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# Artemis: Depictions of Form and Femininity in Sculpture

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# Artemis: Depictions of Form and Femininity in Sculpture

## Abstract

Grecian sculpture has been the subject of investigation for centuries. More recently, however, emphasis in the field of Art History on the politics of gender and sexuality portrayal have opened new avenues for investigation of those old statues. In depicting gender, Ancient Greek statuary can veer towards the non-binary, with the most striking examples being works depicting Hermaphroditos and 'his' bodily form. Yet even within the binary, there are complications. Depictions of the goddess Artemis are chief among these complications of the binary, with even more contradiction, subtext, and varied interpretation than representations of Amazons. The numerous ways Artemis has been portrayed over the years highlight her multifarious aspects, but often paint a contradictory portrait of her femininity. Is she the wild mother? The asexual huntress? Or is she a tempting virgin, whose purity is at risk? Depictions of her in sculptural form, deliberately composed, offer answers. Though as separate depictions they sometimes contradict one another, as a whole, they reveal just how Artemis the female was thought of.

## Keywords

Artemis, Sculpture, Gender, Ancient Greece, Femininity

## Disciplines

Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and Baroque Art and Architecture | Art and Design | History of Art, Architecture, and Archaeology | Sculpture

## Comments

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### Artemis: Depictions of Femininity and Form in Sculpture

Grecian sculpture has been the subject of investigation for centuries. More recently, however, emphasis in the field of Art History on the politics of gender and sexuality portrayal have opened new avenues for investigation of those old statues. In depicting gender, Ancient Greek statuary can veer towards the non-binary, with the most striking examples being works depicting Hermaphroditos and 'his' bodily form. Yet even within the binary, there are complications. Depictions of the goddess Artemis are chief among these complications of the binary, with even more contradiction, subtext, and varied interpretation than representations of Amazons. The numerous ways Artemis has been portrayed over the years highlight her multifarious aspects, but often paint a contradictory portrait of her femininity. Is she the wild mother? The asexual huntress? Or is she a tempting virgin, whose purity is at risk? Depictions of her in sculptural form, deliberately composed, offer answers. Though as separate depictions they sometimes contradict one another, as a whole, they reveal just how Artemis the female was thought of.

The sculpture *Artemis with a Doe* presents a familiar interpretation of the goddess as she is known today (fig. 1). Commonly referred to as the *Diana of Versailles*, this sculpture is a Roman Imperial copy of the original 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE Greek bronze, attributed to the sculptor Leochares. Epitomizing the growth of classical naturalism, this work is charged with movement. Artemis seems halfway through a step, her weight resting on her front leg as the toes of her back leg push off of the ground. Her chiton, which is carved intricately but nowhere near the transparent, Phidian-type, flutters out behind her, tracing the space she has just crossed.

Moreover, it is tied short around her waist – not to reveal her toned and sculpted legs, but to account for the vigorous movement and intense activity that has animated her form. As she turns her head to the side, perhaps spotting some prey, she reaches behind her shoulder for an arrow from her quiver to knock on her bow, which, while once gripped in her left hand, has not survived the ravages of time. The stag which is her companion, however, has. Just like Artemis, he is midway through a stride, and “though she is armed ... her hand rests cherishingly” on his head, just between his antlers.<sup>1</sup>

This statue represents the type which dutifully portrayed Artemis as *Parthenos*, or virgin, through varying methodologies of portrayal and symbolism. Having asked of her father Zeus “pray give me eternal virginity” at the age of three, the presence of transparent, clinging drapery would make little sense in this context.<sup>2</sup> Instead, she is dressed in the Amazonian-style chiton which falls about her knees.<sup>3</sup> The sight of women wearing short garments, aside from the Amazons, was a rare one in Ancient Greece. The short chiton was usually worn by men, and therefore symbolized athleticism and activity – both traditionally masculine traits.<sup>4</sup> Such marriage of the feminine and masculine through Artemis, emphasizing her removal from the female sexual world, was a common depictive scheme. Solomon Reinach, writing in 1885, noted that a statue of the goddess in the collection of the then Museum of Constantinople was posed in a traditionally male style - leaning in a carefree manner that seems to indicate a good-natured disinterest - associated with portrayals of satyrs, Dionysos, and Artemis’s own brother, Apollo.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 191.

<sup>2</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 175.

<sup>3</sup> D.B. Harden, “A Series of Terracottas Representing Artemis, Found at Tarentum,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 47, part 1 (1927), 94.

<sup>4</sup> Christiane Bron, “The Sword Dance for Artemis,” *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 24 (1996), 75.

<sup>5</sup> Salomon Reinach, “Marble Statue of Artemis in the Museum of Constantinople,” *The American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts* 1, no. 4 (Oct., 1885), 321.

Furthermore, the inclusion of the stag, bow, and quiver together reference the hunt, but also connect back to her virginal nature. As a figure who inspired and demanded “respect for animal life,” Artemis allowed the hunt only providing that “the hunter obeyed the rules and rituals” of the practice – namely that they killed for survival and sustenance, and never for sport.<sup>6</sup> “The environmental relevance of Artemis’s virginity,” as Hughes says, is that the wilderness sacred to her must remain unclaimed and intact, sovereign from man.<sup>7</sup>

A “mythopoetic [representative] of the Greek maiden at adolescence,” this statue reinforces classical interpretations of Artemis and her sexuality, or lack thereof, in relation with her femininity.<sup>8</sup> Her steadfast bow and arrow, her carefully sculpted, bird-like face, and her motion and agency all speak to her role as “a virgin expert in archery ... and as the personification of perpetual youth and vigour.”<sup>9</sup> Her figure is regal, but also lightened by the movement of the work. There is a sense that, at any moment, she may come to life and finish pulling the arrow from her quiver, finally catching up with the object of her hunt. While the graceful curve of her limbs and her pose explicitly grant her poise, they do not ease her into the role of the sexualized object of desire, instead imbuing her with agency.

Similarly bothering little with issues of Artemis’s sexuality is the type called the Asiatic or Winged Artemis. Found in the form of relief carvings, in-the-round sculpture, and ornaments of ivory, terracotta, and lead, this particular incarnation of Artemis was produced in sculpture from circa 800-700 BCE into the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, when they began to grow scarce.<sup>10</sup> The Asiatic or Winged Artemis portrayed in the terracotta *Antefix*, circa 600 BCE, that is today in the

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<sup>6</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 193.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Jennifer Larson, “Handmaidens of Artemis?” *The Classical Journal* 92, no. 3 (Feb-Mar, 1997), 255.

<sup>9</sup> G.E. Mylonas, “A STATUE OF ARTEMIS,” *Bulletin of the City Art Museum of St. Louis* 20, no. 2 (April 1935), 18.

<sup>10</sup> M.S. Thompson, “The Asiatic or Winged Artemis,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 29 (1909), 292, 297.

collection of the British Museum, is a prime example of the type (fig. 2). It speaks to aspects of Artemis that reference her role as “one of the oldest figures [of] iconography ... the mistress (or master) of game.”<sup>11</sup> Frequently pictured as winged, she is always accompanied by at least one animal, sometimes two. These range from lions and birds to snakes, and even fish.<sup>12</sup> In the British Museum *Antefix*, Artemis clutches two lions, one in each hand, as they twist away from her. Her pose and anatomy are similar to that of the korai; her body appears tubular underneath the carefully patterned archaic folds of her chiton. This firmly upright posture, however, also has the effect of stabilizing her form in a decidedly dictatorial way. Behind her torso, the remnants of framing wings - once majestically impressive, now largely missing - thrust upwards, the feathers simplified to sharp dramatic lines that alternate between raised and in relief. She is authoritative and commanding, and though her head has broken away, her power is unmistakable. While many Asiatic or Winged Artemis figures, in their reference to her as the ancient “*Potnia Theron* (the lady of wild things, or mistress of beasts)” characterize her as a protector, there are those, such as the *Antefix*, which typify her as a conqueror.<sup>13</sup> Several of the protector type, found at the temple of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, depict the animals facing in, close to Artemis, and exhibiting no clear attempt at or inclination of movement.<sup>14</sup> The lions gripped by the British Museum figure, however, have their heads turned away, the muscles of their haunches defined and seeming to press outward, pushing against the form of the goddess to move themselves away. Artemis is connected to the wilderness as its regent, but in Ancient Greece, there was a fine line between regent and tyrant. As she is depicted firm, resolute, and dominant over two snarling lions,

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<sup>11</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 191.

<sup>12</sup> M.S. Thompson, “The Asiatic or Winged Artemis,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 29 (1909), 286-8.

<sup>13</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 191; M.S. Thompson, “The Asiatic or Winged Artemis,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 29 (1909), 297.

<sup>14</sup> See: M.S. Thompson, “The Asiatic or Winged Artemis,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 29 (1909).

viewers of the relief are reminded that “Artemis is herself the wilderness,” and no amount of civilization or domestication will soften the claws of the beast or the arrows of the huntress.<sup>15</sup>

This Artemis is not just *Potnia Theron*, but “She Who Slays” and “Artemis Laphria (Artemis the devourer),” in whose name living animals were thrown onto pyres as annual offerings, and human sacrifices are offered.<sup>16</sup>

This representation of the goddess paints her as a powerful, imposing figure, even a primitive one. Her dominion is the Arcadian wilderness, which, while it later morphs into a paradisiacal untouched clime representative of its name, was originally characterized as “a wild and dangerous, rude and barbarous land.”<sup>17</sup> She is not to be crossed, as she is known to enforce her rules harshly – any individual who broached her dominion and hunted or “killed her sacred charges” was met with “vindictive pursuit and punishment.”<sup>18</sup> Even more so, she is not to be tamed or softened by the concerns of sexual desire. Cast in the traditionally masculine role of domineering master, she has been practically unsexed. The lack of definition in her anatomy, the absolute absence of provocativeness, the focus regal symbolism, all reveal a sculptor unconcerned with demonstrating her sexual appeal through visual vocabulary. Images such as the *Antefix*, in which Artemis has the strength to grip a lion firmly by the foreleg in each hand, recall a more brutal Artemis. This Artemis, mistress of beasts, displays the same sharpness as the

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<sup>15</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 165.

<sup>16</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 164; Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 194; M.S. Thompson, “The Asiatic or Winged Artemis,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 29 (1909), 306.

<sup>17</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 166.

<sup>18</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 192; Jennifer Larson, *Greek Heroine Cults* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 87; Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 182-3.

Artemis who, when Aktaion - having spied her naked - attempted to force himself on her, transformed him into a stag to be torn to pieces by his own hunting hounds.<sup>19</sup> Portrayed as a figure with archaic power and influence, this sculptural tradition lends darkness and danger to Artemis. More importantly, by doing so, it lends a harshness to her femininity that refuses to be softened.

And yet, as Christine Downing says, “creation-and-destruction ... were seen as two phases of the one ever-recurring inescapable pattern, not as irreconcilable opposites.”<sup>20</sup> Even as Artemis embodied everything wild, other, and untamed, she also represented a significant nurturing instinct, one with a unique interpretation of her asexuality. Such is the case of the *Artemis Ephesia*, representative of a more localized cult tradition within and around the city of Ephesus. A Roman copy in bronze and alabaster of a 300 BCE Greek original, it is today held in the collection of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli (fig. 3). Like the *Antefix*, her body is largely cylindrical and solid, possibly referencing the earlier tradition of the korai once again, though the suggestion of fabric is assured by the ripples of her garment at her feet. She cuts an imposing figure, with her cylindrical headdress and the disc which frames her head – reminiscent of a saintly nimbus in later Christian iconography. However, she is imposing by virtue of her regality rather than by any sense of danger. The materials of the Roman copy, if they represent the original Greek material and color scheme, create a striking contrast between the ebony alabaster of her head, hands, and feet against the luminous bronze of her clothing and ornamentation. Outstretched arms bent at the elbows, palms open and up, emphasize a willingness to nurture and create an invitation to come into an embrace. The most notable aspect

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<sup>19</sup> For a more in depth discussion of the myth and its reconstruction from a collection of ancient sources, see: Lamar Ronald Lacy, “Aktaion and a Lost ‘Bath of Artemis’,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 110 (1990).

<sup>20</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 12.



of her form, however, is the number of breasts<sup>21</sup> covering her torso.<sup>22</sup> Globular, pendulous, and plentiful, they are attributes of the “mother goddess” indicating “fecundity and reproductive sexuality” – a far cry from representations of the virginal huntress many are familiar with.<sup>23</sup>

In fact, Artemis as a goddess had been associated with midwifery since only moments after her mythical birth when, over the course of “nine desperately agonizing days,” she assisted in the delivery of her twin, Apollo.<sup>24</sup> Votive offerings to her commonly included sculpted reproductive organs, such as breasts, vulvae, and even wombs.<sup>25</sup> Statues of Artemis Ephesia, no matter their origin, tap into the mythos of Artemis “as mother of living creatures,” a “patroness of childbirth and guardian of the young.”<sup>26</sup> Other sculptures, such as a *Terracotta Figurine*, property of the Israel Museum, in which Artemis holds a newborn deer to her breast – referencing suckling – latch on to this mythos as well (fig. 4).<sup>27</sup> The sculptural tradition of Artemis Ephesia seems to take this one step further, with the city translating their patron goddess

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<sup>21</sup> It has been suggested by G rard Seiterle that these are in fact representative of the practice of adorning cult statues with the severed testicles of sacrificial bulls. This has met both acceptance and controversy, as while the forms seems to lack nipples, the reasoning is somewhat circumstantial. It also relies on modern ideas which conflate power with masculinity and virility. Furthermore, it does not affect the interpretation later on, as even in antiquity, writers referred to the sculptures of Artemis Ephesia as “multi-breasted.” See: Lynn R. LiDonnici, “The Images of Artemis Ephesia and Greco-Roman Worship: A Reconsideration,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 85, no. 4 (Oct. 1992) for a fuller discussion of the historiography surrounding the subject.

<sup>22</sup> Some purport that this portrayal arose from a sculptural misunderstanding of pectoral and stomach adornments which worked its way into the accepted depiction of Artemis Ephesia. See: Lynn R. LiDonnici, “The Images of Artemis Ephesia and Greco-Roman Worship: A Reconsideration,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 85, no. 4 (Oct. 1992).

<sup>23</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 192.

<sup>24</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 161; Susan Guettel Cole, “Domesticating Artemis,” in *The Sacred and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*, ed. Sue Blundell and Margaret Williamson (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 34.

<sup>25</sup> Susan Guettel Cole, “Domesticating Artemis,” in *The Sacred and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*, ed. Sue Blundell and Margaret Williamson (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 36.

<sup>26</sup> Donald J. Hughes, “Artemis: Goddess of Conservation,” *Forest & Conservation History* 34, no 4 (Oct. 1990), 192.

<sup>27</sup> Sonia Klinger, “A Terracotta Statuette of Artemis with a Deer at the Israel Museum,” *Israel Exploration Journal* 51, no. 2 (2001), 215, 217, 219.

“into a general protectress and nurturer.”<sup>28</sup> While this seems to flout her role as *Parthenos*, the truth is that, in the ancient world, mother and nurturer were not “erotic categories” of femininity – that is to say, legitimate wives were not thought of as sexual beings in Ancient Greek society.<sup>29</sup> Pseudo-Demosthenes clarified the distinctions between womanly roles by saying “We have courtesans for pleasure, concubines to look after the day-to-day needs of the body, wives that we may breed legitimate children and have a trusty warden of what we have in the house.”<sup>30</sup> Artemis could, and did, as sculptures of Artemis Ephesia prove, exist as the seemingly paradoxical virginal mother, representing care and nurturing femininity in a context completely removed from questions of sexuality.

Different from all of these, however, are *Running Artemis* and *Artemis Fastening Her Mantle*. *Running Artemis*, an original Greek marble dated between the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC and the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD, has come down through the centuries in pieces, and only the torso to the knee joints remain, currently in the collection of the Saint Louis Art Museum (fig. 5). Despite the apparent paucity of the sculpture’s complete form, what is left offers more than enough information about how the sculptor sought to portray Artemis’s femininity. Originally running, as the name suggests, the stumps of the arms and legs suggest a wide range of motion. The quiver strap which still separates and underlines her breast suggests that possibly she held a bow, though her pose and action beyond running are unclear. Above all this, however, it is the drapery, or rather, its defiance of normal conventions of fabric, is what begs notice. Despite being carved in stone, the fabric of Artemis’s short chiton seems as delicate and thin as tissue paper. The ripples and folds of the fabric cascade across her figure more like water than anything

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<sup>28</sup> Lynn R. LiDonnici, “The Images of Artemis Ephesia and Greco-Roman Worship: A Reconsideration,” *The Harvard Theological Review* 85, no. 4 (Oct. 1992), 397.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 409.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 408-409.

else, barely concealing the flesh that they cover. Her nipples and areolae are almost visible, her belly-button is clear as day, as is much of the toning on her stomach, and her legs stand out almost perfectly. Her genital region is only spared this treatment by a cleverly placed undulation in the fabric. The combination of garment and form exudes a subtle sexuality – one that, in the context of depictions of a virgin goddess, is nearly unbelievable. As heroic nudity emphasized masculinity, clothing, too, could be used to emphasize feminine form and beauty.<sup>31</sup> This treatment of fabric and form, wherein the body is “covered with a tunic of thin material clinging close to the forms – wetted drapery” revealing almost everything, is accepted and common on depictions of nymphs, nereids, and Aphrodite, to name a few, but rarely so with Artemis.<sup>32</sup> Even so, some sculptors did seek to portray Artemis as physically desirable, as *Artemis Fastening Her Mantle* supports.

Associated with Praxiteles, this work is also known as the *Diana of Gabii*, and has been called “one of the most attractive works of ancient art” by viewers of it at its current home in the Louvre (fig. 6).<sup>33</sup> While it is again a Roman copy after a Greek 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE original, the statement can hardly be argued. Fully intact, this vision of Artemis presents her in a more sedate and domesticated moment as she fastens part of her clothing about her shoulder. The curve of her neck and shoulders is revealed as her hair is bound upon her head by a fillet. Again she wears the short chiton, but this time it slips artfully and somewhat tantalizingly off her shoulder, revealing just enough flesh of the breast to make the viewer wonder what more there is. Delicately she twists her arm, holding the closure of her mantle, or himation, between the thumb and forefingers

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<sup>31</sup> Christiane Bron, “The Sword Dance for Artemis,” *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 24 (1996), 69.

<sup>32</sup> W.R. Lethaby, “The Sculptures in the Later Temple of Artemis at Ephesus,” *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 33 (1913), 93.

<sup>33</sup> Salomon Reinach, “Marble Statue of Artemis in the Museum of Constantinople,” *The American Journal of Archaeology and of the History of the Fine Arts* 1, no. 4 (Oct., 1885), 322.

in a way that allows the rest of her fingers to fan out in a graceful arc. There is a sense that this moment is private, that the viewer is intruding on a moment of readying for the day. Absent are the bow and quiver. In this moment, Artemis is desirable, elegant, and comely, posed identically to Aphrodite on Athenian red-figure oenochoe, attributed to Polion or the Heimarmene Painter and currently in the collection of the Vatican (fig 7).<sup>34</sup>

These two sculptures prove that, to some sculptors, Artemis's "virginity is not asexual like that of Athena, but is highly sexualized," as a maiden before marriage is considered ripe for the picking.<sup>35</sup> Rather than emphasizing Artemis's power, prowess, or divinity, they emphasize her form and her delicacy, adhering to an ideal that places women in the confines of the home.<sup>36</sup> As many have observe, "Artemis's virginity ... seems to invite violation," her wildness, domestication.<sup>37</sup> Rapes, both attempted and successful, are all too common in myths of Artemis, and often extend to her followers.<sup>38</sup> While in mythology these incidents are regarded as a "heinous assault" punishable by justly horrible death, sculptors faced no such dangers.<sup>39</sup> Just as Homer infantilized Artemis on the battlefields of Troy and portrayed her as a mewling weakling in the face of Hera's tirades, these artists remove her sexual agency, devaluing her choice of eternal virginity by making her an object to be visually consumed for pleasure.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Mentioned and corroborated: W.R. Lethaby, "The Sculptures in the Later Temple of Artemis at Ephesus," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 33 (1913), 90 .

<sup>35</sup> Jennifer Larson, "Handmaidens of Artemis?" *The Classical Journal* 92, no. 3 (Feb-Mar, 1997), 255.

<sup>36</sup> Sue Blundell and Margaret Williamson, "Introduction," in *The Sacred and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*, ed. Sue Blundell and Margaret Williamson (London, New York: Routledge), 1.

<sup>37</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 177.

<sup>38</sup> Lamar Ronald Lacy, "Aktaion and a Lost 'Bath of Artemis'," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 110 (1990), 26-42; Jennifer Larson, "Handmaidens of Artemis?" *The Classical Journal* 92, no. 3 (Feb-Mar, 1997), 253-4; Susan Guettel Cole, "Domesticating Artemis," in *The Sacred and the Feminine in Ancient Greece*, ed. Sue Blundell and Margaret Williamson (London, New York: Routledge, 1998), 27.

<sup>39</sup> Lamar Ronald Lacy, "Aktaion and a Lost 'Bath of Artemis'," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 110 (1990), 40.

<sup>40</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 166.

For all of their differences, however, these statues represent an important and complex definition of femininity as it related to Artemis herself. As a transitional figure, Artemis was associated with girls in adolescence, young women just before marriage, and women during pregnancy and childbirth.<sup>41</sup> These important moments of change in a woman's life were related to milestones of biological growth and evolution of social position, and not "defined by a relation, positive or negative," to the masculine."<sup>42</sup> It is often that gender distinctions are defined by the oppositional figure – for example, women are not men – but the femininity that Artemis was supposed to embody was one that was related wholly to herself. While it is clear that Artemis was the eternal virgin for many, her simultaneous roles of nurturing and motherhood reminded audiences of mythology that she was female, leading to further evolution of her into a physically desirable figure. Sculptural portrayals of Artemis show society grappling with a femininity more complex than the asexuality of Athena, the wifely virtue - if strained - of Hera, and the eroticism of Aphrodite. They show society grappling with the fact that an individual, even and especially a mythic one, is multifaceted and constantly evolving, and that femininity is never defined by a strict set of rules

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<sup>41</sup> Jennifer Larson, *Greek Heroine Cults* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1995), 117; Jennifer Larson, "Handmaidens of Artemis?" *The Classical Journal* 92, no. 3 (Feb-Mar, 1997), 253; Christiane Bron, "The Sword Dance for Artemis," *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 24 (1996), 77.

<sup>42</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1989), 179.





**Figure 1: *Artemis with a Doe (Diana of Versailles)*, Roman copy of Greek Bronze original, att. to the sculptor Leochares, late 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Marble. Collection of the Musee de Louvre.**



Figure 2: *Antefix*, Archaic Greek, relief, painted with red and black, ca. 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE. Terracotta. Collection of the British Museum.





**Figure 3: *Artemis Ephesia*, Roman copy of Greek Original, c. 300 BCE. Bronze, alabaster. Collection of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.**



Fig. 1. Terracotta figurine in Israel Museum (inv. No. 80.51.139): frontal view.



Fig. 2. Rear view.



Fig. 3. Lateral view.

**Figure 4: *Terracotta Figurine* (various views). Terracotta. Collection of the Israel Museum.**



**Figure 5: *Running Artemis*, Greek, late 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE – early 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Marble. Collection of the Saint Louis Art Museum.**



**Figure 6: *Artemis Fastening her Mantle (Diana of Gabii)*, Roman copy of Greek original, att. to the sculptor Praxiteles, c. 350 BCE. Marble. Collection of the Musee de Louvre.**





Figure 7: Athenian Red-figured Oinochoe, connected with Heimarmene Painter or Polion, c. 450-373 BCE. Collection of Museo Gregoriano Etrusco Vaticano.

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