

HYMN III. TO ARTEMIS

(TRANSLATED BY A. W. MAIR)

[1] Artemis we hymn – no light thing is it for singers to forget her – whose study is the bow and the shooting of hares and the spacious dance and sport upon the mountains; beginning with the time when sitting on her father’s knees – still a little maid – she spake these words to her sire: “Give me to keep my maidenhood, Father, forever: and give me to be of many names, that Phoebus may not vie with me. And give me arrows and a bow – stay, Father, I ask thee not for quiver or for mighty bow: for me the Cyclopes will straightway fashion arrows and fashion for me a well-bent bow. But give me to be Bringer of Light¹ and give me to gird me in a tunic² with embroidered border reaching to the knee, that I may slay wild beasts. And give me sixty daughters of Oceanus for my choir – all nine years old, all maidens yet ungirdled; and give me for handmaidens twenty nymphs of Amnisus³ who shall tend well my buskins, and, when I shoot no more at lynx or stag, shall tend my swift hounds. And give to me all mountains; and for city, assign me any, even whatsoever thou wilt: for seldom is it that Artemis goes down to the town. On the mountains will I dwell and the cities of men I will visit only when women vexed by the sharp pang of childbirth call me to their aid⁴ even in the hour when I was born the Fates ordained that I should be their helper, forasmuch as my mother suffered no pain either when she gave me birth or when she carried me win her womb, but without travail put me from her body.” So spake the child and would have touched her father’s beard, but many a hand did she reach forth in vain, that she might touch it.

[28] And her father smiled and bowed assent. And as he caressed her, he said: “When goddesses bear me children like this, little need I heed the wrath of jealous Hera. Take, child, all that thou askest, heartily. Yea, and other things therewith yet greater will thy father give thee. Three times ten cities and towers more than one will I vouchsafe thee – three times ten cities that shall not know to glorify any other god but to glorify the only and be called of Artemis And thou shalt be Watcher over Streets⁵ and harbours.⁶” So he spake and bent his head to confirm his words.

[40] And the maiden fared unto the white mountain of Crete leafy with woods; thence unto Oceanus; and she chose many nymphs all nine years old, all maidens yet ungirdled. And the river Caraetus⁷ was glad exceedingly, and glad was Tethys that they were sending their daughters to be handmaidens to the daughter of Leto.

[46] And straightway she went to visit the Cyclopes. Them she found in the isle of Lipara – Lipara in later days, but at the at time its name was Meligunis – at the anvils of Hephaestus, standing round a molten mass of iron. For a great work was being hastened on: they fashioned a horse-trough for Poseidon. And the nymphs were affrighted when they saw the terrible monsters like unto the crags of Ossa: all had single eyes beneath their brows, like a shield of fourfold hide for size, glaring terribly from under; and when they heard the din of the anvil echoing loudly, and the great blast of the bellows and the heavy groaning of the Cyclopes themselves. For Aetna cried aloud, and Trinacia⁸ cried, the seat of the Sicilians, cried too their neighbour Italy, and Cynos⁹ therewithal uttered a mighty noise, when they lifted their hammers above their shoulders and smote with rhythmic swing¹⁰ the bronze glowing from the furnace or iron, labouring greatly. Wherefore the daughters of Oceanus could not untroubled look upon them face to face nor endure the din in their ears. No shame to them! On those not even the daughters of the Blessed look without shuddering. Though long past childhood’s years. But when any of the maidens doth disobedience to her mother, the mother calls the Cyclopes to her child – Arges or Steropes; and from within the house comes Hermes,

stained¹¹ with burnt ashes. And straightway he plays bogey to the child, and she runs into her mother's lap, with her hands upon her eyes. But thou, Maiden, even earlier, while yet but three years old, when Leto came bearing thee in her arms at the bidding of Hephaestus that he might give thee handsel¹² and Brontes¹³ set thee on his stout knees – thou didst pluck the shaggy hair of his great breast and tear it out by force. And even unto this day the mid part of his breast remains hairless, even when mange settles on a man's temples and eats the hair away.

[80] Therefore right boldly didst thou address them then: "Cyclopes, for me too fashion ye a Cydonian¹⁰⁴ bow and arrows and a hollow casket for my shafts; for I also am a child of Leto, even as Apollo. And if I with my bow shall slay some wild creature or monstrous beast, that shall the Cyclopes eat." So didst thou speak and they fulfilled thy words. Straightway dist thou array thee, O Goddess. And speedily again thou didst go to get thee hounds; and thou camest to the Arcadian fold of Pan. And he was cutting up the flesh of a lynx of Maenalus¹⁵ that his bitches might eat it for food. And to thee the Bearded God¹⁶ gave two dogs black-and-white,¹⁷ three reddish,¹⁸ and one spotted, which pulled down¹⁹ very lions hen they clutched their throats and haled them still living to the fold. And he gave thee seven Cynosurian²⁰ bitches swifter than the winds - that breed which is swiftest to pursue fawns and the hare which closes not his eyes²¹; swiftest too to mark the lair of the stag and where the porcupine²² hath his burrow, and to lead upon the track of the gazelle.

[98] Thence departing (and thy hounds sped with thee) thou dist find by the base of the Parrhasian hill deer gamboling – a mighty herd. They always herded by the banks of the black-pebbled Anaurus – larger than bulls, and from their horns shone gold. And thou wert suddenly amazed and sadist to thine own heart: "This would be a first capture worthy of Artemis." Five were there in all; and four thou didst take by speed of foot – without the chase of dogs – to draw thy swift car. But one escaped over the river Celadon, by devising of Hera, that it might be in the after days a labour for Heracles,²³ and the Ceryneian hill received her.

[109] Artemis, Lady of Maidenhood, Slayer of Tityus, golden were thine arms and golden thy belt, and a golden car didst thou yoke, and golden bridles, goddess, didst thou put on thy deer. And where first did thy horned team begin to carry thee? To Thracian Haemus, whence comes the hurricane of Boreas bringing evil breath of frost to cloakless men. And where didst thou cut the pine and from what flame didst thou kindle it? It was on Mysian Olympus, and thou didst put in tit the breath of flame unquenchable, which thy Father's bolts distil. And how often goddess, didst thou make trial of thy silver bow? First at an elm, and next at an oak didst thou shoot, and third again at a wild beast. But the fourth time – not long was it ere thou didst shoot at the city of unjust me, those who to one another and those who towards strangers wrought many deeds of sin, forward men, on whom thou wilt impress thy grievous wrath. On their cattle plague feeds, on their tilth feeds frost, and the old men cut their hair in mourning over their sons, and their wives either are smitten or die in childbirth, or, if they escape, bear birds whereof none stands on upright ankle. But on whomsoever thou lookest smiling and gracious, for them the tilth bears the corn-ear abundantly, and abundantly prospers the four-footed breed, and abundant waxes their prosperity: neither do they go to the tomb, save when they carry thither the aged. Nor does faction wound their race – faction which ravages even the well-established houses: but brother's wife and husband's sister set their chairs around one board.²⁴

[134] Lady, of that number be whosoever is a true friend of mine, and of that number may I be myself, O Queen. And may song be my study forever. In that song shall be the Marriage of Leto; therein thy name shall often-times be sung; therein shall Apollo be and therein all thy labours, and therein thy hounds and thy bow and thy chariots, which lightly carry thee in thy

splendour, when thou drivest to the house of Zeus. There in the entrance meet thee Hermes and Apollo: Hermes the Lord of Blessing,²⁵ takes thy weapons, Apollo takes whatsoever wild beast thou bringest. Yea, so Apollo did before strong Alcides²⁶ came, but now Phoebus hath this task no longer; in such wise the Anvil of Tiryns²⁷ stands ever before the gates, waiting to see if thou wilt come home with some fat morsel. And all the gods laugh at him with laughter unceasingly and most of all his own wife's mother²⁸ when he brings from the car a great bull or a wild boar, carrying it by the hind foot struggling. With this sunning speech, goddess, doth he admonish thee: "Shoot at the evil wild beasts that mortals may call thee their helper even as they call me. Leave deer and hares to feed upon the hills. What harm could deer and hares do? It is boars which ravage the tilth of men and boars which ravage the plants; and oxen are a great bane to men: shoot also at those." So he spake and swiftly busied him about the mighty beast. For though beneath a Phrygian²⁹ oak his flesh was deified, yet hath he not ceased from gluttony. Still hath he that belly wherewith he met Theiodamas³⁰ at the plough.

[162] For thee the nymphs of Amnisus rub down the hinds loosed from the yoke, and from the mead of Hera they gather and carry for them to feed on much swift-springing clover, which also the horses of Zeus eat; and golden troughs they fill with water to be for the deer a pleasant draught. And thyself thou enterest thy Father's house, and all alike bid thee to a seat; but thou sittest beside Apollo.

[170] But when the nymphs encircle thee in the dance, near the springs of Egyptian Inopus³¹ or Pitane³²— for Pitane too is thine — or in Limnae³³ or where, goddess, thou camest from Scythia to dwell, in Alae Araphenides,³⁴ renouncing the rites of the Tauri,³⁵ then may not my kine cleave a four-acred³⁶ fallow field for a wage at the hand of an alien ploughman; else surely lame and weary of neck would they come to the byre, yea even were they of Stymphaean³⁷ breed, nine³⁸ years of age, drawing by the horns; which kine are far the best for cleaving a deep furrow; for the god Helios never passes by that beauteous dance, but stays his car to gaze upon the sight, and the lights of day are lengthened.

[183] Which now of islands, what hill finds most favour with thee? What haven? What city? Which of the nymphs dost thou love above the rest, and what heroines hast thou taken for thy companions? Say, goddess, thou to me, and I will sing thy saying to others. Of islands, Doliche³⁹ hath found favour with thee, of cities Perge,⁴⁰ of hills Taygeton,⁴¹ the havens of Euripus. And beyond others thou lovest the nymph of Gortyn, Britomartis,⁴² slayer of stags, the goodly archer; for love of whom was Minos of old distraught and roamed the hills of Crete. And the nymph would hide herself now under the shaggy oaks and anon in the low meadows. And for nine months he roamed over crag and cliff and made not an end of pursuing, until, all but caught, she leapt into the sea from the top of a cliff and fell into the nets of fishermen which saved her. Whence in after days the Cydonians call the nymph the Lady of the Nets (Dictyna) and the hill whence the nymph leaped they call the hill of Nets (Dictaeon), and there they set up altars and do sacrifice. And the garland on that day is pine or mastich, but the hands touch not the myrtle. For when she was in flight, a myrtle branch became entangled in the maiden's robes; wherefore she was greatly angered against the myrtle. Upis,⁴³ O Queen, fair-faced Bringer of Light, thee too the Cretans name after that nymph.

[206] Yea and Cyrene thou madest thy comrade, to whom on a time thyself didst give two hunting dogs, with whom the maiden daughter of Hypseus⁴⁴ beside the Iolcian tomb⁴⁵ won the prize. And the fair-haired wife⁴⁶ of Cephalus, son of Deioneus, O Lady, thou madest thy fellow in the chase; and fair Anticleia,⁴⁷ they say, thou dist love even as thine own eyes. These were the first who wore the gallant bow and arrow-holding quivers on their shoulders; their right shoulders bore the quiver strap,⁴⁸ and always the right breast showed bare. Further

thou dist greatly commend swift-footed Atalanta,⁴⁹ the slayer of boars, daughter of Arcadian Iasius, and taught her hunting with dogs and good archery. They that were called to hunt the boar of Calydon find no fault with her; for the tokens of victory came into Arcadia which still holds the tusks of the beast. Nor do I deem that Hylaeus⁵⁰ and foolish Rhoecus, for all their hate, in Hades slight her archery. For the loins, with whose blood the height of Maenalus flowed, will not abet the falsehood.

[225] Lady of many shrines, of many cities, hail! Goddess of the Tunic,⁵¹ sojourner in Miletus; for thee did Neleus⁵² make his Guide,⁵³ when he put off with his ships from the land of Cecrops.⁵⁴ Lady of Chesion⁵⁵ and of Imbrasmus,⁵⁶ throned⁵⁷ in the highest, to thee in thy shrine did Agamemnon dedicate the rudder of his ship, a charm against ill weather,⁵⁸ when thou didst bind the winds for him, what time the Achaean ships sailed to vex the cities of the Teucri, wroth for Rhamnusian⁵⁹ Helen.

[233] For thee surely Proetus⁶⁰ established two shrines, one of Artemis of Maidenhood for that thou dist gather for him his maiden daughters,⁶¹ when they were wandering over the Azanian⁶² hills; the other he founded in Lusa⁶³ to Artemis the Gentle,⁶⁴ because thou tookest from his daughters the spirit of wildness. For thee, too, the Amazons, whose mind is set on war, in Ephesus beside the sea established an image beneath an oak trunk, and Hippo⁶⁵ performed a holy rite for thee, and they themselves, O Upis Queen, around the image danced a war-dance – first in shields and armour, and again in a circle arraying a spacious choir. And the loud pipes thereto piped shrill accompaniment, that they might foot the dance together (for not yet did they pierce the bones of the fawn, Athena's handiwork,⁶⁶ a bane to the deer). And the echo reached unto Sardis and to the Berecynthian⁶⁷ range. And they with their feet beat loudly and therewith their quivers rattled.

[248] And afterwards around that image was raised a shrine of broad foundations. That it shall dawn behold nothing more divine, naught richer. Easily would it outdo Pytho. Wherefore in this madness insolent Lygdamis threatened that he would lay it waste, and brought against it a host of Cimmerians⁶⁸ which milk mares, in number as the sand; who have their homes hard by the Straits⁶⁹ of the cow, daughter of Inachus. Ah! foolish among kings, how greatly he sinned! For not destined to return again to Scythia was either he or any other of those whose wagons stood in the Caystrian⁷⁰ plain; for thy shafts are ever more set as a defence before Ephesus.

[258] O Lady of Munychia,⁷¹ Watcher of Harbours, hail, Lady of Pherae!⁷² Let none disparage Artemis. For Oeneus⁷³ dishonoured her altar and no pleasant struggles came upon his city. Nor let any content with her in shooting of stags or in archery. For the son⁷⁴ of Atreus vaunted him not that he suffered small requital. Neither let any woo the Maiden; for not Otus, nor Orion wooed her to their own good. Nor let any shun the yearly dance; for not tearless to Hippo⁷⁵ was her refusal to dance around the altar. Hail, great queen, and graciously greet my song.

1. *phosphoros* is one of the titles of Artemis; cf. v. 204, Eur. *Iphi. in T.* 21.

2. See note on v. 225.

3. Amnisus, river in Crete. Cf. Apoll. Rhod. iii. 877 ff.

4. Artemis in one aspect is Eileithyia = Lucina. She is said to have been born before Apollo and to have assisted at his birth. Hence her birthday was put on the 6th of Thargelion (Diog. L. ii. 44), while Apollo was born on the 7th. (W. Schmidt, *Geburstag im Altertum*, p. 94.)

5. Hence her title *enodia*, A. P. vi. 199.

6. As goddess of mariners she is called Euporia, Limenitis etc. So *Néossoos*, Apoll. Rh. i. 570.

7. River near Cnossus in Crete, Strabo 476.

8. Sicily.

9. Corsica.

10. It is hard to determine the sense of *amboladis*. The schol. says *ek diadochês*, i.e. in succession or alternately. The same difficulty attaches to *amblêdên* and *amboladên*, which the scholiasts interpret usually as either = *apopooimiou* or as = “by spurts” (e.g. Pind. *N.* x. 62, where among other explanations in the scholia one is *ouk ephexês*, i.e. not continuously). The combination of *amboladên* with *zeiô* in Hom. *Il.* xxi. 364, Herod. iv. 181 might suggest that here to *amboladis* should be taken with *zeionta* in the sense of “sputtering,” but the order of words is against that.

11. *kechrêmenos* of MSS. is probably correct. This participle in late poetry is used in the vaguest way to indicate any sort of condition.

12. *optêria*, *ta hyper tou idein dôra* (schol.), were gifts given on seeing for the first time a new-born child (schol. Aesch. *Eum.* 7; Nonn. v. 139). Very similar is the birthday-gift proper, the *dosis genethlios* or *gegethlia*. *Ta epi tê prôtê hêmêra dôra* (Hesych.). Phoebe gave the oracle at Delphi as a birthday gift to Phoebus. More usually *optêria* = *anakaluptêria*, gifts given to the bride by the bridegroom on seeing her for the first time; Pollux ii. 59 *optêria ta dôra ta para tou proton idontos tèn numphên numphiou didomena*. Cf. iii. 36 *ta de para tou andros didomena edna kai optêria kai anakaluptêria . . . kai prosphthegktêria ekaloun*. Moeris 205. 24 *optêria Attikôs, anakaluptêria Hellênikôs*.

13. The three Cyclopes, sons of Gaia, were Brontes, Steropes, Arges (Hesiod, *Th.* 140).

14. i.e. Cretan, cf. Stat. *Th.* iv. 269 “Cydonea harundine,” vii. 339 “Cydoneas sagittas.”

15. Mountain in Arcadia.

16. Cf. Homer *H. Pan* 39.

17. The ancients differed as to whether *pêgos* meant black or white (Hesych. s.vv. *pêgos* and *pêgesimallô*).

18. It is by no means certain that the MSS. *parouatious* is wrong, “with hanging ears.” *Parouaious* is based upon Hesych. s.v v. *parôas, parôos*, Aelian. *H.A.* viii.

12 cf. Arist. *H.A.* ix. 45, Dem. *De cor.* 260. Should we read *Parauaious*, i.e. Molossian?

19. *au eruontes*, common in Oppian and Nonnus, is apparently a misunderstanding of the Homeric *aueruontes* (= *anaferuontes*).

20. Arcadian, cf. Stat. *Th.* iv. 295 “dives Cynosura ferarum.”

21. Oppian, *Cyneg.* iii. 511 f.

22. Oppian, *ibid.* 391 ff.

23. Apollodor. ii. 5. 3 “The third labour which he (Eurystheus) imposed on him (Heracles) was to bring the Cerynean hind (*Kerunitin elaphon*) to Mycenae alive. This was a hind . . . with golden horns, sacred to Artemis.” Cf. Pind. *O.* iii. 29.

24. *einateres* = wives whose husbands are brothers; *galiô* = wife and sister(s) of one man. (Hom. *Il.* vi. 378) Gercke, *Rh. Mus.* xlii (1887), p. 273 ff., sees an allusion to Arsinoë I. and Arsinoë II.

25. Cf. the Homeric epithet of Hermes, *Akakêta*, *Il.* xvi. 185, etc.

26. Heracles, as son of Amphitryon son of Alcaeus. According to Apollodor. ii. 4. 12, Alcides was the original name of Heracles, the latter name having been bestowed upon him by the Pythian priestess when he consulted the oracle after he had gone into exile for the murder of his children. Heracles asked the oracle where he should dwell and he was told to settle in Tiryns and serve Eurystheus for twelve years.

27. There is nor reason whatever to suppose that *akmôn* here has any other than its ordinary sense of anvil, used metaphorically, as in Aesch. *Pers.* 52. It has been sometimes supposed to mean unwearied = *akamatos*.

28. Hera, mother of Hebe.
29. "Phrygia, a hill in Trachis where Heracles burnt" (schol.)
30. When Heracles was passing through the land of the Dryopes, being in want of food for his young son Hyllus, he unyoked and slaughtered one of the oxen of Theiodamas, king of the Dryopes, whom he found at the plough. War ensued between the Dryopes and Heracles, and the Dryopes were defeated, and Hylas, son of Theiodamas, was taken as a hostage by Heracles (Apollodor. ii. 7. 7, Apoll. Rh. i. 1211 ff., Ovid, *Ib.* 488). Hence Heracles got the epithet Bouthoinas, schol. Apoll. Rh. l.c., Gregor. Naz. *Or.* iv. 123. The Lindian peasant who was similarly treated by Heracles, and who, while Heracles feasted, stood apart and cursed (hence curious rite at Lindos in Rhodes, where, when they sacrifice to Heracles, they do it with curses, Conon 11, Apollod. ii. 5. 11. 9, Lactant. *Inst. Div.* i. 21) is identified with Theiodamas by Philostr. *Imag.* ii. 24. Cf. G. Knaack, *Hermes* xxiii. (1888), p. 131 ff.
31. Inopus in Delos was supposed to have a subterranean connexion with the Nile.
32. On the Eurotas with temple of Artemis.
33. This may be the Athenian Limnae (so schol.); but there was a Limnaeon also in Laconia with temple of Artemis and an image supposed to be that carried off by Orestes and Iphigeneia (Paus. iii. 7) from Taurica.
34. Attic deme between Marathon and Brauron with temple of Artemis (Eurip. *Iphig. in T.* 1446 ff.).
35. In the Crimea, where Artemis was worshipped with human sacrifice (Eurip. *l.c.*, Ovid, *Trist.* Iv. 4, *Ex Ponto* iii. 2, Herod. iv. 103).
36. The typical heroic field (Hom. *Od.* xviii. 374, Apoll. Rh. iii. 1344); cf. *Od.* vii. 113.
37. *i.e.* from Epirus. For the great size of the *Êpeirôtikai boes* see Aristotle, *H.A.* iii. 21, who says that when milking them the milker had to stand upright in order to reach the udder. Both Stymphaea and Tymphaea seem to be attested, though the latter seems to have the better authority (Steph. Byz. s.v. *Tumphon*).
38. Hesiod, *W.* 436.
39. Doliche: either Euboea (*E.M. s.v. Euboeia*), E. Maass, *Hermes* xxv. (1890), p. 404, or Icaros (Steph. Byz. s.v. *Ikaros*), or an island of Lycia (Steph. Byz. s.v. *Dolichê. nêsos pros tê Lukia, hôs Kallimachos*).
40. In Pamphylia, with temple of Artemis, Strabo 667.
41. In Laconia.
42. Britomartis or Dictyna, a Cretan goddess sometimes represented as an attendant of Artemis, sometimes regarded as identical with her.
43. Artemis in Ephesus, Sparta, etc.
44. Cyrene.
45. "The tomb of Pelias" (schol.).
46. Procris.
47. Mother of Odysseus.
48. The MS. *asul(l)ôtoi* is quite unknown. The translation assumes a connexion with *asilla*.
49. Atalanta took a prominent part in the hunt of the Calydonian boar, and received from Meleager the hide and head of the boar as her prize (Paus. viii. 45).
50. Hylaeus and Rhoecus were two centaurs who insulted Atalanta and were shot by her (Apollod. iii. 9. 2).
51. Chitone, by-name of Artemis as huntress, wearing a sleeveless tunic (*chitôn*) reaching to the knees.
52. Neleus, son of Codrus, founder of Miletus (Strabo, 633).
53. Artemis Hegemone as leader of colonists (Paus. viii. 37).
54. *i.e.* Athens.

55. Cape in Samos.
56. River in Samos.
57. Artemis was worshipped in Ephesus with the title *Prôtothroniê* (Paus. x. 38. 6). For rock-cut throne on Mount Coressus at Ephesus cf. A. B. Cook, *Zeus*, i. p. 140 f.
58. The *aploia* is sometimes described as a storm, sometimes as a dead calm.
59. Epithet of Helen as daughter of Nemesis, who was worshipped at Rhamnus in Attica.
60. King of Argos.

61. For their madness and cure cf. Paus. ii. 7. 8, viii. 18. 7 f.
62. Azania in Arcadia.
63. In Arcadia.
64. For the temple of Artemis Hemera or Hemerasia at Lusa cf. Paus. viii. 18. 8.
65. Queen of the Amazons, no doubt identical with Hippolyte.
66. The flute (*aulos*) invented by Athena (Pind. *P.* xii. 22) was often made from fawn bones, Poll. iv. 71, Athen. 182 E, Plut. *Mor.* 150 E.
67. In Phrygia.
68. A people living on the north of the Black Sea.
69. The Cimmerian Bosphorus, which was named after the Cow (*bous*), i.e. Io, daughter of Inachus, king of Argos.
70. The Cayster is a river in Lydia.

71. Harbour of Athens, where Artemis had a temple (Paus. i. 1. 4).
72. Artemis Pheraia is Artemis as Hecate from Pherae in Thessaly (Paus. ii. 23. 5).
73. King of Calydon in Aetolia, who neglected to sacrifice to Artemis. In anger she sent the Calydonian boar to ravage his land.
74. Agamemnon, who shot a stag which was sacred to Artemis and boasted of the deed (Soph. *Electr.* 566 f., Hygin. *Fab.* 98). This led to the *aploia* at Aulis and the sacrifice of Iphigeneia.
75. Queen of the Amazons, who founded the temple of Artemis at Ephesus.