

Hera *Maritima*: Exploring Hera as a Goddess of the Sea

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

Is Hera, queen of the gods and supreme goddess of marriage, also a goddess of the sea? In this thesis I will argue that she is. The exceptional number of miniature ships that were dedicated in multiple Hera sanctuaries in the Archaic period, begged the question of whether Hera's veneration served broader purposes than that of a deity connected to marriage alone. This research takes an interdisciplinary approach and I use a large variety of sources rooted in: archaeology, literature, folktale, myth, psychology, and the landscape. The conclusions are largely based on the analysis of Hera's sanctuaries, their votive assemblages, and myths that include her involvement, contextualized in their historical setting.

Hera's maritime aspects derive from long-term religious developments, regionality, and practical material aspects. I will argue that part of her religious veneration is rooted in her identification and role as an ancient mother goddess with symbolic connections to the realm of the sea and water. She presides over transitional periods in young men and women's lives in both the real lives of ancient Greeks and mythic tales. The transitional period often leads to marriage and includes religious customs involving water, a sea-voyage, or experiencing trials and tribulations. She is also affiliated with liminal spaces, one of which is the sea.

There are at least 7 seaside sanctuaries dedicated to Hera, and in many others, rivers and other natural and man-made water sources are in the vicinity. Her most well-known sanctuaries all contain evidence of maritime imagery and/or votive dedications. She is related to other elements associated with water and the sea including weather, navigation, the seasons, and agriculture. Hera's relationship with Poseidon is examined, as well as other water deities, to place her further within the religious realm that they all reside in.

Hera's roots and long history of independence is reaffirmed throughout this research. In addition to being venerated as a maritime deity, she is also concerned with the consequences of

sea travel such as colonization, war, and guest-friendship. This sheds light on her characterization as a patron deity that was often overshadowed by her involvement in marriage and with Zeus. This thesis argues that her many realms are much more connected than previously imagined.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

*“Hera set about harnessing her horses with golden headbands, / ... she led her swift-footed horses / under the yoke, impatient for strife and the battle cry.”<sup>1</sup>*

The traditional conceptualization of Hera is that she is the goddess of marriage, protectress of the realms of women, queen of the gods, and divine partner of Zeus, albeit a one-sided partnership much of the time. Considering those designations, the above passage is peculiar. Why is she so involved in the war of the *Iliad*, not just from afar, but directly within the gore of the battlefield, rather than tending to brides-to-be? This discrepancy has opened the discussion for investigating the vast number of examples that demonstrate the ambivalent nature of Hera, a deity who does not fit into neat categories. One such example concerning this research, is Hera’s relationship with the sea.

### **Votive Dedications of Boats**

Paul Forsythe Johnston published a study of Greek boat models and their interpretation – concluding that roughly only 130 examples survive.<sup>2</sup> The Archaic period, the height of all sanctuaries of Hera, is the period with the largest number of boat models (Fig. 1) discovered thus far, and the largest contemporary group (22) from a single votive context comes from the sanctuary of Hera on Samos.<sup>3</sup> Additional boat votives and evidence for full-sized ship dedications have been found in sanctuaries of Hera as well. We must ask, why is Hera the recipient of votive gifts in the form of boats – the largest surviving number given to any deity? Jaclyn Haley Streuding notes that during the Archaic period a new ‘class’ of maritime offerings emerged – not just small votive boats but also naval equipment that was meant to display power

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<sup>1</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 4.730-32, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 4.

<sup>3</sup> Johnston, 46.



Figure 1. Miniature ship models from the Samian Heraion, 7<sup>th</sup> century BC.  
(Personal photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece)

and prowess in battle.<sup>4</sup> Jens David Baumbach mentions that votives are not always representative of the dedicator's social background – thus, perhaps votives were not always meant to demonstrate power or commemoration of a victory.<sup>5</sup> He hypothesizes that the small boats in Hera sanctuaries could be votive offerings or symbolic cult objects, or even meant to represent her concern with fishing.<sup>6</sup> The reasoning behind maritime-themed dedications will be discussed in detail later on. It is important to first establish that this is not solely a study of epic Hera, or at least the one that comes to mind – the jealous shrew, bane of Heracles' and Troy's existence. This is a study of religious Hera, her prominence and power over the sea and the elements.

### **Hera's Roots**

There are many theories as to where Hera and her worship came from. Some scholars say she was an indigenous goddess of the Argive plain, merging with and inheriting the name and beliefs of newcomers. Others believe she has Indo-European roots, citing the use of her name in Linear B tablets.<sup>7</sup> Joan V. O'Brien states that there is "no consensus on the meaning of her name" – it could be lady, mistress, a synonym of *potnia*, or of the year, relating to the seasons.<sup>8</sup> Martin Nilsson agreed with a previous notion that *Hpa* could be a Greek translation of the Mycenaean name of their supreme goddess.<sup>9</sup> Others believe she is one of the Anatolian sister goddesses, *potnia Aswiya*, imported to Greece during the Bronze Age.<sup>10</sup> What is agreed upon is that she is

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<sup>4</sup> Jaclyn Haley Streuding, "Success at Sea: Maritime Votive Offerings and Naval Dedications in Antiquity," 50.

<sup>5</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *The Significance of Votive Offerings in Selected Hera Sanctuaries in the Peloponnese, Ionia, and Western Greece*, 5.

<sup>6</sup> Baumbach, 163.

<sup>7</sup> John Chadwick, *The Decipherment of Linear B*, 124.

<sup>8</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera: A Study of Ritual, Hero, and the Goddess in the Iliad*, 114.

<sup>9</sup> Martin P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*. 395. He agreed with the idea originally put forward by Blinkenberg, *Le Temple de Paphos*, *Det Kgl. Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Hist.-filol. Medd.*, IX:2, 1924, p 29; p 489 no.9.

<sup>10</sup> See John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies And Trade*, 93-94, for the suggestion that Hera could be a pre-Phrygian version of Cybele, the Anatolian mother of the

certainly an ancient, multifunctional goddess, even if her roots are unclear. She was the patron goddess of Samos and Argos, venerated throughout the Peloponnese and parts of Italy, and her worship continued through Roman times where she became known as Juno and occupied a position of high religious rank.

Whether she was always known as Hera, or became identified with local goddesses as people moved, she was known throughout the Mediterranean, likely in large part because of the communication between cultures made possible by seafaring. The approximate date that the inhabitants of Greece mastered the art of sailing continues to be pushed back as research continues. Holocene societies had “territorial overlap” and likely transferred seafaring knowledge to each other.<sup>11</sup> B. Horejs et al. argue that maritime connections were likely established before the 7<sup>th</sup> millennium BC, particularly in the Anatolian coast, which spread from there.<sup>12</sup> The earliest miniature boat model comes from Mesopotamia circa 5000 BC in a sacred context.<sup>13</sup> The Cycladic cultures were using long boats from 3000 BC on,<sup>14</sup> and models of ships in a votive context in the Aegean Islands appear in the Early Bronze Age.<sup>15</sup> According to Aaron J. Brody, maritime religion was a “discrete subset of the general religious beliefs and cultic practices of Mediterranean societies, generated by dangers faced while living and voyaging at sea.”<sup>16</sup> Thomas Fillmer discusses the lack of a written record for seafaring but that we can see evidence for it in the prominence of boats and their sacredness through art; a fresco frieze was

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gods; See Scott Noegel, “Greek Religion and the Ancient Near East,” 28, for the importation of the goddesses into Greece; See Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 28, for similarities between Anatolian goddesses and Samian Hera.

<sup>11</sup> B. Horejs et. al., “The Aegean in the Early 7th Millennium BC: Maritime Networks and Colonization,” 295.

<sup>12</sup> B. Horejs et. al., 295.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 2.

<sup>14</sup> Carol G. Thomas, “The Mediterranean World in the Early Iron Age,” 38.

<sup>15</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 5.

<sup>16</sup> Aaron J. Brody, “The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers,” 451-4.

found in Thera from Minoan times that depicts 7 large ships in procession, complete with flower garlands and leaping dolphins.<sup>17</sup>

### **The Importance of Water**

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the Greek world revolved around the sea. Pindar opens the first *Olympian Ode* with a variation of “best is water.”<sup>18</sup> William H. Race postulates that water is mentioned many times in Pindar because it provides the basis for everything else that is essential: drinking, sailing, fishing, hygiene, and purification. It is the sustenance of life.<sup>19</sup>

Margarita de Orellana points out that the Greeks revered their water deities in a special way; for example, Corinthian Games in Ionia became a national festival in honor of the water gods.<sup>20</sup> Helen Farr aptly remarks that seafaring led to social action and the transfer of knowledge, not just of the craft itself.<sup>21</sup> Religion would certainly have been a way to establish identity, alliances, and similarities between groups of people. Cultic practice is typically generated by the needs of a particular society at a particular time. Brody states that mariners had religious needs that were not shared “by members of society who never left dry land,”<sup>22</sup> though Denise Demetriou suggests that more than just one class of people would have frequented boats: “soldiers, pirates, pilgrims, slaves, athletes, artists, craftsmen, prophets, oracle emissaries, philosophers, law-givers, guest-friends, judges, diplomats, and traders.”<sup>23</sup> It was not just material goods that crossed cultural and physical boundaries, but poetry, folktale, and technology.<sup>24</sup> This may help to explain why figures such as Hera are recognizable in other pantheons, or why creation myths have so many similarities, such as the Babylonian creation

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<sup>17</sup> Thomas Fillmer, “Theories on Ship Configuration in the Bronze Age Aegean,” 130.

<sup>18</sup> William H. Race, “Pindar’s ‘Best is water’: Best of What?,” 120.

<sup>19</sup> Race, 124.

<sup>20</sup> Margarita de Orellana, “The Worship of Water Gods in Other Civilizations,” 70.

<sup>21</sup> Helen Farr, “Seafaring as Social Action,” 91.

<sup>22</sup> Aaron J. Brody, “The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers,” 444.

<sup>23</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean: The Archaic and Classical Greek Multiethnic Emporia*, 4.

<sup>24</sup> Carla Antonaccio, “Greek Colonization, Connectivity, and the Middle Sea,” 218.

myth of *Enuma Elish* – which describes sky and earth coming together to birth their gods.<sup>25</sup> A deity with power over the sea that could assist in not only safe voyages but navigation, the weather, economy, and not to mention protection from the “sea peoples” - who have been cited as the bringers of destruction for many Mycenaean cities - would certainly be required.<sup>26</sup> It is interesting to note here that the peacock has always been a symbol affiliated with Hera; the peacock cries to indicate weather changes, and Panos Bardis rightly links this to Hera’s role as a weather goddess (which will become even more evident in chapter 2).<sup>27</sup>

Greece is not the only culture where a female deity specifically was required for the sea. In the Uluburun shipwreck (off the coast of Kas, Turkey), a cast bronze female figurine was found that has been identified with a traveling goddess – found in other ships on the bow.<sup>28</sup> While that goddess seems to reside onboard the ship, from the perspective of Hera, a deity concerned with the sea does not solely look after the ship or even live in the sea. Sandra Blakely points out that maritime deities include gods of the elements, wind, constellations, and patron deities.<sup>29</sup> The sea was an “ambiguous place, part of the divine order of the universe,”<sup>30</sup> and though it may not be possible to pinpoint exactly when or where Hera became affiliated with the sea, she was certainly part of this religious order.

## **Main Questions**

The main questions that this thesis will strive to answer are as follows: Is Hera a goddess of the sea? Did she start as a sea-goddess, become a sea goddess, or leave that identity behind over time? What are the implications of maritime-themed votive offerings left behind in her

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<sup>25</sup> Scott Noegel, “Greek Religion and the Ancient Near East,” 26.

<sup>26</sup> Helène Whittaker, “The Sea Peoples and the Collapse of Mycenaean Palatial Rule,” 77.

<sup>27</sup> Panos D. Bardis, “Heavenly Hera Heralds Heroines: Peace Through Cross-cultural Feminist Symbols and Myths,” 95.

<sup>28</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship in the Bronze Age Levant*, 206.

<sup>29</sup> Sandra Blakely, “Maritime Risk and Ritual Responses: Sailing with the Gods in the Ancient Mediterranean,” 365.

<sup>30</sup> Astrid Lindenlauf, “The Sea as a Place of No Return in Ancient Greece,” 428.

sanctuaries? How does this contribute to the conceptualization of Hera's character and her religious veneration as a whole? The following pages will argue that Hera is not a goddess of the sea in the same sense that some other deities are, such as the sirens – she does not come from the sea or live in the sea. What can be said in more certain terms is that her religious realm, particularly her early realm, was deeply connected with the sea, rivers, and everything the sea and the watery depths symbolize. She is a goddess of the sea in that she has power and influence over it and was venerated as such. The sea was a vast realm of the unknown – dangerous, adventurous, full of risk and opportunity. It was all-encompassing, essential, and a liminal zone. Hera's affiliation with and connection to the sea is derived from larger religious ideas which will be delved into in the next four chapters.

### **Chapter Outline**

Chapter one centres on the discussion of Hera as a mother goddess, and how mother goddesses were worshipped as not only having influence over the sea but also being a part of the sea. Those who study archetypes believe that the sea was conceptualized as the womb of the supreme earth deity – who provided the essential fruit of the earth: fertility, children, cosmic stability, and sustenance. This will focus largely on theories of her earliest worship and in the ways in which her many realms are connected and relate back to the sea. The roles of goddesses changed in folktale, epic, and religion, depending on the time. Hera likely always had a role in marriage, just as she had a role for mariners and anyone who lived near water, but before the formation of the polis, the legal sanctity of marriage did not necessarily need to be encouraged, and neither did a divine exemplar of this. The goddesses themselves do not change, but the priorities of the societies who conceive of them do. However, as Ken Dowden aptly states, “pagans are great hoarders of traditions,”<sup>31</sup> and just because the priorities change, that does not

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<sup>31</sup> Ken Dowden, “Olympian Gods, Olympian Pantheon,” 47.

mean her early emphases were forgotten, and those emphases will be highlighted. Echoes of her sea power are apparent into Hellenistic times and beyond.

Chapter two discusses Hera's general affiliation with water. Much of this focuses on the location of her sanctuaries, their proximity to water, and the foundation myths that support the reasoning behind it. Were the sites of her worship purposely built near water, or did ancient societies coincidentally decide that since she was already present on the harbours, she might be able to help them embark and return from sea journeys? Many of her sanctuaries were seaside or near to the sea and contain remnants of votive offerings that connect her with water and maritime imagery. This chapter will also discuss the evidence for Hera as a weather goddess and the personification of the wind.

Chapter three revolves around Hera's connection with heroes, beginning with naming associations. O'Brien writes that there are strong suggestions that Hêrâ would have been the Mycenaean goddess of the spring, and the Hôrai (seasons) would have been derived from this as well. From this, she suggests that 'hero' would have been "he who belongs to the goddess of the seasons" in Greek, ἥρως, and makes many connections between Herakles and Hera, as well as stating that Hera is the tamer of heroes, particularly in relation to marriage.<sup>32</sup> The focus will be on Hera's guidance and/or persecution of heroes when they embark on journeys – namely, on the sea. She tends to involve herself when young men go through transitions, particularly when they leave via the sea and return home to a new phase in their life – becoming a warrior, a husband, or if they do not return home at all and instead go to the underworld. Tales of the *Argonautica*, *Odyssey*, *Iliad*, and *Aeneid* come to mind. Why should Hera become involved at all? Or Athena, for that matter? This chapter will argue that the answer lies in female goddesses and their connection with the sea as a symbol of transitional rites.

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<sup>32</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 117. O'Brien writes that the suffix – ως signifies one belonging to another.

Chapter four focuses on Hera's connection with Poseidon. A major question here is, where does Hera fit in with the many characters already involved with the ocean, rivers, and springs, including the supreme ruler of the sea? This chapter will discuss the similarities between Poseidon and Hera sanctuaries, votive offerings, their personalities, their long histories, and their partnerships in myth.

There are three appendices; Appendix I is a compilation of marine-themed offerings in Hera sanctuaries, as well as a list of her sanctuaries located near the water. Appendix II lists other sites and relevant votives useful to the themes of this research and focuses largely on the votive offerings related to heroes and horses that are outlined in chapters 3 and 4. Appendix III provides a basic timeline of the major sites and pertinent cultic activity associated with them.

## **HISTORY OF SCHOLARSHIP**

### **Introduction**

Hera is a remarkably complex figure with a long history, but arguably the most underrated Greek goddess. For example, Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming write that Juno “was not at all the nagging wife stereotype generally associated with her Greek ‘equivalent’ Hera ... and “there are other goddesses who assume greater significance.”<sup>33</sup> Martin Nilsson in *A History of Greek Religion*, though acknowledging that Hera could be a powerful bronze-age descendant, still describes the domain of her worship as “remarkably limited” aside from Olympia and “younger cults.”<sup>34</sup> Despite this, it has more recently been well established that there is a discrepancy between the earth deity Hera, an independent figure pre-Zeus, and the goddess of marriage handed down from ancient historians and poets. Some attribute this to patriarchal literature and use the *Iliad* as a prime example, or the changing roles of religion due to the formation of the polis, or the solidification of panhellenism. Whichever the answer may be, if there is one, the theme that arises from those who study the early worship of Hera is that she was, at one point, predominantly an earth and fertility deity with chthonic elements.

### **Analyses of Hera**

#### **A Theme of Discrepancy**

O’Brien in *The Transformation of Hera* discusses the discrepancy between “the divine protector and scheming wife.”<sup>35</sup> She concludes that Hera was likely a Mycenaean goddess of fertility and earth who tamed young couples, and although she persisted regionally, she became subordinate to her husband via the solidification of her recognizable character in written literature. O’Brien looks at the sanctuaries in Samos and Argos, using the *Iliad* as a comparative.

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<sup>33</sup> Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming, *The Goddess: Myths of the Great Mother*, 77; 83.

<sup>34</sup> Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, trans. F. J. Fielden, 25-26.

<sup>35</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 3.

C. Kerényi uses the same comparative material as O'Brien, and concludes that Hera's early worship was in archetypal form; she was a great female deity, called "*panton genethla*, origin of all things, by some of her worshippers," but was simplified and reduced by the epics of Homer.<sup>36</sup> Charlene Spretnak looks at the Samian sanctuary and uses it to argue that Hera did have autonomous importance prior to the formal and written composition of Homeric epics (before the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC). She also establishes Hera's affiliation with the seasons, connecting them to three stages of the moon and three stages of a woman's life: maiden, fertile woman (wife), and elder. She states it was part of connecting women with nature and their menstruation cycles, attested to by the importance of lygos branches used in Samos during their festivals to stimulate menstruation and aid in purification.<sup>37</sup>

### **Chthonic Elements**

Blanche Menadier debates Hera's identification as an earth goddess, but claims that the connotation is related to possible chthonic elements that have been highlighted at the sanctuary of Perachora: a slightly sloped floor in the temple giving the illusion of disorientation and descent, the myth of Medea's children finding their death in her temple, and the remarkable amount of bronze phiale found in the sacred pool that may attest to an oracle.<sup>38</sup> She argues that at Perachora from the Geometric to Archaic period, Hera was worshipped as a fertility goddess, with a male consort playing a minor role.<sup>39</sup> Both G. W. Elderkin and Marguerite Rigoglioso believe there is a mystery element to Hera cults in Argos and Samos: Rigoglioso argues that worshippers of Hera were part of virgin cults with rites and rituals that are reminiscent of parthenogenic myths and the theme of male gods creating heroes with mortal women.<sup>40</sup> Elderkin

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<sup>36</sup> C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera: Archetypal Image of Father, Husband, and Wife*, trans, Christopher Holme, 114. Kerényi quotes Alkaios fr24A, 7, in Diehl, Anth. Lyr.

<sup>37</sup> Charlene Spretnak, *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece: A collection of pre-Hellenic Myths*, 87.

<sup>38</sup> Blanche Menadier, "The Sixth Century BC Temple and the sanctuary and cult of Hera Akraia, Perachora," 43; 176.

<sup>39</sup> Menadier, 171-9.

<sup>40</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, in both *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece* and *Virgin Mother Goddess of Antiquity*.

remarks that at Sparta, Hera was worshipped with the title 'Argive' and is represented on a grave stele holding a veil and a pomegranate. He states there is a chthonic connection here with marriage and the dead, which seems to have a secretive aspect as attested to by Pausanias.<sup>41</sup> Pausanias describes the statue of Hera at Argos where she holds a pomegranate but claims he cannot reveal what the significance is.<sup>42</sup> The similarities between the worship of marriage, chthonic, and earth deity Hera may be less a discrepancy and more a symptom of generational differences. For example, some attribute her later identification with marriage as an inherited characteristic derived from an earlier version of the goddess of "fecundity."<sup>43</sup>

### **Baumbach's Study of Hera**

Thus far, the scholars mentioned who study Hera focus on the *Iliad* as well as one or two sanctuaries exclusively. There is yet to be a comprehensive study of Hera using all the evidence available. The closest is Jens David Baumbach's study, *The Significance of Votive Offerings in Selected Hera Sanctuaries in the Peloponnese, Ionia, and Western Greece*. He compiled a study of votive dedications in select Hera sanctuaries (Argos, Samos, Perachora, Tiryns, and Poseidonia) and divided them into a thematic categorization. The focus of his study was to question whether the votives functioned similarly in all her sanctuaries and if this was an indication of panhellenic worship. His overall conclusion determined that while there are similar themes in each sanctuary, the votives themselves differ, and place emphasis differently; therefore, he determines that the cults developed independently although they would have been recognizable to each other. The limitation to his study was that there were only 5 aspects he focused on which restricted the analysis of many of the votives, making them fit into rigid categories: pregnancy, childbirth, and growing up; marriage; home and family; agriculture and vegetation; military concerns. Many of them seem to belong to the same sphere though they are

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<sup>41</sup> G. W. Elderkin, "The Marriage of Zeus and Hera and It's Symbol," 428-9.

<sup>42</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.17, trans. W. H. S. Jones. Pausanias refers to it as a holy mystery.

<sup>43</sup> Robert Renehan, "Hera as Earth-Goddess: A New Piece of Evidence," 194.

separated in the overall analysis. It also seems pertinent to mention that many votives were likely meant to address more than one aspect of the goddess, ones that might not have even been a part of his 5 categories.

Baumbach's study has been of the utmost value to this research, as much of the material he discusses is either unpublished or inaccessible otherwise. He also uses the votives as an analytical tool of their own as opposed to using them selectively to reinforce a literary idea. He also highlights the purposeful and conscious actions of the dedicators of these objects, making it clear that the choices are not random, and are meant specifically for the chosen deity. He uses Asklepios sanctuaries as an example, where offerings were left in the shape of body parts, unlike deities who were not involved in healing, stating it cannot be true that there is no correlation between the type of votive and the god.<sup>44</sup>

### **A Theme of Reluctance**

Baumbach's assertion that the votives are not random only reinforces the notion that Hera has an affiliation with the sea. Although her sanctuaries are notable for the high amount of miniature ship offerings, scholars seldom nominate her as a sea deity. There is a general theme of reluctance in scholarship to acknowledge Hera's importance in Greek religion and how widespread and complex her worship would have been. Elite or out-of-character aspects seem to be underestimated. Both Jennifer Larson and Aaron J. Brody mention sea deities that were worshipped at the seaside, but do not include Hera, although she has at least 7 coastal sanctuaries that we know of, and many others attested to in literature (see Appendix I).<sup>45</sup> Brody discusses the worship of deities on the ship itself, but also on-shore worship attested to by shrines, and names Athena, Zeus, Herakles, and Poseidon. Amelia R. Brown and Rebecca Smith remark that Aphrodite was a goddess of the sea: "her cults catered to the needs of both visiting

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<sup>44</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 2-3.

<sup>45</sup> Aaron J. Brody, "The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers," 444; Jennifer Larson, "A Land Full of Gods: Nature Deities in Greek Religion."

travelers and local citizens, with some sanctuaries immediately accessible to those arriving at the harbour, and others clearly visible as landmarks and blessings to those approaching (or departing) along the coast.”<sup>46</sup> Yet without the name Aphrodite, this passage could be describing Hera. It is said that even after the Samian temple was no longer in use, the lone massive column was kept in place to serve as a landmark for both planes and ships, and still does to this day.<sup>47</sup>

Barbara Kowalzig focuses on Artemis as a guardian of harbours and her relation to seafaring. Her study is on connectivity in maritime regions and how cult networks would have been tied together via their homes on the coast, but she never mentions Hera as one of these players in the maritime world.<sup>48</sup> Sandra Blakely provides a list of maritime gods that do not necessarily have their realm in the sea but appear to have influence there, but does not mention Hera. She mentions an entire ship being dedicated to Apollo on Delos, and states that because of this, he must have had power over the sea – but leaves out the two ship bases left at the Samian Heraion.<sup>49</sup> Baumbach touches on the ship votives found in Samos, both large and small, stating Hera must have a link to the sea, but attributes them to gratitude for support and success in battle – and groups it within food supply (fishing) or military concerns.<sup>50</sup> He also notes goddess figurines that hold a ship found in multiple sanctuaries of Hera, noting her as a possible “protectress of the fertility of the sea.”<sup>51</sup> O’Brien mentions that Hera’s early spouses were likely river-gods, as opposed to Zeus, but does not imply that it could relate to a different religious aspect of her character.

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<sup>46</sup> Amelia R. Brown and Rebecca Smith, “Guardian Goddess of the Surf-Beaten Shore: The Influence of Mariners on Sanctuaries of Aphrodite in Magna Graecia,” 38.

<sup>47</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” 99.

<sup>48</sup> Barbara Kowalzig, “Cults, Cabotage, and Connectivity.”

<sup>49</sup> Sandra Blakely, “Maritime Risk and Ritual Responses,” 366.

<sup>50</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 165.

<sup>51</sup> Baumbach, 40.

## Analyses of Hera Related to the Sea

A few scholars have made the connection between Hera and the sea, usually citing the ship votives and agreeing that there are suggestive details that Hera could be part of the religious realm of the sea. I intend to build upon and expand the ideas that have been brought to light thus far. Helmut Kyrieleis discusses the miniature votive boats found on Samos, stating there are 40 of them found so far, but there could be hundreds more. He does not think they were specifically dedicated by mariners, stating they would have had more detail if so, and are more reminiscent of toys or festival objects: “perhaps these oddly abstract little boats point to a peculiarity of the Samian cult of Hera hitherto unknown to us.”<sup>52</sup> He also mentions a connection between the Samian boats and votive figurines found at Tiryns and Perachora of a goddess holding a little boat, which will be discussed further later on.

Streuding highlights Aphrodite as a sea goddess but does mention that other deities are involved as well. She mentions that it is not only boats found in Hera’s sanctuaries but also fishhooks and anchors.<sup>53</sup> Demetriou calls Hera a deity of navigation and attributes this to the location of her sanctuaries, focusing on the Heraion on Gravisca as evidence.<sup>54</sup> Hannah Ringheim recognizes the ritual connection between Hera, near-eastern imports, and seafaring, calling boats an “appropriate offering and within the sanctuary’s domains of worship.”<sup>55</sup> Erika Simon calls Hera a goddess of seafarers and patron of sailors, attributing this to her involvement with trade across the sea, the proximity of her temples near the sea or harbours, and her involvement with the Argonauts.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” footnote 13.

<sup>53</sup> Jaclyn Haley Streuding, “Success at Sea,” 44; 73; 179-81.

<sup>54</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 87-88.

<sup>55</sup> Hannah L Ringheim, “Hera and the Sea, Decoding Dedications at the Samian Heraion,” 18.

<sup>56</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl 49.

Two scholars who have delved further into this concept are Deborah Boedeker and Paul Forsythe Johnston. Johnston states that “it is possible by the Archaic period that Hera of Samos was a specific patron deity of seafarers.<sup>57</sup> He implies it is to do with the location of her sanctuaries; Samos was a naval power in the early Archaic period and had established overseas trade connections and settlements. His study does not include all ship models that have been found in Hera’s sanctuaries and does not elaborate much further on Hera outside the context of Samos. Boedeker, in her article “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” touches on both the ship votives and the literary evidence, namely Sappho in fragment 17 and the Brothers Poem.<sup>58</sup> She also mentions the locations of Hera’s sanctuaries being on harbours or capes, including Perachora.<sup>59</sup> She states that Hera was likely a powerful local goddess in Lesbos, who was purposely involved in the affairs of mariners, and was a deity who could be prayed to for safe journeys. She comes to the conclusion that Hera has a large role to play in seafaring and sea journeys that has not been previously discussed, but she does not discuss the religious implications further or the additional archaeological evidence besides the boat dedications on Samos.

## **Conclusion**

There exists a puzzling aversion to ascribing Hera with any large amount of influence. Even at Olympia, where Hera’s cult, worship, and temple predate Zeus’, there is an ongoing argument that the temple was meant for them both and not Hera alone, or even just for Zeus (which will be discussed further in chapter 4, and the final conclusion). Catherine Morgan does not consider Hera’s worship to be early in Olympia, even though she states that “Argive contacts

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<sup>57</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 49-50.

<sup>58</sup> On the so-called Newest Sappho or Brothers Poem, see discussion in Brill 2016 and notably Brill’s retraction of a piece by Dirk Obbink on the vital issues of provenance and the accessibility of the papyri in question. The authenticity or inauthenticity of the fragment as relating to Sappho is still yet to be determined.

<sup>59</sup> Deborah Boedeker, “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” 200.

with Olympia begin at a strikingly early date ... Argive craftsmen worked at Olympia from the 9<sup>th</sup> century onwards ... [and there is] unequivocal direct sanctuary participation evidence.”<sup>60</sup> It seems reasonable to hypothesize that the Argive worship of their patron deity Hera would translate with Olympian worship of Hera, especially if the two communities were already closely connected in those early times.

Three of the most significantly studied temples in all of Greece are dedicated to Hera, including the largest Greek temple ever built (on Samos), and it is clear her sanctuaries were widely known and visited in ancient times, as “ no other archaeological excavation in Greece has, in fact, produced anything like the number and variety of imports found in the Archaic sanctuary of Hera at Samos.”<sup>61</sup> One of the aims of this research is not only to provide a corpus of evidence regarding Hera as an ancient sea-deity, largely unknown previously, but also to convey that she was not ‘dimmed’ or ‘subordinated’ as much as it may seem.

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<sup>60</sup> Catherine Morgan, *Athletics and Oracles: The Transformation of Olympia and Delphi in the 8<sup>th</sup> Century BC*, 85.

<sup>61</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” 112-115. The other two I am referring to are the Argive and Olympian Heraion.

## **THEORY AND METHODOLOGY**

### **Methodology**

#### **Reflection on The Sources**

The field of classics has come a long way since the time of searching for selective evidence archaeologically, based on an already developed theory, rooted in literature. This is a relatively untouched topic that can only be discussed when looking at all the available evidence. Evidence that will be used to determine whether Hera is a goddess of the sea will be the archaeological finds from selected sanctuaries, including but not limited to votive behavior. As mentioned previously, there is not a large corpus of model ships available, but that is not the only symbol of watery veneration. C. Kerenyi states that “only from her sanctuaries can we learn more about Hera.”<sup>62</sup> This includes the physical location of them, the geographic setting, and usage of the land across time. Gregory Retallack has suggested that there is an economic basis for the location of cult sites that can be determined by studying the soil. He has concluded that Argos, Samos, Perachora, and Plataea all have in common that their soil is cultivable only with difficulty; therefore, the people who lived in the vicinity would likely have been herders. The ‘native vegetation’ is interpreted to be grassy oak woodland, which greatly informs the interpretation of the cultic usage of the land in very early times.<sup>63</sup> This also sheds light on folktale that is embedded within epic and landscapes.

The limitation to working with such a large number of sites and sources is acquiring all the necessary archaeological reports. Unfortunately, one website that lists every archaeological site with each report published on them is yet to exist. The excavation journals, votive objects, and thousands of fragments have been passed from location to location, hand to hand, and much

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<sup>62</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 115.

<sup>63</sup> Gregory J. Retallack, “Rocks, views, soils and plants at the temples of Ancient Greece,” 640-6.

remains unpublished, while some is undocumented to begin with. Additionally, a devastating amount of material that was stored in the National Museum in Athens was destroyed during both world wars. Due to the current pandemic, many reports were either unavailable at the local library, online, or unavailable to be brought in within the timeframe of this project.

Most archaeological sites have had the recovered material re-examined or even re-excavated, but the publications are not available in a series or published in the same journal. Aside from Argos and Perachora, all the other primary sites were excavated by the German School of Archaeology and thus published in German, so analysis of the reports by me was done with the assistance of translation software. Both T. J. Dunbabin and Blanche Menadier report that Humfry Payne, who excavated Perachora, kept a large amount of information in his head, including the stratigraphical information, which seems to be the case at more than just Perachora, leaving the dates of the votive objects open to interpretation.

The newest Samos report does not discuss the votive objects, but rather the architecture of the site and building uses. What is missing from every site for this research except for Argos and Perachora is the initial report and analysis on votive finds. Follow-up reports and other scholars do mention those votive offerings, and I was privileged enough to visit the sites in person in the summer of 2019 as well as their accompanying museums and was able to document not only the current landscape, state of the buildings, and environment, but also the objects displayed there that are of utmost importance to this research.

Despite the challenges, enough material was available to create an analysis, particularly with the help of scholars (namely Baumbach) who had been able to study the unpublished material and review the reports I was unable to read myself. While each author had their own interpretation of the material and may only have studied the votive pieces relevant to their own research, because I had collected enough different perspectives, I was able to form my own.

An enormous variety of secondary sources were utilized, including: opinions of Greek religion; the history of the sites themselves; commentary on the developments between the Bronze Age to the Classical periods; maritime history; the history of seafaring and ship building in the Mediterranean; goddess and nymph worship; women in ancient Greece; etymology; and remarks on ancient Greek myth and literature. The time frame that will be focused on is the Late Bronze Age to the end of the Archaic period, and because there is much to be deciphered about the developments in religion throughout those years, the use of psychological theories and cross-cultural perspectives will also be employed.

An interdisciplinary approach will be used in this research, as is the move in general in scholarship about ancient religion. In addition to archaeological finds, select literary excerpts will be used that contribute to the construction of Hera's character through epic and folktale. Examples include passages by Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, Alcaeus, and Vergil. Later Roman authors who use Greek material are also quoted where necessary. It is not enough to look at the material evidence and literature alone, as the historical context is vital to provide clarity about the societies and people that produced both, what their motivations were, and what unique challenges and circumstances they may have faced. Authors such as Pausanias and Strabo are utilized to corroborate tangible (what is seen at sanctuaries) and abstract (myth) characteristics of religious Hera, as much as can be fully trusted from ancient accounts and interpreted with a modern lens.

Susanne Bocher and Petra Pakkanen recognize that there is a methodological issue in looking at only material evidence for religion, or only the literature, because there are scant written testimonies of religious practice.<sup>64</sup> The same can be said for the absence of votives we might expect, especially ships, as most of the ones that have survived are wooden, and it is

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<sup>64</sup> Petra Pakkanen and Susanne Bocher, *Cult Material from Archaeological Deposits to Interpretation of Early Greek Material*, 1.

plausible that many have been lost to time and the environment. Jaclyn Streuding notes that Delian inventories list a large amount of naval equipment, such as anchors, that have never been located,<sup>65</sup> so it is important to keep in mind there is much that did not survive, as is the nature of archaeological research.

One must consider the availability of certain materials in antiquity, and the actions of the dedicator that may have only been expressed verbally or in private moments, not in materiality. For example, in Olympia, it is said that there were restrictions put in place for the type of dedications that were allowed at the altars of Hera and Zeus.<sup>66</sup> The meaning of a votive may be implied, or change over time, and the visible connotation of an item does not mean it could not have been used to ask for something that we cannot see in the archaeological record. The dedicator may know that the deity is available for prayers that they cannot physically symbolize. Colin Renfrew has established guidelines for the archaeological study of cultic practice that have been kept in mind while looking at sanctuaries of Hera: boundary zones, the focus of attention, the presence of the deity, and votive offerings.<sup>67</sup>

## **Theory**

### **How do we study Greek Religion?**

There is not one agreed-upon system of Greek religion; even in the age of panhellenism where there were panhellenic sanctuaries and festivals (Delphi and Olympia, for example), gods could be understood differently in different places, which we can see through the use of epithets and their implied emphases. Dowden states that the gods “live in different but intersecting

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<sup>65</sup> Jaclyn Haley Streuding, “*Success at Sea*,” 40.

<sup>66</sup> Michael Scott, *Delphi and Olympia: The Spatial Politics of Panhellenism in the Archaic and Classical Periods*, 175-181.

<sup>67</sup> Colin Renfrew and Paul G. Bahn, *Archaeology: The Key Concepts*, 47.

dimensions which combine to create the illusion of a single personality.”<sup>68</sup> He argues there is the religious practice which includes the physical actions of worshippers; myth, which gives a reason for the practice; and thoughts about the divine.<sup>69</sup>

There tends to be a reluctance to combine myth and religion, and I agree that there should be a distinction in the way we treat and define these terms, however, they inspire and inform each other. The characters created in myth and sung by bards were worshipped in a religious context as well, sometimes very differently than how they are portrayed in written literature. Nilsson states that “speeches put in mouths of men” do not necessarily reflect the real beliefs of the people,<sup>70</sup> and Richard Martin states that epic leaves much unmentioned that “may have been important on the ground.”<sup>71</sup> Although, there are pieces of truth that shine through in myth. For example, in the *Iliad*, Hera tells Zeus: “There are three cities which are by far the dearest to me, / Argos and Sparta and Mycenae of the wide streets,” and we are now aware that she was venerated in those cities and was patron deity.<sup>72</sup>

Nevertheless, it is also important to note that not all actions of literary figures can be taken at face value and carry over to their religious veneration. In myth, Hera does not seem to be the most loving or responsible mother. She is known to attempt infanticide on Zeus’ children, and she throws her own son, Hephaestus, from Olympus because of a deformity. However, myth was sometimes used to explain and mirror the human condition. Nilsson explains that blacksmiths, who Hephaestus was the god of, were known in real life as having stunted limbs or severed tendons, with strong arms and weak legs, because of hammering at the anvil.<sup>73</sup> In this case, Hera could have been used as a literary device to explain real phenomena instead of what a

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<sup>68</sup> Ken Dowden, “Olympian Gods, Olympian Pantheon,” 42.

<sup>69</sup> Dowden, 42.

<sup>70</sup> Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, trans. F. J. Fielden, 162.

<sup>71</sup> Richard Martin, “Epic,” 152.

<sup>72</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 4.51-61, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>73</sup> Martin P. Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, trans. F. J. Fielden, 66.

modern-day reader might see as a story about a cruel mother. Studying religion means reading between the lines and recognizing that some things may not need to be said aloud if they are deeply embedded in oral history and story-telling traditions or encoded within intangible symbols.

### **Relevant Debates: The Evolutionary Model**

The early study of Greek religion relied on an evolutionary model, or a linear model; the idea of religious expression taking the form of animism which ‘developed’ into anthropomorphism, a theory discussed in depth by Martin Nilsson, Sir Arthur Evans, and Jane Ellen Harrison to name a few. While the idea of primitivism vs. ‘higher culture’ has been discounted along with other colonial ideals, there is still a tendency to conform to the idea that goddesses, particularly Hera, ‘changed’ over time and were drained of their autonomous power and placed within the realm of domesticity. For example, O’Brien studies the idea of this transformation and notes that pine cones, poppy heads, and pomegranates slowly begin to disappear from the votive assemblage in Samos around 600 BC, and hypothesizes that a transition begins at that time where she becomes a counterpart to Zeus and a marriage deity instead of the important earth deity she was before.<sup>74</sup> I prefer a more cyclical model of Greek religion, and as stated in the introduction: the priorities of the society that produces deities change, not the deities themselves. Oral tradition and inherited religious practice must play a part in this phenomenon, and although earlier traits of the deity may not be as explicitly expressed in later years, or their name and attributes alter, we cannot expect identical material evidence from societies that were not identical over time.

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<sup>74</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 63.

## Relevant Debates: Continuity and Polis Religion

Thomas Harrison remarks, “beliefs can be maintained despite contradictory evidence and are reinforced through their expression in action, including rituals.”<sup>75</sup> This is an important topic to discuss, as much of the evidence for Hera as a sea-goddess will recall ancient traditions and connect them to centuries later. In the late 1800s-early 1900s, when Heinrich Schliemann and other first archaeologists dug at important sites, the tendency was to claim there was always a connection between past and future societies and their gods. Presently, it appears that those connections are not always as straightforward as they were posited many years ago. Hera’s name is present on linear B tablets as of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC in Pylos, but her veneration at other locations as early as the Mycenaean times and prior to that has been questioned, such as at Tiryns.<sup>76</sup> It may not ever be possible to say with certainty that Hera as we know her was a pre-Mycenaean or Minoan goddess, though it is certainly suggestive that multiple sites where there is evidence for a female deity worshipped in those times is the location of a later Hera cult. We can say that she was likely identified with whoever that goddess was, if not that goddess herself. Social memory is important to keep in mind when considering continuity, as the decision to choose certain deities to uphold and dedicate temples to is very likely due to a collective interpretation of the past and not accidental.<sup>77</sup> The attempt to establish connections with a greater past is visible throughout Greece particularly in the Iron Age and Archaic periods.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Thomas Harrison, “Belief vs. Practice,” 27.

<sup>76</sup> At Tiryns, cult activity begins in the Middle to Late Bronze Age; like many Mycenaean centres, there is evidence for the worship of an unidentified female goddess. Hera is securely identified as the goddess worshipped on the remains of the Mycenaean megaron as of at least 750 BC; various scholars have argued for earlier and later dates.

<sup>77</sup> Ruth M. Van Dyke and Susan E. Alcock, *Archaeologies of Memory*, 3.

<sup>78</sup> Carla Antonaccio, “Contesting the Past: Hero Cult, Tomb Cult, and Epic in Early Greece,” 389-410.

Continuity of ritual and the sacredness of space is not a new idea. For example, Kyrieleis notes that Hera was no longer worshipped in Samos as of the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, and a Christian church was built with the same building materials in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD.<sup>79</sup> He also states that the sanctuary of Hera in Foce del Sele was transformed into a chapel dedicated to the Madonna el Granato, who holds a pomegranate. Terracotta pomegranates and bronze fishhooks were among the 7<sup>th</sup> century finds dedicated to Hera in the same location. Even in the modern period, there is a festival in which little decorated ships are carried in procession. He postulates that Madonna el Granato is a later ‘version’ of Hera.<sup>80</sup>

The concept of polis religion is also relevant to this research. There are many ideas contributing to the polis religion theory: Anthony Snodgrass believes that sanctuaries were an important part of the development of the polis, and François de Polignac theorizes that sanctuaries developed on the borders of the polis to establish dominance. Jonathan Hall points out that all poleis were different, and their sanctuaries and developments likely were too.<sup>81</sup> Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood believed that religion was mediated by the institutions of the polis and used it to create identity and unite people and communities,<sup>82</sup> while Julia Kindt reasons that the polis model is valuable but discounts religious beliefs and the agency of the people who abided by those beliefs.<sup>83</sup> The polis religion model cannot be applied to every situation, particularly when studying the time before the development of large cities and temples. The polis was very likely an important influence in the process of religious monumentality and identity, but I do not believe it would have been a defining or dictating factor. People created the polis, and they created their gods and systems of cultic practice long before that.

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<sup>79</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” 100.

<sup>80</sup> Kyrieleis, 112.

<sup>81</sup> Directed Study, Lecture on Archaeology and the rise of the polis in Greece, winter semester 2019, Dr. Margriet Haagsma, University of Alberta (Summary).

<sup>82</sup> Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood, “Early sanctuaries, the eighth century and ritual space: Fragments of a discourse,” 8.

<sup>83</sup> Julia Kindt, *Rethinking Greek Religion*, 13; 30-35.

## Relevant Debates: Mother Goddess

Although it is tempting, it is not my intent here to be decisive or conclusive about the ever-changing theory of a transcendent, boundary and language crossing mother-goddess worshipped since the dawn of time. It is only to establish theories regarding the ancient mother-goddess, to position Hera within this sphere, and determine how this thought process may have influenced her veneration as a sea-deity. It is important to clarify that this discussion is about matriarchal religion, not societies as a whole or their political systems. The theories of matriarchal religion and consequently the existence of a main, powerful, female deity, are largely based on the predominance of female figurines in not only Greek sanctuaries throughout time, but religious centers around the world.<sup>84</sup> The earliest human art in stone age sculpture and vase paintings depict the female body.<sup>85</sup> Gary Beckman questions whether the art and figurines depict deities or worshippers, and whether they all depict the same figure or not.<sup>86</sup> This question persists at Archaic and Classical sanctuaries where thousands of female figurines were left behind, nearly always more than male, and usually in the company of animal figurines. The other problematic factor when it comes to the female figurines is that they are left behind in virtually all substantial and long-standing sanctuaries, and often there are no defining features that lead scholars to determine precisely who the figurine could be representing.

There are two main arguments when it comes to the mother goddess theory: One is that she is rooted within an ancient matriarchal system with an emphasis on life-giving, and that perhaps chiefdoms were based on kinship through a female line;<sup>87</sup> the other is that the worship of a universal female goddess, or goddesses, is embedded within the human psyche that comes from a time where the woman's body was equated with the earth, and everything necessary for

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<sup>84</sup> Martin Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*, 289.

<sup>85</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 94.

<sup>86</sup> Gary Beckman, "Goddess Worship: Ancient and Modern," 9.

<sup>87</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, *Virgin Mother Goddesses in Antiquity*, 10-11; Charlene Spretnak, *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece*, 88-9.

survival. Within both of these theories, it is not agreed upon whether it was one goddess with different functions, multiple goddesses with the same name, multiple goddesses with different names but the same representation, or one goddess who encompassed every function but divided her roles to the next generation of goddesses in cyclical fashion based on regional variations. The most convincing answer to this question seems to be the latter; that there are multiple female goddesses who present in the form of ‘mothers’ who have had crossovers between their realms since time immemorial. One would always occupy the highest position in the trinity, typically the oldest, partnered with the equally as powerful male-god or consort. As roles were solidified and given names, like Gaia, this cyclical tradition continued with Rhea, and eventually to Hera, who inherited the leader role. Hera is present in the realms of all the Greek goddesses in the main pantheon – namely Artemis, Athena, Demeter, and Aphrodite, though she mostly watches from afar, seeming to occupy a more elite position. There are echoes of this in the *Iliad*, every time she stands up to Zeus when no one else will, or when she exercises control over the other deities. For example, during battle Hera antagonizes Artemis, “How can you now have the daring to stand up/ against me? It will be hard for you to oppose my fury ... You will soon find out how much stronger I am.” Artemis is described as cowering and weeping away from this confrontation.<sup>88</sup> Fee and Leeming cite examples from Near Eastern, Celtic, Germanic, Iranian, and Indian cultures who have also followed this model.<sup>89</sup> D. Miron states that each goddess, ancient and beyond, fulfills the role of a segment of a woman’s life, which is where the different names, votives, and regional variations come from.<sup>90</sup>

There is too much evidence to decline the existence of a great mother goddess, whether she took on one or multiple forms, and Hera does certainly seem to have roots in that kind of worship whether continuity can be established or not. Chapter one will discuss this in more

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<sup>88</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 21.474-494, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>89</sup> Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming, *The Goddess: Myths of the Great Mother*, 7.

<sup>90</sup> D. Miron, “The Heraia at Olympia: Gender and Peace,” 30.

detail, but it is an incredibly important factor to acknowledge for this research, because mother goddesses encompass everything, including power over the sea and elements.

## **CHAPTER 1: MOTHER GODDESSES AND THE SEA**

### **Introduction**

This chapter will present numerous traits that define Hera as a mother goddess, and subsequently describe the ways in which mother goddesses are related to the sea and maritime veneration. It focuses on the long-held religious expression in antiquity of the woman's body as provider, destroyer, and vessel, and how this is expressed in votive offerings and in myth. It also discusses the wide-ranging symbolism of the sea and characterization of the sea as feminine. Lastly, cross-cultural examples of female goddesses associated with the sea are used to provide a larger picture of where Hera and her character fit into this realm.

Hera is most universally identified with marriage, which is also affiliated with the sanctity of state and citizenship, but she is also identified with: fertility, heroes, the seasons, war, guest-friendship, the underworld, stages of the moon relating to stages of a woman's life,<sup>91</sup> *kourotrophos*, *hippia* (protector of horses)<sup>92</sup>, protector of the life cycle of crops and animals,<sup>93</sup> and, as this research will show, a deity with a deep connection to the sea and power over the realm of water. How can one goddess have so many characteristics? I believe the answer lies in her early and continuous characterization as a supreme mother goddess.

Writing about the origins of gods in the ancient world, Carolina Lopez-Ruiz aptly states that "origins of specific phenomena are impossible to retrieve."<sup>94</sup> This is particularly true when studying religion, which is why it is important to employ an interdisciplinary approach, including the use of psychological archetypes. Erich Neumann in *The Great Mother: Analysis of the Archetype* describes mother goddesses as universal inward images of the human psyche. As

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<sup>91</sup> Charlene Spretnak, *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece*, 87.

<sup>92</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 19.

<sup>93</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, "Homer's Savage Hera," 110.

<sup>94</sup> Carolina Lopez-Ruiz, "Gods – Origins," 369.

mentioned in the previous chapter, some of the earliest societies created images of the female figure, which were then used in a religious context – a statement which is very difficult to dispute no matter where one stands on the theory of matriarchal religion. Rigoglioso reasons that this is because the female was considered “foundational and central, which does not mean that men [or male deities] did not have any power.”<sup>95</sup> Spretnak adds that the female figure was associated with order, wisdom, protection, and life-giving processes.<sup>96</sup>

Mother goddesses are all-encompassing; they are more than just powerful earth deities, but essences of the earth itself - where the sea plays a large role. Hesiod credits Gaia with the origin of the world as he knows it, who then parthenogenically created the next generation of divine beings.<sup>97</sup> The liquid of the divine woman has continually been credited with the origins of other phenomena, for example, the myth in which Hera is tricked into nursing baby Herakles and ultimately creates the milky way. The mother goddess archetype is not exclusive to Greece, nor is it exclusive to antiquity. It is visible in the modern world in figures such as the Virgin Mary or mother nature.

### **Establishing Hera as a Mother Goddess**

The following sections describe characteristics and realms known to mother goddesses, who encompass pieces of them all, and include specific examples of Hera’s representation within those realms.

### **Her Long History of Independence**

Previous scholarship has secured Hera as an independent and powerful patron deity before she was united in myth and religion with Zeus. There are clear echoes of this even after the fact, such as Homer in his *Hymn to Hera* mentioning that she is honored “equally” with

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<sup>95</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, *Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity*, 10-11.

<sup>96</sup> Charlene Spretnak, *Lost Goddesses of Early Greece*, 17-18.

<sup>97</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony*, lines 126-147, trans. Glenn W. Most.

Zeus.<sup>98</sup> Hera is referred to as a Pelasgian (or indigenous) deity in ancient myth and by modern authors. For example, in the *Argonautica*, the author writes that Pelias “paid no heed to Pelasgian Hera.”<sup>99</sup> In the *Iliad*, Homer refers to Argos as “Pelasgian Argos,” of which Hera is the patron deity.<sup>100</sup> C. Waldstein and his fellow excavators argue that at the site of the Argive Heraion there was a cult of a “primitive female deity, great mother of the gods, whether we call her Ge, or Demeter ... or Hera ... these men [called] her Hera and reproduced [her image] in wood and stone.”<sup>101</sup>

It was stated in the previous chapter that Greek religion is cyclical, and Hera seems to have inherited the supreme goddess role at the top of the trinity. Rigoglioso states that Plutarch in *Moralia* 15.157 “equated Hera with Gaia, the earth herself ... [because they have] the same self-generating capacity.”<sup>102</sup> This duplicity is reaffirmed elsewhere, such as Alcaeus referring to Hera as πάντων γενέθλαν, “the origin of all” mentioned in the History of Scholarship chapter.<sup>103</sup> Hera shares other characteristics with Gaia; Larson states that Gaia has three domains: heaven, earth, and the underworld,<sup>104</sup> and O’Brien argues that Hera “was transspatial in that she was at home in Olympus, Argos, and where the titans dwelled ... [and she was also] transfunctional.”<sup>105</sup>

Hera, like Gaia, has been credited with the ability of parthenogenesis, which may explain why she seems to renew her virginity in a spring, sea, or river every year in multiple festival

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<sup>98</sup> Diane Rayor, *The Homeric Hymns*, 91.

<sup>99</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 1.11-14, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>100</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 2.680-85, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>101</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol. 2, 14. In Vol 1. 5-6, the authors also suggest that Hera was the supreme goddess of an earlier people, not the spouse of a king, but the queen herself.

<sup>102</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, *Virgin Mother Goddesses of Antiquity*, 59.

<sup>103</sup> Deborah Boedeker, “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” 196-7; C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 114; Robert Renehan, “Hera as Earth-Goddess: A New Piece of Evidence,” 194. These authors each cite Alcaeus fr 129 (24 A DI.), 7.

<sup>104</sup> Jennifer Larson, “A Land Full of Gods,” 67.

<sup>105</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 203.

locations.<sup>106</sup> Hebe, daughter of Hera, is said to have “sprung from mother-earth.”<sup>107</sup> Anthony Verity remarks that the scene in the *Iliad* where Hera distracts Zeus with lovemaking in order to give the Greeks an edge in battle, does not result in the conception of a child, but rather resulted in growing grass and hyacinth.<sup>108</sup> She is the wife of Zeus, but she seems to be only be united in marriage with him, not creation, which she can do on her own.

## Tree Cults

The association between trees, female goddesses, and religious veneration has been attested to since at least the Minoan period. Neumann states that mother goddesses bring life from themselves, therefore they are the mothers of vegetation, and the center of fertility rituals to ensure prosperous vegetation would be the tree – a fruit-bearing tree of life.<sup>109</sup> A ring seal found on the Acropolis of Mycenae shows an enthroned goddess next to a woman seated under a tree, with 3 females surrounding her.<sup>110</sup> One found at Phaestus (on Crete) shows a nude woman grasping a tree, and one with three dancing women, two pillars, and a tree; these seem to relate to a dance or ceremony to invoke the deity.<sup>111</sup> It has been theorized that the tree is related to childbirth, protection,<sup>112</sup> the embodiment of the spirit of a deity,<sup>113</sup> or is a phallic representation of the male uniting with and growing from the female earth.

Later, *xoana* (wooden statues carved from trees) of many deities are described, including multiple of Hera.<sup>114</sup> A later or additional form of the tree seems to be the pillar, and Hera’s

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<sup>106</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.38, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>107</sup> Arthur Bernard Cook, “Who was the wife of Zeus?,” 367.

<sup>108</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 14.347-51, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>109</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 48.

<sup>110</sup> Theodore C. Eliopoulos, “The Minoan Goddess with Upraised Arms’ Today,” 90.

<sup>111</sup> Martin Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*, 269.

<sup>112</sup> Nilsson, 412.

<sup>113</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 49.

<sup>114</sup> Isabelle Clark, “Gamos of Hera: Myth and Ritual,” 22-25. Clark also writes that the Daidala festival at Plataea in Boeotia is dedicated to Hera, in which wooden *xoana* are collected, and one of which is named the bride. The ‘bride’ is given a ritual bath and carried in procession to Mt. Kitharion where Zeus and Hera are worshipped together. The rest are burnt. It becomes

affiliation with both trees and pillars is extensive. Her wooden statue is bathed and re-dressed in festivals at both Argos and Samos (see below). At Samos, the remains of a 7<sup>th</sup>-century statuette were found in the foundations of the second temple, made of pear wood.<sup>115</sup> At Argos, the cult statue has not been found, but Pausanias wrote that the *horai* were represented on the cult statue's crown, further confirming her close relationship with the seasons, earth, and nature.<sup>116</sup>

A tree and/or column cult has been attested to at both Samos and Argos, and there are also suggestive finds at Tiryns and Perachora. An Argos vase frieze shows women in a row holding a branch in their hands, of which the report claims there is no satisfactory explanation.<sup>117</sup> Nilsson provides a possible answer: in most religions it is not just the tree trunk that is a cult object but also the branches growing from it.<sup>118</sup> Further examples include the description by Callimachus of the Samian cult statue of Hera having a vine branch around its hair.<sup>119</sup> At Perachora, there are 10 examples of vase paintings that show women dancing with joined hands, two of which hold wreaths and another where they are holding twigs.<sup>120</sup> Her image was on a pillar in the second Argos temple but no one is sure what it looked like;<sup>121</sup> the taper towards the top of the pillar led excavators to believe that her worship was likely in aniconic form at one point.<sup>122</sup>

In addition to the pillar at Argos suggestive of aniconic representation, a mini architectural model of a pillar was found at Tiryns,<sup>123</sup> and in the Bothros, 4 cylindrical terracottas

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affiliated with the myth of their union but likely started with celebrating the epiphany of the goddess in her statue.

<sup>115</sup> Cecilie Brøns, *Gods and Garments: Textiles in Greek Sanctuaries in the 7<sup>th</sup> to 1<sup>st</sup> Centuries BC*, 166.

<sup>116</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.17, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>117</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 112.

<sup>118</sup> Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*, 262.

<sup>119</sup> Callimachus, *Aetia* 4.101, trans. C. A. Trypanis, T. Gelzer, and Cedric H. Whitman.

<sup>120</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 23.

<sup>121</sup> Baumbach, 101.

<sup>122</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 43.

<sup>123</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII: Kult im archaischen Tiryns, Eine Analyse neuer Befunde und Funde*, 136.

with rows of colored stones dated to 750-650 BC. The pillar or column-like models appear at Samos as well. Baumbach questions if the ones at Tiryns were meant to represent tree trunks with fruit, and attributes this to Hera's function as provider of food.<sup>124</sup> In a review of Milette Gaifman's study on aniconism in Greek antiquity, Daniel Barbu reiterates that aniconism should be viewed as a spectrum and not as a phase used prior to the visual expression of deities as anthropomorphic, rather, the use of such objects and versatile materials is "visually expressing [the deities'] liminal character."<sup>125</sup> With this in mind, I would argue that these models are reminiscent of the tree/pillar cult of which one or more great female deities dominated – representing more than simply a provider of fruit and sustenance, but the larger paradigm of life itself. They could also have been used as small but significant symbols of the epiphany of the goddess and the awareness of her presence at the site of the dedications.

At the site of the Samian Heraion, excavators have continually expressed confidence that there was an ancient tree cult that involved the epiphany of the goddess. Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier writes that a scene on the sarcophagus of Hagia Triada in Crete depicts a sanctuary with a tree, which can give us an idea of what the Samian one may have looked like: The scene shows an altar in front of a sacred enclosure with a tree, and birds seated on double axes on either side of the altar, surrounded by fruit and a bull sacrifice.<sup>126</sup> For a long time, excavators believed that the tree growing in the sanctuary now is the same cultic tree discussed by ancient authors and appears on Samian bronze coins from 238-244 AD,<sup>127</sup> however, it has recently been proven that it is a less than 100 year old juniper tree.<sup>128</sup> There is evidence that a tree, whether or not it was always the same kind, had been continually planted in the same vicinity over the years, which leads me to

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<sup>124</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 66.

<sup>125</sup> Daniel Barbu, Review of *Aniconism in Greek Antiquity: Oxford Studies in Ancient Culture and Representation* by Milette Gaifman.

<sup>126</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 32-33.

<sup>127</sup> Walter, Clemente, and Niemeier, Section 1.6: 14-23. The cult image of Hera is shown on coins standing in front of 4 columns, and in front of 1 column is a lygos tree.

<sup>128</sup> Vladimir Milojcic, *Samos I: Die prähistorische Siedlung unter dem Haraion-Grabung 1953 und 1955*, 1.

believe that it was of utmost cultic importance and likely was meant to establish cultic continuity, or remembrance of the past to reinforce and express Samian identity, even into the Roman period and beyond to the modern day.<sup>129</sup>

There is certainly a cultic connection between trees and water. One example is Hera and Io in Argos: Hera's cultic hegemony in Argos was traditionally granted by a river god, who also happens to be the father of Io - who is also involved in myths where she is bound to a cultic tree.<sup>130</sup> In the *Argonautica*, Jason and his crew carve an image of the "mountain Goddess ... 'lady of many names'" from a vine stump in the forest, set it up, dance a war dance, and offer it sacrifices in order to avert the incoming hurricane.<sup>131</sup>

While not necessarily representing Hera, a Minoan ring found in a Mycenaean shaft grave at Pylos depicts a goddess and worshippers that seem to be dancing in a circle, surrounding an altar with trees. The scene is described as taking place on a sandy beach, with the sea visible next to them (Fig.3).<sup>132</sup> It is striking that the goddess, worshippers, tree, and altar, are all essential parts of a religious ceremony in either the immediate vicinity of the beach or next to



Figure 2. Minoan gold seal ring from Pylos.  
Jack L. David and Sharon R. Stocker, "The Lord of the Gold rings:  
The Griffin Warrior of Pylos," 641.

<sup>129</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 20-24.

<sup>130</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 168.

<sup>131</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 1.1117-1140, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>132</sup> Jack L. Davis and Sharon R. Stocker, "The Lord of the Gold Rings: The Griffin Warrior of Pylos," 640.

the water itself; perhaps this is one of the earliest Greek representations of a powerful female deity in the realm of water and seafaring.

Samian coins provide an additional example of the tree-water connection. O'Brien notes that a cultic tree is persistent on Samian coins even into the Roman Imperial era, accompanied by two nude infants, a temple, and peacocks. On some coins, the tree appears with the river Imbrasos, who is sometimes perceived of as an early spouse or consort of Hera.<sup>133</sup>

### **Mistress of Animals**

A common name given to the primary Mycenaean deity is the mistress of animals, who is related to nature and fertility. Elsi Spathari suggests that the Argive Hera would have been related to this Mycenaean goddess of nature, if not the same one.<sup>134</sup> In Knossos from Neolithic times, female figures were more often than not found with animal figurines,<sup>135</sup> which continues throughout Mycenaean times into Archaic and Classical all over mainland Greece. Sanctuaries of Hera are notable for the presence of thousands of both female and animal figurines, with arguably the most popular animal votive dedication being either bovine or horse/horse and rider.

Baumbach has questioned why bovines in particular are popular with Hera, not only in votives but in the number of bones left behind in her sanctuaries, particularly at Samos. He suggests they are of cultic significance and to do with her role in fertility of both humans and animals.<sup>136</sup> Neumann dives deeper, suggesting that the celestial cow is identified with mother goddesses is a symbol of the nourishing milk of the earth.<sup>137</sup> There is undoubtedly a connection between the bovine and Hera, as her most well-known epithet is βωῶπις, a sacrificial cow was

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<sup>133</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 39.

<sup>134</sup> Elsi Spathari, *Corinthia-Argolida: A Guide to the Museums and Archaeological Sites*, 118.

<sup>135</sup> Martin Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and Its Survival in Greek Religion*, 290-308.

<sup>136</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 162.

<sup>137</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 47.

given to her at Olympia and Argive festivals, and the name of the hill that the Argive Heraion sits on is 'Euboea' which means "rich in cattle."<sup>138</sup> Jane Ellen Harrison has posited that deities were worshipped in animal form prior to the transformation into anthropomorphic figures,<sup>139</sup> and C. Schuchhardt suggests when they became women, the animals were placed next to them as companions instead, or become descriptive terms, which is perhaps why Hera is known as "ox-eyed."<sup>140</sup> This is a rather evolutionary view, but still useful in identifying the link between animal and goddess. The trial of strength that occurs in the *Argonautica* after Jason and Medea's introduction involves bulls and oxen - other animals that frequent Hera sanctuaries.<sup>141</sup>

Votive finds from sanctuaries of Hera further attest to her affiliation with animals. Images of birds are also frequent in sanctuaries of Hera – both in votive offerings of statuettes, on vase paintings, and depicted in friezes (Fig. 4 and 5). In the context of birds, it appears she has power over them, can represent one herself, or can send them as messengers. In the *Iliad*, both Athena and Hera are said to move like wild pigeons,<sup>142</sup> and they both have birds that are dear to them: the owl and the peacock. The important symbol of the bird is associated with the epiphany of gods and goddesses, and in Roman times they become known as powerful omens.



Figure 3. Stone with carved birds at the Argive Heraion temple terrace.  
C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 115, fig. 53.

<sup>138</sup> C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 120.

<sup>139</sup> Jane Ellen Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*, 260.

<sup>140</sup> Karl Schuchhardt, *Schliemann's Excavations*, trans. Eugenie Sellers, 22.

<sup>141</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 3.930-45, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>142</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 5.778-9, trans. Anthony Verity.

Certain birds have retained their holy significance, such as the dove in Christianity. In the *Argonautica*, Hera compels a crow to tell Jason and Mopsos that a woman will never show herself to a man who has others nearby.



Figure 4. Figurines of birds from the Samian Heraion.  
(Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece)



Figure 5. A life size bronze dove from Perachora, likely meant to be suspended (7th century BC). Excavators believe the dove might have been held in the hand of Hera's cult statue.  
(Personal Photo: National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Greece)

At Perachora, Humfry Payne describes an image of a female flanked by centaurs who appears “to have mastery over them,” and branches are seen in the background.<sup>143</sup> Vessel fragments depict scenes such as birds perched on florals, a floral column, a bird in a tree, and there are hundreds of terracotta figurines of animals, fruit, and flowers. Payne describes many of the figurines as “bird-faced.”<sup>144</sup> A life-sized bronze dove was recovered with suspension holes intact; it is hypothesized to have fit in the hand of Hera’s cult statue (Fig. 4).<sup>145</sup>

In addition to the votive offerings and animal bones, the largest altar at Samos (the seventh built known as the Rhoikos altar in 550 BC) was decorated with friezes of animals, leaves, and flowers.<sup>146</sup> At Argos, 24 figurines of women holding an animal in their right hands were dedicated,<sup>147</sup> as well as thousands of cattle figurines in addition to the hundreds of other animals.<sup>148</sup> Other female figurines held fruit and doves to their breast, and 6 of them are seated and securely identified with Hera.<sup>149</sup> Many vase fragments depict ‘water birds.’<sup>150</sup> An engraved ivory depicts a snake next to two figurines holding hands as well as branches, and between them is an upside-down bird.<sup>151</sup>

## **Fruit and Flowers**

The symbolism of seeds, fruit, and flowers is arguably the most apparent in the realm of mother goddesses. They are all symbols of fertility, growth, prosperity, and nature. Hera received dedications of this nature in almost all her sanctuaries. Kyrieleis notes ivory and terracotta

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<sup>143</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora, the Sanctuaries of Hera Akraia and Limenia: Excavations of the British School of Archaeology at Athens, 1930-1933* Vol 2, 61 #419.

<sup>144</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 247-9; 107.

<sup>145</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 17.

<sup>146</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 151.

<sup>147</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 85.

<sup>148</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 15.

<sup>149</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 79.

<sup>150</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 135.

<sup>151</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., 347.

votive pomegranates (Fig. 6), poppy seeds, pinecones as well as actual seeds that could not have been growing in the Samian area.<sup>152</sup> Argive wheat and ears of corn were called the “flowers of Hera.”<sup>153</sup> At Olympia, the winners of the festival of the Heraea were originally given a pomegranate as a prize and then indulged in eating the meat of a heifer.<sup>154</sup> Neumann suggests that the pomegranate and poppy seeds stress the idea of both fertility and containment: “man is surrounded by vegetation ... [and is] dependent on it.”<sup>155</sup> In the *Theogony*, Gaia produces her offspring and then contains them within her; she is not only the origin, but the protectress and the vessel even after they are born into a dangerous situation. Hera received dedications in her sanctuaries of both real fruit and flowers, and representations of them.



Figure 6. Clay pomegranates from the Samian Heraion, 7th century BC.  
(Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece)

At Tiryns, Argos, and Perachora, statuettes of a seated goddess have been found that have a small ship at their shoulders decked in flowers (Fig 7.).<sup>156</sup> Perhaps the flowers are symbolic not only of human fertility, but the survival and behavior of the environment which the communities

<sup>152</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion At Samos,” 110.

<sup>153</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 66; Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 139.

<sup>154</sup> Ludwig Drees, *Olympia: Gods, Artists, and Athletes*, 29.

<sup>155</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 45-52.

<sup>156</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion At Samos,” 112-3.

depend on for their livelihoods, a large part of which would be the sea. The goddess with the ship may well represent all these things, as well as Hera's power over the sea, what it produces, and how she dictates that it responds to seafarers. The flowers may indicate real flowers, or, perhaps they are symbolic of the sons who are cherished onboard an embarking ship (such as the *Argo*), a ship that relies on the kindness of a deity for its safe return.



Figure 7. Goddess figurine with flower decorated ship at her right shoulder, from Perachora.  
Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 40, fig. 2.65.

## **How Do Mother Goddesses Relate to the Sea?**

### **Prelude**

Mother goddesses are not only earth deities with power over vegetation and the surface of the earth, but they hold power within the liquid (or the sea) as well. Neumann implores us to look at the implied symbolism of this liquid and states that female power “dwells in springs and streams, the earth, mountains, hills, and underworld. There is a mixture of elements of water

and earth.”<sup>157</sup> He goes on to say that symbols were used before any human form was represented in legends,<sup>158</sup> for example, the mother goddess symbolism is also present in ordinary vessels such as pots;<sup>159</sup> vessels that hold precious items such as food or oil. The appearance of maritime-related iconography on ordinary vessels begins at a very early stage. Ships appeared on Cycladic frying pans, sometimes depicted with female genitalia, leading Shelley Washmann to believe there is cultic significance between ships and feminine cult already in the Bronze Age. 7 seals with imprints of ships were found of Minoan manufacture from the same time period.<sup>160</sup> Communities that lived near the coast were dependent on sea and sea travel for their sustenance, food supply, and later, their dominance in war and defense. William H. Race suggests Pindar expressed basic physical needs in terms of water, where it supplies the natural needs for celebration and achievement.<sup>161</sup> Nature and the sea, as well as the deity (or deities) with control over those realms would ultimately be the ones to pray to in order to fulfill those needs.

### **The Feminine Seascape**

There is a long history of association between mother goddess symbols and maritime imagery. Wachsmann states that Minoans and their Cycladic neighbors “viewed the sea and their ships with religious awe in which they held the worldly powers ... depictions of ships seem intertwined with religious concepts of divinity, fertility, and the sea.”<sup>162</sup> Fillmer studied a fresco frieze found in Santorini which depicts 7 large ships in procession, covered in **flower** garlands.<sup>163</sup> A seal found at Thera also contains an image of a boat with a cultic **tree** in it with a **dove** on the wing.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 260.

<sup>158</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 12.

<sup>159</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 134.

<sup>160</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 70.

<sup>161</sup> William H. Race, “Pindar’s ‘Best is water,’” 122.

<sup>162</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 121.

<sup>163</sup> Thomas Fillmer, “Theories on Ship Configuration in the Bronze Age Aegean,” 129-30.

<sup>164</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 112-13.

Other than sea creatures and the deep unknown, figures associated with the sea are predominantly female. There is Poseidon, of course, but most sea legends revolve around either monstrous creatures, sirens, or nymphs. Rigoglioso suggests that nymphs have a connection with parthenogenesis and virgin cults, and she quotes Menodotus, Samian historian (in Athenaeus 15.671) who wrote that the Samian sanctuary of Hera was established by nymphs.<sup>165</sup> Hera's connection with sea nymphs likely would have been early; in the *Argonautica*, the night before Jason and Medea share their marriage bed, Hera sends nymphs, daughters of a river, to gather flowers for the couple.<sup>166</sup> Larson writes that nymph cult sites are often found in natural caves, where popular votives left behind in Attica were wreaths, greenery, and flowers. She also states that nymphs receive prenuptial dedications from women such as dolls and toys,<sup>167</sup> similarities they share with Hera. Hera received stalactite dedications at Samos, at least 5 of



Figure 8. Left to right: Stalactite, rock crystal, coral. Behind are models of pinecones. All votive offerings from the Samian Heraion. (Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece)

<sup>165</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece*, 127.

<sup>166</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.1145-50, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>167</sup> Jennifer Larson, *Greek Nymphs: Myth, Cult, Lore*, 227-9.

which are in the Vathy museum, while only one is discussed by Kyrieleis, who claims it is in a class of its own along with pieces of coral.<sup>168</sup>

Stalactite (Fig. 8) is mostly found in caves which are typically exclusive to nymph cult sites, particularly if they are located close to water sources.<sup>169</sup> This connection between Hera, the female-oriented sphere of water, nymphs, virginity, and creation is highly suggestive of an ancient and perhaps unconscious association between mother goddesses and the sea.

### **Birds and Ships**

Mark Samuel remarks: “Greek ships were referred to as κορωνίς or ‘curved.’ Κορωνίς normally refers to the upward curve of a ship at the bow and stern. If it is connected with κορώνη, ‘sea-bird,’ it may also allude to the beak-like bow on Geometric ships.”<sup>170</sup> Samuel tends to disagree with the bird/ship link, but the wording is not the only connection they share. It has already been established that birds are symbols of female deities, who are all in some way mother goddesses themselves. In the *Argonautica*, Mopsos watches a bird perched on the head of their ship. He interprets the bird’s signs and proceeds to tell Jason that he needs to pray to the “mother of all the blessed gods where she sits enthroned, and then the raging storm will die out ... for on her the winds and seas and earth’s foundations all depend ... Zeus himself ... and all other blessed immortals honor that terrible goddess.”<sup>171</sup> I agree with Peter Green, who writes that he believes the bird was sent by Hera, who is also likely the unnamed goddess at the end of the previous quote.<sup>172</sup> Not only does she protect the men and their ship here, but she also sends a bird to deliver a message, and is attributed with having control over the foundations of the earth and sea.

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<sup>168</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion At Samos,” 111.

<sup>169</sup> Jennifer Larson, *Greek Nymphs: Myth, Cult, Lore*, 229-39.

<sup>170</sup> Mark Samuel, *Homeric Seafaring*, 97.

<sup>171</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 1.1078-1102, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>172</sup> Peter Green, *The Argonautika: Apollonios Rhodios (Extended edition)*, 226.

At Perachora, an Egyptian seal was found displaying a bird with outstretched wings with a boat. An additional seal has only a boat, and one other could depict a man in a boat. The editors of Payne's excavation journal questioned why the boats would be there unless they indicated the epiphany of an Egyptian deity,<sup>173</sup> but it could be argued that the ship and bird symbolism was an appropriate offering for Hera the mother/sea goddess. Wachsmann notes that birds, or parts of birds, appear at the extremities of ships in antiquity.<sup>174</sup> In addition to birds, models of eyes have also been attested to on Greek ships. Fragments have been found, and they appear on 4<sup>th</sup>-century naval inventory lists at Piraeus as *ophthalmoi* but seem to date back to the Late Bronze Age. Whether the eyes are symbolic of a goddess or not is yet to be discussed, but it certainly does seem to represent the idea of a lookout, or a presence onboard who is watching.<sup>175</sup>

### **Women as Vessels, The Sea as Womb**

Neumann speculates that mother goddesses are present in natural elements, namely earth and water, where "containing water is the womb of life, it is the water below, the water of the depths, ground water, ocean, lakes, and ponds. Maternal water nourishes and transforms ... and preserves existence."<sup>176</sup> The mother goddess is a great "container" that holds everything that springs from it and continues to surround it like an eternal substance.<sup>177</sup> Water deities are often credited for the origins of specific phenomena. For example, In the *Iliad*, Homer implies that Oceanus and Tethys are responsible for the origins of the gods,<sup>178</sup> and in the *Theogony*, Hesiod calls the first 41 female offspring of Oceanus and Tethys a "holy race of Kourai who on earth raise

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<sup>173</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 461; 508.

<sup>174</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 184.

<sup>175</sup> Deborah Carlson, "Seeing the Sea: Ships' Eyes in Classical Greece," 347; 362-3.

<sup>176</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 47.

<sup>177</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 25.

<sup>178</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 14.200-204, trans. Anthony Verity.

youths to manhood with lord Apollo and the rivers.”<sup>179</sup> One of them is Admete, a priestess of Hera.”<sup>180</sup>

Kerenyi points out the fundamental theme of birth by a river and the association with plants/flowers: The island of Samos and the river Imbrasos which ran through the Samian sanctuary was sometimes referred to as Parthenois or Parthenia (Island of the virgin), or Anthemous/Anthemoussa (rich in flowers), which matches one of Hera’s Argive epithets – Hera *Antheia*.<sup>181</sup> In Samos, an early myth revolved around the river god Meander’s daughter Samia and her marriage to a foreign king, and the Samians believed Hera was born under a lygos tree near the river running through the sanctuary.<sup>182</sup> Again there is a connection between Hera, divine water, creation, protection, parthenogenesis, and the fertility of the earth resulting in the creation of plants, flowers, or beings.

A woman’s body is often characterized as a vessel, which is a central symbol of the feminine.<sup>183</sup> Mother goddesses were the vessel of the world, in which everything is created and held.<sup>184</sup> This symbolism is not only in pots or pans as mentioned earlier, but in storage vessels, houses, baskets, bottles, or anything that holds items of importance. Evidence of this “prephilosophic wisdom common to all those that speak the language”<sup>185</sup> can be seen in certain finds from sanctuaries of Hera. Votives in the form of building models, architectural elements, and copious amounts of baskets (or *kalathoi*) have been recovered at Samos, Argos, Perachora, and Tiryns – some of her earliest cult sites. 35 terracotta and limestone building models were

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<sup>179</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 346-8, trans. Caldwell, provided in Marguerite Rigoglioso, *Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece*, 32.

<sup>180</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece*, 32.

<sup>181</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 155; Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 12.

<sup>182</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 12. She summarizes Pausanias 7.4.1-4 who seems to attest to a “cultural mixture” on the island.

<sup>183</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 29.

<sup>184</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 43.

<sup>185</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, XIV.

found at Samos dated from the 8-6<sup>th</sup> century,<sup>186</sup> as well as three votives representing stairs, multiple columns, capitals, and pillars.<sup>187</sup> Argos also had 8<sup>th</sup>-century terracotta models of buildings and pillars.<sup>188</sup> Perachora had 4 terracotta building models from the Geometric period,<sup>189</sup> and over 100 clay baskets of both proper and miniature size.<sup>190</sup> At Tiryns, 350 miniature baskets from the 6-5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC were also recovered.<sup>191</sup>

The building models (e.g., Fig. 9 and 10) were originally thought of as replicas of actual houses or the early temples in the sanctuary, but that idea has slowly lost prominence. Baumbach thought of them as representing Hera's function as protectress of the home, which is in line with the archetypal symbolism.<sup>192</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier have suggested they were representations of real homes that were placed under the protection of Hera.<sup>193</sup> The baskets have been thought of as reminiscent of both festivals in which cult items and food were carried in baskets, or reminders of the duties of a woman after marriage, such as weaving; the wool would be held in a basket.<sup>194</sup> There has been no satisfactory



Figure 9. Building models from the Samian Heraion.  
(Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece)

<sup>186</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 160.

<sup>187</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 107-44.

<sup>188</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 63; C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum Vol 1*, 139.

<sup>189</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum Vol 1*, 91-97.

<sup>190</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 34.

<sup>191</sup> Baumbach, 61.

<sup>192</sup> Baumbach, 160.

<sup>193</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 123-44.

<sup>194</sup> John Howard Oakley and Rebecca H. Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, 38-39.

or uniform answer to the question of the house models or baskets thus far, though the explanation very well could be that the models are representative of the mother goddess' body as a vessel of creation.



Figure 10. Clay building model from the Sanctuary of Hera at Perachora., mid-8th century BC.  
(Personal Photo: National Archaeological Museum of Athens, Greece)

The most striking symbol of a vessel related to mother goddesses in the Greek world is the ship. Neumann suggests that a maternal archetype in a child's unconscious is a picture of a ship.<sup>195</sup> The symbolism is related to a crib, being rocked, as well as the ship as a representation of the uterus while the surrounding sea is the maternal fluid.<sup>196</sup> Wachsmann explains that the shielding deity charged with the function of protecting the people on board a ship is always female,<sup>197</sup> and there is evidence for female figureheads being placed at the prow of ships, as mentioned earlier.<sup>198</sup> Even now, ships are almost exclusively characterized as feminine, given female names, and spoken of as "she." In addition to the 40 miniature wooden boat votives

<sup>195</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 119.

<sup>196</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 256.

<sup>197</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 195.

<sup>198</sup> Aaron J. Brody, "The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers," 448.

discovered at Samos, boat models were also found at her sanctuaries in Gravisca, Argos, Tiryns, Olympia, and Perachora. In many cases they were recovered with other maritime-related finds (see Appendix I for full details).

François de Polignac writes about both the building and ship models found at Hera sanctuaries, and suggests a symbolic connection between Hera's fundamental and sovereign role in perpetuating not only the *oikos* but also protecting the inside and outside world.<sup>199</sup>

## **Death and the Sea**

Birth and death go together hand in hand in the religious realm. While the sea is the womb and the place of creation and living things, it is also where the dead are received. She “draws life back into herself, with a devouring and ensnaring function.”<sup>200</sup> This helps to explain why mother goddesses like Hera seem to have chthonic elements and relations to the underworld. She is not always nurturing, but characterized as destructive and evil at times; the two poles are intertwined.<sup>201</sup> Many symbols of mother goddesses are connected to the function of the ship in this way; the ship is made of wood, which comes from the tree rooted in the earth, and the ship can either return from its voyage on the sea or become lost at sea – either way, the material is always returning to herself.<sup>202</sup>

Due to this polarity of the mother goddess character, she is sometimes given evil elements or witch connotations, and can be either a “good, bad, or terrible mother.”<sup>203</sup> In this case, Hera is very clearly a true mother goddess. She cannot be described as a ‘warm and fuzzy’ mother to her own children, throwing Hephaestus from Olympus and fighting in the Trojan war opposite Ares. In the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Hera mothers the bane of all mortal's existence,

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<sup>199</sup> François de Polignac, “Héra, le navire et la demeure : offrandes, divinité et société en Grèce archaïque,” 4-5; 14.

<sup>200</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 72.

<sup>201</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine*, 13.

<sup>202</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 258.

<sup>203</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 21.

Typhon, and gives him to Python to raise without her. She also raises the Nemean Lion, which Hesiod calls “a woe for human beings.”<sup>204</sup> In Ovid’s *Fasti*, she only creates Mars on her own (granted by Oceanus) to invoke revenge on Zeus, not because she necessarily wants a child.<sup>205</sup>

Hera’s negative attributes are even sometimes inherited by her children: Homer has Zeus tell Ares that he has the *menos* of his mother, which seems to be a liquid they inherit from their mothers.<sup>206</sup> Aeschylus writes that Hera “reared a violent son [Ares] ... whose mind knew no respect for others,” also calling him ruthless and evil.<sup>207</sup> Other creatures that terrify humans and mariners seem to either come from the sea, like Scylla and Charybdis, or are children of marine deities, such as Medusa. Despite this, Zeus teases Hera for treating the Achaeans like they are her own children because she protects them so fiercely in the *Iliad*,<sup>208</sup> and Hektor claims that he wishes lady Hera could be his mother.<sup>209</sup>

### **Death, Oracles, and Ships**

Ships are connected with ideas of death and the underworld; the author of the *Argonautica* is sure to mention all the women crying as the men leave on their journey with Jason as their leader. Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming state that burials in ships trace back to the Bronze Age, because the sea is the ‘mother’ and is bringing her children back into herself.<sup>210</sup> Although there may not be specific evidence of sea burials in Greece, the symbolism of the sea in this case is worth mentioning. Astrid Lindenlauf describes the sea as a territory beyond human reach and with association with the female bosom or lap with a reputation as corrupting or deadly.<sup>211</sup> She goes on to claim that mythical male figures who are suffering choose the sea as

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<sup>204</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 319-33, trans. Glenn W. Most.

<sup>205</sup> Ovid, *Fasti* 5.226-75, trans. James. G. Frazer.

<sup>206</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 5.-892-93; Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 81.

<sup>207</sup> Aeschylus, *Fragment 282*, trans. Lloyd-Jones.

<sup>208</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 18.358-9, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>209</sup> Homer *Iliad* 13.825-7, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>210</sup> Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming, *The Goddess: Myths of the Great Mother*, 23.

<sup>211</sup> Astrid Lindenlauf, “The Sea as a Place of No Return in Ancient Greece,” 421.

the final away-place, making the choice to commit suicide and “unify” themselves with the sea. In addition, Brody recalls that the Egyptian goddess Hathor is accredited with guiding the voyage of funerary boats.<sup>212</sup>

This recalls the long, cross-cultural history of female deities, the sea, and ships, and death. Hera has a long association with being a bringer of death as well as chthonic elements. The sanctuary at Perachora is suggested to have had an oracle, as mentioned in the History of Scholarship chapter, largely due to the large amount of bronze phialai found in situ in the sacred pool,<sup>213</sup> and Strabo calls the Heraion at Perachora an oracle.<sup>214</sup> T. J. Dunbabin notes that phiale could be thrown into the water when setting out on a journey, citing mythical tales where this takes place (for example, Xerxes crossing Hellespont).<sup>215</sup> Dunbabin suggests that the location of Perachora suggests that an offering could be thrown into the sacred pool upon entry into the sanctuary, and depending on if it was “swallowed down and accepted,” Hera could grant a successful sea voyage.<sup>216</sup>

Perachora is not the only location Hera was associated with an oracle: A bronze disk was found at Cumae attesting to an oracle of Hera: “Hera does not permit oracular consultation in the morning.”<sup>217</sup> She was given offerings of amuletic value at numerous sanctuaries, which are often found in graves of women and children.<sup>218</sup> Vases with holes in the bases were found at Tiryns that are described as being used for libation sacrifices of chthonic nature.<sup>219</sup> Hera’s sanctuary at Perachora is also known as the tomb of Medea’s children, connected with a Corinthian festival where 14 children were sent to the temple to stay for one year, reminiscent of

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<sup>212</sup> Aaron J. Brody, “The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers,” 446.

<sup>213</sup> Blanche Menadier, “Cult of Hera Akraia,” 83.

<sup>214</sup> Strabo, *Geography* 8.22, trans. Horace Leonard Jones.

<sup>215</sup> T. J. Dunbabin, “The Oracle of Hera Akraia at Perachora,” 68-9.

<sup>216</sup> Dunbabin, 69.

<sup>217</sup> Blanche Menadier, “Cult of Hera Akraia,” 182.

<sup>218</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 27.

<sup>219</sup> Baumbach, 69.

the rites performed for dead children (discussed further in Chapter 3).<sup>220</sup> At the foot of Mt. Kronos at Olympia there is said to be an oracle of Gaia,<sup>221</sup> which later becomes the altar of Hera.<sup>222</sup> Both mother goddesses and the sea share traits of creation, consultation, and death, encompassing both wonderful and lethal qualities at the same time.

Hera's association with the pomegranate is also strongly related to the underworld. The pomegranate may have been a symbol of both fertility as well as the all-encompassing nature of a mother goddess' power over the surface of the earth, above and below. If they *are* the earth, the underworld is a part of them as well. The dedication of real and representative votive cakes, or *koulouria*, is attested to in multiple Hera sanctuaries, namely Tiryns, Argos, and Perachora. There are clay baking scenes and figurines of females holding cakes or kneading bread.<sup>223</sup> Baumbach suggests it is to do with Hera being a provider of food, and Menadier thought they could be representative of ritual dining.<sup>224</sup> However, it is suggested in the study of archetypes that the dedication of food or images of cooking is in relation to mother goddesses having the ability to transform basic elements; another symbol of fertility and creating the food of the earth.<sup>225</sup>

John Salmon has suggested that cakes or loaves of bread at Perachora could have connections with the underworld and the oracle of Hera, stating Pausanias reports barley cakes were used for oracular purposes – if they sank in a lake near Epidauros it was a favorable response.<sup>226</sup> Since many of these cakes and bread images are found at Perachora, where an oracle

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<sup>220</sup> Blanche Menadier, "Cult of Hera Akraia," 192-5.

<sup>221</sup> Olympia Vikatou, *Olympia: The Archaeological Site and the Museum*, 11.

<sup>222</sup> Catherine Morgan, *Athletics and Oracles*, 42.

<sup>223</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 91; Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 245; Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 69.

<sup>224</sup> Blanche Menadier, "Cult of Hera Akraia," 159.

<sup>225</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 285-6.

<sup>226</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 3:23.8; John Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora, and the Early History of Corinth and Megara," 167.

of Hera may have been, this would also relate to her chthonic mother goddess characteristic. Hera is not the only goddess to receive cake or bread-themed offerings, and there are other reasons for dedication to consider, such as the perceived preference of the deity (bloodless or not) and particular kinds of preparation for festival or everyday use.<sup>227</sup> However, considering votives were often mass-produced and given to multiple deities, it is reasonable to assume that the context and meaning would change from sanctuary to sanctuary. It is also interesting to note that Menodotus wrote that Hera's Samian cult statue was 'fed' sacrificial cake before purification in the sea,<sup>228</sup> so it is likely that bread and cake are of a special and varying cultic significance to Hera at different sanctuaries. At Perachora, it seems to be more chthonic. Whether the cake offerings are related to chthonic elements, the creation of basic elements aspect, or simply the preparation of food for religious festivals, they all fit into the mother goddess realm.

### **Across Time and Space**

Since this evidence relies largely on the idea of religious archetypes, it is useful to include examples from other cultures that reinforce the symbolism between mother goddesses and the sea. Neumann argues that mythical imagery is a spontaneous expression of the unconsciousness that configures the mythologies of all people.<sup>229</sup> Hera seems to be an example of one of these unconscious creations in the Greek world, with similarities elsewhere. In Babylonian mythology, the female goddess Tiamat (salt water) unites with the male goddess Apsu (fresh water), which creates the world. The original creative element of the world is watery, feminine, and ambivalent.<sup>230</sup> Ugarit's (Syrian) religious text lists Asherat of the Sea as the great goddess.<sup>231</sup>

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<sup>227</sup> Emily Kearns, "Ο λιβανωτὸς εὐσεβῆς καὶ τὸ πόπανον: the rationale of cakes and bloodless offerings in Greek sacrifice," 94; 101.

<sup>228</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 172.

<sup>229</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 16.

<sup>230</sup> Neumann and Manheim, 16.

<sup>231</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 208.

Phoenician goddess Tanit was associated with maritime religion, particularly with imagery of dolphins (which Mark Christian notes were good omens for sailors), as well as caves.<sup>232</sup> This is an interesting similarity she shares with Hera. A 6<sup>th</sup>-century bronze figurine of a dolphin was recovered in the Samian Heraion, which is fitting for the known naval power of Samos and an offering to their patron deity (Fig 9.). Caves were mentioned earlier as associated with nymph worship, and Christian adds evidence for Tanit worship in caves (particularly the Grotto Es Cuyam) by sailors who very likely left behind offerings in exchange for safe passage and protection for themselves and families left on shore. He notes that caves thus far, at least in the context of Tanit and maritime religion, have been understudied.<sup>233</sup> There is certainly the potential for more to be discovered, and if there are further similarities between Hera and female goddesses associated with water and caves, especially in the form of offerings, it would be of great value to this study.



Figure 11. Bronze dolphin from the Samian Heraion.  
(Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy,  
Samos, Greece).

Fee and Leeming include two other mother goddesses linked with the sea: Ardivi Sura Anahita, “powerful, pure, wetness” goddess in Persia, who happens to be linked with the Roman Juno and the Slavic water goddess Mati Syra Zemlya, “moist mother earth.” They state Anahita is

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<sup>232</sup> Mark A. Christian, “Phoenician Maritime Religion: Sailors, Goddess Worship, and the Grotta Regina,” 193-4.

<sup>233</sup> Mark A. Christian, “Phoenician Maritime Religion,” 195.

the source of life-giving water; by extension, she is the source of all life; and Nammu, named in a cuneiform tablet. She is a Sumerian mother goddess whose symbol means the sea, who gave birth to heaven and earth.<sup>234</sup>

## Conclusion

The information provided in this chapter is not meant to provide conclusive evidence that Hera descended from Minoan or Mycenaean origins, but rather provide suggestive details that mother goddesses worshipped over the course of thousands of years seem to share similar realms, traits, and conceptualizations that also appear to be related to Hera. This can be seen in sanctuary offerings, art, and myth, such as the examples provided here of trees, animals, fruit, flowers, cakes, and vessels. The long importance of the sea in the Mediterranean world is undoubtedly connected with the long importance and worship of the female figure, namely the mother goddess who encompasses the living and the dead, creation, and destruction. Natural elements have long been associated with deities; water and the sea are populated by mostly female goddesses such as nymphs and sirens. Mother goddesses share traits with the sea and water itself – they both inspire wonder, are essential, ambivalent, the origin of living beings, and dangerous. The sea is an extension of the mother goddess' body, or, the mother goddess can be anthropomorphic with symbolic power over the sea, just as mother goddesses are the earth themselves but are also visualized as a woman. They are one and the same. Both ships and the sea are archetypal images of the mother's containment of her children, and the symbols of mother goddesses such as ships found in Hera sanctuaries further justify that she has a secure place within the realm of the sea.

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<sup>234</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 46; 68.

## **CHAPTER 2: HERA AND THE WATERY ELEMENTS**

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses Hera's affiliation with water and the elements. The previous chapter conveyed Hera's symbolic connection with the sea and the all-encompassing nature of ancient mother goddesses. Now we will turn to more tangible evidence of her veneration as a goddess of the sea, such as the location of her sanctuaries and their proximity to water. It will be argued that Hera's realm as a sea goddess is not just the sea itself, but also nature, navigation, weather, and the elements. Her veneration is more than just to do with the sea, but water itself, and this manifests itself in how ancient poets describe her power over the elements, and her relationships with other water deities. It can also be seen in the evidence for the importance of water in cultic practice concerning Hera, and in votive offerings that seem to request the assistance of a deity who is in control of water, weather, and the sea.

### **The Realm of the Sea**

Larson argues that the category of nature deities is a "modern construct; all Greek gods were connected in one way or another with natural phenomena, so in some sense, were all nature deities."<sup>235</sup> This is likely a reflection of the intimate connection between the Greeks and their environment. It does not fade in Roman times either; for example, Mars is much more of an agricultural deity than his Greek equivalent Ares, the god of war. The realm of water required a multifaceted deity to oversee it; Mark A. Christian's study on ritual evidence onboard ancient sea vessels reveals that ceremonies could be detailed and extensive, including rituals to land gods for departure and landing, and seeking approval to enter harbours from local patron deities.<sup>236</sup> He names Tanit as the Phoenician goddess seafarers would look to, calling her characteristics

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<sup>235</sup> Jennifer Larson, "A Land Full of Gods," 56.

<sup>236</sup> Mark A. Christian, "Phoenician Maritime Religion," 198.

‘fluid’ and associates her with Astarte in Carthage, both considered mother goddesses and associated with vegetation.<sup>237</sup>

Hera has been identified with both Tanit and Astarte, and her Roman equivalent Juno was the patron deity of Carthage, providing suggestive evidence for cross-cultural communication. This also may help to explain the perpetual question of why Hera receives votive dedications of figurines depicting goddesses that do not look like her, or do not seem to relate to her worship. For example, at Poseidonia, the excavators noticed that the female figurines left at the altar of Hera looked like Astarte and not Hera because they are depicted nude. The same was noted in some cases at Perachora.<sup>238</sup> At Samos, hundreds of figurines seem to depict near-eastern and Egyptian goddesses.<sup>239</sup> Indications of her affiliation with these other goddesses’ realms (such as water) were likely always there in her sanctuaries, but seemingly overshadowed by the more apparent objects that represented marriage and femininity.

## **The Sea and Colonization**

The flexible worship of the sea deity also extended to the establishment of Greek colonies, which was done largely via sea travel. Many of the Greek colonies in the Mediterranean with a Hera cult share similarities in their votive offerings and locations, some of which are clearly sea-related. Demetriou hypothesizes that the Hera cult in Gravisca had a Samian connection.<sup>240</sup> Irad Malkin underlines the importance of religion in the foundation of colonies; the connection

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<sup>237</sup> Christian, 192-8.

<sup>238</sup> See Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 17 and 121, for Astarte figurines at Perachora and Poseidonia; See Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming, *The Goddess: Myths of the Great Mother*, 83, for details on Juno modelled from Astarte in the Roman Republic; See Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora Vol 2*, for the Egyptian/Phoenician objects section.

<sup>239</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 155. Baumbach lists a bronze relief of 3 naked women with hands on their breasts, located on bronze horse trappings, that seem to come from North Syria in the 9<sup>th</sup> century; Scott Noegel, “Greek Religion and The Ancient Near East,” 30. Noegel suggests Hera has a Mesopotamian look at Samos similar to Gula (a Babylonian goddess of healing).

<sup>240</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 86.

between ‘mother’ and ‘parent’ city likely would have been through the establishment of sanctuaries, altars, calendars, and “the transfer of sacred fire.”<sup>241</sup>

Brown and Smith cite Aphrodite as a marine deity with a connection to colonization: “her cultic role as a provider of following winds, calm seas, fresh water, desired objects, and fertility; and her perceived protection of sailors all show that she was poised to play a key role in the development and practice of Greek maritime, emporium and colonial religion.”<sup>242</sup> Although they do connect Hera with colonization and civic religion, they do not attribute her with the same maritime influence. Demetriou reinforces Aphrodite’s influence over the sea in three ways: in a passage by Plutarch (*Greek Questions* 54) in which a Samian boat owner is given advice by her; that she was worshipped under the epithet *Limenia*; and a stone anchor dedicated to her in Aegina.<sup>243</sup> What is not noted is those similarities with Hera; they are both given the epithet *Limenia*, and Hera is also given votive anchors (namely in the sanctuary in Kroton), as well as a multitude of boat votives already discussed, in addition to the two (or more) real boat dedications in Samos (see Appendix I). It is reasonable to assume that a patron deity such as Hera with an extensive range of divine ability would become associated with all of the spheres of influence that require cooperation in order for successful colonization: sea-faring, marriage, guest-friendship, and fertility.

### **The Location of Sanctuaries of Hera**

As mentioned previously, the realm of the sea deity is complex. Demetriou discusses coastal sanctuaries as multifunctional places rather than a space for specialized deities.<sup>244</sup>

Thomas F. Tartaron describes the “coastscape” as a place of connectivity between “coast and

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<sup>241</sup> Irad Malkin, “Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece,” 122-9.

<sup>242</sup> Amelia R. Brown and Rebecca Smith, “Guardian Goddess of the Surf-Beaten Shore,” 21.

<sup>243</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 95.

<sup>244</sup> Demetriou, 90.

hinterland,” which gives both communities a distinct identity, even if the same deity is worshipped.<sup>245</sup>

Appendix I provides a snapshot of the location of sanctuaries dedicated to Hera near the sea. It is not a comprehensive list of all sanctuaries as there may be others unpublished, yet to be discovered, or obscure. It lists the ones that were found over the course of this research and pertain to it. Even with the possibility of the list being incomplete, it is clear that Hera was venerated with proximity to the sea in many locations; too many with maritime-related finds to be solely a coincidence. At times where a sanctuary of Hera is not close to the sea, it usually still has a form of natural running water nearby. The sanctuaries listed in the following section require further elaboration and will be discussed the most in the remainder of this thesis.

There is a significance in recognizing the conscious decision of a community to worship a particular deity in a particular place. Malkin, discussing the colonial context, states that people made the decisions on where to worship a particular deity based on “self-made criteria.”<sup>246</sup> This is in opposition to Nilsson, who suggests that certain areas are religious on their own and are universally recognized as such. Larson mentions the “pre-existent holiness of a place” as well.<sup>247</sup> Whichever the case, many coastal and water-friendly places either started out affiliated with Hera or became that way. Hera was chosen to be venerated next to or in relation to the sea or water, as opposed to other deities that might seem to the modern reader as more appropriate. The following sections do not provide a full overview of each site but rather highlight the location and relationship to water sources nearby.

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<sup>245</sup> Thomas F. Tartaron, “Defining Maritime Small Worlds of The Aegean Bronze Age,” 87.

<sup>246</sup> Irad Malkin, “Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece,” 185-6.

<sup>247</sup> Jennifer Larson “A Land Full of Gods,” 57.

## Samos

Pedley states that until the late 7<sup>th</sup> century, the approach to the Samian sanctuary would have been via the sea.<sup>248</sup> Later, there still would have been an entrance there and by the processional way into the main town. In antiquity, the sanctuary and vicinity would have been a bay with marshy sections close to the river,<sup>249</sup> but in the present day it is dry and grassy.<sup>250</sup> The river Imbrasos, which played an important role in the foundation myths of Samos and the religious festivals, also ran nearby the sanctuary, and likely formed the south and west borders.<sup>251</sup> The south temenos contained a large water basin as of the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC, likely used for purifications upon entry to the sanctuary.<sup>252</sup> Man-made wells are dotted along the path from the sea to the sanctuary, constructed in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC, and most finds that were recovered from them date from that time to the early 6<sup>th</sup> century BC. At least 22 of the 40 miniature wooden boats were discovered in these wells, as well as animal bones, cooking spits, potsherds, and other debris from the sanctuary.<sup>253</sup>

Kyrieleis characterizes Samos as a marine trading center based on the study of the votives found in the sanctuary,<sup>254</sup> which is also reinforced by the massive amounts of foreign votives and goods found in the sanctuary, on inventory lists, and the words of ancient historians who speak of the wonder of Samos and the temple to Hera.<sup>255</sup> It is also pertinent to note the real ship dedications in Samos dated from the 7-5<sup>th</sup> century (mentioned above). Shipley notes two stone

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<sup>248</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 154.

<sup>249</sup> Vladimir Milošević, *Samos I*, 1.

<sup>250</sup> Niki Evripidou et. al., “Holocene paleogeographical reconstruction and relative sea-level changes in the southeastern part of the island of Samos (Greece),” 456-7. The area is subsiding, there has been sea level rise attested to by their most recent research and underwater archaeology. The authors note that the area would always have been close to the coast, bordered by the river, and it is not likely that the shape of the coast has changed much since antiquity.

<sup>251</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 150.

<sup>252</sup> Baumbach, 150.

<sup>253</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion At Samos,” 107-8.

<sup>254</sup> Kyrieleis, 102.

<sup>255</sup> For example, Herodotus, *Histories* 3.60, trans. Robin Waterfield.

foundations, which would have held ships at least 30m long, in the south temenos of the sanctuary.<sup>256</sup> Baumbach also notes multiple inscriptions regarding ship captures and dedications from inside the temple (see Appendix I and fig.12).

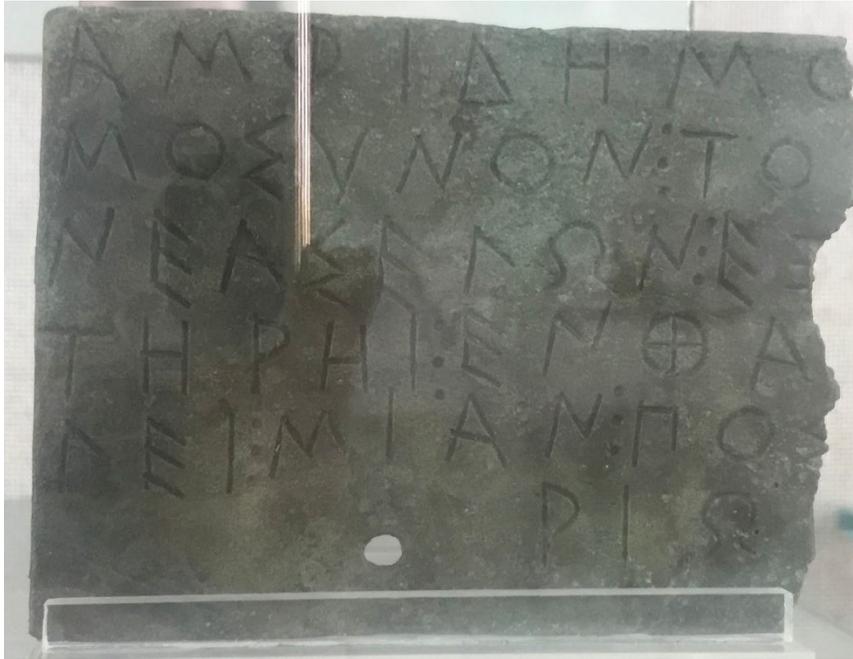


Figure 12. Double-sided dedicatory inscription by Amphidemos. Mentions ships taken as prizes dedicated to Hera and Poseidon. 6th Century BC. (Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece)



Figure 13. 20m south of the Samian Altar, the area where a ship dedication was set up. Backfilled. (Personal Photo: 2019)

<sup>256</sup> Graham Shipley, *A History of Samos 800-188 BC*, 85.

## Tiryns

Tiryns was arguably one of the most important and extravagant Bronze Age sites, complete with cyclopean walls that inspired legends about how they were built. Schliemann examined the site first along with Mycenae, and the German Archaeological School has continued since then. Tiryns reached its height in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at which point it was a Mycenaean palace rather than a sanctuary for all in the community to share. ‘Building T’ or the megaron is the site where evidence for specific Hera worship comes from circa 900 BC in the post-palatial era. Joseph Maran determined Building T was a direct ancestor of the Mycenaean megaron, built into the ruins.<sup>257</sup> August Frickenhaus studied the votives from the bothros (within the megaron) and determined that Hera was worshipped there, presumably at a later date than the construction of the second phase of the building itself.<sup>258</sup>

Although Tiryns was not located on the sea, it had a long relationship with both Mycenae and Argos, sharing religious responsibilities, votive production, and battling over control. Alkestis Papademetriou notes that Tiryns had an “obvious” long history with the sea and uses the example of the painted floor of the Tiryns megaron from the 13<sup>th</sup> century, which is a representation of dolphins.<sup>259</sup>

## Perachora

The sanctuary of Hera at Perachora is located on a beach, a stone’s throw away from the water (Fig. 14). Payne noted that it is “bounded on three sides by the Corinthian gulf, Halkyonic gulf, and the bay of Corinth,”<sup>260</sup> and that approaching the site, there seems to be the remains of a fishing village.<sup>261</sup> Hera was worshipped at Perachora with three different epithets: *Akraia*,

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<sup>257</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 57.

<sup>258</sup> Later publications on Tiryns such as Baumbach and Brüggemann cite Frickenhaus for analyses of the votives. They utilise *Die Hera Von Tiryns*, from the Tiryns series of the German Archaeological Institute. This publication was unavailable to me at the time of this research.

<sup>259</sup> Alkestis Papademetriou, *Tiryns: A Guide to Its History and Archaeology*, 43.

<sup>260</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 1.

<sup>261</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 22.

*Limenia*, and *Leukolenos*. Menadier notes that *Akraia* and *Leukolenos* are attested to in literature,<sup>262</sup> but *Limenia* does not appear to be referenced outside of this sanctuary, aside from an inscription to Hera *Limenia* found in Thasos.<sup>263</sup> While *Akraia* relates to promontory or height, *Limenia* relates more to the harbour. Scholars have puzzled over the different epithets here, which the next section on Paestum may help to explain. The finds from Perachora have been published in two volumes by Humfry Payne with additions and edits completed by T. J. Dunbabin, and more recently re-examined by Blanche Menadier.

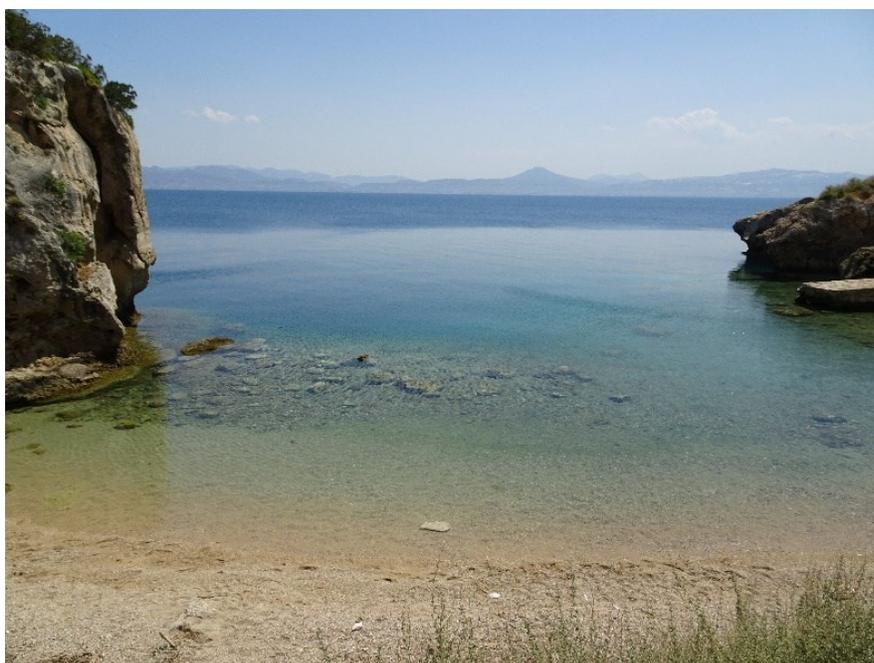


Figure 14. View from the Temple to Hera *Akraia* at Perachora.  
(Personal Photo: 2019)

## Paestum

Baumbach notes that the temples of Poseidonia have received interest since the 1500s as they remained visible, but systematic excavations were not recorded or published until approximately 1958; most votive offerings remain unpublished and require further analysis.<sup>264</sup>

<sup>262</sup> Blanche Menadier, “Cult of Hera Akraia,” 150.

<sup>263</sup> Deborah Boedeker, “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” 201.

<sup>264</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 105-7. Baumbach summarizes the history of archaeological research: The Heraion was examined by Sestieri Bertarelli in depth, mostly studying the terracottas found in the votive dump north of the temple of Neptune; Greco

The Heraion at Paestum is close to the Silaros river, however, there could be two or three more temples to her in the city. Kerenyi questions if this is because there was more than one aspect to the goddess that needed to be worshipped locally; one requiring proximity to the river and one needed above sea level.<sup>265</sup> He mentions the multitude of votive offerings to Hera in this location and their implied characterizations of the goddess: figurines of women holding babies, “the mother”; sphinxes, “the underworld goddess”; doves, “the realm of Aphrodite.” He then states that “this position adopted here by Hera [is] the universal woman goddess.”<sup>266</sup> This highlights the complexity of Hera’s conceptualization, and again, the need for a deity primarily next to the water that can also move between realms.

## Lesbos

Although the altar described in Alcaeus (fragment 129) has not been found, Louis Robert studied inscriptions on Lesbos at the edge of a bay in Kalloni. They are dated to the Archaic period, and “there are vestiges of a monumental temple from the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC ... associated with the cult of Lesbians from the first half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century BC.”<sup>267</sup> Hera seems to belong to a triad in Lesbos made up of herself, Zeus, and Dionysus. Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti argue that the presence of Hera is decisive in both Alcaeus and Sappho, and it is likely she had regional sovereignty with her husband Zeus, as he is referred to as “husband of Hera – Zeus *Heraios*.”<sup>268</sup> Sappho fragment 17 seems to refer to a story in the *Odyssey* (3.15) where Menelaos and his group stop at Lesbos and the women put on a celebration for the heroes. Diane Rayor asserts that the chorus seems to privilege the female deity, Hera, over the other two at the shrine where it was presumably performed.<sup>269</sup> The first few lines of fragment 17 read: “near ... /

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looked at the Archaic pottery; additional study by Trendall; outline of cults in the area studied by Cipriani and Ardovino.

<sup>265</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 167-8.

<sup>266</sup> Kerenyi and Holme, 172-4.

<sup>267</sup> Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti, “Héra Et Zeus à Lesbos: entre poésie lyrique et décret civique,” 27.

<sup>268</sup> Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti, 27-31.

<sup>269</sup> Diane Rayor, *Sappho: A New Translation of the Complete Works*, 104.

your ... festival, Lady Hera,/ which the kings had performed ...”<sup>270</sup> Although the altar, shrine, or temple to Hera has yet to be located archaeologically, there is certainly a literary affiliation between Hera, arriving from the sea, and Lesbos; in Sappho and Alcaeus it is a religious connection. In the Brothers Poem, Sappho pleads: “send me, yes command me / to keep praying to Queen Hera / that Charaxos return here / guiding his ship safe / and find us secure.”<sup>271</sup> Boedeker aptly argues that Hera does not only have a role in guiding Charaxos’ ship, but also to keep the people waiting for him at home safe. She maintains that Hera is an important local goddess for Lesbos and people both leaving and arriving via the sea.<sup>272</sup>

### **A Note on Argos and Olympia**

For the following two sections on Argos and Olympia, it is important to mention that while neither of them is located on the coast or within the immediate vicinity of the seaside, they were connected to communities who were. They are both important for studying the complexity of Hera, and maritime-themed offerings were recovered at both (see Appendices I and II for further details).

Argos and Olympia were used by a wide variety of people; Olympia became the most famous panhellenic sanctuary, and the Argive Heraion was used by multiple groups who resided in the Argive Plain.<sup>273</sup> Many scholars have demonstrated that the Argive Heraion with its secluded location, not located within any one city, was used as a social arena for competing elites.<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>270</sup> Sappho, fragment 17.1-3, trans. Diane Rayor.

<sup>271</sup> Sappho, Brothers Poem, lines 1-8, trans. Diane Rayor. See Brett Nongbri, "Variant Readings: The Retraction Of Dirk Obbink's Sappho Chapter And The Question Of Authenticity,"; Brill's retraction notice of Dirk Obbink, "Ten Poems of Sappho: Provenance, Authenticity, and Text of the New Sappho Papyri."

<sup>272</sup> Deborah Boedeker, "Hera and the Return of Charaxos," 207.

<sup>273</sup> For a reconsideration on the Argive Plain and communities who used it, see: Jonathan Hall, "How Argive was the Argive Heraion? The political and cultic geography of the Argive plain."

<sup>274</sup> See François de Polignac, "Argos entre centre et périphérie: L'espace culturel de la cité grecque,"; "Mediation, competition, and sovereignty: the evolution of rural sanctuaries in Geometric Greece."

## Argos

The Argive Heraion has been extensively excavated since the mid-1800s, with the first comprehensive study done under Waldstein in 1895 which is where a large amount of the votive information in this research comes from, followed by Blegen who discovered inscriptions to Hera on a small shrine.<sup>275</sup> Papademetriou states that the Argolid had been continuously inhabited since the Neolithic Age: “its proximity to the sea was ideal.”<sup>276</sup> She also states that around the Archaic period, Argos would have been only 1km from the sea.<sup>277</sup>

The Heraion itself is located approximately 8 km from the city of Argos,<sup>278</sup> and although today the Heraion requires a slight climb to get there with no water in sight, the sanctuary was originally built on “smooth level clearings, flanked on left and right by waterfalls and rivers.”<sup>279</sup> O’Brien describes the whole area of the Heraion as fertilized by three rivers and numerous springs.<sup>280</sup> Pausanias mentions that Hera was nursed by the three daughters of the river Asterion, which ran in the vicinity of the sanctuary.<sup>281</sup> The three daughters’ names are of the hills above the sanctuary. Baumbach suggests “maybe the whole sanctuary is related to the importance of [the daughters] and how they nursed her.”<sup>282</sup> The local myth of Hera and the rivers is of vital importance: she is nursed by water deities, therefore one could argue she was given some of their qualities.

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<sup>275</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 74. Baumbach gives a summary of the excavations since Blegen: Caskey, Amandry, Kalpaxis, Strom, Billot, Pfaff.

<sup>276</sup> Alkestis Papademetriou, *Tiryas: A guide to its history and archaeology*, 7.

<sup>277</sup> Papademetriou, 7.

<sup>278</sup> François de Polignac, “Argos entre centre et périphérie,” 56.

<sup>279</sup> S.E. Iakovidis, *Mycenae-Epidaurus. Argos-Tiryas-Nauplion: A complete guide to the museums and archaeological sites of the Argolid*, 75.

<sup>280</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 120.

<sup>281</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.17, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>282</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 82.

Another clear association of Argive Hera and her power over water comes from Pausanias. He describes a sanctuary of Hera *Hypercheiria* (she whose hand is above) on the same hill as the Argive temple and near a hero shrine. He claims that it was built due to an oracular utterance at a time when flooding was an issue in the area.<sup>283</sup> Perhaps the importance of Hera's relationship with the sea, rivers, and water is embedded within her conceptualization and surfaces in local myths such as the ones mentioned above. She is credited with having power over bringing essential water to the crops, but also prayed to to help put a stop to excessive flooding.



Figure 15. The Argive Heraion site in 2019. Where the second temple would have stood.  
(Personal Photo)

## Olympia

The oldest worship in Olympia is usually attributed to Zeus, although the bulk of the oldest finds were located at the corner of the Heraion and near the altar of Hera (the

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<sup>283</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.3.13, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod.

characterization of those finds will be discussed further in Chapter 4). The main volume of publications on excavations at Olympia comes from the German Institute of Archaeology. W. Dörpfeld and Helmut Kyrieleis were mainly utilized for this research; Kyrieleis provided follow up and re-examined the earlier trenches used by Dörpfeld near the Pelopion, which is the area where the Heraion is located.<sup>284</sup> Dörpfeld defended a much earlier date of use of the sanctuary (circa 2000 BC) that has been disputed since then, but his research and publications are continually cited and used for reference. He also wrote that Kronos and Rhea were worshipped in the oldest version of the sanctuary, at the site of the later Hera temple, which is next to the remains of a natural spring.<sup>285</sup>



Figure 16. The Temple of Hera at Olympia in 2019. (Personal Photo)

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<sup>284</sup> Wilhelm Dörpfeld, *Alt-Olympia: untersuchungen und ausgrabungen zur geschichte des ältesten heiligtums von olympia und der älteren griechischen kunst* Vol 2. Dörpfeld mentions that holes were dug inside the Heraion in 1880, the finds of which were published in the museum of Olympia, but he does not mention precisely what the finds were. They were subsequently published by Adolf Furtwängler in *Olympia* Vol 4 by the German Archaeological Institute (pages 4 and 28). This volume was not available to me at the time of this research.

<sup>285</sup> Wilhelm Dörpfeld, *Alt-Olympia: Untersuchungen Und Ausgrabungen Zur Geschichte Des ältesten Heiligtums Von Olympia Und Der älteren Griechischen Kunst* Vol 1, 51-52.

The Olympian sanctuary is 15km from the mouth of the river Alpheus, the largest river in the peninsula; Drees refers to it as a ‘sacred’ river that leads to the Ionian Sea.<sup>286</sup> The two communities that vied for control over the Olympian sanctuary were the Eleans and Pisatans. Both community boundaries were defined by rivers; the Pisatans near the river Alpheus, and the Eleans near the river Peneus.<sup>287</sup> The river Kladeos would have been known to frequent visitors to the sanctuary; the location threatened to flood Olympia, and there is evidence of a floodwall built to divert the river from flowing into the sanctuary.<sup>288</sup> Pausanias mentions that the river Alpheus was honored most by the Eleans, followed by the river Kladeos, who he describes as pictured on the edge of the frieze of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia.<sup>289</sup>

### **Water and Religion**

Alan Peatfield highlights the long cultic importance of water in Greek religion. He focuses largely on Minoan religion, in which ritual activity is associated with water sources: spring sanctuaries, libation vessels, installations of wells, and offering tables next to water.<sup>290</sup> He also suggests a potential female deity: “the guardian of water supply,” which appears in figurine vessels that involve the act of pouring.<sup>291</sup> It is apparent that a female goddess is in constant religious communication with the water early on in Greece, and this is a custom that is either passed on to or recognized in Hera.

### **Customs Involving Water**

At both Argos and Samos, the main festival involved a procession to the water, where the cult statue was bathed, “purified,” and re-dressed in a new peplos and jewelry. For the Argives,

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<sup>286</sup> Ludwig Drees, *Olympia: Gods, Artists, and Athletes*, 11.

<sup>287</sup> Drees, 11.

<sup>288</sup> Kenneth R. Wright, “Ancient Olympia Floods and Sedimentation,” 17. Wright estimates the date of the floodwall is 500 BC, but it could have been built anytime between 1200 to 323 BC. He states more evidence is needed, but there were 5-8 metres of sediment in Olympia already by the mid 1800s, due to water deposited by floods.

<sup>289</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.5.10, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H.A. Ormerod.

<sup>290</sup> Alan Peatfield, “Water, Fertility, and Purification in Minoan Religion,” 217-223.

<sup>291</sup> Peatfield, 222.

this was done at a natural spring in Nauplion, and in Samos, there seems to be a variation between whether the cult statue was brought to the sea or the river for purification. Baumbach refers to the Samian version where the statue is brought to the sea, and questions the reasoning behind it, stating it is the one part of the myth that is missing.<sup>292</sup> He refers to the story told by Athenaeus (referring to Menodotus and Nicaenetus)<sup>293</sup>, a local Samian myth, where pirates attempted to steal the cult statue of Hera, but once they got it on board, the ship would not move. This is a myth that gives a reason for the *Tonaia* festival where the cult statue is bound to a tree in later times. Baumbach reasons that it is related to the wedding of Zeus and Hera, in which they are “bound” together, and the sea-bath becomes representative of a pre-marital purification ceremony.<sup>294</sup> In different analyses of the *Tonaia* origins and festival, the focus seems to be on why the statue was bound to a tree, who tried to steal it, and what it represents, though one might argue the most important takeaway is the ship’s *inability* to move while the statue was onboard. Not only does Hera have the power to assist in safe sea-travel, she also can hinder it.

## Marriage

The yearly celebratory pre-nuptial bath for Hera’s cult statue is demonstrative of a real practice that ancient Greek brides acted out prior to their weddings for purification and fertility. The water came from a special source or vessel,<sup>295</sup> and it seems to be a local custom whether the bride bathed in a river, spring, or at her home.<sup>296</sup> John Oakley and Rebecca Sinos cite the earliest depiction of a wedding on a *loutrophoros* which shows a procession of women bringing bath water to the bride.<sup>297</sup> They also look to scholia on Euripides’ *Phoenician Women* who remark on

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<sup>292</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 170.

<sup>293</sup> Athenaeus XV 672 a – e (Menodotus); 673 b – c (Nicaenetus) qtd. in Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 170-1: “Tyrrhenian pirates attempted to carry off the cult image of Hera in their ship; but the goddess intervened, the ship remained motionless as if nailed to the water, whereupon the pirates returned the cult image to its place with all speed.”

<sup>294</sup> Baumbach, 170-1.

<sup>295</sup> Isabelle Clark, “The Gamos of Hera – Myth and Ritual,” 15.

<sup>296</sup> John Oakley and Rebecca Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, 14.

<sup>297</sup> Oakley and Sinos, 5. Many of these have been found in Athens since then.

a cursed marriage: “The Ismenus River made this alliance / without the luxurious bath.”<sup>298</sup> They remark that a bath in a local river or spring was part of fertility custom, because water is both life-giving and productive.<sup>299</sup> In a Euripides fragment of *Danae*, he also writes, “the earth flowering in spring, and water rich with fertility; and I can speak the praise of many beautiful things.”<sup>300</sup>

It is well known that Hera and Artemis are the main goddesses who receive dedications by brides to be, who give their toys, locks of hair, and childhood possessions.<sup>301</sup> As the goddess of marriage, Hera received other marital-themed dedications such as veils. One epigram reads: “Alkibia dedicated the sacred veil for her hair to Hera / When she reached the time of her lawful wedding.”<sup>302</sup> Conceivably, there is another connection between Hera and water in this way. Her affiliation with water and the sea need not be separated from marriage. The most important time of a woman’s life in ancient Greece was her marriage which was when the main rites were performed, namely the prenuptial bath in sacred water, which ensured her purification and fertility. Hera is present in all these realms: marriage, the sacredness of water, the sea, and fertility, thus fulfilling her cyclical and persistent role in a woman’s life.

### **Marriage and the Sea**

Hera *Teleia* is one of her many epithets. The meaning can be described as ‘complete’ or ‘fulfilled.’ This has been explained mostly in terms of her marriage, as she experienced the stages of maidenhood, marriage, and motherhood, therefore completing a complete journey of womanhood. O’Brien states that since both Hera and the circular river Okeanos are *Teleia* and *Teleeis*, telos signifies a goal that completes a natural cycle by returning to its place of origin.<sup>303</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Euripides, *Phoenician Women* line 347-8, trans. David Kovacs.

<sup>299</sup> John Oakley and Rebecca Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, 15.

<sup>300</sup> Euripides, *Dramatic Fragments: Danae* 2-3, trans Christopher Collard and Martin Cropp.

<sup>301</sup> Aphrodite Avagianou, *Sacred Marriage in the Rituals of Greek Religion*, 3-6.

<sup>302</sup> Greek anthology, 326 West = Anth (Greek anthology) Pal. 6.133, qtd. In John Oakley and Rebecca Sinos, *The Wedding in Ancient Athens*, 14.

<sup>303</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 197-8.

The water of a river and the sea is endless, constantly flowing, all-encompassing, and always returning, and it is telling that Hera shares this epithet with the river.

In addition to the symbolic similarities between the river and Hera, Giulia Re argues that the maritime power of [Hera] produces another kind of telos: “the favorable conclusion of a sea voyage.”<sup>304</sup> Giulia refers to Aeschylus’ *Suppliant Women*, which is set in Argos, and the use of landscapes in Attic drama to convey shared notions, where the connection between marriage and seafaring is not expressed clearly in the play but alluded to.<sup>305</sup> This is another way in which Hera’s connection with the sea was presumably well-known in different traditions and locations, like the audience of *Suppliant Women*, but did not need to be explicitly stated.

### **Cups, Libations, and The Sea**

In his article about conical cups, Malcolm Wiener states that they first appear in the Early Minoan II period in Crete and later become widespread and adopted by the Mycenaeans throughout the Aegean. He states that their function has always been somewhat of a mystery, particularly because there are so many of them, but that there is evidence for their usage in funerary practice (they are found in early tholos tombs), hospitality gifts, feasting, and cultic ceremony.<sup>306</sup> A ceremony he does not mention is one proposed by G. Kapitän, which is one performed prior to departing on a sea voyage. Kapitän suggests that cups were thrown into the water as offerings when setting out to sea, as well as used on land to pour libations.<sup>307</sup> He mentions a passage by Athenaeus (11.462b-c):

So too Polemon in his *On Morychus* (fr. 75 Preller) says that there is a hearth in the temple of Olympian Earth located outside the city walls in Syracuse, at the very tip of the island, and that when they put out to sea, they take a kulix from there and keep it with them until the shield on the temple of Athena is no longer visible. At that point, they drop the cup

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<sup>304</sup> Giulia Re, “When Virgins travel by sea: marriage and landscapes in Aeschylus’ *Suppliant Women*,” Abstract.

<sup>305</sup> Re, Abstract.

<sup>306</sup> Malcolm H. Wiener, “Conical Cups: From Mystery to History,” 355-64.

<sup>307</sup> G. Kapitän, “Archaeological Evidence for Rituals and Customs on Ancient Ships,” 147.

(which is made of terracotta) into the sea, after putting flowers, honeycomb, solid chunks of frankincense, and various other spices as well, into it.<sup>308</sup>

Cups have been found in the sea near Syracuse, along with anchor stocks and figures of deities and dolphins, among other finds.<sup>309</sup> At the Heraion of Samos, cups were a popular find from the Minoan times; conical cups dated to 1700 BC were found in situ in the area of the altar.<sup>310</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier also noted sacrificial cups that were found sunk in wells leading to the sea, dating to approximately 630 BC.<sup>311</sup> Inscribed dedications to Hera were found on cups at the Heraion in Gravisca as well, and one cup found at Perachora depicts the bows of two ships surrounded by dolphins.<sup>312</sup> While there is already ample evidence to describe ancient Samos as a naval power, it can be argued that the sea was important in their religious realm, and seafarers would have had to pay their respect to the patron and maritime deity of Samos, possibly at times in the form of cups and libations from said cups, reinforcing Kapitän's notion of the usage.

A chthonic element could also be at play in Samos if the cups were used in an oracular context, the same way Dunbabin described objects could be used in the sacred pool at Perachora. It is a persuasive argument that the cups could have had this additional use, since the wells the cups were sunk in were located on the pathways leading to the sea, where the departure would occur. A sailor could drop the cup in a well and determine if the voyage would be a success, depending on if it sunk or not.

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<sup>308</sup> Athenaeus, *The Learned Banqueters* 5.11.462b-c, trans. S. Douglas Olson; Kapitän, 147.

<sup>309</sup> Kapitän, 153.

<sup>310</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos* 21,1, 27-34.

<sup>311</sup> Walter, Clemente, and Niemeier, 27-34.

<sup>312</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 339, #3658.

## **Hera and The Elements**

O'Brien, referring to Hera's power as an earth deity, suggests that Hera tames elemental waters through her power over elemental fires.<sup>313</sup> This comes from the *Iliad* during Achilles' battle with the river in Book 21. Hera requests the help of Hephaestus: "make a great flame slash out, and I will go in rows of violent storm from the soul to sea, / blown by the west wind and the clearing south wind."<sup>314</sup> The river does not request that Hephaestus put out the fire, but Hera, who then commands her son to stop. A similar episode occurs in the *Argonautica*, where Hera asks Hephaestus to blast fire until the Argonauts are past their enemy. She commands Aiolos, lord of the winds, to stop the motion of air so the breeze does not ruffle the heroes until they get to Alkinoos.<sup>315</sup> She may not be the one controlling the elements in these two examples; however, she is the one pulling the strings and seems to be in command of those who do involve themselves directly.

In the *Orphic Hymn to Hera*, she is referred to as "Provider of soul-nourishing breezes fit for mortals."<sup>316</sup> From the time of the *Argonautica* to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, to the *Orphic Hymns*, Hera is ascribed with power over the elements, not just the sea and water, but the properties that arise from their shared atmosphere; therefore it can be argued that she was a goddess of the weather and the seasons as well. Hera's relationship with the *horai* was mentioned previously, and O'Brien postulates that "maybe [she] was the embodiment of the spring."<sup>317</sup> The *Hekatombaia* at Argos contained rituals to end one year and open another, which involves the change of seasons. In the *Iliad*, more than once Hera creates and spreads mist, once around her horses and once to protect the Greeks as they made their way through the city.<sup>318</sup>

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<sup>313</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, "Homer's Savage Hera," 114.

<sup>314</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 21.331-41, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>315</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.753-770, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>316</sup> *Orphic Hymn to Hera* line 3, trans. Selina Stewart.

<sup>317</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 137.

<sup>318</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 3.210-14; 5.775-7, trans. Anthony Verity.

In the *Argonautica*, Hera protects the Argonauts from the Kolchians by holding them back “with lightning, bright and terrible.”<sup>319</sup> Apollodorus cites Hera’s help as the reason the Argonauts passed through a section of the sea with mist and rocks blocking their way, although other variations cite Thetis or Athena.<sup>320</sup> Brody claims that in the realm of the sea there are two kinds of important deities, ones that control the winds and the storms, and ones that aid in safety and success of navigation. He names the Phoenician storm god, Zeus, Jesus, and Allah,<sup>321</sup> however, I would argue that in all of the examples provided in this chapter thus far, Hera was the only deity required for all of those components, if she was chosen to be called upon.

## The Wind

D. P. Nelis suggests that deities were used as symbols in religious practice, and names Hera as the symbol of air.<sup>322</sup> The wind is associated with Hera in many ways. In the *Argonautica*, it is said that the ship sped towards the Pelasgian land of Pelias, “in accordance with the Goddess Hera’s wishes, a following wind blew strongly.”<sup>323</sup> Iris (Hera’s servant) and the Harpies are offspring of Electra (an oceanid), were “conceived as strong winds early on.”<sup>324</sup> Two of Hera’s offspring are also conceived of as having power over the wind or air, and it would not be unreasonable to speculate that they inherited this characteristic from their mother. For example, Arthur Bernard Cook states that Hephaestus is considered “fire in actual use and mixed with lower air” in Cornutus.<sup>325</sup> Typhon is said to be the sender of whirlwinds,<sup>326</sup> and the offspring of

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<sup>319</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.506-510, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>320</sup> T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, 357.

<sup>321</sup> Aaron J. Brody, “The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers,” 445.

<sup>322</sup> D. P. Nelis, “Apollonius of Rhodes,” 360.

<sup>323</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.241-44, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>324</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 265-69.

<sup>325</sup> Cornut., *Theol.*, 19 in Arthur Bernard Cook, “Who was the wife of Zeus?”, 368.

<sup>326</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 101.

Typhon are strong winds that “blow haphazard on the sea ... they blow different at different times, scattering ships and drowning sailors.”<sup>327</sup>

Typhon and Hephaestus share characterizations as fire and wind gods, while their mother is seen as having power over the wind, and consequently the tide and waves of the sea. This contributes to the reason I would advocate that Hera is not a goddess of solely the sea but the whole realm of the sea and water. It encompasses all the elements, the wind, direction, and what those entities imply for seafarers who embark on voyages as well as the people who live on land.

Aside from the water itself, manipulation of the wind is arguably the most crucial aspect of seafaring. A goddess with power over the strength of wind would have been vital; Jamie Morton notes that straits in particular (Samos, for example), were notorious for calms, making ships immovable.<sup>328</sup>

## The Rain

As a goddess related to water and influence over the elements, it could be expected that Hera would receive votive offerings asking for rain. While Zeus is usually characterized as the weather god, he is not always alone in this territory. Pausanias mentions altars to Zeus and Hera on the road to Epidauros, which “receive[d] sacrifices when rain [was] needed.”<sup>329</sup> He also mentions altars on Mt. Arachnaion to both Zeus and Hera, where sacrifices were made in the time of drought.<sup>330</sup>

Baumbach cites numerous terracotta frogs dedicated at multiple sanctuaries of Hera, including Perachora, which might be conceived as fertility offerings because they are “characterized by prolific breeding ... but they are also known as announcers of rain.”<sup>331</sup> This

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<sup>327</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 872-75, in Anna Collar, "Sinews of Belief, Anchors of Devotion: The Cult of Zeus Kasios in the Mediterranean," 4.

<sup>328</sup> Jamie Morton, *The Role of The Physical Environment in Ancient Greek Seafaring*, 103.

<sup>329</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.17, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>330</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 63.

<sup>331</sup> Baumbach, 154.

argument is strengthened by other votive offerings related to rain at Tiryns and Argos. At Argos, over 100 mini terracotta hydriai were found in the vicinity of the Heraion, likely dating to the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. Baumbach cites Foley who believes that a severe drought was experienced in the area during the 8<sup>th</sup> century, which consequently would live in the memories of the following generations.<sup>332</sup> Demeter and Zeus are both recipients of this type of vessel, usually in sanctuaries close to the sea. On the inner sides of the handles, a female figure is depicted. Baumbach suggests two theories: they are related to prenuptial bathing, or as Hera's function as provider of rain.<sup>333</sup> Either way, it only solidifies Hera further within the realm of water.

At Tiryns, 4 fragments of kraters depict processions of maidens holding branches, and wavy lines surround them. Baumbach identifies the wavy lines as representations of water.<sup>334</sup> Whether this represents the waves of the sea or a ceremony to invoke rain via Hera, the offerings were placed within her sanctuaries and are of cultic significance regarding water and religious ceremony.

### **Hera's relationship with other water deities**

The realm of the sea, as mentioned above, encompasses the elements as well as those who do dwell in the sea themselves, or are conceived as being part of the sea. Hera's similarities with nymph worship was discussed previously, however, there are a few more important examples that should be mentioned. In the *Argonautica*, Hera tells Thetis: "Do not forget, Thetis, / that it was I that reared you from infancy, and loved you / more than all the other sea nymphs that dwell in the salt depths / because you would not bed Zeus ..." <sup>335</sup> O'Brien mentions this conversation and suggests that perhaps it is because as her role as an earth goddess, she could have done this kourotrophic activity for Thetis as a sort of 'foster mother,' <sup>336</sup> however I

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<sup>332</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 95.

<sup>333</sup> Baumbach, 89-95.

<sup>334</sup> Baumbach, 61-2.

<sup>335</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.784-825, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>336</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 108.

would argue that it is a deeper relationship than that, one of a supreme deity watching over the younger and less powerful sea nymphs. The Greek *nymphē* means bride, and there is evidence that nymphs helped with childbirth as well as nurtured women before their wedding.<sup>337</sup> If nymphs were indeed thought of as brides, or function to care for brides, they would certainly fall under Hera's jurisdiction. In the *Aeneid* book 1, Hera bribes the king of the winds to stir up a storm for Aeneas, and in exchange, she gives him the "loveliest of all *her* sea nymphs, Deiopea, as a bride."<sup>338</sup>

It is not only the nymphs that seem to answer to Hera. In the *Argonautica*, Hera has influence over the Nereids, who "plunge back into the depths" when their "work for Hera [was] done."<sup>339</sup> Pausanias mentions a sanctuary to Hera near the marketplace of Coroneia (a village in Boeotia) in the proximity to an altar of the winds, "with an ancient image [of Hera], and in her hand she carries the Sirens, for the story goes that the daughters of Achelous were persuaded by Hera to compete with the muses in singing. The muses won, plucked out the sirens' feathers, and made crowns for themselves."<sup>340</sup> Just as the Argive statue of Hera had the *horai* in her crown, she holds the sirens in her hand here. She appears to be larger in stature, size, and influence, both symbolically and literally, and it could be said that it is because they are derivatives of her overarching dominance of the realm that they all belong to.

The most important relationship of all is the one between Hera and Poseidon, the deity who is known as God of the Sea. This will be delved into in detail in chapter 4.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has provided a multitude of evidence for Hera's affiliation with the sea, water, and the elements. It was first indicated by sanctuaries of Hera with proximity to the sea

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<sup>337</sup> Jennifer Larson, "A Land Full of Gods," 61.

<sup>338</sup> Vergil, *Aeneid* 1.65-85, trans. Sarah Ruden. My emphasis.

<sup>339</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.966-7, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>340</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 4.9.34, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

and natural water sources, as well as the accompanying myths and songs that stem from the landscape. There is a long history of religious customs involving water attested to in Greece, and aside from purification upon entry to a sanctuary, arguably the most important and widespread ceremony involving water is the prenuptial bath. This fits well within Hera's realm as the goddess of marriage and sacred water, both in the sea and local rivers. Her relationship with water is further authenticated upon examining her relationship with confirmed sea deities, such as Thetis, nymphs, and the sirens. While all of the domains mentioned in this chapter may appear separate: rain, wind, marriage, rivers, colonization, the weather, and so on, they are all part of the larger religious sphere of Hera in which she governs water, the sea, and what is made possible by sea-travel.

## **CHAPTER 3: HEROES, HERA, AND THE SEA**

### **Introduction**

This chapter will demonstrate Hera's unique involvement with transitional rites via her longstanding relationship with heroic figures. A religious lens will be put on famous tales about Greek heroes to determine what they may represent, and it will be argued that Hera oversees transitions of both men and women before and during the time they become adults and spouses. This is relevant to the study of Hera as a sea goddess because the vast majority of these heroic tales occur on the sea or during a sea voyage. The sea on its own was a transitional zone;<sup>341</sup> ambivalent, unknown, and unpredictable, in the same way that a new stage of life is, and it required the attention of and sacrifices to a specialized deity.

It is important to first establish Hera's affiliation with heroes and the commemoration of the heroic past in general, what the figure of a 'hero' represented up until the Archaic period, and how this was expressed in both the literary realm and material culture. I will then outline the numerous heroes Hera is involved with, their stories, and determine how this contributes to the conceptualization of Hera as a goddess of the sea.

### **Who are heroes, and where did they come from?**

Gunnel Ekroth says the following about heroes: "A hero can be defined as a person who had lived and died, either in myth or real life ... the tomb may have been the focus of the cult ... usually a local phenomenon."<sup>342</sup> They are usually represented as superior to humans, on a quest, in search of glory or *kleos*, and sometimes they achieve that *kleos* by dying early. Hesiod describes heroes as a god-like race of men who fought at places like Thebes or Troy and went to the Isle of the Blessed.<sup>343</sup> Regarding Herakles, Hesiod writes: "Blessed is he who having

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<sup>341</sup> Jaclyn Haley Streuding, "Success at Sea," 77.

<sup>342</sup> Gunnel Ekroth, "Heroes and Hero-Cults," 101.

<sup>343</sup> Hesiod, *Works and Days* lines 157-8; Gunnel Ekroth, 101.

accomplished a great deed lives among / the deathless ones without pain and ageless for all his days.”<sup>344</sup> Ekroth points out that ‘the dead’ and ‘the hero cult’ gradually become separated after the Archaic period, but prior to that, the two overlapped, especially in religion and folktale.<sup>345</sup>

Like any literary phenomena, a parallel to the real lives of ancient Greeks can be identified. It has been suggested that the Archaic trend of unidentifiable *kouroi* dedications in sanctuaries is reminiscent of both aristocratic values and the young warrior, the real-life version of the demigod heroes. Nanno Marinatos states that the Mycenaean “Mistress of Animals embraced the hero as the embodiment of all aristocratic warriors of the polis ... many goddesses assumed this function [including] Hera.”<sup>346</sup> In the literary realm, many tales do focus on a man in his prime off to battle in war or complete a task that will ultimately involve some sort of conflict. Nilsson argues that in the Mycenaean period, city-goddesses were worshipped as special protectresses of the *basileus*,<sup>347</sup> which seems to be reflected in later epics where a female goddess protects a specific prince, warrior, or hero, and has a special relationship with them.

After the Mycenaean period the tradition does not die; the *basileus* or *wanax* could be related to the later concept of hero, as Homer refers to Agamemnon as *wanax*. It seems probable that heroes in myth inherited some aspects of these rulers. Alexander Mazarakis Ainian notes the special privileges and honors of their positions in his analysis of ruler cults and dwellings.<sup>348</sup> Larson notes that heroes are often linked within kinship and related to the founding of cities,<sup>349</sup> also in alignment with the tradition of the *basileus*. A conscious effort to connect communities

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<sup>344</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 749-50, trans. Barry B. Powell.

<sup>345</sup> Nanno Marinatos, *The Goddess and the Warrior: The Naked Goddess and Mistress of Animals in Early Greek Religion*, 114.

<sup>346</sup> Marinatos, 134.

<sup>347</sup> Martin Nilsson, *A History of Greek Religion*, 154-5.

<sup>348</sup> Alexander Mazarakis Ainian, *From Rulers' Dwellings to Temples: Architecture, Religion and Society in Early Iron Age Greece (1100-700 BC)*, 307.

<sup>349</sup> Jennifer Larson, *Greek Heroine Cults*, 5.

with a heroic past can be seen materially, for example, burial trends and the imitation of grandiose tholos tombs.



Figure 17. Colossal Kouros from Samos. Front and Back view  
(Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Vathy, Samos, Greece, 2019)

### **Where does Hera fit in?**

Many scholars have highlighted the connection between Hera's name and the hero title. Both 'Hera' and 'hero' are considered to be pre-Greek words, though neither have clear etymology. The two words appear to be connected very early and may have been etymologically related, but it has yet to be determined officially.<sup>350</sup>

O'Brien states that Hera's relationships do link her to heroes, and also mentions it is natural "given the cultural tendency to see the female as a metaphor for the natural world, that Hera be depicted as the psychological source of the hero's χόλος (bile).<sup>351</sup> James C. Wright

<sup>350</sup> Carolina Lopez-Ruiz, "Gods – Origins," 374. She writes that they seem to come from the same word.

<sup>351</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, "Homer's Savage Hera," 123.

mentions Hera's association with the heroes of the *Iliad* and the Argive warrior tombs, implying the epic may have been the catalyst for the establishment of the hero cult and Hera's association with it.<sup>352</sup> It appears, though, that her link with heroes predates the *Iliad*. Peter Green states the legend of the Argonauts is among the earliest known to Greeks, at least the 9 or 10<sup>th</sup> century, 'enshrining' memories of expeditions from the third or fourth millennium.<sup>353</sup> It can also be said that the Argonauts' adventures are known to the audiences of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and are a generation earlier.<sup>354</sup> Whether the *Iliad* or the cult came first, Hera is linked with heroes both in and outside of epic, and perhaps they inspired each other.

One of the theories regarding this clear but frustratingly elusive relationship between hero and Hera is the ancient religious partnership of divine queen and young male consort.<sup>355</sup> Both aforementioned authors mention the consort, and many scholars have proposed that Hera and Herakles are the Peloponnesian example of this relationship, focusing on the name Herakles "Hera - kleos = the glory of Hera."<sup>356</sup> Christopher Pfaff references multiple authors who have argued that both Herakles and Hera "mean something like 'ready for marriage'" and that Hera's original consort may have been named 'Hero.'<sup>357</sup> Although some disagree, Cook discusses a cult

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<sup>352</sup> James C. Wright, "The Old Temple Terrace at the Argive Heraeum and the Early Cult of Hera in the Argolid," 197-200.

<sup>353</sup> Peter Green, *The Argonautika: Apollonios Rhodios (Extended edition)*, 21.

<sup>354</sup> Homer, *Odyssey* 12.69-72 (trans. Stanley Lombardo) mentions the adventures of the Argonauts: "Only that one sea faring ship sailed through the Argo, a concern to all sailing from Aietes. And even it would have swiftly dashed on great rocks, had not Hera sent it through, since Jason was dear to her,"; Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 157. O'Brien suggests that because we are not told who Jason and Aietes are, or where the ship had been, it presupposes a story so well known it was not worth the mention.

<sup>355</sup> Hera is not the only goddess associated with this tradition, for example, Aphrodite and Adonis also feature in analyses of the divine woman and her young consort. However, Hera seems to have the most association with the concept of heroes.

<sup>356</sup> C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 137-9. Kerényi argues that Herakles means "the one who won fame through Hera," and he belonged to her at Tiryns where cult of Herakles is attested to. He claims that "Daktylic Herakles was the partner of the great moon goddess in Hera at Olympia almost to mid-8th century ... and then Homer makes a final contribution to the religions ... Zeus takes the place of mere Parastates, who was only a servant of women."

<sup>357</sup> Christopher A. Pfaff, "Artemis and a Hero at the Argive Heraion," 277-81.

on Cos to Herakles where marriage was celebrated in his temple,<sup>358</sup> lending to the theory that Herakles is representative of both heroic deeds, youth, and marriage. Hera and Herakles are linked in many ways, the most prominent being the twelve labors he endured in accordance with her wishes. Kerenyi states there is not enough evidence for it, but Herakles could potentially be identified as the beardless statue next to Hera's at Olympia (as opposed to Zeus) from the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the 8<sup>th</sup> century, as one of his epithets is "Herakles *Parastates* – the one who stands beside."<sup>359</sup> Tiryns and Argos connect them mythically, and at Perachora, Herakles appears multiple times in the *Limenia* temenos: on bronzes, one of which is said to be a copy of one at Olympia,<sup>360</sup> on a vase battling a snake,<sup>361</sup> and on engraved stones with a bow and arrow.<sup>362</sup>

Herakles, like Hera, sometimes also appears in a maritime context. Blakely states that Herakles-*Melqart* was the favored patron of Phoenician sailors,<sup>363</sup> and Brody states that multiple classical sources name harbours, promontories, and islands as dedicated to the chthonic deity Herakles.<sup>364</sup> In *Geography* 3.5.5, Strabo records that Hera and Herakles were worshipped together on an Island in southern Spain: "Others have supposed that the isles near each mountain [on the straits of Gibraltar], one of which they call Hera's Island are the Pillars [of Herakles]. Artemidoros speaks of Hera's Island and her temple, and he says there is a second isle."<sup>365</sup> Herakles is also a main player in the *Argonautica*, under the protection of Hera, a vast difference from the usual persecution he endures from her. It may be impossible to ever determine the root of the Hera/Herakles relationship, but an ancient partnership morphed by time and local legend cannot be ruled out, and it certainly contributes to the substantial evidence

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<sup>358</sup> Arthur Bernard Cook, "Who was the wife of Zeus?" 377.

<sup>359</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 136-7.

<sup>360</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 142.

<sup>361</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 62 (#421).

<sup>362</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 454.

<sup>363</sup> Sandra Blakely, "Maritime Risk and Ritual Responses," 366.

<sup>364</sup> Aaron J. Brody, "The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers," 446.

<sup>365</sup> Strabo, *Geography* 3. 5. 5, trans. Jones. Varying accounts of this translation exist, not all include Hera.

that Hera was affiliated with hero cults.

### **Hera and Transitional Rites**

It is worth noting that male heroes in epics are nearly always equipped with a female deity to guide them. Zeus, Ares, or Poseidon may be fond of a particular hero like Zeus is to Hektor, but they do not involve themselves in the same way that Aphrodite, Athena, or Hera do. The male figure who has the privilege of a female goddess communicating with them is also telling. For Hera, the men she pays most attention to (whether it be positive attention or not) are Jason, Herakles, Achilles, Aeneas, and Kleobis and Biton. They are all young, unmarried, warrior-types. The majority set out on a task of some kind and return as a grown man with a wife, or in some cases, die with hero status granted by the goddess. Hera does not figure in the *Odyssey*, though it is clear Homer knew of her and could have written her in if he wished. It looks as though she is not needed with Odysseus, owing to the fact that he is already married with an adult son, having already experienced the initial trials and tribulations of a young man. Her association with Herakles, Aeneas, and Jason effectively comes to an end when they finish their journeys as older and wiser men, sometimes with a wife and children. It could be argued that those journeys are the rites they endured and proved themselves with, set up and orchestrated by Hera.

With the epic divine female/semi-divine male element in mind, the idea of a religious partnership between supreme goddess and young consort becomes clearer, particularly when one recognizes the open dialogue between folktale, religion, and the eventual solidification of literature and myth. This is another way in which the sea does not need to be separated from marriage, as the sea journeys ultimately prepare the young male for proper manhood, returning to land and ready to begin their new phase as spouses. It seems only reasonable that Hera, as supreme deity in the marriage realm, would be affiliated with this quest (including sea journeys) that enable both men and women to arrive at that point. While the men do what needs to be

done at sea, the women stay on land, doing their own set of rites and performing the appropriate sacrifices for their set gender roles at Hera sanctuaries.

### **Examples of Hera's Involvement in Transitional Rites**

#### **Medea**

In the *Argonautica*, Medea shows obvious signs of hesitation and fear when it comes to leaving her home, marrying Jason, and going to a distant land to join him – all stages of the process that would lead from the transition from maiden to wife. It is clear that Hera puts these foreign ideas into her mind: “into Medea’s heart Hera cast the most appalling / terror: ... eyes burning, eardrums thumping ... clutch[ing] at her throat ... fluttering in her breast.”<sup>366</sup> Green notes that this is a direct echo to Sappho, who writes of ringing ears caused by excitement at the site of a beloved.<sup>367</sup> It is also Hera who creates the plan of Jason and Medea’s marriage, and who summons the nymphs to prepare their marriage bed; she is the instigator of these events that will ultimately carry them over from one stage of life to another in the realm of maturity.

Hera’s involvement with Medea does not end in the *Argonautica*: In Eumelos (8<sup>th</sup>-century poet) Hera claims she will ‘reward’ Medea for resisting Zeus’ advances by making her children immortal, but Medea’s children ultimately die in the Perachora sanctuary of Hera and are honored with a cult.<sup>368</sup> Menadier corroborates the legend, citing Euripides’ *Medea*: 7 girls and 7 boys from distinguished families went to the sanctuary of Hera to stay for one year, mourning the children of Medea, and return to society with changed appearances.<sup>369</sup> She argues

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<sup>366</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.11-14, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>367</sup> Peter Green, *The Argonautika: Apollonios Rhodios (Extended edition)*, 293.

<sup>368</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.3.10-11.

<sup>369</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 57. Baumbach references a story (by Plutarch, Bacchylides, and other authors) of the daughters of Proitos (King of Tiryns): a situation in which a change of appearance relates to the context of transitional rites into a new social status. The girls insulted Hera, who punishes them into madness. She ultimately cures them (one of her signature moves), they re-appear and act differently, and this is apparently related to an initiation ritual at the Heraion in Tiryns.

that Euripides could have been explaining a local religious custom regarding the rites of dead children.<sup>370</sup> While this is not a life transition from one maturity level to the next, it is a transition and crossover to the underworld, another realm in which Hera was connected as a chthonic deity, especially in Perachora.

There is a connection between chthonic deities and the sea. For example, in the *Argonautica* book 1, the Argonauts leave Lemnos, and: “by learning those secret rites, with their benign initiations, they might steer in greater safety across the chilling deep . . .”<sup>371</sup> Green states that later authors cite the island the ceremony occurs on as related to the Kabeiroi, chthonic deities who are Phrygian in origin, presiding over fertility and the protection of sailors.<sup>372</sup> While we cannot state for sure that the mystery deity the Argonauts were involved with after leaving Lemnos is Hera, it serves to cushion her involvement in realms that may at first glance seem disconnected. In book 23 of the *Iliad*, during the preparation of Patroclus’ funeral, Achilles “cut off a lock of his fair hair / that he had been growing long to offer to the river.”<sup>373</sup> It is often cited that brides-to-be dedicated locks of hair to deities such as Hera or Artemis before their wedding, but this Achilles scene alludes to a tradition with a wider scope. Not only does a male hero make an offering of hair in the context of death, he offers it to a river, and Anthony Verity suggests that it was in thanks for the water’s nurture.<sup>374</sup> Related to the notion of death, water, and heroes is a find from an Argive tomb (associated with the projection of a heroic past) within the sanctuary of Hera. One of the vessels recovered was a vase with 7 watercrafts depicted on it.<sup>375</sup> It could be argued that the imagery of the sea in a warrior tomb was deemed appropriate in this case.

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<sup>370</sup> Blanche Menadier, *Cult of Hera Akraia*, 192-9.

<sup>371</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 1.921-5, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>372</sup> Peter Green, *The Argonautika: Apollonios Rhodios (Extended edition)*, 222.

<sup>373</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 23.140-1, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>374</sup> Homer, *Iliad*, commentary on Book 23 by Barbara Graziosi, 140-1.

<sup>375</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships & Seamanship*, 80.

## Kouroi

Kourai and Kouroi were mentioned earlier as reminiscent of aristocratic values and a strong warrior class. Baumbach hypothesizes that they are symbolic of the primary duties of the young generation, military, and growing up. He cites 21 kouroi and 26 veiled kourai dedicated at the Heraion of Samos (6<sup>th</sup> century) that could represent Hera's function as presiding over 'growing up.'<sup>376</sup> In addition to those, one of the most fantastic Samian finds is the colossal kouros dated to 580 BC (Fig.17), which would have stood on the Sacred Way even before the largest temple of Hera was built. Kyrieleis argues that this statue indicated the idea that heroes are 'larger than life,' perhaps honoring a specific family or heroic ancestor.<sup>377</sup> The description of most kouroi also conveniently aligns with the description of Hera's son in the *Homeric Hymn to Ares*: "chariot master, city guard, strong willed, tyrant to enemies ... wielding **manhood's** scepter ... warrior strength."<sup>378</sup> Hera's involvement with young, strong, capable men and their coming of age is perpetual.

## Kleobis and Biton

The legend of Kleobis and Biton is as follows: their mother was a priestess of Hera at Argos, and during a festival to Hera, she needed to be taken to the temple. There were no oxen, so they pulled her cart to the temple themselves. Herodotus describes them as "prized winning athletes with amazing physical strength," and claims the Argives had statues of them made in Delos.<sup>379</sup> In response to their mother's prayers to receive "whatever was best for humans."<sup>380</sup> Hera renders them with death in her temple. Baumbach states that this story indicates Hera's connection with both growing up and the immortalization of children in the Peloponnese, and

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<sup>376</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 158.

<sup>377</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 120-1.

<sup>378</sup> Diane Rayor, *Homeric Hymns*, 89. My emphasis.

<sup>379</sup> Herodotus, *Histories* 1.31, trans. Robin Waterfield.

<sup>380</sup> Herodotus, *Histories* 1.31, trans. Robin Waterfield; Pseudo-Apollodorus, *Bibliotheca* 2. 53, trans. Aldrich.

that the view of being granted death by a deity must have been a positive one because it does not only occur here.<sup>381</sup> O'Brien gives another reason for Hera's epithet *Teleia* in this context; she *fulfills* the hero with an early death at the turning point of their lives that would have otherwise brought marriage. It may have been a heroic ideal to receive memorials at life's "midpoint."<sup>382</sup>

François de Polignac refers to Hera as a liminal deity, stating that when a sanctuary is located on a cape, promontory, edge of a city, or near rivers, "it reflects the mediating function of worship by their instillation on a significant threshold, dotted [in] the passage between [the inner and] outer universe."<sup>383</sup> He goes on to suggest that heroes become related to these spaces as their "exploits carry them to the edge of the known or civilized universe." This is another way in which Hera, a number of her sanctuaries, and heroes are linked via a liminal zone – especially at Argos.

### **The Sea as a Transitional Zone**

Brody refers to the sea as a liminal zone, and asserts that travelling over water itself is a rite of passage.<sup>384</sup> Janett Morgan alludes to the involvement of female goddesses in the creation of transitional space and boundaries,<sup>385</sup> which supports the reasoning behind why a deity such as Hera is involved in both the rites of passage for young men and women, and how the sea became involved. According to a study of psychological archetypes, the sea and sky are one and the same, and the hero makes a voyage around both, eventually returning to the 'womb' of the underworld, creating unity and a sense of completeness.<sup>386</sup>

In epic, the sea and ships seem to be revered, and Hera inspires greatness from the men who embark on sea voyages. The notion of fighting, dying, or staying by the ships even in times of peril, fear, or hopelessness is continuous. Numerous examples stand out: In book 1 of the

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<sup>381</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 86.

<sup>382</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 199.

<sup>383</sup> François de Polignac, "Héra, le navire et la demeure : offrandes, divinité et société en Grèce archaïque," 14; 18.

<sup>384</sup> Aaron J. Brody, "The Specialized Religions of Ancient Mediterranean Seafarers," 449.

<sup>385</sup> Janett Morgan, "Women, Religion, and the Home," 308.

<sup>386</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 180.

*Iliad*, Achilles exclaims that Agamemnon should “ensure that the Achaeans survive, **fighting beside their ships**.”<sup>387</sup> When the Greeks are nearly ready to flee Troy and return home, Hera commands Athena to “not let them drag their **well-balanced ships** down to the sea.”<sup>388</sup> Hera scolds the Greeks herself about their fear in the *Iliad* book 5, igniting the “fury and spirit in each man.”<sup>389</sup>



Figure 18. Fragment of vase with ship and rowers, Tiryns. 730-690 BC.  
(Personal Photo: Archaeological Museum of Nauplion, Greece, 2019)

In the *Pythian Odes*, Pindar writes that “Hera kindled all persuading sweet desire in the sons of gods for the ship Argo, so that none should be left behind to nurse a life without danger at his mother’s side, but rather that he should find even against death the fairest antidote in his own courage along with others of his age.”<sup>390</sup> It is notable that Pindar highlights the aspects of courage even in the face of danger, and the notion of leaving one’s mother’s side. It alludes to a sense of independence and going through a rite of passage in order to arrive at a new stage of life with other men of the same age who are expected to do the same – all of which occurs onboard

<sup>387</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 1.343, trans. Anthony Verity. My emphasis added.

<sup>388</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 2.154-66, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>389</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 5.780-92, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>390</sup> Pindar, *Pythian Odes* 4.184-7.

the Argo. These examples further demonstrate that there is a certain connection between Hera, the glory of young men, and fighting bravely ‘next to’ a ship.

## **Rites at Sea**

### **Goddess of Navigation and Safe Homecoming**

Although Hera has the power to bring safety to those voyaging at sea and is often prayed to for it, as well as accompanies the heroes throughout their journeys, this also means she has the power to bring danger to them. Boedeker tends to agree, stating Homeric Hera either protects or harms heroes at sea.<sup>391</sup> She uses the *Iliad* as an example, where Zeus reminisces on punishing Hera for blowing Herakles off his sea course, and Proclus’ summary of Cypria, where Hera sends a storm after Paris when he sails away with Helen.<sup>392</sup> Perhaps these trials, like the labors of Herakles, are a part of their initiation into manhood. It is fitting, then, that the *Argonautica* closes with the young men set on their way because Hera “darted down out of heaven, [shouting] ... / the vault of heaven resounded ...” and shortly after, they arrive at the Bay of Argo “coming safe, by Hera’s counsel.”<sup>393</sup> The story ends when their journey ends, their initiation complete, back in the zone of safety, all guided and manipulated by Hera.

### **Sappho**

Pirenne-Delforge and Pironti refer to Hera of Lesbos as the protector and development of young women, and “may also be that of young men,” like Larichos, in the newest poem of Sappho.<sup>394</sup> Sappho refers to being sent to pray to Hera for the safe return of Charaxos and to find the people on land unharmed. In the following lines, she writes that if a helpful god turns people

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<sup>391</sup> Deborah Boedeker, “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” 195.

<sup>392</sup> *Iliad* 15.23–24; Cypria fr. 1; in Deborah Boedeker, “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” 195.

<sup>393</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4.640–58, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>394</sup> Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti, “Héra Et Zeus à Lesbos,” 30. See previous footnotes #58 and #271 for discussion surrounding the so-called Newest Sappho or Brothers Poem.

away “from troubles, they are blessed / and full of good fortune / For us too, if Larichos lifts his head high / and in time grows into a man, / our spirits may be swiftly freed / from such a heavy weight.”<sup>395</sup> Diane Rayor writes that Sappho’s choice of Hera is significant in this poem, as a helper of seamen but also a goddess of marriage. She references Larichos “lifting his head” as either saving his life, raising himself literally, standing tall, or growing into a man/husband.<sup>396</sup> The most convincing explanation considering other situations where Hera is involved, is Larichos both becoming a man, and ‘standing tall’ on this particular journey of becoming an adult.

Sappho certainly lived in the world of seafaring and mentioned it frequently, and authors have identified Charaxos as a certain type of traveler from Sappho’s time who would have traded in foreign markets, possibly as elite leaders, even in the century before colonization began.<sup>397</sup> Boedeker highlights the wording in Sappho fragment 17: “now... we too perform / as in these olden days” and the mention of Hera at the end, as suggestive of an annual festival at the temenos of Hera that celebrated the homecoming of seafarers.<sup>398</sup> Sappho does name Hera as the specific deity to help in the situation of her brother returning safely home, which adds another layer to evidence of Hera as a specific seafaring deity, but the implication is much larger than a safe homecoming. This poem is a religious invocation, and not only refers to the navigation assistance required for the safety of the men onboard Charaxos’ ship, but also involves the idea of maturity and becoming a man. Any deity could have been chosen, for example, Sappho recurrently uses Aphrodite even in maritime contexts, but in this case, Hera was deemed most appropriate.

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<sup>395</sup> Sappho, Brothers Poem, lines 15-20, trans, Diane Rayor.

<sup>396</sup> Diane Rayor, *Sappho: A New Translation of the Complete Works*, 163-4.

<sup>397</sup> Kurt A. Raaflaub, “Archaic Greek Aristocrats As Carriers of Cultural Interactions,” 211.

<sup>398</sup> Deborah Boedeker, “Hera and the Return of Charaxos,” 193-4.

## Jason

Jason is the leading example of Hera's involvement in the rites of men, using the sea as a stage for the transition to occur. Athena is known to choose one hero to help, such as Odysseus or Achilles, but for Hera, Jason's story is the only one where she consistently involves herself in a specific hero's life time and time again, working to nurture, save, and encourage him. In the *Iliad*, she helps all of the Greeks, but not necessarily one hero in particular, as opposed to proclaiming: "[I will] protect [Jason], with all my limbs' innate strength ... long before this, Jason had won my / great love ... hence the unfailing high honour in which I hold him."<sup>399</sup> This loving description of Jason occurs at the same time as she describes her lust for revenge against Pelias, thus it is clear that the treatment Jason receives from her is out of the ordinary. Jason begins as a mere young man, not equipped with immortal strength or bravery, referred to by both Nelis and T. Gantz as an ordinary or un-Homeric hero.<sup>400</sup> He is arguably the one onboard the Argo with the most to prove and seems to require Hera's involvement across all of her realms: the sea, navigation, prowess in battle, maturation, and winning over Medea, who is inevitably the reason his quest for the golden fleece is successful. The *Argonautica* is not merely a story of an adventure at sea, but the challenges that occurred along the way, and the arrival home to a completely new phase in life for Jason both as an adult and a husband. Nelis writes that a significant aspect of Jason and the Argonauts is "their youth ... initiation of young warriors is part of the adventure ... It is a traditional tale [where they prove themselves, and] it is also sexual initiation for both man and woman."<sup>401</sup> Hera, not coincidentally, oversees all these moments, both on land and sea.

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<sup>399</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 3.63-76, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>400</sup> T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, 371; D. P. Nelis, "Apollonius of Rhodes," 362.

<sup>401</sup> D. P. Nelis, "Apollonius of Rhodes," 363.

## **Conclusion**

In the introduction of this thesis, I posed a question: why is Hera so involved with the gore of the *Iliad*, instead of tending to brides-to-be? The answer can quite possibly be found in this chapter. It does not have to be one or the other – heroes or brides, she presides over both in their preparations for the next stage in their lives, whether that be as adults arranging for marriage, or to the underworld before the transition can occur. She was recognized as a deity with flexibility, someone who can move freely in between different realms. It can be argued that from the onset of her veneration, she was involved religiously with a male consort or semi-divine figure, eventually identified with the hero of Greek epic, with a role of protectress over the young and the transition from youth to adult. Hera's sanctuaries on the coast would have been a place to see the palpable line between land and sea, which defines the liminal zone between the known and unknown. It places her firmly within the role of overseeing a transitional zone.

On a practical level, seafarers, traders, and warriors very likely would have prayed to Hera for success and safety. On a religious level, her association with the sea goes deeper than a good outcome on a safe voyage. The sea voyage itself in religion and folktale was a rite of passage, preserving an ongoing theme of leaving via the sea as a naïve boy and returning as a more mature man, often leading to marriage. It is probable that the sea voyage was used to imply the rites of transition because of both the vast and mysterious nature of the ocean and the very real and vital role the sea played in the daily lives of the Greeks.

It can be said that Hera's designation as a divine guide of heroes at sea is partially embedded in her ancient role of mother goddess that was outlined in chapter one. However, that is not the only reason. Her unique partnership with young heroes and important stages in their lives, both in religion and epic, cannot be separated from any time or place that she is worshipped in. The most famous heroes and warriors of both the historical and mythical realm are intertwined with their youth, ships, the sea, and elaborate commemoration, all of which are

related to Hera and her worship as well. Her association with these young heroes and the direct role she plays in their development sheds light on her conceptualization as a whole, not just as a goddess of women concerned with brides, but as a goddess of the institution of marriage, transformation, and transitions.

## **CHAPTER 4: HERA AND POSEIDON**

### **Introduction**

This chapter outlines Hera's connection to Poseidon in three ways: by using examples of similarities between popular votive dedications to both deities; by looking at their partnerships in myth and in the landscape; and comparing their personalities, both of which seem to share characteristics with the sea itself. This chapter does not seek to position Hera as the supreme god of the sea instead of Poseidon, nor does it define the two as spouses. The aim is to point out suggestive affiliations between the two deities that validate the already distinguishable link between Hera and the sea.

It is true that a correlation between Hera and Poseidon does not necessarily imply similar worship; as we have seen, there is apparent overlap in almost all the members of the Olympic pantheon. However, most overlap occurs between gendered groups, arguably due to the overlap of their realms and the people who worship them and seek to earn their favor in similar requests. The likenesses shared by Hera and Poseidon are more unique, namely in their character, as will be discussed, but also because they are two deities who do not 'normally' have intersecting realms. Brown and Smith state that cults of gods worshipped on the coast are linked: "Hera was connected with other maritime deities such as Aphrodite, Apollo, Artemis, Poseidon, and the Dioscuri."<sup>402</sup> Thus, the similarities become far more detectable when one recognizes Hera as a primary maritime deity.

### **Who is Poseidon?**

Although Poseidon's general conceptualization is god of the sea, his early identification seems to be more related to the earth, titled "earth-shaker." Hesiod describes him as: "Poseidon,

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<sup>402</sup> Amelia R. Brown and Rebecca Smith, "Guardian Goddess of the Surf-Beaten Shore," 21.

who holds/ the earth, lord of earthquakes.”<sup>403</sup> Larson dubs him “a complex Mycenaean deity whose origins lie further inland ... an ancestral god with ties to freshwater springs and horses ... not a personification of the sea but its ruler.”<sup>404</sup> His worship is attested to by the 13<sup>th</sup> century at Pylos via linear B tablets, where it appears he could have been the chief deity, receiving richer offerings than both Hera and Zeus.<sup>405</sup> He is commonly identified as a tamer of horses, even described in terms of horse-like characteristics. Judith Maitland points out in the *Iliad* he is described as bounding like a horse, and in the *Odyssey* he is referred to as black-maned.<sup>406</sup> He is also affiliated with walls and assemblies.<sup>407</sup>

Poseidon is not recognized as a creator of the sea, or a symbolic part of the sea, but he exercises control over the sea. The traditional view is that he was given control of the sea in later epic when three divine realms were divided between three of Cronos’ sons. Erika Simon does not believe he was first identified with the earth and later moved to the sea to divide power between Zeus and Poseidon, rather, she agrees with Ludwig Preller who characterizes Poseidon as twofold; “master-builder of the earth which rests on and is supported by the sea.”<sup>408</sup> She argues that he was closely connected with the elements, and the realms of land and sea need not be completely separated.<sup>409</sup> She uses examples of designs on Geometric vases to demonstrate the connection between pasture and sea; in many cases, horses, fish, and birds appear to swim and graze side by side.<sup>410</sup>

Poseidon is not the first god in the sea; in the *Theogony*, the sea (*pontos*) was produced by Gaia in the initial stages of creation; subsequently, Oceanus and Tethys bore the Oceanids,

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<sup>403</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 12-13, trans. Barry Powell.

<sup>404</sup> Jennifer Larson, “A Land Full of Gods,” 68.

<sup>405</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 70.

<sup>406</sup> Judith Maitland, “Poseidon, Walls, and Narrative Complexity in the Homeric *Iliad*,” 1.

<sup>407</sup> Elizabeth R. Gebhard, “The Evolution of a Pan-Hellenic Sanctuary: From Archaeology Towards History at Isthmia,” 133; Maitland, 1.

<sup>408</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 71.

<sup>409</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 71.

<sup>410</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 50.

and then came the Nereids.<sup>411</sup> In myth, Poseidon is certainly known as the master of the sea and the creatures that reside within, but Blakely points out that although he controlled the waters, he did not necessarily help to guide the ships aside from certain seaside temples that served as aids for navigation.<sup>412</sup>

The realm of the sea is complex and divided, a place under the protection and responsibility of more than one deity. With this in mind, it creates room for Hera's place in this realm, and although they might oversee and identify with different aspects of the sea, they do share this space.

## **Shared Character Traits**

### **Anger**

Simon describes Poseidon as characterized by the propensity of his anger. His depiction is rough, which could be attributed to his involvement with “destructive sea storms, earthquakes, and volcanoes ... all [of which are] hostile.”<sup>413</sup> It could be argued that this is a personality trait Poseidon shares with Hera – they are both involved in battle, are ruthless, in league with monsters, and yet are still revered, respected, and prayed to for safety or success. Simon suggests that the *Odyssey* could be a poem about Poseidon's anger,<sup>414</sup> an interesting parallel to the idea that the *Aeneid* is a poem about Hera's anger. The heroes in both tales are constantly persecuted and seek to earn the gods' favor for success and survival in their journeys.

### **Nature of The Sea**

Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell write that the Mediterranean Sea is such a large focus of cultural history that it has been given presumed personality traits, it has even been used

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<sup>411</sup> Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 126-265, trans. Glenn W. Most.

<sup>412</sup> Sandra Blakely, "Maritime Risk and Ritual Responses," 366.

<sup>413</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 73.

<sup>414</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 73.

as a metaphor in antiquity for political corruption.<sup>415</sup> They aptly argue that frontiers, such as the sea, are defined as much by what crosses them as well as what they hold apart, and those who have spent time at sea would be aware that it is displacing, unstable, and elusive. Thus, the sea “lend[s] itself to multiple and complex interpretations.”<sup>416</sup>

Hera and Poseidon share their ambivalent nature with the sea. Carla Antonaccio writes that the sea in antiquity was both feared and respected for its dangers, connectivity, and provider of resources.<sup>417</sup> Both feared and respected are adjectives that could describe both Poseidon and Hera. Lindenlauf describes a Boeotian skyphos where a scene depicts Odysseus on a raft that seems to portray a “range of characteristics attributed to the sea: dangerous, savage, and corrupting nature ... associated with Poseidon.”<sup>418</sup> In the *Argonautica*, the sea is referred to as ‘inhospitable’ numerous times,<sup>419</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>-century poet Semonides wrote that the sea has more than one character, which Lindenlauf suggests is due to its association with origin, creation and birth, but also ending, destruction, and death.<sup>420</sup> Christine Downing says this about Hera: she is every stage of women’s life, worshipped by all ... whom the Greeks feared a little and did not like at all.”<sup>421</sup> While I do not believe she was unliked by all, I do agree that she was feared, and known to strike at a moment’s notice, in the same way the sea was, and the same way Poseidon could – especially with half-man half-monster creatures waiting in the watery depths at his disposal.

## The Banes of Zeus

Another trait the two deities share is their willingness to act against Zeus, particularly in the *Iliad*. Maitland agrees, stating they are both depicted “as rebellious and competitive towards

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<sup>415</sup> Peregrine Horden and Nicholas Purcell, *The Boundless Sea: Writing Mediterranean History*, 4; 42. Plato’s *Politicus* 273 D 6.

<sup>416</sup> Horden and Purcell, 49; 52.

<sup>417</sup> Carla Antonaccio, “Greek Colonization, Connectivity, and the Middle Sea,” 217.

<sup>418</sup> Astrid Lindenlauf, “The Sea as a Place of No Return in Ancient Greece,” 418.

<sup>419</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 2.548, trans. Peter Green. This is one of many instances.

<sup>420</sup> Astrid Lindenlauf, “The Sea as a Place of No Return in Ancient Greece,” 419.

<sup>421</sup> Christine Downing, *The Goddess: Mythological Images of the Feminine*, 73.

Zeus,” with only the two of them and Athena questioning Zeus’ supremacy.<sup>422</sup> Although they do not win, they try, and neither of them shows true remorse or fear in the way Athena does. The two plot together in *Iliad* 14, and there is a curious parallel in dialogue: Hera distracts Zeus and asks *sleep* to assist her so Poseidon can reorganize the Greeks – when she looks at Poseidon leaving, she was “glad in her heart.”<sup>423</sup> Not long after, she sees Zeus on Mt. Ida, and “he was hateful to her heart.”<sup>424</sup> When they are both scolded for defying Zeus, it is as though Hera is reading from a script, addressing the gods of Olympus, stating they were “fools” to act against Zeus, while smiling, “but her forehead above her dark brows showed no softening lines.”<sup>425</sup> Poseidon gives way to Zeus as well, but tells Iris that Zeus is arrogant, and that he is Zeus’ equal: “let him not try to threaten me with his hand strength ... use his violent threats [on those who are] under compulsion to listen to the orders that he gives.”<sup>426</sup> Maitland describes books 13-15 as a dynastic struggle over the authority of god-like activities, including seafaring,<sup>427</sup> perhaps why Hera’s specific involvement and partnership with Poseidon over Zeus is not so conspicuously covered.

### **Hera and Poseidon – an early partnership?**

Kerenyi separates the worship of Poseidon from that of Zeus in that Poseidon is never without the earth or the sea, with an ‘earth’ goddess beside him - the (possible) principal deity of religion.<sup>428</sup> Simon’s analysis supports this statement; she quotes the *Odyssey* (book 11) in which Odysseus is told by Teiresias to go into the country, plant an oar into the earth, and offer

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<sup>422</sup> Judith Maitland, “Poseidon, Walls, and Narrative Complexity in the Homeric *Iliad*,” 2.

<sup>423</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 14.156, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>424</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 14.157-8, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>425</sup> Homer *Iliad* 15.100-5, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>426</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 15.185-99, trans. Anthony Verity.

<sup>427</sup> Judith Maitland, “Poseidon, Walls, and Narrative Complexity in the Homeric *Iliad*,” 11.

<sup>428</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 66.

sacrifices to Poseidon. She suggests that it is clear he has an association with both the sea and the earth in this way.<sup>429</sup>

Kerenyi also states that Poseidon has a cult epithet of *pater*, or father, which seems to be ‘dark, enclosing an animal husband image ... not bestial but not a higher or spiritual one ... [more towards] the broader origin of life.’<sup>430</sup> Zeus *patros* and Poseidon *patros* seem to have different connotations. Poseidon appears to be related to creation, for example, his epithets of *genethlios* and *genesios*. Noel Robertson believes this testifies to Poseidon’s connection to procreation rather than kinship ties.<sup>431</sup> The creation aspect of Poseidon has been alluded to; Simon refers to Plato’s *Laws* in which he suspects the Cyclopes, sons of Poseidon, were an “unrefined early form of the human race.”<sup>432</sup> This contrasts with Zeus who is characterized as the father of gods and men; He occupies a fatherly position of guidance and authority, and is already worshipped as ‘father’ by the Indo-Europeans in a context of the importance of ancestors and kinship.<sup>433</sup> In addition, he does not partake in the conflict of the *Iliad* the way Hera or Poseidon do; he lets the scales decide the important outcomes.<sup>434</sup>

Both Hera and Poseidon are intertwined with the symbols surrounding creation, the sea, the earth, and the male and female components of water, while there has never been any doubt that Zeus is very much a god of the sky. This is not to say that Hera and Poseidon are versions of Gaia and *pontus*, as we know Zeus and Hera are already partnered in Pylos by the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC.<sup>435</sup> However, there is always regional variation at play, and the similarities between Poseidon,

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<sup>429</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 72-73; Homer, *Odyssey* 11.126-8, trans. Stanley Lombardo.

<sup>430</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 89.

<sup>431</sup> Noel Robertson, “Poseidon’s Festival at the Winter Solstice,” 13.

<sup>432</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 73. She refers to Plato’s *Laws* 3.680b,682a.

<sup>433</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 11-12.

<sup>434</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 23.

<sup>435</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 39.

Hera, and earlier characters credited with creation are striking given the cyclical nature of Greek religion.

O'Brien makes a connection between Hera and Poseidon, suggesting Hera's early spouse may have been Poseidon *Hippos* – of the horse, based on the two deities presiding over the marriage rituals of Achilles' parents, and Achilles later is given horses by Poseidon, which are voiced by Hera.<sup>436</sup> Hera also had the epithet *Hippia*, and Drees has put forward the following theory (summarized):

In the Argolid, Zeus-Pelops married the Indigenous earth mother, later given the Greek name of Hera ... as Pelops' wife she becomes tutelary goddess of the fruits of the earth ... Hera [fought] Poseidon for religious rights in the Argolid, she overcame him, and received the epithet of Hippodamia – the one who has subdued the horse. The cult spreads through the Peloponnese and arrives in Olympia. She becomes subordinate to her male partner ... deprived even of her fertility with Zeus, mostly a companion and not even mother of his children ... under her old name Hippodamia. Pelops is also demoted to a demi-god, and Zeus retains only the one name.<sup>437</sup>

As we have seen so far, there are many theories as to who Hera's early spouse was – whether it be the general idea of young male consort next to supreme female goddess, Herakles, Zeus, sometimes no spouse at all is considered, and now, Poseidon is also a possibility. As stated in chapter 1, it is my view that earth goddesses are one recognizable facet of the larger mother-goddess figure, which incorporates both earth and sea. I would argue that it was not necessarily an earth goddess Poseidon has always had by his side, but a more inclusive mother-goddess, quite possibly identified with Hera even if just regionally or in local traditions. Whether Drees is correct in his theory, or O'Brien, or neither, it is certain that both Hera and Poseidon are related to the water, horses, and share a common epithet.

Neumann implies that there was symbolism in the realm of water for both male and female deities that exist together, in which the flowing water is masculine, such as a spring

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<sup>436</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 205-6.

<sup>437</sup> Ludwig Drees, *Olympia: Gods, Artists, and Athletes*, 29.

(Poseidon's early realm), and the feminine symbol is the main body of water generated from the earth.<sup>438</sup> Kerenyi breaks down Poseidon's name in this way: *Posis* – capable husband of a wife, *Da – ga* / earth, and argues that shaker would have been added, meaning holding or having, man of woman.<sup>439</sup>

The potential for the larger religious symbolic partnership of Hera and Poseidon becomes clearer in this way: male and female, symbolic representations of earth and water together, as well as father/mother, related to creation. This is not to say that an overarching myth existed which paired the two of them together, rather than with their respective partners Zeus and Amphitrite, but it is indicative of an early regional partnership, particularly in the Peloponnese. The largest concentration of Hera sanctuaries are located in the Peloponnese, and Poseidon's arguably most important sanctuary is located in Isthmia, nearby.

A myth regarding a battle between Hera and Poseidon exists in the Corinth/Argos area, where it is said they battled over religious primacy in the land. Asterion, a river god, ultimately decided the land was Hera's. Poseidon's anger made their waters disappear, but Hera 'induced' him to send them back. Pausanias writes that in gratitude, the "Argives made a sanctuary to Poseidon *Prosklystios* at the spot where the tide ebbed."<sup>440</sup> Hera was not always friendly with Zeus either, so if Poseidon was an early spouse, competition and rivalry is to be expected. The relationship between them may not be detectable unless one looks closely for it, but it does seem to take root in the religious importance of water and creation as counterparts, which may have survived in remnants that surface in later myths such as the one above, and in the *Iliad*.

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<sup>438</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother*, trans. Ralph Manheim, 198.

<sup>439</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 64-65.

<sup>440</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.22.4, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

## **Sanctuary Similarities**

### **Ship Votives**

The most notable similarities when it comes to material worship of both Hera and Poseidon are the miniature boat dedications. Metal ship models from the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia were unearthed as well as a few clay models.<sup>441</sup> Arne Thomsen cites 24 boat/boat fragments at Isthmia from the 7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries and suggests “their presence in such numbers at Isthmia, while rare in other places, must be related to the role of Poseidon as god and master of the sea.”<sup>442</sup> This is a rather overarching statement when a larger number of miniature boats was recovered at Samos, however, it further justifies the connection between the boats as an appropriate cult object and/or dedication for a sea deity. Hera and Poseidon are the two deities with the most numerous ship-themed dedications (found thus far). The two real ship dedications (large and life-sized) at Samos are said by Boedeker to have been dedicated to both Hera and Poseidon,<sup>443</sup> and there were two shrines to Poseidon on opposite sides of the Samian strait, likely placed as navigational markers.<sup>444</sup>

Elizabeth R. Gebhard states that Demeter is frequently linked with Poseidon. She does not list a partnership with Hera but does state that the tripods, bovine figurines, and armor left as dedications at Isthmia are comparable to the dedications to Hera at Perachora and Zeus at

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<sup>441</sup> Eleni Hasaki and Yannis Nakas. "Ship Iconography on the Penteskouphia Pinakes from Archaic Corinth (Greece): Pottery Industry and Maritime Trade," 67.

<sup>442</sup> Arne Thomsen, "Riding for Poseidon: Terracotta Figurines from the Sanctuary of Poseidon," 111.

<sup>443</sup> Deborah Boedeker, "Hera and the Return of Charaxos," 202; cites François de Polignac, 114-5, who cites Helmut Kyrieleis (1993). Kyrieleis' 1993 volume I am unable to attain, and therefore cannot confirm whether the ships were dedicated to both Hera and Poseidon, but I have found no other reference to this. Kyrieleis in "The Heraion at Samos" p. 112 states there is a ship dedicated to Hera near the altar at Samos. There is a plaque set up at the modern site of the Samian Heraion near the altar which states a ship dedication was made there, so, it is safe to assume there was a separate ship dedication than the platforms on the beach.

<sup>444</sup> Jamie Morton, *The Role of The Physical Environment in Ancient Greek Seafaring*, 203.

Olympia in the same time period.<sup>445</sup> She also mentions cups that were left near the Isthmian altar, which calls to mind the earlier discussion of cups and their significance at Samos and Perachora. Menadier discusses fragments of black cup dedications that are likely dating to the Geometric period at Perachora, and mentions that they are most similar to ones left at Corinth and Isthmia.<sup>446</sup> Related to this, both deities received votive offerings of anchors – Poseidon at Thasos and Hera at Kroton and possibly Gravisca.<sup>447</sup> Just these few affiliations are sufficient to place Hera and Poseidon in the same realm, and it further validates Hera’s maritime veneration.

### **Vicinity**

Samos and Corinth are not the only two locations in which Hera and Poseidon are worshipped close by to each other. Proximity alone does not equal affiliation, however, when the votive offerings and myths are considered, it becomes more substantial. Firstly, Argive Hera (her cult statue) renewed her virginity yearly in a sanctuary of Poseidon in Nauplion – in a spring called Canathus.<sup>448</sup> Hera goat-eater was worshipped by the Lacedaemonians, “not far” from the sanctuary of Poseidon ‘god of kin.’<sup>449</sup> Jessica Paga and Margaret M. Miles write that the sanctuary of Poseidon at Sounion is one of his many sanctuaries located up high, where ships “were vulnerable to Aegean winds and other turbulence.<sup>450</sup> Hera’s epithet *Akraia* comes to mind when making this comparison. Hera’s sanctuary overlooking the water at Perachora may have been in direct view, and affiliation, with one of Poseidon. T. J. Dunbabin notes that a site was found on top of the Loutraki mountain, visible from Perachora, which is likely a temple to Poseidon.<sup>451</sup>

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<sup>445</sup> Elizabeth R. Gebhard, “The Evolution of a Pan-Hellenic Sanctuary: From Archaeology Towards History at Isthmia,” 126.

<sup>446</sup> Blanche Menadier, *Cult of Hera Akraia*, 91-97.

<sup>447</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity In the Ancient Mediterranean*, 87.

<sup>448</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.38, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>449</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.3.11, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>450</sup> Jessica Paga and Margaret M. Miles, “The Archaic Temple of Poseidon at Sounion,” 689.

<sup>451</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, Preface; Vol 1, 17. This evidence comes from Xenophon describing the Corinthian War in 390-1 BC, where an attack was launched on Perachora, resulting in the Temple of Poseidon to be burnt down.

## Poseidonia

It seems telling that the namesake of Poseidon, Poseidonia, is where Hera is a principal deity. Here she is dubbed Hera *Hippia*, and 6<sup>th</sup>-century figurines were found of her holding mini horses in her hands.<sup>452</sup> Thomas G. Palaima analyzed Linear B tablets and Greek gods named within them, stating there are female versions of both Zeus and Poseidon that seem to be associated with place, such as Posidaeia.<sup>453</sup> This is not to say that Hera was a female version of Poseidon, but she may have been considered a counter-part or at least a female deity just as powerful, existing in the same sphere, filling in gaps where a male deity could not.

## Affinity with Bulls

Poseidon has a special affinity with bulls and horses. Horses will be discussed next, but bulls are another votive dedication which the two deities share. Bulls are found among animal figurines at most Hera sanctuaries, some smaller in number than others, and a small bull skull was buried at Samos with iron spits.<sup>454</sup> Bulls are found in copious amounts at Poseidon sanctuaries, particularly at Isthmia in the Geometric period.<sup>455</sup> Hera is mostly described or given an epithet to do with bovines, but bulls are sometimes used as a substitute. In the *Palatine Anthology*, the Lesbos sanctuary discussed in chapter 3 is referred to as belonging to “bull-faced Hera.”<sup>456</sup>

## Affinity with Horses

Hera’s affiliation with horses is a major similarity she shares with Poseidon. Horses were known for their value and had an aristocratic connotation. They are related to battle and heroes, especially when dedicated as votives both on their own and with a rider. O’Brien suggests that

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<sup>452</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred In the Ancient Greek World*, 172.

<sup>453</sup> Thomas G. Palaima, (Appendix “Linear B Sources”) in *Anthology of Classical Myth*, 446.

<sup>454</sup> Blanche Menadier, *Cult of Hera Akraia*, 163-4.

<sup>455</sup> Arne Thomsen, “Riding for Poseidon: Terracotta Figurines from the Sanctuary of Poseidon,” 111.

<sup>456</sup> *Greek Anthology* 3.9.189, trans. W.R. Paton.

Hera is a tamer of both heroes and horses, citing Achilles' conversation with horses in *Iliad* book 19, the 'taming' of Heracles, and the shortening of heroes' lives and days, such as when she sends the sun away early after Patroclus' death.<sup>457</sup>

Nanno Marinatos, reflecting on the Mistress of Animals, references horses as one of the animals that flank her, stating they are significant because they are symbolic of the male identity which she protects.<sup>458</sup> Fee and Leeming remark that an equine association is common for Indo-European goddesses, especially those who patronize warriors, and they typically drive a great celestial chariot which is "the embodiment of powerful, unpolluted waters ... bringer of life, role of patroness of herds and crops, and function as the ultimate source of all waters and fertility."<sup>459</sup> Hippodameia, another goddess affiliated with horses, is credited by Pausanias as Pelops' charioteer as opposed to his wife, when he describes a frieze on the temple of Zeus at Olympia.<sup>460</sup> She is also said to be the one who established the games for Hera at Olympia.

As mentioned earlier, Poseidon is described in terms of horse characteristics, and Kerenyi suggests his original shape was the horse.<sup>461</sup> Miniature horses, horse-and-riders, and chariots were frequently dedicated to Poseidon. Thomsen uses horse dedications to Poseidon at Isthmia as a way to question horse affiliations with Hera, stating that horses cannot always be used as a sign for a typical Hera dedication given the many horse votives at Isthmia and Nemea.<sup>462</sup> While horse epithets, dedications, and imagery may not be exclusive to Hera, they are

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<sup>457</sup> Homer, *Iliad* 18.239-42 trans. Anthony Verity: "ox-eyed Hera sends the unwearied sun to return, unwillingly, into the streams of the Ocean."; Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 191. Refers to Hera as the tamer of Horses and Heroes when Achilles speaks to his horses in *Iliad* 19. "The horses tell Achilles they will save him because the goddess Hera gave them a voice, he is fated to be tamed in battle by a god and a mortal."

<sup>458</sup> Nanno Marinatos, *The Goddess and the Warrior: The Naked Goddess and Mistress of Animals in Early Greek Religion*, 89.

<sup>459</sup> Christopher R. Fee and David Leeming, *The Goddess: Myths of the Great Mother*, 47. They are referring to Persian Anahita and the Celtic Epona, but they do speak in general terms of mother goddesses.

<sup>460</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 3.4.10, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>461</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 69.

<sup>462</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 114.

still a signifying factor when it comes to her worship. For example, Kyrieleis notes that “in no other Greek sanctuary have so many horse trappings been found as in the Heraion at Samos ... [they] reveal a special trait of [Hera] ... as protector of horses and riders.<sup>463</sup> Also at Samos, numerous wooden little stools were found with horses carved into the sides. Kyrieleis notes that these were frequent in Near Eastern art as pedestals for votive figures, usually with lions, bulls, or sphinxes, though at the Heraion, they are solely supported by horses. He states that they must be associated with the cult of Hera on Samos “in some way not yet understood.”<sup>464</sup>

Outside of Samos, horses frequent Hera sanctuaries, examples include: horse votives as the oldest dedications at Argos<sup>465</sup> along with 48 mounted warriors and a woman on a horse;<sup>466</sup> 32 figurine horse votives at Perachora, with bronze bits, bridles, and weapons;<sup>467</sup> terracotta

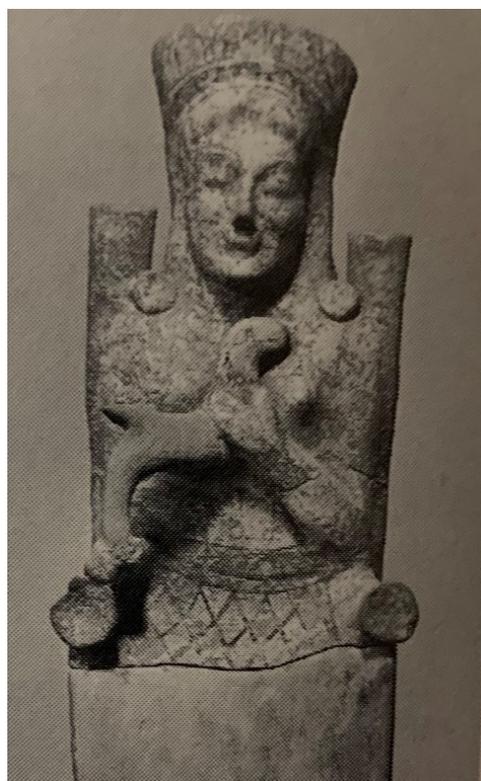


Figure 19. Hera *Hippiā*, holding a small horse to her breast. From Paestum. Archaic figurine. (Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae (LIMC) IV no.2. Eros-Herakles, “Hera #57”).

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<sup>463</sup> Kyrieleis, 114.

<sup>464</sup> Kyrieleis, 114.

<sup>465</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 49.

<sup>466</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 97.

<sup>467</sup> Baumbach, 42; Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 182.

shields at Tiryns along with 15 mounted warrior statues and gorgon masks.<sup>468</sup> See Appendix II for further examples.

## **Olympia**

Hera's altar in the Olympic stadium was called Hippias, beside Poseidon Hippios' altar, where the first races were for Hera by women,<sup>469</sup> which is also attributed to by Pausanias who notes that the two deities' altars (Horse god and goddess) were placed at the starting point for the chariot races.<sup>470</sup> Horse figurine dedications in terracotta, as well as chariot figurines and horse trappings, continued to be popular dedications into the Early Iron Age and Archaic period.<sup>471</sup>

While the horse is known for its aristocratic elements, it was associated with Poseidon prior to the rise of an aristocratic class of warriors that is projected in the Archaic period. Perhaps the association of horses with Hera is also just as longstanding and was originally related to the water, marriage, and creation. For example, at Olympia, hundreds of bronze and terracotta figurines of mostly bulls, horses, and chariots were found in the area of the Altis, at the corner of the temple of Hera. They have been dated anywhere between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>472</sup> They seem to be dedicated prior to the first temple's completion, but during the time when Hera's altar existed.<sup>473</sup> Excavators have deemed these finds as dedications to Zeus, even though evidence for Hera's worship and her temple is present before his.

It is worthwhile to note here that at least 2 ship models were found in the same vicinity as the horse-related figurines (Fig 20.). The excavators write that the ship models are "quite unique

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<sup>468</sup> Baumbach, 68; Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 250.

<sup>469</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 133-4.

<sup>470</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 3.4.15, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>471</sup> Catherine Morgan, "The Origins of Pan-Hellenism," 17.

<sup>472</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, *Anfänge und Frühzeit des Heiligtums von Olympia: die Ausgrabungen am Pelopion 1987-1996*, 25-33; 10.

<sup>473</sup> Michael Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 148-9.

in Olympia ... life at sea is not represented here so far.”<sup>474</sup> They date them to approximately the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC and dub them as exceptions to the typical votive collection.

In Johnston’s catalog of approximately 130 ship figurine discoveries, Zeus is not mentioned as a recipient, and there is only one literary source from the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D which claims a ship was given by a merchant to Zeus *Kasios* as a thank you. The physical evidence that Johnston provides regarding the ship votives comes largely from burial contexts, or votive contexts to Hera, Aphrodite, Apollo, Poseidon, and occasionally Athena.<sup>475</sup> This is not to confidently say that ship votives were never given to Zeus, but it seems far more likely that these were dedications to Hera given the ample evidence for similar dedications elsewhere. With this in mind, it is more convincing that the votive dedications of horses, horse-and-riders, and chariots were meant for Hera and provide a strong example of similarities between herself and Poseidon.

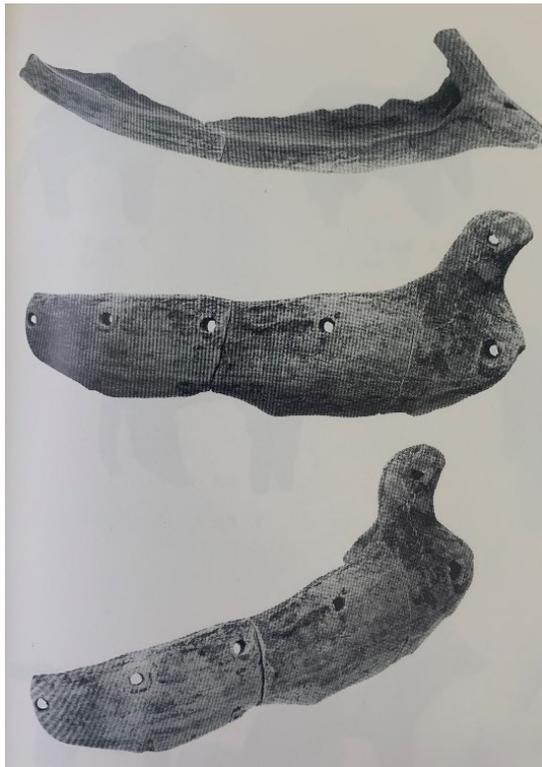


Figure 20. Ship models from Olympia.  
(Helmut Kyrieleis, *Anfänge und Frühzeit des Heiligtums von Olympia*, Table 33)

<sup>474</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, *Anfänge und Frühzeit des Heiligtums von Olympia*, 90; 133-34; Table 33.

<sup>475</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*; p. 135 for literary evidence via Prokopios.

## **Horses and Marriage**

Simon refers to Poseidon's similarities with horses as wild, unruly, and untamed.<sup>476</sup> Hera has also been referred to as untamed. This calls to mind imagery of horses and the sea; from a modern perspective, the galloping of horses, with their manes blowing behind them, is reminiscent of the sound and view of rolling waves. O'Brien compares the taming of horses to the concept of marriage and domestication of both young males and females.<sup>477</sup> This adds another layer to the importance of horses for both Hera and Poseidon. On the one hand, there is the practical aristocratic relation between the two deities, chariot racing, and warrior values. On the other, there is a symbolic connection between the breaking/taming of horses and the breaking/taming of young men and women entering marriage. There is an apparent cyclical connection between animals, in this case the domestication of the horse, marriage, and creation – which also relates to water as the center and vessel of creation. This is fitting for both the eventual lord of the sea, Poseidon, and the mother of all, including the sea, Hera.



Figure 21. Example of the numerous horses on display at the Olympia site museum. They are in the "Zeus Cult" area. (Personal photo: Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece, 2019)

<sup>476</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 75.

<sup>477</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 59.

## **Conclusion**

Hera and Poseidon have a peculiar relationship in regard to their sanctuaries, the locations, their motives in myth, their votive offerings, and their affiliations with horses; there are too many similarities and connections across time and space to be deemed a coincidence. It should be reiterated that these similarities do not mean Hera is the rightful ruler of the sea, or that she has more of a connection to the sea than Poseidon, or that they were panhellenic spouses. They both seem to have very early connections to the Peloponnese as mother and father characters and are tied to the symbol of the horse, which is related not only to aristocratic values but also the idea of taming and marriage. Chariot races were religious in nature, performed at festivals, therefore we can assume that the chariot and horse symbol was not solely used in a competitive and athletic way.

These similarities are suggestive of an early partnership, or if not a partnership, at the very least, a synonymous regional importance in the realm of the sea and creation in which both female and male deities play a role. The votive offerings of horses come to represent aristocratic and warrior values; however, they provide an example of how a votive can evolve but still retain historical and symbolic significance, maintaining a two-fold meaning that would otherwise go unnoticed. It is conceivable that Hera would share similarities with other female deities, but because certain aspects are shared so frequently with Poseidon as well, sometimes solely between the two of them, it ought to be called into question. If certain shared votives and characteristics clearly connect Poseidon with the sea, such as his fierce personality, horse, and ship dedications, there is little reason to deny that they should also connect Hera with the sea.

## **CONCLUSION**

### **Summary**

Hera's characterization as a mother goddess, her power over the sea and elements in myth, locations of many of her sanctuaries in relation to water sources, maritime votive offerings, relationship with heroes and transitional rites, and relationships with other water deities could all be expanded upon in their own separate ways. However, this is a large piece of the puzzle that is Hera. The past four chapters have demonstrated that in addition to being queen of the gods, goddess of marriage, patron deity of Samos and the Argive plain, and numerous other characterizations, Hera is also a goddess of the sea. The maritime aspect of Hera is religious in nature, and it is not distorted by the lens of epic, but rather veiled behind the main themes and encoded in gestures, symbols, and dialogue. If one is not looking for it, it is easy to miss, particularly when taking a one-dimensional approach.

### **Answering the 4 major questions posed in the Introduction:**

#### **Is Hera a goddess of the sea?**

Hera is a maritime goddess in two major ways: First, she is a goddess venerated in relation to the sea and seafaring who could be prayed to for safety both on ships and for those who were left behind on land. Naturally, she is also a goddess related to the consequences of sea travel – colonization, trade, rites of passage and maturity, sustenance, and the responsibility to provide, military prowess, and navigation. Second, she is a goddess with connotations to the sea on a level of liminality and religious symbolism that seems to take root in a subconscious level of cross-cultural mythology. That is, the long affiliation with not just the sea, but water itself that springs from and is an integral part of the earth. Her veneration and personification embody a supreme female goddess capable of parthenogenesis that can anthropomorphically rule over water, or who includes the water as a part of her body. Thus, her watery realm includes the sea, natural

water sources, the elements, wind and rain, weather, and the seasons. Both the practical and spiritual levels can be seen from her characterization in literary sources and evidence from her sanctuaries – both votive offerings and the landscape and accompanying myths. Whether one informs the other is a question we cannot answer for sure, but it does seem that the material worship and literary depictions come from a deeply embedded religious affiliation with water.

### **What are the implications of maritime-themed votive offerings left behind in her sanctuaries?**

The sheer multitude of miniature boat offerings, as well as life-sized ship offerings, especially in comparison to other marine deities at Hera sanctuaries is striking. These alone are a signifier of maritime veneration (see Appendix I for a full listing of maritime offerings). Some have attributed these offerings as a symbol of thanks in seafaring, or war prowess left to the patron goddess to ensure outsiders know of their maritime power, rather than specific imagery appropriate to a sea goddess, but I would argue that the offerings are representative of both. The boat votives and maritime-themed imagery are left behind in more than just seaside sanctuaries, such as Argos and Olympia, which favors the idea that Hera was well known in the world of water, not just to those who were set up on an island or promontory.

It is clear from myth, the location of many of her sanctuaries next to the sea or that are inclusive of natural water sources, and votives, that Hera was invoked during sea journeys, but votive offerings can also symbolize her role in influencing the elements and weather, protection, navigation, and the fertility and survival of both crops and the young warrior and maiden class. We have also seen that votives are capable of symbolizing more than one aspect of the goddess, and maritime-themed imagery can also be related to rites of passage, marriage, fertility, and Hera's role as a mother goddess invoking chthonic and oracular characteristics with the cyclical nature of life and the sea.

### **Did she start as a sea-goddess, become a sea goddess, or leave that identity behind over time?**

I believe that Hera's role as a sea-goddess is derived from the larger religious aspects related to the sea and water itself, which manifested on a practical level in many ways including seafaring. Therefore, she was always a sea-goddess of sorts, particularly considering her very early role as an all-encompassing goddess involved in creation, which is rooted in the essential element of water.

She did not leave the identity behind over time, however, priorities of the societies she belonged to changed, particularly with the rise of the polis and the institution of marriage. Poseidon became the god with the most obvious association with water along with sea-nymphs and other creatures that live in the depths, but Hera maintained a connection and even expressed ownership or dominance with those deities. I do not think this important part of Hera's identity was forgotten or left behind, and echoes of her power over the sea lived on in Roman myth and continues to perpetuate in recognizable modern-day traditions.

The pomegranate, one of Hera's most popular dedications especially regarding fertility for new brides, is an example of a symbol that did not lose its meaning today; O'Brien writes that in modern-day Greece, brides smash a pomegranate on the threshold before entering their new home.<sup>478</sup> The pomegranate is also one of the symbols of the Madonna del Granato previously mentioned in the Theory and Method chapter. Particularly telling is the modern-day festival celebrating her where decorated ships are carried in procession.<sup>479</sup> Today, ships as well as most vessels are characterized as feminine and are given feminine names. The female mother nature is asked for rain, the sea is typically regarded as a 'she,' and the Virgin Mary parthenogenically created the savior of the Christians who goes through many trials before ultimately receiving

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<sup>478</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 66.

<sup>479</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 112.

salvation. It is not a new phenomenon that religion, albeit with completely different structures, adopts old traditions and assigns them with new but recognizable meanings.

### **How does this contribute to the conceptualization of Hera's character and her religious veneration as a whole?**

The maritime aspect aided in constructing the character of Hera, particularly in her early veneration and the choice of locations for her religious worship. She was a goddess with a deep, instinctual connection with the sea. Her affiliation with water and the elements can be seen in her votive offerings and location of her sanctuaries, and the many mythical and literary connections with other maritime deities, including Poseidon and the sea-nymphs, cannot be ignored. This does not overshadow her main responsibility of overseeing marriage; marriage was intertwined with the sea and customs involving water in religion.

Her shared characteristics with the sea assist in understanding her ambivalent and somewhat severe nature. Recognizing her maritime aspect also connects many dots that seemed scattered prior to this research; for example, her role in colonization as a patron deity and why she would be given the epithet of *Hippia* when horse symbolism is typically reserved for Poseidon.

Her involvement in so many realms and her role in such a large corpus of areas allows her to fit in perfectly with the sea and as queen of the gods who oversees all things. The sea to the ancient Greeks was a powerful, strange, terrifying, liminal, and wonderful place that would have required a flexible deity.

## **Implications**

### **The Larger Context**

An important takeaway from this research is that it is important to look for connections between every discipline possible, not solely the archaeology or the literature, and not even just

the two of them together, but to incorporate psychology, anthropology, geology, and the landscape.

The study of Hera and her maritime aspects can shed light on the construction of powerful female religious characters in ancient Greece. It contributes to the larger context of goddess worship over time and how continuity can be seen in small but informative places. A cross-cultural lens should certainly be used in the study of early goddess worship to better understand how it evolved over time regionally. More work needs to be done on the implications of the roles of female deities and the long continuation of such roles and cult personalities. It would also contribute to the long-vexed question of cult continuity in Greek sanctuaries; whether early unnamed or curiously named female deities are connected to deities of the solidified Greek Pantheon or not.

Many Greek museums showcase countless female figurines that go unnamed and unevaluated. In six of the sites' accompanying museums mentioned in this paper, there is a multitude of examples of images and statuettes that date from Neolithic to classical times. Many are slated with the description "could depict Hera, Aphrodite, or Athena ..." and so on. These are found all over the Mediterranean world, sometimes in identical form. Digging into these representations while including folktale, archaeology (including such figurines), and cross-cultural myth would be a massive project. However, it would aid in discerning which votives maintained their meaning and which may have changed or adopted new connotations.

## **Olympia**

It became clear throughout the course of this research that doubt exists as to whether the Temple of Hera at Olympia was reserved exclusively for her. Simon writes "there is little doubt as to who the real proprietor [Hera] of the temple was,"<sup>480</sup> and highlights that it was Cronos at the

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<sup>480</sup> Erika Simon, *The Gods of the Greeks*, trans. Jakob Zeyl, 15.

hill of Olympia who received offerings; early on, the site seems more sacred to Cronos than Zeus,<sup>481</sup> but this is not a conclusion shared by all scholars. Many scholars attribute the early worship to Zeus beginning at the 10<sup>th</sup> century BC based on the votive offerings found in the ash layer near the Pelopion, which seems unusual to begin with, as many of those votives are very typical for Hera sanctuaries. The 2 ship votive dedications recovered in the same location add further evidence to the argument that the temple, and likely the worship before the temple was built, was largely focused on Hera. Perhaps with further excavation, study, and discovery of ship votives, the view on early cult activity at Olympia will change. It would also inform us on who might have been visiting the sanctuary at the time of the ship votive dedications, and what they imply when they are not dedicated at a seaside location. As this paper has argued previously, the symbolism of the ship is capable of a larger religious implication rather than solely asking for favor or thanks in relation to seafaring.

### **The Telos of Hera**

As of yet, there is no comprehensive study of Hera's character and her religious continuity throughout time that involves each sanctuary and each myth. A more balanced picture is in need of creation by looking at all of the aspects and votives with an interdisciplinary lens, recognizing the multiple meanings that one object can represent and the multiple contexts in which they occur. There is more research to be done on marine votives in general, and specifically in Hera sanctuaries, it could be done with translation expertise and the ability to retrieve all relevant archaeological reports. A pan-Greek study of marine votives, where they appear, and in what context would be of immense importance in the continuation of this study.

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<sup>481</sup> Simon and Zeyl, 17.

## **Going Forward**

It is my hope that this is the beginning of a universal conceptualization and recognition of Hera as a maritime deity, and that it will be the spark that uncovers more previously shrouded connections between Hera and the world of water. We began with a quote that highlighted the curious nature of Hera, and it is only fitting to end with one too:

*“Mother of rain, nurse of winds, source of all things  
For without you I recognize not one form of life;  
For you have a share in all mingled with holy air;  
For you alone have power over all and rule  
Stirring with airy whistling down, into the stream.  
But, Blessed Goddess, Many-Named, All-Queen ...”*<sup>482</sup>



Figure 22. "Colossal head of Hera." Limestone. Sometimes identified as a Sphinx or Hera. From an Archaic building, Sanctuary of Olympia.  
(Personal photo: Archaeological Museum of Olympia, Greece, 2019)

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<sup>482</sup> *Orphic Hymn to Hera* lines 4-9, trans. Selina Stewart.

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## **APPENDIX I: SEASIDE SITES AND THEIR FINDS**

The list below is the beginning of what I hope will be a growing catalogue of maritime sites and water-themed votive objects dedicated to Hera. Despite the title, this does not only include sites that are immediately next to the sea, because as we have seen, Hera's watery veneration is derived from more than just a few sanctuary locations. Therefore, this list is comprised of both coastal sites, sites with natural or man-made water sources, and ones in the vicinity of rivers. Additional sites and relevant votive objects to this topic may exist, and I am sure there is much more to be discovered, therefore I do not claim that this is an exhaustive list of every one that exists. However, it is a complete list of what I have come across in the process of my research and provides a picture of the material evidence that supports Hera's veneration as a maritime deity. The main and most well-known sites in this Appendix are accompanied by key points to keep in mind, as well as relevant myths and festivals. Unless a specific date is assigned to a votive object, the date is either unknown or inconclusive. However, unless otherwise listed, most finds are assumed to date between the 10<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC.

### **MAIN SITES**

#### **ARGOS**

- 8km from Argos, lower hill of Mt Euboea<sup>483</sup>
- Warrior tombs nearby (Prosymna)
- Rivers nearby in antiquity (as well as waterfalls and streams), including a river named "The Water of Freedom"<sup>484</sup>
- 265 baskets of vase fragments still to be put together as well as thousands of small terracottas. Inscribed marks on bronzes cannot be made out, all currently in the storeroom of the National Museum in Athens.<sup>485</sup>
- 2900 terracotta figurines, 1800 standing, only one section has been published.<sup>486</sup>

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<sup>483</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 74.

<sup>484</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 14.

<sup>485</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 1.

<sup>486</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 101.

- Argive Homeric epithet “thirsty” because it was a dry zone, the whole area would have been dependent on wells that collected water from rain and nearby streams.<sup>487</sup>
- The city of Argos had at least 4, possibly 6, separate sanctuaries to Hera with separate cults, but the Argive Heraion in the plain is the oldest.<sup>488</sup>

### *Myths and Festivals*

- Daughter of the river god Asterion nurses Hera as a baby, and twined into Hera’s headdress on the cult statue is a herb called Asterion.<sup>489</sup>
- Cult statue has never been found but has been described. Her crown always has the graces/*horai* (seasons), and she holds a sceptre and pomegranate.<sup>490</sup>
- The priestess Chrysis lit a torch in the temple where it caught on fire and was destroyed. Archaeological evidence shows that the first temple was destroyed by fire. A new one was built circa 420 BC.
- The *Hekatombaia* or *Herea* – a festival to commemorate the new year. 100 oxen were sacrificed. The cult statue rode in a wagon and was given a new robe.<sup>491</sup>
  - Variation is that it commemorates her defeating Poseidon for control of Argos, a river god granted her control of the area.<sup>492</sup>
  - Recalls binding her priestess to a wild olive tree.<sup>493</sup>
- Related to the myth of Io, one of Zeus’ many lovers. Hera transforms Io into a cow and has Argos guard her. Zeus sends Hermes to kill Argos and sets Io free, but Hera drives Io mad with a gadfly.
- Connected with the myth of Kleobis and Biton, who drove their mother up to the sanctuary, pulling the cart instead of oxen, and Hera delivers them an early death.
- The Argive Plain is the mythic site of an argument between Poseidon and Hera, in which a river god gives Hera ultimate religious control over the area.
- Pausanias mentions a hero shrine not far from Argos, and nearby there is an additional sanctuary to Hera called “Hera *Hypercheiria*” (she whose hand is above) who was prayed to when there was flooding.<sup>494</sup>

### *Water/Maritime Related Finds:*

- Vase painting sherd depicting a ship<sup>495</sup>

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<sup>487</sup> Baumbach, 62.

<sup>488</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 4-5.

<sup>489</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 137.

<sup>490</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 88.

<sup>491</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 143.

<sup>492</sup> Ludwig Drees, *Olympia: Gods, Artists, and Athletes*, 17.

<sup>493</sup> O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 168.

<sup>494</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.3.13, trans. W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod.

<sup>495</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships and Seamanship*, 144. It is unpublished and unpictured.

- Vessel fragment on red clay with black glaze: an animal in the upper right, the centre is a man about to shoot an arrow, and on the left – the prow of a boat and the back of a rower. Fish can be seen in the background.<sup>496</sup>
- 2 seated figurines with flower decorated ships at their right shoulders (6-5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC)<sup>497</sup>
- Pieces of coral and bits of shell conglomerate<sup>498</sup>
- Terracotta ship model (Late Helladic)<sup>499</sup>
- Several hundred mini terracotta hydriai: many of the inner handles depict a female body (7<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>500</sup>
- Carving of fish and waves that may have been part of the oldest altar<sup>501</sup>
- Vessel fragments with purple fish and scale pattern<sup>502</sup>
- Vessel depicting fish with a flower branch between them<sup>503</sup>
- Fish and wave patterns on vases found in nearby beehive tombs<sup>504</sup>
- 7 ships depicted on a vase found in a Middle Helladic Argive tomb<sup>505</sup>
- Vessels meant for pouring in the shape of a ship<sup>506</sup>
- Women on a vase frieze in a row, all draped, holding a branch in their hands. From waist to feet there are three parallel lines (waves? Geometric period)<sup>507</sup>

## PERACHORA

- Earliest known decorated statue base in Greece, but the cult statue is missing.<sup>508</sup>
- Located on a beach
- Hera *Akraia* and Hera *Limenia* worshipped here, more likely one sanctuary with two temples than two different goddesses worshipped here. Additional epithet: “Hera *Leukolenos*”<sup>509</sup>
- Excavator Payne died suddenly and left much to be deciphered from notes.
- 10-20 tonnes of pottery, the whole temenos area was covered with votive objects. The site is on a slope and has been disturbed many times.<sup>510</sup>

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<sup>496</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 113.

<sup>497</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 96-7.

<sup>498</sup> Baumbach, 85. He does not believe these are amuletic because they are not perforated.

<sup>499</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 152.

<sup>500</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 89.

<sup>501</sup> C. Waldstein et. al, *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 112-4.

<sup>502</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 86-88.

<sup>503</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 91.

<sup>504</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 94.

<sup>505</sup> Shelley Wachsmann, *Seagoing Ships and Seamanship*, 80.

<sup>506</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 152-5.

<sup>507</sup> C. Waldstein et al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 114. Excavators state there is no satisfactory explanation for the lines because no female figure is represented without them. I would argue they are waves or representative of water, perhaps a ceremony for women only invoking a water deity.

<sup>508</sup> Blanche Menadier, “Cult of Hera Akraia,” 24.

<sup>509</sup> Menadier, 131-3.

<sup>510</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 116.

- Most finds at *Limenia* area, over 1500 fragments of terracotta figures with not many published.<sup>511</sup>
- Most objects are documented without stratigraphy, so dating is obscure, and lots of material still has not been published because it is in unlabelled boxes.
- Hera *Akraia* epithet from 2 shards and a marble bowl (5-4<sup>th</sup> centuries BC)
- Hera *Limenia* epithet from a vase inscription (6<sup>th</sup> century BC)
- A spring could have been in the vicinity of the sacred pool in the *Limenia* temenos, but it has never been found and is debated<sup>512</sup>
- A possible nearby temple to Poseidon (see chapter 4)

### *Festivals and Myths*

- Strabo mentions an oracle at the sanctuary of Hera *Akraia*.<sup>513</sup>
- Connected with the myth of Medea's children – their burial site

### *Water/Maritime Related Finds:*

- Figurine with a flower-decorated ship at the right shoulder (Has been identified between the 8<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, seems identical to the ones found at other sites)<sup>514</sup>
- A cup depicting two ships surrounded by dolphins<sup>515</sup>
- Mini terracotta boat (8-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC)<sup>516</sup>
- Two bronze fishhooks (8-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC)<sup>517</sup>
- 30 vases preserved in all: Poseidon on some of them. Eros riding a dolphin, Trophy on a stone heap, goat, bird in flight, windswept tree (3<sup>rd</sup> century BC)<sup>518</sup>
- At least 4 Egyptian seals with boat representations, one with a man in a boat (found in “lower levels” but it was documented without stratigraphy)<sup>519</sup>
- Pyxides with painted fish<sup>520</sup>
- 6 coral bits (Geometric deposit, 8<sup>th</sup> century BC?)<sup>521</sup>

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<sup>511</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 227-8.

<sup>512</sup> Blanche Menadier, “Cult of Hera Akraia,” 42.

<sup>513</sup> John Salmon, “The Heraeum at Perachora, and the Early History of Corinth and Megara,” 165.

<sup>514</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 40.

<sup>515</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 339. Other side depicts a fallen warrior.

<sup>516</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 40.

<sup>517</sup> Baumbach, 40.

<sup>518</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 364.

<sup>519</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 461. In the section on “Egyptian type objects” but undated.

<sup>520</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 112.

<sup>521</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 2. Mentions these 6; Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 77. Also cites this from the Geometric deposit. Vol 2 (526-7) mentions worked pieces of coral that were likely amuletic. 4 “unworked” pieces listed in the section on miscellaneous objects.

- Shells. 1 Engraved tridacna shell<sup>522</sup>
- Krater handles depicting dolphins<sup>523</sup>
- Sirens depicted on a cup<sup>524</sup>
- Depiction of a dolphin's nose<sup>525</sup>

## SAMOS

- Heraion is on the south side of Samos, 100m from the sea. In antiquity, it would have been a bay.<sup>526</sup>
- Sacred tree attested to near the altar
- Original name of the island: "Parthenia."<sup>527</sup>
- Still much to be published, 1000 boxes of pottery lost during WW2.<sup>528</sup>
- Earliest temple was built in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. At the time, a large water basin was built on the south side of the temenos. The sanctuary would have been entered via the sea.<sup>529</sup>

### *Myths and Festivals*

- Admete (name meaning "untamed," priestess of Argos) flees Argos for Samos. Argos sends pirates to steal Hera's icon; they abandon it on the beach and flee to their ships. One myth claims that when they tried to bring the wooden statue onto their ship, the sea stopped moving. Admete bathes the icon in the river Imbrasos and puts her back into the temple.<sup>530</sup>
  - Other variations say that the inhabitants of the Island found the statue on the beach, thought it ran away on its own, and bound the statue to a *lygos* tree so that it could not run away.<sup>531</sup>
- Other myths state that the sanctuary was founded by Argonauts, who bring Hera's cult statue from Argos.<sup>532</sup>
- Samians believed Hera was born under the *lygos* tree near the river Imbrasos.<sup>533</sup>
- The Heraia festival became the *Herios Gamos* festival to celebrate the wedding of Zeus and Hera.<sup>534</sup>
- The Tonaia was the "roping festival" in which they re-enacted the return of Hera's cult statue. The statue is carried to the river, bathed, and purified to restore her virginity, fed sacrificial

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<sup>522</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 527.

<sup>523</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 232.

<sup>524</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 338-43.

<sup>525</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 344, #3733. Excavators were not sure what the shape belonged to.

<sup>526</sup> Vladimir Milojcic, *Samos I*, 1.

<sup>527</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 156.

<sup>528</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 147-8.

<sup>529</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 30-31.

<sup>530</sup> Marguerite Rigoglioso, *The Cult of Divine Birth in Ancient Greece*, 120.

<sup>531</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 55.

<sup>532</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 12-15.

<sup>533</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 171.

<sup>534</sup> Baumbach, 172.

cakes, and given a new peplos to wear.<sup>535</sup>

### *Water/Maritime Related Finds:*

- 40 miniature wooden boats (7<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>536</sup>
- Pieces of coral (7<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>537</sup>
- Piece of stalactite (7<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>538</sup>
- Bronze figurine of a dolphin (6<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>539</sup>
- 2 life-sized ship bases in the south temenos (7<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>540</sup>
- Ship dedication near the altar<sup>541</sup>
- 7 individual ship foundations (630/20-590 BC)<sup>542</sup>
- Inscription on bronze plate stating 6 ships dedicated here, and one to Poseidon (6<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>543</sup>
- Inscription “Hegesagores captured 15 ships of the enemy at Memphis.”<sup>544</sup>
- Statue base inscription “conquered 8 ships.”<sup>545</sup>
- Coins with representation of ships<sup>546</sup>
- Conical cups (1700 BC)<sup>547</sup>
- Cups (630 BC) many found sunk in the same wells as the wooden boats<sup>548</sup>

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<sup>535</sup> Myth and variations attested to in almost every source that discusses Samos. See O’Brien, Kerenyi, Rigoglioso, Spretnak, and Baumbach for examples.

<sup>536</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” 112; Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 107-113.

<sup>537</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 157. Baumbach assumes these to be of amuletic value, along with the stalactite and rock crystal. He does note, however, that Kyrieleis thought these objects were “curiosities.”

<sup>538</sup> Baumbach, 157. Related to caves, stalactites are found in the context of sea-nymph worship as well.

<sup>539</sup> Fig. 11, personal photo.

<sup>540</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 107-113. They write, “a place for mooring boats had been built at the edge of road ... the bases for two [ships,] one behind the other.” One stone foundation was 25m long.

<sup>541</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” 112-13. Kyrieleis writes, “a real boat set up as votive offering next to altar of Hera.” He does not give a date. John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 155. Pedley also notes the boat next to the altar. Upon visiting the Samian Heraion in 2019, I saw the plaque on the Sacred Way noting where the boat stood, but the area has now been back filled.

<sup>542</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 42-46.

<sup>543</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 165. “Dedicated by Amphidemos.” The inscription is unpublished.

<sup>544</sup> Baumbach 165. Inscription was found inside the Heraion.

<sup>545</sup> Baumbach 165. Statue base inside the Heraion.

<sup>546</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “The Heraion at Samos,” 112-3. Ships were on Samian coins continuously, Kyrieleis does not give a specific end-date, but notes that they were “still on later coins.”

<sup>547</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 27-34. They were found at the altar, see chapter 2 on the significance of cups.

<sup>548</sup> Hans, Clemente, and Niemeier, 42-46.

## TIRYNS

- Heraion on the upper citadel, built on remains of Mycenaean megaron
- Altar is on the Great Megaron<sup>549</sup>
- Burials below after collapse of palace<sup>550</sup>
- Proximity to the sea

### *Myths and Festivals*

- Herakles connected to Hera here, she drove him mad, and he needed to settle in Tiryns and serve King Eurystheus
- First cult statue is a carving of her in a wild pear tree, 'that the Argives stole from Tiryns'<sup>551</sup>

### *Water/Maritime Related Finds:*

- 2 figurines of a goddess with a little boat decked with flowers (One author says 8-7<sup>th</sup> centuries BC, another says 6-5)<sup>552</sup>
- 1 ship model (with a possible helmsman, Archaic period)<sup>553</sup>
- 13<sup>th</sup> century BC floor of the megaron depicted a scene of dolphins and a representation of an octopus<sup>554</sup>
- 4 krater fragments of processions of maidens holding branches, wavy lines surround them which have been suggested to represent water (Geometric-orientalising periods)<sup>555</sup>
- Gold-seal ring with an enthroned goddess and representation of a ship (16-15<sup>th</sup> centuries BC). Ship has a row of garlands from the masthead to stern, also found on Minoan seals.<sup>556</sup>
- 2000 female figurines (could be archaic or earlier). Most are enthroned and wear a headdress. Some hold flowers and wreaths. Elaborate figures are wearing pendants in the shape of a pomegranate. Some of the figurines have a footstool and base, as well as flower arrangements "which could have been mounted on small boats."<sup>557</sup>
- Krater that could portray a bird-boat (Late Helladic IIIC)<sup>558</sup>

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<sup>549</sup> Alkestis Papademetriou, *Tiryns: A Guide to Its History and Archaeology*, 57.

<sup>550</sup> Papademetriou, 52.

<sup>551</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.17, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>552</sup> For variations, see Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 67; Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 112-13; Hannah L Ringheim, "Hera and the Sea, Decoding Dedications at the Samian Heraion."

<sup>553</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 98; 104 #T-13; and Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 155.

<sup>554</sup> Alkestis Papademetriou, *Tiryns: A Guide to Its History and Archaeology*, 43.

<sup>555</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 62. Baumbach states that these are not found anywhere else and they must have been made in the Argolid. He also states that these apply to scenes of horse leaders or processions.

<sup>556</sup> Alkestis Papademetriou, *Tiryns: A Guide to Its History and Archaeology*, 70.

<sup>557</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 243.

<sup>558</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 183.

## **ADDITIONAL SITES**

The following additional sites are also dedicated to Hera near water and/or with maritime-related finds. They may not have been mentioned in the preceding chapters as much as the more detailed sites above, but they are crucial in understanding the widespread maritime veneration of Hera. Other notable finds are included as well as the maritime votives if applicable.

### **BOEOTIA**

- All 4 harbours are regarded as Hera's cult sites. "Aidespsos, Chalkis, Eritrea, and Karystos."<sup>559</sup>

### **CORFU<sup>560</sup>**

- Temple 610 BC
- Largely unpublished thus far
- Characterized as Heraion based on finds
- In the *Argonautica*, the Argonauts (with help from nymphs) prepare Medea a bridal bed in a sacred cave off the coast of Corfu, in "Makris."<sup>561</sup>

### **CORINTH**

- Hera *Akraia* worshipped<sup>562</sup>
- Epithet: Hera *Bunaea*<sup>563</sup>
- 17 boats found in "Potters Quarter"(Archaic)<sup>564</sup>
- Additional temple (apsidal building) to Hera 5km south of Corinth's harbour, Kenchrai. Ancient Solygeia, modern village of Galataki. Dated between 8-5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC. Mycenaean sherds were found, inconclusive stratigraphy, but the site may have been in use during the Bronze Age.<sup>565</sup>

### **CYME (?)**

- In the *Homeric Hymn to Xenoi*, it is stated, "you folk dwelling in the steep city of lovely eyed Hera." The commentary on the translation states that this hymn fragment was found at the end of a manuscript and refers to Hera's city of Cyme, on the Aeolian

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<sup>559</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 140.

<sup>560</sup> Corfu Section: Philip Sapirstein, *The Monumental Archaic Roof of the Temple of Hera at Mon Repos, Corfu*, 32.

<sup>561</sup> Apollonios Rhodios, *Argonautika* 4: 1130-1135, trans. Peter Green.

<sup>562</sup> T. Gantz, *Early Greek Myth: A Guide to Literary and Artistic Sources*, 369.

<sup>563</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.2.5, trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>564</sup> Paul Forsythe Johnston, *Ship and Boat Models in Ancient Greece*, 71.

<sup>565</sup> Alexander Mazarakis Ainian, *From Rulers Dwellings to Temples*, 65.

coast of Asia Minor, south of Lesbos.<sup>566</sup>

## GRAVISCA

- Connected to Samos<sup>567</sup>
- 1 boat found in a temple to Hera<sup>568</sup>
- Cups with inscribed dedications to Hera<sup>569</sup>
- Possible votive anchors<sup>570</sup>

## KROTON

- Founded 710 BC<sup>571</sup>
- Small harbour by the promontory<sup>572</sup>
- River Aisaros was adjacent, a town on both sides of the river<sup>573</sup>
- Hera Lacinia worshipped on a promontory six miles SW<sup>574</sup>
- Temple structure is 5<sup>th</sup> century BC (Doric)<sup>575</sup>
- There are 6<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> century BC temples to Hera<sup>576</sup>
- Votive anchors found<sup>577</sup>

## LESBOS

- Temple to Hera might have been at Messon, near an ancient harbour<sup>578</sup>
- Archaic graves and pottery found near the site<sup>579</sup>
- 600 BC<sup>580</sup>

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<sup>566</sup> Diane Rayor, *The Homeric Hymns*, 34.

<sup>567</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 83.

<sup>568</sup> Demetriou, 83. Product of Sardinian culture.

<sup>569</sup> Demetriou, 86-87.

<sup>570</sup> Demetriou, 87. They were found in the Aphrodite cult space, but area is also in Hera's context.

<sup>571</sup> Irad Malkin, "Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece," 43.

<sup>572</sup> John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies And Trade*, 179-80.

<sup>573</sup> Boardman, 179-80.

<sup>574</sup> Boardman, 179-80.

<sup>575</sup> Boardman, 179-80.

<sup>576</sup> Boardman, 181.

<sup>577</sup> Boardman, 179-80.

<sup>578</sup> Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti, "Héra Et Zeus à Lesbos," 27. Vestiges of a monumental temple found from 4<sup>th</sup> century BC.; Deborah Boedeker, "Hera and the Return of Charaxos," 199. She suggests the site could have been near Messon or Cape Phokas where a Hellenistic temple to Dionysus is located.

<sup>579</sup> Deborah Boedeker, "Hera and the Return of Charaxos," 200. She cites Nigel Spencer who states that a late 4<sup>th</sup> century BC temple is visible that covers an undated earlier structure, which could have been open air.

<sup>580</sup> Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge and Gabriella Pironti, "Héra Et Zeus à Lesbos," 199-200.

## OLYMPIA

- Earliest temple is dedicated to Hera. Earliest finds are not attributed to her, even though they are located under her temple<sup>581</sup>
- 2 ship models dated to approximately 8<sup>th</sup> century BC<sup>582</sup>
- Temple is at the foot of Kronos hill located near a natural spring<sup>583</sup>
- Temple to Hera and Temple to Mother of the Gods mark the boundary of the Altis<sup>584</sup>
- Connection with Peloponnese<sup>585</sup>
- Epithet: Hera *Olympia*, Hera *Hippia*<sup>586</sup>
- River Kladeos nearby
- 15m from the largest river in the peninsula, the sacred river Alpheus, which connects to the Ionian Sea<sup>587</sup>
- River Peneus is also nearby, forming the main area of Elis<sup>588</sup>

## POSEIDONIA - FOCE DEL SELE

- 8.5 km north of Poseidonia at river Sele<sup>589</sup>
- 7<sup>th</sup> century BC finds, temple dated to 570 BC<sup>590</sup>
- 2 pieces of coral found (perforated) 6-5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC<sup>591</sup>
- Figurines of pregnant women, doves<sup>592</sup>
- Bronze fishhooks found<sup>593</sup>
- Dog skeletons<sup>594</sup>
- In antiquity, it was believed the cult was derived from the Argolid, but current scholarship has doubts<sup>595</sup>

## POSEIDONIA – PAESTUM

- Greek colony in Italy
- The Hills and sea form natural boundaries<sup>596</sup>
- 7<sup>th</sup>-century founding<sup>597</sup>

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<sup>581</sup> Thomas Davidson, “The Recent Excavations and Discoveries at Athens and Olympia,” 224-5.

<sup>582</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, “Anfänge und Frühzeit des Heiligtums von Olympia,” 90; 133-4.

<sup>583</sup> Olympia Vikatou, *Olympia: The Archaeological Site and the Museum*, 11.

<sup>584</sup> Wilhelm Dörpfeld, *Alt-Olympia* Vol 1, 50.

<sup>585</sup> Michael Scott, *Delphi and Olympia*, 185.

<sup>586</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 121.

<sup>587</sup> Ludwig Drees, *Olympia: Gods, Artists, and Athletes*, 11.

<sup>588</sup> Drees, 11.

<sup>589</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 105.

<sup>590</sup> Baumbach, 133.

<sup>591</sup> Baumbach, 138.

<sup>592</sup> Baumbach, 136-7.

<sup>593</sup> Baumbach, 140: Cites Capaccio, 227 – dating and place of origin is uncertain.

<sup>594</sup> Baumbach, 137.

<sup>595</sup> Baumbach 142-4.

<sup>596</sup> Baumbach, 105.

<sup>597</sup> Baumbach, 105.

- Votive dump found in front of the altar and 25m east. Female figurines with flowers, babies at breasts. Hundreds of swaddled baby figurines.<sup>598</sup>
- Coral amulets worn on figurines<sup>599</sup>
- Pieces of coral<sup>600</sup>
- Two or three temples in the city and a dozen smaller temples dedicated to Hera.<sup>601</sup>

## SARDINIA

- Sanctuary has not been located, but excavators of Etruscan tombs state that a bronze boat from Sardinia was a dedication to Hera.<sup>602</sup>

## THRACE

- Samian colony<sup>603</sup>
- 600 BC
- Inscription to Hera *Limenia*<sup>604</sup>

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<sup>598</sup> Baumbach, 121.

<sup>599</sup> Baumbach, 114.

<sup>600</sup> Baumbach, 114. Cites their purpose as thanks to Hera after they had fulfilled purpose as *apotropaia*.

<sup>601</sup> C. Kerenyi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 167-8.

<sup>602</sup> Denise Demetriou, *Negotiating Identity in the Ancient Mediterranean*, 87-88.

<sup>603</sup> Deborah Boedeker, "Hera and the Return of Charaxos," 201: "Samian colony Heraion Teichos [located] on the Propontis, place name strongly suggests there was another. Inscription from Thasos mentions Hera *Limenia* as well."

<sup>604</sup> Boedeker, 201.



Figure 23. Map of Hera Sanctuaries in Greece - Associated with Water

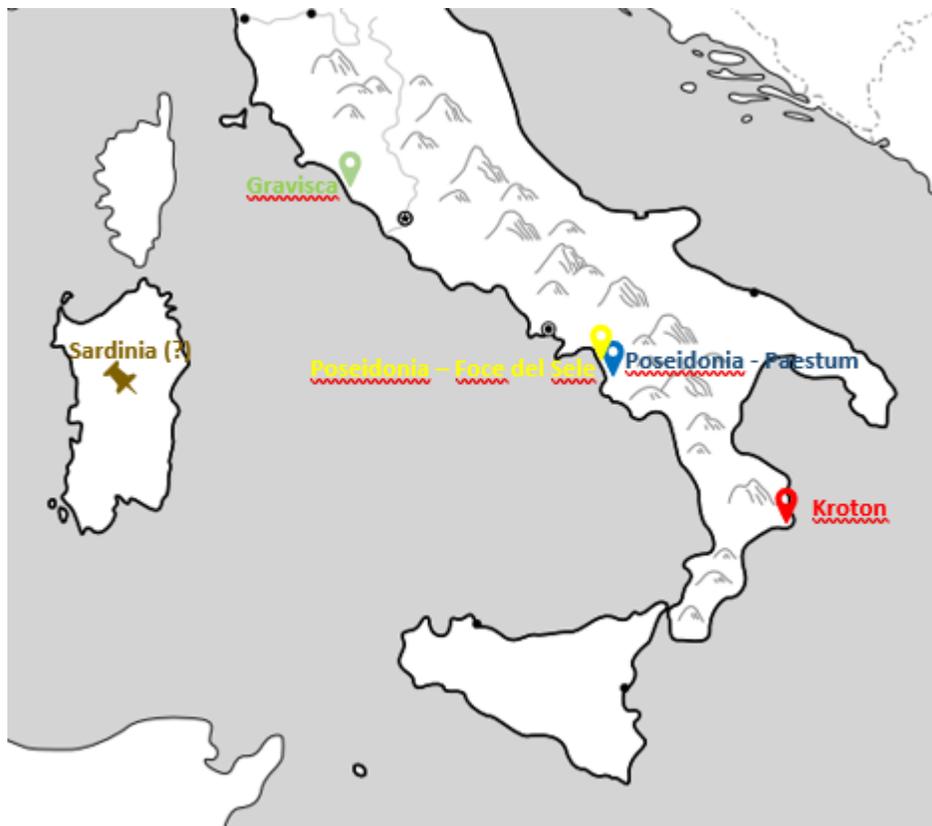


Figure 24. Map of Hera Sanctuaries in Italy - Associated with Water

## **APPENDIX II: SUPPLEMENTARY SITES AND FINDS**

This appendix is comprised of three sections. The first section highlights many notable finds that may not be specifically related to the maritime characteristics of Hera, but they do support her veneration as a mother goddess: such as imagery related to transitional rites, chthonic aspects, tree cults, animals, birds, fruit, and flowers.

The second section focuses specifically on heroes (warriors) and horses. Hera's relation to heroes and horses was outlined in chapters three and four. It was not possible to include most of the related material finds that support the conclusions made; thus, many of them are listed here.<sup>605</sup> This is a start to unfolding the mystery of Hera's origins and her connection to heroes and young men throughout the Minoan to Archaic periods. Centaur-related imagery is also listed. In myth, centaurs were known to raise and train some of the most famous heroes (such as Chiron training Jason, Achilles, and Herakles), and they do often appear in sanctuaries of Hera. O'Brien remarks on an urn found at Knossos that depicts a goddess of vegetation standing on a chariot and suggests it is reminiscent of spring arriving every year, and that women were likely associated with the chariot and horses prior to men.<sup>606</sup>

It is important to note that both sections do not include a comprehensive list of all the relevant finds that have been documented, which could be multiple volumes on its own. Section 1 is especially useful to relate back to when reading chapters 1 and 2, and Section 2 is more relevant to chapters 3 and 4.

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<sup>605</sup> While not a material find, one literary note is worth mentioning as well. In *Seven Against Thebes*, by Aeschylus (500-400 BC), Hera is invoked in the context of battle: "They utter sharp cries of terror / I hear the rattle of chariots around the city! / O Lady Hera! / The sockets of their heavy-laden axles are squealing!" Aeschylus trans. Alan Sommerstein, *Seven Against Thebes*. *Loeb Classical Library* 145, p 166-7.

<sup>606</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 51.

Section 3 is a supplementary list of Hera sites and their notable finds that I came across in my research that are not specifically related to the water, but that I hope will be useful in research going forward, in trying to create a more complete picture of the worship and characterization of Hera across time and space.

The same dating advisories as Appendix I apply here.

## **SECTION 1: NOTABLE FINDS**

### **ARGOS**

- Terracotta Mycenaean figurines wearing a peplos<sup>607</sup>
- Limestone pillar tapers towards the top, a possible form of a cult statue<sup>608</sup>
- Terracotta models of buildings (8<sup>th</sup> century BC)<sup>609</sup>
- Upper stoa of the temple, a stone with two carved birds<sup>610</sup>
- 5 groups of females with rolls of clay (babies?) on their laps (7-6 centuries)<sup>611</sup>
- Terracotta dove with its young under a wing<sup>612</sup>
- 24 standing figurines of women with an animal in hand, one carries a bow<sup>613</sup>
- 50 clay miniature baskets<sup>614</sup>
- Terracotta cakes and tables<sup>615</sup>
- Bird and pomegranate figurines on decorated bases (8-7 centuries)<sup>616</sup>
- Vase fragments depicting water birds<sup>617</sup>
- Engraved ivory depicting a snake next to two female figures who hold hands and branches, between them is an upside-down bird.<sup>618</sup>
- Hundreds if not thousands of cattle figurines, mostly unpublished
- Bronze cakes, flowers, trees, a foot with a sandal.<sup>619</sup>
- Seals and scarabs, all perforated (8-7<sup>th</sup> centuries), made of ivory and stone. 41 faience scarabs<sup>620</sup>

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<sup>607</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 4-5.

<sup>608</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 42-43.

<sup>609</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 63.

<sup>610</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 112-14.

<sup>611</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 91.

<sup>612</sup> Baumbach, 83.

<sup>613</sup> Baumbach, 85.

<sup>614</sup> Baumbach, 92.

<sup>615</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 16.

<sup>616</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 93.

<sup>617</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 108. 7 mentioned.

<sup>618</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 343-7. The excavators state that most engraved stones, gems, and ivories, are dated to around the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC. They are engraved with “limited themes” mostly humans and horses, birds and snakes.

<sup>619</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, 16.

<sup>620</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 84.

- 6 figurines depicting Hera who hold fruit and doves to their breast (6-5<sup>th</sup> centuries)<sup>621</sup>

## PERACHORA

- Terracotta female figurines with birds, fruit, and flowers.
- 28 figurines of women holding doves to their breast (530-480 BC). Some with pomegranates, wreaths, and seeds in their hands (7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries BC)<sup>622</sup>
- Female figurine holding a branch<sup>623</sup>
- Female figurine on a throne<sup>624</sup>
- At least 242 seated female figurines, many described as bird-faced (7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>625</sup>
- A life-size bronze dove, likely meant to be suspended (7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>626</sup>
- Gold seal rings depicting processions of women<sup>627</sup>
- 200 bronze phialai from the sacred pool (6-5<sup>th</sup> centuries BC)<sup>628</sup>
- 50 unbroken kalathoi and several thousand kalathoi fragments (8-6 centuries)<sup>629</sup>
- 4 terracotta building models (Geometric deposit)<sup>630</sup>
- Votive cake models, possibly wreaths (8<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>631</sup>
- Bronzes from *Limenia* area: birds, horses, lions, possibly held in Hera's hand. (750 BC)
- A flying bird on at least 15 seals<sup>632</sup>
- 10 vase paintings depicting dancing women with joined hands, two hold wreaths and one holds twigs.<sup>633</sup>
- Vessel fragments depicting birds perched on florals, floral columns, a bird in a tree<sup>634</sup>
- Hundreds of terracotta figurines of animals, fruit, and flowers
- Tall pyxides: painted depictions of two birds, a monkey, horseman with harnessed horse, two men fighting, also many of birds, animals, rays, and flowers.<sup>635</sup>
- Figurines of pomegranates and poppy heads<sup>636</sup>

## SAMOS

- 26 veiled korai (7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>637</sup>

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<sup>621</sup> Baumbach, 79.

<sup>622</sup> See Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 1-55 for many variations.

<sup>623</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 171-2.

<sup>624</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 171-2.

<sup>625</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 247.

<sup>626</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 133-4.

<sup>627</sup> Elsi Spathari, *Corinthia-Argolida*, 54-55.

<sup>628</sup> Blanche Menadier, "Cult of Hera Akraia," 104.

<sup>629</sup> Menadier, 114.

<sup>630</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 32-33; Menadier, 117.

<sup>631</sup> Baumbach, 34; Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 1, 67.

<sup>632</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 416.

<sup>633</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 23.

<sup>634</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 107.

<sup>635</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 107-19.

<sup>636</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, examples #1263 and #1311A.

<sup>637</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 158; Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos* 21,1, 107-113.

- Wooden relief of an embracing couple, an eagle and couch between them (7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>638</sup>
- Wooden utensils and furniture: 200 wooden carved items in the wells leading to the sea (where the wooden boats were found, they are a part of this group).<sup>639</sup>
- 35 building models (8-6<sup>th</sup> century, 20 are protogeometric)<sup>640</sup>
- Real/terracotta/bronze/ivory poppy seeds, pomegranates, pomegranate seeds, olives, olive pits, poppy heads (mostly 6<sup>th</sup> century, but these are popular offerings throughout the whole period of the sanctuary).<sup>641</sup>
- Most animal bones are cows and wild fallow deer (no thigh bones of any animal)<sup>642</sup>
- Animal figurines, including 9 representations of birds (most date to the 8<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>643</sup>
- Three votives in representation of stairs, and many columns, capitals, pillars<sup>644</sup>
- Popular votives are protomes, griffins, cauldrons. Over 300 recovered (mostly 7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>645</sup>
- 210 phiale from the temple of Hera (libations, chthonic, oracular?) 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD coins from Samos show her cult statue with round items that could be phiale according to Baumbach.<sup>646</sup>
- Wooden cult image of Hera, now lost<sup>647</sup>
- Wooden statue base (8<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>648</sup>

## TIRYNS

- Seated female figurines holding babies and cakes (7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>649</sup>
- Female figurines wearing pomegranate pendants<sup>650</sup>

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<sup>638</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 159-60.

<sup>639</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 165-6; Hannah L Ringheim, "Hera and the Sea, Decoding Dedications at the Samian Heraion," 18; Baumbach 148-9; Graham Shipley, *A History of Samos 800-188 BC*, 85.

<sup>640</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 160; Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 123. Excavators write that there are some made of limestone, two are made of clay, at least one is wooden. They state that some of the oldest votives are of these buildings.

<sup>641</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 163; Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 110; John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 166; Michael Scott, "Temples and Sanctuaries," 232.

<sup>642</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 166.

<sup>643</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 163.

<sup>644</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 123-44.

<sup>645</sup> Hans, Clemente, and Niemeier, 163-5.

<sup>646</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 168. From the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC Inventory List.

<sup>647</sup> Vladimir Milojcic, *Samos I*, 1-5. He writes that it was found near a rocky outcrop that has protection for small boats, in the lygos bushes, however because there were lots of disturbances and modern excavations that took place beforehand, the age and location is questionable.

<sup>648</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 37-39.

<sup>649</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries* 58-60; Alkestis Papademetriou, *Tiryms: A Guide to Its History and Archaeology*, 60.

<sup>650</sup> Baumbach, 67.

- More than 1000 terracotta figurines, some throned (mostly female)<sup>651</sup>
- Standing figurines with fruit in left hands, some with doves to their breast, some holding cakes<sup>652</sup>
- Figurines carrying baskets on their heads (550-480)<sup>653</sup>
- 350 terracotta mini baskets (6-5 centuries)<sup>654</sup>
- 9 statuettes of animals – rams? 4 birds, maybe doves. (6-5<sup>th</sup> centuries)<sup>655</sup>
- 3 terracotta pomegranates (8<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>656</sup>
- Mini architectural models of pillars (4 or 5) from 750-650 BC.<sup>657</sup>
- Vases with holes in the bases (750-650 BC) from the bothros<sup>658</sup>
- 206 bronze phials<sup>659</sup>
- Bird-like figurines (Archaic?)<sup>660</sup>

## **SECTION 2: HORSES AND HEROES**

### **ARGOS**

- 48 mounted warrior figurines, including a woman on a horse (7-6 centuries).<sup>661</sup>
- “Poros fragment of the hock of a colossal horse” possibly part of a pediment of the old temple.<sup>662</sup>
- Oldest votives here are bovine and horse-themed.
- Pithos depicting Herakles and a centaur, he is shooting an arrow.<sup>663</sup>
- Terracotta figurines of centaurs.<sup>664</sup>
- A bowl with an image of a centaur.<sup>665</sup>
- Friezes of men on the rims of bowls, sometimes of warriors:<sup>666</sup> 11 for certain depicted in combat.

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<sup>651</sup> Attested to in Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, and Melissa Veters, “Private and Communal Ritual at Post-Palatial Tiryns.”

<sup>652</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 54-55; Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 244.

<sup>653</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 59-60.

<sup>654</sup> Baumbach, 61.

<sup>655</sup> Baumbach, 67.

<sup>656</sup> Baumbach, 67.

<sup>657</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 135.

<sup>658</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 69-70.

<sup>659</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 206-7.

<sup>660</sup> Bruggeman, 103.

<sup>661</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 97.

<sup>662</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 140.

<sup>663</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 182.

<sup>664</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 15.

<sup>665</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 163.

<sup>666</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol Vol 2, 112.

- Bowl friezes from old temple terrace: fallen warrior, over him a bird flies<sup>667</sup>; bird between the legs of an armed warrior;<sup>668</sup> a horses body and a man carrying a shield, to the left is a woman holding a staff and chiton; a woman and centaur who is armed;<sup>669</sup> Herakles attacking an unknown figure with a sword.<sup>670</sup>
- Several bronze mirrors and other transitional items: 2000 bronze pins, 110 bronze fibulae, 800 dress pins, jewelry, and pendants (8-6<sup>th</sup> centuries) <sup>671</sup>
- Bronze tripods (Geometric)<sup>672</sup>
- Earliest bronzes are animals: horses, dogs, bulls, pigs, bears, cocks, birds, centaurs, serpents, tortoises, lions. Most horses do not have riders.
- Two females on a chariot with horses in a terracotta relief.<sup>673</sup>
- Nearby Prosymna tombs associated with Hera: “At the same time, however, pottery and votives of Late Geometric date discovered at the Heraeum site testify to the establishment of the Hera cult. On the basis of the votives from the tombs and the sanctuary, it is impossible to tell which came first, hero cult or Hera cult, but it is apparent that the two were closely linked.”<sup>674</sup>

## OLYMPIA

- Altar to Hera *Hippia* at Olympia’s starting gate
- Horse and horse-and-rider figurines dominate the early votive material<sup>675</sup>
  - Hundreds of horse figurines found in the “black layer” under the temple of Hera dating to approximately 10<sup>th</sup> century BC (to 8<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>676</sup>
  - Also found in the black layer:
    - Bronze animal figurines (over 30, Geometric)
    - Fragments of wheels
    - Terracotta figurines: Horses and cattle most prominent, some birds and cows.
    - Bronze tripods and cauldrons, as well as weapons (spearheads, swords, helmets)

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<sup>667</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 161.

<sup>668</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 162.

<sup>669</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 163.

<sup>670</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 163.

<sup>671</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2. Many listed between pages 200-274.

<sup>672</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 1, 63.

<sup>673</sup> Waldstein et. al, Vol 2, 55.

<sup>674</sup> James C. Wright, “The Old Temple Terrace at the Argive Heraeum and the Early Cult of Hera in the Argolid,” 193.

<sup>675</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, *Anfänge und Frühzeit des Heiligtums von Olympia*, 1-25.

<sup>676</sup> Kyrieleis, 2-24; 27; 35. Kyrieleis and his team re-excavated after Dörpfeld and found even more votive figurines and animals made of bronze and terracotta when they cleared the terrain of the Hera altar. He cites the finds as sub-Mycenaean, Protogeometric, and Geometric; John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred In the Ancient Greek World*, 102.

## POSEIDONIA – FOCE DEL SELE

- Terracotta pomegranates, heads, and horses<sup>677</sup>
- Horse bits and a horse skeleton<sup>678</sup>
- Worshipped as Kourotrophos and Hoplosmia<sup>679</sup>

## POSEIDONIA – PAESTUM

- Bronze arrowheads, swords, shields<sup>680</sup>
- 6<sup>th</sup>-century figurines of horses, 8 small figurines with horses held to breast, or mini horses in their hands<sup>681</sup>
- Inscription attests to figurines representing Hera *Hippia* (6<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>682</sup>
- Representations of Chiron the centaur<sup>683</sup>

## PERACHORA

- Depiction of a chariot with horses, behind it is a tree (late 6<sup>th</sup> century).<sup>684</sup>
- Depiction of a horse tied to a capital of a column.<sup>685</sup>
- Lions and centaurs predominate on seals from the 8-7<sup>th</sup> centuries.<sup>686</sup>
- 32 plain figurines of horses, 5 with harness and 15 with a rider (7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries from Corinth).
- Horse bits and bridles (7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries)<sup>687</sup>
- 4 bronze horse trappings.<sup>688</sup>
- 4 swords, 5 spearheads, 30 arrowheads.<sup>689</sup>
- Domed lid of tall pyxides: hoplite following another, who is holding a sword (~700 BC)<sup>690</sup>
- A shield depicting a bird in flight (700 BC approx.).<sup>691</sup>

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<sup>677</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 137.

<sup>678</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred In the Ancient Greek World*, 29.

<sup>679</sup> Pedley, 172.

<sup>680</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 121.

<sup>681</sup> Baumbach, 121; John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred In the Ancient Greek World*, 172.

<sup>682</sup> For further Poseidonia-Paestum finds, see Rebecca Ammerman, “The Naked Standing Goddess: A Group of Archaic Terracotta Figurines from Paestum,” 208.

<sup>683</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 114. Baumbach states that Chiron’s presence indicates a healing and education function that Hera also takes on in this location and that it may be a cult aspect that has not been investigated yet.

<sup>684</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 97; Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 352.

<sup>685</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 61.

<sup>686</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 25.

<sup>687</sup> Baumbach, 42.

<sup>688</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 182.

<sup>689</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 41.

<sup>690</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 121.

<sup>691</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 121.

- Terracotta animals: mostly horses. Some horses with riders, dogs, rams, birds, and bulls.<sup>692</sup>
- Gold and bronze jewelry<sup>693</sup>
- Hundreds of dress pins (8-5 centuries)<sup>694</sup>
- Standing female figurine with spear and shield<sup>695</sup>
- Vessel with female flanked by a centaur, branches in the background<sup>696</sup>

## SAMOS

- Horse trappings: 16 snaffle bits, 5 blinkers, 8 bells. Terracotta horses (large number), horse carts, warriors with horses. Earliest are 10<sup>th</sup> century and remains popular until the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>697</sup>
- 70 shields made of bronze and terracotta (8-7<sup>th</sup> centuries)<sup>698</sup>
- Weapons, mostly swords and daggers (7<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>699</sup>
- Miniature wooden stools with horses carved into the sides.<sup>700</sup>
- Horse harnesses, horse trappings, bronze bridles.<sup>701</sup>
- Bronze statue of a woman on a horse, with a child in her arms (7<sup>th</sup> century BC).<sup>702</sup>
- 9 or 10 votive horse stands, in situ (720-700 BC). Perhaps a portable carriage as well.<sup>703</sup>
- Oldest votives here are bovine and horse-themed.
- Fragmented scene on a limestone block: heads and spears of 3 warriors (7<sup>th</sup> century) possibly part of the frieze of the temple.<sup>704</sup>
- 21 kouroi (6<sup>th</sup> century)<sup>705</sup>
- Colossal kouros (580 BC)<sup>706</sup>
- 50 fibulae, multiple mirrors, dress pins, jewelry, belts, toiletries (transitional dedications)<sup>707</sup>
- Wooden carving of a couple, the woman does not wear a veil, and the man does not touch the woman's wrist (which is typical of a wedding scene). There is a bird between the two.

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<sup>692</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 1, 227-8.

<sup>693</sup> Examples throughout: Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, such as Vol 2, 527.

<sup>694</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 35.

<sup>695</sup> Humfry Payne, T. J. Dunbabin, and Alan Albert Antisdell Blakeway, *Perachora* Vol 2, 365.

<sup>696</sup> Payne, Dunbabin, and Blakeway, Vol 2, 61.

<sup>697</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 164.

<sup>698</sup> Baumbach, 166.

<sup>699</sup> Baumbach, 66.

<sup>700</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 114.

<sup>701</sup> Kyrieleis, 114.

<sup>702</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 157.

<sup>703</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 48.

<sup>704</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 166.

<sup>705</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 159; Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 107-113.

<sup>706</sup> Helmut Kyrieleis, "The Heraion at Samos," 119. He writes "The newly found kouros is about three times life-size and is thus by far the largest statue of this type ever found in Greece until now in such an excellent state of preservation."

<sup>707</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 160.

Perhaps it depicts her power to bring a change of seasons accompanied by her young consort (7<sup>th</sup> century BC).<sup>708</sup>

## TIRYNS

- Terracotta shield: One side shows the Amazonomachy as well as a bird of prey snapping at a fish.<sup>709</sup>
- Terracotta shield: One side shows a horse with wagon, and on the other side, a bird to the right of a warrior in full armor.<sup>710</sup>
- 15 handmade statuettes of mounted warriors (7-6 century)<sup>711</sup>
- Earliest finds of the bothros are gorgon masks and shields.<sup>712</sup>
- Upper castle bothros: birds accompanying warriors on clay shields.<sup>713</sup>
- Fresco fragments of a woman on a chariot, as well as a procession of women approaching a goddess (Mycenaean)<sup>714</sup>
- 26 dress pins (transitional dedication, 750-650 BC)<sup>715</sup>
- Miniature geometric horse and rider<sup>716</sup>
- At least 17 horse and rider figurines, animal legs – likely of horses (Archaic?)<sup>717</sup>
- Heron (possible) nearby the site.<sup>718</sup>

## SECTION 3: SUPPLEMENTARY SITES

### MYCENAE

- Mycenaean Megaron becomes a temple of Hera and/or Athena in Archaic times<sup>719</sup>
- Hellenistic sherd with a dedication to Hera of the Acropolis, in the Perseia fountain house<sup>720</sup>
- A boundary stone in the temenos with Hera inscription “boundary of the precinct of Hera.”<sup>721</sup>

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<sup>708</sup> Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 73.

<sup>709</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 242.

<sup>710</sup> Brüggemann, 241.

<sup>711</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 68.

<sup>712</sup> Arthur Bernard Cook, “Who was the wife of Zeus?” 250-4.

<sup>713</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 241.

<sup>714</sup> S.E. Iakovidis, *Mycenae-Epidaurus. Argos-Tiryns-Nauplion*, 105.

<sup>715</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 61.

<sup>716</sup> Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 13.

<sup>717</sup> Brüggemann, 98.

<sup>718</sup> Brüggemann 220. Author believed that post-Archaic times, it was a hero cult rather than being related to Hera. It is my belief that the two were very much related and not separate cults at all.

<sup>719</sup> Brüggemann 274.

<sup>720</sup> James C. Wright, “The Old Temple Terrace at the Argive Heraeum and the Early Cult of Hera in the Argolid,” 194.

<sup>721</sup> Brüggemann 274.

- Female figure adorned with branches found<sup>722</sup>

### **UNNAMED NEAR MYCENAE**<sup>723</sup>

- Small sanctuary on the road from Tiryns to Mycenae
- Late geometric with height in the 7<sup>th</sup> century BC
- Frequent visitors until Hellenistic Period
- Hera's name on a classical sherd
- Seated female figurines, wreaths, drinking and mini vessels

### **METAPONTON**

- Eusebian foundation date of 773/2 BC (based on votive figurines)<sup>724</sup>
- Heraion Archaeological date 650 BC<sup>725</sup>

### **Mt. Kythairon (with Zeus)**

### **NEAR ARGOS**<sup>726</sup>

- Mycenaean sanctuary on Mount Arachnaion in the eastern Argolid.
- Peak of Profitis Ilias, known as historical sanctuary of Zeus and Hera from Late Geometric onwards.

### **EPIDAUROS**

- According to Pausanias, there is a sanctuary of Aphrodite here, "while one on the harbour, on a height that juts out into the sea, they say is Hera's."<sup>727</sup>

### **DELOS**

- Delos Heraion
- 23 fibulas found<sup>728</sup>
- Priestess sent there to look after the cult statue<sup>729</sup>
- Herodotus 9.96: Sailing from Delos to Samos, when they reach Samos, they drop an anchor close to the temple of Hera

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<sup>722</sup> Petros G Themelis, *Nauplion: The City and the Museum*, 49-50.

<sup>723</sup> This section's points: Nora Brüggemann, *Tiryns XVIII*, 270.

<sup>724</sup> John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies And Trade*, 180.

<sup>725</sup> Irad Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece*, 181.

<sup>726</sup> This section's points: Birgitta Eder, "The Role of Sanctuaries and The Formation of Greek Identities in the LBA/EIA Transition," 32.

<sup>727</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 2.29.1., trans. W. H. S. Jones.

<sup>728</sup> Cecilie Brøns, *Gods and Garments*: 379.

<sup>729</sup> Brøns, 379; Joan Breton Connelly, *Portrait of a Priestess: Women and Ritual In Ancient Greece*, 42.

## DELPHI

- “The *Herois* was the name of the Delphic festival of the earth goddess who mothered Python / Typhon and Herois of Hera was one of the names of the mother of it.”<sup>730</sup>

## CUMAE

- Oracular cult of Hera.
- A bronze disk dated to the sixth century was inscribed with the phrase "Hera does not permit oracular consultation in the morning."<sup>731</sup>

## CORCISA (Corcyca)<sup>732</sup>

- Corinthian colony
- 5<sup>th</sup> century BC sanctuary of Hera *Akraia*

## SANTA VERENA<sup>733</sup>

- South Italy
- Sanctuary of Hera within the city walls
- 10 standing figurines found<sup>734</sup>

## SPARTA (?)

- Pausanias lists a sanctuary to Hera in Laconia (XI)
- In Sparta, she is depicted on a grave stele, veiled, and holding a pomegranate.<sup>735</sup>
- Sometimes known as Hera Aphrodite in this area

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<sup>730</sup> Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera*, 36.

<sup>731</sup> Blanche Menadier, "Cult of Hera Akraia," 182.

<sup>732</sup> This section's points: John Salmon, "The Heraeum at Perachora, and the Early History of Corinth and Megara," 202-3.

<sup>733</sup> This section's points: Rebecca Miller Ammerman, "The Naked Standing Goddess: A Group of Archaic Terracotta Figurines from Paestum." 204.

<sup>734</sup> Ammerman, 204.

<sup>735</sup> G. W. Elderkin, "The Marriage of Zeus and Hera and It's Symbol," 429.

## **APPENDIX III: TIMELINE**

- **7000-3000 BC NEOLITHIC**
  - Traces of Neolithic, Bronze, and Iron at the Argive Heraion site<sup>736</sup>
    - Organic growth and development from pre-Mycenaean civilization<sup>737</sup>
  
- **3000-2100 BC EARLY BRONZE AGE**
  - First habitation at Samos Heraion from 2500<sup>738</sup>
  - Earliest building activity EH II at Tiryns<sup>739</sup>
  - Early Helladic: Argos has a settlement with houses, phi/psi figurines<sup>740</sup>
  - Excavator W. Dörpfeld believed Olympia could have been used as a sanctuary from 2000 BC (though he thought it was more likely 1500-1100) based on building activity and graves
  
- **1600-1200 BC LATE BRONZE AGE**
  - 1500 Occupation and worship, maybe of Hera, and then continuously until through the Mycenaean period at Tiryns<sup>741</sup>
  - ~1400 Great Mycenaean palaces built
  - Minoan cult activity at Samos
  - Mycenaean pottery found at Samos Heraion and in the town<sup>742</sup>
  - Late Helladic III C material at Perachora: pottery and head of a female figurine with polos<sup>743</sup>
  - Linear B Shrines to Zeus, Hera, and Poseidon 1500-1100<sup>744</sup>
  
- **1200-900 BC EARLY IRON AGE**
  - After 1200, Tiryns supersedes Mycenae
  - Ionian population settling in Samos 1000-900
  - 1000 First altar at Samos<sup>745</sup>
  - 10th century: Samos sanctuary beginnings
  - 10th century: cult activity at Olympia: burnt ash layer in the Altis contained mostly bovine and horse figurines
  
- **900-750 BC IRON AGE**
  - 900-700 Bothros finds in Tiryns where Hera is the deity
  - Geometric period: Start of Perachora cult, most finds from 800-720 BC

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<sup>736</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 1, 42; Vol 2, IX.

<sup>737</sup> C. Waldstein et. al., *The Argive Heraeum* Vol 2, X.

<sup>738</sup> Graham Shipley, *A History of Samos 800-188 BC*, 25.

<sup>739</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 52.

<sup>740</sup> Baumbach, 76.

<sup>741</sup> Graham Shipley, *A History of Samos 800-188 BC*, 25.

<sup>742</sup> John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies And Trade*, 30.

<sup>743</sup> Baumbach, 13.

<sup>744</sup> John Griffiths Pedley, *Sanctuaries and the Sacred in the Ancient Greek World*, 23.

<sup>745</sup> Hans Walter, Angelika Clemente, and Wolf-Dietrich Niemeier, *Samos 21,1*, 35.

- Olympia an important Panhellenic center by this time, sanctuary still at its simplest form
- First temple of Samos is built by 799, may have been built earlier
- 710 BC Kroton founded with Hera Lacinia sanctuary. Doric temple built near 500 BC<sup>746</sup>

- **750-480 BC ARCHAIC PERIOD**

- 7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries: buildings at Olympia are erected, the temple of Hera among them, was complete by 570
- First temple at Argos, 7<sup>th</sup> century, burnt down in 423. New temple was already being constructed at the time on the lower terrace
- 7-6<sup>th</sup> centuries: most finds from Argos in the one votive deposit, foot of the foundation wall of second temple<sup>747</sup>
- 750 Definite Hera cult in Tiryns<sup>748</sup>
- 610 Temple founded to Hera at Mon Repos, Corfu
- 7<sup>th</sup> century: Poseidonia Paestum and Foce del Sele sanctuaries founded
  - Temple at Foce del Sele dated to 570 BC
- Mid-8<sup>th</sup> century-7<sup>th</sup>, Perachora apsidal temple likely built<sup>749</sup>
- End of 6<sup>th</sup> century: second version of Perachora temple built, but foundations show it was a Doric reconstruction
- Biggest Samian altar built in the 6<sup>th</sup> century
- Mid-6<sup>th</sup> century, biggest temple to Hera constructed at Samos – never exceeded in size by any other temple in Greece<sup>750</sup>
- 600 BC Samian colony on Thrace founded – inscription to Hera *Limenia*
- Hera worship in Mycenae
- Heraion in Metapontum 650 BC
- Corsica: Hera *Akraia* sanctuary in 5<sup>th</sup> century

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<sup>746</sup> John Boardman, *The Greeks Overseas: Their Early Colonies And Trade*, 180-1.

<sup>747</sup> Jens David Baumbach, *Votive Offerings in Hera Sanctuaries*, 78-9.

<sup>748</sup> Baumbach, 52.

<sup>749</sup> Baumbach, 13.

<sup>750</sup> C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera*, trans. Christopher Holme, 151.