

Classical Mythology

LLCU/CMLT 316.010/080



Class 11

The Greek Pantheon, cont.: Artemis and the Realm of Hades

Readings for Tuesday:

Classical Mythology 359-384

In-class Writing Exercise

“What have you found to be most surprising or unexpected so far from lecture content or readings?”

Artemis (Diana)



Artemis and Callisto



Artemis and Actaeon



Artemis and Actaeon

Hunter who violated Artemis' purity (either through rape or by accidentally seeing her bathing)

- Turned into a stag by Artemis as punishment (and to prevent him from telling others)
- Actaeon then torn apart by his own hounds



Artemis at Brauron: A Rite of Passage



<http://notablewomen.files.wordpress.com/2013/08/girls-playing-artemis-brauron.jpg>

Artemis at **Brauron**: A Rite of Passage

“When I was seven, I immediately served as an *arrephoros* (basket carrier for Athena)

Then, at ten, I was a *aletris* for Athena Archegetis. (grain-grinder for Athena)

Then, wearing the saffron dress, I was a bear at the Brauronia.

And once I, a beautiful child, was a basket-carrier, wearing a necklace of dried figs.”

- Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
(The ‘education’ of a young girl)



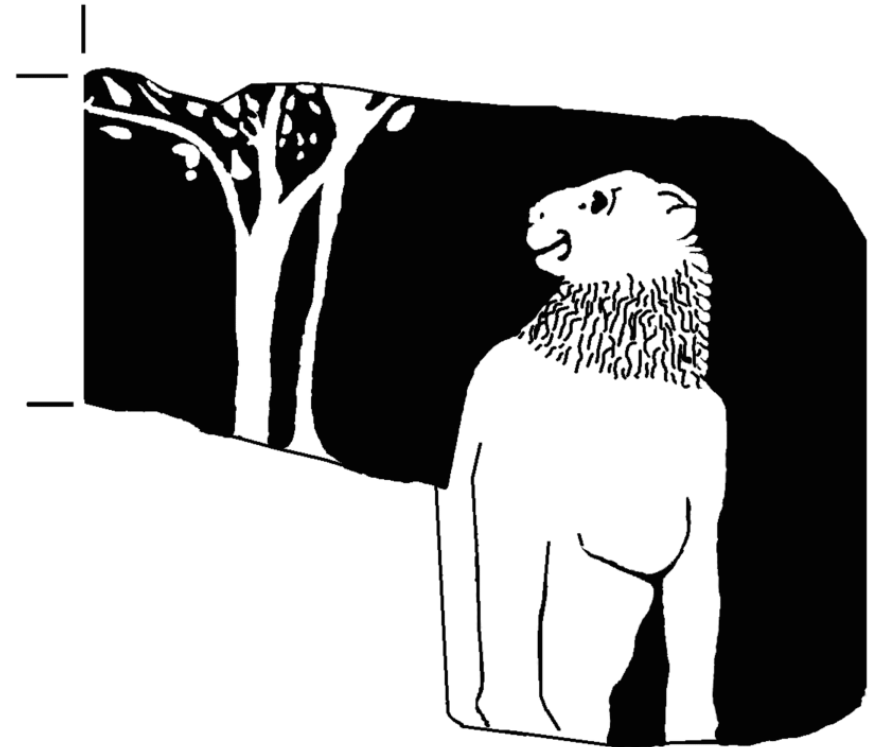
Artemis at Brauron

- .Ritual for young girls (5-10 yrs.)
- .Held at special sanctuary
- .Girls dressed as bears, played games
- .‘Rite of passage’ function



Artemis at Brauron

The Rituals (?)



Artemis and Hippolytus



http://www.art-prints-on-demand.com/kunst/pierre_narcisse_guerin_3656/phaedra_hippolytus_hi.jpg

Artemis and Hippolytus

Son of **Theseus** (king of Athens) and Amazon queen (Hippolyte or Antiope)

- Shuns contact with women in favour of the hunt (worshipping Artemis)
- As punishment, Aphrodite causes his stepmother **Phaedra** to fall in love with him



Artemis and Hippolytus

Phaedra reveals love to Hippolytus,
but he reject her in disgust

- Phaedra tells Theseus Hippolytus raped her
- Theseus curses Hippolytus, causing Poseidon to send a sea monster after him
- Hippolytus is killed, but not before he reconciles with Theseus



Artemis and Hippolytus

- .Complex readings: was Hippolytus overly pious and thus deservedly destroyed, or rightly pious and destroyed by petty gods?
- .Contrasts ruin from excessive carnal love (Phaedra) and rejection of love (Hippolytus)
- .Characterization: Theseus and Hippolytus

The Myth of Atalanta



The Myth of Atalanta

- Young princess devoted to Artemis (exposed at birth, suckled by bear, raised by hunters)
- Did not want to marry (oracle perhaps said that disaster would follow if she did)
- Pursued hunting and athletic pursuits
- Her absentee father later tried to secure a marriage for her



The Myth of Atalanta

- Atalanta (or her father) arranged for a footrace to decide her spouse
- If she lost, she would marry; if she won, she would kill the suitor and place his head on a stake in the stadium
- The suitor Hippomenes was assisted by Aphrodite, who gave him three golden apples



The Myth of Atalanta

- Atalanta may or may not have been happy with the results
- Hippomenes did not give Aphrodite her due acknowledgement of assistance
- Aphrodite thus caused Hippomenes to have sex with Atalanta at a sanctuary
- Both were transformed into Lions (folktales say that lions cannot have sex with each other: only leopards)



<https://i.ytimg.com/vi/EAhN4nPy3LY/maxresdefault.jpg>

Artemis and Aphrodite:

- .Foil to one another (worshipping Artemis the symbolic rejection of carnal passion)
- .Both represent changes in sexual maturity
- .Like life, a balance must be struck between one's reverence towards the gods: worshipping one too strongly leads to self-destruction
- .Myth often punctuates transitions in a human's life

The Realm of **Hades**: From Life to Death



Hades

- One of original Olympians – Born of Kronos and Rhea
- Allotted the Underworld in the regions of the earth
- Does not figure prominently in Greek myth



Hades

- Often named through euphemisms: *Pluto* (Greek); *Dis* (Roman) = Wealthy
- Underscores Greek and Roman discomfort with death



Death



[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9e/Gela_Painter_-_Black-Figure_%22Pinax%22_\(Plaque\)_-_Walters_48225.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9e/Gela_Painter_-_Black-Figure_%22Pinax%22_(Plaque)_-_Walters_48225.jpg)

Death

.Complex rituals to mark the passing of a loved-one, to ensure his or her transfer into the next stage of existence, and to protect the living from *miasma* (blood/death pollution)

Death

- Women of the household responsible for care of corpse
- Funeral processions often a communal event (some mourners “hired” to show importance of individual)
- Body either cremated or buried (inhumation)



The Afterlife in Myth

- Myths illustrate different ways of perceiving our existence after this world
- It is the great unknown; as a result, stories surrounding what happens to us after death are as varied as the people who tell them
- The impressions we get of the places and people in the afterlife are often incongruous