DRAYTON'S MOON-GODDESS IN ENDIMION AND PHOEBE

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IN

ENDIMION AND PHOEBE

By

NANCY LYNN SPRING, B.A.

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AUTHOR: Nancy Lynn Spring, B.A. (McMaster University)

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines Michael Drayton's Endimion and Phoebe as a work that forces its reader to focus on its female subject: the Moon-goddess. Although critics have been fascinated with the experience of Endimion, Drayton's poem is actually constructed around Phoebe. The first chapter of the thesis explores the Neoplatonism in the poem, particularly as it leads to the paradox of Drayton's mutable goddess; Phoebe contains within her both unity and multiplicity. The second chapter discusses the further complexities of Phoebe by examining the unfolding of her character through the poem. When we consider the implications of moon mythology we will find the tension between Phoebe's passivity and her power of particular importance. Drayton's Moon-goddess, "the onely Mistres of the Night," is no mere accessory to Endimion and Phoebe but instead pervades the poem so thoroughly that we cannot dispute her status as the poem's nucleus.

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Introduction

Jean Brink's assertion in Michael Drayton Revisited that "Drayton's place in the canon needs revision" (Brink ix) applies particularly to a poem of Drayton's that has been sadly neglected: Endimion and Phoebe. In the introduction to his 1925 edition of Michael Drayton's Endimion and Phoebe, J. William Hebel explains that because of the scarcity of copies of the poem to that point, Endimion and Phoebe "has failed to find a place among those poems of Drayton's which are remembered whenever his name is mentioned" (Drayton viii). Endimion and Phoebe was entered in the Stationers' Register on April 12, 1595, and most likely published in that same spring, but it was never reissued during Drayton's lifetime. J. William Hebel explains that the poem was not again published until 1856 when it was printed within a collection entitled Poems of Michael Drayton by J. P. Collier. Collier later printed the poem separately "in or about 1870" (Drayton vii). Moreover, adds Hebel, "both of his editions were limited to a very few copies" (Drayton vii). Yet though Brink works with the advantage of more than fifty-five years of the poem's easy availability because of Hebel's editions, her

treatment of Endimion and Phoebe is limited and disappointing. Although her discussion of Drayton's connections to his potential patroness, Lucy, Countess of Bedford, is fascinating, Endimion and Phoebe warrants a much more thorough "revisitation." When we re-examine the poem in the light of the philosophy, cosmology and mythology of the later sixteenth century we discover many details of the poem that have been overlooked. Moreover, when we release Endimion and Phoebe from the confines of the critical assumptions that have plagued the poem, we discover that Endimion and Phoebe has been, until this point, "visited" almost entirely by indifferent strangers.

Jean Brink is correct to censure the criticism of Drayton, especially regarding Endimion and Phoebe. Both before and after the poem's "re-entrance" into circulation in 1925, criticism has been deficient. We find the earliest treatment of the poem in 1905, when Oliver Elton devotes less than four pages to its discussion (Elton 64-68). Elton points his reader to a few examples of "good verse-craft" within Endimion and Phoebe but essentially concludes that the poem is "a bright and silvery love-story...not unmarred by pedantry and misplaced philosophising" (Elton 64). In 1924, Claude L. Finney picks up the discussion of Endimion and Phoebe through a comparison to Keats' Endymion; however, he is much more concerned with the latter poem. J. William Hebel's

introduction to his 1925 edition of the poem, along with the notes supplied by Kathleen Tillotson in 1941, provides a detailed history of the poem and its possible sources, yet both neglect to analyze the text itself. In 1932, Douglas Bush asserts without evidence that Endimion and Phoebe is "rather too facile, and, if not invertebrate, has not a back strong enough to bear the load of Drayton's [philosophical passages]" (Bush 162). Bush is more interested in the possible sources of the poem than in what Drayton has to say himself. So we find that up until this point, most critics regard Endimion and Phoebe as a mildly amusing but peripheral example of Elizabethan poetry. It is assumed to be hardly worth the effort of analysis.

But even more recent criticism falls short of careful scholarship. For while there has been little work done on Endimion and Phoebe over the years, there is even less when we discover the repetition within existing criticism. Again and again we are given plot summaries of the poem in place of analysis. Even in her 1982 article, Barbara Ewell finds it necessary to relate the plot outline of Endimion and Phoebe yet once more! Critics seem uninterested in the work done before them and continue to blindly repeat the suspected influences on the poem. Although Tillotson's notes on this are quite thorough, critics such as Reese and Hardin continue to emphasize the poem's connection to Marlowe's Hero and

Leander and Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis. Instead of probing the areas of Endimion and Phoebe that are unique to Drayton, they assume that these are the very passages where the poem is most inferior to its "predecessors"; Reese argues without proof that "Drayton is at his best when most influenced by the originals he wants to rebuke" (Reese 21). Because Reese assumes that Endimion and Phoebe is an upbraiding of Marlowe's and Shakespeare's mythological poems, she reduces its status to less than a poem in its own right. Instead, Endimion and Phoebe is seen to be a mere reaction to other poems and not worthy of deeper exploration.

When we examine the poem's criticism more carefully, we discover two main assumptions that have hampered critics' interpretations of Endimion and Phoebe throughout the years. First of all, we are told repeatedly that the poem must be studied within the context of its genre: the epyllion. Yet by grouping the poem with Marlowe's Hero and Leander and Shakespeare's Venus and Adonis, critics have given the more "chaste" Endimion and Phoebe a lower standing in comparison. It seems that after critical appetites have been whetted by Shakespeare and Marlowe, any mythological poem that falls short of such titillation is dismissed as insipid. While it is difficult to imagine C.S. Lewis' lips moistened in a seizure of voyeurism, he seems nevertheless disappointed in his reading of the poem:

> In this perplexing poem the style of the erotic epyllion jostles with that of Du Bartas, and there is a similar wavering in Drayton's conception of his theme. He has, rightly, a feeling that this myth demands something more than a sensuous treatment, but has not quite made up his mind what that something should be (Lewis 531).

Lewis believes that Drayton has mismatched the myth and the genre. Because Lewis assumes that the poem must be an epyllion, he seems to accuse Drayton of somehow shortchanging the nature of a genre that is "rightfully" erotic by blending in the dubious realm of philosophy. Douglas Bush is equally repelled by an epyllion that would dare to be other than erotic (Bush 160). But the problems of examining Endimion and Phoebe as an epyllion go further than this; for as we will discover, the genre itself is highly dubious.

Clark Hulse leads us to a major difficulty in even discussing this genre in terms of the poetry of the late 1500s. He admits that "there is no Renaissance critical discussion of the genre and the general principles of Renaissance critical theory can be made to apply only loosely and indirectly" (Hulse, Metamorphic 4). Indeed, neither the term "minor epic," nor any of its "synonyms" existed in the Renaissance (Hulse, "Elizabethan" 308).[1] Hulse reminds us

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[1]The term "epyllion" is first thought to have been used to mean a literary genre by German Classical scholars "sometime before the middle of the nineteenth century" (Reilly 111), but scholars such as Walter Allen have questioned its legitimacy as a genre even for the purposes of Classical literature.

that "Donno and Smith both recognize such genre divisions as uneasy compromises between utility and accuracy, and that uneasiness suggests that new grounds might be sought" (Hulse, Metamorphic 17). Yet it does not occur to any of these critics that the poem may be released from this genre and examined in itself. Hulse's "new grounds" will still not permit the epyllion context to be abandoned.

Hulse and many other critics cling to this "genre" as a "necessary" tool in understanding these mythological poems of the 1590's. Elizabeth Story Donno, like so many critics after her,[2] sets out to define the common elements of these poems that she insists must surely belong to the same genre (Donno, Elizabethan 1-20). She states that each of these poems originates from a love episode taken from the rich reservoir of Ovid's Metamorphoses or his Heroides (Donno, "Epyllion" 62). In most of these poems we find also the lover's complaint, both from a male and female vantage point, catalogues of beauties, numerous digressions, and some form of metamorphosis. Indeed, many of these supposed common characteristics are so general that they might apply perfectly

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[2]Note the three "anthologies" of this verse form: Elizabethan Minor Epics, Elizabethan Narrative Verse and Elizabethan Verse Romance, edited by Elizabeth Story Donno, Nigel Alexander, and M.M. Reese respectively. None of these volumes contains the same selection of poems; indeed, Alexander chooses not to include Endimion and Phoebe.

to poetry that Donno would never classify as epyllion.[3] While Donno has defended this approach as "useful" (Donno Elizabethan 6), we find that Endimion and Phoebe has only suffered because of the assumption that it is an example of such a dubious genre.

Because of this critical legacy attached to Endimion and Phoebe, critics have spent far too much time defending its position within the genre, and far too little examining the poem itself. Any volume that sets out to examine the poem within this epyllion context devotes only a few pages to its discussion as opposed to the chapters that consider the more "erotic" epyllions. While critics such as Louis Zocca, Richard Hardin and William Keach all believe that Drayton's poem is an example of "a philosophical epyllion" (Hardin 17), they agree that "one willingly returns to the sensuous but highly poetic strains of Marlowe and Shakespeare" (Zocca 263). It seems that even in literary criticism, sex sells. While Keach seems to grant the poem a lofty status, he is nevertheless quick to dismiss it; for if he had discussed poems as "extraordinarily complicated" as Endimion and Phoebe, he "would have doubled the size of [his] book" (Keach xviii). Unfortunately, until now, no critic has been willing to grace

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[3] For example, certain "complaints," such as Daniel's Rosamond, share many characteristics that Donno would reserve for epyllions.

this "extraordinarily complicated" poem with the detailed analysis that it deserves. Other critics have not been so kind to the poem: instead of dismissing it because of its complexity, they believe that two or three pages is sufficient treatment for a poem that dares to rebel against its presumed genre by neglecting the hot passion of other, more erotic epyllions. But whether or not Endimion and Phoebe belongs to this genre, indeed, whether or not this genre even exists, need not concern us. For it is time to let go of this critical tradition that has caused an overwhelming neglect of a fascinating poem.

The second assumption that has marred criticism of Endimion and Phoebe is the supposition that this is a poem about Endimion. Although Drayton draws our attention to his mysterious and paradoxical Moon-goddess, critics remain more fascinated with the beautiful shepherd boy. We find the possible origins of this bias in 1944, when Edward Le Comte devoted an entire chapter to the poem in Endymion in England. Here Le Comte strives to analyze Endimion and Phoebe according to the actual text; to his credit, we suspect that Le Comte, unlike his predecessors, has read the entire poem several times with care. But although his effort is much more thorough than earlier critics, the very perspective of his book biases his interpretation of the poem. For Le Comte, like most critics of the poem who follow him, is preoccupied

with the "Endimion" half of the myth. Though Drayton's poem is actually shaped around Phoebe, "the onely Mistres of the Night" (line 412), critics have assumed that Endimion must surely be the poem's subject and focus. Even such recent critics as Vincent Petronella believe that Endimion's experience is the undisputed centre of the poem.

The first part of this thesis will examine an aspect of Endimion and Phoebe that has been only partially explored to this point: this is the poem's Neoplatonism. If we refuse to squander any further critical energy in determining the "true genre" of Endimion and Phoebe, then we need not fear the Neoplatonic presence within the poem. Both Barbara Ewell and Vincent Petronella have recently discussed this aspect, though Petronella appears unaware of the former's work. Their discussions of Endimion and Phoebe as a Neoplatonic allegory of love are engaging, but both focus almost exclusively on the influence of Ficino's version of Plato's Symposium. When we examine the influence of Plato's Republic, as well, we find that Drayton has divided the world of Endimion and Phoebe into two regions: spiritual and material. Yet though Phoebe represents the world of Platonic Ideas, her status is problematic; because of her very nature she demonstrates Drayton's paradox of a mutable goddess.

The second part of this thesis explores the character of Phoebe more specifically. Because even modern critics have

remained more fascinated with the "Endimion" half of the myth, the complexity of the Moon-goddess has been ignored. When we acknowledge the ancient connection of women to the moon and the mythological perceptions of the late sixteenth century, we find that Drayton has created this complex Phoebe as the centre of his poem. She embodies not only the paradox of a mutable goddess, but also demonstrates the tensions between her virginity and fertility, her confinement and control, and her power and passivity or powerlessness. By abandoning previous critical assumptions and by exploring the unfolding of Endimion and Phoebe step by step, we can no longer ignore the magnitude of Drayton's glorious Moon-goddess.

Chapter One

THE PARADOX OF A MUTABLE GODDESS: NEOPLATONISM IN ENDIMION AND PHOEBE

Endimion and Phoebe has been called a "Neoplatonic allegory of the soul's awakening through love to knowledge and wisdom" (Petronella 95). Indeed, this is a poem pervaded by Neoplatonism. Although critics such as Vincent Petronella convince us of the poem's connection to Plato's Symposium and the concept of "Platonic love," Drayton explores far wider aspects of Neoplatonism. Since Endimion and Phoebe appears to be greatly influenced by Plato's Republic as well, other parts of Neoplatonism also need to be considered. Through a careful reading of the poem, we find that Drayton accentuates the difference between the spiritual world of Phoebe and the material world of Endimion. While some critics have been intrigued by Endimion's "Platonic ascent," Drayton focuses our attention on Phoebe, who, being cyclical by her very nature, is a fascinating choice as a Platonic Form. When we explore Drayton's much-neglected "number section" in the poem, we find that Phoebe's glory is expressed in both her unity and her multiplicity. Indeed, Drayton presents the paradox of a

mutable goddess. Only by examining the Neoplatonism throughout Endimion and Phoebe may we discover why Phoebe is the appropriate Form to have communion with earthly beings.

In his article "Double Ecstasy in Drayton's Endimion and Phoebe," Vincent Petronella focuses on an aspect of Renaissance Neoplatonism that intrigued many poets of the late sixteenth century. Sears Jayne explains this trend:

> About 1570 a new Plato burst upon the English scene--not Plato the cosmologist or Plato the politician, but the Plato of the Symposium, Plato the apostle of love and beauty, of refinement and gentility, of art and poetry, of everything to which the "barbarous" English aspired in their scramble to catch up with the civilized continent (Jayne 225).

The popularity of this "new continental doctrine" of love and beauty is usually attributed to the writings of Marsilio Ficino, though his influence was not always direct. Indeed, it is Ficino who coined the term "Platonic love," by which he meant to describe love as Plato depicted it (Kristeller 47). Although the phrase has become trivialized and diluted, Ficino meant it in its purest sense; this concept provided the bottom rung of "the Neoplatonic ladder from man to God" (Jayne 227). In his Commentary on Plato's Symposium on Love, Ficino emphasizes that love is the highest human experience available in this life, for the love of a human being acts as a preparation for the love of God. Moreover, Ficino believed that even physical love is a good thing because "it is physiologically natural" (Ficino 16). The progress of the

human soul to the heavenly realm is ultimately brought about by love.

Vincent Petronella explains that the poetic ascent of Endimion's soul to the heavens is only made possible by Drayton's use of "three interconnected Neoplatonic themes: the four 'frenzies'; the triad of emanatio-ratio-remeatio; and mystical ecstasy" (Petronella 87). This complicated process brings Endimion's soul from a state of "multiplicity to unity" (Petronella 88), for according to Ficino, the soul cannot enter the upper world of the "One" until it is rid of its earthly dividedness. Yet this is impossible without divine assistance. Petronella reminds us that Phoebe first slides down from her sphere "for her sweet Endimions sake" (line 82). He will not learn the heavens' truths without her: "The divine or supernatural world enters that of the mortal (emanatio); the mortal becomes enraptured (raptio) and anticipates the refreshing newness of a return (remeatio) to the divine level" (Petronella 89). Phoebe then provides energy for Endimion's spiritual ascent by the four frenzies: "(1) poetry or music, (2) rites or divine mysteries, (3) prophesy, and (4) love" (Petronella 88). Of course we might guess which is "the greatest of these." It is ultimately Phoebe's active love for Endimion that leads us to the poem's first spiritual climax. Petronella considers this moment to be the poem's most vital Neoplatonic passage:

> And now to shew her powerfull deitie,
> Her sweet Endimion more to beautifie,
> Into his soule the Goddesse doth infuse
> The fiery nature of a heavenly Muse,
> Which in the spyrit labouring by the mind
> Partaketh of celestiall things by kind:
> For why the soule being divine alone,
> Exempt from vile and grosse corruption,
> Of heavenly secrets comprehensible,
> Of which the dull flesh is not sensible;
> And by one onely powerfull faculty,
> Yet governeth a multiplicity,
> Being essentiall, uniforme in all;
> Not to be sever'd not dividuall.
>
> (lines 505-518)

Endimion glimpses a world higher than his own only because the divine Phoebe chooses to infuse him with "The fiery nature of a heavenly Muse." Critics have been so captivated by Endimion's experience that they have inflated its significance in the poem. When Barbara Ewell observes that "Hallet Smith has indicated the Platonic bias of Drayton's choice of subject," she adds in parenthesis: "(Endimion is the symbol of high contemplation)" (Ewell 15). Here she assumes, of course, that Endimion is necessarily Drayton's subject. But when we examine the poem, we find that he is really a rather passive participant in this scene of divine intervention. Drayton instead emphasizes the ardent goddess. In an echo of the writings of Ficino, we learn that only by the conditioning of his soul is Endimion allowed to temporarily transcend the "dull" world of the senses. Phoebe is the necessary "conditioner": she is Drayton's true subject.

While Vincent Petronella's examination of Endimion and Phoebe is fascinating, it by no means provides an exhaustive discourse on Neoplatonism in the poem. Petronella's argument is strong enough to convince us of the importance of Ficino's influence on Drayton, especially in his philosophy of love, but this is really only one aspect of Neoplatonism in the poem. Marsilio Ficino has been called the "fountainhead of Renaissance love Platonism," and this may well be true (Jayne 238). Yet Renaissance Neoplatonism as a whole neither begins nor ends with Ficino. Sears Jayne argues that while he would not minimize the "ultimate importance" of Ficino's influence, he is offended that "Ficino's responsibility for the Platonism of the English Renaissance has usually been regarded as 'a matter too generally agreed upon to need further comment'" (Jayne 215).

The Platonic tradition in England, observes Jayne, "was not only strong but also basically Neoplatonic for centuries before Ficino was born" (Jayne 215). Moreover, his writings were not translated into English during the Renaissance, nor did his works begin to appear in English libraries until after 1600 (Jayne 221). Granted, the educated Englishman, including Drayton himself, would have had access to Ficino through Latin. "Yet copies of these editions are relatively uncommon in surviving library catalogues of the period" (Jayne 220). While his influence on English

Renaissance poetry is obvious, his concepts were often poorly understood and integrated. Jayne describes Chapman's use of Ficino in "Ovid's Banquet of Sense" and "Andromeda Liberata" as borrowings that "are simply stuck into his poems as cloves are stuck into a ham" (Jayne 218). Clearly, Petronella has made a strong argument that this is not so in Drayton's Endimion and Phoebe. Indeed, the Platonism that we find in Drayton's poem is woven so subtly into each passage that it becomes integral to Drayton's very message.

Drayton's use of Neoplatonism reaches further than the realm of love. Here we must consider a work that had just as much impact on Renaissance England as Plato's Symposium. This work is Plato's Republic. Specifically, the allegory of the cave (Republic VII) appears to have strongly influenced Endimion and Phoebe. Drayton emphasizes the distinction between the spiritual or intelligible world of Phoebe and the material world of Endimion. Isabel Rivers provides a summary of this famous allegory:

> Life in the second, material world is represented by prisoners in a cave, chained so that they cannot move their heads, who spend their time watching **shadows** cast on a wall by a fire behind them. One of them...is forcibly released and made to see his "reality" for what it is. He is then dragged out of the cave into the **sunlight** (the first world), where painfully he is able first to discern objects and finally to look straight at the **sun** itself (the Idea of Good). Having learnt the truth, he returns to the cave to attempt to enlighten his fellow prisoners (Rivers 35-6) (emphasis mine).

Although Endimion's existence in the beginning of the poem seems far more tolerable than life in a cave, his world is nevertheless restricted. From the point where Phoebe first approaches Endimion, Drayton provides clues that emphasize the limitations of Endimion's earthly environment:

> Neere to a Grove she had Endimion spied,
> Where he was fishing by a River side
> Under a Poplar, shadowed from the Sun,
> Where merrily to court him she begun.
> (lines 171-74)

If we keep the allegory of the cave in mind, we see that because he lives in the material world, Endimion is necessarily "shadowed from the Sun." His perceptions may be formed only from shadowed copies of the real world, for he does not have direct access to "the Idea of the Good." Furthermore, it is no accident that he sits under a "Poplar." For this is a tree with a rapid growth-rate and relatively short life-expectancy. Add to this that it is known for its tremulous leaves, and one can acknowledge that it serves as a fitting symbol for mutability. In his attention to such detail, Drayton accentuates the transience of the world in which Endimion lives.

But Drayton becomes even more explicit in portraying the earth as the inferior realm that Neoplatonism would have it to be. When Phoebe first carries Endimion to his heavenly journey, she lifts him "up from this lumpish mould" (line 665). The OED tell us that "mould" can mean both earthly soil

in a general sense and, more specifically, the earth or soil that acts as a grave to the dead. In addition, "mould" refers to the material comprising the human body, just as Adam was formed from the dust or "mould" of the earth. Clearly, this is an image of a flawed, ephemeral world. The earth's human inhabitants are merged so completely with the soil that one cannot distinguish the source of the "lumpish" clumsiness, stupidity and lethargy that is common to both. Without celestial aid, these beings are without hope of a spiritual existence. From his heavenly vantage point, Endimion views "The earth in perfect roundness of a ball" (lines 665-6). It seems that in spite of its shortcomings, the earth does possess a degree of perfection. Yet this is not what Drayton chooses to emphasize. We might note that the earth only resembles the "perfect roundness of a ball" when it is observed from a great distance. Up close, its imperfections cannot be ignored.

Near the end of the poem we learn that the planets "extend their severall powers, / Unto this little fleshly world of ours" (lines 697-8). Such a description of Endimion's environment is hardly flattering. Drayton diminishes the earth's physical and spiritual status with two adjectives. Compared to the magnitude of the universe, our world is, after all, "little." Compared to the spiritual realm from which Phoebe descends, our world is nothing more

than "fleshly." In our material existence, our greatest pleasures can rarely surpass the lascivious, sensual desires of our flesh. Drayton expands on the limitation of Endimion's world:

> Wherein her Maker's workmanship is found,
> As in contriving of this mighty round,
> In such strange maner and such fashion wrought
> As doth exceede mans dull and feeble thought,
> Guiding us still by their directions;
> And that our fleshly frayle complections
> Of Elementall natures grounded bee,
> With which our dispositions most agree;
> ...
> And by their influence powerfull on the earth,
> Predominant in mans fraile mortall bearth,
> And that our lives effects and fortunes are,
> As is that happy or unlucky Starre,
> Which reigning in our frayle nativitie,
> Seales up the secrets of our destinie.
> (lines 699-706, 711-716)

Here we are subject not only to our "Maker" but also to the "sovereign" powers of the planets. Although we are part of a creation that reflects beauty, we are unable to appreciate the "workmanship" of our "Maker." It is interesting that Drayton again seems to praise the earthly. The "Maker" has formed "this mighty round" of earth with skill. It has been created in "strange maner" and has been wrought with "fashion." Yet the highlight of this creation, man, is plagued with "dull and feeble thought" that prevents his understanding of the world around him and its source. Moreover, the astrological powers of the planets control human destiny by what seems to be little more than chance or luck.

Like Endimion, we are all victims of our "frayle mortall bearth." While on earth, we will continue to suffer its limitations.

In this passage from Endimion and Phoebe, we see a blending of Christian and Platonic thought, a phenomenon not at all extraordinary in the 1500s. Ficino considered Christianity to be a sister to Platonism. He believed that "true religion, that is, Christianity, and true philosophy, that is, Platonism, are in basic harmony with each other," neither having to be subservient to the other (Kristeller 49). Isabel Rivers explains that "because of its doctrine of two worlds, [Platonism] was most easily assimilated to Christianity" (Rivers 37). Since Drayton is specifically concerned with distinguishing the worlds of Endimion and Phoebe, we can understand how two apparently separate modes of thought, Christianity and Platonism, become merged. The Apostle Paul's words to the Corinthians are particularly compatible with Plato's allegory of the cave. Paul stresses that "Now we see but a poor reflection; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). Whether we call our earthly existence "shadowy" or "looking through a glass darkly," the implications are the same. Our present life is a mere substitute for the life that is one day to come. A second aspect that aligns Christianity with Platonism is that

the world beyond, that world which is full of "sunlight" and complete knowing, is immutable. In book five of the Republic, Plato explains that the world beyond consists of essential, unchanging Forms. Beautiful objects may come and go, but the essential Form of Beauty remains "unchangeably in the same state for ever" (Plato 220). Christianity, too, affirms that only the world beyond our senses has permanence. Paul encourages us to "fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:18). Certain strands of Neoplatonism brought Platonism even closer to Christianity. Plotinus' idea of "the One" comes very close to the Christian concept of an eternal but personal God (Jayne 226-7). So we need not be surprised that Drayton would display evidence of this merging in Endimion and Phoebe. Drayton adeptly expresses the distinctions between the two worlds in the poem, that which is transient and that which is eternal, using both Christianity and Platonism.

But even more interesting than his attention to the lower world of Endimion is his fascination with the celestial world of Phoebe. Her world is not only distinct from Endimion's, but it is physically higher. Indeed, her environment includes a throne from which she must descend in order to reach the lowly earth. Twice Drayton emphasizes this descent: near the beginning of the poem we have "Phoebe

sliding from her Sphere" (line 75) and later she repeats the action:

> Downe slydeth Phoebe from her Chrystall chayre,
> Sdayning to lend her light unto the ayre,
> But unto Latmus all in haste is gon,
> Longing to see her sweet Endimion;
> At whose departure all the Plannets gazed,
> As at some seld-seene accident amazed,
> Till reasoning of the same, they fell at odds,
> So that a question grew amongst the Gods,
> Whether without a generall consent
> She might depart their sacred Parliament?
> (lines 389-399)

Her longing for Endimion overrides any sense of heavenly duty that might be associated with her "Chrystall chayre." Although the other celestial gods disapprove of this departure from her rightful realm, Phoebe will not be stopped. In her passion, Phoebe disdains lending "her light" to the air. Yet because of her earthly descent, she nevertheless bestows her glory:

> But her sweet Latmus which she lov'd so much,
> No sooner once her dainty foote doth touch,
> But that the Mountaine with her brightness shone
> And gave a light to all the Horizon:
> Even as the Sun which darkness long did shroud,
> Breakes suddainly from underneath a clowd,
> So that the Nimphs which on her still attended,
> Knew certainly great Phoebe was discended;
> And all aproched to this sacred hill,
> There to awayt their soveraigne Goddesse will.
> (lines 423-432)

Because of Phoebe's divinity, the earth may be described not as "lumpish," but as hallowed: Latmus here is a "sacred hill." Drayton emphasizes this elevated spiritual status by his use of light imagery. Though the region had been in

darkness as though "underneath a clowd," Phoebe gives "light to all the Horizon." Of course, Platonically, the earth has been and still remains in "shadows." Yet Phoebe's presence allows at least for the possibility of a glimpse outside the "cave."

Just as Endimion's mortal being is not easily distinguished from the "lumpish mould" on which he stands, so is Phoebe merged with her heavenly environment. Giordano Bruno was an Italian philosopher and astronomer of the sixteenth century who was famous for his theories of the infinite universe and the multiplicity of worlds. Petronella translates his description of Phoebe's deity: "Diana is that one who is being itself, that being who is truth itself, that truth that is intelligible nature, which the sun and the splendour of superior nature influence" (Petronella 95). Phoebe's role in Endimion and Phoebe is far more than a tour guide to Endimion through a heavenly journey of truth; she is herself truth. Phoebe is Drayton's personification of a Platonic Form.

When guided through the heavens, Endimion is only able to learn of their mysteries because they are "lightned by her shining beames" (line 683). His own shadowy vision is not sufficient. Before Phoebe reveals her full identity, his words to her serve as an amusing foreshadow:

Be kind (quoth he) sweet Nymph, unto thy lover,

> My soules sole essence, and my sences mover,
> Life of my life, pure Image of my hart,
> Impressure of Conceit, Invention, Art,
> My vitall spirit, receves his spirit from thee,
> Thou art that all which ruleth all in me.
> (lines 569-574)

Though Endimion speaks only as an ardent lover, his words are more accurate that he realizes. Petronella finds this passage to be especially significant, for he believes that "at times such as these, Phoebe represents the soul of Endimion" (Petronella 96). This statement is problematic in part; for Phoebe's identity extends far beyond her spiritual connection to Endimion. Of course, Petronella explores this concept in terms of Ficino's Commentary on Plato's "Symposium", but our interpretation need not be so complicated. Phoebe is the "essence" of Endimion's soul in that she is the immortal Form of which it partakes. Without the existence of Phoebe's "real" world, there would be no "copy" of the real world. Endimion's "vitall spirit" does indeed receive his spirit from her. According to some strands of Neoplatonism, the human soul is actually a part of the World of Ideas but is trapped within the corporeal human body. In his Phaedo Plato explains that until a pathway is found back to the World of Ideas, the soul remains "excluded from all fellowship with the pure and uniform and divine" (Rivers 42). In this way, Endimion's connection to Phoebe is closer than he realizes. Her "light" will not only lead him into truth but will also provide the

possibility of his soul's release.

Phoebe's "powerfull deitie" and her ability to "infuse the fiery nature of a heavenly Muse" into Endimion's soul help to indicate that, in her, Drayton has depicted a Platonic Form (lines 505-8). Yet it is curious that he has chosen Phoebe to fulfill this role. For in the realm of Being, that world that is eternal, stable, immutable and perfect, Phoebe, the goddess of the moon, leaves much to be desired. By her very nature, she is not in herself a source but is instead a reflection of the sun. This fact was well-known by Drayton's time; S.K. Heninger reminds us that even "Pythagoras was well aware that the moon shines only by light reflected from the sun" (Heninger 124-5). When Phoebe first descends to the earth, she must do so in reference to her brother, Phoebus:

> Her Brothers beames now had shee layd aside,
> Her horned cressent, and her full-fac'd pride:
> For had shee come adorned with her light,
> No mortall eye could have endur'd the sight.
> (lines 105-108)

Although we are told that "No mortall eye" could tolerate the sight of "her light," we know that the brilliance truly belongs to the sun. If she lays aside her "Brothers beames" then there is no fear of injuring human eyes, for she has no light of her own. Her heavenly beauty may only be exposed with the cooperation of the sun:

> Her richest Globe shee gloriously displayes,
> Now that the Sun had hid his golden rayes:
> Least that his radiencie should her suppresse,

> And so might make her beauty seeme the lesse.
> (lines 849-852)

Her dependence on another god's whims makes Phoebe a fascinating choice as Platonic Form. But it is not just her deficiency as an independent source that makes us question her ability to fulfill this role.

As the goddess of the moon, Phoebe's cyclical nature gives her qualities that seem more in keeping with Endimion's material world than the immutable World of Ideas. Because she is the moon, because she bears "Twenty & eyght great gorgious lamps" (line 842), she is "immutable" only in the consistency of her cycles; her very essence involves continuous waxing and waning. Drayton describes her ever-changing beauty with great sensitivity:

> Her rarest beauty being now begun,
> But newly borrowed from the golden Sun,
> Her lovely cressent with a decent space,
> By due proportion beautifi'd her face,
> Till having fully fild her circled side,
> Her glorious fulness now appeard in pride;
> Which long her changing brow could not retaine,
> But fully waxd, began againe to wane.
> (lines 833-840)

The pulsating effect of her splendour is riveting, in spite of its being "merely" a reflection of "the golden Sun." Yet there is something suspiciously earthly about this description of beauty. When Endimion first experiences the spiritual ecstasy that Petronella discusses, his physical description could serve to foreshadow Phoebe's glory:

> His cheekes now pale then lovely blushing red,
> Which oft increasd, and quickly vanished;
> And as on him her fixed eyes were bent,
> So to and fro his colour came and went.
> (lines 533-536)

Endimion's earthly face, albeit under spiritual influence, becomes a picture of the waxing and waning beauty of Phoebe. Yet from an earthly point of view, we might interpret the throbbing flushing of Endimion's face as just as much a reflection of human sexuality, as of Phoebe's deity. So what is it about Phoebe, a goddess, that aligns her so closely to human experience?

Drayton emphasizes her inferior position in the heavenly hierarchy. Although the other gods are not pleased with her earthly descent they cannot restrain her, "For of the seaven sith she the lowest was, / Unto the earth she might the easiest passe" (lines 401-2). It seems that her lesser position in the World of Ideas makes Phoebe naturally more sympathetic to earthly matters. But her affection for mortals is rooted in more than her physical proximity to the earth:

> Sith onely by her moysty influence,
> Of earthly things she hath preheminence,
> And under her, mans mutable estate
> As with her changes doth participate;
> And from the working of her waning source,
> Th'uncertaine waters held a certaine course.
> ...
> And unto her of women is assign'd,
> Predominance of body and of mind,
> That as of Plannets shee most variable,
> So of all creatures they most mutable.
> (lines 404-9, 419-22)

Phoebe's physical nearness to the earth gives her power over its tides and perhaps rainfall. She has the authority to make the otherwise "uncertaine" waters follow a path and pattern that is "certaine." Yet the distinction between goddess and subject is not always so clear; Phoebe and humans "participate" together in a kind of dance of change. It is probably predictable that Drayton specifies that Phoebe is especially "assign'd" the "creatures" that are "most mutable": women. Of course, we will not dispute feminine connections to the moon. Drayton reminds us often enough of the twenty-eight-day cycle that turns our minds toward female menstruation. Nevertheless, it does not appear in this poem that women are Phoebe's main concern. Her true connection to the earth lies in her pursuit of Endimion. For this initiates her earthly descent.

Drayton seems to have been the first poet to disguise the mythical Phoebe as a nymph in order to woo Endimion as a "mortal." She approaches Endimion "like a Nymph, crown'd with a flowrie twine, / And not like Phoebe, as herselfe divine" (lines 109-10). The implications of this image create an interesting paradox. When she is disguised and descended to Earth, she is a mere partaker of Phoebe's greatness and not Phoebe herself. Edward Le Comte expands on this idea:

> The point that Phoebe seems not herself on earth is returned to often enough and under such circumstances as to call attention to its

> philosophical appropriateness. We come to realize that when the goddess adapts herself to mortal senses she is platonically bound to seem less than, lower than, her celestial self. And Drayton's Endimion...fails to connect the ideal he has long worshipped at a distance with that beauty which, entering at the eye, makes its way to his heart (Le Comte 92).

Endimion's failure to recognise his "sacred queen" in the "nymph" who approaches him is at times humorous. His dismissing remarks while he tries to fish are particularly ironic: "Now, he requests, that shee would stand aside, / Because the fish her shadow had espide" (lines 237-8). That Endimion would dare to associate his great deity with the "shadows" of the material world seems heretical, yet this is what Drayton does. While on earth, Phoebe is not truth herself, but is obscured in truth's shadows:

> Which whilst her Brother Titan for a space,
> Withdrew himselfe, to give his sister place,
> Shee now is darkned to all creatures eyes,
> Whilst in the shadow of the earth she lyes.
> (lines 653-62)

In an act that may parallel Christ's incarnation, Phoebe sets aside her heavenly glory in order to offer Endimion a more abundant life. Just as God receded from Christ at the moment of crucifixion, leaving the earth in darkness (Luke 23:44-5), so does Phoebus "Withdraw himselfe" from his sister when she descends to the shadowy earth. In this way Phoebe is the saving mediator between the spiritual World of Forms and the material World of Copies.

Before concluding our discussion of Neoplatonism in Endimion and Phoebe, we must confront a passage that has been disdained and avoided by critics, but has nevertheless been suspected of being somehow "intimately connected" with the philosophy of the poem as a whole (Smith 95): the passage of the "nines and threes" (lines 878-974). In the poem's climax, when Phoebe appears in her final procession, only the Charities and the Muses are allowed to come close to her glory:

> For none but these were suffered to aproch,
> Or once come neere to this celestiall Coach,
> But these two of the numbers, nine and three,
> Which being od include a unity,
> Into which number all things fitly fall,
> And therefore named Theologicall:
> And first composing of this number nine,
> Which of all numbers is the most divine,
> From orders of the Angels dooth arise,
> Which be contayned in three Hirarchies,
> And each of these three Hirarchies in three,
> The perfect forme of true triplicity.
> (lines 879-890)

The reason for their privileged treatment is simple: the Charities and the Muses are comprised of the sacred numbers 3 and 9. Only those grouped according to these elevated numbers are worthy to approach Phoebe's divinity. But while we might agree that numbers connected to the "Hierarchy of Angels," the Muses, the Worthies, and, of course, the Trinity warrant special recognition, we may wonder why the numbers 3 and 9 are distinguished as sacred. Moreover, we wonder why Drayton included this number section which some critics

believe to be an enigmatic "digression" that keeps the "true" tale "waiting" (Le Comte 98).

Petronella explains the significance of Drayton's number passage in part by recognizing that numbers in general are "insubstantial, pure, absolute forms--the essential ideas that make up the Neoplatonic world of being" (Petronella 100). He borrows from S.K. Heninger by adding that "The physical representation of number...is a legitimate means of rendering perceptible what might otherwise remain beyond human knowledge" (Heninger 77). Numbers are indeed an appropriate topic in a poem that considers a transcendence of the mundane world of human perception. Indeed, Petronella believes that "Drayton has not digressed at all" with this passage (Petronella 101). But while Petronella acknowledges the relationship between numbers and the world of forms, he neglects to explore their connection to the world of copies, the world where we first learn to count with our fingers and toes. For, contrary to Petronella, numbers are also "palpable countables" (Petronella 100); unlike any other concept, they significantly collapse the distance between the material world and the world of Platonic archetypes. Numbers clearly partake of both worlds.

Because Petronella has failed to completely appreciate the significance of Drayton's number passage, he does not use Heninger's work to his full advantage. For Heninger tells us

that numbers are "the means of bridging the physical and the conceptual worlds, of allowing intercourse between them" (Heninger 78). And here we discover in part why Drayton has linked his number passage so strongly to Phoebe. It is no accident that Drayton allows only exalted numbers to approach Phoebe's "celestiall Coach." Indeed, the groups of 3 and 9, together with Phoebe, become the centre of the poem's climax. Like Phoebe, numbers "have existence in both worlds, embrace both worlds, allow for interaction between both worlds" (Heninger 78). Drayton uses the dual nature of numbers to illustrate the glory of his Moon-goddess who joins the physical to the conceptual world. But while this helps to explain the presence of numbers in general in the poem, we must consider why Drayton chose to focus specifically on the numbers 3 and 9.

Drayton's first clue as to the importance of 3 and 9 is that they "being od include a unity" (line 882). In Touches of Sweet Harmony, S.K. Heninger explains that because odd numbers will not be divided into equal parts, "they have an integrity which suggests they are limited, capable of organization, [and] productive of order....Consequently, odd numbers are associated with perfection and divinity" (Heninger 86). In this way, odd numbers might be thought to "include a unity." But Drayton is far more specific in the numbers that he exalts, for this is his passage of "nines and threes."

Heninger continues to explain that according to Pythagorean mathematics, the number three is particularly significant because it is the first "real" number. This is the first number or "quantity composed of units" that has physical extension (Heninger 87). In Medieval Number Symbolism, Vincent Hopper explains this more thoroughly:

> The number 1...is represented as a point. The number 2 gives extension, since by joining 2 points a line is produced. But neither point nor line are tangible objects. The triad, however, is represented by the triangle, the first plane figure, and is therefore the first real number. The triangle becomes thereby the basis of all objects perceptible to the senses. This is the meaning of Plato's remark that surface is composed of triangles (Hopper 35).

But because of Phoebe's divinity, we may consider also another explanation of the number 3's importance. Hopper tells us that "the all-embracing 3 [is] the most universal number of deity" (Hopper 6). He explains that nine, too, is elevated in this way, although the "the triple triad" is necessarily less holy than the Trinity (Hopper 100). So Phoebe's connection to 3 and 9 is logical when we consider both her relationship to the earth and her divinity.

But when we examine the poem, we find that Drayton connects the number 3 to Phoebe even more strongly. Just before entering the number passage, Drayton reminds us of Phoebe's unique beauty:

> Her ayrie vesture yet so rare and strange,
> As every howre the colour seem'd to change,

> Yet still the former beauty doth retaine,
> And ever came unto the same againe.
> (lines 855-8)

Because of her cyclical nature, Phoebe's beauty is constant only insofar as it continually changes. In this way Phoebe expresses and contains both unity and multiplicity. And here we discover a further connection to the number 3. For Hopper explains that "by virtue of the triad, unity and diversity of which it is composed are restored to harmony" (Hopper 41). Drayton emphasizes this aspect of 3 by referring to the mystery of the Holy Trinity:

> First in the forme of this triplicitie
> Is shadowed that mighty Trinitie,
> Which still in stedfast unity remayne,
> And yet of three one Godhead doe containe.
> (lines 955-8)

It is not surprising that the "mighty Trinitie" would be "shadowed" when we consider its function within the transient world:

> All things are essentially <u>One</u> with God. But just as 3 is the first number which can be visualized (in the triangle, the first plane figure) by the human eye, so manifoldness is more comprehensible to human understanding, which cannot aspire to the intensity of the One" (Hopper 99).

In a world of shadows, the full "intensity of the One" is too great to bear: "No mortal could have endur'd the sight" (line 108). Instead this intensity must be mitigated or dispersed before human beings may understand its truth. Just as the concept of the Trinity may allow Christians to grasp the

essence of God, so does Phoebe, who contains both multiplicity and unity, provide the means for the earthly Endimion to glimpse a heavenly vision.

We must wonder how Petronella could have missed the strong connection between the number passage and Phoebe, for he recognizes in his article that "Phoebe is the Ultimate One who combines within her the multiplicity of divine forces" (Petronella 99). Perhaps his failure to recognize the link between the number 3 and Phoebe, whose natures include both unity and multiplicity, is caused by his obsession with Endimion. For when he acknowledges that only "two of the numbers, nine and three" may approach Phoebe, he finds it necessary to ask, "Is Endimion in fact actually absent from this mystical moment?" (Petronella 100). Petronella is so concerned with defending Endimion's presence within the scene that he fails to notice that Drayton leaves him out for a purpose: Phoebe, not Endimion is the focus of this poem. She is the being whose unity in the midst of her multiplicity, whose constancy in the midst of her mutability, allows her to act as mediator between the spiritual World of Forms and the material World of Copies. She is Endimion's saviour.

Finally, we must consider Neoplatonic ideas about cosmology as they relate to Phoebe, the logical arbitrator between the two worlds. E.M.W. Tillyard explains that the moon was seen to be suspended in a kind of cosmic limbo:

> Within this universe there was a sharp division between everything beneath the sphere of the moon and all the rest of the universe. (The adjective sublunary contains a lot of meaning.) It was the difference between mutability and constancy. Though the four elements were the material for the whole universe, they were differently mixed in these two regions: below the moon ill, above it perfectly (Tillyard 52-3).

Because the moon lies exactly between what is "mutable" and what is "constant," it is the ideal mediator between the transient world and the eternal. Isabel Rivers quotes the words of Cicero from his Republic:

> In the lowest sphere revolves the Moon, set on fire by the rays of the Sun. But below the Moon there is nothing except what is mortal and doomed to decay, save the souls given to the human race by the bounty of the gods (Rivers 81).

Phoebe is divine, but only marginally. Her proximity to the earth makes her the natural bestower of "the bounty of the gods." Petronella again translates the words of Bruno:

> [Phoebe] is of the order of second intelligences that gather up the splendour received from the first intelligence in order to communicate it to the others who lack the more direct vision... Thus nobody can possibly see the sun, the universal Apollo and absolute light.. but they can see his shadow, his Diana (Petronella 103).

Though Phoebe's brilliance is a mere "shadow" when compared to the glory of Phoebus, hers is the light that is suitable for the eyes of human beings. Because she contains within her both unity and multiplicity, both constancy and mutability, she is the goddess who is able to meet Endimion's needs. Drayton has portrayed an image of complex subtlety and beauty

that is also a fascinating paradox: Phoebe is a mutable goddess. Endimion and Phoebe is indeed a "Neoplatonic allegory" that forces our attention on Drayton's goddess who joins heaven to earth.

Chapter Two

"Mistres of the Night": PHOEBE AND MOON MYTHOLOGY

When Michael Drayton chose to create a poem that emphasized the Moon-goddess, he exploited a rich and multi-faceted mythology. Edward Le Comte recognizes the complexity of Drayton's Moon-goddess by citing a passage from the poem:

> And now great Phoebe in her tryumph came,
> With all the tytles of her glorious name,
> Diana, Delia, Luna, Cynthia,
> Virago, Hecate, and Elythia,
> Prothiria, Dictinna, Proserpine,
> Latona, and Lucina, most divine.
>
> (lines 823-828)

Here is a being who is as "multiple" as her names (Le Comte 16); each title is carefully chosen by Drayton to capture the intricacy of his Moon-goddess. Yet even with these clues, Drayton has constructed a goddess who is difficult to delineate. For when we examine the poem in the context of moon mythology and follow Drayton's Moon-goddess through the poem, we find that the complexities associated with Phoebe extend far beyond the Neo-platonic tension between her divinity and her mutability. Phoebe is connected to such diverse matters as hunting, virginity, childbirth, fertility and the cycles of nature. Also, Drayton presents a goddess who is both passively confined and actively in control; in

spite of her power, Phoebe wavers between confidence and insecurity. Drayton makes his goddess more intricate by subtly connecting her to women in general and, as we might suspect in a poem of 1595, to Queen Elizabeth I.

But while Le Comte is intrigued by the moon mythology implicit in Endimion and Phoebe, his main interest lies in the star-gazer, the sleeping Endimion. Like most other critics of the poem, he has been so intrigued by the experience of this beautiful shepherd youth that he has ignored the poem's main focus. Phoebe, with all of her titles, is left to her mysterious existence among the spheres. Yet in spite of the complexities and paradoxes associated with her character, Phoebe holds the place of honour throughout Endimion and Phoebe. From the opening description of Latmus to her triumphal final procession, we find that Phoebe's presence pervades the poem so thoroughly that we cannot dispute her status as the poem's nucleus. Although our consideration of her character must always be with the tension of power and powerlessness in mind, Drayton still ends his vision of Phoebe with a gorgeous manifestation of her glory. This is our last glimpse of her.

Although Drayton chose to reserve his catalogue of Phoebe's titles for the latter part of the poem, its presence reinforces the complexity of Phoebe's character that we witness throughout Endimion and Phoebe. Of course, her main

title, "Phoebe," seems most appropriate when we recall her role as saving mediator between the spiritual world of forms and the material world of copies. The Oxford Classical Dictionary tells us that "Phoebe" is the daughter of Heaven and Earth. By this title alone Drayton uncovers some of the tension that is present within the character of the Moon-goddess, but he does not stop here. As we observe the unfolding of Phoebe's complex character throughout the poem, we see that Drayton makes use of the characteristics of each of her many titles. His mixture of Roman and Greek epithets of Phoebe can be grouped according to those involved with hunting and virginity, those with childbirth and fertility, and those with the cycles of nature.

Many forms of the Moon-goddess are linked to hunting and virginity in a way that might symbolize female power. "Diana" is the virgin goddess of women and of the hunt. She is often pictured in a forested environment, equipped with bow and arrows. "Delia" is an epithet of Diana originating from Delos, her birthplace. She might have been used by Drayton in part as a compliment to Samuel Daniel, whom he later acknowledges in the poem's close. The theme of virginity is carried further when we read "Cynthia," a Roman epithet of Diana; for in the Renaissance, "Cynthia" is more closely linked to the virgin queen, Elizabeth I, than any other Moon-goddess title. "Dictinna" was a follower of Artemis, the

Greek equivalent of Diana. While she is not a huntress, she is known as "the lady of nets" and is credited with the invention of fishermen's nets. Though not traditionally associated with the Moon-goddess, "Virago" means a "man-like woman" and is connected with female warriors and Amazons. We see, then, that this group of titles describes a facet of Phoebe that is both active and powerful. She is the self-sufficient virgin huntress.

But Drayton reminds us also that Phoebe is strongly connected to childbirth, fertility and the cycles of nature. Both "Luna" and "Lucina" are Roman Moon-goddesses whose only distinguishing characteristic is their association with childbirth. "Elythia" or "Eleithyia" is the Greek equivalent of Lucina, so she is equally connected to childbirth. "Latona" or "Leto" is proof of the moon's maternity, for she is the daughter of Coeus and Phoebe. Leto herself is the mother of Apollo and Artemis. "Hecate" might be considered a "darker" daughter of Coeus and Phoebe who is nevertheless a nurturer of children. The Oxford Classical Dictionary tells us that she is connected to sorcery and black magic and is traditionally worshipped at cross-roads. Hecate's darkness has been linked to the moon's mysterious absense during daylight, but her nightly return connects her to fertility cycles.

Drayton's reminder that Phoebe is a goddess of childbirth and fertility logically leads us to the fertility associated with the cycles of nature in general. "Proserpine" is the goddess of the underworld whose yearly return to the upperworld marks the beginning of spring and renewed fertility. So this catalogue of titles reveals that Phoebe is connected to hunting, virginity, childbirth, fertility and the cycles of nature. Each title is necessary for Drayton to portray the goddess of his vision. Drayton has carefully constructed a goddess who is as hard to pin down as her ever-changing face.

But before we examine the unfolding of Phoebe's character, we will first consider the sources of Drayton's version of this myth. Kathleen Tillotson states in her introduction to her notes on Endimion and Phoebe that "Of the various early references to the story only one need be recalled: that [story] in Ovid (Heroides XVIII), which suggested to Drayton a lovely image for Phoebe's descent" (Hebel V, 19). Yet there was also an abundant supply of contemporary commentary on classical mythology in the sixteenth century, especially in the form of mythological handbooks. In their book, Classical Myth and Legend in Renaissance Dictionaries, Starnes and Talbert emphasize the importance of certain "specialized compendiums in classical mythology" in the education of the Renaissance student

(Starnes 25). Starnes and Talbert quote the words of Charles Hoole regarding the anticipated effect of such a multitude of books on students of the day: it "will invite them like so many bees to busie themselves sucking up matter and words to quicken their invention and expression" (Starnes 26). It is reasonable to imagine Michael Drayton as one such "busie bee"; Bernard Newdigate reminds us that Drayton's "reading was both wide and deep" (Newdigate 22). Although there is no proof that he attended university formally, his knowledge of Latin allowed him intimate aquaintance with Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Martial and Juvenal and, though probably in translation, he knew Homer, Musaeus, Pythagoras, Archelaus, Plato, Plutarch,and numerous others (Newdigate 22-3). Because of this, we may safely assume that Drayton had access to the Elizabethan compendiums in classical mythology, even those that still remained in Latin during his time (although many were translated into English).

Douglas Bush discusses two such compendiums in his Mythology and the Renaissance Tradition in Engish Poetry:

> The Mythologiae of Natalis Comes (1551) and Le Imagini, con la Spositione de i Dei degli Antichi of Vincenzo Cartari (1556)...had an enormous influence throughout literary Europe, and the number of editions perplexes the bibliographer (Bush 31).

Both Comes and Cartari were popular among Elizabethan poets, but it is Comes who seems to have been the most utilised:

Natalis Comes (Natale Conti) is perhaps the most

> attractive of the compilers, and he has his merits. He summarized mythological tales in easy Latin, assembled abundant references, quoted and translated Greek authors, and altogether provided the means which enabled many men, such as Chapman, to appear more learned than they were (Bush 31).

Though Drayton might not have required "easy Latin...to appear more learned" than he was, there is evidence that he, like other poets, turned to Comes for details in mythology. The Mythologiae supplies a wealth of information about Diana. It contains lengthy sections describing the variations in her "history." In recalling the list of Phoebe's names in Endimion and Phoebe (lines 823-828), Bush believes that "Drayton might have got most of his titles for Diana from Comes" (Bush 157). In her notes to the poem, Kathleen Tillotson specifies that "Comes has chapters on Hecate, Proserpina, Luna, Diana and Lucina (III, 15-18, IV, I), and also gives the names Delia, Cynthia, Ilythia, Prothyraea and Dictynna" (Drayton V 22). Indeed, this work alone covers ten of the thirteen names that Drayton includes. Moreover, we find similar lists of Diana's names in many other handbooks. Vincenzo Cartari's introduction to his Diana section is no exception:

> For so much as among the auncients the Moone was reverenced and adored under divers and severall names, so likewise did they then erect and dedicat unto her Statues, Altars, and Images of divers and severall formes, for that with some she was called Diana, with others Proserpina, with others Hecate, with other some Lucina, and in Aegypt generally entearmed Isis (Cartari sig. G4v).

So literary Elizabethans were surrounded by images of the moon in both their ancient and more contemporary mythology. But for all of this information, Diana was no easier to define. She remained a figure caught in the tensions of her seemingly incompatible qualities. She was both virgin and mother, a lover of body and of soul, powerful yet passive. As we examine the unfolding of Phoebe's complex character in Endimion and Phoebe, we discover that Drayton made use of many such paradoxes. Each passage involving his Moon-goddess must be studied to attain a better understanding of Drayton's conception.

Drayton describes Phoebe in several passages throughout the poem, both by the narrative and by her own words. The emphasis of each of these sections varies according to the different aspects of her moon-like character. She is both the pure virgin goddess of women, and an aid in fertility and childbirth. According to Drayton's vision of the Moon-goddess, Phoebe is both hunter and fisher. But she has also a darker side, an aspect that seems much less than divine. Drayton echoes the rhythms of the moon; for just as the moon continually waxes and wanes, so does Phoebe's character ebb and flow between confidence and insecurity. In spite of, or perhaps because of, her lunar glory, Phoebe exists between the tension of her power and her passivity or powerlessness.

We might ask why Drayton chose the Moon-goddess as the subject of his poem. In her book on feminine mythological images, Christine Downing considers the fascination that the moon holds for us:

> We hunger for images of human creativity and love inspired by the capacity of female bodies to give birth and nourish, for images of how humankind participates in the natural world suggested by reflection on the correspondences between menstrual rhythms and the moon's waking and waning (Downing 4-5).

Whether Drayton himself "hungered" to express this mysterious "correspondence" between women and the moon need not concern us. For by his very mention of Phoebe, Drayton has borrowed from a mythology in which women's issues cannot be ignored. In her book Woman's Mysteries: Ancient and Modern, which now might be called a "textbook" on the Moon-goddess, M. Esther Harding discusses the ancient relationship between women and the moon:

> The belief that there is a peculiar connection between woman and the moon has been universally held from the earliest times. Her power to bear children, surely a most mysterious thing, was thought to be the gift of the moon, while the activities which were her particular charge, agriculture, making things grow, tending the fire, and cooking the food, depended for their success on the good offices of the moon. To primitive man, her monthly rhythm, corresponding as it does with the moon's cycle, must have seemed the obvious result of some mysterious bond between them (Harding 55).

Harding goes further to explain that "in other languages, ...words for menstruation and for moon are either the same or

are closely related. Our word menstruation signifies 'moon change,' mens being 'moon'" (Harding 55). So the moon's continual waxing and waning has been understood through the ages to parallel, if not cause, the menstrual cycles of female human beings.

Before we continue examining the unfolding of Phoebe's character, we might consider a passage in Endimion and Phoebe mentioned in the previous chapter that specifically connects Phoebe to women:

> And unto her of women is assign'd,
> Predominance of body and of mind,
> That as of Plannets shee most variable,
> So of all creatures they most mutable.
> (lines 419-22)

Because of Phoebe's lesser position in Renaissance cosmology, her strong connection to earthly matters in general seems natural. But Phoebe's more specific "assignment" is women. When Drayton describes Phoebe's monthly cycle, stating that "Twenty & eyght great gorgeous lamps shee bare" (lines 842), we are surely reminded of another twenty-eight-day cycle: the ebb and flow of female menstruation. In this sympathetic rhythm shared by planet and creature alike, both the moon and women become a picture of mutability. Yet though the lamps around Phoebe are "gorgeous," they do not glisten without a price. These are lamps that she must "bare." Drayton's choice of diction is interesting, for while her shining glory is beautiful, she might also be seen to carry or endure it as

a burden. Though there is a splendour in participating in this twenty-eight-day cycle, there are also its limitations, which we will discuss below. But the second connotation of Drayton's "bare" leads us to a central paradox in moon mythology. For while women must "bear" the inconvenience of menstruation, its presence is a foreshadowing of another kind of "bearing": the "bearing" that is involved in childbirth. This points us towards a basic paradox in moon mythology that we will later find Drayton has made use of throughout his Phoebe passages. Although the moon is connected to childbirth, she is pre-eminently known as a symbol of virginity.

We first encounter Phoebe, by her title of Diana, within the opening of the poem when the region of Mount Latmus is described. As many critics have noted, this descriptive passage contains some of the richest and most beautiful poetry in Endimion and Phoebe, but none have discussed the significance of Phoebe's attraction to this mountain. For the region of Latmus is far more than a mere backdrop for the poem: by Phoebe's advocation, its very soil is hallowed ground. We learn that "great Diana of her speciall grace, / With Vestall rytes had hallowed all the place" (lines 21-2). Phoebe embraces this region with her entire being, making it somehow holy:

> And from the Azure starry-painted Sky,
> [Phoebe] Embalmd the bancks with precious lunary:
> That now her Menalus shee quite forsooke,
> And unto Latmus wholy her betooke.
> (lines 77-80)

Although Latmus contains nothing heavenly in itself, it is receptive to communion with the divine. Phoebe allows the "starry-painted Sky" to be joined to its "bancks" by a bathing of her "precious" moonlight. Indeed, this celestial "embalming" does more than preserve the otherwise transient region of Latmus: Phoebe's "precious lunary" acts as an agent of baptism. Because of her divinity, she has authority over such religious rites. Later in the poem she emphasizes that her own "foote, Arts just proportion doth reveale, / Signing the earth with heavens own manuel seale" (lines 205-6). It is Phoebe's physical contact with the earth's surface that allows the earth to partake of anything heavenly. By marking the soil of Latmus with her foot she does more than participate in a beautiful dance. Instead, her act of "Signing" is a religious rite in which she transfers heaven's seal or order to earth. Phoebe has hallowed Latmus with her moonlight and her "Signing"; she has blessed this place with her own physical contact. But what is it about this region that makes it so privileged by Phoebe's grace?

Because Phoebe acts as an arbitrator between the heavenly and the earthly in a Neo-platonic sense, we find that the region of Latmus is the obvious place of her affection.

Not only does this region accept celestial glory through Phoebe's moonlight, but it also strives to attain heaven through its own power:

> Upon this Mount there stood a stately Grove,
> Whose reaching armes, to clip the Welkin strove,
> Of tufted Cedars, and the branching Pine,
> Whose bushy tops themselves doe so intwine,
> As seem'd when Nature first this work begun,
> Shee then conspir'd against the piercing Sun.
> (lines 23-28)

The trees of Latmus attempt to establish contact between the earth and the heavens. Moreover, this contact is sought out in the absence of the sun's rays; Phoebus here is the "piercing" enemy. Drayton emphasizes this by describing "The patient Palme, which thrives in spite of hate" (line 33). The acute heat that this tropical tree must endure can be interpreted only as "hate."[1] While Phoebe must usually wait for her brother to "withdraw" himself before her glory may be seen (lines 653-4), this region will accept her dimmer light at any time of day. Only Phoebe's "precious lunary" may enter

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[1]This diction is not so peculiar when we recall the story of Latona or Leto, the second last name in Phoebe's catalogue of titles. The Oxford Classical Dictionary tells us that when Leto became pregnant by Zeus, his wife, Hera, became so jealous that she proclaimed that Leto's children could not be born in any place where the sun shone. When she was ready to give birth, Zeus caused a wave to curl over the island where she waited so that her childbearing would be shielded from the sun. She bore her children under this protection while clasping a palm tree. In this myth, the sun's rays become synonymous with Hera's jealousy and hatred, and the palm tree becomes a source of strength, as though by enduring years of the sun's harshness it has acquired the ability to bear great pain. It has indeed "thrived in spite of hate."

this place; the rays of "the piercing Sun" are forbidden to penetrate Latmus. Indeed, so significant is this region that Drayton chose to frame the action of the poem by returning to its description near the end:

> But to my tale I must returne again,
> Phoebe to Latmus thus convayed her swayne,
> Under a bushie Lawrells pleasing shade,
> Amongst whose boughs the Birds sweet Musick made,
> Whose fragrant branch-imbosted Cannapy,
> Was never pierst with Phoebus burning eye;
> Yet never could thys Paradise want light,
> Elumin'd still with Phoebes glorious sight.
> (lines 975-982)

Although the final section of the main body of the poem might be considered fragmented, Drayton very clearly returns to his initial depiction of this region to remind his reader of the importance of Latmus, the place of Phoebe's "speciall grace." Her presence and blessing has made Latmus a "Paradise." Just as Latmus must be seen as Phoebe's ideal earthly abode, so is Endimion and Phoebe a poem created for her. Though we might be intrigued by a beautiful sleeping shepherd boy, the poem forces our attention to focus on Drayton's version of the Moon-goddess.

When Phoebe first slides "from her sphere" (line 75), she is seen in her passive beauty and purity. She is "like a Nymph, crown'd with a flowrie twine, / And not like Phoebe, as herselfe divine" (lines 109-10). While she has laid aside her full celestial power, her beauty shines forth:

> An Azur'd Mantle purfled with a vaile,
> Which in the Ayre puft like a swelling saile,
> Embosted Rayne-bowes did appeare in silk,
> With wavie streames as white as mornings Milk:
> Which ever as the gentle Ayre did blow,
> Still with the motion seem'd to ebb and flow.
> (lines 111-17)

Although Phoebe is disguised, her moon-like qualities will not be completely hidden. Her mantle is "Azur'd," for she is a goddess of "the Azure starry-painted Sky" (line 77). As a virgin goddess, her "vaile" is "as white as mornings Milk." Even the motion of her garments emphasizes her cyclic nature: they "seem'd to ebb and flow." Yet the full force of her power is restrained:

> About her neck a chayne twise twenty fold,
> Of Rubyes, set in lozenges of gold;
> Trust up in trammels, and in curious pleats,
> With spheary circles falling on her teats.
> (lines 117-120)

Though her jewelery may be beautiful, it seems to confine her like a strait-jacket: her chain wraps around her neck forty times! Moreover, it is "Trust up in trammels." Although as "Dictinna " Phoebe is associated with trammels or fish-nets, it is disturbing that these are used to confine <u>her</u> instead of fish. The description continues to provide images of covering and confinement:

> A dainty smock of Cipresse, fine and thin,
> Or'e cast with curls next to her Lilly skin:
> Throgh which the purenes of the same did show
> Lyke Damaske-roses strew'd with flakes of snow,
> Discovering all her stomack to the waste,
> With branches of sweet circling veynes enchaste.
> (lines 121-6)

Though this restriction seems less sinister (the translucent smock allows her skin to show through and the branches circling her waist are "sweet"), she is nevertheless restrained; while she might be compared to a jewel, placed in a natural setting of branches, her "enchasement" is more likely an enclosing, given the context of the passage as a whole. The final lines of this passage are ironic:

> No smother beauty maske did beauty smother
> "Great lights dim lesse yet burn not one another,
> Nature abhorrs to borrow from the Mart,
> "Simples fit beauty, fie on drugs and Art.
> (lines 129-132).

No, her natural comeliness is not smothered by artificial beauty-aids from stores, but she is certainly suppressed by her clothing, an "unnatural" adornment. While her natural beauty is not quelled, her ability to move undoubtedly is. In this first description of Phoebe, Drayton creates a picture that is beautiful but static to emphasize her passivity.

The second picture of Phoebe is anything but static. In this passage, Drayton makes use of the associations with Diana as goddess of the hunt or chase:

> Her dainty Buskins lac'd unto the knee,
> Her pleyted Frock, tuck'd up accordingly:
> A Nymph-like huntresse, arm'd with bow & dart
> About the woods she scoures the long-liv'd Hart.
> She climes the mountains with the light-foot Fauns
> And with the Satyrs scuds it or'e the Launes.
> In Musicks sweet delight shee shewes her skill,
> Quavering the Cithron nimbly with her quill,
> Upon each tree she carves Endimions name
> In Gordian knots, with Phoebe to the same:
> To kill him Venson now she pitch'd her toyles,

> And to this lovely Raunger brings the spoyles.
> (lines 157-168)

We might very easily forget that this "Nymph-like huntresse" is the same passive goddess to whom we were introduced a few lines earlier; yet Drayton prefaces this passage with a reminder that this creature is the same disguised goddess, "As shee Celestiall Phoebe had not been" (lines 156-7). However, this active facet of Phoebe's character is just as essential to Drayton's conception of his Moon-goddess. Unlike the earlier static picture of a confined goddess, this Phoebe has taken control over her restrictive clothing, tucking up her frock, so that she is prepared for action. Moreover, she vigorously pursues the object of her desire, whether it be a deer or Endimion. Drayton prepares us for a female who will be the initial wooer. Here, Phoebe makes her own music, not relying on the lays of a shepherd-boy to sing her praises. As a "Nymph-like huntresse," she attempts to take love's fate into her own hands: she carves her name with Endimion's "In Gordian knots." This time, if she is to be "Trust up in trammels," then she will tie the knots herself, and Endimion, whether he wishes or not, will join her in a confinement of bliss! She is Diana of the hunt and also Dictinna of the fish-nets when she coaches Endimion with his angling technique. So our first glimpses of Phoebe's character show us two extremes in her nature: she is both passively confined,

and actively in control. Drayton allows his reader to experience the tension within her moon-like character even before we hear words from her mouth. Our consideration of Phoebe's character must always be with this tension of power and powerlessness in mind.

Many critics have noticed that much of Endimion and Phoebe, especially this opening section, is written "in a pastoral strain...[with] a note of comedy" (Bradbrook 71). Critics have been amused by the unexpected female wooer, reminiscent of Marlowe's Hero or Shakespeare's Venus. Instead of the anticipated shepherd lover, exalting the beauty and charms of a lady, Endimion is content to passively sing "the night away" or play a "Roundelay" on his pipe (lines 134, 137). Phoebe is the aggressor who seeks out Endimion and begins "merrily to court him" (line 174). Yet critics have failed to understand that this unusual courting scene does not involve simply a reversal of gender roles. Phoebe is not the "unworthy" shepherd-figure who seeks only to find favour with her object of love. Her agenda goes beyond the usual courtly lover's need to win the beloved even at the expense of sacrificing personal dignity. Phoebe's role is much more complex; for while she is responsible for wooing Endimion, she is also the sole flatterer of herself. She will not allow her own charms to remain unexalted. Just as Phoebe must make her own music, so must she sing her own praises. While this

initiative may seem empowering, a close examination of Phoebe's words throughout her opening speeches reveals a different picture. Here we find a powerful goddess who nevertheless wavers between confidence and insecurity. The strength that she demonstrates is continually mitigated by her limitations as Moon-goddess: her power is present, yet it is "Trust up in trammels."

When Phoebe does speak, even as a disguised "nymph," she reveals a tension within her character. Her first speeches demonstrate both confidence and playfulness, yet when we examine her words closely, we find also evidence of her insecurity. Phoebe begins by speaking not in her own voice but in that of an assured "Nymph":

> I am a Nimph and not of humaine blood,
> Begot by Pan on Isis sacred flood:
> When I was borne upon that very day,
> Phoebus was seene the Reveller to play:
> In Joves hye house the Gods assembled all,
> And Juno held her sumptuous Festivall
> ...
> And on that day, my birth to memorize,
> The Shepheards hold a solemne sacrifice.
>
> (lines 181-186, 191-2)

On the surface, Drayton has created a scene of great empowerment. Phoebe is in a sense creating her own "history": she mythologizes herself. It is within the context of this control that Phoebe's confidence and playfulness are revealed. For instead of relating a completely fraudulent account of her "history," Phoebe uses half-truths and inside jokes that

allude to her true divine status. Although "No mortall eye could have endur'd the sight" of Phoebe's full glory (line 108), she seems more than willing to allow glimmers of her powerful light to shine through her disguise. As the Moon-goddess, she does not lie when she proclaims that she has not been born of "humaine blood." Moreover, several of the images that she presents bring us back to moon mythology. When she states that she is "Begot by Pan on Isis sacred flood," she connects herself both to Pan's fertility, an important aspect of the Moon-goddess, and to Isis, the Egyptian mother-goddess of the moon. This prepares the reader for her later promises to Endimion; if she possesses the same fertility and control over flocks as her "father," then she may indeed pledge to "tend thy flock" faithfully (line 207). Her promises would be tenable and valued by a shepherd:

> Thy Ewes (qd.she) with Milk shall daily spring,
> And to thy profit yeerely Twins shall bring,
> ...
> The cruell Tygar will I tame for thee,
> And gently lay his head upon thy knee;
> And by my spells, the Wolves jawes will I lock,
> And (as good Sheepheards) make them gard thy flock,
> Ile mount thee bravely on a Lyons back,
> To drive the fomy-tusked Bore to wrack.
> (lines 249-50, 257-262)

Here Phoebe seems intentionally to weaken the "nymph's" mask, for we see her celestial glory shining through as both goddess of fertility and goddess of the hunt. Although Phoebe continues in a sense to "ebb and flow" in spite of her

disguise (line 117), she desires to make her connection to the moon even more apparent. By emphasizing these associations with fertility, Phoebe links herself to a central aspect of moon mythology.

M. Esther Harding explains the traditional connection between the moon and fertility by quoting the words of Plutarch: "The moon, with her humid and generative light, is favorable to the propagation of animals and the growth of plants" (Harding 110). Harding further explains the "primitive" perception of this feminine ruler of night:

> To those primitive peoples who live in southern climates the sun appears as a force hostile to vegetation and reproduction. To them the moon is the fertilizing power (Harding 21).

Not only is her waxing and waning reminiscent of menstruation, but also of the swelling of a pregnant female abdomen. It is not difficult to surmise that if the moon causes the onset of menstruation, then she may also be responsible for its ceasing, which is an indication of pregnancy. In this way we might also connect the rhythms of the moon's cycle to the pulse of contractions during childbirth. M. Esther Harding emphasizes that many women throughout history have prayed to the moon both for the blessing of conception and for comfort during childbirth:

> Diana...was famed for blessing women with children. She presided over childbirth and was called Opener of the Womb. Euripides tells us that in her capacity of midwife, Artemis, the Greek prototype

> of Diana, would not even speak to a childless woman (Harding 116).

Harding notes from an anthropological view that in many societies, "the chief duty of the midwife is to make suitable prayers and offerings to the moon so as to secure the woman an easy delivery" (Harding 24). But the Moon-goddess is not simply a barren being who bestows all fertility upon others.

An integral part of moon mythology is the idea of the "Moon Mother." She herself is capable of fertility. In some legends, she bears a son who later becomes her lover. At her death, the process begins again, as it does every twenty-eight days (Harding 94-5). Thus we find her represented as the "Many Breasted Mother of All." Both Natalis Comes and Vicenzo Cartari include the identical engraving of this multi-breasted goddess in the "Diana" sections of their books. We need not then be surprised that Drayton makes use of this rich image. In Phoebe's initial description he tells us that her "vaile" appeared "With wavie streames as white as mornings Milk" (line 114). A few lines later, Drayton allows us to gaze a little lower down her body to follow the winding and perhaps sinister pathway of her necklace:

> About her neck a chayne twise twenty fold,
> Of Rubyes, set in lozenges of gold;
> Trust up in trammels, and in curious pleats,
> With spheary circles falling on her teats.
> (lines 117-120)

Though Drayton continues to describe Phoebe's beauty after

this passage, we are struck by his emphasis, however subtle, on her breasts. The alliteration of "Trust" and "trammels" serves to accentuate the final "teats." Moreover, line 114's "mornings Milk" cannot be far from our minds when Drayton has chosen to name Phoebe's breasts with a noun more usually associated with the mammary gland of a cow (this connotation would be weaker in Drayton's time; however, the OED suggests that although "teats" was associated with women in general in "early use", it was increasingly used in reference to quadrupeds by Shakespeare's time).

Because of these details, Phoebe's speech in her self-mythologization is not as startling as it may initially seem:

> The chast Diana nurst mee in her lap,
> And I suckt Nectar from her Downe-soft pap.
> (lines 193-4)

While "chast" and "nurst" might seem a surprising combination, Drayton is merely borrowing from an already paradoxical mythology. Phoebe is both the "Many Breasted Mother of All," and a virgin. Yet this image is particulary engaging because of its empowering implications. According to Phoebe's playful "myth," she has nursed herself; Phoebe has provided her own nourishment. Although disguised as a lowly nymph, she hints at her true connection to the great Moon-goddess which is, after all, even closer than that of a baby breast-feeding from her mother.

Phoebe continues to link herself playfully to the moon:

> The Well wherein this body bathed first,
> Who drinks thereof, shall never after thirst;
> The water hath the Lunacie appeased,
> And by the vertue, cureth all diseased;
> (lines 195-8)

As goddess of the moon, Phoebe holds all control over "Lunacie" or moon-madness: she need not bathe in any "Well" to appease herself. She increases her connection to the moon further when she confidently promises Endimion that she will "stay the time, it shall not steale away, / And twenty Moones as seeming but one day" (lines 267-8). The "nymph" again alludes to her lunar power over the waters when she predicts that Endimion will in time regret his rejection of her: we are reminded of her authority over the tides when she tells him that "with floods those eyes shall weare" (line 279). With each of these details, Phoebe provides obvious clues that although she is not born of "humaine blood," her status is much higher than a nymph's. Because Phoebe possesses this knowledge, she is able to sing her own praises freely and playfully. Later in the poem, we are not surprised when Phoebe reveals her true identity by "innocently" stating: "I am no Huntress, nor no Nymph (quoth she) / As thou perhaps imagin'st me to be" (lines 631-2). Of course it was not by Endimion's wild imagination but by Phoebe's own words and disguise ("shee was apparrelled in greene" [line 226]) that

he thought her a "Nymph." Yet her playful confidence is not invariable. In spite of knowledge that she is the great Moon-goddess, Phoebe's confidence sometimes falters.

Shortly before Phoebe leaves Endimion, she entreats that he "Looke in this Well, (if beautie men alow) / Though thou be faire, yet I as fayre as thou" (lines 287-8). Here her insecurity brings her to a point that is completely inconsistent with courtly love. She no longer playfully lists her attributes but instead seeks desperately to retain some status. Phoebe is not the selfless "Shepherd wooer," nor is she Shakespeare's Venus who addresses Adonis as "'Thrice fairer than myself'" (Shakespeare line 7). Even though disguised as a nymph, she strives to maintain some power, begging Endimion to return to "this Well" that connects her to her deified self. For this is the well whose water "hath the Lunacie appeased" (line 197). Yet Drayton has supplied earlier evidence of this insecurity. When describing the beauty of her hands ("See, see, these hands have robd the Snow of white" [line 201]), she uses the same language that was earlier applied to the beauty of Endimion: "His dainty hand, the snow it selfe dyd stayne" (line 139). In her notes to the poem, M. M. Reese comments that this line is "a rather feeble repetition of a poetic idea, especially when applied to another character" (Reese 259). But Drayton has made no such mistake; while Phoebe desires to woo Endimion, she does so

always with her own status in mind. By utilizing the same flattering language for herself that has been applied to Endimion, Phoebe continually reminds us that she is "as fayre as" the beloved. This courting scene is no simple reversal of pastoral gender roles, but is instead another manifestation of the complexity of Phoebe.

By the end of this "wooing" section, Phoebe's confidence has turned to obvious insecurity. Phoebe despairs at her powerlessness:

> Fond boy, with words thou might'st be overcome,
> "But love surpriz'd the hart, the tongue is dumbe,
> But as I can, Ile strive to conquer thee;
> Yet teares, & sighes, my weapons needs must bee.
> My sighs move trees, rocks melting with my tears,
> But thou art blind; and cruell stop'st thine ears.
> (lines 283-286)

In spite of her best efforts and elaborate speeches, the "nymph" does not possess the power to win Endimion's love. Endimion <u>might</u> "be overcome" with words, yet Phoebe has no more speeches: her "tongue is dumbe." Only her "eyes to him in silence spoke" (line 294). With her only weapons being "teares, & sighes," we cannot help but recall the anguished women found in Ovid's <u>Heroides</u>. Indeed, the passage speaks of a pain far more general than that of the "nymph." As a "chaste" goddess, Phoebe would never force the issue of sexual fulfillment of her love even if she could. But because she is a woman, the irony is greater: unlike Jove or Neptune, Phoebe can never rape. Instead, the power to change

Endimion's heart is given to Cupid, a masculine love god:

> But whilst the wanton thus pursu'd his sport,
> Deceitfull Love had undermin'd the Fort,
> And by a breach (in spite of all deniance,)
> Entred the Fort which lately made defiance:
> And with strong siedge had now begirt about
> The mayden Skonce which held the souldier out.
> "Love wants his eyes, yet shoots he passing right,
> His shafts our thoughts, his bowe hee makes our sight.
> (lines 304-310)

While "Skonce" means a small fort or shelter, the OED also suggests the denotation of "head or crown of a head." Though Phoebe might attempt her own methods of wooing him, Endimion must be penetrated in a way that shatters his "maiden head." It is not her earthly beauty or heavenly force that wins Endimion, it is not even her elaborate and confident speeches that sway his heart, but it is instead the intervention of Cupid. Only he has the power to break the fort of Endimion's cold heart.

Yet Drayton does not leave us here. Although Phoebe is temporarily overcome in her pursuit of Endimion, her vigour is not completely crushed. Just as the moon both waxes and wanes, so does her power and powerlessness exist in a tension that continually ebbs and flows. Though she has left Endimion's presence in defeat, she once again slides down "from her Christall chyre" (line 389) to meet him with renewed strength. Once again Phoebe returns to the region of her affections where her full glory may be celebrated:

> But her sweet Latmus which she lov'd so much,
> No sooner once her dainty foote doth touch,
> But that the Mountaine with her brightnes shone
> And gave a light to all the Horizon:
> Even as the Sun which darknes long did shroud,
> Breakes suddainly from underneath a clowd,
> So that the Nimphs which on her still attended;
> Knew certainly great Phoebe was discended;
> And all aproched to this sacred hill,
> There to awayt their soveraigne Goddesse will,
> And now the little Birds whom Nature taught,
> To honour great Diana as they ought,
> Because she is the Goddesse of the woods,
> And sole preserver of their hallowed floods.
> Set to their consort in their lower springs,
> That with the Musicke all the mountaine rings.
> (lines 423-38)

Here Drayton emphasizes her authority: by the mere touch of her foot, "all the Horizon" lights up. Of course, we have been told earlier that Phoebe's foot signs "the earth with heavens own manuel seale" (line 206). She returns to Latmus fully empowered to annoint this dull earth with the brilliance of heaven. No longer are "teares, & sighes" her only weapons, for the entire region is mesmerized by her presence. She holds the creatures of Latmus in a kind of trance in which "As though inchaunted [they] do forbeare their food" (line 446). Birds respond to her with music by which "all the mountaine rings," and the currents of "trembling brooks" are paralysed (line 443). Phoebe has returned to Latmus as "Goddess of the woods" and the forest beasts regard her with awe:

> The heards of Deare downe from the mountains flew,
> As loth to come within Dianas view,
> Whose piercing arrowes from her Ivory bowe,
> Had often taught her powerfull hand to know.
> (lines 447-50)

Here Phoebe's power is reaffirmed. Although it has taken Cupid's arrows to penetrate Endimion's heart, Phoebe nevertheless possesses "piercing arrowes" and a "powerful hand": her skills in archery are not to be underestimated. Drayton again partakes of "Diana" mythology to emphasize Phoebe's restored power. She is still the same huntress who first approached Endimion near the poem's beginning. Like Diana, however, Phoebe remains somewhat distanced from the creatures of this earth; they are "loth to come within [her] view." Because of her power, it seems wiser not to meet her her face to face.

But when Phoebe approaches the sleeping Endimion, her austere force seems to melt away; indeed, she admires him while on her knees. Here Phoebe is not the huntress Diana but is instead an aspect of the moon that is more tender:

> And comming now to her Endimion,
> Whom heavy sleepe had lately ceas'd upon,
> Kneeling her downe, him in her armes she clips,
> And with sweet kisses sealeth up his lips,
> Whilst from her eyes, teares streaming downe in showrs
> Fell on his cheekes like dew upon the flowrs,
> In globy circles like pure drops of Milk,
> Sprinckled on Roses, or fine crimson silk.
> (lines 469-476)

Drayton presents his goddess here as a nurturer, a mother-goddess of the moon. Her tears here are not "weapons" (line 284) but are instead like rain-showers that provide water for flowers. This is indeed a goddess of fertility. But Drayton connects her more closely to qualities of motherhood by making

her tears also "like pure drops of Milk." Here she seems to be the "Many-Breasted Mother" of Endimion as she offers him not only her overflowing emotions but also the nourishment of a mother's "pure" milk. This image is very important in a Neo-platonic poem, for if we have anticipated a sexual consummation of this goddess-shepherd alliance, then our hopes are now shattered. The love that Phoebe demonstrates for Endimion at this pre-climactic point in the poem is maternal. For it is maternal devotion that best illustrates Phoebe's love for both Latmus and Endimion. Only at this juncture does she respond in full to Latmus's branches that have strived "to clip the Welkin" in the poem's beginning (line 24): Phoebe now approaches Endimion, whom "in her armes she clips." Now she touches Latmus with more than her foot: while kneeling on its soil she joins her very lips to the mortal, Endimion. Even in tenderness Phoebe's glory is revealed, for it is in this section that she is ready "to shew her powerfull deitie" (line 505).

Drayton accentuates the moon-like rhythms of his goddess by allowing them to penetrate both Endimion and Latmus. When Endimion first awakes, he reacts much as did the region of Latmus that was mesmerized by Phoebe's presence. He is

> struck into a sodayne feare,
> Beholding thus his glorious Goddesse there,
> His hart transpiersed with this sodayne glance,

> Became as one late cast into a trance.
> (lines 528-530)

Even before Phoebe reveals her true identity, Endimion becomes afflicted with a "sweet Fever" that causes his entire being to wax and wane as if to reverberate Phoebe's splendour:

> Thus whilst this passion hotely held his course,
> Ebbing and flowing from his springing source,
> With the strong fit of this sweet Fever moved,
> At sight of her which he intirely loved,
> Not knowing yet great Phoebe this should be,
> His soveraigne Goddesse, Queene of Chastity.
> (lines 555-60)

Lest we imagine that such a response might be sexual, Drayton reminds us explicitly that this goddess is a "Queene of Chastity." In the midst of a hot "passion" that ebbs and flows, Endimion achieves an intimacy with his goddess that is exclusively spiritual. Yet Endimion discovers that his is not the only essence that has been infiltrated by the pulsations of the Moon-goddess: "Now he reports he noted whilst she spake, / The bustling windes their murmure often brake" (lines 565-6). Both Endimion and the region of Latmus seem now to respond fully to Phoebe's rhythms.

Yet Drayton changes Phoebe's course once again before she reveals herself. Just when she appears most powerful, her confidence again drains from her as Endimion now takes his turn to create a myth. Immediately following Endimion's observation that even the wind responds to this "Nymph's" majesty, he suddenly tells the story of a "youthfull swaine"

and "fayre Nymph" who are transformed into a "holy well" and "fayre flower" respectively. In her notes to the poem Tillotson explains that "This Ovidian tale appears to be Drayton's invention" (Drayton V 21). Yet we may wonder why Drayton chose to include such a seemingly incongruous narrative at this point in his tale. Most certainly, Endimion intends that this story parallel his situation with Phoebe, now that he has been pierced by Cupid's arrows. But there is a problem with this. Endimion's tale would lead us to believe that he has been an ardent lover, vainly pursuing his indifferent beloved for years, yet he has only just declared his love for the "Nymph" (lines 569-82). While Douglas Bush states that "Phoebe...pretends to be coy" at this point (Bush 157), there is no evidence to support this. There is no indication that Phoebe is anything like the nymph of Endimion's creation who is "careles of [the] misery" of her lover. Yet Le Comte seems to have no difficulty with the myth's place in the poem. He perceives it to be simply "a sad Ovidian tale of the metamorphosis of a swain and a nymph. That nymph did not pity her lover, and as a result the gods changed him into a fountain and her into a purple flower" (Le Comte 96). He then adds that "Phoebe pretends to be unmoved by this appeal" (Le Comte 96).

However, Phoebe is very much moved by Endimion's tale: she is driven to rage!

> Now like a jealous woman she repeats,
> Mens subtilties, and naturall deceyts;
> And by example strives to verifie,
> Their ficklenes and vaine inconstancie:
> Their hard obdurate harts, and wilfull blindnes,
> Telling a storie wholy of unkindnes.
> (lines 613-24)

Apparently, Le Comte is as oblivious as Endimion to the tremendous irony in the telling of such a myth. For Endimion accuses Phoebe of the very things that he has been guilty of in the poem's beginning. Phoebe has lamented earlier in the poem that "My sighs move trees, rocks melting with my tears, / But thou art blind; and cruell stop'st thine eares" (lines 285-6). Now Endimion sympathizes with the unrequited love of a "youthfull swain":

> To her his love and sorrow he imparts,
> Which might dissolve a rock of flinty harts;
> To her he sues, to her he makes his mone,
> But she more deafe and hard then steele or stone.
> (lines 593-6)

Like Le Comte, Endimion seems insensible to how this passage connects to his own former "deafness" and hard-heartedness. Moreover, he has the arrogance to transform "himself" into a fountain or "holy Well." This has been a symbol used by Phoebe (lines 195, 287). But Endimion's egocentricity seems to extend beyond childish selfishness; he seems driven to re-possess the power that he has experienced earlier in the poem when he rejected Phoebe's advances. Where Phoebe has created her own mythology earlier in the poem to entice Endimion, he now becomes the maker of myth in an act that seems to re-

establish a more traditional hierarchy of sexual power. When he calms and reassures the angry Phoebe, he promises that "all he spake was in good fayth and troth." His thoughtless words may seem completely erased in Phoebe's mind, but she is "convinced" so quickly that we might suspect that she is particularly eager to move beyond this point of powerlessness.

It is at this point that Phoebe "thought time that she reveald, / That kind affection which she long conceald" (lines 628-9). At this juncture, when she might be seen to be at her most vulnerabe because of Endimion's "unkind" story, Phoebe chooses to let her true, powerful identity be known:

> I am not Huntresse, not no Nymph (quoth she)
> As thou perhaps imagin'st me to be,
> I am great Phoebe, Latmus sacred Queene,
> Who from the skies have hether past unseene,
> And by thy chast love hether was I led,
> Where full three yeares thy fayre flock have I fed,
> Upon these Mountaines and these firtile plaines,
> And crownd thee King of all the Sheepheards swaines:
> Nor wanton, nor lacivious is my love,
> Nor never lust my chast thoughts once could move;
> But sith thou thus hast offerd at my Shrine,
> And of the Gods hast held me most divine,
> Mine Altars thou with sacrifice hast stord,
> And in my Temples hast my name ador'd,
> And of all other, most hast honor'd mee,
> Great Phoebes glory thou alone shalt see.
> (lines 631-646)

Here Phoebe seems to reclaim her power by emphasizing her chastity. While Drayton has shown several "moon-like" facets of Phoebe's character, he seems to link her chastity most strongly to her might. Although Endimion has unsettled her by his thoughtless story-telling, he has clearly not

"conquered" her as a lover. Phoebe's chastity can be held as proof of her autonomy, indeed, of her status as Endimion's "soveraigne Goddesse, Queene of Chastitie" (line 560). Yet when we consider general moon mythology, we need not be surprised that Drayton would connect virginity to power.

A central aspect in the stories of the Moon-goddess has always been her chastity. Indeed, she is often referred to directly as "the goddess of chastity." When we speak of the "coldness" or "heartlessness" of the moon, we are usually referring to her refusal to participate in sexual love. Unlike Aphrodite or Venus, she does not "burn" with carnal passion. She guards her chastity with a ferocity. Nancy Vickers describes the Actaeon-Diana story as found in Ovid's

> Metamorphoses that illustrates this so well: Actaeon is, as usual, hunting with friends. At noon, he stumbles upon a grove where he sees Diana, chaste goddess of the hunt and of the moon, bathing nude in a pool....Actaeon is transfixed...,and Diana, both in shame and anger, sprinkles...his face...and hair...with water....Her vengeful baptism triggers a metamorphosis: it transforms Actaeon from horn to hoof into a voiceless, fearful stag....What awaits him is annihilation through dismemberment, attack unto death by his own hounds... (Metamorphoses 3. 193-98) (Vickers 268-9).

Diana will not let this "violation" by Actaeon go unpunished. Her chastity, and all that it represents, is too precious to be taken lightly. Furthermore, all her followers must pledge to her their eternal virginity. In his worship of Artemis, another name for the moon, Hippolytus prides himself that he, "whose very soul the seed of Chastity... has deeply rooted,"

is worthy to gather the sacred flowers (Euripides ll. 80-1). Only a virgin may present a woven garland to this goddess of chastity and of the moon. Hippolytus emphasizes this voluntary celibacy for his beloved goddess:

> I am a virgin to this very day. Save what I have heard or what I have seen in pictures, I am ignorant of the deed. Nor do I wish to see such things, for I've a maiden soul (Euripides ll. 1004-7).

Certainly, it is this form of devotion that most impresses the goddess of chastity.

Though Drayton's Phoebe has many faces, he makes frequent use of moon-like chastity in Endimion and Phoebe. Drayton's use of her title "Diana" is second only to "Phoebe" in frequency. Even before she reveals her identity, we see that her love has never been "wanton, nor lacivious" (line 639). Though Phoebe initially pursues Endimion with a passion of sorts, we soon learn that it is not sexual. When she first approaches him, Phoebe is dressed as a huntress, but her motive is not lust. She is led "by chaste desire" to Endimion (line 169). After listing her physical attributes in an attempt to win Endimion's favour, she states simply: "If not all these, yet let my vertues move thee, / A chaster Nymph Endimion cannot love thee" (lines 223-4). Drayton makes further use of this tradition of chastity by endowing Endimion with the same religious devotion as practised by Hippolytus. Indeed, we learn that it is Endimion's chaste devotion that

has first brought Phoebe to the lowly earth when she says: "And by thy chast love hether was I led" (line 635). Phoebe praises him for imitating her chastity. Because Endimion "most has honor'd" Phoebe, he alone will see her glory" (lines 645-6). Endimion's devotion to Phoebe is not built upon empty promises, for when the beautiful "nymph" confronts him, he experiences no difficulty in rejecting her advances:

> He tels her, he was Phoebes servant sworne,
> And oft in hunting had her Quiver borne,
> And that to her virginity he vowed,
> Which in no hand by Venus was alowed;
> Then unto her a Catalogue recites
> Of Phoebes Statutes, and her hallowed Rites,
> And of the grievous penalty inflicted,
> On such as her chast lawes had interdicted.
> (lines 229-236)

Though he seems sadly distanced from his object of worship at this point, knowing her only by "Statutes" and "laws," Endimion is as chaste as the goddess he serves. In terms of her power, the virginity associated with Phoebe is of the utmost importance. This is the proof that she is autonomous. Endimion will receive her approval only if he follows her stringent laws, according to her terms. Phoebe's chastity is the assurance that her power, which seems at times so precarious, will not be divided and weakened still further.

Harding believes that the concept of virginity, especially when used in myth or religion, "must refer to a quality, to a subjective state, a psychological attitude, not to a physiological or external fact" (Harding 102). Many

feminists have developed this idea of "psychological virginity" and have used it to represent the potential power of woman. As a virgin, albeit psychologically, she remains intact and will not allow her power over herself to be mitigated by the penetration of outside forces. We must remember that with Diana's virginity comes her strength. Vincenzo Cartari emphasises Diana's virginity in his mythological handbook:

> ...shee was depictured in the shape and due resemblance of a young and pleasant-looking virgine of most amourous and beauteous aspect, having on either side of her forehead two small glistering hornes, newly peeping forth (Cartari sig. G4v).

The phallic significance of these "hornes" remains to be examined but it is noteworthy that their penetration of Diana's forehead comes from within her. As a virgin, she is not "violated" by outside powers.

Drayton's use of a myth that centres on both female virginity and female power has strong implications when we consider that Endimion and Phoebe was written in the age of the virgin queen, Elizabeth I. It is doubtful that we will escape the presence of Elizabeth in any English poem of 1595, but this would be even more unlikely in a poem partaking of the mythology of the moon. Philippa Berry refers to the moon as "the privileged emblem of [Elizabeth's] courtly cult" (Berry 111). Roy Strong explains that "the cult of Elizabeth as the moon goddess, Cynthia or Diana...[originated] in the

personal imagery with which Sir Walter Raleigh clothed his relationship with the Queen" (Strong, Gloriana 125). Elizabeth herself embraced the mythology of the moon in her personal life. It is believed that she was the owner of a painting of Diana by Frans Floris even before Raleigh established the cult of Elizabeth as Moon-goddess (Berry 8).[2] But Elizabeth did not limit her association with the moon to her personal belongings. In a playful letter to Lord Robert Dudley, she apologizes for her literary incoherence:

> Rob, I am afraid you will suppose by my wandering writings that a midsummer moon hath taken large possession of my brains this month, but you must needs take things as they come in my head, though Order be left behind me (Bassnett 43).

Certainly, Elizabeth was not uncomfortable associating herself with the moon;[3] neither could Drayton have been unaware of the

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[2]So closely was she linked to Diana that this painting was later assumed to be yet another royal portrait; Le Comte describes a portrait of "Elizabeth...with her furs, her bow and quiver, a hound's head jutting across her lap and the emblem of the crescent moon in her aging hair" (Le Comte 68n) that must surely be instead this Floris painting. Strong himself states that "no single portrait makes use of [the moon] as a major iconographical theme" (Strong Gloriana 128), so Le Comte must have been mistaken in the title of the portrait.

[3]We might speculate, however, that she was not delighted that her own moon-mimicking monthly cycles were so closely monitored: "Certainly the interest in Elizabeth's marriage in the first years of her reign amounted to obsession. Doctors made statements about her ability to have children and her monthly periods -- even her laundry was investigated for regular (or irregular) traces of menstrual blood" (Bassnett 41-2).

connections between his virgin Moon-goddess and Elizabeth.

The poetry of the 1590's serves to emphasize the connection between Elizabeth and the Moon-goddess. Wilson believes that "court poets were too enamored of pagan myth not to name this virgin Diana or Cynthea" (Wilson 191). Le Comte explains further why the connection became so strong:

> As the early years of Elizabeth's reign passed, and she remained the virgin queen, it became increasingly fashionable for the poets to refer to her as Diana or Cynthia. They thus found a classical name and a focal point for a Renaissance ideal which has its roots in the middle ages -- the ideal of virginity (Le Comte 68).

Frances Yates celebrates Chapman's Hymnus in Cynthiam as "the quintessence of the Cynthian cult" (Yates 76), and certainly we must recall The Faerie Queene's "Belphoebe" and other virgin figures, but there were many other literary examples. Le Comte points us to a specific poem, "The Sheepheards praise of his sacred Diana," found in Englands Helicon (Macdonald 101-2), that he believes was written by Sir Walter Raleigh.[4] In this poem we see the same ideas about the moon that are expressed in Endimion and Phoebe. In both poems, the moon is contrasted to the sun, for Phoebe's light is "harmlesse," unlike the damaging rays of her brother, Phoebus. Drayton describes her "moysty influence" that makes "Th'uncertaine

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[4]This poem was printed anonymously in The Phoenix Nest 1593.

waters [hold] a certaine course" (lines 403, 408) and "Raleigh's" poem reads that she "moists the ground" and "moves the floods." Moreover, this poem communicates the same Neo-platonic and cosmological ideas that we find in Endimion and Phoebe. This moon corresponds closely to Phoebe: she embodies the same paradoxes ("Eternity in her oft change she beares"), and the same precarious position as the line between mutability and constancy ("Mortality below her Orbe is plast"). Le Comte says of "The Sheepheards praise" that "except for the telltale 'knights,' this would do as a hymn to the pagan goddess" (Le Comte 69). But surely the connections of Elizabeth to Diana demand a more careful assessment of this poem and others like it. From the first time Sir Walter Raleigh declared his queen to be "quell'unica Diana," and probably much earlier, Elizabeth would forever be associated with the virgin Moon-goddess; we must take this into account in any reading of Endimion and Phoebe.

Although Drayton suggests the connection between Elizabeth and Phoebe near the end of his poem when he mentions both "Astrea," a well-known title for Elizabeth, and "Eliza" (lines 859, 942), the strongest link that we find between Phoebe and Elizabeth is in their shared status as powerful female virgins. Susan Bassnett explains the relationship of Elizabeth's virginity, or unmarried state, to her power:

> She had, finally, acquired power, and had moved from a position of powerlessness to one of total control. Had she married, she would have remained Queen but still have found herself in a subservient position to her husband, and she must have had strong feelings about the undesirability of that state of affairs. (Bassnett 40)

Bassnett takes this further: "Elizabeth's virginity was her statement of what we might term feminist attitude...It was her trump card" (Bassnett 125). By embracing a mythology that emphasized her virginity, Elizabeth was indeed playing her cards carefully. Drayton demonstrates that Phoebe's virginity is used in a similar way; for we remember that just at the moment when Phoebe appears most vulnerable because of Endimion's "unkind" story, she reveals her true identity by calling attention to her chastity (lines 631-646). Just as for Elizabeth, Phoebe's virginity becomes a symbol of her autonomy and power. It is at this point, when Phoebe has been clearly established as the "queene of Chastitie," that Drayton chooses to end his poem by fully exalting the glory of his Moon-goddess.

Only after we have witnessed the unfolding of Phoebe's wide range of moon-like characteristics will Drayton allow us to behold the climax of Endimion and Phoebe. Drayton reserves this glorious final procession for the last part of the poem:

> And now great Phoebe in her tryumph came,
> With all the tytles of her glorious name,
> Diana, Delia, Luna, Cynthia,
> Virago, Hecate, and Elythia,
> Prothiria, Dictinna, Proserpine,

> Latona, and Lucina, most divine;
> And in her pompe began now to approch,
> Mounted aloft upon her Christall Coach,
> Drawn or'e the playnes by foure pure milk-white Hinds,
> Whose nimble feete seem'd winged with the winds.
> (lines 823-832)

Here Drayton attempts to summarize the complex character of his Phoebe. Each title is necessary to illustrate his vision of a Moon-goddess whose characteristics seem to wax and wane like her ever-changing face. Phoebe is both static beauty and powerfull huntress. She is both distant virgin and tender, nurturing mother.[5] We have seen throughout the poem how Phoebe continues to waver between confidence and insecurity in spite of her power, however precarious, as Moon-goddess. Yet while this final procession combines each of her aspects, she still remains worthy of great honour and utter reverence. This is the picture of Phoebe that Drayton intends to be our last. This is the image that we have worked towards throughout Endimion and Phoebe.

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[5]Drayton continues to emphasize such dichotomy by allowing "foure pure milk-white Hinds" to draw her coach. Cartari tells us that Diana's chariot is often drawn by a Mule, "comparing her (being cold of nature) to the barrennesse and sterrillitie of that beast; and as her selfe giveth no light or splendour of her selfe, but borroweth such her brightnesse of her brother Phoebus, so the Mule never engendreth by any of her owne kind, but by asses, horses, and other like beastes (Cartari sig. H1r). Drayton instead chooses to allude both to her virginity and to her motherhood; for the colour of the hinds is "pure...white," yet reminiscent of mother's milk.

It is surprising, then, that so many critics have missed the purpose of this final procession, indeed, of the entire poem. Edward Le Comte comments that "It was philosophically right for Endymion to soar, but the point of Drayton's fable is nearly lost in the elaborant pageant with which he brings the poem to a close" (Le Comte 97). He assumes, of course, that the "point of Drayton's fable" is necessarily Endimion. What could be more intriguing than a beautiful shepherd youth who evokes such intense love from the Moon-goddess? Still, in spite of adolescent male fantasies, this is not what Drayton chose to emphasize. We might be misled by the opening lines of the procession (lines 753-57), but we soon come to understand that Phoebe is the focus of this pageant. Endimion is glorified to a degree but he still preceeds Phoebe: the best is left for last. He is honoured according to her terms: "A bevy of fayre Swans, which flying over, / With their large wings him from the Sun do cover" (lines 817-18). Petronella comes far closer to the dynamics that we discover in this procession passage: "Drayton creates a combined masque and triumph in which Endimion is a participant and in which Phoebe is the central character" (Petronella 98). In spite of the many paradoxes associated with her character, Phoebe holds the place of honour throughout the poem. Drayton incorporates both her chastity and her fertility, her confinement and her control, her

confidence and her insecurity to portray the goddess of his vision. It is within this context of continual ebbing and flowing within her character that Phoebe, with all her titles, might be named "the onely Mistres of the Night" (line 412). She is certainly the main focus of Endimion and Phoebe.

Conclusion

Many critics have been uncomfortable with the ending of Drayton's "tale" in Endimion and Phoebe which they consider desunt nonnulla (Le Comte 99). Although the final picture of ongoing communion between Phoebe and Endimion may be beautiful, the last two lines of the passage are unsettling to the modern reader:

> She lay'd Endimion on a grassy bed,
> With sommers Arras ritchly over-spred,
> Where from her sacred Mantion next above,
> She might descend and sport her with her love,
> Which thirty yeeres the Sheepheards safely kept,
> Who in her bosom soft and soundly slept;
> Yet as a dreame he thought the tyme not long,
> Remayning ever beautifull and yong,
> And what in vision there to him be fell,
> My weary Muse some other time shall tell.
> (lines 983-992)

Le Comte's response to Drayton's words is typical: "The Muse might well be weary, but it was a mistake to admit it" (Le Comte 99). Yet when we consider Elizabethan poetry in general, this "lack" of decorum is not at all unusual. Here we must be careful not to impose our modern conceptions of closure on a poem of 1595. Still, we cannot help but wonder how serious was Drayton's intention to finish his tale "some other time." Indeed, a study and comparison of Drayton's later attempts to rewrite this myth would be useful; for

Drayton printed The Man in the Moone in 1606 which he revised and printed again in 1619. But for the purposes of Endimion and Phoebe, Drayton finishes his poem beautifully; instead of terminating Phoebe's ever-present cycles, he allows her to "descend and sport" as she pleases while Endimion, whom so many critics assume to be the poem's centre, remains asleep.

Phoebe's presence continues even in Drayton's epilogue to Endimion and Phoebe. Though he begins by praising the poetic skills of Spenser, Daniel and Lodge (lines 993-1004), his highest compliment is reserved for the "sweet mayd" whose qualities most remind him of his beloved Phoebe:

> If ever Nature of her worke might boast,
> Of thy perfection she may glory most,
> To whom fayre Phoebe hath her bow resign'd,
> Whose excellence doth lyve in thee refin'd,
> And that thy praise Time never should impayre,
> Hath made my hart thy never moving Spheare.
> Then if my Muse give life unto thy fame,
> Thy vertues be the causers of the same.
> And from thy Tombe some Oracle shall rise,
> To whom all pens shall yearely sacrifice.
> (lines 1023-1032)

While Drayton has held Phoebe in the place of highest honour throughout the poem, he now allows her to submit her "bow" of power to another woman. Yet this by no means erases Phoebe from our minds, for Drayton's attraction to this other woman lies in Phoebe's continued presence, "Whose excellence doth lyve in thee refin'd" (line 1026).

In her notes to the poem, Tillotson explains that the "sweet mayd" and "Sweet Nymph of Ankor" is Anne Goodere

(Drayton V 22). Le Comte supports this, explaining that since Anne Goodere was married the same year that Endimion and Phoebe came out, "the time was ripe for Drayton to think platonically of [her]" (Le Comte 99). Even Petronella states that "Phoebe is clearly Drayton's symbol for Anne Goodere" (Petronella 103). But more recent criticism casts doubt on this assumption. Jean Brink's argument that "we may read Endimion and Phoebe as an allegorical statement about Drayton's patronage relationship with the countess" seems much more likely (Brink 32). Indeed, past critics have ignored the poem's dedication to Lucy Countess of Bedford. Brink notes that Drayton ends his list of titles for Phoebe with "Lucina" (line 828), which is a complimentary play on the name Lucy (Brink 33). Moreover, she points out that one of the Harington estates (Lucy's maiden name), was located on the Anker, making her a very possible "Nymph of Ankor" (Brink 33). But we find further evidence that Drayton linked his Phoebe not to Anne Goodere but to Lucy. In his dedicatory sonnet, "To the excellent and most accomplish't Ladie: Lucie Countesse of Bedford," Drayton promises Lucy that "Unto thy fame my Muse her selfe shall taske" (Drayton I 126). In the end of Endimion and Phoebe, he tells the "sweet mayd" that "if my Muse give life unto thy fame, / Thy vertues be the causers of the same" (lines 1029-1030). Drayton has framed his work with his desire to preserve the fame and virtues of a woman

that must surely be Lucy. Yet more important even than her identity is Drayton's method of praising her; for Drayton pays the highest tribute to the "sweet mayd" by connecting her so strongly to the goddess of his poem.

In spite of critics' fascination with the experiences of the shepherd boy, Endimion, Drayton's poem is constructed instead around Phoebe. When we explore the Neoplatonism in the poem, we find that Drayton's Moon-goddess contains within her both unity and multiplicity. But the paradoxes associated with this mutable goddess extend further than this. Drayton exploits a mythology that is rich and multi-faceted. As her many titles suggest, the complexity of Drayton's conception of Phoebe makes her a difficult goddess to define. In spite of her power, Phoebe wavers between confidence and insecurity in a pattern that is as cyclic as we might expect in a Moon-goddess. Yet Drayton's final vision of her is clear: as the "soveraigne Goddesse [and] Queene of Chastitie" (line 560), she is worthy of her place of honour throughout the poem. It is time that critics follow Drayton's example in relinquishing Endimion to his final sleep; for Phoebe, "the onely Mistres of the Night," is the true mistress also of Endimion and Phoebe.

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