THE MASTER OF ANIMALS
(PLATES XV-XXI)

THE ORIGIN of Hermes is obscure, like that of most Greek deities, and so it provides a knotty problem for the researcher. Several scholars have attempted to unravel it, and although they have rarely been in open dispute, the diversity of their opinions proclaims their tacit disagreement with one another. A short critical summary of the most widely held views will follow in order to clear the ground.

The views are all inconclusive, partly because they are based in every case upon anthropological inference only, partly because the separate dilemmas which the problem offers have not all been squarely faced. We will deal first with the god’s original character since this has been of particular interest to most scholars. The best known theories are five in number. The evidence for the first which claims him as a Wind God ¹ is non-existent. Most popular is the second theory which explains him as a fertility and phallic god in origin.² Yet most of the evidence for it is late. Homer, Hesiod, and the late seventh-century writer of the Homeric Hymn to Hermes know nothing of his alleged phallic character, and he is completely anthropomorphic in early art. The upright phallos which represented him at Kyllene in Elis is unique, and the authors who report it are all late. The strongest support for this theory has been the ithyphallic herm which, on anthropological grounds, would argue a phallic origin. But the earliest herms like the one from Siphnos do not antedate the first quarter of the 6th century,⁶ and it has recently been proved beyond doubt that the origin of the phallic herm is to be sought in the cult of Dionysus, not of Hermes.⁴ Finally, Hermes has almost nothing to do with the fertility of the earth, having obtained an entry into the Andanian and Eleusinian Mysteries as a pastoral, not as a vegetative deity.⁶

Nor is there early evidence to support the third theory that Hermes was originally an underworld divinity.⁶ The Iliad is silent, and the Odyssey knows him only as a

¹ Scherer, Roscher’s Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie, I, pp. 2360 ff., but see Farnell’s devastating dismissal of the theory, Cults of the Greek States, V, p. 9, note d.
² A. B. Cook, Zeus, I, p. 429, note 4, p. 704 and passim; S. Eitrem, Pauly-Wissowa, R.E., VIII, 1, pp. 773 ff.; Jane Harrison, Themis, p. 297; Gilbert Murray, Five Stages of Greek Religion, pp. 76 f.; O. Gruppe, Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte, II, pp. 1329 ff., thinks Hermes is both chthonian and fertility god; L. Preller, Griechische Mythologie, I, 1, pp. 386 ff., stresses his fertility aspect especially with regard to the pastoral sphere but also in general.
³ R. Lullies, Die Typen der Griechischen Herme, pl. 2, 1, 2.
⁵ Farnell, op. cit., V, pp. 10 f.; Pausanias, II, 3, 4; IV, 1, 8; Dittenberger, S.I.G., 653; E. Roberts and E. Gardner, Inscriptions of Attica, p. 7.
⁶ Gruppe’s views have already been mentioned; Preller finally discarded the chthonian theory advanced in Demeter und Kore, p. 201; Nilsson at first claimed him as a Death God in origin (Griechische Feste, p. 390), but since then he has modified this view (cf. Greek Popular Religion, p. 8); Persson, The Royal Tombs at Dendra, accepts Nilsson’s earlier view (see p. 114).
guide to Hades. The Homeric hymn barely mentions this activity and, judging from the later literature and art, his chthonian activity remained that of Psychopompos, although his underworld associations rendered him in time sufficiently awesome in the eyes of a few for them to invoke him as a chthonian power. Yet on the whole his position in Hades was a subordinate one, to be understood not as a shorn heritage of powers which he once possessed and of which he was subsequently deprived, but as a development of his function of guide. This development was both facilitated and encouraged by a widespread change in burial customs at the end of the Bronze Age.

The last two theories about Hermes’ original character are more weightily supported than any of the others by evidence from all periods, but no scholar has examined any of it in detail and the Homeric evidence has been almost completely ignored. One theory suggests that a very primitive function of Hermes was that of Guide to the wayfarer; the other argues that he was a pastoral deity whose original concern was with flocks. An examination of these two activities with emphasis on the Homeric evidence will provide us with a point of departure, although the literature and art of almost every century reveals that they were always prevalent in popular belief. The two functions do not appear to be closely connected but they have one aspect in common which is frequently expressed, powerfully emphasized by Homer, and of considerable importance to the search for the god’s original character and power. This aspect is Hermes’ protectiveess; he protects the wayfarer and he protects the flock.

An examination of the Iliad will show that, although Hermes is referred to more than once in digressions from the narrative, his most important activity in the epic is that of the Guide. Therefore it is clear that this idea about the god was firmly established in the minds of ninth-century Ionian Greeks. The epithet Diaktoros, which is almost certainly to be interpreted as “the Guide,” occurs more often than any other except Argeiphontes. There are other references to him of a like nature. He is once described as τοιός ὁδουπόρος, three times as πομπός, and twice as τοιός πομπός. The significance of the demonstrative adjective should not be lost. Furthermore, he is

7 Odyssey, XI, 625 f.; XXIV, 1 ff.
8 Cf. lines 571 f.
9 His name often occurs in the “devotiones” (cf. Arch. Anz., 1907, p. 127; C.I.G., 538). Orestes (Choeph., 1 ff.) appeals to the chthonian Hermes, but Aeschylus here seems to make Zeus responsible for the god’s power in the underworld.
10 I hope to deal with this at some length in my book on the cult and concept of Hermes.
12 Farnell, op. cit., pp. 9 ff.
13 H. G. Evelyn-White, Hesiod, Homeric Hymns, and Homerica, passim, translates the word in this way. Its meaning has been much disputed, but after a critical analysis it will be found that the most cogent arguments support the interpretation of the epithet as “Guide.” I hope to consider both “Diaktoros” and “Argeiphontes” at some length elsewhere.
14 Iliad, XXIV, 375; 437, 439, 461; 153, 182.
the deity who dominates the twenty-fourth book as the guide of Priam on his dangerous journey to and from the tent of Achilles. But his guidance is not merely mechanical; it includes protection, and Homer is at pains to stress this. Note the emphasis on the god’s solicitude for the aged king when he first approaches: “But the helper himself drew near and took the old man’s hand and spoke to him,” and his endeavours by means of a friendly conversation to calm the old man’s fears. How carefully, too, the poet describes the god’s anxiety for Priam’s welfare and his preparation for the return journey, for Hermes himself harnesses the mules to the cart which is to carry them back to Troy. But the protective aspect of the god’s function is perhaps most forcibly expressed by Zeus himself in his words to Hermes earlier in the book:

'Ερμεία, σοι γάρ τε μάλιστα γε φίλτατόν ἐστιν ἄνδρι έταιρίσσαι.

Four passages in the Odyssey contain references to Hermes’ function of guide, in three of which the god himself appears as a personality. The fourth will be considered first as it has the added interest of being the first reference in art or literature to the god’s simplest monumental form. Eumaeus mentions an 'Ερμαιός λόφος above the city which he passed on the way back to his hut. The scholiast explains that the 'Ερμαιός λόφος was a stone heap. Even without his learned comments it is clear to the reader that the monument is a waymark, in fact, a guide. Attention has already been drawn to two of the other Odyssey passages wherein we encounter Hermes as the guide. Under the god’s safe conduct Herakles and the souls of the dead suitors travelled to Hades. More important is the third passage which tells of the god’s sudden appearance to Odysseus who wanders alone in the mountains. Hermes comes of his own accord to help Odysseus, taking action independently of other supporters of the hero, even of Athena who is not concerned with this adventure. At present, the main interest of this episode for us is that once again the poet introduces Hermes as the guide, and once again he lays stress on the protective aspect of the deity in carrying out this role. Hermes takes the hand of Odysseus and exclaims: “Whither, unfortunate, dost thou thus wander alone in the uplands, strange to the place?” The god’s protectiveness is implicit in everything he says and does here, but, if additional evidence is required, it will be found in Hermes’ own words: “But come now, I will save and preserve you from harm.”

This trait is displayed by the god in his pastoral activities as well, so before it is subjected to further analysis let us recall what Homer has to say of Hermes’ concern

15 Achilles mentions these dangers, Ibid., XXIV, 563 ff., and so does the god, XXIV, 683 ff.  
16 Ibid., XXIV, 360 f.  
17 Ibid., XXIV, 677 ff., 690 f.  
18 Ibid., XXIV, 334 f.  
19 Odyssey, XVI, 471 f.  
20 Ibid., X, 277 ff.  
21 Ibid., X, 280 ff.  
22 Ibid., X, 286.
with flocks and herds. Direct reference is made to his power to increase them in the passage about Phorbas, the Trojan, who is described as "rich in flocks." 23 His son, Ilioneus, had his flocks increased, and hence his wealth, through the intervention of Hermes who loved him. The god's ability to do this is mentioned by another early author, Hesiod, who associates him with Hekate in the byres. 24 Another reference in the Iliad is found in a digression from the narrative where Homer tells the story of the parentage of Eudorus, a son of Hermes by a maiden called Polymele, a member of Artemis' choir. 25 In Polymele's name we can see a reference to Hermes' pastoral concerns. The same word is used adjectively with respect to Phorbas.

The single passage in the Odyssey relevant to the present subject is perhaps the most interesting of them all. Eumaeus kills a boar for dinner and divides it into seven portions, one of which he sets aside for Hermes and the nymphs. 26 We learn from this that Hermes' connection with the half-divine creatures of wood, field, and mountain was very early and sufficiently close for them to share sacrifice. We also learn which deities a herdsman was careful to honour.

Nymphs are mentioned often in the Odyssey. Athena refers to some who dwell in caves. 27 Animals of every sort were cared for by them, 28 and like Hermes, they protected travellers. The nymphs of Ithaca with whom he is associated actually possessed an altar at which all wayfarers offered sacrifice. 29 Such a community of ritual and function is not surprising, for it is clear even from the Homeric poems that he and they were thought to haunt the same kind of country.

Of all Hermes' epithets, Argeiphontes occurs in Homer most often, fourteen times in the Iliad and thirteen times in the Odyssey. It means "The Slayer of Argus." 30 The poet does not relate how Hermes released the heifer, but Hesiod seems to have told the story of Hermes, Io, and Argus. 31 The epithet thus alludes indirectly to the god's protection 32 of domestic creatures, so that we find in Homer an idea which is often expressed in later periods. Kriophoros was a usual epithet and was officially attached to him in more than one locality. Artistic representations of him in this guise are usual from early times onward, and two famous sculptors of the "transitional period," Kalamis and Onatas, chose to present the god in this manner. 33 They

23 Iliad, XIV, 490.
24 Theogony, 444.
25 Iliad, XVI, 179 ff.
26 Odyssey, XIV, 434 ff.
27 Ibid., XIII, 347 ff.
29 Odyssey, XVII, 210 f.
30 This is its traditional meaning but, like "Diaktoros," its meaning has been disputed and I will discuss it more fully in another place.
31 Scholiast on Homer, Iliad, XXIV, 24.
32 Argus may have been at first simply a shepherd dog and not a monster. Odysseus' dog possessed that name, and the word is frequently used adjectively to describe dogs. If so, Hermes' interference may well originally have been terrifying rather than benevolent. Observe Apollo's words to Hermes in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, 286 ff.
33 Pausanias, IX, 22, 1; V, 27, 8.
may have helped to establish a type because Hermes Kriophoros is afterwards encountered over and over again in the major and minor arts, but the type could only arise out of a prevailing religious idea.

Thus, even in the earliest period, the protective aspect of Hermes was so pronounced that we may fairly view it as part of his function of guide and of pastoral god. But if his worshippers thought that he protected travellers and flocks, they obviously believed that he had the power to do it, and so it is pertinent to ask what specific harm was feared by men in early Greece which the god, in their opinion, was empowered to avert. The state of society which Homer describes enables us to infer a good deal about this. For one thing, its economic structure was largely pastoral; for another, travel in open country and in the mountains was dangerous because of sudden and frequent assaults upon travellers, herdsmen, and flocks by wild beasts. An examination of the similes of Homer will show that this inference is not fanciful. He often derives his similes from wild animals. We find him describing a lion hunt, a leopard hunt, a lion attacking a bull, or herds of cattle, or even plundering the cattle steading and the sheep folds, and one simile gives a detailed description of a lion and a hunter who has wandered far afield. Similar references to lions and other wild beasts in both epics could be multiplied. These animals constitute the main danger against which Hermes offers protection, and considerable evidence exists to prove that he was able to protect because he could control wild beasts. But for the moment let us confine our enquiry to the epics. His concern with and control over such creatures is actually implied in the Odyssey. He says "I will save and preserve you from harm." But what was it that Odysseus had most to fear when he was wandering alone in the uplands? It was Circe, of course, but the danger of the witch lay for him in her regrettable habits of transforming men, not only into swine, but into wolves and lions as well. A very Mistress of Animals was Circe, but she says herself that she had been told that she would fail on one occasion. It was Hermes who informed her of this; it was likewise he who was responsible for her failure because he gave the moly to Odysseus. Moly, according to two later authors, grew at Pheneus and on the slopes of Mt. Kyllene; that is, in the very region where the cult of Hermes was at all times strongly entrenched. It is to our purpose to notice that, while Circe is mistress of many whom she has metamorphosed into wild beasts, Hermes is the

84 Iliad, XX, 164 ff.; XXI, 573 ff.; XVII, 542; XVIII, 573 ff.; XVII, 657 ff.; XXIV, 41 ff.; XVIII, 318 ff.
85 Odyssey, X, 210 ff., 239 ff., 431 ff.
86 Circe appears to have absorbed some of the main characteristics of a Minoan predecessor and so she acts as another and independent survival of the pre-Greek Mistress of Animals whose most familiar successor is Artemis. This problem will be dealt with at some length in my book.
87 Odyssey, X, 330 f.
88 Theophrastus, Hist. Plant., IX, 15, 7; Pliny, N.H., XXV, 4, 8.
one who can effectively oppose her on her most powerful ground. His powers were equal to those of the dread goddess and she bowed before his intervention. The significance of this will become more apparent when we come to tests of our material other than the Homeric.

The Earliest Monumental Form of Hermes

Few scholars have considered the problem of the god's original form in great detail. Since his phallic character is apparently non-existent in the early period and since the origin of the phallic herm can be assigned to the cult of Dionysus, the assumption that Hermes' earliest form was a phallic post or simple phallos is clearly not justified. A far better case can be made out for the simple stone heap. Several authors allude to these heaps, the earliest being Homer himself who, as we have seen, calls the god's stone heap an 'Ερμαῖος λόφος. Nilsson, who has always claimed the stone heap as Hermes' earliest monumental form, suggests that a larger unwrought stone may often have surmounted it. Fact is made of this brilliant inference by the discovery of a large grey stone inscribed "Hermanos" (Plate XV, d) which was embedded in a stone heap on a hillside in Laconia. A three-stroked sigma marks the inscription as 6th century in date but because epigraphists have been so interested in the lettering, the immensely significant circumstances of the find have gone totally unnoticed. This stone in its heap presents us with an actual 'Ερμαῖος λόφος which had presumably remained undisturbed for centuries. Although the inscription is 6th century in date, the cult object itself may be much older. In any case it is striking testimony from a fairly early period which lifts Nilsson's suggestion from the realm of conjecture into the world of fact.

Further archaeological support is given by a number of fifth-century silver tetradrachms from Segesta in Sicily. The first shows a hunter with his foot on a heap of stones (Plate XXI, e). That this is Hermes' heap is clear from another coin struck at the same time (Plate XXI, g) where the herm rises diagonally out of it. On yet another Segestan coin of the same period the herm is replaced by a large spherical stone that tops the heap (Plate XXI, f).

It emerges, then, that Hermes' simplest, and presumably, his earliest monumental form was a heap of stones often surmounted by a larger unwrought stone. Such was probably the 'Ερμαῖος λόφος mentioned by Eumaeus who, like other rustic worshippers, believed the spirit of Hermes to be immanent in that heap.

39 Hermes could also change the shape of living creatures. He taught Autolykos the art, according to Pherecydes Fragment 63. Artemis also transformed mortals into beasts. We recall the misfortunes of Actaeon and Kallisto.
41 A History of Greek Religion, pp. 109 f.
43 Roberts, An Introduction to Greek Epigraphy, pp. 251, 270.
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THE GOD’S NAME AND SOME OF HIS EPIPHETS

The derivation of the name Hermes from ἔρμα, being sound for all dialectical variants, is therefore almost certain. It corresponds so well with the primitive ritual significance of the cult as to be descriptive of it, if we accept the derivation, as surely we must, the name simply means “He of the stone heap.” Consequently it is Greek. Yet a mass of evidence points to his origin with a pre-Greek people; so the student is faced with a riddle. Farnell considers the Greek etymology to be a very serious obstacle in the path of enquiry, but it is not an insuperable barrier.

It is wise to bear in mind that Homer refers to the god almost as often by a few of his well-known epithets as by the name which we usually give to him. Diaktoros and Argeiphontes, singly or together, are alternative names for him, and so is Eriounios. The last epithet, meaning the Ready Helper or Bringer of Blessing, refers to that aspect of benevolence and protection which was considered earlier. As we have seen, the word Hermes is descriptive of his form. Two of the three epithets just mentioned are descriptive of his personality and his function; the third derives from a very ancient legend which alludes to the god’s pastoral associations. The epics indicate that the god may have had more than one appellation among ninth-century Ionian Greeks. At least there would be no confusion in their minds if one alluded to the god by one of these three epithets because Argeiphontes, Diaktoros, and Eriounios designate him as surely and unmistakably as the name Hermes. They are used of no other deity in the poems and are consequently to be ranked as functional, not as ornamental epithets.

NON-HELLENIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GOD

With whom, where, and at what time did Hermes originate? Some have ignored the problem raised by his Greek name and have boldly proclaimed him Pelagian. Sir Arthur Evans suggests a pre-Greek origin for him by implication.

44 Cf. Preller, op. cit., I, 1, p. 385 f., note 5.
45 Nilsson, Gr. Feste, p. 389, emphatically remarks that any disagreement with this derivation must arise from the fact that it will not suit a pre-conceived theory. I just as emphatically agree with him. Cook, op. cit., II, pp. 383 f., note 7, accepts the derivation from ἔρμα but translates it as “prop,” — and see Hetty Goldman, loc. cit., p. 68, who points to the Homeric use of the word to mean the long wooden props with which the Achaeans beached their ships. But supports other than wooden props were used at a very early time for beaching ships. Hesiod, Works and Days, 624 f. advises the would-be seafarer to draw up his ship on the shore for the winter and pack it tightly with stones.
46 It occurs alone twice, cf. Iliad, XXIV, 360, 440.
47 J. Harrison, Prolegomena, p. 631, and Gilbert Murray, op. cit., p. 77.
48 Palace of Minos, III, p. 524. Evans thinks that the aniconic agalma of Hermes on Mt. Kyllene may well have been of Minoan workmanship. This statement implies that, in the great scholar's opinion, the concept inherent in the agalma was known to this pre-Greek people.
scholars have cautiously called him Greek, but this fails to account for the god's many non-Hellenic traits. Still others withhold their opinions, thereby leaving the subject an open question. Only Farnell has subjected the indirect evidence to a careful analysis, but even he does not concern himself with the survival of Minoan characteristics in the classical cult of Hermes, nor has he noticed the monumental evidence which proves the existence of the cult in the Late Helladic Age.

His treatment of the ethnic problem consists of a survey of the cult's geographical distribution, of the form and character of the god, of his mythological associations and festivals; and a pre-Greek origin for the Hermes concept is implicit in this general internal evidence, especially if it is viewed collectively. The main points made by Farnell are the god's aniconic form, the fact that his worship in the historical period was most powerful in regions with deeply rooted Pelasgian traditions like Attica and Arcadia, his connection with the earliest Arcadian genealogies, and the Saturnalia-like practice in the Cretan Hermaia. During these festivals the slaves changed places with their masters, and Farnell thinks the slaves may represent a stock of earlier people who had been conquered by the invaders and who were the earliest worshippers of Hermes. This practice, according to Farnell, is "the best and clearest evidence" that Hermes originated among a pre-Hellenic people.

A few more points can be made: Hermes' subordinate position in the Olympian hierarchy, his aspect of thievishness, his connection with early legendary characters like Autolykos, Odysseus, and Perseus, his share in the sort of conflict between divinities which reflects a racial collision and which ends either in the complete overthrow of the older divinity or in a compromise. The most famous conflict involved Hermes with Apollo and it ended according to the legend in friendship. Lastly, in historical times Hermes could boast, not many temples, but the unswerving devotion of common folk.

Minoan Survivals in the Classical Cult and Concept of Hermes

If one scrutinizes the historical cult and concept of both Athena and Artemis one discovers certain peculiarities which are demonstrable Minoan survivals. Such a scrutiny has never been directed towards Hermes but it reveals similar survivals, and most of the evidence for Minoan traits in his cult and concept is significantly early.

Two types of sanctuary were usual in Minoan times, the outdoor and the indoor

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49 Eitrem, loc. cit., VIII, 1, p. 773, says "Die Gestalt des Hermes geht in die Urzeit der Griechen zurück"; O. Gruppe, op. cit., II, pp. 1318 ff., presumably thinks Hermes to be Greek since he favours the theory of the god's connection with Sarameyas.

50 Preller, op. cit., I, 1, p. 385, regards the cult as very ancient but forbears from giving a definite opinion owing to difficulties surrounding his name. Nilsson, Griech. Feste, p. 391 does not express an opinion about the people of his origin but thinks they must have been a pastoral folk.


52 Athenaeus, XIV, 639 B.
shrines. We can recognize two main kinds of outdoor shrines, the caves and the rock shelter. Many sacred caves in Crete have yielded votive offerings in bronze and terracotta of Minoan workmanship.\textsuperscript{58} Now Hermes was often venerated in caves,\textsuperscript{54} the two most interesting being those on Mt. Kyllene and near Patsos in Crete. They deserve some consideration.

Northern Arcadia, especially Mt. Kyllene, was beyond doubt the most hallowed of all places where Hermes was afforded worship. He had a temple on the summit of the mountain,\textsuperscript{55} and the legends which recount the circumstances of his birth almost all agree that he was born in a cave on the mountain by Maia. The mountain was carefully explored and few caves were found. One corresponds with the description of Hermes' birthplace in the Homeric hymn.\textsuperscript{56} Pausanias does not mention the cave but it has been pointed out that its existence was probably forgotten in his day. Votive offerings in terracotta were found in the cave when it was discovered, and the early date of many of these indicates that the sanctity of the place was observed at a much earlier period. For our present purpose, the cave is much more interesting and significant for precisely that reason. Hermes derived one of his most important epithets, Kyllenios, from this very mountain. Its first occurrence in literature is in the Odyssey\textsuperscript{57} and although his cult may have been discontinued on top of Kyllene and within the cave, the epithet was never forgotten so long as Hermes claimed a place in the hearts and minds of men.

The god's cult in the cave near Patsos does not seem to have fallen into desuetude, but neither this nor the Kyllenian cave has ever been scientifically excavated. Some of the votive offerings in bronze and terracotta found at Patsos were dedicated in Minoan and slightly later times.\textsuperscript{58} They will be considered at length below.

The sanctuary of Middle Minoan date on Mt. Juktas shows that mountain tops were also considered to be sacred by the Minoans, possibly because of the natural awe they induced. When we turn to Hermes we find that he favoured the tops of mountains too. He is to be found on Mt. Juktas itself, and Kyllene, the highest mountain in Arcadia, belonged to him. Several others can be mentioned: Akakesion in Arcadia and Mt. Kerykion in Boeotia which was claimed as his birthplace, and he was present within the very precinct of the Zeus temple on Mt. Lykaios.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{53} Cf. Nilsson, \textit{M.M.R.}, pp. 49 ff. for a good critical précis of these finds.
\textsuperscript{55} It was in ruins when Pausanias visited it; cf. VIII, 17, 1-2.
\textsuperscript{57} XXIV, 1.
\textsuperscript{59} "Eph. 'ArX., 1904, pp. 200 ff., pls. 9, 10, figs. 20-22; Cook, \textit{Zeus}, I, p. 84, note 1.
Thus Hermes inhabited the sort of outdoor places which, in Minoan belief, had been sacred. In one certain instance he occupied a cave to which the Minoans had actually brought offerings long before the end of the Bronze Age. In historical times his cult seems to have been rather powerful in the same region, judging from fifth-century and later coin types of Sybrita, a town not very far east of the cave in question. He was also known at Phaistos and in many other places in Crete.

Among other objects which frequently appear in Minoan religious art are sacred stones and pillars. No god familiar to us in historical times is more closely associated with the stone and pillar cult than Hermes. We have already noted his most primitive image which was an heap of stones often surmounted by a larger stone, but another usual shape was the semi-iconic herm which consisted of a shaft supporting a bearded head and having the phallos placed halfway up its length. The ithyphallic terminal figure, Dionysiac in origin, probably attached itself to Hermes sometime during the centuries after Homer. It was customary for the semi-iconic image as well as the large unwrought rock to be placed upon a stone heap, although the heap was sometimes replaced by a four-sided plinth, and this kind of cult statue of Hermes had a widespread popularity, ranging from Magna Graecia to Panticapaeum.

Hermes was by no means the only god in historical times who was associated with the sacred stone or pillar but his connection with this sort of cult was more marked than most. For example, no other god bothers about the simple stone heap. It was customary for even the casual traveller to add another stone to the cairn as he passed it, but since these heaps were often in lonely parts of the country and on hill tops, they were most often encountered by peasants and shepherds who took their sheep and goats to graze in the uplands. Hermes in his aniconic form was more familiar to herdsmen than to anyone else and so it is probable that his stone heaps received their most profound veneration from pastoral folk.

The god’s connection with trees is not so spectacular as with pillars and stones but it is close enough to cause the writer some surprise that attention has not been drawn to it before now as an instance of Minoan survival. The shaft of his pillar was often made of wood and several famous agalmata were also wooden. This is a custom which obviously derives from Minoan practice and is to be met with in the case of every Greek deity, but three of his agalmata are worth mentioning. An image of Hermes stood in the temple of Athena Polias on the Acropolis, simply described

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60 The date of the earliest Kyllenian finds we unfortunately do not know.
61 Cf. Charles Seltman, Greek Coins, pl. XXXVIII, 5-8.
62 Ibid., pl. XXXVI, 13.
63 At Aptera, Dreros, Gortyna, Itanos, Kydonia, etc., cf. Eitrem, loc. cit., p. 753.
as a wooden agalma which was hidden in a tangled growth of myrtle. It was dedicated by Kekrops. Our only authority is Pausanias, who is on the whole reliable, and we can trust the tradition of its great age because of the place wherein it was kept. A callow newcomer was not likely to find his way into that temple. Nor was Hermes a stranger to the Acropolis. Representations of him were found there in the excavations which include archaic reliefs and an equally archaic head of a herm. But the early association of Hermes and Athena is interesting in view of her own undoubted Minoan origin.

At the time of Pausanias’ visit to Troizen there was a wild olive tree growing in such a way as to entwine the image of Hermes Polygios. Local tradition had it that when Herakles rested his club against the image the implement took root and life and grew again into a living tree. There have been various attempts to explain the epithet πολύγυς which need not concern us here; the main lesson of the account is Hermes’ close connection with a tree which he himself in the view of the Troizenians caused miraculously to grow.

The agalma on Mt. Kyllene is our third instance. This was enormous, and its material was sufficiently unusual for Pausanias to digress on the kinds of wood used by primitive people for their sacred images. Sir Arthur Evans thinks it may have been a Minoan cult object, but in spite of the apparent durability of this wood which is related to cedar and resists both insects and rot, it is difficult to believe that the image had existed for more than a millenium and a half. Kyllene is a very high mountain and Pausanias saw a ruined temple; so the image could not have had much protection. We do not, on the other hand, know how long the temple was in ruins. The writer is far from rejecting the implication of Evans’ suggestion. The Minoan dedication might easily have been replaced by an exact replica.

We have not done with the god’s concern with trees. In the Homeric hymn to Hermes we read that the young god thwarted Apollo’s angry purpose by making the withies by which he was to be imprisoned spring up and entwine until they covered the rest of the cattle. This miracle recalls the Troizenian tradition related to and by Pausanias, and so the legend which attached to Hermes Polygios may have been

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65 Pausanias, I, 27, 1. I completely agree with Cook, Zeus, III, p. 725, note 5, that there is no reason to assume that the sacred object was a phallos.
68 There is nothing in Pausanias to suggest that it was phallic.
69 Palace of Minos, III, p. 524.
70 Frazer, Pausanias’ Description of Greece, IV, pp. 245 f.
71 Pausanias notes other instances of Hermes’ connection with trees, IX, 22, 2 and 24, 5; cf. also Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner, A Numismatic Commentary on Pausanias, pl. X, 14-16.
72 408 ff.
an old one, indeed a variant of that in the Homeric Hymn. But with the author of the latter we are the better part of a millennium earlier in time and we find a most important association of Hermes with trees. Nor should we overlook moly which plays so important a part in the Odyssey. This cannot be called a tree but it was living vegetation, and its powers, too, were momentous, for they concerned wild beasts.

Finally, let us consider Hermes’ staff. The place of its origin as well as its true significance in early times is a vexed question. There is not sufficient evidence to prove that the Greeks adopted it from anyone else—unless they were pre-Greek—and the serpent staff of the Babylonians cited by Frothingham is not a true caduceus. The rhabdos carried by the god in Homeric literature has no serpents and the earliest representations of the usual caduceus show variations on the 8-shaped termination but no attempt to indicate snakes. Our concern is its material. The Odyssey reports the rhabdos to be of gold but the Iliad does not specify its material. It is obvious that a humbler stuff, probably wood, was originally used to make the staff. As it possessed magic powers from the earliest times it could easily be transmuted into gold through the alchemy of the imagination, for gold, too, is thought to have magical properties. A wooden prototype, however, is something more than conjecture. Apollo describes the rhabdos which he gives to Hermes as τριπέτηλον “three-leafed” or “three-branched,” and in the second quarter of the 7th century BC a Corinthian painter decorated a pinax with Poseidon and Amphitrite in a chariot followed by Hermes, identifiable by his beard and by the caduceus which he holds in his right hand (Plate XX, a). The interesting tip to this wand has not gone unnoticed; from it spring two three-leafed shoots, one above the other.

Attic vase-painters seem to have thought of the caduceus as wooden also. Hermes on a sixth-century Attic black-figure vase holds a gnarled caduceus in one hand as he aids Poseidon in teaching Herakles how to fish (Plate XX, b). More interesting is the tondo of an early red-figure kylix (Plate XX, c). Behind Hermes is a tree; he bends over and grasps a smaller but similar tree to strip it of its leaves and superfluous branches in order to make a caduceus. This vase-painter, too, considered the caduceus to be of wood. We need not stress the fact that this staff was his most characteristic attribute. He is almost never without it.

The epiphany of the Minoan deity was often in the shape of a bird. As with so many Greek gods, the bird survived as a creature sacred to Hermes. The cock seems

75 Homeric Hymn to Hermes, 530.
77 Lenormant and De Witte, Élité des Monuments Céramographiques, III, pl. XIV.
78 Ibid., III, pl. LXXIV.
to have been his favourite fowl but his association with it is not so marked as Athena's with her owl. But the actual appearance of Hermes and his way of getting from place to place are far more interesting. Even in the *Iliad* his chosen form of movement is flight, and a lovely passage in the *Odyssey* describes him as "like to a bird." There is no reason to believe that he has taken the form of a bird, and it is most unlikely that Homer wished to convey such an idea in view of the fact that Hermes carried his wand as he flew. Homer speaks more than once of Hermes' sandals which carried him swiftly over land and sea and so he probably envisaged Hermes in the same way that we do. And as soon as the god is found in art in his anthropomorphic form he has wings attached to his boots or to his cap or both. Much more important is his occasional portrayal in archaic art with wings like those of Artemis Potnia Theron because they spring from his body. A kylix, potted and painted about 540 B.C. shows Hermes on both sides seated on a rock. He holds what is probably a lagobolon in his left hand, wears a cap, and his feet are shod with the usual winged boots. From his breast spring two great curling wings, stylized in the usual orientalizing manner and very like those which Artemis has at the same period (Plate XXI, a). About ten years later another Attic painter displayed Hermes with wings springing from the shoulder, but they are more naturalistically rendered (Plate XXI, b).

Nilsson has suggested that the survival of wings in the case of both Hermes and Iris is functional; they are messengers and therefore require speed, an explanation suitable for Iris but not for Hermes because he never appears as a messenger in the *Iliad* and yet in that poem he makes his way swiftly by flight from place to place. Probably the explanation which Nilsson gives for the wings of Artemis Potnia Theron also for Hermes. He suggests that her wings represent a conflation of the bird and human epiphany, either but not both of which at once the Minoan deity, whose successor Artemis is, chose to assume. It is true that Hermes' wings are functional when he has become a full-fledged messenger but this idea was in its infancy in Homeric epic.

The Minoans had a Nature religion and they did not exclude from it as too terrifying the wild beasts she nurtured. Their religious art records both a Mistress and Master of Animals.

Hermes' association with goats, sheep, and cattle is well known, and we have

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79 *Iliad*, XXIV, 345.
80 *Odyssey*, V, 49 ff.
81 *Iliad*, XXIV, 340 ff.; *Odyssey*, V, 45 f.
82 Lenormant and De Witte, *op. cit.*, III, LXXV.
83 Lenormant and De Witte, *op. cit.*, II, p. 114, identify this figure as Hermes. I find that H. B. Walters; *C.V.A.*, British Museum 4, pl. 50, 1 a, and text p. 4, calls the winged figure a wind god; but since he does hold a staff, wears a nebris and is one of a company which so often includes Hermes, Lenormant and De Witte are surely correct in their identification.
already considered the Homeric evidence which shows that ninth-century Ionian Greeks were familiar with him as a pastoral god. We also observed, first, that travellers, shepherds, and flocks were protected by him, secondly, that the main danger for all of them was the attack by wild beasts, and thirdly, that Hermes presumably possessed the power which would render his guardianship effective.

If one turns to the short verses of Leonidas of Tarentum, an early Hellenistic author, one will find that he calls the god "protector of flocks" in one of his epigrams, and in another he states definitely the danger which the god averts: 85

Moricus the goatherd set me up, Hermes, the overseer, to be the approved guardian of his fold. But, ye nanny-goats who have taken your fill of green herbage on the mountains, heed not now at all the ravening wolf.

Hermes' concern with and power over beasts of prey have hitherto been almost unnoticed, but evidence both literary and archaeological for his interest in animals and monsters is considerable. Our first definite literary statement is quite early; in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes, Zeus endows his son with many powers in addition to those given by Apollo: 86

Take these, Son of Maia, and tend the wild, roving, horned oxen and horses and patient mules.

So he spake. And from heaven father Zeus himself gave confirmation to his words and commanded that glorious Hermes should be lord over all birds of omen and grim-eyed lions and boars with gleaming tusks and over dogs and all flocks that the wide earth nourishes.

Does this passage explain the incredible feat of slaying the oxen which Hermes managed to do beforehand? "Great strength was in him" 87—yet he was not a day old!

In two places in the Iliad Homer describes a lion as "hankering after flesh," κρεοῦν ἐρατίζων. 88 The hymn writer twice used the same phrase of Hermes himself, first when the god plans the theft of the cattle, and again when Apollo retorts to his protest that he knows nothing about it. 89 The second passage is sufficiently interesting to quote: "You will plague many a lonely herdsman in mountain glades, when you come on herds and thick-fleeced sheep, and have a hankering after flesh." So speaks Apollo, and the habits which he describes are very like those which are indulged in by the wild beasts themselves.

In fact, Hermes is a very Master of Animals in this poem, and the writer is not unique in what he says. He provides us with our most definite literary statement of these powers, but he is not our earliest source.

85 The Greek Anthology, VI, 334; XVI, 190. This is W. R. Paton's translation.
87 Homeric Hymn to Hermes, 117.
88 XI, 551; XVII, 660. 89 64, 287.
Moreover, the god is connected with hunters. Aipytos, whose grave according to Homer 90 was near Mt. Kyllene was killed whilst hunting; Amphion learned music from Hermes who gave him a lyre to bewitch wild beasts when he played on it; 91 Pan, the son of Hermes, was fond of the chase; Autolykos, another son 92 whose name means “the wolf himself” or “the very wolf,” hunted around Mt. Parnassus; and black-figure vase-paintings 93 show him with Athena attending the combat of Herakles with the Nemean lion.

Another very famous hunter turned to Hermes for help in the chase. Our evidence for this is archaeological and it supports, moreover, an interesting passage in Arrian which we must consider first. In his treatise on hunting 94 Arrian says that it is advisable to offer sacrifice to certain deities before starting the chase. Hermes is one, and Arrian carefully gives two of his epithets, ἐνόδιος and ἡγεμόνιος. Thus the prospective hunter is urged to sacrifice to Hermes, protector of travellers, as a cautionary measure. Theophrastus also refers to the custom of pouring libations to the wayside heap, but he does not give a particular reason for it. 95

The archaeological evidence which supports Arrian’s statement comes from a much earlier period. Consider first a skyphos made about 400 B.C. probably in Boeotia. The painting shows a young man seated, labelled Kephalos, who holds two spears and pours a libation from an oinochoe to an ithyphallic herm (Plate XV, f). Behind him is his hound who busily sniffs a hedgehog; the herm, 96 roughly drawn, is deeply embedded in a heap of stones. To the right stands Artemis, the Great Huntress herself, also labelled, holding two spears.

Contemporary with the skyphos is a coin minted at Pandosia in South Italy. The reverse shows a naked Pan seated on a rock holding two spears with his hunting hound at his feet (Plate XXI, c). In front of Pan is a bearded terminal herm to which a caduceus is affixed. To be compared with this Pandosian coin are the Segestan tetradracmas mentioned above. They show that in Segesta, 97 too, the god was associated with hunters. Local legend told how the nymph Segesta was ravished by Krimissos, a river god, who assumed the shape of a hound for the purpose. Their child, Egestos, founded the city and it is he, as hunter, who occupies the obverse or reverse of most of these coins. On one we see him with a hound, 98 resting his foot

90 Iliad, II, 603 f.
91 Pausanias, IX, 5, 8. He cites a much earlier source.
93 C.V.A., British Museum 6, pls. 75, 4; 77, 3; 76, 4 and elsewhere.
94 De Venatione, 34. 95 Char., 16.
96 Nilsson, Greek Popular Religion, p. 8 and fig. 3, also considers this Hermes, not Priapus. Our illustration is from C. Watzinger, Griechische Vasen in Tübingen, pl. 41.
97 The Greek element in Segesta seems to have come from Phocaea in Ionia; cf. Ziegler, Pauly-Wissowa, R.E., II, 1, p. 1057 f.
98 Which may represent Krimissos. I must thank Charles Seltman who drew my attention to this evidence and to P. Lederer’s dissertation, Die Tetradrachmenprügung von Segesta (Munich, 1910).
on the heap of stones and holding two hunting spears in his left hand (Plate XXI, e). On another, Egestos is accompanied by two hounds instead of one, and rising out of the heap is the semi-iconic herm wearing a pilos (Plate XXI, g) like the one which dangles at the neck of the hunter himself. The third coin has the large round stone topping the heap as its most interesting feature, but on it we see another hunter with weapons and hound, this time Krimissos who can be identified by the horns on his head (Plate XXI, f).

These coins and the Boeotian skyphos inform us that Hermes’ concern with hunters was not only recognized in the 5th century but that the recognition was widespread over the Greek world. It is not the sort of religious idea which is likely to have originated among a people so highly urbanized and commercial as the Greeks in the 5th century; on the contrary, the idea belongs to a rural economy which the Greeks had had to replace to some extent by industry and commerce long before. Its widespread existence implies that it was familiar to those Greeks who had indulged in colonization during the 8th and 7th centuries. The implication sheds any taint of conjecture when one recalls the remarks in the Homeric hymn, and when one turns to archaeological evidence which, like the hymn, antedates the 5th century. It consists chiefly of vase-painting. This was a minor art which provided a livelihood for ordinary people; the vase-painter was a craftsman who derived his designs from the customs, beliefs, and ideas of his contemporaries. He was no religious innovator. He made his pots to sell them, and the scenes which he depicted were chosen because of their wide appeal.

Like the hymn writer, artists in Athens and Corinth who lived during the late 7th and early 6th centuries had the notion that Hermes was associated with wild beasts, for the god is shown in their company on several vases. Whereas the writer of the Homeric hymn stated his view, the vase-painters depicted theirs, and the combination of literary and archaeological evidence shows that the ideas were prevalent about 600 B.C.

Corinthians loved to paint animals on pots which they were able to export widely during the 7th and 6th centuries. An interesting aryballos was imported into Delos (Plate XVIII, c) which is typical Corinthian work of the first quarter of the 6th century B.C. On the aryballos two leopards move towards each other around the vase turning their fierce faces frontally. Hermes stands between them, one hand tucked into his short chiton, the other holding a very long caduceus. At about the same time an Athenian painted a dinos in black-figure which subsequently went to Naukratis. He divided his design into friezes which he filled with wild animals and monsters. In this company we see Hermes standing, caduceus in hand, flanked by two smiling sirens while all round him are lions, boars, and other monsters (Plate XIX, a, b). On vases

99 Charles Dugas, Le Trésor de Céramique de Délos, pl. XXVI, 357.
of this kind Hermes is the "human" creature\(^{100}\) who appears,—if one appears at all,—and he stands alone amid a wild or even monstrous gathering. At the end of the 6th century Maia joins him on a vase (Plate XVIII, \(d\)).\(^{101}\) Mother and son stand in the middle facing one another; a ram approaches from the right while from the left moves a goat followed by a lion with heavy mane and gaping jaws.

A wild animal which Artemis Potnia Theron frequently holds in subjection is the stag. Hermes occasionally demonstrates his power over the same animal. On an archaic gem\(^ {102}\) we find him dressed in the usual way and holding his caduceus in one hand. In the other he grasps the hind hoof of a stag which dangles upside down (Plate XXI, \(d\)).

The foregoing evidence makes comprehensible the position and power of Hermes in the Circe story. We have seen that the god’s mastery over wild animals is recognized in the archaic period both in literature and in art. It is what Hermes does in the 10th book of the Odyssey which bears out their testimony and makes him Circe’s redoubtable opponent.

Thus, very early indeed in the historical period, we find Greeks associating Hermes with beasts of prey as well as with the more timid sheep and goats. It is not surprising that the hunter will pour a libation to him before engaging on his risky venture, nor that the shepherd will consider his image to be a protection for the flocks against attack by wild beasts. The god is at home with monsters too. He is seen with sphinxes and sirens in Corinthian and Attic art. Frequently, at all periods, he joins satyrs and silens who are, like himself, most at home in the countryside. Hermes’ demesne remained rural even in so urbanized a civilization as the Greek during the 5th century, although his character had developed a metropolitan suavity by this time. Even in the Hellenistic period he is shown\(^ {103}\) with several animals: a goat, dog, horses, cock, panther, and dolphin\(^ {104}\).

**Monumental Evidence for Hermes in the Bronze Age**

Mycenaean representations exist for both Zeus and Athena. I believe the same may be said for Hermes. Attention has been drawn to the object before now, but no one has seen its connection with the classical concept of the rural Hermes who, in semi-iconic form or represented simply by a large rock, stands in a heap of stones.

\(^{100}\) J. D. Beazley and H. Payne, *J.H.S.*, XLIX, 1929, p. 256, and Payne, *Necrocorinthia*, p. 143, remark the frequency of Hermes’ appearance with wild beasts and monsters in the ceramic art of this period but they overlook the Homeric hymn. Their explanation for his association with them is that he is god of roads. I partly agree with the explanation (which they do not develop) so long as it applies only to the period at which the vases were painted.

\(^{101}\) Lenormant and De Witte, *op. cit.*, III, pl. LXXXV.


\(^{103}\) *B.C.H.*, XIII, 1889, pp. 375 f. and pls. XII, XIII.

\(^{104}\) For Hermes’ interest in fish see Pausanias, VII, 22, 4; Athenaeus, VII, 287 A; and dedications by grateful fishermen recorded in the Anthology.
In one of the rock-cut tombs at Mycenae Tsountas discovered a number of glass plaques three of which were published by Sir Arthur Evans and referred to in later publications by himself and by other authors. They provide the clearest evidence for the sacred character in the Bronze Age of the pillar or large stone. All three show a similar scene which is ritual sacrifice to a stone or stones of various sizes. On one (Plate XV, e) the objects are fair-sized free-standing pillars. Another is profoundly interesting, for, in an important detail, it is unique.

This glass plaque (Plate XV, a), illustrated by Sir Arthur Evans, has been referred to by Professor Wace who dates it with the others to Late Helladic III, that is, to the last period of the Bronze Age. Nilsson and Evans have described the plaque, but no one has observed its full significance. It is agreed that a stone heap surmounted by a larger object is depicted which is receiving ritual honours. The object is probably a large stone, and on it two daimones pour a libation from prochooi. These daimones are often to be found in Bronze Age art carrying the sacred libation jug, but their character and habits will engage our attention later. Just now let us consider that which engages theirs.

What we see here is a libation given to a heap of stones. In the mind of the craftsman who made this plaque the idea existed that a heap of stones was a worshipful thing. He presumably shared the idea with others, for the object was found in a tomb, having been placed there by mourners. This craftsman lived during that period which we call Late Helladic III. We have leapt the chasm made by the Dorian Invasion and have found on the other side an idea—expressed in an action—which was also to be found in the place whence we have come. The action is ritual libation. The idea is that a deity is either immanent in the heap and its surmounting stone, or is connected with them. In fact, we discover at Mycenae the earliest extant evidence for this idea in Greece, for the plaque tells us that sacrifice was offered to stone heaps during the Bronze Age. In the historical Greek period sacrifice was also offered to such heaps, and those heaps were sacred to Hermes whose spirit was immanent in them. Let us observe once again the vase on which Kephlos is depicted doing honour to the herm (Plate XV, f). He, like the Mycenaean daimones, pours a libation from a jug, and the heap is as clearly shown by the fifth-century Boeotian vase-painter as it is by the unknown Mycenaean craftsman. Both heaps are topped by a larger object. On the vase the object is clearly an ithyphallic herm; on the plaque, a large round stone, but we know that such unwrought stones were sacred to Hermes. The round rock on which Krimissos rests his foot on the Segestan coin replaces the semi-iconic

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105 I agree with Nilsson that columns or pillars having a structural function have no indisputable claim to be sacred images in themselves.

106 Evans, J.H.S., XXI, 1901, p. 117, fig. 13.

107 Ibid., p. 117, fig. 12; Palace of Minos, IV, p. 455, fig. 380.


109 Minoan-Mycenaean Religion, pp. 219 and 221.
herm on the other coins (Plate XXI, f, g). It strongly resembles the stone on the plaque. More important for comparison is the crude slab inscribed with the god's name which was found in its heap near Chrysapha (Plate XV, d) because it provides absolute proof of such an aniconic form for Hermes, and sacrifice to the herm is shown on vase-paintings, some of which antedate the Kephalos vase by more than a century.

Hermes is not merely the divinity of the heap in historical times but the only Greek god who is. We may say at once that the form of the divinity on the plaque and the kind of ritual it receives directly correspond with a familiar form assumed by the later Hermes and the ritual which he received. Still we cannot claim to have discovered Hermes' origin in spite of the fact that we have found a heap deity in the Bronze Age, a time when the two racial and religious components which were Greek and pre-Greek had been well mingled. It is fairly obvious from our knowledge of the Minoan religion that the plaque represents the pre-Greek. Did Hermes merely appropriate the form and rite, or has he a closer connection with the idea expressed here? We can settle this question when we have found the answer to another. What is the character of the deity of this particular heap? Does it, or does it not correspond with what we know of Hermes?

The stone heap occurs occasionally in Bronze Age art and three objects which display it are interesting. One of these is a white carnelian seal of the "signet" type (Plate XV, b) dating from Middle Minoan II b and found in East Crete near Kritsa. Mounting a heap of six stones on either side is a wild goat. One looks back over his shoulder, the other looks upward, and behind each of them is a small palm tree. The character of this scene is secular with nothing to suggest religious significance until we compare it with other objects. Note, however, that a Minoan engraver associated wild goats with stone heaps while another Bronze Age artist portrayed a scene in which libations are poured to such a heap.

Belonging to the same period as the carnelian and coming from central Crete is a banded agate engraved with a similar scene (Plate XV, c). The goats are not present; there are more rocks in a less tidy heap which is surmounted by a palm tree very like those on the seal above, but it is much larger. Two smaller shoots spring lower in the heap. A third Minoan heap is also flanked by animals, but this time wild goats are replaced by lions (Plate XVI, b). This fragmentary clay sealing was found in the

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110 Another Minoan-Mycenaean reminiscence in fifth-century Sicily appears on a coin of Catana where a bull-leaper is depicted. Cf. also Diedrich Fimmen, _Die Kretisch-Mykenische Kultur_ for Mycenaean finds in Sicily.

111 _C.V.A._, British Museum, III H e, pl. 45, 6 a and 6 b; Micali, _Storia_, 3, pl. 96, 2; L. Curtius, _Die Antiken Herren_, fig. 1.

112 Evans, _Palace of Minos_, IV, p. 488.

113 _Ibid._, II, p. 494. Evans identifies the trees with a palm. There is some evidence that palms were sacred to Hermes in classical times; cf. Eitrem, _loc. cit._, p. 759.
Little Palace at Knossos.\textsuperscript{114} We are able to make out part of an entablature and the top of a column. Crowning all this is a stone heap, the summit of which is gone. There remain the two hind legs of the left lion and the left hind leg of the right. Evans has reconstructed the group in two ways\textsuperscript{115} which need not concern us here as both reconstructions are conjectural. We are satisfied with identifying the heap and the beasts. Evans calls attention to the cairn shown on the glass plaque when discussing this stone heap and stresses the importance of the connection between the lions and the sacred object. He also compares these lions with those on the famous signet from Knossos of Middle Minoan III to which we now come.

The signet has been lost, but several clay impressions of it were found which display the following scene (Plate XVI, \textit{a}). The façade of a building is on the left with columns and horns of consecration, a door below, and two separate horns on top. In the centre appears the Mistress of Animals in the usual Minoan female garb, standing on top of what is either an enormous heap of stones or, as is usually now supposed, a mountain peak. Flanking her as guardians, but placed on a much lower level, are two lions. A young male figure stands at the right; he is perhaps a votary.

It is probably correct to interpret the central object which supports the goddess as a stylized rendering of a mountain peak but the relation between it and the cairns already observed is obvious. We are getting nearer to understanding the nature of the heap divinity.

Let us look into the daimones who pour the libations on our plaque. They frequently occur in the art of the Bronze Age. An examination of their habits leads one naturally to Nilsson’s conclusion that they are neither human nor fully divine, but are gods of lower rank, typically Minoan,\textsuperscript{116} and creatures of popular belief. These daimones are closely connected with the cult. Frequently they appear as its servants, but we know from some representations that they are superior to human beings and animals, are often to be found with animals, and are obviously thought to possess power over them. One daimon moves along carrying a monstrous bull on a chalcedony lentoid; another shoulders a stag on a Cretan bead seal. More interesting is a carnelian seal on which a daimon carries the carcases of two lions suspended from the ends of a long pole. Melos produces a broken carnelian lentoid whereon we see a daimon leading a lion. From Mycenae comes another lentoid which dates from the Late Helladic period (Plate XVII, \textit{c}).\textsuperscript{117} The creature shows its power over animals by standing between two lions and extending an arm over the head of the right hand beast.

\textsuperscript{114} Palace of Minos, II, p. 523 f.
\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., II, p. 524, fig. 327; IV, p. 608, fig. 597 A, i.
\textsuperscript{116} Minoan-Mycenaean Religion, pp. 324 ff. I agree with Nilsson that the assumption of an Egyptian origin is almost groundless. What is most important about them are their functions which belong to Minoan belief, \textit{ibid.}, p. 327.
\textsuperscript{117} For these gems cf. Evans, Palace of Minos, IV, p. 431, fig. 354; p. 441, fig. 364; p. 442, fig. 367; p. 444, fig. 369; also J.H.S., XXI, 1901, p. 168, fig. 46.
We have gone still further in establishing the nature of the heap divinity on the plaque, for in its ministers we find creatures who have power over such terrifying beasts as lions and bulls. But the daimones are themselves inferior to the greater gods because they administer to their cults. Scenes on other objects show the actual subjection of daimones to a greater god. They act, in general, as the servants of the gods but they are the immediate subjects of one. That one is the Master of Animals.\textsuperscript{118}

The religious association between the Master of Animals and his daimones is depicted on a gem in the Castellani collection (Plate XVI, d).\textsuperscript{119} The god stands in the centre, faces right and grasps the daimon on either side of him by the head. They hold libation pitchers, while behind them is shown the bough or slim trunk of a tree. The god is clearly in control of the creatures. They command animals; so does he, but he commands them. We do not find the Mistress of Animals exerting this control. They are the Master’s especial minions. On a rock crystal lentoid from Phigaleia we again find the god centrally placed and flanked by daimones, but the god exerts an even fuller mastery, for he has caught them by their tongues (Plate XVI, c).\textsuperscript{120}

Each of the several parts of the glass plaque reveals, after analysis, the same thing. The heap itself led us to wild animals. The daimones proved not only to have command over wild beasts when they wished to exert it but are themselves the direct subjects of the Master of Animals. I think it is reasonable to conclude that it is he whom the stone heap denotes, and so it is well to give him some consideration.

Minoan male deities are rare, but the Master of Animals has a definite and certain position. We have observed the god in relation to his ministers already. Let us observe him with animals. Two seals which come from Kydonia, or near by, in Crete represent him with animals.\textsuperscript{121} One, made of basalt, dates from Late Minoan I (Plate XVII, d). Again the god is placed in the centre, his divine character indicated by the horns of consecration at his feet. On the left a winged goat rears upon its hind legs; our daimon, on the right, faces the Master with the libation jug in both hands. The second representation occurs on a beautiful white agate lentoid (Plate XVIII, b). The young god, centrally placed as usual, stretches his arms over the heads of two lions as he did with the daimones on the Castellani gem. Two enormous hounds accompany the Master of Animals on a broken clay seal from Knossos which dates from the transition between the Middle and Late Minoan periods.\textsuperscript{122} With this is possibly to be associated another Middle Minoan clay sealing from Knossos where the god, capped and bearing shield and spear, strides to the right accompanied by an animal which is either a lioness or a large dog (Plate XVII, e).\textsuperscript{123} This clay seal was found with another on which the Mistress of Animals appears with a lion. Also from Middle

\textsuperscript{118} Nilsson, \textit{Minoan-Mycenaean Religion}, p. 328, has observed this.
\textsuperscript{119} Evans, \textit{Palace of Minos}, IV, p. 465, fig. 389 a.
\textsuperscript{120} \textit{Ibid.}, IV, p. 466, fig. 390.
\textsuperscript{121} \textit{Ibid.}, IV, p. 467, figs. 392, 391 bis.
\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Ibid.}, IV, p. 581, fig. 566.
\textsuperscript{123} \textit{Ibid.}, III, p. 465, fig. 324 a.
Minoan III, but coming from Hagia Triada, is a clay sealing of the Master of Animals who holds a bow and is accompanied by a lion.\textsuperscript{124}

The mainland and Aegean islands also have produced representations of the god. A finger ring of jasper from Mycenae displays him holding one fierce lion by the throat and another by the hind leg (Plate XVIII, a).\textsuperscript{125} A ring now in Berlin but found in the islands shows a similar scene.\textsuperscript{126} It is very interesting that, on the first ring, the god is represented with a beard, a fashion which we have reason to believe was introduced by the Greeks. No Minoan men ever wear beards.

Nilsson has pointed out the connection between the Master of Animals and the sacred bough, and has noted that the god replaces this object and "other cult implements on other seals."\textsuperscript{127} Our own examination of the component parts of the glass plaque has led in every case to wild animals. On the Castellani gem the two daimones who flank him carry the very libation jugs with which we see them on the plaque, where his place is taken by the heap. In another case, we have found the sacred tree with which he is associated, and the heap of stones together.

The nature of our heap divinity is thus apparent. He is that deity for whom Nilsson has coined the term "Potnios Theron," the counterpart of the Minoan Mistress of Animals, and himself Minoan in origin. Hunting was a favoured sport among the Minoans, and he develops easily into the Hunter's god\textsuperscript{128} from what was probably a daimonic origin. He first appears anthropomorphically in Crete in Middle Minoan III and is found with fair frequency during the Late Minoan period. Although he is Minoan and therefore pre-Greek, he seems to have been recognized and accepted by the Greeks, for his worship continued well down into the last part of the Late Helladic period, as our plaque tells us, and the newcomers at Mycenae seem to have endowed him with a beard.

I think our path has come to an end and that we have found the idea which underlies the concept of the god who, after changes and much development, appears before our eyes in Homer with the name of Hermes. We know that from the very earliest historical times Hermes dominated the heap which received ritual libation. We know also that the heap deity of the Minoans was their Master of Animals and god of hunting. Hermes too, as we have seen, controlled beasts and was appealed to by hunters: the authority of vase-paintings is strengthened by coinage, Hermes' powers in the 10th book of the \textit{Odyssey}, and the important literary testimony of the Homeric \textit{Hymn}. He retains his connection with monsters and with daimones who appear with

\textsuperscript{124} \textit{Ibid.}, I, p. 505, fig. 363 c.
\textsuperscript{125} C. Tsountas, \textit{Mycenae} (Athens, 1893), pl. 5, 5.
\textsuperscript{126} Furtwängler, \textit{Beschreibung der Geschnittenen Steine im Antiquarium}, pl. 1, 9.
\textsuperscript{127} Minoan-Mycenaean \textit{Religion}, p. 309.
\textsuperscript{128} I agree with Nilsson, \textit{Minoan-Mycenaean Religion}, p. 353, that his weapons do not indicate a martial character, for they are the sort of weapons used first of all during the Bronze Age for hunting. Moreover, the pursuits of war were not loved by the Minoans.
him often on vase-paintings. Startled and joyous satyrs surround him on a late fifth-century vase by the Dinos Painter (Plate XVI, e),\footnote{Lenormant and De Witte, op. cit., III, p. xc, and an interesting red-figure pelike shows a shaggy satyr contemplating a herm on its heap; cf. C.V.A., Compiègne, pl. 17, 11; Micali, Storia, pl. 96, 3.} and in the very early Homeric \textit{Hymn} addressed to Aphrodite he is associated with silens.\footnote{262 f.}

Nilsson has suggested that one of the Minoan daimones rose from daimonic to divine status. This Being he identifies with Pan.\footnote{Minoan-Mycenaean Religion, p. 328. In a footnote on the same page he refers his readers to a passage in \textit{A History of Greek Religion}, p. 111 where he considers the emergence of Pan.} To support his derivation of Pan from these creatures whose garb often resembles the skin of some feline creature is the literary evidence which reports that Pan wore a lynx pelt.\footnote{Homeric \textit{Hymn to Pan}, 23 f.} And what of Hermes’ concern in this question? At an early period he acknowledged paternity of Pan.\footnote{Ibid., 27 ff.} We have observed the similarity of interests between the Master of Animals and his daimones, and this also prevailed between Hermes, his son, the satyrs, and the silens. Once again popular belief has shown its tenacity and we perceive another instance of survival.

Hermes was known at Kydonia\footnote{Cf. Eitrem, loc. cit., p. 753.} where two Minoan seals depicting the Master of Animals were found. And I should like now to call attention once again to the finds of the Patsos cave. Several little Minoan images were found here. Nilsson is rightly cautious about the nature of the deities of these outdoor shrines, for it is not usually revealed by the votives dedicated in them. However, the Patsos cave certainly knew some deity during the Bronze Age. Equally certain is it that Hermes Kranaios was worshipped there in the historical period, but Hermes’ presence there in later times is not the reason for my suggestion that the cave was the property of the Minoan Master of Animals. One terracotta male head deserves closer study (Plate XVII, a).\footnote{F. Halbherr, \textit{Museo Italiano di Antichità Classica}, II, pl. 14.} Divinity is indicated by a curious headdress which has three whorls above the double band encircling the brow. On almost every well-preserved seal showing the Master of Animals three similar circles appear on top of his head which to my mind indicate such a headdress. The three circles are clear on the Kydonia gems (Plates XVII, d; XVIII, b), and on a Knossian\footnote{J.H.S., XXI, 1901, p. 125, fig. 15.} sealing (Plate XVII, b) where he is flanked by lions the headdress, distinctly rendered, strongly resembles the one which crowns the Patsos terracotta. To the best of my knowledge the correspondence of these headdresses has not been observed.

Nor has it been noticed that the small bronze figure found in the same cave and published by Sir Arthur Evans\footnote{Evans, \textit{Palace of Minos}, IV, p. 608, fig. 597 A, h.} corresponds almost exactly to the Master of...
Animals as he appears, in hunter’s guise, on the Knossian sealing mentioned above (Plate XVII, f, e), for in both representations the god wears a short tunic held in tightly at the waist by a belt, and a very tall, peaked cap. The bronze figure is damaged, but it obviously carried a spear and shield just like those shown on the seal and so it, too, presents the deity as a hunter.

This bronze and the terracotta head go to establish the identity of the god in the Patsos cave. The Master of Animals was the Bronze Age Lord of the shrine.

Therefore the other finds admit of interpretation. Small bronze and terracotta images of domestic goats and cattle were dedicated in the cave, most of which are to be dated to the same period as the terracotta head. I suggest that these were offered by herdsmen who visited the cave to invoke the god’s protection for their flocks. Some of the objects already studied show that the Minoan god had such interests: there is the winged goat on one engraving, and on another two goats mount his stone heap. Sheep and goats grazed in the uplands and shepherds often had their folds far away in the hills, sometimes in caves, like Polyphemus. Odysseus, for example, had a long upward climb to reach the hut of Eumaeus. The Master of Animals was a hunter’s god, but he must have appealed strongly to shepherds also because of his power over lions, wolves, leopards, and other beasts which threatened flocks. In short, the sphere of this Minoan god was wider than has been hitherto supposed, for his very power would recommend him to shepherds as a god. They had themselves to turn hunter occasionally in order to protect the weaker creatures under their care. It is not surprising that the Master developed a protective aspect, or that this protection was offered to mortals and flocks which ventured into his domain.

There remains a problem for us to solve. How may Hermes’ name be explained? Farnell has suggested that the mysterious Gortynian name hedas harks back to the original worship. He may be right, but we cannot state this as a certainty. Even if we could, the name Hermes would still be a problem.

Hermes’ name means, as Preller suggested and Nilsson agrees, “he of the stone heap.” It is a Greek term, and it is descriptive in quality. May not the Greeks have so described the spirit of the heap of stones which they encountered when they entered Greece? They found a population which revered a powerful god, and soon discovered the places which he was believed to inhabit, but they did not discover his name. In connection with this suggestion it will be interesting to quote a passage from Herodotus: “Formerly, in their sacrifices, the Pelasgians called upon gods—this I know for I was told it at Dodona—without giving name or appellation to any; for they had not as yet heard of such.”

Farnell rejects the statement on the grounds that Herodotus favours an Egyptian

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138 The historical Hermes often wore a similar tall peaked cap.
139 Odyssey, IX, 181 ff.
140 Cults of Greek States, V, p. 9.
141 Book II, 52.
origin for the names of the gods, which we know at the very least is highly unlikely. Nor is it likely that our pre-Greeks knew no names for their divinities, but Herodotus’ statement may on the other hand reflect the state of affairs in which the god’s name was so holy or so terrifying that his worshippers rarely gave voice to it.  

Let us now turn our minds specifically to Hermes. It requires little imagination to apprehend the terrifying aspects of the Master of Animals. The analogy that comes at once to the mind is provided by the Erinyes who were more commonly given the euphemistic title of Eumenides. In the present case, the Greek newcomers might easily encounter the god and not learn his name, for which reason they gave him a nickname of their own: “Old Heapy,” “the heapy one,” or, more respectfully, “he of the heap.” Another explanation of Herodotus’ statement may be that the subject people withheld the name of their god from the conquerors in order that they might not empower them further with the knowledge of it, in which case the Greeks again would have to resort to a descriptive name of their own. And we must not forget how often Hermes is referred to by an epithet in Homeric literature, and how often these very epithets replace his name. Let us repeat that several of these are descriptive of his character whereas “Hermes” is descriptive of his form.

Herodotus goes on to say: “when the Pelasgians, then, inquired at Dodona if they should adopt the names that had come from foreign parts, the oracle bade them use the names. From that time onward they used the names in their sacrifices; and the Greeks received these later from the Pelasgians.”

This leads us to the consideration of the survival of the nickname of the god at the expense of the true name. First of all, apt nicknames have a tendency to stick. Secondly, there were several waves of invaders coming at intervals, all of whom spoke a Greek dialect and who would cleave to a name they understood. More and more inhabitants knew the god as “Old Heapy.” Greek in time became the common language and ousted that spoken by the pre-Greeks. Herodotus’ second statement may reflect the growing obsolescence of names and terms belonging to the older tongue.

Before leaving the subject it would be as well to note that the Minoan god of animals was adopted by the Greeks and very much adapted. This process was gradual, but it is easy to understand that, having once adopted him, they should prefer the name to which they were accustomed. Athena may be raised as an objection to this suggestion. No Greek word could change her name. The answer is, however, that the invading Greek deities were on the whole male and thus more likely to come into conflict with other males. Also, the Minoan goddesses, forerunners of Artemis and Athena, were extremely powerful. Not for them was the struggle for existence which faced their male kindred.

The tale of the development of the Minoan god, though interesting, is a long one,

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142 As Farnell assumes, op. cit., I, p. 13.  
143 Hestia may be a Greek goddess.
and this article has sought only to establish a tenable hypothesis of Hermes’ origin. He has other facets in Homeric literature besides the two most important ones which we considered above. One of these, his concern with herdsmen and flocks has been examined and put, it is hoped, in its proper light. But what of Hermes, the guardian and guide of travellers? It must be our task to explain how this function arose.

The stone heaps sacred to the Minoan god were everywhere. Many lost and lonely travellers must have hailed the heaps with joy when they came upon them because travelling in Greece was uncertain if not dangerous in the early part of the 2nd millennium B.C. when the first Greek-speaking peoples penetrated the peninsula. There were no roads; still, the god’s stone heaps guided one from place to place. In that respect they were convenient to the traveller. Often the wayfarer went through wild country; the god whose heaps guided him through it also protected him from the lions, wolves, and boars which dwelt there. That is why Hermes’ guidance of travellers is not simply mechanical, and it must have been this function more than any other which enabled him to survive among the Greeks, for they would obviously require the god as a guide far more, particularly at first, than would the people whom they conquered.

To illustrate the activity of the wayfarer’s god I shall draw attention to a few lines of the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite.\(^{144}\) This poem was composed at an even earlier date than the hymn to Hermes, and there is an interesting description of him as the sure Guide through unknown and dangerous country. Aphrodite, who refuses to reveal her identity, must therefore give a plausible account of herself to Anchises. She tells him that she is a mortal princess, daughter of a Phrygian king, and destined by the gods to be his bride. Here is her description of her journey to Mt. Ida:

> And now the Slayer of Argus with the golden wand has caught me up from the dance of huntress Artemis, her with the golden arrows. For there were many of us, nymphs and marriageable maidens, playing together; and an innumerable company encircled us: from these the Slayer of Argus with the golden wand rapt me away. He carried me over many fields of mortal men and over much land untilled and unpossessed, where savage wild beasts roam through shady coombes, until I thought never again to touch the life-giving earth with my feet.

Many genuine mortals had to make journeys fraught with such perils and they looked to Hermes as their guardian as well as their guide on the way. That is why his protectiveness is so strongly emphasized by Homer. It is an aspect which the god never lost throughout the many centuries when his cult was vital, and it is the ultimate explanation of all those qualities in his later character which can be called fine.

\(^{144}\) 117 ff. This is Evelyn-White’s translation.
CHITTENDEN: THE MASTER OF ANIMALS
PLATE XVI

CHITTENDEN: THE MASTER OF ANIMALS
CHITTENDEN: THE MASTER OF ANIMALS
PLATE XIX

CHITTENDEN: THE MASTER OF ANIMALS
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