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THE GODS OF ANCIENT GREECE

Identities and Transformations

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READING PAUSANIAS: CULTS OF THE GODS AND REPRESENTATION OF THE DIVINE

Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge

Over the past couple of decades Pausanias has become the centre of a minor academic industry, a point made recently by Glen Bowersock.¹ The growing scholarship in this area has taken Pausanias' profile seriously and his work at face value. One of the major trends has been the appreciation of Pausanias' work as a complex literary enterprise and not just as a databank to be plundered without taking into consideration the context of each piece of information, be it chronological or narratological. Such a flourishing interest in Pausanias' work has also been inspired by the increasing interest in the Greek world under Roman rule, the world to which Pausanias belonged, and the related question of what it meant to be Greek when power was held elsewhere.²

Pausanias was a serious scholar and a tireless traveller. Maybe he can also be considered as 'dry, sober and pedantic', as a German

I would like to thank Jan Bremmer warmly for his invitation to this prestigious conference and Andrew Erskine for the wonderful hospitality of the University of Edinburgh. The argument presented here in English depends on a larger research project, which is published in French: *Retour à la source: Pausanias et la religion grecque* = *Kernos*, Suppl. 20 (Liège: CIERGA, 2008). The translations of Pausanias' text are taken from the Loeb edition by W. H. S. Jones (London, 1918–35) and slightly adapted to be more literal.

- 1 G. Bowersock, 'Artemidorus and the Second Sophistic', in B. Borg (ed.), *Paideia: The World of the Second Sophistic* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2004), pp. 53–63 at 53. Many monographs, collective books and individual articles in journals have been published over the last twenty-five years, following Christian Habicht's Sather Classical Lectures, *Pausanias' Guide to Ancient Greece* (Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1998²), and the very useful introduction to the Italian edition of Pausanias by Domenico Musti in D. Musti and L. Beschi, *Pausania: Guida della Grecia. I: L'Attica* (Milan: Mondadori, 1982).
- 2 Cf. the well-balanced and lucid book of W. Hutton, *Describing Greece: Landscape and Literature in the Periegesis of Pausanias* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

scholar described him in 1890.³ Perhaps he is almost ‘one of us’, as Snodgrass concluded in a wonderful paper on Pausanias and the Chest of Kypselos in 2001.⁴ However true these identifications may be – and perhaps all are true – Pausanias had many problems to solve and many choices to make in order to transpose his vision and understanding of the material and cultural landscapes of Greece into a literary work. The *Periegesis* is the result of these choices and not a photographic image of what Greece was like at this time.⁵ This is true for every piece and type of information. It is even truer as far as religion is concerned, especially since Pausanias still belongs to the system he describes. On this level, he is *not* one of us. Therefore, reading Pausanias in order to consider the question of Greek gods implies that we should take into account his own position on the matter, on the one hand, and the way he reports the many results of his visits on the spot, combining them with literary references, on the other hand. These points of view are not completely independent, since Pausanias presents himself as a pious man, who pays respect to the local religious traditions he refers to. Such an attitude has been understood as a literary affectation rooted in the intellectual praxis of the time.⁶ I do not agree with such a statement and I follow William Hutton when he says that ‘literary effect is not necessarily the same as literary affectation’.⁷

Regarding the gods and their local cults, Pausanias is an important literary source that enables us to understand the so-called local Greek pantheons, particularly when we are able to compare his testimony with the epigraphic evidence.⁸ In this case, one of the main problems that needs to be thoroughly discussed is the chronological background of so much information. On the other hand, as far as the very concept of god in Greece is concerned, other questions – different from the

3 W. Gurlitt, *Über Pausanias: Untersuchungen* (Graz: Leuschner and Lubensky, 1890), p. 126 (‘mit den trockenen, nüchternen, pedantischen Pausanias’, tr. Snodgrass [here below], p. 128).

4 A. M. Snodgrass, ‘Pausanias and the Chest of Kypselos’, in S. Alcock et al. (eds), *Pausanias: Travel and Memory in Roman Greece* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 127–41.

5 The huge bibliography on this subject has been exhaustively treated in Pirenne-Delforge, *Retour à la source*.

6 J. F. Gaertner, ‘Die Kulte piklesen und Kultaitia in Pausanias’ *Periegesis*, *Hermes* 134 (2006), pp. 471–87. A very different approach is that of J. Elsner, ‘Pausanias: a Greek pilgrim in the Roman world’, *Past and Present* 135 (1992), pp. 3–29, repr. in R. Osborne (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Greek and Roman Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 260–85, with a *postscript* 2003, and in Alcock et al., *Pausanias: Travel and Memory*, pp. 3–20.

7 Hutton, *Describing Greece*, p. 11.

8 See different papers on Pausanias in V. Pirenne-Delforge (ed.), *Les panthéons des cités, des origines à la Périégèse de Pausanias* = *Kernos*, Suppl. 8 (Liège: CIERGA, 1998).

‘pantheonic’ reading though complementary to it – need to be asked of the *Periegesis*. The first question is: can we find a definition or definitions of what a god means to a Greek intellectual such as Pausanias, living and writing during the Roman period? The second question is: to what extent can his review of ‘all things Greek’ (πάντα τὰ Ἑλληνικά, 1.26.5) provide us with information on the point of view of his local informants on the same question of what a god is?

In order to present these questions, I shall limit myself to certain aspects only. First, if we agree that by defining a god, we are essentially speaking about status, I shall present the different places where Pausanias confronts divine and heroic ranks. Which interpretative tools does he use as regards divine or heroic status? Secondly, what happens with figures whose divinity is not a matter of discussion? What kind of mechanisms does Pausanias identify to explain the beginnings of a cult in a community? Answering each of these questions will provide some material for reflection on the Greek gods.

‘GODS BORN FROM HUMAN BEINGS’

In book 10, Pausanias describes Delphi in particular. In the sanctuary of Apollo, the paintings of Polygnotos in the *lesche* of the Knidians deserve special attention, and Pausanias takes a long time to describe the different scenes depicted on the walls. One of them is a complex image of the Underworld with many different figures. Some are epic and widely known, others are not, like the anonymous people carrying water in jars. ‘We inferred’, writes Pausanias, ‘that these people were among those who held the rites at Eleusis to be of no account. For the Greeks of an earlier period looked upon the Eleusinian Mysteries as being much higher than all other acts of piety, just as they honoured gods much more than heroes’ (10.31.11). Pausanias’ reverence for the Eleusinian Mysteries is featured throughout his work. Scholars have understood and studied such reverence for a long time.⁹ However, the contrast made in this passage between honouring heroes and honouring the gods has not been assessed. In this text, Pausanias considers that the gods are the recipients of an early reverence, which therefore manifests a deeper and higher piety. It is interesting to highlight the contrast with heroes: Greek gods extend beyond space and time while heroes are rooted in the human condition.¹⁰ But what about human

9 For example, J. Heer, *La personnalité de Pausanias* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1979), pp. 132–4.

10 On the birth of the category of the heroes see now J. N. Bremmer, ‘The rise of the hero cult and the New Simonides’, *ZPE* 158 (2007), pp. 15–26.

beings becoming gods in the *Periegesis*? Pausanias' criteria are still the same: people of ancient times were more pious and righteous; accordingly, some extraordinary stories of divinization are believable in so far as they are placed in remote periods of time. In one place, Pausanias explains his point of view on this matter: a metamorphosis is believable if it concerns, for example, an ancient king of Arcadia, such as Lykaon. Pausanias says in book 8:

For the men of those days, because of their righteousness and piety, were guests of the gods, eating at the same board; the good were openly honoured by the gods, and those who did wrong were openly visited with their wrath. In those days gods were even born from human beings, gods who down to the present day have honours paid to them – Aristaeus, Britomartis of Crete, Herakles the son of Alkmene, Amphiaraos the son of Oikles, as well as Pollux and Castor [. . .]. But at the present time, when sin has grown to such a height and has been spreading over every land and every city, no longer are gods born from human beings, except in the flattering words addressed to the power, and the wrath of the gods is reserved until unjust people have departed to the next world.¹¹

We cannot completely exclude that such self-presentation is, at least partly, a literary posturing dictated by the wish to criticize the imperial cult of his time. However, the connection of divine status, with honours paid to these figures born from human beings in a bygone age, is striking in the *Periegesis* as a whole, and this is what I would like to show. In some of the cities he visits, Pausanias points to the place where the divine status of these human figures has been recognized. The Greek expression used by Pausanias is always θεὸν νομίζειν. It has long been recognized how difficult it is to translate this expression.¹² It implies

11 Paus. 8.2.4–5 (translation more literally adapted from W. H. S. Jones): καὶ ἐμέ γε ὁ λόγος οὗτος πείθει, λέγεται δὲ ὑπὸ Ἀρκάδων ἐκ παλαιοῦ, καὶ τὸ εἰκὸς αὐτῶ πρόσεστιν. οἱ γὰρ δὴ τότε ἀνθρώποι ἕξονοι καὶ ὁμοτράπεζοι θεοῖς ἦσαν ὑπὸ δικαιοσύνης καὶ εὐσεβείας, καὶ σφισιν ἐναργῶς ἀπήντα παρὰ τῶν θεῶν τιμὴ τε οὖσιν ἀγαθοῖς καὶ ἀδικήσασιν ὡσαύτως ἡ ὀργή, ἐπεὶ τοι καὶ θεοὶ τότε ἐγίνοντο ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, οἱ γέγρα καὶ ἐς τὸδε ἔτι ἔχουσιν ὡς Ἀρισταῖος καὶ Βριτόμαρτις ἡ Κρητικὴ καὶ Ἡρακλῆς ὁ Ἀλκμήνης καὶ Ἀμφιάραος ὁ Οἰκλέους, ἐπὶ δὲ αὐτοῖς Πολυδεύκης τε καὶ Κάστωρ . . . ἐπ' ἐμοῦ δὲ – κακία γὰρ δὴ ἐπὶ πλείστον ἠύξετο καὶ γῆν τε ἐπενέμετο πᾶσαν καὶ πόλεις πάσας – οὔτε θεὸς ἐγίνετο οὐδεὶς ἔτι ἐξ ἀνθρώπου, πλὴν ὅσον λόγῳ καὶ κολακείᾳ πρὸς τὸ ὑπερέχον, καὶ ἀδίκους τὸ μῆνιμα τὸ ἐκ τῶν θεῶν ὀψέ τε καὶ ἀπελθοῦσιν ἐνθὲνδε ἀπόκειται. On this passage, see Hutton, *Describing Greece*, p. 305–11, and, with a slightly different point of view, Pirenne-Delforge, *Retour à la source*, pp. 67–72 and 333–41.

12 Cf. W. Fahr, *Θεοὺς νομίζειν: Zum Problem der Anfänge des Atheismus bei den Griechen* (Hildesheim: Olms, 1970), pp. 160–2, and *passim*.

both the affirmation of a status and the customary honours paid in a community. I will translate it by an inelegant but efficient periphrasis: 'to consider and honour as a god'.

Herakles first appears in this context.¹³ Describing the Stoa Poikile at Athens, Pausanias declares that the people of Marathon associated Herakles with the depiction of the battle because, according to the text: 'The Marathonians, according to their own account, were the first to consider and honour Herakles as a god.'¹⁴ This is confirmed in Marathon itself, where Pausanias says: 'The Marathonians worship . . . Herakles, saying that they were the first among the Greeks to consider and honour him as a god.'¹⁵ The same applies to the inhabitants of Oropos as regards Amphiaraios. According to Pausanias: 'The Oropians were the first to consider and honour Amphiaraios as a god, followed by all the Greeks.'¹⁶ In this case, an epiphany of Amphiaraios is associated with this veneration. People who were cured of their diseases had to throw a coin into a spring. This is where, according to the Oropians, Amphiaraios rose up as a god, after having been swallowed by the earth with his chariot.

Two different passages concern another figure 'born from human beings and who became a goddess'. The Megarians are the only Greeks who say that the corpse of Ino was cast up on their coast and buried in their city. According to Pausanias, they said 'that they were the first to name her Leukothea and that every year they offer her sacrifice'.¹⁷ In Messenia, the inhabitants of Korope tell a similar but slightly different story. They considered the place on the shore where Ino rose from the sea as sacred, once she was already considered and honoured as a goddess, and called her Leukothea instead of Ino.¹⁸ The difference is the epiphanic element in the Koropean version of the story, as in the case of Amphiaraios. Pausanias gives no comment about the Megarian version but we may infer that the presence of a tomb, pointing to a dead body, does not support the local claim, in so far as the visitor explicitly refutes a similar appropriation of Iphigeneia

13 For the status of Herakles see also Stafford, this volume, Chapter 12.

14 Paus. 1.15.3: Μαραθωνίους γάρ, ὡς αὐτοὶ λέγουσιν, Ἡρακλῆς ἐνομίσθη θεὸς πρῶτοις.

15 Paus. 1.32.4: σέβονται δὲ οἱ Μαραθῶνιοι . . . Ἡρακλέα, φάμενοι πρῶτοις Ἑλλήνων σφίσιν Ἡρακλέα θεὸν νομισθῆναι.

16 Paus. 1.34.2: θεὸν δὲ Ἀμφιάραον πρῶτοις Ὠρωπίοις κατέστη νομίζειν, ὕστερον δὲ καὶ οἱ πάντες Ἕλληνας ἡγνῆται.

17 Paus. 1.42.7: μόνοι δὲ εἰσιν Ἑλλήνων Μεγαρεῖς οἱ λέγοντες τὸν νεκρὸν τῆς Ἰνουῦς ἐς τὰ παραθαλάσσια σφίσιν ἐκπεσεῖν τῆς χώρας [. . .] καὶ Λευκοθέαν τε ὀνομασθῆναι παρὰ σφίσι πρῶτοις φασὶν αὐτὴν καὶ θυσίαν ἄγειν ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος.

18 Paus. 4.34.4: τὰ δὲ τὴν ὁδὸν ταύτην ἐστὶν ἐπὶ θαλάσσης χωρίον, ὃ Ἰνοῦς ἱερὸν εἶναι νομίζουσιν· ἐπαναβῆναι γὰρ ἐνταῦθα ἐκ θαλάσσης φασὶν αὐτὴν θεὸν τε ἤδη νομιζομένην καὶ Λευκοθέαν καλουμένην ἀντὶ Ἰνοῦς.

by the Megarians some lines further on. Amphiaraios and Ino, just like Herakles, are gods born from human beings, but their human flesh has disappeared. Pausanias' judgement on the Dioskouroi story is more difficult to evaluate. In Sparta, he describes the tomb of Castor, over which a *hieron* has been constructed: 'For they say that it was not before the fortieth year after the fight with Idas and Lynceus that the sons of Tyndareos were considered and honoured as gods.'¹⁹ Perhaps this calculation in time was connected to one of the numerous epiphanies of the Tyndarides to which Pausanias himself sometimes refers (3.16.2–3).

In the Arcadian book, we find all these figures, except for Ino, present in the list of the gods born from human beings (8.2.4–5, quoted above). One exception is Asklepios, who rather unexpectedly does not appear in this list. The treatment of Asklepios' divine status by Pausanias in his second book is highly significant. We first learn that the Athenians associated their worship of Asklepios with Epidauros: it was after he arrived from this place that he was considered and honoured as a god in their own city.²⁰ But Pausanias' discussion is centred on the necessity of arguing against a transformation of Asklepios' status. Pausanias insists on the fact that he was considered and honoured as a god ἐξ ἀρχῆς, 'from the beginning'. Several signs show that the god did not owe his divine reputation to events over time. This is mainly proved by his interpretation of a Homeric passage: the fact that Machaon is said to be the 'human son of Asklepios' implies that he is the 'son of a god'. Therefore, Asklepios is not a θεὸς ἐξ ἀνθρώπου, a 'god born from a human being'.

The case of Trophonios in Lebadeia, who is also absent from the list in the eighth book, is more complicated. In the Boeotian book, Pausanias says when visiting Lebadeia that he is convinced that Trophonios is the son of Apollo and not of Erginos, 'as does everyone who has gone to Trophonios to inquire of his oracle'.²¹ Pausanias' oracular experience is at the core of his conviction. Trophonios is a god and the quality of his oracle proves it. However, in the first book, explaining the transformation of Amphiaraios into a god, he writes that some other humans from the past receive divine honours (θεῶν τιμαί) in Greece. Some of them even get a whole city of their own, such as Protesilaos in Elaeus or Trophonios in Lebadeia (1.34.2). Therefore,

19 Paus. 3.13.1: ἐστὶ δὲ καὶ Κάστορος μνῆμα, ἐπὶ δὲ αὐτῷ καὶ ἱερὸν πεποιήται τεσσαρακοστῷ γὰρ ὕστερον ἔτει τῆς μάχης τῆς πρὸς Ἴδαν καὶ Λυγκέα θεοὺς τοὺς Τυνδάρειω παῖδας καὶ οὐ πρότερον νομισθῆναι φασί.

20 Paus. 2.26.8: . . . καὶ θεὸν ἀπ' ἐκείνου φασὶν Ἀσκληπιὸν σφισι νομισθῆναι.

21 Paus. 9.37.5: λέγεται δὲ ὁ Τροφώνιος Απόλλωνος εἶναι καὶ οὐκ Ἐργίνου· καὶ ἐγὼ τε πείθομαι καὶ ὅστις παρὰ Τροφώνιον ἦλθε δὴ μαντευσόμενος.

the comparison with Asklepios needs to be qualified: Trophonios is the son of Apollo, just like Asklepios, but Asklepios is a god from the beginning, while Trophonios has become a full god in the course of time by the divine honours received in Lebadeia, and through the reputation of an oracle unworthy of Apollonian paternity.

The divine status attributed to some human beings of old is a complex theological problem in a religious system without any central authority or dogmatic profile. Here and there in the *Periegesis*, Pausanias refers to the different stages for recognizing a divinity: worship in a local community and thereafter the force of a reputation that spreads progressively. He confirms that the duration of the veneration and the vitality of the cult are essential criteria, providing the basis of divine ranking for some humans of old.

By chance, this point of view is supported by the Greek version of a *senatus consultum* preserved in an inscription from Oropos, the favourite city of Amphiaraos referred to above. The inscription dates from the year 73 BC and refers to a dispute concerning the taxation of the land in Amphiaraos' sanctuary. In fulfilment of a vow, Sulla had once given a considerable amount of land, which was not to be violated, to Amphiaraos' sanctuary. Some years later, after Sulla's death, the *publicani* (tax-farmers) attempted to collect taxes from this area and were informed by the Oropians of Sulla's decisions. The *publicani* did not honour the arrangement. An envoy was sent to Rome and the representative of the *publicani* defended their opinion, arguing that the exemptions granted by Sulla referred only to those lands that were sacred to a god and that Amphiaraos was not a god.²²

Finally, the Roman Senate confirmed Sulla's decision, calling to mind the decree of 86 and the *senatus consultum* of 80, which ratified the former decree. In these two former documents, Amphiaraos' name is systematically defined by the word *theos*. We no longer possess the Latin version of the *senatus consultum* but we may suppose that the Greek version was a faithful translation of the original. The point is that the argument does not mention the Greek word *heros* to identify Amphiaraos' status. For Latin speakers such a notion did not make sense.

In his treatise *De natura deorum*, Cicero refers to the situation in philosophical discussion concerning rank within the supra-human world. The passage reads:

22 *I. Oropos* 308 (= *Syll.*³, 747). Cf. R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East: Senatus Consulta and Epistulae to the Age of Augustus* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1969), pp. 133–8, no. 23; E. Famerie, *Les documents officiels romains de la République et du principat d'Auguste: Documents épigraphiques et sources littéraires (212a–14p)*, Paris, no. 48 (forthcoming).

If Ino is to be deemed divine, under the title of Leukothea in Greece and Matuta at Rome, because she is the daughter of Cadmus, . . . are [others] to be not counted in the list of the gods?²³ . . . Or if we allow Ino, are we going to make Amphiaraios and Trophonios divine? The Roman tax-farmers, finding that lands in Boeotia belonging to the immortal gods were exempted by the censor's regulations, used to maintain that nobody was immortal who had once upon a time been a human being.²⁴

In Pausanias' language, this means that θεοὶ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, 'gods born from human beings', do not exist. On a more general level, it means that the theological problem had very concrete implications. However, it is difficult to follow Albert Schachter when he writes that 'Amphiaraios seems to have been the only hero who was legally declared a god for tax purposes.'²⁵ For the Oropians, their god was a full god. Such evidence explains why Pausanias carefully pleaded for an original divine status to be attributed to Asklepios. Two centuries earlier, the case was not evident for another healing god such as Amphiaraios.

Additional information is given in two other stories told by Pausanias. The first refers to an Olympian athlete called Kleomedes of Astypalaia, who lived in the fifth century BC. During a boxing match, he killed his adversary and was deprived of his prize by the umpires. He became mad through grief and returned home to Astypalaia. There, he pulled down the pillar that held up the roof of a school and killed the children who were attending classes. Pelted with stones by the citizens, he took refuge in the sanctuary of Athena, hiding in a chest where the Astypalaians, breaking into it, were unable to find him, dead or alive. When questioning the oracle of Delphi to find out what had happened to him, the Astypalaians were told that Kleomedes was the last hero and to be honoured with sacrifices as being no longer a mortal. Therefore, Pausanias concludes: 'From this time the Astypalaians have paid honours to Kleomedes as to a hero.'²⁶

23 Cic., *Nat. D.* 3.48 (tr. H. Rackham, Loeb, 1951²).

24 *Ibid.* 3.49: *Nostri quidem publicani cum essent agri in Boeotia deorum immortalium excepti lege censoria negabant immortalis esse ullos qui aliquando homines fuissent.* Cf. Cic., *Div.* 1.40 (88): *Amphiaraum autem sic honoravit fama Graeciae, deus ut habetur, atque ut ab eius solo, in quo est humatus, oracula peterentur*, 'As for Amphiaraios, his reputation in Greece was such that he was honoured as a god, and oracular responses were sought in the place where he was buried' (tr. W. A. Falconer, Loeb, 1923).

25 Schachter, *Cults of Boiotia*, vol. I = *BICS*, Suppl. 38.1 (London, 1981), p. 25.

26 Paus. 6.9.6–8: . . . 8. τούτοις χρήσαι τὴν Πυθίαν φασίν· ὕστατος ἥρώων Κλεομήδης Ἀστυπαλαίου, ὃν θυσίαις τιμᾶθ' ὥς οὐκέτι θνητὸν ἔοντα. Κλεομήδῃ μὲν οὖν Ἀστυπαλαίῳ ἀπὸ τοῦτου τιμᾶς [τε] ὥς ἤρω. Cf. H. W. Parke and D. E. W.

A more famous athlete, Theagenes of Thasos, won no less than one thousand four hundred crowns, according to Pausanias. When he died, one of his enemies insulted his statue every night until he died in turn, killed by the falling statue. The son of the dead man prosecuted the statue for murder. When Theagenes was condemned, the Thasians threw his statue into the sea. In the course of time, the earth yielded no crops to the Thasians and the oracle of Delphi instructed them to retrieve the exiles. Among them, Theagenes' statue had to be recovered, a problem resolved by chance during a fishing expedition. The statue was then erected in its original position and the Thasians established sacrifices to Theagenes as if he were a god.²⁷ Pausanias states in a conclusion on this subject that he knew of many other places, among both Greeks and barbarians, where images of Theagenes were erected. 'He cures diseases and receives honours from the natives.'²⁸ Since Kleomedes and Theagenes were contemporaries, the time factor is not relevant in their respective cases. What is at stake is the geographical extent of Theagenes' protection and benevolence, which is essential for the recognition of this figure as divine. Kleomedes forever remains an Astypalaian hero, whose excessive deeds must be contained and controlled by an appropriate cult within his own community.

Accordingly, the status of all these supra-human figures poses a theological problem, to which scholars like Cicero or Plutarch proposed philosophical solutions. Pausanias' position is different, as far as his main interest focuses on local practice, even expanded by some information acquired in a library. He echoes local claims, such as 'we were the first of the Greeks to consider and honour Herakles, Amphiaraios, and so on, as a god', or some Delphic oracles that specify the status of an angry dead person and the cult he deserves. Except in the case of Asklepios, Pausanias does not very often qualify such a statement. Nevertheless, the authoritative statement of the Arcadian book implies that, for him, a long-lived local tradition and great vitality in worship are important factors that attest to the divine dimension of a hero. The geographical extension of a cult is another criterion, be it a multiplication of places of cult, as for Asklepios and Theagenes, or the foreign dimension of the audience, as in the case of Trophonios and perhaps Amphiaraios. Geographical extent, however,

Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle. II: The Oracular Responses* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1956), pp. 38–9, no. 88.

27 Paus. 6.11.8: νομίζουσιν ἅτε θεῶ θύειν. Cf. J. Pouilloux, 'Théogénès de Thasos . . . quarante ans après', *BCH* 118 (1994), pp. 199–206 at 204.

28 Paus. 6.11.9: πολλαχοῦ δὲ καὶ ἐτέρωθι ἔν τε Ἑλλήσιν οἶδα καὶ παρὰ βαρβάροις ἀγάλματα ἰδρυμένα Θεαγένους καὶ νοσήματά τε αὐτὸν ἰόμενον καὶ ἔχοντα παρὰ τῶν ἐπιχωρίων τιμάς.

is not enough without the time element, as attested by his scepticism about Theagenes.²⁹

DEITIES WITHOUT ANY DISCUSSION

Local claims are also present in the appropriation of figures whose divinity is not a matter of discussion. The same objective is at stake: to be the first community to have worshipped a divinity. The example of Eileithyia in the first and third book of the *Periegesis* is significant. In book 1, Pausanias is in Athens, near the Prytaneion. A temple of Eileithyia had been built very close by. According to Pausanias, Eileithyia was coming to Delos from the Hyperborean land when the goddess Leto was pregnant and ready to give birth to the twins Artemis and Apollo. According to the local tradition, Delian people taught the others Eileithyia's name.³⁰ Sacrifices and a very old hymn were the components of her worship on the island. Afterwards, Pausanias refers to the Cretan tradition of Eileithyia's birth (the child of Hera) in Amnisos, near Knossos. Finally, he gives some information on the Athenian iconographic type of the goddess' statues. Two of them are Cretan, consecrated by Phaedra. The oldest was brought by Erysichthon from Delos.

In this passage concerning the cult of Eileithyia, Delos is the place where the divine identification was made. The goddess' name came from this place, where she appeared in a remote past and where she had been honoured for a long time. Such a description is a narrative transposition of the expression θεὸν νομίζειν, as confirmed by another passage in book 3. Visiting the Spartan sanctuary of Eileithyia, Pausanias refers to the local tradition of the cult's origin. The sanctuary was built and Eileithyia was 'considered and honoured as a god' after an oracle was given in Delphi. Presumably, Apollo was asked: 'To which god or goddess is it necessary to sacrifice in that circumstance?', and the god's answer was a name and the recommendation for worshipping a specific goddess whose honours had to be inaugurated in the community.

In his passage on the Athenian Eileithyia, Pausanias might well have been influenced by Herodotus. First of all, he gives more credit

29 Compare *IG* XI 2.1109, l. 8–17 = *LSCG* 83: . . . ὄντος ἀρχαίου τοῦ μαντείου καὶ προτετιμμένου διὰ προγόνων, παραγινομένων δὲ καὶ ξένων πλείονων ἐπὶ τὸ χρηστήριον, 'because of the antiquity of the oracle and its high reputation enjoyed for generations and also because it is visited by foreigners in large number', tr. adapted from E. Stavrianoupoulou, *Kernos*, Suppl. 16 (Liège: CIERGA, 2006), pp. 137–38.

30 Paus. 1.18.5: τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους παρ' αὐτῶν φασὶ τῆς Εἰλειθυίας μαθεῖν τὸ ὄνομα.

to Herodotus than to the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo*, since the historian seems to associate Eileithyia with the Hyperborean land and not with Mount Olympos as the hymn does.³¹ Secondly, the ὄνομα – that is, the name of Eileithyia which the Delian people taught to the rest of the world – could refer to Herodotus' second book, where he discusses the origin of Greek gods. Within the undetermined divine world, the Pelasgoi worshipped generic θεοί. Afterwards, under Egyptian influence, Greeks gave names to the gods and the divine world acquired its Greek configuration (Herod. 2.50). Without addressing the huge problem of the Herodotean *ounomata*,³² divine 'names', it seems that the authoritative representation of the origins of Greek religion delivered by Herodotus might have been present when Pausanias wrote that Delians taught 'the others' Eileithyia's name. The expression clearly implies cult-spreading based on 'theonymic' knowledge. Such spreading was also assumed by the Delphic oracle, as confirmed by the Spartan tradition of Eileithyia's cult. The expression θεὸν νομίζειν for a real goddess is unique in the *Periegesis*, where it usually refers to a change of status. The application of the expression to Eileithyia clearly shows, however, that the mechanisms of ranking or cult inauguration may be described by this single expression.

SEARCHING FOR SOME 'THEOLOGY'

If we try to search for some 'theology' in ancient Greek religion, that is, definitions concerning its gods, we can find it in passages such as these, whether they concern the early cult for Eileithyia, the divinity of Asklepios or the impressive deification of Herakles. It would be interesting to know what kind of arguments the defenders of the Oropians put forward to convince the Roman Senate that Amphiaraos was a god. Although we are given no information, we can perhaps surmise that a long-lasting veneration based on an epiphany and on the quality of his oracular and therapeutic expertise were part of it.

For Pausanias, gods are present from the beginning, ἐξ ἀρχῆς, even though their identification by name in a specific community is a matter of time or circumstance. Other gods, 'born from human beings', θεοὶ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, justify their rank by an old veneration, connecting them

31 *H.h. Apoll.* 97–101; Hdt. 4.35.6.

32 For example: A. B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II: Commentary 1–98* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), pp. 203–5; W. Burkert, 'Herodot über die Namen der Götter: Polytheismus als historisches Problem', *Museum Helveticum* 43 (1985), pp. 121–32; T. Harrison, *Divinity and History: The Religion of Herodotus* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 251–64; J. Gould, *Myth, Ritual Memory, and Exchange* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 359–77 ('Herodotus and Religion', 1996) at 374–5.

to bygone days, when gods and men could meet and interact. As for the others – that is to say, all those local heroes deeply rooted in the human condition, and the powerful people of the time who were honoured as though they were gods – they have another ranking. Another passage in book 8 confirms such a point of view. The text is well known and has often been commented upon. Pausanias refers to a theogonic story told by the Arcadians. Rhea had given birth to Poseidon and hidden him among some lambs. The goddess declared to Kronos that she had given birth to a horse and gave him a foal to swallow instead of the child, just as she did later to save Zeus himself. Pausanias says:

When I began to write my synthesis,³³ I was inclined to count these stories as foolishness, but on getting as far as Arcadia I grew to hold a more thoughtful view of them, which is this. In the days of old, those Greeks who were considered wise spoke their sayings not straight out but in riddles, and so the stories about Kronos I conjectured to be one sort of Greek wisdom. In matters of divinity, therefore, I shall adopt the received tradition.³⁴

Speaking of foolishness, Pausanias points to a well-defined category: ‘these *logoi*’ are stories referring to gods. The pious Pausanias, just as Xenophanes many centuries earlier, does not subscribe literally to such a conception of the divine. But the confrontation with ancestral Arcadian traditions changes his opinion regarding the understanding of these stories. I do not have time to go deeper into the interpretation of such an ‘Arcadian conversion’ here – I have done so elsewhere – but this statement shows the different ways in which Pausanias refers to Greek *logoi*. On the one hand, there is fiction (μυθολογήματα), which means stories referring to human actions including the heroic sphere. As Pausanias says, ‘Those who like to listen to the miraculous are themselves apt to add to the marvel, and so they ruin truth by mixing it with falsehood’ (8.2.7). On the other hand, there is the register of the enigmatic, which means hidden discourse about the divine. As far as fiction is concerned, several levels and various criteria of plausibility

33 For this meaning of συγγραφή, see Pirenne-Delforge, *Retour à la source*, pp. 23–40.

34 Paus. 8.8.2–3 (translation adapted from W. H. S. Jones): τοῦτοις Ἑλλήνων ἐγὼ τοῖς λόγοις ἀρχόμενος μὲν τῆς συγγραφῆς εὐηθείας ἔνεμον πλέον, ἐς δὲ τὰ Ἀρκάδων προεληλυθὼς πρόνοιαν περὶ αὐτῶν τοιάνδε ἐλάμβανον· Ἑλλήνων τοὺς νομιζομένους σοφοὺς δι’ αἰνιγμάτων πάλαι καὶ οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ εὐθέως λέγειν τοὺς λόγους, καὶ τὰ εἰρημένα οὖν ἐς τὸν Κρόνον σοφίαν εἶναι τινα εἰκαζόν Ἑλλήνων. τῶν μὲν δὴ ἐς τὸ θεῖον <ἀν>ήκόντων τοῖς εἰρημένοις χρῆσόμεθα. <ἀν>ήκόντων is a correction proposed by Habicht, *Pausanias’ Guide*, pp. 156–7 n. 65.

are applicable. As far as gods are concerned, Pausanias suspends judgement: 'In matters of divinity, therefore, I shall adopt the received tradition.'³⁵

Let us return to Oropos to conclude. Amphiaraios was a problem for the *publicani* who saw him as a man of the past. For the Oropians, the tradition of his epiphany and the quality of his therapeutic expertise were old enough to justify the most favourable ranking. For Cicero, Amphiaraios was a good object 'to think about' in a philosophical discussion about figures that were absent from Rome's divine background. For Pausanias, he belonged to the second rank: a θεὸς ἐξ ἀνθρώπων, due to long-lasting veneration. As Amphiaraios was a god, even of a second rank, Pausanias did not comment upon the Oropian stories about him: he adopted the received tradition and transmitted this to his readers without any critical statement. Conversely, in Troezen, in front of the place where Semele was thought to have been brought out of the Underworld by Dionysos, Pausanias decisively states that he cannot even bring himself to believe that Semele died at all, seeing that she was the wife of Zeus.³⁶ We may suppose that what was at stake was not Semele herself but the rank of Dionysos: a god ἐξ ἀρχῆς, a god of the first level, whose mother did not even die and whose wife became a goddess as soon as he married her.

In Pausanias' *Periegesis*, we find gods (θεοί), gods born from human beings (θεοὶ ἐξ ἀνθρώπων), heroes of old or heroes of yesterday. We also find the gods of his time, born from flattery. All these figures offer a broad range of possibilities for reflection on divinity and supra-human status. My focus was Pausanias, but I do believe that his insider/outsider perspective gives us a lot of material to question afresh some of the main theological issues of the Greek system. Regarding religion, the *Periegesis* is much more than a convenient databank of Greek cults and sanctuaries.

35 Paus. 8.8.3. This statement deserves close analysis. I address the problem elsewhere: Pirenne-Delforge, *Retour à la source*, pp. 71–2 and 'Under which conditions did the Greeks "believe" in their myths? The religious criteria of adherence', in Chr. Walde, U. Dill (eds), *Antike Mythen, Medien, Transformationen, Konstruktionen. Festschriften für Fritz Graf* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2009), pp. 38–54.

36 Paus. 2.31.2: ἐγὼ δὲ Σεμέλην μὲν οὐδὲ ἀποθανεῖν ἀρχὴν πείθομαι Διὸς γε οὖσαν γυναικα.