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## CONCLUSIONS TO THE PANEL

In trying to sum up and conclude our panel, we have to go back to our starting question: which maternity for Hera/Juno? To answer this, we should remember that, by analysing the sources, we gain the impression that for the Greek and Roman worlds we cannot speak of a motherhood *tout court*, but of several motherhoods, depending on the context that we take into consideration: purely physiological, biological, political, social, mythical, religious, philosophical, juridical or iconographical. So we have a character, and not real people, and we have several motherhoods, not just one. Or, to say it with Adrienne Rich's words, we have "Motherhood as institution" and "real" mothering (women's experience and relation to their own reproductive capacities).<sup>1</sup>

The kourtoprophic role, that is typical not only of Hera but also of all the "major" goddesses, albeit in different ways, not of just one in particular, is to be understood more as a nurse/protectress-function than as mother-function. Motherhood *chez les déesses grecques*, in short, seems to be transported to a more abstract and metaphorical level, away from the (not very interesting? Not very noble? Not very relevant? Too practical?) concreteness of biological and human motherhood. They were – to say it in a modern way – some kind of "surrogate" or "delegated" mothers; their role was in some way more similar to that of a nurse. At least as we perceive it. On the contrary, "minor figures" are perhaps perceived as more "human", which could imply a more "human-like" relationship with their children. The nymphs, in particular, are liminal (in many senses) deities with a peculiar relationship not only with motherhood, but also with breastfeeding.<sup>2</sup> But this is another story...

<sup>1</sup> RICH 1976.

<sup>2</sup> PEDRUCCI 2013a, 253–255.

Personally, I have focused on *kourotrophia*. I have defined Hera's attitude towards children/*protegés* as distal: the parenting strategy actually typical of ancient mothers rather than of nurses. The kourotrophic functions, in particular as protectress of young people (not only girls, indeed) during passages from one social status to another, despite local differences, is constantly occurring in Greece, Southern Italy and Rome. Motherhood is just one of them, and it is important to the woman not in itself but as a stage in women's life and their social identity. Quoting Marianna Scapini, Hera/Juno's control over motherhood and childbirth, that can manifest itself both in a negative and in a positive way, is nothing but one of the numerous tasks which the *feminea dea* has to perform *par excellence* in order to regulate the roles of women.<sup>3</sup>

Concerning Hera/Juno and Heracles, as Marianna Scapini has pointed out, the goddess was supposed to control female virginity and, precisely because of and as a consequence of that, grant fertility and the stability of society. In these cases, such a role could express itself only in a dialectic relationship with the male element, which is often embodied by Hercules. Something similar might have happened, as we have learnt from the paper of Marialucia Giacco and Chiara Maria Marchetti, in the archaic phase of extra-urban sanctuary at the mouth of Sele River: here, too, Hera was associated with Heracles.

As far as Magna Graecia is concerned, here – at least in some cases<sup>4</sup> – the goddess seems to have a more “explicit”, “physical” link with maternity. A more “proximal” idea of maternity? As we have seen, this might mean a mothering more similar to nursing (in antiquity, the nurse had a more physical link with the baby, at least in wealthy families). Another detail that emerges in Giacco and Marchetti's work is the idea of a divine mother protecting the demographic growth of her sons by supporting them in their reproduction. Within colonial societies, demographical growth represents a constant concern.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Her connection with maternity and, more generally speaking, with femininity is really manifold, as suggested by the multiplicity of epithets analyzed by Rosa Cid López in the paper delivered in Budapest. Over time, Juno has become a goddess who incarnates all of the female features: wife (Juno Regina o Juno Pronuba) and mother (Juno Lucina). If we have to find an adjective, maybe we could say that, in Rosa's opinion, Juno's (link to) maternity is very practical, biological, civic.

<sup>4</sup> Especially when the maternal bodies are represented. We can observe something similar in Sicily, see PEDRUCCI 2013b.

<sup>5</sup> See DUGAST 2017 and SCIORTINO 2017.

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