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HERA AND JUNO: THE FUNCTIONS OF THE GODDESSES IN PREHISTORIC AND HISTORIC GREECE AND ROME

INTRODUCTION

On June 16–19, 2015, the *Symposium Classicum Peregrinum* met in Budapest, Hungary to discuss the topic, “Hera and Juno: The Functions of the Goddesses in Prehistoric and Historic Greece and Rome.” This *Symposium* was organized by Attilio Mastrocinque (Università di Verona), Patricia A. Johnston (Brandeis University) and László Takács (Pázmány Péter Catholic University, Budapest). It was hosted by the Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest.

Our concerns centered on questions concerning the original functions of Hera, and how similar were the functions of this Greek goddess to those of Roman Juno. Although these goddesses have been extensively portrayed as jealous wives (Burkert describes Hera as “the termagant” of Homer¹), what was the original function and what was the meaning of her jealousy? How was Hera related to the life of women and men? Did Hera interfere with family life?

Hera may have been the first deity to whom the Greeks dedicated an enclosed roofed temple sanctuary, at Samos about 800 BCE. Votive offerings unearthed at Samos show that Hera was not just a local Aegean Greek goddess, for her sanctuary was at the crossroads of trade and cultural exchanges with Armenia, Babylon, Iran, Assyria, and Egypt. The earliest temple at Olympia was dedicated to Hera, to whom two early Doric temples at Paestum were also dedicated, and there were numerous early temples dedicated to her on Delos, Argos, etc.

In Roman Religion, Juno’s function is perhaps even more complex and disputed. She had a large number of significant and diverse names and titles, reflecting her var-

¹ BURKERT 1998, p. 132.

ious aspects and roles. Some of these roles were similar to those of Hera, some were even more complex, because *iuno* was the vital spirit of a woman. When the Romans were contending with the Etruscans they encountered the powerful goddess Uni of Veii (396 BC), and when the Romans subdued the Latins, they encountered Juno Sospita of Lanuvium; they adopted both these cults. What was the connection between Juno Moneta and prophecy? Was there a connection in the Roman Empire between Juno and the Matres and Matrones?

The first temple to Juno was traditionally built in Rome by the Etruscan kings, the Tarquinius, who were familiar with both the corresponding Etruscan goddess, Uni, and the Greek Hera. Initially Juno was connected with all aspects of the life of women, especially married life, but her military role does come to be emphasized – certainly this is so by the time of Vergil and, according to Servius (*ad Aen.* 1. 20²), apparently also by the time of Ennius. Ovid says she acquired this role when she gave birth to Mars (*Fasti*, Book V), which she did, with a special herb from Flora, out of jealousy after Jupiter gave birth to the warrior goddess, Minerva, out of his own head. But the iconography of Etruscan vases shows Juno Sospita of Lanuvium as a valiant warrior early in the 6th century BC.

As Juno Lucina, goddess of childbirth, she had a temple on the Esquiline from the 4th century BC. In her role as female comforter she assumed various descriptive names. Individualized, she was the female principle of life; as every man had his *genius*, so every woman had her *juno*. Thus she represented, in a sense, the source of female life, generation, and death.

As her cult expanded she assumed wider functions and became, like Hera, the principal female divinity of the city. In the 6th century BC a major development of the city of Rome and its institutions transformed Jupiter and Juno (like the Greek models) into the supreme gods of Rome by being entrusted with political and military responsibility. So, for example, as Sospita, portrayed as an armed deity, she was invoked all over Latium and particularly at Lanuvium, originally as a savior of women but eventually as savior of the people. As Juno Moneta (“the one who warns”), she had a temple on the Arx (the northern summit of the Capitoline Hill) from 344 BC, which later housed the Roman mint, (with the words “mint” and “money” deriving from this epithet).

Frequently she is portrayed as a standing matron of statuesque proportions and severe beauty, sometimes exhibiting military or aggressive features, as in Vergil’s *Aeneid*, where Vergil presents her as a *saeva* goddess, as do subsequent writers, such as Silius Italicus, whose *Punica* is configured as the continuation of the grudge developed in the *Aeneid*.

The first group of papers in this collection focuses on Hera’s role in Greek literature. The second examines her behavior, particularly her anger, as it was viewed over

² *Aen.* 1. 19–20: <*Iuno*> *progeniem sed enim Troiano a sanguine duci / audierat Tyrias olim quae verteret arces.* Ennius 293: *Romanis Iuno coepit placata favere* “Juno was appeased and began to show the Romans her good will”. E. NORDEN (1915, p. 169) says this “may be a paraphrase, not a jumbled line of Ennius” ad l. 279–282: <*Jupiter speaking*> *Iuno, quae mare nunc terrasque metu caleumque fatigat / consilia in melius referet, mecumque fovebit / Romanos...* Servius also cites *Aen.* 1. 20.

time, from Homer – where this anger seems to be based in the adulterous behavior of her husband, Zeus, to the later, Roman, accounts of her militancy and rage over a broader range of behavior by humans as well as gods. The third group of papers represent a panel that focused on Hera/Juno in the context of maternity.

The first group of papers begins with Alberto Bernabé's examination of "Hera in the *Homeric Hymns*". The paper deals with the features and functions of Hera in the *Homeric Hymns*, which preserves a very short and trivial hymn to her (*h.Hom.* 12), two nearly identical references to her sleeping during the birth of Hermes in the two Hymns devoted to him (*h.Merc.* 8 and *h.Hom.* 18. 8), and other minimal allusions (*h.Ap.* 95 and 99, *h.Ven.* 40). She also appears in a leading role in the fragmentary *Hymn to Dionysus*, where the goddess is bound and then released by Hephaistos and in the *Hymn to Apollo*, where the birth of Typhoeus was conceived as an act of revenge against Zeus for giving birth to Athena (*h.Ap.* 305ss.). On the other hand, the myth of the *Hymn to Apollo* (305–338) is revisited attending to some striking Hittite parallels concerning the relationship between the oath by Heaven and Earth and the birth of a monstrous rival of the king of gods.

Ana Isabel Jiménez San Cristóbal then discusses "The So-Called Lesbian Triad: Zeus, Hera and Dionysos". She begins by examining the presentations of the two literary sources that attest to this Lesbian triad, then discusses the problem of the identity of these gods, and finally discusses the traditional notion of this triad of gods as being based in Lesbos, a grouping which was accepted until recently.

The next four papers are concerned with the anger of Hera/Juno. *Acta Antiqua Hung.* (vol. 55, 2015) published a volume of papers from the 2014 *Symposium Peregrinum*, which was focused on Augustus and also dealt with some aspects of Juno. In that volume, P. A. Johnston argued that Vergil was trying to present in his *Aeneid* a Juno who was not merely an equivalent of Homer's jealous Hera – although they do share a number of features – but that he really was also trying to depict Juno in her role as a major deity of Italy (and Etruria), and not just a transplanted Greek deity. Livy, in his *ab urbe condita*, highlights her pre-Trojan ties to Italy, as the embodiment of the Etruscan goddess Uni, whom, according to Livy, the Romans struggled to win over to their cause.³ In this volume, Johnston, in "Vergil's Use of *saevus* (vs. Homer's δεινός) to Depict Juno", continues this topic by showing how Vergil's depiction of Juno as *saeva* corresponds not to Homer's depiction of Hera, but rather to a combination of Homer's Hera and Pallas. Vergil's Juno, moreover, is far less subservient to Jupiter (who is not really as active in the *Aeneid* as Zeus is in the *Iliad*). While Homer frequently pairs Hera with Pallas Athena, Vergil's Juno acts independently, while assuming in particular many of the traits of Homer's Pallas Athena.

Beatrice Poletti then examines the reconciliatory role of this goddess in "Juno in the *Proemium* of Ovid's *Fasti* 6: Considerations on the Reconciliatory Role of the Goddess", where the goddess has retained that aspect of her function which has allowed Roman development and has also been enriched by characteristics springing from her ancient Italic cult as Uni. Ovid, she argues, has blended the early martial and political

³ JOHNSTON 2015, pp. 167–178.

aspects of the goddess with her function as protector of legitimate marriage, which seems to have been prominent in the Augustan age.

Irena Radová then examines the *Argonautica* of Valerius Flaccus (45–90 AD), and concludes that, in this version of the *Argonautica*, Juno is both an assisting goddess – Juno *socia* – and also as a product of Valerius’ careful reading of epic poetry and of his permanent engagement in an intertextual dialogue with Homer and Apollonius Rhodius.

Francisco Marco Simón then considers the epithets expressing the local identity of the divine personality – or of their cult group – in an increasingly globalized world such as the Roman Empire, in “*Iunones: An Approach to Their Personality and Geography of Cult*”. The epigraphic expression of plural female divinities, represented sometimes in triads, is a feature of Romano-Celtic realms. This is the case of the *Matres* and *Matronae*, as well as the *Fortunae*. Examining the *Iunones*, the author finds about 70 inscriptions dedicated to these deities, sometimes appearing with the epithet *Augustae*, others as *Matronae*, *Montanae*, *Domesticae*, *Suleviae*, associated with other deities such as *IOM*, *Hercules*, *Genius Loci* or the *Augustorum Numina*, or assimilated to the *Gabiae*. The sacred geography of the *Iunones* includes Italy (with a higher density in *Venetia* and *Histria*, but with manifestations in *Transpadana*, *Umbria*, *Aemilia*, *Latium* and *Campania*), but they are also found in diverse provinces of Celtic tradition, such as *Germania Inferior*, *Noricum*, *Belgium*, *Aquitania*, *Lugdunensis* or *Narbonensis*. He presents an analysis of individual or collective dedicants, the activities commemorated in their altars, and the processes that make these goddesses visible, at a regional or local level, in theonyms related to the Roman *Iuno*.

Dan Tudor Ionescu, in “*Amiculum Iunonis: Juno and the Feast of the Lupercalia*”, focuses on the possible connections which can be established between the Roman goddess Juno as the protector deity of marriages and married women and the rites and rituals associated with the sacred feast of the *Lupercalia*. He also analyzes the role of other Italic gods associated with these sacred ceremonies, such as the rustic god *Faunus*, as well as Jupiter, Mars, and Romulus-Quirinus, but he recognizes that these figures are in secondary roles, while the name *Luperci* given to the young Roman men involved the ritual flogging of the Roman women of fertile age. They were linked with *lupus*, the Latin name of the wolf, the animal sacred to the god Mars and forever bound to the Twins Romulus and Remus, the mythical and heroic founders of Rome. The *amiculum Iunonis*, or the garment of Juno, is in fact the name given to the ritual objects used by the *Luperci* in the act of symbolic fecundation of the Roman young women, namely the leather thongs carved out of the skin of a sacrificed goat. The he-goat (Latin *hircus*) is also connected with the ancient Roman and Latin god *Faunus* (the Italic divine counterpart of the ancient Greek Πάυς).

Marine Miquel examines the depiction of Juno in the works of Livy, in “*Juno and the interpretationes Romanae in the Mirror of Livy’s Writing of History*”. She concludes that it is not surprising, given that the *ab urbe condita* is an important source of information about Roman religious practices, to find frequent mentions of Juno’s shrines or cults in Livy’s work. Yet, we have to ask ourselves to what extent this religious data has been rewritten and recomposed according to the Roman historiograph-

ical tradition in order to provide the audience with a particular view of Roman history. Her study is intended to distinguish two kinds of *Junones*: Roman and Italian *Junones* who stood as a protective goddess of Rome, on the one hand, and on the other hand as *Junones*, from the borders of the Roman world, who supported or questioned Rome's identity and its Empire's guiding principles in the historical narrative.

Attilio Mastrocinque then considers the Carthaginian goddess with this name, in "Juno Caelestis and Septimius Severus". Juno Caelestis, the ancient goddess of Carthage, was worshipped during the Roman period. The Roman colony, Julia Carthago, was inhabited by Italian colonists, who were settled there by Caesar and Augustus. An early attempt to establish a colony was made by Caius Gracchus, but his planned *colonia Junonia Carthago* failed shortly before his death. The name "Junonia" is an evident statement of the role of this goddess at Carthage. She was also a prophetic goddess, who caused some problems to Pertinax, the governor of Africa shortly before (189–190 AD) the death of Commodus. A new study on her prophecies and their political involvement in this period could prove helpful to understand a related problem, namely that of the relationship between Juno Caelestis and the Severan dynasty.

Finally, Katarina Petrovićová examines the treatment of Juno by Martianus Capella (fl. c. 410–420). Petrovićová argues that, although the goddess Juno is traditionally represented as a very powerful entity in Roman literature, who cares for stable human relationships, especially between men and women, she is at the same time often depicted as a jealous, furious, even a vengeful goddess. She examines his work, the *De nuptiis*, which is on the one hand an encyclopaedic work presenting the seven liberal arts, but, on the other hand, is a fairy-tale story about the quest for and the finding of a suitable bride for the God Mercury. The suitable bride turns out to be the learned but mortal "Philology". This is a narrative about the bride's journey towards immortality. Regarding the formal aspect of the work, accurate descriptions are combined with modes of allegory and satire. Such satirical and novelistic features, including copious and more or less obvious intertextual ties, provide for several, albeit sometimes disparate, interpretations of the *De nuptiis*. Étienne Wolff then surveys "Allegorical Interpretations of Hera-Juno at the End of Antiquity: The Example of Fulgentius", a fifth-to-sixth century African author who wrote allegorical interpretations of gods and fables from mythology. Wolff illustrates how allegorical interpretations of the pagan gods flourished at the end of Antiquity: they were conceived by the pagans who used them to spiritualize their religion, as well as by some Christians, who felt that the pagan fables must inevitably harbor some truths that it was important to discover. This phenomenon has a parallel in the allegorical interpretation of some episodes of the Bible, many of which were based on the etymology (now considered far-fetched, in the light of modern linguistics) of gods and heroes. The goddess Hera/Juno, he argues, was not exempt from such treatment as can be seen in his examination of what can be found on this subject in the works of Fulgentius the Mythographer.

This collection concludes with a panel, organized by Giulia Pedrucci, "Which Maternity for Hera/Juno? Myths and Cults between Greece, Magna Graecia and Rome". The maternal role of Hera/Juno, the main goal of this panel, investigates the ambiguous role of Hera/Juno as mother within the Greek and Roman pantheons. While

most Greek and Roman authors clearly think of these deities as female, and even as mothers (i.e., as having given birth), many do not seem to have taken this motherhood into consideration. Goddesses, moreover, who are described as mothers often appear to be not particularly “motherly” towards their own children. “Major” goddesses like Hera/Juno or Aphrodite tend to enact a more abstract and metaphorical approach to fertility, abundance, and the care and protection of infants – what we call *kourotrophia* – but they tend not to give much attention to their offspring, who in fact do not even seem to have a childhood. These goddess-mothers instead often seem to be more worried about some mortal or semi-divine figure, such as Aeneas, Demophoön, and others. Moreover, goddesses who are *not* “biological” mothers, like Athena (as protector of Ulysses and *Erichthonius*) or Artemis, seem to behave more positively, more protectively, towards the children of others. The most “maternal” deities are those from a previous time (compared to the so-called “Olympian” era) or “minor” divine figures, such as Gaia, Rhea, Maia, Leto, Thetis, and Callirrhoe. In this panel Giulia Pedrucci writes about “Motherhood, Breastfeeding and Adoption: The Case of Hera Suckling Heracles”; Marianna Scapini then examines “Juno against Wedding and Childbirth: Meaning and Function of a Reversed Behaviour”, and Marialucia Giacco and Chiara Maria Marchetti consider “Hera as Protectress of Marriage, Childbirth, and Motherhood in Magna Graecia”.

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