

This paper will detail, in diachronic fashion, the evidence for the cult of Hera at Plataea and offer new explanations for the frequency and evolution of her festivals there, the Small and Great Daedala. The role this festival played at various consequential events in Boeotian History will also be demonstrated. New findings argued include: (1) The Thebans maintained and reorganized the festival later known as the Small Daedala and made it more pan-Boeotian during their first occupation of Plataea (427-387 BC). (2) *Contra* the opinion of Pausanias and all subsequent scholars, the Small Daedala were celebrated every six years, as Pausanias' (9.2.7) local exegete reported. (3) The Great Daedala, which we know from Pausanias entailed an elaborate sacrificial procession of several Boeotian *poleis* to Mount Cithaeron that culminated with a conflagration of 14 wooden statues (δαίδαλα) that had been collected at the previous 14 Small Daedala, were instituted in 335 BC and took place every 90 years, not every 59 years as Pausanias' guide and subsequent studies have claimed. (4) These 14 statues did, as Pausanias' source said, represent the *number* of Daedala festivals that the Plataeans missed during their two exiles (431-387 and 373-338 BC). (5) The Plataeans' first exile should be regarded as beginning with the Theban attack of 431, after which most of the Plataeans left the city (Thuc. 2.6.4; 2.71-78), not the traditional date of 427 after the fall of the city. (6) The Theban assault on Plataea in 431 coincided with the opening ceremony (ἱερομηνία, Thuc. 3.56.2; 3.65.2) of the Daedala celebrations, which had to be cancelled, and this is why the Plataeans later marked the time of their exiles by the number of Daedala festivals missed. (7) The ἱερομηνία of the Daedala commenced at the first crescent moon after the vernal equinox.