Abstract

This dissertation looks at the interplay between the poetic text and the circumstances of production in the performance of Greek cult hymns. Although it employ the evidence from various genres and performance occasions, including the Homeric, Orphic and dramatic hymns, the primarily focus is those hymns that were composed to accompany religious rituals and are fully integrated into a public cult event. These include the well-known fragmentary lyric works of Archaic and Classical poets such as Alcman and Pindar as well as inscribed hymns.

The investigation looks at the groups and individuals involved in the production of cult songs and show how their interests and goals helped shape the performed text. A key premise of the study is that no single function can explain the entire extant corpus of such hymns, but rather, in order to delineate a network of relevant stakeholders, each hymn must be considered in its own particular historical and performative contexts. The principal rhetorical-religious aim of a hymn is to praise a deity in an appropriate manner. One of the greatest challenges for an ancient hymnographer was to balance between this primary goal of a hymn and various other competing functions specific to the occasion. For this to be achieved, the text needed to employ the familiar form and language of Greek hymnodic tradition, allowing it to maintain a feeling of a genuine religious song. Yet this constraint left ample room for the poet to manipulate traditional material and generic forms in a manner that would reflect the interests of mortal stakeholders. It is this
manipulation of traditional form to accommodate the specific circumstances – particularly the various stakeholders – of the particular hymnodic occasion that is the principal interest of this thesis.
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 1: Introduction</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 2: Organization and Stakeholders of a Cult Hymn Performance</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 3: Traditional Form and Language of the Greek Hymn</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 4: The Hymn of Limenios at the Pythais of 128 BCE</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 5: Hymnographers’ Manipulation of Traditional Form</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 6: Deixis and the Contextualization of Ritualized Song</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 7: Readings and Writing for the Gods: Cult Hymns in a Song-and-Book Culture</td>
<td>201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapter 8: Conclusion</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix A: ancient Doxography of the <em>hymnos</em></td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendix B: text and translation of select cult hymns</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1
Introduction

1 Hymn-singing in Greek cult

In the first book of the *Iliad*, the god Apollo sends a plague to the Achaeans camp, as punishment for their mistreatment of his priest. The disease does not abate until the Greeks return the priest’s captive daughter and give offerings to the god. Among these offerings are not only sacrifices but also songs.

> the whole day long they sought to appease the god with song, singing the beautiful paean, the sons of the Achaeans, hymning the god who works from afar. (1.472-4)

Their purpose is clear – they are offering Apollo a “beautiful” gift in order to appease him. And, the narrator tells us, they are successful: “and his heart was glad, as he heard” (1.474). The Achaeans are responding to a crisis situation in a manner entirely consistent with their cultural norms. A god has been offended and his anger is bringing harm to their community – their temporary community of the military camp. The logical solution is to repair the relationship with the god that has been jeopardized. With instructions from a seer, a solution is found: atone for the crime and offer further gifts to soothe the divine fury. The men are away from home in a foreign country, at war and under threat of annihilation by a deadly disease, but their forms of worship are not limited to such times of crisis. At the end of the Delian portion of the Homeric hymn to Apollo, the singer describes the festive context of his performance: a *panegyris* in honour of Apollo on the tiny island of his birth, attended by Ionians with their families; they come in ships, wearing long robes, displaying their wealth; they delight the god with athletics, song and dance (147-50). Although it is not mentioned here, the pilgrims no doubt brought rich gifts to sacrifice and dedicate on Delos. The tradition of sending festive embassies to the regional sanctuary on Delos is also well attested in a later period.¹ There is a clear analogy between cult songs and other gifts: not unlike sacrifices or other *agalmata*, the performance of a hymn (or an

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athletic display for that matter) is an offering intended to charm the deity and to make him gracious toward the worshippers.  

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2  Aims and methods

Conceptualized in this way, the hymn fits into the system of *charis*, whose central role in Greek religion has rightly been stressed in modern scholarship. The position of the cult song in a ritual event and the language of favour, gift-giving and pleasure in the hymnic texts both impel us to see this form of utterance as part of an on-going, long-term reciprocal relationship between the mortal and the divine planes. The hymnic performance is at once an instance of gift-giving and an instance of discourse that attempts to establish, maintain, or repair the *charis* between the community of its singers and the divine addressee. Starting from this point, it is possible to analyse the form, language, rhetorical strategies and artistic embellishments of the Greek hymn as all aimed at a unified religious objective: to please a god with appropriate speech and beautiful spectacle and so make him favourable to the worshipping community. And this has been done by a number of scholars in recent decades, most notably by Furley and Bremer, whose collection of Greek hymns provided one of the most important starting points for my own work on the subject. To some extent this approach will also be reflected here, especially in the description of traditional hymnic features (chapter 3), but, as the next few paragraphs will make clear, I depart from the perspective of Furley and Bremer in my insistence on the hymn’s ability to undertake several competing goals, as determined by its particular set of circumstances.

Does the *charis*-function fully account for what is found in the extant samples of the Greek hymn? And does its centrality to the nature of the cult song preclude other functions or levels of meaning? Greek religious worship is rarely clearly separable from other facets of society. The

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3 Day (1994: 57ff), for example, makes a case for understanding *charis* as the pleasing quality of any *agalma* and is thus the key to the latter’s function.

4 For the centrality of *charis* to the generic conception of the Greek hymn, see Race 1982, Furley 1995 and Depew 2000: 60.

5 Furley and Bremer 2001; but also Furley 1993, 1995, 2007 and Bremer 2008; the same basic approach is also shared by Race 1982 and Pulleyn 1997.
great Panathenaic procession is a genuine pious ritual, the expression of the city’s dedication to
the cult of Athena Polias, but is also a political event, a public display of the city’s harmony and
structure to its citizens, and of its wealth and power to the foreign delegates. Not surprisingly this
dimension of the festival has attracted at least as much scholarly attention as its cult functions.⁶
A temple, a pompê, a theoric delegation or an agôn, in addition to serving religious needs, can
simultaneously have political, sociological and economic significance. And this applies equally
to the cult hymn. It too is a public religious act and able take on roles beside that of an offering to
the gods. If anything, as a public utterance, an instance of speech privileged by its ritualized
context, it may have more potential to become a messenger than other elements of worship.

This point is one of the contentions of the present work, which is, however, less concerned with
making the point than with investigating its further consequences. If the hymn can serve other
functions beside that of establishing charis, what are they? The possibilities here are virtually
endless – a hymn can, for instance, make geo-political claims of the polis it represents, promote
the social position of a group within the city, advertise the poet’s own special status in the cult,
help establish a new ritual, or restructure the religious landscape of a Panhellenic sanctuary.
What quickly becomes apparent is the sheer variety of the surviving hymns and their aims. Each
hymn is shaped by the particular set of circumstances in which it is composed and performed. Do
such alternative messages take away from the religious aim of the hymn? Quite the contrary:
praising and pleasing the deity is not simply one among the numerous things that hymns can do;
it is something they must do (or be seen to do) if they are to maintain the authority which allows
them to make any additional claims. This implies that hymns were often simultaneously
functioning on several levels, but also that these functions were not all equally important. Two
key questions arise from this fact. First, what determined the complexity of a hymn’s mission
and the messages it was expected to carry? And secondly, how is such complexity (or lack
thereof, as the case may be) reflected in the hymn’s texts that survive? Or to put it another way,
how did the composer of a hymn, the ancient hymnographer, manipulate the formal features at
his disposal to accommodate the (often multiple and competing) functions his hymn needed to
perform?

⁶ See, e.g., Wohl 1996 and Parker 2005: 261 with further bibliography.
For each of these questions, and especially for the first one, the issue of stakeholders is key. While it is possible to consider levels of significance apart from any consideration of agency and even, although with more questionable results, outside of the text’s historical and performative context, this is not the perspective adopted here. Cult songs are commissioned, composed, staged, performed, viewed and, sometimes, recorded and read by people; and the messages or functions of the hymns discussed here are viewed in relation to the groups or individuals involved in the production of the performative event. Not all possible stakeholders will be present in every case, and not every stakeholder will have the same interest in (or influence on) the production as every other. Indeed, in its organization and circumstances every performance, not only every hymn, will be unique. The level of available evidence unfortunately does not allow us to contextualize and reconstruct the performance of every individual surviving cult song, but it will nonetheless be an important first step to familiarize ourselves with the range of possibilities and common practices in the organization of this genre.

There has been some recent work done to open up the Greek hymn to analysis which goes beyond their rhetorical-religious function as an agalma. Among the most significant contributions in the area was Barbara Kowalzig’s monograph, Singing for the Gods (2007), where she suggested that Greek choral song was a tool used to refigure and continuously reconcile aetiological myth and ritual. She further argued that this power of choral cult poetry to modify mythological material was used for objectives beyond the specific festival or cult concerned. Her work focuses on one particular function: the creation and negotiation of local religious, ethnic and political identities. The performance of myth and ritual in choral songs was a key way of defining and redefining group identities and power relations in Archaic and Classical Greece. By choice of mythic variant, a community could signal ethnic identity and allegiances. Kowalzig, like Furley and Bremer, seeks to define the primary and central function of Greek hymns, with the main difference between them being the function which they choose to focus on and which they see as central. Among the primary interests of the present study, by contrast, is to observe the relationship between a particular set of circumstances and the unique hierarchy of functions which these create in each case; and furthermore, to investigate the way in which a hymn can tackle multiple aims simultaneously. In other words, the focus is more on the variation and the potential for multilayered communication rather than on a unified function that could provide a kind of final analysis.
One of the most important contributions of Kowalzig’s book is the discussion of how the power of choral song is based on the authority of antiquity and tradition which it both claims for itself and imparts to other rituals in the cultic context. However, her work stresses one specific way by which a hymn can do this – aetiological myth, whereby the ritual and discourse of the here and now is validated by the performance of a model, a precedent set in the timeless time of myth where all that is now was formed and established. This use of aetiology is of course undeniable and it will have a prominent part to play in our discussion of a number of the surviving cult hymns. But not all myths are aetiological, not all hymns incorporate an aetiological myth and in those that do, it usually forms only a small portion of the whole song. The power of hymns to convey messages or make claims effectively – whether claims about ethnic identity or anything else – is based more generally on its success as a song for the gods. In order to be accepted as a genuine religious song intended to please the gods, it needs the authority of age and tradition, as also argued by Kowalzig. The logic of ritual is that what worked once will work again and thus a ritual established long ago and passed down by tradition is seen as valid while innovation is potentially a threat, since there is no guarantee that it will satisfy the deity and may even cause offense. But the legitimacy of age is added not only by incorporating aetiological myths. Such myths are one among a whole range of traditional forms, language and content at the hymnographer’s disposal which can signal authoritative antiquity and the status of a genuine cult hymn.

3 Defining the hymn

Before proceeding it is important to clarify the subject matter somewhat – that is, to define what is meant by a “hymn” and to determine whether this definition corresponds to a category that exists in ancient sources.

Our word “hymn” derives from the Greek hymnos, but the latter is subject to a considerable deal of ambiguity, a topic that has had some modern discussion. Scholars in the Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine periods were interested in categorizing Classical literature and therefore in defining literary genres. On the other hand, it has been observed that in the living culture of

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mousikê of the Archaic, Classical and even Hellenistic periods, formal distinctions and sharp generic categories were not an issue, and terminology which modern (and later ancient) scholars regard as generic, including hymnos, were not used with the level of precision that may be desirable today. As will be discussed below, this profound diachronic shift is somewhat exaggerated; nonetheless, it is doubtless true that the way such words were used, and the way “genres” were distinguished, changed over time.

By far the most common definition (explicit and implied in usage) of hymnos is “song for the gods.” This is, for example, the way Plato understands it when he calls hymns sung prayers (Leg. 700b). And this of course is the way the term “hymn” is commonly used today. But there are other ancient usages as well. One that is especially common in earlier sources is simply “song of praise” or even just “song.” This seems to be the way that Pindar intends the word when he applies it to his own epinicians and the way it is employed in early epic. It is ultimately impossible to tell for sure whether this should be read as a metaphorical usage based on the religious sense of the word or a sign of greater lexical flexibility in the Archaic and early Classical contexts. It may, for instance, represent a diachronic development from a more general to a more specific definition. Within the framework of such development the self-referential application of the word in Archaic epic would make sense in terms of a later, narrower definition if heroes are included in it. With regard to the epinician, it must be kept in mind that although, as a genre, it is intended to celebrate a mortal, the extant examples are full of praise of the gods. The victor’s debt of gratitude for divine aid is a prominent theme. The impetus for the celebration is a victory at an agôn, which itself is a gift to the gods and is embedded within a larger ritual occasion, the Panhellenic festival. Finally, there is some evidence that may suggest a performance at a public festival and/or in a sanctuary for some of the surviving epinicians. Taken together, these factors would suggest that in the case of the victory ode at least, the term hymnos understood as “song of praise for the gods” is quite appropriate, if still metaphorical.

A more significant ambiguity is with a usage that seems to be narrower than “song for the gods.” There is some evidence that there was a distinct category of cult song, alongside such sub-genre as paean and dithyramb, called hymnos. The most important reference is in Proclus, where the

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9 That is the view of Pulleyin 1997: 43-4.
“hymn proper” is distinguished from the prosodion by its performance mode: it is sung while standing around the altar to the accompaniment of the kithara.\(^{11}\) Although Furley has dismissed this as mere confusion on the part of later scholars, there are questions that still remained unanswered if, as he suggests, it is accepted that hymnos was a general category of cult songs applied by Hellenistic critics to those cases where a more specific classification (as paean or prosodion, e.g.) was impossible.\(^{12}\) In short, the possibility of a hymnos as a specific type of cult song cannot be ruled out given the current state of evidence. Nonetheless, these cases of wider and perhaps narrower applications of the word hymnos do not detract from the apparent majority consensus, which recognized the definition of the hymn as a song in praise of the gods. In other words, the ancients clearly had a category which approximated our own understanding of the hymn.\(^{13}\)

4 Hymnos in ancient Rhetorical theory

It is possible to go one step further and see how the hymn, in its more common sense of a religious song, was conceptualized by ancient scholars. Already in Plato, hymnos is closely associated with enkomion, a song of praise, and distinguished from it by the nature of the subject – divine vs. mortal.\(^{14}\) This remained the standard formulation of the hymnic genre in later theoretical treatment.\(^{15}\) Unfortunately, the meaning and aims of the hymn is rarely the subject of focused discussion in antiquity – the role of song in ritual must have been such a familiar staple of the everyday for ancient Greeks that it would rarely occur to anyone to question its form or function. It is really only in the work of later rhetorical writers that the hymn receives direct attention and even then seldom more than cursory. Still, a few interesting facts can be gathered from its treatment. It is significant, for example, that the hymn is grouped, along with enkomion, under encomiastic or epainetic speech, which means that the principal rhetorical aim of the genre was understood to be praise. Encomiastic in turn, fits under the epideictic branch of rhetoric; but this does not necessarily imply an emphasis on the display aspect of the hymn since the

\(^{11}\) Ap. Phot. 239.320a.18-20.
\(^{13}\) For a more detailed discussion of the various uses of hymnos see App.A.1.
\(^{14}\) Rep. 607a.
epideictic was more or less the miscellaneous category for speeches which were intended neither for court nor for political disputation.

For the most part, the ancient rhetoricians do not go far into discussing the proper elements and features of the hymn, contenting themselves with noting that it is just like the *enkômion* except for the divine nature of the *laudandus*. One fortunate exception is the two treatises on epideictic rhetoric attributed to Menander Rhetor, both of which dedicate substantial amount of space to the hymn. In spite of this seeming wealth of information, the texts do not contain the kind of information that would be most useful, in particular for the present study. For one, neither Menander nor any other rhetorician pays any attention to the performance mode or context of hymnody. This is of course understandable (although no less regrettable) considering their specialized subject matter. Perhaps more frustrating is the fact that the two treatises do not discuss the aims of the hymn beyond that implied in its categorization as encomiastic speech in honour of a god. The first work classifies *hymnos* into various types including cletic, mythological and genealogical, among others, and recommends the level of elaboration and grandeur for each, at times providing a Classical model.16 Given that most surviving hymns are comprised of elements that correspond to more than one of these categories, this classification would be somewhat confusing if the author did not add an important clarification: many hymns combine several or even all of these “types.” 17

As part of the second treatise, Menander guides the reader through the composition of a Sminthiac Oration, which, as the text is itself careful to note, is a hybrid speech combining elements of the hymn with those of the praise of a city. In fact, most of the oration can be regarded as hymnic: if the few sections which are very clearly directed at the praise of the city are excluded, what remains is in line with other surviving cult hymns, including a tri-partite division, appeal to *charis* and conventional formulae. This reassures us of a certain degree of stability in the hymnographic tradition across many centuries.18

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16 Treatise 1, 333ff
17 Treatise 1, 333.8.
18 See further on rhetorical treatment of hymns in App.A.2-3
5 Hymn and prayer

The emphasis on praise is universal in the rhetorical definitions of the hymnic genre. Modern discussion, on the other hand, associates hymns most closely with prayer. Plato called hymns “sung prayers” but this definition is a rare exception and does not become standard, by contrast with his close connection (and distinction) between hymn and enkômion. And whereas prayer can be omitted from a Greek hymn, some form of praise is a must. In modern scholarship, the distinction between hymn and prayer as types of religious discourse has been subject to some debate.

Furley and Bremer base the distinction on performative grounds.19 They argue that the hymn, unlike prayer, emphasises song, dance and musical accompaniment. The problem with this narrow definition is that it excludes many texts which were not intended for a musical performance but were nonetheless artistic expression of the praise of divinity. The Homeric hymns, for instance, were most likely chanted rather than sung, while works like the prose hymns of Aelius Aristides and even the hymns for Eros in Plato’s Symposium were recited. Lattke is somewhat more capacious in his definition but still insists on the “song” quality of the hymn; an elegiac or epic hymn might perhaps fit in, but certainly not a prose hymn.20 As Cairns points out, the ancient hymn can be understood to cross generic boundaries: there are hymns in many different genres of Greek literature, including epic, lyric, dramatic, elegiac and several kinds of prose.21 As was seen earlier, the way ancient scholars distinguished the hymn is based almost exclusively on a divine laudandus and not on formal features which define it as its own genre. The question of whether any formal characteristics can be described as common among hymns will be discussed in a later chapter. What is important to note now is that an overly narrow definition – whether based on performative or formal grounds – risks leaving out works which the ancients would not hesitate to call hymns.

Pulleyn takes a different approach to the distinction between hymn and prayer.22 He focuses on a contrast in terms of the charis relationship between gods and men: while hymns offer a pleasing offering (an agalma) to the god, thus increasing the reciprocal charis between the worshiper and

21 Cairns 1972: 92.
22 Pulleyn 1997, esp. 44-47. This approach is also followed by Depew 2000: 61-2.
the divine addressee, prayers do not – they merely invoke a god and make a request. In order to please the deity the hymn needs artistic language and elaborate praise of the subject.\textsuperscript{23} In other words, the hymn, as \textit{agalma}, is contrasted from a prayer by its level of poetic or rhetorical elaboration. In a sense, the performative features, which are viewed as defining characteristics by Furley and Bremer (and to a lesser extent Lattke), are themselves forms of artistic elaboration that render the hymn pleasing to the god and thereby build up the \textit{charis} for the worshipping community. The connection between \textit{charis} and performative features is in line with a statement by Plutarch (\textit{De Pyth.} 406c-d) that the gods appreciate the \textit{kosmos} and \textit{charis} derived from \textit{melos} and \textit{metron}. The two views have common ground but Pulleyn’s definition is somewhat more inclusive: there are, after all, many hymns which never had the qualities of song, dance and instrumental accompaniment and yet are quite sophisticated and ornate.

Gordley cautions that, while Furley and Bremer’s definition is too narrow, Pulleyn’s risks being too general since some prayers too display poetically ornate language. He offers his own formulation: the hymn is a brief praise of the divine in first or third person and cultic or didactic in function.\textsuperscript{24} The requirement of one of two specified functions may still exclude some ancient hymns, unless “cultic” and especially “didactic” are defined very broadly. For instance, do Homeric hymns qualify? If they are assumed to have been primarily performed at rhapsodic contests during public festivals, they could perhaps be said to be incorporated within a cult event. What about Callimachus’ hymns? Some of them, at least, are not cultic by any stretch of that term, but are they didactic? Yes, but only inasmuch as almost any work of literature may be described as instructional or informative. It seems that the functional elements in this definition may render it overly narrow. Without them, however, all that is left is praise of the divine, and it is not clear how this can be used to differentiate a hymn from other kinds of religious utterance such as prayer.

The distinction made by Pulleyn does still seem the most useful, provided only that it is seen as a matter of emphasis. The prayer is essentially a request, while a hymn is above all a pleasing offering, an \textit{agalma}. And although some prayers are rather elaborate and many hymns include a request, there are also many simple prayers and some hymns that leave out the prayer altogether.

\textsuperscript{23} The elevated quality of diction in hymns is also stressed by Kroll 1968:11.

\textsuperscript{24} Gordley 2007: 125ff and 32-3.
Since the focus here is on the kinds of hymns which were performed as part of a cult event, the term “religious song” will at times be used as synonymous for “hymn” and the “song” (or more generally performative) qualities of such works will be an important consideration of the study.

6 Hymns and cult hymns

In modern scholarship, hymns have traditionally been subsumed under the umbrella of ancient Greek poetry and classified, like other works within this large category, based on formal features, especially metre. Thus, Alcaeus' hymns were categorized as lyric poetry along with his other poems, while the Homeric hymns were part of the epic corpus, shared by such other material as the *Iliad* and the *Works and Days*.

Two developments over the last two centuries, however, have changed the way Greek hymns are seen today. First, the discovery of papyri and inscriptions containing hymns have both expanded and diversified the total of the surviving corpus. Secondly, growing awareness of the importance of performance to our understanding of Greek literature and particularly poetry has forced us to rethink our classification of hymns. Scholars today, when they approach a Greek poem, often begin by considering what would have been the mode and context of performance for which it was composed, the characteristics of the performer(s) and the audience, the possible identity of the commissioner and/or primary addressee, the function of the poem within its occasion, and so forth.25

Such a line of thinking, when applied to the Greek hymn, at once unifies and fragments this class of songs: the hymns need to be considered together, despite all of their formal differences, as songs whose primary function it was to celebrate the gods; and yet at the same time it is reasonable to distinguish among them based on the kinds of occasions and performance modes for which they were intended.26 So, for instance, most of the surviving hymns of Alcaeus were probably meant for a sympotic solo performance before an audience consisting of an inner circle of aristocrats connected to the poet himself by social and political ties.27 The likeliest scenario

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26 This is the approach taken by Furley in his article “Types of Greek Hymns” (1993).
27 Page 1955: 265, Campbell 1982: 286; and especially Rösler 1980, who argues that Alcaeus’ poetry is genuinely
for the Homeric hymns is a rhapsodic contest, although the symposium is not to be excluded either; thus the agonistic motivation and the conventions of the rhapsodic tradition are just as essential to understanding these works as their hymn status. Athenian drama too incorporated entire hymns, and these must be viewed as having a double nature - they are hymns praising and/or addressing a deity but also and simultaneously part of the inherent fiction of the play, with its own conventions, agonistic intentions, and functions within a particular festive context. Finally there is another group of hymns - consisting of the fragmentary partheneia of Alcman, the surviving hymnoi, paens, dithyrambs and partheneia of Pindar and Bacchylides (as well as a few small fragments from other lyric poets) and inscribed hymns from the Hellenistic and Roman periods – which were composed to be performed as part of certain, typically formal and civic, religious ceremonies. When performed, a hymn of this kind constituted a ritual act embedded within a context that also included other rituals such as sacrifice, procession, and prayer. These songs – cult hymns – are distinguished from other hymns by their particularly complete and immediate integration into the cult practice.

It needs to be recognized that this distinction is not absolute: divisions between such various types of hymns are sometimes blurry and there is much to commend a close comparison among them. Hymns sung, chanted or recited by choroi, rhapsôidoi, aulôidoi and kitharôidoi as part of agônes mousikoi were also integrated into a cult event, since all such contests were organized in the context of religious festivals such as the Pythia in Delphi in honour of Apollo and Charitesia in Orchomenos in honour of the Graces. Similarly, hymns incorporated into dramas were a part of a cult celebration inasmuch as the dramatic contests were conducted as a ritual part of festivals like the Athenian Dionysia. Even hymns whose primary context was the symposium need not be considered necessarily any less religious than songs like Pindar's paens, for example. The symposium had its own ritualistic structure that included libations, spoken prayers or toasts, as well as sung hymns, all in a particular conventional order. The difference here is that the degree of deliberate advance preparation, formal organization and public (typically polis-wide or occasional, not intended for a potential wide audience spread across time and space. The poet was speaking specifically and exclusively to his aristocratic fellow drinkers.

28 Clay 1997: 489 with n.4 and 496-498; a good overview of the issue can be found in Richardson 2010: 1-3.
30 There are also a few (mostly anonymous) hymns from these later periods preserved in MSS and papyri (e.g., Furley/Bremer nos. 7.4, 12.1-4).
31 See, e.g., Xenoph. 1, esp. 11-16; Xen. Symp. II, 1, and Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1 161-162 and n. 8. Also note that in Plato's Symposium, the participants must praise (hymnein) the god Eros.
even Panhellenic) participation characteristic of cult hymns is absent or at least significantly reduced at a sympotic recitation of a hymn. On the other hand, the difference between cult, agonistic (e.g., Homeric) and dramatic hymns should probably be considered as one of degree. The ritual nature, integration into religious event, and primacy of prayer and celebration of divinity that is most fully apparent in the bulk of cult hymns is somewhat tempered by the competitive concerns (in the case of both agonistic and dramatic hymns) and the fiction of the play (in dramatic hymns). This difference is usually reflected in the hymnic texts. Prayer is rarely present in the Homeric hymns, while the dramatic hymns often reflect in one way or another the particular situation of the play and thus sound more specific and private than most cult hymns.32

Similarly, Orphic hymns and hymns found in the so-called Magical Papyri, although performed as part of religious ritual, pertain to worship within in the context of non-civic cult practice.33 This of course does not imply that words uttered are less religious or unconnected to the tradition of civic hymnody. The difference is once again the context of performance and, as a result of a less civic and official context, a distinct set of stakeholders and potential aims. And, as with Homeric and dramatic hymns, there are departures in formal terms that may be connected to difference in context, mode and aims of performance. That said, it is important once again to recognize that all of these categories of hymns partake of a shared tradition of religious songs, with similar conventions regarding structure, formulaic phrasing, and choice of topoi. In recognition of this overall unity our survey of this traditional hymnic language will often take examples from Orphic, Homeric and, to a lesser extent, sympotic and dramatic texts. Nonetheless, the central subject of the study as a whole are those hymns which are thought to have been composed for performance as an integral part of official, civic cult practice. Not only do they form a group of texts that are distinct enough to form a legitimate object of a focused inquiry, but also, from the point of view of practical limitations, they represent a manageable corpus of data for a project of this scope.

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32 See, e.g., Parker 2005: 138: “yet [choral hymns in drama] are always recognizably hymns sung by a particular chorus in a particular play, not a voice speaking for Athens.”

7 Types of cult hymns

Menander Rhetor’s classification of hymns into mythological, scientific, apopemptic and other similar categories is quite unusual and, as the author himself implies, these may in reality represent elements rather than types of hymns. The same treatise also provides another list of sub-species of hymnos, which includes more familiar song-forms such as paean and dithyramb. The distinction is made – much as that between hymn and enkômion – based on the addressee. Analogous lists are frequently found in other rhetorical, critical and lexicographical literature, although the specifics may differ. Furthermore, a similar categorization was evidently used by Hellenistic librarians who collected the works of earlier lyric poets. Pindar’s poems, for instance, fall into such classes as paean, dithyramb, hymnos, partheneia, as well as others, such as epinicians, which were not intended for cult performance.

The terms are not the invention of Hellenistic scholars: many are already current in Archaic literature. What is more difficult to assess is to what extent the Hellenistic terminology is contiguous with earlier use; or, to put it another way, whether these terms always corresponded to specific types of song and whether the earlier associations overlap with the Hellenistic system of genre. The most sceptical view is that the two worlds – represented by Alexandrian librarians on the one hand and Archaic-Classical composers on the other – are separated by a wide rift, and the conceptualization of song-type changed drastically from one based on performance mode and occasion to another focused entirely on formal features of the text. The sharp periodization that is at the root of this concept has come under some criticism, and it has rightly been pointed out that the Hellenistic scholars did not entirely ignore performative aspects, but probably turned to formal features when the original occasion of a song was no longer known.

This criticism, however, does not detract from the valuable observation that in the Greek song-culture types of songs were connected to occasions and modes of performance. And even if the categorization of songs was not as formal or clear-cut as that attempted by Hellenistic and later ancient critics, there are signs that as early as the late Archaic period, there was some idea of

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34 Treatise 1, 331.20-332.2.
35 E.g., dithyramb: Archilochus fr. 120. Paean: II.1.478-9, for example, quoted above; partheneion: Alcman fr. 13; prosodion: Aristophanes (Aves 853-4); hyporchema: Plat. Ion. 534c. 4.
36 See further discussion and references in chapter 7 below, p. 199ff.
“genre,” a the sense of songs with recognizable features (including performative features that may not be apparent in the surviving texts), associated with particular occasions, and distinguishable to an ancient audience. Pindar, in a priamel that opens a funeral song (Pi. Fr. 128c), associates several other song-types with particular deities and occasions, contrasting these from the thrēnos. And a recent study of the use of lyric genres in Attic drama implies that these non-dramatic song-types were readily recognizable even when embedded in a different performance: such generic play relies on the familiarity on the part of the audience with the conventional features (formal, thematic, occasional or performative) of the hymenaios or the paean, for instance.37

Some of these sub-categories of the cult song (although not all) have received considerable interest in the last few decades, and one of the foremost concerns has been precisely reconstructing the contemporary conceptualization of the genre in its context.38 The present study is not specifically concerned with a particular type of hymn or with the distinctions between such songs as the paean and dithyramb. Nonetheless, certain apparent genre-specific features or expectations will come to bear on the discussion, especially with regard to the partheneia of Pindar and Alcman.39

8 Overview of the study

The principal aim of the present work is to extend the discussion of the Greek cult hymn beyond its primary rhetorical-religious role in a ritualized event, to analyse the relationships between the specific occasion of a hymnic performance (particularly the people involved) and the character of the sung text, and to observe how the ancient hymnographer manipulated familiar features of an ancient form to suit various, often multiple, objectives.

Chapters two and three provide the groundwork for the central discussion of the varieties of strategies employed by hymnographers. The stakeholder model is first developed through a discussion of the contexts of hymn-singing in cult, the practical organization of such

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37 Swift 2010.
39 See further on the question of hymn-types in App.A .4. And see Swift 2010: chapter 1 for a good discussion of the issue involved in dealing with the Greek lyric genres.
performances and the interested parties. Then a survey of common hymnic features helps to reveal the conventional elements of the genre: these are tools used by the composer to maintain the traditional feel expected from a cult song while simultaneously incorporating the specific functions that reflect the network of stakeholders involved in the production. Chapter four looks closely at a particular surviving cult hymn – the paean and prosodion of Limenios – and uses it as a case study of the intersection between occasion and text. The unusually robust evidence on the historical circumstances and festive occasion of this hymn allows us to contextualize its performance and analyse the ways in which the unique network of interests surrounding it contributes to the shape of its text. This case study is then used as a starting point for the subsequent chapter, which opens up the discussion to the wider corpus of surviving cult hymns. This section looks at the variation in the circumstances of performance and the ways in which the hymnographer responds to them; it is organized along several axes - the complexity of the stakeholder network, the presence or strength of competing functions within the text, and the degree of innovation or conservatism in the form and language of the hymn. The next chapter picks up the discussion and introduces another key parameter – level of localization, or the degree to which a hymnic text is anchored in its original performative occasion. Special attention is given to the linguistic concept of deixis, the way in which language signals its position in its context, in terms of space, time and person. This brings us to consider the intended life of a hymnic text beyond the initial cult performance, including questions of reperformance, textualization and dissemination. The issue of the after-life of cult songs is developed further in chapter seven, but with a special focus on the effects of literacy and the epigraphic habit on the tradition of hymnody.

The study of Greek cult hymnody provides a unique opportunity to look at material that is found at the intersection of two academic fields that have traditionally been largely isolated from each other – religious practice and lyric poetry. Focusing specifically on hymns that were composed for cult performance will, I hope, have two benefits. First, it will re-insert the fragments of hymnoi, partheneia, paeans and other hymnic genre composed by the great Archaic and Classical lyric poets in the context of religious ritual, and more importantly, within the same hymnodic tradition as the surviving epigraphic hymns from Hellenistic and Roman period, and the countless other cult songs performed throughout Greek antiquity across the Hellenic world and known only from secondary accounts. And second, deleniating the subject in this manner will
narrow the material down to a group of hymns that are unified by a performance context that, on a fundamental level, they all share. I hope to show that the core religious role of these songs at once imposed certain constraints on their form and content, and simultaneously empowered them to make powerful religious, political and other claims. Without undermining the centrality of the hymn’s status as an *agalma*, my intention is to move the discussion beyond this shared goal and analyse the potential of this kind of discourse to become an active agent in the performance of functions that are specific to each hymn. While parts of the thesis work to delineate common patterns – patterns of organization, performance, formal composition – these are largely intended as frameworks that allow me to see how the unique set of circumstances led each hymnographer to manipulate the material of a shared tradition in his own way. Among the variable circumstances I place particular emphasis on human agents. It is one of the goals here to encourage readers of these hymns to consider the people who commission, composed, perform, view, or were in any other way connected to the performance of a Greek cult song: the messages encoded in the texts that survive, the aims embedded within them, are those of the hymn’s particular set of stakeholders.
Chapter 2
Organization and Stakeholders of a Cult Hymn Performance

1 Introduction

The aims of a Greek cult hymn, it is being argued here, are closely tied to the circumstances of its presentation, and above all to the individuals and groups that are in some way involved. Before the various stakeholders can be considered systematically, it is important to outline some basic information about the performance of cult hymns, both its mode and the way it fits into the larger context of a public religious ceremony in Greek culture.

Wherever there were Greeks, they sang hymns, and occasionally the modern person gets a little glimpse at what this might have looked like. Visual, documentary and literary sources occasionally depict, refer to or in some other way provide information related to the singing of a cult hymn. The third chapter of Heliodorus’ novel *Aethiopica*, for instance, consists in large part of an elaborate ekphrasis of a theoric contribution from Thessaly presented during the Pythia at Delphi, and part of it describes the performance of a hymn to Neoptolemus by two maiden choruses, one singing and the other dancing.\(^{40}\) The text makes is clear that the context is the ritual sequence leading up to the main sacrifice. Similarly, Lucian refers to boys’ choruses accompanying sacrifices on Delos with *hyporchemata*.\(^{41}\) There are many depictions of the chorus in surviving Greek art, but without other attributes confirming a ritual setting the context is open to debate. Several representations of choral performance around or close to the altar have survived and these corroborate the textual evidence of the practice.\(^{42}\) As a result of such evidence, it is possible to describe some common features of a hymnodic performance in a cult setting.

\(^{40}\) Hld. *Aeth.* 3.2.1-2.
\(^{41}\) Luc. *Salt.* 16.
\(^{42}\) E.g., Boston, MFA 65.908, ThesCRA vol. 2, no. 100: Attic white-ground *phiale* ca. 450 BCE, showing women holding hands and dancing around a flaming altar, accompanied by an *auletris*; London, BM 1906.12-15.1, *ThesCRA* vol. 2, no. 284: Attic black-figure *kylix* 570-560 BCE, showing five women and a boy dancing beside an altar.
The material this thesis looks at spans centuries of Greek history, but diachronic development is not the focus of this study. Certainly there was change in Greek religious practice – we hear of new cults being introduced, festivals established, and ritual sequences modified. Yet there is also a degree of conservatism inherent in ritual activity. Although cults and festivals and sanctuaries were sometimes established, abandoned or changed, the fundamental components of Greek cult, the patterns of worship, display a remarkable continuity across time. The centrality of such rites as procession, libation and sacrifice is one of these constants, as is the general manner in which these rites are conducted. An Archaic Greek would perhaps be surprised at the worship of living rulers in the late Hellenistic period, but he would probably be perfectly familiar with the way the sacrifice was conducted, for instance. This observation also holds true for our subject-matter. Certain developments will of course need to be discussed, inasmuch as they have a significant impact on the argument about the aims and means of cult hymns. These include the rise of literacy, the epigraphic habit, professional choruses and the appearance on the scene of Rome and other political powers above the level of the sanctuary or the polis. Even these major changes were not as universal as one might suspect: in spite of evidence for occasional use of professional choruses, they did not altogether replace the singing of cult hymns by local citizens; similarly, even at the peak of the epigraphic habit, it is highly doubtful that inscribed hymns accounted for anything but a small minority of the total songs performed in public religious festivals around the Greek world. More importantly, in spite of diachronic change and local variation, the practice of public cult hymnody retains its essential familiar shape from the Archaic (and probably before) right through the Roman Imperial periods. It is these common, persistent, traits, that form the focus both of the thesis as a whole and of the present and subsequent chapters in particular, which seek to delineate the traditional modes of performance, forms of organization, and common formal features of the Greek cult hymn.

2 Cult hymnody in context

There seem to be two specific contexts for cult hymnody that were most common. Hymns were regularly sung on the way to the sanctuary, as part of the ceremonial pompê. The Greek term prosodion was used to refer to this kind of hymn, although it is not clear whether this was a distinct sub-genre of the wider hymnos category or a secondary description that could be applied

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43 See p. 149 and n. 356 below.
to any hymn that was sung in procession. On the one hand, it is clear that other hymn-types could be processional. Thus, the Theban *daphnéphorikon* was sung during the laurel-bearing procession and the song which Apollo instructs the Cretans to sing on their way to his new temple in the Homeric Hymn is the paean, or at least the associated paeanic cry.\(^4^4\) In fact, paeans were apparently especially popular for this purpose. On the other hand, the Hellenistic scholars who classified the works of early lyric poets like Pindar treated the *prosodion* as a separate class. Perhaps more significantly, the titles of the two Delphic hymns with musical notations describe each author’s contribution as “paean and *prosodion*”, which is normally taken to mean two distinct parts of the text.\(^4^5\) As a ritualized act, the processional hymn fits well with the logic behind the *pompê* itself – the worshippers bring offerings to the dwelling-place of the god(s), and these offerings include sacrifices, physical dedications as well as pleasing displays.

Most frequently, the destination of the *pompê* is an altar, the centre of the *temenos*, and this provides the second most common scenario for cult hymnody. The climax of the cult event – the blood sacrifice – was accompanied only by instrumental music (normally the *aulos*), due to the observance of *euphêmia*. Hymns and prayers, however, were standard elements in the lead-up to the sacrifice. The hymn, in addition to being a gift in its own right, framed the entire ritual sequence as an act of communication with the divine: its invocation was needed to draw the god’s attention to the event, creating a link necessary for the food, objects and spectacles to become offerings; the praise it offered the god, and the aesthetic pleasures of its form and performance, ensured that the offerings would be accepted graciously; and the prayer, when present, communicated the hopes with which the worshippers approach the deity and linked these with the offerings they were bringing. In a passage that has been a key in the discussion of the term *hymnos*, Proclus distinguishes between the *prosodion* and “hymn proper” based on performative grounds: the latter is sung around the altar to the accompaniment of the lyre, the latter in procession to the accompaniment of the *aulos*.\(^4^6\) This has been variously interpreted as either indicating the existence of a separate distinct sub-class of religious song called *hymnos*, or as a somewhat confusing attempt to distinguish the *prosodion* from other hymns, or hymns


\(^{4^5}\) There are two metrically-distinct sections, the second probably corresponding to the *prosodion*. Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1, 131.

\(^{4^6}\) See references in n. 508.
generally speaking. Another alternative may be added – namely, that both terms are being used
generically, or rather on a different level than such words as paean, dithyramb and adonaion,
which are listed earlier in the same work as sub-categories of the hymn. Here the distinction
concerns specifically mode of performance, and just as a paean or partheneion can be
processional, so they and many other songs can be sung around the altar, that is as a “hymn
proper.”

In public religious practice, offerings could usually be made any time of the year. This means
that offerings, including blood sacrifices, could be brought to a sanctuary on any day by any
citizen (subject of course to various purity requirements and particular local restrictions). Yet
there was a marked imbalance of worship at a sanctuary in favour of heortai dedicated to the
associated deities. Among other contributing factors is the fact that it was during festivals that
the community at large performed official rituals; and private acts of piety tended to gravitate to
this collective event. Offerings, especially sacrifices, given outside the public festive days
probably would have been on a more modest scale, the rituals less formal and elaborate. Not
surprisingly, then, the majority of known occasions for the performance of cult hymns coincide
with public festivals. This is consistent with the general impression of Greek religion more
generally: it is more public than private, more civic than personal, more collective than
individual (all without denying the presence of personal conviction or private worship).

This point brings up the question of the mode of performance. There were without question
occasions when hymns were sung by a solo voice – during rhapsodic and kitharodic contests, as
well as at symposia, to name but the clearest examples. When it comes to cult hymns, however,
there is little evidence for such monodic performance and considerable evidence for some form
of choral presentation. Aside from internal metaperformative references to a group of
performers, clues in external sources, and the incorporation of cult hymns into other choral
genres, there is another argument which is perhaps less concrete but may be more powerful. This
is simply that idea that the logic of a communal ritualized event prefers (if not demands) a
collective voice. In communication with the god, multiple voices speaking in unison are more

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48 The arguments are summarized in Bernardini 1993: 92-4. Cf. Burnett 1985: 5-14, esp. statement on p.6 quoted in
Kurke 2005: n.6: “a band of singing dancers has a special efficacy since many voices obviously have more effect
than one when calling upon a nonhuman power.”
powerful than one. As a pleasing offering, the song of many is more impressive, potentially more worthy, than that of an individual. Finally, the cult hymn in public worship is sung on behalf of the worshipping community, and it makes sense that a chorus, itself a group drawn from that community, should act as the representative of that larger collective. It is this logic of communal worship that may explain why, unlike the epinician, for example, Greek cult song has not been the subject of a great deal of controversy with respect to mode of performance.49

Choral performance encompasses a number of different alternative models, including a single unanimous chorus, separate singing and dancing choruses, and two antiphonal sections (semi-choruses, or leader and chorus). These are not simply hypothetical scenarios: they are attested in ancient sources, and need to be taken into account as real possibilities for cult hymns.50 Unfortunately, that is as far as it is possible to go in the majority of cases. The structure of compositions like Cretan hymn for Zeus, with a recurring refrain, would have been particularly suitable for a split performance - chorus and congregation at large, for instance, or solo singer and chorus, depending on the complexity of the refrain. This is plausible, but still unprovable.

If the chorus is to represent a community in communication with the gods, it should be a part of that community and it does seem that cult hymns were by and large performed by choruses made up of citizens of the community which they represent. The more ambiguous issue is the one pertaining to professional choreuts. Evidence suggests that by the fourth century, it was common practice to recruit professional choruses for performance in musical and dramatic contests.51 The proxenic decrees related to the Pythaides embassies the Athenians sent to Delphi in the late Hellenistic period leave no doubt that the theoric hymns of Limenios and Athenaios were sung by members of the guild of Dionysian artists, that is a professional chorus.52 This shows that by that date (129/8 BCE), at least in a theoric context, professionals choreuts at times sang cult hymns. The qualification “at times” is necessary because even in this period (and later), the

49 For the debate regarding the performance of victory odes see references in n. 389 below.
50 For a discussion of the various possible modes of choral performance see Bernardini 1993: 92 and Furley and Bremer 2001: vol. 1, 26 with further references.
51 On drama, see Wilson 2000: 289-90 and 2002: 62-3, although he notes that local, citizen, choreuts were still being recruited alongside professionals. For Athenenian theatre see Wallace 1995: 214. For choreutes as one of the specializations among the technitai see Chaniotis 1990. Rutherford (2001: 61) believes that the paianistai listed in several Athenian inscriptions from the second and third centuries CE are members of a professional guild analogous to the technitai.
52 For Delphic that concern the late-Hellenistic Pythaides embassies, including the proxenic decrees for the technitai, see FD III 2:11, 47, 48 and 49.
practice does not by any means displace the amateur citizen chorus. In fact, there is evidence of a second chorus taking part in at least some of the Pythiades: whereas the professional chorus is part of the guild’s own, independent, contribution to the theôria, the boys’ chorus, in all likelihood made up of amateur Athenians, is sent by the city of Athens itself. Also, there is little evidence of professional choreuts performing cult hymns earlier than this. The apparent preference for amateur citizen choruses in this kind of context when compared to the competitive framework of the agôn may be connected to the fact that the cult hymn was seen as an integral element in the communal act of worship, central to the ritual sequence: here it was particularly important that the speaking voice really identify with the community.

The mention of a boys’ chorus in the context of the Athenian Pythais brings up an important point regarding the make-up of hymnic choruses. The available evidence suggests that the choreuts normally shared the same gender and age group. Thus there were choruses of men, youths and boys but not ones that mixed male voices of different categories. Women too sang cult hymns, and this is of course an important point of contrast with the theatre. But choruses were made up of either men or women, but apparently not of both, and there were also separate different age categories here also. There is a practical explanation for such segregation which has to do with the nature of Greek music itself. With rare (and usually late) exception, the Greeks did not employ harmony. Choruses sang in unison and even the instrumental accompaniment normally followed the melodic line of the voice in the same key (or, perhaps sometimes, at an octave’s distance). In fact, when this relationship between voice and instrumental accompaniment was breached, it became one of the main causes of displeasure among conservative critics. But even this is always a question of the relationship between voice and instrument, not of multiple melodic lines within the chorus. This explain why there was a need to separate people of different natural voice ranges, especially in a traditional genre of music like the cult hymn, which furthermore was by and large the domain of amateur singers. Yet the existence of this technical justification does not preclude other considerations. Above all, it is important to remember that hymnic choruses, even more than other choruses, were

53 West 1992: 40-1. ThesCRA lists two cases (Vol. 2, nos. 86-87) that violate this rule: a reference in Lucian (sailit. 12) to a dance performed by boys and girls together; and a mid-sixth-century marble base from Kyzikos that depicts two youths and a girl dancing together. West notes that there is some evidence for mixed dancing but not singing.
55 Pl. Leg. 812d.
representatives of the larger worshipping community. As such, they could model not only the unity of that community but also its structure. A *parthenos* had a very different role in a Greek *polis* than a *pais*, an ephèbe or a *gynē*, and public choral performance, especially within an official city-wide ritualized context such as a religious festival was an opportunity to enact and emphasize these roles and their contrast from others.\(^{56}\)

It is now possible briefly to summarize the picture of a Greek cult hymn performance. There was normally a group of people in festive dress, wearing crowns, sometimes carrying ritual symbols, singing a song for a god; this same group or another danced. The music was completed by an instrumentalist (or several of them): most commonly, the instrument was the *aulos* or kithara. The location was often a sanctuary (or a procession toward a sanctuary), particularly the main altar. The cult song was embedded into a ritual sequence which also included other acts, most notably procession, prayer, libation, sacrifice and banquet. The performers of the hymn were probably rarely the only people present at the occasion: there were those who were otherwise actively involved in the ritual, those who were there by virtue of their official status, as well as (relatively) passive onlookers. The context was usually an official public festival and the general mood one of joyful celebration.\(^{57}\)

There are of course plenty of other details that remain to be considered. Who are the instrumentalists accompanying the chorus? How were the choreuts selected from the citizen body and, if professionals, what role did they have in the organization of the performance? Who taught the chorus what to sing, dance and play? Who was in charge of the entire presentation - the priests, other magistrates, or some rich patron? What about audiences? Did they know what was going to be sung, when, by whom? A number of these questions will be discussed in the course of the remainder of this chapter. The state of the evidence is such that some will remain unanswered and others will only be given hypothetical answers. In many cases, it will be necessary to accept that a variety of scenarios existed. Perhaps one of the most obvious and

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\(^{56}\) Calame 2001 is the classic treatment of the relationship between the phenomenon of *partheneia* and the place of the *parthenos* in Greek society. On the construction and reinforcement of gender roles through musical performance in Greek culture, see Stehle 2007. She summarizes (72): “performers can stage their gender identity through performance…. In effect they publicly demonstrate their internalization of their gender roles, while reinforcing the construction of those roles for the audience.” The social identity is related to the age group as well as gender: “each set of performers dramatizes the perspective of its gender and age group” (69).

\(^{57}\) See the broad summary of the performance mode and occasion of Greek hymns in West 1992: 14ff and Furley and Bremer 2001: v. 1 20-35.
crucial questions to start with is what was sung. The answer may seem obvious – hymns – but this merely opens up a slew of other issues: who chose the hymns for a particular occasion, where did they come from, when and by whom were they composed?

3 Old and new hymns

The scenario provided by secondary accounts is typically quite straightforward: a choral song to a god is sung (and, sometimes, danced) in a public sanctuary by a group of citizens, in procession or around the altar, during a regular calendar festival. The audience is principally other members of the community, with the occasional addition of other Greek visitors. Little is said about the origin of the hymn, probably implying that it is a hymn that has been sung at the given occasion for the particular god since time immemorial. The frequency of this pattern in the sources probably reflects its popularity in real cult practice. This simple scenario can perhaps be considered a basic type, without the label necessarily implying historical primacy. What will become apparent in the course of this chapter, however, is that there were many cases of significant divergence from this kind of performance, cases where this relatively straightforward set of stakeholders was complicated by fragmentation, replacement or addition of interested parties.

The starting point, however, will be the simpler scenario, not only because it would have probably been widespread historically, but also because it may be helpful to think of other arrangements as variation from a basic model, even if this model turns out to be largely theoretical.

The cult hymns that have received the most scholarly attention are the (often fragmentary) remains great lyric poets of the Archaic and Classical periods, and it may be tempting to jump straight to these texts. But this temptation should be resisted. What the surviving paeans, dithyrambs and other hymns of these great poets represent is most likely a situation that was in some way abnormal in the large scheme of things. Most poleis on most occasions under most circumstances would not have commissioned an international star poet. There were “lesser” hymnographers around of course, often locals. Some of them are known to us from inscriptions, including a few surviving hymn texts that mention their authors: Isyllos, Philodamos, Isidorus,
among others. Yet even these hymns, new works composed by local poets, may have been
more the exception than the rule. The rule is likely best exemplified by hymns such as the one
found near Dicte on Crete or the so-called Erythraean paean to Asclepius. These are
anonymous traditional hymns regularly reused by the worshiping community. That so few of
them survived is surely in part to be explained by the very fact that they were traditional and
local, passed down orally within the community from one generation to the next, with no need of
committing them to writing. Of course someone composed them, but who it was and when is
either forgotten or does not matter all that much to the people who would sing and hear the
hymns. The best evidence for this type of scenario and its prevalence is found outside the hymns
themselves, in literary sources, which occasionally and unconsciously, mostly through choice of
wording, let slip a hint about the organization of a hymn performance.

Pausanias’ Description of Greece is one of the richest sources in this regard. When describing the
pannychios rites for Dionysos in Sicyon, he says that the women would sing “local hymns”
during the nightly procession. The phrase suggests traditional songs of obscure or unknown
origin, part of a local repertoire utilized repeatedly as part of this cult event. In another passage,
the Elians are said to sing hymns in the prytaneion. Pausanias says that that it was
“inappropriate for him to include in his narrative” the “the words which it was established to say
over the libations, and the hymns which they sing.” Although he will not tell the reader what
the hymns were, the wording suggests a pre-existing body of songs, rather than newly-
commissioned works. His statement also groups the utterances to accompany libations –
explicitly described as traditional - and the hymns. The sense of a traditional repertoire is
strengthened in the next section of the passage, where Pausanias adds that the “songs sung in

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58 The hymns of Isyllos, Philodamos and Isidorus: n. 84, 82, and 130, respectively. For the text of Iyllos and
Philodamos, see App. B. For Isidorus, see Bernard 1969: no. 175, Vanderlip 1972, Moyer 2010 and Faraone
2012.
59 Dictaean hymn and Erythraean paean: Furley and Bremer 2001: no. 1.1 and 6.1, respectively. More recent
treatments include (Dictaean hymn) Alonge 2005 and 2011: 221-33, (Erythraean paean) Vamvouri 2004 98-100;
and (both) Fantuzzi 2010: 188-9.
60 Rutherford (2004: 85) makes a similar suggestion specifically for theoric hymns: “Many of the songs performed
by visiting delegations were probably traditional and old, either anonymous or attributed to poets of the distant
past.” Of international star poets like Pindar he says: “they would be commissioned to compose a song on the
occasion of a particularly special theôria; otherwise an old song would be used. And that is probably one of the
reasons comparatively few of these theoric songs have come down to us.”
61 Paus. 2.7.5-6.
62 Paus. 5.15.9-12.
63 Paus. 5.15.11: ὡς ὅσεα δὲ ἐπὶ ταῖς σπονδαῖς λέγειν σφίσιν ἐν τῷ πρυτανείῳ καθέστηκεν, ἢ καὶ ὃμινος ὁποίους
ἀδουσιν, οὔ με ἦν εἰκὸς ἔπεισαγαγέσθαι καὶ ταῦτα ἐς τὸν λόγον.
the Town Hall are in Doric, but who composed them the Eleans do not say.”

The phrasing once again points to a selection of pre-existing songs, probably from a local repertoire. Pausanias is silent about why the Eleans do not identify the composer, just as he is silent about his reasons for not adding any precise information about the songs themselves, but religious secrecy may have a part to play. In general, the origin of a song used in a cult setting is often unspecified. Parallels can be drawn from epigraphic evidence. In one of the proxenic decrees commemorating the contribution of the Athenian artists’ guild to the Pythais thêria, for instance, mentions the patrios paian. As the discussion of Limenios will demonstrate, there is a possibility that the phrase is referring to one or both of the hymns with musical notation composed for the same festival some years earlier. But whatever song is being referred to, what the inscription emphasizes above all is its national and traditional status. Similarly, a sacred law from Stratonicaea reinstitutes the regular performance of the synêthê hymnon for Hecate. Once again, the value of the hymn lies precisely in the fact that it is part of the local custom.

The second most common case found in literary sources like Pausanias, Herodotus and others, is when a hymn is said to have been composed by a legendary ancient poet. Plato refers to one Tynnichus of Chalcis, whose one worthy composition was “the paean which everyone sings” and which “is just about the most beautiful of all songs.” Aeschylus, according to Porphyry, regarded it as the greatest paean. This must have been an ancient hymn, a paean perhaps originally composed for a Delphic performance and still sung in the fourth century BCE, at least at Athens. Herodotus reports that Olen the Lycian composed a Delian hymn to the Hyperborean maidens Opis and Arge and that it was this poet who “also wrote the other ancient hymns sung in Delos.” According to Pausanias, Olen was the founder of the hymnic genre and wrote many hymns for the Delians, including one for Eileithyia. One important thing to notice is that the reference is to hymns that are still being sung at Delos in Herodotus’ and even Pausanias’ day. There were other semi-mythical hymnographers. Herophile was a Sybil who was said to have

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64 Paus. 5.15.12: ὁπόσα δὲ ἁδουσιν ἐν τῷ πρυτανείῳ, φωνὴ μὲν ἔστιν αὐτῶν ἡ Δώριος, ὡστὶς δὲ ὁ ποιήσας ἦν τὰ ἁσματα, οὐ λέγουσιν.

65 See further p. 101 with n. 257 and p. 187-8 below.

66 LSAM 69.16-17.

67 The hymn to Athena mentioned by Aristophanes (Nu. 961ff) is also in this category: an archetype of a local ancient song, taught to children as part of a proper, traditional education.

68 Pl. Ion 534d5-e1; Porthyry 2.18.

69 On Tynnichus see Pórtulas 2012: 221-3.

70 Hdt. 4.35.3; Paus. 1.18.5, 8.21.3, 9.27.2.
lived before the Trojan War and composed a hymn to Apollo which the Delians still remember.\textsuperscript{71} The most celebrated hymn of the Messenians, a \textit{prosodion} to Apollo, was attributed to Eumelus of Corinth, a semi-legendary epic poet traditionally dated to the 8\textsuperscript{th} century BCE. The story went that Eumelus composed this for the Messenians’ first Delian \textit{theôria}.\textsuperscript{72} The Lykomidae, an Attic priestly family, claimed that the hymns they sang to accompany their Eleusinian rites were composed for them by none other than Orpheus.\textsuperscript{73} This same family also had a hymn to Demeter by Musaeus, an equally illustrious musician.\textsuperscript{74} Pausanias also refers to another ancient hymnographer, Pamphos, as responsible for composing the oldest of the Athenians’ hymns and says that both he and Orpheus wrote epic hymns to Eros to be sung by the Lycomidae during their rituals.\textsuperscript{75} Stories like these confirm that it was normal for hymns to be reused regularly for recurring cult occasions, that this practiced continued to be the norm well into the Roman period, and that many of the hymns in such traditional repertoires were old, so old in fact that they were connected to the heroic age. Of course it is impossible to tell how old such hymns really were, but that is not really very important. What matters is that they were seen as ancient and that this connection with antiquity (especially when augmented by association with some illustrious name) was a matter of pride.

Antiquity and tradition in fact may have been valued over the prestige of a Panhellenic legendary author like Orpheus or Musaeus, and a local connection could be just as important as the latter. The Delphians are proud to sing a hymn by Boio, a local woman,\textsuperscript{76} and the Spartans are equally proud of their Gitiadas, who composed a hymn to Athena and other so-called “Dorian songs.”\textsuperscript{77} In some other instances, even when the author is forgotten or simply unnamed, the people speaking to Pausanias still make sure to mention that the hymns they sing are “local.”\textsuperscript{78}

Some hymns were not local, not ancient or neither. Inscriptions of the so-called Erythraean paean to Asclepius, for example, have been found in four places around the Greek-speaking world –

\textsuperscript{71} Paus. 10.12.2.  
\textsuperscript{72} \textit{ibid.} 4.4.1.  
\textsuperscript{73} \textit{ibid.} 9.30.12.  
\textsuperscript{74} \textit{ibid.} 1.22.7; 4.1.5.  
\textsuperscript{75} \textit{ibid.} 7.21.9, 9.29.8, 9.27.2.  
\textsuperscript{76} Paus. 10.5.8.  
\textsuperscript{77} \textit{ibid.} 3.17.3.  
\textsuperscript{78} E.g., Paus. 2.7.6. Cf. Plut. \textit{Qu. Gr.} 26 (297b-c), which refers to a particular apopemptic partheneion sung by Aenianians; the wording here leaves no doubt that the song was a traditional, local, one, regularly reused as part of the recurring theoric occasion.
Ptolemais in Egypt, Athens, Dion in Macedonia and Erythrae, the last being the oldest version. Therefore, at least three (and perhaps all four) poleis adopted the hymn from elsewhere for their own local religious use. The Athenian cult of Asclepius also employed a paean ascribed to Sophocles, likely composed very soon after the introduction of the god’s rites into the city, an example of a contemporary text entering a traditional canon. Perhaps the most interesting example is the hymn to Hygieia by the poet Ariphron, little known today but one of the most familiar hymns in antiquity, to judge from numerous references and quotations. It may have been written for a sympotic context originally – this is the way it is used by Athenaios. At the same time, however, it was sung in religious contexts at Epidaurus and Athens, where the text was preserved in epigraphic ritual programmes. Here was a song incorporated into a cult tradition that was not ancient – not, at least in the way Musaeus or Olen were – and, for at least one of these two poleis, not local. In all three cases, the hymns were incorporated into a ritual programme and so became part of a local, traditional repertoire, reperformed countless times.

When the hymn is completely new, this fact is apparently worth mentioning. When describing a Roman festival, the 2nd-century CE writer Phlegon specifies that the hymn sung during a particular stage of the nightly ritual is newly-composed. As any part of ritual, a hymn acquires authority and validity by virtue of antiquity and tradition. In this context, being old is more valuable than being new. In matters of religion, ancient custom has the advantage of having been tested and proven by time – what has been effective for generations past is likely to continue being effective in the future. On the other hand, change in ritual is potentially dangerous because it may fail to please and might even offend the deity. This applies to hymns sung in cult just as


80 Furley and Bremer 2001 no. 7.3.

81 For references and discussion see p. 233 and n. 495 below.

82 Both surviving epigraphic texts of the paean are part of longer inscriptions (Epidaurian stone IG IV 1:132 and the so-called Kassel stone, IG II² 4533) that contain several texts that were probably intended to function as a program of ritual performance. See Furley and Bremer 2001: vol.1, 268.

much as other ritualized acts. Change certainly did occur in Greek religion but it was carefully managed: on the one hand, innovation was often authorized by oracular decrees or other forms of divinations; on the other hand, additions or modifications were normally embedded within the existing traditional background. The present study will reveal various strategies used by the stakeholders of cult hymn performance to manage the inherent dangers of change. Generally, oracular validation is often obtained (and advertised); novelty is balanced by conventional hymnic form; and new features are connected to existing mythological and ritual elements.

The evidence seems to tell us that most hymn performances around the Greek world employed songs from a local, traditional repertoire and the use of new hymn in cult was something special. Under what circumstances would this occur? The cult hymns of poets like Pindar and Bacchylides, unfortunately, do not give us enough relevant information. They are preserved on papyri, with only an occasional title added by the Hellenistic editors, likely extrapolated from the text itself. Luckily, a few of the inscribed hymns (and other related inscriptions) are somewhat more revealing.

The subscriptio to Philodamos’ paean informs us that he and his brothers composed the hymn in accordance to the oracular instructions of Apollo: divine approval helps dispel the anxiety surrounding a new ritual (speech) act. In the poetic text itself, these instructions are carefully listed, and they reveal that the paean itself was part of a larger development in the landscape and calendar of the Delphic sanctuary – the closer integration of Dionsysos into Apollonian cult. As if this was not “special” enough, the performance also coincided with the reconstruction of the main temple of Apollo, an event that is itself incorporated within the hymn. In other words, behind the simple formula “X composed hymn Y in accordance with the god’s bidding” there are two major religious-political events involving no doubt a complex network of local officials and elites.

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84 Most (especially public) oracular responses that have survived pertain to matters of cult. See references in n. 356 and 359 below.

85 See, for instance, Plato’s warning against undoing traditional forms of worship (Leg. 5, 738b-c). Kearns (2010: 331) comments: “the lawgiver’s task is to ensure that all the deities are properly worshipped in the city. However, in doing this he must not design a scheme from scratch, but respect and work around old foundations. By and large this is how polytheistic societies work; new cults arrive in addition to old, rather than actually replacing them.” Cf. Lysias 30.18, on the importance of maintaining religious traditions, in this case Solon’s sacrificial calendar. In general see Price 1999: 76-81.

The supposed oracular impetus to the composition of a hymn recurs in several other instances. A paean to Apollo and Asclepius from Athens bears a title “composed by Makedonikos of Amphipolis at the god’s command.” There is little in the text, however, to tell us if there were other, more worldly, circumstances involved. The paean of Isyllos from Epidaurus is one of the most explicit about the context and motivations behind it. It too claims support of the Delphic oracle, but in its case Apollo only told Isyllos that it would please him to have the paean inscribed. The real motivations are to be found in the rest of the extensive peritext. The paean is to serve as part of a new ritual instituted by a *lex sacra* recently passed in Epidaurus. The ritual highlights and celebrates the aristocratic echelon of the town and the introduction to the *lex* is a defence of the traditional relationship between the people and the elite. Thus the context for the hymn and its performance is an ongoing local political struggle which is being played out in the religious landscape of the *polis*.

To return briefly to the paean by Philodamos, the poets themselves, who came from Scarpheia, were rewarded by the city of Delphi with valuable perks, including tax exemptions and priority access to the oracle equal to Delphian citizens themselves. This is a reminder that a new hymn was not something negative: if crafted in a fitting manner (that is, consistent with the particular cult and festival, composed within the traditional norms of religious song) and approved by the community and the gods, it became a prized gift, pleasing to the deity and his worshippers. Other poets are known to have received similar rewards from Delphi. One of them is Aristonoos of Corinth, whose two hymns, to Hestia and Apollo respectively, survive. Unfortunately, and unlike the paean of Philodamos, these two texts do not provide sufficient information to reconstruct any special circumstances that incited their composition. Another is Hermocles of Chios, who is discussed further below. The practice is not limited to Delphi, as shown by two public decrees from Hellenistic Tenos. In the first, Alcione, an Aetolian poetess, is made

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87 *IG II²* 4473, 1st c. BCE, Attica. Furley and Bremer 2001 no. 7.5 with previous bibliography, Vamvouri 2004: 5.3.
90 *Syll.* 3 579.
91 *IG XII* 5:812-3. Rewarding proxenic status and priviledges to visiting poets and musicians (and of course other benefactors as well) was a common practice, as attested in epigraphical sources. For a brief overview, see Hunter and Rutherford 2009: 3-4, with further bibliography in notes 9 and 12.
proxenos and presented with a ceremonial crown on two public occasions, in gratitude for a hymn to Zeus, Poseidon and Amphitrite. The second is virtually identical except that the poet, whose name is lost, was male. Finally, from Athenian-controlled Delos, there is parallel decree for Amphicles, who composed a prosodion and trained a boys’ chorus to sing it.92

To return to Hermocles, his reward is similar to that granted Philodamos and Aristonoos, except that in addition to the various local perks he was crowned with a laurel wreath. The more significant difference is his position and the context. Hermocles was an official ambassador sent by the polis of Chios to Delphi (or rather, to the Amphictyonic Council, as suggested by his title, hieromnêmon).93 The inscription lists the responsibilities he fulfilled at Delphi: he sacrificed to Apollo, performed other ancestral rites honourably, mixed a silver krater at the Theoxenia, wrote a hymn to Apollo, fulfilled his stay in a manner worthy of the sanctuary and those who sent him, gave an account before the (probably Delphic) assembly. The Delphic polis, by the same act, also honoured and crowned Chios itself. Furthermore, this public decree was inscribed on two stelae, to be set up in Delphi and Chios, respectively – a detail absent from the two parallels discussed above. Therefore, Hermocles is rewarded not only as an individual who has benefited Delphi but also as a representative of another state. The hymn is only one of his achievements and, in fact, is not given any special attention in the inscription. It is worth noting that Chios is being honoured by Delphi in part for their recent “struggle for common freedom”, referring in all likelihood to the so-called Hellenistic war.94 Therefore, the entire procedure documented by the stelae was probably not an ordinary and regularly-recurring one, but rather triggered by special set of political circumstances.

One of the most interesting things about the case of Hermocles is that the hymn, its composer and possibly performer(s) are part of an official delegation, a tool being used for international politics. Nothing in the inscriptions concerning Philodamos and Aristonoos suggests an analogous position for those poets. However, two other inscriptions from Delphi may offer a parallel (albeit an inexact one). From the texts of two hymns with musical notations composed by Athenaios and Limenios, it is clear that the performers and the composers were members of a

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92 DI 1497.
93 The hieromnêmones were voting representatives sent by individual member states to the Council. For detailed treatment see Lefèvre 1998: 205-14 and Sánchez 2001: esp. 496-507.
94 Derow-Forrest 1982: 88-90 and Rutherford (2009: 245), who also notes a close parallel to Amphicles, another Chian hieromnêmon honoured (this time on Delos) for his poetic services.
musical corporation (*synodos technitôn*) based in Athens.\textsuperscript{95} It is also quite clear that these musicians were sent from Athens as part of a religious embassy, a *theôria*. More specifically, the *theôria* involved is the Pythais, which occurred only occasionally and quite rarely. What is more, as will be discussed in a case study later on, these hymns were featured soon after the reintroduction of the festival following a long hiatus. Thus, once again there is a rather special set of circumstances demanding or justifying a composition of a fresh new hymn. Like Hermocles, Athenaios and Limenios, as well as the performers of the hymns, are acting as official representatives of one *polis* in another. The parallel is not exact because these two poets do not speak before an assembly or act as symbolic recipients of public honours granted to Athens; in other words, their roles are less directly political than that of Hermocles of Chios. Furthermore, for Limenios and Athenaios, their hymn performances are the principal contributions to the *theôria* and additional Athenian officials are present to perform various other roles. Hermocles\textsuperscript{96}, by contrast, is the leading ambassador and the hymn is just one, and not the principal function of his position.

Many of these cases and their contexts will be discussed in greater detail in the course of the present study. What can be gathered at this point is that the creation of a completely new hymn for performance in a cult setting seems to coincide with a special situation. The places involved are usually large and powerful *poleis*, especially regional or Panhellenic centres of worship. The circumstances include irregular embassies, religious or political in their purpose, as well as significant changes in local cult structure, which in turn tend to reflect political tensions or developments.

In order to complete the picture, it is helpful to turn briefly to the other main group of surviving cult hymns – the relevant fragments of lyric poets. Once again, these represent original hymns created for a particular primary performance. As mentioned above, unlike some of the inscribed hymns, these fragments rarely give sufficient information about the circumstances of their production. All that there is to go on is the poetic text itself and the Hellenistic titles, when the latter remain. How much can be deduced from these varies greatly. For instance, the context of the few fragments of *prosodia* and *hyporchêmata* of Bacchylides cannot be contextualized at all.

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\textsuperscript{95} A good, up to date summary of the *technitai* is Lightfoot 2002; Le Guen 2001 and Aneziri 2003 are the most comprehensive studies to date. Stefanes 1988 remains a good reference, especially outside Hellenistic period.

\textsuperscript{96} Possibly with his brother: see *FD* III 3:223.
On the other hand, a relatively detailed picture can be pieced together about Pindar’s best-preserved *daphnéphorikon*. The piece was sung by a group of Theban maidens to the accompaniment of *auloi* during a public procession, which was part of the Daphnephoria festival in honour of Apollo. The text gives an idea of the general order of the procession and names of the main participants, including the young boy with the most honoured role of *daphnéphoros*. This unusual degree of self-reference is due in part to the sub-category of hymn to which it belongs. *Partheneia*, including *daphnéphorika*, place special emphasis on the aristocratic participants of the ritual. This can be seen in the extant fragments but is also corroborated by an ancient commentator Photius, who no doubt had at his disposal a greater sample than remains to us now. He generalizes that *partheneia*, along with a few other genres, represent an intermediary category: in contrast to songs composed for the gods on the one hand and those in honour of men on the other, these types of songs are meant for both mortals and immortals. He clarifies that they are still meant primarily for the gods, but include the praise of men as an important additional function.

Many of the lyric fragments that can be connected to cult hymns lie somewhere in between these two extremes in terms of self-references and potential for contextualization. What can be drawn out is typically some combination of: the performers, the cult, and the place. One of Bacchylides’ paeans, for example, was composed for the cult of Pythian Apollo in Asine, while one of the fragments of Simonides seems to be a paean for a Delphic performance by a chorus from Andros. Again, in the hymnic fragments of the lyric poets there is a prevalence of *theôriai*, regional or Panhellenic cult centres and large, rich *poleis*. There are, however, cases where the special set of circumstances that gave rise to the need for a new hymn cannot even be guessed.

4 Stakeholders in a hymn production

The preceding section has outlined a range of possible scenarios for cult hymn performance. It is now possible to revisit the initial set of questions about the people involved. To help grasp the complex network of stakeholders, it is possible to imagine three rough and at times overlapping

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98 239 Begger p.320a. See further below, pp. 168 and 268.
99 Fr. 4 and see Rutherford 2001: 31 with n. 31.
100 *PMG* 519, fr. 35b and see Rutherford 2001: 28.
groups: the hosts, the presenters and the audience. To start with a relatively straight-forward case, the Elian monthly rituals mentioned by Pausanias\footnote{Paus. 5.15.11.} involved the singing of hymns. As discussed earlier, the hymns are most likely taken from a traditional local repertoire. There is no mention of a professional chorus or chorodidaskalos, so it is probable that the hymns were sung by the polis at large, or a chorus drawn from the citizen body. These amateur performers, along with the aulete who is mentioned by Pausanias, are the presenters in this case. The audience is most likely all (or mostly) local, aside from the odd tourist like Pausanias. Here already there is some overlap, since there is no sharp division between the presenters and audience, both groups being citizens of the polis. The host is the polis of Elis, but there is a more specific sub-unit involved – the prytaneion members. They are the decision-makers who choose the hymns and appoint the relevant temporary magistrates for the ritual, including some of the presenters, namely the aulete and the ceremonial director (exégêtês).

A very similar system, where a city council elects temporary religious officials, can be seen in epigraphic evidence from Roman Ephesus.\footnote{See especially Ephesos 445.} The officials, there termed kourêtes, include a hymnôidos, and aulete.\footnote{The term hymnôdos in this case is somewhat unclear. In an inscription from Stratonicea (n. 128 below), the related term hymnôdia refers to the boys’ choruses. This usage is supported by a number of inscriptions from Claros that uses hymnôdoi to describe teoric choruses of boy, girls or both. And cf. IGBulg. II 666, which includes the plural hymnôdoi, mentions the setting up a chorus (chorostatountos, line 7.) Likewise, in other inscriptions from Ephesus, there are references to hymnôdoi as a group of singers (Ephesos 212, 227, 228, etc.) sometimes said to be attached or assigned to a particular sanctuary (Ephesos 829, 23-4). The appointment of single hymnôdos raises questions about his role and status. See also Furley and Bremer 2001: vol. 1, 25-6. A parallel is offered by Aphrodiasis 18, 16, where, like in Ephesos 445, a hymnôdos, in the singular, is listed among other public officials. Does the term here designate an equivalent of a choragus or chorodidaskalos, or a solo hymn-singer?} It is not clear whether the acting prytanis or the boulê is also responsible for selecting the hymns like in Elis, but it seems likely. This decision-making heart of the host polis or site is often one of the most powerful and active stakeholders involved in a hymn performance. One of the most informative pieces of evidence for their role is a Delphic inscription from the 3rd century BCE.\footnote{Syll. 450 = FD III 2.78, Rutherford 2004: 73, 78-9.} As in the cases discussed above – Hermocles, Aristonoos and Philodamos – the decision-makers of the polis have determined to reward a poet, Cleochares, for his hymns with various civic perks. However, here there are some new details. Cleochares of Athens has composed three hymns – a prosodion, a paean and a hymnos to be sung by a boys’ chorus during the sacrifice at the Theoxenia festival. The polis (probably the
assembly), has decided that the annually-appointed chorodidaskalos should teach these hymns to the boys and present them at the Theoxenia. A decree from Stratonicea provides for a daily selection of thirty boys from local noble families for the singing of hymns.\(^{105}\) It lists a number of further officials involved – a paidonomos and paidophylakes are responsible for selecting the choreuts; a named grammateus will compose (or has composed) the hymns; and a herald and kitharist are to accompany the performance. The first three are quite clearly official public posts; the status of the herald and kitharist is not explicit, but since they are required daily, they are probably hired staff of the polis. The fact that the grammateus, but none of the others, is named indicates that his role as hymnographer is in all likelihood not solely due to his official position.

These cases suggest that the city leaders were frequently involved in the selection of new hymns at least indirectly: a new hymn needed their approval in order to be performed at a public occasion in the polis. Whether the poet or the council would initiate this process – that is whether the poet offers a hymn to the council’s discretion or the council commissions it from the poet – is hard to tell. Pindar’s epinicians were probably commissioned and paid for by his patrons but throughout the texts, the poet presents the songs as a gift of friendship among xenoi.\(^{106}\) Similarly, if the hymns are bought and ordered by the city, this fact would probably not be advertised in inscriptions. Instead, the poet will be said to have written the hymn out of friendship and goodwill for the city – which is precisely what tends to happen. In the words of Schachter and Slater,\(^{107}\) “of course artists did get cash….But one did not confuse in public language the glories of an olive crown with the vulgarities of payment.”\(^{108}\) His analysis of proxenia inscriptions (similar to those mentioned above) reveals that explicit reference to cash payments is very rare, although there is sufficient evidence that the honorands of these texts (including poets) did normally get a valuable reimbursement of some kind. In any case, what is fairly certain is that the authorities of the host site were usually involved in the selection of a hymn, old or new, when it was to be performed as part of a public cult ceremony. Additionally, they took charge of at least some aspects of organization of the performance such as the appointment of chorus teacher.

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\(^{105}\) See reference in n. 128 below.

\(^{106}\) On the payment of the epinician poet, see Carey 2007: 200 and references to internal evidence in n.31. Pindar’s re-formulation of the patron-client relationship as one of aristocratic xenia is one of the large messages of Kurke 1991. Some recent criticism to this view is presented by Bowie 2012.

\(^{107}\) Schachter and Slater 2007: 88.

\(^{108}\) Ibid.: 88.
and leader, and the context of presentation, general (e.g., at the Theoxenia) and specific (“during the sacrifice”).

The system by which public choral performances are organized in a polis is called chorēgia, a term that has a wide range of possible meanings to reflect the variety of such systems. As usual, the chorēgia best known to us is that found in Classical Athens, particularly as it pertained to competitive dramatic and dithyrambic choral performances. In this case, rich Athenians were selected based on their wealth qualification to act as chorēgoi, and their main task was to finance and oversee the performance of a single chorus. The job included hiring a poet (who was in this case also the chorodidaskalos) and aulete.

The responsibilities involved – namely, financing, organizing, instructing and leading a chorus – were surely not limited to agonistic performances in Athens. And the way they were distributed and carried out in any given polis or sanctuary can legitimately be considered a chorēgia system. For example the monthly rituals in Elis described by Pausanias took place in the prytaneion and a number of public officials were involved, including a master of ceremonies and an aulete. The financial burden may have been assumed by the polis as a whole. In another case, that of Cleocharis, the Delphic boulê is once again involved in the selection or commissioning of the hymn and the appointment of the chorodidaskalos who is then responsible for preparing and presenting the choral performance. The instrumentalist, kitharist or aulete, was perhaps also appointed by the boulê. Once again, the financing (including no doubt Cleocharis’ fee) was likely the burden of the public treasury.

For the Theban Daphnephoria, the choregic function seems to have been performed by a leading family like that of Agasicles for whom Pindar composed one of his daphnēphorikon. The poetic text itself reveals that the maiden chorus was lead by a daughter of the family, while her mother was either another “leader” or helped in the girls’ preparation, or both. At least two other members of the family – the boy laurel-bearer and an adult relative – had prominent roles in the procession. The aristocratic oikos is at the very center of Pindar’s hymn and later editors and

109 The most detailed treatment of chorēgia is Wilson 2000. At the end of the fourth century BCE the Athenian system of chorēgoi was replaced with a single agonothete whose own financial contribution would supplement public funding: Csapo and Wilson 2010.
110 See pp. 26-7 with notes above.
111 See p. 35-6 with notes above.
commentators refer to this and other daphnēphorika by the name of the daphnēphoros. There is almost no doubt that it was the elite family who hired the poet-chorodidaskalos. Furthermore, their centrality in the choral ritual as well as in the choral text strongly suggests that they were the financiers of the performance as a whole.\(^{112}\) In other words, they had a role parallel to that held by leitourgical chorēgoi in democratic Athens. An analogous aristocratic chorēgia may have been in place in Archaic Sparta. Alcman’s fragmentary parthenia reveal a prominence of elite family members, including in the role of chorus-leader, similar to that seen in the Theban Daphnephoria. Whether Athenian chorēgoi, Delphic chorodidaskaloi or Theban elite oikoi, the people involved in the chorēgia process can be seen to straddle the space between presenters and host, performers and polis. They work with other presenters to bring the choral hymn to life and they do this with the authorization or at least implicit consent, as well as on behalf of, the polis and its authorities.

When a new hymn is composed, there is a very important additional stakeholder – the hymnographer himself. Sometimes, however, he has roles that are beyond those of a presenter. Isyllos, for instance, is clearly a politically-active member of the local elite and is part of the decision-making group within the Epidaurian polis.\(^{113}\) In fact, he is partly responsible for the organization of the very context (the new ritual) for which the hymn is composed. In other words, he is a key figure within the group of stakeholders earlier termed the “host.” In cases like the paean of Isyllos and the hymn of Hermocles, the hymnographer is a politically active aristocrat who has chosen to compose a hymn. Most of the time, however, new hymns were composed by professional poets like Chleochares (described as poiētēs melôn, line 3), Amphicles (mousikos kai melôn poētēs) and Alcione (possibly termed poiētria, line 4), as well as Pindar and Bacchylides. Even among the professionals there are varying degrees of independence. When Pindar, for instance, composes a paean for the Athenian theôria to Delos, he is representing the Athenian polis as well as himself as poet. Limenios’ case is even more complex: he is the spokesperson of the Athenian polis as well as the corporation of technitai. Clearly his stake in the hymn was quite different from that of someone like Alcione or Chleochares who, as far as is discernable from the inscriptions, are acting as independent professionals representing

\(^{112}\) This is also the conclusion of Hubbard (2011: 360) and Kowalzig (2004: 55-6.) Cf. Currie 2011: 295-7, who argues that the family of Aioladas took on the role of chorēgos, in the sense of chorus-leader and financier.

\(^{113}\) Kolde (2003: 223ff) offers a thorough discussion of the status and role of Isyllos in Epidaurus.
themselves. Many of them were the so-called *poeti vaganti*, travelling poets and entertainers who made their living from contest winnings, commissions and other rewards.\textsuperscript{114}

The precise extent of the hymnographer’s role must have varied. Chleocharis’ hymns were taught to the chorus and presented\textsuperscript{115} by a separate person, the local *chorodidaskalos* appointed annually by the council or assembly in Delphi. This indicates that at least in some instances the poet’s job was limited to composition. Another example of this division of responsibilities is seen in the inscriptions related to Limenios’ hymn. As will be seen in the case study below, he (and probably Athenaios as well) composed the paean and prosodion, and accompanied them on the *kithara* together with other musicians; but the task of training the chorus was left to another *technitês*.

Normally, there is a close connection between the audience, the host and the presenters. The host tends to be the *polis* and the audience largely its citizens. A choreic system connects and mediates between the *polis* and the presenters. The performers – particularly the citizen amateur *choreutai* – mirror and reflect the larger community from which are they drawn and which they represent. The chorus of the cult hymn frequently adopts a collective “I” which stands for chorus and *polis* at the same time. This is especially evident in the prayer that traditionally ends a hymn. The chorus asks the god benefits for the community which it represents. A good example of this proximity among the stakeholders is the paean to Asclepius found in an inscription at Erythrae.\textsuperscript{116} The performers sing before fellow citizens and worshipers and ask the god to be kindly to “our city” and give “us” life, health and honour.

The close connection can be undermined in several ways. The audience and the host can be different. This would be the case in regional and Panhellenic centers like Delphi and to a lesser extend in large cities like Athens. The presence of a Panhellenic audience is often reflected in the hymnic texts from such sites. The Epidaurian hymn to all the gods closes with a prayer for the congregation of “Greeks” and for “this temple” without any mention of the local community.\textsuperscript{117} In some of these cases, there is nonetheless a “local” population that can identify itself with the

\textsuperscript{114} See Hunter and Rutherford 2008.

\textsuperscript{115} Or “led”: *eisagein*.

\textsuperscript{116} For references see n. 79 above. The ambiguity of “person” in the hymns is discussed further, with additional examples, below, pp. 176ff.

\textsuperscript{117} *IG IV*\textsuperscript{2} 1:129, Epidaurus, third century CE; Wagman 1995: 51ff and Furley and Bremer 2001: no. 6.7.
host *polis* and thereby claim precedence over other, visiting, members of the audience. Delphi, whose citizens had their own *polis* and a privileged status vis-à-vis the sanctuary of Apollo, and Eleusis, where the oversight of the cult of Demeter and Kore was the domain of local families and which belonged at the same time to the larger Athenian polity, best fit this description.\(^\text{118}\) Hence, Pindar’s sixth paean and Philodamos’ paean to Dionsysos, both composed for performance at the Delphic theoxenia, try at the same time to honour the local host-city and include other members of the audience.\(^\text{119}\) Especially noteworthy is Pindar’s choice of wording to describe the occasion of the performance: “the sacrifice is on behalf of all-Greece (Pan-Hellas), inaugurated by the Delphic people.”\(^\text{120}\) On the other hand, the setting for the hymn to Dictaean Zeus found in Palaikastro on Crete was most likely a sanctuary used by several communities but not belonging to any one of them.\(^\text{121}\) The focus would then be the region, or the group of communities represented at the cult event, and not any one *polis*. Something similar might be happening in Classical Delos, the site of many of the surviving hymns;\(^\text{122}\) the island was, at least in theory, the common sanctuary of all Ionians rather than a *polis* or the territory of a *polis*.

When a sanctuary technically did belong to a particular *polis*, the degree to which it was actually subject to civic authority was nonetheless far from uniform. Even at the height of Athenian democracy, the cult of Eleusis, a place firmly within Athenian public jurisdiction, was largely administered by local priestly elite. The power resided in a few ancient *oikoi* with exclusive and hereditary titles to the main religious magistracies at the sanctuary. By contrast, the Athenian Asclepieion, which is home to several inscribed hymns discussed here, was at this time much more fully integrated into the local democratic machinery. Its priests were annually elected in the same way as other public magistrates, and many decisions were subject to approval by one of the civil governing bodies. In the 1st c. BCE the priesthood became perennial (*dia biou*) and it may

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\(^{119}\) On the dual – local and Panhellenic – perspective of these two hymns, see in details below, pp. 159-61. For Philodamos, see references in nn. 58 and 86 above. Pi. *Pae. 6*: Rutherford 2001: D6, Furley and Bremer 2001: no. 2.2, Kurke 2005.

\(^{120}\) 62-4 and cf. stanza XII of Philodamos.

\(^{121}\) The hymn may in fact have been performed by ephebes drawn from a number of *poleis* from the region. See Rutherford 2004: 73 and n.34, who also notes a possible parallel at the Panionion.

\(^{122}\) For a discussion of Delos as a centre of theoric choral singing as well as the context for a large number of surviving hymnic (especially paeanic) fragments, see Kowalzig 2007: ch. 2.
be that priestly families started to form. Yet even then, the power of the elite priests was balanced by temporary civil magistrates. ¹²³

The larger point is that the sanctuary and the polis (or the religious and civil authorities) were not always one and the same stakeholder even if they did often overlap. And furthermore, the level of integration or independence of a cult site vis-à-vis a polis or other political power was not static. Therefore, not only can the host and audience be disjointed, but there can also be fragmentation within the host site itself, with several competing centres of power involved.

The presenters can often shift away from audience and host as well. The most common way that this happens is when a hymn is composed by a non-native poet. Pindar, a Theban, composed his eighth Paean¹²⁴ for the Delphians, for instance. In cases like these, the chorus and the host (and the privileged element of the audience) are still aligned, but hymnographer, frequently reflected in the poetic voice of the text, must be considered a distinct and distant stakeholder. The foreignness of the hymnographer is perhaps more significant when he is also a political figure like Hermocles of Chios.

The hymns of Limenios and Athenaios, as well as a number of Delian hymns by Pindar and Bacchylides, represent another scenario where the presenters are distanced from host and audience. The performances are part of theôriai, religious embassies, from other poleis. Thus, the hymnographer and, more significantly, the chorus itself, represent an outside community.

The first two examples – paeans and prosodia from Delphi – have another complication added: not only are the performers representing Athens, but they are also members of a professional corporation of performers, an intermediary stakeholder with its own interests not necessarily identical with those of the Athenian populace or leadership. The Athenian synodos technitón is only one instance of a larger process that seems to have begun in the late 5th or early 4th century BCE, the increased professionalization of performers.¹²⁵ Professional auletes and poets were nothing new, but the appearance of professional choristers – although it did not entirely displace

¹²⁴ Fr. 52i Maehler, Rutherford 2001: B2.
their amateur citizen counterparts – fundamentally changed the relationship between presenter, host and audience. The heart of the choral performance was now at times drawn from other (sometimes various) poleis and did not automatically identify with or reflect the performance site or its people. Even when they were local, as for instance in the case of a choral performance by the Athenian technitai in Athens itself, the insertion of this intermediary organization between performer and audience (and performer and host) must have given the event a different feeling: it was more a presentation for the citizens and less a ritual performed by them.

It should be remembered, however, that technitai travelled to other sites primarily in order to participate in agônes musikoi or give paid recitals in theatres and concert halls (ôideia). Outside of home-bases of Dionysian synodoi like Athens, Alexandria and Pergamum, local choruses would still normally be drawn from citizen amateurs, especially for cult hymns, as they had been for centuries. The honorific decree for Amphicles of Delos, for instance, specifies that his prosodion is to be performed by a chorus of citizen’s children (or sons). Similarly, an inscription from second-century Stratonicea describes the daily selection of thirty boys from local noble families to perform hymns. And the honorific decrees related to the Hellenistic Pythais embassies refer to a chorus of paiides pythaistai which accompanies the embassy on at least several occasions, and these too were in all likelihood amateurs drawn from the Athenian citizen body. Yet the use of professional choruses for cult hymn singing, both at home and abroad, undeniably becomes a real possibility by the late Hellenistic period and beyond, as seen in cases like Limenios’ paean (whose chorus, as shown by a related proxenic inscription, consisted of technitai) and the paianistai in Roman Athens.

126 In the Hellenistic period the Deliades, a group of female singers on Delos, appear to be professional musicians. Rutherford (2004: 72-3) believes they may have been commissioned by other poleis to perform hymns as part of their theoriai. They are first mentioned already in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo (302-6). See also Kowalzig 2007: 56-68 and Pavlou 2008: 62 with n.11.
127 DI 1497 ll. 12-4; and cf. Syll.3 450 ll. 4-5: Cleochares’s hymns were to be performed by a chorus of local Delphic boys, trained by a local public chorodidaskalos. Delphic boys’ choruses are also mentioned in Syll.3 703 (and see West 1992: 377, Rutherford 2004: n.31 and Elsner and Rutherford 2005: 22), where two Arcadian musicians are honoured for their training services, among other things.
128 Stratonicea 5=LSAM 60=SEG 15, 655.
129 Syll.3 698B, 20 and Syll.3 698.8, 29 and see Rutherford 2004: 80. Likewise, the Aeanianian apopemptic hymn that was still used in Plutarch’s time was sung by local parthenoi, not a hired chorus. See reference in n. 78 above. Cf. IG VII 1776, a victor list from the Museia in Thespia dated to 212 CE, which mentions a choros poleitikos (line 29), probably non-professional chorus of citizens. This would indicate that even in the Imperial period, and even in competitive music, there was still a place for amateur choruses. See further Ceccarelli 2010: 142 and n. 148 and 149.
130 Syll.3 698.
131 See ref. in n. 51 above. The molpoi in Miletus, on the other hand, seem to represent public religious officials with
The two theoric hymns from Delphi suggest yet another potential stakeholder – this time an added layer to the already complex idea of “host.” Limenios ends the prosodion with a prayer for Athens, Delphi, the synodos and, last but not least, Rome. The larger power to which the local community is political subject must also be added to the network of interested parties, whether or not any Romans are around. The Egyptian version of the Erythraean paean to Asclepius adds a detailed prescript that mentions Roman rulers and a visit of a Roman magistrate as the historical background for the inscription. Nor does it take Roman domination to begin to see this kind of attention to an imperial power. Already in the Classical period there may be echoes of Athenian imperial interests in a dithyramb by Bacchylides performed by Ceans on Delos. By the Hellenistic period, it is reasonable to suppose, the great political powers beyond the polis were regulars among the growing network of stakeholders. The supposition finds support in the Erythraean inscription of the paean to Asclepius. The same stone includes the beginning of a paean to Seleucus: both paeans were used in the local Apollonic-Asclepiadic cult.

It has been noted already how heterogeneous an audience can be at a Panhellenic or regional centre, for instance; and the level of heterogeneity only increased in the Hellenistic and Roman periods when Greeks found themselves living side by side with Romans, Egyptians, Jews, Syrians, Thracians, and others. Ptolemaic Egypt is a prime example of this phenomenon. Isidorus in the late 2nd century BCE composed a series of Greek hymns to Isis inscribed in the temple of Isis-Harmouthis in the Fayum. The goddess is originally Egyptian but after several centuries of syncretism she is identified with Greek deities such as Demeter and Tyche and worshiped by Greeks in and beyond Egypt. Though founded in the Twelfth Dynasty, the temple had been rebuilt and expanded by the Ptolemies. Isidorus relies on a long history of Isis aretalogies and uses many traditional Egyptian titles and associations; yet at the same time he uses epic metre

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132 17 Maehler; see Fearn 2007: 242.
133 Lines 74-6. See Furley and Bremer 2001: vol. 2, 162. They note that Seleucus’ genealogical connection to Apollo would have justified his incorporation into this cult. Fantuzzi (2010: 182) lists other known paeans for Hellenistic rulers.
134 SEG 8.548-51. Further references in n. 58 and 322.
and phrasing and equates the goddess with Greek and other divinities. Medinet Madi (Narmouthis) was part of the Arsinoite Nome (the Fayuum), which had a heterogeneous population composed of native Egyptians, Greek and mixed Greek-Egyptians. Culturally and linguistically, there was also a mix of Egyptian and Hellenic, as shown by the presence of Demotic as well as Greek texts and the worship of Greek, Hellenized and Egyptian gods. The reference, in the final hymn, to an annual festival, suggests a regular public performance. Moreover, the texts are inscribed prominently in a public sanctuary, so even apart from any hypothetical performance it is legitimate to speak of an audience. The audience would have been a cultural blend. Some – Greeks, mixed Greek-Egyptians and Egyptians of higher social level and therefore education – will have been able to read the texts for themselves. Another group, illiterate but perhaps with some knowledge of Greek, could have someone else read it to them (or listen to a public performance of course). Finally, Egyptians with no (or nearly no) Greek at all, would still have known people who could easily translate the hymns for them. Yet, as a closer look at the text will show later on, it is the first group, the Greeks (including other Greek-speaking non-Egyptians) that seems to be the primary intended recipients of these songs.

The fragmentation of an audience was not only along national or ethnic lines. The rich peritext of Isyllos’ hymn reveals tensions between several political forces in Epidaurus, tensions that were clearly being played out also in local religious life. Similar divisions based on political and economic classes or ideologies were active in most or all Greek communities. Another form of heterogeneity – distinct but often parallel to social-economic class – is related to the education or interpretive competency of the audience. Favreau-Linder’s reading of Menander Rhetor finds that his two extant treatises of hymnography imply multiple levels of interpretation in the intended or expected audience of a hymn. Treatise I recommends certain elements – e.g., philosophical discussion of physis – for more cultured listeners, and others – e.g., traditional

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137 For some estimates about the makeup of the population in Ptolemaic Fayuum in general, see Clarysse and Thompson 2006: v. 2 138-40 and Thompson 2009.
138 On the mix of Greek and Demotic texts, see Bard 1999: 371
139 Hymn 2, 24: “rejoicing each year in your festival” and Faraone 2012: 624.
140 On the position of inscriptions see n. 328 below.
mythological accounts – for the wider panegyric crowd.142 And Treatise II, the Sminthiac oration, in its choice and treatment of the various elements indicates a heterogeneous audience with different levels of competence: *physis* is omitted to avoid alienating the masses but myths are told in such a way as to suggest a more intellectual, allegorical interpretation for the benefit of the educated listeners.143

No discussion of the stakeholders in a hymn performance would be complete without talking about the gods. After all, hymns are sung in their honour; and this is especially significant in the case of cult hymns which are rituals executed for the gods as part of a larger event organized in order to celebrate and worship them. The obvious question, in view of the above examination of stakeholders, is where the gods fit in. Spina, in a discussion of the rhetoric of Greek hymns, quotes Aristotle’s famous tri-part scheme: speaker, subject and listener.144 If the hymn is conceived, as it was by the ancient rhetoricians, as a type of epideictic speech of praise, then the god is the subject, the *laudandus*, of the *enkômion*. It is then necessary to take into account the implications of Aristotle’s further claim that of the three constituents of, or considerations for, rhetoric it is the listener who is the most significant. In other words, Aristotle is suggesting that the audience more than anything else will shape the form of public utterance.

Yet, as numerous examples in the following chapter will show, the extant ancient Greek hymns very commonly address the gods directly, as if they were in attendance at the performance. Calls to the god to come, to hear, to receive the song, are conventional features of the language of the genre. Even in the absence of direct address – in so-called *Er-Stil* hymns – the texts frequently speak of the subject-divinity as present: Pindar’s Theban *daphnêphorikon* proclaims that “Loxias has come” (3). As Spina explains, the presence of the god is not just imagined or pretended to satisfy a hymnographical convention: it is presupposed by the hymn as such; it is an indispensable prerequisite for the religious efficacy of the ritualized utterance and other rituals of the cult event. Thus, in terms of Aristotle’s scheme, the divine subject is both a subject and a listener of the hymn, while the mortal audience and the immortal deity are both listeners. This dual nature of the audience is perhaps one of the most significant pressures on the hymn as a rhetorical utterance and a challenge for the hymnographer in his task.

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5 Conclusions

The performance of a cult hymn in Greek culture was an integral part of a ritual sequence. Singing in a sacred time and (often) in a sacred space, a chorus of citizens, speaking on behalf of their community, communicated with a god, calling his or her attention to the festive event and the pleasing offerings, giving praise and asking for divine favour. The hymns sung were most often traditional, local songs passed down orally from one generation to the next. Yet it is the new songs, composed for special occasions, in extraordinary circumstances, that are more frequent in the surviving corpus and also offer more interesting cases for the study of the hymns’ stakeholders and aims. Here the simple triangulation of host, performer, and audience becomes complicated by fragmentation, differentiation and overlap. The last section of this chapter serves as a survey of the individuals and groups that may become involved such an event, and some of the relationships that can exist between them. In order truly to understand the relationship between the network of stakeholders behind the performance of a cult hymn and its intended functions, however, it will be necessary to recognize the impact of particular, unique circumstances surrounding each individual song. But first, the following chapter will continue to lay the ground work by investigating the formal elements which constitute traditional material at the ancient hymnographer’s disposal.
Chapter 3
Traditional Form and Language of the Greek Hymn

1 Introduction

Over the past century or so, the study of ancient Greek literature, and in particular poetry, has seen a shift in its core approach. Instead of reading poems from the Archaic and Classical periods as textual artefacts alone, scholars have began emphasizing their nature as speech acts in an oral culture, performed in a specific mode at a specific occasion.\(^\text{145}\) The present work on Greek hymnography is intended in the same spirit: the focus is on the functions of religious songs within their performative contexts. In light of such an occasion-driven perspective, a section devoted to formal features of hymns might come as a surprise. A formalist analysis, after all, is associated with old-fashioned “new critical” methodologies rather than performance analysis.

In a recent work, Andrew Ford describes the shift from a view of Greek poetry as song tied to occasion in the Archaic and early Classical periods, to another, in the late fifth century BCE and beyond, that sees the poem as an artefact to be analyzed and classified on purely formal features, independent of any performative mode or context.\(^\text{146}\) According to Ford, this was “a fundamental and broad shift from early responses to singing as a form of behaviour regulated by social, political, and religious values to a conception of poetry as a verbal artefact, an arrangement of language subject to grammatical analysis, formal classification, and technical evaluation (8).” On this view, beginning with Plato and Aristotle, the ancient scholars who analyzed, edited, classified or commented on poetry are all part of this long formalist tradition ignorant of or indifferent to performance and context, a tradition that was not questioned until the rise of performance criticism after the middle twentieth century. It is not the place here to investigate the validity of Ford’s broad assessment. What is important, however, is to determine whether formal analysis still has a role to play in scholarship that tries not only to re-contextualize

\(^{145}\) Oxford bibliographies, for instance, list “performance” in second place among the top issues in modern scholarship on Greek lyric.

\(^{146}\) Ford 2002.
surviving Greek songs within their intended performative occasions, but also to regain the critical perspective of the Archaic and early Classical periods.

In this early stage of Greek song culture, it was the occasion and the corresponding religious and social values that determined what was appropriate in a performance: this is what Ford calls by the Greek term *to prepon* (12ff). Included under this concept is the content of a song (themes, *topoi*, myths), performative elements (dance, melody), and what may be regarded its formal features – for example, meter and language. The various types of Greek songs, or genres, developed out of, and were defined by, certain occasions.\(^{147}\) This necessarily implies that there were recurring occasions (e.g., calendar festivals) and similar occasions (symposia, funerals, processions, etc.), and furthermore that certain kinds of songs were associated with them. A *threnos* was sung at a funeral, a dithyramb was normally heard at a Dionysian festival. Moreover, what would have been considered appropriate (*prepon*) was not entirely unique to each particular occasion, but was to a great degree shared by similar occasions. For instance, to use Ford’s example (15), it was proper to express the limits of mortality and human dependence on the gods at a victory celebration, and so it was to be expected in an epinician. Not surprisingly, after a long period, certain elements – whether pertaining to content, form or performative mode – become traditionally connected to particular types of song as a result precisely of the religious and social values emphasized by the kinds of occasions to which they belong. Those present at a wedding will surely have had some expectations about what a *hymenaios* should sound and look like. In such a song culture, there is no necessary antithesis between convention and occasion. If an epinician speaks of the proper limits of a mortal, is it out of obedience to a formal convention or a sense of what is appropriate at the victory celebration? The two are not mutually exclusive because the values of the occasion which brought about the development of this conventional *topos* are still there, active in the present instantiation of just such an occasion.

A formal analysis is not inconsistent with an occasion-driven approach to Greek poetry. Instead, the features that are found in common within a given genre can be viewed as vestiges of the

\(^{147}\) Of course the genres of Greek song were not only shaped by their occasions, but also shaped or characterized those very occasions. This mutually-constructive relationship between genre and occasion is nicely summarized by Day 2000: 37-42, who says that that shared speech acts and audience responses to these acts help constitute a sense of a particular occasion and at the same time define a reconizable generic force.
occasion out of which it grew. Unfortunately, many conventional features cannot be recovered, either because they are not recorded in the surviving evidence (melody, dance, etc.) or because of a lack of a sufficient sample that is representative of a particular genre. Yet whatever can be obtained through a formal examination of the extant texts should be used as part of any study that concerns itself with performance contexts.

There is yet another service a formalist approach can render an occasion-conscious scholar. The existence of conventions in the composition of Greek poetry does not mean that the process was mechanical. For although there were similarities within kinds of occasions, there were also individual differences: not every Apollonian festival was the same, and neither was every victory celebration. And as will be seen later in this section, the common features that can be found in the corpus of Greek hymns do not add up to a formula capable of generating or accounting for an entire song. The conventions that will be discussed here were neither rigid nor binding. Even the most common elements are sometimes left out and within the traditional form there is infinite room for flexibility. Yet it is precisely with the traditional form in mind that the choices of the given poet become more apparent. The conventional features should be seen as tools, or resources, at the hymnographer’s service and discretion. Through the manipulation of these resources, a hymn was able to become appropriate not only to the traditional expectations of its genre and type of occasion, but also to the particular context where it would be performed.

This section will deal with the formal features of the extant hymns, especially cult hymns. It will attempt to delineate conventional elements, structures, language – characteristics that have survived in the hymnic texts. This approach will allow us to see some of the tools at the hymnographer’s disposal, which will in turn illuminate the choices made in the composition of individual hymns, and how these reflect the specifics of the occasion and the intended functions of the song.

2 Structure

The most complete ancient treatment of the hymn is found in the two treatises attributed to Menander Rhetor. The Sminthiac oration, which is used in the second treatise to illustrate the
structure and content of a hymn, has many sections. There are four main divisions – the *prooimia*, the hymn to the god, praise of the city and occasion and the closing – and each of these has several parts (e.g., the hymn to the god includes an invocation, a birth myth, *enkômion* of the country and praise of the god’s powers). Menander himself says that the oration is not a pure hymn, since it also includes praise of the country and city. If these “extra-hymnic” elements are taken out, there remain three main divisions: an extended introduction, including an invocation, a long central section, including mythological narrative and praise of the god’s powers and associations, and a conclusion, consisting mainly of direct requests. In this form, the structure of the Sminthiac is comparable to the tri-partite division seen in the majority of the surviving Greek hymns. Furley and Bremer, who are not the first to observe this organization, call the three parts invocation, praise and prayer, respectively. This structure is based on the common movement of many (and especially cult) hymns: make contact with the addressee, gain his favour through various kinds of praise and finally make a request. The hymn to Zeus discovered in Palaikastro on Crete, for instance, opens with direct second-person call to the god using his local cult title *kouros* (*ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, io great kouros*). In the middle there is a myth, which, although very fragmentary, seems to give an account of Zeus’ concealment at Dicte by Rhea after his birth. The last two stanzas consist of prayers, asking the god to “leap upon” (and so bless) their wine jars, flocks and cities. A closer look at the structure of surviving cult hymn will reveal, however, that this general division is subject to a great amount of variation and manipulation.

### 2.1 Invocation

The direct invocation of the Dictaean hymn is perhaps what would be expected, even desired, in a song to a god – after all, it is an utterance intended for and directed to a god. And it is possible to find other instances of it. Isidoros’ first hymn to Isis opens with *πλουτοδότι βασίλεια θεῶν*, and the other two with similar second-person addresses. Many of the Orphic hymns likewise use direct invocation at the beginning: *Οὐρανὰ παγγενέτωρ* “Uranus father of all” (no. 4), *Κλῦθι μάκαρ*… *Ὑπερίων* “hear, blessed Hyperion” (no. 8), etc. Aristonoos addresses Apollo with an

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148 For a full discussion of Menander’s and other ancient rhetorical works that touch on the *hymnos*, see Appendix A.
149 Furley-Bremer 2001: v.1 50-2 with bibliography. A tri-part division is of course not unique to the hymn, but the particular form of this division – invocation of a god, praise of deity, and especially prayer – can be said to be characteristic.
extended direct invocation in his paean; and Pindar’s fr.95 starts with ὦ Πάν, Ἀρκαδίας μεδέων. Yet there are even more hymns which do not address the god directly. Very few of the Homeric hymns open with a second-person invocation. Instead, they normally either declare the subject (the god to be hymned) in the poet’s first person or invoke the Muse to sing of the god. The hymns to Demeter and Hermes, for example open with: Δήμητρ’ ἡδοκομον σεμνὴν θεᾶν ἄρχομ ἀείδειν (I begin to sing the lovely-haired goddess, revered Demeter) and Ἑρμῆν ὑμνεῖ Μοῦσα Διὸς καὶ Μαιάδος υἱόν “the Muse hymns Hermes, son of Zeus and Maia.”

In his classification of the openings of Greek poetry, Race attempted to explain the phenomenon by proposing two fundamentally distinct types of Greek hymns – rhapsodic and cultic. In rhapsodic or epic hymns, the speaking voice is that of an impersonal, artistically self-aware poet, who tells of a god in a third person and does not actively involve himself in a communal religious act. The cultic hymn, on the other hand, is sung in the person of a worshiping community or at least a representative of that community who turns to the deity directly, in order to praise him and pray to him in the second person.

As attractive as this simple division may appear, the surviving examples simply do not support it. Some of the hymns that use the direct address were not intended for use in cult. For example, Cleanthes’ Hymn to Zeus opens with Κύδιστ’ ἀθανάτων, πολυώνυμε παγκρατές αἰεί | Ζεῦ φύσεως ἀρχηγέ “most glorious among the immortals, worshipped under many names, almighty forever, nature’s founder, Zeus.” Yet it is difficult to call a stoic philosophical hymn cultic. Most significantly, even among Homeric hymns, undeniably epic and rhapsodic, there are several examples of second-person opening invocations. Pythian Apollo is invoked directly: ὦ ἄνα, καὶ Λυκίην καὶ Μῃονίην ἑρατεινὴν | καὶ Μίλητον ἐχεῖς ἑναλὸν πόλιν ἰμερόεσσαν “oh lord, you hold Lycia and lovely Maionia and Miletus, the charming city by the sea.” On the other hand, many hymns which may be considered cultic do not open with a direct invocation of the hymn’s main subject. Just to cite a few examples, Aristonoos’ hymn to Hestia, unlike his paean to Apollo, uses the plural first-person: [Ἰ]ερόν ἱερῶν ἄνασσαν | Ἑστίαν ὑμνήσωμεν “we will sing Hestia, lady, holy of holies;” and the two theoret paeans with musical notation from Delphi

150 PMG 887 and cf. Alc. fr. 308b, 325; Anacr. fr.3, 12; and the opening hymn of the Theognidea.
151 Cf. the hymn to Zeus that opens the Works and Days.
153 Homeric Hymn to Pythian Apollo and cf. h.Hom. 8, 21, 24 and 29.
both ask the Muses to sing of Apollo. The Erythraean paean is an example of yet another
common variant not found in epic hymns, a second-person address to the chorists to sing: παιᾶνα
κλυτόμητιν ἄείσατε | κοῦροι “sing, kouroi, Paian, famed for his wisdom.”

Race’s division, it seems, does not adequately explain this variety of hymnic openings. Instead, it
needs to be accepted that there were several traditional ways to begin a Greek hymn, including a
cult hymn. In the late 19th century, Norden coined the terms Du-Stil and Er-Stil to describe the
two main formulations of mythological narrative in religious poetry. Its application to the central
part of the Greek hymn will be discussed later on. But the basic distinction extends to the
invocation as well. As the above examples indicate, the hymnographer could open with a direct
address to the god or identify the god in the third person. The latter could be done in several
ways: by a first person declaration – “I sing of Apollo” – or by second-person request to sing,
directed either to another divinity – “sing, oh Muse, of Apollo” – or to the performers – “sing-ye
of Apollo.” The last type can be considered meta-performative since it is in effect an instance of
the performance pointing to itself in real time, the singers telling themselves to do what they are
in fact doing. Later chapters will shows how this kind of invocation can be elaborated with
further descriptive detail and used to create points of contact between the song and occasion.
Also notice that in the example from Aristonos’ hymn to Hestia, the first-person declaration is
plural and future: “we shall sing.” The use of futures and the ambiguity between singulars and
plurals of the first person are two questions which will be discussed below.

The invocation, it was said earlier, is meant to make a connection with the deity. This is more
applicable to the second-person invocations where the god is addressed directly than to the other
styles of opening mentioned above. At times, the desire to make a direct connection with the god
is made even more explicit. The hymn can ask him to hear the worshiper (κλοθή is a common
formula, especially in Orphic hymns)154 or even to come to him. This last type is called cletic,
which is used as a technical term already by Menander Rhetor. In an example from surviving
epigraphic hymns, Philodamos’ paean calls to Dionysos to “come at this spring-time sacred
time;”155 similarly the Dictaean hymn prays for Zeus to go to Dicte: Δίκταν ἐς ἐνιαυτὸν ἔρπε
“come to Dicte at the turn of the year” (5). Homeric hymn to Hestia asks her: ἔρχεο τόνο’ ἀνὰ

154 Cf. the Thgn. 4 and 12. This function – calling the god to come or hear the hymn - is particularly common in the
Orphic corpus, where nearly all the hymn open or close with a form of καλεῖν, κλώειν, or ἔλθειν.
155 ἔρνα[είς ικοῦ | ταῖσδ’] ἱεράς ἐν ὀραῖς.
οἶκον “come into this house” (h.Hom. 24, 4); Sappho’s famous hymn to Aphrodite (fr. 1) is a cletic hymn, as is Alcaeus hymn to the Dioscuri (fr. 34a) and Anacreon’s hymn to Dionysos (fr. 12). The request to come and be present can also be addressed to the Muses rather than the main divine laudandus: the inscribed hymn to the Mother of the Gods opens with θεαί, | δεῦτε ἔλθετε ἀπ’ ὅρανω “goddesses, come here from the sky;”156 while Limenios and Athenaios begin with: ἵτ’ ἐπι τηλέσκοπον τὰν Παρ[νασί]αν “come to far-seen Parnassus” and κέκλυθ’ Ἐλικώνα βαθύδενδρον αἱ λάχετε Διὸς | ἐ[ρ]ίβρόμου θύγατρες εὐώλ[ενοι] μόλετε “listen, fair-armed daughters of loud-thundering Zeus who possess the deep-wooded Helikon, come!”, respectively.

More generally, the function of the opening – whatever type thereof the hymnographer chooses to employ – is to identify the god who is the subject of the hymn. The declaration of the subject at the outset is of course not unique to the hymn. The Iliad and the Odyssey, for instance, both open with their respective central themes. Yet there seems to be a special importance attached to the correct identification of the god to whom a hymn is dedicated; the identification has a religious significance and seems to reflect the nature of Greek system of cults. The realm of ancient Greek gods is a complex one: there are many deities, some of them with multiple cult identities or regional variants; some are famous throughout Greek lands while others only familiar within small local worshiping communities. As a result, the Greeks may have viewed confusion between divinities as a real danger, particularly in the context of cult, where it was desperately important that everything should be done just right. The offering, hymn or sacrifice, had to reach the intended recipient. Thus the precise and often elaborate invocation in hymns and prayers is related to a genuine anxiety about the successful performance of ritual. In other words, the traditional feature of the hymnic genre is fundamentally tied to the religious function that the genre performs in its ritual context. This and other recurring formal elements simultaneously help define the occasion and construct the genre. This should not be seen as a diachronic development where a certain kind of utterance grows out of a genuine religious impetus but then outgrows the latter and becomes a literary convention stripped of any relation to that original need determined by occasion. The utterance helps define the religious occasion just as much the latter shapes the formal speech act; the relationship is analogous to other ritualized acts such as libation or purification. Reiteration and formalization does not take away from conventional discourse its occasional function. Even when the utterance is removed from the “real” occasion

156 IG IV² 1.131, Furley and Bremer no. 6.2
(in a literary hymn for instance) it helps to recreate a fictional version of the context with which it is associated, bringing with itself its original religious significance as well. Only when the occasion disappears – e.g., when the traditional Greek religious practices are no longer intimately familiar to the audience – can the convention be said to be a purely literary trope without religious impetus.

Because of its special religious importance, the invocation is often extended beyond a simple name of the god, to include an elaborate list of cult titles, associations (with geographical places, physical attributes, spheres of life and divisions of the universe) and genealogical relations. A relatively brief example of this is Aristonos’ paean to Apollo, which calls him Apollo and Paean, mentions his dwelling in Delphi, his oracular power and his parentage. Philodamos limits himself to cult titles and epithets; he invokes Dionysos as Dithyrambos, Bakhos, Tauros, kissokhaitas, Bromios and Paian (cf. similarly Limenios’ hymn: Pythian, golden-haired, far-shooting, well-lyred Phoebos). The invocations of Isidorus’ hymns to Isis are particularly elaborate, with eleven titles in Hymn 1 (including, appropriately, “of many names”) and the same number in Hymn 3. Later in the first hymn, the list is extended further by twelve other titles, this time names of Syrian, Lycian, Thracian, Greek and Egyptian goddesses who, by a process of syncretism, are said to be merely other designations for Isis.

In Menander’s Sminthiac oration, the invocation of Apollo takes the form of an aporia: ὦ Σμίνθιε Ἀπόλλων, τίνα σε χρὴ προσιπεῖν; πότερον κτλ… “oh Sminthian Apollo, how should we address you? Whether….” This trope, or at least its application to the hymnic invocation, seems to be connected to the same traditional concern with proper identification of the addressed god that is responsible for the lists of names and titles in the examples cited above. Menander is clearly not inventing anything new here. Callimachus employed this style of opening for his hymn to Zeus: πῶς καὶ νῦν, Δικταῖον ἀείσομεν ἢ Λυκαῖον (how shall we sing of him, as lord of Dicte or of Lycaeon?) and the same author’s hymn to Delos has ποίῃ ἐνιπλέξω σε; τί τοι θυμήρες ἄκοῦσαι; “in what manner will I entwine you? What will please your heart to hear?” (29-30). Theocritus, in his hymn to the Dioscuri, asks with which of the twins he should begin (22.25). Even earlier, the Homeric hymn to Apollo has something similar: πῶς γὰρ σ’ ὑμνήσω πάντως εἴδωμιν ἐόντα; “how will I hymn you, who are celebrated in so many hymns?” According to Race these kinds of questions belong to a wider category of literary device which he calls
hesitation about the proper beginning. Menander in fact includes such an *aporia* about the *archê* in one of the three *prooimia* of the Sminthiac, distinct from the subsequent *aporia* about the correct invocation of Apollo. Although Race considers this a conventional *topos* of the hymn, it is better to think of it (much like the invocation of the Muse) as a common literary device of Greek poetry in general, since it is not limited to hymns and is actually not very common in them. Among the cult hymns, which are the focus here, there are almost no examples to speak of. The sole possible exception is Pindar fr. 29 from his Theban hymn to Zeus, which hesitates about which god or hero should be the subject of the song.

Just as the long lists of titles and associations or even the fictional hesitation about the proper address seems to be rooted in a genuine desire to identify correctly and precisely a particular god, so likewise the invocation of the Muse may be based on a need of a divine intermediary to aid the poet. Pindar explains the importance of divine inspiration in one of his paeans: “I pray to fine-robed Mnemosyne daughter of Uranus and her daughters to grant me inventive skill (*εὐμαχανίαν*), for blind is the heart of any man who seeks the deep path of poetic wisdom (*σοφίας*) without the Heliconian Muses.” In a largely oral culture, access to the past requires divine assistance. The Muses, daughters of Mnemosyne, are the keepers of this memory, which they can transmit through the singers they inspire. Their inspiration authorizes the poet’s speech, giving it the status of a true remembrance. In addition to the Muses and their mother Mnemosyne, a poet may also ask for aid of Apollo, the leader of the Muses in song and dance, and the Graces who can bestow *charis*, a quality which is indispensable for a hymn. As Bacchylides phrases it in one of his dithyrambs, “countless paths of ambrosial verses lie open for him who obtains gifts from the Pierian Muses and whose songs are clothed with honour by the violet-eyed maidens, the garland-bearing Graces.”

158 The Muses are particularly appropriate as intermediaries because their chorus also provides the main divine precedent for mortal hymn-singing. See Furley and Bremer 2001: v. 1, 14-5.
159 Fr. 52h ll.15ff
160 Depew (2000: 70-1) emphasizes this *mnêma* quality of the hymn and connects it to the status of *agalma*, since the pleasing display memorializes the god and the worshipper’s relation to the god. It may be going too far, however, to regard the language of *mnasthai* as generic. Unlike *charis*, words with this root are rare outside the Homeric hymns. Furthermore, although the verb is part of a formula the marks the end of the Homeric hymn and transition to a different epic song, it cannot be said to be “common in hymnic beginnings.” Even within the Homeric hymns, it appears only twice in this position, less than many other more frequent verbs (*ὑμνεῖν* 4, *ἐνίσπειν* 4, *ἀρχεῖν* 9 and *ἀείδειν* 18.)
161 B. *Dith.* 19, *init.*
The address to the Muse can be as brief and simple as it is in the first lines of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, or as elaborate as extensive as the beginning of Hesiod’s Theogony. The main subject of the *Theogony* is delayed until line 104, when the Muses, as in many instances already cited above, are addressed directly and asked to sing of the generations of the gods. This is prefaced with a long introductory section in which Hesiod praises the Muses in the third person. Not only is this in effect an expanded invocation to the Muse, but it is also the most explicit treatment of the special relationship between them and the poet and the significance of divine inspiration. According to Hesiod’s account, it is the Muses that possess the knowledge of such mysteries as the generation of the gods and the skill needed to express this knowledge in song. Only by coming into contact with them, by means of their inspiration, did the Boiotian shepherd himself gain this special knowledge and skill: the Muses taught him the *Theogony* that he is about to sing to his audience. The singer is the servant of the Muse (l. 100) and it is from the Muses and Apollo that anyone is a singer and a kitharist (ll. 94-5).

Invocations are not limited to the opening of the hymn. That is perhaps the place most readily associated with the invocation: after all, the functions that have thus far been suggested for this element of a hymn – making contact with the divinity, correctly identifying the addressee, declaring the main subject – logically belong to the beginning of the work. Yet the extant hymns indicate, in this case and in general, that whatever conventions existed for their structure, there was still plenty of room for variation in the actual organization of the traditional elements. One of the most common places to find an invocation, besides the beginning, is toward the end. The inscribed hymn to the Mother of the Gods, for instance, ends with χαῖρ’ ὦ μεγάλα ἄνασσα Μᾶτερ Ὅλυμπω “rejoice oh great lady, Mother of Olympus.” The same hymn opened with an indirect invocation, addressed to the Muses or the Charites (the text is corrupt); multiple types of invocation, then, can be used within a single hymn. Often the reiterated invocation appears immediately after the “praise” section, in the transition to the final prayer. In this respect, the hymn of Limenios is fairly typical (l. 34). Its prayer begins with: ἄλλ’, ὦ Φοῖβε. There is certain logic behind the placement of the invocation in this position. It is here that the hymn typically returns to the here and now of the occasion and needs to reorient itself within its ritualized context. The final prayer is also the most regular in its preference for direct address to the god. The speaker here re-establishes the communicative link between the worshippers and the deity.
Very commonly an invocation is repeated several times as part of a refrain. The recurring refrain seems to be a traditional element of hymn- (or more generally song-) form; the effect of a repeated, chanted formula is to give the hymn a feeling of highly ritualized utterance. The refrain could be very brief, consisting only of an invocation, as in Pindar’s Paean 21 - ἰὴ ἰὲ βασίλειαν Ὀλυμπίων “ie ie queen of Olympian gods” - or a signature cry, as in Pindar’s Paean no. 4: ἰὴ ἰή, ὃ ἰὲ Πα[μ].162 Or the refrain can be longer, such as Philodamos’ paean to Dionsysos, which adds a prayer - ἰὲ Παιάν, ἵθι σωτήρ, εὖφρων τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσε εὐαίωνι σὺν ὀλβωί “ie Paian, come kindly, saviour, protect this city in happy fortune” - or Dictaean hymn to Zeus, combining a complex cletic invocation with an element of praise and a mini-prayer: ἰὼ μέγιστε κοῦρε, χαῖρέ μοι, Κρόνειε, παγκρατὲς γάνος, βέβακες δαιμόνων ἁγώμενος· Δίκταν ἐς ἐνιαυτὸν ἕρπε καὶ γέγαθι μολπᾶι “io great kouros, rejoice with me, son of Cronus, almighty splendour.”

With this general picture of the traditional forms, contents and positions of an invocation in mind, it is worth pointing out some cases of rather stark departure from these conventions. Pindar’s sixth paean opens with an address to Pytho, that is Delphi, and there is no address or any indirect invocation, or a prayer for that matter, to Apollo. The invocation, therefore, frames the piece as a hymn to the place, Delphi, rather than the god. That this was indeed a hymn for Apollo is confirmed elsewhere in the poem. The text labels itself as a paean by its use of the characteristic call (121-2), confirming the ancient editor’s classification of the hymn. Performance by young men (122) and the theme of salvation from danger further reinforce the generic association. The singing voice situates itself in the sanctuary of Apollo and suggests a comparison with another choral performance for Apollo (15-18). The specific occasion is identified as the Theoxenia, a Panhellenic gathering for Loxias (60-2). Finally, the main myth of the paean (the death of Neoptolemus) certainly has Apollo at the centre. The song, therefore, is a paean for Apollo, or rather Pythian Apollo. Delphi is his home and everything about this place – from its mythical foundations to its sacred topography – is defined by reference to this cult. To invoke and praise Delphi, or rather Pytho, therefore, is to invoke and praise this particular, local manifestation of Apollo.163

162 Cf. Pi. Pae. 2 and 5.
163 Cf., albeit two centuries later, Callimachus’ Hymn to Delos.
It is really only the final triad that presents any difficulties in terms of the poem’s interpretation as a hymn for Pythian Apollo. The last triad, like the first, opens with a direct invocation of a place, but this time it is Aegina and not Delphi. The remainder of the text is devoted entirely to the praise of this island (and its eponymous nymph) and the Aeakids. A recent discovery of a second title – “prosodion to Aeacus for the Aeginetans” – has led scholars to suggest that it may represent a separate composition, perhaps performed on Aegina, or that it was performed at the same occasion as the remained of the paean but by a separate, Aeginetan, chorus. Both possibilities leave room for interpreting the triad as a separate hymn, for Aeacus and his heroic descendants, whose relationship to Aegina is analogous to that between Pythian Apollo and Delphi; in fact the connection can even be said to be closer because Aegina herself, as the eponymous nymph identified with the land, was said to be his mother.

This is not the only case of a Pindaric paean which invokes a laudandus that may seem odd at first. Pindar’s Paean 15 is entitled “for the Aeginetans to Aeacus”; Paean 15 is similarly dedicated to Elektryon; and the beginning of Paean 2 is a direct invocation of another hero, Abderus. Although Apollo and Aphrodite are then added to the list of recipients, Abderus still comes first: σέθεν Ἰάοντι τόνδε λαῷ παῖνα διώξω Δηρηνὸν Ἀπόλλωνα πάρ τ’ Αφροδίταιν “beginning from you I will drive this paean for the Ionian people to Apollo Derenos and Aphrodite” (3-5). To be first in a hymn is an honour: hymnographers frequently use works like “πρῶτον” and “ἄρχομαι” to stress the importance of the beginning. The final triad of Pindar’s sixth paean, if considered on its own, can be added as yet another example of a hymn apparently composed for a hero. These cases, however, are not as strange as they may appear at first. Although very few hymns to heroes have survived, this phenomenon falls well within the ancient conception of the genre. Heroes are often grouped together with the gods and contrasted from mortals; they are sometimes even called theoi; and ancient definitions of the hymnos make it clear that songs in honour of heroes fit within their conception of this category.

Pindar’s Daphnephorikon was performed not only within an Apollonian festival, but as part of the central ritual for god: procession bearing laurel branches from Tempe to his sanctuary in

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164 The full details of the discovery can be found in d’Alessio 1997 and Rutherford 1997. See also Bremer 2001: v.1. 107-8 with further references.
166 See further App. A, pp. 261-2 below.
Thebes. It can be concluded with some confidence that the hymn’s intended divine recipient is indeed Apollo. Yet, the invocation here is far from direct. After what was probability a direct address to the Graces there appears the only extant reference to Apollo himself:

[Loξίας | ἄθανάταν γὰρ χάριν | Θῆβαις ἐπιμείξων

“for Loxias has come with willing heart, bringing immortal grace to Thebes.” The logic of the grammar implies that Apollo is the subject of the hymn: the reason that the Graces are being invoked and why their aid is needed, the occasion of the present performance, is the arrival of Apollo. Yet he is not named explicitly as the subject or laudandus, as is commonly the case in conventional hymnic invocations. A similarly oblique identification of the laudandus, once again Apollo, can be seen in Pindar’s first paean. Not until line 8 does the hymn mention the god: “ie, ie, the all-concluding Year and the Themis-born Hours have come to the horse-driving city of Thebes bringing a crown-loving feast for Apollo.”

Even in these cases, although they depart from the more traditional forms of invocation (and other features as well), some conventional elements are still present, and, most importantly, the song reflects its role in a larger ritual sequence. This can be contrasted from the near-complete absence of this cult element in such agonistic hymns as dithyrambs of Bacchylides. The fragmentary poem 16, apparently composed for performance in Delphi, seems to allude to the absence of Apollo and his forthcoming return, when he will “seek the flowers of paeans.” Bacchylides uses this as a brief priamel before identifying the subject at hand: “until then, we sing….” Here, everything that is known about Delphic religion would lead us to expect Dionysos, who is believed to winter at Delphi while his half-brother is away visiting the Hyperboreans. This calendar division of Delphic cult between the two gods would no doubt be even more familiar to the ancient audience. And although the correlation between hymnic genre and gods is never clear-cut or absolute, in Delphi the paean and dithyramb have strong Apollonic and Dionysian associations, as the discussion of Philadamus’ hymn below will show. No doubt the mention of paeans and Apollo together – both absent until spring – only reinforces these associations. However, Bacchylides then surprisingly continued: “until then, we sing how the son of Amphitryon (i.e., Heracles)….” The poem then relates the tale of Heracles’ death. Is this then a hymn to Heracles? It is hard to read it that way: there is no invocation of or prayer to Heracles. Should it be considered a hymn to Dionysos by virtue of it being a dithyramb? No mention is made of Dionysos or any Dionysian rites or attributes. The other dithyrambs of
Bacchylides with an extant opening (frr. 15, 18, 19 and 20) present the same situation: they have no invocation at all. One of them – fr. 19 – concludes with the birth of Dionsysos, but this is hardly sufficient grounds for regarding the work as a whole as “Dionysian”, especially seeing as the mythical narrative is focused much more on the story of Io. Given that the songs were composed for performance at *mousikoi agônes*, they are only offered to any given god inasmuch as they are presented in the larger context of a festival dedicated to one. Like an Athenian tragedy, then, the dithyrambs are one step removed from the ritual sequence at the center of the cult event as such, and are therefore not under that same constraints of traditional form.

2.2 Middle section

The central section of a Greek hymn has been called by different names, one of the oldest being *pars epica*. This term is applicable to the Homeric Hymns, where the middle section consists of mythological narrative, but less so to many other hymns. As Furley and Bremer note in their introduction, mythological narrative is only one kind of content found here.\(^{167}\) Aristonos’ hymn to Hestia, for instance, has no myth; instead it celebrates the goddess’ connection to Apollo and her importance as the source of fire for the altars of the gods. The same poet’s paean to Apollo does have a brief myth about how Apollo received the seat of Delphi from Gaia and Themis with Athena’s help; however the bulk of the central portion is taken up by other, non-narrative, elements: the hymn tells of Apollo’s oracular powers and the place of other gods – Athena, Poseidon, the Nymphs, Dionsysos and Artemis – within the Apollonian landscape of Delphi. The paean to Asclepius from Erythrae, by contrast, focuses exclusively on genealogy.

Therefore it is better to use a more general term than *pars epica*. *Sanctio* or *argumentum* have been offered as alternatives, suggesting that the central portion of the hymn is essentially meant to persuade the addressed divinity to grant the prayer that follows. There are cases among surviving Greek hymns which offer support for this interpretation. In Sappho’s hymn to Aphrodite, the speaker devotes the central section to reminding the deity of previous occasions when she came and granted her assistance: ἀλλὰ τύιδ᾽ ἐλθ᾽, αἴ ποτα κἀτέρωτα κτλ. The result is essentially an appeal to precedent, used as a basis for making a similar request once more on the present occasion. Roughly a third of the mid-section of the first hymn to Isis by the Fayum

\(^{167}\) Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1 51.
hymnographer Isidorus consists of a lengthy *enkömion* of her salutary powers and activities: “deathless saviour, many-named, mightiest Isis, saving from war, cities and all their citizens: men, their wives, possessions, and children. As many as are bound fast in prison, in the power of death, As many as are in pain through long, anguished sleepless nights, etc.” This eulogy of Isis specifically as saving deity can be understood as an *argumentum* leading directly to the prayer: “prove yourself merciful to me and free me from all distress.” The genealogy of the Erythraean paean – which includes Hygieia in the list of Asclepius’ children - may be designed as a basis for the request to grant “Health” to the worshippers.

At the same time, a connection between the contents of the middle section and the prayer is not always so clear. For example, the hymn to Isis mentioned above also devotes a large amount of space to a list of alternative names and identities for Isis: “each speaks in his own language, in his own land. The Syrians call You Astarte, Artemis, Nanaia, the Lycian tribes call You Leto, the Lady, etc.” How does this information act as a *sanctio* for the prayer for salvation? Similarly, can the birth myth of Asclepius in Isyllos’ paean be related specifically to the prayer for health of mind and body for the Epidaurians? In both instances, some plausible explanation can be found. Isyllos’ genealogical myth focuses on the local connection of the god – his ties to Epidaurus through Phlegyas, whom the text claims to be the father of Koronis, Asclepius’ daughter. The Epidaurian genealogy of the healer god gives a basis, an argument, for the citizens’ prayer: “foster your native city Epidauros, etc.”

Interpreting the catalogue of Isidorus as an *argumentum* for his prayer is somewhat more challenging. Perhaps by identifying Isis with many other goddesses around the known world, the hymn claims even greater power and wider reach for the goddess, thus justifying the expectation of her ability to grant the request for protection. This is a bit of a stretch however. After all, one can go further and say that the central section is always an *argumentum* in that it praises the god in some way and expects thereby to make him more willing to hear and fulfil the prayer. Yet it is important to remember that not all hymns have a prayer. Many Homeric hymns do not; neither do, for instance, the hymn to the Mother of the Gods, the hymn to Pan from Epidauros or the two hymns to Telesphoros from Athens.

168 Ll. 25ff, Vanderlip, tr.
169 Ll.17ff
So Furley and Bremer are probably correct to prefer to focus on the more general unifying feature of “praise” and choose Nordern’s term *eulogia* for this part of the hymn. Recall the defining features stressed by Race in distinguishing the hymn from other types of religious discourse: a special *charis* relationship which the hymn, as an offering to the deity, is primarily aimed to foster. In view of this definition, the *eulogia*, at least in terms of its purely religious-rhetorical functions, seems to be aimed at pleasing the deity through praise and thereby creating or increasing the *charis* between the god and the worshipper(s). Nonetheless, it should be remembered that this praise may sometimes additionally function more specifically as an *argumentum* for the prayer, when the latter is present.

Some of the types of praise that may be incorporated in the *eulogia* have already been mentioned – mythological stories, genealogy, lists of names or cult titles, celebration of particular powers. Gordley offers a more complete catalogue: predication of powers, repeated anaphoric address, *hypomneseis* (reminders of earlier benefits by deity or earlier worship offered by petitioners), *ekphraseis* (descriptions of the god, his haunts), and narratives.\(^{170}\) It should be noted that many of these elements may also appear in other parts of the hymn. In particular, predication of powers, anaphoric address, *ekphraseis* and genealogical information are not uncommon in the invocation and, to a lesser extent, the prayer. Even features which are fundamental to the invocation and most associated with that segment of the hymnic structure, features like lists of attributes, powers and titles, can be categorized as “praise” no less than *hypomneseis* or narratives. In some brief hymns, there does not seem to be a middle section at all. Consider for instance one of the surviving Attic *skolia*, which consists only of an invocation (“Mother of Wealth, Olympian Demeter…”) and a brief prayer (“protect this city carefully.”)\(^{171}\) In such cases, the function of praise is performed by the invocation alone.

Mythical narrative may not be the only possible type of praise found in the *eulogia*, but it is a significant and common type, and one that is often the focus of scholarly attention. Kowalzig’s thesis about the use of choral religious song for (re)defining ethnic, political and religious group identities, for example, is largely based around the selection and manipulation of mythological

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\(^{170}\) Gordley 2007: 130.

material. One important distinction in discussing narrative in hymns has been that between Du- and Er-Stil, proposed by Norden in his *Agnostos Theos*. The Dictaean hymn to Zeus relates its myth in the second person: ἐνθά γάρ σε παῖδ’ ἐμβροτον | ἀσπίδ[ | πὰ Ῥέας λαβόντας “for it was here that they received you, immortal child, with their shields” (12-4). The Homeric hymn to Aphrodite, by contrast, tells the story in the third person:


where the wet force of the blowing Zephyr
carried her over the waves of the roaring sea
in the soft foam. And the Seasons, who wear golden fillets,
gladly welcomed her. (*h.Hom.* 6, 3-6).

Earlier it was noted how the same distinction can be observed in the invocation, where the poet can choose between a direct address and an indirect declaration of the subject, either through a first-person utterance or an imperative to another addressee. The same section also discussed the proposal by Race to divide Greek hymns into two categories, rhapsodic and cultic. It was shown that this division is not readily supported by the types of invocations found in these two groups of texts. If applied to the central section of a hymn, Race’s distinction would anticipate that in the rhapsodic hymns, the mythical narrative would be told in the third person, to reflect the detachment and poetic self-awareness of the singer-composer: he tells an audience about the god. On the other hand, in cultic hymns the myths should be told in the second person, from the voice of the worshipper directly appealing to the deity. The actual use of Du- and Er-Stil in mythological narrative seems to contradict any such expectations. Some Homeric hymns use the second person in their narratives;\(^\text{172}\) while some cult hymns relate the myth in third person.\(^\text{173}\)

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\(^{172}\) E.g., *h.Hom.* 25ff; *h.Hom. Dion.* 5ff

\(^{173}\) Athenaios 4ff; Limenios 4ff; Pi. *Pae.* 6, 87ff
In fact, the hymnographer does not even need to maintain the same *Stil* throughout a single hymn. The Delphic hymns of Athenaios and Limenios switch from *Er*- to *Du-Stil* within the *eulogia*, so that both styles are used for narration. In the transition between the invocation and the central section, Limenios’ paean asks the Muses to “sing of Pythian Apollo, golden-haired, archer, lyre-player, whom favoured Leto bore by the famous lake.” (4ff); later, the chorus turns to speak directly to the god: “having crowned your glossy hair with laurel, while hauling massive stones with godly hand, you challenged, Lord, the enormous, earth-born monster” (21ff) In the Erythraean paean, an indirect opening invocation and third-person myth are interspersed with direct invocation in the recurring refrain and followed by a direct prayer. Similarly, the Epidaurian hymn to the Mother of the gods opens with an invocation to the Muses, then relates a myth in the *Er-Stil* and closes with a renewed invocation, this time directly to the Mother. The Homeric hymn to Delian Apollo moves seamlessly between the two styles: ὡς σε πρῶτον Λητὼ τέκε χάρμα βροτοίσι (25); οὐδὲ τις ἔτι | Φοῖβον δέξασθαι καὶ πιοτέρη περ ἐούσα “how Leto first gave you birth, a delight to mortal men, but no land, though rich, dared to receive you, Phoebos” (47-8); ἐκ δ’ ἔθορε πρὸ φώς δέ, θεαὶ δ’ ὀλόλυξαν ἄπασαι. | ἐνθα σὲ ἤϊε Φοῖβε θεαὶ λόον ὠδαίτι καλῶ “but out he leaped and into the light, and all the goddesses raised a shout of joy. Then did the goddesses wash you, eie Phoebos, with beautiful water” (119-20). Interestingly, this hymn’s brief prayer (line 165) is expressed indirectly, using a third person optative form: ἀλλ’ ἄγεθ’ ἵληκοι μὲν Ἀπόλλων Ἀρτέμιδι ξύν “but come, be kindly, Apollo, together with Artemis.” This is quite atypical: of the three parts of the hymn, the prayer is the least commonly expressed in a third (or first) person. Even hymns that are otherwise indirect in their invocation and *eulogia* tend to turn to address the god directly at the end.174 It seems best not to try to find an exact correlation between the styles of narrative (or invocation) and any sub-divisions of the Greek hymns. Instead, the two alternatives – and the possibility of shifting from one to the other – should be thought of as yet another formal tool at every hymnographer’s disposal. In the last section, it was observed that the god for whom the hymn is sung is, in rhetorical terms, at once the subject and listener of the speech; and, as a corollary to this, both the god and the mortal audience are listeners. One of the effects (and perhaps the intentions) of the choice between the two styles – *Du-Stil* or *Er-Stil* – is to highlight one or the other side of this dual role of the divinity (and dual identity of the listener). More will be said about mythological narrative specifically when levels of discourses are discussed below.

174 See, for examples, the Homeric Hymn to Hermes.
2.3 Prayer

As mentioned earlier, there are some hymns which have no prayer. Yet most hymns do, and usually it takes the form of a direct address, even when the rest of the hymn is in the third or first person. The Homeric hymn to Zeus (no.23) opens with a first-person declaration of the subject – “Zeus…I will sing” – continues with a brief statement of praise in the third person – “who brings all things to fulfillment and…” – but ends with a prayer in the second person: “be gracious, far-seeing one…. ” Normally the main prayer comes at the end. There are, however, some notable exceptions. Arifhrin chose to make his request to Hygieia immediately after the invocation, before eulogia, apparently switching the traditional order. The only prayer in Alcaeus’ hymn to the Dioscuri (fr. 34) is in this same position. These remain, however, exceptions to the rule.

It is not uncommon to find prayers in addition to the closing one. The prayer in Philodamos’ paean is part of a recurring refrain, so the closing is the last of several repetitions of the same request; and the so-called “Morning-Song to Asklepios” expressed its petition – “wake up!” – twice, at the opening and the closing.

Main prayers are often very brief and general, asking the god to be kind or favourable, with few specific requests. According to Xenophon, Socrates was in favour of this approach, “recognizing that [the gods] know best what is good for us.” Philodamos’ paean is quite typical in its simple appeal: “kindly guard this city with happy good fortune” (155-6). Occasionally a cult hymn will be more specific: the Dictaean hymn asks Zeus to “leap on (and presumably thereby bless) our wine-jars,…sheep,…harvest of corn, …houses that there be offspring,…cities,…seafaring ships,…young citizens.” What is not found in surviving cult hymns, however, is the kind of occasion-specific request sometimes made within other types of hymns: Alcaeus asks Hera, Zeus and Dionsysos to “save us from present hardship and from sadness of exile; as for Hyrrhas’ son, let him be chased by the Revenge of those men we remember” (fr. 129 11-4); Anacreon begs Dionsysos to “give Kleoboulos a piece of good advice: to return my love” (fr. 357, 9-11); the Suppliant’s prayer to Zeus (Aesch. Suppl. 525ff) asks him to keep them away from “the brutality of men” and “smash their black-benched bewilderment deep into the purple sea”; and the paean

175 Xen. Mem. 1.3.2.
at the beginning of Sophocles’ _Oedipus Tyrannus_ (151ff) prays for deliverance from the plague presently besetting Thebes. It seems that such hymns are occasioned by a particular one-time set of circumstances, whether real or fictional, whereas cult hymns are more commonly used within a recurring occasion such as a calendar festival. Thus, cult hymns tend to favour simpler, more generally-applicable prayers. It is reasonable to expect that a real one-time event such as a natural disaster, break out of war or salvation from a plague may have also prompted the singing of hymns, perhaps even newly-composed hymns designed specifically for the occasion, and within such a set of unusual circumstances the prayer would perhaps sound more like what is found in dramatic hymns (e.g., requesting aid for the particular needs at the time). However, if such hymns were ever composed, they have not survived. It is tempting to speculate about the form of prayer that Pindar might have included in the fragmentary ninth paean, whose invocation, at least, refers to an unusual occurrence – an eclipse.

From the examples already quoted above, it is evident that prayers are commonly made in the first person: it is “I” or “we” who is making the request and this is often also the same party on whose behalf the request is being made. As will be discussed later on, there is often a certain degree of uncertainty built into the hymnic first-persons, complicated further by the ambiguity of the number (singular versus plural). It seems that normally, within the prayer, a first-person singular refers to the performer and/or poet, while a first-person plural to the performers and/or the worshipping community they represent. For instance, in the Erythraean paean, the main prayer is: ἵλαος δὲ ἐπινίσεο τὰν ἁμὰν πόλιν εὐρύχορον, ἰὲ Παιάν, δὸς δ᾽ ἡμᾶς χαίροντας ὑγιείαι “come kindly to our city with its wide dancing places, ie Paian, and grant us to rejoice with holy, glorious Health as we look upon the noble light of the sun”, which uses the plural and is best understood as asking Asclepius’ aid for the community as a whole. The version of the same hymn from Ptolemais keeps this communal prayer but also adds another request, this time in the first person singular: χαίρε μοι, ὦ Παιάν, ἐπ᾽ ἐμαῖς εὔφροσι ταῖσδ᾽ ἀοιδαῖς, χαίρ᾽ ὦ Πύθι Ἄπολλον “rejoice with me, oh Paian, at these my gracious songs, rejoice Pythian Apollo.” This request, directed to Apollo, makes better sense if made on behalf of the performers rather than the wider community.

The natural intended beneficiary of a prayer within a song of public worship is of course the community and so, not surprisingly, this is very often whom the prayer asks the god to benefit.
This can be expressed explicitly – “foster your native city Epidaurus”\textsuperscript{176} or “preserve this city”\textsuperscript{177} – or implicitly, by the use of a first person that obviously includes the local public: e.g., σῶιζων ἑφέποις ἡμᾶς, ὦ ἱὲ Παιάν “grant us your saving presence, oh ie Paian.”\textsuperscript{178} The prayer can, however, ask the deity to aid another party instead of – or in addition to – the community. Limenios’ hymn prays for the \textit{polis} represented by the theoric performance (Athens), the \textit{polis} that is hosting it (Delphi), the performers and their organization (Athenian \textit{technitai}) and the larger political power (Rome). The Ptolemais version of the Erythraean paean adds a prayer for the Nile and Egypt as a whole to the generic prayer for the community already in the adopted text (“look kindly on our city, etc.”) And the Epidaurian hymn to all the gods asks them to σώιζετε τὸνδ’ Ἐπιδαύρου ναὸν ἐν εὔνομίαι πολυάνοπι Ἑλλάνων... εὐμενεῖ σὺν ὀλβωὶ “preserve this temple of Epidaurus with its virtuous multitude of Greeks...in gracious fortune.” – the focus here is on the temple itself and its Panhellenic attendance rather than the local Epidaurian community.\textsuperscript{179} As the discussion of deixis in chapter 6 will demonstrate, in the use of the first-person in Greek hymns there are cases where the speaking “I”, even within the prayer, seems to refer specifically to the poet. It is of course not a coincidence that some of these beneficiaries correspond to stakeholders in a hymnal performance discussed in the previous chapter.

Beyond the typical request to “benefit” or “be kindly to” the worshipper(s), there are several other common requests that are worth noting. The god can be asked to come “here” or be present. Philodamos’ paean, for instance, has ἵὲ Παιάν, ἵθι σωτήρ “ie Paian, come, saviour” as part of its closing prayer. There appears to be two basic possible intentions of this kind of entreaty. First, it can simply be a synonym for the request of general aid or protection (“be kind”, etc.): “be with us” really means “protect us.” So when the worshippers at Dicte are asking Zeus Kouros to “leap upon” their cities, ships and flocks, they hope that the god will protect and bless these by his presence. Alternatively (or in addition), this kind of prayer can be doing what many invocations do: ask the god to attend to the performance, by listening or coming “here” (recall the cletic invocation discussed earlier). In other words, the god is asked to appear in order to receive the offering that is the hymn, as well perhaps as other offerings being made on the occasion. The Greek gods are not omnipresent and the conception of the deity attending a ritual

\textsuperscript{176} Isyllos 59-60.
\textsuperscript{177} Philodamos 155.
\textsuperscript{178} Aristonoos’ paean 47-8.
\textsuperscript{179} IG IV\textsuperscript{2} 1:129, lines 12-15.
in his honour in order to receive the sacrifices, spectacles and dedications is readily apparent from sacrifice scenes in literary and visual sources. In one of the best-preserved votive reliefs from Brauron, for instance, Artemis is shown standing behind her altar, ready to receive the victim and other offerings being brought by a festive procession.\textsuperscript{180} The hymn to Athena, Demeter and Kore in Aristophanes’ \textit{Frogs}, closes with a passionate request for the “goddesses” to “come here” (1154ff), which is best understood as performing both of these functions.

Related to this last “cletic” type of prayer is something that appears in Aristonos’ paean to Apollo: \textit{χαρεῖς ὑμοίοις ἡμετέροις} “rejoicing in our hymns.”\textsuperscript{181} Here the god is asked not simply to hear or receive the hymnic offering but to enjoy it. The divine enjoyment of the performance is crucial to its basic religious-rhetorical function of creating a reciprocal \textit{charis} relationship between the community and the godhead. Indeed, the common hymnic formula \textit{χαῖρε} (discussed in detail below), should probably be seen as essentially another version of this same type of prayer. If the god does not “rejoice” at the hymn, then its efficacy is undermined and no other kind of petition can be expected to succeed.

Occasionally a prayer will request the addressee to bless, favour or aid the performers in their present task. Limenios’ asks the Delian trinity to “come kindly to Bakchos’ competition singers.”\textsuperscript{182} In Aristophanes’ \textit{Thesmophorizousai}, the chorus of Athenian women, singing a hymn to all the gods, asks Dionysos to “come here and lead our dance” (987). Sometimes this request seems to reflect specifically the pressures of an agonistic performative context. The Homeric hymn to Aphrodite (no. 6) is quite explicit in this regard: “grant that in this contest I be the victor and urge on my lay;” and similarly in Homeric hymn no. 10 (also to Aphrodite): “grant that my song be enchanting.”\textsuperscript{183} On other occasions, such a plea should probably be intereted as analogous to the invocation of the Muse seen earlier: the performers and/or poet desire divine aid or inspiration in their task. In fact, the invocation of the Muse, which is most commonly part of the opening of a hymn, is in itself a brief prayer. Earlier it was observed that the opening of the Theogony can be seen as an extended invocation of the Muse by the poet before embarking on the actual theme of the work. At the same time, it is a self-contained and complete hymn to the

\textsuperscript{180} Marble relief, Archaological Museum of Brauron 1151, ca. 350-330 BCE, and cf. 1152 and 1153.
\textsuperscript{181} Line 45; and cf. the Ptolemais version of the Erythaean paean, 25.
\textsuperscript{182} Βάκχου θ’ ἱερονίκαισιν μόλετε προσπάλοισι.
\textsuperscript{183} Cf. also \textit{h.Hom.Cer.}, 2, 13, 24, 25 and 30.
Muses: it opens with a third-person declaration of the divine subject “let us begin with the Muses” (reiterated again at line 36); proceeds with a long section praising their powers and benefits to mankind in general and singers in particular; and ends with a prayer, introduced, as so commonly, with χαίρετε (104). The prayer asks the goddesses to “grant delightful song”, and this then leads, still in the form of a direct imperative, to the declaration of the theme for the larger work. The main concluding prayer of the hymn to the Muses, then, is identical in essence to a typical opening invocation to the Muses in many other hymns. The choice of deity addressed with this kind of appeal usually has some logic to it: the Muses are the keepers of poetic wisdom (Pindar’s famous sophia), the Graces have the power to grant charis to the hymn, Apollo is the leader of the Muses and a musician (kitharôidos) in his own right, Dionysos inspires his followers to dance, Aphrodite dispenses charm and enchantment.184

3. Formulae

3.1 Χαίρε

One of the most universal and easily-recognizable formulas in Greek hymns is χαίρε and related words. Callimachus repeats it three times in the closing of his hymn to Zeus: χαίρε μέγα… χαίρε, πάτερ, χαίρ’ αὖθι “much joy to you… rejoice, father, rejoice again.” The literal meaning of the verb is “rejoice” but the imperative is often used with the colloquial sense of “hello!” and “goodbye!” And since in hymns χαίρε is most frequently seen at the start and especially around the end of the composition, it is usually translated to reflect this everyday force of salutation. When the full range of related expression found in hymnic texts is considered, however, it becomes evident that the literal meaning is either the sole or the principal one active in such formulae and is therefore also to be preferred in translation.

The simplest form of the formula is χαίρε on its own. The closing of the hymn to the Mother of the Gods, for example, is χαίρ’ ὥ μεγάλα ἄνασσα Μάτερ Ὀλύμπω “rejoice, oh great lady Olympian Mother.” The most common formula in the Homeric hymns is οὕτω χαίρε185, which is normally rendered in English as “and so farewell.” There are several elaborations in the corpus,

184 There are, however, also rare cases of Demeter, Hestia and Earth Mother invoked in this way.
185 E.g., nos. 1, 3, 4.
however, which give valuable clues to the intended meaning of this verb. Hymn to Dionsysos (h.Hom.26) uses the following prayer:

Καὶ σὺ μὲν οὗτο χαϊρε πολυστάφυλ’ ὃ Διόνυσε:
δὸς δ’ ἡμᾶς χαίροντας ἐς ὥρας αὐτίς ἱκέσθαι,
ἐκ δ’ αὐθ’ ὑράων εἰς τοὺς πολλοὺς ἐνιαυτοὺς

and so rejoice, oh Dionsysos, rich in grapes,
and grant that we may arrive again rejoicing to this season,
and from that season onwards for many years to come.

The juxtaposition of σὺ χαϊρε and ἡμᾶς χαίροντας using a μὲν… δὲ construction strongly suggests that the primary sense of the verb is “rejoice”: thus you rejoice…and grant that we rejoice. Theocritus uses a nearly-identical formulation to end one of his *Idylls*: χαϊρε, Ἀδων ἀγαπατέ, καὶ ἐς χαίροντας ἀφικνεῦ “rejoice, beloved Adonis, and may we rejoice when you come.”186 A similar parallel between the god’s and the worshipper’s rejoicing is present in the Homeric hymn to Hermes no.18: χαῖρε, Ἑρμῆ χαριδῶτα διάκτορε, δῶτορ ἑάων “rejoice, Hermes, giver of joy, giver of good things.” χαίρειν and χάρις share the same root, and the proximity of the two words only reinforces their connection here. Hermes, the giver of joy, is himself asked to rejoice in return.

There are other versions of the formula that further explain the intended connection between the hymn, the worshipper(s) and the addressed deity. Homeric hymn to Artemis (h.Hom. 9) adds an important twist: οὕτω χαϊρε…ἀοιδῇ “and so rejoice… in the song.”187 It is the hymn itself which the singer hopes will bring joy to the deity. The logic behind the formula is clear: we give you charis through our hymn in the hope that you, in return, grant us charis. With this in mind, the prayer in another Homeric hymn (h.Hom. 24, to Hestia) can be interpreted as expressing the

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186 Theoc. *Idyll* 15, 149. The last phrase may have a more active force as well: “bring us joy with your advent.” Cf. the ending of Erythaean paean. As noted by Day (2000: 47), the prayer here not only seeks to establish a reciprocal relationship, where the god returns charis to the ritual “in return for the charis that the ritual gives;” it also attributes the quality of charis to its own ritual performance. The language of charis is not limited to hymns. They are common in many cult inscriptions, including dedicatory epigrams (Day 1994). One important difference is that in hymns this language is frequently self-reflexive, since it is their own performance that creates charis.

187 And cf. no.14 to Mother of the gods.
same idea of reciprocity: χαῖρε, θεῶν μήτηρ, ἄλοχ’ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος, | πρόφρον δ’ ἄντ’ φῶς βιῶτον θυμήρε’ δοκεῖ “rejoice…and in exchange for my song make my life pleasing.”

There is yet another level to the network of *charis* in the Homeric hymns. The god may further be asked to give *charis* to the song itself: χάριν δ’ ἀμ’ ὀπασσόν άοιδῆ (h.Hom. 24). This may have to do with the agonistic context for these particular hymns: in addition to giving the deity *charis*, the kitharist also aims to make the human audience and the judges χαίρειν.

It is interesting to observe what happens to the χαῖρε formula in the Orphic hymns, composed centuries later than the Homeric hymns, but for a cultic (rather than an agonistic) performative context. These hymns can be characterized as cletic: they all ask the addressed deity to “come” and attend the mystery rituals of which the hymns are part. Therefore verbs such as κλύειν and ἔλθειν are very frequent. The basic formula χαῖρε, which is used so frequently in other types of hymns, is quite rare here. Instead, the transition from *eulogia* to the prayer is usually signalled by such direct imperatives as κλῦθι, or other forms of this verb. But χαίρειν by no means disappears from the closing prayer. Hymn 31 (to the Kouretes) provides a standard expression of petition: ἔλθοιτ’ εὐμενέοντες ἐπ’ εὐφήμοισι λόγοισι, βουκόλῳ εὐάντητοι ἀεὶ κεχαρηότι θυμῶι “come and be gracious to our auspicious words, with your spirit delighted, ever kindly-disposed to the ox-herd.”

Therefore, like in other hymns, the worshippers wish for the god(s) to “rejoice.” Moreover, again as in the Homeric hymns, the worshippers hope that the god grant joy to them in return: κλῦθι, μάκαρ, κλήμῳ <σε> πρὸς εὐιέρους ἐπιλοιβάς, | αἰεὶ ὅπως χαίρουσιν ἔργοις ἥμεροις “hear me, blessed one, as I call you to the sacred libations, that ever may you come gentle to the joyous rites.”

Finally, the god is to take *charis* specifically from the hymns and other rites being performed for him: ἀγλαότιμε, | σεμνοῖς μυστιπόλοις χαίρων ὅσίοις τε σεβασμοῖς | ιλάον ἁγκαλέω σε μολέν ἐκεραθότα μύστας “splendid in honour, delighting in the reverend priests” and the holy rites! I call upon you to come propitious, delighted with the initiates.”

Thus, despite important changes in the precise formulation, the prayers of Orphic hymns maintain the familiar logic of reciprocity and *charis*: rejoice in our songs (and other rites) and (in exchange) come and bring joy to us.

188 In Orphism, βούκολος, literally “ox-herd”, is used to designate the ministers of Dionsysos. See Ricciardelli 2000 ad. loc. and xxvi with n.1.
189 Hymn no. 66, to Hephaestus.
190 μυστιπόλοι are those who perform the mystic rites, including the singing of the hymns themselves. See Ricciardelli 2000 ad. loc.
191 No. 18 to Hades; and cf. nos. 51, 52, 83.
The discussion of the *charis* formula so far has described its function in two important groups of hymns – Homeric and Orphic. The same concept of reciprocity and very similar language of *charis* is present in cult hymns preserved in inscriptions. The Erythraean paean expresses the interrelation between divine and mortal joy using much the same formulation as that found in the Homeric hymn to Dionysos (no. 26) quoted earlier (as well as the hymn in Theocritus): χαίρε μοι… δός δ’ ἡμᾶς χαίροντας ὀρᾶν φάος ἀελίου. The Ptolemais version of the same hymn keeps this prayer but adds another one that completes the picture: χαίρε μοι, … ἐπ’ ἐμαῖς εὔφροσι ταῖσδ’ ἀοιδαῖς “rejoice with me, … in these me gracious songs.” The χαίρε μοι of the first request is now clarified. It is the hymn itself that will ideally give joy to the god and make him favourable to the people, bringing them joy in return. Makedonikos’ paean from Athens offers a parallel to the grammatical construction of the first prayer in the Erythraean paean (χαίρε…δός δ’ ἡμᾶς χαίροντας “rejoice… and grant that we, rejoicing”) but with a noteworthy difference: χαίρε… σὴν δὲ δίδου σοφίαν ὑμνουμένους ἐς αἰεὶ θάλλειν “rejoice… and grant us ever to flourish, hymning your wisdom.” In exchange for the joy which the community hopes the god will gain from this hymnic offering, he is asked to make them flourish and praise his wisdom in song. The act of worshipping and celebrating the god with hymns is joyful to both the worshippers and the god; so by preserving and protecting them, the god would be granting *charis* to the mortals while also maintaining the *charis* which he gains from their hymns.

In Aristonoos the same idea appears with another variant of the *chaire* formula: χαριεὶς ἡμετέροις ύμνοις “rejoicing in our hymns.” The hymnic performance as the main source of *charis* for the addressee is already familiar from examples in Homeric and Orphic hymns. And in one cult hymn – the Morning Song for Asclepius – the combination of κλύειν and χαίρειν is particularly close to the prayers in Orphic material: ἔγρεο καὶ τεὸν ύμνον ἢ ιε κέκλυθι χαίρων “wake up, ie ie, and rejoice in hearing your hymn.”

Such elaborations of the formula creates a clear picture of the idea it expresses, so that even in cases of hymns which use the simplest of all variants – χαίρε – the underlying network of concepts to which it is ultimately linked should not be missed. Even in such a bare form, the

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192 Cf. skolion to Pan (Apud. Athen. 694d, Furley and Bremer 7.2.4) - ταῖσδ’ ἀοιδαῖς κεχαρημένος.
193 As Depew (2000: 75) puts it, “the imperative chaire is so common in hymnic sign-offs because it encodes what a
formula nonetheless evokes the reciprocal and cyclical relationship of *charis* between worshipper and deity; it is rarely, if ever, simply a greeting or a farewell.

The popularity of the *χαίρε* formula in Greek hymns is of course not accidental. The ideas it expresses go to the heart of what Race considers the primary function of hymns, and what is certainly one of the hymn’s main religious-rhetorical objectives: “the rhetorical *telos* of a hymn is, then, to secure the god’s pleasure by a ‘pleasing’ choice of names and titles…and by the ‘proper’ narration of his powers and exploits.” Complementary to this view is the idea of the hymn as an *ἀγάλμα*, a pleasing offering or favour for the god intended to secure his favour in return. It is not the only such favour or offering. An elegiac inscription from Paros, commemorating the dedication of a temple, utilizes language that is very similar to many of the formulations of the *χαίρε*-formula quoted above: *χαίρε… τοίσδεσσι καὶ ἱλήκοις Παρίοσιν* “rejoice…at these [gifts] and be gracious to the people of Paros.” The “do ut des” religious logic here is clear and analogous to such prayers as *χαρεῖς ὑμνοῖς ἡμετέροις… σώιζων ἐφέποις ἣμᾶς* “rejoicing in our hymns… protect us with your presence” (45-8) in Aristonoos’ paean. Yet instead of ὑμνοῖς, the goddess (most likely Artemis) in the Parian inscription is asked to rejoice in *τοίσδεσσι*. The deictic pronoun can technically refer to “these people here”; but given that it is followed immediately by ἱλήκοις Παρίοσι, this would seem superfluous since the “people here” are Parians. It seems to make better sense to take the expression as referring back to the various gifts to the goddess described in detail in the lines immediately preceding the request. What is supposed to give the goddess joy, then, is the offering of cult statue, altars and temple elements listed by the hymnic dedication. The close parallel in the vocabulary and the grammar, however, shows that a performance of a hymn can function in precisely the same way as other types of *ἀγάλματα*. Whether a sacrifice, a statue or a song, the offering is meant to bring pleasure to the recipient and thereby build up the stock of reciprocal *χάρις* existing between the mortal and immortal realms.

### 3.2 Transitional formulae

There are certain words, phrases and constructions which are frequently found at the points of transition between the sections of a Greek hymn. As a later section of the present chapter will

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illustrate, these points often also correspond to shifts from one level of discourse to another. Like other formal features of the hymn, these transitional markers seem to be conventional. At the same time they may have functioned as cues for the audience that helped them keep track of the structure and progression of the song.

The normal way to signal the movement from the invocation to *eulogia* is through the use of a relative pronoun referring to the main deity identified in the opening. After the title, the hymn to Hestia by Aristonoos begins: [ἱ]ερὰν ἱερῶν ἀνασσαν | Ἑστίαν ὑμνήσομεν, ἃ κτλ. “we sing a hymn for lady Hestia, holy of holies, who etc.” The relative ἃ refers back to Hestia and begins the praise proper. Occasionally the link is made through a place mentioned in the invocation, rather than the deity. Aristonoos chose to use this method in his paean to Apollo:

Πυθίαν ἱερόκτιτον
ναίον Δελφίδ’ ἁμφὶ πέταν
ἀεὶ θεσπιόμαντιν ἐ-
δραν, ἢ ἢ Παιάν,
Ἁπολλὸν…
ἔνθα ἀπὸ τριπόδων κτλ.

Apollo, who ever dwell
in the sanctified oracular seat of Pytho
by the Delphic rock,
ie ie Paian…
there from your tripods etc.

The word ἔνθα refers back to Delphi, which opens the invocation and the hymn as a whole. The importance of the place, which is also the place of performance, is stressed further by its function as the link between the opening and the *eulogia*.

When a hymn has an indirect invocation (whether through a first-person declaration, invocation to the Muse, or an invitation to the worshippers), another form of transition is available. In the

epigraphic Hymn to the Mother of the Gods, the grammar of the invocation is extended by the use of ὡς and applied to the mythological narrative itself: […]ς θεαί, | δεῦρ ἐλθετ’ ἀπ’ ὦρανῳ | καὶ μοι συναείσατε | τὰν Ματέρα τῶν θεῶν, | ὡς ἦλθε κτλ. “Goddesses, come here from the sky and sing with me in honour of the Mother of the gods, how she came to etc.” The word ὡς not only provides the grammatical link but also marks the shift from one section to the next.

In contrast to Homeric and epigraphic hymns, Orphic hymns do not use a transition between the invocation and the eulogia because there is no clear break between these two elements. In fact, normally praise in an Orphic hymn takes the form of a series of complex adjectives, participles and phrases in apposition with the invocation, effectively replacing what in other hymns would have been a separate eulogia. The first few lines of the hymn to Heracles (no.12) will suffice to illustrate the effect of this “Orphic” style:

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Ἡρακλεῖς ὀμβριμόθυμε, μεγασθενές, ἀλκιμε Τιτάν,
καρτερόχειρ, ἀδάμαστε, βρύων ἀθλοηι κραταιοῖς,
αιολόμορφε, χρόνου πάτερ, † ἀιδίε τε † ἐυφρων κτλ.
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Heracles, strong-spirited, mighty, stout Titan,
staunch-armed, unconquered, abounding in fierce toils,
shape-shifter, eternal and kind.

It is not uncommon to find attributes, titles and powers incorporated into the invocation using apposition elsewhere, but rarely to such great length as found in Orphic hymns.

A closing prayer in a Greek hymn usually opens with a direct invocation of the deity – often with the vocative marker ὦ - or an imperative verb form, most commonly χαῖρε. In cletic hymns, including most of the Orphic hymns, a form of ἐλθεῖν, κλύειν or καλεῖν is more common. This in itself frequently also acts as the marker of transition from eulogia to prayer. For example, the prayer in Makedonikos’ paean to Apollo and Aslepius starts with χαῖρε, βροτοῖς μέγ’ ὄνειαρ while the epigraphic hymn to Pan moves immediately after the eulogia directly to ὦ ἱῃ κτλ. It is equally common, however, for hymns to lead into the prayer with an additional word or phrase

196 See for example Orphic hymns nos. 7, 2, and 3, respectively.
that helps signal the division in the hymn. By far the most popular of these is the word \( \text{ἀλλά} \). The Dictaean hymn to Zeus Kouros initiates the final prayer with \( \text{ἀλλά} \, \'\text{ἀναξ} \) (27). In the Homeric hymns, although \( \text{ἀλλά} \) is found on a few occasions\(^{197}\), another formula – \( \text{kαί σ\(\iota\) -} \) is preferred.\(^{198}\)

### 3.3 Epiphthegmata

In the Homeric hymn to Pythian Apollo, the god tells his newly-recruited Cretan followers to process toward his seat in Delphi while chanting the \( \text{ἰηπαιήονα} \) (500). The reference is to the ritual call \( \text{ἰη Παιάν} \).\(^{199}\) Some versions of this call, which Athenaios calls the \( \text{παιανικόν} \) (or \( \text{ἰηπαιάν} \) \( \text{ἐπίφθεγμα} \)),\(^ {200}\) can be found in the vast majority of extant paeans. Even Pindar, whose hymns often depart from formal conventions, does not shy away from this signature invocation.\(^{201}\) The call can take on many different forms: \( \text{ἰη} \) can be doubled,\(^ {202}\) turned into an adjective\(^ {203}\) or made into a plural \( \text{ἰήτε} \);\(^ {204}\) \( \text{Παιάν} \) can be elaborated,\(^ {205}\) replaced,\(^ {206}\) or left out.\(^ {207}\)

But if it still remains recognizable to us, there can be no question that it would have been familiar to an ancient audience. Indeed, this *epiphthegma* is the most recognizable defining feature of the paeanic genre.

In the Homeric hymn to Apollo, however, the reference seems to be to the chant itself; there is no indication of a complete hymn being sung. A useful parallel is offered by Bacchylides’ dithyramb no. 3, at the end of which the youths saved by Theseus honour their hero. The young women give out an \( \text{ὀλολυγή} \) (125-7) while the ephebes exclaim the paean shout: \( \text{ἡθοι δ’ ἐγγύθεν νέοι παιάνιξαν ἔρατῳ ὀπί} \) (128-9, and the young lads straightaway raised the paean with their lovely voices). Again, there is no reason to believe the chants were incorporated into a larger paean-hymn. This seems to suggest that such calls may have developed independently of hymnic genres and used on their own as part of cult. It is even plausible that the paean song developed from the simple chant or, alternatively, incorporated the pre-existing chant at some

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\(^{197}\) *HHom. Cer.*, Ap. and no. 20.
\(^{198}\) E.g., *HHom. Merc.*
\(^{199}\) E.g., Makedonikos 13.
\(^{200}\) Ath. 15.52.15 and 19.
\(^{201}\) *Pae.1* (fr. 52a) 5; 2 (fr. 52b) 35, 70, 107; 4 (fr. 52d) 31, 62; 5 (fr. 52e) 37, 43.
\(^{202}\) Pi. *Pae.* 4.
\(^{203}\) *ἰη*, S. *OT* 154.
\(^{204}\) Pi. *Pae.* 6.
\(^{205}\) Δάλιε *Παιάν*, Soph. *OT* 154.
\(^{206}\) Δάλη Ἀπόλλων, Pi. *Pae.* 5.
\(^{207}\) Pi. *Pae.* 1; 21; *Morning Song to Asclepius* (Furley and Bremer 2001 no.7.6).
early stage of its development. In the surviving paeans and fragments, the chant is very frequently used as (or within) a recurring refrain. It is tempting to imagine a tradition of performance by two choruses or by a chorus and the wider community, the latter responding to the former with a simple collective shout. The same performative model can also be applied to paeans with the *epiphthegma* occurring at the end of the hymn, which is also very common.

Few dithyrambs have survived and almost none that can securely be placed in a cultic context. As a result, there is not a lot of direct evidence for a dithyrambic *epiphthegma*. Other sources, however, suggest that Dionysos had his own cultic call. Lucian, in his speech “Dionsysos”, describes the Bacchic revel and adds that the common signal for the participants was εὔοĩ: καὶ τὸ μὲν σῶνθημα ἡν ἀπασι τὸ εὔοĩ (4.7 and the common word was euoi). Another description of an imaginary revel, this time in Demosthenes’ speech On the Crown (260.5), refers to a chant εὔοῖ σαβοῖ, a version of the *epiphthegma* connected specifically to the Sebazius cult of Dionysos. And Pausanias, explaining the name of a mountain (Εὖα, 4.31.4-5), explicitly refers to εὔοῖ as Βακχικόν τι ἐπίφθεγμα. Dithyrambs, the songs most closely associated with his worship, would in all likelihood have often incorporated this *epiphthegma*. Philodamos, who, as the later discussion will show, combined paeanic-Apollonic and dithyrambic-Dionysian features in his hymn, juxtaposes a version of the εὔοῖ with the paeanic shout in the refrain: εὔοι ὦ ἰὸ Βάκχε ὦ Παιάν. The effect of Philodamos’ juxtaposition of these calls presumed the audience’s familiarity with the respective cultic and generic associations of the two *epiphthegmata*. ἰὸ Βάκχε (also ἰὸ Βάκχε, and ἰόβακχε) is another common call in the Dionysian cult; and the *iobacchos*, which Menander regards a song for Dionysos distinct from the dithyramb, may be connected to it.

Was the ritual shout limited to just these two types of hymn – paean and dithyramb? There is no evidence for calls associated with *parthenaia*, *hyporchemata*, or *prosodia* and this may be due to the fact that these hymns were distinguished primarily not by a particular cult or god, but by a feature of their performance. The shout ἀλλον ἀλλον may have been connected to an obscure “Linos-song”; and similarly, the lament for Adonis (the *adônidion*, listed by some grammarians as a type of song for the gods) seems to have had a conventional refrain - ὦ τὸν Ἄδωνιν –
associated with it.\textsuperscript{208} There are also epiphtegmata outside the hymnic genre. Pindar informs us in the opening of his ninth Olympian that in earlier days Archilochus’ “thrice-repeated chant καλλίνικος” (2) sufficed for victors in Greek contests; this reference to the simple ancient call is meant as a contrast to the elaborate artistic epinikia now composed by Pindar himself. Whether or not the victory song in the form that it survives today developed out of this simple invocation, there is no reason to doubt the existence and use of the epiphtegma. In Pythian 1 (32), the term is used in relation to the herald’s official proclamation of Hiero as victor which lends further support to this term as a conventional, ritualized salute for a victor. Pindar also commonly applies τὸ καλλίνικον (or similar form) to his own epinician, possibly implying once again a comparison between the basic καλλίνικος invocation and the poet’s own grand artistic version.\textsuperscript{209} The wedding song, hymenaios, was probably so named after the chant ύμηναον,\textsuperscript{210} which may be added to the list of known epiphtegmata; eventually the name becomes personified as a god, Hymenaios or Hymen.

Whenever they were heard, these ritual calls would have immediately brought with them their respective cultic and generic associations. This function of a generic marker is significant for the way in which song-types are incorporated or at least invoked within other forms. For instance, when the chorus in Sophocles’ \textit{OT} sings ἰήϊε Δάλιε Παιάν in the opening of the parodos, it is apparent (and to the ancient audience would have been all the more so) that the song is either a paean or is at least integrating some aspects, conventions or associations of the paeanic hymn. Swift, who studies the use of lyric genres in Athenian tragedy, rightly considers epiphtegmata some of the most secure cues for identifying such cases of incorporation.\textsuperscript{211}

There are even instances within the extant Greek hymns themselves where poets blend, bend or simply play with traditional hymnic types, relying on audience’s familiarity with epiphtegmata. Recall the refrain in Philodamos’ paean to Dionysos, where the poet intentionally places dithyrambic (or at least Dionysian) calls εὐοῖ and ἵο Βάκχε side by side with the unmistakably paeanic and Apollonian ὢ ἰὲ Παιάν. Moreover, this amalgamation of cues from two cults and respective genres is repeated over and over again as part of a refrain, making the point hard to

\textsuperscript{208} Alexiou 2002: 57.  
\textsuperscript{209} P.5.106, N.3.19, N.4.16, I.5.54.  
\textsuperscript{210} E.g., Sapph. fr. 111.  
\textsuperscript{211} Swift 2010.
miss even for those in the audience paying the least attention. An epigraphic hymn to the god Pan from Epidaurus may offer another example. The brief text ends with ὦ ἱη Πάν Πάν. The first part is a version of the paeanic call known from surviving paeans. The second looks like a play on the sound of Παιάν. The overall result is undeniably a nod in the direction of the παιανικὸν ἐπίφθεγμα; the effect is playful, even comic, in line with the mood of the hymn as a whole and the god Pan himself.

4 Levels of discourse

4.1 Myth and occasion

When Philodamos signals the transition from the opening invocation to the eulogia with the formula ὃν… ποτε, there is a change beyond a movement between two formal divisions. There is a shift from “ἡριναῖς…ταῖσδ’ ἱεραῖς… ὥραις (this spring-time sacred time)”, the here and now, the present festive surroundings on the one hand to the realm of “once upon a time”, ποτε212, when gods were mingling with mortals, being born in earthly cities and leading local girls in choral dance. There is a shift, in fact, in what can be termed the level of discourse. The two levels seen in the Philodamos example, which will be called occasion and mythological narrative, are very common in surviving hymns. The concept of levels of discourse provides a different mode of analysis above and beyond that of formal structure, with which it often overlaps but does not correspond exactly. For although, as in this example, the transition to eulogia is commonly at the same time a shift to mythological narrative, and the movement to prayer is frequently accompanied by a shift back to the level of occasion (see, e.g., Makedonikos), there are many exceptions. First of all, as discussed earlier, many hymns do not use mythological narrative at all. Moreover, the occasion is not always limited to the invocation and prayer. Limenios, for instance, breaks his mythological narrative in the eulogia to express a direct cletic invitation to the god to come to the place of performance now: ἀλλὰ χρησμωιδόν ὃς ἔχεις τρίποδα, βαῖν’ ἐπὶ θεοστιβέα | τὰνδε Παρνασσίαν δειράδα φιλένθεον “but you, keeper of the oracular tripod, come to this divinely-charged ridge of Parnassus trodden by god” (21-2). He then returns to the mythological level of discourse. It is perhaps not accidental that the interruption is marked by ἀλλὰ, the typical formula for the transition from eulogia to prayer.

212 Line 6, and cf. Makedonikos, 7.
What characterizes these two types of speech found in hymns and differentiates them from each other? The most fundamental feature of the level of occasion is its focus on the *hic et nunc*, the time and place, the people and circumstances of the present performance. This includes meta-performative language such as meta-poetic references to the song\textsuperscript{213}, invocations in the form of an imperative directed by the performers at themselves\textsuperscript{214}, or detailed descriptions of the performance and performers. The Dictaean hymn to Zeus provides an example of this fuller form of meta-performative description. The text informs us that the hymn is being sung in Dikte to the accompaniment of *pektis* and *aulos*, by a chorus standing around the altar. Makedonikos’ paean is also fairly informative: the singers are Athenian *kouroi* holding branches of olive and laurel. Few cult hymns, however, are as full of detailed references to the performance itself as Pindar’s surviving *daphnêphorikon*. Here the choral speaker describes her own dress and ritual gear, her status as *parthenos*, her actions, the accompaniment of *auloi*, and the order of the ritual procession. She also directly addresses Pagondas, another participant in the ritual, and refers to her own singing of the hymn. Other participants are named as well. Furthermore, the opening of the song localizes the performance in Thebes.

In addition to the hymn performance and its immediate ritualized context, occasional discourse may include references to the wider historical context. Limenios, for instance, speaks of the Greek victory over the invading Gauls, while Philodamos provides details on the ongoing reconstruction of the Delphic temple and mentions a change to the programme of the Pythian Games. In general, the effect of such occasional language is to create links between the hymnic text and its surroundings; it anchors the song within a particular ritual and historical context. It will be demonstrated later how this potential was used by hymnographers to serve more specific objectives. It is worth adding that the same occasional, especially metaperformative, language that allowed a cult hymn to connect itself with other elements of its ritual event could also be used to create a fictitious ritual context for a purely literary hymn. Callimachus is particularly known for his ability to create a vivid image of a festive event as occasion of his hymns. His hymn to Zeus, for example, is full of reference to other rituals, direct addresses to audience and chorus, and details about the performance (including kithara accompaniment and dancing).

\textsuperscript{213} ταῖσδ’ ἀοιδαῖς, apud. Ath. 694d.
\textsuperscript{214} Limenios has: ἵππα θεῶν ἀείσατέ λαοί.
The main difference between this type of discourse of occasion and mythological narrative is one of time. When the discourse shifts from ταῖσδ... ὥραις to the birth of Dionsysos in Philodamos’ paean, it moves in time from the now of the present performance to the τότε (14) of myth. Yet it is not a simple chronological movement from one definite moment to another, as, for instance, when an epinician shifts between the present of the victory celebration to the moment of victory in the recent past. The τότε of the mythological level of discourse is an undefined period in some distant past; it is ποτε, almost timeless and eternal. Here it is helpful to apply the concept of illud tempus, a term coined by Mircea Eliade to describe the sacred time, a time of origins, as opposed to the profane time of daily life.215 Another scholar explains this further as “a time in which things happen which have permanent results in the present and which explain why today the world is the way it is.”216 Thus, this level of discourse focuses on mythical time that formed the state of the world as the worshippers know it in the hic et nunc of the ritual occasion.

In other words, the relationship between the two levels is not merely one of chronology – the myth came before the occasion – but also one of aetiology – the myth is the basis and explanation for the occasion. The paean of Limenios makes the connection explicit when he says, after narrating Apollo’s arrival in Attica shortly after birth, ἀνθ’ ὦν ἐκείνας ἀπ’ ἀρχὰς Παιήνων κυκλήσκομεν ἄπας λαὸς αὐτοχθόνων “that is why and from that origin we call upon Paian, the entire earth-born tribe” (17-8). The wording puts the causal (ἀνθ’ ὦν) and temporal (ἐκείνας ἀπ’ ἀρχὰς) connections together in way that demonstrates precisely the way events of illud tempus determine the present, including the very cult event of which Limenios’ hymn is part. In this case Apollo’s visit to Athens, and the spontaneous musical reception he receives there, acts as the aitio for the fact that Athenians sing paeans to the god to this day. There are cases, some discussed below, where the aitia are more specific and designed to support precise functions of a given hymn.

The aetiological connection, by providing a precedent and model for the ritual act, in a sense bridges the purely temporal gap between the two levels of discourse. This distance between the

215 Eliade 1959.
216 Syed 2004: 104; similarly, Sinos (1998: 84-5) refers to “heroic past, the time of myth, when gods and humans mingled more freely than they do in our world” which he sees as outside historical time. Certain rituals, he believes, make the worshippers (performers and audience together) temporarily transcend “mundane world” to experience this timeless past.
occasion and myth can also be negotiated by other means. If the myth takes place in the sanctuary, city or region of the ritual, the shared space provides a ready link. In the Dictaean hymn, the transition between invocation and *eulogia* is effected by the word ἔνθα (12, here) which identifies the place of Zeus’ hiding in the mythological narrative with the place of occasion and performance where the god is now being invited to come. Of course, the aetiological and spatial connections are here intertwined, as suggested by the wording ἔνθα γὰρ (for it is here that): the place, manner and the very fact of the Cretan celebration are founded on the events of the narrative told by the hymn as well as the very place where these events took place. Similarly, Aristonoos’ paean opens its myth with ἔνθα’ (9), referring back to the reference to Delphi in the invocation, although here the invocation lacks the language of occasion used by the Cretan hymn, leaving the spatial link more implicit. Another particularly interesting way to span the chronological divide is by means of a different kind of time, the cyclical time of calendar rituals, which in effect equates the *then* of the myth and the *now* of the ritual that commemorates the narrated mythical event. To draw a familiar modern parallel, Christmas for Christians is the time of Jesus’ birth and Easter the time of his Resurrection. Christmas, regardless of the precise recurrence, *is* the time of the nativity. The language of sermons, songs and greetings connected to these two calendar holidays speaks of the mythological events as if they were occurring on those very days, often using the present tense. However the hymn makes this link between the two levels of discourse, the result is that the performance and its occasion are thereby imbued with the metaphysical significance of *illud tempus*.

### 4.2 Metapoetic and didactic language

When the speaker in Pindar’s second dithyramb (25) refers to himself as the chosen herald of the Muses; or when the singer of the Homeric Hymn to Delian Apollo calls on the Deliades to remember him and tell anyone who asks that he, the “blind man of Chios”, is the best singer they have ever heard (167-72); or when the Theogony tells of the poetic inspiration of the Boeotian shepherd by the Muses (22ff) – the focus is apparently neither the performative occasion nor the once-upon-a-time of mythological *aitia*. The kind of utterance that is seen in these examples is common enough in Greek hymns (and in other Greek poetic genre) to be considered a distinct

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217 In Philodamos’ paean, the link is not signalled deictically at all, but it is nonetheless there: the first musical, choral, celebration of Dionsysos on earth is located precisely at Delphi (19ff), the place of the paean’s own performance.
level of discourse. Here the hymn reveals the voice of the poet, or at least the poet’s persona \textit{qua} poet. Since this level of discourse concerns itself with the process of \textit{poësis} that is responsible for creation of the very song, it can legitimately be called metapoetic in the way that language that refers to its own performance was earlier described as metaperformative.

As will be discussed in some detail in the chapter on \textit{deixis}, the speaking voice in Greek cult hymns is inherently ambiguous: it is often difficult or impossible to untangle the performer(s) and the poet and sometime both of these from the wider community or audience. When the poetic voice is most apparent is precisely at moments of metapoetic utterance like the three mentioned above: here the persona of the individual creator is heard through the performers, whoever he or they may be.

The presence of the poetic persona in the victory odes of Pindar (and to a lesser extent Bacchylides) has come up frequently as an important factor in the debate over the the mode of performance of this kind of song. A statement that is most easily understood as coming from a single creative voice has been viewed as evidence for solo performance. The fact that some very similar utterances are also found in cult hymns, which were clearly performed by choruses, does not by any means prove that \textit{epinikia} too had to be performed in the same way. What it shows, rather, is that the presence of the poetic voice is irrelevant to the debate, and that at least for fifth-century Greek audiences a situation where multiple personae were expressed by the actual performer did not present a serious obstacle. With this in mind, it should not be too surprising to see this level of expression even in the most public and religious form of Greek song. After all, the composer-poet had a stake in its successful performance, positive reception, future survival and dissemination, and further commissions. Indeed, cult hymns probably had larger, often Panhellenic, audiences, with representatives of \textit{poleis} as well as aristocratic families local and foreign; so the stakes, if anything, were higher.\footnote{For the dissemination (oral or textual) of his poetry, for future commissions, and more generally for the spread of his fame, a poet in this period probably relied heavily on inter-\textit{polis} ties among local aristocratic circles. On the role played by \textit{xenia} (and the slightly more official \textit{proxenia}) relationships in the dissemination of Greek poetry, see Hubbard 2004: 82ff and Carey 2007: 209. For future public commissions (i.e., cult songs), the presence of official theoretic embassies at Panhellenic and regional festivals must have been particularly significant. Compare the various levels of spectators (and their respective degrees of competence) present at the dramatic festivals (see esp. Revermann 2006 and Roselli 2011: 51-52).}
What is surprising, on the other hand, is the absence of poetic statements in the remainder of the surviving Greek cult hymn corpus. While occasion and myth are nearly universal in Greek hymns, metapoetic discourse is less widespread. Within cult hymns, only Pindar and Bacchylides offer clear examples. Hymns preserved on stone from the fourth century onward do quite regularly include titles, signatures and other forms of explicitly self-identifying peritext, but these hardly seem the same kind of language. The conventional invocation of the Muse, which is not uncommon in epigraphic hymns, is the closest parallel to the kind of metapoetic utterance found in other hymns.

The last type of language looked at here is didactic. Even if, as Gordley suggests, instruction is a function of all hymns to various extents, there are utterances that occur in Greek hymns which seem especially aimed at delivering a moral lesson. Alcman’s first partheneion, for instance, warns any mortal against trying to fly to heaven or marry a goddess. Such gnômai, or pithy sayings, are often used to draw out a general truth from the mythical narrative and at the same time effect a transition from one mythical episode to another or to the level of occasion. Later in the same partheneion by Alcman, the text summarized a section of myth (unfortunately badly damaged) with a moral, including a makarismos, a favourite didactic topos among the Greeks: “Those who plotted evil met with an unforgettable end – there is punishment from the gods. But he is blessed who…” (34-7). The hymn then turns to the occasion and the performance itself: ἐγὼν δ’ ἀείδω “but I sing of.”

As in the case of metapoetic discourse, didactic language is not as common as mythical narrative and occasion in general and essentially absent from cult hymns preserved in inscriptions. There reason behind these two points of contrast is far from clear. Unfortunately, what survives of the ancient Greek cult hymns falls into two groups: the few fragments of the Archaic and Classical poets, and the later hymns, mostly preserved on stone, and dating from the fourth century.

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219 Pi. Pae. 5, 44ff; Pae. 6, init.; Dith. 2, 23; B. Dith. 19, init., 9; fr. 5 (Pae. 2).
220 Isidorus, for example, appends a simple signature “Isidorus wrote (this)” at the end of each of his hymns.
221 Gordley 2011.
222 Alcm. fr. 1, 16-9; and cf. Pi. Pae. 2, 66-67; fr. 61; B. fr. 4, 61-68; fr. 5.
223 ἠλαστα δὲ | Γέργα πάσον κακά μησαμένοι | ἐντὶ τις σιῶν τίσις | ὁ δ’ ἀβλιος, ὀστὶς κτλ.
224 Didactic language is most common, understandably, in epinikia, thrênoi and enkomia, it can also be found in the fragments of the cult hymns of these two poets: E.g., epinikia: Pi. N. 9, 46-48; I. 7, 42-45; B. fr. 3, 74-82, 86-90; thrênoi: Pi. fr. 131a; 131b; enkomia: Pi. fr. 126; Bacc. fr. 20b, 24ff, cult hymns: Pi. Pae. 2, 66-67; fr. 61; B. fr. 4, 61-68; fr. 5.
century and (mostly) later. This is essentially due to the accident of transmission: the majority of
the cult hymn survives on inscriptions, and the habit of inscribing hymns seems to have only
arisen in the fourth century. As a result of this discrepancy, it is impossible to tell what is
responsible for the apparent disappearance of metapoetic language in cult hymns: do the
inscribed hymns represent a different, "sub-literary", class of hymnography invisible from earlier
records, while the poetic descendants of Pindar and Bacchylides and their "high literary" hymn
either vanished like so much other ancient literature or never existed? Or was this feature
particular to Pindar and Bacchylides or to their generation of poets, and its absence from later
hymns a reflection of a diachronic change in style? Too little of Simonides has survived to be
able to tell whether he had already set a precedent in this respect. The only fragment with a
metapoetic expression is fr. 531 (Page),225 it is not certain what kind of song this comes from,
but it may have been a thrênos. A thrênos, however, is not quite a cult hymn - not in the sense
that a hymnos, a paean, a dithyrambos or even a partheneion is a cult hymn: it was often private
or semi-private and its focus, by its nature, was the mortal subject, linking it closer to the
enkômion and even epinikion.

It is noteworthy that Alcman's two partheneia, unlike that of Pindar, do not include poetic
discourse. This might suggest that this feature was not standard in cult hymnography until later,
perhaps the fifth century; but the sheer lack of evidence, especially on the partheneion, and the
geographical, chronological, and cultural distance between Alcman's Sparta and Pindar's Thebes
makes it impossible to determine with any certainty.226

Another possible reason behind the absence of metapoetic and didactic language in later cult
hymns - namely that the remains of the fifth century and those of the later period represent,
respectively, two different levels of poetic production - cannot be ruled out either. The difference
may also lie in the medium, rather than the literary level. As will be discussed in chapter seven,
text, and epigraphic text in particular, introduced into the field of hymnography an important
new tool – the peritext. It was now possible to record for posterity and display for publicity
certain information associated with the hymn, without at the same time having to include it in the

225 In the poem, Simonides is implicitly comparing the permanence of kleos, mnastis, and epainos (possibly in part
through the agency of oral poetry like the song itself) to the perishability of physical commemoration (tombs).
226 Carey (2011: 444) does see some instances of the poetic persona in Alcman, but notes this aspect is not as
prominent as in later choral lyric. He places Alcman somewhere between “anonymous popular song” and
“freelance choral poets of the sixth and fifth century.”
performed text itself. It is the peritext that occasionally offers examples of what can be counted as petapoetic and didactic utterances, although they are nonetheless not precise parallels to counterparts in the literary hymns of the fifth century. One of the sections of Isyllos’ inscription outside the paean proper, for example, includes several didactic statements:

Δᾶμος εἰς ἀριστοκρατίαν ἀνδρας αἱ προάγοι καλῶς,
αὐτὸς ἵσχυρότερος· ὀρθοῦται γὰρ ἐξ ἀνδραγαθίας.
Αἱ δὲ τις καλῶς προαχθεῖς θιγγάνοι πονηρίας
πάλιν ἐπαγκροῦων, κολάζων δᾶμος ἁσφαλέστερος.

When a people raises its menfolk in proper manner toward aristocracy, it is stronger itself. For it is held upright by manly excellence. But if a citizen who has been properly brought up engages in wickedness, going back on his training, the people do better to punish him (3-6, Furley and Bremer, trr.)

Although in their context the statements are clearly intended to apply to a specific political situation in Epidaurus, and would be interpreted as such by contemporary readers, they are nonetheless general enough to retain their revelance beyond the immediate set of local circumstances.

Isidorus, whose four hymns were publicly inscribed in Medinet Madi, adds a brief signature after each one. In two cases, however, this simple signature is expanded into a longer statement and after the last song, in the conclusion of the entire text, the hymnographer added what may be called a metapoetic statement or a *sphragis*:

Ἀσφαλέως δὲ μαθὼν τε παρ’ ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἱστοροῦντων
ταῦτα καὶ αὐτός ἐγὼ πάντ’ ἀναγραφόμενος
ἡμεῖς ἡς Ἐλλησι θεοὶ δύναμιν τε ἁνακτος,
ὡς βρο[το]τος οὐδ’ ἐπερος ἐσχεν ἴσην δύναμιν.
Learning these things carefully from the men who make inquiries, and recording all of them myself, I interpreted for the Greeks the power of the lord and god, how no other mortal had equal power (37-40).

Here the text speaks in the voice of the poetic persona and sets out his role and mission in composing the hymns. A parallel may also be offered by the final lines of the hymnic temple-dedication from Paros, where the hymnographer speaks on his own behalf. Unfortunately the text is fragmentary at this point, but the statement recorded the poet’s name – Nikades - and framed his hymn as an expression of his pious dedication to the god. The signatures following each of Isidorus’ hymns were in all likelihood added to the text upon inscription, and this may be the case with Nikades’ brief sphragis as well.

Inscribing a hymn on a wall of a temple or on a stele set up within a temenos anchors it in that place, makes it a permanent part of the physical space – this too may offer a hint to a potential explanation behind the scarcity of metapoetic and didactic material in epigraphic hymns. In his discussion of Alman, Chris Carey notes that, for all of its epichoric character, the Spartan poet’s songs were nonetheless disseminated widely outside its original context. He proceeds to show that there is much in the surviving texts to indicate that this poetry was indeed suitable for Panhellenic (as well as local) consumption, and was probably intended for both. Among other features, he points to the fact that “a surprising amount of Alcman is susceptible to being extracted for partial performance” (449). This is important because early international dissemination relied on circulation within Panhellenic elite circles, largely through (informal, partial) sympotic re-performance. I would suggest that among the material that is most suitable for this kind of re-performance is precisely the didactic material such as is found in the cult

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227 ἱστορούντων may also be translated as “those who study history” (so Faraone 2012); the sense is that these are men who are authorities on the subject Isidorus is treating in his hymns, in particular the last one. Faraone’s interpretation is that Isidorus learned the relevant information from Egyptian hieroglyphic record, read to him (presumably by the priests of the temple.) See also Vanderlip 1972 ad loc.

228 These lines are discussed in more detail below, pp. 134-6.

229 IG XII 5:229, Paros, 2nd c. CE?; Furley and Bremer 2001: no. 12.5.

230 It is not certain whether or not either of these hymns would have been performed. A reference to an annual festival in Isidorus’ hymn 2 (n. 139 above) may suggest a regular performance of at least (e.g., the Isiac) hymns. The fourth hymn is quite unlike the others, however, in its metapoetic language, its addressee (a Pharaoh), and indirect style (i.e., no direct address to the subject.) Cf. Moyer 2010: 22. Nikades’ hymnic dedication may have accompanied the inauguration of the temple (p. 210 below), although this too is not certain. In both cases, even if the hymns were performed, the final sphragis could nonetheless have been added later, when the text was inscribed.

231 Carey 2011.
hymns of Alcman, as well as Pindar and Bacchylides. The metapoetic statements may likewise be related to this awareness and even intention of future wide dissemination beyond the festival and cult for which the hymns were composed, and especially beyond the formal, public form of the original performance. 232 Many of the epigraphic hymns were also reperformed and some (e.g., the Erythraean paean) were even reperformed in several different locations. The reperformance, however, was still analogous in mode and context to the original performance: public, official, formal, choral, and normally within the same specific cult and festival. Fragmentary dissemination and informal private reperformance was not within the foreseeable (or intended) future life of most hymns that have come down in inscriptions. 233

It is important to add that the preceding discussion of levels of discourse does not claim to account for absolutely every line of text in extant Greek hymns. Nor would it be useful to attempt such complete categorization by coining as many levels as necessary to fit everything that one finds in the poems. That said it does seem that the four levels of discourse outline here, and especially those of occasion and myth, are potentially helpful heuristic categories reflecting types of language that are both distinct and widespread.

5 Conclusions

This chapter has surveyed some of the formal features which are commonly found among the surviving examples of Greek hymns. Material was drawn not only from cult hymns, as defined in the introduction, but also from rhapsodic, Orphic and, to a lesser extent “monodic,” literary and dramatic hymns. Although cult hymns are distinguishable from the rest and are treated separately in relation to the central questions of this study, all of these works are drawing on a shared hymnographic tradition in terms of their structure, themes and language. The survey has delineated some of the most popular and familiar elements in the larger genre, but of course this is not an end in itself. This thesis is largely concerned with the Greek cult hymns as they relate to  

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232 This form of dissemination is most fully described in the metapoetic statement in Theognis 237-54. Cf. Carey’s (2011: 444) comment on Alcman’s own sphragis: “The name is obviously meant to preserve the poet in time. But is is especially when poetry travels that naming becomes critical.” And this applied not only to the name, but likewise to the larger persona and artistic mission that the poet seeks to portray.

233 The same contrast is valide whether the principal means of dissemination is oral or textual (as suggested by Hubbard 2011), since in either case the main reperformance scenario outside the primary cult setting (as attested by external and foreshadowed by internal evidence) remains partial, informal and monodic renditions during private, elite gatherings.
and interact with their performative contexts. Formal analysis is relevant to this perspective because conventional features are not independent of performance occasion. Recurring forms of speech acts help create a sense of occasion and at the same time help define the related genre: what is appropriate for a particular place and time is also a conventional attribute of associated utterances. The formal elements of the Greek hymns are intertwined with the requirements of the religious occasions in which they are performed. Because they are conventionally connected to the genre and occasion, these elements are familiar to the audience; they fulfill their expectations of this type of song. It is through such features that the hymn acquires a feel of a genuine cult song and assures those present that this song will be a true agalma – it will delight the god and create charis between him or her and themselves. Finally, the authority which the hymn acquires through its traditional features allows it to make additional claims, to fulfill additional functions.

The formal analysis provided in this chapter has drawn out some of the traditional material at disposal of the ancient hymnographer, material which validates the song’s role within its ritual context and yet can be moulded to suit a given set of stakeholders and their specific aims. Drawing on the stakeholder model developed in chapter 2 and the outline of formal hymnic features presented here, the next chapter will apply the results of these two discussions within a framework of an in-depth case study. The investigation of Limenios’ paean and prosodion in its performative and historical contexts will also provide a transition to a broaded analysis of functions and strategies in Greek cult hymns, the subject of chapters 5 and 6.
Chapter 4
The Hymn of Limenios at the Pythais of 128 BCE

1 Introduction

The previous two chapters have considered a wide range of scenarios involving a presentation of a cult hymn as well as the traditional language and form at the hymnographer’s disposal. It is impossible to offer a simple universal model for the organization and the network of stakeholders of such an event, since along both of these axes each performance will have its own unique set of factors. This specific combination of factors will in turn influence the way a poet will mould the familiar elements of the hymnic genre. Nonetheless, to concretize the performative and formal issues set out in previous two chapters, it will be helpful to go through an example in greater detail and see how the complex network of stakeholders surrounding the performance and its ritual context shaped the traditional hymnodic language of the piece. The choice of Limenios’ paean and prosodion is motivated by the richness of our evidence concerning its context and performance but also the complexity of the immediate historical context. This extended study will also provide the starting point for the subsequent wider discussion of the ways in which traditional hymnographic material was variously moulded to suit the particular circumstances of a given hymnic performance.

2 Pythais of 128/7 BCE in its political context

The main evidence for the performative context of Limenios’ hymn comes in the form of two related inscriptions, CID 3:2 and Syll. 698A. The first contains the hymn itself with a helpful title. The second is a proxenic inscription that mentions Limenios and is similar in form to others of its type discussed in chapter 2. Both inscriptions have been dated to around 128 BCE, the year of the performance itself. In addition to these two principal documents, other Delphic hymns, proxenic inscriptions, and documents dealing with the Pythais are useful for comparison and

234 On the date of the paean see Daux 1936, Poehlmann 1970, Bélis 1990, Schroeder 1999 and Furley and Bremer 2001: v. 1 131ff. The general consensus is that the hymn was performed during the Pythais of 128/7 BCE. Although Schroeder has argued for the subsequent Pythais, the date seems secure as it is based on the presence of the composer’s name in another, datable, inscription pertaining to this year’s delegation.
relevant for the questions of the organization of a cult hymn at this Panhellenic site, the details of the specific cult context (the Pythais *theôria*) and the parties involved.

From the proxenic decree it is known that the religious occasion of the performance was the Pythais, an Athenian *theôria* to Delphi. The same inscription provides some important clues about the decision-making process involved. The wording of the decree indicates that the initial step in the organization of this *theôria* was the vote by the Athenian assembly.\(^{235}\) Of course, the proposal for the vote came from the *boulê*. The Pythais, however, was not a regular calendar festival and was only organized occasionally, in the words of the Delphic inscription “when the time had come and in accordance with oracles and observations” (5-6). At least one of the requirements was the sighting of lightning over Mt. Parnes by certain Athenian officials, who watched for it from a pre-determined point (probably the Acropolis) on three days every month;\(^{236}\) so this, at least symbolically, was what initiated the whole process.

The *theôria* seems to have been first organized after the defeat of the Persians. However, there was an unusually long break without a Pythais in the early Hellenistic period. There is record of a Pythais in 326/5 BCE but no evidence of another one until 138/7 BCE, which was then followed by three more, 128/7, 106/5 and 98/7 BCE. Thus, the re-inauguration of the Classical tradition is still a very recent and relevant development at the time of the performance of Limenios’ hymn in 128/7 BCE. What were the reason for the apparent discontinuation and the renewal of the embassy? Clearly these changes cannot be explained by the presence or absence of the divine signs alone.

One possible explanation has been suggested by John Mikalson in his work on Athenian religion in the Hellenistic period.\(^{237}\) He suggests that the interruption of the Pythais corresponds to the establishment of Macedonian supremacy in Greece in the fourth century and reflects the decline of Athenian power and independence. It is also symptomatic of a more general decline in the cult of Apollo at Athens which he sees during this time. The last two known embassies occurred in 355 and 326 BCE, respectively. Soon after, the failed revolt against Macedonian control (the

\(^{235}\) [Ψα[οί]ξαμένου τοῦ δόμου τοῦ Ἀθηναίων], 4.
\(^{237}\) Mikalson 1998: 268ff
Lamian war) led to the imposition of much harsher domination over Athens. Around the same time (314 BCE), Athens lost control of Delos, one of the two main centres of Apollonian cult. In 290 BCE, the other Panhellenic site of Apollo, Delphi, fell under control of the Aetolian League. Prior to this, the sanctuary was administered by the Amphictyonic Council, on which Athens had a seat. Thus, in the course of a few decades, Athens lost political independence, international influence, and any power over the two primary sites of the cult of Apollo. Some suggest an even more specific political obstacle to the Pythais: the Aetolians shut Macedon out of Delphi, and Athens, as part of Macedonian territory, was prevented from sending any official embassies to the sanctuary.238

These political processes were temporarily reversed in the late third and early second centuries. In 229 BCE the Athenians regained their independence from Macedon. They picked the winning side in the Macedonian wars, a move which, when the wars ended in 168 BCE, gained them substantial rewards, including the restoration of Delos. Also, after the Romans defeated the Aetolian League and forced it from Delphi around 189 BCE, Athens helped reorganize the old Amphictyonic League.239 Athens was once again a free polis with an international presence and a powerful voice in the administration of both Panhellenic sanctuaries of Apollo. The decision to re-inaugurate the old tradition of the Pythais in 138 BCE probably had a lot to do with these changes on the political front. Having recently come out of a long period of dependence to Macedon rule and relative obscurity on the Panhellenic scene, Athens needed to assert its ancient status in Greece, its continued political and cultural prominence and religious dedication to traditional cults. Another historian, Habicht, points to other epigraphic documents from the second half of the second century that indicate a growth in relations between Delphi and Athens.240

Obviously the role of Rome is very significant in these developments. In 200 BCE, Rome saved Athens from a Macedonian siege that threatened to subjugate it once again. Athens then allied

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238 Ferguson 1911: 231 and reference in n.3.
239 Athen’s leading role (along with the Thessalians) in the reorganization of the Amphictyonic League in the 180s BCE is discussed by Habicht 1987, with further references in n. 34 there.
240 Habicht 1997: 211 and 275-9. Athens and Thessally were the most important actors in the re-organization of the Amphictyonic Council in the first half of the second century, after the Aetolian war; and the many new documents added to the Athenian treasury in the second half of the same century “reveal that cordial relations prevailed.”
itself with Rome and remained its ally in the course of three wars that follow. After the Third Macedonian war in 168, Rome rewarded Athens with Delos (among other territories). Finally in 146, Rome had defeated the Achaean League and sacked Corinth. Greece was now de facto under Roman sway or even control. In the mid- and late second century, therefore, Athens in a sense had a debt of allegiance and respect to Rome both as its ally and subject.

Delphi was in a similar position. The ousting of the Aetolians from Delphi around 190 BCE and its return to the Amphictyonic Council was seen as an act of liberation on the part of the Romans. In 189 BCE, soon after the defeat of the Aetolian League, the Senate passed a decree guaranteeing the autonomy of Delphi, its sanctuary and the integrity of its territory. Therefore Delphi too in this period owed its respect to Rome not just as to its overlord but also as its liberator and protector of its ancient rights. It will soon become clear that that the technitai of Athens likewise had much resting on the Romans. The elaborate prayer for Rome that closes Limenios’ hymn is a reflection of these links of dependence and gratitude.

Athens’ recovery (and that of the Pythais) was brief. Four embassies were sent, the last in 98. Soon after, in 89 BCE, Athens sided with the losing side against Rome.

This brief summary of the political context indicates that there are two ways of understanding the decision to send the Pythais in 129/8 BCE. On the one hand there is the official process that determines whether or not to celebrate the festival in any particular year: observation of lightning by special officials, possibly confirmed by the Delphic oracle, proposal by the boulê, ratification by the ekklésia. Yet this does not explain the gap in the tradition or its resumption nearly two centuries later. Behind the larger historical processes of discontinuity and renewal (and subsequent abandonment) lay major political and religious developments.

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241 The once common assumption that Greece was annexed and turned into Roman provincial territory has been convincingly attacked by Morstein Kallet-Marx (1995 42-9), among others. However, whether or (as seemly more likely) not Delphi and Athens were officially within Roman provinces, it is undeniable that Rome had real power over their affairs and frequently played the role of a mediator in local disputes.

242 Syll.3 612, Sherk 1984: no. 15.

243 Note the wording “oracles and observations” in Syll.3 698A.
3 Organization of the Pythais

Once the decision was made to send a Pythais, the embassy had to be organized and sent out. Lack of evidence means that almost nothing can be said about the details of Classical Pythais delegations, so what is described here applies to 138/7 BCE and on.\(^{244}\) The Pythais had two fundamental religious objectives. The first was to bring sacred fire from Apollo’s sanctuary back to Athens. The traditional aetiology for this is that the original Pythais was sent out in order to relight the Athenian fires polluted by the Persians.\(^{245}\) The second key aim was to bring an offering of first fruits to Pythian Apollo. A series of inscriptions from the turn of the first century BCE records collections made over the course of several years for the offerings of the Pythais in 98/7 BCE.\(^{246}\) The other standard ritual elements included a large procession, sacrifices and the singing of hymns to Apollo.

All these responsibilities required a large number of people, and the epigraphic evidence indicates that the four late-Hellenistic \textit{theôria}i numbered between three and five hundred official members alone. The embassy included officials, priests, delegates, ephebes, knights and of course musicians (in the widest sense of the term). A list inscribed on the Athenian treasury informs us of the leaders in 128/7 BCE: the nine archons, herald of the Aeropagus court, \textit{hieromnêmôn} (religious representative).\(^{247}\) A comparison to similar lists from other years indicates that the precise make up of the \textit{theória} varied from one instance to another. For instance, \textit{exégêtai}, \textit{stratêgos} and priest of Apollo are some additional officials sent as part of other Pythais missions. The theoric delegates proper are listed in two separate inscriptions under the titles \textit{theôroi} and \textit{pythaistai}, respectively.\(^{248}\) The distinct names, one general the other specific, suggest that the two groups had different religious roles, although it is impossible to say what these were. From a proxenic decree honouring the Athenian \textit{technitai} for their contribution in the Pythais of 97 BCE, it appears that some of the duties that could be assigned to \textit{theôroi} were sacrifices and offerings of first fruit (\textit{aparchai}). There are further distinctions within each class. Among the \textit{theôroi}, there were the more important \textit{architheôroi}.\(^{249}\) And the term \textit{pythaistai}

\(^{244}\) On the Pythais in the fifth and fourth centuries see Daux 1936: 528-31 and Mikalson 1998: 34.
\(^{245}\) Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1, 132 and n. 115.
\(^{246}\) SEG 32.218, discussed in Tracy 1982.
\(^{247}\) \textit{IG} II\(^2\) 985 = \textit{FD} III 2.3. Colin 1905 offers a detailed study of the make-up of the Hellenistic Pythais delegations; and cf. further notes on the inscription in Tracy 1975.
\(^{248}\) \textit{FD} III 2.8, 12.
\(^{249}\) Parker (2005: 79), discussing Athenian \textit{theôria}i in general rather than the Pythais in particular, suggests that the
is sometimes qualified with *paides* or *klêrôtoi*, which tells us that there were children and adult sub-categories of this class of ambassadors, and also that the way they were chosen varied as well.

One very important detail about these lists is that the delegates were not always representing the city of Athens as a whole. In *FD III* 2:8, listing the *theôroi* of 128/7 BCE, there are several subheadings – “from the people of Athens”, “from the Tetrapoleis” and “from the Pyrrakidai.” The evidence from other Pythais missions gives further confirmation of the fact that a *genos*, a tribe and a region could send its own *theôroi* in addition to those being sent on behalf of the *polis* of Athens. The same is true in general of the *pythaistai*, although it is not clearly the case in the list for 128/7 BCE. Other bodies, including professional organizations were apparently also allowed to include their own representatives. Thus, the proxenic decree *Syll.* 698A shows that the *synodos* of Athenian *technitai* sent its own *theôroi* (including an *architheôros*), as part of the delegation in 128/7 BCE.

The groups outlined thus far – the various officials and delegates – seem to be the heart of the Pythais. They were escorted by two further bodies. In front of the procession marched the ephes and on the sides rode the Athenian knights. Lists of the participants from each of these groups have survived in inscriptions, again in the Athenian treasury at Delphi. The Pythais came also *kanêphoroi*, girls, usually of elite Athenian families, responsible for carrying baskets full of ritual implements. No inscription survives that lists the basket-bearers for 128/7 BCE, but their presence in 138/7, 106/5 and 98/7 BCE make it unlikely that there were none in the year of Limenios’ paean as well. The tripod containing the sacred fire was the responsibility of another female official, the *pyrphoros*, who was conducted by a male citizen designated by the state. The tripod for the fire was borne ceremonially on a chariot, indicating the importance of this element to the religious significance of the Pythais.

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250 For 128/7 BCE, *FD III* 2:24, 27, respectively.
252 *FD III* 2:33 for 128/7 BCE.
Musicians in the Hellenistic Pythaiides

The last major group of participants are the musicians. Our evidence is mainly in the form of three analogous inscriptions, all Delphic proxenic decrees on the walls of the Athenian treasury. The earliest\(^\text{253}\) is particularly relevant, because it very likely relates to the same Pythais as our hymn. The other two\(^\text{254}\) have been dated to 97 and 106 BCE, respectively. Several significant points can be drawn from these documents. First of all, they show that it was not unusual for the technitai to participate in the Pythais. In addition, this privilege was not exclusively granted to this particular organization. The Athenian treasury also has a proxenic decree honouring the delegates sent as part of a Pythais by another association – that of epic poets.\(^\text{255}\) Second, it was normal for the technitai, as part of their contribution to the mission, to perform a paean.\(^\text{256}\) The hymns of Athenaeos and Limenios are two examples. \textit{FD} III 2: 48 adds a third: the performance of a patrios paian is one of the first acts by the technitai mentioned by the honorary decree.\(^\text{257}\) No. 49, although very fragmentary and so missing much of the first half of the text, is very likely to have included a similar reference.

Limenios’ was not the only hymn sung as part of the Pythais of 128 BCE. The so-called first Delphic hymn, now believed to have been composed by Athenaios, was in all likelihood performed by the \textit{megas choros} in the same year.\(^\text{258}\) Moreover, as mentioned above, “the paeans and the chorus” of \textit{FD} III 2:48 (l. 21) might be referring to additional songs sung by the same choristers as the main paean. Also, \textit{Syll.}\(^\text{3}\) 698(A) includes in its list of honoured technitai three

\begin{itemize}
\item \(^\text{253}\) \textit{Syll.}\(^\text{3}\) 698(A).
\item \(^\text{254}\) \textit{FD} III 2:48-9.
\item \(^\text{255}\) \textit{FD} III 2:50.
\item \(^\text{256}\) Singing hymns, especially paeans, was probably part of the Pythais already in the Classical period. Rutherford 2004: 78.
\item \(^\text{257}\) The phrase may refer to the hymn of Limenios (or that of Athenaios, or both), which had, in some 30 years, become a national, tradition connected to the Pythais. Pöhlmann (1970) and Furley and Bremer (2001: vol. 1, 131) prefer to interpret this as a traditional scheme that allows for individual variation, and that both of the Delphic hymns that we have are such variations on the “national paean.”
\item \(^\text{258}\) The relationship between, and the chronology of, the paeans of Athenaios and Limenios are still a contested issues. See Daux 1936, Pöhlmann 1970, Bélis 1992, Schröder 1999b and Furley and Bremer 2001: vol. 1, 129-131. Furley and Bremer follow Pöhlmann in preferring an earlier date, 138, for Athenaios’ hymn. Given the chronology of the relations between the synodos and Delphi, and the absence of an honorary decree for 138 BCE, I think it more likely that the two hymns were both performed in 128 BCE. That Athenaios’ hymn could have been performed, in the absence of the synodos, by the chorus of \textit{paides pythaistai} (proposed by Pöhlmann and mentioned also by Furley and Bremer), is unlikely given the reference in the hymn to the “entire swarm of the technitai” (ll. 16-7) Schöder, on the other hand, has recently proposed dating Athenaios’ song to 128 and Limenios to the next Pythais in 105 BCE. The presence of Limenios in the proxenic decree for 128BCE and his absence in the surviving portion of that decree for 105 BCE seems to work against this theory.
\end{itemize}
chorodidaskaloi of the chorus of pythaistai. Thus the paides pythaistai accompanying the Pythais probably sang hymns too. That they did sing in the previous Pythais is known from an inscription listing the paides pythaistai for 138 BCE which includes two chorodidaskaloi – in fact two of the three listed in Syll. 3 698(A). This means not only that several hymns could be sung by different sub-groups of the theòria, but also that these groups at times collaborated and worked together.

The three proxenic inscriptions honouring the Athenian technitai include other specializations than those required for the ritual elements of the embassy (i.e., theòroi, chorists, chorodidaskaloi, etc.) Comic, dramatic and satyric playwrights and actors, kitharodes, aulodes and rhapsodes, among others, are also there in Delphi as part of the Athenian delegation. Thus, besides offering sacrifices, participating in the pompê and singing cult hymns, the technitai offered other displays, over several days, for the entertainment of all those present. And as other inscriptions from the treasury tell us, the technitai were not the only ones to put on spectacles to add to the variety of the festive occasion. The Athenian knights, not content with playing the part of ceremonial escort to the Pythais procession, put on their own equestrian agônes. The victor lists indicate that this was not an open contest but games among the knights themselves, showing off before the Delphic and Panhellenic crowds, and it can be supposed that this model was likewise followed by the artists.

The prosopography of the three documents pertaining to the technitai reveals another key detail about the way these events were organized by their association. The same names quite often recur more than once in a single inscription. Thus a member of the synodos could be one of the theòroi, perhaps carrying first fruits in the procession, and he could also be a comic actor taking part in the entertainment later that or the next day. This also means that the same professional musicians were involved in the performance of cult hymns and in the shows added for entertainment, another sign of just how blurred the line is between these two categories.

What is added by considering all the available data on the Pythais is the realization that its programme was much more elaborate than any one of the inscriptions might lead one to imagine. At the centre of it all was the large procession that included all the delegates and officials from
the city and its various elements. It probably moved along the Sacred Way toward the oracle.\textsuperscript{259} It is during this procession that Limenios’ paean and prosodion would have been sung by the Artists’ “great chorus.” The hymn itself was just one element. Onlookers would have also seen ephebes marching at the front and knights riding at the sides, a chariot bearing the tripod, \textit{theôroi} carrying offerings, girls bringing baskets. Outside of the procession too there were noteworthy events and entertaining sights – sacrifices, contests, all sorts of musical and dramatic performances. Limenios’ hymn needs to be considered as part of this grandiose religious event, involving a complex network of interested parties.

The epigraphic sources give the impression of a large, diverse delegation. The Pythais included representations of nearly all the major groups of the Athenian polity – the democratic side (delegates chosen by lot) and the aristocratic (those sent by or chosen from the elite), boys, girls, ephebes and knights, tribes, regions, families, organizations, priests and city officials. In short, the whole city of Athens was on show, except it was on show in Delphi. The description may call to mind the Panathenaic procession, where the Athenians watched their city – in all its various strata and segments – present itself before them.\textsuperscript{260} At the Pythais, the audience is Panhellenic, so whatever image of itself Athens was presenting, it was meant not so much for itself but for the wider Greek world. The act of staging such a spectacle, in effect occupying the sanctuary over a period of several days, must have had the effect of sending out a powerful message about Athens’ continued importance in the changing political landscape, as well as its ongoing dedication to the ancient cults, that of Pythian Apollo in particular. With its recent recovery of independence, territories and international influence, Athens is now ready to remind the Greeks that its former glory has not perished: as stated by one recent commentator, the Athenians were trying to “to renew old traditions and, by so doing, to reassert the importance of Athens in Greek affairs.”\textsuperscript{261} A later part of this chapter will show that this political aim is one of the most pronounced in the hymnic text itself and will have been one of the top priorities – although not the only one – for the hymnographer as he crafted his composition.

\textsuperscript{259} Furley & Bremer 2001: v.1 135.
\textsuperscript{260} For a discussion of the polyvalent meaning of the Panathenaia, including the presence of both democratic and aristocratic dimensions, see Wohl 1996.
\textsuperscript{261} Tracy 1982: 150.
5 Delphi and Rome

So far this chapter has considered the official process involved in deciding to send a Pythais, the overall composition of the embassy and the events which it likely included. Some of the other parties involved now need to be added into the already complicated set-up, for although the Athenian polity is a key player it is not the only powerful stakeholder in the performance. All the rituals and other activities took place in Delphi, particularly in the sanctuary of Apollo. Therefore, the permission of the Delphians needs to be assumed. Here must be considered the question of who exactly was in charge. On the one hand, Delphi was its own *polis*, with a *boulê*, an *ekklêsia*, *prytaneis* and other offices;262 on the other, the sanctuary was at least partially under the authority of the federal institution of the Amphictyony.263 The Delphians themselves had a seat of the Amphictyonic council, but so did eleven other states, including, significantly, Athens.

The inscriptions relating to the Pythais refer to archons, *bouleutai* and the *polis*, that is the *ekklêsia*. So, for example, the decision to recognize the *technitai* with a *proxeny* in 128 BCE was made by the vote of the Delphic assembly. In such proxenic decrees, some of the privileges being granted (e.g., *promanteia*) concern the sanctuary and the temple specifically. The *polis* of Delphi clearly had jurisdiction over the sacred precinct, even though certain specific powers were held by the Amphictyonic council. The Amphictyony, by contrast, is not mentioned directly in any of the available sources on the Pythais. The only sign of it in the inscriptions is the inclusion of a *hieromnêmôn* in the Pythais embassies of 128/7, 106/5 and 98/7 BCE. This was the normal title of a religious representative sent by member states to the council. The most likely scenario seems to be that it was the assembly of the Delphians which granted the Athenians permission to celebrate the Pythais and received the delegation.

The hymn of Limenios ends with a prayer for the everlasting might of Rome. This final stakeholder too deserves attention. The Romans were not new in the region: they had been fighting wars here since the First Macedonian War in 214 BCE. This was followed by more wars with Macedon, the Seleucids and the Aetolian League. But for most of this period, at least officially, they were visiting, not staying. Even when control of Delphi was taken from the

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262 Daux 1936: 426-37 and see further references in n. 118 above.
263 On the relationship between the *polis* of Delphi and the Amphictyony, including respective roles and capacities, see Arnush 2000 and Scott 2010: esp. 35-6.
Aetolian League in 191, during the Syrian wars, the Roman senate granted the Delphians autonomy. This is demonstrated by an inscription from 189 BCE containing two letters from a praetor (one to Delphi, another to the Amphictyonic League) followed by a *senatus consultum*. The consular decree included guarantees of inviolability of the sanctuary, the city and the land of the Delphians, autonomy, and freedom from taxation. It was only in 146, after the defeat of the Aetolian League and the sacking of Corinth, that Greece was subdued by the Romans. This was still a recent development in 128 BCE, the time of the Pythais. Although the Romans probably did not have any direct role in authorizing or organizing the festival, they were now an important presence in the region with which the other major stakeholders – Athens, the Amphictyony, Delphi and even the synodos – would wish to be on good terms.

6 The performance of Limenios’ paean

The discussion can now turn specifically to Limenios and the performers of his hymn. Based on *FD III* 2:47,265 which is likely connected to the same Pythais as Limenios’ paean and prosodion, the synodos’ musical contribution consisted of a main hymn, performed by “the great chorus,” and various other performances or thymelic contests over several days of festivities. It is reasonable to suppose, then, that the paean corresponds to that composed by Limenios, since none other is mentioned. This leads to several noteworthy details. First of all, the list of the singers of the paean gives us the size of the chorus, 39, appropriately named “the great chorus” in the decree. Most strange perhaps is the fact that Limenios is not named as the poêtês or chorodidaskalos of the paean. No poet is mentioned and the chorodidaskalos of “the great chorus” who sang the paean is another man, Nikokrates.

It may be expected that the poet-composer of a hymn would also be responsible for the training of the chorus as well. But this would not be the only exception. Perhaps the most notable comparable case is one mentioned earlier, that of Cleocharis, another Athenian.266 Like Limenios, Cleocharis was a professional musician, a lyric poet. According to the text of his

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264 See p. 93 with n. 242 above.
265 *Syll.* 698(A).
266 *Syll.* 450. Another Delphic decree honours a pair of Arcadian musicians for giving concerts of ancient lyric poets and training boys’ choruses. It is not clear whether the two activities refer to the same performances. The two inscriptions indicate that even within the same context (Delphic boys’ choruses), there is flexibility in the organization: the chorodidaskalos could be a local public official or a visiting musician. See references in n. 127 above.
proxenic decree, Cleochares composed a paean, *prosodion* and *hymnos* for performance during the sacrifices at the Delphic Theoxenia. Yet the task of training and leading (or presenting) the boys’ chorus was given not to the hymnographer himself, but to another man, the *chorodidaskalos* appointed annually by the Delphic *polis*, a local official. Epigraphic evidence from the Hellenistic and especially Imperial periods suggests that this distinction between the two roles was regularly maintained in the context of competitive musical performance: *poëtai* could win crowns at Greek games, while *chorodidaskaloi* could not; for that reason, the members of the latter profession were also grouped with the so-called *synagônistai* (fellow-competitors or support-staff to the main *technitai*) in the Dionysian *synodoi*.²⁶⁷ There are instances already in Pindar’s epinicians where the wording seems to suggest a similar division of duties between the poet himself and a trainer of the chorus, which would imply that this was not a phenomenon of the later periods.²⁶⁸ At the same time, however, even in the Hellenistic period some poets also doubled as trainers. Amphicles of Delos, for instance, is honoured for both, composing a *prosodion* and teaching the citizens’ children (or sons) to sing it.²⁶⁹

Another detail of *Syll.*³ 698(A) that may appear odd at first glance is that no instrumental accompanists to the paean are named, even though the title of the hymn indicates that Limenios himself not only composed it but also played the *kithara* for the chorus. The decree (and the other two of its kind), divide the *synodos*’ contribution to the Pythais and its list of honoured *technitai* into two main parts, what might be termed the ritual and the entertainment components, respectively, keeping in mind the terms’ vagueness and anachronism. The first part lists those artists taking an active part in the procession and other ritual activities of the Pythais – namely, the ambassadors and the performers of the paean, including the chorus trainer. The second includes the participants in the *agônes* staged “to embellish the days of the god” (l. 20). As mentioned earlier, the same *technitai* sometimes had more than one role. Significantly, in his commentary on these inscriptions, Daux²⁷⁰ noticed that the way the artists are listed changes slightly from the older decree (the one being discussed here) and the other complete example, probably dating from 97 BCE.²⁷¹ The latter repeats the names of artists with multiple roles. So, for instance, eight kitharists and six auletes are listed as accompanists to the “great chorus”, and

²⁶⁷ Anziri in Hunter-Rutherford 2008: 223.
²⁶⁸ See n. 490 below.
²⁶⁹ *ID* 1497.
²⁷⁰ Daux 1936: 727.
²⁷¹ *FD* III 2:48.
three of these same musicians (all three auletes) are also listed as participants in the *thymelic* performances. The earlier decree did not list the accompanists separately if they were already named in the second part of the text. This implies that whatever auletes and kitharists played with the paeanic chorus in the procession also performed in the subsequent *agônes* and are thus hidden in this larger list of entertainers.

Only one, Limenios, named as one of the kitharists to give a concert, can be connected back specifically to the cult hymn. Yet in the text of Limenios’ paean and prosodion, in its description of the original Athenian act of hymning Apollo – the explicit mythological *aition* for the present paean – the *kithara* is joined by the Λἴβυς λωτὸς (the lybian pipe, 13). Furthermore, although the delegation of *technitai* in the Pythais of 97 BCE was larger than its earlier counter-part, it is difficult to believe that while the chorus of 43 was accompanied by eight kitharas and six pairs of *auloi*, one of 39 could do with a single kitharist. Instead, it should be imagined that the two auletes and several of the other six kitharists listed in *FD* III 2:47 likely played alongside Limenios in accompaniment to the cult hymn.

7  The Athenian *synodos* of Dionysian *technitai*

Limenios (as well as the other instrumentalists and chorists performing his hymns) was a member of the guild of professional musicians based in Athens. His own interests in this context, therefore, were closely identified with this organization. What were the interests of the Artists? Why did they join the Athenian delegation and spend, in their director’s own words, “no small amount of money” to participate in the Pythais of 128? To understand this it is necessary to know a bit more about this group and the critical situation in which it found itself around the time of this performance. The Athenian *synodos* of Dionysian artists was one of the earliest professional organizations in the Greek world. The first surviving reference to it is in ca. 278 BCE, from a decree by the Amphictyonic League. With this document, found in two inscriptions, one in Delphi the other in Athens, the Amphictyonic officials grant the Athenian *technitai* immunity, security and freedom from taxation and levies all over Greece. Recognized at home and abroad, the Artists were now safe and free to travel and perform anywhere in the

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273 *IG* II² 1132.
Greek world. This was crucial for the members, who were professional entertainers, men who made their living by competing in *agônes mousikoi* and sometimes also presenting concerts. Such a career required a high level of mobility.

The *synodos* was organized as a religious guild, with its own priests, festivals and sacrifices. It is this status that allowed it to function freely within and outside of its own home *polis*, in multiple municipalities and sanctuaries. At the same time, it was a micro-state, with administrative and financial magistrates, assembly and ambassadors. Thus it was able to operate independently of the polity in which it was based.274

It is important to remember that this was not the only way musicians could make a living, and that not all musicians were therefore members of such unions even when the latter had multiplied and grown in size. There were heralds, trumpeters and auletes employed by the state, including the Athenian state: some working in the military context, others attached to particular magistracies or priesthoods. Auletes and kitharists were also employed as teachers. More private occasions – funerals, weddings, family festivals, accompaniment for manual labour and athletics, among others – provided work for many musicians, especially auletes, who were probably not of the standing and skill required for the big games. *Hetairai* too were often trained musicians. And there were opportunities for poets and chorus-trainers to be hired or commissioned by wealthy patrons and *poleis*.275

For some professional entertainers such as chorists and actors, however, prizes (and occasional concert fees) were the main form of compensation. And for most artists, little else could match the income potentially available from competitions, provided they had the required talent and proficiency. The appropriate level of skill, at least later in the history of the *technitai*, had to be proven by a victory in *stephanitic* games. A member also had to be of the appropriate gender (male), status (freeborn) and specialization.276 Some, such as mimes and pantomimes, could not participate in Greek games and so could not join a *synodos*;277 others, the so-called *synagônistai* or support-staff, were indispensible for the contests but did not compete for prizes and therefore

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274 Csapo and Slater 1995: 240. For references on the *technitai*, see n. 95 above.
275 On the opportunities available for professional musicians in ancient Greece see Kemp 1966 and Bélis 1999.
276 Members had to be Greek but apparently did not need to be a citizen of any particular *polis*. The one apparently acception is in fact the Athenian *synodos*. See Le Guen 2001: v. 2, 41ff.
277 Csapo and Slater 1995: 239.
were not part of the guilds of *technitai*, although they did create their own organizations. There is evidence from the Roman period that a small entrance or registration fee was later required as well.\textsuperscript{278}

For those who qualified, membership offered several important advantages. One was job placement or agent-services, to use modern concepts. The guild sought out opportunities for performance or was sought out by festival organizers; it would handle all negotiation collectively in the name of its members and contract out entire teams of artists for competitions. So, for example, epigraphic documents survive that preserve the process whereby the Delphians recruited one such *synodos* – in this case a rival of the Athenian *technitai* – for the Soteria.\textsuperscript{279}

Nor were *poleis* and sanctuaries the only clients: the Arists also performed for, and received patronage, from Hellenistic monarchs and other wealthy aristocrats.\textsuperscript{280} Secondly, with the help of its collective bargaining power, a *synodos* was able to secure for its artists political and economic benefits, such as those provided by the Delphic decree above.

It is not surprising that this model was not limited to Athens. Three other major guilds were formed during the Hellenistic period – those of Isthmia and Nemea, Ionia and the Hellespont, and Egypt, respectively.\textsuperscript{281} In addition, there were smaller local groups, including one in Rhodes and several in Magna Graecia. The biggest rival to the Athenians in this early period was the *synodos* of the Isthmus and Nemea, the other major player in mainland Greece. This group is first attested around the same time as the Athenian *synodos*, ca. 279 BCE, once again in a Delphic inscription.\textsuperscript{282} This decree, however, is more modest than the universal protection offered by *IG II*\textsuperscript{2} 1132 for the Athenians: it is from the Delphian *polis*, not from the Amphictyon, and offers the Isthmian and Nemean Artist *promanteia, prohedria* and *prodikaia*, the staple privileges of many similar Delphic documents.

\textsuperscript{278} E.g., *pap.agón.3.16* (mid 3\textsuperscript{rd} c. CE): the document announces the enrolment of one Aerelius Atres and confirms that he has paid the required fees (ἀποδεδωκότα τὸ κατὰ τὸν νόμον βασιλικὸν ἐκ πλήρους δηνάρια) of the change in the name of its members and contract out entire teams of artists for competitions. So, for example, epigraphic documents survive that preserve the process whereby the Delphians recruited one such *synodos* – in this case a rival of the Athenian *technitai* – for the Soteria.

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\textsuperscript{281} On the history of the various *synodos*, see Le Guen (2001) v.2, 5-40.

\textsuperscript{282} *Syll.* 460.
It was perhaps inevitable for these two powerful organizations, competing for jobs, to come to heads sooner or later. The synodos of competitors in Isthmia and Nemean was based in the territory of the Achaean League, so the crushing defeat of the league and the sack of Corinth in 146 BCE should perhaps have been a blow to the corporation; however, the Romans immediately confirmed the rights of the Isthmian technitai. The odds were more or less balanced between them and the Athenians. It is difficult to determine when the conflict began, since most of our information comes from a senatus consultum that marks its final resolution in 112 BCE.283 This document refers back to two earlier Roman rulings on the case – in 130 (or 128) and 118, respectively. The issue seems to have concerned Delphi and/or the Pythian Games in some way. Also, the final decree of the senate was set up at Delphi. Therefore, the Delphians were at the centre of the conflict; their city and sanctuary was the battlefield in the war between the two most powerful organizations of artists. There is nothing surprising about this: after all, this was not only a Panhellenic site, but also the location of the most important musical festivals in the Greek world, the Soteria as well as the Pythia. Thus the polis of Delphi and the Amphictyony were two key players in the conflict.

The Pythais of 128 BCE and the performance of Limenios’ hymns that were part of it occurred during this crucial time for the synodos of Athenian technitai. As observed by Bélis in her commentary on the two Delphic hymns,284 this occasion coincides with the period which was apparently a turning point of Delphic attitudes to this organization and their rivals. Before at least 128 BCE, Delphi appears to have favoured the Isthmian and Nemean technitai. Two documents point in this direction. Sometime between 145 and 125 BCE, the Delphians sent three ambassadors to the Isthmian synodos, inviting them to perform at the Soteria, to which the Artists respond by staging concerts free of charge.285 In 134 or perhaps 130 BCE, the Amphictyonic Council renewed the rights granted to the Athenian technitai back in 278/7 BCE. The decree, however, stresses that the renewal was enacted in response to a petition by ambassadors from the synodos. No language of praise – common in such decrees – is used and

285 See n. 279 above.
no additional privileges are added. Furthermore, the decree closes with an important qualification: the old terms are being renewed as long as the Romans do not have any objections. This is in stark contrast to a similar document from the Amphictyonies dating to sometime between 124 and 117 BCE. This longer decree praises both Athens and the *synodos* in florid terms, adds further privileges – the right to wear crowns and golden robes in all cities of Greece – and no qualifications. Moreover, it adds that the *synodos* as a whole and the ambassadors sent to Delphi on this occasion are to be crowned and their honours are to be announced the Pythian Games.

Clearly the relations between Delphi and the Athenian *technitai* had changed since 134/0 BCE. One of the things that happened in the meanwhile was the collective participation, in 128 BCE, of the Artists in the *Pythais*, a *theòria* that was itself re-inaugurated by the Athenian *polis* ten years prior. Surely these tangible and generous demonstrations of commitment to the Delphic sanctuary and the cult of Pythian Apollo played an important role in fostering the change. In an interesting detail, the proxenic decree honouring the artists for their contribution to the 128/7 Pythais mentions that, according to the guild’s director, *epimeletês*, they “spent not a small amount on this,” an important reminder that Limenios’ hymn is part of a costly investment by a growing professional organization, an investment that certainly aims at benefiting the interests of the technitai in relation to Athens, Delphi and the Greek world at large. The turn-around in the relations between the *synodos* and Delphi was not only welcome to the *technitai* but was probably precisely what they had hoped and intended to achieve with their contribution to the Athenian theoric delegation.

In the conflict between the two *synodoi*, Delphi and the Amphictyony were two highly influential parties. At least as important, however, was another – Rome. The qualification appended to the Amphictyonic treaty of 134 BCE suggests not only the cold relationship between Delphi and the Athenian *synodos* at the time, but also the growing direct involvement of the Roman republic in all aspects of Greek affairs. The final resolution of the case involving the two groups of Dionysian artists by a *senatus consultum* in 112 BCE was not the first time Rome

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286 *CID* 4:117 = *FD* III 2:69.
287 The significance of their participation here is amplified if, as is likely, they did not make a contribution in the previous Pythais, or at least did not participate in full force. On the question of the Pythais of 138 BCE and the hymn of Athenaios, see n. 251.
was drawn into the quarrel. Before this, each synodos in turn appealed to Roman authority for a resolution. At first, consul (or praetor) Publius Cornelius Lentulus took the side of the Isthmian synodos in 130 (or 128) BCE. The Athenians then sent ambassadors to the Roman proconsul in Pella, Macedonia C. Cornelius Sisenna, with accusations against their Isthmian rivals. The proconsul backed the Athenian technitai in a decree datable to 118 BCE. When the Isthmians continued to act contrary to this ruling, the Athenians sent ambassadors to the senate of Rome and obtained a confirmation of the proconsular decree; this senatus consultum is dated to 112 BCE. Although the exact details of this case are not clear, what comes through is just how important the Roman support was at this time for both guilds.

Once again, the date of the Pythais when the Athenian technitai sang Limenios’ paean and prosodion in Delphi – 128 BCE – comes at a crucial point, just as the conflict is escalating and following a Roman ruling unfavourable to the Athenian side. In this uncertain period the Artists need to get Rome on their side. The next time Rome is presented with the issue, it backs Athens. Of course the synodos’ participation in the Pythais of 128 BCE cannot be credited with this shift the way it probably can be with the change of heart seen at Delphi. However, in reading Limenios’ hymns, this dependence on Roman backing cannot be forgotten.

It must also be remembered that the polis of Athens, represented at the Pythais by a large contingent made up of many segments of Athenian populace, clergy and administration, is a separate interested party. The participation of the synodos is not automatic, as is evidenced by its absence from the first Pythais in 138 BCE. It is important to remember that the association is in effect a mini-polis within a polis, with its own offices, priests and assembly; it makes its own decisions and can interact directly with poleis, kings and other associations. The Artists’ contribution to the Athenian embassy is voluntary and as much a gift to their own home city as to Delphi and to Apollo. By their involvement – particularly their choral hymnic performance and the shows that follow the main procession and sacrifices - the theôria is greatly embellished, a fact that would have been appreciated by the Athenian authorities and citizens alike.

Aside from any patriotic desire to honour their homeland, the technitai would have wanted to preserve good terms with the powers of the Athenian polis, to maintain the recognition of their

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288 On Rome’s role as mediator in this dispute, see Morstein Kallet-Marx 1995: 150-2.
special semi-independent status and their many privileges. In addition, although the *synodos* is gaining quite an international influence in its own right, it can nonetheless benefit from the support of Athens in its dealings with other cities and powers abroad. The conflict with the Isthmian *synodos* is a good example of this. When, in spite of the ruling of Sisenna in 118 BCE, the rival *technitai* continued to cause problems for their fellow artists, the Athenians appealed for support to Rome. This embassy of 112 BCE, which was successful in obtaining Roman senatorial confirmation of the earlier ruling in favour of the Athenian *synodos*, was led by representatives of Athenian administration, not the *technitai*. In other words, the city itself came to the Artists’ defence and spoke on their behalf in Rome. The eagerness of the *technitai* to contribute generously to the Pythais of 128 BCE, to glorify and adorn their *polis* before the Panhellenic audience in Delphi, may have helped sustain their mutually-beneficial relationship.

9 The multiple functions of Limenios’ paean

The case of Limenios shows just how intricate a network of stakeholders the production of a cult hymn can involve. It may now be considered how the interests and objectives of the various parties involved are incorporated into the traditional language of the hymn, or how the hymnographer manipulates the conventional hymnic elements to suit multiple objectives.

In her treatment of Limenios’ paean and *prosodion*, M. Vamvouri seems to recognize at least implicitly the presence of multiple functions at play simultaneously within the text.\(^{289}\) The hymn’s main objective or one of them, according to her view, is to promote Athens on the Panhellenic stage: to establish a firm connection between Athens and the cult of Pythian Apollo; and to reposition Athens, now under Rome’s control, as an ancient (autochthonic), peaceful, agrarian community. Mythological variation is a key means of achieving this end. Like Kowalzig, Vamvouri focuses on the manipulation of mythological material as an essential tool used by the hymnographer.\(^ {290}\) However, Vamvouri does not limit herself to aetiological myth alone and recognized the presence of several functions present in the central part of the hymn. Most notably, quoting an earlier work of Furley, she accepts that this central section of the hymn is in part acting as an argument for the prayer; it is designed to persuade Apollo to grant the

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\(^{289}\) Vamvouri 1998.  
\(^{290}\) Kowalzig 2007.
specific requests made at the end of the hymn. In other words, in addition to the political objectives on the part of the Athenian polity, the religious functions of the hymn are likewise recognized.

It is Vamvouri’s approach that is closest to the theoretical and methodological perspective behind the present study, although there are important differences in the conclusions about Limenios and the aims of his hymn. One important departure concerns the precise characterization of the Athenian aims or claims as interpreted by Vamvouri, especially the idea that Athens is trying to present itself specifically as a peaceful agricultural city in contrast to Rome’s military power. More importantly, however, there is more to be said about this song and its functions, the text beyond the middle section, the context of performance, immediate and historical, and especially about the other stakeholders in the hymn, their interests and the way these too are represented within Limenios’ work. Furthermore, the religious-rhetorical function and the traditional quality of the hymn, is not just one level of interpretation or one function among others, which seems to be implied by Vamvouri’s reading; rather, it is a prerequisite for any other claims or messages embedded in the hymn. Unless the primary religious-rhetorical function of the hymn – to establish charis between mortals and the specific god being praised – is seen to be fulfilled, any other intended messages will fall flat.

Limenios was careful to balance these several aims and requirements. His paean and prosodion ring true as an example of its genre: its structure, flow of topoi and language are traditional and reminiscent of many other surviving Greek hymns; and through the careful manipulation of this traditional form he is able not only to present proper praise of Apollo but also to get across ideas important to other, mortal, stakeholders. These, most significantly, included the administration and populace of Athens (many of whom were there in Delphi for the occasion), the Delphic hosts, the Roman republic, the professional guild of Athenian Artists, and the crowds gathered at the sanctuary from all over the Greek world.
9.1 The text of Limenios’ hymn

After briefly outlining the larger movements of the text and pointing out the traditional hymnic elements the present section will discuss how the latter are used or manipulated in the hands of the hymnographer to the service of the various stakeholders of the production and their aims.

The song opens with a cletic invocation of the Muses, asking them to come to the place of performance – Mt. Parnassus, which is being used as a metonym for Delphi. There is a metaperformative reference in the request for the Muses to lead or start “my hymns.” With the final element in the opening petition for divine assistance, the main subject of the hymn is identified: Pythian Apollo, who is further modified with other epithets including eulyras. The relative pronoun hon then creates the transition between the occasion and mythological narrative as well as between the invocation and the central part of the hymn.

The so called pars media or argumentum of the hymn consists mostly of mythological scenes, interrupted once with a re-iterated invocation. The myths are arranged more or less chronologically: birth on Delos received with joy by the whole world; arrival at Athens; defeat of the Python, probably Tityos and the Gauls. Leto gives birth on Delos while holding on to an olive tree. The whole world rejoices and the air and sea are calmed. Leaving Delos, Apollo goes first of all to Attica, where he is welcomed with music. The aulos, kithara and the Paeanic call are combined in this mythological, magical performance. Apollo rejoices and recognizes in this the will of Zeus. The mythological narrative is here briefly interrupted to make an aetiological point -- “that’s why from that time we call upon Paean” – and to make a transition back again to Delphi by a direct cletic re-invocation of Apollo, inviting him to the place of performance.

The rest of the mythological action takes place here, in or around Delphi and represents an aretalogy of the god. Apollo puts on a laurel wreath on his oiled hair and sets down the foundation for his sanctuary. He then faces three violent and savage opponents: the Python son of Gaea, probably Tityos who tried to rape Leto, and the barbarian Ares, which is a reference to the Gauls who tried (or perhaps even did) plunder Delphi in 280/79 BCE but were defeated with the help of a thunderstorm and/or earthquake. Although the background to the last episode is a historical event, the focus here is on the apparently miraculous natural forces attributed to
Apollo; therefore, the victory is mythologized and included in the catalogue of Apollo’s accomplishments.

An abrupt shift is signalled with the word *alla* in line 35, which, along with the ὃ introducing the last invocation, creates the transition to the final part of the hymn – the prayer. The prayer is addressed to the Apollonian or Delian trinity – Apollo, Artemis and Leto - and consists of four separate petitions on behalf of four groups: the Athenians, the Delphians, the Athenian *technitai* and the Romans.

### 9.2 Traditional elements

In overall structure, the hymn follows the standard tripartite pattern – invocation, praise and prayer. The two forms of invocation used by Limenios – an indirect declaration of the *laudandus* through an invocation of the Muses; and a direct address to the divine recipient – are both well-attested and traditional in the hymnic corpus, as discussed in the previous chapter. The cletic hymn is also an ancient and common form of religious discourse.

The movement from invocation to praise or myth using the relative pronoun and from the middle section to the prayer with *alla* or *allo* ὃ, are popular transitional formulae that would have been readily recognizable to the audience as clear signposts.

First person meta-performative references like “our hymns” in Limenios’ opening are likewise frequent in other hymns. When hymns include a final prayer, it is normally in the form of a direct second-person address. General requests like “save” and “be kindly” are the norm in surviving cult hymns, much more common than requests describing specific intervention required in the particular situation the speaker finds himself in, which are more characteristic in hymns embedded within drama for example or a dramatic situation of a lyric poem.

The use of epithets and other qualifiers in references, especially invocations to a god, is a customary way employed by hymns to ensure the correct and specific identification of the subject and/or addressee. Thus Apollo is called *Pythios* and he “who holds the tripod”, and the Muses are identified as Pierian and those “who dwell on Heliconian rocks.” Epithets and relative clauses often refer to attributes, favourite haunts, genealogy and powers of the god; along with
mythological episodes, these honorifics are at the same time some of the more common forms of praise employed in Greek hymns.

Finally, the use of aetiological myth to justify and explain the present ritual is a traditional and powerful tool at the hymnographer’s disposal, analyzed in detail by Kowalzig, as I mentioned already.

The hymn has some features that are recognizably paeanic. There has been much discussion about the genre of paean, but some features are traditionally associated with and commonly shared by the extant examples, even if they are not universal. Performance by a chorus of men or youths, addressed to Apollo or closely related deities, aimed to obtain aid or more specifically salvation or to offer thanks once aid has been received. All of these are true of Limenios’ song: note for example that the first two prayers ask for the gods to save and keep safe the communities that are addressing them. Additionally, one of the most clear generic signals is the title Paean and the Paeanic call ἴε Paian. The title is certainly there: when in line 18 the speaker says that “since that beginning we have been calling upon Paean”, the present instance is certainly being included in this statement. The paeanic signature call or epiphthegma is suggested for the lacuna of line 15, where the text breaks off after the reference to some shout or sound heard by Apollo, accompanied by aulos and kithara. Some version of the Paeanic call or title seems to be required by the logic of the following lines: the speaker very explicitly says that it is because of “this” (the original musical performance including the shout in line 15) that “we call on Paean.”

The traditional structure, content and language give the song the feel of an authentic hymn and paean. When the audience recognizes the traditional features – consciously or otherwise – they become assured that what they are hearing is a genuine song for the gods.

9.3 The religious-rhetorical function

But the hymn also needs to be seen to successfully accomplish its basic religious function within its ritual context – pleasing the god through proper praise and artistic embellishment. For praise to seem proper it needs to suit the specific cult, the setting and occasion. Limenios’ hymn is a
gift to Apollo Pythios at Delphi as part of a theoric offering by the Athenians. Two deictic references to “this Parnassos” (lines 1 and 22, respectively) point to the Delphic setting. The references not only to Mt. Parnassos, but also to the Python, the laurel, the oracle and tripod, the sanctuary and temple, the omphalos, and less directly the Pythia and Soteria games, all emphasize that this offering and performance are firmly set within Delphic religious landscape. More than half of the mythological episodes are likewise located in or around Delphi, and the final prayer is in part made on the behalf of the Delphians themselves.

The first time the divine laudandus is declared, in the opening invocation, he is introduced as Pythios. In the second invocation he is called “oracle singer” and “you who hold the tripod.” These titles and descriptions strengthen the specific identification of the god as Pythian Apollo. In lines 18-9, within the pars media of the hymn, the performers identify themselves as Athenians, thereby signalling the theoric context of the song. The prayer on behalf of Athens and the prominent role of Attica in the mythological material acts to emphasize the status of the hymn as an offering brought to Delphi from Athens. Apollo’s own original arrival to the site of Delphi from Attica mirrors the course taken by the Athenian pilgrims themselves on this very occasion. The other honorific epithets applied to Apollo, and the mythological episodes – the joyful reception of his birth, the celebratory welcome in Attica and especially the aretalogy that outlines his victories against savage enemies – all add to the praise of Apollo.

The most powerful assurance of the hymn’s success as a pleasing offering to the god comes with the aetiological performance in lines 13-7.291 The performance serves as a model for the real present performance of Limenios’ hymn; or to put it another way, Limenios designs the internal mythical performance to reflect the external performance of his own hymn. In the myth, Apollo is welcomed by a paean sung by the Athenians – or the land of Athens itself – to the accompaniment of kithara and aulos. In reality, Apollo is being offered a paean sung by a chorus of Athenians – explicitly born of that land (autochthonôn) – to the accompaniment of kithara and aulos. This is an instance of what scholars have termed “choral projection” where the performing chorus assimilates its own identity with that of another group of performers, often mythological or divine but at any rate absent from the actual occasion.292 In the mythological scene, Apollo

291 For similar embedded aetiological performances see, e.g., Hh. Merc. 425ff and Hh. Pan 14ff
292 Henrich (1995 and 1996) discusses this phenomenon in Greek tragedy but the term is likewise applicable to cases
recognizes the will of Zeus in this welcome at Attica, which is already a powerful seal of approval for that performance and any future re-instantiations. Perhaps more importantly, Apollo himself rejoices. Thus the performance in the myth has the effect which every hymn aims to produce – the favour of the divine recipient. And the claim that the original and originating Athenian paean obtained this success is a good sign, a guarantee that the present offering will likewise please Apollo and create *charis* between him and the worshipping community.

Not all hymns have a prayer, but those that do sometimes exhibit a close connection between the praise of the middle part and the petition at the end. In other words, the *pars media* can be used as an *argumentum* for the final prayer, and this can be an additional religious-rhetorical function beyond the more general creation of *charis*. For example, the aretalogy in lines 23-35 recalls Apollo’s protection of Delphi in the past, and thus offers the basis for his protection of the Delphians in the future, which is one of the requests of the final prayer. The original warm reception of Apollo at Athens, and the continued worship of him as Paean, Healer, by the Athenians and the *techmitai* which extends even to the present performance (9-20) justify the petition for his salvation and kindness to these two related groups.

### 9.4 Athens and Delos

The traditional feel of the hymn and the performance of the basic religious aim of hymn as such are what give a cult song like this the power to convey additional messages and accomplish further functions that reflect the interests of the various stakeholders involved.

Most generally speaking, the Athenians, not only in this hymn but also in the renewal of the Pythais *theòria*, are reminding the Greek world about themselves, after a period of relative obscurity and subjugation to Macedon. They are once again on the Panhellenic cultural, religious and political stage. More specifically, what really comes through in the text is Athens’ claim of her ancient and constant dedication to ancient cults, to Panhellenic sanctuaries, and more particularly to Delphi, Delos and the cult of Apollo. Recall Mikalson’s observation, mentioned earlier, of an overall decline in Apollonian worship at Athens around the time of Macedonian
take-over, the same time that the Pythais embassies apparently stopped as well. What is interesting is that the resumption of the Pythais also coincides with a wider revival in the worship of Apollo. For example, there is an inscription containing a decree re-establishing the cult; it is datable to the third quarter of the second century BC, contemporaneous with the first two late-Hellenistic Pythais.\(^{293}\)

For the Athenians, the grand *theôria* of 128 BCE is an opportunity to publicize their piety. This comes out most clearly in the hymnic text is the aetiological scene. Incorporating a mythological model within the hymn connects the *hie et nunc* of the present occasion to *illud tempus*, the time of beginnings, when all that is now was established and formed. To apply the framework developed by Kowalzig, by performing the mythological event in ritual, the chorus closes the gap (temporal, conceptual and/or spatial) between the inaugural authoritative event and the act of its re-performance: the two become the same, and thereby the present actions gain the authority of antiquity. This authority or power allows for the communications of messages, the making of claims, through the manipulation and innovation of the mythological material without in a sense being caught doing it, without losing that power of tradition or religious authority.

The version of Apollo’s early career that includes a stop-over in Attica between his birth on Delos and arrival at Delphi is not common. It does not, for instance, feature in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo or Callimachus’ hymns to Apollo or Delos. It is not original to Limenios: Aeschylus already includes it in his *Eumenides* (9-14). Apparently, it is a particularly Athenian variation of the myth. By naming Attica as the first place visited by the god after his birth, this variant gives the city place of pride in Apollonian myth and potentially in his cult as well.

Limenios’ mythological scene however does more than this for Athens. It provides an aetiological basis for the practice of singing hymns, and more specifically paeans, for Apollo, and even for application of the cult title of Paian to the god. Note that this is an alternative aetiology to the one found in a much older text, the Homeric hymn to Apollo, where Apollo himself recruits Cretan sailors to be his priests and instructs them to sing the paean for him (390-520). In another version, Callimachus’ Hymn to Apollo, the paean’s aetiology and etymology is provided by the story that Delphians cried *hie hie paieon* to encourage Apollo as he shot down

the Python with his arrows (21).\textsuperscript{294} Limenios’ version locates the inaugural event in Attica; Athens is thus given the honour of being the first to sing a paean (or any hymn) to Apollo and to call him Paian. And this originating event is reaffirmed by Zeus and Apollo.

Limenios makes the aetiological point behind the scene explicit with the words “this is why from that time we call upon Paean, the whole people of autochthones.” The effect is to draw a continuous line between this pre-historical or extra-historical inaugural precedent stretching seamlessly to the present moment, thus making a claim for the Athenians’ constant and uninterrupted dedication to Apollonian cult, a claim that is important for Athens to make after the apparent decline in the worship of Apollo at home, relative isolation from Delphi and Delos, and the abandonment of such traditional rites as the Pythais itself for a considerable period in the early Hellenistic period.\textsuperscript{295}

In addition to the idea of Athenian dedication to the cult of Apollo, Limenios makes another claim about the position of Athens with respect to the two main Panhellenic seats of Apollo, Delphi and Delos. If the geographical movement of Apollo in the hymn is conceptualized, this claim becomes apparent: from Delos, to Athens, to Delphi. Athens is mythologically situated between Delos and Delphi as a link connecting them to each other. With the reconstitution, under Athenian supervision, of the Amphictyonic Council and the restoration of Delos by Rome, Athens has regained significant influence at both sites, and especially on Delos. Thus, the mythological arrangement in the hymn may be intended to reflect the image Athens wished to propagate about its continued or renewed leading role in religious politics in general and with respect to Apollonian religion in particular.

The Delian aspect of Apollonian identity and cult is prominent in the hymn. The birth myth is situated on Delos. The next episode re-emphasizes Delos with the words “leaving the isle of Kynthia”, thus drawing the trajectory between Delos and Athens. The final prayer is addressed not to Apollo alone but also to Artemis and Leto; the three gods are particularly important in Delian cult of Apollo – they are sometimes called the Delian trinity. Leto is mentioned several


\textsuperscript{295} The emphasis on tradition and continuity can also be seen in the honorific inscriptions related to the Hellenistic Pythais: Rutherford 2004: n. 52.
more times throughout the hymn: the middle section opens with Leto; Apollo is called the son of Leto in the Python scene; one of the victories in the aretalogy is against Tityos who tried to rape Leto. The replacement of the more typical palm tree with olive in the birth scene here may be original to Limenios and is another attempt to create a connection between the Delian Cult and Athens. It is possible that this Delian aspect of the hymn is meant to reaffirm Athens’ role as the representative of the Delian cult (Delos being now part of its territory) and strengthen the connection between the two sanctuaries via Athens.

9.5 The swarm of technitai

In the aetiological passage, after making the explicit connection between the mythological performance and Athenian paean-worship, Limenios goes one step further and adds the synodos of Athenian Artists to the formulation: “that is why and from this beginning we call on Paian, the whole people of autochthones and the sacred swarm of technitai dwelling in the city of Cecrops.” (17-20). It is important to discuss the synodos as a separate stakeholder or party within the hymn and the performance context, since, as indicated already, it was a state within a state and could and did act independently of the polis within which it was based. It used its own funds to make a voluntary contribution to the Pythais in 128/7 BCE, partly to support its homeland to be sure, but also for its own interests. Although the Athenian synodos is only some one hundred and fifty years old, the hymn in this aetiological passage nonetheless asserts its connection to an ancient past. By including them in the first person plural of the present kiklêskomen, the technitai are incorporated into the tradition extending back to the original event. The fact that it is the technitai who are performing the present paean is thus granted aetiological validation. The mythological precedent is set not just for Athenian worship of Apollo Paean but for the Artists’ role in this worship as well.

Lines 18-20 also advertise or emphasize the identification of the speaker. In the invocation, the first person plural in “our hymns” referred to the performers; now the performers identify themselves as Athenians (we, the whole people of autochthones) but also more specifically as members of the synodos of Athenian technitai. The Artists are advertising themselves, their organization, their presence here at Delphi, and their own independent contribution to the Pythais and the cult of Delphian Apollo.
Note also the choice of some of the epithets in the hymn. Parnassos in the opening is described as *philochoron* (if the restitution is correct), characterizing Delphi as a traditional site of choral song and thus an appropriate setting for the present performance, but also making a link between the musicians singing the present chorus and Delphi. A few lines later (4) Apollo is called *eulyras*, pointing to his role as a musician, almost a colleague of the *technitai*. He plays the lyre to the chorus of the Muses, and Limenios plays his kithara to accompany the great chorus of the Athenian Artists in Apollo’s honour.296

There are possibly also some allusions to two of the main festivals featuring musical contest in Delphi and really in the whole Greek world. The defeat of the Python is the foundation myth for the Pythian Games. The description of Apollo crowning himself with laurel before his contest with the monster may be intended to evoke the same practice among contemporary contestants at the Pythia.297 The defeat of the Gauls, on the other hand, may be pointing in the direction of the Soteria, a festival established by the Amphictyonic League to commemorate the divine deliverance, and reorganized by the Aetolians as an iso-Pythian penteteric crown festival in 246/5 BCE.298 It soon became almost as or even as famous and important as the Pythia itself. This was the festival to which the Delphians had invited the Isthmian-Nemean *synodos* – but apparently not the Athenian *synodos* – in the recent past. Overall, the hymn is presenting Delphi as a seat of *mousikê* and of competitive music, the home to a divine patron of music and the arts. These are all lines connecting the place of performance and the performers themselves, the professional musicians of Athens.

In the final section of the paean, the *technitai* are not appended to the prayer for Athens, as merely part of the *laos*, but have a distinct prayer separated by the intervening prayer for Delphi. They are once again advertising their own presence, contribution, and identity as connected to but at the same time independent of the Athenian *polis*.

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296 Similarities between deity and performer can bring the two closer together in the ritual act of communion. The Erythraean paean describes the performers explicitly as *kouroi*, a status that may be intended gives them a special affinity to Apollo, the eternal *kouros*, and his son. The relationship is made more explicit by Makedonikos, who uses the term for both the chorus and Asclepius. Vamvouri Ruffy (2004: 101) sees this as an “argument supplémentaire.”

297 Furley and Bremer 2001: 98.

298 Raschke 1988: 137.
9.6 Delphi: praising the host

The abundant references to the religious landscape of Delphi, used to localize the performance firmly within local cult, have already been noted above. For example, the reference to the laurel crown is a signal that both the god and the hymn are moving from Athens, the land of grain and olive, to Delphi. These references are also part of the language aimed to praise and please the Delphians. In particular, there is a message about the special relationship of Delphi to the god, not only in situating many of the mythological episodes there but in other ways as well. The titles and descriptions applied to Apollo identify him as Delphian Apollo and link him with Pythian cult – Pythios, he who holds the tripod, oracle-singer, among others. Parnassos, a metonym for Delphi as a whole, is described with honorific epithets. *theostibea* and *philentheon* (21-22) which point to its special connection to the gods and above all Apollo (who in the language of Delphic religion is simply *theos*). The Delphians can claim Apollo as their special guardian. This is what the hymn communicates through the aretalogy.

The inclusion of the last episode, referring to Apollo’s intervention against the Gauls in 280 BCE, is particularly notable. The miraculous triumph over the Gauls and salvation of the sanctuary from barbarian plunder soon became a keynote event in the Greek and especially the Delphic imagination. It was for the Delphians what the defeat of the Persians was for the Athenians – a significant Panhellenic victory, but especially important to the construction of Panathenaic identity. Perhaps the most clear sign of just how central Gaulic defeat was in the Pythian civic and religious life is the Soteria festival, which was by this time as important a feature in the Delphic religious calendar as the Pythia.

Due to this special relationship with Apollo, The Delphians can expect the god’s continued protection and this is what the prayer asks on their behalf: to keep the Delphians and their children safe in their homes.
9.7 Last but not least: Rome

The discussion of the historical context has indicated that the Romans were not only a significant power in the region generally speaking but had a specific influential relationship with each of the other principal stakeholders involved, Athens, Delphi and the *synodos*.

Rome is not incorporated into the rest of the hymn – perhaps inserting them into Apollonic or Delphic myth and landscape would have cost the hymn that genuine feeling of traditional song that is so important to its communicative power. Yet Rome closes the hymn and receives the longest, most specific and elaborate prayer.

Limenios’ fairly complex prayer reflects the intricacies of the occasion as discussed above – a situation where there are multiple competing stakeholders and interests, where the performers represent themselves as well as their community, where the performance takes place in a different community than that represented by the speaking voice of the hymn, and where all other stakeholders – with the possible exception of the god himself – are now politically subject to yet another overarching power-structure. Thus something which in a less complicated context might be as simple as “Apollo, be kindly to us” vel sim., is here expanded to include four individual appeals for four groups, each with its own interests.

The particular wording of each part of the prayer is worth a closer look. The city of Athens and its people receive perhaps the simplest and most traditional petition: “save.” The opportunity is however taken to add further praise of the performers’ home, by calling Athens *theoktistos* and its people *kleinos*. The prayer for the Delphians is more specifically to keep them and their children safe in their homes, which is in line with the kind of aid offered by the god in the Delphic aretalogy of the middle section: he brought safety to the land and its people by vanquishing violent and savage enemies. The *technitai* have their own prayer, distinct from that made for Athens. The request is quite generic – “come kindly.”

The prayer for Rome, on the other hand, is specific and elaborate: the gods are asked to “increase the power of the Romans with ageless vigour, thriving and victorious” (46-50).
It is tempting to speculate whether there is a connection being suggested here, in the ending prayer, between *pherenikan*, used to described Rome, and *hieronikaisin* qualifying the *technitai*: as themselves victors in sacred contests, the Artists recognize and honour the Romans as their fellows in victory.

10 Conclusions

Athenian *technitai* are the composers, performers and financiers of the hymnic offering that is the paean and *prosodion* of Limenios. Thus, even if the Athenian *polis* and to a lesser extent the Delphian might have had some input into the performance or even the text of the song, it is still primarily the product of the *synodos* and reflects its interests and its portrayals of itself, its city, Delphi and Rome. Above all, the artists wish to maintain the support of Athens and obtain greater recognition and support from Delphi and Rome, particularly in light of the ongoing contest with a rival corporation. It is thus imperative for them to prove on this Panhellenic stage that not only their city but also their guild is dedicated to Delphi and to the cult of Pythian Apollo, and to demonstrate that they are a significant and positive presence in the musical scene.

Yet the analysis has wider significance. Above all, it illustrates the ability of a hymnographer to effectively balance several potentially competing functions within a single composition, and to do this by manipulating but without jeopardizing the traditional form and language of the hymn, and while also maintaining its primary religious role as a pleasing dedication to a god imbedded within a larger ritualized event. Limenios’ paean is also a testament to the ability of a poetic text to become a powerful agent in a wider (historical, religious, etc.) development or event. Limenios’ hymn is not merely an embellishment added to the ritual sequence that is the Pythais *theòria* but one of its key components – elements that construct the sense of a ritualized occasion. The efforts of the Athenians to reaffirm their central position in Panhellenic religion and those of the *technitai* to gain the upper hand in their ongoing conflict with a rival guild are not merely part of Limenios’ background – his hymn is among these efforts. The next two chapters will demonstrate that this kind of active interaction between the language of a cult hymn and its context is not unique among Greek cult hymns.
Chapter 5
Hymnographers’ Manipulation of Traditional Form

1 Introduction

One of the central aims of hymns as hymns is to create a charis connection with a deity, to satisfy a divine subject, by means of a pleasing display and appropriate praise. In addition to this broad general purpose, however, the Greek hymn was often required to accomplish other aims, connected to the particular set of parties involved and their respective interests. The choices made by the composer, then, were often influenced by a number of competing objectives and the final form of his product should be viewed with this important fact in mind. The previous chapters have outlined the kinds of stakeholders that are frequently involved in a cult hymn production as well as the formal features which constitute the traditional resources for the composers of these songs. The analysis of Limenios’ paean and prosodion demonstrated how one Greek hymnographer was able to manipulate such traditional features in a way that reflected the aims of multiple parties without jeopardizing the familiar feel and fundamental religious function expected of a cult song.

Limenios’ paean, the subject of the previous chapter, is quite unique for the sheer volume of available evidence that allows the reconstruction of the the immediate and historical contexts of its performance. Yet fortunately it is not the only extant cult hymn, and some other surviving examples can be contextualized to a certain degree. The discussion can therefore be expanded: the present chapter will investigate the different strategies used by Greek hymnographers to shape traditional material in order to suit their particular contexts. It will be considered to what extent the pressures, functions and methods observed in the case of Limenios are at play in the wider sample. What soon becomes apparent is that there is considerable variety even within the small number of the extant cult hymns. They range extensively in terms of the complexity of the stakeholder network involved, the presence or strength of competing functions within the text, the level of localization, and degree of innovation or conservatism in the form and language of the hymn. There is nothing necessary about these particular parameters of course, and others could be included, such as the type of musical arrangement or the complexity of meter. The
categories chosen here, however, all touch on the central questions of this dissertation – what hymns aim to do and how they go about doing it. The parameters are therefore also closely interconnected and will inevitably overlap and correlate as they are applied to specific examples. A complex network of parties with an interest in a hymnic performance will usually also lead to the functions beyond the praise of a deity, as well as to greater innovation. However, such correlations are not linear – the way they manifest themselves is complicated – and not guaranteed. As the study moves away from Limenios and his paean it will become clear that his was a particularly intricate situation, with an extremely complex network of stakeholders and competing objectives. The hymnographer introduced some innovations to the mythological section of his work, but also made certain that the overall feel of the hymn remained familiarly traditional in language and structure. Using deictic anchors as well as allusions and references to local religious landscape, the hymn was rooted firmly in Delphi, its place of performance; this acts as a counterweight to the highly Athenocentric strain in some parts of the hymn.

2 Athenaios’ paean and prodosion

The first Delphic hymn, probably by Athenaios,299 was probably composed for same occasion as that of Limenios. Thus the constraints and objectives discussed in the preceding case study apply equally well to both of these theoric pieces; and this similarity is reflected in the parallels between the two texts. Athenaios, like Limenios, opens with a cletic invocation to the muses, identifies the subject and transitions to the central section with a relative pronoun. Strong deictic language (4, 17) links the performance to Delphi, while references to the Kastallian spring, Mt. Parnassus, Delphic women, the tripod and oracle, Python and Apollo’s interception against the Gauls both further localize the performance and honour the host city. The use of the phrase κιθαρίσει κλυτόν (16, famed for kithara-playing), like eulyras in Limenios, is probably meant to establish a fellowship between the professional artist and Apollo as the patron of the arts. This impression is strengthened by the fact that in both cases, the musical attribute appears within a meta-performative utterance that draws attention not only to the musical activity itself but also the identity of the performers as musicians.

299 FD III 2:137. For the relationship between the two hymns, see references in n. 258 above.
Athens and the *synodos* are once again both prominent in the hymn, at least in the *eulogia* (the final section, prayer, is largely missing), but their connection to the cult of Apollo is less clear than in the second hymn. Limenios employed mythological innovation in order to situate Athens in the center of Apollonian worship and provide an aetiological foundation for the *synodos*’ role in the paeanic performance. In Athenaios, Athens is presented as a pious city that honours its gods with sacrifice and hymns, but this activity is connected to Athena and Hephaestus, not Apollo. Likewise, the singers identify themselves as *technitai* who have come to from Athens to celebrate Apollo, but there is no clear link to an aetiological precedent and native Athenian tradition of Apollo-worship or paean-singing. The proximity between the two scenes suggests comparison and further connection is provided by the emphasis on musical activity in both as well as by specific verbal echoes - Ἀθθίς - Ἀθθίδα, κίθαρις - κιθαρίσει. The logic here is clear: Athens is dedicated to the traditional rituals for the gods, including the singing of hymns, and so the artists of its city are here to offer a hymn for Apollo. Yet both the aetiological argument and the geographical interconnections seen in Limenios are absent in Athenaios.

If, as seems to be the most likely scenario, both hymns were performed at the same Pythais, then the two composers would have found themselves faced with a very similar set of stakeholders and constraints. If the alternative date for Athenaius’ (138 BC) paean is accepted, the main pressures discussed with reference to Limenios are, if anything, more prominent. First, this was the first Pythais sent by Athens after a break of nearly two centuries, so the need to re-establish their *polis*’ reputation as a pious devotee of Pythian Apollo is even greater than in the subsequent reiterations of the festival. And second, what is known about the conflict between the Athenian and the Isthmian-Nemean *synodoi* suggests that the situation in 138 BCE is perhaps even more intense than ten years later. This is a time when the Delphian seem to favour the Isthmian *technitai*. Sometime after this first Pythais is when the Athenian Artists appeal to Amphictyonic Council to review their original rights. Although they succeed, the tone and contents of the resulting document, the fact that it had to solicited, and even the sheer need of this renewal at this time all points toward the uncertain position in which the Athenian *technitai* must have been. Finally, by 130 (or perhaps 128 BCE) the conflict escalated enough to be brought before a Roman authority, who ruled in favour of the Isthmian side. This means that in 138 BCE the tensions between the two organizations were heating up and the Athenians were at risk of losing. Therefore, if the earlier dating for Athenaios is accepted, the main messages integrated into the
paean composed by Limenios should be even more prominent here. It remains the more likely scenario, however, that the two hymns were indeed performed in 128 BCE. It is possible, therefore, that it is precisely because they shared the same performative context, that the two paeans were intentionally designed to prioritize different ideas. At the same time, it should also be remembered that even identical stakeholder networks and sets of circumstances will not necessarily lead to songs which are duplicates of each other when two different creators are at work.

3 Stakeholder network

Two major contributing factors to the complexity of the context in the case of both of these Delphic hymns are their role within a *theôria* from another *polis*, and their performance by an independent professional guild. The presence of the Athenian *polis* and the Dionysian *synodos* as additional interested parties introduced competing functions that needed to be considered by the hymnographers. The stakeholder model is considerably simplified when one or both of these players are absent. By a happy coincidence, among the scant remains of Greek cult hymns, there are two paeans which represent such a scenario. Moreover, they were both composed to be performed in the same Delphic festival, although with gap of over one hundred years between them.

The older is Pindar’s sixth paean, composed sometime 490-461 BCE for the Theoxenia festival. According to the main title above the first line of the hymn in the papyrus, it was composed for a performance by a Delphian chorus at Delphi (ΔΕΛΦΟΙΣ ΕΙΣ ΠΥΘΩ). However, in 1997 Rutherford and d’Alesio discovered the presence of a secondary title in the margin, beside the beginning of the third triad: “for the Aeginetans for Aiakos, a prosodion.”\(^{300}\) Starting from this clue, Leslie Kurke has argued persuasively for a performance by two choruses, the first two triads by Delphians, the third by a chorus sent from Aegina.\(^{301}\) This would mean that at least the third triad, if not the entire hymn, needs to be considered as a theoric dedication, much like the hymns of Limenios and Athenaeaus.


The second paean, intended for the Delphic Theoxenia of 340/39 BCE, was composed by Philodamos.\(^\text{302}\) It survives as an inscription on a stone discovered by a French team in 1892. A helpful subscript containing a proxenic decree for Philodamos and his brothers gives us some useful information. In addition to the hymnographer’s full name and origin – Philodamos son of Ainesidamos of Scarphea – and the date, the text indicates that he and his brother composed the paean “in accordance with the oracular declaration of the god.” The term used to describe the contribution of Philodamos and his brothers - ἐποίησαν – is generic and can conceivably include, besides the composition of the hymn itself, other elements in the organization of the performance, such as the training of the chorus. As the discussion in chapter 2 has indicated, the range of responsibilities of a hymnographer varied: they could be limited to providing the hymn, or could encompass recruitment and/or training of the chorists, leading the performance and providing instrumental accompaniment. There is no indication that this was a \textit{theoric} hymn sent as a gift by another \textit{polis}. The poets are apparently acting independently and the chorus is in all likelihood a local one, made up of Delphic men, youths or boys.

Pindar’s and Philodamos’ paean\(^\text{303}\)s predate the organization of professional artistic guilds and there is little evidence for professional choruses involved in cult performance during this period.\(^\text{303}\) Therefore in each case, it is fairly safe to assume that the paean was performed at Delphi by a citizen chorus (or two). Pindar’s paean, however, unlike that of Philodamos, is at least in part a \textit{theoric} song, and this introduces an additional stakeholder, the \textit{polis} of the Aeginetans. The local authorities – the two distinct political entities of the Delphic \textit{polis} and the Amphictyonic Council – represent the most, or one of the most, significant stakeholders in both instances. As will be seen further below, Philodamos’ hymn may imply some degree of conflict or at least strain between or within these organizations. Because these performances took place during a Panhellenic festival in a Panhellenic sanctuary, the audience needs to be treated as a separate (and heterogeneous) party. Lastly, neither Pindar nor Philodamos shares the citizenship of either the host or the performers of their hymns; they are both independent artists acting on

\(^{302}\) On the date, see Vamvouri 2004: 189-90 with references there.

\(^{303}\) The first we hear of the Guilds is from a decree regarding the Athenian synod, datable to ca. 278 BCE. It is of course possible that these organizations are considerably older, but here we are in the area of speculation. There may some evidence for professional choreuts in victory lists that include choruses comprised of members from different \textit{poleis}. Interestingly, the earliest of these likewise date to roughly the same time as the technitai decrees (\textit{Syll.} \textsuperscript{3} 424 from 272 BCE.)
their own behalf; as such, their own personal and poetic objectives may be integrated in these texts and may not be identifiable with those of the other stakeholders.

3.1 Aristonoos’ hymn to Apollo: Athenian involvement?

It is possible to add another Delphic paean to the picture, an example of a cult hymn whose context and stakeholders are not clear from the text. Aristonoos’ paean to Apollo was inscribed on a column discovered close to the treasury of the Athenians. The same column contains another work by the same author – a hymn to Hestia. Overall Aristonoos’ paean is a simple and conservative hymn, with tripartite structure, stanza form and brief recurring refrains containing the paeanic *epithetegma*. In contrast to Limenios, this hymnographer does not incorporate references to performers or ritual context of the song. The hymn is rich in references to Delphic cult: the central section consists of a brief myth of Apollo’s establishment at Delphi and an outline of the other local cults connected to Apollo’s sanctuary; and throughout the text there are allusions to details of the religious landscape and ritual practice of the city. Within this traditional composition, however, it is possible to detect what might be a conscious Athenocentrism. In his narration of Apollo’s arrival at Delphi Aristonoos, like Limenios and Aeschylus before him, gives the Athenian variant where the god travels from Athens: “when Athena sent (or conducted) you to Pytho” (19-20). The catalogue of cults associated with Apollo’s Delphic sanctuary opens with Athena (25). She is said to have pride of place at the sanctuary as *pronoia* (a reference to a real cult of Athena Pronoia at Delphi). Apollo gives her “highest honours” (31-2) as “thanks for the aid she offered long ago” (29). The reference is apparently to the episode alluded to briefly in lines 19-20, but the exact sequence of events is unclear. Furley and Bremer suggest that Athena’s reception and *pompê* of Apollo is meant to take place after his expulsion from Delphi following his slaying of the Python. The slaying of the monster and resulting exile are not included in the hymn but both episodes are implied by reference to Apollo’s consequent purification at Tempe.

Other elements in the mythological narrative may be following a particular Athenian version as well. In Aristonoos, Apollo takes over the oracle of Delphi from its previous occupants – Gaia and Themis - by persuasion (21-4). Both the peaceful, conflict-free, transition and the line of succession are known chiefly from Aeschylus’ *Eumenides*. The prominence of Athena combined
with the apparent choice of Athenian mythological variants might suggest that this paean was composed for the *polis* of Athens, and the apparent connection to the treasury building only strengthens this possibility. But there are grounds for doubt too. First of all, the paean’s mythological narrative has significant points of departure from Aeschylus and Limenios. Unlike the version found in the *Eumenides*, Aristonoos’ paean still incorporates (although indirectly) the element of violent take-over inherent in the death of the Python. And, if Furley and Bremer’s interpretation of the mythological sequence is correct, Athens is not Apollo’s very first stop after his birth on Delos as it is in the other two versions. More significantly, Aristonoos honours Athena not the Athenians. Throughout the text, the focus is on the interaction between the gods and their position in the cult of Apollo at Delphi; mortals play no significant role – in fact, their presence is only implied in the allusions to actual ritual practices. In Limenios, it is Athens that welcomes Apollo with the inaugural musical performance and it is the Athenians who are said to continue to honour him with paeans from that day to the present time. And in Aeschylus, it is the Athenians, “children of Hephaestus” who conduct the god to Delphi. But Aristonoos speaks of the goddess herself giving Apollo *pompê* and receiving special place in his sanctuary as a reward.

Note too that in contrast to Limenios, Aristonoos does not identify the performers as Athenians. In fact the only reference to the hymn’s own performance comes at the very end, in the final prayer. The chorus asks the god to take pleasure from “our hymns”, give blameless prosperity and “save us.” The first-person plurals do not have defined referent; they point to whoever happens to be singing the hymn and the worshipping community they represent. Nowhere in the text is there a suggestion that this is a theoric hymn, sung by a chorus coming from another city. Without such reference to a different *polis*, the most natural referent of such self-reference is the place of performance itself, in this case Delphi. A parallel may be drawn, for instance, with the Dictaean hymn to Zeus from Palaikastro, which likewise prays on behalf of the local Cretan community (or group of amphictyonic communities) using merely the first-person plural – “our cities.” And in the case of the Erythrean paean, the absence of fixed local references and the use

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304 Furley and Bremer (2001: v.1, 121 and n.89) use the prominence of the various gods with a cult at Delphi as evidence for performance at the Theoxenia. Rutherford (2001: 28) prefers to place it during the Septerion. Vamvouri (2004: 94-6) suggests that the gift-exchange among the gods is intended as a model for the relationship that the hymn tries to establish between the divine recipients and the mortal worshippers.
instead of such flexible language as “our city” and “us” is what made it easy for it to be adopted by various poleis across the Greek world.

Even the association between the inscription and the treasury of the Athenians is questionable: it is far from certain that the column containing Aristonoos’ hymns ever belonged to that structure. A separate inscription records the decree of the Delphians to reward Aristonoos for his hymns with proxenic privileges. Here too there is no mention of his connection to Athens or any Athenian organization. The title of the paean, furthermore, identifies him as a Corinthian. Thus, unlike Limenios, who is both an Athenian citizen and member of the synodos of Athenian technitai, Aristonoos appears to be an independent poiêtês, most likely commissioned to compose the hymns for a specific festive context. Of course not being an Athenian does not preclude someone from composing a hymn for the Athenians, as the next example plainly illustrates. Unfortunately the available evidence is not sufficient to determine the occasion or the commissioner in this case. The Athenian polis remains a possibility given the centrality of Athena in the paean; but Delphi, as the place of performance, also suggests itself as a natural candidate and should in either case be considered an important stakeholder.

Makedonikos, who composed a hymn for the cult of Asclepius in Athens sometimes in the first century BCE or CE, is likewise not a local poet. According to the title, preserved in the same inscription as the hymn itself, he was from Amphipolis and was incited to write the hymn by the command of “the god”, much like Philodamos. One significant difference from the three Delphic hymns just discussed is that the Athenian Asklepeion was not a Panhellenic sanctuary and so the worshippers would have been for the most part from the local community. The speaking voice identifies itself as κοῦροι Ἀθηναίων (Athenian youths, 4); the prayer is made on behalf of the city of Athens; and there is no suggestion of professional guilds. This paean can thus be considered an example of low stakeholder complexity: there is no presence of a theôria

305 Daux 1945.
306 Thus Rutherford 2001: 29 with n. 25.
307 A similarly ambiguous case is presented by Pindar’s Pae. 8. Here again the mythological content may points in the direction of Athenain involvement. Athena is prominent here; and the main myth, the four temples of Apollo, might have a relationship to the Alcmaeonid temple constructed in the recent past. Here, however, even if the Athenians had some role to play, the title “for the Delphians” makes it improbable that they performed it themselves. Rutherford 2001 230-1.
308 IG II² 4473+.1-11(Mitsos).
309 Ἀτθίδα Κεκροπίαν πόλιν, line 19.
or a synodos; this is a local performance by a chorus of young men, citizens of the polis representing the wider worshipping community before that very community.

Among the inscriptions from this local sanctuary were discovered several other hymns, including one of the four copies of the so-called Erythraean paean. The author of this hymn is not recorded in any of the inscriptions containing the poetic text, and his name was in all likelihood long forgotten. This was probably viewed as a traditional song suitable for the worship of Asclepius anywhere his cult was practiced. In such a scenario we cannot speak of the hymnographer as a distinct stakeholder at all. At least one of the sites where the paean was sung, Ptolemais, had a network of stakeholders which was not quite as simple as that at Athens. A prescript to this version of the Erythraean paean indicates that the hymn was inscribed after the restoration of the temple and sanctuary of Asclepius, which was timed to coincide with the visit of important Roman officials; the hymn was probably performed at the inauguration of the restored temple during their stay in Ptolemais. A scenario such as this should caution us against the assumption that a simple, traditional hymn necessarily precludes the presence of various interested parties.

Another surviving example of an anonymous, traditional cult song is the hymn to Dictaean Zeus from Palaikastro, Crete. Neither the composer nor the original date of the pieces can be determined and the text was apparently inscribed several times over, indicating the use of this song in the cult practice over many centuries; in fact, the hymn probably predates its initial inscription. Unlike the Erythraean paean, which was adopted and reused by sanctuaries all over the Greek world and whose geographical origin cannot be ascertained, the Dictaean hymn is clearly a local song, reflecting the peculiar practices and myths of the region. However, even here, in what would seem to be the simplest possible case of local cult hymn-singing, there is an important complication in the stakeholder network. The hymn was connected to a regional common sanctuary, open to worshipers from several communities in the area. Not enough is known about the sanctuary to tell who was in charge – a local family, a particular polis or an amphictyonic council. But in any case, there would have been representatives of different communities involved in the performance of the hymn.

310 IG II² 4509, 1st-2nd c. CE.
311 Bernard, Inscr.Métr. 176, from 98-100 CE.
Even in cases where strong outside influences are absent, there can be distinct and potentially competing interests at play. Pindar’s only surviving partheneion was composed for performance during the Theban Daphnephoria. This was a local festival for Apollo, so the audience (or rather the worshippers) were Thebans. The poet, Pindar, and the parthenoi were likewise locals. Yet one local family was so prominent in this cult performance that it must be considered a stakeholder in its own right, apart from the wider worshipping community or the civil and religious authorities of the city. This aristocratic family provided the daphnêphoros, the leading role in the festival procession, as well as several other officials, possibly the chorêgos of the maiden chorus, the adult male escort for the boy, and a female chorodidaskalos. It is highly probable that they had a leading role in the organization and financing of the festival, including commissioning Pindar to compose the hymn. Although the festival was a regular, calendar event, it was not always the same family that took on this central responsibility. A short fragment survives from another of Pindar’s daphnêphorika; on this occasion, it was apparently the poet’s own son, Daiphantus, who had the prestigious leading part.312

3.2 Political conflict and Isyllos’ paean

Similarly, a certain degree of differentiation or fragmentation in the local worshipping community may be present within the context of Isyllos’ paean from Epidaurus.313 Before looking more closely at this text, it needs to be noted that Epidaurus was an ancient and famous cult centre of Asclepius and, unlike the Athenian Asclepieion, regularly drew crowds of worshippers from all over Greece. In another hymn used at the site,314 the final prayer refers to the sanctuary and the Panhellenic gathering of visitors, rather than the local community: σώιζετε τόνδ’ Ἐπιδαύρου | ναὸν ἐν εὐνομίαι πολ[υ]άνορι Ἑλλάνων “preserve this temple of Epidaurus in virtuous multitude of Greeks.” The wider audience, from outside the polis, would have witnessed the performance of Isyllos’ paean. The inscription containing the hymn also includes a lex sacra which introduces a new rite, a pompê for Apollo and Asclepius. It seems reasonable to assume

312 Fr.94c. For identification of the boy as Daiphantus, son of Pindar, see Ferrari 2012: 169.
313 Kolde (2003: 232-3) discusses the possibility that Isyllos did not compose the text himself but hired a professional hymnographer. At the end, he favours Isyllos as the poet, and notes that if someone else did write the verses Isyllos nonetheless would have given him detailed instructions. Therefore in either case if it legitimate to talk of “Isyllos’ paean” and Isyllos’ aims and tactics behind its text and performance
314 IG IV2 1:129.
that the paean for Apollo and Asclepius, composed in time for the inauguration of the ritual and inscribed together with the law, was intended to be sung during the procession.\(^{315}\) If so, then the paean would probably also have been reperformed during the regular recurrences of the rite, suggested by the *lex*: ὅρας ἐξ ὑμῶν ἅμι τόνδε σέβοντας “honouring this law always, from one year to the next” (25). Over time, the hymn’s exposure to a wide range of audiences from all over the Greek-speaking world was guaranteed, a fact that could not have escaped the notice of the hymnographer. Later it will be discussed how at least some of the messages imbedded in the hymnic text were likely intended for these many visitors to Epidaurus.

It is the peritext of Isyllos’ paean that indicates the involvement of a certain sub-group within the Epidaurian *polis*. The performance was a local production, not part of a *theôria*, not sung by a professional chorus of *technitai* or composed by a foreign poet. According to the title, the inscription as a whole is set up by Isyllos Sokrateus, a citizen of Epidaurus. Later on, the authorship of the paean is likewise attributed to Isyllos (33). In the opening of the hymn itself, the performers, in a self-directed invitation to sing not untypical of the genre, identify themselves as Epidaurians.\(^{316}\) However, there is good reason to believe that Isyllos represents a particular, elite division of the *polis*. In the first part of the long inscription, which provides the background and motivations for the new *lex*, Isyllos emphasizes his long-held belief about the proper relationship between the *dêmos* and the *aristoi* of a city: the people grow stronger if they lead men, in a proper fashion, to *aristokratia*. The stability of *dêmos* is also assured if they punish any who, in spite of proper upbringing, embraces *ponêria*. It has been argued that *aristokratia* here does not mean what its English derivative has come to denote today, that it means merely the rule of those who are morally upstanding and will lead the city in the right direction.\(^{317}\) Even if “aristocracy” may be an anachronistic translation, in ancient political discourse the term nonetheless has a fairly specific reference to a particular constitutional system, the rule of a small minority of *aristoi*,\(^{318}\) and certainly by the late Hellenistic period this would have been the first and strongest meaning associated with the word. *Ponêria* may be somewhat more neutral; literally it simply means “badness” and can certainly encompass a moral sense of “vice”, but it

\(^{315}\) Sineux 1999: 156 and further ref. in n.11.

\(^{316}\) ζαθέας ἐνναέτα τᾶσδε Ἑπιδαύρου, line 2.


\(^{318}\) Already in Aristotle (*Pol*. 1293b1). Although terms like *aristoi* and *agathoi* (and their opposites) can have many meanings, in a political context, some reference to genealogical and economic groups within the *polis* seems unavoidable.
also extends to a more specifically political idea of “corruption” or even “mob-rule” and in this context, side by side with aristokratia, these politicized connotations are certainly active. Yet the language of elitism is not limited to this brief introduction.

The next section contains the sacred law itself. The direct participants in the pompê are to be chosen from the aristoi of the town. Once again, the phrase oĩ κεν ἀριστεύωσι (14) can conceivably be interpreted in politically-neutral and purely moral terms; but this would be a stretch in view of the other politically-charged language of the inscription. Even if the vocabulary itself could potentially bear such apolitical reading, it is highly improbable that the contemporary audience would have interpreted it in that way. Those noblemen chosen to represent their community are required, as part of the rite instituted by this law, to pray on behalf of all citizens. The list of blessings included in the prayer includes some rather generic and common items: health, wealth and peace. Eunomia is somewhat more political but still general: proponents of almost any constitution would stand behind the principle of “good order.” Last but certainly not least in the list stands kalokagathia, which the gods will be asked to make “prevail in Epidaurus” (24). This word like no other reflects the self-image of Greek elites across centuries; it stands at once for the ethical, eugenic and political ideals of the aristocracy.

At the end of the long inscription, Isyllos presents an anecdotal account of his own (or his son’s, the grammar is unclear) encounter with Asclepius. The epiphany is said to have occurred when the god was on his way from his seat in Epidaurus to Sparta. The Spartans were under threat from Philip of Macedon and Asclepius was coming to their rescue. The text presents several reasons why the god decided on the side of the Spartans: his respect for the offspring of Heracles, because they rightly obey the laws of Lycurgus which he received from Delphi, and since Philip aims to destroy Sparta’s royal power. The last two are of course part of the same issue: Spartan monarchic system is part of the Lycurgan constitution; in fact, it could even be considered a synonym or metonym for the laws of Lycurgus as a whole. It has been rightly suggested by Furley and Bremer that this story is crafted to give further support to the larger political message of the project of which the inscription is a part. Asclepius is shown to support the preservation of a conservative political system against a power that threatened to

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319 LSJ πονηρία, πονηρός.
320 πολιάταις | πᾶσιν lines 21-2.
destroy it and replace it with something else; the clear implication is that he would also stand behind Isyllos and his friends in their efforts to preserve the traditional oligarchic system in Epidaurus.

The law, the ritual – including the paean – and the inscription are all part of an effort on the part of a sub-group of Epidaurian citizens, of which Isyllos certainly was one, to reaffirm their supremacy in local politics. Of course this is not the only purpose of the hymn, as subsequent discussion will make clear, but it was certainly one of the main influences active here. At the end of the introductory segment of the inscription, Isyllos indicates that the decree was favoured by the gods (ἔγενε ὁ οὐκ ἄνευ θεῶν, and it happened, not without the gods, 9). In the law itself, he is careful to indicate that it was passed by the entire dêmos of Epidaurus, choosing to use the emphatic ἅπας (12). Such efforts to prove the unanimous (divine and mortal) support for the new lex sacra itself suggest a certain level of anxiety on the part of its proponents. The reference (albeit general – τίς) to someone who is καλῶς προαχθεὶς “raised well” (probably suggesting of elite background) and yet turns to ponêria, and the recommendation that such men should be punished by the dêmos seems to point to a recent or ongoing threat from a demagogue. Since the Archaic period, Greek poleis frequently witnessed civil strife between the traditional oligarchic families and those, often from the same elite ranks, who relied to popular support and sought to bring about a democratic constitution or set themselves up as tyrants. Another interesting point in this opening section that may suggest division in Epidaurian politics is Isyllos’ indication that he has voiced this opinion about the proper relationship between the people and the nobility for some time: τάνδε τὰν γνώμαν τόκ’ ἤχον καὶ ἔλεγον καὶ νῦν “this opinion I held and expressed then and do so now” (7). For all of Isyllos’ insistence on unanimous support, his own language may hint at some period of debate and disagreement about the law and the larger political issues involved.

3.3 Isidorus: hymnography in a multi-cultural setting

A different sort of division lies behind the inscribed hymns to Isis found in the Fayum region of Egypt. The texts date to the first century BCE in the late Ptolemaic period and are composed in Greek.322 They were inscribed on the posts at the entrance to the Ptolemaic temple of Isis-

322 Bernard, Inscr. Métr. 175. The most complete edition and study is Vanderlip 1972. See more recently Zabkar
Hermouthis in Narmouthis (Medinet Madi). This temple was built, probably by Ptolemy IX, next to an older, Middle-Kingdom (XII dynasty) temple to Renenunet, a local goddess who is identified with Isis-Hermouthis. The new temple was only one element of the expansion project; under the Ptolemies were also added a processional road leading up to the two temples, porticoes and other smaller temples. All four hymns were composed by a man called Isidorus, as indicated in the inscription. Three of the four are to the goddess Isis-Hermouthis, while the last honours Amenemhet III, one of the Pharaohs believed to have built the temple. Thus, while decorating and perhaps (if performed) celebrating the new Macedonian-Greek expansion of the sanctuary, it likewise recognizes and glorifies the Egyptian foundations.

In the form, language and content of the hymns too, as will be discussed later, Isidorus attempts to incorporate both of these cultural and religious models. Modern excavations indicate that this town, Narmouthis (Medinet Madi), like many of its kind in the Fayum during the Hellenistic period, had a population made up of Greeks, Egyptians, and mixed or hellenized locals. Both Greek and Demotic documents have been uncovered, suggesting the use of Egyptian and Greek in the community. Likewise, there is evidence for the worship of Greek, Egyptian and Greco-Egyptian syncretised deities. Isis-Hermouthis belongs in this last category: originally an Egyptian goddess, her cult had by the late Hellenistic period spread through much of the Greek world and this process would only continue in the Roman Imperial period.

As previous commentators have noted, the hymns of Isidorus combine religious and literary traditions of Greece and Egypt. Of particular note are his use of epic diction and language of Isis aretalogies. The very end of the inscription is perhaps the key to understanding where Isidorus stands in relation to the various cultural groups and traditions in the town and region. He claims that the material in his hymns (ταῦτα πάνταν(α) “all this”) was gathered by him directly (αὐτὸς ἐγὼ “I myself”) from men who inquire into the past. The last phrase, παρ’ ἀνδρῶν τῶν ἱστορούντων “from men who make inquiries” could be a reference to the local college of priests connected with the temple. Earlier in the fourth hymn he refers to “those who have read sacred writings.”

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323 Gasparro 2007: 49.
324 See p. 43-4 above.
326 οἱ ἱερῶν γράμματα ἀναλεξάμενοι, 18. Gasparro (2007: 51) notes the absence of any mention of Soter and suggests
Isidorus further insists that this information and the process whereby he obtained it are trustworthy (ἀσφαλέως) and that he diligently recorded all (ταῦτα πάντα) that he learned. The next line explains that he interpreted and/or translated for the Greeks (ἡρμήνευσι Ἑλλησι) the power of the god and king. Thus Isidorus sees himself as a translator or interpreter between the two cultural traditions; he explains to the Greek in the language and in terms they can understand the ancient local beliefs and myths related to the land to which they have come. The statement seems to apply specifically to the last hymn to the divine king (Pharaoh) with whom the Greeks and other non-Egyptian Greek-speakers would not have been familiar. By contrast, these same non-natives could be expected to know something of Isis, at least her Hellenised syncretic version; at the same time, there are other aspects of this goddess – the more traditional Egyptian and even more specifically local ones – which Isidorus needs to explain, so to some degree his interpretative mission extends to all four hymns.

His need to consult those “who inquire into records” and “those who have read sacred writings” indicate that Isidorus was probably not an Egyptian priest. He was a Greek or at least Hellenised and educated in Greek. His main audience, according to the final lines paraphrased above are Greeks, or at least Greek-speakers. Yet the local priests in charge of the temple certainly needed to give him the permission to have the hymns inscribed anywhere in the sanctuary, let alone in such a prominent position, at the very entrance to the temple. In addition to the temple authorities, the local Greek-speaking and Egyptian communities, and the poet himself, who chose to express his persona in the text, the local authorities and performers may be added to the set of stakeholders, although the state of the evidence does not allow any more precise identification of the latter.

4 Competing functions

Stakeholders, by definition, are those groups or individuals who are not indifferent to the production of cult hymn performance. The interest the various stakeholders have in the performance is of course not the same. A worshipping community may, for instance, simply

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327 On Isidorus’ ethnicity see Moyer 2010: 8 with references in n. 18.
wish for the hymn to be sung well and please the god; officials at a Panhellenic site may wish their city and their administration to look good in the eyes of the foreign delegates; and so on. The kind and degree of influence the various interested parties will exert on a hymn depends not only on their respective objectives but also on the extent of their power over the production. In the case of Limenios’ paean, the synodos of Athenian technitai, an internationally influential guild to which the composer as well as the performers belonged, naturally shows up more prominently than the Panhellenic worshippers who merely witnessed the final product.

The relationship between the stakeholders involved, with their respective interests and degrees of power, on the one hand, and the functions imbedded in the hymnic text, is far from being mathematically predictable: other factors, often specific to the given local and historical context, are often involved. To begin with, one important qualification has to do with the rhetorical-religious objective of the cult hymn as such, an issue mentioned in the last chapter. Whatever the parties involved and their objectives or degrees of influence, the hymn must first of all be seen to succeed in this primary function of pleasing the god. Looking back once again at the Delphic hymn by Limenios, it is notable that the praise of Rome is limited to the prayer at the end of the text, and yet it was certainly a very significant stakeholder whom the Delphians, the Athenians and the technitai will have wished to satisfy and keep on their side. But it is one thing to modify the details of a mythological tradition slightly to give Athens more credit in the myth and cult of Apollo; it would have been another to introduce Rome, a foreign city, into the local Greek religious landscape and history. To do so would have threatened to undermine the seriousness and believability of the song as a cult hymn, an offering to a god which is founded on ancient precedent and maintains traditional form and content which has proven its religious efficacy. And such a blatant break with propriety and tradition would negate any secondary aims the stakeholders of a performance may have. So in a sense, the fostering of a charis relation with the god, through appropriate praise and embellishment, is a prime and over-arching objective which all stakeholders share, in part because its attainment is a pre-requisite to any other functions.

329 Relegating the Romans to the end could be (and has been) interpreted as underplaying their importance. Vamvouiri Ruffy (2004: 98), for instance, argues that: “les Athéniens sont soumis à l’occupant romain. L’absence de motivation traduirait-elle une reticence de la part des Athéniens à l’égard de la force romaine.” Yet if one considers the nature of this genre, their inclusion at all is in fact quite an honour, since they are a foreign element in the occasion and the tradition; in light of this, the final position within the prayer portion of the hymn, as well as the amount of space given them and the specificity of the prayer on their behalf, is in fact a sign of great prominence and glorification. And of course this is much more in synch with what is known about the historical situation than the initial reaction.
4.1 Isyllos’ inscription and the Epidaurian cult of Asclepius

A similar concern with preserving a feeling of a genuine and conventional hymn or paean may be at play in Isyllos’ work. As discussed above, the paean composed by Isyllos was part of a larger move initiated by a sub-group of Epidaurian society to which the poet belonged. The members of this elite clique, perhaps in opposition to demagogical or democratic forces present in the city, were trying to remind their fellow citizens about their rightful place as leaders of this community. It may be somewhat surprising then, that while political rhetoric is fairly explicit in the remainder of the inscription, the hymnic text itself is silent on the subject of aristokratia, kalokagathia, the dēmos and those who would betray their upbringing and ruin the city by turning to ponēria. This is not so surprising with respect to the pars media, since it is essentially entirely taken up by mythological narrative. The opening invocation and the closing prayer, on the other hand, operate on the level of occasion, in the hic et nunc, which could offer an opportunity for politically-charged language. Instead, both the prayer and invocation use inclusive terms for the Epidaurian polity and the performers (who are in turn representatives of that polity).330

Was Isyllos trying to maintain the integrity of his hymn as a cult song, and was he apprehensive about adding language that would make it sound more like a political diatribe? It is certainly one possible explanation. There are few sharp and absolute lines dividing what is appropriate in a hymn and what is not; and political messages can be embedded in cult songs (and other religious discourse). The fragment of Pindar’s fifth paean, for instance, has been interpreted as an aetiological justification of Athenian colonial claims. Composed for a theoric performance on Delos, it apparently narrated the settlement of Euboea (and perhaps other islands as well) by Athenians.331 Yet not every hymnographer was able to incorporate competing functions and issues related to the immediate local context without thereby diminishing the traditional pious tone of the hymn. Alternatively, or additionally, he may have felt that the political objectives he and his allies wished to achieve were better served by other aspects of their programme. The lex sacra and the no-doubt many speeches delivered in order to guarantee its ratification delivered

330 λαοί, ζαθέας ἐννέατει τάσσεται Επιδαύρου, line 38-9, τάν σάν Επιδαύρων ματρόπολιν, line 59, φρεσί και σώμασιν ἄμοις 61.
their message loud and clear. The epigraphic peritext of the paean, which accounts to the bulk of the inscription, gave the message permanence; as did the recurring annual ritual which would have served to remind the participants and spectators of the political issues behind the law. Furthermore, the manner in which the ritual was conducted – a procession, hymn and prayers by the aristoi of Epidauros – was a no less powerful, and at the same time more subtle means of accomplishing precisely what an explicit message in the paean would have done: it impregnated the ritual act with the political ideals of Isyllos’ party.

It is not, however, the case that the ritual as a whole leaves the political message unspoken, merely implied in the choice of performers. If the text of the law is understood literally (and there is no reason that it should not be), it prescribes the precise requests that are to be included in the prayers; and although some of these are entirely general and conventional, “peace” and “kalokagathia” are in the realm of politics, and the latter in particular speaks to the kind of oligarchic rhetoric used in the introductory paragraphs of the inscriptions. Thus it remains somewhat curious that Isyllos chose to avoid such terminology in the prayers that are part of his paean. Whatever additional motivations he may have had, it seems likely that concern with the preservation of a traditional and religious feeling of the song was at least partly responsible.

The question then becomes: what does Isyllos’ paean try to accomplish? Of course, as any hymn, it is aimed at pleasing the deity and making it helpful to the worshipping community. The hymn is presented to two related deities – Apollo and Asclepius. Most of the central section consists of a local genealogical myth which leads ultimately to the birth of Asclepius. Both gods are invoked using their names as well as cult and honorific epithets. The honorifics applied to Asclepius characterize him as a healing god, benefactor of mortals, responsible for health; these epithets both lead into and provide an argumentum for the final prayer which asks, quite simply, for health. The recurring epiphetagma ἱὲ Παιάν and the opening of the final prayer with χαίρεν further add to the traditional feel of the text. So far, it may be said that Isyllos successfully crafted a traditional-sounding paean with conventional structure, common hymnic formulae, appropriate praise connected logically to a general prayer. It is certainly sufficient for an acceptable hymn for use in a recurring cult event. But is that all that it sets out to do?

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332 Apollo: παιάν, φοῖβος, Λατῶιος, κόρος, χρυσοκόμας; Asclepius: παιάν, νόσων παύστωρ, δωτὴρ ύγιείας, μέγα δώρημα βροτοῖς.
It may be helpful to compare another simple hymn, the so-called Erythraean paean. Like Isyllos’ hymn, this paean was sung for Apollo and his son Asclepius. The overall structure is also quite similar. Both open with an invocation to the performers to sing Apollo, proceed to a middle section consisting essentially of a genealogy and ending with a prayer. One important feature absent from Isyllos’ song is the recurring refrain. The genealogical sections have some things in common as well. Both introduce Asclepius as the son of Apollo and Coronis, the daughter of Phlegyas. However, the Erythraean paean leaves the matter there and proceeds to list the offspring of Asclepius, a catalogue of semi-personified abstractions like Panacea and Health. The effect is equivalent to that achieved by the honorific epithets in Isyllos’ paean: to characterize Asclepius as a healing deity and thereby provide the basis for the requests for health and longevity in the final prayer. Isyllos’ genealogy on the other hand elaborates the ancestry of Asclepius far beyond what can be seen in the Erythraean version, but ends with his birth and does not mention any offspring. This choice to focus on the ancestry of the god is an important distinction which provides a clue to one possible secondary function of Isyllos’ paean.

The composition of Erythraean paean is both simple and traditional. It uses stanza form with recurring refrain, standard paeanic call ἴὲ Παιάν, a common type of indirect invocation addressed to the singers, a tri-part division, familiar transitional formulae between the parts (ὁς, 4, χαῖρε, 19), traditional epithets, and a collective general prayer. Furthermore, it does not use deictic language or references to local context in a way that would anchor the text in any particular cult site. For instance, the prayer is made on behalf of τὰν ἀμὰν πόλιν (20) and ἡμᾶς (22), and the performers are called simply κοῦροι, all terms that are relative and/or universally applicable. Finally, no local or innovative variant is introduced in the myth. It is precisely this simplicity, conservatism and absence of localizing language that allowed this hymn to be as popular as it apparently was in the Asclepius cult all over the Greek world. The text of the hymn has been found in four separate inscriptions from Erythrae, Athens, Dion in Macedonia and Ptolemais in Egypt. It is highly probable that this is only a sample of the sites that used the paean, which was flexible and general enough to fit into any programme of worship directed at this god.

Unlike the Erythraean paean, Isyllos’ work is well localized. Opening invocation connects the song to Epidaurus in two ways. The deictic phrase τᾶσδ’ Ἐπιδαύρου anchors the performance in
Epidaurus and the entire line – ζαθέας ἐνναέται[ι] τὰσοὶ Ἑπιδαύρου “inhabitants of this sacred Epidaurus” – identifies the performers as citizens of that polis. The prayer at the end is made explicitly on behalf of Epidaurus. More importantly, however, Isyllos also introduces mythological details which are far from universal. As mentioned briefly above, the central section focuses on the birth of Asclepius and especially on his ancestry. The immediate parentage of the healer god and the birth assisted by the Moirai would not be strange or controversial to any listeners.

But looking closely at the family connections outlined in lines 41-6, it becomes apparent that the hymnographer was keen on presenting a particular, somewhat non-standard and local version of Asclepius’ genealogy. He associates Coronis, Asclepius’ mother, with another name, Aigla.333 He connects this Aigla-Coronis, through maternal lineage to a Muse, Erato and a hero, Malos. Neither Malos, nor his marriage to Erato initiated by Zeus, nor yet Kloephema as mother of Coronis is attested elsewhere. Malos is probably based on the epithet of Apollo Maleatas. In another part of the inscription, Isyllos introduces Malos as the original founder of the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas in Epidaurus (27-8). This gives the myth of Asclepius additional connection to Epidaurus, since the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas is located here and Malos, one of Asclepius’ ancestors, is supposed to be a local hero.

The conception and birth of Asclepius is located at Epidaurus as well – κατιδὼν δ’ ὁ χρυσότοξος Φοῖβος ἐμ Μάλου δόμοις (and when Phoebos of the golden bow saw her in the house of Malos, 48-9) in the house of Malos, thus in Epidaurus. Most notably, Isyllos claims Epidaurian nationality for Coronis’ father, Phlegyas: Φλεγύας δέ, [ὁς] πατρίδ’ Ἐπίδαυρον ἔναιεν “And Phlegyas, who dwelled in Epidaurus, his homeland” (43). This is contrary to a much more common version which makes Phlegyas a Thessalian.334 There did exist several alternative views, less common but attested in literature. One of these gives Asclepius a Messenian birth and excludes both Coronis and Phlegyas altogether335 while another, especially obscure, claims the god for Arcadia.336 Pausanias reports a story he heard from the Epidaurians, according to which

333 There are several known characters with this name in mythology, including, in Athens, a daughter of Asclepius, but none of them can be easily identified with Isyllos’ Aigla (Kolde 2003: 154-5). That does not necessarily mean, of course, the she is the poet’s own invention.
335 Apollod. 3.118-22, Paus. 2.26.5-7, 4.3.2.
336 Paus. 8.25.11.
Asclepius was born in their land when Phlegyas and Coronis came there from Thessaly. But nowhere outside of Isyllos’ own hymn do extant sources indicate that the god was Epidaurian both by parentage and birth. Isyllos’ hymn manages to connect both sides of Coronis’ ancestry, as well as Asclepius’ birth scene, to his home polis. The hymn seals its unusual genealogical claim in the final prayer when it calls Epidaurus Asclepius’ own homeland: τὰν σὰν Ἐπίδαυρον ματρόπολιν (you homeland Epidaurus, 59). The special relationship between the god and the community on whose behalf the hymn is uttered thus becomes part of the argumentum for the prayer. As a deity specifically responsible for healing and a benefactor of men, it is appropriate to ask him for health; as a native of Epidaurus, it is doubly appropriate for this city’s citizens to expect his aid.

It is impossible to tell to what extent this account is part of idiosyncratic local belief or Isyllos’ own invention. In either case, he certainly tries to legitimize it by claiming the authority of ancient oral tradition. By way of a transition between initial invocation and the mythical central section of his paean, Isyllos inserts the assertion that what follows “has come down to the ears of our ancestors.” If the whole story was pure invention on the hymnographer’s part, this statement would be a blatant falsehood easily falsifiable by any Epidaurian who hears or reads the paean. It is common to modify mythological material, even within ritualized discourse such as a hymn; but it is difficult to believe that the local audience would accept a completely original story contrary to what they are familiar with. It is much more likely that some vague idea of an Epidaurian parentage of Asclepius was current in that polis, not surprisingly given the prominence of the god’s cult in the local religious landscape. The story told to Pausanias, for example, which situates the birth in Epidaurus but maintains the traditional Thessalian identity of his mother, may represent a more moderate and familiar local variant. But Isyllos probably elaborated the available material further, filling in the gaps and showing precisely how their beloved healer god could be one of their own, without cutting all ties to the familiar Panhellenic account of his parentage. Outside of the poetic text, in another part of the inscription, Isyllos provides further guarantee of the validity of his paean. He reassures the reader that he has sent to Delphi to inquire whether Apollo would like this hymn inscribed and that he received an

337 Paus. 2.26.1-3. For a discussion of the various competing traditions see Edelstein (1945) 67ff
338 Molinos Tejada and Garcia Teijeiro (2002: 244 n.40) see in this term an emphasis more specifically on the maternal ancestry of Asclepius: “cité de la mere.” That, of course, does not diminish from the point about Asclepius’ status as a native of Epidaurus.
339 ὡδε γάρ φάτις ἐνέπους ἡλιθ’ ἐς ἄκοας προγόνων ἀμετέρων, line 40.
emphatically positive response. This stamp of approval from one of the addressees of the paean and the most powerful oracular seat in Greece lends undeniable authority to the hymn as a whole and, implicitly, to the mythological assertions it makes.

For an Epidaurian listener or reader, Isyllos’ genealogical account would affirm and at as same time clarify some of his own vague ideas about a local connection of Asclepius. To a visitor, one of many coming to this Panhellenic site, it would present a strong alternative version of the god’s ancestry. The main characters would still be found in their standard roles – Apollo, Coronis, Phlegyas – so he would not be shocked or confused. Some of the others – Aigla and Erato – would likewise be familiar, although their part in Asclepius’ ancestry would be new. A few – Malos and Kleophema – would probably be entirely novel, but at least Malos could be readily associated with the local cult title of Apollo. All of these connections to the more familiar elements of myth and cult would surely help make the account more palatable to a foreign visitor. Finally, it would not be an unusual experience for any Greek to encounter an unfamiliar hero, minor deity, cult title or semi-mythological local figure when visiting another polis. The alternative account, plausible in its own right, would be given further confirmation by the divine blessing from Delphi and the authority of ancient oral tradition.

Given the status of Epidaurus as a Panhellenic site of the Asclepius cult, it is highly unlikely that Isyllos did not foresee the effect of his paean and the rest of the inscription on foreign visitors. On the contrary, this will have been one of the functions which the hymnographer sought to accomplish: to promote the prestige of his home city as the most important site of the healing religion. It was already the most popular sanctuary with pilgrims seeking the god’s aid; a consistent and acceptable Epidaurian genealogy would consolidate this significance on the historical-mythological level.

The claim for the religious centrality of Epidaurus, its primacy with respect to other competing cult sites, can further be seen outside the paeanic section of inscription. After the hymn, the inscription goes on to recount an event that is meant to demonstrate the power and aid of Asclepius. When Philip was marching to attack Sparta, the god came to its aid. On his way he

340 More generally, Isyllos’ mythological variant is in line with the general pattern of change in Greek religion, which prefers to maintain existing elements of ritual and myth, to build on them and reconfigure them, rather than inventing entirely new practices or stories. For this model of “bricolage”, see references in n. 356 below.
appeared in an epiphany to either Isyllos in his youth or his son or both of them (the grammar of the passage makes this unclear). One detail in particular is significant in this context: Asclepius is said to come “from Epidaurus” (65) when he goes to Sparta. In other words, not only is he a native of the city but he resides there as well.

In a different section, before the hymn, the inscription makes a note about the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas at Epidaurus (27-31). It was noted that in Epidaurus Asclepius was closely linked to this local cult, and the paean itself, addressed to both gods, elaborates this connection further. Here, the sanctuary is first of all given the aura of antiquity: it was first founded by the eponymous hero Malos, three generations before Asclepius. In addition, the inscription asserts that no one may “descend to the inner sanctuary of Asclepius in Tricca, Thessaly, before making preliminary sacrifices on the altar of Apollo Maleatas” (30-31). The statement presents several powerful related claims about the centrality of Epidaurus in the geography of Asclepiadic religion. First, it postulates a link between the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas and the cult of Asclepius – not only in its local Epidaurian manifestation but abroad, perhaps anywhere it may be found. Second, the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas in Epidaurus, and by extension the Epidaurian cult of Asclepius closely associated with it, has precedence over other cult sites of the healing deity. Finally, the claim of precedence is made in particular with respect to a sanctuary in Thessaly, and this is emphasized by specifying the region and not only the place (Tricca). Recall that the most common and Panhellenic genealogy of Asclepius localizes his birth and part of his ancestry (Phlegyas) precisely in Thessaly, and it is to this familiar Thessalian version that Isyllos wishes to offer a viable local alternative. Thus the two claims – cult precedence and genealogy – are meant to reinforce each other in displacing Thessaly and situating Epidaurus at the center of Asclepiadic myth and cult.

Tricca was perhaps the most important competitor vying for the cult of Asclepius but it was certainly not the only one. At least two other places – Messene and Arcadia – had long-standing claims to being the birth-place of the god. This rivalry for the rightful place of a cult is best understood in terms of the logic of hero cults, which were highly localized, normally tied to a single place of importance to the hero in life (usually his tomb).

\[341\] See notes on p. 141-2 above.
\[342\] On the close connection between heroes and particular location see, for example, Ekroth 2007: esp. 111ff and
Dioscuri, Asclepius was treated variously as hero and god, a rare kind of liminality which was explained in myth by an apotheosis. As a god, Asclepius could be worshipped anywhere. And from later fifth century onward, local Asclepeia began to be established in other poleis. In around 420 BCE the cult was brought to Athens and Aegina; Mantinea, Sikyon and Cyllene and perhaps Corinth had cults dating from mid fifth century. The healing cult really exploded in popularity in the fourth century BCE: Eretria, Crete, Cyrene, Delphi, Eleusis, Tarentum, Erythrae and Kos, among others. This expansion continued throughout the Hellenistic period. Worshippers seeking divine healing from Asclepius could now go to a local site instead of making the long trip to Epidaurus.

In spite the great increase in competing healing centres, the volume of pilgrims flooding in to the Epidaurian Asclepieion does not seem to have diminished. It remained a hugely popular site throughout antiquity. The monumental building programme of the fourth century and the Panhellenic Asclepeia with dramatic, musical, gymnastic and equestrian games, certainly helped maintain the sightseeing appeal of the city. But the power of its claims of a privileged connection to the deity cannot be overlooked either. Although a god, or at any rate a hero-god, is not as closely linked to a particular geographical place as a hero or one of the ordinary deceased mortals, space still matters. The Greek gods are not omnipresent: their presence or at least attention is required for successful communication, whether prayer, offerings or divination. And such communication is not equally likely everywhere. In general, sacred space is more apt for a connection to the gods than profane space. Furthermore, the Olympian gods have their favourite places on earth. Thus, for instance, an offering to Zeus Olympios at Olympia or Apollo Pythios at Delphi may be felt to be more valuable, more likely to reach and please the god than one made at the local Attic deme shrines to those gods. What is behind such localizations? For most Greeks, no justification was necessary beyond custom. A long-standing, traditional connection between a site and a particular cult was the most powerful basis for the perpetuation of worship. Yet those who wished to know could find a more satisfactory explanation in mythological accounts that explained why a place was special to the god.

Parker 2011: 104

Mikalson 2010: 43.


For a chronological survey of the Epidaurian Asclepieion see Melfi 2007: II.1.
The cult of Asclepius was among the most ancient in Greece. Cult activity in the Asclepieion begins from the sixth century BCE but worship probably goes back centuries on the hill of Maleatas, a local cult of Apollo which continued to be closely associated with Asclepius. So the authority of antiquity already gives Epidaurus an elevated status among the many newer healing cults scattered around the Greek world in the Hellenistic Period. Moreover, many other sanctuaries, especially those of Ionia, traced their roots back to Epidaurus. Yet it certainly helps to bolster this traditional connection to the cult through local mythological accounts. The Epidaurian variants of the Asclepius birth-myth (both that heard by Pausianias and that promoted by Isyllos) help justify the primacy of this cult site over all others to those who need further justification; it localizes the cult of the god in the only way it can be – by explaining why the god prefers this place and, by implication, why those seeking contact with him should prefer it too.

4.2 Apollo and Dionsysos at Delphi: Philodamos’ paean and religious reforms

In the example of Isyllos’ paean, behind the hymn and the inscription of which it is part lies a change in the local religious calendar – namely, the institution of a new annual pompê. The new rite for Apollo Maleatas and Asclepius and the mythological restructuring in the paean support and lend credibility to each other and both have as one of their aims the elevation of Epidaurus’ religious status on the Panhellenic stage. The situation can be compared to the paean of Philodamos from Delphi, which is likewise an element in a larger change to the local religious landscape. Two distinctions need to be made prior to any in-depth comparison. The political dynamic so blatant in the Isyllos inscription is absent from or at least not apparent in Philodamos. At the same time, the religious restructuring is both more central and arguably more fundamental than what was observed in Epidaurus.

The paean is preserved in an inscription that also gives us a title and a postscript. The first unusual detail to catch one’s attention – and the feature that more or less summarizes the overall intention of the hymn – is that it is a paean to Dionsysos. Although there is some debate about the origin and the definition of a paean as a genre or cult title, most scholars would probably

346 For the sanctuary of Apollo Maleatas see Papadimitriou 1949, Lambrinoudakis 1975 and 1981.
347 Edelstein 1945: 238ff
348 BCH 19:393=SEG 32:552.
agree that the term is not traditionally associated with this god. The more common and widely-
attested connection of both the song and the epithet paian is with Apollo and deities closely
related to him (Asclepius, Leto, Artemis). Dionsysos, on the other hand, is most naturally
related to another type of song (and corresponding epithet) - dithyrambos. The association
between dithyramb and Dionsysos is already present in the first reference to the genre in a
fragment of Archilochus (fr. 120 W) and is maintained, at the other end of the spectrum, by the
lexicographers and commentators well into the Imperial period. And in spite of a lack of
recognizably Dionysian contents in some extant examples (above all those of Bacchylides) and
the spread of dithyrambic competitions beyond Dionysian festivals in the Hellenistic period, the
traditional connection never entirely disappears.

As the present analysis of Philodamos’ paean will demonstrate, the traditional connection of the
two genres (and the polarity between them and their respective gods) are in fact implied in the
text even as it tries to overcome them. In the course of his song, Philodamos’ strategy is to
challenge the familiar associations and oppositions by employing the features most readily
identifiable with one or the other cult and genre. More generally, the innovative characterization
of Dionsysos and juxtaposition of Dionysian and Apollonian features are framed within
traditional hymnic structure, language and form. This should not come as a surprise in light of
what has already been said about the relationship between the basic, religious-rhetorical function
of the hymn (which expresses itself in the recognizably traditional form and content) and any
secondary aims a particular set of stakeholders may require. The more powerful the competing
functions and the more significant the manipulation they demand of the hymn, the more
immediate the need to emphasize the religious authority of the song as a genuine, traditional cult
hymn.

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349 Fairbanks 1900: 66-7, Bowra 1961: 408, Rutherford 2001: 6. Paeans that are composed for other deities usually
make an effort to establish some connection to Apollo nonetheless. For instance, paeans for Asclepius open with
Apollo and use the genealogical link to justify the younger laudandus. The paean of Philodamos is of course
another perfect example of this. See in general Fairbanks 1900: 48-9 and Sineux 1999: 158.
350 E.g., Proclus (ap. Phot. Bibl. 319b35-320a4 Henry) classifies the dithyramb and iobacchon as hymns for
Dionsysos.
351 On the history of the dithyramb, see Zimmermann 2007-2009 and 2008. On the connection between the
Dionsysos and dithyramb see the introduction to Kowalzig and Wilson, edd. 2013: esp. 8ff. For the traditional
opposition between the dithyramb and paean see Fantuzzi (2010) 190 and further references there.
352 Pórtulas (2012: 222) notes the “sacred, numinous atmosphere” that is given to a song by virtue of Archaic or
archaizing style and compares it with the similar religious aura surrounding the ancient cult statues, the xoana,
again due in part precisely to their Archaic style.
First it is important to look at the innovations in the hymn and the underlying secondary objectives which these are intended to accomplish. The most striking innovation is generic: the fact that this is a paean for Dionsysos. That it is indeed a paean is clear not only from the title but likewise from the poetic text itself. The epiphthegma Ἱὲ Παίαν mentioned above is the most easily recognizable generic marker but to this may also be added the language of health, salvation and preservation, all characteristic of Paean, who was once a separate healing god and eventually became associated with Apollo. In the longer recurring refrain, Dionsysos is called σωτήρ and asked to preserve (φύλασσ[ε]) the city; and in the closing, he is called ἄναξ ὑγείας “lord of health” (153). The association of Dionsysos with these attributes is as unusual as the singing of paeans for him.

In addition to this overall twist of generic associations, Philodamos also manipulates traditional mythological material. At least five stanzas are dedicated to mythological narrative. Stanzas six through eight are highly fragmentary but it is likely that at least a part of this section contained further myth and a transition to the hic et nunc of the occasion. Of the initial five stanzas that concentrated on myth, one – number four – is likewise almost entirely missing. After the initial invocation, the hymn narrates the birth of Dionsysos in Thebes and proceeds to recount the travels of the young god around the Greek world, ending finally on Olympus. Dionsysos’ birth is welcomed and celebrated by all the gods and men (8-9). This pattern of divine birth followed immediately by universal jubilation, however, is much more at home in Apollo’s myth than that of Dionsysos, who is usually described as encountering initial opposition from both mortals and the other gods.  

When he arrives on Olympus the Muses receive him with dance. This too is highly irregular; Dionsysos is accompanied and celebrated by a band of female attendants but these are Maenads not Muses, who are supposed to be led by Apollo in his role of Musagêtês.

What is Philodamos trying to achieve with these innovative shifts in the image and myth of Dionsysos? Why is this god being given Apollonian aspects? Aside from the title, the

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353 There are many stories of early opposition to Dionsysos. See, e.g., Euripides’ Bacchae for the story of Pentheus, Il. 6, 129ff For a similar myth about Lycurgus, Ps.Apollod. Bibl. 3. 26-29 for Hera’s hatred of Dionsysos; and more generally Furley and Bremer 2001: v.2 63-64. Funtuzzi (2010: 190) further notes that καλλίτας (line 7), applied here to Semele, is a traditional epithet for Leto, another example of intentional mixture between the two birth-myths.
hymnographer’s strategy is most apparent in the shorter of the two recurring refrains: ευοῖ ὦ οἳ Ἦκακξ’ ὦ ἰὲ Παιάν (5, 18, etc.) This line juxtaposes two of the most common Greek epiphtegmata – the bacchic ευοῖ and paeanic ἰὲ with their respective epithets, Bakchos and Paean. The first call and epithet would have been immediately recognizable as a feature of Dionysian worship; the second pair is just as much at home in Apollonian cult. What is interesting is that Philodamos does not merely replace the dithyrambic call with the paeanic: he is not inverting the cult identities of the two gods. Nor does the juxtaposition simply equate the two gods, as suggested by one interpreter. Rather, he recognizes and incorporates the familiar Dionysian attributes of his divine laudandus but also applies features which would be considered more normal for Apollo.

The Dionysian attributes of this Dionsysos are not limited to the epithet Bakchos and the epiphtegma ευοῖ. Dionsysos is connected, as would be expected, to the dithyramb, both the song and title. He is invoked as dithyrambos in the opening, there is a reference to a new contest of kyklioi choroi, normally identified as dithyrambs, set up in his honour at the Pythian Games (133-4), and the divine performance in his honour (59) is likewise a kyklios choros. His birth is set in Thebes, he is depicted in a chariot drawn by lions (138-9), he is also called Βρόμιος (2) and possibly Ταῦρος (3), and he, as well as his mortal and immortal worshippers, wears ivy (2, 59, 147). Removed from the context of this particular hymn, these elements together would amount to an almost stereotypical image of Dionsysos, characterized exactly as he would be expected to be. The point seems to be that even as Dionsysos is apparently acquiring (or rediscovering) some unfamiliar features and taking on a new position at Delphi, he is still the same god; he maintains what is his and what everyone knows, or thinks s/he knows about him. This approach is consistent with the general rule of religious change in Greek culture: change in cult and myth is improper if it involves overtaking what has been sanctioned by custom; what is acceptable and even quite common, on the other hand, are changes that keep what is already there and add something new to a city’s religion, provided of course that the additions are also confirmed by divine communication such as an oracular decree.

354 Fantuzzi 2010: 190.
355 On the association between kyklios choros and the dithyramb see Fearn 2007: 165ff
356 It is telling, for instance, that the majority of Delphic consultations and the state consultation of Didyma, have to do precisely with religious matters and especially with seeing advice on ritually correct action. See n. 364 below. On the practice of consulting an oracle about changes in cult, see Parker (2011) appendix 1. Levi-Strauss’ concept of bricolage (esp. 1966: 16ff) has proven to be a helpful tool for understanding religious change in the
Another good place to start analysing the hymnographer’s aims and strategy is the divine performance on Olympus (53-63). As the case of Limenios has shown, it is not unusual for Greek hymns to incorporate a mythological performance that in some way parallels the external performance into which the myth is embedded. In Limenios’ paean Apollo is received in Attica with paeans, and this inaugural event is then connected to the tradition of paean-singing by the Athenians and even more specifically the technitiae. Such a model performance has an aetiological function: it provides the precedent that justifies the real performance or some aspect thereof.

In Philodamos’ aetiological performance, Dionsysos is celebrated by a chorus of the Muses. As mentioned above, the Muses are closely connected to Apollo but not to Dionsysos. But note that Dionsysos does not simply replace Apollo, just like the paeanic call in the refrain does not replace the Dionysian ιο Βάκχε. Apollo too is present in his familiar role as Musagêtês, leader of the Muses. A similar scene – Apollo and the Muses entertaining the gods – is commonplace in Greek literature. Yet not everything is typical. The Muses are wearing ivy, the plant sacred to Dionsysos; and they are dancing kykloï choroi. The phrase is closely associated with the dithyramb and in a context of generic manipulation, this connotation is unavoidable. A little later, the same adjective κυκλιάν (134) is used again, this time almost certainly with a specific reference to dithyrambic contests. The divine event is a mixture of Apollonian and Dionysian features, which is likewise true of the external performance of Philodamos’ hymn. The Muses also call Dionsysos paean - they too are singing a paean to Dionsysos. The model is designed to mirror, explain and justify the paean and its unconventional aspects. Dionsysos and Apollo are not replaced or assimilated but they are brought closer together, and Dionsysos especially is made more Apollonian, more at home in an Apollonian context. In the first stanza, Dionsysos’ birth was celebrated by all the gods. Here, significantly, it is specifically Apollo who is welcoming his half-brother on Olympus. It will now be demonstrated that this too reflects the external performance and its occasion, where Dionsysos is being welcomed by Apollo in his home at Delphi.

Greek world: rather than inventing rituals and myths from scratch, the Greeks adopted and manipulated existing, familiar elements. See, for instance, the concept applied to Orphic myth by Graf and Johnston 2013: 70-3, 82-93, and discussion of the role of bricolage in Greek religious change in general by Sourvinou-Inwood 1995: 24 and further references there.
The opening reference to “spring-time sacred days,” combined with report that Apollo has commanded for the present hymn to be repeated annually at the xeniois eteiois theôn (110-11), points strongly toward a performance at the Delphian Theoxenia, a spring festival associated particularly with welcoming the return of Apollo from his winter sojourn with the Hyperboreans. The city's religious calendar was traditionally divided between Apollo and Dionsysos. The proximity between the two gods was nothing new in the Delphic religious context. Although the sanctuary was described as belonging to Apollo, Dionsysos had a prominent place. During the winter months, when Apollo was said to be visiting his favourite Hyperboreans and his oracle was silent, the temple was not vacant – Dionsysos was there, acting as resident and custodian of his brother’s naos. The double-occupancy of the temple was embodied in the sacra – both gods had statues in the cella of the temple. Yet in spite of this proximity, there had nonetheless been a clear distinction between the two cults – Dionsysos was there when Apollo was not. Bacchylides’ second dithyramb (fr. 16) opens with a priamel based on the division of the Delphic religious calendar between paeanic singing for Apollo and performance of dithyrambs for Dionsysos:

you come to seek the flowers of paeans, Pythian Apollo, all those which choruses of Delphians loudly sing at your glorious temple. Until then we sing of how the son of Amphitryon … (8-15).

When Apollo returns, the Delphic choruses will please him with paeans but meanwhile, while Apollo is away and Dionsysos tends the temple, it is appropriate to offer him dithyrambs such as this one.

Philodamos’ paean marks a significant shift from this traditional separation. Judging from stanzas IX-XI of the song, in the background of its performance was a wider reformulation of the local cultic schema - a move to integrate Dionsysos more fully into the ritual landscape of Delphi. A share in the new temple and the construction of a grand statue give the deity who had already had a home there even greater spatial integration. Evidence from Pausanias and

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archaeological finds at Delphi corroborates the picture painted by the hymn, namely that the art of the new temple treated both, Dionysos and Apollo, with similar prominence. On the East pediment, Apollo is the central figure, and is surrounded by Artemis, Leto and the Muses. But the West pediment was dominated by Dionysos as kitharôidos with women dressed like maenads around him. It is possible that these female figures are the muses in Dionysian garb seen in Philodamos’ divine aetiology, and the two sides of the temple present both gods as mousagetai, conferring on Dionysos his brother’s traditional role. Temporal integration into the entire calendar cycle is aided by rituals in honour of Dionysos added to two Apollonian festivals - the Theoxenia and the Pythia - held during parts of the year (spring and summer, respectively) when Dionysos had conventionally been thought to be absent from Delphi. To the Theoxenia were to be added a regular hymn (probably this very paean) and a sacrifice for Dionysos, while the Pythia, according to Apollo's commands, was henceforth to include a contest of dithyrambs in his honour among its agônes mousikoi. The choice of Theoxenia is particularly poignant. As the festival that celebrated the return of Apollo to Delphi and, implicitly, the departure of Dionysos, this is the probably the oddest and at the same time the most logical occasion possible for the performance of a genre-bending hymn that announces the Dionysian reforms.

The text of the paean is not simply a reflection of this religious shift at Delphi - it is one of the means by which it is affected. It facilitates the integration of Dionysos on two levels. First and more obviously, the hymn communicates the oracular instructions of Apollo which in turn express the practical strategy for the expansion of Dionysian cult in the polis. If the hymn was reperformed, as it seems to claim the god demands, this strategy will be reiterated regularly. And whether or not the claims of annual reiteration are accepted, the inscription of the text itself would act as a lasting reminder of Apollo's commands.

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360 Pausanians (10.19,4) describes what he saw on the pediments as follows: “τὰ δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἀετοῖς ἔστιν Ἀρτέμις καὶ Λετὸς καὶ Ἀπόλλων καὶ Μοῦσαι δύσις τε Ηλίου καὶ Διόνυσος τε καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες αἱ Θυιάδες.” For a summary of the archaeological findings and the reconstruction see Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1 80.

361 Whether or not the women around Dionysos are the Muses, the image is striking because of Apollo's traditional characterization as the prototypical kitharôidos (as well of course as Musagêtês, i.e., a kitharistês leading a choros). See Power 2010: 205 n. 49 on Apollo-kitharôidos.

362 On the question of reperformance of Philodamos’ paean see p. 184-5 below.
On another level, Philodamos’ song helps incorporate Dionsysos into the largely Apollonian context, both the immediate festive occasion of the performance (Theoxenia) and more generally the sanctuary and religious calendar of Delphi. Through the manipulation of generic associations, familiar imagery and traditional mythological material, the song makes Dionsysos more Apollonian and thereby more suitable for cohabitation of Delphi with his brother. The hymn, then, acts not only to communicate but also to justify the other, parallel changes as well as the overall shift in religious landscape of which it is a part.

The paean of Isyllos was composed for performance in a new ritual – an annual procession by the select elite men of Epidaurus in honour of Asclepius and Apollo Maleatas. Similarly, Philodamos’ hymn is to be part of new ritual incorporated into the Theoxenia at Delphi. In the latter case, however, this new ritual is only one element in a larger cultic reorganization. Apollo, who, in Philodamos’ paean welcomes Dionsysos with music on Olympus, is also welcoming him at Delphi, to share with him his sanctuary and his festivals throughout the year, not only when he himself is absent in the winter months. These changes are significant, as are the innovations in genre and mythology that the hymnographer incorporates into his song in order to aid the local religious reconstitution. To avoid losing the authority of religious discourse, Philodamos had to maintain the traditional feel of the song and validate the unconventional elements. One of the most powerful tools used to justify the generic transformation of Dionsysus – the aetiological divine performance – has already been discussed. By appealing to a precedent in the illo tempore of mythological aitia, the song acquires both the authority of antiquity and the approval of the gods, who teach mortals how to worship them.

The appeal to divine approval does not end there however. Like Isyllos, Philodamos also relies on the more authoritative voice of the oracle. As the gods are distant from mortals, it is difficult to determine the correct way of acting towards them in order to create a charis relationship. Divination – and especially the oracles of Apollo - provides one way of ensuring that individuals and communities do not behave impiously.\(^{363}\) So it is no surprise that the majority of surviving historical oracular questions and responses (on the level of the state) deal precisely with issues of cult.\(^{364}\) The introduction of new cults, festivals and rituals is among the most common because

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363 Apollo had a special role as an exegete of divine matters for mankind. See further Parker 2000: esp. 83-4.
unlike existing practices, which have the assurance of tradition, innovation entails the danger of offending (or simply failing to please) the deity. Since Isyllos and Philodamos are involved in cultic change, they seek both a precedent in tradition or mythology and oracular confirmation. But whereas Isyllos was told merely that it would please Apollo to have his paean inscribed, Philodamos receives a long list of instructions including the command to compose and perform the present hymn. The postscript to the paean in the inscription indicates that Philodamos and his brother composed the work “in accordance with the god’s oracular response.” In addition, the poetic text incorporates the contents of Apollo’s guidelines. This is in contrast to Isyllos, who chose to leave the oracle out of the paean and mentioned it only in a separate section of the inscription. The description of the oracle in Philodamos probably began in one of the missing stanzas. The grammar of the opening of the ninth stanza - ἐκτελέσαι δὲ πρᾶξιν Ἀμφικτύονας “for the Amphictyons to complete the task” – appears to continue a thought begun earlier. At the very least, some context or introduction to the instructions probably began in stanza eight, and possibly other instructions (e.g., for Philodamos to compose the paean) were included in the missing text as well.

Even in its extant state, the report of Apollo’s decree takes up a significant part of the overall hymn – three full stanzas – and is both specific and elaborate, as the earlier discussion has noted. One reason for incorporating this long section in the paean is to help account for the unexpected Apollonian transfiguration of Dionsysos and his proximity to Apollo in the hymn. The message is that the god of Delphi instructs Philodamos and the authorities of Delphi to incorporate his half-sibling into his cult. At the same time, the instructions included in the hymn serve to publicise and justify the other elements of the larger religious reorganization. Finally, some parts of the oracular section of the paean may be aimed at those who have the power to enact the god’s decree. For example, representatives (official or otherwise) of member-states in the Amphictyonic League, which is partly responsible for the sanctuary of Apollo and the organization of the Pythian games, are told or reminded to complete the rebuilding of the temple and to make the appropriate changes to the Pythian programme.

365 The phrase in lines 106-7 – θεὸς κελεύει – frame the subsequent list of instructions as the direct report of the oracular decree.
366 A possible reason for this choice is discussed on pp. 139-40 above.
The divine aetiology and oracular confirmation helps to validate and explain the unconventional elements of the hymn. But even when justified explicitly, on a more implicit or subconscious level such unfamiliar features can nonetheless threaten to destabilize the feel of the hymn as a cult song, making the worshippers uneasy or suspicious about its potency and seriousness. The remedy is to ensure there is enough of what is traditional and familiar to reassure the audience of its success as a genuine cult hymn – of its dedication to the praise and pleasure of the god. It has been observed how Philodamos incorporates many aspects of Dionsysos’ traditional mythological and cult personality; this ensures a certain level of stability during the transition he is made to undergo. Likewise on the formal level, the hymn includes many conventional features which add to the sense of conservatism in the song.

The refrain, the site of some of the most blatant mixing of genres and manipulation of Dionysian persona, is at the same time one of the hymn’s most conventional features. Recurring refrains of this kind are found in some of the most traditional and simple hymns, like the Dictaeaean hymn to Zeus from Crete and the Erythraean paean to Asclepius. Both of these, as well as the paean of Philodamos, combine the stanza form with this recurring refrain. Likewise, the *epipthegmata*, although their combination and application here is quite unusual, in and of themselves constitute another conservative and familiar feature of cult discourse on the one hand and readily recognizable generic markers on the other. The same can be said about the other characteristic paeanic features mentioned above – they are traditional and familiar to the particular type of hymn even if their application to Dionsysos is not.

In its overall structure the paean follows what has been shown to be the most common, tri-partite division, with a direct second-person invocation, a long section of praise and a brief final prayer. Properly speaking, the final prayer is a single line – χαίρε ἄναξ ὑγιείας “rejoice, lord of health” (153) – followed by the last repetition of the longer refrain. The refrain includes a more explicit request for protection and fortune of “this city.” Yet, as was discussed in chapter three, the simple call to farewell and rejoice – *chaire* – can be considered a complete prayer in its own right, since it invokes the main object of the hymn as such, the primary hope of all the worshippers with respect to their choral offering: the reciprocal *charis* relationship with the god. The form of *chairein* is one of several common hymnic formulae incorporated by Philodamos. To this can be added the transitional signposts: ὅν… ποτ’ (6), which marks the shift from
invocation and occasion to *illud tempus* of myth and the central section of the hymn; and ἀλλὰ (144), which signals the conclusion of the hymn. The number and prominence of such common traditional elements and features in this hymn concur with the suggestion made earlier that the presence of strong competing objectives in the hymn necessitates a corresponding conservatism in form and language in order to offset the potentially destabilizing effect of the former. The more innovation such competing functions require, the more traditional the hymn needs to sound.

There is yet another aim that is incorporated into Philodamos’ paean. The oracular section of the hymn (or at least what has survived of it) opens with the direct injunction directed to the Amphictyons: complete the temple and do it quickly (105-7). The previous temple had been destroyed over two decades prior and its reconstruction is in the immediate background of the performance. After years of work and several interruptions, the temple is still incomplete, although the types of instructions given in the paeanic text suggest that the project was in the last stage, or at least that the structure of the building was already there. In the following stanza, the hymn apparently appeals to the wider audience and declares (probably still based on the oracular decree) that any man who contributes to the project will be blessed. Finally, the text goes on to give specific directions on certain features of the new temple. Here the two goals – completion of the building and repositioning Dionsysos in Delphi – are aligned, since these instructions provide for both the greater integration and “Apollonization” of the god. The performance and subsequent inscription of Philodamos’ paean, then, was intended to have a tangible, positive effect on massive public construction project: it encouraged those primarily responsible for its management to complete it with all speed, called upon all those present and their communities to help in any way they could, and gave specific, concrete guidelines for the last stages of the project. Yet, as has been said earlier, not all functions are equal. All cult songs are first and foremost required to please the divine recipient with appropriate, traditional language of praise and artistic embellishment. But even between the two complementary aims of Philodamos’ paean that have been outlined here, it is the further integration of Dionsysos within Delphic religion (which includes the audience’s acceptance of his new position and persona) that is more fundamental to the hymnographer’s overall strategy. As the above analysis has demonstrated, this re-configuration of Dionsysos permeates the entire text of the hymn. The rebuilding project, on the other hand, is limited to the oracular stanzas. Moreover, the details of the temple which
are included here are those that focus on Dionsysos and are aimed at consolidating his new place in Apollonian cult. Finally, while the building of the new project is an issue that is at the forefront of the immediate local-historical context, it would not continue to be so indefinitely; the relevance of this aspect of the paean, therefore, extends only until the project’s completion. The hymn itself, however, is tied to a cyclical cult occasion that will recur, at least in theory, for eternity. The special relationship between the divine half-brothers in Delphi, as redefined in part by the new temple and the hymn, is likewise something whose local importance does not have a pre-determined term of expiration.

Now that some of the competing functions of Philodamos’ hymn are more apparent, the question of agency needs to be considered: whose interests do these functions reflect? The performance took place in Delphi and this site is prominent in the text. Deictic phraseology points not only to a particular place (τὰνδε πόλιν “this city” 12, 25, etc.) but also to a specific festive time (4). In the mythological narrative, Delphi has the pride of place as the first stop the newborn god makes after his birth in Thebes (20). Here he joins the Delphic women on Mt. Parnassus in a celebration probably involving dancing. In this context Delphi is called ὑμνοβρυής (brimming with hymns, 19), thus suggesting that this place is particularly appropriate for hymnic performances. The oracular section makes many detailed references to the local religious context, including the ongoing improvements to the temple and sanctuary and the expansion of the Pythia festival. The importance of Delphi in the hymn is not surprising. Not only is it the site of the performance, but it is also central to the process of cult reorganization which is the historical context of the hymn: Dionsysos is being incorporated more fully into the Pythian religious calendar and landscape.

As was noted in the course of the the discussion on Limenios, there are two main powers at Delphi, the polis of Delphi with its civic and religious officials on the one hand, and the Amphictyonic Council on the other. The Council is responsible for the organization of the Pythian Games and has some role in the maintenance of the sanctuary at Delphi.367 However, the citizens of Delphi still have a privileged position at the sanctuary; the priests are drawn from their number and they have the right of priority access to the oracle.368 It is reasonable therefore to consider the Delphian polis or some group within it the main influence behind the changes

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367 On the division of powers and responsibilities between the polis, priesthood and Amphictyony, see Scott 2010: 35-6 and further references in n. 35 there.
368 See n. 118 above.
taking place in the local cult structure, changes which are being presented as the initiative of the god himself.

Control of and privileged access to the temple and oracle are not the only factors that favour this possibility. The postscript to the paean indicates that as a reward for their hymn, Philodamos and his brother were granted proxenic privileges by the polis of Delphi. Furthermore, the oracular section of the paean is directed at least in part to the members of the Amphictyons; certainly the first command, with regard to finishing the restoration of Apollo’s temple, is explicit: “the god bids the Amphictyons quickly to complete the deed.” Some of the other instructions also pertain to known responsibilities of the Council such as the organization of the Pythian Games. In the case of the temple, it is of course not the ambassadors themselves who were doing construction. But the Delphians probably relied heavily on the other cities to help in the financing and management of the project. It is certainly not the poet himself who wants to give orders to the representatives of member cities; nor does it make much sense to read this as the Council itself publicizing their own apparent sluggishness in completing the restoration of the temple.

Instead, it is probably better to imagine the internal authorities of Delphi, or some element of the citizen body, using the authority of oracular utterance and religious song for their own aims. One of these is to encourage the member poleis of the League to hasten in the completion of the restoration, which had already been going on for several decades, since the destruction of the temple around 370 BCE. The other is to reposition Dionsysos in the cult life of their city. For this purpose also they need the assistance of the Amphictyons (e.g., adding dithyrambs to the Pythia). What motivations the Delphians had for wishing to raise Dionsysos to equal standing with Apollo in their sanctuary is a difficult question which will probably never be answered with any certainty. One possibility, suggested by Parke and Wormell, is that Delphi was reacting to the growth in the popularity of Dionysian cult in the fourth century BCE, which may have posed a threat to the sanctuary of Apollo as the religious centre of Greece. This hypothesis was proposed with reference to the pediment sculptures of the new temple, but can likewise be applied to Philodamos’ paean, which is part of a coherent collaborative strategy of religious restructuring. An alternative possibility is offered by Scott, who sees the influence of Athens

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370 Scott 2010: 138. Coissant (1996: 128) thinks that behind both the temple sculptures and the paean is a
at play here. The Athenians are establishing their presence on the Panhellenic stage by integrating Dionysos, the god of their theatre and democracy, into the Delphic sanctuary. Scott demonstrates that Athens had a strong presence in the religious topography of Delphi in this period and was even actively opposing the authority of the League. Moreover, it is telling that the two sculptors working on the pediments were Athenians. Yet, even if there was external influence behind the designs, the commissions were nonetheless assigned by the *polis* of Delphi and it would certainly have the final say in approving the proposed artistic programme. As for the hymn of Philodamos, which is explicitly supportive of the sculptural programme and is working together with it, the extant portion of the text shows no sign of Athenocentrism in its portrayal or narrative of the god, nor of any direct involvement of the Athenians in its commission, composition or performance.

So far two stakeholders have been considered in the production of Philodamos’ paean: the Delphic *polis* is probably the main power behind the message of the hymn and the larger religious strategy at work here; and the Amphictyonic Council is one of the explicit addressees of this message and potential partners in the implementation of this strategy. But the Amphictyons are not the only intended audience. The hymn is performed in front of both local and visiting spectators. The prominence of Delphi in the text has already been noted, but the Panhellenic dimensions are equally important here. The oracular instructions incorporated into the paean describe the context of this performance and the song’s role within it: “this hymn is to be presented to the sacred kindred family of the gods during the annual *xenia*” (110-112). The reference is to the Delphic Theoxenia festival and the wording emphasizes the regular, yearly recurrence of both the occasion and the hymnic performance. By applying the deictic phrase τόν ὅμοιον “this hymn”, the paean anchors itself permanently to the new element in the festival program. The lines that follow (112-14) add further crucial information: the hymn is to be accompanied or followed by sacrifices and the supplication of all of Greece. Delphi is always a host to foreign visitors, private and official, drawn by its oracle; but this phrase stresses the Panhellenic nature of the Theoxenia and indicates specifically that the new elements being added to the programme are likewise intended for participation by locals and visitors alike.

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371 Macedonian move to bring Dionysos, which they regard as northern god, to Delphi.
371 On the question of the reperformability of Philodamos’ paean and more on this passage see p. 184-5 below.
That the Theoxenia had long been a Panhellenic festival receives further confirmation from another surviving hymn believed to be composed for this occasion. Roughly a century earlier, Pindar strikes a balance between Panhellenic and local discourse in his sixth paean. A particularly telling passage appears in the opening of the second strophe (lines 62 and following): “for a sacrifice is being made on behalf of splendid All-Greece, which the race of Delphi (saved) from famine by its prayer.” The explicit reference to All-Greece (pan-Hellas) is balanced by the emphasis on the central role of Delphi.372

Throughout the text, Philodamos similarly tries to mediate between the two competing dimensions – local and Panhellenic - of Pythian cult. Both are at the core of the occasion, a Panhellenic festival that is being used to incorporate significant changes into the local cultic system. The dual nature of the event is highlighted on the level of ritual occasion, the hic et nunc, as well as in mythological narrative. The final section of the hymn turns to the audience and asks them to welcome Dionsysos with choruses in their streets, and the wording “all over blessed Hellas” (149) leaves no doubts that it is a Panhellenic audience that is being addressed.373 Yet the final words of the paean – the last reiteration of the longer refrain – focus on Delphi: it is for “this city” above all that the prayer is made and on its behalf that the paean is sung. The point is emphasized by its repetition as part of the refrain as well as its final position here.

The double structure of worship, with the participation of all Greece but a privileged ritual position of the local population, is perhaps paralleled by the description of worship in Eleusis (lines 31-5): “there the entire Greek nation, surrounding the indigenous witnesses of the holy Mysteries, invokes you as Iacchus.” The image is quite literally one of an inner circle of local initiates into the mysteries and the Panhellenic pilgrims gathered for festive worship. The pattern is mirrored in Delphi, whose citizens have a privileged relationship with Apollo's temple and oracle, the focus of Panhellenic worship at Delphi. The connection between the two sanctuaries is strengthened by incorporating Dionsysos, identified with Iacchus, into the description of Eleusinian cult.374

373 The petition in lines 144ff to celebrate Dionsysos with ivy-bearing choruses throughout Greece, while primarily directed toward the future, can at the same time be read as a self-reflexive reference to the present performance – an ivy-bearing choral song in honour of Dionsysos at a pan-Hellenic festival. See Vamvouri 2004: 104.
374 On the close association of Iacchus with Dionsysos and the question of whether the former was ever regarded a
Likewise, earlier in the central section of the hymn, Delphi is given the privilege of being the first place visited by Dionsysos after his birth. At the same time, however, the hymnographer is keen to include many different cities and regions in his description of the god’s travels. Although only the first, second, third and fifth stanzas are sufficiently complete to allow interpretation, even within these four Philodamos manages to incorporate references to Thebes, Orchomenos, Euboia, Delphi, Eleusis, Thessaly, Olympus and Pieria. It is quite likely that several others were mentioned in the incomplete parts of the text. It is difficult, for instance, to imagine a complete absence of the Aegean islands, from such a detailed geographic catalogue of the god's travels. After all, the story of Dionsysos is hardly complete without his nuptials on Naxos. Delos, on the other hand, would be particularly appropriate in view of the special Apollonian twist on the Dionysian myth being developed by Philodamos. The scope is widened even further by the claim that “all mortals” rejoiced at the birth of Dionsysos (10).

The result is that Delphi, the Theoxenia, the cult of Dionsysos and the new rituals being performed at this moment are all given a Panhellenic dimension. In view of this the secondary messages embedded in the text should likewise be understood as intended not only for Delphians themselves (or the officials of the Amphictyons) but also the crowds gathered from across the Greek world. It is perhaps easy to understand why these foreign visitors need to be told and convinced of the major changes in cult structure happening in the Pythian sanctuary. Delphi relies strongly on the pilgrimage of other Greeks, private individuals coming to consult the oracle as well as public delegates from other states. The status and privilege of the site, not to mention its financial health, rests on the continued recognition of Delphi’s authority and ongoing influx of visitors offering sacrifices and dedications. Putting Dionsysos on equal footing with the traditional inhabitant of Delphi throughout the year is a significant change to the familiar structure of Pythian religion and thus needs to be accepted by all Greeks, not just the Delphians themselves.

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separate deity, see Jiménes San Cristóbal 2012.
4.3 Pindar’s Theban *daphnêphorikon*: celebrating mortals with songs for the gods

Philodamos’ paean for Dionsysos is an illustration of how powerful stakeholders with specific objectives can noticeably impact the hymnic text. Another, even more extreme, example of this can been seen in Pindar’s *daphnêphorikon* (fr. 94b Maehler), already discussed briefly earlier in this chapter.³⁷⁵ As mentioned there, the noble family of the *daphnêphoros* played a prominent role in the organization of the hymn’s performance and its ritual context; so much so that in the text, the secondary function of praising this *genos* seems to overtake the (normally) primary goal of cult song – the praise and pleasure of the god. There is no central prayer or mythological narrative to be found in the poem; the opening includes only a brief and indirect invocation of Apollo, to whom the Daphnephoria festival was dedicated. Interestingly, the initial invocation of the divine addressee seems to be adapting and reconfiguring two common features of the cult hymn: the cletic invocation and the simple prayer for *charis*. The first reflects the worshipers’ desire for a god to be present at (or at least turn his attention to) the ritualized offering: because the Greek gods are not omnipresent, their participation in the communion and communication with mortals is a prerequisite for a successful relationship. It is hoped that the god will receive both the gifts and prayers. The prayer for *charis* is a manifestation of the basic logic behind the hymn and Greek cult practice more generally. In these lines of Pindar’s *partheneion*, however, these basic aims, so central to most Greek hymns, appear to be taken for granted. Rather than asking the god to come, the text announces his presence – ἥκει γὰρ ὁ [Λὸξ]ίας “for Loxias has come” – and in place of a petition for *charis*, is an indicative statement assuring the community of Thebes that Apollo is giving them ἄθανάταν χάριν “immortal grace.” Beyond this cursory reference in the first few lines there is nothing else that could be considered the praise of the deity.

There is, however, plenty of encomiastic language directed toward mortals – the aristocratic family who probably commissioned the song. In lines 10-11 of Pindar's *partheneion*, the speaker says that she “will hymn the house of Aeoladas and the son of Pagondas.” Although the term *hymnein*, as discussed in chapter 2, can have a more general sense of “sing”, in the context of a ritualized event such as this, when used within the text of a performed cultic song, a *hymnos*,

³⁷⁵ See p. 131 above.
there is no doubt this more particular meaning is active here. The chorus is essentially stating
that this boy, Agasicles, is a laudandus of present hymn: he is thus set on par with the god
celebrated by the laurel-bearing procession. There is another Pindaric parallel to this focus on the
mortal laudandus in this type of song. A small fragment survives from the opening of another
daphnēphorikon (Maehler 94c). Ambrosius' vita, which quotes the line, says that Pindar “married
Megakleia and had a son with her, Daiphantus, for whom he wrote a daphnēphorikon”; the
wording is reminiscent of the language of epinicians, where a song is written for a certain
individual laudandus who belongs to a particular polis, rather than for a god on behalf of a polis
as a whole. Daiphantus must have had the same role as Agasicles in fr. 94b. Note that the
fragment (very likely the opening) and the opening of fr. 94b both feature Apollo, whose cult this
type of hymn served; yet in Parth. 2 and very likely in the partheneion for Daiphantus as well,
the attention shifts very quickly to the mortal subjects and little additional time seems to be
devoted to the god. Another similarity is that both mention not only the daphnēphoros himself,
but other family members and it is quite likely that, like Agasicles' sister, the sisters of
Daiphantus would also have had a prominent part in the ritual.

In fact, the bulk of the surviving text of Pindar's partheneion centres around the praise of this
boy, Agasicles, mentioned again at line 38, and his family. The speaker describes herself as a
"faithful witness to Agasicles and his parents", tells of their hospitality (proxenai, line 41) and
the honour they have received by previous as well as the present generations, and then proceeds
to a catalogue of the family's equestrian victories. The text then extends their virtues to the moral
realm (lines 61ff), reporting that they chose the path of justice and loyalty in spite the strife over
their just ambition. There follow direct address of Pagondas, according to the most likely
reconstruction of the genealogy the boy's father, a reference to Damaena, perhaps Pagondas'
daughter and Agasicles' sister, and another reference to their mother, Andaesistrotato. All three of
them had important roles in this same ritual: Pagondas probably accompanied the boy at the front
of the procession, Damaena was the first (protē) in the chorus of parthenoi performing the song,
and Andaesistrotato may have had a part in training the chorus or at least her daughter, the
choragos.\footnote{On the various interpretations of the relationships between the various characters named in Pindar's fr. 94b see Calame 2001: 60 n.156 and cf. 1994: 138-9, Stehle 1997: 93-100 and Kurke 2007.} Therefore, including the mention of Agasicles' grandfather Aeoladas in line 9, the
hymn celebrates five members and three generations of this aristocratic family only within the extant parts of the text.

Such abundance of encomiastic language is more reminiscent of epinicians and encomia than other cult hymns. And there are more specific parallels as well. The catalogue of equestrian victories, the concern with envy and strife arising from such athletic successes, the celebration of the noble family's xenia\(^{377}\) and even the idea of the poet (or, as here, performer) being the witness of the laudandus' achievements - these are all standard features of the victory ode.

How to understand this apparent anomaly? The first thing to note is that the text is incomplete and it is possible that the missing text contained more of the kind of traditional religious language that would be expected from a hymn. This is not a complete conjecture: the fragmentary line 91 probably included a direct address to Zeus, possibly as part of a prayer. At the same time, the extant part of the partheneion does have some traditional features. The deictic connection to the place of ritual (Thebes), the self-reference by the performers either in second or first person, the description of the occasion and performance – these are all commonly found in other hymns and can be understood (at least in part) as intended to please and establish a connection with the god, to emphasize the pleasing display of the pompê and the dedication of the polis to the worship of the god.

Even the opening invocation, in spite of its unconventional reformulation of common requests for divine presence and favour, nonetheless employs traditional hymnic motifs. This hymn recognizes the need for the god’s participation and the charis relationship as the ultimate aim of cult activity; but rather than asking for the god to come and working its way to the chaire prayer in the end, it anticipates its own success qua hymn (or, perhaps the success of the ritualized events as a whole in achieving these central religious goals). Loxias is here (ἥκει), bringing joy for Thebes. Note the use of the word πρόφρων in line 4: normally translated as “kindly” and

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377 The term chosen by Pindar, proxenia, can have a more technical meaning - an official position of a host of foreign representatives. Yet, even in its less technical sense, the term probably still retains something of this public dimension - we can think of it as a slightly more public version of the simpler xenia. The choice of proxenia, over Pindar's more usual xenia, then, may suggest that some of the more public and official implications of the former are being applied here. In other words, proxenia is used in the partheneion, in a more public song, where xenia would more likely be used in the private or semi-private context of the epinikion. On xenia and proxenia see Herman 1987: esp. 130-142.
“willing”, its more literal sense is “with forward mind” or “of one’s own accord.” Pindar is apparently alluding to the logic of traditional hymn, according to which the god must be pleased before giving favour in return, but is intentionally inverting this conventional order. Apollo, “readily”, without being asked first, comes in anticipation of pleasing offerings and grants his charis pre-emptively. It is now the turn of the worshipping community to fulfil the god’s expectation, the repay him for his favour. After the declaration of the god’s arrival, the text moves immediately onto depicting the festive occasion itself: the chorus of parthenoi, their dress, the laurel branches in their hands, wreathes on their head, and of course their singing, accompanied by auloi. The hymn thus directs the attention of divine and mortal audience to the agalma that is the festive procession of the Daphnephoria. There is a sense of urgency in the wording. The shift to the action of the choristers is sharp, marked with the brief and almost abrupt transitional ἀλλά (6). Two future verbs provide the framework for this meta-performative narration: “having girt…holding… I will sing…and recall.” Grammatically, the action of the verbs and, though subordination, the participles attached to them, are placed in the future tense; yet they are describing actions in the past or present: the resulting impression is that of the speaker racing to catch up with or anticipate her own words. This sense is strengthened by the use of ὀκέως (quickly, 6) with one of the verbal forms in the clause, and the reference to the “quick blasts of the Zephyr (16-7)” and “Boreas” who “urges on the speeding storm (18-20).” Even the choice of a verb with perfective mood, ἥκει, may be intended to stress the immediacy of the god’s presence: Apollo is with us now, ready to receive our pleasing offerings.

Pindar’s partheneion, then, does exhibit elements which are familiar to from many other hymns; moreover the poet incorporates the logic of reciprocity so central to Greek cult. Yet for all these redeeming features there is no denying that the hymn does not sound like most of the ones discussed in this and previous chapters. The opening sequence is a perfect example. On the one hand, the description of the chorus in lines 6ff underscores the pleasing display offered to Apollo on his arrival, as thanks for his favour. Yet on the other hand, the object of the main verb in the passage - ὑμνήσω, I will hymn – is not Apollo but the “abode of Aioladas.” This sudden turn away from the divine and toward the mortal laudandus foils the expectation built up by the sequence of the song up to this point, especially given the choice of a term related to hymnos. This leads back to the question asked earlier – should the apparent unconventional nature of this hymn be understood? One approach would be to treat it as a special case, an anomaly in the
corpus of Greek hymns. In a recent work, Leslie Kurke describes this poem as a "wedding of genres", a mix between *partheneion* and *epinikion*, created by the specific historical circumstances of the Theban *polis* (its dominance by a narrow oligarchy of a few aristocratic families) and the particular festival for which it was composed.\(^{378}\) It is certainly possible that some of the choices made by Pindar in composing his song are motivated by that local political situation. The aristocratic language found in it is a remarkable element that would perhaps not be expected in a cult hymn. What is more difficult to accept, however, is the idea that this element is the result of an admixture of the epinician genre to a *partheneion* resulting from the specific set of political circumstances in Thebes. Rather, it seems more likely that what is seen here is an instance of a feature which may actually be typical of this type of song.

In order to define something as a mixture, it would be necessary to have sufficient evidence for the elements being mixed. There are probably enough victory odes for this purpose; but very little evidence for *partheneia* survives. Therefore, there simply is not enough information to compare Pindar's *partheneion* to a "typical" model of the type. In fact, the only other two extant samples complete enough to be comprehensible - the surviving *partheneia* of Alcman - show many of the very features that make Pindar's song appear strangely epinician.\(^{379}\) In the Louvre *partheneion* (fr. 1) there is only one prayer (81) and it very brief and addressed to the general and colloquial *theoi* rather than a specific cult deity defined by name and epithet. The second surviving fragment of a *partheneion* by Alcman (fr. 3) has no myth; the first (fr. 1) has a long narrative, but this seems to be mostly heroic material included to illustrate *gnômai*, rather than divine myths that add to the praise of the song’s divine recipient. Such didactic use of myth is more familiar, again, from epinicians and encomia than hymns.

Other forms of praise of the gods are likewise rare. Fr. 3 has none at all. In the first of Alcman's *partheneia*, there are a few brief and passing statements of praise directed to gods. At the conclusion of the first mythic section (lines 11ff), the gods Aisa (Fate) and Poros (perhaps “the Contriver”) are described as universal rulers and "oldest of the gods." In the second gnomic lesson, following another mythic section, the hymn states that there "there does exist retribution

\(^{378}\) Kurke 2007.

\(^{379}\) The fullest account of the two long fragments and of *partheneia* in general, is Calame 2001. See also Stehle 1997: chapter 3 on female choruses, Page 1951 on the first fragment, and a commentary on the main fragments in Hutchinson 2001: 71-139.
from the gods" (line 36). In lines 83-4, the hymn adds further that “fulfilment and outcome is with the gods.” Finally, the speaker in 87-8 declares her special devotion to Aos (Dawn). These brief moments of religious praise are dispersed widely throughout the text and are directed to a variety of deities, most commonly to “the gods” in general. They do not give a strong impression of a hymn that addresses and celebrates a particular god or goddess; instead these statements are mostly used for didactic and encomiastic ends.

On the other hand, as in the case of Pindar’s daphnêphorikon, Alcman’s partheneion fragments incorporate aristocratic motifs and the praise of human beings. The prominence of equestrian agonistic language in the Louvre partheneion points to a similar involvement by the local aristocracy as that seen in the case of the Theban Daphnêphoria. Horse-breeding and horse-racing were the reserve the Greek elites because only they had the means to participate at this level of competitions. In Alcman, however, although the references to horse racing imply aristocratic male presence, the discourse is used not in order to praise a particular noble family and its Panhellenic agonistic achievements, but as a comparandum for the discussion of the physical beauty of the parthenoi themselves. Like Pindar, Alcman singles out by name for individual praise a number of mortals. Among the many girls named, none is given as much attention as Agido and Hegesichora. They are praised not only for beauty but also for their skill in mousikê. A number of times, the enfêmion takes on the form of simile, comparing the girls to prized horses in the races.

These “epinician” or “encomiastic” features in the only other partheneia extant today undermine the suggestion that Pindar’s daphnêphorikon represents a peculiar mix of genres reflective of a special political context. Moreover, the defining feature of the Theban political situation seems to be less than exceptional in Archaic and Classical Greece. If anything, a narrow oligarchy, the dominance of aristocratic elites, is the rule, and democracy the rare exception. The presence of elite self-promotion through public displays, elite competition and elite involvement in public cult should be expected in most poleis. Therefore, it is at least as likely that these apparently unusual features of the surviving partheneia are not admixtures of another "genre" but features common to this kind of song.380

380 Parker (2011: 222 n.180) describes Kurke’s scenario as “rather speculative.” My issue, however, is not with the specific reconstruction of the political motivations behind the aristocratic-encomiastic discourse, but rather with
This explanation receives some confirmation from ancient scholarship. Photius, in his division of melic poetry into three categories - for gods, for men and for both gods and men - places the *partheneion* into the last group. It seems that the collection of *partheneia* available to him or his sources (which was certainly larger than the three fragmentary texts available today) led him to believe that this type of song frequently and traditionally allowed for a great deal of attention to the aristocratic participants of the performance; in other words, that the *partheneion*, although performed during festivals as an offering to the gods and thus a hymn, was composed in order to praise both the divine recipient and the mortal *laudandus*. This is consistent with the notable presence of the praise of mortals in all the (albeit very few) surviving examples of the genre, on par with or even outweighing the celebration of the god. Thus in this case the strong secondary function of Pindar’s *partheneion* is not only due to the influence of a powerful stakeholder but probably also certain factors associated with the particular type of hymn.

5 Conclusions

*Partheneia* represent a somewhat unusual case within the genre of hymnography, one where the presence of mortal interests is particularly strong. However, as the present chapter has demonstrated, it is not abnormal for hymns to display functions which extend beyond the praise of a deity. What these functions are and whose interests they represent varies widely from one song to the next and each case needs to be treated individually. When possible, contextualizing the performance using all the available evidence is an instructive first step to understanding the stakeholders involved. The identity, number and relative influence of these individuals and groups, as well as the interrelationship among them, is normally the primary explanation of the functions embedded in the hymnic text. It would be difficult, for example, to make sense of Limenios’ aetiological performance or the choices he makes in the compound prayer without taking into account the nature of the group he represents, their relationship to Athens, Delphi and Rome, and the political background of the Athenians’ renewal of the Pythais. Yet the Greek hymn is never wholly void of what have been found to be traditional features of its genre. Even the *partheneion*, which lies between the two categories – songs of gods and those for mortals –

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the assumption that the presence of such discourse is a sign of a unique local (and characteristically Daphnophoric) ad-mixture of epinician features into a *partheneion*, which, by implication, traditionally excludes this level of discourse.
still shows recognition for the fundamental logic behind the cult song and incorporates some of
the attributes which makes it recognizable as an example of this wider type of mousikê.

Outside of such intermediate genre, this patina of traditional cult discourse is even more
fundamental. It is treated as a prerequisite for success of any secondary functions, whether the
self-promotion of the composer, the political positioning of the polis or the restructuring of local
cult. The relationship between the complexity of the stakeholder network and the conservatism
of the text is anything but straightforward. On the one hand, hymns that can be considered fairly
simple in their purpose and context, such as the Erythraean paean and the Dictaean hymn to
Zeus, certainly incorporate a great deal of the kinds of features which must have been felt to be
conventional. Yet those hymns which were required to satisfy important additional interests
frequently use the traditional language and style of hymnography with just as much zeal in order
to ensure the innovations of their song are not lost on the ears of an audience who senses a
departure from the familiar feel of a hymn. Thus Philodamos, for examples, chose to compose
his genre-bending paean in a stanza form with recurring refrains, cult epiphtegmata and
conventional titles and formulae.

Similarly, no direct pattern can be expected between the complexity or power of the stakeholders
and the visible presence of secondary function in the surviving text. As has been noted, Isylllos,
who found himself in a position somewhat analogous to Philodamos, chose to leave the political
interests behind the performative context of his new paean out of the sung text itself. Whether
this was because of a concern about the traditional feel of the resulting position, a preference to
present these interests in other ways – by the choice of participants in the ritual, for instance, or
the rhetoric of the peritext – or something else, for us it is an instructive reminder that there are
always other variables at play and few of them clear to ourselves.

The chapter that follows explores what may be termed localization, which is another important
parameter in our discussion of the tools and strategies used by the Greek hymnographers to craft
a traditional hymn that suits its particular set of circumstances. It will be observed how not only
the immediate historical context but also the intended future life of the song influences the
degree to (and the manner in) which its text is anchored to the time, place and the people of its
performance.
Chapter 6
Deixis and the Contextualization of Ritualized Song

1 Introduction

The cult hymn is an instance of occasional discourse – it is part of a communal event, an act within a ritual sequence, a religious utterance in a sacred time and place. Not surprisingly, then, this type of song frequently points to or describes this festive context, setting its own performance in relation to other elements of the event. Contextualization of this kind can be seen as being among the traditional resources at the hymnographer’s disposal. And as with other such resources, there is ample room for manipulation. This chapter will show that neither the degree nor type of contextualization is uniform across the corpus of extant Greek cult songs. After defining the forms of localization generally found in these texts (with a special focus on deictic anchoring), the discussion will turn to the specific ways these are employed and, most importantly, the possible reasons behind the variation. One of the most influential factors that will surface in the course of this analysis is the intended future of the hymn beyond the initial performance. A distinction will be made between hymns composed with a particular, one-time, occasion in mind and others that were open to multiple reperformances (at reiterations of the same festive occasion or beyond). It will be argued that the way deictic language is employed in a cult hymn, as well as the presence or absence of specific local references, are closely related to such distinctions.

2 Deixis

In Pindar’s second paean, the speaker at one point says: τάνδε ναίω Θραϊκίαν γαῖαν (24-5). Words such as τάνδε are called deictic pronouns because they indicate, point to something. So when the chorus say “this Thracian land” in the quote above, the implication is that the thing being pointed out is there, present and apparent to the audience. In other words, by its use of such a term, the text refers outside of itself and situates itself in space relative to the object of the pronoun. But it is not only deictic pronouns ending in –δε that have the ability to make links between a text and its environment, although they are perhaps the most obvious examples. For
instance, in Pindar’s fifth paean, immediately after a mention of Delos, the Athenian chorus sings: ἱήμε Δάλι’ Ἀπολλόν’ Λατός ἐνθὰ με παῖδες εὐμενεῖ δέξασθε νῷ φθεράσσοντα ὑμέτερον κελαδενᾶ νῦν μελιγάρυϊ παιᾶνος ἀγακλέος ὀμφᾶ “ieie Delian Apollo! Children of Leto, receive me there with a kindly heart, your attendant with the loud, sweet-voiced sound of the glorious paean” (43-8). The word ἐνθὰ is referring back to Delos and the παιάν is the song being sung at this very moment. Thus, the grammar of the language here localizes the paeanic performance on Delos. This ability of an utterance to make connections to its context, to localize itself through its grammar in space and time is called deixis.  

This feature of language is often used in hymns to make important links between the text and its occasion or wider historical context; it can also serve to situate the mythological narrative in relation to the occasion, helping to overcome the temporal gap between them. It thus presents a level of analysis that is complementary to levels of discourse but taking a more specifically linguistic perspective. As noted above, the ability to create deictic connections is not a specialty of any one type of word; indeed, almost any kind of word or phrase can be used for deictic anchoring. Here the discussion will look particularly at three uses of deixis in the hymns: localization of performance in time and space; identification of speaker and audience (particularly through the grammatical category of person); and self-reflexive reference to the song itself. Interestingly, some of the same kinds of expressions which are used to form links between a text and its environment can also be used to create an imaginary environment. This phenomenon is called deixis am Phantasma and is contrasted with demonstratio ad oculos.  

Although this form of deixis is important to the way a poet like Callimachus or Horace goes about constructing a fictional occasion within a “literary” hymn, this will not be the focus here since the thesis is primarily dealing with hymns which are (almost) certain to have been composed for performance that is central to an existing cult event.

381 Some of the principal sources for the theoretical formulation of deixis include Bühler 1990 (tr. of 1934), Jakobson 1957 and Levinson 1983. Arethusa no. 37 (2004), edited by Athanassaki, collects papers that apply deixis to Greek lyric poetry.

382 Bühler (1990: 137-57) distinguished between three forms of pointing, including anaphora (internal reference) as a third.
2.1 Time and place

The two examples from Pindar’s paeans quoted above show how a text can locate itself in a particular place, employing a simple deictic pronoun (τάνδε γαῖαν “this land”)\(^{383}\) or an adverb of place (ἔνθα “here” or “there”) working within a more complex construction. In the Dictaean hymn to Zeus, it can be seen how a song can obtain a similar result without using explicit deictic pronouns or words especially connected to spatial relations. Zeus is asked to come to Dictae to enjoy a song τὰν τοι κρέκομεν “which we are singing” (5-7). Here the person and tense of the verb κρέκομεν and the implied simultaneity of the two actions ἐρπε καὶ γέγαθι “come and rejoice” identify the place of performance as mount Dictae on Crete. A few lines later the text does use a word of place - ἔνθα “here” (12) – but this connects the myth that is about to be told back to the place of occasion and performance established earlier on. It is of course not accidental that many of the examples quoted and cited above come from the opening of a hymn; it is within the invocation that the god is normally asked to turn his attention or even come to the place of performance. In fact words of place like δεῦρο “here” are standard element in the cletic formula.\(^{384}\)

The opening of Philodamos’ paean offers a vivid example of temporal localization when it asks Dionysos to come during “this sacred spring-time season” ἠρινα[ῖς ἱεραις ἐν ὥραις]. Even without ταῖς’ the cletic invocation, which as a rule has a present sense, would place the performance itself in the context of a spring religious festival, later in the text identified as the Delphic Theoxenia. The deictic pronoun acts to emphasize the link to the present occasion.

Time plays a crucial role in the relationship between the formal elements and levels of discourse within a hymn. The movement between the hic et nunc of the occasion and the illud tempus of myth is signalled using grammatical features of the text. Most simply, this can be done by means of verb tense, past for myth and present for occasion. Quite often the hymnographer chooses to add further stress to the temporal shift by using specific words like ποτε, τότε and νῦν. In

\(^{383}\) Cf. Philodamos 12, 15: τάνδε πόλιν; Athenaios 4, 17 and 23: τάσδε πετέρας, τόνδε πάγον, τάνδ…γαῖαν; Limenios 22 τάνδε Παρνασσίαν δειράδα; Sapph. fr. 2, 1: τόνδε ναὸν; Hymn to All the Gods, 12-3: τόνδ’ Ἐπιδαύρου | ναὸν.

\(^{384}\) E.g., Hymn to Mother of the Gods (Furley and Bremer 2001 no. 6.2), 2; Alc. fr. 34, 1; Sapph. fr. 1, 5; fr. 2, 1; Pi. Dith. fr. 75, 1.
Pindar’s first paean, for example, after a section of didactic statements and before concluding
with a final petition, the text returns to the festive context of the performance:

ἰὴ ἤ ὑ ν ὁ παντελὴ Ἐνιαυτόν
Ὤραί τε Ὀμίγονοι
πλάξιππον ἁστυ Θήβας ἐπῆλθον
Ἀπόλωνι δαίτα φυλησιστέφανον ἄγοντες

ie ie, now have the all-concluding Year
and the Horai, daughters of Themis,
come to the horse-driving city of Thebes,
bringing to Apollo a crown-loving feast (5-8).385

The myth deals with an almost timeless past; the occasion (and accordingly also the invocation)
is set firmly in the present; the prayer, although it may also be a place for the language of
occasion, ultimately concerns itself with the future. It is not surprising, then, to see another
temporal adverb, ἀεί (always), show up in prayers.386

If, in agreement with the ancient commentators and rhetorical theorists, the hymn is seen as a
form of epideictic speech, then this temporal stance between past, present and future that is
found in the extant texts would seem to be more or less in tune with Aristotle’s general
observation: namely, that while the epideictic genre aims at the present, it also concerns itself,
like the forensic, with the past and, like the deliberative, with the future.387 One important
qualification, however, must be added with reference to the primary position given to the present
in Aristotle’s formulation: the hymn, with its aspirations to please the deity and gain its favour,
may be turned rather more in the direction of the future than other forms of ceremonial speech.

This simple movement – present-past-(present)-future – is of course a generalization. Not all
hymns have a mythological narrative or a prayer and some shift between occasion and myth
several times in the eulogia. Perhaps the most interesting phenomenon, in terms of temporal

385 Lines 5-8, translation by Race; cf. Pl. Pae. 2. 80 ποτε: Philodamos 6, Makedonikos 7; τότε: Philodamos 14.
386 Aristonooos’ Hymn to Hestia 16, Paean to Apollo 47, Makedonikos 17.
387 Rhetoric 1358b17-20.
deixis, is the use of the future tense. Aside from the forward-looking prayer and straight-forward references to future events, verbs in the future tense are also frequently used to refer to the song itself. The female chorus of Pindar’s *daphnêphorikon* promise to sing the hymn (ὑμήσω, 11) which they are in fact singing.\(^{388}\) The use of the future tense with reference apparently to present performance and its circumstances has received a lot of scholarly attention.\(^{389}\) Most of this attention has focused on Pindar's epinicians, and in fact a term "epinician future" has been used to describe this phenomenon. However, as such examples make clear, and like other so-called "epinician" features, this use of the future tense is not limited to victory odes alone.

More recently, some studies have distinguished between several non-literal uses of futures in performed poetry. The type seen in the Pindaric fragment mentioned above (and the parallel from Alcman as well) is both the easiest to interpret and the most common in surviving cult hymns. Its position, at the beginning of the song, is the key to understanding this type of self-referential future utterance. Because it appears at the start of the performance, usually in the invocation, most of the song is yet to come and the hymn as a whole can legitimately be placed in the future. As such, this initial future may be seen as the equivalent to the imperative which is likewise common in hymnic invocations: in other words, “we shall dance” in this position is much like “let us dance.” The future tense is frequently used in the indirect first-person invocation of the type “Aphrodite…I will sing” (*h.Hom.* 6), and this serves the same function as the invocation in the form of an imperative to performer or the Muse (e.g., “Muse speak to me of the deed of the Cyprian” *h.Hom.Ven.*). Therefore, such futures can be called pseudo-imperative or programmatic.

A meta-performative use of the future tense is somewhat more difficult to understand when it appears further along in a song. In Pindar’s *daphnêphorikon*, meta-performative language is found throughout the text, and even as late as lines 66-70, the chorus, addressing one of the main participants in the procession, say:

\[Δαμαίνας πά[τερ, ἑ]γ[ισίμ]ω νῦν μοι ποδὶ στείχων ἄγερ· [τ]ίν γὰρ ἔ[ὑ]φρων ἔπεται\]

\(^{389}\) See n. 390 below.
πρώτα θυγάτηρ ὁδοῦ
δάφνας εὐπετάλου σχε[ό]ν
βείνοισα πεδίλοις

father of Damaina, stepping with your fateful foot
lead the way for me; for your daughter will graciously
follow you first on the way,
walking with her sandals close
by the leafy laurel.

The description is most likely a feature of the ongoing laurel-bearing procession that is the immediate context of the *partheneion’s* performance, and yet the grammar places it in the (albeit immediate) future.

It is these kinds of instances of the future tense that have sparked a debate, although, as mentioned above, the focus has been Pindar’s epinicians rather than hymns. Some have argued that references to performance made in the middle or end of a song in the future tense should not be seen as meta-performative at all: instead, they are references to other, external, future, performances. Others have defended reading these “epinician futures” as self-referential, either calling them “fictional futures” because they are narrating what is happening in the present, or “self-fulfilling futures” when the utterance itself fulfills the promise it makes – e.g., “I shall remember X” is the declaration and completion of the promise to mention X. This interpretation of such future verbs was one of the key issues in the larger debate about the performance of the victory ode, with the proponents of the monodic model preferring to see references to collective singing (e.g., the *kômos*) as external to the Pindaric song itself. It should be noted that in extant hymns, references to external performances are usually clearly distinguishable from self-references to the present hymn: at the end of many Homeric hymns, for instance, a future verb is used unambiguously to indicate a subsequent song.

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390 Some of the earliest contributions are Bundy (1986: 21-2), proposed the idea of the “encomiastic future” which never points outside the text and is often self-fulfilling, and Slater (1969: 88), who sees the origo (the deictic centre) of Pindar’s epinician utterance as the moment when the chorus has arrived but has not yet begun singing. See further references in D’Alessio 2004.
391 On the debate see p. 178 below with further references in n. 394.
D’Alessio (2004), who also provides one of the best summaries of this debate, favours yet another reading. For him, the gap between the time of composition (“coding time”) and time of performance (“decoding time”) is the key to interpreting such cases: for the poet composing the text, the song as a performative event is in the future, and this is reflected in the future-tense meta-performative utterances. Yet this seems to merely shift the question. Surely the hymnographer is aware that the text will be heard at a later time; then why incorporate language that reflects this time-gap? It may be unnecessary to look for a single model to explain all apparently self-reflexive future utterances. For hymns, as noted above, by far the most common type is the initial programmatic future which poses the least difficulty.

### 2.2 Person

The grammatical person can be used to identify (or assign identity) to characters and to define their relationships with respect to one another and the performance itself. In the most straightforward configuration – the one that is easiest to grasp – the first person coincides with the performers, who are the speaker of the text; the second person coincides with the main addressee, that is the deity being worshipped; and the third person is used for other parties such as the wider community. There are several factors which complicate and frustrate this simple scheme. First of all, even though the hymn is offered to a deity, it is also presented before a mortal audience; therefore, the performers are at once singing to and for both the immortal and mortal addressees. It has already been noted that the god for whom the hymn is sung may be spoken of in the third person just as easily as the second; and a single song can shift between these two styles at will. Of course this also means that the human audience is treated in the same way. That is to say, the speaker can tell the god about the community or the community about the god. Philodamos, for instance, addresses Dionysos directly in the invocation and the refrain, referring to the community in the third person (“this city”); but in the conclusion the audience is addressed in the second person (144ff), with the god named in the third. The direction of speech is moved several times within the paean.

As if to complicate matters even further, the wider worshipping community, which is often also the audience, can also be included in the first person. This occurs especially frequently in the final prayer, where the performer(s) turn to the deity and make a petition on behalf of the group
which they represent. By including the non-performing worshippers in the collective first person, the hymn allows them to change their rhetorical role from listener to speaker. This is usually correlated with the direct address to the god, which stresses his role as a listener, and not only the subject of the speech act. The Dictaean hymn expresses this inclusivity with the phrase “πόληας ἁμῶν” (our cities, 32), referring to the several communities represented at the regional sanctuary hosting the performance. In Aristonoos’ prayer – ὅλβον ἐξ ὡσίων διδοὺς ἀεὶ καὶ σώζων ἐφέποις ἡμᾶς “grant us ever righteous fortune and give us your saving presence” (Hymn to Apollo 46-8) – the ἡμᾶς is less explicit, but it is also best understood as extending beyond the chorists themselves. But it is not always quite so clear. The line before in the same paean reads: χαρείς ὠμοις ἡμετέροις “rejoicing in our hymns.” Who is intended by ἡμετέροις? Technically, it is only the performers who are delivering the hymn, but it is being offered on behalf of a community; furthermore, the phrase is grammatically dependent on the prayer, which, as has been noted, should be understood as referring to the larger group. So in this case, both ἡμετέροις and ἡμᾶς are probably inclusive. Yet it is ambiguous all the same.

A similar case is presented by the Erythraean paean: χαϊρέ μοι, ἱλαος δε ἐπινίσεω τὰν ἀμὰν πόλιν εὐρύχορον “rejoice with me, and kindly come to our city with its wide dancing places” (19-20). Again, there is a χαϊρε formula followed by a petition for the protection of the community. But here there is a further difficulty presented by the shift in number. As has been seen earlier, the χαϊρε formula refers to the χάριν derived by the god from the hymnic offering itself. Unlike in the Aristonoos paean quoted above, the change in number seems to signal a difference between the referents of μοι and ἀμὰν πόλιν. Although it is difficult to be sure, the first person singular is probably best taken to describe the performers themselves while the plural clearly includes the larger group. The prayer continues with: δὸς δ’ ἡμᾶς χάριοντας ὀρᾶν φάος κτλ. “grant that rejoicing we see the light etc.” (18ff). ἡμᾶς here, like in Aristonoos, is inclusive. The additional stanza in the Ptolemais version of the same paean lists a number of more specific requests, including δοιης… τὰκε πόλει θάλος ἁμβρόσιον “grant this city divine gift of harvest” (23), and closes with a more elaborate χαϊρε formula: χαϊρέ μοι, ὦ Παιαν, ἐπ’ ἐμαῖς εὐφροσι ταῦτα ἀοιδαῖς, χαϊρ’, ὦ Πύθι Ἀπολλον “rejoice with me, oh Paian, in these my gracious songs” (25-6). The use of such phrases as “this city” indicates that the text is explicit when it means to be inclusive, which lends further support to interpreting μοι and ἡμᾶς as referring more narrowly to the performers themselves.
In the examples above, the performer is a chorus, a naturally collective voice. And it is quite easy to understand a group like a chorus as the voice of the larger group, the community, from which furthermore the chorus is usually drawn. Yet even a solo performer, a singer of a monodic hymn or an orator pronouncing a prose hymn at a panegyris can take on this role of the intermediary between the worshippers and the deity. In Menander Rhetor’s hymn to Apollo Smintheus, composed for a public delivery by an orator at a festive gathering in the god’s sanctuary in the Troad, the speaker uses the first plural *hemeis* to identify himself with the community, to be their voice in prayer to Apollo. Similarly, the solo rhapsode who opened his poetic contribution at some festive contest with the Homeric hymn to Dionysos adopted this collective voice in his prayer that the god “grant that we return to this season rejoicing, and from this season on again through the many years.” In both cases, the hymn signals the change in the persona, from singer to community, with a grammatical change to the plural first person.

Not only can the community (or audience) be included in the first- (as well as second- or third-) person utterances, but the performers are also often addressed in the second person. Normally, however, such instances of self-address by a hymnic chorus are clearly meta-performative and therefore not easily confused with speech directed to the audience. When the text of the Erythraean paean says παιᾶνα κλυτόμητιν ἀείσατε | κοῦροι “sing, lads, of the paean famed for wisdom” (1-2), there can be no doubt that the κοῦροι are the paeanic chorists themselves.

The source of greatest ambiguity remains the use of the first person. And the ambiguity is not only between the performers and audience but at times also between performers and poet. Although it is rare in epigraphic hymns, the language in the hymns of Pindar sometimes leaves the identity of the speaker uncertain. In his sixth paean, for example, the first-person speaker identifies himself as the “prophet of the famous Pierians” (6), describes himself as arriving to Delphi from elsewhere, and refers to his τιμαί in Delphi. The use of the singular in itself is not problematic. Like the so-called “epinician futures” discussed above, the first-person singular was one of the key issues in the debate about the mode of performance of victory odes. But as is

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393 H.Hom. 26, 13-4 and cf. 11, 5.
seen here in the Pindaric paean and earlier in the inscribed paean from Erythrae, choral performance was never an obstacle to the use of both the plural and the singular with reference to the performers.\(^{395}\) On the other hand, the use of such meta-poetic language as “prophet of the famous Pierians” seems to be more applicable to a poet’s persona than to a chorus, but it can conceivably still make sense with either or both referents active. It is the last two points (arrival to Delphi and ἐμαῖς τιμαῖς) that really point in the direction of Pindar’s own poetic persona. The song, according most scholars’ interpretation, is being performed by a local, Delphic chorus, so it makes little sense for them to arrive in their own city and request its welcome. And as for the “honours”, it is believed the reference here is to the proxenic privileges awarded to Pindar by Delphi for his poetic services.\(^{396}\) Therefore, here (as in many epinicians), a local chorus is at times speaking with the voice of the poet, and the audience is expected to interpret this distinction correctly and instantaneously in the course of performance.

There are several general observations that can be drawn from such examples about the use of the first person in hymns. First, there were apparently no interpretive difficulties for performers or audience in ambiguous, multi-level and shifting referents attached to the speaking voice. Even though the actual performers of the text were clearly identifiable during the delivery, they could at the same time become the mouthpiece of other identities, including the wider community and the poet, instead or in addition to their own. And second, it seems that when the audience or larger worshipping group was to be included in the speaker’s first-person utterance – especially the prayer – the plural was preferred to the singular, the latter being normally reserved for the performer and/or poet instead.

2.3 “This song”

The last kind of deictic discourse that will be considered briefly is speech that refers to the hymn itself. Sometimes such references are made by the peritext, in which case the purpose is to add some factual information about its composition or performance. The simplest form of this kind of adscript is a title, such as that appearing before one of the paeans with musical notation from

\(^{395}\) Kurke (2005: 87) critiques Lefkowitz’ strict distinction between the choral and poetic voice and points out that Pae. 6. 1-18 “must, in fact, be the poet.”

\(^{396}\) Kurke 2005: 105.
Delphi - παῖς Διὸς ἔτειν εἰς τὸν θεὸν ὁ ἐπὸησεν καὶ προσκιθάρισεν Λιμήνιος [ός Θ]οίν[υ Α]θηναῖος] “paean and prosodion for the god composed and accompanied on the kithara by Limenios son of Thoinos, Athenian” – which tells the reader the genre and the author of the hymn. Prescripts to hymnic texts were sometimes more extensive, none more so than the peritext to Isyllos’ paean, which includes the text of the religious law that inaugurated the regular performance of the hymn as part of a new public ritual; the defence of the new law by Isyllos himself; and other information about the context of its composition, delivery and inscription.

As an alternative to the title, some inscribed hymns add a signature with similar kinds of information. Isidorus, for instance, signs all four of his hymns with a simple Ἰσίδωρος ἔγραψε “Isidorus wrote”, leaving the object (i.e., the preceding hymn text) understood. But after the second hymn, he adds: εὐχῶν ἡδ’ ύμνῶν τε θεοὶ κλύοντες ἐμεῖο | ἄνταπέδωκαν ἐμοὶ εὐθυμίαν χάριτα “the gods, hearing my prayers and hymns, granted me in return generous grace.” The compound phrase “prayers and hymns” must refer, or at least include in its reference, the very hymns inscribed there. The supplementary couplet makes a claim about the hymnographer’s success in achieving the primary religious objectives of a hymn as such: the creation of a reciprocal flow of χάρις between the mortal and the immortal realms, and, as in similar formulations discussed earlier, the source of divine pleasure is none other than the hymnic offering itself. An interesting parallel is provided by another adscript. The temple-dedication from Paros (CIG II 2388) concludes with the following sphragis by the hymnographer: τὸνδε σοι, ὦ δαιδοῦχε, Διὸς τέκος, ύμνον ἐτευξεν | Νικιάδης ὃς σεῦ ἴ<λ>ατο [− u u − “oh torch-bearer, child of Zeus, this hymn was composed for you by Nikiades who....” The deictic element is more pronounced here, with the pronoun τόνδε clearly identifying the ύμνον with the present text. Like Isidorus’ elegiac pentameter, the signature here is also in the metre of the rest of the hymn. But since neither the fact of performance nor its mode can be ascertained with certainty, it is difficult to ascertain whether this is part of the song itself or an element of peritext.

More interesting still are cases where the performed hymn itself points deictically to itself. Such a self-reflective act is most often used in one of two ways. The first is as part of a metaperformative utterance, where the speaking voice draws attention to the beauty of the
performance and its festive context, framing and emphasizing it as an agalma. The Cretan chorus refers to its own song-dance:

μολπᾶι,
tὰν τοι κρέκομεν πακτίσι
μαίξαντες ἀμ’ αὐλοῖσιν
καὶ στάντες ἀείδομεν τεόν
ἀμφὶ βωμόν οὐερκῆ

the song
which we play for you, mingling
lyres with auloi
and standing around your
well-fenced altar we sing (6-10).

The mention of the song being sung leads to a description of the context and mode of performance. The second frequent use of this type of self-reference is in the conclusion, particularly as part of the χάρις formula. The Homeric hymn no. 9 to Artemis, for example, asks the goddess to take pleasure in the song: οὕτω χαῖρε… ἀοιδῇ “and so take pleasure in… the song.” This and other examples of this elaboration of the formula were discussed in chapter 3: by referring specifically to itself as the source of χάρις for the addressed deity, the hymn clarifies the nature of the exchange that it intends (or claims) to bring about. In either case, the self-reflective reference to the hymn is a way of bringing attention to its status as a pleasing offering.

3 Localization in the Greek cult hymn

The above discussion introduced the concept of deixis, a term from the field of linguistics which refers to the way in which an utterance connects to its context (or creates a fictional context). It has also been observed how this ability of language to situate and orient itself within its field of reference is sometimes used by hymnographers to localize their songs in space and time. Deictic

397 Fantuzzi and Hunt 2004: 263: “the description of part of the ritual with which the song is associated, a description which often involves reflexive self-reference by the singers, is one of the most persistent features of Greek cult song.” Cf. Depew 2000.
utterances may also identify the voice of the speaker and define other persons, including audience, poet and worshipping community. This too should be regarded a form of localization, a way to position the utterance relative to the individuals and groups connected to the song’s performance. It may now be considered how localization, including deictic language, was used by the ancient hymnographers to suit the intended aims of their compositions. The first question here is how the degree and manner of deictic anchoring varies within the corpus of existing Greek cult hymns; and secondly, what functions such localization play in view of the hymns’ overall objectives. In what follows, deixis will be considered together with another form of contextualization – references and allusions to the performative occasion or larger historical context. When a poet mentions a local institution or geographical feature, this may not necessarily be a deictic utterance, but it may have a similar effect – localization of the song – and intended function.

3.1 A hymn’s afterlife and level of contextualization

The extent to which a hymnic text is embedded within its performative context can often be related to the intended use of the song – whether a one-time local performance, an open-ended sequence of re-performances within a given recurring festive context, or even greater transferability that transcends the time and place of the initial performance. Pindar’s surviving partheneion is an example of a cult hymn designed not just for a particular festival in a particular city, but furthermore for performance at a specific instance of that festival: the Daphnephoria in Thebes in the year when Agasicles son of Pagondas was the daphnêphoros. As the discussion in the last chapter noted, the song is full of references to the elite family at the centre of the occasion. At one point, the hymn turns directly to address one of the family members in the second person, identifying him explicitly – “lead me, father of Damaina, stepping with your fateful foot” (66-7). This is followed immediately by another utterance with strong deictic aspects – [τ]ιν γὰρ εὕφρων ἔστει πρῶτα θυγάτηρ [ὁ]δοὺ δάφνας εὔπετάλου σχεδ[ό]ν βαίνοισα πεδίλοις, Ἀνδαισιστρότα ἣν ἐπάσκησε “for your daughter will graciously follow you first on the way, walking with her sandals close by the leafy laurel; her whom Andaisistrota cultivated” (67-

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398 The text fragmentary at this point and may have read either πάτερ or παῖ, that is Agasicles or his father Pagondas who would probably be escorting the boy in the procession; but of course to the original audience the reference would have been clear. The ambiguity extends to the interpretation of the θυγάτηρ as well. For references to the several proposed reconstructions of the people involved and their relationship with one another see n. 376 above.
72). Given the proximity to “father of Damaina”, θυγάτηρ is almost certainly the daughter of Pagondas, that is Damaina herself. The utterances presuppose the presence of these two people in the time and place of its annunciation; the details of the references further give them central roles in the performance or its ritual occasion. Through these and other instances of contextual and deictic language, the hymn is anchored to the specific performance occasion for which it was composed. It is designed for this one primary instantiation and any full public re-performance is difficult to conceive. Even the same polis and same festival in another year would have been inappropriate for this partheneion because a different boy from another local aristocratic family will have been chosen for the eponymous role.399

The fragmentary partheneia of Alcman are probably analogous in terms of their degree of localization. As noted earlier, one of the features shared by all three surviving examples of this sub-genre is the praise of specific, named human beings. Alcman’s songs are full of deictic and contextual language. In lines 78-81, the chorus sings: “Hagesichora is not here with us but stands by Agido and with her praises the festivities.” Phrases like this imply the presence of the two girls at the performance; others give details of the chorus’ actions (e.g., ἄμιν Ὀρθία φεροίσαις as “we bring to Orthia”, 60) and attire (e.g., πορφύρας…ποικίλος δράκων παγκρύσιος…μίτρα Λυδία “purple…the elaborate golden serpent…the Lydian headband”); and lines 70ff apparently give the names of eight of the parthenoi. In the other fragment (fr. 3), there are similar references and descriptions of a prominent girl: “Astymeloisa does not answer me but, with a garland,…she has come on her soft feet…. Astymeloisa…through the crowd” (64ff). The degree of contextualization certainly suggests that these songs were intended for a specific one-time occasion, perhaps at a particular occurrence of a regular festival. One interpretation of the texts, however, may offer an alternative. Alexander Dale discusses the theory that the names like Agido and Hagesichora are “speaking names.”400 In other words, they are not real names of historical figures but are constructed or chosen to convey a particular meaning – “Leader”, “Choral-leader”, “Pleasing to the city”, etc.401 This non-biographical reading would leave room for reperformability of the hymns since the names could be applicable to different girls according to the occasion. It is not clear, however, that all the names are easily interpreted in this way, as

399 We should not, on the other hand, preclude the possibility of preservation and even (private and perhaps partial) re-performance by Agasicles’ genos.

400 Dale 2011: 34 n. 85.

401 This theory of “noms parlants” was first suggested by Calame 1977: v. 2:140-2.
designating a performative role or special social status. In an earlier monograph on Alcman in his Spartan context, Ferrari doubts that the list of eight choristers can be interpreted as speaking names, but believes that names like Hagesichora, Aenesimbrotta and Agido may be.\footnote{Ferrari 2008: 82. However she sees in these names astronomical (rather than metaperformative) references. By contrast, Hinge (2009) argues that all the names are generic and the Alcman had no specific girls in mind when composing the piece.} Her main support comes from a suggestion, proposed by Herrington, that Alcman’s \textit{partheneia} would not have survived as long as they did without being re-performed. Of course this argument does not work if only some of the names in the text are fictional and easily transferable. And even without the names, the degree and specificity of deictic language makes it difficult to see the songs, especially fr. 1, as appropriate for multiple performances. Regarding the textual history of Archaic and Classical lyric poetry little can be said with any confidence except that there were surely many different means of, as well as motivations behind, the preservations of these works beyond the original intended performance.\footnote{Carey (2011) argues that Alcman, for all the local and occasional content, nonetheless crafted his songs for Panhellenic (as well as local) audiences. He points to what is essentially a Panhellenic literary dialect in the surviving fragments, as well as a mixture of local and Panhellenic myths. The strongest point, however, is the fact that Alcman’s poetry does circulate outside of Sparta (at first orally, later aided by publication). Ancient sources testify to the fact that some of Alcman’s songs continued to be reperformed at Sparta until the fourth century (ref. in Carey 2011: 455), although it is of course impossible to say whether the surviving fragments are among them.} Moreover, there are many other examples of songs composed with a specific occasion in mind, not the least of which are the books of Pindar’s epinicians, encomia and \textit{partheneia}; their occasional language did not prevent them from being preserved or even (at least in some cases) re-performed.\footnote{There is a significant amount of internal evidence in Greek lyric that reperformance was a possibility and in some instances the poet’s intention, yet this was not the only purpose for the preservation of lyric texts and does not apply equally well to all songs. This question is discussed further in the next chapter, pp. 210-3, and 229-31.}

The degree of special and temporal anchoring in the \textit{partheneia} is comparable to what is seen in the paean of Philodamos. The Delphic context of performance is prominent throughout the hymn, both in the references to local religious landscape, choice of myths, and deictic language. The oracular section of the text (lines 105ff), which is full of references to the ongoing rebuilding of the temple and other contemporary developments at the sanctuary, points to a single performance. Yet within that very section, as part of the god’s instructions, the song seems to suggest that Philodamos’ paean was to be integrated as part of the “annual Theoxenia (109-11).”\footnote{See also Vamvouri 2004: 190-1. Alonge (2011: 217-8), on the other hand, uses Philodamos’ paean as a clear example of a hymn that is inscribed around the time of its original and only performance solely for the} The phrase \textit{τόνδε ύμνον} “this hymn” is a clear self-reference to the hymn in
performance; ξενίοις ἐτείοις θεῶν “the annual hospitality of the gods” coincides with “these sacred springtime days”, a reference to the spring festival of the Theoxenia, in the opening invocation; and the adjective “annual” (ἐτείοις) used to describe festival stresses the cyclical nature of the context. The phrasing “receive this hymn for your sacred kin in the annual Theoxenia” could perhaps be read as merely describing a one-time performance within a calendar festival, but this does not seem like the best interpretation here. First of all, what would be the point of stressing the recurring nature of the context if the decree is intended for one instance? Furthermore, the interpretation applied to phrase point has repercussions for the next as well. The clause does not end here the same and following two lines (111-3) refer to a Panhellenic sacrifice, another ritual which Apollo has commanded to be integrated into the same annual context. The parataxical relationship between the two elements means that whatever reading is accepted for the hymnic performance will have to be extended to the sacrifice as well. It is highly implausible that the new Dionysian components in the Theoxenia set out and celebrated in the paean were only intended as a temporary, one-time, ritual, to be cancelled the following year. The text, then, in all likelihood indicates that the paean was composed to be re-performed. Philodamos was probably commissioned to provide the hymn for the new Dionysian ritual that was now being introduced into the festival. Yet the difficulty posed by the contemporary references remains. One possibility is that only some of the stanzas were going to be sung at subsequent reiterations. The bulk of the hymn would certainly be fitting for repeat performance at the Delphic Theoxenia. Stanza form would have made partial rendition very feasible. And the coherence and unity of the hymn would not suffer if the oracular section (probably starting from the stanza before line 105 and going to line 143) were removed: in fact, the hymn would maintain the tri-partite structure with the appropriate transitions, and would, if anything, sound more traditional than it does now.

By contrast to Pindar’s daphnéphorikon and, to some extent, Philodamos’ paean, the hymn to Zeus discovered in Palaikastro represents a song that is perfectly suitable for reperformability. The fact that the text was inscribed several times over strongly suggests regular re-use of the song at the Dictaean sanctuary.406 The phrase εἰς ἑναυτὸν “at the turn of the year” in the

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406 See, for example, Bulloch 2010: 179: “ritual dance, which was clearly performed as part of a regular, perhaps annual, celebration.” The surviving inscription is from the third c. CE, but, based on orthography and language,
recurring refrain (lines 3, 8, etc.) also seems to suggest an annual festive context for the song. There are no references to a specific historical context (as there are in the paean of Philodamos) or to particular individuals (in contrast to the daphnêphorikon). For instance, in the first stanza the singers describe their own performance – they sing a song for Zeus around his altar to the accompaniment of lyres and auloi (lines 4-5) – but without identifying themselves. Similarly, in the final prayer the chorus refer to themselves (and the communities they represent) using the first person plural, yet the references are not absolute - ἀμῶν acquires its sense from the identity of the performers in any specific instantiation of the song. In other words, the text is not anchored in time.

Or rather, it is anchored to an annual performance, as suggested by εἰς ἐνιαυτόν, but not to any particular instance thereof. Furthermore, the recurring occasion is not specified in any way within the text. The worshippers would of course know for which annual occasion, probably a regional festival, this was intended, but the hymnic text itself does not make this connection absolute. This may be compared to Isyllos’ paean. Here too the text suggests the intention of reperformability, although the indication comes in the peritext, in the description of the lex sacra rather than the hymn itself: ὀρας ἐξ ὡρᾶν... ἀεὶ “from season to season” or “from one year to the next” (24).\(^{407}\) And the reperformability is likewise strictly local. As the last chapter discussed, the hymn presents a peculiar Epidaurian version of Asclepius’ birth myth and stresses the connection to the local cult of Apollo Maleatas. The performance is anchored in space right at the start: ἀείσατε λαοί, ζαθέας ἐνναέται τᾶσδ’ Ἐπιδαύρου “sing, people, the inhabitants of this

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407 See Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1 237. Alonge (2011: 230 n.34) tries to disassociate the paean from the lex. Although there is no explicit reference to the paean in the law, it seems advisable to try to read the several sections of this inscription as composing a single document, with a unified purpose and occasion. The law probably does not include every detail of the ritual; for instance, it would be surprising if the pompê and prayers were not followed by other offerings, in the form of libations and sacrifices. Both the paean and the ritual in the lex are dedicated to the same deities, Apollo Maleatas and Asclepius, and both are authored by Isyllos himself. It seems, therefore, unnatural and unnecessary to hypothesize another, unspecified festive occasion in honour of these two gods, distinct from the one legislated within the same document, as the performative context of Isyllos’ paean.
holy Epidaurus” (37-8). In this one clause, the place is identified as Epidaurus and the performers (and worshippers) as citizens of Epidaurus. Of course there is even more specific identification of the participants in the ritual procession in one of the earlier parts of the inscription - oἱ κεν ἀριστεύωσι πόλης τὰς Ἐπιδαύρου...οίς πολιούχος ὑπὸ στέρνοις ἀρετά τε καὶ αἰδώς “whoever who are supreme in this city of Epidaurus… those who have virtue and reverence in their hearts” (14-5), that is, the select among elite male citizens – but what is noteworthy is that the paean itself is linked firmly in space by deictic phraseology and local content. The more important point here is that, like the hymn from Palaikastro, Isyllos’ inscription (both the song and its peritext) is silent about the specific occasion of the performance and its context (the aristocratic pompê). The phrasing indicates a regular, annual re-performance: if the ritual was being added to an existing festival, the festival is unidentified; if the lex in effect establishes a new festival (or at least a new procession, with prayers, hymn and, unspecified but almost certain, offerings), there is nothing to indicate where this was to fit within the religious calendar at Epidaurus. That the timing was crucial is beyond question – performing a given ritual at the correct time was just as much a part of the Greek concept of piety, hosiotês, as performing it in the correct place and manner. The numerous cult calendars that have survived from the fifth century BCE and onward only confirm this principle. So it must be assumed that the hymn and surrounding rituals were indeed intended for a specific point in the Epidaurian calendar and that the timing was too familiar (even obvious) to the local citizens to warrant inclusion in the inscription.

The paean of Philodamos is likewise composed for (probably partial) re-performance, but unlike the last two examples it is more explicitly tied to a particular point on the Delphic festive calendar – the Theoxenia. Limenios’ paean and prosodion present a different situation still because of the special nature of the occasion. The text is firmly anchored to the Athenian Pythais theòria to Delphi but there is nothing tying it to a particular instantiation of the festival. If Athenaios’ and Limenios’ songs come from two different instances of the festival, it is to be concluded that a new hymn was composed each time. Yet, as discussed in chapter 4, the alternative scenario – both hymns being composed for the Pythais of 128 BCE – leaves room for the possibility of re-performance. The words patrios paian in a proxenic decree commemorating a Pythais of 97 BCE (some 30 years after Limenios’ performance) may be a reference to the

408 On sacred calendars, see Lupu 2009: 65ff The earliest known example is from 600 BCE.
same composition, possibly together with that of Athenaios, which would have by then become the “traditional” song for this occasion. Of course the evidence is not conclusive, but on this interpretation, Limenios and Athenaios, like Philodamos, composed hymns for re-performance at a particular recurring festival. There is, however, an important difference related to the idea of temporal anchoring: the Daphnephoria is a regular calendar festival, cyclical and predictable; the Pythais, on the other hand, is only organized occasionally and at irregular intervals, so even if the hymns were composed with re-performability in mind, the future of the text was still unpredictable at the time.

To return to the Cretan hymn, the fact that the text lacks fixed temporal anchors and is infinitely re-performable does not mean that it is also mobile: on the contrary, the hymn is firmly rooted in the local context of its performance. The most obvious instance of spatial deictic anchoring occurs in the refrain, when the divine addressee is invited to Dicte (lines 3, 8, etc.) to enjoy the song. If there could have been any ambiguity about the reference here, the first stanza following the initial iteration of the refrain clarifies: τάν τοι κρέκομεν “which we are playing” (4). The μολπᾷ (song-dance) in the previous line is thus the present song is performance which aims to please the god; and Δίκταν is the place of performance: the cletic appeal thus localizes the occasion at Dicte on Crete. There is little else by way of references to local geography or topography. Fields, houses, ships and cities are mentioned but these are all vague and meaningful only within their performative context and to the participants in the event; likewise, the βωμὸν εὔερκῆ (well-fenced altar) of the refrain is not very specific in itself, although it is deictically equated with a very specific altar of Zeus through the phraseology of the line - στάντες ἀείδομεν τεὸν ἀμφὶ βωμὸν εὔερκῆ “we sing standing around your well-fenced altar” - where the first person refers to the performing chorus and the second singular to the divine addressee named earlier. Yet the hymn is also tied to the local religious background of Dicte, or of Crete at any rate, through its choice of mythological and cultic language, in other words in its form of praise for the god.

The most striking example of local cult in the hymn is perhaps the cult title kouros applied to Zeus. Ever since the discovery of the inscription in the late 19th century, scholars have pointed to
this epithet as evidence of an anomalous Cretan cult of Zeus as a young man.409 Some have identified this Zeus *kouros* with an anonymous god depicted as a young man in bronze-age sculptures and wall paintings and there was an attempt to define this deity as a “dying god” similar to Adonis or Osiris.410 The case of this “Cretan Zeus” was used to support a theory of continuity in religious worship from pre-Greek civilization on the island. Recently, however, these ideas have come under some criticism. Mark Alonge, for instance, questions the significance of the term κόρε in the text, preferring to read it with Κρόνειε, as periphrasis for Κρονίδης “son of Cronus”, rather than with μέγιστε.411 The argument is not entirely convincing: the best parallel he offers is Κρόνει παῖ (8 n. 20) which does not demonstrate that *kouros* can be used in this way; and the greater proximity to μέγιστε, combined with the interruption of χαίρέ μοι, still presents an obstacle to his reading. Alonge himself in fact recognizes that even if his interpretation is accepted, the choice of *kouros* still needs to be accounted for.

Alonge’s stronger point in fact is that this term here means “child” or “infant” rather than “young man” and therefore does not have any relation to an anonymous Minoan youth. The best piece of evidence for this is provided by the mythological narrative of this very hymn. Although highly fragmentary, enough can be read of the central stanzas to show that the text spoke of the Cretan version of Zeus’ infancy: Rhea hid the child from Cronus on the island and his cries were drowned out by the pyrrhic dances of the Couretes. The god’s infancy, including this particular story, is a common subject of ancient literature unlike his youth, which is virtually absent from surviving sources. The hymn’s use of the word *kouros*, then, is clearly a reference to this very myth and an appeal to the divine addressee’s childhood connection to Dicte. What is significant for us is that, with or without the “Cretan Zeus” theory, the hymn incorporates a local aspect of Zeus and a local version of his divine myth. Even apart from explicit deictic anchoring described above, the text is most suitable to a performance at Dicte or at least on Crete. It is composed for repeat performance at the local sanctuary of Zeus.

A fascinating case of deictic anchoring can be observed in the so-called “mimetic hymns” of Callimachus. In contrast to the *partheneia* discussed earlier, whose high degree of localization links them almost inextricably to their original performative occasion, the extreme specificity of

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409 Most famously advocated by Harrison 1912.
410 See references in Alonge 2005: n.7, 9 and 11.
contextualization in these Hellenistic poems may in fact preclude their performance as a ritual component in a public cult event. There are six extant hymns composed by Callimachus, and the question of their performability has been one of the most challenging and debatable issues in modern scholarship on Hellenistic literature.\footnote{A good up-to-date summary in Bulloch 2010: esp. 167ff See also Cameron 1995: 63-67 and Morrison 2007: 106.} There is significant variation in the level of deictic language within the collection. The first hymn, for instance, opens with the words “at libations to Zeus what else should rather be sung than the god himself….?” In the aporia that follows there is a first-person plural (“how shall we sing of him….?” lines 4ff) and later on there is praise of “our ruler” (lines 84ff). This is the extent of deixis within the text and it hardly sufficient to localize the hymn in time or space, although critics have rightly assumed that the “ruler” is Ptolemy Soter or Philadelphus, under whose sway and protection the poet himself worked during most of his productive career.\footnote{Bulloch 1985b: 549.} Some of the hymns (numbers 2, 5 and 6), however, are so full of deictic and contextual phraseology that they have sometimes been grouped together as “mimetic” hymns, to distinguish them from the rest.\footnote{E.g., Depew 2000: 78, and Bulloch 1985a: 8: “Callimachus’ mimetic hymns were clearly written for recitation before an education audience associated with the royal court at Alexandria.” Cameron (1995) also maintains this distinction (e.g., 63) but argues that public performance cannot be discounted even for these three hymns (64-7.)} The invocation of the second hymn narrates in the present tense prodigious signs of Apollo’s presence in the place of performance: “how the laurel branch of Apollo trembles! How trembles the whole shrine! Now surely Phoebos knocks at the door with his beautiful foot. Don’t you see? The Delian palm nods suddenly and the swan in the air sings sweetly” (lines 1ff). The hymn then bids the audience to be quiet and the “young men” of the chorus to sing, dance and play the lyre, a command which they apparently obey: ἤγασάμην τοὺς παῖδας ἐπεὶ χέλυς οὐκέτ' ἀεργός “I admire the youths since the shell is no longer idle” (16). This colourful opening places the performance in the Panhellenic sanctuary of Apollo and points to a rendition by a chorus of youths to string accompaniment during a public, festive occasion. The praise section of the hymn outlines the god’s timai, briefly alludes to several well known myths and mentions cults of Apollo around the Greek world; but particular emphasis is given to Cyrene, Callimachus’ home, and its special connection to Apollo. This gives a strong impression of a theoric hymn sung by Cyrenaeans at the Delia.\footnote{Cameron (63) thinks that the more natural context is a festival in Cyrene itself, pointing especially to the references to “our city” and “out kings”; but such references would also be at home if sung by Cyrenaeans abroad.} The praise of “my king” in line 26 refers, as in a similar phrase within the first hymn, to one of the Ptolemies, Soter or Philadelphus, who held control over Cyrene during most
of Callimachus’ life and whose presence was also felt on Delos itself. Of course the high degree of contextualization in this poem does not prove its performance in a public context; but it does not preclude such a performance either. In the Bath of Pallas, on the other hand, the performance is narrated in such detail that may render it inappropriate for a performance within a ritual sequence in a public festival: the words of the master of ceremonies, whose persona the hymnic voice adopts, would simply not correspond with the real-world actions of the festival. In this case, then, the deictic and other forms of localization are probably intended to replace a real ritual context with a fictive one.

For a hymn at the opposite end of the spectrum from Pindar’s Theban partheneion in terms of the level of localization, the Erythraean paean to Asclepius would be a prime candidate. As seen in the previous chapter, the references to “our city” and “us” are relative, applicable to any worshipping community. The second-person plural self-address of the chorists as kouroi (1-2) is an example of relative deixis, connecting the utterance to the performers; but the connection is valid for nearly any context, with the only limiting factors being the performers’ gender and age. Of course given the conventional association between the paean and young men, this is not much of a constraint. Nothing in the text points to local geographical features, unusual mythological variants or specific historical context. Such built-in flexibility of deictic language and lack of contextualization meant that the paean was both re-performable and transferable. That these features were fully exploited in antiquity is shown by the text’s archaeology: it has been found in four separate inscriptions from Attica, Egypt, Macedonia and Asia Minor; and in two cases it was part of a larger hymnic programme, plainly intended for regular reuse at the local sanctuary of Asclepius.

Interestingly, at least two communities that adopted the hymn for its own Asclepieion felt the need to anchor it more firmly in its local context. At Dion, Macedonia, the general reference to τὰν ἐμὰν (or ἁμετέραν) πόλιν (my / our city) is replaced with the more fixed phrase Δείων πόλιν.

418 Depew (2000: 79) analyzes such use of deixis in imitation of “the performative and occasional nature of the genre.” I do not agree, however, that this “decontextualization” or “objectification” of the hymn the primary function of deictic or other language of occasion. Moreover, Depew sees such poetic imitation part of a more general diachronic progression from communal, occasional performances in the Archaic and Classical periods to literary poetry and individual artistry of the Hellenistic, a common model which is discussed critically in the next chapter.
“the city of Dion.” And the version from Ptolemais adds an entire stanza, expanding the final prayer with a request for regular flooding of the Nile on which rests the fertility and prosperity of the country: “grant the Nile’s everlasting streams, and divine vegetation for this city, and pure glory for all of Egypt.” The deictic τὰ ἡμέραν πόλιν “this city” is of course just as accommodating as ἁμετέραν πόλιν (our city), but mention of the Nile and Egypt restricts the reference. All relative deictic phrases become anchored or contextualized in performance (and, as the next chapter will discuss, inscription); but the stakeholders of these two cities apparently preferred to have the hymn localized more explicitly and specifically in the performed and inscribed text itself.

3.2 Anchoring a hymnic text: some aims and effects

This brings us to the second question concerning deixis and contextual language in Greek hymns – what were their effects and purposes. Language with temporal deictic force can aid the transition between the hic et nunc of occasion and illud tempus of myth. Bridging or obscuring the time-gap between the present and the timeless past is a prerequisite for the power of aetiologies to validate ritualized action. In her study of temporal deixis in Pindar, Maria Pavlou has noted an important difference in the relationship between present and past is constructed in the composer’s cult and encomiastic works: “cult songs bring to the fore and manifest a time that moves in circles and constantly renews itself and/or is ‘immobilized’ and static….in the victory odes past and present retain their own individual stigma and hypostasis.” In other words, while both forms of song use the mythological past to bolster the significance of the present event, cult poetry incorporates more fully the cyclical and eternal conception of festival time. It is here that the distance between “now” and “then” is collapsed and the chorus performs the words and actions of the myth it is narrating. One of the most illustrative examples used by Pavlou (61) is paean 12, where the joyful proclamation of the Delian women (perhaps even a reference to the Deliades) at the birth of Apollo and Artemis is fused with the performance of the Naxian choristers. Of course this use of time is not limited to Pindar’s cult poetry. It has been observed, for instance, how Philodamos used an embedded aetiological performance by Apollo and the Muses in a similar manner.

419 Oikonomos, Epigraphai 4, 11.
Grammatical person, especially first- and second-person plurals, is often used to identify the performers with the worshippers. As the examples of Arisitonoos, the Dictaean hymn and Erythraean have shown, this is particularly common in the final prayer, where the chorus turns directly to the god to address him or her on behalf of the group it represents. The effect is not only to bring the narrated event to life, marking its occurrence in the present moment, but also to justify the performers’ role as the voice of the community before the divine addressee.

Spatial localization can further the argumentum for the song’s appeal to the god. A close connection between a place or a community and a particular god can be a powerful basis for a favourable relationship. For instance, the Dictaean hymn uses deictic phrases and local myth to highlight Zeus’ association with the place of performance. He is called kouros throughout the song, not only the myth that relates his sojourn on Crete in infancy: the separation in time between then and now is erased. He is asked to come to Dicte “for it is here” (ἔνθα γὰρ) that he spent his earliest days - the deictic phrase explicitly ties the place to the myth as the foundation for the cletic request. The community (or several communities) who worship at this Cretan site ask Zeus to come and bless their cities, ships and home; they can expect and request special favour from the god precisely due to their physical connection to a place dear to him, something which is reflected in the highly localized language of the song. An analogous strategy was used by Limenios: he presents an aetiological myth which creates a link between Attica, the performer’s place of origin, and the divine addressee, Apollo. Using deictic language, the text then connects the polis of Athens and its people with the mythological event (17-20). The present performance is presented as a re-instantiation of the original, linked by a continuous tradition, and the performers are identified with the place where the myth is localized. As with the Palaikastro hymn the result, at least in part, is a claim to a privileged relationship between the god and the community on whose behalf the hymn is being sung, an argument for divine favour.

Of course a hymn is not simply an argument for a prayer. It is also an offering itself and is normally incorporated into a larger ritualized event that is full of displays and dedications aimed at pleasing the deity. Some deictic and contextual utterances are used to emphasize the hymn’s own status as an agalma, to advertise its performative aspects, or to draw attention to other
pleasing elements within the cult context. The Dictaean hymn does this by identifying the molpê of the refrain, a self-reference of the text to itself, to the external performance. Pindar’s partheneion describes in some detail the processional chorus which Apollo has come to receive. And even the simple reference to the dances around the altar in Aristonous’ hymn to Hestia can be read along the same lines: the chorus points to its own performance as one of the offerings being given to the goddess and implicitly promises an endless supply of similar pleasing displays in return for her charis: “Hestia, grant us in return that, with pious fortune, we may ever dance around your shining hearth.” (14ff)

In the Greek conception of divinity, a god’s presence is required or at least preferred when making offerings. Visual sources frequently illustrate this by representing the god receiving offerings from mortals, normally smaller in sizes than the divine figure. For example, several relief plaques from Brauron show Artemis next to (or sitting on) an altar, ready to accept the sacrificial victim being led by her worshippers. And in the famous Ninion pinax from Eleusis, the Two Goddesses are welcoming a pompê or pannychis of mystai at their sanctuary, symbolized in the painting by the agelastos petra. In Pindar’s daphnêphorikon, Apollo is represented as already present at the place of performance. This is consistent with visual depictions but is quite exceptional for a literary work – it is much more common for a cult hymn to ask the god to come (the so-called cletic hymn) rather than to assume his or her presence. There are many hymns which are not cletic but it is less common to find one without some kind of initial invocation: an offering in the form of a spectacle does not necessarily require the actual presence of the god but cannot succeed without the god’s attention. Whether presence or attention is being requested deixis is sometimes used in the invocation as a way of emphasizing the choral offering and its location. The Cretans sing “come to Dicte” and the Delphians performing Philoadmos’ paean ask Dionysos to “come here.” As much as deixis can guide the god’s attention to the place of offering, it can also help direct divine favour to the worshipping community. This is probably one of the aims of the localized language added to the final prayer of the Erythraean paean in Dion and Ptolemais. It can also be understood as one of the reasons

422 According to Depew (2000: 75), references to and descriptions of the festive performance are a generic feature of the Greek hymn, comparable to “the insistence in many dedicatory inscriptions on the beauty of the artefact it accompanies.”
423 E.g., marble votive reliefs from Brauron no. 1151, 1153 (ca. 350 BCE); in another (no. 1152, ca. 340 BCE), the goddess is accompanied by Leto and Apollo.
why Isyllos petitions Asclepius to favour “your motherland Epidaurus and send manifest health to our minds and bodies” (58-60). The deictic phrasing identifies the community which is offering the god the present performance, the city which he should favour in return for the pleasing display, as Epidaurus.

The language here does much more than this, however. As mentioned earlier, the phrase “your motherland Epidaurus” is also meant to appeal to the special link between the god and the *polis*, an argument for his favour developed earlier in the hymn through the local variation of his birth-myth. At the same time, the same words serve a secondary aim beyond the establishment of a *charis* relationship with the god: along with the unusual mythological account, the connection to the cult of Maleatas, and other instances of localization in the paean, they are intended to claim a prioritized position of the Epidaurian Asclepieion relative to its many competitors. The deictic and other anchoring devices emphasize Epidaurus as the *centre* of the healing cult which has acquired Panhellenic appeal. Unlike the Erythraean Paean, suitable for any of the dozens, perhaps hundreds, of local sanctuaries of Asclepius scattered throughout the Greek world, Isyllos’ hymn is meant to stay “here” and stress, to local and visiting audiences alike, the importance of Epidaurus in the cult and myth of the god.

But note that this additional, competing function of the hymn does not challenge or undermine the fundamental religious-rhetorical aim of the paean. The localizing language is crafted to do double duty. The myth that ties Asclepius’ birth and genealogy to the place of performance can promote the city’s place in the international healing cult (and challenge counter-claims like those of Tricca, for instance) and at the same time communicate a powerful argument for the god’s special favour. Calling Epidaurus Asclepius’ *metropolis* and using deixis to underscore the Epidaurian identity of the worshipping community not only guides the god’s grace to the right place but also reminds the Panhellenic audiences that this is a favourite place of the healing deity. The message would be clear: coming to Epidaurus brings the patient closer to Asclepius; offerings, prayers and healing rituals are more powerful and successful here than in other, lesser, Asclepeia.

Likewise, when Limenios uses deictic language to connect the mythological performance with his own *theoric* chorus of Athenian *technitai*, he is doing several things at once. On the one hand,
by identifying themselves and the worshipping community they represent, the singers communicate to the god the source of the hymnic offering. The Athenian mythological variant presents a claim of a special link between the community and divine addressee; and the aetiological connection between the divine model performance and present song adds validity to the form of offering. On the other hand, the same lines advertise Athens and, more importantly, the technitai, before the Panhellenic audience at Delphi: a claim is made for Athens’ on-going dedication to traditional Greek cults and sanctuaries, while the technitai asserts their prominence on the international scene.

The same paean’s high degree of localization can also be seen to satisfy several objectives. The importance of Delphi to the cult of Apollo Pythios hardly needs an explanation: it is his seat, his centre on earth. Above all else, therefore, anchoring the hymnic text in its Delphic context aids its primary ritual aim: to gain the god’s favour. Yet as far as the members of the synodos are concerned, celebrating Delphi may also serve another purpose. Recall that the Artists are involved in an on-going battle with a competing organization and that in this stand-off Delphi wields significant power. Winning the recognition and support the authorities in charge of this Panhellenic sanctuary is key to Athenian victory. As in the case of Isyllos and his Epidaurian paean, the various functions at play here do not invalidate or challenge one another. They can be said to be “competing” only in that a single performed utterance is required to carry multiple meanings and the hymnographer needed to construct the song in a manner which would allow for this polyphony. This does not necessarily imply, for instance, that Limenios is merely masking a political message with a religious patina, or that the singers in the Athenian Pythais are not speaking from religious conviction or genuine desire to please Apollo. The need to please the Delphians, to impress the other Greeks, to satisfy Rome are all taken into account here, but not to the detriment of the central religious-rhetorical purpose of the hymn as such. As for the poet’s or the other musicians’ inner feelings – which of the various aims is on their mind as they are composing or delivering the song – that is anyone’s guess.

4 Conclusions

The language of a cult hymn frequently emphasizes its performative qualities and localizes the utterance within the festive occasion of which it is a part. This feature of the genre is in line with
its primary religious role within the ritual sequence: the creation of *charis* between the worhsipping community and the divine addressee. By pointing out and describing the pleasing qualities of its own performance and of the other elements of the event, the entire ritualized sequence (and the hymn it particular) is framed as an *agalma* being offered to the god in order to delight him or her. As with other features of the hymnic text, however, localization can also serve additional functions specific to the particular set of circumstances. The links to the performance and larger event are achieved with the deictic aspects of language, which orients the speech act in its context, or explicit references to the place, time and details of the occasion. Yet degree and the precise manner in which these forms of localizations are used vary a great deal from one cult hymn to another. It has been demonstrated here that among the most influential factors in this regard is the intended future of the hymn beyond its inaugural performance. The issues of localization and future life of hymns are also at the heart of the next chapter, which looks at the technology of writing and in particular the practice of inscription and asks how these two developments were applied to Greek cult hymns.
Chapter 7
Readings and Writing for the Gods:
Cult Hymns in a Song-and-Book Culture

1 Introduction
The last chapter discussed ways in which the very language of the hymn can embed it in its performative context, anchoring it in time and in space, and suggested that the future of the hymn beyond the primary festive context (especially its reperformability) was a key to understanding the variation in the level and form of localization found in the extant corpus. In a sense, the present chapter will draw on both these issues. It will consider the question of the hymn’s subsequent life and function, but in this case the questions will be posed in relation to the technology of writing. It will be asked why Greek hymns were written down. What purpose did they serve in this textual form? Some of the discussion will be concerned more specifically with the practice of inscribing hymns in public places, a different, more physical, form of localization.

2 Religious decline: a modern myth
Until quite recently it was general practice among Classical scholars and ancient historians to talk about the late Hellenistic period as a time of drastic change and, more significantly, decline. Even today, after marked criticism of sharp periodization in historical studies, many scholars still talk about the Archaic and Classical periods as distinct from Hellenistic and Roman periods of Greek culture. And most survey courses continue the old practice of focusing primarily, or even exclusively, on the history, society and literature up to the death of Alexander. The fallacy of the “golden age”, of the peak of civilization, followed unavoidably by deterioration and corruption of this ideal, still haunts the study of Greek antiquity. It is found in modern discussions of nearly every issue, including several that touch on the subject of the present thesis. Archaic and Classical periods were a time of communal worship and devotion to traditional ancient cults, according to one popular idea; but in the Hellenistic period, the polis as the heart of social life

\[425\] For art history, see Pollit 1986: 164. More generally on the conception of Periclean Athens as the golden age, followed by the decline of the fourth century and especially the Hellenistic period, Green 2008: xvi-xvii and 45-6.
gave way to large empires ruled by distant monarchs; people lost faith in traditional religion which led to scepticism as well as widespread rise of new, often foreign, private mystical cults. This model of religious decline or radical reformation has been justly criticized in more recent studies.\textsuperscript{426} Not only does the evidence fail to support the idea of a decline in traditional rituals and cults, but, if anything, it points in the opposite direction: the volume of dedications, festivals, contests and other offerings seem to increase. New cults, foreign gods, private worship, scepticism, and even worship of human beings and abstractions are all present to be sure, but are for the most part not dramatic departures from earlier practice; nor do they undermine the continued flourishing of traditional, public cults.

Hymns in fact offer a good case in point. If the hypothesis about religious decline were true, one would expect less hymn-singing activity. Yet this is not at all what is found. Ancient accounts such as the Periegesis of Pausanias are full of references to both, the ongoing singing of ancient traditional cult songs as well as introduction of new hymn-singing events. The epigraphic evidence confirms the impression given by such secondary accounts: older hymns continue to be sung while new hymns are commissioned by cities and sanctuaries. Moreover, the majority of hymns in both kinds of sources are ones used in collective, public, normally official cults. Thus, although hymns for more unofficial or private worship do survive from the Hellenistic and Roman periods (e.g., Orphic and Magic hymns on papyrus), they clearly did not displace public hymnody; and at the same time neither Orphism nor private magic is a new phenomenon, nor yet hymn-singing outside of official ritualized occasions.

3 Song and book cultures

Another facet of the “golden-age” assumption that has had a pronounced impact on the study of ancient hymnography has to do with literacy. Ever since the monumental studies of Parry on epic traditional verse, scholars have emphasized the orality of ancient Greek society. But, once again, this ideal, pure song-culture is set against not only our own textual world but also the so-called book- and even bookish culture of the Hellenistic period. This is an instance of the larger pattern of sharp periodization that assigns to the Hellenistic period a dramatic break from the political, religious, social and cultural realities of the previous ages. Literature – or so the story goes – was

\textsuperscript{426} Shipley 2000; Potter 2003.
no longer composed for performance, as it had been in the earlier age, but for quiet, private reading. Generic distinctions were no longer bound up with social occasion but defined by formal features distilled by Alexandrian librarians. Hymns are at the heart of the issue because Callimachus, who is frequently showcased as a prime example of the new literate world and leading patron of the associated book aesthetic, wrote a collection of hymns which has partially survived to our time. These are ready examples for the supposed shift from song to book culture. Poets like Pindar composed hymns for performance by a chorus of amateur citizens representing their community at a particular public religious event; their creations were guided by the social demands of the city and the specifics of the cult and festival that would provide the occasion. Callimachus (and other Hellenistic poets who composed hymns, such as Theocritus), by contrast, were writing for a small readership of erudite literati and/or for royal patrons; their hymns were not written for a community or for a social occasion; they were not gifts for the gods offered in a sacred time and place, nor meant for public choral performance. The form and language of the poems are based on the long tradition of Greek hymns and, especially in the more mimetic of the collection, give a sense of genuine religious, performed songs; yet this is all pure fiction and exhibition of expertise in generic forms.

If this picture seems over-simplified, too black-and-white, this is because it is. In brief discussion of the so-called “mimetic hymns” of Callimachus in chapter 6, it was noted that there are cases where the level and kinds of deictic language may indeed rule out actual cult performance. But this is true only of a minority of the hymns in the collection. As for the rest, there is nothing in the texts that precludes the possibility that they were composed for an actual performance. The temptation of course is to use the blatantly fictional mimesis in some examples as evidence for the purely literary quality of the entire corpus, but this should be resisted: the fact that the hymns were collected together – even if this was done by Callimachus himself – does not necessarily

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427 For a summary of this conventional view, see Bulloch 2010: 167-8: “the poet was now an artist whose creations were no longer composed out of social demand and performed at specific community occasions” and for criticism see Cameron 1995: 63-7.

428 Another parallel theme is the progression from communal to personal, from collective to individual. This has been applied to cult songs in particular. E.g., Klinck 2008: 168: “I believe it is significant that Alcman is the earlier composer of the two, and thus closer to traditional oral songs. In him the traditional takes precedence over the personal….By the time of Pindar…festal songs have become less anonymous and communal.”

429 And even in the case of these mimetica hymns – 2, 5 and 6 – some kind of performance, including performance in the context of a festival, is still a possible scenario. See Cameron 1995: 64-7. Likewise Acosta-Hughes and Stephens (2012: 90) allows that some of Callimachus’ hymns could have been composed for original performance and includes here nos. 2 and 6.
indicate that they were originally composed for the same purpose. The hymns should be dealt with case by case. Just because the script-like narration in the Bath of Athena makes it unlikely that it would have been sung within a ritual sequence of a real-life festival for the goddess does not necessarily imply that the Hymn to Zeus (no. 1) could not have been presented at Alexandria or the Hymn to Apollo at a theoretic presentation by Cyrenaeans at the Delia.

Yet even if the status quo is correct and Callimachus’ hymns were never meant for performance in a cult context, it still does not go to show that no contemporary hymns were. Nearly all the epigraphic hymns which survive today were inscribed in the Hellenistic, some in the Roman, period, some newly commissioned, others perhaps recording an earlier composition; most of these were clearly sung in ritualized, mostly public, contexts. The practice of communal hymn-singing is therefore alive and well. Assuming Callimachus and other authors of “high poetry” were composing for reading alone, they are nonetheless drawing on this living practice, relying on their readers’ familiarity with cult hymnody. And no matter how introverted and secluded one imagines these erudite, elite scholars to have been, it is inconceivable that in constructing their mimetic scenes of festivals and (to a large extent) traditional-sounding hymns, they are relying entirely on antiquarian knowledge of ancient Greek practice, oblivious of the flourishing song-culture around them.

Instead of an abrupt shift from an oral culture to a literary one, what can be seen in the Hellenistic and Roman periods is the co-existence of both side by side – a co-existence that really does not disappear any time in antiquity. What is equally interesting is that this model is not only applicable to this later age of Greek civilization – it can be extended back at least to the mid-fifth century. In her book on literacy in Athens, Rosalind Thomas critiques the concept of a sharp turn to literacy in the later Classical period there; instead she defends a vision of fifth- and fourth-century Athens as a song-and-book culture.\textsuperscript{430} Formalized genres of performed speech – drama, oratory, sympotic verse, etc. – were integrated into the core of the city’s life; at the same time, there were authors writing primarily if not exclusively for private readings (historiography,

\textsuperscript{430} Thomas 1989; also 1992 and cf. 2008, which reiterates her original argument but takes some more recent studies and evidence into account.
philosophy, medicine, etc.), while texts of performative literature were beginning to be recorded on stone and paper and collected in private and public archives.\footnote{Harris (1989: 327) makes a similar conclusion about the progress of ancient literacy in general: “a transition not to written culture…but to an intermediate condition.”}

Something similar was happening outside of Athens and more particularly in the area of cult hymns. There is evidence for the use of writing by hymnographers at least as early as Pindar. There are strong reasons to believe that Greek lyric poets used writing. Thomas Hubbard even suggests that the wide repute and poetic immortality which Pindar promises his \textit{laudandi} is based as much on textual dissemination as on reperformance.\footnote{Hubbard 2004: esp. 84-5. See pp. 222ff below for further discussion on the use of writing by lyric poets in general.} The \textit{sphragis} of the Theognidea, probably even earlier than Pindar, has also been interpreted as referring to recording the elegies in writing.\footnote{Pratt 1995.} Inscribing verse is a practice as old as the Greek alphabet itself: the so-called Nestor’s Cup and the Dipylon oinochoe, from the eight century, are among the very earliest examples of the alphabet;\footnote{The absolute oldest example of the Greek alphabet found so far is a single word – εὔοιν (possibly a form of the Bacchic call) – on a vase from Gabbi, Italy. See Peruzzi 1992.} the oldest inscription on a bronze object is the early-seventh century Mantilikos’ statuette; all three use hexameter metre.\footnote{Nestor’s Cup: Museo di Villa Arbusto, inscription in \textit{CEG} 454; Dipylon oinochoe: National Archaeological Museum Athens, inscription in \textit{CEG} 432. Mantilikos’ statuette: Boston 03.997, inscription in \textit{CEG} 326.} By the late fifth century or earlier hymns were likewise being recorded in this way. For the most part these are examples of verses composed first of all to be performed, and writing is used as an aid, a counterpart to performance, rather than for its own separate purposes. Epigrams probably represent one of the earliest exceptions, since they were probably not performed but were rather intended specifically to be read.

The interplay between literacy and orality, then, can already be seen by the fifth century BCE. But it would be an exaggeration to suggest that there was no diachronic change at all. First of all, the model of co-existence has its limits – it cannot be pushed back indefinitely. Before the age of the lyric poets it is hard to find evidence for the regular use of writing by Greek authors; and it is generally agreed that Homeric and other early epics are the products of oral composition. In the field of hymnography, the purely literary hymn does not make its appearance until the Hellenistic poets like Callimachus. The fourth-century hymn to Virtue, attributed to Aristotle,
was probably composed for a small intimate group of acquaintances and pupils, but was nonetheless recited aloud at dinner, a form of performance at a social occasion. Plato incorporates hymns into his philosophical works, most famously the hymns to Eros in his *Symposium*; yet even these are not stand-alone literary products and, furthermore, they are presented through a fictional performance within a dramatized social context.

The re-introduction of writing into the Greek-speaking world sometime in the eighth century certainly did not create an immediate or widespread shift to literacy. Between this point and the founding of the library of Alexandria it is possible to detect a slow and gradual development—there is a clear growth in the contexts, purposes and sheer extent of writing. Therefore, although the chapter opened by rejecting the idea of a sharp turn from an oral to a literary society, it is nonetheless legitimate to inquire into the ways in which cult hymnody was influenced by the developments of, and in, writing.

4 Sacred places and the power of textuality

So how and why was this new technology applied to religious songs? It is relevant that sanctuaries were some of the earliest and common settings for writing in Greece. From the first half of the seventh century, there survive labelled dedications, followed later in the same century by sacred laws, treaties, lists of officials and other public documents. One interesting fact about the second group is that they include not only what would obviously be considered “religious” texts, but documents dealing with various political issues. The choice of a public sanctuary, then, is probably motivated by its central position in the community, as a place open to and frequented by, in theory, all the citizens of the *polis* or even, in the case of common temenê, inhabitants of some larger territory. This cannot be the whole story, however, since very few people possessed even basic literacy, especially in this early period. The sacredness of the space must have played a role as well: anything within a *temenos* is in the god(s)’ possession.

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436 Gordley 2011: 70.
438 Gagarin (2008) notes that the distinction between “sacred” and “secular” laws is a modern one, albeit a useful one heuristically, and finds no significant differences in forms and function between these two types of inscriptions.
439 This purpose is made explicit, for instance, in a decree from Cos (*Iscr. di Cos ED* 134), which is to be set up in the Asclepieion ὅπως εἰδῶντι Κώιοι. And cf. *IG VII 1* from Megara: ἀγγράψαι δὲ τὸ δόγμα τὸν γραμματέα τοῦ δάμου εἰς στάλαιν λαθίναν καὶ ἰνθέμεν εἰς τὸ Ὄλυμπείον, ὅπως εἰδῶντι πάντες.
and thus under his/their protection. Thus a treaty, for instance, will have the authority conferred on it by the sanctity of the place, as well as the force behind the oath that binds it.

Yet it is not just the place that gives the inscribed text authority – the very act of writing, the form of the written word, was felt to possess some power of its own. This idea is not clearly articulated in ancient sources, probably because it was not clearly understood, but that some such aura or mystery surrounded letters can be gathered from some of the early uses of writing. A label may be added to a material offering for several reasons. It can be a way of specifying the divine recipient and/or the dedicator. Correct and precise identification of the deity is certainly a concern in Greek religion, as can be plainly seen in the practice of opening a hymn or prayer with an invocation using not only the god’s name but also his cult titles, associated place-names and other attributes. The dedicator’s name is often left out, so self-advertisement is clearly not a universal purpose. If the aim is to ensure that the offering is received by the intended deity, then the label is somewhat redundant: the location of the dedication (a sanctuary belonging to a particular god or group of gods) already does this. Of course emphasis and repetition is not uncommon in ritual and economy is hardly a primary concern. More noteworthy is the fact that it is quite common to find the generic “θεῷ” or something similarly vague, without any indication of the specific god. There is apparently something more important and harder to pinpoint at play than a simple “to and from” address. The letters on the dedication may have been felt to give the object greater power, to confirm its status as an offering, to strengthen the communicative link the ritual is intended to accomplish.440

There are cases where a text does not communicate any explicit message and does not accompany an agalma. A particularly fascinating example is provided by the abecedarian inscriptions from the sanctuary of Zeus Semios on Mt. Hymettos, dated from the seventh century BCE.441 The same collection also contains simple, stand-alone signatures in the form of “X wrote this” on shards of broken pottery – in other words on objects which cannot be considered pleasing physical gifts in their own right. Single letters and meaningless collection of letters have also been found elsewhere and one of the leading explanations is that the writing was seen as

440 A similar argument has been made for the inscription of laws: the texts were designed less for reference (given the limits of literacy) than for the authority and permanence of writing. See Wohl 2010: 289-90 with previous bibliography.
441 Thomas 1992: 60.
endowing the object with some special value or power.\textsuperscript{442} The written text in such cases does not supplement an offering but is itself given to a god; writing does not strengthen a ritual act but constitutes one. But the most vivid example of the perceived power of writing is surely to be found in the area of magic. Curse tablets have been found across the Greek (and Roman) world and span nearly the whole of antiquity.\textsuperscript{443} They begin to appear in the seventh century, and there is evidence that they were known even earlier.\textsuperscript{444} In its simplest form, the \textit{katathesmos}, or binding spell, consists simply of writing down the target’s name on some surface (e.g., lead) and depositing this in a sanctuary, tomb, the person’s dwelling, or some other meaningful location. As with a dedication label, the place of deposition is part of the formula, but the very act of writing letters is really the essence of the curse: it is by writing down the person’s name that he or she is bound. The ritual may be accompanied by spoken words too, but again, it is through the new and strange medium of writing that the words acquire supernatural power.\textsuperscript{445} It is possible to try to rationalize this: written word may be felt to be in some ways more stable or even permanent than oral utterances; the name incised on the tablet or the object labelled with the name is the physical double of the owner of the name himself, so acting upon it (piercing, rolling up, scratching, burying, etc.) may be perceived as effecting the mortal target; in some cases, the choice of burial (e.g., tomb, place associated with chthonic deities) may allow us to see the curse tablet as a message delivered to the powers which are to be the agents of the spell. Yet beyond these particular explanations, there is something deeper that the curses share with many other early uses of writing in Archaic Greece: a vague feeling of the strange power of the written word. Similarly, when it comes to discussing the various potential motivations behind the decision to commit cult songs to writing, is is important not to forget this mysticism surrounding a text.\textsuperscript{446}

\section{5 Reperformance and \textit{leges sacrae}}

One common type of early inscription in sanctuaries is sacred laws, and this has particular relevance to cult hymns: at least some of the hymnic inscriptions are either part of, or can be

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{442} See Wilson 2009: 550 and n.30 for further references.
\item \textsuperscript{443} For a brief overview of the corpus of Greek curse tablets see Ogden 2002: 210.
\item \textsuperscript{444} Thomas 1992: 63.
\item \textsuperscript{445} In his discussion of hexametric incantations, Faraone (2008) suggests that while this phenomenon is oral in origin, from the late fifth century BCE onward the perceived power of such incantations rested more and more in the textuality of the written form. He points in particular to one Sicilian amulet (198-9) whose verses point explicitly to physical features as the source of their efficacy.
\item \textsuperscript{446} See Thomas 1992: chapter 5 on the “non-rational” uses of writing including its magical associations.
\end{itemize}
interpreted as, *leges sacrae*. The most obvious aim of setting up such texts at sanctuaries is to ensure correct performance of rituals. This is related to the concept of *hosiotês* discussed in a previous chapter: the need to act appropriately with respect to the gods, and in particular to perform correct rituals in the proper time and place. Spatial constraints are encoded into the placement of the text – it is normally a safe assumption that the injunctions of a *lex* are referring to the particular altar, temple or sanctuary within which it is inscribed, or at least in its vicinity. The fact that many of these *leges* are in the form of calendars is a reminder of the importance of appropriate timing. Texts of this kind may also indicate what ritual is to be performed, by whom and in what manner. The *lex* proposed by Isyllos, passed by the Epidaurian assembly, and subsequently inscribed in the Asclepieion institutes a new *pompê*; outlines the selection process for participants; describes the ritual apparatus, dress and even hairstyle; and gives some guidelines for the prayers to be made on behalf of the community; finally the text institutes the procession as an annual ritual to be conducted perpetually. Note that this law includes instructions not only for ritual acts but also for the words to accompany the acts - the contents of the prayer. Saying appropriate words is in reality not distinct from the requirement for correct action mentioned above, but part of it: a speech act is an act, and an utterance is no less powerful (and, if incorrect, dangerous) than any other deed performed in a ritualized context. Hence the call to *euphêmia*, (literally ritually-correct speech, but in practice holy silence) which precedes a sacrifice is even more commonly attested than the placement of a *perirrhantérion*, a basic form purification at the entrance to a sanctuary, although both can be seen as precautionary procedures, done “just in case” someone should risk offending the deity and thereby threaten the community as a whole.

This is where epigraphic hymns fit in. They too can in many cases be seen as instructions for correct speech in a cultic setting. Isyllos’ paean for Apollo Maleatas and Asclepius is included in the inscription that presents the *lex sacra*. The paean is understood as part of the newly inaugurated annual ritual; it has the force of the law behind it. Thus not only does the inscription provide for the general contents of the prayers to be recited by the members of the procession, but also lays out the complete and exact text of the hymn which is to be sung as part of the new ritual event.

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447 Hitch (2008: esp. 116) argues that speech acts were not secondary to other kinds of acts in Greek religious practice, in spite their absence, by and large, from the inscribed record, which she explains with reference to the specific functions of the records themselves.
A number of extant epigraphic hymns survive as part of larger ritual programs. The so-called Kassel stone from Athens, for instance, contains a number of hymns, all to deities associated with the cult of Asclepius: the healer-god himself, the goddess of health Hygieia, and Telesphoros, believed to be Asclepius’ son. It is thought that the texts were inscribed together at the same time, sometime in the second century CE. First comes a very brief ‘morning-song to Asclepius.’ One modern interpreter reads the series of hymns as a programme outlining the proper hymns to be sung during the course of the day of worship in the particular sanctuary and cult to which the stone belonged. For instance, the morning-song to Asclepius was an early-morning prayer and the other hymns were sung subsequently at pre-designated times of the day. A similar hypothesis has been proposed for the series of hymns, all connected with the Asklepiadic cult, found in Epidaurus. Here one of the hymns has what appears to be a heading indicating that it is to be sung during “the third hour”, while a *lex sacra* directs pilgrims to sing sacred songs, two of which follow on the same stone, after incubation. In these two cases, then, the inscription defines what is to be sung and when at the particular sanctuary. The stone containing the oldest text of the Erythraean Paean provides yet another parallel: on the opposite side are inscribed procedures for worshipers, including instructions to sing a paean to Apollo, the first words of which are preserved underneath, three times around the altar. The side with the paean to Asclepius also contains a second very fragmentary paean to Apollo.

These examples can be interpreted as hymns embedded into inscribed *leges sacrae*. An interesting twist is represented by Philodamos’ paean. The postscript indicates that the paean was composed in accordance with the god’s commands. The fact that the hymn was performed and inscribed in the sanctuary of Apollo at Delphi, and that its authors were officially recognized by the *polis* with a proxenic decree, assures us that in the background of this hymn, much like the paean of Isyllos, there lay a public decision. The poetic text further reveals that the paean is part of a new, annual ritual (or group of rituals) being added to the Theoxenia. It is being presented as

448 IG II² 4533.
449 Furley-Bremer 2001: v.2 268-9. Alonge (2011: 221 n.10) is sceptical about its use as a “liturgical script” given the many scribal errors in the stone’s text. This seems a rather weak argument; more importantly, even if the inscription did not provide the exact script for ritual performance, that does not mean it could not function as an aid to reperformance by providing the identity and order of the songs.
450 Furley 2001: 268.
451 Maas 1933: 154-5.
a divine decree from Apollo’s oracle, but there can be little doubt that the Delphic assembly had to confirm the decision. Thus behind the oracular stanza is what can be legitimately called a *lex sacra*. In fact the other demands made by Apollo and summarized by the paean in its oracular stanzas should probably likewise be seen as reflecting official policy of the Delphic polity. But the twist here is that, unlike the text of Isyllos, this inscription does not embed the hymn within a larger epigraphic context that includes the law, its background and justification. Instead, the *lex* is incorporated into the hymn: on the one hand the hymn is in effect part of – or at least affirmed by – the law; on the other, the contents of the law are in turn transmitted through the hymn. In both cases (as in most other epigraphic hymns) the hymn is legitimated by the sacred law; yet in Philodamos, the law itself also gains prestige of the oracular or poetic context in which the song places it: the relationship is reciprocal.

The interpretation of hymn inscriptions as *leges sacrae* assumes, of course, that the songs would be reperformed and that the inscribed texts would serve in some way as an aid to reperformance. The reperformance assumption is valid for a large number of the extant epigraphic hymns. The traditional hymns such as the Erythraean Paean, the Hymn to Diktaian Zeus and Arirhron’s paean to Hygieia were standard songs, incorporated into the rituals of their respective cults, preserved, inscribed and probably re-inscribed for generations. Hymns like these were unquestionably performed repeatedly and regularly. Does this feature of reperformability apply to other kinds of compositions? As the discussion of *deixis* has shown, in many instances (e.g., Isyllus, Philodamos, probably Makedonikos and Aristonous, maybe also Limenios and Athenaios) it does. Thus, much like the sacred laws and calendars that outlined the contests to be held and the animals to be sacrificed during various festivals, the texts of many inscribed hymns, sometime along with accompanying instructions, told the worshippers the songs to sing at given times.

What exactly was the relationship between the inscribed hymnic text and reperformance? Mark Alonge holds that hymns were inscribed to monumentalize a past performance rather than to canonize a text with a view of reperformance.452 There are certainly some valid objections for the view of epigraphic hymns as sacred laws, but the possibility cannot be ruled out generally for

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452 Alonge 2011: esp. 228ff Elsewhere he recognizes at least one undeniable exception to his argument makes reference to at least one alternative or complementary function of hymnic inscriptions – dedications or thank-offerings (229).
the entire corpus of epigraphic hymns. Most people, even in the Roman period, were illiterate or only semi-literate, so it is probably unrealistic to imagine the singers learning the words by reading them off the stone, let alone looking at the lyrics as they sang.\footnote{The classic work on the subject remains Harris’ (1989) diachronic perspective with fairly pessimistic results. See especially 327ff.} One possibility, however, is that someone who \textit{was} literate would read the text aloud to the choristers. There is evidence for this model in action from a related sphere – reperformance of “Classical” tragedies in Athens starting in the fourth century BCE.\footnote{Thomas 1992: 48-9.} According to the \textit{Lives of the Ten Orators}, one of Lycurgus’ reforms was to require any actors wishing to perform a play of one of the great tragedians to learn the words correctly from a text kept in the public archive. They did not read the text themselves however but were aided by a public secretary, who read it aloud. It is easy to imagine something of this sort occurring in preparation to the reperformance of a hymn like the paean of Philodamos or those of Limenios and Athenaios – hymns, in other words, which were fairly recent. But it was probably unnecessary for traditional songs, re-used for decades or centuries at regular festive occasions, songs like the Erythraean paean, the Dictaean hymn to Zeus and the traditional hymns reported by ancient authors as attributed to legendary musicians. Such familiar hymns were known, if not by the entire community, then certainly by enough individuals to ensure their survival from one generation to the next.

Interestingly, some of the hymns which are part of inscribed cult programmes outlined above are not spelled out in full, but are merely suggested with a first line or opening passage.\footnote{For instance, the Erythraean stone contains the opening of a paean to Seleukos. For the idea of early written texts (and specifically poetic texts) as mnemonic devices, cues for what the reader already knew by heard, see Thomas 1992: 91-3.} What the epigraphic text is doing in such instances is telling its reader what songs are to be sung in a particular context; the knowledge of the songs is taken for granted. Even in the cases of non-traditional hymns, it is not entirely clear that the inscription per se was intended to serve as a learning text. For instance, the member of the theoric chorus that was preparing to deliver the great paean for an upcoming Pythais would not wait to get to Delphi before learning the words. If the Athenian \textit{technitai} did re-use a standard \textit{patrios paian} (whether this was the combined hymns of Limenios or Athenaeaus or something else), they would surely have had their own copy of it at home, in Athens. And, like Lycurgus’ texts of the great tragedians, it is better to imagine it as a papyrus role in an archive rather than a public inscription. So the aim of recording
these paeans in the treasury of the Athenians at Delphi is something other than to aid reperformance.

There are also cases of hymns that are probably not suitable to be sung after the initial presentation. An interesting example comes from the island of Paros, perhaps from the second century BCE (although the dating is far from secure).\footnote{Furley and Bremer 2001: v.2 379ff} This is a verse inscription commemorating the construction, repairs or embellishments of a temple of Artemis.\footnote{IG XII 5:229.} The text identifies the benefactors and dedicators as two private individuals, apparently acting independently of any polis or other larger organization. No public cult or festival is referred to. Although the metre (elegiac couplets) is frequently associated with epigrams, which are not meant for performance, the length of the text and its self-identification as a hymn has led some to assume that it was performed, probably by a solo singer, perhaps during an unveiling ceremony for the temple.\footnote{See Furley and Bremer 2001: 379-381.} Nonetheless, the alternative possibility that this was a silent text, in the tradition of dedicative epigrams while at the same time drawing certain elements from the older tradition of the hymn, cannot be excluded. After all, there are other exceedingly long epigrams and it is not uncommon for poets of the genre to employ fiction or use language in less than completely literal sense.\footnote{For possible parallels for choral singing of dactylic hymns see West 1986 and cf. IG XII 5:893, another hexameter hymn from Tenos, with address to Apollo musagêtês and reference to “celebration and choral song” probably implies musical performance.} If the hymn was performed, it was probably meant to be sung once only, at the inauguration of the temple for whose construction (or improvements) the named dedicador and his wife provided funds. The details of the construction project are too closely tied to its specific contemporary context to make it appropriate for any recurring occasions.

If it is accepted that the two paeans with musical notations from Delphi represent unique variants of a traditional “national paean” form, composed for a particular occurrence (or two separate occurrences) of the Pythais festival, then one must also accept that the hymns would have been performed only once. Moreover, as suggested earlier, even if the reperformability of these texts was intentional, the composers and commissioners would not have been aware of the future of these hymns due to the irregular nature of the particular festival. A comparative example is available from Rome: Horace’s famous Carmen Saeculare. The inscription which refers to the
hymn gives a great deal of information about the performance and context of the hymn.\textsuperscript{460} The occasion - \textit{ludi saeculares} - was theoretically supposed to take place once every 100 or 110 years. Although they were celebrated five more times over the following 250 years, neither Augustus nor Horace could have expected this in 17 BCE, when the \textit{carmen} was performed.\textsuperscript{461} Therefore, whatever the motivation behind the inscription at that time, it was probably not the anticipation of reperformance.

There is a deeper issue with this legalistic reading of inscribed hymn, one which extends also to other “religious” inscriptions. It was mentioned earlier that the conceptual foundation for making such texts is the concern with performing appropriate acts, including speech acts, at the correct time, in the correct place and manner. But this concern, so central to Greek religion, long predates the rise of the epigraphic habit and even the re-introduction of literacy. Piety in this sense did not depend on writing; it had long rested firmly on oral tradition. What was said above about familiar, traditional hymns is more generally true of ritual: a community’s collective memory, with the core provided by expertise of priests and elders, was sufficient to maintain ancient practices. Questions about ritual were regularly resolved by reference to ancestral practice as preserved in collective memory, not textual record. It is worth stressing that at the height of the epigraphic habit, \textit{leges sacrae}, including inscribed hymns, still probably represented only a small minority of the multitude of rituals, prayers and songs that were performed in the cults of Greek cities.\textsuperscript{462} By and large, traditional usage, intimately familiar to the worshippers, continued as the primary basis for religious action. Therefore the availability of an alternative method of preservation did not lead to a universal or standard practice whereby all that was (or was supposed to be) said and done at a sanctuary would be recorded on stone.

It would not, however, be reasonable to dismiss the reperformance element in sacred inscriptions. When a change was introduced to local cult – such as Isyllos’ procession in Epidauros or the adoption of the Erythraean paean in Ptolemais, for example – it could be useful

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item[CIL {} 6.32323. For a commentary see Fraenkel 1957: 364-71; more recent discussions of the \textit{Carmen} and the \textit{ludi} include Putnam 2001 and 2010 and Thomas 2011.
\item In fact the inscription commemorating the \textit{ludi saeculares} of 218 CE include the fragment of a different hymn, no doubt a new creation commissioned for the games. See Taylor 1934: 103. On the festival’s history see Beard 1998: 205-206.
\item With regard to sacred laws, for instance, Gagarin (2008: 104) suggest that “written laws can only have preserved a small percentage of the many rules concerning sacrifice or other sacred matters… many others would continue to be remembered by priest and others.”
\end{enumerate}
\end{footnotesize}
to have the new rituals recorded and displayed, even if only a small minority of the visitors would be able to read the words. Another scenario where codification may be desirable is when traditions are being neglected, either because they are forgotten or simply due to slackness. Here the inscription could function as a reminder and enforcement of existing rites. Apart from transmitting the “letter of the law”, this form of presentation would have the authority from both the sanctity of the place where they are erected and the mysterious power of the written word as such.\footnote{There are parallels in the codification of Athenian law in the end of the fifth century BCE. See \citet{wohl2010} cited in \ref{mtnote440} above.}

To see writing being used as a guide to correct performance of ritual, an example is readily available the sphere of magic and Orphic cults.\footnote{\citet{pajarez2003-2007} is the most complete collection of Orphic texts. For a systematic treatment of Greek magic, including anthology of representative texts, see \citet{dickie2001}.} Curses, incantations, recipes and of course hymns that populate the corpora of these “alternative” religious veins are written precisely in order to provide the initiate or practitioner with necessary instructions. One important distinction from epigraphic \textit{leges sacrae} is the medium of these texts – ostraca, thin led tablets and especially papyrus, rather than stone or marble. The nature of the cults involved may help explain this choice of material. What characterizes Orphism, Dionysian mysteries, magical practices and similar religious activity is that it is normally outside of public, institutionalized cult. The two main implications of this are that the rites are often performed in private, by individuals or small groups of initiates, and that they are not attached to a particular sanctuary. Hence the texts are recorded in a form which is appropriate for private consumption and great mobility. To this may also be added the certain degree of secrecy or arcane knowledge connected to these unofficial cults, although this element has probably been exaggerated under the influence of our familiarity with magic in the later, Christianized, world.

Some inscriptions containing cult hymns and other rituals instructions, then, could be considered a more public, official counterpart to the magical and Orphic texts on papyri. Alonge’s contention that hymnic inscriptions were a way of commemorating a specific performance is certainly valid for many cases, but it is also impossible to rule out the possibility that some of these texts also functioned as cues or reminders and in some cases even canonized texts, for regular performance. Alonge is sceptical about the reperformance of the majority of the existing
epigraphic hymns, which in part helps explain the conclusions about the aims of such inscriptions. But as has been noted in chapter 2, the secondary references to the regular reuse of a traditional hymn, along with explicit instruction for reperformance in some of the epigraphic texts themselves, hardly leaves room for such scepticism. More importantly, when dealing with questions of literacy and the epigraphic habit, it is best to allow for a variety of objectives and functions. Indeed, commemoration and reperformance are neither mutually exclusive nor the only possible reasons why cult hymns were inscribed.

The text of sacred laws, including those containing a hymnic script, would have been effective forms of communication in spite of the low levels of literacy. First of all, reading in antiquity was nearly always done aloud, so the presence of an educated individual - whether temple official or passerby – would mean an opportunity for a sort of ad hoc performance that would be heard by illiterate visitors. Even in the absence of any readers, the inscription could nonetheless be a tool of communication. According to John Bodel, inscriptions bearing laws, edicts, imperial letters, treaties, and other official documents functions primarily as reminders of their original publication, which was in the form of oral delivery. In other words, without reading (or being able to read) an inscription, the sight of a particular slab of marble, for instance, at a specific public location, would bring back to the mind of the viewer the declaration which accompanied or preceded the erection of the monument. The official publication could be replaced by an alternative memory – hearing someone read the inscription aloud at a later occasion, or listening to a secondary report of its contents. The recollection may not be precise, of course, but would probably be sufficient to indicate the text’s intention and, if appropriate, guide the individual accordingly. The physical form of the official document not only acts as a mnemonic device – its prominent position, the expense of material and labour involved, its permanence, and even the very mystery of textuality all add authority to the message which the object conveys and, above all, symbolizes.

466 Day (2000: 41) describes this as a (re-)enactment of the viewer’s prior participation in the event symbolized or commemorated by the visual representation, and this is applicable whether or not text is part of that representation. His focus is dedicatory epigrams but he refers to a parallel analysis of the Parthenon frieze by Osborne (ref. in Day, n. 14).
467 See Thomas 1992: chapter 5, esp. 84-5 on use of inscriptions as symbolic memorials.
6  Memory and afterlife

The idea of a public inscription as reminder of an oral event deserves further consideration. When considering the corpus of epigraphic cult hymns, this aspect extends beyond those texts which were intended for reperformance – whether or not an inscription is intended to initiate and/or guide future ritualized action, it can commemorate a past one. A public inscription is way of fossilizing, of preserving what is otherwise an ephemeral event – a hymnic performance. The best example of this is probably Horace’s *Carmen Saeculare*; the related inscription includes not only details of its performance but also an elaborate description of the larger festive occasion.  

Similarly, a visitor to Delphi would see inscribed on the walls of the Athenian treasury, near the hymns of Limenios and Athenaeaus, the proxenic decree with details of the associated Pythais *theòria*.

It is important not to lose sight of the human agency of course. The hymn or the cult event has no inherent drive for self-preservation outside of the stakeholders involved. In many cases the initiative must have come from the desire to be recognized by people present and future for the achievement of a lavish performance. The skill of the hymnographer who writes the song, the piety of the *polis* that sends a theoric chorus, the wealth of the aristocrat who commissions a public performance: these can all lead to fame and glory, provided a way is found to communicate and advertize them. Such a service is provided by the medium of inscription, and more specifically inscription in a sanctuary where countless people come to worship. Some of the visitors who witness the text first hand will in turn communicate the message to others, disseminating it through space and helping to ensure its survival over time. This motivation is not limited to the inscribed cult hymns. In fact, it is evidenced in some of the first uses of alphabet since its invention: earliest of all are *depinti* on private objects indicating their makers or owners, followed by labels on tombs and dedications. In all three groups, one may detect the desire on the part of an individual to identify himself; and the references to the hymnographer, performers or other stakeholders in hymnic texts are analogous. On one level this is mere self-advertisement, the need for acknowledgement. But there seems to be a deeper wish to leave a mark that would remain there when the author was absent, a physical surrogate for the real person. This is the logic behind formulae on curse tablets: the written name is in some way the

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468 For reference see n. 460 above.
individual it represents, but one which is independent in time and space, able to survive spatial separation and death of its mortal counterpart.

When talking about the early Greek *dipinti*, Thomas calls this aim of writing the “immortality through permanence.” Human immortality in its more literate sense is not a fundamental issue in Greek religious thought, the way it is, for example, in Christianity or Islam. Death is repeatedly described as an inevitable part of human life and the key distinction between mortals and the gods. Life after death is far from a certainty, and its nature is even more doubtful. Most Greeks would have agreed that it is nothing to look forward to in any case. The form of immortality toward which mortals *can* strive is survival of one’s name and deeds. One of the most terrifying thoughts to an ancient Greek, to judge from their literature, is that no one will remember his name, that all memory of him will be lost: this possibility is more frightful than any hellish afterlife because it is more real, more immediate. How to achieve this less physical but yet more accessible form of immortality? Great deeds alone are not enough: these must be known and remembered. The form of permanence varies. In the earliest literature, especially the Homeric epics, the key is *kleos* or renown. Its mechanism is rarely described but is primarily *phatis*, rumour or word of mouth. According to Redfield, “things, places and persons acquire *kleos* as they acquire an identity in the human world, as stories are told about them.”

In early lyric, the role of poets in the immortalization of human accomplishments becomes more central and more explicit. Pindar, for instance, warns that *ta kala*, fine achievements, are worthless unless celebrated by song (such as his own epinicians, it is to be understood). In one of his Olympian odes, he tells his *laudandus*: “when a man with fine achievements but no songs reaches the house of Hades, he has spent his strength and his breath in vain and gained only a short-lived delight with his effort. But on you the soft-singing lyre and the sweet flute scatter grace and the Pierian daughters of Zeus nurture your wide fame.” Elsewhere Pindar speaks of his song travelling on every ship that leaves Aegina, his subject’s home, and Theognis promises

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470 Mikalson 2010: 175ff with further bibliography on pages 185-6.
471 Quoted in Bowie 2012: 69, ref. in n.3. *Kleos* is derived from the verb *kluô*, to hear of something from someone, or to hear something spoken of, so term has speaking and listening built into it. See also Petropoulos (2011) on *kleos* in Homer.
his addressee, Kyrnos, that he will give him wings to travel far and wide. Thus the role of poetry is not only preservation but also dissemination of its subject’s fame. At the heart of both is reperformance, as is clear from Theognis’ reference in the same passage to sympotic singing: “you will be present at every meal and banquet, lying on the lips of many guests, and lovely youths shall sing of you well and orderly and in a clear voice to the clear-voiced aulos.” The wide dissemination, of course, in turn helps assure survival: “and when you go down to the lamentable house of Hades in the depths of the gloomy earth, never, although dead, will you lose your fame.”

But physical memorial is an important alternative to word of mouth right from the start. Already in the illiterate world of Homeric heroes, the role of the tumulus as a sign, a sêma is key – it reminds passersby of the hero buried there and his deeds. When the shade of Elpenor in Hades is beseeching Odysseus to bury his body, there are two issues at stake. First, without a proper burial his soul cannot pass to the final stages of the afterlife and is forced to wander on the edges of Acheron. But equally important is his wish to be remembered. He asks Odysseus to: “burn me with my armour, all that is mine, and heap up a mound (sêma) for me on the shore of the grey sea, in memory of an unhappy man, that men yet to be may learn of me. Fulfil this my prayer, and fix upon the mound my oar wherewith I rowed in life when I was among my comrades.”

Of course the tumulus, even with a distinguishing feature like Elpenor’s oar, would be unable to preserve his name or his story on its own: its efficacy depends of the a continued oral tradition that passes this information on from one generation to the next. But the physical sign is not superfluous – it is a powerful mnemonic device that sustains the phatis, bringing the story to

473 N. 5.2-6: ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ πάσας | ὅλκαδος ἐν τ’ ἀκάτω, γλυκεῖ’ ἀιωδά | στεῖχ’ ἀπ’ Αἰγίνας διαγγέλλοισ’, ὅτι | Λάμπωνος υἱὸς Πυθέας εὐρυσθενής | νίκη Νεμείοις παγκρατίου στέφανον (Sweet song, go on every merchant-ship and rowboat that leaves Aegina, and announce that Lampon's powerful son Pytheas [5] won the victory garland for the pancratium at the Nemean games. Tr. D.A. Svarlien.) Cf. O. 9. 21-7, where the poet claims that his message will travel faster than any horse or ship. Thognis 237-8: Σοὶ μὲν ἐγὼ πτέρ’ ἔδωκα, σὺν οἷσ ἐπ’ ἀπείρονα πόντον | ποτήσηι, κατὰ γὴν πάσαν ἀειρόμενον | ῥηϊδίως (I have given you wings on which you will easily rise and fly over the boundless sea and all the earth.)

474 Thgn. 239-43: θοίνηις δὲ καὶ εἰλαπίνηισι παρέσσηι | ἐν πάσαις, πολλῶν κείμενος ἐν στόμαις, | καί σε σὺν αὐλίσκοισιν λημφθόγγος νέος ἄνδρες | εὐκόσμως ἄρα ταῦτα τε καὶ λιγέα | άσσονται.. Thgn. 243-5: καὶ ὅταν διόνυσης ὑπὸ κεῖθεσι γαίης | βῆις πολυκωκύτους εἰς Ἀίδαο δόμους, | οὐδέποτε οὔδε θανὼν ἀπολεῖς κλέος.

475 Thgn. 243-5: καὶ ὅταν διόνυσης ὑπὸ κεῖθεσι γαίης | βῆις πολυκωκύτους εἰς Ἀίδαο δόμους, | οὐδέποτε οὔδε θανὼν ἀπολεῖς κλέος.

476 Od. 11.75-8: ἀλλὰ με κακκῆαι σὺν τεῦχεσιν, ὦσα μοι ἐστίν, | σήμα τέ μοι χείλεσι πολῆς ἐπί θνί θαλάσσης, | ἀνδρός δυσπήγης κοινοῦς, | οὐδὲκ’ εὐσμονίδοις πυθέσθαι, | ταῦτα τέ μοι τελέσας πῆξαί τ’ ἐπὶ τύμβου ἔρεμουν, | τὸ καὶ ζωῆς ἔρεσαν εὐν μετ’ ἑμοίς ἐτάροισιν. Tr. A.T. Murray. Cf. II. 7. 87ff and 7.91 for a similar sentiment about the tomb acting as a mnemonic aid that prompts people to recollect and revitalize stories about the deceased.
mind and giving an occasion for re-iteration and thereby further dissemination which in turn ensures its survival.

The tumulus is perhaps one of the oldest but not the only form of physical commemoration. The inscribed stele of a later age did not diminish the importance of the tombstone as a sign, meaningful even to the illiterate viewers. In the later Archaic and especially Classical periods sculpture and inscriptions come into their own, and the lyric poets talk of them as competing forms of commemoration. Pindar’s Nemean 5 opens with a dismissal of sculpture as “motionless” in contrast to his songs (1-5), and some have read a fragment of Simonides (PMG 581) as implying a similar comparison between inscribed tombstones and his verses – in his case, the criticism is based on the fragility of the physical object. It is difficult to determine how much genuine hostility lies behind such polemical statements. As in the case of the tumulus of Elpenor, the physical and oral forms of commemoration work together to help ensure the immortality of the hero’s name, and there may be some internal indications that the lyric poets themselves recognized this potential for collaboration. Yet some scholars insist that, whatever aid the physical commemoration may provide, for the poets of Archaic epic and lyric, the key to immortality is still the spoken word. For all the polemics – whether genuine or generic - on the part of oral song culture, writing, and inscription in particular, clearly introduced yet another potential path to immortality through permanence.

To what extent does this immortalizing function belong to the text itself, or its specific medium, independent of performance? Looking at hymn inscriptions, most of them recollect the original oral delivery and its occasion and/or a practice of cyclically-recurring performances. Of course beyond the cult hymn, the entire genre of funerary epigrams can be adducted as an example of texts which do not recall a primary performance. Parallels from the hymnic corpus are difficult to find. The dedication from Paros gives little indication of its performance and includes a final sphragis that seems out of place at least in a choral delivery. But this is quite an unusual piece, a private inscription in elegiac couplets accompanying a physical dedication (various elaborations to the temple of Artemis); it thus may owe as much to the tradition of the epigram as to the cult hymn. Even here, however, the possibility of some kind of inaugural oral delivery cannot be

478 Petropoulos 2011: 38 n. 145.
excluded. Similarly, the poet’s own autobiographical references in Isidorus’ hymns to Isis and the absence of any meta-performative language leave the possibility that the texts were composed without a public, festive presentation. Yet this too is only one possibility. And as will be seen later in this chapter, the autobiographical references in both examples are limited to a sphragis at the end of the hymnic text and could have easily been added later, at the time of inscription. The secondary accounts and internal evidence establish beyond doubt the tradition of hymn-singing in sacred places throughout the Ancient Greek world. The same goes for the related phenomenon of setting up inscriptions containing the texts of hymns which have been and/or would be performed at the sanctuary. The alternative – inscribing hymns which were never intended for performance – is something that is very difficult to establish as a Greek practice. Thus the burden of proof must be on those who would argue that an epigraphic hymn found at a Greek sanctuary was never performed.

Is comparison with funerary epigrams, *dipinti* and similar forms of writing, then, irrelevant here? Not entirely. The hymnic inscription will evoke the memory of a grand festive performance, but only in the minds of those who have such a memory, those who have witnessed it. The others will consume it as something that stands on its own. In such instances, the ability to immortalize the named person(s) appears to rest entirely on the text as such. Yet here too a qualification is necessary. It is worth emphasizing again that reading was done aloud and moreover that most people could not read. So even in the absence of a festive, public, performance, such texts are still performed, rendered orally and receive aurally. The textual message, in other words, is still largely communicated by word of mouth. And although the preservation of a person’s name in a physical form may have had some mystical appeal, surely the more valuable service of the text was its ability to remind its audience of the absent individual. It is only through this human agency, through the knowledge it conveys and memory it preserves in people’s minds that an inscription can create *kleos*. It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the inscribed text is add nothing: the medium of speech does indeed bring the silent text to life, but the inscribed text in turn, with its longevity, stability and public availability, extends the power of speech. The collaboration, in other words, is quite like that between *phasis* and *sêma* in the world of Homeric heroes as suggested above.

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479 For a similar observation on epigrams see Day 1989: esp. 27. Depew (2000: 66), citing Day and Svenbro, points to the practice typical of early dedicatory inscriptions of presenting the object itself as speaking, views this as reflective of an intention “to perpetuate [the original ritual utterance] by prompting its re-enactment in reading.”
7 Messages for the gods

When an ancient visitor to a sanctuary read out an inscription he found there – be it a hymn, a dedication label or another kind of text – he brought it to life not only for himself and any other bystanders but also for its divine addressee. Inscribing such discourse, then, could be conceived of as a way of extending (or reinstating) the communicative link established during its formal performance. A similar model is proposed for dedicatory epigrams by Joseph Day: the process of reading (aloud) the inscription accompanying the physical gift reperforms the very act of dedication. Granted that this form of simple, informal utterance cannot be considered an agalma in the manner of a grandiose choral performance at a festival, it nonetheless reiterated the praise and prayer directed to the deity and emphasized the prior (and possible future) pleasing displays signalled by the inscription. There is a further possibility that such texts were seen to be an effective communication with the gods even apart from revitalization through speech.

Here the starting point is offered once again by that very early use of writing – curses. Unlike dedications, depinti, tomb inscription and so forth, defixiones were not always (or even normally) set up in publicly visible places or indeed privately accessible ones. Most commonly, they were taken out of the world of the living immediately after being made, and buried in the ground. In spite of being doomed never to be read by any living being again, however, the logic of the curse required that the tablets be an effective vehicle of communication with the appropriate powers. The addressees, the agents of the curses, then, were assumed to be able to decode the message without hearing it pronounced aloud – i.e., by someone with a voice, a mortal. It is tempting to cite two comparable phenomena from Ancient Egyptian culture: the hieratic script which was used exclusive by the priestly caste for religious texts, existing alongside the “secular” demotic system; and the practice of engraving and depositing written texts in tombs and inner sanctuaries of temples where few or no human was going to have access to them. The Greek had no special

481 Day 2010: esp. 14-5. Cf. Depew 2000: 76-66, who lists several functions of inscribing hymns (including memorial of original occasion, an offering, script for reperformance) but focuses especially on this kind of informal re-performance generated by every individual reader: “[an inscribed hymn] would stage its re-enactment on a daily basis.”
482 See references in on p. 205 above.
form of writing for the immortals but belief in the power of text to communicate with the gods (or souls of the dead) even without being uttered aloud may be implied in the general practice of writing in sacred places.

Another parallel between inscribed hymns and curses is the choice of location. Curse tablets were not placed at random. Most commonly they were buried with the bodies of a recently deceased individual or a place connected with a chthonic power. By the same logic, the most effective place for depositing any written message to a divine address is his naos, his sanctuary. This of course is far from being the sole reason for depositing an inscribed hymn (or any other text directed toward the divine) in a sacred place. Several others have already been discussed in this chapter – the centrality, openness and prominence of such a space within an ancient Greek community makes it a prime candidate for displaying documents meant for public consumption; and the laws, decrees and treaties set up in a sanctuary are felt to have the protection and authority of the deity who holds the place.

8 Text as agalma

The location of the hymn inscription also matches that of the performance which it is intended to commemorate: the spatial connection strengthens the mnemonic force of the text. But is the inscribed hymn merely a reminder of a pleasing offering or can it be considered one in and of itself? Labelling physical dedications to the gods was one of the first uses of the alphabet in ancient Greece but it is the object rather than the text which is the agalma. In other words, the text seems to accompany and to aid the offering, rather than being one itself. Similarly, the hymnic inscription appears to be secondary to the performance it commemorates (or future ones it promises and helps to produce) – it is a record of a pleasing display, not an agalma. A tempting exception is the Parian temple dedication. But even if this hymn was never performed (which is a matter of debate) it accompanies and commemorates what is arguably the more valuable and important gift, the building project itself.

There are some reasons to question this initial impression, however. Recall the abecedaria deposited at the sanctuary of Zeus Semios mentioned above: these texts neither communicate a specific message, commemorate a performance, nor accompany a separate physical offering.
They are dedications in their own right – the very text as such is felt to hold value. Another interesting case comes from the hymnic corpus. In the long inscription containing Isyllos’ paean to Asclepius and Apollo, he describes how he consulted the Delphic oracle about his hymn (lines 31ff) This in itself is not uncommon: as was noted in chapter 2, cult hymnographers are often said to be directed by the gods, especially by Apollo through his Pythian oracle. What is interesting here is that Isyllos asks the god not about composing the paean, but specifically about inscribing it: μαντεύσασθαι οἱ περὶ τοῦ παιὰνος ἐν Δελφοῖς, ὃν ἐπόησε εἰς τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα καὶ τὸν Ἀσκληπιόν, ἣ λόιον οἱ κα ἐπὶ ἀγγράφοντι τὸν παιὰν (to consult the Delphic oracle about the paean that he composed for Apollo and Asclepius, whether it was better for him to inscribe the paean, 32-5). The answer that comes back is positive: “it would be better now and for the future (35-6).” The inscribed text itself (and the act of inscribing it) is seen as an offering which will please the god, apart from the hymn’s performance.

Pausanias (9.16.1) reports that Pindar’s Hymn to Zeus was engraved in the temple of Ammon in Lyibia, and a scholion on Olympian VII says that the epinician was inscribed in gold letters in the temple of Athena in Lindos, the home of the ode’s laudandum. Whatever the historical value of such anecdotes, they demonstrate that a dedication of a poetic text could be viewed by the ancients as a proper and worthy gift to a god. Whether or not in either case the ode was (re)performed locally is not mentioned as part of the secondary report, the entire focus being placed on the text itself. The detail about gold lettering in the case of Olympian VII adds an interesting element to consider: what is pleasing in such an offering is not just its textuality, or even the artistic value contained in the verses, but also the form, the presentation of the text. The choice of writing surface, the workmanship of the engraver, the arrangement and styling of the letters can all help to make the inscription into a beautiful and costly object.

In fact the very placement of the inscription within a sanctuary makes it an offering to the divine keepers of the place. The act of dedication is in essence the placement of something within the sacred space, and everything in that space is seen as the property of the god whose dwelling it is said to be. In this sense, the inscription and performance of a cult hymn are analogous: a hymn is normally performed at a time and/or within a space sacred to the divine addressee as a way of attaining greater proximity to him or her. As an offering in its own right, as a way of communicating with both gods and mortals, and as a form of immortalization, the inscribed
hymn can function as a surrogate for performance. Yet judging from our evidence it was much more commonly its complement, with speech and text working in tandem and each extending the reach of the other. The development of literacy and the rise of the epigraphic habit, then, did not fundamentally shift the focus of the Greek hymns – to create charis for the community vis-à-vis the gods, and kleos among mortals for the poet, performers, commissioner or the city. Instead, the written word and the phenomenon of the public inscription in particular offered a powerful new tool to further these traditional, universal aims.

9 Private copies of public songs

Most of what has been discussed thus far applies primarily to hymns recorded in inscriptions within public sanctuaries. But the technology of writing was probably applied to cult hymns sometime before our earliest surviving inscribed hymns (fourth century BCE) or even the earliest examples of the practice according to secondary reports (e.g., Pindar’s hymn to Zeus, sometime in the fifth century BCE). It is now generally assumed that Archaic poets recorded their compositions, including hymns. The most obvious piece of evidence is their very existence: the fact that the texts were available to the collectors from Alexandria and other centres of learning in the Hellenistic period shows that they had been recorded and preserved. Now one may counter that a myth, for instance, or an epic, can survive for generations without being recorded. But it is less easy to imagine Pindar’s daphnêphorikon, for example, being preserved in its full length and original form without the intervention of writing: in contrast to a myth, the partheneion is an utterance whose text is more or less fixed; at the same time it lacks the mnemonic aids such as Homeric formulae; most importantly, as discussed earlier, it is doubtful that such a song would have been reperformed in full and on a regular basis.

There are several possible ways in which writing may have been employed. One of the earliest was surely as an aid in composition. Today it is almost inconceivable that anyone could compose songs, poems and prose of any considerable length or complexity without the use of writing. Since the research of Parry and Lord in the early twentieth century, it has generally been

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483 Wagman (1995: 38ff) sees the collection of hymns from Epidaurus (IG IV 1:129-35, SEG 300.390) as a product of an inscription program, quite independent of any performance. The alternative – a ritual programme, along the lines of those of Kassel Stone and Erythraean inscription – is also a possibility. See above, p. 208.

484 See, for example, Harris 1989: 47 and Yunis 2003: 4.
accepted that the Homeric epics and other similar verses were composed orally, and to some extent continued to be re-composed in the course of every individual delivery before being committed to writing sometime in the sixth or fifth century BCE. The same scholars, and others after them, have studied the mechanism of such purely oral composition as preserved in the Homeric and comparative texts, especially the traditional formulae. The texts of Archaic and early Classical Greek poetry, however, do not show the same degree of formalism as the earlier epic material, although a strong influence is undeniable. This observation, along with external evidence for the spread of literacy around the same time, has led to the suspicion that the situation had changed: even though literature was still largely, or even exclusively, designed for oral delivery, the poets now employed writing in their creative process. It is less easy to determine where the Homeric hymns fit in relative to this shift. Modern scholarship agrees that the corpus includes works composed not only by different poets working in different parts of the Greek world, but also at different points in time, ranging from the Archaic to the Hellenistic or even Roman periods. This chronological range prohibits us from generalizing about the use of writing in the hymns’ composition. The four long hymns (to Demeter, Apollo, Hermes, Aphrodite) are probably among the earliest and, according to one commentator on the Hymn to Demeter, the text “gives no grounds for supposing that it was not composed by a poet using the same techniques of traditional oral poetry as Homer and Hesiod.” The hymns to the Sun and Moon, on the other hand, are in all likelihood considerably later, dating perhaps to the Hellenistic period; and it would be unreasonable to suggest that their authors refused the aid of writing any more than other epic poets of the age. Between these two extremes, no firm assertion can be offered: the language and structure remains traditional, so, as Richardson admits, “the boundary area between oral and literary epic is too uncertain.” In fact even in the case of the four longer hymns, the issue is debatable. With regard to the Hymn to Aphrodite, Faulkner suspects the use of writing, although he has his doubts. And according to another scholar, the Hymn to Hermes too shows signs of literary composition.

487 Ibid. 11.
488 Faulkner 2008: 25.
489 Janko 1982: 149-50, ref. in Faulkner 2008: 25 n. 86. According to Faulkner, the same uncertainty must be extended even to the Homeric epics in their present state: 24 n. 78. Vergados, in his commentary of Hh.Hermes (2013: 73-5) is hesitant to conclude either way, and prefers to place the hymn in a “gray area” between oral and written literature.
A written copy of a performative text may have also sometimes been used for transmission and instruction. Earlier chapters have pointed to several scenarios where the hymnographer and the chorodidaskalos are two different people. There is internal evidence in Pindar’s victory odes which has been interpreted in a similar fashion. The composition would need to be transmitted from the former to the latter, who would then pass it on to the chorus members. This would be difficult to do reliably without a written copy, especially in the case of physical separation between the poet and choral master. It is difficult to imagine that, in an age when writing had become available, the poet would teach the song to an intermediary, a kind of messenger, and that this man would subsequently transmit it orally to the local chorodidaskalos at the place of performance.

Which – composition or transmission – was the earlier use of writing, it will never be known, and in fact it may not even make sense to think in terms of chronological primacy. But what about permanence: were hymns, or songs of any kind, recorded on papyrus in order to preserve them for posterity? First of all it is necessary to recognize in what ways this form of recording differs from inscription. Although the distinction may seem trivial – merely one of medium – it has fundamental implications. Inscribing a text in stone usually gives it greater visibility than writing it on papyrus; this is due the fact that inscriptions are usually placed on public display. Perhaps even more integral to this form of record-keeping is the permanence and relative immutability it bestows on the text by virtue of the durability of the material. This indeed is one of the reasons why stone is often used when texts are to be put on display: inscriptions are most resistant to both natural environment and human tampering. In other words, the quality of durability also underlies that of visibility that characterizes epigraphic discourse.

When considering poems written down on papyrus, visibility may probably be set aside – they were probably not seen, let alone read, by large audiences. There is evidence from a later period that there was a segment of the population which had the ability to read epigraphic script but not

490 O. 6. 87-91, where the poetic voice urges Aeneas, probably the trainer, to rouse the chorus to song. The same passage uses a metaphor of the message-stick (skytala) of the Muses. This and similar writing metaphors are used as pointing to the use of writing by Pindar. See further Hubbard 2004: 91. There are several passages which may imply that Pindar did not necessarily travel to the victor’s home for performance. See Landels 1999: 6 and n.6.

491 Other surfaces, including bronze and even wood, were also sometimes used for public display, although not as commonly as stone. See Scafuro 2013: 402-6.
handwriting. In other words, there were people who were able to acquire a basic level of literacy by reading public inscriptions, although the lack of (or a very minimal) formal schooling left them unable to decipher more complex scripts, and possibly language, of private and literary texts. Although in the Archaic and Classical period minuscule letters had not yet been developed and there is no clear distinction between epigraphic and cursive forms of written word, the wider principle still applies: epigraphic texts were, intentionally and by their very nature, more accessible than papyri. Public archives are, at least by name, open to a wide audience. However, these were probably not set up before the end of the fifth century BCE at the earliest, and even later outside of democratic Athens. Public inscriptions, on the other hand, had already been around for centuries, as had the practice of writing in general and recording songs on papyrus. Publicity or wide consumption seems not to have been the main, direct, intention of this type of record-keeping in the way public performance and inscriptions.

Similarly, papyrus as a material lacks the kind of durability naturally associated with stone. That said, if kept in the right conditions, text written on papyrus can easily last over several generations. And, once again, there is the simple fact that many of the Archaic lyric texts, including hymns, did survive long enough to then be gathered in the Hellenistic Period, when the preservation of texts is undoubtedly one of the primary aims of their recording. Furthermore, two late anecdotes about Pindar aside, there is no evidence that any significant portion of these verses (if any at all) were inscribed on stone. It is also highly improbable that their survival during the centuries since composition was due to chance – in other words that the songs were recorded for other ends such as to aid composition, instruction or transportation and just happened to survive. To be preserved in full (as they were, to judge from the later references to hymns which now survive only in fragments), the texts would have needed careful safekeeping, and perhaps periodic re-copying. If these texts were written down only to serve a one-time, immediate purpose, no one would have expended the time, effort and cost of providing such safekeeping. In fact, given the considerable value of the material, the rolls would in all likelihood have been reused. Thus it is safe to assume that preservation was one of the reasons songs, including hymns, were committed to writing.

Since there were probably no public archives until the end of the fifth century and even then were rare and limited in scope, it is important to consider how, where and by whom these texts were preserved. Unfortunately, there is simply not enough evidence to go beyond speculation. For works composed in praise of mortals such as epinicians, encomia and epitaphioi, the most obvious candidate is of course the commissioner and his family. This includes certain kinds of hymns, particularly partheneia. After all, who would be more interested in keeping the text of Pindar’s surviving Theban maiden song than the family of Agasicles? It is they, after all, who almost certainly commissioned it and organized the performance. It is also not out of the question that the wider community by whom, or on whose behalf, a cult song is performed, would sometimes preserve its text even if it was commissioned by a private individual or family. In the case of victory songs, there is some evidence that its performance was sometimes a rather public affair – while competing as an individual, the victor was nonetheless seen to bring glory to the polis.\textsuperscript{493} Recall once again the story that one of Pindar’s Olympians was dedicated by the victor at one of the local public sanctuaries in his city. According to Atheneaus, Peisistratus and Polycrates gathered significant personal libraries, suggesting that tyrants, as well as aristocratic families, were important for the early preservation of literary texts.\textsuperscript{494} Finally, it is useful to remember that when a hymn, or other song, was initially recorded, it was normally done so by the poet himself, and it is easy to imagine that he, and his descendants after him, would safeguard these texts.

As with inscription, this earlier method of preserving hymns should not be taken for granted; once again it is necessary to inquire into the intentions of their guardians. Such text is a record of the initial performance, although much less prominent and accessible than an inscribed commemoration. It is also possible to see it as a valuable object, an heirloom for a family or sign of prestige (especially if composed by a star poet) for a community; again it is similar in this sense to the inscribed hymn when viewed as an agalma for a god, except of course its material and decorative values are much more limited. But perhaps one of the main uses of preserving a hymn on papyri is to aid future reperformance. It may be helpful once again to refer to the standard texts of the Athenian tragedians instituted by Lycurgus, whose explicit intention was to ensure accurate renditions of the “classics.” It is quite likely some such practice had been

\textsuperscript{493} Kurke (1992) remains the fundamental treatment of the delicate relationship between individual, and aristocratic, prestige conferred by Panhellenic victory, and the glory it reflected on the polis.

\textsuperscript{494} Ath. 1.3 A.
widespread in a less formalized manner earlier and applied to other performed literature. The story of Peisistratus commissioning an official text of the Homeric epics for recitation at the Panathenaea some two centuries prior fits this pattern.495

It is important to understand what is meant by “reperformance.” As noted earlier, most of the extant epigraphic hymns were probably re-used on a regular, periodic basis in public cult worship; and, judging from this sample and numerous secondary references to hymnody in ancient sources, this re-use of traditional hymns was standard practice. On the other hand, there are some cult songs which, due to their occasional language, seem to be less suitable for such public, cyclical repetition. But even these kinds of hymns, composed primarily for a specific one-time festive context, may have been reperformed in a less public or formal setting. The surviving partheneia, for instance, can be compared to the epinicians. Both genres have an encomiastic focus and frequently include references to the occasion. In the case of the victory odes, internal evidence suggests that the poet foresaw some form of future survival and dissemination of these songs,496 and in the period when he worked, repeat performance seems to be the likeliest method.497 There is still some disagreement as to the precise manner of reperformance intended or expected by Pindar: a regular public reperformance sponsored and organized by the victor's family or polis; a semi-private performance for the family and inner circle of the laudandus; informal and perhaps even fragmentary reperformance by a solo singer at a symposium? There are references to the last scenario - sympotic solo (sometimes selective) reperformance – in Attic comedy.498

495 Earliest reference in Cicero, De orat. 3.137.
496 Pi. N. 4, 16, evidence of solo/small-group reperformance as the norm; N. 5, init. and cf. Bacc. 3, 96-8: reperformability beyond the commissioner's polis; N. 3, 2, possible sign of anniversary reperformances; and cf. Fearn (2007) on implied heterogeneity in the audience (initial or future) of Bacc. 13; ibid. 82 on Sim. fr. 542, an enkômion for Scopas, possibly revealing the poet's awareness of potential competing receptions, possibly via subsequent reperformances; Bacc. fr. 20b seems to explicitly invite reperformances; Theog. 237-54: implies multiple future reperformances; Ar. Nu. 1356 and Av. 927-30 suggest at least fragmentary familiarity (probably through reperformance) of aristocratic poetry among lower classes.
497 See Carey 2007: 199-200 on the scarcity of references to original performance of epinicians as suggestive of the poet’s expectation of multiple future occasions; Hubbard 2004: 88-89 on ambiguities of the first-person in Pindar and intended/expected monodic reperformance; Currie 2004 on a range of possible reperformance scenarios (from formal public choral presentations to partial and informal recitations at symposia) for epinicia; Morgan 1993: ambiguity between choral and solo performance is intentional, designed to allow for both, likely a choral premiere and probably mostly solo reperformances; see also Morgan 2012. Felson 2004: 265: intentionaly polysemous deictic pointers in Pindar with reperformance in mind. Nagy 1994-5: 19: epinician poetry as presuming immediately a continuance of various reperformances. Hornblower 2012 explores the role of victor’s families in the preservation of epinicians (in part through re-performance).
498 Ar. Nu. 1356.
These are just some possibilities, and of course they are by no means mutually exclusive. In fact, in the Greek culture of *mousikê*, there were no strict divisions between occasions and modes of performance. The same poets could work in different genres: Sophocles wrote at least one paean; Timotheus composed *dithyramboi* for choruses and *nomoi* for solo kotharoidoi; and Simonides, who is most famous for his epigrams, was also prolific in various kinds of performed poetry. Furthermore, the same composition could be performed in different ways and in different contexts. The Homeric Hymn to Demeter, for instance, like the others in the collection, was probably originally composed for a rhapsodic competition at a public religious festival; but the text may have been reused later on in a more private context, as part of Orphic initiation rituals. This is suggested by the fact that passages from the hymn, under the name of Orpheus, have been found on an Orphic papyrus. An even better example is Ariphron’s paean to Hygieia, a hymn dated usually to the early Hellenistic period. Although little known today, and it must have been one of the most popular hymns in antiquity. The text is found in two inscriptions; it is also fully quoted by Athenaios as well as an anonymous Greek codex, and partially quoted or referred to by Lucian, Plutarch, Maximus Tyrius and Sextus Empiricus. The poem may have been influenced by a skolion-hymn to *Hygieia* (possibly by Simonides) quoted in a sympotic context by Socrates in Plato's *Gorgias*. In Athenaios, the *deipnosophistai* use it as an after-meal prayer in their own symposium. Thus the hymn is definitely at home in a sympotic context. Yet on the other hand two inscriptions - the Epidaurus stone and the Kassel stone from close to Athens - include the text among other hymns and ritual instructions. The Asclepius cults in Athens and Epidaurus, then, incorporated Ariphron's paean into their ritual programmes. There is really no way of telling with certainty whether the poet composed this piece originally for a sympotic or cultic (or some other) performance occasion.

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499 Interestingly, the epigrams of Simonides differ in certain key features (including dialect) from his lyric poems. See Hutchinson 2001: 289. On Timotheus see Power 2010: 242. It is also known that Aristotle wrote songs, a few fragments of which survive (Ford 2011). See Fearn 2007: 336 on the possibility that *khôrêgoi* commissioned victory epigrams from the same poets that composed the choral works themselves. An example of extreme multitasking is Ion of Chios, who wrote, tragedies, comedies, satyr plays, elegies, paeans, dithyrambs, scolia, epigrams and hymns, among others (Jennings 2007: 2-3.) And see Lardinois 1996: 153 on the probability that Sappho also wrote choral works. The best candidates among the surviving fragments are fr. 140(a), a hymn, perhaps a *partheneion*, for the cult of Aphrodite, and fr. 44, an *epithalamion*, a type of *hymenaion*. Also Fearn 2007: 171-2 on Alcaeus fr. 307 *PMG* (summary by Himerios Or. 48.10-11) probably a paean, perhaps for performance at Delphi.


501 Simonides fr. 651 *PMG* = Plato *Gorgias* 451e.
What is significant is that the Greeks apparently saw no obstacle to using the same song as part of multiple kinds of occasions. This in turn may imply that Ariphron had this transferability in mind and created the hymn for more than one potential context -- or at least, that such a scenario must be considered a possibility for Greek hymns. The fact that the poem abstains from making references to a specific context or even to a particular type of occasion may support the possibility that its reperformability reflects authorial intention. What the evidence from Ariphron’s paean and the victory ode tells us is that it is unwise to assume that hymns which were primarily composed for a particular cultic event were never performed again. Indeed, a text like the *daphnêphorikon* of Pindar was probably preserved by the commissioner's *genos* not only as a valuable memento, an important document of family history, but also as a song to be brought to life in the future, even if only at private occasions and in the form of a selective, solo recitation. In case of Alcman’s lyrics, there is positive evidence for formal, local reperformance at least into the Classical period and Chris Carey has recently argued for piecemeal, informal, reperformance of the songs abroad. Lastly, the possibility must be added that such poetic, including hymnic, texts were also enjoyed as read texts. Yet it must be remembered that individual, private reading – let alone in silence – was a rare phenomenon at least until the time of Aristotle.

10 Text and peritext: expanded possibilities

So far the chapter has looked at ways in which a text can enhance the capacities already available in an oral musical culture: composition, transmission, reperformance, permanence, fame. But its physicality – especially in the case of an epigraphic hymn -- also opens new possibilities. Some of these have already been hinted at earlier in the chapter. An inscription of a hymn dedicated at a sanctuary is a physical ornament: through its medium, lettering and format, it becomes a permanent pleasing offering in a way an ephemeral performance can never be. This decorative

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502 Leven (2008: 240-1) analyses the deictic flexibility of Ariphron’s hymn.
503 Rutherford (2004:6-7) also suggests that theoric hymns may have been reperformed at other occasions such as *symposia*. Hubbard sees a future of reperformance aided by textual dissemination on a small scale in Pindar’s poetry, both epinician and non-epinician (including hymns): 2005 and 2011, respectively.
504 Carey 2011: 448-452.
505 Ford (2003) regards the earliest poetic texts as aids for performers and possibly also a tool for composition; but sees an reading as an independent use of such texts emerge slowly by the fourth century.
value can become enhanced even further if it is accompanied by other artwork, such as sculptural or relief elements.

An inscribed hymn is also embedded in its spatial context much more securely and precisely than a hymn-in-performance, and this has interesting repercussions for the deictic language in the text. The reference point is no longer the person of the performative voice, but the physical object itself. For instance, τὰδε πόλει, τάν ἁμὰν πόλιν and ἁμετέραν πόλιν (this city, my city, our city) in the various versions of the Erythraean paean have no fixed referents: in performance, they are given meaning through the identity of the chorists and the place of performance; but when inscribed, it is the location of the inscription which anchors them. A particularly interesting example is offered by the opening of the Parian dedication: σο[ι]τόδ’ ἄγαλμα, θεὰ (yours is this pleasing offering). If and when it was sung at the inauguration of the renovations sponsored by Nikias, the phrase would most readily be understood to refer to the restored temple; the deictic force of τόδ’ would depend on the place of performance and could even have been emphasized by hand gestures on the part of the singer(s). When someone read the epigraphic text, on the other hand, the words would be interpreted in relation to the physical location of the inscription. Since it was engraved on the temple, or at any rate in the sanctuary, the temple would still be the primary referent, especially once the reader reached the description of the architectural and sculptural additions dedicated by the sponsor. Yet the inscription itself and the hymnic composition would also be included in the deictic phrase: in other words, the language of this opening contains both, an ad oculos and an anaphoric force.

The written or inscribed hymnic text, then, is not merely a record of the prior performance (or a script for future ones): it can communicate the song to different audiences, in a different form; it can become a valuable dedication in its own right; and it integrates the text into sacred space and offer a physical permanence in a way that oral utterance can not. The recorded hymn does not merely replicate the functions of the performed hymn. What is more, it does not necessarily have to duplicate the contents as delivered in performance. This may seem counterintuitive: if the hymns are recorded to ensure correct reperformance in a ritualized context, if their texts (especially as inscribed in sanctuaries) are meant to function as leges sacrae, how could they

506 For example, on the connection between the physical context of Isidorus’ inscriptions and the deictic language of his hymns, see Moyer 2010: 4ff
deviate from the intended performed utterance? First of all, as has been noted already, not all hymns were composed for regular cult reperformance and the exact role of the inscribed hymn in the practice of regular reperformance is not clear and probably not uniform across the board.

More importantly, there are different kinds of possible variation. Departure from the written text in specific words or phrases, for example, although entirely possible, would be undetectable because the text is usually the sole surviving evidence of performance. Another possibility is selective (re-)performance. Evidence for partial re-use of epinicians beyond their original performance has already been noted. And earlier it was suggested that Philodamos’ paean may have been reperformed regularly at the Delphic Theoxenia, but without the “oracular” stanzas. This is of course only a hypothesis but it seems the best solution to the apparent incongruity between the clear assertion of reperformance and the high degree of historical contextualization within the hymn.\textsuperscript{507} This scenario would imply that the inscription at once recorded the inaugural performance of the paean, with the entire original text, and also provided a text for future, partial renditions.

There is another form of differentiation between recorded and performed hymns, one which receives even greater confirmation in our sources – peritext. The term is normally used to describe any textual elements which are not part of what is considered the “main” text. Of course this can be a slippery concept, dependent on what is considered the central text and what its periphery. For the purposes of this study, inasmuch as it is dealing primarily with performed literature and cult hymns more particularly, the concept is a helpful way of separating the sung hymn from the rest of the inscribed (or written) document. The distinction may not necessarily imply that anything referred to “peritext” is silent text. As mentioned earlier, official documents were probably declaimed aloud before or after being inscribed; the \textit{lex sacra} that precedes the Erythraean inscription of the Erythraean paean, for example, was probably performed in this sense. But when discussing the regular choral, melodic reperformance of the paean, it is only the poetic text itself which is intended, and the \textit{lex} can legitimately be termed peritext.

The kinds of information that can be included in such added material vary, but the name of the author is certainly one of the most common elements found in the extant corpus. This should not

\textsuperscript{507} On the question of the reperformance of Philodamos see pp. 184-5 above.
come as a surprise in light of our previous discussion of the role of textuality in the quest for fame and immortality. Interestingly, the author’s identity is not commonly included within the performed text itself. Nikiades includes his name at the end of the Parian hymnic dedication, but whether this text was ever performed is debatable; and, in either case, the last line may have been added at the time of inscription and not intended to be sung. This may be compared to the hymns to Isis by Isidorus. Once again, it is not entirely certain whether these were composed for performance. The author adds his signature - Ἰσιδωρος ἔγραψε (Isidorus wrote) – at the end of each hymn; it is not incorporated into the (elegiac) metre of the songs, although in one case this formula is followed by an extra couplet. This postscript was probably added at the time of inscription and was not recited or sung with the hymns proper, if the latter were indeed performed. One famous counter-example is the introduction to the Theognidea, where the author’s name is included in the metric composition, well into the text. Yet this work was probably not performed in its entirety as a single piece, but includes elegiacs composed at different times, for different occasions, possibly even by different poets. The sphragis may have been added to unify the collection at a later date.

In either case, Theognis’ sphragis is famous in part because it is unusual for performed verse, and can be counted as an exception that proves the rule. In cult hymns, the practice is almost unheard of. The reason for this is something which has been stressed in the previous chapters: the feeling of a traditional, “genuine” religious song which is required of a hymn composed for a ritualized occasion. The law of propriety, kairos, restricts what may and may not be spoken in a particular context. Explicit self-advertisement by the poet may have been felt to be one of the elements which would threaten the solemnity of the song. The textual medium, however, gave those in charge a way of presenting and preserving that information which they did not deem appropriate for ritualized performance.

In addition to the hymnographer’s name, such information often included the lex that institutes the hymn, as was seen in the inscription containing the oldest version of the Erythraean paean, as well as the background to or justification for the hymn. Isyllos, for instance, decided to inscribe his law, the political case of his party, an oracular confirmation, an emphatic

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508 The opening of the Theogony (22) provides another early example.
509 The Greeks spoke of “setting up” a hymn [ref.’s + Gk.]
advertisement of Epidaurus’ primacy in the cult of Asclepius, and a miracle story illustrating the
god’s power. Apparently Isyllos, or others involved in the background, felt that this content
would be best left out of the paean itself, which is quite simple and traditional in composition.
Philodamōs’ paean similarly appends a title that gives his name and a postscript referring to the
divine impetus for the work and the Delphians’ reward. However, the oracular decree, as well as
the institution of the hymn, including the ritual context for its performance, is also outlined
within the sung portion of the inscription.

One way of understanding this contrast is to realize that the rules of ritual propriety are not
absolute and ultimately what is acceptable speech depends on the stakeholders involved.
Additionally, the advantage of a composition like Isyllos’ paean is that its simplicity, its lack of
contemporary references, makes it ideal for regular reperformance; and this was probably one of
the composer’s intentions. Philodamōs’ hymn was most likely also intended as a permanent
addition to the festival programme of the Theoxenia, but, as has been suggested already, it would
only have been suitable for such a purpose if reperformed without stanzas 9-11. Whatever the
motivation – whether religious propriety, intended reperformability, or something else –
textualization, and especially public inscription, allowed the hymnographer and commissioner to
choose what would be performed, and what would only be recorded in the peritext.

11 Conclusions

Writing did not diminish the central role of speech in Greek society and the rise of the epigraphic
habit did not eliminate performance as a form of public presentation.510 The growth of the
written word was a slow and gradual process and neither the end of the fifth century BCE nor the
dawn of the Hellenistic age marks a universal adoption of this new technology or a general
departure from the reliance of word of mouth in all aspects of life. By and large, the impact of
literacy on Greek hymnody was to offer a new way of doing what had already been done through
oral communication. Transportation, instruction, preservation, composition and dissemination
are only some of the purposes to which writing could now be applied. But it also offered some
new possibilities. A written hymn was could be dedicated at a sanctuary as a gift in its own right.

510 Cf., e.g., Hitch 2008: 116: “written documentation did not supplant the oral traditions and, in many cases, was
incomplete without accompanying speech acts.” Similarly, Thomas (1989: esp. 20ff) argues for the text as an aid
to, rather than a replacement for oral communication.
By inscribing a cult song within a sacred space, the worshipping community extended the communicative link with the deity beyond its brief performance. The written form of the hymn allowed the composer to add material in the peritext and thus preserve and communicate information which was not part of the performed version. But perhaps the greatest benefits of the epigraphic medium were its durability and visibility, which gave it the power of turning the hymnic text into a lasting memorial of a festive event and offered a new path to glory and even immortality.

The fact that literacy does not complexly change the functions or forms of Greek hymns should not come as a surprise in view of what has been observed at the start of this chapter about the wider continuity in the traditional religious customs. Religious practice, including the signing of hymns as part of ritual sequence in public festivals, does not fundamentally change or diminish in the Hellenistic period. If anything, the spread of Greek-speaking peoples in the wake of Alexander’s conquests, eager to maintain ties to the customs of their homeland, combined with the fierce cultural competition among the new and old political powers, will have led to significant growth in the sheer volume of festivals and cults, accompanied by a heightened sense of the value of Hellenic traditions.
Chapter 8

Conclusion

The aim of the present study was to investigate the relationship between rhetorical strategies employed in the composition of ancient Greek cult hymns and the constraints of their production. Two central questions were asked at the outset and served as the starting point for the thesis: what cult songs were intended to accomplish and how they were designed to accomplish these objectives. Rather than searching for a single function that would account for all the surviving samples of the genre, the approach has been to recognize the diversity in the circumstances of a hymnic performance and observe how this diversity is reflected in the extant texts. The thesis was set in motion by the desire first to analyze texts which have only recently begun receiving the attention they deserve and, secondly, to open up the scholarly discussion to functions beyond the praise of a deity, to a diversity and even plurality of messages embedded in the hymnic texts. A song composed for performance within a ritual sequence is not produced or consumed in a vacuum. Its form and the occasion of its composition, performance and, in some cases, codification, are closely intertwined in a relationship of mutual influence. To answer the two questions set out above, therefore, it was necessary to see the surviving examples of cult hymns in relation to their particular contexts. Not all cult hymns could be contextualized to an equal extent, the main limitation being the scarcity of evidence. In a few cases, such as Pindar’s daphnèphorikon, Isyllos’ paean and especially the two hymns with musical notation from Delphi, the combination of internal and external evidence allowed for the performance and its circumstances to be considered in significant amount of detail. In others, it remains difficult even to place or date the occasion.

The first step, in chapter 2, was to delineate a model of stakeholders in a cult hymn production. At the simplest level there are three groups inherent in such a performance – performer, host and audience. It was found that this triangular arrangement is complicated by the duality of the address in cult hymns, aimed as they are simultaneously at a divine and a mortal recipient. This issue was picked up later, in chapter 3, which observed how this duality is managed in the language of the hymn itself. The model was shown to undergo further complication and
fragmentation as the circumstances of performance deviated from this theoretical type: for example, mortal audiences are often heterogeneous, performers, audiences and hosts sometimes overlap, while factors such as *theōriai*, foreign poets, and professional choruses introduce a major divide between the various groups.

One crucial distinction that was noted in relation to the organization of a cult song performance and its stakeholders is between traditional, often anonymous and local, songs and new hymns commissioned with a particular occasion in mind. It was suggested that the first group probably accounted for the majority of hymns sung in religious worship among the ancient Greeks in any period. Yet it is this second group that displayed some of the more complex networks of stakeholders and objectives. This makes sense in light of the fact that the composition of a new cult song was most often tied to an extraordinary occasion: a one-time (or irregular) festival, an iteration of a regular festival which was somehow particularly important, or the inauguration of a new festival, cult or ritual, to give a few examples.

Although it was argued that no single function can account for all features of all surviving hymns, it was at the same time found that not all functions are equally important. To a large extent this relates to the fact that among the groups and individuals with a stake in any given performance, some will have more influence than others. There is one goal, however, which is in a class of its own. The central rhetorical-religious aim of the hymn as an *agalma* is to please the deity, to establish or maintain a *charis* relationship with him or her, to make him or her favourable to the worshipping community. The study suggested that this function was not on par with others but was a pre-requisite for them. The most traditional, simplest hymns usually focus on this one purpose alone. Newly-commissioned hymns often have other, competing aims, but each of them must first and foremost persuade the audience of its legitimacy as a ritualized utterance and a pleasing display for the gods. One crucial consequence of this is that hymns often had to satisfy several objectives. Much of this thesis (especially chapters 4 through 6) was dedicated precisely to exploring how the ancient hymnographers crafted their works to face this challenge, how this polyphony of stakeholders speaks through the hymnic text.

One of the most significant findings to emerge from this study is that the key to striking a balance between the primary ritual service the hymn provides qua hymn and supplementary
objectives introduced by the specific stakeholders and circumstances of each individual case lies in the traditional structure and language of the hymnic genre. The use of conventional formulae, *topoi*, phraseology and structure gives a hymn the feel of a genuine cult song, the patina of traditional discourse. This traditional language ensures that the song is accepted by the audience; it assures the worshippers that the song will generate the divine *charis* they seek to effect with the performance. This acceptance endows the hymn’s words with the authority of a ritualized utterance, and it is precisely this authority that in turn gives it the power to convey other, specific messages successfully. At the same time, the formal and rhetorical conventions of the Greek hymns are anything but rigid: the ancient hymnographer had ample room to manipulate this language to satisfy the added purposes that his hymn was trying to attain. Using longer case studies as well as briefer examples, the thesis investigated precisely how the balance between various needs of the hymn is attained through the choice and arrangement of largely traditional material and features.

This analysis was organized along several axes: the complexity of the stakeholder network, the integration of secondary functions into the hymn text, the conservatism or innovation of its language and the degree of localization. Although hymns with few competing stakeholders do tend to have fewer functions integrated into the text and are usually quite simple and conventional in their composition, the relationships among these various parameters are not linear and other factors often need to be taken into account. In particular, in chapter 6 it was observed that the extent to which a hymnic text is anchored to its original occasion (and the way this is done) is correlated strongly with the intended future of the song after this primary performance. This relates back to the distinction between ancient traditional hymns repeated regularly in religious worship on the one hand and newly commissioned songs designed for a particular festive scenario. Hymns that are part of a local standard repertoire were once new, and new hymns, as we saw in the case of Ariphron’s song to Hygieia for instance, could become traditional. In other words, much of the hymn’s form, and especially its level of contextualization, has to do with its past and future. An orientation toward a specific performance versus infinity of reiterations, a local audience versus Panhellenic dissemination, is encoded in the text and in some cases probably also reflects authorial intent. To investigate this connection, the thesis employed the concept of deixis, an aspect of language that pertains to the way an utterance orients itself relative to its context. A song intended for regular repeat
performance such as the hymn to Dictaean Zeus will usually be less tied to a particular instantiation of the festive occasion than a hymn intended primarily for a particular performance. Pindar’s fragmentary *partheneion* for Agasicles was used as an example of the latter. Some hymns, such as the Erythraean paean, were found to be even less contextualized, a feature which allowed them to be transferred across space as well as time.

Yet even here, as with the other parameters, the correlation was found to be flexible. For example, the text of the Philodamos’ paean to Dionsysos refers to its own future of reperformance as part of the Delphic Theoxenia – a future which is apparently guaranteed by an oracular decree. At the same time, a large section of the hymn is devoted to highly occasional language that seemingly ties it not only to the geographic context of the Delphic sanctuary of Pythian Apollo, but also to the historical circumstances surrounding its original performance. A possible solution to this apparent inconsistency was proposed by noting that the epigraphic text as we have it did not always coincide perfectly with the performed (or reperformed) text – a partial rendition of the hymn at future recurrences of the festival occasion would have satisfied the promise of reperformance without jeopardizing the unity of the song or its integrity as a cult hymn.

The relationship between the textualization of a hymn and its performance was investigated as part of a larger discussion (chapter 7) that inquired into the effects of writing and more specifically epigraphy on the tradition of cult hymn singing. Much as in the case of the overall research questions, the approach that was adopted here was to allow for various motivations in the adoption of writing and inscription into the sphere of hymnody. Commemoration is among the most universal purposes of setting up hymnic texts in sanctuaries. Nonetheless, the inscribed hymn should also be seen as a pleasing offering, a dedication to a god, much like the performance itself. Furthermore, in spite of some recent arguments to the contrary, it was maintained that hymnic texts – both epigraphic and private – could at times serve for future reperformance. Even if (or when) a hymnic inscription was not used to provide the exact text for the future, it could have still ensured reperformance through its symbolic power and authoritative status. Finally, appealing to analogies with other early applications of writing, especially sacred laws, curses and *dipinti*, it was suggested that the relatively new and strange medium of the written word was imagined to possess a vague mystical power, and this too contributed to the
textualized hymn’s value or authority. The study found that many of the motivations behind writing and inscribing cult hymns – reperformance, preservation, fame, etc. – were not new in themselves; yet writing gave a new and powerful way of achieving these aims, most often through collaboration with the spoken word.

The major exception to this observation – an important capacity added by text to the tradition of hymnody – lies in the potential for divergence between the written and sung versions of the hymn. Although this is plausible, the study did not find sufficient evidence for the function of the text as a surrogate for performance, without any aid of or reference to song. On the other hand, it was concluded that textualization did offer significant opportunities for recording information which, for various reasons, was left out of the performance.

It is now possible to revisit the original research questions and summarize the findings in a succinct manner. First – what do cult hymns do? At their core, as beautiful offerings dedicated to the gods and embedded within a larger ritualized occasion, hymns, through their content, performance and (when codified) physical form, aim to establish, maintain or repair the relationship of charis between the worshipping community and the divine addressee. Nearly all hymns, however, also have other, supplementary, functions. Much like an animal sacrifice, which serves not only to please the deity but also to satisfy the human community (through the social delight of the collective banquet as much as the rich food itself), so too the hymnic performance is a joyous activity and a pleasing sight for mortals no less than the gods. In many cases, there are further, more specific objectives, which reflect the interests of the people involved in the hymnic production. Limenios’ paean and prosodion, for instance, was intended to praise the Delphic hosts and the Roman republic, two powerful players with considerable sway in the ongoing conflict between the Athenian and Nemean-Isthmian artists’ guilds. The Athenian synodos itself needed to portray itself as a positive and pious influence in the world of international festivals. At the same time, the Athenian polity was eager to make a claim about its continuous dedication to (and central role in) traditional Panhellenic cults in general, and that of Pythian Apollo in particular. All of these “practical” concerns had to be balanced without jeopardizing the central religious-rhetorical function of pleasing Apollo himself.
The second question was: how do cult hymns accomplish their aims? As already mentioned above, the cult hymn was a traditional genre with certain conventions and associations. When the chorus was stationed around the altar, ready to start its song, the worshippers present to witness the event had particular expectations with regard to the structure, language, content and mode of performance. Chapter 3 surveyed a wide range of hymnic texts to delineate some of the most common formal features of the genre. Most surviving examples follow a familiar tri-partite structure composed of an invocation, praise and a prayer: the community establishes a communication link with the divine addressee, often adding epithets and other descriptive language to ensure correct identification of the intended cult figure; the hymn then delights the god with praise that is appropriate for the particular cult, sanctuary and festive occasion, sometimes also crafting a more specific argument to support the final prayer; the connection is then re-established in order to present the divine recipient directly with a petition, which in cult hymns tends to avoid very specific requests. Hymns nearly always incorporate language that reflects the underlying logic behind the ritual act of hymn-singing: the song is an agalma, a splendid offering that is presented by (or on behalf) of the community to the god, in order to establish, repair or maintain a reciprocal relationship of charis between the divine and mortal planes. Hymns are gifts to the gods but are sung before a mortal audience and this duality is reflected in the tendency of the text to modulate between the Du- and Er-Stil. Nearly all surviving hymnic texts also shift between at least two levels of discourse: mythological narrative is the most common form of praise in the song’s central section, but it often also provides the aetiology for the cult event, including the very performance of which it is a part; the here and now of the occasion, on the other hand, is the level that localizes the text within its festive context and draws attention to the beauty of its own performance as well as other elements of the ritualized event. Such traditional formal elements are not merely literary conventions: they are simultaneously generic and occasional because the genre and occasion are mutually defining. The use of chaire at the end of the hymn is conventional, but it also serves an important religious purpose of helping establish the charis between the worshippers and the deity. Opening the hymn with an extended invocation that includes compound adjectives and phrases that describe the genealogy, attributes and cult-associations of the divine recipient is likewise a common topos in Greek hymns, but it always reflects anxiety about getting the addressee exactly right. At the same time such conventional features help to satisfy the audience’s expectations, giving them the familiar elements of a religious song. They endow the hymn with the feel of an authentic cult
song, sure to please the god. Innovation is possible, and even normal, but it is acceptable thanks to the traditional framework that gives the song its authoritative status.

The dissertation focused specifically on hymns composed primarily for performance as a fully integrated element of a cult event. Although other kinds of hymns – including Orphic and Homeric – were considered as part of the analysis of the traditional hymnic form, the central discussion and its conclusions are intended to apply to the narrower group of texts. This focus was in part motivated by practical limitations. Yet, as discussed in the introduction, the distinction is not arbitrary: the functions of Greek songs are closely related to their occasion and so the difference in the occasion of the various kinds of hymns is significant. It is also reflected to some extent in the form and language of the hymns themselves. For instance, prayer is more central in most cult hymns than in the Homeric hymns composed for rhapsodic contests. Dramatic hymns, especially their prayers, tend to be much more specific (and private) than cult hymns because they are integrated into a particular dramatic scenario of the play. And the form of praise in Orphic and magic hymns is quite distinct from that seen in the majority of surviving hymns composed for public worship. That said, these hymns are all part of shared tradition, drawing on many of the same conventional features and language, and there are even cases of hymns bridging the gap between such categories. Further research might investigate in greater detail the relationship among the different kinds of Greek hymns, to what extent they can be recognized as distinct based on their texts, how the primary mode and circumstances of consumption in each case determine their form and especially any points of intersections. For example, it is noteworthy that some lyric hymns which are thought to have been composed for private occasions create a fiction of a public cult performance. Sappho, for example, sets one of her prayers to Aphrodite (fr. 2) in a sanctuary. Some of Callimachus’ hymns were probably never performed as part of a ritualized sequence in a public cult event, and yet that is precisely the kind of mode and context of performance that its language works to create. The same can be said about many hymns embedded within dramatic fiction: they too are typically sung by the chorus, often dramatized as songs sung within sacred space or time, and may even allude to real cults and hymn-types. In all such cases, the performed or literary text appeals to its audience’s experience and familiarity with the practice of cult hymnody. Should this be taken as an indication of primacy of cult hymnody, conceptual if not chronological? In other words, was the kind of hymnic performance that has been the focus of this thesis an ideal model of hymnody, a
status analogous to the impromptu solo recitation by a xenos at a symposium or an informal shout by a group of peers during a kômos in relation to the epinician?511

At the same time categories such as “rhapsodic hymn” and “literary hymn” should probably be applied with some caution, since to some extent they reflect modern (albeit useful) classifications of extant hymns and their groupings in the textual sources more than ancient practice. The danger of labelling all of Callimachus’ hymns as “literary” was noted in the last chapter. The thesis briefly discussed an alternative categorization of Greek hymns, one that reflects the ancient practice of distinguishing between a number of different songs for the gods, such as paëans, dithyrambs and prosodia. Such terms are ancient, at least as old as the Archaic lyric poets, and are used regularly in later, Hellenistic, Roman and Byzantine, criticism as sub-genre of the hymn. These distinctions were not a major element in the present thesis, with the notable exception of the analysis of Pindar’s daphnêphorikon, whose profusion of eulogistic language may be related to its identity as a partheneion. It would be interesting to assess whether these kinds of generic distinctions impact the hymnic text in relation to the parameters set out here. For example, there is evidence for paëanic singing outside of cult. Is this the case for other hymnic forms? Is there a noticeable distinction in the paean (for instance) sung at symposia and those used in cult? It is also notable that the majority of extant inscribed hymns are paëans. This could be the result of pure chance of survival or the reflection of the sheer popularity of paëans compared to other hymns. But it is nonetheless worthwhile to consider a possible link between the paëans (or cults that prefer the paean in their worship) and the practice of public inscription.

Going further afield, it needs to be recognized that cult hymnody (and also hymnography) is neither unique in antiquity to the Greeks, nor did it exist in isolation from traditions of religious singing in neighbouring cultures. Future research in this area might explore how the questions asked of Greek cult hymns in this dissertation apply to Egyptian, Roman, Early Christian, Byzantine, Israelite and Mesopotamian hymns. The earliest Christian hymns (mostly in the texts of the New Testament or other contemporary works), for example, must be seen as drawing on various cultures of ritualized song, including Greek and Israelite. This debt has of course been

511 For these elements of fiction in Pindar’s epinicians, see Carey 2007: 204-7.
recognized but it still remains to compare how such issues as multi-functionality, contextualization and literacy vs. orality play out in these three related traditions.\textsuperscript{512}

\textsuperscript{512} Gordley 2007, for example, locates the Colossian hymn from the New Testament in relation to Greco-Roman (as well as Jewish) hymnography.
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Appendix A

Ancient doxography of the *hymnos*

1 Introduction

Given how integral and ubiquitous an activity cult hymnody was in the ancient Greek world, it is worth inquiring how the ancients themselves saw the hymn, what it meant to them, how they conceived its function within the festival. Unfortunately, the response is far from satisfactory. The ancients say very little; in fact, almost nothing explicit in answer to such questions. A few passages and some passing references may give an unintended hint, but mostly even this answers other questions than ones we would really like to ask. The silence, though frustrating, is less surprising than one might feel at first. The very fact that hymns were so common, that they were heard and seen and sang and danced on a regular basis by many people all over the Greek-speaking Mediterranean would have made them less interesting as a topic of scholarly discussion. How a hymn-performance was integrated into the rest of a ritual programme would probably be too obvious to be worth asking. And what functions a hymn performed within its ritual context was probably a question that would not have occurred to an ancient Greek at all. Still, even the few unintended hints are worth noting of because they come from people who not only had access to a large corpus of Greek hymns than we possess today, but, more importantly, who – even in the Roman period – were still living in a world where hymns were being composed and performed in much the same ways they had been for centuries. In other words, the phenomenon that is the subject of the present investigation was for them simply part of their culture, their world. The rhetoricians whose passages make up the majority of ancient testimony that survives, are writing about hymns not only – and not primarily – in order to describe how they had been written in ages past but how they should be properly composed in their own day.

These passages, references and other brief hints often touch on issues which are still discussed and debate by modern scholars: particularly those dealing with the definition and classification of hymn. Many of the issues they discuss connect directly with the central questions being asked here – the functions of a hymn, its forms, its audience and patrons, its performative contexts.
2 The term “hymnos”

The Greeks had many words for “song” or kinds of songs – *oidê*, *melos*, *molpê*, *aisma*, *nomos*, *paian*, *dithyrambos*, *epinikion*, *hymnos*, among others – and the exact meaning of, and relationship among, them seems to be an issue already in antiquity. The most important term for this thesis is of course *hymnos* and the problem with defining “*hymnos*” begins with several ambiguities in its usage. The lexicographers and rhetoricians define (or apply) the term as a song for the gods, or some synonymous phrase. But oftentimes, in Archaic, Classical and Hellenistic literature, it is used in reference to a song that is not – at least primarily – intended for the gods. The best-known example is Pindar, who often gives the name to his epinicians, songs for victors in contests. In spite of Bremer’s recent suggestion that the religious aspects of epinicians have been gravely underestimated, it would still not be true to define this type of song as essentially a song for the gods.513 Most scholars today would probably agree that this usage of “*hymnos*,” whatever its frequency, is basically metaphorical and is meant to stand for “song” (e.g., *oidê* or *melos*) in general or perhaps a song of praise.514

A more problematic ambiguity, one which is still debated over today, is the apparent application of the word “*hymnos*” in a narrower sense than “song for the gods.” Two pieces of information from the ancient sources lead in that direction above all others. First, it is known that the Hellenistic editors, who collected and classified much of the ancient Greek literature to survive to our times, had a book of “*hymnoi*” by Pindar. This in itself would not be an issue, but for the fact that they also had separate books of paeans, dithyrambs, *hyporchêmata*, *partheneia* and *prosodia*, which are all types of song normally defined as kinds of hymns, as species within the genus of “*hymnos*.” This separate and additional book of “*hymnoi*” seems to suggest the existence of a subclass of religious song – in other words of hymn – called “*hymnos*”, a subclass which we know nothing about as such. This would imply that the Greeks had two proper senses of “*hymnos*”, a generic sense, meaning a religious song and a specific sense of some particular

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513 Bremer 2008. His point is not that the victory ode is itself a hymn, but that there are “traces of the hymn” in it, reflecting two ideas essential to epinician occasion and genre: the relationship between human excellence and divine aid; and the unbridgeable divide between mortal and divine.

514 Pulley (1997: 43-4) believes that the earliest usage encompassed any hexameter poem. There is little reason to believe that *hymnos* was ever limited to a particular metre except for the fact that some of the earliest instances of the word happen to occur within epic poetry. The most common sense of *hymnos*, according to Pulley, was any song for the gods. Interestingly, he includes Pindar’s application of the term to victory odes in this category, although ancient commentators themselves grouped epinicians with songs for (living) mortals.
kind of religious song, whose features (e.g., differentia from other analogous types) are simply unknown.

The second piece of evidence for this double-meaning is a statement by Didymus quoted in Orion, Ps.-Zonaras, *Etymologicum Magnum*, John of Sardis and Photius and probably paraphrased by Proclus. Basically all the variants say that *prosodia* are distinguished from *hymnoi* (Proclus adds “*kyrios hymnos*”, hymn proper) by the fact that the former are performed to the accompaniment of *auloi* while in procession toward a sanctuary or altar, while the latter is sung while standing still and to the accompaniment of the kithara. If that was all they said, it would be a strong argument in favour of a separate subclass of religious song, a “*kyrios hymnos*.”

The problem is that in almost all of the quotes and paraphrases this statement is immediately preceded with a discussion of the relationship between “*hymnos*” and songs like “*paean*”, “dithyramb”, and so forth; and this discussion defined this relationship as genus and species. This is most explicit in the version as quoted by Orion, which says “the hymn is distinct from *enkomia*, *prosodia* and paens not in that these latter are not hymns, but as genus to species.” This led Furley (1995) to dismiss the idea of a separate “*hymnos*” subclass and suggest that “*hymnos*” was always a larger category and that the confusion came because the Alexandrian editors, when they did not have a separate subclass available or could not determine into which subclass to place a hymn, put it into a generic pile of “*hymnoi*. “Thus, according to this interpretation, the book of Pindar’s “*hymnoi*” should be seen as “other” or “miscellaneous” hymns. There is some explicit support for this view in Menander Rhetor (331 and also in John of Sardis (120), probably quoting Menander), which says that “hymns are distinguished on the basis of each god: those to Apollo are called paens and *hyporchêmata*, those to Dionsysos are dithyrambs, those to Aphrodite *erotika*. Those to the other gods they call hymns generically, particularly to Zeus.”

But this still does not explain why many of these authors, including John of Sardis, then go on to distinguish “*hymnos*” from “*prosodion*.” If the point was that *prosodion* differs from “*hymnos*” (which in turn includes paens, dithyrambs, etc.) – in other words, if it was *prosodion* that was the exception – this would make some sense. Yet in the statement of the genus-species

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1 The last phrase “μερικώτερον πρὸς Δία” is difficult to interpret. Some have suggested “<ὃ> μερικώτερον <οἶνον> πρὸς Δία” (or, more particularly, for example ‘to Zeus’.)
relationship mentioned above, *prosodion* is always included in the list of examples of species within the genus of *hymnos*. Furthermore, elsewhere these and other authors list “*hymnos*” as a separate item in a list of genres, particularly religious genres, alongside paean, *prosodion*, and others, as if it were yet another species on the same level as the rest. Furley believes that these are signs of confusion which began already in antiquity and was caused mostly by the Alexandrian classification of “other hymns” into a category “*hymnoi*.” Perhaps John of Sardis, writing in the 9th century or other late commentators could have been confused; but Didymus lived in the 1st c. BCE, so it is harder to believe that he would not be aware of what a “*hymnos*” was and whether there was a separate kind of religious song by that name. What is more, already Plato (*Leg.* 700b) seems to be confused. He too on the one hand defined hymns as “prayers to the gods”, a generic category, and on the other lists “*hymnos*” along other species of cult song as a separate item. Surely Plato was not confused by Alexandrian classification. It looks like, at least until some new evidence presents itself, we have to allow for the possibility that there indeed was a type of cult song called a *hymnos* and that the term *hymnos* was always ambiguous.

3 Defining the hymn

There is no doubt that one, and probably the most widely applied, sense of the word was song for the gods. It is this sense that Plato clarifies in another passage (*Rep.* 607a) when he contrasts it with *enkômion*. The hymn, he says, is sung for the gods while encomia for men. This distinction is standard in later rhetoricians and grammarians, who treat the hymn as a kind of praise discourse and distinguish it from *enkômion* based on the addressee (mortal or immortal). The distinction is between mortal men (ἄνθρωποι) immortal gods (θεοί). The heroes probably fit with the second category, since they too are immortals. A commentary on Dionysius Thrax makes this explicit when it says that encomia are composed for men and cities, hymns for gods and heroes. Similarly, Aelius Theon Rhet. (*Prog.* P.109, 20-6) divides encomiastic rhetoric into three categories, for living mortals (*enkômion* proper), dead mortals (*epiraphion*) and for *theoi* (hymn), and then rephrases this last group to include heroes as well as gods. There is other

516 Orion, quoting Didymus, 155; Photius 239 Bekker p.320a.
517 Another possible interpretation of the Proclus passage on “hymn proper” and *prosodion*, is that both are here being used as secondary descriptive categories concerned specifically with performance.
518 See, for example, Aphthonius *Progymnasmata* 21; Ael.Aristides *Ars rhetorical* 1.12.2.6; Ael.Theon *Progymnasmata* 109; Stephanus *In artem rhetoricam comm.* 282.
evidence that the term *theos* could sometimes be applied to heroes.\(^{520}\) And we know that hymns were sung in hero-cult: Heliodorus describes the public choral performance of hymn to Neoptolemus at Delphi,\(^{521}\) for instance, and Pi. *Pae.* 2 (fr.52b), which opens and closes with Abderus, is at least in part dedicated to the hero.\(^{522}\) There are also figures which fall somewhere in between hero and god – Heracles, Asclepius, the Dioscuri and Adonis, for example, all of whom received hymns\(^{523}\) – which further suggesting that the main distinction is really between mortals and immortals.

The precise relationship between *enkômion* and hymn is also not free of ambiguity. On the one hand, *enkômion*, *hymnos* (and sometimes also *epainos* and *epitaphios*) are normally classed under *enkômiastikê* or *epainetikoi* or *enkômion* in a general sense of “praise.” At the same time, *enkômion* is sometimes included in a list of songs that are subclasses of *hymnos*.\(^{524}\) The quote in Orion says that “[hymns] are distinguished from encomia and prosodia and paeans not as if these too were not hymns but as genus from its species.” What is more, he adds immediately “for all compositions for those above define as hymns”, leaving no doubt that “hymnos” is here used in its wider proper sense of songs for the gods. It looks like the term *enkômion* was no less ambiguous than *hymnos*. What we can conclude from all this is that the terms were not being used very precisely and they always had a level of flexibility built into them.

The way these philosophers, commentators, lexicographers and especially rhetoricians deal with hymns in their writings can also provide some helpful clues as to what were considered its important features and functions. It is significant, for instance, that hymn is very commonly defined as a type of praise discourse and frequently discussed side by side with *enkômion*. Related to this is the fact that *hymnos* was sometimes used to indicate simply a song of praise and later on apparently evolved to mean “praise.” Praise, then, was clearly felt to be at the very core of a hymn. Prayer was of course also important: Plato defined hymns as songs which are prayers to the gods.\((Leg.700b)\). But this definition seems to be quite unique whereas the

\(^{520}\) Ekrøth 2010: 101.

\(^{521}\) Hld. *Aeth.* 3.2.1-2.

\(^{522}\) Cf. also Pi. *Pae.* 15, which is entitled “for Aeacus” and opens with him.

\(^{523}\) The female *aoidos* in Theocritus’ *Idyll* 15 sings a hymn to Adonis. There are Orphic hymns to Heracles and Adonis (nos. 11, 60) and Homeric hymns to Heracles and Dioscuri (nos. 15, 16, 33). Asclepius is the recipient of several of the cult hymns discussed in this thesis, and cf. *Orph. Hymn* 66 and *h.Hom.* 16.

\(^{524}\) Orion, quoting Didymus, 155; Photius 239 Bekker p.320a.
association of hymn and praise is almost universal. And this is reflected in the extant hymns, where prayer is often brief and general or even missing altogether, whereas praise of one kind or another is a must.

4 The form of hymns

The ancient rhetoricians’ treatment of hymns is likewise instructive for the formal analysis of the preserved texts. The analogy between *enkômion* and *hymnos* goes beyond their primary objective – praise. Formally, the two kinds of discourse are likewise claimed to be identical. One of the rhetorical handbooks puts it more explicitly than the others: “of [encomia] the kind for living men is called specifically *enkômion*, the one for deceased men termed *epitaphios* and the one for the gods, *hymnos*. But whether one praises living people, dead people or even heroes and gods, the means of speaking (*logôn ephodos*) is one and the same.”525 Another writer, Hermogenes, after giving general advice on composing a praise speech (focusing on praise of men), says: “from this you will not fail to understand how one should praise gods, but remember that encomia of gods should be called ‘hymns.’”526 So the types of praise speech are distinguished solely based on the addressee while their form is essentially the same. In fact this is not always the case in the extant Greek hymns, which sometimes display formal features not found (or not commonly found) in encomia and similar genres. And yet, by and large, as concerns the praise function of hymns, they clearly shared many basic requirements and objectives with other kinds of praise speech.

Hermogenes’ advice that precedes the sentence quoted above and thus apparently applicable likewise to *enkômion* and *hymnos*, comes in a form of a list of praiseworthy topics to be included in a speech of this sort: origin, birth, upbringing and training, qualities of mind and body, his pursuits and deeds, external aspects (wealth, friends, luck, etc.), longevity, death and post-mortem facts such as children and the funeral. In spite of the author’s suggestion to the contrary, it is easy to see that this plan would not be readily suitable for a hymn: there are items which are inapplicable to a divine subject, including external aspects, death and funeral; and the whole chronological organization is much more appropriate to a mortal than a god. Another second-

525 Aelius Theon *Progymnasmata* p.109.
526 *Progymnasmata* 7.
century rhetorician, Alexander Numenius, gives a more complete list of subjects and one which is meant specifically for a hymn. According to Alexander, a hymn should consider the gods’ power and works, origins, nature (sky, sea or earth); praise of town and country; technical arts associated with the god, accomplishments through these arts, what the god is leader and manager of, his discoveries, descendants, offices; when he appears to humanity; his gifts; his temples; sacred trees and places; other connections with various gods. A similar formula for a hymn’s contents can already be seen a century earlier in Quintilian, who includes the god’s power, discoveries, exploits, genealogy and offspring. He introduces his list with the recommendation that the hymn should open with a show of veneration for the god’s majesty (3.7.7-9). The lists given by Quintilian and Alexander are quite similar; in fact, the latter includes all of the items in the former but elaborates some and adds others. It is plausible that the subjects outlined by Quintilian are those deemed the basic essentials of a hymn according to ancient rhetorical thought.

Such lists of topoi to include in a hymn can only go so far: they reveal little about the contents and nothing about the form and structure of hymns as envisaged by ancient scholars. It is very fortunate therefore that there survived a much more detailed discussion, specifically dedicated to the composition of hymns, in the form of two treatises attributed to Menander Rhetor. Like other rhetoricians, the author includes hymns under encomia which in turn belong to epideictic rhetoric. But in contrast with the other extant rhetorical handbooks, Menander’s has a long section on hymns. Several curious pieces of information can be gathered from his account. First of all, it is notable that he does not distinguish between stand-alone hymns and hymns included in other kinds of speech or writing. For him, a hymn within a dialogue of Plato or a speech by one of the Classical orators is as much an example of the genre that he is describing as an Orphic or lyric hymn. Also, he does not give much formal advice on the construction of a hymn – at least not in this first treatise. Instead, his method is to divide the genre into types of hymns and then briefly recommend the extent of elaboration for the content and the level of grandeur for the style, sometimes adding suggested ancient models. The types themselves are perhaps the more interesting detail: cletic, apopemptic, scientific, mythical, genealogical, fictional and (de)precatory. He adds that many hymns in fact combine several or even all of the types and some of these types overlap. This addition is significant because most of the Greek hymns that

527 Alexander Numenius in Spengel Rhetores Greaci pp. 5-6 and see Gordley 2007: 117-9 for discussion.
survive do indeed combine several of these categories, so that it makes better sense to treat them as elements, rather than types, of a hymn.

In a separate treatise, likewise transmitted under the name of Menander, the rhetorician guides his reader through the composition of a speech in honour Apollo Smintheus. This composition is, as writer himself says at one points, “not simply a hymn” since it includes material that hymn would not. Still, the majority of its content is hymnic so it is the closest thing to a step-by-step tutorial in hymnography from an ancient writer. Furthermore, the context for this qualification makes it easy to identify the extra-hymnic elements: namely, the *enkômion* of the country and, possibly, the praise and description of the city, the festival, the temple and the statue. The structure recommended by Menander is as follows:

- three *prooimia*
  - first *prooimion*, giving thanks to Apollo as leaders of the Muses for the gift of speech; *apologia* for delivering the oration.
  - second *prooimion*, a sort of *captatio benevolentiae* for the hymn, which cannot compare with Homer, Hesiod or Pindar.
  - third *prooimion*, the search for the proper *archê*.

- “the hymn to the god himself”
  - invocation by several names and identities
  - the birth myth
  - *enkômion* of the country
  - praise (divided into four sections corresponding to four chief powers of the god)

- praise of city and occasion
  - the foundation of the city
  - foundation of the cult
  - organization of the festival
  - description of the temple
  - statue
  - sacred grove and springs

- closing
The oration is consistent with a point made in the first treatise, namely that the theoretical types of hymn laid out there were in actual practice often combined. We find in the quotes and recommendations parts that would be classified as scientific, genealogical, mythological and precatory hymns. The invocation, for example, speculates on the identification of Apollo with the sun, the mind and the “Second Power”, thoughts that, as the text itself admits, are appropriate to philosophers. The praise of the god consists of four mini-encomia on Apollo’s powers of archery, prophecy, medicine and music, each with mythological material to support the association.

The pseudo-hymn makes use of a number of terms, phrases and tropes, which can be regarded as formulaic. The transition to the conclusion is signalled by the phrase ἀλλ’ ὦ, and this leads to the renewed invocation. The prayer is strengthened with a compound of ἀεί, extending the requested favours into perpetuity. The ending evokes the key concept of χάρις. These three usages are already standard in Archaic and Classical hymnography. Menander also incorporates two instances of rhetorical aporia, first in one of the prooimia, where he seeks for the right archê, and second in the invocation where he is uncertain how to properly address the god. This feature is formulaic but, unlike the three others, it is neither limited to hymns nor is it all that common in the surviving Greek cult hymns.528

The speaker’s voice or the first-person persona of the oration includes itself in the collective civic “we” of the polis, thus identifying itself with the community on whose behalf it is speaking. This is of course quite normal in public discourse in general and in cult hymnography in particular. At the same time, however, the speaker maintains his poetic (or, rather, in this case, rhetorical) individuality, positioning himself with respect to Homer, Hesiod on the one hand, and

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528 See further discussion of this topos above, pp. 54-5.
philosophers and theologians on the other. This is more pronounced than in surviving cult hymns, although even there the poetic persona at times stands out of the collective worshiping “we.” That this should be less obscure in a speech delivered by a sole orator than in a hymn sung by a chorus probably is not surprising given that very difference in performer.

One of the sections of the speech deserves special attention. Following the traditional hymnic praise of the god and before the closing and prayer, Menander suggests an encomiastic description of the cult and (quite likely) performative context. This includes the foundation of Alexandria Troas and the cult of Apollo Smintheus, the description of the temple, statue and other sacred landmarks there, as well as the praise and overview of the relevant festival. Reference to the festive occasion and larger local context is not uncommon in cult hymnody: it is a way to draw (divine and mortal) attention to the ritual event, including the offerings being presented to the deity; and it is also one of the forms of localization discussed in Chapter 6. However, this degree of detail about the cultic context is rarely found in actual surviving hymns, and it may also be that this section is one of the extra-hymnic elements that belong to the speech by virtue of its being a Sminthiac oration rather than “simply a hymn.”

No less noteworthy than this presence of a detailed discussion of the performative context is the complete absence of any recommendations or observations on the performative features of hymns. And this is not limited to Menander. The grammarians and rhetoricians who treat hymns in any capacity – definition, classification or instruction – do not make any mention of its performance. Plato had defined hymn as a type of song, but even this basic association rarely resurfaces in latter lexicographers. This is not because the hymn had gone through a fundamental shift in nature. Although from the Hellenistic period onward some hymns were probably written solely for reading pleasure, there is sufficient evidence to show that hymns did not cease from being performed. To some extent, the silence may be related to the rise of the prose hymn, or the hymnic speech. To people like Menander, an oration delivered by one man, without instruments, song, dance or even metre, is as much a hymn as a choral dance-song to the accompaniment of auloi or kithara. Therefore, what matters most, what is definitive about the genre, and is thus worth describing and instructing, is only the form and content. Whatever performative qualities were relevant to the delivery of the religious oration – which, after all, was also a performance – were those which applied to public speaking in general and could be acquired no doubt from
other rhetorical handbooks or teachers. And while other kinds of hymns – recited or sung – had not died out, their particular performative features were beyond the scope of grammar and rhetoric, which account for the bulk of remaining theoretical or practical writing on hymnography.

5 Types of hymns

As has been noted above, Menander’s first treatise on epideictic subdivides the hymn into several types (e.g., cletic, apopemptic, precatory) which in practice are more often elements or parts of hymns. In the same work, the author also gives an alternative subdivision, one more commonly found in ancient sources. He says that there are various types of hymns for different gods, including paean and hyporchêma for Apollo, dithyramb and iobacchi for Dionsysos, and erotika for Aphrodite. The list varies from author to author. Orion gives prosodion, enkômion and paean as examples. The inclusion of enkômion is problematic and is due to the ambiguity of the term, which is elsewhere (sometime in the same work) contrasted with hymn. A parallel but alternative classification is offered in Photius, who divides melic poetry into four categories, for the gods, for mortals, for both gods and mortals, and for various circumstances. The author explains that in the third category are songs which are primarily written for the gods but which include praise of mortal men. He adds nomos and adônidion to the first category (to the gods), while enkômion and erotika are now classed separately, as songs for mortals. There is no way to reconcile all the varying subdivisions. What is worth observing is the essential principle shared by the different writers: their classification is based solely on the addressee or the recipient of the song or poem. This basis of classification is followed also by lexicographers, who consistently define paean and dithyramb as “hymn to Apollo” and “hymn to Dionsysos”, respectively. The Hellenistic editors who compiled the works of Classical poets like Pindar seem to have resorted to this same principle, although they may have supplemented this with others, such as generic signatures (e.g., the paean and dithyrambic calls), performers (e.g., young women, young men), occasion (e.g., Daphnêphoria, Dionysia) and setting (e.g., Delphi, Delos). Finally, in the somewhat problematic distinction between prosodion and hymnos discussed earlier, Proclus and others rely on another factor – specific ritual occasion and mode of performance (approaching the altar, aulos accompaniment vs. standing around the altar, kithara accompaniment).
Appendix B

Text and translation of select cult hymns

1 Paean and Prosodion for Apollo by Limenios

Text from Powell c1925: 149-150, translation adapted from Furley and Bremer 2001: v.1, 137-8


ζων ἔδος πολυκυθ]ές ληξόμενος
όλεθ’ ὑγρὰ χ[ιόνος ἐν ζύλα.] (35)

[Ἀλλ’, ὃ Φοῖβε,] σῶζε θεό-
κτιστὸν Παλλάδος [Ἴστυ και
λαὸν κλεινόν, σὺν] τε θεά,
tόξων δεσπότι Κρησῖον[v]
kυνὸν τ’ Ἀρτεμίς, ἥδε Λα- (40)
tοί] κυδίστα: και ναέτας
Δελφῶν [ημελείθ’ ἀμα τέ-
κνοις συμ]βίοις δόμασιν ἄ-
πταιστοῦς, Βάκχου [θ’ ἱερονί-
καις] νεῖς μόλετε (45)
προσπόλοισιν, ταύ τε δόρι-
[στεπτον κάρτε] Ρωμαίοιν[v]
ἄρχαν αὐξετ’ ἀγηράτῳ
θάλ[λουσαν φερε] νικαν. (50)

Paean and prosodion to the god which Limenios, son of Thoinos, of Athens composed and accompanied on the kithara.

Come here to the far-seen twin-peaked Mt. Parnassos, famed for dancing, and conduct my hymns, Muses of Pieria, who inhabit Helikon’s snow-covered crags.
Sing of Pythian Apollo, goled-locked, far-shooter, god of the lyre

5 Phoebos, whom happy Leto bore by the famous lake, clutching with her hand a thriving shoot of grey-green olive during labour. The whole heavenly dome rejoiced in cloudless glory and the air restrained the blustery squalls of wind; Nereus’ powerful breakers stilled their thunder

10 and wide Ocean who cups earth in a watery embrace. At that time, leaving the isle of Kynthia the god arrived in Attica, Famous for the first corn, on Tritonis’ craggy slope; the Libyan pipe, pouring forth a melodious sound, sang with its sweet voice, mingling with the kithara’s weaving melodies, while an echo, latent in the rock, resounded. And he was pleased because he comprehended this was Zeus’ divine design. That is why, from that time on we, we call on Paieon, the whole earth-born people and the great thyrsus-stricken holy swarm

15 of Bakchos’ artists living in the town of Kekrops. But, you who hold the tripod, come to this sacred Mt. Parnassos, beloved of the god. Having crowned your glossy hair with laurel, While hauling massive stones with godly hand you challenged, Lord, the enormous, earth-born monster. But, child of Leto of the windsome eyes, you shot the savage child of Earth with arrows, and likewise Tityos when he lusted
for your mother…
…you killed the beast…
30…and whistling from its den.
Then, Lord, you protected Earth’s sacred navel, when
the barbarian brought sacrilegious plunder to your wealthy
seat of prophecy but perished in a storm of freezing rain.

O Phoebos, preserve the city of
35Pallas, founded by the gods,
and its famous people, with the help
of the goddess, mistress of the bow
and of Cretan hounds, Artemis and
most honoured Leto. And look after the citizens
of Delphi and the children,
keeping them safe from trouble
in their homes, and come kindly
To Bakchos’ servants,
the sacred Victors, and grant
the spear-crowned Roman
empire ageless strength,
Make it flourish in victory.

2 Paean for Dionysos by Philodamos

εν [Δελφον]ν ἱερὰ μάκαιρα χώρα· (20)
αὐτὸς δ’ ἄστε[ρόεν δέμας
φαίνον Δελφῖσι σὺν κόραις
Παρνασσοῦ πτύχας ἔστας.
ʼΙὲ Παιάν, ἰθὶ σο[τή]',
ἐὐφρο[ν] τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ’ (25)
eυαίωνι σὺν ὀλβοι.

III [Νυκτί]φαεῖς δὲ χειρὶ πάλ-
λων σ[έ]λας ἐνθέοις [. . . . .]
τροις ἐμοῖς μυχοῦς [ʼΕλε]υ-
σίνος ἃν’ [ἄνθεμω]δείς, (30)
Εὐοὶ ὦ ὦ Βακχ’ ὦ ὦ Παιάν
[ἐθνος ἔθνοι] ἀπαν Ἐλλάδος
ὀργίων ὅσι[ον Ἰα][κ]-
χον [κλείει της βροτοῖς πόνων (35)
ω[ς][άρ] μου[ν] [ἄμοχθον].
ʼΙὲ Παιάν, ἰθὶ σοτή[ρ]
ε[ὐαίωνι τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ’
eυαίωνι σὺν ὀλβοι.

IV [. . . . . . . . . .] δὲ καὶ χοροῖς (40)
γ[. . . . . . . . . .]εκγ[. . . . . . . . . . .
υθυθν . . . . . . . . . . . .
Ἰὲ Παιάν,
εὐφρων τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ’

V [ʼΕ]νθεν ἃ[π]’ ὀλβίας χθονὸς
Θεσ[άλιας] ἐκέλσας ἁσ-
tη, τέμενὸς τ’ Ὀλύμπι[ον, (55)
Πιερίαν τε κλειτάν
Εὐοὶ ὦ ὦ Βακχ’, ὦ ὦ Παιάν
Μοῦσαι δ’ αὐτίκα παρθένοι
κλείσοι] στεψάμενι κύκλωι σε πάσαι
μ[έλγαν] ἀθάνατον ἐς ἄι (60)
Παιάν’ εὐκλέα τ’ ὀ[π’ κλέο]σ-
σαι: [κα]ταρξὲ δ’ Ἀπόλλων:
ʼΙὲ Παιάν, ἰθὶ σοτήρ,
e[ὐ]φρο[ν] τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ’
eυαίωνι σὺν ὀλβοι. (65)
VI . . . σευ . θ . εταστ . τιμ . . . . . . . ισορι
. . . . κανεξεσι πυθοχρη[στ . . . ]ιαχαν
. . . . νεαι
Εύοι ὦ ἰὸ Baḵ[ς ὦ ἰ ᾿Παϊά]ν
. . . εμι . . . λε . . δαι . . . . . . . . . . . . πις (70)
. . . . . . . . . . . . [ . . . . . . . . . . . . ] νφο

VII παλ[ (75)
ρων φιλ[
ον προφη[
νομοθετ[ (85)
pαλλ . ᾿κ[
ως[

VIII ναπεμπε[
oισβου[ ος[
ωσδυσαντ[
σιν εχρθθπο[. ε χωρανελε (100)

πατρι[
' ᾿Ιε Παϊάν, ᾿ιθ[𝑠] σωτήρ,
[ευφρων] τάνδε πόλιν φύλασς' ευαίονι σὺν ὅλ[βοι.]

IX ᾿Εκτελέσαι δὲ πρᾶξιν Ἀμ- (105)
φικτόνας θ[εός] κελεύ-
ει τάχος, ὄ[ς ᾿Ε]κάβολος
μὴν ε[. ] κατάσχη, ᾿Ευοί ὦ [ἰὸ [Β]αḵ’ ὦ ἰ ᾿Παϊάν
dε[ξιαί] δ’ ἐγ ᾿ξεινίος ἔτει-
(110) οἰς θεόν ιερῷ γένει συναίμω
τόνδ’ ὄμιν[ν], θυσίαν δὲ φαί-
νειν σὺν ᾿Ελλάδος ὀλβίας
πα[νό]ήμοις ἱκετείας.
᾿Ιε Παϊάν, ᾿ιθ[η] σωτήρ, (115)
εὐ[φρ]ων τάνδε πόλιν φύλασς' ευαίονι σὺν ὅλβοι.

X ᾿Ω μάκαρ ὀλβία τε κεί-
νων γ[νεά] βροτῶν, ἀγή-
ρων ἀμίαντον ᾿ά τιτσῆ (120)
vο[ν ᾿ά]νακ[τι] Φοίβοι,
Εὐοί ὦ ἰὸ Baḵς ὦ ἰ ᾿Π[αῖαν]
χρύσεον χρυσεός τύποις
πα[. . . . . . . . . . . . ]ν θεαὶ ῥυκυκλοῦ[νται
[. . . . . . . . . . . . ]]δογ, κόμαν (125)
δ’ ἀργαίνοντ’ ἐλεφαντ[ναν 
ἐν] δ’ αὐτόχθοιν κόσμῳ.

Ἰὲ Παιάν, ἵθι [σωτήρ,] 
eὐφρον τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ’
eὐαἱ[οινί] σὺν ὄλβοι. (130)

XI Πυθιάσιν δὲ πενθετή-
ρος [προπό[λιτς] ἔταξε Βάκ-
χου θυσιάν χορόν τε πρ[λ-
λών] κυκλιάν ἀμιλλαν

Εἰδοὶ ὦ ιὸς Βακχ’ [ὁ ἰὲ] Παιάν (135)
teύχειν, ἀλοφεγγέσιν
d’ ἀ[ντο] ο[λαίς] ἵθον ἀβρόν ἀγαλμα Βάκχου
ἐν [ζεύγεὶ] χρυσέων λεόν-
tων στήσαι, ζαθέωι τε [εὐ-
ξαιθεῶι] πρέπον ἄντρον. (140)

Ἰὲ Παιά[ν, ἵθι σω]τήρ,
eὐφρον τάνδε πόλ[λιν φ]ύλασσ’
eὐα[ἰωνί σ]ὺν ὄλβοι.

XII Ἀλλὰ δὲξεσθε Βακχ[ια]-
tάν Δίονυσ[ον, ἐν δ’ ἀγυι-
κλήσκετε] κισ[σοχ]αίταις
Ε[ὐο]ἱ ὦ ἰὸς Βακχ’ ὦ ἰὲ [Παιάν]
pάσαν Ε[ὐλ]άδ’ ἄν’ ὀ[λβί]αν
παν...ετε...πολ...υ...στα...νας...ρεπι. (150)
lω...io...ε...κυκλι[Χαῖρ’, ἃνας ψηφείας. (153)

Ἰὲ Παι[ιάν, ἵθι σωτήρ,] 
eὐφρον] τάνδε πόλιν φύλασσ’ (155)
[eὐαίων] σὺν ὄλβοι.]

I. [Come here,] Dithyrambos, Bakchos, euie, Bull, crowned with ivy, 
Roarer, oh come in this sacred spring-time season – euhoi, o oi 
Bakchos, o ie Paian! - Whom once upon a time, in ecstatic Thebes, 
Thyona bore to Zeus, mother of a beautiful son. All immortals started 
dancing, all mortals rejoicing at your birth, o bacchic god.

– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy 
prosperity.

II. On that day Cadmus’ [famous] country jumped up in bacchic revelry, 
the vale of the Minyans, too, and fertile Euboea – euhoi, o io Bakchos, 
o ie Paian! Brimful with hymns, the whole sacred and blessed country 
of Delphi was dancing. And you yourself, you revealed your starry 
shape, taking position on the crags of Parnassus, accompanied by 
Delphic maidens.
– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.

III. Swinging your firebrand in your hand – light in the darkness of night – you arrived in your enthusiastic frenzy in the flower-covered vale of Eleusis – euhoi, o io Bakchos, o ie Paian! There the entire Greek nation, surrounding the indigenous witnesses of the holy Mysteries, invokes you as Iacchus: you have opened for mankind a haven, relief from suffering.

– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.

IV. Fragmentary

V. From that blessed country you came to the cities of Thessaly, and to the sacred domain of Olympus and famous Pieria – euhoi, o io Bakchos, o ie Paian! And forthwith did the maidens, the Muses crown themselves with ivy and sang and danced around you, proclaiming you to be ‘Forever immortal and famous Paian’! Apollo had taken the lead in this dance.

– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.

VI. Fragmentary

VII. Fragmentary

VIII. Fragmentary

IX. The god commands the Amphictyons to execute the action with speed, so that he who shoots from afar may restrain his anger – euhoi, o oi Bakchos, o ie Paian! – and to present this hymn for his divine, kindred brother, on the occasion of the annual feast of hospitality for the gods, and to make public sacrifice on the occasion of common supplication of blessed Hellas.

– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.


– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.
XI. To the organizers of his quadrennial Pythian Festival the god has given the command to establish in honour of Bakchos a sacrifice and a contest of many circular choruses – euhoi, o io Bakchos, o ie Paian! – and to erect an attractive statue of Bakchos like the bright beams of the rising sun, standing on a chariot drawn by golden lions and to furnish a grotto suitable to the holy god.

– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.

XII. But welcome Dionsysos, god of the bacchants, and in your streets with ivy-crowned choruses call upon him -- 'Euhoi, o io Bakchos, o ie Paian!' -- all over blessed Hellas…. in a circle. Rejoice, Lord of Health!

– Ie Paian, come O Saviour, and kindly guard this city in happy prosperity.

3 Daphnephorikon by Pindar (Fr. 94b)

Text from Maehler 1989: 91-5; translation from Race 1997: 323-9, with a few changes.
δαιδάλλοισ’ ἔπεσιν, τά δ’ ά[ξ–u–
Zeύς οἶδ’, ἐμὲ δὲ π’ ῥέπει
παρθενήμια μὲν φρονεῖν
γλώσσα τε λέγεσθαι’ (35)
ἀνόρος δ’ οὔτε γυναικός, ὃν θάλεσσιν ἐγ-
κειμαι, χρῆ μ’ λαθείν ἀοιδάν πρόσφορον.
pιστὰ δ’ Αγασίκ’ λέει
μάρτυς ἠλιθθὸν ἓς χορόν
ἔσιοὶς τε γονεύσιν (40)
ἀμφὶ π’ ροξενίασι— τί-
μαθεῖν γάρ τά πάλαι τά νῦν
τ’ ἀμφικτίόνεσιν
ἵππως τ’ ὡκυπόδων πρ[λυ-
γνῶτοις ἐπὶ νίκαις, (45)

Δ’ (Ε’) αῖς ἐν ἀιόνεσσιν Οὐρῆ[στοῦ κλυ]τάς,
tαις δὲ ναὸν Ἰτωνίασι α[........]α
χαίταν στεφάνις ἐκ-
σμηθεὶν ἐν τε Πίσσα περπ[]
(desunt vv. aut 8 aut 23) (49)
ρίζα τέ [u— (58)
σε]μνὸν αν[ου—]Θ[ή-
βας] ἐπαπυλίοισ<ν>. (60)

Ε’ (Ζ’) ἐνῆκεν καὶ ἐπετ[............]λος
τόνδ’ ἀνδρῶν ἕν[κε]ν μερίμ[ας σώφρονος
ἔχθραν [Ε]ριν οὐ παλί-
γλώσσαν, ἀλλὰ δίκας ὅδοὺς
π[σ]τάς ἐφύλη[σε]ν. (65)
Δαμαίνας πά[τερ έ]ργ[ισίμ]ῳ νῦν μοι ποδί
στείχῳν ἄγεο· [τ]ίν γάρ ε[ῦ]φρον ἐνεμαι
πρώτα θυγάτηρ [ό]δου
’δάφ’ νας εὐπετάλου σχεδ[ό]ν
βαίνοσα πεδίλοις. (70)
Ἀνδαισιστρότα ἂν ἐπά-
σκηπε μῆ[θερ][ι]..].].].].]ρο[ ]
ά δ’ ἐρ[γ]μασι [—
μυρίων ε[.............]μις
ζευξα[ου]— (75)

F’ (Η’) μὴ νῦν νέκτα[ρ .............]νας ἐμᾶς
διψῶντ’ α[.............] παρ’ ἀλμυρόν
σίχεσθον: ε[— —
(desunt vv. aut 10 aut 25) (78)
]οι[ (89)
αθᾶ[ου]— (90)
Z’ (I’)

 αὐξ[υ –μ–υ –μ–
 τ[μ –μ–υ –μ–
 —μμ — (95)
 μμ –μμ –μμ –μμ
 —μμ — ] (100)
 —μμ — ]ντ[μ–
 —μμ — ]μαν
 —μμ — ] (105)

Η’ (IA’)

νος τί’ ἐστίαν
 —μμ –μμ –μμ –μμ (106)
 (desunt reliqua)

golden (robed)

......
For Loxias has come
gladly to shed immortal grace
on Thebes (5)

But quickly tying up my robe
and carrying in my gentle hands a splendid branch
of laurel, I shall hymn
the all-glorious house of Aiolodas
and his song Pagondas, (10)

my maidenly head flourishing
with garlands,
and I shall imitate in my songs,
to the accompaniment of lotus auloi,
that siren’s loud song (15)

which silences the swift blasts
of Zephyr, and whenever with the strength of winter
chilling Boreas rages
swiftly over the sea…
stirs up the blast… (20)
(8 or 23 verses missing, two fragmentary)

many are the former things…
as I adorn them in verses, while the others…
Zeus knows, but it is proper for me
to think maidenly thoughts
and to say them with my tongue. (35)

Neither for a man nor woman, to whose offspring I am devoted, must I forget a fitting song. As a faithful witness for Agasikles I have come to the dance and ofr his noble parents (40)

because of their hospitality, for both of old and still today they have been honored by their neighbors for their celebrated victories with swift-footed horses (45)

for which on the shores of famous Onchestos and also by the glorious temple of Itonia they adorned their hair with garlands and at Pisa…

(8 or 23 verses missing)

holy…to Thebes of the seven gates. (60)

And then …. provoked on account of these men’s wise ambition a hateful and unrelenting strife, but he cherished the faithful ways of justice (65)

father of Damaina, stepping forth now with with your fateful foot, lead the way for me, since the first to follow you on the way will be your kindly daughter, who beside the branch of leafy laurel walks on sandals, (70)

whom Andaisistrota has trained in skills…

and she, with works of innumerable having yoked (75)

Do not, you two, thirsting for nextar…of mine, go to the salty…

(4) Isyllos’ inscription
Ἰσυλλός Σωκράτευς Ἐπιδαύριος ἁνέθηκε (1)
Απόλλωνι Μαλεάται καὶ Ἀσκλαπιώδι.

{A} Δάμος εἰς ἀριστοκρατίαν ἀνήρ αἱ προάγοι καλὸς,
ἀυτὸς ἵσημος ἔρθορια γὰρ ἐς ἀνδραγαθίας.
Αἱ δὲ τις καλὸς προσεχθεῖ θυγάναι ὕπορχια (5)
pάλιν ἐπαγκρούον, κολάξαν δάμος ἀσφαλέστερος.
Τάνδε τάν γνώμαν τόκη ἦχον καὶ ἔλεγον καὶ νῦν λέγω.
Εὐξάμαν ἀνεγράψεν, αἰ κ’ εἰς τάνδε τάν γνώμαν πέτῃ
ὁ νόμος ἀμίν ὑπὸ ἐπέδειξεν, ἐγείτο δ’, οὐκ ἀνευ θεῶν.

{B} Τόνδ’ ἰαρὸν θείαι μοίραι νόμον ἦρεν Ἰσυλλος (10)
ἀφθιτον ἀέναον γέρας ἀθανάτισι θεοῖσιν,
καί ναὶ ἅπας δᾶμος θετμὸν θέτο πατρίδοις ἀμᾶς,
χεῖρας ἀνασχόντες μακάρεσσι ἐς οὐρανὸν εὐρύ.

{C} Πρῶτος Μᾶλος ἐτευξεν Ἀπόλλωνος Μαλεάτα
βωμὸν καὶ θυσίαις ἀγλάισεν τέμενος.
Οὐδὲ Θεσσαλίας ἐν Τρίκκηι πειραθείης
εἰς ἄδυτον καταβὰς Ἀσκληπιοῦ,
ἐὰν μὴ ἀφ’ ἁγνοῦ (30)
πρῶτον Ἀπόλλωνος βωμοῦ θύσας Ἡσαλίσας Μαλεάτα.

{D} Ἡσυλλος Ἀστυλαίδαι ἔπεθηκε μαντεύσασθα[ι] οἱ περὶ
tοῦ παιᾶνος ἐν Δελφοῖς, ὅν ἐπόησε εἰς τὸν Ἀπόλλωνα
καὶ τὸν Ἀσκληπιόν, ἢ λωίνοι οἱ καὶ εἴη ἄγγράφοντι
tὸν παιᾶνα. Ἐμάντευσε λώινοι οἱ καὶ εἴμεν ἄγγράφοντι (35)
καὶ αὐτίκα καὶ εἰς τὸν ύστερον χρόνον.

{PAEAN} (36)
{E} Ἱὲ Παιᾶνα θεὸν ἄείσατε λαοί,
ζαθέας ἐνναέτα[ι] τάσδ’ Ἐπιδαύρου.
Ὡδε γὰρ φάτις ἐνέπουσ’ ἡλυθ’ ἐς ἀκόας

προγόνων ἀμετέρων, ὁ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων. (40)
Ἐρατὼ «Μοῦ σαν πατὴρ ᾿Ζεὺς λέγεται Μάλου, ὃς μὲν παράκοιτιν ὀσίοις γάμοις.
Φλεγύας δ', [δ] πατρίδ' Ἠπίδαυρον ἔναιεν,
θυγατέρα Μάλου γαμεῖ, τὰν Ἑρατω γείναται μάτηρ, Κλεοφήμα δ' ὄνομάσθη. (45)
Ἐγ' ἐν Ἑρατώ γένετο, Αἴγλα δ' ὄνομάσθη·
tὸν ἐπόνυμον· τὸ κάλλος δ' ἐκ Κορονίς ἑπεκλήθη. Κατιδὼν δ' ὁ χρυσότοξος Φοῖβος ἐμ Μάλου δόμοις παρθενίαν ὥραν ἔλυσε, ἐφεξήν δ' ἕμεροντον ἐπέβας, Λα(50) τὸ ἐπὶ κόρε χρυσοκόμα.
Σέβομαι σε· ἐν δὲ θυώτει τέμενε τέκετο ἤν Ἀἴγλα, γονίμαν τὴν ἀνταυξαμένην ἰάμιν ὡδίνα Διῶς παῖς μετὰ Μοιράν Λάχεσίς τε μαῖαν ἀγαυά· ἐπίκλησιν ταῦτα τὸν ἱμερόντων ἐπέβας.
Τοῖς δ' ἐπὶ κόρε χρυσοκόμα, Ἰὲ Παίαν, ἱὲ Παίαν, χαίρεν Ἀσκλπιέ· παῖς δ' ἐκ Παλαιάν, χαίρεν Ἀσκλπιέ, ταῦτα τὰν Ἐπίδαυρον ματρόπολιν ἐρώτουσιν ἀμοῖς, ἱὲ Παίαν, ἱὲ Παίαν. (80)
Isyllos of Epidaurus, son of Socrates, dedicated (this) to Apollo Maleatas and Asclepius

A. When a people raises its men in proper manner toward aristocracy, it is stonger itself. For it is held upright by manly excellence. But if a citizen who has been properly bought up engages in wickedness, going backwards, the people are more secure if they punish him. I held that opinion then and I expressed it and I say it now. I vowed to inscribed it should the motion which I proposed be approved as law by us. And this happened, not without the gods.

B. I Isyllos formulated this law, sanctified by divine providence, as an undying and everlasting honour to the immortal gods, and the whole people passed it as a law of our country, raising their hands into the wide heavens toward the blessed gods. The men who are distinguished in this city of Epidaurus are to gather together and an announcement is to be made in the tribes to those men who possess city-protecting virtue and respect in their hearts: these men should be summoned to conduct a procession with unbound hair in honour of lord Phoebos and his son Asclepius the healer. They are to approach Apollo in holy fashion wearing white dress and garlands of laurel, Asclepius with shoots of cultivated olive. They are to pray to grant all citizens and their children everlasting good health, civic concord and peace and affluence without reproach, and also to grant that nobility always be dominant among the men of Epidaurus. They are to honour this ritual always, from one year to the next.

C. Malos was the first to build for Apollo Maleatas an altar and to enhance his precinct with sacrifices. Not even in Thessalian Tricca would you go down into the sanctuary of Ascpelius and seek his favour without first scarifying on the sacred altar of Apollo Maleatas.

D. Isyllos dispatched Astylaidas to consult the oracle in Delphi about the paean which he had composed for Apollo and Asclepius, whether it would be beneficial for him to inscribe the paean. The oracle responded that it would be beneficial both immediately and for the future for him to inscribe it.

E. Ie, sing in honour of god Paean, people who inhabit this holy Epidaurus. This is the tradition which reached our ears from our forefathers, O Phoebos Apollo: Zeus is said to have given the Muse Erato to Malos as his wife in hallowed marriage. Phlegyas, however, who dwelt in Epidaurus, his homeland, married the daughter of Malos whom Erato, her mother, bore, and Cleophema was her name. Phlegyas had a daughter Aigla: that was her proper name, but she was called Coronis for her beauty. Now Phoebos of the golden bow saw her in Malos’ home and put an end to her virginity by entering her enticing bed, O son of Leto with the golden hair. I worship you. Aigla gave birth to a child in the sweet-smelling sanctuary, and Zeus’ son
delivered her assisted by the Fates, including reverend Lachesis. Apollo called this child after his mother Aigla, Asclepius, the healer of illnesses, give of health, great boon to mortal men. Ie Paian, ie Paian! Rejoice, Asclepius, and foster your native city, sending splendid health to our minds and bodies. Ie Paian, ie Paian!

F.
You gave the following proof of your virtue, Asclepius, at the time when Philip led his army against Sparta with the intention of destroying its royal power. Asclepius came swiftly to their rescue from Epidaurus out of respect for the descendants of Heracles, and Zeus saved their lives. He went at the time when the boy came from Bousporos, sick, and as he approached you men him, shining in golden armour, Asclepius. When the boy saw you he stretched out his hands to you and entreated you, speaking words of supplication: “I do not enjoy the blessing of your gifts, Asclepius Paian, but have mercy on me.” And you spoke to me the following clear words: “Take courage. I will come to you in time – stay here – but first I will ward off disaster from the Spartans, since they justly observe the oracles of Phoebos which Lycurgus imposed on the city after consulting the oracle.” Thus he went on his way to Sparta, but an impulse moved me to go and report to the Lacedaemonians the divine occurrence in every detail. They listened to me as I recounted the message of salvation, Asclepius, and you saved them. They proclaimed that everyone was to welcome you as saviour at feast, spreading the word throughout wide Laconia. These events, O greatest of the gods, Isyllos recorded in honour of your excellence, O lord, as is proper.