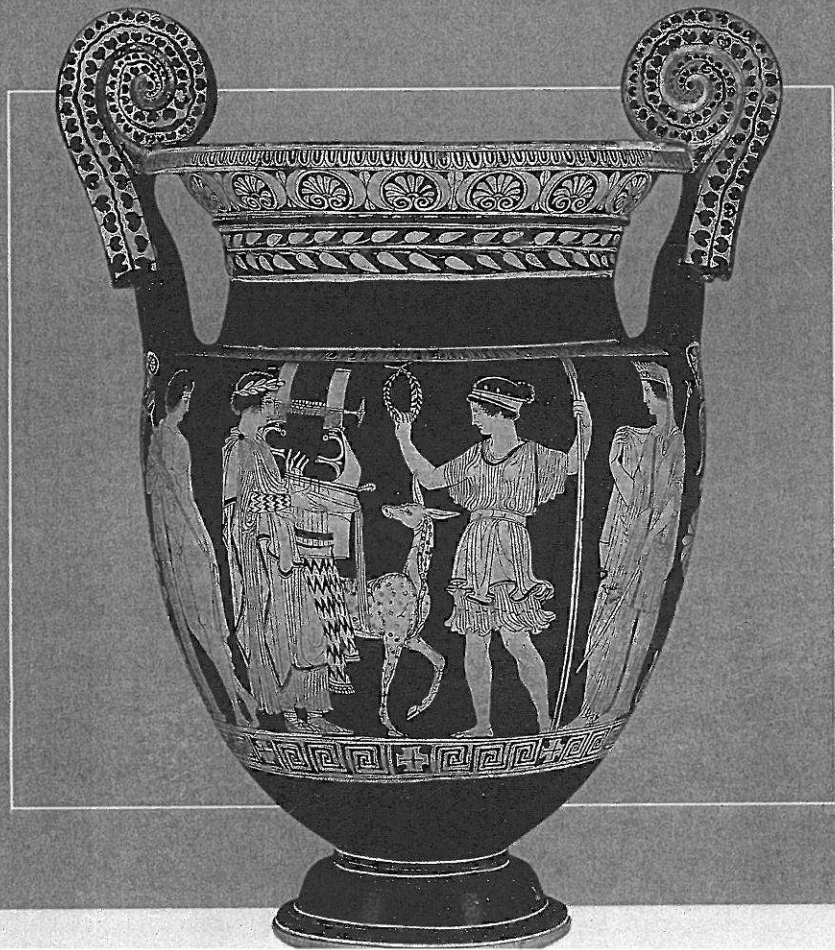


Edinburgh Leventis Studies 5

THE GODS OF ANCIENT GREECE

IDENTITIES AND TRANSFORMATIONS



EDINBURGH LEVENTIS STUDIES 5

THE GODS OF ANCIENT GREECE

Identities and Transformations

Edited by
Jan N. Bremmer and
Andrew Erskine

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TRANSFORMING ARTEMIS: FROM THE GODDESS OF THE OUTDOORS TO CITY GODDESS

Ivana Petrovic

One of the most celebrated works of art in antiquity, famous for its artistic qualities, the impression it left on its observer and its technical excellence, was Pheidias' enthroned *Zeus* made for the sanctuary at Olympia.¹ It is interesting that this particular statue was, according to the tradition, approved by two authorities: Zeus himself and Homer.

According to widespread tradition,² Pheidias' representation of Zeus was inspired by the following verses from the *Iliad* (1. 528–30): 'As he spoke, the son of Kronos bowed his dark brows, and the ambrosial locks swayed on his immortal head, till vast Olympos reeled.'³ The statue, made according to the Homeric description of the god, pleased the deity too. Pausanias relates a tradition according to which Pheidias prayed to the god 'to show by a sign whether the work was to his liking. Immediately, runs the legend, a thunderbolt fell on that part of the floor where down to the present day the bronze jar stood to cover the place' (5.11.9).

This story not only emphasizes the status and great artistry of Pheidias' *Zeus*, but is also an important testimony of the role the Homeric epics played in the shaping of the Greek concept of divine. Herodotus (2.53.2) famously stated that it was Homer and Hesiod who taught the Greeks the ancestry of the gods, gave the gods their epithets, distributed their honours and areas of expertise, and described their outward forms.

The anecdote about Pheidias' statue of Zeus testifies not only that the Homeric epics were indeed perceived as very important for visualizing divine beings, it also features a god personally approving of this

1 For the statue see Lapatin, this volume, Chapter 7; Barringer, this volume, Chapter 8, esp. Fig. 8.1.

2 See T 692–754 in J. Overbeck, *Die antiken Schriftquellen zur Geschichte der bildenden Künste bei den Griechen* (Leipzig: Engelmann, 1868).

3 Translation: Butler.

depiction. By expressing his approval of Pheidias' statue, Zeus was at the same time approving of the Homeric picture of himself.

This chapter will investigate the impact of early Greek epic on subsequent literary representations of another god, one who would perhaps not react to her depiction as favourably as Zeus had done. It discusses the representation of Artemis in early Greek epic and the impact of this representation on subsequent poetry. I shall argue that, even though the Homeric Artemis has little to do with the Artemis of Greek cult, the image of the goddess created in early epic was so influential that it dominated Greek poetry for centuries. It was only in Hellenistic poetry that the depiction of the goddess was modified to bear a stronger resemblance to the role Artemis played in cult.

1 ARTEMIS IN EARLY EPIC POETRY

Herodotus' statement regarding the impact of early epic on the visual and literary representation of the Greek gods may be bold, but the fact is that the depiction of the gods in early Greek epic was viewed as fundamental both by poets who adopted the characters of the gods as represented in it and by philosophers who criticized them.⁴ However, if these texts were indeed crucial for determining the literary characterization of the Greek gods, how do we explain the fact that the distribution of the honours and competences of the deities in them does not really reflect contemporary cult practice? And furthermore, how do we explain the fact that, to Greek audiences, this didn't really matter?

In the distribution of honours and competences allegedly made by Homer and Hesiod, some gods scored poorly. This is very obvious in the case of Artemis. She was after all one of the oldest Greek deities with one of the most widespread cults, and yet the literary persona of the goddess differs greatly from the conception that grew in her worship.

In the *Iliad*, Artemis makes a rather sorry sight in the only scene where she is presented at some length. In the showdown of the gods, she slyly attempts to incite Apollo to fight his uncle Poseidon, and showers him with insults when he refuses. Then Hera insults her and puts her back in her 'proper place', first verbally and then physically (*Il.* 21.481–8):

4 On gods in Homer see B. C. Dietrich, *Death, Fate and the Gods* (London: Athlone Press, 1965); M. Willcock, 'Some aspects of the gods in the *Iliad*', *BICS* 17 (1970), pp. 1–10; J. Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 144–204; W. Burkert, *Greek Religion, Archaic and Classical*, tr. J. Raffan (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), pp. 119ff; E. Kearns, 'The gods in the Homeric epics', in R. Fowler (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Homer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 59–73.

'How dare you, you shameless dog, to stand up to me?!' – Hera screams – 'certainly you are no match for me, even if Zeus gave you your bow and arrows and made you a lioness to women and allowed you to kill whichever you wish. Go and slaughter wild deer in the mountains: this is much better for you than fighting your superiors. Since you wish to try your hand at war and want to fight against me, let me teach you once and for all just how much mightier I am!'

Then Hera grabs Artemis and beats her with her own bow and arrows, smiling all the while. Humiliated and reduced to tears, Artemis seeks the comfort and protection of her father, while Leto gathers her daughter's scattered weapons. This episode agrees well with the characterization of Artemis elsewhere in the *Iliad*. The most common epithets used for Artemis in the *Iliad* are *iocheaira* ('of the showering arrows'), *agrotera* ('of the wilds') and *potnia thêrôn* ('mistress of animals'). They qualify her as a goddess of hunting and wild animals. However, each and every time these domains are mentioned, they appear in a markedly negative context. It is as if the poet was trying hard to demonstrate that the domains of Artemis are not worth very much. Three times she appears as a 'mistress of animals' in the *Iliad*, first in book 5 (49–58) as the goddess who taught Skamandrios to hunt. However, when Skamandrios was attacked by Menelaos, he proved to be an easy target. The poet even asserts the futility of the divine gift (*Il.* 5.53–8):

But Artemis the Mistress of the Bow was of no help to him now, nor were the long shots that had won him fame. For as Skamandrios fled before him, the glorious spearman Menelaos son of Atreus struck him with his lance in the middle of the back between the shoulders and drove it through his chest.

The spear triumphs over arrows, and the gifts of Artemis are obviously worthless in open battle. The second time Artemis' domain as mistress of animals is referred to, in *Iliad* book 9, she is not helping anyone either: she sent the Kalydonian boar to punish Oineus for neglecting her (533–42). Finally, she is called *agrotera* and *potnia thêrôn* in book 21, just before Hera decides to demonstrate how pointless and irrelevant these epithets actually are (470–1).

Four times Artemis is mentioned as a slayer of women in the *Iliad*.⁵ Her beauty is not mentioned in the *Iliad* at all, though there

5 *Il.* 6.205–6.428; 19.59–24.606

is one fleeting reference to the beauty of the girls who danced in her choruses.⁶ The only instance in the *Iliad* where the actions of the goddess are actually beneficial for someone is in the fifth book, where Artemis and Leto are healing Aeneas in Apollo's temple.⁷ In sum, in the *Iliad*, Artemis is represented as a killer of women and wild beasts. She is characterized as a vengeful, insolent brat, certainly not capable of holding her own among the Olympian gods.

Her representation in the *Odyssey* is slightly more positive. Her beauty is underlined in similes where Helen (4.121–2), Nausikaa⁸ and Penelope⁹ are compared to Artemis, but as far as honours and competences go, she is still little more than a slayer of beasts and women. She is mentioned seven times as the one who sends death to women, but, at least in the *Odyssey*, this death is characterized as a *pleasant and peaceful one*.¹⁰

As for her competence as a goddess of hunting, it is mentioned only once, in the beautiful simile in *Odyssey* book 6 (102–9):

As Artemis, who showers arrows, moves on the mountains either along Taygetos or on high-towering Erymanthos, delighting in boars and deer in their running, and along with her the nymphs, daughters of Zeus of the aegis, range in the wilds and play, and the heart of Leto is gladdened, for the head and the brows of Artemis are above all the others, and she is easily marked among them, though all are lovely, so this one shone among her handmaidens, a virgin unwedded.¹¹

Burkert rightly asserts that this scene became the definitive picture of the goddess in Greek literature and iconography.¹² The depiction of the beautiful goddess Artemis surrounded by her nymphs, which was so influential in Greek and Roman poetry, has but little correspondence in Greek cult, as Artemis was almost never venerated together with the nymphs.¹³ Nevertheless, the romantic idea of the lovely

6 Hermes kidnapped the beautiful Polymele when he saw her dance for Artemis: *Il* 16.181–4.

7 *Il*. 5.445–8. Artemis had several cults as a healing deity, but I think that here she is primarily serving as a substitute for her brother (note the fact that the healing takes place in the temple of Apollo, l. 446).

8 *Od*. 6.101–9, 151f.

9 *Od*. 17.37; 19.54.

10 Artemis kills women: *Od*. 11.172–3; 11.324; 15. 409–11; 18.201–5; 20.61–3, 80–3.

11 Translation: Lattimore.

12 Burkert, *Greek Religion*, p. 150.

13 In Apollonius 3.876–86 and Virgil, *Aen*. 1.498–501, the simile is used in depictions of Medea and Dido; J. Larson, 'Handmaidens of Artemis?', *Classical Journal* 92 (1997), pp. 249–57.

huntress, the goddess of the outdoors as Wilamowitz succinctly characterized her,¹⁴ lingers almost to this day, as most textbook articles and encyclopedia entries focus on her virginity and fondness for wild nature and its creatures.

Turning to Hesiod, we cannot find many significant additions to the literary characterization of Artemis. She is mentioned only twice in the *Theogony*, once at the beginning (14), alongside other gods being hymned by the Muses, and once in 918 as a child of Zeus and Leto. Both times she bears the epithet *iocheaira* ('of the showering arrows').

She must have played a more prominent role in the *Catalogue of Women*. Judging from the three fragments of the *Catalogue* which do mention her (one dealing with Kallisto,¹⁵ one with the sacrifice of Iphigeneia¹⁶ and one with Orion¹⁷), Artemis was probably characterized as a stern mistress of wild animals and marriageable maidens, quick to punish all who challenge or insult her in any way.

Artemis is not mentioned at all in the *Works and Days*. It is interesting to note that Hesiod does state that the seventh day of the month, the birthday of Apollo, is among the holiest days (770–1), but he characterizes the sixth of the month, which was the traditional birthday of Artemis, in the following manner (782–4): 'very unfavourable for plants, but good for the birth of males, though unfavourable for a girl either to be born at all or to be married'. Perhaps Hesiod was unaware of the tradition according to which the goddess Artemis was born on the sixth,¹⁸ or simply failed to observe it. Be that as it may, the characterization of Artemis in Hesiod does not really add much to Homer's picture.

Let me conclude the discussion of Homer and Hesiod, the canonical texts of Herodotus, by considering the representation of Artemis in the corpus of *Homeric Hymns*. Even though the two hymns dedicated to Artemis are rather short, they do add an important characteristic

14 'Herrin des Draussen', in U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorf, *Der Glaube der Hellenen*, 2 vols (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1952), I, p. 175, and II, p. 145.

15 Fr. 163 Merkelbach-West. On Kallisto in early Greek poetry see T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp. 725–9.

16 Fr. 23a–b Merkelbach-West. In *Ehoiai* she is called Iphimede. On Iphimede/Iphigeneia in Hesiod see Gantz, *Early Greek Myth*, pp. 27, 582–4.

17 Fr. 148 Merkelbach-West.

18 Cf. M. L. West, *Hesiod, Works and Days: Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1978), p. 356 ad loc.: 'Hesiod seems unaware of it (sc. of the sixth being the birthday of Artemis) for she would have made it an excellent day for a girl's birth.'

to the depiction of the goddess, one unmentioned in epic poetry: she is represented as the goddess of music, leading the chorus of Muses and Graces. The longer *Hymn to Artemis* (27) initially depicts her as a virginal huntress (27, 2–10) but then goes on to offer a delightful description of Artemis leading the song in Delphi (11–20):

When the animal-watcher goddess profuse of arrows has had her pleasure and cheered her spirits, she unstrings her bent bow and goes to the great house of her dear brother Phoibos Apollo, to Delphi's rich community, to organize the Muses' and Graces' fair dance. There she hangs up her bent-back bow and her arrows and goes before, her body beautifully adorned, leading the dances, while they with divine voices celebrate fair-ankled Leto, how she bore children outstanding among the immortals both in counsel and action.¹⁹

A very similar representation of Artemis the chorus-leader occurs in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.²⁰ Calame argued persuasively that these passages, as well as the simile from the sixth book of the *Odyssey* depicting Artemis sporting with the nymphs, reflect Artemis' role in female initiation rituals.²¹ The dances young marriageable girls performed for Artemis were famous and their ubiquity became proverbial.²²

The main honours and competences of Artemis are summarized in the *Hymn to Aphrodite*. At the beginning of the hymn, the goddesses who did not yield to the power of Aphrodite are enumerated, among them the chaste Artemis. Five verses encapsulate her spheres of influence: hunting, singing and dancing, and finally, rather surprisingly, 'the city of upright men' (16–20):

Nor is Artemis of the gold shafts and view-haloo ever overcome in love by smile-loving Aphrodite, for she too likes other things,

¹⁹ Translation: West, Loeb.

²⁰ *H.H. Ap.* 3.194–9.

²¹ C. Calame, *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece*, tr. D. Collins and J. Orion (Lanham, MD, New York and London: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), pp. 91–101, 142–85. On the motif of the girl snatched from the chorus of Artemis, see I. Petrovic, 'Artemisfeste und Frauen: Göttliche Didaktik als literarischer Topos', in A. Hornung et al. (eds), *Studia humanitatis ac litterarum trifolio Heidelbergiensi dicata: Festschrift für E. Christmann, W. Edelmeier, R. Kettmann* (Heidelberg: Peter Lang, 2004), pp. 275–94.

²² Cf. Aes. *Prov.* 9: ποῦ γὰρ ἡ Ἄρτεμις οὐκ ἐχόρευσεν. Due to the important role choruses played in her cult, the goddess also had the cult epithet Humnia in Arcadia (Paus. 8.5.11 and 13.1).

archery and hunting animals in the mountains, lyres, dances, and piercing yells, shady groves, and a city of righteous men.²³

All other domains of influence enumerated in this hymn are given in the plural, but the city is in the singular. One could perhaps conclude that it is one particular city whose upright men were dear to Artemis. Judging on the basis of her role in the *Iliad*, perhaps it is Troy.

If we were to use early Greek epic as our sole source for the history of Greek religion, we could easily have concluded that Artemis was a marginal goddess, daughter of Zeus and Leto, sister of Apollo, a virginal huntress who delights in song and dance, surrounded by nymphs, but also a slayer of women and irascible punisher of mortals. However, Artemis was in fact the goddess with the most widespread cults of all Greek female deities; only Apollo had more shrines and temples than she did.²⁴ She was also arguably one of the oldest Greek deities.²⁵ It is simply astonishing that she plays such a marginal role in early Greek poetry. It is also surprising that in the Homeric poems, her role as protector of women, especially in childbirth, is glossed over and that she is presented instead as their killer. Hera's derision of Artemis as a 'lion to women' is in fact a succinct encapsulation of the *Iliad's* attitude to the goddess in general. All her characteristics are presented in a negative light: as a huntress, she is useless in an open combat; as a deity of women, she is a killer; as a protector of wild nature, she sends horrible beasts to punish humans. Among the Olympians, she is out of her depth; to humans, she is a terrible mistress.

Early Greek epic sums up the most important characteristics of the cult of Artemis, but only in order to present their negative foil. It is only when we move on from Homer and Hesiod to later poetry that we realize the full meaning of Herodotus' statement about the importance of the two archaic poets for the characterization of gods in literature. For even though the representation of Artemis in the early epic barely corresponds to her role in cult and does not provide an accurate impression of her importance in the Greek pantheon at all, it did become conventional. Even when the texts are local in character and depict local deities, their characteristics as depicted in the Panhellenic epics still influence the representation greatly.

²³ Translation: West, Loeb (slightly modified).

²⁴ G. B. Hussey, 'The distribution of Hellenic temples', *AJA* 6 (1890), pp. 59–64.

²⁵ Linear B tablets from Pylos record the word *atemit-*, but it is still disputed whether this is a testimony of the cult of Artemis in the Mycenaean age. See C. Sourvinou-Inwood, 'A-te-mi-to and A-ti-mi-te', *Kadmos* 9 (1970), pp. 42–7.

2 ARTEMIS IN DRAMA

In Athenian tragedy we do get an occasional glimpse of the local cults of Artemis, but her characterization still owes much to the Homeric slayer of women. Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* depicts a cruel, cryptic goddess who communicates through bird-signs and is so enraged over the destiny of Troy that she demands the life of an innocent virgin.²⁶ Since Aeschylus does not mention the miraculous salvation of Iphigeneia, but dwells on the horrific scene of her (unwilling!) sacrifice, it is the cruel nature of Artemis that hangs over the whole trilogy, which depicts the terrible chain of slaughter in the house of Agamemnon. Artemis is still a vengeful, capricious, dangerous deity.

The Iphigeneia episode was very popular with all tragedians.²⁷ Euripides, too, stresses the cruel, bloodthirsty nature of the goddess, who may have substituted a deer for a virgin in Aulis, but nevertheless receives human sacrifices in the barbaric land of the Taurians. The bloodthirsty Artemis has to be appeased through the agency of Athena and Apollo, who 'civilize' her by transporting her image to the Attic Halai and by introducing a milder ritual without human sacrifice.²⁸

Paradoxically, on the Athenian stage, Artemis is still mainly destroying the very creatures she is supposed to protect – the young and chaste. She does not do anything to save Hippolytos, but does promise to kill a favourite of Aphrodite's in revenge. Again, as in the *Iliad*, the goddess is at the same time powerless when facing other Olympians, and a terrible, cruel mistress of the very ones she is supposed to be guarding. Artemis obviously had a reputation for cruelty in Athens. In Sophocles' *Ajax*, upon realizing that the hero has gone mad, the chorus suggests that it was probably the work of Artemis, who is punishing him as a retribution for a victory that had paid her no tribute (172–8).

However, in both tragedy and comedy, it is also obvious that Artemis is a very important and beloved goddess among women. Female characters often swear by her,²⁹ they call upon her to protect

26 See H. Lloyd-Jones, 'Artemis and Iphigeneia', *JHS* 103 (1983), pp. 87–102 = H. Lloyd-Jones, *Greek Comedy, Hellenistic Literature, Greek Religion, and Miscellanea: The Academic Papers of Sir Hugh Lloyd-Jones*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), II, pp. 306–30; J. N. Bremmer, 'Sacrificing a child in ancient Greece: the case of Iphigeneia', in E. Noort and E. J. C. Tigchelaar (eds), *The Sacrifice of Isaac* (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 21–43.

27 See Gantz, *Early Greek Myth*, pp. 584–8.

28 E. *IT* 1449–61. See F. Graf, *Nordionische Kulte* (Rome: Institut Suisse de Rome, 1985), pp. 410–17.

29 S. *El.* 626, 1239; Ar. *Lys.* 435, 922, 949; *Th.* 517, 569, 742; *Ec.* 90, 136; Men. *Dysc.* 874.

them against enemies,³⁰ or pray to her³¹ and fondly mention her sanctuaries and choruses.³² This depiction of Artemis as especially important for women does roughly agree with her local cults, as, in Attica, she was indeed venerated as a deity of childbirth and female initiation. She presided over female rites of passage (as Brauronia, Munychia,³³ Tauropolos³⁴), childbirth (Locheia, Eileithyia) and child-rearing (Kourotrophos).³⁵ At her Attic sanctuaries, chosen girls underwent rituals meant to turn them into marriageable *parthenoi* (at Brauron).³⁶ However, she also received yearly offerings as a goddess of combat.³⁷ Perhaps due to the paucity of transmitted plays, the warlike aspects of the goddess are not mentioned in extant Attic drama.

3 ARTEMIS AS A CITY GODDESS

Whereas in many poleis of mainland Greece Artemis was primarily a goddess of hunting, initiation and childbirth, she had a rather

30 E. *Ph.* 152.

31 A. *Th.* 154; *Supp.* 1030; S. *Tr.* 213; E. *Med.* 160; *Ph.* 192; Ar. *Th.* 115–20, 970.

32 E. *Hec.* 464.

33 On the cult of Artemis in Brauron and Munychia see J. D. Condis, 'ARTEMIS BPAΥPΩΝΙΑ', *AD* 22 (1976), pp. 156–206; M. B. Hollinshead, 'Legend, cult and architecture at three sanctuaries of Artemis', dissertation, Bryn Mawr College, 1979, Ann Arbor, 1980; L. Palaiokrassa, *Tò iepò τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος Μουνυχίας* (Athens: Archaïologike Hetaireia, 1991).

34 On Artemis Tauropolos in Halai see Hollinshead, 'Three sanctuaries of Artemis'; L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (Berlin: Heinrich Keller, 1932), pp. 208ff.

35 On Artemis as a goddess of birth and childrearing see P. Bruneau, *Recherches sur les cultes de Délos à l'époque Hellénistique et à l'époque Impériale* (Paris: De Boccard, 1970), pp. 191ff; T. H. Price, *Kourotrophos: Cults and Representations of the Greek Nursing Deities* (Leiden: Brill, 1978); H. King, 'Bound to bleed: Artemis and Greek women', in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt (eds), *Images of Women in Antiquity* (New York, London: Routledge, 1985), pp. 109–27; S. G. Cole, 'Domesticating Artemis', in S. G. Cole, *Landscapes, Gender and Ritual Space: The Ancient Greek Experience* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 198–230.

36 On the ritual *arkeia* see A. Brelich, *Paides e parthenoi* (Rome: Ateneo, 1969); L. Kahil, 'L'Artemis de Brauron: rites et mystères', *Antike Kunst* 20 (1977), pp. 86–98, and 'Mythological repertoire of Brauron' in W. G. Moon (ed.), *Ancient Greek Art and Iconography* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1983), pp. 231–44; K. Dowden, *Death and the Maiden* (London and New York: Routledge, 1989), pp. 9–47; W. Sale, 'The temple-legends of the Arkeia', *Rheinisches Museum* 118 (1975), pp. 265–84; C. Sourvinou-Inwood, *Studies in Girls' Transitions* (Athens: Kardamitsa, 1988); S. Price, *Religions of the Ancient Greeks* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 90–7; B. Gentili and F. Perusino (eds), *Le orsi di Brauron: Un rituale di iniziazione femminile nel santuario di Artemide* (Pisa: ETS, 2002).

37 The Athenians conducted annual sacrifices to Artemis Agrotera and Enyalios in thanksgiving for the victory at Marathon (Aristot. *Ath. Pol.* 58.1).

different role in the cities of Asia Minor and in the Greek West. In these areas Artemis was a very important city goddess.³⁸ In many cities she was regarded as protector and principal deity. Artemis Leukophryênê ('white-browed') was the main goddess of Magnesia on the Maeander; as Astias ('of the citadel') and Prokathêgemôn ('leader') she was worshipped as city goddess in Iasos (Caria), as Kyria ('mistress') in Laodikeia (Syria) and Milyas (Lycia), as Artemis Myrea in Myra (Lycia), as Artemis Kindyas in Kindye in Caria, as Anaitis in Hypaipa, as Sardianê in Sardes.³⁹

Cults of Artemis in Perge (Pamphylia) and Ephesos were especially prominent. Not only was she these two cities' main goddess, but they were avid propagators of her cult in the whole of Asia Minor and helped institute it in countless cities of the hinterland.⁴⁰

However, we have very little literary evidence for this aspect of the cult of Artemis. Even though the archaeological evidence for the importance of Artemis in the West is conclusive,⁴¹ the only extant piece of poetry clearly characterizing Artemis as a city goddess in the West is the eleventh ode of Bacchylides. This ode celebrates the victory of a certain Alexidamos of Metapontion in the boys' wrestling contest at the Pythian games.⁴² It is, however, conspicuous that even though the poet clearly exhorts Artemis as the main city goddess of Metapontion and refers to her as 'living in Metapontion with good fortune, the golden mistress of the people' (11.115–17), he introduces the goddess in a distinctly Homeric fashion, by employing the Homeric epithet *chrysêlakatos* (37–9):

Νῦν δ' Ἄρτεμις ἀγροτέρα
 χρυσάλακατος λιπαρὰν
 [Ἡμ]έρα τοξόκλυτος νίκαν ἔδωκε.⁴³

Now Artemis of the wilds with spindle of gold, gentle, famed for the bow gave (sc. to Alexidamos) a brilliant victory.

Furthermore, by asserting that it was Artemis herself who gave the victory to young Alexidamos, Bacchylides may have been alluding to the distinctly Homeric role the gods played at the athletic contests. Mikalson analysed the instances in epinician odes and dedicatory epigrams in which poets claim that the gods themselves bestowed victory on the contestants.⁴⁴ He concluded that poets of the classical period rarely attribute victory to the gods but, when they do so, it is usually the deity of the festival or the competition itself that provides the aid to the victor. He singles out the eleventh ode of Bacchylides as a unique example where it is not the deity presiding over the contest that bestows victory, but the deity of the competitor's homeland.⁴⁵ The only other instance of gods who are not presiding over the games nevertheless helping humans win the contest is *Iliad* 23.⁴⁶ Only after this distinctly Homeric introduction and characterization does Artemis receive her local epithet, Hêmera ('tame'), in Bacchylides' eleventh ode.

The poet goes on to relate the foundation-myth of the cult of Artemis in Lousoi, which was brought to Metapontion by its Achaean

38 On the cult of city deities, see U. Brackertz, 'Zum Problem der Schutzgottheiten griechischer Städte', dissertation, Berlin, 1976.

39 For *testimonia* and bibliography, see I. Petrovic, *Von den Toren des Hades zu den Hallen des Olymp: Artemiskult bei Theokrit und Kallimachos* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), pp. 201–2.

40 See Petrovic, *Artemiskult*, pp. 202–21, for a discussion of cults of Artemis in Ephesos and Perge, with bibliography.

41 G. Olbrich, 'Ein Heiligtum der Artemis Metapontina? Zur Ikonographie der Terrakottafiguren von S. Biagio bei Metapont', *Parola di Passato* 31 (1976), pp. 376–408; M. Giangulio, 'Per la storia dei culti di Crotona antica: Il santuario di Hera Lacinia. Structure e funzioni cultuali, origini storiche e mitiche', *Archivio Storico per la Calabria e la Lucania* 49 (1982), pp. 5–69; J. C. Carter, 'Sanctuaries in the chora of Metaponto', in S. E. Alcock and R. Osborne (eds), *Placing the Gods* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 161–98; D. Giacometti, 'Il culto di Artemis a Metaponto', *Ostraka* 8 (1999), pp. 407–26; A. de Siena, 'Profilo storico archeologico', in A. de Siena (ed.), *Metaponto: Archeologia di una colonia Greca* (Taranto: Scorpione Editore, 2001), pp. 7–44.

42 R. Merkelbach, 'Bakchylides auf einen Sieger in den 'Ἡμεράσια zu Lousoi', *ZPE* 11 (1973), pp. 257–60, argued that the victory was not at the Pythian games, but at the Hemerasia of Lousoi. A. Köhnken, 'Hemerasien- oder Pythiensieg? Zu Bakchylides, ep. 11', *Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft* 2 (1990), pp. 49–51, offers persuasive arguments in favour of the Pythian games.

43 Text: Irigoin.

44 J. D. Mikalson, 'Gods and athletic games', in O. Palagia and A. Choremi-Spetsieri (eds), *The Panathenaic Games* (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2007), pp. 33–40.

45 *Ibid.*, pp. 38–9.

46 *Ibid.*, p. 33, rightly asserts that Homeric instances of divine intervention do not provide an apt parallel for the analysis of the passages where Pindar and Bacchylides praise the victories of their contemporaries. I agree that this is the case with most of the passages he discusses, since in them the gods do not randomly appear in order to support their favourites, but the divinities presiding over the games bestow victory on the contestants. However, Bacchylides 11 is a striking exception. Here Artemis seems to be assuming the role of the Homeric divine helper, since she is not presiding over the games and yet bestows victory on Alexidamos. Furthermore, Bacchylides is actually implying that there was something akin to the dispute of the gods regarding Alexidamos' contests, since he says that the boy nearly missed an Olympian victory due to either 'a god or a wandering judgement of men who took the highest honour out of his hands' (34–6). According to Mikalson, the classical poets never ascribe defeat to the gods (*ibid.*, p. 34: 'In the rhetoric of the classical period, the gods give victory; they do not cause defeat'). However, he also asserts that Homeric gods both give victory and cause defeat (p. 33), which brings me to the conclusion that Bacchylides is using a Homeric model of the divine engagement in the athletic contest in his eleventh ode.

founders.⁴⁷ The final section of the poem, line 117 (*chrusea despoina laôn*, 'golden mistress of the people'), could perhaps even be observed as a pun on the Homeric depiction of the goddess as *potnia thêrôn* (from the *Iliad*) or *potna thea* (from the *Odyssey*). In Bacchylides' ode, Artemis is not only the mistress of animals, but also the mistress of the citizens. One wonders why it was necessary for a poet depicting a local city goddess to reach for Homeric epithets, especially since, in Homer, Artemis has very little to do with cities and city life.

In his treatment of Artemis as a city goddess, Bacchylides is adopting a strategy similar to that of Anakreon. In one tantalizing fragment, which was probably the beginning of a longer poem, Anakreon is entreating Artemis Leukophryênê, the main goddess of Magnesia on the Maeander (fr. 348 Page):

γουνούμαι σ' ἐλαφιβόλε
 ξανθή παῖ Διὸς ἀγρίων
 δέσποιν' Ἄρτεμι θηρῶν·
 ἦ κου νῦν ἐπὶ Ληθαίου
 δίνησι θρασυκαρδίων
 ἀνδρῶν ἑσκατορᾶις πόλιν
 χαίρους', οὐ γὰρ ἀνημέρους
 ποιμαίνεις πολίητας.

I appeal to you, fair-haired, deer-shooting daughter of Zeus, Artemis, queen of game: with pleasure, surely, now you look upon the valiant population of the town by the river Lethaios, for the citizens in your flock are anything but uncouth.⁴⁸

Here, Artemis is invoked with her usual Homeric epithets pertaining to her genealogy and hunting as her area of influence. She is *elaphêbolos* ('deer-shooting'), blonde daughter of Zeus and a mistress of wild animals, but she is also depicted as a city goddess, protector of all citizens. Anakreon is playing with the idea of Artemis as mistress of wild animals even as he depicts her as a city goddess, using the verb *poimainô* ('to herd, tend') in order to qualify the goddess' relationship with her citizens.⁴⁹

47 On this see D. Cairns, 'Myth and the polis in Bacchylides' eleventh ode', *JHS* 125 (2005), pp. 35–50, and B. Kowalzig, *Singing for the Gods: Performances of Myth and Ritual in Archaic and Classical Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 267–327.

48 Translation: Furley and Bremer.

49 Cf. W. D. Furley and J. M. Bremer, *Greek Hymns* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), I, p. 178: 'This opening contains gracious praise of the city of Magnesia, expressed through the witty device of saying: "Artemis loves wild animals; but she surely smiles on Magnesia because its citizens are anything but wild".'

The important question here is: why would poets who are depicting distinctly local characteristics of deities for local audiences allude to the Homeric characterization of the divinity – a characterization which, as we saw previously, does not really correspond to cult practice? It seems that the depiction of gods in poetry demanded a careful negotiation of their identity with respect to their Homeric personae.

We have seen that in the archaic and classical period, the Homeric characterization of Artemis seems to dominate her depiction in poetry, even if the texts are dealing with local cults which have little or nothing to do with the Homeric Artemis. To a degree, it was possible to merge the Homeric goddess with the local Artemis, and to adapt the picture of the goddess to the cultic reality through careful negotiation of her local and Homeric characteristics. It is a great pity that such a vast number of texts is lost to us, especially choral lyric, which would certainly have provided many interesting depictions of Artemis. However, on the basis of what we have, apart from the two texts we mentioned where Artemis is depicted as a city goddess, in archaic and classical poetry she is primarily a virginal huntress, quick to punish her followers for the loss of virginity, and those who endanger her chastity, neglect her sacrifices or insult Leto.

In the Hellenistic period, however, an important change in the perception of Artemis takes place: the cities of Asia Minor undergo a renaissance as the centre of gravity in the Greek world shifts eastwards. These cities profited from economic growth after Alexander's conquests, and with increased economical prosperity came growing cultural influence. Countless inscriptions testify to their attempts to propagate the city cults, so much so that their efforts have been compared to the religious zeal of the Christian missionaries.⁵⁰ Thus in the third century BC, the cult of Artemis the protector of cities spread rapidly throughout Asia and became prominent in Lydia, Caria, Ionia, Phrygia, Lycia, Pamphylia and Cilicia.

With the era of Athenian literary supremacy over, new capitals, especially Alexandria, flourished and attracted intellectuals from all over Greece. One of the most famous poets and scholars working in Alexandria in the first half of the third century BC was Callimachus of Cyrene. It is his *Hymn to Artemis* I wish to discuss now in order to demonstrate how this poet adapted the literary persona of Artemis to fit her contemporary cult.⁵¹ This intention may come as a surprise,

50 R. E. Oster, 'Ephesus as a religious center under the principate. I: Paganism before Constantine', *ANRW* II, 18, 3 (1990), pp. 1661–728.

51 For a fuller analysis of the representation of the cult of Artemis in Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis*, see Petrovic, *Artemiskult*, pp. 114–263.

since Hellenistic poetry is often considered to be largely detached from any religious setting. Modern scholarship usually asserts that myths were for Hellenistic poets no more than traditional stories, and that Hellenistic poets treated gods basically as fictional literary characters, displaying little or no interest in the religious tendencies of their own time. But if we pay close attention to the way Callimachus portrays Artemis, we shall see that this is a misconception.

By Callimachus' time, the goddess Artemis as found in cult practice had outgrown her canonical literary representation. Homer's insolent girl was in the third century BC one of the most important goddesses of the richest part of Greece. She was now the mistress of cities, and so her literary image needed to be revamped. In my opinion, Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis* provides us with a unique opportunity to witness one such literary makeover. Literary representation of the goddess had to be updated, but one could not simply dismiss the poems which had for centuries been perceived as canonical in their depiction of the gods, their origins and their spheres of influence. What Callimachus did instead was a brilliant turning of the tables – he simply wrote a new *Homeric Hymn*.

The corpus of *Homeric Hymns* celebrates and describes individual gods. The characterization of the gods in the hymns was very important and influential for their portrayal in Greek literature. Along with the epics, the *Homeric Hymns* literally created the Panhellenic personalities of divinities. This is especially the case with the four long hymns, which contain epic narratives of the important episodes in the life of the gods and present their most important cult places and areas of influence.⁵² Callimachus, using this genre as a model, went back to the very childhood of Artemis in order to rewrite her biography, and thereby adapt the literature to the contemporary state of the cult.⁵³

The hymn opens with a delightful scene – little Artemis is sitting

52 On the presentation of the gods in the *Homeric Hymns*, see J. Strauss Clay, *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns* (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2006²).

53 A. Ambühl, *Kinder und Junge Helden: Innovative Aspekte des Umgangs mit der literarischen Tradition bei Kallimachos* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), discusses Callimachus' strategy of rewriting the earlier texts. Her excellent discussion of the *Hymn to Artemis* interprets several important hypotexts and their appropriation by Callimachus (pp. 245–95): Artemis from the *Iliad*, Nausikaa from the *Odyssey*, Euripides' Iphigeneia and Hestia from the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, as well as masculine 'rivals' of the goddess – Apollo from the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* and Achilles and Herakles in Pindar's odes. However, her analysis seeks to throw more light on Callimachus' poetic procedure and his own positioning in Greek poetry and rivalry with the poetic predecessors. I shall try to elucidate Callimachus' rewriting of earlier texts with an emphasis on the goddess' role and presentation in cult.

on Zeus' knees and asking for various presents in the manner of a precocious child. Her list is quite long: she wants many things, and she wants them immediately. She demands a virginal status, many cult epithets, arrows and a bow, a short tunic so that she can hunt; she wants nymphs, all the mountains. As far as cities are concerned, any will do, since she will rarely descend to the towns, save to help women at childbirth. This scene is a clever reworking of the episode from the book 21 of the *Iliad* – it is now appropriate for the goddess to sit in Zeus' lap, since she is a little girl. It also draws heavily on the typical representation of young Olympians, who know what their spheres should be the moment they are born. In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, the god literally leaps out of his mother's womb and immediately announces (131–2): 'I want the lyre and the crooked bow as my things. And I shall prophesy Zeus' unerring will to humankind.' Thus Artemis is made to resemble her brother, a precocious offspring of the gods.⁵⁴

Everything Artemis demands in her speech agrees with her traditional literary representation. However, Zeus' answer is a rather innovative one (31–9):

Have all that you want so badly, my girl, and other presents bigger still your father will give you – not just a single tower, but thirty cities for your own: thirty cities that won't know how to worship anyone but you, and be the towns of Artemis. Many another will be yours to share with other gods, inland cities, islands too, and in them all will groves and altars of Artemis abound, and you will be Protectress of Streets and Harbours. (tr. Nisetich)

Needless to say, the depiction of Artemis as a goddess of many cities is unusual and has no precedent in earlier literature. Modern scholarship has ascribed this oddity to Callimachus' innovative spirit and perceived it as yet another attempt by the poet to surprise his readers with unexpected versions of myths. The notion of Artemis as city goddess is thus explained away as Callimachus' playful and eccentric invention.

However, if we take the cults of Artemis into account, the explanation for the addition of cities to Artemis' list becomes rather simple:

54 It has often been noted that sibling rivalry is one of the main motifs of Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis*. See on this P. Bing and V. Uhrmeister, 'The unity of Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis*', *JHS* 114 (1994), pp. 19–34; R. L. Hunter and T. Fuhrer, 'Imaginary gods? Poetic theology in the *Hymns* of Callimachus', in F. Montanari and L. Lehnus (eds), *Callimaque* (Geneva: Fondation Hardt, 2002), pp. 143–87; M. Plantinga, 'A parade of learning: Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis* (Lines 170–268)', in M. A. Harder et al. (eds), *Callimachus II* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004), pp. 257–78; Ambühl, *Kinder und Junge Helden*.

Callimachus is literally re-creating the canonical character of the goddess in order for it to fit cultic reality. In order to bestow on Artemis the power to protect cities, the poet had to start at the very beginning, with the goddess' childhood. Artemis does not express a wish to own cities herself – in fact she professes her utter lack of interest in cities and their inhabitants.⁵⁵ It is Zeus who bestows this gift on her. In presenting one sphere of Artemis' influence as a direct wish of Zeus, Callimachus is again resorting to a conventional device of the *Homeric Hymns*. In the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, for instance, Hermes manifests several abilities and interests from birth, but it is Zeus who bestows on him additional spheres of influence and proclaims that he will have the gift of prophecy, that all flocks will belong to him and that he will be appointed messenger to Hades (568ff).

Note also how Zeus stresses and repeats the very number of cities in Callimachus' hymn (33–5): 'Not just a single tower, but thirty cities for your own: thirty cities that won't know how to worship anyone but you, and be the towns of Artemis.' Here Callimachus is effectively correcting the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*, where Artemis only has one city of just men.

This scene is only the first step in Callimachus' representation of Artemis as the goddess of cities. He also explains how exactly Artemis watches over her cities. She punishes the unjust, and rewards the just cities (120–35):

You shot first at an elm tree, second at an oak, third at an animal, and fourth at no oak: but a city of criminals was your target now, people guilty, over and over, of sins against each other, sins against strangers. Fools, they have your wrath to contend with now, a bitter dough to swallow. Pestilence feeds on their livestock, frost nips at their crops, their old men shear their hair in grief for sons dead, their women die blasted in childbirth or, escaping, bear not one child able to stand up straight. Not so the ones on whom you smile and show your favour, whose fields bring forth abundant grain, whose cattle multiply, whose homes flourish. Only bodies full of years are carried to their funerals. Strife that tears to pieces even the well-run household leaves their families untouched. Around a single table loaded with offerings, wives of brothers and husbands of sisters take their seats.

55 Cf. 18f.: δὸς δέ μοι οὐρα πάντα· πόλιν δέ μοι ἦντινα νεῖμον / ἦντινα λῆς· σπαρνὸν γὰρ ὄτ' Ἀρτεμις ἄστυ κάτεισον ('And give me all the mountains to roam – whatever city you want me to have is fine with me: it won't be often Artemis comes to town).')

By punishing the unjust and rewarding the just cities, Artemis effectively demonstrates that she has accepted her father's gift. She also proves herself to be a true daughter of her father, since she is acting exactly as he does in an earlier text: this depiction of the goddess in action is a reworking and adaptation of Hesiod's representation of Zeus in the *Works and Days* (225–47),⁵⁶ where Hesiod describes Zeus' treatment of the just and unjust rulers and their respective cities. However, even though Artemis and Zeus have the same rewards and punishments in their stock, Artemis is obviously quicker to punish, since Callimachus first describes how she treats the unjust citizens, whereas Hesiod begins with the rewards for the just. This, I think, is Callimachus' nod to the literary persona of the goddess and to the countless myths in which Artemis cruelly punishes everyone who dares to insult her in any way. The goddess has changed, but not completely. Thus Hesiod's epic, too, is being reworked and adapted to the contemporary situation. It is no longer only Zeus who watches over the cities: his daughter has joined him, since he has bestowed his competences on her.

After the poet has explained how Artemis became the goddess of the cities and how she watches over them, he exemplifies her role by describing at length the foundation of her most important cult centre, Ephesos (237–58):

Even the Amazons, lovers of violence, once set up a wooden image in your honour, under an oak by the sea in Ephesos, and Hippo performed the sacrifice, and then they danced, Lady Oupis, a war dance around it, first in armour, holding their shields, then fanning out in wide choral rings, and music played, to keep the songs bursting from their throats in unison, the high thin wail of reed pipes (it was before people had learned to hollow out the bones of fawns, an art of Athena's hateful to deer): and the echo sped to Sardis, to the Berekynthian meadow, the rapid thud of their feet, the rattle of their quivers answering. And later, around that wooden image, rose a spacious sanctuary – dawn will never look upon a godlier or richer one: it would put Pytho in the shade.

56 As noted by F. Bornmann, *Callimachi Hymnus in Dianam: Introduzione, testo critico e commento* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1968), ad 129–35. See on this also H. Reinsch-Werner, 'Kallimachos Hesiodicus: Die Rezeption der hesiodischen Dichtung durch Kallimachos von Kyrene', dissertation, Berlin, Nikolaus Mielke, 1976, pp. 74–86; Bing and Uhrmeister, 'The unity of Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis*', p. 25; Ambühl, *Kinder und Junge Helden*, pp. 245–95.

With that in mind, no doubt, Lygdamis threatened to plunder it, his wits gone, his heart full of outrage. He came with a host of mare-milking Kimmerians, equal in number to the sands, those men who sprawl along the Bosporos, the strait of the cowgirl, daughter of Inachos. How far from the mark he was, that fumbling king who was not destined – neither he nor any of those whose wagons crowded the meadow of Kaÿster – to go home again! Thus do your arrows guard Ephesos for ever.⁵⁷

The shrine of Artemis in Ephesos is compared to Apollo's in Delphi, which it would easily outdo (250). Importantly, for a proper city deity, a description is given of how exactly Artemis takes care of Ephesos – she defends it from the Cimmerian invasion. This episode recalls the Gallic invasion of Delphi and Apollo's defence of his shrine.

The very structure of the hymn to Artemis recalls the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, since the first part depicts Artemis as a child and her first endeavours, then the poet depicts Artemis entering the Olympian halls and her acceptance by other gods, and the second part of the hymn enumerates her favourite nymphs, islands and cities, and depicts the founding of the Ephesian shrine. Just like the poet of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Callimachus first presents Artemis as a child, then as a fully fledged Olympian goddess who visits Olympos and is accepted by other gods, and then he goes on to enumerate her most important cult places and epithets.⁵⁸

By combining the Homeric depiction of Artemis as a virginal huntress with her depiction as a powerful, just deity of the cities, the poet is not only adapting the literary goddess to the Artemis of contemporary cult, he is also rewriting the texts of his predecessors. Callimachus is at the same time playing according to the rules of the genre of *Homeric Hymns* and breaking those rules, inasmuch as he is actually correcting and rewriting them. He is writing himself into the Homeric tradition and is bestowing on Artemis a portrayal worthy of her status and significance. But, in his reshaping of the literary persona of Artemis, Callimachus had to reach into the ancient, canonical reservoir of literary motifs. He also adopted a markedly Panhellenic perspective, since he did not concentrate on one myth or cult of the goddess, but attempted to draw an all-encompassing picture of Artemis and to mention as many cult places and legends as possible.

The identities and functions of the gods in Greek society were subject to change. Depicting gods in poetry was often a balancing act

57 Translation: Nisetich, slightly modified.

58 Bing and Uhrmeister, 'The unity of Callimachus' *Hymn to Artemis*'.

which demanded a careful negotiation of their identities, a negotiation which is often dismissed as experimentation or playful invention in the current scholarship on Hellenistic poetry. The interest in local cults and arcane rituals displayed by Hellenistic poets is often interpreted as a display of learning or even antiquarianism. However, it is interesting to note that, when it comes to depicting the functions and the characters of the gods, the actual inventors were not the Hellenistic poets, but Homer and Hesiod.