



A Study on the Recurrent Processes of the Goddess and Her Representation: Hera

Tanrıça'nın Tekrarlayan Süreçleri ve Temsili Üzerine Bir Çalışma: Hera

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ÖZ

Tarih boyunca yakın bölgelerde yaşayan topluluklar birbirleriyle ekonomik, sosyal, dini ve politik ilişkiler geliřtirmiş ve bu sayede kültürler arasında etkileşimler gerçekleşmiştir. Ege, Doğu Akdeniz ve Mezopotamya, erken dönemlerden itibaren rituel, mitsel ve dinsel figürler açısından benzer karakterlere yönelmiştir. Kutsal figürler benzer özlere sahip olsalar da ait oldukları coğrafyaya ve döneme göre özellikleri ve önemleri deęişmiştir. Yunan ve Doğu dünyasına ait sosyo-kültürel üretimin aktarımı, Bronz Çağ'dan itibaren Doğu Akdeniz ve Anadolu üzerinden gerçekleşmiş ilişkinin sonucudur. Mezopotamyalı mythoslar, karakterler ve tasvirler arka planlarındaki öz korunarak, Yunan ozanları tarafından yeniden biçimlendirilmiş ve çağlar boyunca anlatılarak toplum tarafından benimsenmiştir. Bu metinde, Antik Yunan sosyo-kültürel yapısının, mitsel ve dinsel göstergeler üzerinden izlenebilen etkileşim süreçleri, bu dönüşümün minör bir izi olarak tanrıça Hera ve inşasının Doğulu varyasyonları incelenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Tanrıça, Hera, Mitoloji, Yunan Kültürü, Din Tarihi

ABSTRACT

Throughout history, communities within the proximity of each other had developed economical, religious, political relations and cultural transmissions between them. From early periods, Aegean, East Mediterranean, and Mesopotamian cultures had leaned towards similar characters in terms of ritualistic, religious and cultic figures. Even though divine figures had a similar point of origin, their characteristics and significance had changed with the location and period. Transfer of the socio-cultural production is an outcome of the relation between the East Mediterranean and Anatolia since The Bronze Age. Mesopotamian mythos', characters and their descriptions had been transferred through cultures, while, in the background, their essences preserved, reformed and told by Greek bards for ages. In this article, the traceable interaction process through the mythic and religious indicators of the socio-cultural form of Ancient Greek and as a minor print of this transformation Goddess Hera and eastern versions of her cultural structure had been analyzed.

Keywords: Goddess, Hera, Mythology, Greek Culture, History of Religion

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Introduction

Aegean, Anatolian, Eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamian societies have oriented toward similar characteristics in terms of ritual/religious/cultic figures since the Neolithic Age. This orientation has depended on both the significance paid to similar values and inter-communal interactions. The ancient Greek culture is in communication with the Orient through Eastern Mediterranean, Anatolia and Aegean since the Bronze Age. This communication has been observed for ages in the Greek culture in the form of motives, descriptions, metaphors, mythoi (narrations which remained without any change, which changed partially or which changed completely). The traces of goddesses, mythoi of Mesopotamia and Anatolian Mother Goddess are observable on the basis of worship of the Greek goddesses (Roller 2004, pp. 46-78).

Management of the pantheon by a single goddess and/or monopoly of power in Mesopotamia, Anatolia and Eastern Mediterranean have changed at some point. The position of the goddess in the systematic order as the “dominant element” (la dominante) has changed as well because dispersal of functions in the Greek pantheon. The figure of the Mother Goddess metamorphosed under the hegemony of Zeus and inhabitants of Olympus, the third generation gods and the tasks attributed to her were undertaken by the Greek goddesses (Kortanoğlu 2015, pp. 84-98; Kortanoğlu 2018, pp. 113-114). Various characteristics, descriptions and mythoi of the Mother Goddess were undertaken by principal goddesses of Ancient Greece. Those Goddesses are Gaia (Eitrem 1992, pp. 467-479), Rhea, Hekate (Heckenbach 1991, pp. 2769-2782), Hera (Eitrem 1994, pp. 369-404), Hestia (Süss 1994, pp. 2713-1304), Demeter (Kern 1992, pp. 2713-2764) (and Persephone (Bräuninger 1937, pp. 944-972)), Athena (Dümmmler 1992, pp. 1941-2020), Artemis (Wernicke 1985, pp. 1335-1440), and Aphrodite (Dümmmler 1998, pp. 2730-2787). However all those figures, features and characters are the derivatives of the same archetype (Jung 2015, pp. 17-21; Kortanoğlu 2018, pp. 113-114).

The roots of the metamorphism of Hera the goddess whom this studies focuses on and of other ancient Greek goddesses is based on the early goddess worshipping in Anatolia and Mesopotamia. Before goddess worshipping was divided into different characters and functions in the Greek culture, it focused on a singly figure in different cultures. The religious figures worshipped in the aforementioned geographical regions are female figures which brought stability, trust and abundance to the demographic community. The functions, tasks and characters of those figures were shaped on the basis of fundamental and spiritual needs of the society which has skipped to permanent settlement and made a particular cultural progress (Okan 2019, pp. 76). Existence of the society and culture in the Aegean, Anatolian, Eastern Mediterranean and Mesopotamian geographic regions closely depends on its relation with nature. Following the development of an earthbound life style by societies in line with the Neolithic revolution, agriculture and consequently earth became the focus of their lives

(Childe 2009, pp. 63). For this reason, agriculture and earth focused life was reflected to rituals, mythoi, descriptions, religious beliefs, cultic worship and episteme production and transfer (Eliade 2000, pp. 20). Ancient societies put earth in the center of their lives and shaped their religious thoughts on this axis and plane of power (just as Middle East feudal Europe). Earth has been the symbol of fertility, harmony, infinite continuity and the fear of losing for them (Fidan 2013, pp. 927-944). This way of thinking lead to regarding earth as female, worshipping earth as a goddess and popularization of worshipping of “mother earth” and “mother goddess” (Roller 2004, pp. 40). Ancient societies regarded the female body as a metaphor for earth. Till dominancy of the masculine figures, sanctity of earth has produced sanctity of woman and goddess (Eliade 1991, pp. 122; Kortanođlu 2018, pp. 144-148).

Female form which associates Neolithic and Early Bronze Age with abundance was described in an exaggerated manner in order to emphasize fertility with a supernatural thought. The image of goddess is made of figures with exaggerated breasts, haunches and navel, described extremely fat symbolizing fertility in descriptions representing “womankind” named as *steatopic*. This type of descriptions (Darga 2011, pp. 43-70) observed in Anatolia, particularly in Höyücek (Duru-Umurtak 2005, pp. 92-109), Çatalhöyük (Mellaart 2001, pp. 137-160) and Hacilar (Mellaart 1970, pp. 145-148) were observed in Greece (particularly Thessalia) and Mesopotamia as well at the same time. This similarity refers to intercultural/inter-communal relationship, both productivity and transmitting character of Anatolia in terms of the influence on the Greek culture. Anatolian as well as Mesopotamian, Eastern Mediterranean, Egyptian and Aegean cultures have perceived woman, goddess and fertility similarly and have influenced one another and oriented to similar descriptions (Okan 2019, pp. 67).

The cultural and religious changes observed in the Greek society led to change in significance of the goddess figure as well. Worshiping was shaped on the basis of the psychology and sociology of the society. When this worshiping transformed into a body of rituals regarded to be holy on the basis of specific purposes, wishes and prayers, repeated and systematized, polytheistic religions came into being. The religious institution which is in close relation with the lifestyle of the society is a holy element which at the same time influences the society and transforms and is transformed with this feature. It owes its power to this quality.

Religion is a very significant factor determining and sustaining the behaviors of the society. Polytheist religious institutions claim that they have the capability to communicate with the gods through the mediation of priests or priest kings. As a consequence of this claim, they could become a power which knows “what the gods want” and which “determines how to live correctly”. Protection of the static structure was assured and its continuity was provided in line with the divine and semi-divine laws ordered (Berger 1995, pp. 433).

Polytheist religion systems have significant determinant effect on shaping the human mind structure and philosophy of life. It is one of the significant functions of the polytheist religions to control the society. The state and religion officials continuously emphasize the justifications of their domination on the society using the method of “legitimizing”. Kings, state administrators and the clergy in the ancient societies explain the divine justifications of their administration using this method. The persons in power (king, aristocracy, consultants and the clergy) imposed on the society that obedience was a moral responsibility required by religion and disobedience was absolutely forbidden in order not to annoy the gods. Through this imposition certain persons came to power and the power was legitimized with religion (and generally by frightening the people with gods/mythoi) (Berger 1995, pp. 433; Okan 2019, pp. 76-77).

Systematized religions have the functions of integrating, auditing and ordering the society and legitimizing “visible” or “invisible” power (in Foucault’s words). Those systematized religions took the control over the society and directed the political and social changes of the era. It took the internal and external appearance and reflexes of the society under control. Although the gods, persons, events, origins and names differ in the configuration mythoi which we can interpret as religious indicators (the keystones of the basic structure named cosmos); almost every society/culture/geographical region have shared deified objects, characters, natural events and concepts (Penglase 1997, pp. 1; Kortanoğlu 2018, pp. 143). Principles of belief are regarded as the factors that affect the behaviors of individuals in their lives and communications with one another. The signs of what is regarded to be holy could always be seen in the background of the society (Berger 1995, pp. 435). Societies have repeated many times the mythoi that they transfer to one another in order to explain the events which they pay significance. This repetition is one of the most significant and irrevocable stages of the religious configuration in the unconscious. Mimesis in the ancient Greek mythology and Roman Empire is carried by similar narrations, symbolisms, iconographic diagrams in the mythoi of Anatolian, Mesopotamian, Levantine and Egyptian cultures (Penglase 1997, pp. 1-6; Burkert 1985, pp. 119). Gods, rituals, cults and worship in those geographic regions have significantly changed in terms of name, appearance, diagram but remained the same essentially. Mythoi and their relevant descriptions appear to be continuity of one another (Demirci 2017, pp. 11; Okan 2019, pp. 35).

Ancient Age mythoi are intertwined with the religious belief system. The reason for this is the fact that particularly the configuration mythoi are the extensions where the religious cosmos is produced (Homer and Iliad, Hesiodos and Theogonia, see. Kortanoğlu 2018). Accordingly the elements that Mesopotamia transferred to different cultures include mythoi as well. After cuneiform became prevalent and translations were made, the Hittites, Urartians, Hurrians and people of Syrian-Palestine line translated the Mesopotamian epitaphs into their

own languages or created interactive repetitions of the same and consequently made the mythoi a basic element of their own cultures (Okan 2019, pp. 86). As it is the case with many Ancient Age societies, Greeks were influenced by this cosmos production as well. They were also influenced by divine figures of Mesopotamian origin and the mythoi composed of the discourses written about those divine figures (Kramer 1999, pp. 65).

The focal point of the initial religions and belief in the ancient cultures was concentrated on the figures responsible for creation of life. In this context, female fertility was accepted as the origin of life and this took the form of a religious thought in time. Female fertility was matched with abundance of earth and female divine figures symbolizing this appeared. The fact that the first divine figures were of earth with female form and this figure was called “mother” supports this thought (Campbell 2003, pp. 311; Okan 2019, pp. 80). Ancient Mesopotamian, Eastern Mediterranean, Anatolian and Aegean cultures have the image of “mother earth” and her husband, inseminating “(celestial) tengri” image in the mythology. This thinking system arises from the extreme significance of earth vivified by rain and irrigation for continuity of life in agricultural societies (Eliade 2003, pp. 99-100). The first step of religion and temples in Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean regions in general terms was earth and the Goddess figures associated with earth. Those figures offered certain features that could be defined as universal in basic iconographic diagram. Those features are basically symbols of abundance of agricultural origin associated with earth and mountain, symbols of fertility related to woman and motherhood, symbols related to love, sex and holy marriage and symbols referring that death and reincarnation is associated with the female figure and earth, agricultural and seasonal cycles (Burkert 1999, pp. 132). In addition to this, goddess was generally treated within the themes related to wild animals and hunting.

The idea of Mother Goddess preserved its existence as a mythological and religious idea attributed to woman throughout the ancient era. This idea caused the female divine figures which were the symbol of sanctity of abundance and fertility were accepted to be holy for a long time even in the periods when matriarchal order had been abandoned (Ateş 2002, pp. 41-46; Okan 2019, pp. 173). Female divine figures were worshipped in the context of Mother Goddess cult in Anatolian cultures as of Paleolithic and Neolithic Ages (Roller 2004, pp. 33). The goddesses originating from the Anatolian goddess, equalized with the goddesses in other cultures or goddesses with independent origins have shared common iconographic features and similar mythoi throughout history.

The goddesses worshipped in the Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean geography has features associated with womanhood and fertility. The goddesses figures distributed in many functions and iconographies particularly including Inanna, the goddess of love in Sumer and Ninmah and Nammu associated with the great mother, Ishtar, the goddess of love and war in Assyria and Babylon, Astarte in Phoenicia, Arinna and Hapat, goddess of sun in the Hittites,

Kybele in Phrygians and their Anatolian equivalents, Goddess with Snake in Minos, Isis, Hathor, Ma in Egypt and Gaia of the Greek culture (Graf 1998, pp. 733-734) were generally worshipped generally under similar themes (Schwabl 1995, pp. 994-1481). Those goddesses resembled to one another in terms of both having similar characteristics and tasks and having similar masculine figures against them. The Mother Goddess is associated with earth and the masculine figure, her spouse nearby her in different geographies is a figure generally associated with the sky, animals and bull, having a warrior character (Okan 2019, pp. 85). The masculine figure that symbolizes the sky in Greek culture has been Zeus which had originally been an Indo-European god and arrived in Greece in the second millennium B.C. (Schwabl 1995, pp. 994-1481). Zeus is originally Indo-European; he is the cosmic personification of sky and power (Eliade 1991, pp. 99). Eliade states that Homer defines Zeus as “the god of the endless sky” and “father of humans and gods”. Zeus is regarded as the undisputed leader of the pantheon of the gods and sovereign of the universe despite the fact that he has created neither the universe nor the life (Eliade 1991, pp. 99). Although the masculine celestial figure is positioned near the goddess in the early ages; it is the goddess who is essentially superior. Zeus the god; took over the power from the goddess in later ages, particularly in the Greek culture following his struggles with the inhabitants of Olympus (third generation gods) and the sharing and became the head of the pantheon (Kortanoğlu 2018, pp. 18). The spirit and the power of the Goddess have never been as before. This process of change may be explained on the basis of the reasons including both the influence of the societies on one another and the change of the focus of life. The end of the Bronze Age and beginning of the Dark Age are the most significant breaking points in this regard. The destructions created by the warrior societies and tribes led to both adoption of their holy values by the societies that they oppress and predominance of a war-focused life rather than agriculture and raise of divine figures that concentrate on this issue (Okan 2019, pp. 175- 176). In the early phases of Mesopotamian, Anatolian, Eastern Mediterranean and Greek culture, the goddess figure that creates everything kept the entire power in her hands heading the pantheon. This figure metamorphosed within the Late Bronze Age and Dark period and was subjected to modification at the time of the Greek pantheon. The Mother Goddess figure metamorphosed in the era of Zeus under the sovereignty of the third generation gods and the tasks attributed to her were undertaken by many different Greek goddesses (Kortanoğlu 2018, pp. 114).

One of the most significant reasons at the beginning of this transition and change period is the societies of Indo-European origin which migrated to Greece and Anatolia in the Bronze Age. Those societies brought their own religious systems and gods as well to the geography where they arrived (Özdoğan 2011, pp. 46-48). Those gods are the warrior gods who are mostly associated with war and sky (Akurgal 2007, pp. 195). Those migrations led to the rise of societies such as, the Mycenaean society in Greece and the Hittites in Anatolia (Tekin 1998, pp. 44-57).

Transformation of the focal points of the mythoi from creation to predominantly the issues of war after the Bronze Age led to the inclination of religion and culture toward this direction as well. While the masculine figures associated with sky and war (physical power) gained power, the Mother Goddess shared her throne with her celestial masculine spouse and later left her place to him. The functions attributed to her were divided among many female figures and while the king of the pantheon collected the entire power and symbolic power in his hands, the powers of the Goddess were divided and distributed (Kortanoğlu 2018, pp. 114; Okan 2019, pp. 175). This metamorphosis led to the Great Mother Goddess to delegate her tasks and functions to many goddesses in the Greek culture. Gaia who can be regarded as the first Greek style Mother Goddess figure (Eitrem 1998, pp. 734-734) later left her place to Rhea and Rhea left her place to Grimal 1997, pp. 207; Kerényi 2012, pp. 63.) Demeter (Laks 1997, pp. 420), her daughter and Persephone (Sourvinou-Inwood 1995, pp. 600-603; Bräuninger 1937, pp. 944-972). It is Artemis who represents the virgin and sagacious aspect of the Mother Goddess (Kahil 1984, pp. 618-753), Athena (Demargne 1984, pp. 955-1044) and Hestia Sarian 1990, pp. 407-412) who represent her protector aspect; Aphrodite (Laks 1996, pp. 838-844) who represents her seductive aspect; and Hera (Kossatz-Deissmann 1988, pp. 659-719) who represents her aspect of protector of holy marriage and the queen of gods (Shmitt-Pantel 2000, pp. 41).

Hera is a good example for the reformation of the goddess in the changed Greek culture. Hera with oriental origins is a good reflection in the Greek culture, of the mythological character that changed as a consequence of division of the powers and functions of the goddess (Okan 2019, pp. 139). Hera is one of the versions of the Mother Goddess figure who lost their superiority within the historical period and delegated its position in the pantheon to the masculine figure but succeeded in remaining close to the visible power through marriage. In addition to being the spouse of Zeus, the chief god whom she married through Hieros Gamos (Graf 1998, pp. 552-553), she is responsible for one of the basic structures of the cosmos in the capacity of protector of the family. After the Mother Goddess lost her power, she reflects the point of view of the Ancient Greek geography toward woman. In this context, she is a figure overshadowed by Zeus, her husband. She was regarded as the queen of the pantheon in the Greek culture rather than a Mother Goddess figure (Shmitt-Pantel 2000, pp. 20). Although she did not have any role in creation of the universe unlike Ninursag of Mesopotamia, she carried on a struggle for power with the king of the pantheon, married to him and was regarded as the queen of him and the community of gods (Kramer 1998, pp. 128). She remained as a version deprived of creative power, deprived of significant powers of the previous Goddesses positioned beside the king of the pantheon associated with the sky and war. Hera's oriental origins are clearly observed in the mythoi related to her. Hieros Gamos ritual and the mythoi related to this are one of the religious issues observed in the Ancient Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean geographies influenced by one another or coming from a shared origin.

This ritual of marriage is related to the change and transformation of the world in the oriental mythologies. The ritual symbolizes the transformation of birth, reproduction and death, namely the transformation of spring, summer and winter. The world livening up in the spring, abundance in the summer period and death in the winter period make up a process repeated continuously. One of the fundamental concerns of the agriculture oriented societies is the question of whether the harvest and animals will be abundant or not. For this reason, rituals elated to abundance were performed in the name of the goddess of earth for the purpose of getting the things to be on rails. One of those rituals is the holy marriage ceremony created on the basis of the belief that it is possible to transform into reality through imitation. Holy marriage is the marriage ritual believed to result in pregnancy and fertility of the goddess. The animations which they had performed, imitating the gods every spring or autumn were traditionalized by time and in the end transformed into a religious ritual. This ritual developed virtually in the same period with emergence of the agricultural societies. It caused the humanity which is in a passive position against the nature to believe through magic that they affected nature (Okan 2019, pp. 140).

The first examples related to Hieros Gamos are from Sumerian mythology. The holy marriage of Inanna, Sumerian goddess with Dumuzi, the king of Uruk city which she is the protector of is the first example of this tradition (Kramer 1998, pp. 374). Inanna had been the protector of Uruk city since the 3rd millennium B.C. or even before and Dumuzi is stated to be the king of Uruk city in the first half of the 3rd millennium B.C. For this reason, Hieros Gamos ceremonies of the Sumerians should have been performed regularly every year since the first half of the 3rd millennium B.C. (Kramer 1998, pp. 374). Hieros Gamos rituals continued for many centuries after Inanna and Dumuzi and were practiced firstly by the Sumerians and then by the Acadians. This tradition transformed into a religious festival by time. The figures of Inanna and Dumuzi (Hooke 2013, pp. 43) changed with Assyrian influence and became Ishtar and Tammuz (Graves 2012, pp. 86). This mythos is a repetition of its original to a great degree (Hooke 2013, pp. 25). Likewise, the mythos is narrated similarly between in Astarte, another face of Ishtar and Adonis in Phoenicia and then between Aphrodite matched with Astarte (Delivorias 1984, pp. 1-151) and Adonis (Comte 1997, pp. 112) and between Kybele and Attis in Anatolia (Pausanias, VII.17.9–12). The most important works related to Hieros Gamos in Anatolia are the İnanđık and Bitik vases that belong to the Hittites. The thought of arrival of abundance in line with fertilization of earth, which the Hittites borrowed from Mesopotamia and adopted was described on İnanđık Vase as a scene of Hieros Gamos. İnanđık Vase of the ancient Hittite Kingdom era was made from cooked earth, Hieros Gamos ceremony was narrated on it with four scenes in the form of friezes with colored figures applied as relief (Özgüç 1988, pp. 16-38). Bitik vase belongs to the ancient Hittite Kingdom era as well. Carrying the presents taken to the holy place and the wedding procession was shown in the first scene of the description in this vase

(Özgüç 1957, pp. 57- 78). The Egyptian culture has the tradition of Hieros Gamos as it is the case with every agricultural based society in Eastern Mediterranean. Holy marriage in the Egyptian mythology realized between the god of sun and abundance Osiris and Inanna, Hekate (Johnston 1998, pp. 267-270) and Isis who is the goddess of moon such as Artemis. Osiris dies for a while and reincarnates as seen in the mythoi of “Lost God”. He gets married with Isis following this reincarnation (Plutarkhos 2006, pp. 86).

As regards to the Greek culture, Hieros Gamos ritual realized between Zeus, the king of the pantheon and Hera (Eliade 1991, pp. 124-125). This tradition remains the same in essence and rearranged on the basis of the society to which it is transferred and circulated from Mesopotamia to continental Greek. Hera (Laks 1998, pp. 358-361) was regarded as the queen of gods though not mother of gods and people believed that her marriage with Zeus brought abundance to the society (Shmitt-Pantel 2000, pp. 20). In addition to this mythos associated with Hera, there are symbols attributed to her among her oriental contacts as well. As it is the case with all other mother goddess cults, Hera was associated with lion/ leopard and is described together with them. The tradition of association of the goddesses with and description of them together with lion (Işık 1999, pp. 12), is observed with Inanna in Mesopotamia and Hapat and Kybele in Anatolia (Kortanoğlu 2008, pp. 76-77). One of the significant points which associate Hera and with Ishtar, the Mesopotamian goddess is that both goddesses take a bath regularly in a lake or river and regain their virginity in each bath (Comte 1997, pp. 112). Both undertook the roles of mother goddess, got married and gave birth to many children but the fact that they still gained their virginity by taking a bath and losing it again and thus regenerating in specific periods of the year have been narrated as a significant point for them (Okan 2019, pp. 143). In this regard, Pausanias tells that Hera took a bath in a spring named Kanathos every year and regained her innocence (Pausanias, II.38.2).

There is no mythos where Hera is a dominant figure however she played significant roles in the mythoi of other divine figures and she was described as a character who emphasizes that the family is indivisible. Hera exhibited the status of the spouse of the god deemed to be the strongest, it was stated in certain sources that Hera’s power arose from “lying in the arms of Zeus, the great” (Shmitt-Pantel 2000, pp. 41). Homer particularly described her as beautiful (Homeros 1993, XIV.200). The original powers that the Goddess has are ignored and she is described with passive roles and show that the Mother Goddess has metamorphosed as a new character in line with the changing culture. Instead of the powerful goddesses in the previous generations, Hera could perform no significant function in her own era except for being Zeus’ wife and the queen of the pantheon (Okan 2019, pp. 139).

The goddess character of divine Greek figures was quite strongly described in the primary and secondary generations, however after Zeus took the reins at the pantheon Hera failed to play a significant role unlike her ancestors. Zeus was concerned about the probability that

he would be replaced by a son after him, just like what had happened to his father, however he elected a way different from his ancestors and surrounded himself with “virgin girls”. He prevented Hera to give birth to a son who could defeat Zeus. Hera who should be equal to Zeus at the reins of the pantheon lost her power after Zeus had become the leader of the pantheon. Non-warrior goddess Hera lost her significance as a reflection of the shift of focus of the Greek culture from agriculture and earth toward politics and war (Okan 2019, pp. 175).

This disintegration in the functions of the goddesses and change in their characters is closely related to the change observed in the Greek culture as of the Bronze Age. The goddesses and characteristics under oriental influence that Hesiodos imposed on Theogonia pioneered adoption of the religious cultures of Mesopotamia, Anatolia and Eastern Mediterranean in Greek geography as well (Lopez-Ruiz 2010, pp. 130). The 8th - 7th centuries

B.C. were regarded as the period when the Greek culture was “orientalized”. Transfer of literature and myths in this period was claimed considering Homer’s and Hesiodos’ works. Ancient writers such as Hesiodos (Hesiodos, pp. 160-206) mentioned the oriental origins of the goddesses of the Greek culture. With respect to this change and transfer, colonization in Anatolia (Kortanoğlu 2013, pp. 212-230), rise of Greek city states, particularly the marine trade of Phoenicians became effective in the transfer of myths and traditions (Boardman 2001, pp. 9-11). The concept of orientalization deemed to be orientation of intercultural interaction from the east to the west and Aegean culture being “influenced” by the Mesopotamian and Eastern Mediterranean cultures in terms of literature, art, religion and myths (Okan 2019, pp. 172).

The goddess figure in the Greek culture seemingly losing her effectiveness is associated with the place of woman in the changing Ancient society. The changes observed in the moral structures of the societies again as a consequence of the migrations that started with the Bronze Age influenced both the woman in the society and the goddesses who may be regarded a reflection of the woman. Goddess was regarded inferior against the god figure representing the masculine power just as the woman regarded as second rate in the Greek world. Greek goddesses Hestia (Graf 1998, pp. 512-514), Athena (Laks 1997b, pp. 160-167) and Artemis (Laks 1997, pp. 54-59) were regarded superior to the other goddesses and respected owing to their virginity. They were further respected for dealing with works regarded more honorable in that era rather than issues including love and sex. The changing of the Greek culture imposed on Zeus generation goddesses’ sagacity, virginity and political warrior attitudes and the task of protecting the family and the state. Those tasks and attitudes of the goddesses narrated in the myths were targeted at symbolizing the ideal Greek citizen and being models for the people (Okan 2019, pp. 176).

Following the Bronze and Dark ages, the Greek culture was reshaped by the influence of particularly the warrior societies and rearrangement of religion by Ancient writers

systematically. The Mother Goddess delegated her functions and tasks to several less strong goddesses under the reign of the king of the pantheon. The Goddess transformed into a surrogate carrying the “life giving sperm” of a masculine figure and a representation of the new moral rules imposed on the society. The idea of goddess who could create everything with parthenogenesis changed through shift of the focuses of societies and consequently metamorphosis of gender roles and reflection of this condition to the mythoi.

The Mother Goddess is essentially the same character widely worshipped in Mesopotamia, Eastern Mediterranean and Anatolia although she may take different names in different regions. She sustained its integrity and continuity till the early periods of the Greek culture. The Greek society that changed through migrations and wars in the Bronze and Dark ages reflected this change to its religions as well and continuity of the goddess metamorphosed, changed and disintegrated in line with the culture itself. The Great Mother Goddess metamorphosed in line with the changing culture. She lost her former sovereignty although her traces continue to be observed in such characters as Hera, the queen of the pantheon. It was again the Anatolia cultures of the Ancient Age who exhibited the strong influence of the Mother Goddess. Kybele (Magna Mater), Artemis and Aphrodite continued to exist and produce in their own territories (Ephesos, Magnesia ad Maendrum, Sardes, Aphrodisias, Perge, Pessinus, Ankyra, Highlands of Phrygia etc.). The temenos, temples, sculptures, monuments and rock-cut tombs show and is evidence to us.

Hakem Değerlendirmesi: Dış bağımsız.

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