ARTEMIS THERMIA AND APOLLO THERMIOS
(WITH AN EXCURSUS ON THE OETEAN HERACLES-CULT) *

BY

J. H. CROON

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this article is to investigate some cults of Artemis and Apollo, which have all one thing in common, namely that they occur near hot springs. In some places these two deities were worshipped side by side, in others either a cult of Artemis or one of Apollo is found. At a few important sites the connection with hot springs is indicated by the epithets mentioned in the title of this article, but other places, in which the epithets do not occur, are also included. This investigation must necessarily be of a preliminary character. The reason for this is, as I have stated elsewhere 1), that nowhere in modern literature has all the evidence concerning religious phenomena connected with hot springs in the Greek world been collected. It is, of course, a well-known fact that among the Greeks, as among other peoples, thermal waters were held to be sacred. It is equally well-known that the Greeks, with their leaning towards personification, thought these springs to be protected by particular deities; and it is most interesting that these protectors were mostly not local nymphs etc., but panhellenic gods and heroes such as Heracles, Artemis, Hephaestus, Asclepius (the latter only in later times). But the order of frequency of these cults has never yet been ascertained. I have dealt with the worship of Heracles near hot springs in a previous work (quoted supra n. 1); it is my present intention to give a survey of the cults of Artemis and Apollo near such waters. When we compare the results of this survey

*) I am very much indebted to Professor W. K. C. Guthrie of Peterhouse, Cambridge, who has read through the manuscript of this article, and, apart from correcting some flaws in the English style, has given me his advice on some points.

with those of the work on Heracles, it will easily be seen that the most popular Greek hero is at the same time the most popular patron of thermal springs, even to such an extent that Athenaeus \(^1\) calls him the patron *par excellence*. But Artemis claims the second place \(^2\), whereas her brother sometimes keeps her company.

Our first duty is, therefore, to register the distribution of these cults; meanwhile it will be possible, I think, to draw some provisional conclusions on their nature. The ultimate digestion of the material has, in my view, to wait until an exhaustive study of all cults etc. connected with hot springs in the Greek world can be published. Then a comparison of all the evidence concerning the various religious phenomena will be possible.

For geographical reasons, on which it is not necessary to dwell here, hot springs show a tendency to appear in groups close together. We are able, therefore, to distinguish certain main centres of thermal waters in the Mediterranean lands. Such centres will be found around the Malian Gulf, along the Western coast of the Peloponnese, on some islands in the Aegean, in the coastal regions of Asia Minor and in the Maeander-valley, in Sicily and in South-Eastern Gaul. We shall see that in each of these regions and in one or two other places a cult of Artemis and/or Apollo occurs.

### 2. GEOGRAPHICAL SURVEY OF ARTEMIS-CULTS

A. There are few regions in the Greek mainland where the cult of Artemis, especially in its more primitive shape, is as wide-spread as the Western Peloponnese and Arcadia. In this region, which through many centuries remained backward in sundry aspects, Artemis was given epithets such as 'Limnatis' or 'Limnaia', "the Lady of the Lake" as Farnell has called her \(^3\), 'Heleia', etc. On the other hand there are, apart from the Thermopylae-country, no regions in Greece where hot springs occur so frequently as on

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1) Athen. XII, 512 f.