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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.