

EIRENE

STUDIA GRAECA ET LATINA

LVI / 2020 / I-II

Centre for Classical Studies
Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague

HERA AND THE DANGERS OF MARRIAGE*

RADEK CHLUP

The goddess Hera has long fascinated modern scholars by the way in which she transgresses some of the basic categories of Greek ideology. One of her main functions consisted in guarding the institution of marriage, yet her own marriage, while in one regard an archetype of all marriages, was highly atypical, in many regards looking like a caricature. Whereas the ideal Greek wife should have been quiet and submissive,¹ Hera is the very opposite of this. She is jealous, quarrelsome, spiteful, disagreeable, distrustful. She keeps on putting obstacles in Zeus' way and plotting against him. As Zeus himself puts it: "she is constantly making reproaches in the presence of the other immortals" (*Il.* I,520-521) and "I am quite used to her opposition in everything I say do" (*Il.* VIII,407-408).²

Modern scholars frequently tried to explain this anomaly by claiming that originally Hera had been an independent "matriarchal" goddess who was eventually forced into a marriage with the patriarchal god.³ Yet, historical speculations of this kind are problematic. They frequently tell us more about modern ideological fantasies (such as that of the "matriarchate")⁴ than about facts of the

* This article was also published in an Open Access mode, under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International Licence (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0).

¹ This is not to say that Greek wives must actually have behaved in such a way. But such was certainly the ideal image, as expressed e.g. in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*.

² Translated by Ennis Rees. All the other translations are mine except for those of Hesiod, which are by Glenn W. Most.

³ Thus, e.g., COOK 1906; GUTHRIE 1950, 66-73 (with a review of previous scholarship), or more recently O'BRIEN 1993. The approach is still popular with scholars who combine academic study with contemporary spiritual approaches, such as RIGOGLIOSO 2009.

⁴ For a criticism of the idea of matriarchate see, e.g., GEORGIOUDI 1992; TALALAY 2012; ELLER 2018.

past. And what is more, they fail to address the question how the gods made sense to the Greeks of the archaic and classical period. Since already on the Mycenaean tablet Tn 316 from Pylos Hera shares a sanctuary with Zeus, it is clear that the divine pair has a long history indeed. It seems wiser, therefore, to take their marriage as given and ask about the meaning its conflicting character might have had for the Greeks of the archaic and classical period.⁵ A crucial step in this direction has been recently taken by Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti, whose 2016 monograph has convincingly demonstrated the meaningful coherence of the traditional image of Hera as a dignified, and yet quarrelsome wife of Zeus. They have particularly shown that Hera's negative and positive features may be seen as two stages of a ritual cycle in which the goddess's anger and separation from Zeus is transformed into new energy that reinvigorates their marriage. By analysing all the major cults and myths of Hera, they manage to present an immensely complex image of the goddess in which all the seemingly contradictory features start to appear as complementary parts of a meaningful symbolic whole.

In what follows I will build on these insights but will go one step further. Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti succeed brilliantly in showing Hera's symbolic network as coherent and meaningful on the level of Greek religious thought. My basic question is, however, why the Greeks needed such a symbolic network in the first place. In what way was it indispensable for the correct functioning of the Greek system of ideas and social institutions?

I have already asked such questions on a general level in my previous article,⁶ in which I suggested to see the gods as the symbolic focal points that on the one hand embody the most important categories, values and notions of a given socio-cultural system, but on the other hand transcend these categories themselves, frequently behaving in various transgressive ways. Thanks to this, the gods may support the system while balancing out some of its inevitable limitations. They mediate the contradictions that every cultural world entails, filling in various gaps and helping to achieve dangerous transitions between categories. Since they are not themselves bound by the rules of the system, they are ideally dis-

⁵ I am not claiming the all the aspects of the gods had to make sense to the Greeks (there were no doubt many local cultic anomalies that did not), but I do believe that at least the central ones must have. Needless to say the "sense" or "meaning" I am talking about here is not of a discursive kind, it is "more akin to the way in which dance or music is meaningful. ... Meaning is about resonance rather than either information or reference" (GRIMES 2014, 318-319).

⁶ CHLUP 2018.

posed for expressing what I propose to call its *shadow*, i.e. the various tensions any cultural ordering of reality is bound to generate.⁷ This shadow is normally not confronted directly but can be reflected in various indirect symbolic ways. The gods offer a good opportunity for such reflection, but as they are at the same time regarded as divine guardians of cultural order, they allow confrontation with otherness without destabilizing the entire system. While normally the possibility of violating the rules would be seen as dangerous, the gods manage to *convert this danger into positive power*, which they use to support the order in turn. The gods stand for constructive otherness. Their fascinating penchant for transgression is explicitly presented as something no mortal can endure, teaching humans negatively to stick to the rules and leave it up to the gods to deal with the chaos that lies beyond the norm.

Abstract as this may sound, the aim of my paper is to illustrate what exactly this may have entailed in case of the goddess Hera. What cultural paradoxes did Hera allow the Greeks to overcome? What tensions and contradictions did she allow them to mediate? Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti say little on this subject. They succeed marvellously in presenting the internal coherence of Hera's symbolic network, but they do not systematically ask what the network reacted to, why was it needed in the first place. They do provide an important clue, though, by referring to the interpretation of François de Polignac, who sees Hera as a goddess who supervises the transformation of the mobile bride coming from the outside into the stable queen of the household.⁸ This is indeed a crucial point that I would like to raise up and develop further.

As a number of scholars have noted, the Greek concept of women entails a number of paradoxes. They are required to be chaste, yet are culturally construed as obscene.⁹ They are relegated "to the periphery of the politico-religious space", but at the same time are given "a determining role in the reproduction of the entire system".¹⁰ Each goddess somehow reacts to these paradoxes and

⁷ The concept of the shadow is mine. It is inspired by the analogous Jungian concept, but differs from it in that it refers to the unrecognized side not of the psyche but of the cultural order, the contradictions of which may equally well be repressed, being solely reflected through mythical or ritual symbols. Cf. CHLUP 2018, 125–126.

⁸ POLIGNAC 1997, 118; PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 236. Cf. PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2009, 101: "In effect, the figure of the goddess invites us to rethink the place of the woman in the matrimonial process that turns her into an accomplished wife. For the woman is equally central in human marriages: not because she would be more important, but because she is an element that is mobile, and thus more critical."

⁹ ZEITLIN 1982, 149.

¹⁰ DETIENNE 1989, 129.

helps to overcome them, but each in a different manner. Hera specifically deals with the tension between activity and passivity, stability and movement, unity and discord. As an archetypal wife she should be subordinate to her husband Zeus, yet her myths are all about defiance. While this does not mirror the Greek social reality directly (surely no Greek woman could be as obsessively rebellious as Hera), we will see that it does react to certain paradoxes entailed in the Greek conception of the wife. The wife was meant to be a truthful guardian of the household, yet she was actually a dangerous stranger coming from the outside. She was given to her husband as passive commodity, but she was never fully subordinate to him, for she retained her relation with her father and her brothers, who were ready to protect her should her husband not treat her right. I believe it is only by reading Hera's myths and cults in relation to these paradoxes that we may fully appreciate why the goddess behaves as she does. Hera's symbolic network may be seen as a cultural mechanism invented to deal with this paradox. Not only does Hera manage to hold all the contradictory tendencies together, presenting as unifiable what in many everyday situations might have seemed difficult to reconcile. Even more importantly, in doing so she is capable of transforming all the tensions into power that is in turn used for stabilizing the system.

Nor was this the only paradox that Hera helped to deal with. Polignac already connected Hera's mediation in marriage to another area involving a mediation between the inside and the outside: that between a sovereign territory and the outside world. Again, I will take this up and try to say more about the paradoxes entailed in this, and the way Hera responds to them. We will see that it was not only in marriage but also in the realm of Greek politics and economy that we find a desire for self-contained autonomy and unity, coupled with the awareness of the impossibility of fully achieving it. In the Greek, essentially pluralistic world unity was always threatened by strife, and prosperous autonomy was only possible thanks to a fruitful but dangerous exchange with the outside world. I will illustrate this by various examples, and will always show how Hera allowed to overcome the tensions and paradoxes involved.

In analysing these examples, I will usually say little that has not been said by others. The contribution of my paper lies in bringing all of these examples together and reading them as diverse variants of one and the same underlying paradox. My aim will thus be to read these seemingly different examples as transformations of the same pattern. What makes the gods fascinating is precisely their ability to structurally connect different areas of experience that at first sight seem to have little in common. To use an image of Claude Lévi-Strauss, each god may be seen as a "matrix of intelligibility" that allows to con-

fer meaning on all the “scattered givens” of human cultural and social experience by articulating “those givens in a coherent system”.¹¹ If we thus wish to understand what Hera meant for the Greeks, it is not sufficient to analyse her meaning in each of her domains of her activity, but we also need to grasp how these different domains are held together by the goddess, what paradoxes and self-contradictions they have in common. It is precisely their ability to deal with many issues at once that makes the gods such a fascinatingly efficient cultural mechanism, and it is only when we understand what this means in the case of Hera that we may truly see her indispensability for the correct functioning of the Greek socio-cultural system.

Ambivalent Female Energy in the Theogony

To understand the marriage of Hera and Zeus, it is first of all important to consider it from the perspective of Greek theogony.¹² In the best known version of Hesiod the origin of the gods first happened according to a dark monotonous pattern: the divine couple has a son, the father fears the son will be more powerful than him and tries to get rid of him; the son rebels in turn, dethrones the father and takes his place. Zeus, too, has become king by having deposed his father, and he is thus in the same danger. As Hesiod tells us (*Th.* 886–898), Zeus took Metis as his first wife, but it was destined that she would first give birth to a powerful daughter, “and then to a son, a king of gods and of men, possessing a very violent heart”. If this prophecy came true, Zeus would be overthrown and the cosmos would not reach the desired stability. To prevent this, Zeus decides to swallow Metis, who is already pregnant with the daughter. The daughter – Athena – is eventually born out of Zeus’ head, but the son is not conceived at all. Subsequently, Zeus begets various children with several other goddesses (*Th.* 901–920): Themis, Eurynome, Demeter, Mnemosyne, Leto. Most of these children are rather gentle females, many of them functioning as “allegorical emblems of his regime”.¹³ The only powerful son, Apollo, is neutralized by the gentleness of his mother Leto, “the kindest one in all Olympus” (*Th.* 408), who is

¹¹ LÉVI-STRAUSS 1985, 145–146.

¹² In what follows in this section I am basically in harmony with PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 85–100.

¹³ CLAY 2003, 29. The children in question are Eunomia (Lawfulness), Dike (Justice), Eirene (Peace), Aglaia (Splendour), Euphrosyne (Joy) and Thalia (Good Cheer).

clearly dissociated from the ambivalent figures of Gaia and Rheia, guaranteeing that her son “will prove no threat to his father’s hegemony” and will “support the subordination of female to male”.¹⁴

For his “very last” (*loisthotatēn* – *Th.* 921) wife Zeus takes Hera. This marriage functions as the seal of Zeus’ rule that will stabilize it for ever. It is thus all the more important that it will produce no subsequent heir proper who might endanger the father.¹⁵ Besides two rather one-dimensional deities, Eileithyia and Hebe, Hera and Zeus beget Hephaistos and Ares, but neither of them is powerful enough to jeopardize his father. Hephaistos is lame, and when at one point he does dare to defend Hera against Zeus’ attack, the father of the gods just throws him by the foot from Olympos (*HOM. II.* I,590–594). And while Ares may seem as a strong warrior, his martial fury is of limited effect and he is depicted in the *Iliad* as weak and cowardly.¹⁶ Moreover, while Hephaistos appears to be presented by Homer as a son of Hera and Zeus (*II.* I,578; *Od.* VIII,312), Hesiod (*Th.* 927–928) and most later authors make him a son of Hera alone. Ares is portrayed as Zeus’ son in most sources,¹⁷ but in the *Iliad* (V,890–893) Zeus dissociates himself from Ares and sees him as chiefly a son of Hera. In case of both Hephaistos and Ares the relation between the son and the father is thus weak, the outcome being a subordinate position in the Olympian hierarchy. The truly powerful sons of Zeus will have to be illegitimate, begotten with mortal women.¹⁸

Yet, to refrain from begetting powerful children with Hera is not enough to stabilize the theogony. The pattern of the father being overthrown by the son cannot be resisted just by Zeus’ self-control. It needs to be *transformed*. To understand the nature of this transformation, we should note that in Hesiod’s theogony there was from the beginning a substantial difference between the part played by males and by females. The male god is a ruler who tries to safeguard his position, only to be eventually overthrown by his son. The goddesses collaborate with these sons against the oppression of their husbands, and they

¹⁴ ZEITLIN 2002, 206. Cf. CLAY 2006, 63–74.

¹⁵ Cf. PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 63, 332; LORAUX 1992, 40–41; REDFIELD 2003, 19–20.

¹⁶ Cf. *HOM. II.* XXI,391–414 (beaten by Athena), *II.* V,855–861 (wounded by Diomedes), *II.* V,384–391 (imprisoned by the Aloadai in a jar).

¹⁷ E.g., *HOM. II.* V,896; *HES. Th.* 923.

¹⁸ Hera is usually portrayed as bitterly persecuting these illegitimate children, but as PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 264–330 show, her hatred of them is in fact ambivalent, and instead of really harming them it acts as the driving force of their destiny that frequently allows them to fully develop their heroic potential.

survive the coup themselves: Gaia, and to a lesser extent Rheia, were still worshipped in classical times.¹⁹ Hera is another goddess in this female line, and is thus an heir to the ambivalent female energy of Gaia. Her situation, though, is more complicated in that Zeus takes care not to beget with her a son of real importance. Hera reacts by regressing to the most ancient stage, in which Gaia started to produce by parthenogenesis: if Zeus does not give her a mighty son, she can give birth to one on her own. She tries this with Hephaistos, but the god is lame and even Hera herself is ashamed of him.²⁰ Hera is not deterred and tries one more time: according to the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* (311–352) she engenders an offspring no less formidable than the monstrous Typhon, the most dangerous enemy Zeus ever had. It is only when Zeus defeats even this terrible monster that Hera finally ceases in her attempts to imitate Gaia directly.

Hera's engendering Typhon is no doubt the most striking instance of her troublesome marriage with Zeus, but on closer look it appears as the key that allows us to understand the nature of Hera's troublemaking. First of all, the *Hymn* makes it clear that Hera sees her action as linked to that of Gaia (who in *HES. Th.* 821 was Typhon's mother herself): it is she to whom Hera prays (together with Uranos and the Titans), and who answers the prayer (334–342). But as Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti point out, there is also a significant difference: while both Gaia and Rheia are "truly maternal goddesses" who turn against their husbands to protect their children, Hera begets Typhon "in order to defend her proper status, to take revenge for being harmed in her rank and her prerogatives".²¹ It is in response to Zeus' begetting of Athena by which she feels dishonoured that Hera acts as she does (*Hom. hym. Ap.* 311–330). In other words, Hera's aim is not really to overthrow Zeus but solely to ensure that within the order he has established her place is fully respected.

This is important in view of the fact that in Hesiod's *Theogony* it is precisely the right division of honours (*timai*) that allows Zeus to establish his new order of things. Already during the titanomachy Zeus managed to secure crucial allies among divinities of the previous generation by declaring that whoever of the gods would help him fight the Titans, to him he would allot appropriate honours and privileges (*Th.* 392–396). Zeus kept his word, and as soon as he became the king of the gods, "he divided their honours well for them" (*Th.* 885).

¹⁹ See MUNN 2006, 32–33; Both Gaia and Rheia were sometimes identified with the Mother of the Gods, which had a cult of her own (MUNN 2006, 56 and 61; ROBERTSON 1996).

²⁰ Cf. LORAUX 1992, 41–42. For Hera's shame see *HOM. II. XVIII*, 395–397; *Hom. hymn Ap.* 317–318.

²¹ PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 95.

As Arthur has shown, the *Theogony* may be read as a system of exchanges in which direct vengeance is gradually replaced by “successively higher degrees of sublimation and symbolization”,²² culminating with “the emergence of symbolic exchange and balanced reciprocity” that characterizes “Zeus’ rule as the reign of justice”.²³ The exchange of proper honours for loyalty to the new establishment was crucial in this regard – and even more so in case of females (such as Styx or Hekate, *Tb.* 383–453), who had been the chief initiators of rebellion from the very start, and whose dangerous power thus Zeus needed to transform through positive reciprocity. It is fully in accord with this that Hera so passionately fights for her prerogatives, i.e. for the honours that the female powers have received in the new order. In other words, while Hera seemingly gives birth to Typhon so as to overthrow Zeus, on closer look she does so in order to defend the system of reciprocity on which Zeus’ rule is based. That Hera does not really want to put an end to Zeus’ rule comes out clearly from a version of the story that we find in a scholium on *Il.* II,783, in which Hera helps to give birth to Typhon on account of “being angry” with Zeus, but as soon as the monster is born, “she makes it up with Zeus, tells him everything, and he kills Typhon by his thunderbolt”.

While Hera does hark back to the ancient female powers, therefore, she transforms the direction of this chaotic feminine energy: instead of striving to overthrow Zeus, she uses it to test his strength. As Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti put it:²⁴

If the intergenerational conflict in which the mother unites with the son against the father ... vanishes from the divine family with the disappearance of the figure of the heir, the conflict as such is not driven out altogether, but it transforms. More precisely, it changes its strategy and turns from the verticality of the lineage into the horizontality of the couple. In effect, the strife “stabilizes” into a permanent dynamic between the two sovereign spouses, a dynamic that is disruptive but necessary.

To understand this dynamic, it is useful to compare once again the part played by females and by males in the theogony. In Hesiod, the task of Gaia was to set

²² ARTHUR [KATZ] 1982, 64.

²³ ARTHUR [KATZ] 1982, 73.

²⁴ PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 96.

things in motion, to generate. Uranos, on the other hand, tried to impede this motion, to keep the progeny inside Gaia's womb. His effort aimed at stability, but it was too violent and unrealistic, trying to get rid of motion altogether. In effect, Gaia found a way round his resistance and helped to depose him. Gaia thus stands for flexibility, growth, development, motion, generation – factors which are crucial for the correct functioning of the world, but which are also highly dangerous, threatening to upset the world's order. It is symptomatic that the castration of Uranos resulted not only in the happy emergence of the new generation of the gods but also in the birth of the Giants, powers of chaos opposing the future Olympians, and of the Erinyes, dark powers of blind vengeance. The aim of the theogony is thus to integrate this dangerous feminine element of Gaia, to make use of its positive qualities while keeping its disruptive aspects at bay. This is just what happens between Hera and Zeus. Hera is herself firmly integrated in the new order: she is Zeus' wife, and it is from him that she derives her honour and legitimacy. But she is also an heir of Gaia, and is embodying all the features of Gaia's feminine energy that can possibly be incorporated into Zeus's order. Her begetting of Typhon can thus be seen as the ultimate test of the order's stability. Once Zeus succeeds in this test, Hera can mitigate her chaotic tendencies and transform them into the shrewd tricks of Zeus' wife, who keeps on manipulating, deluding and seducing her husband, acting as his "intimate enemy" (as Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti repeatedly call her).

A similar sublimation is taking place on Zeus' side. As Arthur pointed out, Zeus escapes the cycle of dethronement "not by resisting it, but by assimilating it in its entirety and controlling it."²⁵ A good example of this is his swallowing of Metis, which synthesizes the strategies of the earlier two stages: "For, like Uranos, Zeus suppresses the child in the mother's womb; and, like Kronos, he swallows the child itself."²⁶ In effect, Zeus "embodies the tensions and struggles of the succession-myth while at the same time transcending them."²⁷ His marriage with Hera may be seen as part of the same pattern: instead of dispensing with fights with dark feminine powers altogether, he integrates these fights in his marriage, thus setting clear limits to them. His marriage thus serves as a paradigm of the cosmic order: it is dramatic and full of conflict, but in the end it endures. In other words, it is precisely because he has such a defiant wife that

²⁵ ARTHUR [KATZ] 1982, 78.

²⁶ ARTHUR [KATZ] 1982, 77.

²⁷ ARTHUR [KATZ] 1982, 78.

Zeus is able to control the world. Zeus and Hera argue all the time, sometimes even to the point of breaking up (as we shall see soon), but eventually all ends well and their marriage lasts. In this way the king of the gods demonstrates his ability to keep the right balance between order and chaos that every functional arrangement of reality requires for its stability.

The Shadow of Patriarchy

In the previous section we have seen how Hera's disruptiveness makes sense from the perspective of Greek theogony and its implicit symbolic logic. Let us now for the first time step back from the Greek mythical worldview and in line with my theory of Greek polytheism ask about the deeper cultural reasons the Greeks might have had to devise such myths. In what way do such myths complement the Greek system of ideas and social institutions? What limitations of this system do they express and what contradictions do they mediate?

One obvious answer to these questions is tied with the well-known fact that Hesiod's theogony functions as one of the charter myths of the Greek classification of gender roles.²⁸ "Hesiod makes cosmic a fable that turns up in various forms all over the world: that order was achieved only when the men got control and displaced the women. As elsewhere, this involves a shift toward civil institutions."²⁹ Needless to say such a one-sided picture was only possible at the cost of repressing the alternatives, which must have produced significant tension. As Zeitlin puts it, "an underlying theme of the entire *Theogony* concerns the anxiety of the male confronted with fear of a 'natural' female superiority".³⁰ Feminist psychoanalytic scholars have pointed out that cultural repression of this kind necessarily gives rise to dark fantasies concerning the feminine. "Woman is cast as Freud's 'dark continent', as the abyss of death, as the devouring mother. ... Woman becomes the repository for all the fears engendered by the force of life: loss of control, loss of self, loss of boundaries, loss of meaning."³¹

Myths provide a cultural vent for such fantasies, envisaging various dangerous monsters linked to the goddesses and transgressing the conventional clas-

²⁸ Cf., e.g., ARTHUR [KATZ] 1982; REDFIELD 2003, 17-26; ZEITLIN 1995, 53-86.

²⁹ REDFIELD 2003, 19.

³⁰ ZEITLIN 1995, 85.

³¹ DECKER 2016, 755.

sification of categories. Typhon, with his “hundred heads of a snake ... sending forth all kinds of inconceivable sounds” (HES. *Th.* 825–830), is a case in point: whether begotten by Gaia or Hera, he always represents that aspect of the feminine principle which resists the stabilizing action of the male god. “Monsters pose a symbolic challenge to the patriarchal order, like Typhon and the Titans do in the myths, because of their flagrant difference and their resistance to categorization.”³² It is symptomatic, as Decker points out, that in Aristotle’s biology monsters originate whenever the male form completely fails to gain mastery over the feminine matter.³³

Yet, this is not to say that we should picture Hera (as Decker does) as a kind of feminist champion, ready to resist the enforcing principles of patriarchal order, though losing the battle in the end. Such a view would be but a modernized version of the historicizing account of Hera as an aboriginal goddess subdued by an invading patriarchal god, and it would miss an essential ambivalence that characterizes Greek gods, who both establish and transgress the cultural order, using the transgressive power in a constructive way. In many cases the contrast corresponds to the difference between the ritual image of the god (which tends to stress the god’s constructive side) and the image emerging in myths (which frequently depicts the darker aspects as well). Accordingly, while Hera’s monstrous and chaotic features do give vent to the shadow of the patriarchal order, Hera’s task – as indeed that of any other goddess – is not just to *express* this shadow but to *transform it into positive power* that may in turn be used to support the very order she seems to disrupt. Narratively, this is clear from the fact that most of her unruly actions result from her feeling of being slighted on her prerogatives, and are thus a way of fighting for the very same honour (*timē*) that Zeus has made one of the cornerstones of his newly established system of symbolic exchange. In myths, however, these two poles of Hera’s behaviour are never quite reconciled and their relationship appears as paradoxical. It is only in some of her cults that the paradox is resolved in that the goddess’s anger is transformed into creative energy that may reinvigorate her sovereign marriage. To this subject we must now turn.

³² DECKER 2016, 755.

³³ See ARIST. *Gen. An.* 767b3–15, with comments by BIANCHI 2014, 37–39, and DECKER 2016, 744–745.

The Cycle of Separation and Reconciliation

One of the most important contributions of Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti to understanding the symbolic complex of Hera is their emphasis on an important ritual cycle that allowed to transform Hera's anger into positive power: Zeus and Hera were frequently represented as *breaking up and subsequently celebrating their marriage anew*.³⁴ That Hera keeps on breaking up with her husband is well known from various mythic accounts. Thus in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* before engendering Typhon Hera stays away from Zeus' bed and from her own throne "for a full year" (343–345), while in *Il. VIII,477–481* Zeus tells his wife that he does not care how angry she gets, even if she goes as far as Tartaros in her sulking – clearly implying that this is what Hera regularly does. Before giving birth to Ares, Hera similarly goes to complain of Zeus to Okeanos (OVID, *Fasti*, V,233), another marginal location. Now, Okeanos is interesting in that it is also a place where Hera was raised (*Il. XIV,201–203*) and where she and Zeus first made love behind the backs of their parents (*schol. Il. XIV,296*). In other words, it is a place associated both with the beginning of Hera's marriage and with its temporal break-up, thus allowing to periodically transform the latter into the former.

The full cycle of separation and reconciliation can be glimpsed in some of Hera's cults. One example is Stymphalos in Arcadia, where according to Pausanias (VIII,22,2) Hera was raised in her childhood by a certain Temenos, who subsequently established three sanctuaries of her and gave her three cultic titles: "he called her Girl (*Pais*) when she was still a virgin; when she married Zeus he called her Fulfilled (*Teleia*); but when for some reason she quarrelled with Zeus and came back to Stymphalos, he called her Separated (*Chēra*)." The three epithets correspond to the three stages through which Hera is constantly passing. Stymphalos here plays the same part as Okeanos: it is a place of Hera's childhood, but also the place she chooses for her sulking – in this way returning to the childhood stage, ready to start the cycle anew.

Pausanias tells us nothing of the cults pertaining to the three sanctuaries, which probably no longer existed by his time. Luckily, we learn more from his description of the Boiotian Daidala festival in honour of Hera Teleia, which elaborates the same theme (IX,3,1–2):

Once Hera got angry with Zeus for some reason and she withdrew to Euboa.
When Zeus failed to change her mind, he went to Kithairon, who at that time

³⁴ Cf. PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 107–119, 123–129, 142–152.

was a ruler of Plataia, for there was no one wiser than him. And he ordered Zeus to make a wooden statue and to carry it, covered up, in a wagon drawn by bulls and to say he is celebrating marriage with Plataia, the daughter of Aso-pos. Zeus did so, and Hera heard the news at once, and immediately turned up. But as she approached the wagon and tore away the dress from the image, much to her pleasure she discovered she was deceived, finding a wooden image instead of a woman, and she was reconciled to Zeus. To commemorate this reconciliation they celebrate the Daidala festival, for in the old days men used to call wooden images *daidala*.

Since Pausanias tells the myth to explain why the Plataians worship Hera under the epithet *Nympheuomenē*, “Bride”, it is clear that at the end Hera symbolically takes the bride’s place herself. This is confirmed by another version of the myth given by Plutarch (fr. 157 SANDBACH), which says that after the reconciliation Hera with much joy and laughter “herself led the bridal procession” (though she still later burned the image out of jealousy). While the myth does not directly put Hera in the bride’s place, it lets her join the game and walk in the marriage procession side by side with the fake bride.

Interestingly enough, Plutarch (fr. 157) also tells a completely different aetiological myth of the Daidala, in which Zeus abducts still virginal Hera from Euboeia, where she was raised, and takes her to a cave on Mt. Kithairon to have his first intercourse with her; when Hera’s nurse comes looking for her, Kithairon assures her that Hera is not inside and that Zeus is making love to Leto; as a sign of gratitude Hera later allowed Leto to share her altar and temple with her. The myth as such is quite standard (the first intercourse of Zeus and Hera was a classic subject covered by many local myths),³⁵ but at first sight it is a completely different aetiological story that is hard to square with the first one. Yet, reading the stories structurally, we may in fact see them as complementary: the theme is separation and reconciliation which allows Zeus and Hera to celebrate their *hieros gamos* once again. The first intercourse takes place in secret – a standard motif, as we can see from *Il.* XIV,296, where Hera and Zeus first made love “behind the backs of their dear parents”. The secrecy secludes the intercourse from the visible social system, making it a liminal event, taking place in a liminal cave, and it is precisely this liminality that functions as a bridge with Hera’s sulking, which has no less liminal features. Another link

³⁵ The claim to this memorable event was made by a number of cities and regions such as Naxos, Samos, Euboeia, Argolis or Mt. Kithairon. For a complete survey see COOK 1940, 1025–1065.

is Euboia, which in the first myth serves as a place of Hera's retreat, while in the second one is a place of her childhood, playing thus a similar double part as we have seen in the case of Okeanos and Stymphalos.³⁶ The final structural link with the first myth is the presence of Leto and the surprisingly friendly gesture towards her. Leto is the fifth wife of Zeus (*Th.* 918–920) whom on other occasions Hera persecutes bitterly, and she thus associates Hera's rival Plataia. In this case, however, Hera and Leto are reconciled, which in turn serves as a reference to the theme of reconciliation from the first myth.

The Daidala festival itself, as described by Pausanias (IX,3,3–9), had two versions. At the Little Daidala, celebrated once every six or so years (not even Pausanias was sure), a wooden image of a woman called Daidale was made from a large oak tree chosen from a sacred grove. After some fourteen cycles of the Little Daidala there followed the Great Daidala, a large festival involving all the important cities of Boiotia. Each of them received one Daidale – fourteen altogether – and they drove them together on wagons in a huge marriage procession from the Asopos river up to the summit of Mt. Kithairon, where they burnt the wooden images together with sacrificial victims (a cow to Hera and a bull to Zeus from each of the cities).

The festival is a complex one and has received a number of interpretations.³⁷ The ritual condenses several symbolic patterns that at first sight appear as contradictory: it is a glorious re-enactment of the sacred marriage, but at the same time a sort of expiatory sacrifice: the animal victims are burned completely together with the images, as was common in sacrifices offered to chthonic deities to appease them. It also resembles a scapegoat ritual: the wooden images are a symbol of the strife between Zeus and Hera, embodying all the conflicts of the Boiotians as well as of the cosmos at large. Yet, instead of being driven out beyond the boundary of the territory, as is the case with standard scapegoat rituals, the images are carried towards Mt. Kithairon, the sacred centre of Boiotia, where their negative energy is transformed into positive power by being burned.³⁸ It is this transformation that unites the expiatory as-

³⁶ To which we may add the testimony of *schol.* AR. *Pax*, 1126, which names Euboia as the place of the first intercourse of Zeus and Hera.

³⁷ Cf. CHANIOTIS 2002 for their overview; sadly, many of these interpretations are based on one-sided readings that fail to see the complete cycle of break-up and re-marriage. The best account of the Daidala with regard to this cycle is PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 109–119.

³⁸ The closest modern European parallel are some of the rites of seasonal renewal in which Death is carried out of the village to be burned or drowned: here too we see a rite which has destruction as its main theme but whose atmosphere is in fact joyful an reinvigorating (an answer to Parker's complaint [PARKER 2011, 221] that "the theme 'prosperity restored' seems

pect of the rite with the celebratory one, making the Daidala a rite of renewal. The festival shows Hera's power to give vent to her dangerous anger, but then transform it into creative energy that imbues her marriage with Zeus with new strength.

Hera and the Unity of Boiotia

The account of the Daidala presented in the previous section is more or less in harmony with the analysis of Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti. Let us now once again take a step beyond this analysis and ask about the socio-cultural functions of these mytho-ritual motifs. The Daidala will for the first time allow us to see how Hera's pattern of separation and reconciliation could be applied to other areas than that of human marriage.

Pausanias makes it clear that one of the main levels of meaning of the Daidala was political.³⁹ The cycle of the Great Daidala corresponded to the length of the period during which the Plataians were in exile and the festival could be held (PAUS. IX,3,5). This is referring to the dramatic events at the beginning of the Peloponnesian war in 427 BC, when the Spartans and the Thebans captured Plataia – the only city of Boiotia which was not a member of the Boiotian Confederacy and was allied with Athens – and the Plataians went to exile. One year later the Thebans levelled the town to the ground, but they built a new temple for Hera instead (THUC. III,68,3) – clearly in celebration of the recovered unity of the Boiotians. It was apparently also the Thebans who commissioned the statue of Hera the Bride which according to Pausanias was made by Kallimachos, a sculptor flourishing in late 5th century.⁴⁰ It seems therefore that the Thebans related the renewal of Boiotian unity to the myth of reconciliation between Zeus and Hera.

The Plataians could return from their exile after the Peace of Antalkidas in 387, but in 373 the Thebans destroyed the city again, and it was only in 338, after the Thebans had been defeated by Philip II of Macedon, that Plataia was

to be missing" in the Daidala). In some nineteenth-century Czech Easter versions of this rite the Death figure was clothed in bridal dress which was stripped off it just before the burning and put on a young maiden who was then triumphantly led back to the village (FROLCOVÁ 2001, 38). That the Daidala were also a spring festival is argued by INVERSEN (2007, 393–394) on the basis of THUC. III,65,2 and II,4,2.

³⁹ See in detail INVERSEN 2007, whose historical reconstruction I follow.

⁴⁰ Cf. INVERSEN 2007, 390–392.

re-established. The Plataians seem to have celebrated their return at the Heraion: Pausanias describes another statue of Hera Teleia made by Praxiteles, who was active ca. 380–330 BC and who as an Athenian was unlikely to have been hired by the Thebans.⁴¹ It must have been the Plataians, therefore, who commissioned the statue either during their first return from exile or after 338 “to stress the wholeness of the city”⁴² and a reassembly of its inhabitants.

Once the Plataians were back, it was the Thebans that experienced a downfall. After their defeat they tried to revolt against the Macedonians in 335, but were crushed by Alexander the Great, who decided to destroy the city, divide its land among other Boiotian cities and sell all the Thebans to slavery. Thebes was re-established in 315 BC by Alexander’s successor Kassandros. The Thebans returned, but we may imagine that the old wounds on all sides would have been deep indeed – requiring a goddess to heal them through her festival (PAUS. IX,3,6): “When Kassandros, the son of Antipater, resettled Plataia, the Thebans too [i.e. just like Hera and Zeus] wished to be reconciled with the Plataians and to take part in the common assembly and send a sacrifice to the Daidala.”

The pattern of the break-up and reconciliation of Hera’s marriage thus may have served as a strong template to be used in a variety of political crises. It allowed the Boiotians to burn down all their resentments and re-establish their territorial unity under the sovereign guidance of Hera. It is interesting in this regard that the goddess Teleia (or possibly a festival of the same name) already appears on a Mycenaean tablet from Thebes, and Schachter relates the name to the noun *telos* in the sense of a “district”:⁴³

Teleia also has to do with “belonging”, in the sense of being a member of an association (a *telos*) of communities. It may go some way towards explaining the “pan-Boiotian” nature of the Daidala procession as well as the term *synteleia*, which described the Boiotian league of the Classical period. The Teleia of the Mycenaean period may have been a celebration bringing together inhabitants of all or at least part of the territory controlled by the Theban wanax, just as the later Heraia of Argos were used as a means of expressing Argive sovereignty over the Argive Plain and its surroundings.

⁴¹ The Hera Teleia statue was depicted on Plataian coins from the 338–315 period, when the Plataians were again in control of the city, and as Inversen notes, it is not “likely that the Plataians ... would have ever chosen a statue sculpted as a part of Theban propaganda to grace their coins” (INVERSEN 2007, 399).

⁴² INVERSEN 2007, 411.

⁴³ SCHACHTER 2000, 13–14.

We will see below that sovereignty over a territory is indeed one of the crucial aspects of Hera. The Daidala allows us to see that Hera helped to achieve this sovereignty not just by positively acting as the unifying “queen” of a territory but also by acknowledging the necessary tensions that any unification entailed. Internal strife was one of the inherent tendencies of the egalitarian and pluralistic Greek world, creating bitter resentments. Hera took the resentments upon herself, so to speak, and provided the Boiotians with a ritual mechanism for transforming them into positive unifying power.⁴⁴

The Dangers of Marriage

The Daidala allow us to understand how Hera’s anger at Zeus could ritually be transformed into passion reinvigorating the original union, and how this cycle might have served as a cultural mechanism for dealing with political tensions and resentments. We will return to this socio-political level below, but before we do so, it will be useful to ask what part the cycle of separation and reconciliation played in ordinary human marriages.

One thing the cycle implies is that Hera is not a goddess of marriage in the sense of a permanent state but rather in the sense of the *transformations* that this state implies. This is particularly obvious with regard to the initial transition into marriage: as I have mentioned already, a surprising number of myths tells about how Zeus and Hera got together and had their first intercourse, an event that was celebrated in numerous local cults. But we have seen that the opposite transition in which Hera separates from her husband was no less important. Clearly, Hera protects marriage by guarding its *boundaries*: both the initial boundary that a maiden has to pass to become a married woman and the final boundary that threatens to dissolve the marriage.

Unfortunately, we know nothing about the situations in which women sacrificed to Hera the Separated, but we do hear of interesting rituals related to the first boundary. The scholium on *Il.* XIV,296, for instance, reports that “Zeus secretly deprived Hera of her virginity on Samos, and for this reason the Samians in imitation of the goddess as part of the rites of betrothal let the brides sleep with their bridegrooms in secret, and only then openly celebrate the wedding.”

⁴⁴ Hera seems to have played a similar part in Elis, where by means of the Heraia festival she helped to reconcile the sixteen Eleian cities, acting as the patroness of Eleian territorial unity. See PAUSANIAS, V,16,5–6; PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 177–178.

The secret prenuptial intercourse apparently emphasized the dangerous liminal nature of the transition into marriage.

Even more intriguing is another custom reported by the same scholium. It relates to the myth in which Zeus and Hera secretly unite and conceive Hephaistos behind the backs of their step-parents Okeanos and Tethys:

But when after Kronos's imprisonment in Tartaros Okeanos and Tethys gave Hera to Zeus, they did so believing she was a virgin. Accordingly, when she gave birth to Hephaistos, she pretended that she conceived him without an intercourse, and she gave him to Kedalion of Naxos to teach him smith's art. For this reason even now the Naxians commemorate this event by letting the bride sleep also with a boy with both parents living.

The same custom is reported by Callimachus (*Aet.* fr. 75 PFEIFFER / HARDER), who also relates it to Hera, though he refrains from telling the myth. The ritual use of a prepubescent boy with both parent living (*pais amphithalēs*) was common in Greece: "such a child served as an index of one's household's good fortune and (so it was hoped) an omen for another's."⁴⁵ During weddings such a boy had several ritual duties, such as giving out bread at the banquet and accompanying the procession of bride and groom. According to Pollux (*Onom.* III,39-40) it was a frequent Greek custom for a bride to spend the night before wedding with a little boy in the house of the bridegroom and for a bridegroom with a little girl in the house of the father-in-law. It is not clear, though, why the boy's nocturnal presence should be seen as commemorating the secret intercourse of Hera and Zeus. The practice has sometimes been interpreted as a fertility rite to assure the birth of a healthy son,⁴⁶ but while this may have been one of the native interpretations, it is one that fails to provide a satisfactory relation to the myth. Since the myth is about Hera pretending to give birth to Hephaistos by herself, it seems that the small boy was meant to convey the image of innocence, to cover up for the drama of defloration, in this way echoing Hera's own pretence from the myth. Rites such as these attest to the notion of wedding as a transition fraught with danger. On the one hand, this danger is neutralized by making ritual use of a boy in whom sexuality has not yet awakened, and who is thus immune to its perils.⁴⁷ On the other hand, the danger can

⁴⁵ GOLDEN 1990, 30. Cf. GARLAND 2013, 218-219.

⁴⁶ Thus, e.g., STUART 1911; OAKLEY - SINOS 1994, 20; HARDER 2012, 581.

⁴⁷ Thus already BONNER 1911.

only be turned into a blessing by appealing to Hera in her ability to transform strife into marital passion.

Why is the transition into marriage dangerous? It is not difficult to see why it must have been daunting for the bride, who was to leave the friendly house of her parents and be transferred to a different family in company of a husband whom she did not really know.⁴⁸ But the danger was no smaller for the groom, who was leading to his house a woman from another family over whom he would only have partial control, and who would thus be seen as “a resident alien”.⁴⁹ As various scholars have shown,⁵⁰ the Greek patriarchal marriage contained an inherent contradiction. On the one hand, the bride resembled a passive commodity that is exchanged between her father and her future husband. Yet while becoming a member of her husband’s house, she also remained a part of her old family, retaining a close relation to her father and brothers who could defend her should they suspect her husband is not treating her right. Marriage was thus “a relation between two patriline. The bride is the symbol and the vehicle of a connection between families. It is this connection that confers on her status and dignity”.⁵¹ But it is the very same connection that makes her potentially dangerous for her husband. While culturally construed as objects of exchange, thanks to the connection to their original families women do in fact possess some kind of autonomy. “As they oscillate between commodity and actor, between object and agent of exchange, the anxiety about this unsteady state becomes evident.”⁵²

It is precisely this contradiction between submission and parity of status that characterizes the marriage of Zeus and Hera, who is both his *wife* and his first-born *sister*,⁵³ i.e. both subordinate to him and his equal. Hera is able to take brilliant advantage of this, as skilful Greek wives no doubt were too in their day-to-day strategies of prevailing upon their husbands by reference to their patrikin. Unlike in human marriages, however, in Hera’s case the contradiction is projected onto one and the same patriline, which allows to turn it into a self-enclosed cycle: whereas in real life too strong a conflict would lead to divorce and the wife’s return to her father (which in most cases would be irreversible),

⁴⁸ Cf. the poignant reflection of this in SOPHOCLES, fr. 583 RADT.

⁴⁹ LYONS 2012, 87-90.

⁵⁰ REDFIELD 2003, 27-81, 117-118; LYONS 2012, 19, 87-90.

⁵¹ REDFIELD 2003, 43.

⁵² LYONS 2012, 90.

⁵³ Hera is first-born in HOM. *Il.* IV,58-61; in HES. *Th.* 454, it is Hestia.

Hera has no other patriline to return to, and the crisis thus only leads to a temporary dissolution followed by renewal.

In Greek wedding ritual the subordination was symbolized by the *anakalyptēria*, the bride's lifting of her veil during the wedding party, a gesture analogous to the "I do" formula in our weddings. This was the most critical point of marriage: the bride surrendered herself to the groom, but by this very act of consent confirmed her freedom – for it was only a free woman, i.e. one backed by her free male kinsmen, that was "sexually unavailable except by marriage".⁵⁴ The tension between freedom and surrender is brilliantly captured by the famous metope from Hera's temple at Selinus (fig. 1), where Hera is lifting her veil, while Zeus holds her by the wrist – another standard wedding gesture that the groom used to lead to bride to his house, signifying his mastery over her. Zeus' gesture is one of domination, yet he actually looks as the weaker of the pair, sitting on the bed and being overpowered by the beauty of his bride. It is the standing Hera who through her gesture of giving in calmly dominates the scene.

It is for this reason that myth of Zeus and Hera sometimes thematize not just their marriage but also their courtship. Courtship presupposes equality, it is a social technique that "softens boundaries and mediates oppositions",⁵⁵ implying free consent on the part of the woman. Since Hera embodies the fullest measure of bridal autonomy imaginable, it is not surprising that, as we learn from Callimachus (*Aet.* fr. 48 PFEIFFER / HARDER), "Zeus courted her for three hundred years". What his courtship might have looked like is illustrated by the following myth from Hermione, a coastal town in Argolis (*schol.* THEOCRIT. XV,64):

Aristocles in his treatise *On the sanctuaries of Hermione* gives a rather specific account of the marriage of Zeus and Hera. According to a myth Zeus saw Hera standing apart from the other gods, and immediately he plotted how to have intercourse with her. Since he wished to be inconspicuous and not to be seen by her, he changed into a cuckoo and sat down on a hill which had previously been called Thornax but nowadays is known as Kokkyx (Cuckoo). And he caused a terrible storm on that day. Now, Hera was walking alone, and she came to the hill and sat down on a spot where nowadays is a sanctuary of Hera Teleia. When the cuckoo saw her, it flew down and settled on her knees, shivering and trembling from cold. Hera took pity on it and sheltered it under her

⁵⁴ REDFIELD 2003, 34.

⁵⁵ REDFIELD 2003, 74.

robe. Zeus immediately regained his form and got hold of her. But Hera was rejecting the intercourse with reference to their mother, and so Zeus had to promise to make her his wife. And the Argives, who worship Hera most of all Greeks, have a statue of Hera sitting in her temple on a throne with a sceptre in her hand, and on that sceptre there sits a cuckoo.

At first sight Zeus' courtship, with its animal disguise well-known from his other love affairs, might seem to resemble rape: he took Hera by surprise and "got hold of her". Yet the surprise is followed by Hera's reasoned reference to the fact that they were born of the same mother, which expressed Hera's autonomy and made her Zeus' equal. Zeus has to promise to turn the sibling relation into a marital one in which Hera would willingly submit to him and yet retain her autonomy, while at the same time participating in his rule. The transformation into a charming little cuckoo seems to serve as a sort of joking trick parallel to that with the false bride at Plataia. It shows wedlock as a paradoxical connection of two powers which are attracted to and repelled from each other in equal degree. The joke is a way to bypass the resistance and open way for a transition to the state of marriage.

The same tension between force, deceit and consent runs through most of the other stories depicting the quarrelsome marriage of Zeus and Hera. Zeus' universe is based upon consent, the divinities that support him do so in exchange for proper honours rendered to them. Yet such a consent is not easy to maintain. This is particularly true when it comes to females, who are supposed to accept their subordinate position, and to be able to find power and dignity precisely in this voluntary subordination. Hera is a condensed expression of this, offering as much resistance as possible and manifesting the tensions that Zeus' patriarchal order creates. In the end, however, she consents, and through the cycle of marriage and separation re-enacts this consent over and over again, reconfirming the stability of Zeus' rule.

Hera and Territorial Sovereignty

Once we have understood the internal contradictions in the Greek institution of marriage to which Hera reacts, we may now return to the area of politics and examine some other ways in which Hera's pattern relates to them. We have already seen that in Boiotia Hera was regarded as the sovereign queen of the territory, who through her ritual cycle helped to mediate differences and turn resentments into the power of unity. This was one of her typical functions

throughout the Greek world. While Zeus was a Panhellenic god, protecting all the cities to an equal degree and never favouring any one of them,⁵⁶ Hera was the very opposite of this, frequently functioning as a patron of particular cities and territories. Indeed, if Zeus was a divine sovereign on the cosmic level, on the level of local politics it was rather his wife who embodied sovereignty.

To understand what this entailed, it will be useful to briefly summarize the part that sanctuaries in general played in archaic Greece. As most scholars agree, the development of clearly defined sanctuaries was bound to the rise of the polis. While numerous cult places already existed during the Dark Ages, it was in the eighth century that they became much more visible and formalized and that their number sharply increased – a phenomenon that is usually seen as connected with the rise of the polis. Interestingly, it was particularly the extra-urban sanctuaries that originated earlier and were the most important ones. An influential interpretation of François de Polignac sees such sanctuaries as places of *mediation*. The sanctuaries originated in a world similar to that depicted in the *Odyssey*, a society dominated by a warrior aristocracy established around local chiefs (*basileis*) and their households, each of them using the exchange of gifts “to maintain the links of hospitality and the network of kinship and marriage alliances that constituted the bases of his power and prestige”.⁵⁷ It was probably due to large population growth, followed by shortage of land, that in the eighth century this old model of organization got increasingly inefficient and forced more and more chiefs “to work together, surrendering some powers they had previously exercised within their villages in return for a share in broader powers in a larger territory”.⁵⁸ Extra-urban sanctuaries seem to have played a crucial part in this process in that they provided a shared neutral spot at which aristocrats from different towns of the region or representatives of different groups within a single polis could meet, share sacrificial meal, strengthen the networks of alliance and compete by offering votive gifts that preserved the glory of the dedicator.

In his first formulation of his thesis Polignac emphasized the fact that “the sanctuary was often situated *right on a threshold to the territory*”, thus helping to delimit and protect “the land controlled by the community upon which the sanctuary depended”.⁵⁹ In his more recent papers Polignac has seen this as the second stage of a slower process. At first the sanctuaries functioned as meeting

⁵⁶ BURKERT 1985, 130.

⁵⁷ POLIGNAC 1995, 7.

⁵⁸ MORRIS 2009, 71.

⁵⁹ POLIGNAC 1995, 33.

points shared by all, their frontier location being rather a mark of their neutrality and openness to communities from both sides of the border. It was only in the period around 600 BC or later that “powerful cities were taking control of external sanctuaries and transforming them into manifestations of their influence, wealth and prestige. These changes modified both the internal organization of the sanctuaries and their territorial orientations, through the creation of sacred ways and processions between city and sanctuary”.⁶⁰ In this way the *mediation* was transformed into *sovereignty*.

The extra-urban sanctuaries were dedicated to different divinities, but the most prominent ones were Hera, Apollo and Artemis, each adding a specific twist to the mediating function just described. For Hera, the classic example is her most famous sanctuary, situated at Prosymna on the north-eastern fringes of the fertile plain of the Argolis, in-between the towns of Argos, Mykenai, Tiryns and Nauplia. As Polignac puts it, “it has the air of a central spot, a meeting place for the entire region. Its position made it the ideal place for the demonstrations of ritualized competition (including sacrifices and offerings that vied in lavishness)”.⁶¹ It thus functioned as a place that – in accordance with Hera’s pattern – allowed to transform strife and competition into cooperation. But while apparently neutral at first, the sanctuary’s central position made it ideally predisposed for being transformed into a symbol of sovereignty over the entire Argive plain. This transformation happened in the middle of the fifth century, when Argos conquered Mykenai and Tiryns and took hold of the entire plain, symbolically confirming this change by remodelling the Heraion and its festivals and making it seem as traditionally closely linked to Argos.⁶² No doubt this forced unification must have created many resentments, and it was for this reason that the Argives made Hera the patroness of their territorial domination, for they knew it was in her power to turn the resentments into the power of unity.

Hera’s patronage over the Argive plane seems to have been not just static but articulated through a dynamic ritual pattern that corresponds to the cycle of separation and reconciliation we have outlined above. Unfortunately, our sources only give us isolated fragments whose fitting together requires more imaginative effort than the space of this paper allows.⁶³ Instead, I will focus on a different famous sanctuary of Hera, which was located on the Ionian island of

⁶⁰ POLIGNAC 2009, 437–438.

⁶¹ POLIGNAC 1995, 37.

⁶² See HALL 1995.

⁶³ For a cautious attempt at reconstructing the pattern see PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 123–141. For a more speculative version see, e.g., BURKERT 1983, 161–168.

Samos, close to the coast of Asia Minor.⁶⁴ Here, too, we find a version of the cycle, and its close analysis will allow us to link the subject of territorial sovereignty to that of marriage.

The Samian sanctuary boasted of one of the earliest temples in the Greek world: built in the eighth century, it was the first temple to establish the canonical length of a hundred feet, often followed later. In the sixth century it was replaced by another temple that Herodotus (III,60) calls the biggest one he has ever seen. In the Greek world, a temple was a manifestation of sovereignty par excellence, functioning as a palace of a god who was seen as the supreme protector of the polis. It is not surprising therefore, that some of the earliest and most important temples were dedicated to Hera, the Olympian Queen, the temple of Hera on Samos being the best-known example.⁶⁵ The reasons for such an astonishing development of the Samian sanctuary, however, are quite different from those we have traced in Argos. Unlike the Argive plain, Samos only supported one polis, and there was thus no need to mediate between different local communities. Instead, the mediation was on an international scale. Since the eighth century the island was a flourishing maritime state and one of the leading commercial centres of Greece, trading with populations all around the eastern Mediterranean.

The mediating part of the Heraion is clear from the fact that the majority of archaic votive offerings found in the sanctuary were imported, including numerous objects from Egypt and the Near East.⁶⁶ As Polignac warns, we should not “confuse the origin of objects and the origin of those who dedicated them to the divinity”; rather the offerings should be seen as at the end of a complex chain of exchanges involving “Phoenicians, Cypriots, Samians, and other Greeks travelling across the Aegean”.⁶⁷ What matters is that Samos functioned as a maritime crossroads at which various routes of exchange intersected. The Heraion provided a space that allowed to integrate these exchanges and transform them into a symbol of sovereignty. “In some ways Hera at Samos can be seen to reign over maritime space and Aegean relations in the same manner that Hera at Prosymna protects the Argive plain and the relations which unite its communities.”⁶⁸

⁶⁴ For its archaeology see KYRIELEIS 1993; BAUMBACH 2004, 147–174. For an interpretation of the cult see PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 141–159.

⁶⁵ Cf. BURKERT 1985, 131.

⁶⁶ It needs to be added, though, that according to BUMKE 2012, many were actually produced in Greek workshops.

⁶⁷ POLIGNAC 1994, 7.

⁶⁸ POLIGNAC 1994, 7.

The international focus of the sanctuary is also clear from the fact that it was situated in the country close to the shore, six kilometres from the town of Samos, and originally it was oriented towards the sea. It was only in late seventh century that it was reoriented towards the town and was connected to it by the “Sacred Way”, whose construction required a rerouting of a branch of the river Imbrasos.⁶⁹ This was a change analogous to that we have seen the Argive Heraion to have gone through in the fifth century: it completed the transformation from mediation to sovereignty by which the sanctuary was fully appropriated by the polis. Unlike in the Argive case, though, the Samian transformation was not absolute and the sanctuary retained its international openness. As we will see in the next section, this openness may be seen as the key not only to the success of the Samian Heraion, but also to the importance of Hera to the Greek world in general.

Sovereignty and International Exchange

To the Samians, the Heraion was a central point of their political identity, and the sanctuary functioned both as a cosmopolitan space of exchange and as a local centre of worship. This comes out clearly in its foundation myths. According to Pausanias (VII,4,4), the sanctuary was founded by the Argonauts, who had brought the cultic statue of Hera from Argos; at the same time, however, “the Samians themselves believe that the goddess was begotten on the island by the river Imbrassos under a chaste tree (*lygos*)” which grew on the spot still in Pausanias’s time. Contradictory as these stories seem, they are to be read together, expressing both the local character of the Heraion and its link with international maritime routes (the Argonauts being the heroes of seafaring par excellence).

The main annual festival of Hera on Samos was called the *Toneia*, “Binding”. Its foundation myth (preserved by *ATHEN. Deipn. XV,672a–674b*) tells how Admete, daughter of Eurystheus, escaped from Argos to Samos, where as a result of a vision of Hera she decided to become her priestess in a sanctuary previously founded by the Nymphs and the Leleges, a mythical pre-Greek primitive tribe. The Argives, furious at her escape, bribed Tyrrhenian pirates to steal the cult statue of Hera, believing the Samians would punish Admete for this. The pirates landed at the “port of Hera” and easily stole the statue, for the temple had no doors. But when they attempted to sail away, the boat would not move.

⁶⁹ KYRIELEIS 1993, 103; SCOTT 2015, 230.

The pirates saw this as a prodigy and left the statue with food offerings on the beach, where it was discovered by the Karians (another non-Greek people), who bound it to a chaste tree (*lygos*), superstitiously believing the goddess had escaped from the temple by herself. It was in this bound state that Admete with the Samians found the statue the next day, loosened it, washed it and brought it back to the temple. “For this reason ever since that day the statue is once a year taken to the shore and purified and cakes are presented to it. And this festival is called Toneia” (ATHEN. *Deipn.* XV,672d). It is possible that at some point the statue was also bound by the chaste tree, but Athenaeus does not mention this; he does state, though, that the Karians were ordered by an oracle to wear wreaths made of chaste tree during the festival, and that in actuality it was the regular participants who wore them (thus playing the part of the Karians), only the personnel of the sanctuary wearing wreaths of laurel.

At first sight such a rite seems entirely different from the cults of Hera we have analysed so far, showing no apparent connection with weddings. Its main theme is a temporary dissolution of order and its subsequent restoration. Yet, the Hellenistic Samian poet Nicaenetus speaks of songs celebrating “the glorious bride of Zeus” during the festival (ATHEN. *Deipn.* XV,673c) and Varro claims that “the statue of Hera is adorned in the manner of a bride and her annual rites are celebrated in the form of a marriage” (LACTANT. *Div. inst.* I,17,8). While we cannot be sure Varro is referring to the same festival,⁷⁰ marriage symbolism can actually be detected in the Toneia myth. Admete means “Untamed”, associating a virgin not yet yoked into marriage.⁷¹ Hera herself was said to have been born on Samos under a chaste tree and “Samos was originally called Virgin Island (Parthenie), because Hera lived there when she was a virgin”.⁷² We thus meet once again the motif of a place of Hera’s birth and her maidenhood. The chaste tree, or *vitex agnus castus* (*lygos*), reinforces the symbolism, for it was a plant famous for its anti-aphrodisiacal effects.⁷³ By being bound to it once a year Hera symbolically resumed her virginity. The circumstances were characterized by chaos and disruption, which corresponds to the stage of Hera’s separation from Zeus and her retreat to various liminal places of her birth. At the same

⁷⁰ Some scholars believe the *hieros gamos* was celebrated at a different festival; cf. the detailed discussion in AVAGIANOU 1991, 46–58, to which we must now add PIRENNE-DELFORGE – PIRONTI 2016, 149–152 (who are convinced Varro is referring to the Toneia).

⁷¹ For the poetic image of virgins as wild horses to be tamed by marriage see CALAME 1997, 237–243.

⁷² *Schol.* DIONYS. PER. 534; cf. Varro cited by LACTANT. *Div. inst.* I,17,8.

⁷³ See in detail VON STADEN 1993.

time, however, the binding also implies *taming* the goddess and preparing her for marriage. The march with the statue back to the Heraion, which must have taken place after the purification, can be seen as a marriage procession that would restore Hera to her fulfilled status of a wife.

It might be objected that despite these symbolic elements the marriage motif is never openly articulated in the rite or the myth, and that the bridegroom in particular is remarkably invisible. We have seen that the first intercourse of Zeus and Hera was indeed associated with Samos and it is likely that the marriage motif was echoed in various choral songs accompanying the festival (as we can see from the fragment of Nicaenetus), but it needs to be admitted that apparently it was not very prominent. To comprehend this, it is useful to recall the structuralist conception which sees symbolic images as essentially condensed, i.e. as defined by their structure which is independent of particular contents and which therefore “permits the unification of heterogeneous semantic fields”⁷⁴ and is relatable to various levels of human experience. From this perspective, Hera’s cycle of separation and reconciliation was a structural pattern that could be expressed through various symbolic “codes”.⁷⁵

Given Samos’s position of a maritime crossroads, it is understandable that in this case the basic images chosen for expressing Hera’s pattern were taken from international sea trade rather than domestic life and that the marital code only played a secondary part. Both codes are mutually convertible, however. Just as in marriage the bride comes from outside to become the mistress of the house, Hera’s cult was seen as involving a mediation between Greeks and non-Greeks or between different Greek groups – such as the Argives, who in the myth were depicted as enemies, but who had in fact supplied the first priestess and through the Argonauts even the cultic statue. The image of the temple having no doors expresses its openness to exchanges with the outside world. At the same time, this openness is conceived as dangerous: Hera’s statue may be stolen by the pirates, just as in marriage the wife may be seduced by an outsider. In the end, however, the goddess manages to combine this openness with stability: the temple welcomes the Tyrrhenians, but when they attempt to sail away with Hera’s statue, their ship cannot move. Thanks to the goddess, the danger entailed in the openness becomes reinvigorating: the energy released by the crisis is transformed into the stabilizing power of renewal, and Hera is bound to the very tree under which she was born.

⁷⁴ LÉVI-STRAUSS 1966, 96.

⁷⁵ For this conception of “codes” cf. VERNANT 1982, 131–142.

A conspicuous feature of the myths of the Heraion is the presence of so many non-Greek peoples: Leleges, Tyrrhenians, Karians. To a certain extent they function as images of the Other: the Tyrrhenians are criminal pirates, the Karians simple-minded primitives evoking a time before the rise of culture. Yet, there is more to this. As Sweeney shows, while the best-known Greek models of ethnicity defined the Greeks in sharp opposition to the barbarians, the Ionians, being situated at an interface between Europe and Asia, opted for a more balanced approach, rejecting the polarised model “in favour of plurality, complexity and ambiguity”.⁷⁶ The Samian foundation myth is a good example. A sixth-century BC genealogy of Asius of Samos (preserved by PAUS. VII,4,1), derived the Samians from Astypalaia (the daughter of Phoinix, sister of Europe), who slept with Poseidon and begot Ankaios, king of the Leleges; he in turn married Samia, daughter of the river Maiandros, from which union Samos was born. Samos thus originated at the intersection of many different elements. Phoinix is a king of Phoenicia (present Lebanon), and while one of his daughters gave name to Europe, the Samians descended from her sister Astypalaia, which made the island “not quite European. Asius seems to suggest that it is certainly very close to being European, but also that it is proud of being something a little different”.⁷⁷ This is also clear from the presence of the river Maiandros, which flew from Anatolia to the western coast, acting “throughout antiquity as a grand highway – a literal channel of communication”.⁷⁸ Poseidon associates another communication channel, that through the sea. At the same time, the *movement* implied in Maiandros and Poseidon is contrasted by the *stability* of Astypalaia, whose name “Ancient City” connotes an ancient acropolis settlement. But the river and the sea are also forces of nature, which in turn are more stable than social structures and imply a kind of autochthony in the midst of social migrations, i.e. they comprise in themselves both movement and stability.

We have seen the same combination in the Heraion myths, where watery beings played a crucial part. The Nymphs and the river Imbrasos made the goddess and her sanctuary autochthonous and rooted in nature. The sea implied international exchange but was counterbalanced by Hera’s firm refusal to move from the island. Interestingly, Samos’s father Ankaios was also one of the Argonauts (AP. RHOD. I,185–89), which resonates with the myth of the Argonauts establishing the Heraion and shows it as containing within itself the same op-

⁷⁶ SWEENEY 2013, 202.

⁷⁷ SWEENEY 2013, 93.

⁷⁸ SWEENEY 2013, 93.

position: while portraying the Samian cult of Hera as a imported by seafaring, it also presents it as a homecoming, one of the seafarers being a Samian native.

But it was not just a focus on autochthony and rootedness in local forces of nature that provided for stability. The stability of nature was complemented by Samian eagerness for culturally shaping the landscape by means of monumental engineering (already praised by HDT. III,60). The best example is Hera's monumental stone temple, which gave the cult of the goddess a firm foundation. Its building symbolized the aspect of stability and sovereignty, which would complement that of movement and mediation. Indeed, since it was no doubt financed by the income from international sea trade, it demonstrated the ability of the goddess to transform movement into a driving force of stability, just as on other occasions she was able to transform her anger into the power of reconciliation. The Samian Heraion is thus both stable and open to movement, both aboriginal and imported, both natural and cultural, both non-Greek and Greek. In the end, however, Hera manages to integrate all these contradictions and unite them in her majestic sovereignty.

It is worth noting in this connection that the miracle of Greek economic and socio-cultural development that started in the eight century was due mainly to a combination of intensive agriculture on the one hand (allowed by the rise of the polis capable of permanently protecting the territory), and international sea trade around the Mediterranean on the other: "Intensive agriculture produced the commodities whose value was enhanced through international exchange, and the new wealth so generated was reinvested in intensive agriculture through extensions of Greek agricultural settlement."⁷⁹ It was thus based precisely on a mutually supportive combination of stability and movement and on the ability to turn the latter into a motor of the former despite the inevitable tensions between them. In actuality, however, these two features were not always easy to reconcile, and trade exchanges were a source of anxiety. "Throughout archaic Greek literature we find a tension between the desire for self-sufficiency and the need for contact and exchange with the outside world."⁸⁰ The best example is Hesiod's mistrust of sea trade in *Op.* 633-362 and his idealization of self-subsistent farming without the need to "travel on ships" (236-237).⁸¹ But even in the *Odyssey* "traders are often mentioned in the same breath with pirates".⁸²

⁷⁹ REDFIELD 2003, 183.

⁸⁰ LYONS 2012, 49.

⁸¹ Cf. VAN WEES 2013, 457-460; LYONS 2012, 47-52.

⁸² LYONS 2012, 49.

The complex of structural themes we have traced on Samos, therefore, seems to be of much more general importance. It shows Hera as one of the patrons of the Greek miracle, a goddess associated both with the protection of agricultural territory (favouring fertile plains as places of her sanctuaries, such as in Argolis or on Samos) and with international trade. Her task was to take upon herself the tension between self-sufficiency and exchange, and to assure the Greeks that, risky as such a combination may seem, it is not only viable but may in fact become a basis of sovereignty of the polis, symbolized by the monumental temple.

Sovereignty and Marriage Exchange

The polarity of the temple and the sea is typical of other cults of Hera as well and is mirrored in votive offerings. Among her favourite offerings in eighth to sixth centuries BC were terracotta models of houses.⁸³ Many scholars regard them as temple models, but as Polignac argues,⁸⁴ it is likely that some of them are simply human houses, symbolizing “the more fundamental part of Hera in the protection of domestic universe and preservation of the household (*oikos*)”. In contrast to them stand models of ships, also found in a number of Hera’s sanctuaries (particularly those laying close to the sea).⁸⁵ Polignac interprets them as standing for masculine “movement of the journey” opposed to feminine “stability of the home”,⁸⁶ and relates them to the fact that a great part of Hera’s archaic votives not just in the seaside sanctuaries but even in Argos were of external origin, i.e. they possibly served as memorials of a chain of exchanges with other regions that the local aristocrats engaged in to arrange alliances, thus securing their domestic position.

It is likely that in some cases these alliances were confirmed by marriage, which in most societies represents one of the basic forms of inter-group exchanges. This helps us understand why it is Hera, the goddess of marriage, who supervises these exchanges and who has the ability to transform their movement into the stability of sovereignty. The bride is “an exogenous element”,⁸⁷ coming

⁸³ POLIGNAC 1997, 113–114; BAUMBACH 2004, 32–33 (Perachora), 89–90 (Argos), 160 (Samos); WALTER ET ALII 2019, 123–128 (Samos).

⁸⁴ POLIGNAC 1997, 113–115.

⁸⁵ POLIGNAC 1997, 115; BAUMBACH 2004, 40 (Perachora), 67 (Tiryons), 96 (Argos), 163–166 (Samos); WALTER ET ALII 2019, 109–110 (Samos); KYRIELEIS 1993, 141–143 (Samos).

⁸⁶ POLIGNAC 1997, 116.

⁸⁷ POLIGNAC 1997, 118.

to the groom's house from the outside. Yet, after being integrated in the new household the situation turns around: the exogenous wife becomes the head and the guardian of the house, while the endogenous husband actually spends most of his time outside. However, the woman is still culturally construed as essentially mobile and unstable, and there is a risk of her failing to play the part of the stable house guardian. "The initial circulation of women makes marriage possible, but the association of women with circulation cannot easily be turned off once it has served its purpose."⁸⁸ There is thus a danger of the wife setting the household in an illegitimate motion once again, either by squandering its resources (HES. *Th.* 594–602, *Op.* 374) or by indulging in adultery.

It is this paradox, and the anxiety tied with it, that lies at the heart of Hera's symbolic complex. On the one hand, the ideal of the woman as the stable queen of the house (the "queen bee" of XENOPHON, *Oec.* 7) helps us understand why it is really Hera rather than Zeus who was cultically connected with the theme of sovereignty. On the other hand, the fact that in myths she seems to be constantly putting Zeus' rule to test rather than supporting it testifies to numerous tensions the aristocratic marriage exchanges must have created. Hera keeps on reinitiating the motion, so to speak, threatening to destroy the marriage. At the same time, however, all of these attempts end well and movement is once again transformed into energized stability.

With this in mind we may return to the theogonic and cosmological conceptions of the male and the female implied in the conflicting marriage of Zeus and Hera. We have seen that in the *Theogony* the goddesses (Gaia, Rhea and Hera) embodied flexibility, growth, motion, and generation, whereas their husbands attempted to achieve order and stability. It might thus seem that the males stood for *culture*, while the females represented *nature* with its power of growth and fertility. Yet, once we examine Hesiod's account of the creation of the first woman, we find that the picture is in fact more complex. While Pandora might at first sight appear as "Gaia reborn",⁸⁹ in fact she displays little of Gaia's natural fertility. On the contrary, her creation is closely associated with *culture*. First of all, it meant the end of the blessed natural state of the Golden Age, and the origin of the cultural institutions of marriage and agriculture.⁹⁰ Moreover, far from being a creature of nature, Pandora herself is a fully artificial creation, moulded from clay and adorned by the gods like a shop window

⁸⁸ LYONS 2003, 128.

⁸⁹ LYONS 2012, 42; for the numerous connections between Gaia and Pandora see WEST 1978, 164–165.

⁹⁰ VERNANT 1982, 168–185.

mannequin.⁹¹ For Hesiod, therefore, “women are on the side of culture, in fact of luxury, which is an excess of culture; they are deceitful, greedy, expensive; they distract men from their work, ... and consume the resources of that work, thereby making it harder.”⁹² Yet, they are a necessary evil, for without them a man would not have a legitimate heir (HES. *Th.* 602–607).

We can see, therefore, that the Greek conception of women is highly ambivalent: they are both natural and hyper-cultural. The key to this paradox lies in marriage, which allows biological reproduction but which is also a result of *exchange* between two patriline, and thus a highly cultural institution, distinguishing humans from animals. As Redfield puts it, “the fertility of the woman links her to nature, but marriage-exchange situates her in culture”.⁹³ In effect, Pandora serves as a representation of the dangers of exchange. She is described as an intruder consuming the resources of the household and threatening its self-sufficiency (HES. *Th.* 594–599), a picture that corresponds to Hesiod’s idealisation of agricultural self-reliance of the household and to his mistrust of sea trade (*Op.* 236–237, 633–662).

Hesiod’s misogyny may have developed in the specific socio-economic conditions of small farmers in the eighth century before the full formation of the polis,⁹⁴ but as Zeitlin argues, it would not have become canonical if it did not agree with a general Greek tendency to see the woman as an “intrusive and ambivalent ‘other’, who is brought into a strange man’s household and forever remains under suspicion as introducing a dangerous mixture into the desired purity of male identity and lineage”.⁹⁵ We have seen already that it was due to her constant link to the original family that the wife was seen as potentially dangerous. Yet it was this same link that allowed to turn mere biological reproduction into the cultural begetting of legitimate heirs. The wife thus both jeopardized the sovereignty of the household and helped to ensure it. Indeed, it was her who ruled the house and who would eventually in the role of a mother-in-law warrant that its rules are also internalized by the bride of her son.

It is this paradox that is reflected in the aetiological stories of Hera’s cult at Samos, which thematize both the culture-producing aspect of exchange and its

⁹¹ Cf. LORAUX 1993, 78–79.

⁹² REDFIELD 2003, 23.

⁹³ REDFIELD 2003, 23.

⁹⁴ Cf., e.g., SUSSMAN 1978. For Hesiod as looking back to the Dark Age and its modes of social organization rather than the newly emerging polis system see EDWARDS 2004.

⁹⁵ ZEITLIN 1995, 61.

dangers. Above all, however, it helps us understand why Hera may act both as an intimate enemy of Zeus and as a dignified queen safeguarding the order he has established. By mysteriously combining both of these roles in her divine personality Hera helped to hold the Greek cultural order together. Her divine example assured the Greeks that with her help mediation may indeed become the very cornerstone of sovereignty.

Conclusion

We have seen that at the heart of Hera's symbolic network we find the tension between activity and passivity, stability and movement, unity and discord, self-sufficiency and exchange, autochthony and import. In myths, Hera demonstrates these tensions in her troublesome marriage with Zeus: she is a rebellious wife who frequently attacks her husband's authority, sometimes even breaking up with him altogether. In the end, however, the couple are always reconciled and Hera's anger is transformed into energy that reinvigorates the union.

While the pattern as such has already been analysed by Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti, it has been my aim to demonstrate what function it might have played in the Greek socio-cultural system. I have suggested to see it as a cultural mechanism that allowed the Greeks to cope with a number of paradoxes entailed in their socio-cultural order. The first of these paradoxes related to the status of women, who were conceptualized as passive and subordinate, but who in many regards were actually more autonomous than it would seem. This was best seen precisely in marriage. On the one hand, the bride was transferred to the groom as a passive commodity and was supposed to be fully obedient to her new husband. At the same time, however, the wife never completely lost her connection with her original family, and was thus seen as potentially dangerous, for she could always ask her brothers for support against her husband. Moreover, while she was supposed to become a trusted guardian of the house, she was also culturally construed as essentially mobile and unstable, and was thus seen as a potential weak spot of the household, prone to destroy it from within by squandering its resources or indulging in adultery. It was this paradox that transpires in the frequent Greek misogyny, of which Hesiod is the best-known example. Hera reacted to this paradox. Through her own defiant behaviour she clearly expressed all the darkest male fantasies of female dangerousness, but in the end she was able to transform her defiance into creative energy that reinvigorated her marriage with Zeus. In this she demonstrated that strong as the tensions within the Greek conception of marriage were, if one entrusted them to her, they would in the end be manageable and worthwhile.

While marriage serves as Hera's "master code", the pattern expressed through this code is much more versatile and may be applied to a number of other areas, such as those of politics and economy. Hera was the patroness of territorial sovereignty, but even in this case she embodied not just its positive unifying side, but also all the necessary tensions that political unification entailed. Hera took them upon herself, so to speak, and helped the Greeks to convert them into the power of unity. Just as she was able to express and transform all the secret female resentments against their husbands, she could equally well give voice to political territorial resentments, providing a ritual mechanism for turning strife into cooperation.

On other occasions, Hera's pattern could be applied to the realm of economy. Here, the marital paradox of the "alien" exogamous bride becoming the guardian of the household corresponded to the tension between the desire for self-sufficiency and the need for exchange with the outside world, well-known from Hesiod again. This was the main theme of the Samian Heraion, which played out the risks of openness to international exchange, but managed to turn them into a driving force of stability. In the regard, Hera can be seen as one of the patrons of the Greek miracle, which was based on a combination of intensive agriculture and international trade exchange. Hera protected fertile agricultural plains, but she also helped to mitigate the farmers' fear of sea trade. By taking these fears upon herself (and in the Samos action even letting herself to be abducted by foreigners) and proving immune to the dangers involved, she assured the Greeks that the risky combination of autonomy and exchange it was not only viable but could in fact become a basis of sovereignty of the polis.*

Bibliography

- ARTHUR [KATZ], M. B. 1982, "Cultural Strategies in Hesiod's Theogony: Law, Family, and Society", *Arethusa*, 15, pp. 63–82.
- AVAGIANOU, A. 1991, *Sacred Marriage in the Rituals of Greek Religion*, Bern.
- BAUMBACH, J. D. 2004, *The Significance of Votive Offerings in Selected Hera Sanctuaries in the Peloponnese, Ionia and Western Greece*, Oxford.

* This work was supported by the European Regional Development Fund-Project "Creativity and Adaptability as Conditions of the Success of Europe in an Interrelated World" (No. CZ.02.1.01/0.0/0.0/16_019/0000734).

- BIANCHI, E. 2014, *The Feminine Symptom: Aleatory Matter in the Aristotelian Cosmos*, New York.
- BONNER, C. 1911, "The Prenuptial Rite in the Aetia of Callimachus", *Classical Philology*, 6, pp. 402–409.
- BUMKE, H. 2012, "Fremde Votive oder fremde Dedikanten? Ägyptische Weihgaben in ionischen Heiligtümern als Zeugnisse für Kulturtransfer", in: L.-M. GÜNTHER (ed.), *Trypbe und Kultritual im archaischem Kleinasien – ex oriente luxuria?*, Wiesbaden, pp. 11–31.
- BURKERT, W. 1983, *Homo Necans: The Anthropology of Ancient Greek Sacrificial Ritual and Myth*, Transl. by P. BING, Berkeley – Los Angeles.
- BURKERT, W. 1985, *Greek Religion*, Transl. by J. RAFFAN, Cambridge (Mass.).
- CALAME, C. 1997, *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece*, Transl. by D. COLLINS – J. ORION, Lanham.
- CHANOTIS, A. 2002, "Ritual Dynamics: The Boiotian Festival of the Daidala", in: H. F. J. HORSTMANSHOFF – H. W. SINGOR – F. T. VAN STRATEN – J. H. M. STRUBBE (eds.), *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H. S. Versnel*, Leiden, pp. 23–48.
- CHLUP, R. 2018, "On the Nature of the Gods: Methodological Suggestions for the Study of Greek Divinities", *History of Religions*, 58, No. 2, pp. 101 to 127.
- CLAY, J. S. 2003, *Hesiod's Cosmos*, Cambridge.
- CLAY, J. S. 2006, *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns*, London.
- COOK, A. B. 1906, "Who Was the Wife of Zeus?", *Classical Review*, 20, No. 7, pp. 365–378.
- COOK, A. B. 1940, *Zeus: A Study in Ancient Religion*, III, Cambridge.
- DECKER, J. E. 2016, "Hail Hera, Mother of Monsters! Monstrosity as Emblem of Sexual Sovereignty", *Women's Studies*, 45, pp. 743–757.
- DETIENNE, M. 1989, "The Violence of Wellborn Ladies: Women in the Thesmophoria", in: M. DETIENNE – J.-P. VERNANT, *The Cuisine of Sacrifice among the Greeks*, Transl. by P. WISSING, Chicago – London, pp. 129–147.
- EDWARDS, A. T. 2004, *Hesiod's Ascra*, Berkeley – Los Angeles.
- ELLER, C. 2018, "From Motherkin to the Great Goddess: Matriarchal Myth in Anthropology and the Classics", in: E. VARTO (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Classics and Early Anthropology*, Leiden, pp. 132–153.
- FROLCOVÁ, V. 2001, *Velikonoc v české lidové kultuře [Easter in the Czech Folk Culture]*, Prague.
- GARLAND, R. 2013, "Children in Athenian Religion", in: J. E. GRUBBS – T. PARKIN (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Childhood and Education in the Classical World*, Oxford – New York, pp. 207–226.
- GEORGIOUDI, S. 1992, "Creating a Myth of Matriarchy", in: P. SCHMITT PANTEL

- (ed.), *A History of Women: From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, Cambridge (Mass.), pp. 449–463.
- GOLDEN, M. 1990, *Children and Childhood in Classical Athens*, Baltimore.
- GRIMES, R. 2014, *The Craft of Ritual Studies*, Oxford.
- GUTHRIE, W. K. C. 1950, *The Greeks and Their Gods*, Boston.
- HALL, J. M. 1995, “How Argive Was the ‘Argive’ Heraion? The Political and Cultic Geography of the Argive Plain, 900–400 B.C.”, *American Journal of Archaeology*, 99, No. 4, pp. 577–613.
- HARDER, A. 2012, *Callimachus, Aetia*, Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary, II: *Commentary*, Oxford.
- INVERSEN, P. A. 2007, “The Small and Great Daidala in Boiotian History”, *Historia*, 56, pp. 381–418.
- KYRIELEIS, H. 1993, “The Heraion at Samos”, in: N. MARINATOS – R. HÄGG (eds.), *Greek Sanctuaries: New Approaches*, London – New York, pp. 125–153.
- LÉVI-STRAUSS, C. 1966, *The Savage Mind*, Transl. Anonymous, London.
- LÉVI-STRAUSS, C. 1985, “The Lessons of Linguistics”, in: *The View from Afar*, Transl. by J. NEUGROSCHER – P. HOSS, Oxford, 138–147.
- LORAUX, N. 1992, “What is a Goddess”, in: P. SCHMITT PANTEL (ed.), *A History of Women: From Ancient Goddesses to Christian Saints*, Cambridge (Mass.), pp. 11–45.
- LORAUX, N. 1993, *The Children of Athena: Athenian Ideas about Citizenship and the Division between the Sexes*, Transl. by C. LEVINE, Princeton.
- LYONS, D. J. 2003, “Dangerous Gifts: Ideologies of Marriage and Exchange in Ancient Greece”, *Classical Antiquity*, 22, No. 1, pp. 93–134.
- LYONS, D. J. 2012, *Dangerous Gifts: Gender and Exchange in Ancient Greece*, Austin.
- MORRIS, I. 2009, “The Eighth-Century Revolution”, in: K. RAAFLAUB – H. VAN WEES (eds.), *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, Oxford, pp. 64–80.
- MOST, G. W. 2006, *Hesiod, Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*, Edited and Translated, Cambridge (Mass.).
- MUNN, M. 2006, *The Mother of the Gods, Athens, and the Tyranny of Asia: A Study of Sovereignty in Ancient Religion*, Berkeley – Los Angeles.
- O’BRIEN, J. V. 1993, *The Transformation of Hera: A Study of Ritual, Hero, and the Goddess in the Iliad*, Lanham.
- OAKLEY, J. H. – SINOS, R. H. 1994, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, Madison (WI).
- PARKER, R. 2011, *On Greek Religion*, Ithaca – London.
- PIRENNE-DELFORGE, V. – PIRONTI, G. 2009, “La féminité des déesses à l’épreuve des épiclèses: le cas d’Héra”, in: L. BODIQU – V. MEHL (éds.), *La religion des femmes en Grèce ancienne: Mythes, cultes et société*, Rennes, pp. 95–109.
- PIRENNE-DELFORGE, V. – PIRONTI, G. 2016, *L’Héra de Zeus: Ennemie intime, épouse définitive*, Paris.

- POLIGNAC, F. DE 1994, "Mediation, Competition, and Sovereignty: The Evolution of Rural Sanctuaries in Geometric Greece", in: S. ALCOCK – R. OSBORNE (eds.), *Placing the Gods: Sanctuaries and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece*, Oxford, pp. 3–18.
- POLIGNAC, F. DE 1995, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State*, Transl. by J. LLOYD, Chicago.
- POLIGNAC, F. DE 1997, "Héra, le navire e la demeure: offrandes, divinité et société en Grèce archaïque", in: J. DE LA GENIÈRE (ed.), *Héra: Images, espaces, cultes*, Napoli, pp. 113–122.
- POLIGNAC, F. DE 2009, "Sanctuaries and Festivals", in: K. RAAFLAUB – H. VAN WEES (eds.), *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, Oxford, pp. 427–443.
- PORTE, D. 1983, "La fleur d'Olène et la naissance du dieu Mars", *Latomus*, 42, No. 4, pp. 877–884.
- REDFIELD, J. 2003, *The Locrian Maidens: Love and Death in Greek Italy*, Princeton.
- REES, E. 2005, *Homer, The Iliad*, Translated, New York.
- RIGOGLIOSO, M. 2009, *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece*, New York.
- ROBERTSON, N. 1996, "The Ancient Mother of the Gods: A Missing Chapter in the History of Greek Religion", in: E. N. LANE (ed.), *Cybele, Attis and Related Cults: Essays in Memory of M. J. Vermaseren*, Leiden, pp. 239–304.
- SCHACHTER, A. 2000, "Greek Deities: Local and Panhellenic Identities", in: P. FLENTSTED-JENSEN (ed.), *Further Studies in the Ancient Greek Polis*, Stuttgart, pp. 9–17.
- SCOTT, M. 2015, "Temples and Sanctuaries", in: E. EIDINOW – J. KINDT (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Ancient Greek Religion*, Oxford, pp. 227–239.
- STUART, D. R. 1911, "The Prenuptial Rite in the New Callimachus", *Classical Philology*, 6, pp. 302–314.
- SUSSMAN, L. S. 1978, "Workers and Drones: Labor, Idleness and Gender Definition in Hesiod's Beehive", *Arethusa*, 11, pp. 27–41.
- SWEENEY, N. MAC 2013, *Foundation Myths and Politics in Ancient Ionia*, Cambridge.
- TALALAY, L. 2012, "The Mother Goddess in Prehistory: Debates and Perspectives", in S. L. JAMES – S. DILLON (eds.), *A Companion to Women in the Ancient World*, Malden, pp. 7–10.
- VON STADEN, H. 1993, "Spiderwoman and the Chaste Tree: The Semantics of Matter", *Configurations*, 1, No. 1, pp. 23–56.
- VAN WEES, H. 2013, "Economy", in: K. RAAFLAUB – H. VAN WEES (eds.), *A Companion to Archaic Greece*, Oxford, pp. 444–467.
- VERNANT, J.-P. 1982, *Myth and Society in Ancient Greece*, Transl. by J. LLOYD, London.
- WALTER, H. ET ALII 2019, *Ursprung und Frühzeit des Heraion*, Wiesbaden.
- WEST, M. L. 1978, *Hesiod: Works and Days*, Edited with Prolegomena and Commentary, Oxford.

- ZEITLIN, F. 1982, "Cultic Models of the Female: Rites of Dionysus and Demeter", *Arethusa*, 15, pp. 129-157.
- ZEITLIN, F. 1995, *Playing the Other*, Chicago - London.
- ZEITLIN, F. 2002, "Apollo and Dionysos: Starting from Birth", in: H. F. J. HORSTMANSHOFF - H. W. SINGOR - F. T. VAN STRATEN - J. H. M. STRUBBE (eds.), *Kykeon: Studies in Honour of H. S. Versnel*, Leiden, pp. 193-218.

Summary

The paper offers an interpretation of the symbolic complex of the goddess Hera, focusing especially on the connection between the chief areas of her patronage, those of marriage and sovereignty. Building on the recent ground-breaking study of the goddess by Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti, I attempt to go one step further in my analysis in that I do not simply examine the internal coherence of Hera's symbolic network, but try to relate it to the Greek system of ideas and social institutions, asking in what way it complements this system and which of its inherent contradictions it mediates. I try to show that the network of Hera's myths and cults does not simply embody and protect the positive categories of marriage and sovereignty, but also expresses their limits and paradoxes, thus offering an opportunity for their indirect symbolic reflection, while at the same time being able to transform the danger entailed in them into protective power with which the goddess supports the sociocultural system in turn. It is for this reason that Hera may act both as an intimate enemy of Zeus and as a dignified queen safeguarding the order he has established.

Keywords: Hera; marriage; sovereignty; exchange; cultural paradoxes

RADEK CHLUP
Charles University
Faculty of Arts
Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies
Jan Palach Square 1/2
116 38 Prague 1
Czech Republic
radek.chlup@ff.cuni.cz



Fig. 1.
Hera and Zeus on the metope from the Temple of Hera
("Temple E") in Selinus, 550-530 BC.

© EGISTO SANI 2013; under the CC BY-NC-SA 2.0.

EIRENE STUDIA GRAECA ET LATINA

ISSN 0046-1628

Founded 1960

Eirene. Studia Graeca et Latina is an international refereed scholarly journal of classics which is published by the Centre for Classical Studies at the Institute of Philosophy of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague. It welcomes and publishes original research on classics, reception of Antiquity and classical traditions. It also brings up-to-date reviews of scholarly literature on these subjects. ■ The journal accepts submissions in English, German, French and Italian. All contributions (except for reviews) are sent anonymously for peer-review. ■ *Eirene. Studia Graeca et Latina* is abstracted / indexed in following scientific databases: *L'année philologique*; The Central European Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (CEJSH); European Reference Index for Humanities (ERIH PLUS); Modern Language Association International Bibliography; Scopus; Web of Science; EBSCO. ■ For manuscript submission guidelines, contents of previously published issues and more, please visit the journal's homepage: <http://www.ics.cas.cz/en/journals/eirene>. ■ All article submissions and subscription / exchange orders (back issues are also available for purchase) are to be sent by e-mail to: eirene@ics.cas.cz. Books for review and other correspondence should be mailed to:

Eirene. Studia Graeca et Latina

Centre for Classical Studies at the Institute of Philosophy of the
Czech Academy of Sciences

Na Florenci 3

110 00 Prague 1

Czech Republic

tel.: +420 234 612 330

fax: +420 222 828 305

EIRENE
STUDIA GRAECA ET LATINA

LVI / 2020 / I-II

© Centre for Classical Studies at the Institute of Philosophy
of the Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague

Prague 2020
ISSN 0046-1628

Editor-in-chief
PETR KITZLER
Centre for Classical Studies,
Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague

Assistant Editors

NEIL ADKIN (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill) - JAN BAŽANT (Centre for Classical Studies, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague) - JAN BOUZEK † (Charles University, Prague) - JAN N. BREMMER (University of Groningen) - KATHLEEN M. COLEMAN (Harvard University) - SIEGMAR DÖPP (University of Göttingen) - HERMANN HARRAUER (University of Vienna) - STEPHEN HARRISON (Corpus Christi College, University of Oxford) - HERBERT HEFTNER (University of Vienna) - BRAD INWOOD (Yale University) - IRENE J. F. DE JONG (University of Amsterdam) - DAVID KONSTAN (New York University) - WALTER LAPINI (University of Genova) - GLENN W. MOST (Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa / University of Chicago) - PAVEL OLIVA (Centre for Classical Studies, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague, emeritus) - JIŘÍ PAVLÍK (Charles University, Prague) - ROSARIO PINTAUDI (University of Messina) - ILARIA L. E. RAMELLI (Angelicum - Sacred Heart University - Oxford) - ALAN SOMMERSTEIN (University of Nottingham) - DMITRY VL. TRUBOTCHKIN (Russian University of Theater Arts - GITIS, Moscow)

Managing Editor
JAKUB ČECHVALA
Centre for Classical Studies, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague

cover and graphic design © Markéta Jelenová
typesetting © Jana Andrlová
print © Karolinum Publishers
English proofreading Pavel Nývlt