



Textualization and Archive in Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos*

This article argues for a new way of reading Hellenistic “literary” hymns, one that situates them in contemporary religious and cultural discourse through the notions of “textualization” and the “cultural archive.” I apply this framework to Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos* and show how this hymn became an important part of the articulation of Ptolemaic religion in the context of ritual politics in the third-century Aegean, as well as how it had a lasting impact on the way that the ritual geography of the Cyclades was imagined. Specifically, the analysis spotlights how the hymn successfully links historical and contemporary theoric choral activity with the etymologization of the Cyclades; how it textualizes the island of Kos within the ritual nexus of Delos; and, finally, how it becomes an important part of Greek cultural memory about Delos.

KEYWORDS: Greek hymns, Greek religion, Callimachus, Hellenistic poetry, ritual theory, textualization, cultural archive, Ptolemaic empire, *theoria*, Hellenistic Aegean, geopoetics, Delos, Kos

1.1. INTRODUCTION

What work does a Greek hymn do in the post-Classical—post-Pindaric, post-Bacchylidean—Greek-speaking world? What about, specifically, in the world of Ptolemaic Egypt? How, for example, should we think about texts like Callimachus’ *Hymns*—seemingly close to ritual yet generally taken to be purely literary, far removed from the umbrella of what one might consider relevant to ritual action or the “religious” in general? Modern scholarship on Callimachus’ *Hymns*—in particular, *Hymns* 2 (to Apollo), 5 (to Athena), and 6 (to Demeter)—has for the most part dutifully followed Richard Reitzenstein’s characterization, in his 1906 work *Hellenistische Wundererzählungen*, of a certain strain of Hellenistic and

Augustan poetry as “mimetic” (versus, implicitly, the “diegetic”).¹ That is, such poetry shows (or, rather, shows off) but doesn’t tell (lacks content). For Reitzenstein, mimetic poetry, while inspired by the form of “real” lyric, was severed from its sacred character.²

The consequence of Reitzenstein’s formulation has been the conceptualization of Greek hymn as lying on a continuum, with “real,” performed hymns on one end and “mimetic” (and/or performative) and “textual” on the other.³ Such an alignment for Greek sacred song models a desacralization and decline over time: a teleological movement from an oral to a written culture, from the performance-based to the literary, and, importantly for the study of Greek religion,⁴ from the primordial elements of that which is considered truly “religious” to their subsequent interpretation, reformulation, and codification.⁵ As the historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith once put it, this is a model that insists on “the ‘givenness’ of the basic elements as primordial and the secondary, degenerative character of ingenuity.”⁶ One of the consequences of such a model for the study of hymns of the Hellenistic period has been an impulse to propose a performance occasion wherever possible, even for compositions not generally labeled as “mimetic.” One such persistent thesis, for example, is that Callimachus’ *Hymn to Delos*, despite its lack of an explicitly mimetic frame, may have been composed for a local Delian ceremony like the Ptolemaieia.⁷

For those working on Hellenistic poetry, hymnic or not, it has been difficult to escape the spell of “reality” and “performance.” But as Denis Feeney pointed out over two decades ago in *Literature and Religion at Rome*, creating an antithetical

1. Reitzenstein 1906: 152–60: a classification based, ultimately, on Plato’s discussion of *mimesis* and *diegesis* in *Rep.* 392d–394c; cf. Vestrheim 2012: 23–24.

2. E.g., Reitzenstein 1906: 160 writes of a (mimetic) poem of Tibullus on the Ambarvalia (Tib. 2.1) that its “character is no longer bound to the sacred” (“einen sakral gebundenen Charakter nicht mehr hat”).

3. On the close relationship between the mimetic/performative and the textual, see for example Calame 2005: 87; see further Vestrheim 2012: 23–24 for how scholars have defined “mimetic” in relation to Callimachus’ *Hymns*.

4. While I realize that the use of “religion” as a concept/analytical category for a premodern society is problematic (cf. especially Bell 2006; Nongbri 2013), I follow MacRae (2016: 6–7, with notes) and others in applying the term in the awareness that to do so is an act of cultural translation, despite the imperfect alignment of what we might term “religion” and what ancient Greeks might have called, as Nongbri writes, “things involving gods or other superhuman beings and the technologies for interacting with such beings” (2013: 157). As Tim Whitmarsh writes: “As a category, religion can certainly do an analytical job for us – but it always needs nuance, and we have to be mindful of the ideological baggage” (2018: 25). In other words, I follow Nongbri here in using the term “religion” as a *redescriptive*, rather than descriptive, notion; cf. again Nongbri 2013: 157, and on the terms “redescriptive” and “descriptive,” see Nongbri 2013: 21; 2008. The use of the term “redescription” as an anthropological concept was, as far as I am aware, first adopted by the historian of religion Jonathan Z. Smith, e.g., 1982: 36–52.

5. See, for example, Mary Depew’s model of *hymnos*, in which “communitarian religion and contestable polis identity” give way to “individual artistry” (2000: 79); cf. Depew 1993.

6. Smith 1982: 42.

7. So, among others, Bruneau 1970: 16–17. On the Ptolemaieia, see section 3.

opposition between “literature” and “real religion” can be misleading. As Feeney states, “there is no given ‘real religion’ which art is then varying or departing from, for what we label ‘real religion’ is itself a mobile set of discourses with varying degrees of overlap and competition.”⁸ Put simply, the line between the modern categories of “literature” and “religion” is an extremely fuzzy one and represents an etic perspective that does not match the evidence.

Scholarship on Greek poetry has yet to fully reckon with Feeney’s challenge to think about the complex interaction of the modern categories of “religion” and “literature”—perhaps because the knowledge structure on which this scholarship has been built is, understandably, so firmly grounded on performance and performance-based theories.⁹ Taking a cue from Feeney’s work, I show in this paper that we can move beyond the categorization of ancient Greek poetry on matters divine as either performance-based or literarily oriented play—“real” or “not real.” In order to do so, the paper offers one way of rethinking the notion of “ritual Greek poetry,” and thus, in part, our understanding and analysis of the representation of Greek ritual, specifically on Delos. I propose that one way to move beyond performance-based theories of poetry in the context of later Greek literature is to reframe our analytic categories: hymn, not as performance (or its derivative, *mimesis*), but as part of a cultural archive and implicated in the process of the textualization of ritual, as true for a “purely literary” hymn of the Hellenistic period as for an Archaic or Classical text of song-dance. While this article proceeds by case study and close examination of a single text and historical period, I believe that the analysis nevertheless advances the scholarly conversation about what “Greek religious poetry” can entail.

1.2. DEFINING THE TERMS

This analysis, then, relies on two concepts: the cultural archive and, especially, the textualization of ritual. First, the cultural archive. In invoking the notion of the “archive,” I take loose inspiration from Derrida’s thoughts on the archive as “at once institutive and conservative,”¹⁰ that is, the archive as an instrument of both preservation and production. Just as aetiology—that characteristic activity of the Hellenistic age—is always aspirational, looking not to the past but the future, so the archive belongs temporally and modally not (or not just) to the historicity of the past, but to the possibilities of, and injunctions for, the future: that which is ordained to be, based on the structuration of the past.¹¹ I am interested in what

8. Feeney 1998: 25.

9. The many applications of theories of performance and reperformance in studies of Greek poetry are vast and beyond the scope of this article. However, for some recent reconsiderations of the relationship between orality (and its corollary, performance) and textuality in Greek poetry, see, for example, Hadjimichael 2019: 171–211 on Greek lyric and Ready 2019 on Homeric epic.

10. Derrida 1996: 7.

11. In Derridean etymological terms, “simultaneously the *commencement* and the *commandment*” (“à la fois le *commencement* et le *commandement*,” Derrida 1995: 11; original emphasis).

happens to our interpretation of hymnic discourse if we think about the hymn as a system that governs relations between past, present, and future. Thinking through the archive in these ways makes room for a type of historicized reading that does not rely strictly on the notion of “performance.” This paper therefore adopts the concept of “archive” as “the foundation of the production of knowledge in the present, the basis for the identities of the present and for the possible imaginings of community in the future.”¹² In other words, we can think about the Greek hymn as a structure of power and as an instrument of identity that, crucially, looks not only to the past and present, but also to the future.¹³

The second key concept is the “textualization of ritual.” In invoking the term “textualization,” I draw inspiration from Catherine Bell’s analysis of how textual processes work both as vehicles and actors in the codification of ritual.¹⁴ In a 1988 article on medieval Taoist liturgical texts, Bell addresses the methodological issues involved in the contextual study of texts, especially “certain types of texts, such as written accounts of ritual.”¹⁵ For Bell, there is a key set of underlying questions that remain unanswered through such straightforward historical “text in context” approaches: “What is the significance or functional effect of writing ritual down . . . ? How does writing a text or depicting ritual in a text act upon the social relations involved in textual and ritual activities?”¹⁶ By calling attention to the “social relations involved in textual and ritual activities,” Bell primes us for the converse of her notion of “textualization of ritual”—namely, the ritualization of texts. In its emphasis on *social* contexts, “textualization” becomes a reparative act, one in which, as Bell herself emphasizes, “texts are seen not simply as expressions or reflections of changing social situations but as dynamic *agents of change*”¹⁷—texts themselves can impact how a social body behaves and therefore constitute an important part of ritual action. Thinking about “textualization” in this way also elides the implicit opposition between learned textual production concerned with ritual but assumed to lack agentive force and texts known to have been performed in ritual contexts and therefore assumed to have more social agency. Bell’s analysis of textualization and its corollary, ritualization, in her 1988 article thus emphasizes the agency of texts and their social roles beyond specific instances of performance.

12. Hamilton et al. 2002: 8–9.

13. It is worth noting that the cultural archive, as used and understood in this paper, may seem to overlap with the notion of *arte allusiva* especially associated with Giorgio Pasquali and a subset of Italian classical philology (cf. Pasquali 1968 [1942], with discussion in the context of Callimachean studies by Citroni 2011). However, I believe that there are several key differences. Most importantly, in the context of this paper, the concept of the cultural archive allows us to think about the genre of “hymn” as a socio-cultural system and as part of what we think of as “religion” in general, rather than primarily as literary allusions. I should note here that the bulk of this article was written before the publication of Kurke et al. 2019, whose discussion of genre would have been relevant.

14. Bell 1988.

15. Bell 1988: 368.

16. Bell 1988: 369.

17. Bell 1988: 369 (original emphasis).

It is worth briefly noting here that Bell's theory of ritualization is likely more familiar to readers from her 1992 book, *Ritual Theory, Ritual Practice*, where she elucidates how ritualization, as practice, consists of a set of cultural strategies that aim at producing differentiation from the "everyday."¹⁸ In this article, however, I am interested in focusing on Bell's earlier 1988 discussion of the synergy between text and ritual, precisely because it shows how different textual processes can themselves be implicated in the production of a social body. More specifically, I am interested in how the role of ritual exegesis, in the case of the *Hymn to Delos*, articulates Ptolemaic religion and becomes part of the fashioning of an imperial, learned public—a specific kind of social body. I interpret the textualization of ritual (and Bell's converse of this, the ritualization of text) as the process by which a textual composition, like the *Hymn to Delos*, becomes part of the fabric of "Ptolemaic religion."

But at this point in the discussion of "textualization," one might point to a key difference between Bell's object of study—the Ling-pao texts and medieval Taoism—and ancient Greek hymns: for the modern scholar, medieval Taoism would be classed as a "book religion," whereas ancient Greek religious culture, despite its proliferation of texts dealing with matters of cult and ritual, would not.¹⁹ Recent work on Roman religious culture is useful here. For example, Duncan MacRae writes about the ways in which Victorian notions of "real book religions" have influenced how scholars have conceptualized the relationship between literature and religion in Roman culture.²⁰ As MacRae points out, the prevalence of the Scriptural paradigm in contemporary scholarship, even in studies of polytheistic, "non-book" traditions, has affected how we organize textual categories in Greco-Roman religious culture and become a dominant second-order concept.²¹ I would argue that approaches to Greek hymns, too, have ultimately been caught up in debates rooted in not only such structuring concepts as the oral versus the textual, the cultic versus the literary, or the performed versus the mimetic, but also the paradigm of Scripture.

How might these various junctures—oral/textual, cultic/literary, performed/mimetic, Scriptural/without Scripture—relate to Greek hymns? Modern discussions of *hieroi logoi* ("sacred words" or "sacred texts") are helpful for thinking about these relationships and, importantly, what "ritualization" for a "non-book" religious culture might entail. Contemporary work on Greek *hieroi logoi* has

18. Bell 1992; see, e.g., definitions at 81–83 and 90–93. Bell's definition of ritualization in the 1992 book also emphasizes that the "implicit dynamic and 'end' of ritualization . . . can be said to be the production of a 'ritualized body,'" that is, a social body that is "invested with a 'sense' of ritual" and is conditioned to reproduce and perpetuate certain contrasts (e.g., "ritual"/"not ritual"; citations from Bell 1992: 98). Kurke 2005 and Olsen 2015 explore how Bell's emphasis on the ritualized body, as laid out in the 1992 book, is particularly useful for scholars interested in ritual and performance, especially in relation to Archaic and Classical choral lyric and *choreia*.

19. Henrichs 2003.

20. MacRae 2016: 141–47.

21. MacRae 2016: 243.

tended to challenge the Scriptural paradigm,²² without, however, necessarily offering an alternative heuristic model. In his discussion of *hieroi logoi*, for example, Albert Henrichs confirms that Greek religious culture was explicitly not a “religion of the book”;²³ he therefore aligns *hieroi logoi* with verbal communication that was above all communication of arcane and secret knowledge.²⁴ For Henrichs and others, *hieroi logoi* occupy a distinct phenomenological position that function primarily in the realm of oral communication and are to be differentiated from mere ritual utterance and general sacred writings.²⁵

And yet, *hieroi logoi* themselves were not a stable generic category across geographic and cultural boundaries. For instance, a Ptolemaic royal decree (*prostagma*), possibly dating to the late third to second century BCE, demonstrates that in Alexandria at that time the audience of a *hieros logos* extended beyond the group of initiates of esoteric mystery cults like those for Orpheus.²⁶ The royal decree orders all those in Egypt participating in the rites of Dionysus to come to Alexandria; to present themselves before a certain Aristoboulos at the *katalogeion*;²⁷ to give an account of the source of their ritual knowledge/ritual accoutrements (τὰ ἱερά, line 11) going back three generations; and to render, each, their *hieros logos*, sealed (ἐ[σφ]ραγι[μένον], line 12) and inscribed with their individual names. With this edict, we see that “the sacred things” (τὰ ἱερά) and sacred books (τὸν ἱερὸν λόγον, line 12) underwent a process of Ptolemaic royal collection and institutionalization that was most likely linked to the census and perhaps also linked to the special tax privileges granted to the guilds of priests and performers known as the Dionysiac *technitai*, closely affiliated with Ptolemaic dynastic cult.²⁸ It is worth recalling here the early Ptolemaic policy of seizing “books from the ships” of all those who docked in Alexandria:²⁹ both can be seen as archival acts intimately

22. Baumgarten 1998; cf. the review by Parker 2000 and further discussion in Henrichs 2003. On *hieroi logoi*, see also Gehrke 2013 and Primavesi 2013.

23. Henrichs 2003: 215, citing Parker 1996 and Dodds 1973.

24. Henrichs 2003: 209, where he describes *hieroi logoi* as “so sublime that they existed only in the religious imagination.”

25. Henrichs 2003: 229–30, further developing Burkert 1985 and especially the definition of *hieroi logoi* at Burkert 1972: 219.

26. Edict recorded on the verso of Berlin, Staatliche Museen P. 11774; first published in Schubart 1917: 189–96, and reprinted in *BGU* (= *Berliner griechische Urkunden*) 6.1211; *SB* (= *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten*) 3.7266; and Lenger 1964: 68–71, no. 29 with extensive bibliography up to 1963; English translation in Hunt and Edgar 1934: 57, no. 208. I follow Lenger’s text. The dating of this (undated) document to the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopator has usually been based on the document on the recto of the same papyrus (= *BGU* 6.1277, a sale of grain at Tholthis dated to 215/214 BCE); cf. Henrichs 2003: 228n.67, with further bibliography. However, Capponi 2010 makes the compelling argument that this edict should be dated to the reign of Ptolemy VI Philometor or Ptolemy Euergetes II Physcon, and linked to the Jewish priest and philosopher Aristoboulos.

27. A public archive possibly connected with record-keeping for the census; cf. Clarysse and Thompson 2006: 2:33–34.

28. E.g., Clarysse and Thompson 2006: 2:52–53, 135–38.

29. τῶν καταπλεόντων ἀπάντων τὰ βιβλία, Gal. *Hipp. Epid.* 3 (Kühn 17A.606; cf. Kühn 17A.618–19). On (the idea of) the Museum and Library of Alexandria and Ptolemaic literary culture, see Erskine 1995; Bagnall 2002; Hendrickson 2014 and 2016; cf. Johnstone 2014.

connected with Ptolemaic religious culture. As Henrichs himself notes, although mainland Greece might have insisted on the primacy of oral communication for its sacred texts or *hieroi logoi*, Ptolemaic Egypt—and specifically Ptolemaic Alexandria—seems to have insisted on the formalization of *hieroi logoi*, sacred texts, into *hierai bibloi*, sacred books.³⁰ MacRae considers a similar phenomenon in Roman religious culture and, adapting the theoretical work of Catharine Bell, refers to this process as “textualization”—“the articulation of a traditional and particularly Roman ‘religion’ in learned treatises.”³¹

In thinking about Greek hymns of the Hellenistic period, I believe that one can adopt the same notion of textualization, as a corollary of ritualization. I would argue that in Ptolemaic Alexandria, highly learned texts like Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* played a key role in the process of textualization. For Callimachus' contemporary readers, exegetical acts were crucial interventions in the negotiation of concurrent political and religious dynamics. By acting as a repository of narratives about Delian ritual (= preservation) and remythologizing Delian aetiologies (= production), Callimachus' *Hymn* becomes not only an archive of Delian cultural memory but also, crucially, part of the articulation of Ptolemaic “religion.”

This article therefore considers what is at stake in such an articulation by taking up Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* as a case-study. In the following sections, I begin by contextualizing the *Hymn to Delos* and its narrative (“2. Island Narratives”). I then examine its historical setting and its relationship to Delian choral institutions (“3. Institut[ionaliz]ing Chorality”) and consider the ways in which it textualizes that relationship (“4. Constructing Delian Hymns: Intertextuality as Textualization”). I conclude with an analysis of the hymn—with special attention to its structure and ending—that traces its narrative and ideological logic (“5. Archivization and Textualization in the *Hymn to Delos*”).

2. ISLAND NARRATIVES

Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos*, at 326 lines the longest of his *Hymns* and the only one to reference any of the Ptolemies by name,³² has in recent years received more dedicated scholarly attention than any other of his *Hymns*.³³ Often set beside his *Hymn to Apollo* and *Hymn to Artemis* as part of a trilogy exploring a nexus of Delian, Pythian, and Cyrenean myth-ritual, the *Hymn to Delos* nevertheless stands

30. Henrichs 2003: 240.

31. MacRae 2016: 141.

32. At line 166, Σαωτήρων ὑπατον γένος (= “last/most excellent offspring of the Saviors”), a kind of periphrastic patronymic.

33. There have been for the *Hymn to Delos* at least one full commentary, three major published studies, and three unpublished dissertations: Mineur 1984, Gigante Lanzara 1990, Ukleja 2005, Giuseppetti 2013, Bauer 1970 (Brown diss., unpublished), Bing 1981 (University of Michigan diss., unpublished but later incorporated into Bing 2008 [1988]), Fleming 1981 (University of Texas at Austin diss., unpublished). I should note here that Brumbaugh 2019 was published after the primary drafts of this article were written.

out as being the only one of Callimachus' *Hymns* to take as its subject matter something other than an Olympian deity. On a basic level, the hymn is represented as an extended *aetion* of how the island of Delos—originally a floating island called “Asteria”—received its name.³⁴

The narrative of the *aetion* traces a history of transformation. We hear about how Asteria, fleeing Zeus' advances, “leapt from heaven into the deep ditch [of the sea] ... like a star (ἀστέρη ἴση)” (37–38). From the outset, there is emphasis on fixity and motion—not only as part of the mythological narrative of Delos' transformation from a wandering island into a fixed one (28–54), or as part of the geological narrative of how islands were “rooted” in place by Poseidon (πρυμνόθεν ἐρριζώσε, 35), but also as part of the history of Delian chorality and festival culture. In the hymn, the very transformation of Delos from Asteria (a Pindaric name) to, literally, the most “manifest” (δηλος) island of the Cyclades is overtly figured through Asteria-Delos' bodily transformation. We will return to this topic in section 5.

The central part of the narrative, from lines 55 to 274, concerns Leto's attempt to find a suitable place to give birth to Apollo, and Hera's wrath at a goddess who “alone was to bear for Zeus a son dearer than Ares” (57–58). Just as Asteria wanders, rootless, so, too, the pregnant Leto peregrinates (55–248). And, thanks to Hera, Leto is spurned at every turn by every city, mountain, river, and island, until, finally, she reaches Asteria. Before Leto settles on Asteria, however, she stops, among other places, at Thebes and Kos.

At both of these sites, a still fetal Apollo prophesies from the womb. At Thebes, Apollo rebukes the city for refusing entry to Leto; on Kos, he warns his soon-to-be mother against giving birth there (162–76). As Susan Stephens has noted, Apollo's second pre-natal prophecy is “a tour-de-force not easily paralleled in previous or later Greek poetry.”³⁵ For, almost precisely in the middle of the poem, the unborn god prophesies that (the future) Ptolemy II will be born on the island of Kos and defeat the Celts, who will “raise their barbarian sword and wage a Celtic War against the Hellenes” (172–73).³⁶ The centrality of this passage for the hymn makes it worth citing at greater length:

34. οὐνομα δ' ἦν τοι / Ἀστερή τὸ παλαιόν, “Your name, once, used to be Asteria” (36–37); see also 39–40: τόφρα μὲν οὐπω τοι χρυσέη ἐπεμίσητο Λητώ, / τόφρα δ' ἔτ' Ἀστερή σὺ καὶ οὐδέπω ἔκλεο Δῆλος (“As long as golden Leto did not yet mingle with you, so long were you still called ‘Asteria’ and not yet ‘Delos’”). “Asteria” notably bookends Callimachus' *Hymn*. Cf. Mineur 1984 ad 300: “in a hymn to Delos, the persistence of this name here and in l. 316 is remarkable.” The emphasis on the figure of Asteria in this hymn points to Pindar's *First Hymn* (fr. 33 S-M), formerly known as the *Hymn to Zeus* but argued by Giovan Battista D'Alessio to have been almost certainly a *Hymn to Apollo* (D'Alessio 2009; cf. D'Alessio 2005). As D'Alessio points out, this was one of Pindar's most famous hymns in antiquity (2009: 129). For a more thorough discussion of Callimachus' engagement with Pindar and of the interplay between Asteria, Delos, and Kos, see Kampakoglou 2019: 299–347 and especially Giuseppetti 2013. Giuseppetti 2013: 143–46 argues that the inclusion of Kos in Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* is directly related to its inclusion in Pindar's *First Hymn*.

35. Stephens 2015: 206.

36. This likening between Kos and Delos as “island nurses” of infant gods and kings appears also in Theoc. *Id.* 17.58–76 (the “Encomium of Ptolemy Philadelphus”). Cf. Hunter 2003: 142–44.

μὴ σὺ γε, μήτερ,
 τῇ με τέκοις. οὐτ' οὖν ἐπιμέμφομαι οὐδὲ μεγαίρω
 νῆσον, ἐπεὶ λιπαρὴ τε καὶ εὐβοτος, εἴ νύ τις ἄλλη-
 ἀλλά οἱ ἐκ Μοιρέων τις ὀφειλόμενος θεὸς ἄλλος 165
 ἐστί, Σαωτήρων ὑπατον γένος· ᾧ ὑπὸ μήτρην
 ἴξεται οὐκ ἀέκουσα Μακηδόνι κοιρανέεσθαι
 ἀμφοτέρη μεσόγεια καὶ αἱ πελάγεσσι κάθηνται,
 μέχρις ὅπου περάτη τε καὶ ὀππότεν ὠκέες ἵπποι
 Ἥέλιον φορέουσιν· ὁ δ' εἴσεται ἦθεα πατρός. 170
 καὶ νύ ποτε ξυνός τις ἐλεύσεται ἄμμιν ἄεθλος
 ὕστερον, ὀππότεν οἱ μὲν ἐφ' Ἑλλήνεσσι μάχαιραν
 βαρβαρικὴν καὶ Κελτὸν ἀναστήσαντες Ἄρηα
 ὀψίγονοι Τιτῆνες ἀφ' ἐσπέρου ἐσχατόωντος
 ῥώσωνται νιφάδεσσιν ἐοικότες ἢ ισάριθμοι 175
 τεύρεσιν. ...

No, mother, do not
 give birth to me here. I do not find fault with the island or begrudge it,
 since it is fat and rich in pasture, as much as any other.
 But by grace of the Fates, to this island there is owed 165
 another god—the lofty offspring of the Saviors. Under his diadem
 there will come, not unwilling to be ruled by a Macedonian,
 both lands and the lands that dwell in the sea, as far as
 the ends of the earth and where the swift horses carry
 the Sun. He will have the character of his father. 170
 And now at some later time a common struggle will
 come to us, when against the Hellenes later-born Titans,
 raising up a barbarian sword and Celtic war,
 will rush from the farthest west,
 like snowflakes, as numerous as 175
 the stars. ...

Apollo's prophecy on Kos—the island on which Ptolemy Philadelphus was born—explicitly names Philadelphus as “another god” (θεὸς ἄλλος, 165) and declares that the future king will rule over an extensive empire including “both *mesogaiai*” (meaning perhaps both continents, Europe and Asia, and/or Upper and Lower Egypt³⁷) and also “the lands that dwell in the sea”—that is, the islands of the Mediterranean. He is also slated to deliver Egypt from the same Galatian threat that attacked Delphi in 279/8 BCE, alluded to in our poem beginning at line 171—a key chronological point that offers a *terminus post quem* for the poem's

37. Stephens 2015 ad loc.

date of composition.³⁸ When Leto finally alights on Delos and gives birth to Apollo, the island undergoes a ritual transformation, which takes up the final 75 lines of the poem.

Structurally, the narrative maintains a close relationship with the Delian portion of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, culminating, as do both the Delian and Pythian sections of that hymn, in ritual action which is in turn presented as the natural, teleological outcome of mythic narrative. Indeed, both the *Hymn to Delos* and the *Homeric Hymn* function as aetiologies of Delian *theōria*.³⁹ In the former, however, we see a concerted effort to embed a new religious and geopolitical center within an established nexus of Delian myth-ritual. What eventually emerges is a revision of the mythical archaeology of Delian choral *theōria*.

New geopolitical orders demand their own literary and mythical ritual thickening, and Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* plays an important role in forging a differently nuanced theoric landscape for Ptolemaic interests in the third-century Aegean. The impact of the historical and political context on the content and, even, structure of the hymn has been noted by various scholars.⁴⁰ In the next section, I follow this historicizing vein of scholarship and take into account the importance of thick historical description. However, I do so in order to think about not just Ptolemaic imperial ambitions, literarily expressed, but, more importantly, the subject of chorality in Greek cultural memory, and how Ptolemaic theology becomes foundational to its myth-historical formation. We will see how, ultimately, the way in which Callimachus archives previous Delian ritual generates a new social body—an imperial audience—and focalizes its myth-historical relationship to the subject of chorality through an imperial lens.

3. INSTITUT(IONALIZ)ING CHORALITY

Before thinking about the remembrance of chorality in the post-Classical period, it will be helpful to begin, first, with scholarly interpretations of what Delian choral practice—specifically, theoric practice—in this age might have looked like.

In his detailed 1970 tome on the Hellenistic and Imperial cults of Delos, Philippe Bruneau begins with an account of the cultic practices and mythology pertaining to Delian Apollo that depends heavily on Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos*.⁴¹

38. On the dating of the *Hymn to Delos*, see below, n.54. It is worth noting, incidentally, that, based on extant epigraphic evidence, Kos was the first Greek community to celebrate this victory of the Greeks (*Hellenes*) over the Celtic barbarians; cf. Barbantani 2011: 195 and *Syll.*³ 398 (dated 278 BCE). On the fecundity of the “Galatians-as-new-Persians” motif and its importance in negotiating relationships between Hellenistic kings and Greek communities, cf. Barbantani 2011, especially 196–200. The topos is explored in much greater detail in Barbantani 2001.

39. Cf. Kowalzig 2007: 121.

40. For example, Stephens 2015: 158–59, 162; Giuseppetti 2013: 123–64; Bing 2008 [1988]: 91–93, 128–29.

41. Bruneau 1970: 16–52.

Arguing that the *Hymn to Delos* is “the sole witness” to a literature inspired by local myths and cults in the Hellenistic era, Bruneau relies on Callimachus’ hymn to structure his discussion of Delian rites and festivals.⁴² When Bruneau writes, for example, about the *Deliades*, or “Delian maidens”—referred to as “the chorus” (ὁ χορός) in Delian inscriptions⁴³—he reads Callimachus literally in order to “excavate” Delian ritual information.⁴⁴ Callimachus’ poem becomes, in this way, an archaeologist’s ritual archive.

Bruneau’s reading of Callimachus’ *Hymn* broadly follows a prominent interpretive trend that attempts to establish an actual festival context for the performance of the hymn, thus aligning Ptolemy II’s Aegean ambitions with a performance that invokes the precedent set by the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*.⁴⁵ While such a logic in the reading of poetic texts can be circular and simplistic, precisely because it can fail to account fully for the complex relationship between poetry and action, this kind of analysis does serve to highlight the density of ritual description in Callimachus’ *Hymn*. But how to explain such density if not as a part of an archaeologist’s thick description?

The apparent answer—literary amalgamation, or the poet’s fancy—follows the other prominent interpretive trend for this hymn: “allusive art” aimed at “the intimate circle of scholars, *literati* and royalty within or connected to the Alexandrian Museum.”⁴⁶ Thus, the lines of this *Hymn* that most explicitly refer to a number of Delian rituals (300–315) have been described as a disordered hodgepodge of ritual—a geopoetics “arranged in a completely unpredictable order”⁴⁷—or as a kind of antiquarian patchwork of Delian myth and song-dance practice.⁴⁸ However, such a characterization of the use of myth in Hellenistic poetry as primarily erudite play prevents us from seeing that the use of myth, also in this period, can have consequences for our understanding of what was happening “on the ground,” and that it needs to be read in a complex matrix that includes the politics of power and the archaeology of ritual. In the case of Delos, for instance, its centrality as the “kilometer zero” of the Cyclades played an important role in the contestation of power in the third-century Aegean.⁴⁹

One way to move beyond “performance” (or non-performance) as the primary analytical framework for thinking about poetry like Callimachus’

42. Bruneau 1970: 16; Bruneau also mentions here a key underlying assumption, i.e., that Callimachus’ hymn was “surely written for a Delian ceremony.” Bruneau and Ducat (2005: 54–56, “Rites et Fêtes”) follow a similar argument and structure.

43. Homolle 1890: 500n.7.

44. Bruneau 1970: 36; cf. 29–32.

45. This kind of propagandistic interpretation of the *Hymn to Delos* goes back at least to Reinach 1911. Further references arguing for real (vs. imagined) performance contexts in Mineur 1984: 10n.1.

46. Mineur 1984: 10 and nn.2–3.

47. Asper 2011: 167.

48. Kowalzig 2007: 56–57.

49. On Delos’ sanctuary (and the Delians’ concern for securing access to power), rather than, e.g., merely trade, as the reason for its extremely widespread network of political connections in the third century BCE, cf. Constantakopoulou 2017, esp. 90–97.

Hymn is to reconceptualize how this hymn works as an archive of cultural memory. How, for example, does this hymn intersect with prior and contemporary ideologies of the Delian chorus? In what ways does its rhetoric take part in the memorialization of the chorus? To what extent does the *Hymn* preserve, and to what extent does it *produce*, the chorus as institutional practice? In order to begin to address these questions, it will be useful to describe briefly its contemporary setting.

The *Hymn to Delos* was probably composed between about 275 and 259 BCE—a politically fraught time for the Ptolemies.⁵⁰ Ptolemy II Philadelphus faced both internal and external challenges. Within Egypt, these challenges included a mutiny by the very mercenaries whom Philadelphus had hired to fight off his half-brother, Ptolemy Keraunos.⁵¹ Beyond Egypt, Ptolemy II and the Antigonids were engaged in a series of confrontations from the late fourth through the mid-third century for control of both mainland Greece and the Aegean.⁵² This geopolitical contestation extended to the Cyclades and Delos—the heart of international religious life in the Aegean.⁵³ Thus, while Delos was independent of Athenian control from the late fourth to the mid-second century BCE, it remained a central point of contestation for foreign ambitions in the Aegean. In the third century, in particular, the struggle

50. For the dating of the hymn: the mention of the revolt of Philadelphus' Galatian mercenaries (as well as, by implication, the Galatian invasion of Delphi) at lines 173–87 has served to establish a commonly agreed *terminus post quem* of 279/8 BCE; cf. Bing 2008 [1988]: 91–93. The *terminus ante quem*, despite the confident assertions of Stephens 2015: 18, Mineur 1984: 16, and others, is, I believe, more problematic. The prevailing assumption has been that Delos (and Kos) would not have received such prominent attention after the Battle of Kos which marked the end of the Chremonidean War, events that are themselves not securely dated. The only date range we can assign to this poem for its initial compositional occasion is, I think, between the mutiny of Philadelphus' Galatian mercenaries and, probably, Philadelphus' death (279/8 and 246 BCE). As Bing 2008 [1988]: 93 notes (cf. Stephens 2015: 18), Corsica—under Roman power after its capture by Cornelius Scipio in 259 BCE in the course of the First Punic War—is unlikely to have been called “Phoenician” (as Callimachus does at *HDel.* 4.19) afterwards. Arguments for an earlier dating of the poem shortly after the suppression of the revolt of Galatian mercenaries do not in my opinion take seriously the creative, *factive* power of poetry. For example, Philadelphus' victory over the Galatians may have been “only a small success” in, e.g., Mineur's view (1984: 17), but the event was surely ideologically labile given the Aetolian victory over the Gauls at Delphi and may have continued to have literary force and ideological (and political) relevance for positioning Alexandria vis-à-vis the mainland for a period of time long after the event. We are told by Pausanias, for instance, that the Aetolians hung up shields in the temple of Apollo, mirroring the shields dedicated by the Athenians almost two centuries earlier (Paus. 10.19.4). Moreover, the naming of Kos and Delos as central points in Ptolemaic imperial geography would perhaps be particularly forceful *after* the Battle of Kos and the end of the Chremonidean War: whatever ties to the Aegean the Ptolemies had might have then most benefited from commemoration and reinforcement.

51. For a basic narrative of the events in this section, see Hölbl 2001: 14–43.

52. A contestation that only ceased (temporarily), in the Antigonids' favor, with the end of the so-called “Chremonidean War” (ca. 267–1?). Cf. Buraselis 1982: 155–60 for a concise account; cf. also Heinen 1972: 95–213; Will 1979–1982: 1:219–33; Habicht 1997: 142–49. On the date of the Battle of Kos, cf. *SEG* 43, 1272; Reger 1985, suggesting 261 BCE; Buraselis 1982: 141–51, suggesting 255/4 BCE.

53. For the most recent survey of Delos in the third century BCE, see Constantakopoulou 2017. For Delos in the period of independence, cf. Bruneau 1970 and Vial 1984.

for dominance in the Aegean between the Antigonids and the Ptolemies is in many ways crystallized at Delos in the history of the Delian federal organization called in epigraphic sources the “League of Islanders” (κοινὸν τῶν νησιωτῶν) and often referred to in modern scholarship as the Nesiotic League. I believe that Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* explicitly celebrates the Nesiotic League—and its complicated power dynamics—while also theologically privileging the Ptolemaic role in the formation of ritual connections among the islands.

The beginnings of the Nesiotic League are extremely hazy, and scholarship on the subject has tended to link the dating of the League to the question of whether it was an instrument of royal power in the Aegean.⁵⁴ Recently, Christy Constantakopoulou has suggested that we should see the League *not* as an Antigonid or Ptolemaic tool, but as a truly independent entity, whose very existence and, even, choice of name (κοινὸν τῶν νησιωτῶν) demonstrate the islanders' agency and successful negotiation of religious and political identity in the rapidly changing Eastern Mediterranean of the third century.⁵⁵ Her insistence on the agency of the League and of Delos, where the League was based, and on the dynamic processes of constructing Aegean identity complicate notions of “top-down” impositions of royal cult, power, and influence.

The complexity of these negotiations of power might best be illustrated by the so-called Nikouria decree (ca. 260 BCE), so named because it was found on the small island of Nikouria, near Amorgos.⁵⁶ This was a decree of the League in response to Ptolemy Philadelphus' request that the Islanders participate in the celebration of the first festival of the Ptolemaieia at Alexandria in honor of his father Ptolemy Soter.⁵⁷ The League declared that they would be happy to do so on the grounds that Soter had freed the Islanders and other Greek poleis, restored their ancestral constitutions, and relieved their tax burden (*IG* XII.7 506, lines 11–16); besides, they had *already* honored Soter with honors equal to those given to the gods (27–31).⁵⁸ A copy of the decree was to be attached to the altar of Ptolemy Soter on Delos (48–49), and sacred *theōroi* from Delos would be sent to celebrate the rites in Alexandria, which were to be regarded as equal in rank to the Olympic games (39). As the decree is one of the earliest pieces of evidence of divine honors for Ptolemy Soter, it has held an especially important place in studies of Ptolemaic cult.⁵⁹ But how, exactly, are the dynamics of power being negotiated in this decree? To what extent was

54. On the date: Constantakopoulou 2017: 33–35 eventually settles for 313 BCE, although she professes not to be primarily interested in this thorny issue; Buraselis 1982: 67 argues for 307 BCE and sees the reincarnation of the League as an Antigonid act (followed by Reger 1994: 31 and Hauben 2010: 108); Meadows 2013 argues against the idea that the third-century Nesiotic League was initially an Antigonid creation, and suggests rather that its first appearance in the third century, some time before 280 BCE, was due to Ptolemaic influence.

55. Constantakopoulou 2017: 31–56.

56. *IG* XII.7 506; *SEG* 60, 933; *Syll.*³ 390.

57. In 279/8 BCE.

58. With mention of ἰσοθέοις τιμαῖ[ς] at line 28.

59. To list but a few examples: Hauben 2010, Wikander 2005, Thompson 2000.

Philadelphus' request a Ptolemaic response to the religious agonistics on Delos' international stage?⁶⁰ And how does the Ptolemaic relationship with the Nesiotic League relate to Delian chorality as both a local and international institution?

In my view, what is at stake in the Nikouria decree is comparable to what is at stake in Callimachus' *Hymn*—namely, the textualization and archivization of a link between ritual activities at Delos and at Alexandria. Further Ptolemaic activities related to Delos confirm this point. For example, by 280 BCE Philadelphus had advertised his intention of establishing a Ptolemaieia, again in honor of his father, but this time on Delos.⁶¹ In other words, Philadelphus seems to have purposefully keyed the “PR” for the Alexandrian Ptolemaieia to the Delian Ptolemaieia. Not long after, the League published on Delos an honorific decree for Sostratos of Knidos, which mentions that the Islanders “make sacrifices on Delos to the other gods and to Ptolemy Soter and King Ptolemy” (θύ-|ουσιν οἱ νησιῶται ἐν Δήλῳ τοῖς τε ἄλλοις θεοῖς καὶ | Σωτήρι Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ βασιλεῖ Πτολεμαίῳ; *IG XI.4 1038*, 23–25), evidently showing that the Islanders paid honors to Philadelphus alongside his father within the first decade of Philadelphus' reign.⁶²

But what do these texts tell us about the “actual” performance of festival culture on Delos? The epigraphic record combined with the literary evidence, including Callimachus' *Hymn*, suggest that Ptolemy Philadelphus, at least, was invested in performative enactments of dynastic commemoration and worship for an international audience.⁶³ While most Hellenistic monarchs, including the Antigonids, did not send theoric embassies to the island, seeming to prefer instead the dedication of precious objects or the establishment of periodic festivals, Philadelphus imitated the behavior of Greek cities by associating himself with *theōriai* sent from Alexandria.⁶⁴ One inscription, from 274 BCE, specifically mentions “a *choreia* from those *theōroi*

60. Notably, a response to the Antigoneia and Demetrieia (for Antigonos Monophthalmus and Demetrius Poliorcetes, respectively), established on Delos in the late fourth century. Cf. Constantakopoulou 2017: 33–35, esp. n.9 on the dates.

61. Bruneau 1970: 520–22 and Meadows 2013: 32n.54.

62. Bruneau 1970: 532. On Sostratos of Knidos, cf. Posidippus 115 AB = 11 GP; Bing 2009: 194–216 (= Bing 1998) discusses this poem in relation to Sostratos' role as dedicator of the statue of Zeus Soter on top of the Pharos.

63. Bruneau 1970: 516, 524; cf. the chorus of Deliades affiliated with “the Ptolemaic king” (Δηλιάδες χορεία ἐπιδόντος βασιλέως Πτολεμαίου) at *IDélos* 298 A, 75–76 and 77–78; *IDélos* 320 B, 19–20, 24–25, 26–27.

64. Contributions by Hellenistic monarchs and other individuals often took on the name of the contributor—thus, Antigoneia, Ptolemaieia, etc. Joshua Sosin (2014) has argued that these contributions, which, in the case of the Hellenistic kings especially, have been interpreted as the “seed money” for endowed eponymous festivals, were too small (even with their capitalizations) to provide the financial support necessary for a festival proper. Sosin makes an important point that a reference to the Ptolemaieia could equally refer to an endowment for a series of dedications of *phialai* as for a festival, and, indeed, that Delian fiscal records seem to indicate the former rather than the latter. That is, royal eponymous endowments appear to imitate a local Delian practice of endowing (relatively small) funds for ongoing ritual more as an act of piety than of international propaganda. However, as I argue in the main text, other aspects of the epigraphic record and Callimachus' *Hymn* itself indicate that Ptolemy Philadelphus was specifically interested in performative enactments of ritual, especially choral ritual, on Delos.

DEPLIANT I: LE SANCTUAIRE D'APOLLON ET SES ABORDS

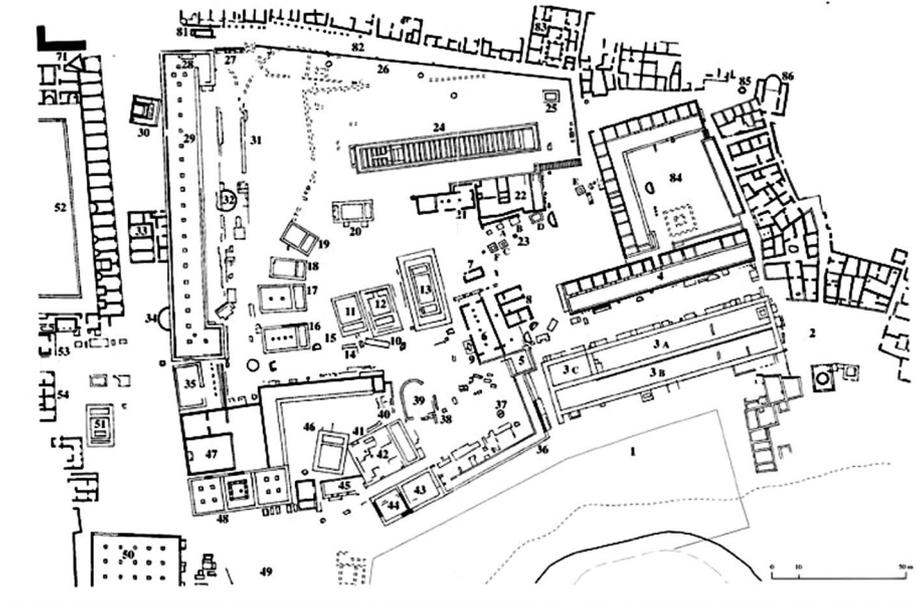


Fig. 1: Plan of the Sanctuary of Apollo, from Bruneau and Ducat 2005.

No. 11: Poros Temple (“Porinos Naos”); No. 12: Temple of the Athenians; No. 13: Temple of the Delians, or Great Temple of Apollo.

making their contributions, from King Ptolemy.”⁶⁵ Like civic theoric dedications, Ptolemy’s theoric offerings were found in the “Poros Temple” (*Porinos Naos*) or in the forecourt of the “Great Temple” of Apollo (Fig. 1).⁶⁶

Given the full extent of Ptolemaic activity related to Delos, I believe that, cumulatively, the epigraphic and literary evidence depicts a concerted effort by Philadelphus to use the Nesiotic League, and Delos in particular, as a way of focusing his religious and political aspirations in the Aegean and broadcasting them to the wider Greek world. From the early 270s to perhaps the early 240s, the manifestation of this effort was primarily focused on *theōriai* and the institution of festivals in honor of the Ptolemies, material signs of which would have been visible in the very center of Apollo’s sanctuary. In exchange for such actions, the Delians benefited from Ptolemaic organizational prowess: we know, for example, that the *nēsiarch*—the chief official of the Nesiotic League—was almost certainly

65. Bruneau 1970: 94; *IDélos* 199, B 13.

66. Bruneau and Ducat 2005: 182–85. Incidentally, both the Poros Temple and the Great Temple of Apollo—as well as the Temple of the Athenians in between them—owed their construction to periods when Delos was under Athenian influence, whether this was an attempt by the Peisistratids to exert authority in the Cyclades or a display of the Athenians’ interest in Delos as the seat of the Delian League.

appointed by the Ptolemaic king.⁶⁷ While I think it is still debatable whether the League of Islanders was clearly formed as an act of *resistance* to Hellenistic royal powers, recent work, including Constantakopoulou's, has highlighted how relations between the "Islanders," Delos itself, and the Hellenistic kingdoms were at some level symbiotic and also part of a complex network of diplomatic relations.⁶⁸

Such a symbiosis is celebrated and institutionalized in Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos*. By incorporating the third-century Aegean in its narrative, the *Hymn* becomes a part of the textualization of Delian myth. Such a process in a Greek text may not be surprising or unexpected; but explicitly thinking through the framework of textualization of ritual and the cultural archive allows us to conceptualize the interaction between Hellenistic literary culture and political culture in a more dynamic way. As heuristic categories, the textualization of ritual and the cultural archive make room for a political interpretation of the *why* and the *how* of Callimachus' intertextual strategies. One can imagine the *theōroi* from Delos arriving at Alexandria to celebrate the Ptolemaieia and being reminded of the close links between Ptolemaic and Delian choral ritual; or a Ptolemaic *theōria* performing their *choreia* on Delos thinking of the history of myth-ritual encoded in Callimachus' *Hymn*. These are speculations, of course—but it is worth pointing out the wide-ranging impact of Callimachus' poetry in Ptolemaic (and, later, Roman) Egypt, notable not least in the popularity of his poetry attested in papyri.⁶⁹ The impact of Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos*, however, is less speculative and more specific. As we will see in the remaining two sections, Callimachus' *Hymn* successfully mythologizes a particular vision of Greek ritual geography by creating the very idea of the "Cyclades" as a geographical unit engaged in "cyclical" dance around Delos—and this had an enduring impact.

4. CONSTRUCTING DELIAN HYMNS: INTERTEXTUALITY AS TEXTUALIZATION

In this section and the next, I am interested in understanding how Hellenistic literary strategies embody political, religious, and cultural strategies and,

67. Bagnall 1976: 146–47; Buraselis 1982: 81–83; Meadows 2013: 34. The same individual also operated widely within League affairs, including: in the collection of debts owed to the Delians by the "Islanders" (*IG* XI.4 559; Migeotte 1984: no. 47; Dürrbach 1976: no. 18); in his travels (or patrols?) around the Aegean in part to provide aid to members of the League (*IG* XII.5 1004 = *OGIS* 773, an inscription from Ios honoring a Ptolemaic official named Zenon for helping to capture slaves who had escaped from the island; the "Bacchon" mentioned as *nēsiarch* in this inscription is the same as the one featured in the Nikouria Decree); and in the resolution of local/intra-island disputes of League members (*IG* XII.5 1065; cf. Bagnall 1976: 144; and on the wide range of activities of the *nēsiarch*, cf. Constantakopoulou 2017: 40–44).

68. In addition to Constantakopoulou 2012 and 2017, see, e.g., Reger 1994: 16–49.

69. Papyrologically, Callimachus is by far the most frequently attested of the Hellenistic poets, and, behind Homer, Hesiod, and Menander, remained one of the most widely read Greek poets in Egypt until at least the sixth century CE: see Lehnus 2000: 35–36; Pontani 2011: 99; cf. also the cautionary note by Harder and Harder in *Brill's New Pauly* (s.v. "Papyri, Literary") about the difficulty of establishing a "top ten" author list from papyrus remains, and how quickly our picture of the most popular authors can change.

consequently, how we might understand a typical literary genealogy of Apolline myth not so much as an inevitable teleology—from the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* to Pindar and Bacchylides to Callimachus—but, rather, as a series of negotiations of political and religious identity. In other words, in the rest of this article, I am interested in how Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* textualizes and archives historical and contemporary relations between Delos and the Ptolemaic Empire.

Scholarship on Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* traces its literary genealogy by standardly invoking several key intertexts for the hymn—among them the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Bacchylides' *Dithyramb* 17, and Pindar's *Paeans* (*Pae.* 5, 7b S-M) and his *First Hymn* (fr. 33 S-M).⁷⁰ But why *these* intertexts? I suggest that the answer to this question is related to how hymns on/about Delos were potent sites for working out issues of translocal identity and territoriality, and how important the Athenian imperial lens was for articulating a Ptolemaic religious identity in the Aegean. The Athenocentric tradition of Delian hymn and chorality was a key component of Ptolemaic myth-making.

In the first instance, I would like to turn our attention to examine what came to be a kind of literary and mythological archetype for Apolline cult and ritual—the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*. An especially relevant passage for thinking about Apolline cult/ritual and Delian hymn and choral practice occurs at lines 156–64:

πρὸς δὲ τόδε μέγα θαῦμα, ὄου κλέος οὔποτ' ὀλείται,
 κούραι Δηλιάδες Ἐκατηβελέταο θεράπναι·
 αἶ τ' ἐπεὶ ἄρ' πρῶτον μὲν Ἀπόλλων' ὑμνήσωσιν,
 αὐτίς δ' αὖ Λητώ τε καὶ Ἄρτεμιν ἰοχέαιραν,
 μνησάμεναι ἀνδρῶν τε παλαιῶν ἠδὲ γυναικῶν
 ὕμνον αἰείδουσιν, θέλγουσι δὲ φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων·
 πάντων δ' ἀνθρώπων φωνὰς καὶ κρεμβαλιαστὸν
 μιμείσθ' ἴσασιν· φαίη δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕκαστος
 φθέγγεσθ'· οὕτω σφιν καλὴ συνάρηρεν ἀοιδή.

In addition to this, there is this great wonder—the fame of which will never perish—the *Deliades*, maiden-servants of the Far-Shooter; they who, after first hymning Apollo and then, in turn, Leto and Artemis, the Pourer of Arrows, call to mind men and women of old, and sing a hymn, charming the tribes of men. They know how to represent the voices and castanet-playing⁷¹ of all men—indeed each would say that he himself was giving voice, so well is their singing art fitted together.

70. E.g., Stephens 2015: 159–62; Giuseppetti 2013.

71. On preferring the textual variant κρεμβαλιαστὸν, “castanet-playing, rhythmical pattern,” over βαμβαλιαστὸν, “trembling, stammering(?),” cf. Peponi 2009: 42.

Ancient, and modern, readers and auditors of this hymn have seen encoded in it an emblem of the genre of *hymnos* itself, especially in these lines, which describe the gathering of the Ionians at Delos and the musical performance of the *Deliades*. The *Deliades* have been understood not only as an interpretive symbol of Apolline song-dance⁷² but also as a representation of the transcendence, and transference, of the epichoric (that is, Delian) to the Panhellenic by means of a choral performance so perfect and inspiring that it “manages to operate as a translocal choric bond of emotion and attitude.”⁷³ Their Apolline song and dance have a transformative effect

Thucydides famously cites this passage of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* in Book 3 of his *Histories*—our earliest and most extensive reference to it. In the course of writing about the Athenian purification of Delos, Thucydides invokes the Delian portion of the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* as evidence of the island’s antiquity as the center of Ionian theoric and choral activity,⁷⁴ with an implied commentary on fifth-century Athenian imperial ambitions in realigning itself with earlier Peisistratid ambitions for Delos.⁷⁵ He writes:

(1) That same winter the Athenians also purified Delos in accordance with a certain oracle. Earlier, Peisistratus the tyrant also purified it. . . . (3) There was once, long ago, a great gathering of Ionians and neighboring islanders at Delos. They were on *theōria* (ἑθεώρουν) with their wives and children, just as the Ionians do now for the *Ephesia*, and both athletic and poetic contests took place there, and the cities led choruses. . . . [Citations of *Hom. Hymn Apollo* 146–50 and 165–72 follow.] (6) Homer attests to so much, that there was once long ago a great gathering and festival on Delos. And later, the islanders and Athenians continued to send choruses along with sacrifices, but the contests and most of the rest were dissolved because of unfortunate circumstances, it seems, until the Athenians then held the contest and horse races, which there had not been before.

Thuc. 3.104.1–3, 6

Perhaps most notable in this passage is Thucydides’ claim that even after the archaic Ionian festival (*panēgyris*) died out, “the islanders and Athenians continued to send choruses along with sacrifices,” thereby stressing continuity from the archaic Pan-Ionian festival down to the full renewal of Delian activities with Athens’ second ritual purification in 426/5 BCE.⁷⁶ The implication seems to be that for a Delian *theōria* to fulfill its minimum requirements, it had to include a chorus. Thucydides’ passage also implies a kind of imperial continuity:

72. Depew 2000: 71.

73. Peponi 2009: 65.

74. On this topic, see Hornblower 1991: 146 and 517–25 on Thuc. 1.96.2 and 3.104, respectively.

75. A theme that also appears at Hdt. 1.64.2. On the importance of Delos for Athenian thalassocracy, cf. Constantakopoulou 2007: 62–75.

76. Kowalzig 2007: 70.

fifth-century Athenian imperial ambitions are aligned with earlier Peisistratid aspirations for Delos. Thus, from the Peisistratid to the Athenian to, eventually, the Ptolemaic southern Aegean, we can trace a history of imperial imitation. In this context, both the Peisistratid and Athenian purifications serve as not only ritual acts but also territorial claims: Peisistratus' purification of Delos coincided with the Athenian takeover of Naxos and the (re)assertion of Athenian influence in the Cyclades.⁷⁷ Fifth-century Athens' symbolic claim on Delos and the Cyclades through its mass expulsion of resident Delians disguised as a religious injunction ("in accordance with a certain oracle," as Thucydides writes) seems to have served a similar purpose.⁷⁸ By the end of the Thucydidean passage, we see how the annual *theōria* sent to Delos from Athens, commemorating Theseus' journey to Crete and his pit-stop at Delos, might have been used to reperform and reinforce, every year, Athens' very thorough revisionist archaeology of Delian myth-ritual.⁷⁹

Athenian imperial power was also propagated through other symbolic manipulations of myth-ritual involving Delian theoric choruses, including Bacchylides 17, a choral paian or dithyramb apparently composed for performance by a Keian chorus on Delos. The poem recounts the journey of Theseus and the so-called "Twice Seven"—fourteen explicitly Ionian youths—destined to be paid as human tribute to King Minos (Bacchyl. 17.1–4 Maehler). The narrative, however, foregoes the rather more familiar encounter between Theseus and Ariadne and instead revolves around "a warrior's contest"⁸⁰ between Minos and Theseus, with Minos challenging Theseus to dive into the sea in order to retrieve a golden ring. Notably, Theseus' heroic act is witnessed by a group of youths now described as *Athenian*:

τρέσσαν δ' Ἀθηναίων
 ἠίθεων < —> γένος, ἐπεὶ
 ἥρωσ θόρεν πόντονδε, κα-
 τὰ λειρίων τ' ὀμμάτων δά-
 κρυ χέον, βαρεῖαν ἐπιδέγμενοι ἀνάγκαν.
 Bacchyl. 17.92–96 Maehler

The group of Athenian
 youths trembled, when
 their hero leapt into the sea,
 and they shed tears from their
 lily-like eyes, accepting heavy necessity.

77. Hdt. 1.6.

78. Thuc. 5.1; cf. 5.32. On the Athenian purification of Delos, cf. Brock 1996 and Hornblower 1991: 517–31.

79. There appear to have been multiple Athenian Delian festivals, including a major *theōria*, quadrennial like the earlier Pan-Ionian gathering, and a more frequent annual *theōria* commemorating Theseus' journey to Crete. Cf. Pl. *Phd.* 58b; Rutherford 2004: 82.

80. Kowalzig 2007: 89.

Theseus is successful in the challenge, and, with the help of his father Poseidon, reemerges.⁸¹ In this choral song, the chorus of “twice seven” is notably transformed from a group composed of the flower of *Ionian* youths (2–3) to a band of *Athenian* ἠῖθεοι (92–93) trembling in fear for their hero.⁸²

As several scholars have discussed in detail, the myth of Theseus in Bacchylides 17 brilliantly illustrates Athenian manipulation of the nexus of Delian myth-ritual. In the context of a *Keian* performance of this song at Delos, a *Keian* chorus would then be performing a scene from “Theseus’ tour liberating the Aegean,” as a moment of liberation from Minoan rule in exchange for tribute to Delian Apollo—in other words, as a member of the Delian League.⁸³ As David Fearn writes, the poem’s narrative, and its performance on Delos by an Athenian ally and member of the Delian League, demonstrate Athenian manipulation of mythological and choral/theoric authority.⁸⁴ Specifically, the narrative takes advantage of historic theoric ties between the Keians and Delos and links those ties to an Athenocentric interpretation of the victory of Theseus over Minos as the catalyst for the Delian *geranos*, or Crane Dance. It therefore successfully superimposes the *kuklios choros* (circular dance)—“which by this time had become in Athens the most significant choral performance form across the festival spectrum”—upon the Delian *geranos*.⁸⁵

Pindar’s *Fifth Paean*, most likely composed for the Athenians⁸⁶ for performance at Delos, similarly contributes to Athens’ mythical-ritual claim to the Cyclades. In the paean, an unnamed group—explained by the scholiast as “from Athens”⁸⁷—“took and settled Euboea” (35–36), then established themselves on the “scattered, sheep-bearing islands” (= the Cyclades, 48–49).⁸⁸ Afterwards, golden-haired Apollo himself gives them “the body of Asteria to live on” (40–42). The poetic response is an outburst of song—a paeanic cry—and the chorus’/speaker’s request to be received as the attendant of Artemis and Apollo:

81. Albeit without Minos’ ring; cf. Kurke 1999: 108.

82. A point forcefully emphasized by Irwin 2012: 53.

83. Kowalzig 2007: 92, and on Delian *theōria* in general, 56–128. On Athenian ideology in Bacchylides 17, see further Calame 1996; Maehler 1997: 182; Fearn 2007: 242–56; Irwin 2012.

84. Fearn 2007: 242.

85. Fearn 2007: 247. It is worth noting that this is not the only Bacchylidean ode closely affiliated with Athenian myth-making; cf. Bacchylides 18 and 19 (with thanks to Peter Bing for the reminder).

86. But see discussion at Rutherford 2001: 296–97.

87. The scholiast notes the subject of the third plural verbs as being ἀπ’ Ἀθηναίων; cf. Rutherford 2001: 294–95.

88. σποράδας ... νάσους (“scattered islands”) might seem to refer to the Sporades, but this latter word does not seem to be used as a geographical term for a collection of Aegean islands (as distinctive from the Cyclades) until the Hellenistic period; cf. L. Büchner, *RE* 3A.1857–74. For further arguments identifying these islands as the Cyclades rather than the modern-day Sporades, see Kowalzig 2007: 85 and Rutherford 2001: 295.

[- υ υ - υ υ Εϋ-
 βοιαν ἔλον καὶ ἔνασαν·
 —
 ἰήϊε Δάλι' Ἄπολλον·
 καὶ σποράδας φερεμήλους
 ἔκτισαν νάσους ἐρικυδέα τ' ἔσχον
 Δᾶλον, ἐπεὶ σφιν Ἀπόλλων
 δῶκεν ὁ χρυσοκόμας
 Ἄστερίας δέμας οἰκεῖν·

—
 ἰήϊε Δάλι' Ἄπολλον·
 Λατόος ἔνθα με παῖδες
 εὐμενεῖ δέξασθε νόφ θεράποντα
 ὑμέτερον κελαδεννᾶ
 σὺν μελιγάρυϊ παι-
 ᾶνος ἀγακλέος ὀμφᾶ.
 Pind. *Paean*. 5.35–48, Rutherford D5

They [= the Athenians]
 took and settled Euboea.

—
Iēie Delian Apollo!
 And they inhabited the scattered islands [=the
 Cyclades], rich in flocks, and got splendid
 Delos, after golden-haired
 Apollo gave them
 the body of Asteria to dwell on.

—
Iēie Delian Apollo!
 There may you, Leto's children,
 propitiously welcome me
 as your attendant, with the resounding
 honey-voiced sound
 of a famous paeon.

Although we only have complete its final two strophes out of an original eight, enough survives to indicate colonizing activity as a major theme. All things considered, Ian Rutherford seems right in his view that “the story of Ionian migration is most likely to have been performed at Delos by Athenians.”⁸⁹ Pindar's *Fifth Paean*, like Bacchylides 17, ends in a moment of ritualization: the paeanic cry and the chorus'/speaker's request to be received as the attendant of

89. Rutherford 2001: 297.

the gods, all of which mediates the colonial act. Asteria in Pindar's *Fifth Paean* is embodied, territorialized, colonized. That is, the paean presents a strikingly imperialist vision of Delian *theōria* by pointedly personifying the figure of Asteria.

In each of these textual moments, from Thucydides onward, Delian hymns, and Delian chorality, serve an important strategic function: they are sites for generating and propagating tropes central to fifth-century Athenian imperial claims on the Aegean. Callimachus' references to these tropes, in turn, represent a strategic archivization and textualization of "Delian hymn" and "Delian chorality": his *Hymn to Delos* contextualizes the Ptolemaic presence in the Aegean through an Athenocentric lens, and reframes the geography of the southern Aegean in such a way that it would henceforth be closely linked with theoric choral dance.

5. ARCHIVIZATION AND TEXTUALIZATION IN THE *HYMN TO DELOS*

Callimachus' *Hymn* engages deeply with the culture of Delian song-dance and theoric performance. It also self-consciously inscribes itself within a tradition of the representation of hymnic (specifically, paeanic) enactment in the context of Delian performance. As several scholars have shown, the *Hymn to Delos* appears well aligned with Ptolemaic ideological needs of the early third century BCE.⁹⁰ I believe that there is also, in the latter half of the *Hymn to Delos*, a persistent evocation of an *Athenocentrized* Delos, against which the Ptolemaic context must be interpreted.

The speaker begins with a rhetorical question: when will he finally hymn Delos? Should he hymn Apolline Delos, the island-nurse (κουροτρόφον, 2)? Or should he hymn all of the Cyclades together because they, already ensconced in a tradition of ritual song (εὐμνοί, 4), are "the holiest of the islands that lie in the sea" (3)?

Having decided on Delos as a fit subject for hymnic song, because of her special care for Phoebus Apollo (5–6), the speaker then names four of the largest islands of the Mediterranean who assemble (ἀλλιζονται) behind Delos in what seems to be a choral procession—so, notably, *not* the Cyclades.⁹¹ Delos, in turn, takes the lead as chorus-leader (ἔξαρχος ὁδεύει, 18)⁹² as the insular procession pays a visit to the Titans Ocean and Tethys:

90. E.g., Bing 2008 [1988]: 93; Giuseppetti 2013; Brumbaugh 2016. On Ptolemaic geo-poetics in the *Aetia* and *Iambi*, cf. Asper 2011.

91. The four islands are Corsica, Euboea, Sardinia, and Cyprus. As Stephens 2015: 183 (ad 19–22) notes, "the choice is comprehensible, since the four act as a geographical bracket encompassing the whole Greek world, with Libyan connections in the west and mythological models of islands nurturing gods in the east."

92. As Mineur 1984: 67 notes ad loc., ἔξαρχος, in its strict sense, appears to be a *terminus technicus* "for the leader of a choir, thiasos, etc."; cf. Hom. *Il.* 24.721; Dem. *De cor.* 260; possibly Eur. *Bacch.* 141 (if the conjecture here is correct).

ἀλλά οἱ οὐ νεμεσητὸν ἐνὶ πρώτῃσι λέγεσθαι,
ὀππότ' ἐς Ὠκεανὸν τε καὶ ἐς Τιτηνίδα Τηθύν
νῆσοι ἀολλίζονται, αἰεὶ δ' ἔξαρχος ὀδεύει.

Callim. *HDel.* 16–18 Pf.

But she (Delos) causes no indignation to be spoken of
among the first, whenever to Ocean and the Titan Tethys
the islands gather, and she always goes as leader.

Callimachus' choice of the verb ἀολλίζω may be significant: in earlier literature, it is often used of a group gathered for religious, civic, or public purposes.⁹³ This chorus of islands is repeated at the end of the hymn, but with the now Cyclades forming a *circular* chorus around Asteria (Delos), redolent with incense and resounding with the great noise of song-dance (including that of the *geranos*, the “crane dance”) during the evening rituals of the Delia-Apollonia.⁹⁴

ἀλλά τοι ἀμφιετείς δεκατηφόροι αἰὲν ἀπαρχαί
πέμπονται, πᾶσαι δὲ χοροὺς ἀνάγουσι πόλῃες,
αἶ τε πρὸς ἠοίην αἶ θ' ἔσπερον αἶ τ' ἀνά μέσσην 280
κλήρους ἐστήσαντο, καὶ οἱ καθύπερθε βορείης
οἰκία θινὸς ἔχουσι, πολυχρονιώτατον αἶμα.
.....
Ἀστερίη θυόεσσα, σὲ μὲν περί τ' ἀμφί τε νῆσοι 300
κύκλον ἐποίησαντο καὶ ὡς χορὸν ἀμφεβάλοντο·
οὔτε σιωπηλὴν οὔτ' ἄσοφον οὐλος ἐθείραις
Ἔσπερος, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ σε καταβλέπει ἀμφιβόητον.
οἱ μὲν ὑπαιίδουσι νόμον Λυκίοιο γέροντος, 305
ὄν τοι ἀπὸ Ξάνθοιο θεοπρόπος ἤγαγεν Ὠλήν·
αἶ δὲ ποδὶ πλήσσουσι χορίτιδες ἀσφαλὲς οὔδας.
δὴ τότε καὶ στεφάνοισι βαρύνεται ἱρὸν ἄγαλμα
Κύπριδος ἀρχαίης ἀρήκοον, ἦν ποτε Θησεύς
εἶσατο, σὺν παιδεσιν ὅτε Κρήτηθεν ἀνέπλει.
οἱ χαλεπὸν μύκημα καὶ ἄγριον υἷα φυγόντες 310
Πασιφάης καὶ γναμπτὸν ἔδος σκολιοῦ λαβυρίνθου,
πότνια, σὸν περὶ βωμὸν ἐγειρομένου κιθαρισμοῦ
κύκλιον ὠρχήσαντο, χοροῦ δ' ἠγήσατο Θησεύς.
ἔνθεν αἰεζῶντα θεωρίδος ἱερὰ Φοίβῳ

93. E.g., *Il.* 6.270, 6.287, 19.54; Bacchyl. 15.42.

94. The description of Delos as neither without music nor without dance but resounding all around with song-dance is highly specified in lines 302–303: οὔτε σιωπηλὴν οὔτ' ἄσοφον οὐλος ἐθείραις / Ἔσπερος, ἀλλ' αἰεὶ σε καταβλέπει ἀμφιβόητον. Mineur 1984: 236 points out that οὔτε σιωπηλὴν οὔτ' ἄσοφον emphasizes the distinct activities of singing and dancing.

Κεκροπίδαι πέμπουσι τοπήια νηὸς ἐκείνης. 315
 Callim. *HDel.* 278–82, 300–315

But for you (Delos) the tithe-bearing firstfruits are sent
 At every annual festival, and all the cities lead their choruses,
 Those that cast their lots in the east and the west and the south, 280
 And those who beyond the northern shore
 make their homes, most long-lived⁹⁵ race.

.....
 Fragrant Asteria, round about you the islands form a 300
 circle and surround you, like a chorus.

Shaggy-haired Hesperus looks down upon you always resounding all
 around, never silent nor noiseless.

The youths sing in accompaniment the *nome* of the Lycian old man,
 which (*nome*) the seer Olen brought to you from Xanthos. 305

The girls, dancing, beat their feet upon the firm ground.

Then, too, the sacred *agalma* of Kypris, the far-famed one of the
 ancient (goddess), is weighed down with wreaths. Theseus once
 set it up, when he was sailing back with the youths from Krete.
 After fleeing the harsh bellowing and the savage son of Pasiphae and 310
 the twisted home of the bending labyrinth, they

danced in a circle around your altar, mistress, as the cithara was
 struck up, and Theseus led the chorus.

From then on, the Kekropidai send to Phoebus
 as ever-living offerings the ropes of that theoric ship. 315

The beginning of this section of the hymn marks a notable modal shift: the transition from hymnic narrative to narrative archive detailing the origins of various Delian rituals. Most scholars have explained away the logic of this list of rituals as a haphazard accumulation—Callimachus the collector at work. Barbara Kowalzig, for example, understands this Callimachean passage as an antiquarian palimpsest of Delian myth-ritual, where “the songs of Olen, the choral traditions, and the dances of Theseus’ *geranos* merge into one and the same floating movement.”⁹⁶ This kind of explanation, however, seems to me not to take seriously the rhetoric of myth-ritual in these lines. Meanwhile, other scholars, as discussed earlier, have attempted to tally the rituals that Callimachus describes with actual third-century practice.⁹⁷ But to try to map Callimachus’ *Hymn* onto the realia of

95. On this translation, cf. Mineur 1984: 226 ad loc.

96. Kowalzig 2007: 57. See a similar characterization by Asper, n.47 above.

97. E.g., Bruneau 1970: 16–52. Or Mineur 1984: 248–49, for a brief survey of different theories proposed to explain παίγνιον (a rite?) at lines 322–23: sailors biting an olive tree with their hands tied behind their backs. Cf. Mineur 1984: 14–15, where he argues for an intentional emphasis on *rites de passage*, or initiation rituals, that he believes allude to Callimachus’ initiation into the Alexandrian Mouseion.

third-century Delian ritual easily leads to a circular kind of argumentation whereby literary sources are used to explain the function and purpose of material remains, and material remains are used to support a straightforward, and potentially simplistic, interpretation of literary allusions and their correspondences with the realia of ritual practice.⁹⁸ Rather, what interests me most here is the rhetoric of ritualization, or rather, the rhetoric of textualizing ritual: how this passage intersects with prior and contemporary ideologies of the Delian theoric chorus.

So far, we have noticed that this poem begins and ends with choral imagery. But it also specifically maps the transition from insular *processional* chorus (16–18) to *circular* chorus (300–301) onto Asteria's ritual transformation and the constitution of the Cyclades as a geographical, ritual, and political unit. As Peter Bing points out, the emphasis on Asteria's motion being transfigured into an image of a circular choral movement of islands also aligns with a cosmic reordering of the world, from the anger of Hera and “the chaos and confusion that had characterized the previous age” to a kind of Apolline harmony represented through circular motion.⁹⁹ Indeed, the hymn as a whole can be read as an extended etymologization of the “Cyclades” as a set of islands linked not only to circular movement but also, specifically, to circular choral dance.

This is an important point worth emphasizing: Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* seems to be the first place in extant Greek literature where such a connection between the term “Cyclades” and circular choral movement is made explicit.¹⁰⁰ This geographic reconceptualization of the Cyclades as a chorally-linked concentric formation around Delos had a powerful and long-lasting impact on Greek cultural memory, as we see in descriptions by later geographic writers like Dionysius Periegetes and Strabo.¹⁰¹ Earlier references to the Cyclades tend to fall into one of two groupings: they are either thematically focused on the islands' relationship to rule and empire, or are classificatory (arguably a key part of imperial information processing).¹⁰² What one might call the “logic of textualization” or the

98. Cf., e.g., Bruneau 1970: 39–40.

99. Bing 2008 [1988]: 125; Bing here also notes that Asteria is only called “Delos” again once she becomes fixed in motion (at line 251, a name not used of her since line 40).

100. Mineur 1984: 235 ad 301: “That after the fixing of Delos on the sea-bottom the Cyclades grouped themselves around her is a detail not found elsewhere.”

101. Dion. Perieg. 525–26: “Lying around Delos, they circle her, and have the name ‘Cyclades’” (ἀμφίς ἐοῦσαι / Δῆλον ἐκυκλώσαντο, καὶ οὖνομα Κυκλάδες εἰσι). Cf. Strabo 10.5.2: “The neighboring islands, called ‘Cyclades,’ made her [=Delos] notable by sending at public expense *theoroi* and sacrifices, and by conducting there choruses of maidens and festive gatherings.” As the authors of the entry “Kykladen” in *Der neue Pauly* (E. Meyer and H. Kalcyk) and *RE* (L. Büchner) are at pains to emphasize, “circular” is not an apt descriptor for the geological formation of the Cyclades. The former are also at pains to emphasize that such a description is “late”—although, as I argue here, this characterization of the Cyclades has its roots in the early Hellenistic.

102. Thus, for example, on the rule and empire theme: Hdt. 5.31 (Naxos and the Cyclades as objects of imperial ambition and bargaining chips for Aristagoras of Miletus); Thuc. 1.4.1 (Minos as the first Aegean thalassocrat whose marine empire included the Cyclades; cf. Hdt. 3.122.2); Thuc. 2.9.4 (the Cyclades, except Thera and Melos, as Athenian allies); Isoc. *Panath.* 43 (Athens regains control of

“archival logic” for Delian myth and ritual has to do with how the memory of such myth-ritual is rehistoricized and perpetuated. Callimachus’ contribution to the textualization and archivization of Delian myth and ritual was in changing how one imagined, wrote about, perhaps even talked about, the ritual geography of the Cyclades and how that geography was conceptually framed.

With the culmination of hymnic narrative in the list of Delian rituals cited above, we see the outcome of a pivotal moment: that is, within the logic of the poem, it is Apollo’s fetal prophecy on Kos preventing his mother from giving birth there that leads to his birth on Asteria/Delos instead (as well as, consequently, Delos’ ritual transformation). The effect of this prophetically rehistoricizing intervention is a subtle refashioning of a predominantly Athenocentric narrative regarding the origins of Delian ritual. That is, part of what this moment of archival list and ritual transformation does is to represent an Apolline teleology that grafts a contemporary political context—that of an independent Delos with connections to the Ptolemaic Empire via the Nesiotic League—onto an imperial Athenian narrative.

In particular, the central positioning of Apollo’s fetal prophecy on Kos about the future Ptolemy makes space for a reconciliation of various island and non-island identities and interests: for the fact that Kos is made to yield to Delos, while simultaneously being claimed for “another god,” is a diplomatic *tour de force* in verse. Such a narrative intertwines the future of Ptolemaic ritual with that of Delian choral ritual. More specifically, the hymn textualizes the ritual relationship of the Ptolemaic Aegean with Delos and, I would argue, the Nesiotic League in such a way that a League decree on Delos honoring Ptolemy Soter and “King Ptolemy” alongside “the other gods” (*IG XI.4 1038*, 23–25) becomes a fulfilment of prophetic destiny.¹⁰³ In my view, the hymn’s very emphasis on the circular motion of the Cyclades in Delos’ ritual transformation would foreground, from a third-century perspective, the role of insular networks in Delian ritual—a fitting celebration of politically independent insular entities.¹⁰⁴ That emphasis is balanced against a richly textualized Athenocentric genealogy for Delian ritual, highlighted in this passage in several lines that focus on Theseus and Athenian *theōria* (307–315), thus layering a third-century present upon an Athenian imperial past. For third-century audiences, the *Hymn* would have served both as a cue to explore the textualization of that past and as a blueprint for integrating Ptolemaic ambitions into that textual nexus. While Ptolemaic power in the Cycladic region was admittedly often aspirational and tenuous, what did have a lasting impact was Callimachus’ particular representation of Cycladic ritual geography.

the Cyclades). Classificatory/definitional references include, e.g., *Lys.* 52 fr. 109 Carey (Keos as one of the Cyclades); *Ps.-Scylax* 48 and 58 (islands that belong to the Cyclades).

103. On the relationship between Callimachus’ *Hymn*, the Ptolemies, and Delos and the Nesiotic League, see also Giuseppetti 2013: 32–35.

104. On the political independence of the Nesiotic League, see above, n.54.

Let us explore one way in which that geography was constructed. The closing lines of the *Hymn to Delos*, which describe the origins of the *geranos* and Theseus' ritual acts on Delos, have been understood by several readers as a partial evocation of Bacchylides 17,¹⁰⁵ for the latter text also famously ends with Theseus surrounded by a chorus (Bacchyl. 17.117–32). As discussed in the previous section, Bacchylides' hymn negotiates mythological identities at a moment of political transition: it becomes a part of the textualization of Athenian cultural imperialism, while simultaneously integrating insular (Keian, Delian) identities with Athenian ones. And to reiterate the role of Bacchylides' text in this process, it is worth emphasizing again that Bacchylides' version of the myth of Theseus—which combined the hero's visit to Poseidon and Amphitrite in their underwater home with his sailing voyage to the Minotaur on Crete—may have been an innovative one, motivated by early fifth-century Athenian propaganda fashioning Theseus as a “national” Athenian hero.¹⁰⁶

Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos*, at lines 308–315, re-encodes Bacchylides 17 back into Delian myth-ritual, but with a difference; for Callimachus' hymn is our first source in which Theseus stops at Delos on his victorious way back to Athens from Crete.¹⁰⁷ What were once separate aspects of myth and performance are conflated to become a new kind of ritual logic. The recollection of Bacchylides' text is particularly important in how it authorizes a future ritual identity: Callimachus' circular chorus of the Cyclades is superimposed on the Athenocentric circular choruses of the Delian *geranos*.¹⁰⁸ Imperial representations mimic imperial representations; the ritual geography of the Cyclades echoes the circular choruses of the *geranos*.

The textualization and ritualization of Athenian cultural imperialism on Delos is activated in other ways. For instance, Callimachus also re-encodes Pindar's *Fifth Paean* and its colonial themes, but again with a difference. Asteria in the *Hymn to Delos* retains her Pindaric embodiment, but Asteria's *corpus* (the δέμας Ἀστερίας, and also, figuratively, the literary archive of Delian hymns) metamorphoses into a body in choral performance, first as chorus-leader (the ἔξαρχος of line 18, cited above) and then as the central figure of a choral performance. She is surrounded by an insular cyclic chorus, which leads, like a series of concentric circles, to the dances of the Delia-Apollonia: maiden *choritides* tunefully stomping the ground and the Athenians, led by Theseus, circling around Delos' altar.

Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* textualizes chorality itself in relation to new geopolitical formations and archivizes how the “Cyclades” would be defined and understood in relation to choral ritual by contemporary and future audiences.

105. Cf. Stephens 2015: 161; Mineur 1984: 240 ad 309.

106. On Athenian ideology and Bacchyl. 17, see above, n.83.

107. For the *Apollonia* as the context being described at *HDel.* 4.304–313, see Mineur 1984: 237–38 ad loc.

108. I owe this observation to Leslie Kurke.

Contemporary audiences could not have missed the connection between the refashioning of well known hymnic narrative about Delos and the framing of a delicately balanced political situation in the Aegean (between Ptolemy, Kos, Delos, and the Nesiotic League). The *Hymn* both charts this history and negotiates a place for the Ptolemaic among the islands and within the Delian hymnic corpus.

6. CONCLUSION

The texts of Bacchylides, Pindar, and others ritualized Athenian political and economic control of the Aegean in the fifth and fourth centuries. In the *Hymn to Delos*, Ptolemaic symbolic affiliations with Delos, the Cyclades, and the Aegean are layered over the Athenian weave. Choruses *were* being sent to Delos to honor Philadelphus and his father, as they had been in the past to honor Theseus and Athens.¹⁰⁹ The fifth-century Athenian tributary system might be recalled in the *Hymn* as well, especially at line 281 in the phrase κλήρους ἐστήσαντο¹¹⁰—in the third century, too, grain was likely sent to Delos for the Nesiotic League from a number of cities embedded in the Ptolemaic network.¹¹¹ And yet it is clear that this is not the Delos of Homer, nor quite that of imperial Athens. Like the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*, Pindar's *Fifth Paean*, and Bacchylides 17, Callimachus' *Hymn to Delos* also ends with the transformative ritualization of Delos or of a Delian chorus as a resolution to a crisis. On the surface, this crisis consists of Leto's not having anywhere to give birth despite her increasingly urgent labor pains; but, as we have seen from Apollo's prophecy about Kos, the crisis alluded to is also that of the transition of political power.

Ultimately, the hymn responds to various political and ideological needs through an explicitly modified archaeology of Delian ritual, revised to make space for the outlying island of Kos and celebrating it within an insular religious network in which it did not, according to "standard," Athenocentric accounts of Delian myth and ritual, have a place.¹¹² Insofar as Athens, the Nesiotic League, and Ptolemy were united in a delicately balanced symbiotic relationship in the first decades of the third century, the invocation of the Athenian thalassocratic and

109. Bruneau 1970: 94–95, 524.

110. This collocation is unusual: Callimachus seems to be the first to use transitive ἵστημι with *klēros* in this way (cf. references under *LSJ* s.v. κλήρος 1A). These *klēroi* are, I think, not just any "lots" or "allotments" but a reminiscence of both the Athenian system of cleruchies—which, as Alfonso Moreno has demonstrated, were the backbone of Athenian imperialism, far more than the payment of tributes (Moreno 2009)—and the colonies established by the Ptolemies abroad, including the re-foundation of multiple towns with good ports and naval bases now bearing the name "Arsinoe" (cf. Robert 1966: 199–208; Meadows 2013: 30).

111. Cf., for example, the decree in honor of Kallias of Sphettos, *IG II³ 1 911*; cf. *IG XI.4 527. Ed. pr.* in Shear 1978.

112. Despite long-standing theoric ties between Kos and Delos: see D'Alessio 2009: 138–39 on how cultic ties between Kos and Delos are reflected in Pindar's *First Hymn* (fr. 33 S-M). See also Sherwin-White 1978: 317–20.

Koan-Delian theoric contexts performs an ideological glide, negotiating a place for Kos and the Ptolemies in the Nesiotic League and in Delian ritual history. The success of that negotiation relies on how it calls attention to its own poetic history and activates an exegetical community that authorizes its Delian vision. As Denis Feeney once wrote of Horace's *Carmen saeculare*, it "mark[s] out a space for poetry as a distinctive discourse."¹¹³

The *Hymn to Delos* encompasses not only the thick weave of aetiologies for Delian myth-ritual—retold and reinterpreted—but also the legitimation, through divine prophecy, of Ptolemy's rightful ritual place in the Aegean. And this, precisely, is the archival act here at work: the justification of, and the laying claim to, a history of belonging. The process of textualization in the *Hymn to Delos* constructs, and manipulates, belief in the *genre* of Apolline song and the pre-Ogygian place of the Ptolemies within it. Its poetic strategy textualizes, inter alia, the figure of the *Deliades* in the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo*: they who "know how to represent the voices and rhythmic motions of all men." To some degree, it is in fact also Callimachus' song that the chorus of maidens, as descendants of the Hyperboreans, performs in their eternal vespers.

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