Academy of Art University: School of Art History

Marriage to Death

A Study of the Iconography of Hermes Psychopompos

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Abstract

This essay explores Hermes’ place in the iconography of death and of weddings on red-figure vases. Just as Hermes leads the soul of the dead to the house of Hades, the groom leads his bride from her home to his. This ritual signifies the act of crossing over, a transition from one life to the next. Attention is given to the similarities between all individuals presented on both wedding and funerary vases. Hermes’ iconography is built on the groom and he became the definitive link between marriage and death. The aim of this argument is to demonstrate how images of a ritual can influence those of mythology.

Using Persephone, the bride of Hades, as an initial link, this essay will place Hermes in the broader context of the relationship between wedding and death. The argument will strengthen with the comparison of physical objects that not only act as iconographic markers, connecting scenes of ritual and myth, but also acting as cables holding the bridge up symbolizing the place of Hermes in these two worlds. Finally, in the end, the entrance of the underworld becomes a place where marriage and death cross, leading to the connection of Hermes.
Introduction

“When Zeus, heavy-thundering and mighty-voiced, heard this, he sent down the Slayer of Argos to Erebos with his golden staff to wheedle Hades with soft words and lead back holy Persephone from the misty gloom into the light to join the gods so that her mother might see her with her eyes and desist from anger”¹ *Hymn to Demeter*, 334.

The concept of marriage and death is a subject that occurs on a variety of Athenian vases, however, scholars have relied heavily on literature to create the links. By looking at an assortment of red-figure vases during the fifth century, the notion of joining a mythological scene, such as those featuring Hermes Psychopompos (leader of souls), created a visual understanding of how a ritual, such as the wedding procession, influenced the iconography. Hermes fits in the tight relationship between marriage and death with Persephone, the bride of Hades, as the initial link. The basis of this argument is that imagery of Hermes Psychopompos develops from the wedding procession with many iconographical parallels. In the scene of the wedding procession, the groom leads his bride from her home to his, a transition from one life to the next. Like this act, Hermes leads the newly deceased from the land of the living to the underworld.

By laying out a variety of vases in chronological order, both featuring scenes of marriage and death – comparing similar iconographical traits – we will have a better understanding of how the vases evolved over time and how scenes of myth were influenced by those of ritual. Artists of black-figure vases chose to represent the wedding procession with the bride and groom riding a chariot. We see the same type of imagery on funerary vases depicting the ekphora. When the black-figure technique shifted to red-figure, we see most vases of both processions change from chariot to on foot.

The continuous visual representation of wedding rituals on vases holds possibilities of artistic manipulation leading to depictions of mythological images, including those of death. This means that because images of the wedding procession feature the same iconographic indicators, it has become a ritual. Artists depicting scenes of myth are influenced by scenes of ritual, using the same indicators. Looking at physical objects -i.e., torches, veils, petasos – and understanding how they have turned into iconographical markers, connects scenes of marriage and death.

Closer examination of the iconography of Hermes looks to not only uncover the relation between guide and groom, but the visual relationship between the broader connections of death involving Hermes in the wedding ritual. Finally, the connection between marriage and death occurs at the entrance of the underworld, a place where individuals - such as Persephone, Hermes, Herakles, Alcestis and Eurydice - move in both directions, causing a two-way motion in marriage. The iconography of Hermes Psychopompos on red-figure vases draws on a longstanding wedding iconography, modelling a mythical ritual on a real ritual.
Literature Review

The connection between marriage and death received much attention, specifically in Rush Rehm’s 1997 *Marriage to Death: The Conflation of Wedding and Funeral Rituals in Greek Tragedy*. He focuses on the important rituals led by women and how they bring about new possibilities to the connection between marriage and death. John Oakley and Rebecca Sinos, in 1993, reconstructed the stages of the ancient Greek marriage, focusing only on the wedding. They connect marriage and death with discussions such as the abduction motif, connecting Persephone.

In 1997, Nanci DeBloois’ “Rape, Marriage, or Death? Gender Perspectives in the Homerica Hymn to Demeter”, focuses on the manipulation of recurring images featuring marriage, death and abduction. H.A. Shapiro, in 1991, demonstrated how the iconography of death on Athenian vases changes throughout the sixth and fifth centuries. Karl Kerényi dedicated his book to Hermes in 1998, providing one of the very few scholarly works focused on this one god. Alexandra Alexandridou, in 2011, considered the iconography of Hermes on black-figure vases in relation to animal scenes, arguing Hermes is one of the very few deities represented, identified by his kerykeion. Helene P. Foley’s commentary on the *Hymn to Demeter* contextualizes the role of Hermes.

Ian Jenkins in 1983 studied the abduction motif on Athenian vases featuring scenes of the wedding ceremony, with the connection of the Persephone myth. He focuses on vases featuring
scenes depicting the wedding procession, when the groom lifts the bride into a chariot, and noticed a similar action with Persephone’s abduction. This acts as a connection between marriage and death. Just as his argument focuses on iconographic similarities connecting the abduction motif, with Hades and groom, the argument aims to link Hermes and groom.
Persephone: The Bride of Hades

Rehm argues, “the story of Demeter and Persephone offered the principal mythical paradigm for the association of death and marriage.”² It is accurate, the development of connections between marriage and death leads to Persephone as the initial link, specifically in literature. Literary interpretations focus on the abduction of Persephone by Hades and how it relates to the bride being lifted into a chariot by the groom during the wedding procession.³ Visual representations of this interaction differ due to artistic interpretations based on ritualistic acts.

In the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, Hades abducts Persephone, coming out of the ground in his golden chariot, taking her as she screams out for help. Yet the depiction of Hades and Persephone on a red-figure Hydria attributed to the Painter of Tarquinia 707 (fig. 1), depicts two a wedding procession.⁴ A veiled Persephone rides a chariot with Hades by her side. She is not presented in a way that would suggest an abduction, but rather standing straight holding a wreath in her hand, an additional object signifying a wedding. Surrounding the bride and groom, are women carrying torches, including Hekate holding two torches following the chariot. Depictions

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of the wedding procession with the use of a chariot are seen on earlier renditions of marriage scenes. The black-figure krater attributed to the Euphiletos Painter (fig. 2) illustrates the wedding procession with the bride and groom riding a chariot. Leading the procession is a woman holding torches. The wedding iconography serves as a visual map for mythological scenes like Hades’ marriage to Persephone. The ritual act of marriage presented on vases provides artists a visual basis they can alter to fit into the theme of myth.

Rehm claims, “Her ascent also reverses the journey that mortal women take when Hermes leads them like a bride down to the land of the dead.”5 As Hermes Psychopompos, he crosses the borders of the underworld leading the newly deceased just as a groom leads his bride. On the Persephone Painter’s name piece, now in New York (fig. 3), Hermes returns Persephone to Demeter. Hermes stands beside Persephone while holding his kerykeion, wearing his winged petasos and chlamys. Persephone, walking out of the earth, wears a veil fixed in place in her hair with a crown. Between Hermes and Demeter stands Hekate, helping to guide Persephone with the use of torches. Persephone returns from the land of the dead led by the guide of souls. Both Persephone and Hermes are guided by Hekate with torches, a typical motif in the wedding procession, back to Demeter, who becomes a symbol of home. As the concept of marriage becomes associated with Hermes, with Persephone as the link, his role as Psychopompos in relation to the groom in wedding iconography develops.

5 Rehm, 36.
From Black-figure to Red-figure: Changes in Iconography

Vases featuring marriage and death saw a change in iconography during the shift of technique from black-figure to red-figure. The wedding procession went from the bride and groom riding a chariot to the groom leading the bride on foot. Like this, the change of funerary iconography occurred, the ekphora with the deceased on a chariot to Hermes leading the souls of the deceased to the underworld. Why the change of iconography from ritual to myth? Why in this manner? The scenes featuring Hermes leading the souls of the deceased were influenced by the wedding procession, transitioning myth to ritual.

When the black-figure technique was dominant, depictions of marriage were essentially limited to the procession usually by chariot.\(^6\) For example, a black-figure amphora attributed to the Group of London B 174 (fig. 4) depicts a scene of the wedding procession. The bride and groom are riding a chariot while women carrying baskets and trays follow on foot along with them. Leading the wedding procession is Hermes, the proegetes. Many of the black-figure vases featuring scenes of the wedding procession present the bride and groom riding a chariot and typically only show this scene during the marriage ritual, unlike red-figure vases. For example, both the red-figure pyxis attributed to the Oppenheimer Group (fig. 5) and the red-figure oinochoe attributed to the Orchard Painter (fig. 6), show the groom leading his bride on foot,

\(^6\) Black-figure wedding processions, see Oakley and Sinos (1993). They provide a detailed account into the shift from black-figure to red-figure with regards to the wedding procession.
grabbing her by the hand or wrist. The act of leading on foot was a popular motif present on many red-figure vases.

There is a parallel shift in funerary iconography. Many of the black-figure vases depicting death, portray the prothesis and ekphora. A black-figure plaque attributed to Exekias (fig. 7) depicts the ekphora, the funerary procession. A chariot carries a draped man. Surrounding the chariot are mourning women. On vases depicting the wedding procession, the shift of iconography from chariot to foot occurred, so too it did in the funerary vases. The white-ground lekythos attributed to the Bosanquet Painter (fig. 8) and the white-ground lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter (fig. 9), Hermes leads the newly deceased by foot, like the groom with his bride, to Charon. Shapiro argues the reasoning for this shift in iconography was to “attempt to blunt the pain of grief by mythologizing death.” Her argument does make sense to the mourners of the deceased; however, this cannot be the only reason. Why have an individual, such as Hermes, lead the deceased on foot? Why have Hermes grasp them by the hand or wrist?

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The artists of these vases had to have had a reason why this iconography. Instead of scenes featuring the deceased laying on a chariot or *kline* surrounded by mourners, red-figure vase painters depicted scenes of death with the inclusion of mythological figures such as Hermes because they present the deceased as someone who is alive, i.e. walking and eyes open. The artists used the iconography of the wedding ritual as a basis – the groom leading the bride by foot – to create scenes of myth. Marriage is a transition from one life to the next, not of death, but of new life. By presenting the transition of death like the wedding procession, not only does it ease those who mourn, but the scene of myth becomes ritual.
Ceremonious Objects in a World of Myth

The connections among marriage and death not only lie in the individuals, whether present in a story or on a vase, but also in the physical objects surrounding them. Common objects associated with the marriage ritual include the veil of a bride, a chariot and a torch. Items such as these are also seen in funerary imagery. These objects act as a connection—with Hermes as a link. As a result, images featuring Hermes in scenes with a theme of death were influenced by scenes of the wedding ritual.

During the wedding procession, the groom leads his bride to his home where the bridal chamber awaits where they will consummate their marriage. According to Oakley and Sinos, “the bridal chamber was the focus of most of the adornment of the bridegroom’s house.” Depictions of the bridal chamber frequently have their own scene on a vase, but there are few where a glimpse is seen during the procession. A red-figure loutrophoros now in Boston (fig. 10) depicts a wedding procession. The groom grabs the hand of a veiled bride leading her to their home. At the far right of the image, through a set of columns, the edge of the wedding bed is shown through with Eros sitting at the entrance. The marriage bed signifies the end of their journey. The parallel in funerary iconography is the *kline*. During the prothesis, the newly deceased is washed, dressed and laid out on a bed. A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter (fig. 11) depicts a scene of the prothesis when the newly deceased is laid out on the *kline* surrounded by

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9 Oakley and Sinos, 35. On bridal chamber iconography, see pages 35-37. No examples of the connection between the funerary scenes. Oakley and Sinos focused on the marriage rituals. Rehm, 41. provides the connection between the marriage bed and kline with no relation to Hermes.

members of the youth’s family. The bed in each scene signifies the end of a journey, whether it be in marriage or death.

On the opposite side of the same loutrophoros (fig. 10), is an individual of interest. Part of the process of the wedding ceremony is the contract between the groom and the father of the bride.\(^\text{11}\) Here, the father of the bride shakes the hand of the groom, who wears a petasos, the travelers hat, slung behind his back. The petasos was worn by young *epheboi*, such as a prospective groom, and act as an indicator that the individual is on a journey. On this vase, the groom traveled to the bride’s home, to create a contract of marriage with her father. It is also possible, the groom before the interaction with the bride’s father, was hunting, making him an individual of class.\(^\text{12}\) The addition of the petasos worn by the groom leads back to Hermes. Hermes is known to wear the petasos as he is the patron of travelers. Even though Hermes is not present on this vase, the use of the petasos, not only has a functional object, serves to include him as a symbol.

A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Bosanquet Painter (fig. 8) depicts Hermes Psychopompos leading a woman to Charon. Hermes looks back towards the woman, grabbing her by the wrist. He holds his kerykeion and slung behind his back is a petasos. A red-figure pyxis attributed to the Oppenheimer Group (fig. 5) presents a wedding procession. The groom, holding a torch in one hand, leads his bride as he grabs her by the wrist. Leading the wedding procession is Hermes. He holds his kerykeion pointed up and wears his petasos slung behind his

\(^{11}\) Oakley and Sinos, 9.

\(^{12}\) No examples of connections between marriage and death, but this book provides a detailed account into hunting and the imagery on vases, particularly the use of the petasos and the connection with Hermes. Judith M. Barringer. *The Hunt in Ancient Greece.* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2003).
neck. Although the petasos is an attribute of Hermes, the inclusion of the object throughout scenes of myth as well as during ritual scenes of marriage has allowed Hermes to connect with the groom. The petasos serves as an object as well as a symbol leading back to Hermes.

A similar connection has allowed for the bride and the newly deceased to interact suggesting women on funerary vases are preparing for a wedding that never took place. A red-figure oinochoe attributed to the Orchard Painter (fig. 6) depicts a wedding scene featuring the groom and his veiled bride. The groom leads his bride by grabbing her by the hand and looking back towards her. Similar iconography and action of the wedding scene are present on several funerary vases, for example, the white-ground lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter (fig. 9). Hermes leads a newly deceased woman who wears a veil. Hermes has replaced the groom in this instance, guiding her to Charon, whereas if a wedding scene, Hermes would guide her to his home. By combining iconography of the wedding scene on a funerary vase, the artist has allowed the woman to have the wedding she may have never had.

During the classical period, the bride was lead by the groom during a torchlight procession. Torches are a symbol of fertility and purification. The mother of the bride/groom carried the torches as their way of transferring the bride from one home to another.

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13 Joan Reilly. “Many Brides: “Mistress and Maid” on Athenian Lekythoi.” (Hesperia: The Journal of the American School of Classical Studies at Athens 58.4, 1989), 411-44. Reilly studies a variety of funerary vases with themes including two women. She concludes that the scene is not funerary, but presents a bride and her companions leading to her conclusion the scenes on these funerary vases were to provide women the experience of a wedding for those who did not experience it themselves.

14 The importance of torches during ancient Greek rituals including both wedding and funerary can be seen in Oakley and Sinos 1993; Helene P. Foley. The Homeric Hymn to Demeter: Translation,
attributed to the Splanchnopt Painter (fig. 12) presents the wedding procession when the groom leads his bride. Ahead of them, guiding the way, are a series of individuals. Two of them are women carrying a set of torches. Even if not exact in meaning, the use of torches is in scenes featuring Hermes and Persephone, creating a link between marriage and death. The red-figure krater (fig. 3) mentioned earlier depicting Persephone and her return to Demeter, also presents a woman carrying a set of torches. Hekate, like mothers in the wedding procession, helps to guide Persephone. In many of these images, there are physical objects that act as iconographic markers indicating the type of theme that is presented in each scene, whether they are common to mythic and real depictions, marriage or death. By including these physical objects seen in images of ritual into themes of myth, myth becomes ritual.

Hermes: The Groom of Death

The act of leading, from one destination to another – one life to the next – is a scene featured on many vases both with the wedding procession and Hermes Psychopompos. In the funerary context, the newly deceased is guided by Hermes on a journey to the underworld where they meet Charon. This representation of guiding, Hermes leading the deceased, developed as the iconography of the wedding shifted – as discussed earlier. The gesture of grabbing, either by the wrist, hand or arm, is seen throughout both wedding and funerary iconography. The act of grabbing the wrist is referred to as cheira epi karpōi. This gesture occurs when a strong grip is needed, whereas holding hands might cause the fingers to slip. The gesture can also suggest forcefulness or the need for control as an individual, whether the bride or the newly deceased, is being lead away. Most images depicting Hermes Psychopompos are of him leading women, linking the groom and his bride.

For example, a white ground lekythos attributed to the Bosanquet Painting (fig. 8) presents Hermes leading a woman by the wrist. He is guiding her to Charon who awaits in his boat where she will begin her life in the underworld. Hermes looks back toward the bride as he points his kerykeion forward. He is a mature individual evident by the inclusion of a beard. Slung behind his back, he wears a petasos. Comparing the red-figure lekythos to a vase featuring the wedding procession, a red-figure pyxis attributed to the Oppenheimer Group (fig. 5), shows the similarity

15 In H. Hoffman’s “From Charos to Charon: Some Notes on the Human Encounter with Death in Attic Red-figured Vase Painting (Visible Religion 4, 1985): 173-204., he looks at the iconographic development of the theme of death on vase paintings of the fifth century with the focus on Charon.

16 For more on the cheira epi karpōi gesture see Rush Rehm (1994) and Oakley and Sinos (1993).
between Hermes and the groom. The Oppenheimer group vase illustrates a wedding procession of an unknown couple, a mortal wedding. The groom, wearing a wreath on his head, leads his bride while grabbing her by the wrist, looking back at her. In his other hand, he holds a torch pointing forward. Following the same gesture, grabbing the wrist, Hermes Psychopompos’ iconography was influenced by the groom, creating a link.

Many of the scenes featuring Hermes Psychopompos depict him leading women. Ridgway argues in her article the reasoning behind most of art featuring women, is because the art was created on objects meant to be used by women. The lekythoi, the distinctive vase shape for funerary vases, was a vessel used to carry oil that were found in or on fifth century grave sites, used as offerings to the dead. The lekythoi vase was also used to wash the newly deceased during the prothesis, a task performed by women. Another reasoning, mentioned earlier, was provided by Joan Reilly. By presenting women in the scenes featuring Hermes Psychopompos, the artist has provided them with the opportunity of experiencing the wedding if they passed at a young age. Hermes leads these individuals in a similar act as the groom in the wedding procession.

Although many of the images of Hermes Psychopompos show him leading women, not all do; Hermes leads men as well. Take for example, a red-figure lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff


Painter that depicts Hermes leading a newly deceased young boy to the underworld (fig. 13). Awaiting them both in his boat is Charon, who is ready to take the boy across the river Styx. Hermes points his kerykeion forward in a guiding action, a similar action seen when Hermes leads women. Hermes reaches out his hand to the boy just like he does on the previous red-figure lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter (fig. 9). A white ground lekythos attributed to the Quadrate Painter also features Hermes leading a draped youth (fig. 14). Hermes, holding his kerykeion up and looking back towards the newly deceased, takes him by the hand as he leads him to Charon who awaits in his boat. The act of leading is what connects images of Hermes Psychopompos. He is shown either grabbing the individual by the hand, wrist or reaching out to them.

In this theme, Hermes Psychopompos leading the deceased, very few vases show him leading adult men, except for one. A red-figure hydria attributed to the Syriskos Painter (fig. 15), presents Hermes leading a adult man, indicated by a beard, grabbing him by the hand as he looks back towards him. Hermes holds his kerykeion, pointed straight up, while his petasos is slung behind his back. This vase was thought to be created earlier than many of the vases featuring Hermes Psychopompos. By changing the individuals into young men, without a beard, they become closer in identity to a woman – i.e., looking youthful and feminine. These images become closer to the wedding iconography leading to the conclusion that these images of myth were based on those of ritual, taking the same iconography, but manipulating it to fit a theme.
Marriage to Death

The link between marriage and death emerges with the experience of specific characters who all take a journey, crossing the boundary of one place. This interconnection plays a crucial part and helps to solidify the bridge between marriage and death. The entrance to the underworld is a place where marriage and death cross. The entrance does not act as a tunnel, but the cause of the two-way motion is marriage. Individuals including Persephone, Herakles, Alcestis and even Hermes cross the borders of the underworld, each figure having a connection with marriage.

There are notable similarities between the myths of Persephone and Orpheus. In the myth of Persephone, Hermes leads Persephone out of the underworld. However, each year she must return to Hades. The crossing of the boundaries between life and death has been made possible with her marriage to Hades. The red-figure krater attributed to the Persephone Painter (fig. 3) shows Persephone coming out of the ground, lead by Hermes. She will continue to make this transition acting a bridge between marriage and death. The same is true in the Orpheus myth. Marriage has created a two-way motion at the entrance of the underworld with Orpheus going to the underworld to retrieve his deceased wife only to lose her again.19

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Performing a similar role as Hermes in the Persephone myth, Herakles retrieves Alcestis from
the underworld. As the bride of Admetus, Alcestis acts as a link between marriage and death.

“Now I must repay Admetus my debt for his generous hospitality! I must bring back to him, to
his palace, his dead wife, Alcestis. I shall go to her grave and wait for Thanatos…But if this fails,
if he doesn’t turn up the feast on the blood of the offerings, I’ll go down to the sunless palaces of
Persephone and her Master, Plouto and I’ll ask them to hand me over the woman. I’m certain
they’ll agree, and I’ll bring her back, into Admetus’ arms.”20 *Alcestis*, 839.

In this myth, Herakles has taken the place of Hermes, returning the recently deceased Alcestis
back to her home.

The retrieval of Alcestis is not the only time Herakles21 encounters the underworld, nor is it the
only link between Hermes and Persephone. A red-figure amphora attributed to the Painter of
Munich 2306 (fig. 16), depicts a scene of Herakles in the underworld. Herakles, wearing a lion
skin on his head, completes his twelfth labour with the capture of Kerberos. He holds a chain in
his hand that is attached to Kerberos. Kneeling before the two figures is Hermes pointing his
kerykeion forward. Persephone as queen of the underworld reacts to the abduction of Kerberos;
Hermes and Athena, Heracles’ frequent aids, are at left. Athena stands beside Hermes holding a
spear while Persephone stands behind Herakles with her arm extended. Hermes once led
Persephone out of the underworld returning her home. The extension of her arm could not only

20 Euripides and George Theodoridis. *Alcestis*. (Bacchicstage, 2008), 839.
21 On the myth of Herakles, see Louis Rawlings and Hugh Bowden. *Herakles and Hercules: Exploring a Graeco-
Roman Divinity* (Swansea: The Classical Press of Wales, 2005).
represent her want of the return of Kerberos, but it also could extend towards Hermes, wanting him to return her home once more.

The link here is that the entrance to the underworld is a place where marriage and death cross. Whether it involves Orpheus attempting to return his wife Eurydice, Hermes returning Persephone or Herakles returning Alcestis, each group of individuals crosses the boundary between life and death, with marriage as the connection. In the end, it all leads back to Persephone and the role Hermes plays as a guide.
Conclusion

Every role of Hermes, whether it is as Psychopompos, proegetes, or aid to Herakles, has served as a connection between marriage and death. The presence of Hermes on both funerary and wedding scenes has demonstrated how important his part is. By putting Hermes in a broader context, while attempting to understand how mythical imagery was created, the notion that mythological scenes were influenced by those of ritual, such as the wedding procession.

Persephone, the bride of Hades, acts as the initial link for Hermes between marriage and death. Hermes plays a role in the myth leading Persephone out of the underworld back to her mother Demeter. With the help of Hekate, the scenes featuring Hermes and Persephone puts Hermes in the position of a “reverse groom”. Just like the groom leading his bride to his home, Hermes leads Persephone to Demeter, her home. After setting the stage with the initial link between marriage and death, it’s important to understand the chronology of iconographic changes, especially when on funerary vases, scenes go from ritual to myth. Comparing the shift of black-figure to red-figure, a relation developed between the procession by chariot and by foot creating a correlation between marriage and death, ritual and myth.

With similar iconographic markers, including the veil of a bride and the newly deceased, the petasos worn by Hermes and the groom, the addition of torches, in scenes featuring Hermes in both wedding and funeral, we are provided with further evidence linking scenes of marriage and death. Continuing with chronology, iconographical changes in the scenes themselves from black-figure to red-figure, further connects these scenes. Most important is the act of leading. Many
lekythoi vases depict a scene when Hermes leads the newly deceased to Charon. Most of the individuals Hermes is shown leading are women, where he grabs them by the wrist, looking back towards them. The same action is seen during the wedding procession when the groom leads his bride. Hermes has now become the groom allowing for the newly deceased women to experience the marriage they were not privileged to have. Finally, by comparing myths similar to that of Persephone, including Eurydice and Alcestis, it was concluded the entrance of the underworld is a place where marriage and death cross, leading back to Hermes, who has now become the ultimate link between marriage and death.

The aim of this argument was the show how a mythological scene was influenced by a real ritual such as the wedding procession. However, there is so much more that could be included to extend this further. Earlier in a footnote, a marble relief featuring the Orpheus myth was mentioned (fig. 17). This relief presents Hermes, who wears his petasos slung behind his back, leading a veiled Eurydice, grabbing her by the wrist. He leads her away from Orpheus back to the underworld. Like this work of art, there could be many others depicts similar scenes creating more connections between marriage and death.
Works Cited


Fig. 1: A red-figure hydria attributed to the Painter of Tarquinia 707 depicting the wedding of Hades and Persephone: a veiled Persephone holds a wreath while hiding a chariot with Hades, while women surround them holding torches. Ca. 450. Wurzburg L535. [BAPD 214708].

Fig. 2: A black-figure krater attributed to the Euphiletos Painter depicting a wedding scene: the groom and bride ride a chariot during the wedding procession. Leading the procession is a woman holding torches. Ca. 550-500. Tampa 1981.005. [BAPD 4367].
Fig. 3: A red-figure krater attributed to the Persephone Painter depicting the return of Persephone: Hermes holding his kerykeion stands beside a kneeling veiled Persephone. Hekate, the goddess of fertility, magic and dark things carries torches while Demeter stands waiting to receive her daughter. Ca. 440. New York 28.57.23. [BAPD 214158].

Fig. 4: A black-figure amphora attributed to the Group of London B 174 depicting a wedding scene: the bride and groom ride in a chariot during the wedding procession, which is led by Hermes. Along with them, are women holding baskets and trays. Ca. 575-525. London 1868.6-10.2. [BAPD 310361].
Fig. 5: A red-figure pyxis comparable to the Oppenheimer Group depicting a wedding scene: a groom leading his veiled bride, grabbing her by the wrist with one hand and holding a troch with the other. Hermes, to the left, leads the procession. Ca. 450-400. Brussels A3547. [BAPD 216669].

Fig. 6: A red-figure oinochoe attributed to the Orchard Painter depicting a wedding scene: a groom leading his veiled bride, grabbing her by the hand while looking back towards her. Ca. 470-460. Florence 4025. [BAPD 205957].
Fig. 7: A black-figure plaque attributed to Exekias depicting a funeral scene: the scene features the ekphora, the funerary procession. The chariot holds a draped man while surrounded by mourning women. Ca. 550-500. Berlin F1819. [BAPD 350094].

Fig. 8: A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Bosanquet Painter depicting a funerary scene: Hermes Psychopompos looks back towards a veiled woman leading her, grabbing her by the wrist, to Charon who awaits in his boat. Ca. 440-430. Munich 8925. [BAPD 3744].
Fig. 9: A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter depicting a funerary scene: Hermes leads a veiled woman to Charon who awaits in his boat. Hermes wears his petasos on his head and points his kerykeion down while he reaches out his hand to the woman. Eidola are flying around the figures. Ca. 475-425. Athens 1926. [BAPD 212341].

Fig. 10: A red-figure loutrophoros depicting a wedding scene: the groom leads the veiled bride to their home. Two erotes fly around the bride and one sits at the entrance to the home. On the reverse (on the left), a groom wearing a petasos shakes the hand of a man, a father of a bride. Ca. 450-425. Boston 03.802. [BAPD 15815].
Fig. 11: A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter depicting a funeral scene: the newly deceased youth is laid out on a *kline* surrounded by members of their family. Ca. 450. New York 07.286.40. [BAPD 212338].

Fig. 12: A white-ground pyxis attributed to the Splanchnopt Painter depicting a wedding scene: a groom leads his veiled bride, grabbing her by the wrist in the wedding procession. Two individuals hold a set of torches. Ca. 470-450. London D11. [BAPD 211904].
Fig. 13: A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Sabouroff Painter depicting a funerary scene: Hermes, holding his kerykeion in one hand, reaches out to a draped youth, leading him to Charon who awaits in his boat. Ca. 450. New York 21.88.17. [BAPD 212345].

Fig. 14: A white-ground lekythos attributed to the Quadrate Painter depicting a funerary scene: Hermes, holding his kerykeion, grabbing the hand of a draped youth, leading him to Charon who reaches out his hand to them. Ca. 450-400. [BAPD 216469].
Fig. 15: A red-figure hydria attributed to the Syriskos Painter depicting a funerary scene: Hermes leading an adult man, indicated by a beard, grabbing him by the hand. Ca. 500-450. Athens 16351. [BAPD 202724].

Fig. 16: A red-figure amphora attributed to the Painter of Munich 2306: Herakles completes his twelfth labour with the capture of Kerberos. Kneeling before the two figures is Hermes pointing his kerykeion forward. Behind Herakles stands Persephone while Athena stands behind Hermes. Ca. 525-475. Munich 2306. [BAPD 202086].
Fig. 17: Marble Relief depicting a scene featuring Hermes leading Eurydice away from Orpheus returning her to the underworld. Ca. 450