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## Approaches to Artemis in Bronze Age Greece

Marie-Louise Bech Nosh

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# FROM ARTEMIS TO DIANA

THE GODDESS OF MAN AND BEAST

12 ACTA HYPERBOREA 2009

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Cover illustration: A wall tapestry from Egypt depicting Artemis.

Dated to the 5th or beginning of the 6th century AD.

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**ACTA HYPERBOREA**

12

# From Artemis to Diana

The Goddess of Man and Beast

Edited by

Tobias Fischer-Hansen and Birte Poulsen

Museum Tusulanum Press

University of Copenhagen

2009

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# APPROACHES TO ARTEMIS IN BRONZE AGE GREECE

MARIE LOUISE NOSCH

Since the decipherment of Linear B in 1952, much research has focused on the names of the divinities on the tablets, as these provided new data for diachronic studies of Greek cults.<sup>1</sup> In recent years, two major monographs on Mycenaean female deities have been published: in 2001, the proceedings of the international *Aegeum* conference entitled *Potnia – Deities and Religion in the Aegean Bronze Age*,<sup>2</sup> and in 2004, the monograph by Cécile Boëlle, *PO-TI-NI-JA – L'élément féminin dans la religion mycénienne*.<sup>3</sup>





*Bronze Age goddesses*

Mycenaean society possessed some female divinities which are unknown in later Greek mythology, such as *Qe-ra-si-ja*, *Pi-pi-tu-na*, *Do-qe-ja* (?), *Qo-wi-ja*, and *Ma-na-sa*. These are partly the legacy of female Minoan divinities.

Other Mycenaean female divinities have familiar names which link them to divinities of the 1st millennium: *Di-wi-ja* (Zeus' female counterpart), the dove goddess *Pe-re-<sup>\*</sup>82/ Pelaia*, *Po-si-da-e-ja* (Poseidon's female counterpart),<sup>4</sup> *Ma-te-re te-i-ja* (the divine Mother), and – perhaps – *Ma-ka*, *Mater Gâ* (Mother Earth).<sup>5</sup>

However, the most frequently mentioned Mycenaean goddess is Potnia. The goddess is either designated as Potnia alone, or with an epithet defining a specific type of Potnia. These epithets indicate various aspects of female goddesses.

At Knossos, these are:

Potnia of the Labyrinth, *da-pu<sub>2</sub>-ri-to-jo po-ti-ni-ja*<sup>6</sup>

*A-ta-na-po-ti-ni-ja*,<sup>7</sup> Potnia of Atana (place-name), or perhaps, Athena.

At Pylos and Mycenae, we have attestation to the following types of *potniai*:

*u-po-jo-po-ti-ni-ja* (from *hypo-* 'under', or *hyphaino*, to weave)<sup>8</sup>

*po-ti-ni-ja a-si-wi-ja*, the 'Asian' Potnia<sup>9</sup>

*po-ti-ni-ja i-qe-ja* / Potnia *Hippeia*<sup>10</sup>

*]a-ke-si po-ti-ni-ja* / Potnia from ? (place-name)<sup>11</sup>

*e-re-wi-jo po-ti-ni-ja* / Potnia from E (place-name)<sup>12</sup>

*ne-wo-pe-o po-ti-ni-ja* / Potnia from N (place-name)<sup>13</sup>

*si-to-po-ti-ni-ja* / the Grain Potnia<sup>14</sup>

Finally, craftsmen, female textile workers and sheep are termed 'of the Potnia', *po-ti-ni-ja-we-jo/-ja*. Economic transactions take place in Potnia's name: she is given products such as honey, textiles, barley, perfumed oil and golden containers. Potnia's partner, *\*potis* or *posis* in Homer, can be traced in the name of Poseidon and in the name of the god *do-po-ta*, the Lord of the House.<sup>15</sup>

There is an ongoing discussion as to whether there are several female divinities called Potnia, or whether all the Potnia names merely represent aspects of a single major female goddess.<sup>16</sup>

Finally, some names of Mycenaean goddesses survived into the 1st

millennium BC, such as *I-pi-me-de-ja/Iphimedeia*, Eileithyia, Hera and Artemis.

*Artemis in the Bronze Age Pantheon: suggestions of her age and origin*

“Artemis was the most popular goddess of Greece”, wrote Martin P. Nilsson in 1925.<sup>17</sup> In the classical tradition, she is associated with mountains, woods, hunting and dancing, nymphs, children and young animals, as well as wild animals. “Herself a ‘Mistress of the Wild’ and a survival of a more primitive, pre-agrarian society of hunters, Artemis’ role as protectress of wildlife is conceptually related to her domesticated function as protectress of young human life.”<sup>18</sup>

In the scholarly literature, historians of religion often suppose the existence of a prehistoric Mistress of Animals. The existence of this goddess is based on two assumptions: (1) hunting must have been of major importance in prehistory and must therefore have had its own deity; (2) seals, sealings, pottery and frescos show a female deity with wild animals.<sup>19</sup> This female deity is commonly termed *Potnia Theron*. One should, however, remember that this term first appears – and then only once – in Homer.<sup>20</sup> As such, it is an anachronism for a Bronze Age goddess. However, *Potnia Theron* has become a convenient generic term for any female divinity associated with animals.

There are various theories concerning the origin of Artemis and her introduction into Greece: some see her as an original prehistoric goddess of hunting, while others believe her to originate in either Anatolia or Crete.

Scholars have sought Artemis’ origin in various periods and cultures. In the 1st millennium, Artemis is associated with hunting, fishing and wild animals. This leads Farnell to the conclusion that her origin must be sought in a period during which her worshippers were mainly occupied with hunting and fishing; that is, a time pre-dating the introduction of agriculture.<sup>21</sup> A similar interpretation is found in West: “There seems no doubt that the cults of this goddess reflect the most ancient and primitive strata of Greek religion.”<sup>22</sup>

Athanasios Antoniou, on the other hand, is convinced of the Minoan elements in the Artemis cult.<sup>23</sup> He also sees a connection from Minoan Crete to the offerings of textiles in classical Brauron. The same interpretation can be found in the work of Nikolaos Platon.<sup>24</sup> Antoniou identifies a

Minoan Artemis with the goddess Eileithyia in Crete. The *Potnia Theron*, the Mistress of Wild Animals, on the other hand, is a kind of forerunner for Artemis, according to Antoniou.<sup>25</sup>

The question is still under debate. In fact, Francis Vian writes in *Histoire des Religions* that “son pays d’origine doit être, en effet, la Lydie et ses alentours”<sup>26</sup> and a few pages later he states: “Artémis, héritière de la Grande Déesse minoenne.”<sup>27</sup>

Finally, some scholars see Artemis as the result of religious syncretism of various female Minoan and mainland/Greek divinities: “Es scheint, dass sie, zusammen mit anderen Gottheiten, aus Kreta nach Griechenland gebracht wurde, und auf diese Weise die Götter des festländischen Griechenlands mit anderen Minoischen Naturgottheiten verschmolzen.”<sup>28</sup> Lloyd-Jones comes to a similar conclusion: “Artemis incorporated various local goddesses who had inherited certain features of the Mistress of Animals, such as Aphaia in Aegina, Diktyнна and Britomartis in Crete, Hecate in many places.”<sup>29</sup>

#### *Linear B inscriptions on Artemis*

In Linear B, Artemis’ name is only attested twice, or perhaps three times. It occurs in two forms: *a-ti-mi-te* in the dative form, and *a-te-mi-to* in the genitive form.

On a tablet from Pylos recording an assessment of the taxes to be paid on landholdings, each line contains the formula: *e-ke to-so-de pe-mol ekhei toson-de spermo*.

In line five, we read:

a<sub>3</sub>-ki-wa-ro , a-te-mi-to , do-e-ro e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 1

Aikiwaro, Artemis’ slave (*Artemitos dobelos*), has so much wheat: 1 unit (96 litres) of wheat.

#### **PY Es 650** (*scribe 11, found in room 7*)

- .1 ki-ri-ti-jo-jo , ko-pe-re-u e-ke , to-so-de pe-mo GRA 6
- .2 a-re-ku-tu-ru-wo , e-ke , to-so-de pe-mo GRA 7
- .3 se-no e-ke to-so-de pe-mo , GRA 1
- .4 o-po-ro-me-no e-ke to-so-de , pe-mo GRA 4
- .5 a<sub>3</sub>-ki-wa-ro , a-te-mi-to , do-e-ro e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 1

## APPROACHES TO ARTEMIS IN BRONZE AGE GREECE

- .6 we-da-ne-wo , do-e-ro e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA T 4  
 .7 wo-ro-ti-ja-o e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 2  
 .8 { ka-ra-i e-ke , to-so-de pe-mo GRA T 3  
 .9 { a-ne-o e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 1 T 5
- v.1 ru-ko-wo-ro e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA '1 T 4  
 v.2 o-ka e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 1 T 2  
 v.3 pi-ro-ta-wo e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 1 T 2  
 v.4 ku-da-ma-ro e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA 1 T 2  
 v.5 pi-ro-te-ko-to e-ke to-so-de pe-mo GRA [[ ]]  
 v.6-8 *vacant*

In the Linear B inscriptions, people who are designated as slaves of a divinity, in particular those termed *te-o-jo do-e-ro*, 'slaves of the gods', generally hold a plot of land. It seems that the term 'slave' may indicate not so much low socio-economic status as a socio-economic affiliation.

The second Linear B tablet mentioning Artemis is also from Pylos and is a lists of individuals, groups of people, or divinities: *\*pa-de-u*, *po-ti-ni-ja*, Artemis in the dative form, and Hermes *e-ma-a<sub>2</sub>*. The king, here in the dative form *a-na-ka-te*, without the initial *w-*, is also mentioned, as are two other important Pylian men: the *ra-wa-ke-ta*, and *e-ke-ra-<wo->ne*.<sup>30</sup> They all receive different products, recorded in their abbreviated form.

**PY Un 219** (*scribe 15, found in Archive room 8*)

- .1 e-ke-ra-ne , tu-wo 2 O 1[  
 .2 pa-de-we , O 1 pa-de-we , O 1  
 .3 ka-ru-ke , PE 2 KA 1 O 6  
 .4 te-qi-jo-ne , O 1 a-ke-ti-ri-ja-i , KA 1  
 .5 a-ti-mi-te , O 1 da-ko-ro-i , E 1  
 .6 di-pte-ra-po-ro , RA 1 O 3 'ko-'ro[ ] '1  
 .7 'a-na-ka-te , TE 1 po-ti-ni-ja[  
 .8 e-[ ] U 1 e-ma-a<sub>2</sub> , U 1 pe-[  
 .9 a-ka-wo-ne , MA 1 pa-ra-[ ] 2  
 .10 ra-wa-ke-ta , MA 1 KO 1 [ ] ME 1 O 1 WI 1  
 .11 KE 1 [ ] *vacat*  
 .12-17 *vacant*

In the first line, one product is spelled out: *tu-wo/ thyos*, ‘burned substance’. Some scholars have suggested that all of the products mentioned on this tablet are in fact abbreviated names for spices: *MA* could be the abbreviation for *marathron*, fennel, and *KO* is a common abbreviation for *ko-ri-ja-do-no*, coriander.<sup>31</sup> However, it is uncertain whether all these commodities should be interpreted as spices or plant products, in accordance with *tu-wo/ thyos* in the first line. There are two major reasons for caution: firstly, *tu-wo / thyos* occurs again on another tablet from Pylos (Un 2) in a cult context, but recorded along with animals, wool, wine, textiles, figs and flour. Secondly, although *tu-wo* occurs in the first line of the tablet from a palaeographical and administrative point of view, this is not necessarily an entry for the whole tablet, but only a single entry. Finally, the context indicates a banquet or a religious event; in such circumstances, we know that the Mycenaean used a range of products, and this range sometimes seems to be quite standardised. The commodities for such events listed on tablets from Pylos can be quite precisely matched with commodities listed on Theban nodules.<sup>32</sup> This standardisation in the range of products may explain why scribe 15 chose to use abbreviations.

The last possible attestation of Artemis is on a tablet from the Pylian Fr series, recording small quantities of barley (HORDeum), mainly for cult personnel. A priest, *i-je-re-u*, is mentioned, followed by *a-ti*[, which could be restored as *a-ti[-mi-to*, ‘of Artemis’. It is, however, also possible to interpret it as the beginning of the priest’s personal name, such as *a-ti-pa-mo/ Antipamos*, a name attested in Linear B.

**PY Fn 837** (*scribe 45, found in Archive room 8*)

- .1 pi-ri[ hord
- .2 i-na-[ hord
- .3 e-ri-[ hord
- .4 a-ko-[•]-ta [ hord
- .5 i-je-re-u , a-ti[ hord
- .6 pu-ko-ro [ hord
- .7 a[ ]na [ hord
- .8 mutila

*Eileithyia*<sup>33</sup> and *Artemis*

## APPROACHES TO ARTEMIS IN BRONZE AGE GREECE

... hence it was in Crete that I saw Ulysses and showed him hospitality, for the winds took him there as he was on his way to Troy, carrying him out of his course from cape Malea and leaving him in Amnisos off the cave of Ilithuia, where the harbours are difficult to enter and he could hardly find shelter from the winds that were then raging (Od. XIX, 188).<sup>34</sup>

The name of the goddess of childbirth is Eileithyia. This name occurs in various forms: the most common form in Crete is Eleuthyia, while in Laconia and Messenia she is called Eleuthia or Elusia.<sup>35</sup> According to Nilsson, Ilithyia was a Minoan goddess of nature who initially protected the birth of both humans and animals, but later occurs only as the divine midwife.<sup>36</sup> Willetts also sees Eileithyia as a Minoan legacy.<sup>37</sup> Although Eileithyia was worshipped all over Greece, she played a major role in Cretan cults: Lato, Inatos, Aptara<sup>38</sup> and Amnisos.<sup>39</sup>

Antoniou shows how Artemis and Eileithyia often occur together, and how Eileithyia becomes one of Artemis' epithets. The Laconian cult place for Eileithyia was probably closely associated with the *temenos* of Artemis Orthia, and Artemis and Eileithyia may have had similar elements in their cults. Imma Kilian suggests, from the finding of votive fibulae dedicated to Eileithyia in Laconia, that garments were offered to Eileithyia, like the *chitons* offered to Artemis in Brauron.<sup>40</sup> Eileithyia continues, however, to have her own proper identity in some places.<sup>41</sup>

In Late Bronze Age inscriptions, Eileithyia is not an epithet of Artemis. Eileithia, in the form *e-re-u-ti-ja*, is mentioned in her own name and right, and receives wool from the Knossos palace administration.



**KN Od(2) 714** (*scribe 103, found in area G1, Gallery of Jewel Fresco*)

- .a a-\*65-na [ ]  
 .b e-re-u-ti-ja LANA 1 [ ]



**KN Od(2) 715** (*scribe 103, found in area G1, Gallery of Jewel Fresco*)

- .a e-re-u-ti-ja
- .b ta-wa-ko-to LANA 1



**KN Od(2) 716** (*scribe 103, found in area G1, Gallery of Jewel Fresco*)

- .a ]e-re-u-ti-ja
- .b ] LANA 4

Another tablet records jars filled with honey being sent to Amnisos and its divinities: Eileithya and the common designation *pa-si-te-o-i*, *pansi theois*, 'for all the gods'. In the last line, one is tempted to restore another divine name, *e-ne-si-da-]o-ne* or *po-se-i-da-]o-ne*.



**KN Gg(3) 705** (*scribe 140, found in area G1, Gallery of Jewel Fresco*)

- .1 ] a-mi-ni-so , / e-re-u-ti-ja 'ME+RI'\*209 1
- .2 ]pa-si-te-o-i 'ME+RI'\*209 1
- .3 ]o-ne 'ME+RI'\*209 1
- .1 Traces at left.

When Linear B was deciphered in 1952, it was particularly exciting to see how the tablets confirmed the literary tradition of Eileithya at Amnisos. However, the tablets do not confirm the connection between Eileithya and Artemis, which is attested in the 1st millennium BC.

*Archaeological remains of Artemis' cult places?*

Artemis is documented as a divinity in the Linear B inscriptions, and sanctuaries dedicated to Artemis are well documented in the Classical or Hellenistic periods. When these sanctuaries yield remains from the Bronze Age, they are often interpreted as evidence for cult continuity and continuity in the worship of the same divinity. However, as Maria Voyatzis points out, "Artemis' name appears on the Linear B tablets and some believe that she was a descendent of the Minoan goddess often termed the 'Mistress of Animals'. Most of her sanctuaries do not, however, reveal particularly early evidence."<sup>42</sup>

In the following, evidence is presented for sanctuaries dedicated to Artemis, particularly with Bronze Age or early Iron Age remains.<sup>43</sup> There is, in fact, only one sacred place with a plausible Artemis cult dating to the very end of the Bronze Age: Kalapodi.

At Kalapodi (ancient Hyampolis) in the region of Phokis was located the temple of Apollo and Artemis Elaphebolos.<sup>44</sup> South-east of the temple are remains of walls dated to Late Helladic IIIC; that is, after the fall of the Mycenaean mainland palaces.<sup>45</sup> The excavators have interpreted the remains as a small shrine. The many fragments of *pitthoi* and remains of grain and beans suggest that food and/or products for offerings were stored nearby.<sup>46</sup> Analyses of animal bones from Kalapodi reveal what had been offered, and perhaps eaten: six fragments from one or more bear skulls have been dated to the Late Helladic period; bones from lions are from the Early Geometric period, and a lion shoulder blade from the Early Archaic period even shows traces of being cut and burnt: the lion must have been slaughtered at Kalapodi. The animal bones from the Late Mycenaean period are numerous.

Most bones from this period are from sheep and goats, followed by cattle and pigs. The slaughtered animals are generally rather young, and according to the excavators this points to a cult situation rather than a settlement.<sup>47</sup> There are also several bones from wild animals of the forest, such as wild boar and various types of deer. Another interesting find at



Kalapodi has been the more than 584 pieces of turtle shell, the remains of at least 50 turtles. These have been dated to the Late Helladic and Proto Geometric periods.<sup>48</sup>

Artemis is traditionally associated with Peloponnesus,<sup>49</sup> and in particular with Arcadia. In addition, Nilsson, on the basis of literary evidence, suggests that Artemis' cult places are located near natural sources of water, such as lakes, streams, rivers and marshes.<sup>50</sup>

To this should be added the caves: some caves are associated with Artemis in the 1st millennium BC, but contain remains from the Neolithic period. The religious nature of these remains is, however, uncertain, and the association with the cult of Artemis is purely guesswork. Consequently, the presence of a Bronze Age Artemis cult in these caves is only a possibility. The caves encompass the cave of Eileithyia near Amnisos, containing finds from the Neolithic and onwards,<sup>51</sup> and the Arkoudia cave in Akrotiri in western Crete, where heads of Artemis statues, dated to the Classical and Hellenistic periods, have been found.<sup>52</sup> The interpretation of the cave of Eileithyia, however, is seriously doubled in recent archaeological research,<sup>53</sup> The Arkoudia cave, however, has two chambers, one of which is 30 m long. "In the middle of this chamber is the most interesting feature – a large stalagmite resembling a bear or a dog", writes Bogdan Rutkowski.<sup>54</sup>

In recent research, François de Polignac<sup>55</sup> differentiates between *cults in remote areas*, and *cults playing a role in the networks of exchange*.

*Artemis cults in remote areas* include the Artemis cult at Hyampolis in Phokis (see above) and the cult of Artemis Limnatis at Kombothekra in the territory of Elis.<sup>56</sup> The finds have been dated from the 9th to the 2nd century BC.

*Artemis cults playing a role in the networks of exchange* include the Attic coastal cults of Artemis at Brauron and Mounykhia. The Artemis sanctuary at Mounykhia in the Peiraieus dates to the end of the 10th century, according to the excavators.<sup>57</sup> At Brauron<sup>58</sup> there are traces of Mycenaean activity. There appears, however, to be a break in human activity between the Mycenaean period and a re-establishment in the 9th century at Brauron. The Artemis cult at Delos should also be included in this group. Delos is dedicated to the worship of Artemis, Apollo and their mother Leto. Under the Artemision, remains were found from the end of Late Helladic III period.<sup>59</sup> Another find group, the ivories from Delos, show that

Delos had foreign contacts and imported prestige items in the Late Bronze Age.<sup>60</sup>

*Cult activities in the 2nd and 1st millennium cult which can be associated with Artemis*

We know of several activities in the Mycenaean cult, but none of them is associated with the name of Artemis. There is attestation to priests, *i-je-re-u*, and priestesses, *i-je-re-i-ja*, as well as sanctuaries, *i-je-ro* / *hieron*. A sanctuary can also be recorded in the expression *po-ti-ni-ja wo-ko-de* or *wo-i-ko-de* 'to the sanctuary of Potnia'. Some tablets indicate what happened in the Mycenaean ritual. At Knossos, tablets record the *te-o-po-ri-ja* / *theophoria*, probably a procession in which a statue of the divinity was carried around.<sup>61</sup> At Thebes, the Linear B tablets record commodities for the occasion of *o-te-tu-wo-te-to*, *hote thyos theto*, 'when the offering was made'. The rituals were closely linked to a religious calendar, of which we know seven names of months.<sup>62</sup>

The phenomena of offerings of textiles and ritual dressing of cult statues are well known in the cults of the 2nd and 1st millennia BC. An Old Babylonian record from as early as the 19th century BC speaks of a wardrobe for the goddess Ishtar.<sup>63</sup> Hecuba gives one of her finest robes to Athena in the *Iliad*. A *pharos* was given to Artemis Orthia at Sparta, according to the seventh-century poet Alkman.<sup>64</sup> Rituals of processions, bathing, feeding and clothing the cult image are attested for the 1st millennium Artemis cult, but the evidence is mostly very late.<sup>65</sup> Irene Bald Romano suggests that the ritual of clothing statues of divinities came to Greece in the 8th century, from the Near East.<sup>66</sup> This, however, is not very plausible, as we already have traditions of textile offerings and the term *te-o-po-ri-ja* attested in the Late Bronze Age written records.

Offerings of textiles to Artemis are well known in classical Greek and Roman cult.<sup>67</sup> In Linear B, textiles are recorded as offerings and perhaps as remuneration for those who participated in the cult.<sup>68</sup> The textiles offered to both male and female Mycenaean divinities were mainly of the type *wehanos*, recorded in the form of the ideograms \*146 or \*166+WE. These textiles were offered to Potnia and to the Potnia of the Labyrinth during a specific month.

**KN M 729**

(scribe unknown, found in area G3, room east of Gallery of Jewel Fresco)

- .1 ]ma-wo , \*146 l[
- .2 ]po-ti-ni-ja[

**KN Oa 745 [+]** 7374

(scribe unknown, found in area H4, south of Corridor of Stone Basin)

- .1 a-ka-[ ]-jo-jo , me-no[
- .2 da-pu<sub>2</sub>-ri[-to-jo ]po-ti-ni-ja ri \*166+WE 22[

In the month of *a-ka*-[, The Pothia of the Labyrinth, 22 pieces of linen *wehanos* cloth

Thus, textile offerings are already an established element of Mycenaean cult practice but seem to be a common element for both male and female divinities, and not related to one specific divinity such as Artemis.

*Artemis and Iphigenia*

Artemis and Iphigenia are worshipped together not only at Brauron, but also at Megara, at Aigira in Achaia, and at Hermione in the Argolid.<sup>69</sup> Brauron had a cult of Iphigenia for women who died in connection with pregnancy and birth. The first millennium association of Artemis and Iphigenia at Brauron and their care for various aspects of female life could be paralleled with the association of Artemis and Eilithya in Crete. Antoniou even sees an evolution from Minoan Crete to classical Brauron. He suggests that “die Grosse Mutter der minoischen Zeit, vorausgesetzt natürlich mehr oder weniger große Umbildungen, in historischer Zeit in Gestalt der Artemis-Iphigenia weiterlebte als Schutzgottheit der Gebärenden. Es ist daher mit größter Wahrscheinlichkeit anzunehmen, dass auch die Artemis von Brauron ihre Wurzeln im Minoischen hat.”<sup>70</sup>

Could the relation between Artemis and Iphigenia be dated to the Bronze Age? Lloyd-Jones seems to suggest a possible connection;<sup>71</sup> he notes that Agamemnon’s daughter is not called Iphigenia in the *Iliad*, but Iphianassa.<sup>72</sup> *I-pe-me-de-ja* is the name of a Mycenaean goddess<sup>73</sup> who is recorded together with other goddesses, such as Peleia / *pe-re*-\*62 and *Di-u-ja*. One can only speculate about Iphigenia’s existence in the Bronze Age.

*Cult activities in the 2nd millennium cults which may – or may not – be associated with Artemis*

Crocus-coloured garments are associated with the cult of Artemis in Brauron, where the yellow garments were worn by the little ‘bears’. We do not know whether the crocus was associated with Artemis in the Bronze Age, but we do know that this motif was popular in Minoan iconography, and that the crocus was a cultivated plant in Mycenaean Greece. The crocus is a flower, the stigmas of which may be used to dye food or cloth with a yellowish tinge. At Mycenae, very large quantities of safflower are recorded. Safflower is another efficient dye plant for the production of yellow-orange dyes. The quantities of safflower and saffron recorded in Linear B inscriptions indicate that the colour yellow was important to obtain, and that the Mycenaeans organised its production.<sup>74</sup>

The most common sacrificial animal for Artemis in the 1st millennium was the goat. Artemis Agrotera received an offering of 500 goats as thanksgiving for the Marathon victory. The sacrifice of animals is well attested in the Linear B inscriptions, in which the most popular sacrificial animal is the sheep, followed by goats and pigs.<sup>75</sup> Jörg Weilhartner shows that in the Pylian banquet tablets,<sup>76</sup> sheep form about 54% of the sacrificial animals, goats 21%, pigs 19%, and cattle 6%. Weilhartner has compared these figures with records of animals in Attic calendars of offerings, and he concludes that the proportions are roughly the same. This result reflects to some extent the nature of stock-farming in Antiquity, but also indicates a remarkable continuity in the tradition of sacrifice.

“In der tat ist und bleibt Artemis eine Herrin der Opfer, gerade der grausamen, blutigen Opfer” according to Walther Burkert.<sup>77</sup> Human sacrifice is a common element in Greek mythology,<sup>78</sup> and quite a few myths associate Artemis with human sacrifice or emphasize her function as the goddess of sudden death.<sup>79</sup> This is not the appropriate place to examine these literary attestations, but it should be noted that two excavations in Crete may point to evidence for human sacrifice. The first of these is on the Jouktas Mountain, where Sakellarakis has excavated a cult place,<sup>80</sup> and the second is the discovery of pottery and human bones in an Late Minoan IB destruction deposit in a town house in Knossos.<sup>81</sup> Bones from a few children were found here, some with fine cut marks. Peter Warren suggests that child sacrifice and sacramental meals could have formed part of Minoan cults.<sup>82</sup> Henrichs, however, doubts the evidence for human sacrifice in the Bronze

Age, and believes it unlikely that the ritual shedding of blood in the 1st millennium BC originated with human sacrifice.<sup>83</sup> In any case, it cannot be proven that the Bronze Age Artemis was particularly associated with the sacrifice of animals – or of humans – but various types of sacrifice were certainly an important element in Bronze Age religion.

*To sum up*

We know for certain that a goddess called Artemis existed in the Mycenaean period, and we know for certain that large quantities of edible and drinkable products, as well as animals, were listed on tablets for offerings or ritual festivals. We cannot be certain that Artemis was also worshipped in this way, but the amounts of animal bones from Late Helladic IIIC Kalapodi, a sanctuary dedicated to Artemis in the 1st millennium BC, make it likely that similar ritual banquets and animal sacrifices were organised for Bronze Age Artemis.

We know from the Linear B inscriptions that textiles were given to divinities, and to priests and priestesses. In the 1st millennium, textile offerings are strongly associated with Artemis at Brauron; it is thus plausible that Artemis also received textile offerings in the Bronze Age.

We know from the Linear B inscriptions that Artemis was worshipped at Pylos. She is attested there only in the epigraphical sources. We possess no tablet from Knossos mentioning Artemis but we know that Artemis was strongly associated with Crete in the 1st millennium BC, for example in the cults of several Cretan towns; it is thus plausible to assume that, at least subsequent to the Mycenaean take-over of Crete, Artemis must have been established as a divinity in Crete as well.

Although Eileithyia and Artemis are closely associated in the 1st millennium BC, this association cannot be determined in the 2nd millennium. On the contrary, Eileithyia appears in Crete as a distinct divinity, receiving her proper offerings.

None of the traditional elements in the cult of Artemis – nature, wild animals, dance – can be demonstrated from the Linear B inscriptions. Bronze Age iconography, however, clearly shows a *Potnia Theron* with precisely these elements.

The Linear B inscriptions suggest that Artemis had a cult of her own at Pylos: perhaps a cult place, an altar, or a larger structure. Products were given to her, and the Artemis cult is shown to have had a slave, and perhaps

a priest. Artemis appears as a well-defined and well-integrated figure in the Mycenaean Bronze Age Pantheon.

## NOTES

- 1 On Mycenaean religion, see, for example, Hiller 1981, 95-126. One deposit of tablets at Knossos, the *Room of the Chariot Tablets*, is dated two generations earlier than the rest of the Knossos tablets. Diachronic suggestions can thus be made regarding the divinities attested in both contexts. See Gulizio, Pluta & Palaima 2001, 453-461. A recent study of Mycenaean divine names also includes the new Theban data: Rougemont 2005.
- 2 *Potnia* 2001.
- 3 Boëlle 2004.
- 4 Muth 1988, 51, suggests seeing *Po-si-da-e-ja* as a variant of *Potnia Hippeia*.
- 5 For a discussion of these terms and other possible names of divinities, see Rougemont 2005. The Theban divinity names are presented in Aravantinos, Godart & Sacconi 2001, 317-325.
- 6 KN Gg 702, Oa 745.
- 7 KN V 52.
- 8 PY Fn 187, Fr 1225, 1236.
- 9 PY Fr 1206.
- 10 PY An 1218. Muth 1988, 50.
- 11 PY An 1218.
- 12 PY Vn 48.
- 13 PY Cc 665.
- 14 MY Oi 701; 702.
- 15 Kopaka 2001, note 10.
- 16 Boëlle 2001; Godart 2001.
- 17 Nilsson 1949, 28.
- 18 Henrichs 1980, 206.
- 19 *Potnia* 2001.
- 20 Artemis is mentioned once as *potnia theron* in *Il.* XXI, 470.
- 21 Farnell 1896, 427.
- 22 West 1995, 59.
- 23 Antoniou 1980, 226-231. A nearly identical paper, Antoniou 1981, 291-296.
- 24 Πλατωνος 1967.
- 25 Antoniou 1980, 227.
- 26 Vian 1970, 497.
- 27 Vian 1970, 515. Another curious suggestion of a Thracio-Pelasgian origin for Artemis Brauronia is found in Popov 1980, 203-221.
- 28 Antoniou 1980, 227.
- 29 Lloyd-Jones 1983, 90.
- 30 Lindgren 1973.
- 31 Boëlle 2004, 129. Boëlle also suggests reading *O* as the abbreviation for *origanon*. While coriander and fennel are found in these abbreviated forms, oregano is not attested in Linear B and this interpretation thus seems to rest on less solid ground.
- 32 Piteros, Olivier & Melena 1990.
- 33 Nilsson 1949, 30-31; Muth 1988, 42-43.
- 34 Translated by Samuel Butler.
- 35 Nilsson provides the reader with a list of all forms of the name and the find-places in Nilsson 1927, 447.
- 36 Nilsson 1949, 30.
- 37 "The links between Eileithyia, an earlier Minoan goddess, and a still earlier Neolithic prototype are, relatively, firm." Willetts 1958, 221. See also Willetts 1962, 168-172.
- 38 Nilsson 1927, 446-447.
- 39 Hiller 1982; Hiller 1992.
- 40 Kilian 1978.
- 41 Antoniou 1980, 228-229.
- 42 Voyatzis 1998, 145.
- 43 See the useful *Forschungsbericht* by Østby 1993.
- 44 Felsch, Kienase & Schuler 1980; Felsch 1981; Felsch 1987.
- 45 Felsch 2001. See table 3 in Felsch 1987.
- 46 Felsch 2001, 194; Kroll 1993.
- 47 Felsch 2001, 197.
- 48 See the contribution by Rathje, this volume.
- 49 Brulotte 2002.
- 50 Nilsson 1967, 492.
- 51 See bibliography in Rutkowski 1986, 68.
- 52 Sinn 1981.
- 53 Betancourt & Marinatos 2000.
- 54 Rutkowski 1986, 48.
- 55 de Polignac 1994, 6.
- 56 Müller 1908; Sinn 1978; Sinn 1981.
- 57 Paliokrassa 1989.
- 58 See bibliography in Østby 1993, 208-209.
- 59 Bruneau & Ducat 1983, 17-19; Gallet de Santerre 1975 on the Artemision. See bibliography in Østby 1993, 217-219.
- 60 Poursat 1973; Tournavitou 1995.
- 61 Ga 1058; Od 696.
- 62 Rougemont, forthcoming, tableau 5.
- 63 Leemans 1952.
- 64 *Partheneion* I, 60 ff.

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- 65 Bald Romano 1988; Kleijwegt 2002, 100-108.  
 66 Bald Romano 1988, 133.  
 67 Muth 1988, 39; Kleijwegt 2002, 100-111.  
 68 Nosch & Perna 2001; Nosch 2007.  
 69 Lloyd-Jones 1983, 95.  
 70 Antoniou 1980, 231.  
 71 Lloyd-Jones 1983, 95.  
 72 Iphianassa is a compound name of which both parts are known from Linear B inscriptions, and both share the fact that the Linear B scribes hesitate over whether to use the initial *w-*. *i-pi* is the instrumental form of *is < wis*, 'strength' 'power', and in graphic form it also occurs in the form *\*wi-pi-*. *I-pe-* may not be related to *\*wis-*, but to *ipsasthai*, 'to press' and in particular 'to press oil' (Mühlestein 1979), or to *\*ispe-*, the root of *\*sep*, 'to take care of', 'to care for' (Neumann 1985).  
 73 Boëlle 2004, 125-127; Neumann 1985; Mühlestein 1979.
- 74 Killen 1983; Nosch 2004.  
 75 Weilharter 2002.  
 76 Ua 17, Ua 25, Un 2 and Un 138.  
 77 Burkert 1977, 237.  
 78 On human sacrifice in Greek myth, see Lloyd-Jones 1983; on Artemis and human sacrifice, see Henrichs 1980; Muth 1988, 40-41.  
 79 *Od.* XI 320-325; *Od.* XV 478; *Od.* XVIII, 202, *Od.* XX 60-61; *Od.* XX 80; Herodotus 4.103; Euripides, *Iphigenia in Tauris* 1458-1461; Pausanias 7.19.1-6; Pausanias 8.53.1-4.  
 80 Sakellarakis & Sapouna-Sakellarakis 1991. See also the short analysis in Rutkowski 1986, 234-236.  
 81 Warren 1981; Wall, Musgrave & Warren 1986.  
 82 Warren 1981, 161-167.  
 83 Henrichs 1980, 205, note 4.

## ABBREVIATIONS

*Potnia* = R. Laffineur and R. Hägg (eds.), *Potnia. Deities and religion in the Aegean Bronze Age. Proceedings of the 8th international Aegean Conference/ 8e Rencontre égéenne internationale* (Göteborg 2000). Liège 2001.

ActaAth = Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Institut i Athen. Acta Instituti Atheniensis regni Sueciae.

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