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5 Ritual ties, ‘portable communities’, and the transmission of common knowledge through festival networks in the Hellenistic world

Christina G. Williamson[1]

Festivals are central to the formation of communities. Some of the earliest evidence that we have for collective human action implicates recurring ritual gatherings. The prehistoric ceremonial site Göbekli Tepe predates the known proto-urban agglomerations by several millennia and serves to remind us that festivals, in whatever form they take, fulfil an innate drive among humans to celebrate together, and to cooperate in ways that transcend mutual exploitation or meeting basic physical needs (e.g. hunting, gathering, trade, and market). Before there were cities, there were festivals.[2] Festivals also shaped emerging cities, certainly in the Greek world. It has been argued that panhellenic games, Olympia in particular, were part of what held this world together during the wave of colonisation in the Archaic period.[3] Festivals attracted interaction at various scales, even on the tiny island of Ikaros (Failaka Island, Kuwait—Figures 5.1 and 5.2), where a third century BCE Seleukid inscription calls for new athletic and music contests in support of a pre-urban population far removed from the centre of the Greek world.[4]

According to Duffy and Waitt, ‘festivals help sustain narratives of belonging through bringing people together to share participating in various activities, but are also an exercise in remembering the past’.[6] This is especially the case with festivals in the Hellenistic world, which certainly engaged people from far and wide, and in which the past played a significant role, whether historically authentic or fabricated to suit the times. Figure 5.2 shows over 160 new or newly reorganised mondial festivals starting in the Hellenistic era and continuing in the early imperial period, and this is by no means complete amidst ongoing discoveries and re-assessments of inscriptions, coinage, and other evidence of festival cultures.

These festivals tended to model themselves on the great panhellenic festivals, often with ‘crowned’ (stephanitic) games declared equal in status to their mainland counterparts, starting with the ‘isolympic’ Ptolemaia at Alexandria in the third century BCE. Scholars have long noted a surge in such festivals in the Greek world after the conquests of Alexander the Great.[7] Until recently, however, this was largely attributed to a presumed decline of the *polis*, as cities were subsumed into empires, with increased personal

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Figure 5.1 Places discussed in the text.

Source: Author.

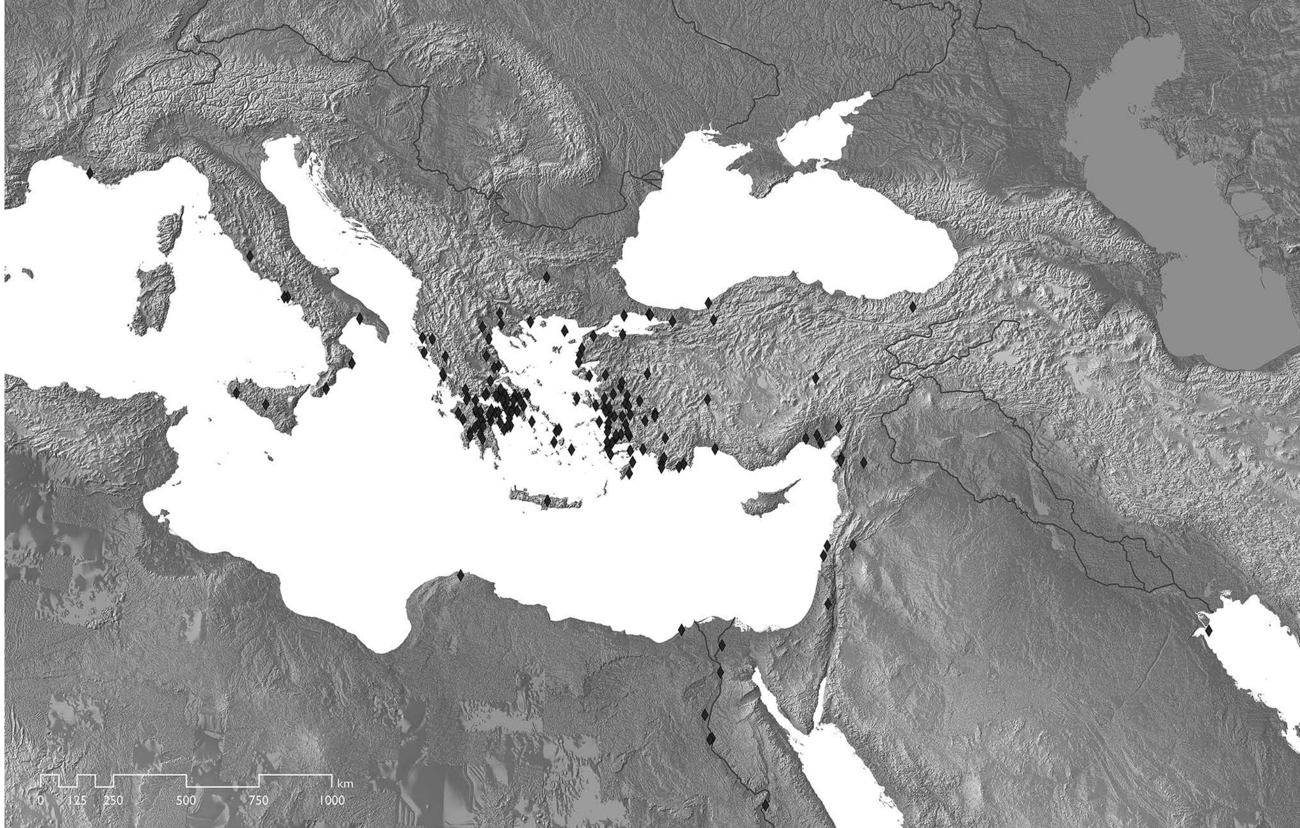

Figure 5.2 Inter-urban festivals in the Hellenistic and early imperial world, based on Chaniotis 1995, and the Groningen and Mannheim databases.[5]

Source: Author.

mobility; at the same time, mounting anxieties in turbulent times presumably fostered an introspective turn to the past and a revival of civic festivals as a result.[8] While this latter may be observed, recent studies demonstrating the vibrancy of cities and their inter-connectivity in this era lead us to consider alternative interpretations of this phenomenon. In our approach, we view festivals as a fundamental channel through which the Greek world became increasingly linked.[9] One of our larger aims is to trace the development of inter-urban festivals in order to fully interpret this phenomenon and how it came about. Meanwhile, the present chapter is a probe into the kinds of connections that were being established, the preconditions for such connectivity to take place, and especially why festivals were so effective at reproducing common knowledge.

Network theory provides a promising approach as it examines the dynamics of relationship structures by modelling people (or places or things) as nodes and their links as ties.[10] Granovetter's leading study posits that innovation spreads through networks via 'weak ties', or sporadic contacts, rather than through 'strong-tie' networks, where everyone knows everyone else, and where it is presumed that knowledge is common, that is, reciprocal and hence static.[11] Weak ties, on the other hand, ideally possess different ('new') knowledge and therefore have a strong brokering potential, filling the disconnect, or 'structural hole', among networks. Ideas common to (strong tie) Network A may thus be shared via (weak tie) Broker B to (strong tie) Network C, where they then rapidly spread due to the dense nature of strong-tie connectivity, eventually becoming common there as well. This moment is designated as 'phase transition' and is key to 'information cascades', where information rapidly flows across multiple networks simultaneously as individual members themselves further become brokers within their own strong-tie networks.[12] Watts and Strogatz, moreover, used statistical analysis to demonstrate the importance of random links, that is, weak ties, in providing shortcuts between nodes across an extended network, thereby creating a 'Small World' in which everyone is only a few handshakes away.[13] Important parameters in their model are the parity of nodes, the stasis of the strong-tie network, the external location of innovation, and especially the randomness of weak-tie contacts. This model has been applied in numerous situations, from analyses of transport systems to the spread of infectious diseases. Problematic, however, is the notion of parity and random contacts, since human relationships are rarely entirely equal or arbitrary.[14] Phase transition is much less likely to occur across asymmetrical network relations, as divisions of race, class, and particularly diverging belief systems can be real social barriers.[15] The success of knowledge transfer thus relies on the level of trust between parties, as well as what is at stake, that is, the importance of information being shared.

Concerning festival networks, the weak-tie model is attractive as transregional brokers may be identified through the many delegations (theoroi), athletes, and musicians.[16] We envisage models in which festivals are hubs

that connect nodes, either of entire cities, or travelling individuals who represent their home town abroad, with emerging clusters and temporal waves of inter-urban interaction as a result. The problem arises when we force these individual actors into the weak-tie model, while the evidence informs us that they were not perceived as filling any kind of structural hole, but were part of a carefully planned mission, reinforcing a network that was believed to be in place already, one principally framed through terms of religion. The significance of a festival was often measured by the antiquity of cult, but also through festival time, the unique capacity of festivals to fluidly and instantaneously connect the present to a deep and heroic past, crossing meanwhile tangible and intangible boundaries.[17] Communities increasingly believed themselves to be connected to each other through perceived kinships rooted in mythological ancestry. Such ties were often intentionally construed by magistrates, and festivals were the conduits through which these networks were shaped, through the agents of travelling delegations, but also athletes and musical performers. Finally, the efficacy of collective ritual in producing and perpetuating common knowledge provided a coordinating mechanism that helped ensure the tightness and continuity of communal identity, so clearly evident at festivals through common feasting, sacrificing, but also the shared values of honour and public awards. The frequency and expanding geographic scope of festivals across the Graeco-Roman world created a plethora of 'portable communities' that helped spread this common knowledge and should be considered through a globalising lens.

Festivals thus present a different kind of network connectivity than that which current network theory was designed to address, oriented as it is to modern, urban, and largely anonymous societies; some of its basic tenets therefore need to be reassessed. This chapter cannot hope to cover all of the areas, but in what follows, festival connectivity will be discussed in relation to the element of festival time, the formulation of ritual ties, and the production of common knowledge. First, however, a brief excursion into festivals in the modern world for the sake of comparison will highlight important issues in addressing these 'portable communities'.

'Portable communities'—a comparative study

Gardner coined the term 'portable community' to depict bluegrass festival culture in the United States, in which individuals in 'community-starved' environments travel to festivals to find and create community with other like-minded individuals.[18] These festivals generally last some days and take place in small towns in the mountains, far from urban sprawl; Gardner's case study was in the Rocky Mountains, but the movement began in the Appalachians in the 1950s and 1960s. Participants usually pitch a tent and wander freely in and out of each other's campsites, sharing food and engaging in spontaneous music sessions, parallel to the main venue. Past and present are mixed as traditions are blended with a sense of nostalgia and inclusive belonging.

These festivals are open to anyone who cares to join, thus creating a 'community of memory' felt by most to be missing in quotidian life; bluegrass music is as Gardner states 'a romantic reaction against modernity'.[19]

Yet despite the seemingly informal nature, these are highly regulated events that follow a logic of their own. A distinctive, albeit invisible, hierarchy among participants is measured by knowledge and experience: full inclusiveness is first enjoyed by the bluegrass performers themselves, who either possess or are in the process of acquiring the expertise of producing music in the 'right way'; then come the regulars, the insiders who frequent the festivals and have a deep knowledge and appreciation for the music and musicians, even though they might not play themselves; following this are the incidental visitors or tourists, who possess little knowledge of either the music or the non-verbal rules of engagement, but who are coaxed into the logic of the festival. Gardner attributes the wide attraction of these festivals to the lack of social interaction, bonding, and resonance in the everyday mainstream lives of the participants.[20] Besides the remote far-away locations at which these festivals take place, their strong normative character, familiar pattern of organisation, and frequency together especially make these festivals, wherever they are held, such effective repeaters—each one ideally serving to reify and reproduce this portable community.

Like the bluegrass festivals, major festivals in the ancient Greek world were also effective repeaters. They could also attract a large group of participants from across a continent, as a portable community. These festivals also often took place outside the city, sometimes in entirely rural settings far removed from the urban centre. Tradition was a fixative point and they were clearly subject to rules or norms of behaviour, often prescribed.[21] Finally, they helped establish a similar social hierarchy, demarcated by civic officials and cult personnel, the delegates, and especially the competitors, athletes, and musicians, as the stars, followed by the local community and the foreigners, those who made up the crowd. Ancient festivals were normative and also served to educate especially the young or foreign.[22] Yet, there were also significant differences that this comparison serves to highlight. Major festivals in the Graeco-Roman world, while often rural, were anything but anti-urban. They were instead densely intertwined with the structuring principles of the *polis*, establishing social roles and hierarchies, as we know from elite profiling or participation via civic, population, and ethnic divisions. Much has been written about *polis* religion,[23] which I will not repeat here, but it is evident that state cult was given a new impulse in the Hellenistic period through festivals, even though it was of utmost importance that it appeared to derive from an age-old tradition.[24] Festivals were at the heart of a sacred urban imaginary, celebrating myths and rituals that were written into the foundation of the city. Highly regulated, festivals provided a venue that at once institutionally galvanised the city while providing a symbolic and emotional focus for its constituents.[25] Ritual participation was seen as producing and reproducing the very structure of society, while

at the same time cementing the place of the individual within the community.[26] Major festivals in antiquity were anything but reactionary. Finally, an important difference concerns the manner of engagement of the portable community—knowledge of bluegrass festivals may spread by word of mouth in an informal, or even random, fashion, and this happened in antiquity too; yet, the constituents of festival communities were, as a rule, also deliberately composed through connections framed in ritual and justified by a deep sense of the past.

Time and festival network building

Time is a strong dimension of festivals. The rhythm of the year is marked by festivals, often coinciding with the seasons. Sacrificial calendars inscribed in civic contexts, as at Erchia in Attika, or Mykonos, coordinated festival time for the entire city.[27] Certain politically central festivals moreover serve to distinguish years, particularly by their priesthoods, such as the Heraia at Panamara for Stratonikeia.[28] This sense of festival time in itself was shared by the community and was part of their identity. The Olympic victor lists are a vivid example. First compiled by Hippias of Elis around 400 BCE, chronographies of Olympionikai were collected and passed through the hands of scholars such as Aristotle, Eratosthenes of Cyrene, Diodoros Siculus, Castor of Rhodes, and Dionysius of Halikarnassos among others, and circulated through inscriptions and papyri until late antiquity.[29] The emerging globalising world across the empires lacked a global calendar, yet the Olympic victories served as a universally accepted chronometer.[30] The lists recorded the achievements of individuals and thereby ensured their fame throughout time, while establishing the chronological depth of the festivals and geographic scope of the victors. They intersected the spheres of time and space, but also the scales of individual, *polis*, region, and oikoumene, the Greek world at large. The lists were a common point of reference and a coordinating mechanism across the Mediterranean but also across time, spanning generations for hundreds of years.[31]

Acute attempts at coming to terms with time are particularly visible in the Hellenistic period, as a rise in historicity and almost an obsession with the past seems to take place, at least in the written record.[32] High honours are awarded to local historians for their role in securing fame for all time, as they record (and inscribe) local histories that place the city and especially its principle deity or sanctuary in the foreground.[33] An eloquent example from the second century BCE is found in the praises awarded to Leon of Samos, perhaps dictated by himself, on the base of his statue in the sanctuary of Hera:

> The Assembly of the people of Samos (dedicated this statue of) Leon, the son of Ariston, to Hera.
>
> Because of time, even a stone grows old, holy bronze is scratched by the misty snowflakes and the strength of steel works out. However, the

> unbreakable fame keeps everything alive, the fame which Leon achieved throughout the city, Leon who has brought accomplishments for the homeland into trustworthy history, sang our native Hera, and showed how the sacrificers adorned her sanctuary with many ships and spoils.[34]

This encomium not only demonstrates the importance of the creation of 'intentional history' or the 'social store of knowledge',[35] but also the crucial role of sanctuaries as a vital link in connecting the *polis* to the outer world. The words 'homeland' (*patras*), 'native' (*autochthona*)—Hera was believed to have been born on Samos—and 'sacrificers' (*rexantes*) imply the watchful eye of a non-Samian audience. Leon elevated the city through its famous shrine onto a central stage of the Greek world, with his local 'trustworthy' histories that were not only intentional but also promotional. By this period, the sacred narrative of the past, whether true, elaborated, or wholly fictitious, had itself become a kind of commodity that worked at three scales simultaneously: as it confirmed the social capital of the historian within a *polis*, it also consolidated the identity of that *polis* via the deity while spreading the fame of both cult and *polis* well beyond. Leon could position Samos as a global player, and the success is reflected in the widely acknowledged and privileged status of *asylia*, or inviolability, obtained for the shrine, which the Samians later defended in Rome.[36] Their defence consisted of an Amphictyonic decree supposedly from the time of the foundation of Greek cities in Asia Minor; however unlikely this document may have been, the Romans accepted it and the status was confirmed.[37]

Local histories with a demonstrable connection to the deep past, preferably one that included the Trojan wars, had a highly valued currency and were thus a strategy employed by cities to gain favour and attention in the Greek world.[38] A surge in the demand for consumer-histories and aetiologies led to the high political profile that local historians and mythographers had acquired.[39] The document produced by the Samians may well have been fabricated, as was an earlier decree by the Magnesians in support of their claims of a Cretan origin.[40] Similarly, the Lindian 'chronicle', listing votive gifts from time immemorial to the recent historical past at the sanctuary of Athena Lindia in Lindos, on the island of Rhodes, has been referred to in the context of 'state fiction'.[41] But the real issue was not the authenticity of the documents, but the credibility of the claim.

This credibility took root in a ritual setting, where time itself acquires a new dimension. Assmann designates Festzeit as significantly different from Alltagzeit.[42] Drawing on Halbwachs, he states that festivals are the 'place' of cultural memory; in the flow of everyday life, they form '"islands of time", islands of a completely different temporality, suspended in time […] memory spaces of "retrospective contemplativeness" [retrospektiven Besonnenheit]'.[43] With all of their trappings and rich sensory triggers—performances with music, sounds, smells, and tastes—and framed by tradition, festivals are the perfect memory alternators that can immediately and

effectively substitute the experience of the everyday world with an alternate reality, where other rules apply. Spectacle can drive these impressions deep into the recall system, as with Whitehouse's 'flashbulb' memories in which the shock of an overwhelming (ritual) experience produces heightened acuity with regard to detail, much more so than under normal circumstances.[44] While the regularity of festivals in antiquity may temper the emotional overload, it is nonetheless the case that the element of spectacle was increasingly deployed as a mechanism for joint attention, as well as a platform for elite-showcasing through benefactions, with splendour becoming ever more central. But even less spectacular rituals cemented patterns of communal memory through their frequency and variety of collective rituals.[45] Processions were increasingly staged; they served not only to link critical places in the urban (and rural) topography, but also to establish the reality of social hierarchies.[46] Sacrifices were the primary channels of communication with the divine, but created meanwhile a common, joint focus of attention, and not without an element of competition as it was important for them to be beautiful and impressive in order to be pleasing to the gods.[47] Feasting involved the communal distribution of sacrificial meat, whether this was distributed equally or reinforced hierarchies.[48] But feasting together would have been as definitive for the community as it is in nearly every culture.[49] Finally, athletic, musical, or dramatic competitions were increasingly central to many festivals. Rivalry and connectivity are two sides of the same coin, exemplified by the subjugation to a common set of rules, but especially the shared value system of godlike excellence. Although the religious nature is debated, I do not hesitate to count agonistic events among collective rituals, especially due to the sacred context in which they took place and their emotional effect, discussed further below.[50] Other collective rituals, such as oaths, singing of hymns, and dancing were surely much more common than the sources suggest.[51]

As a locus of collective identity, festivals are flashpoints of cultural memory. They create communities by providing a common centre that is amplified by ritual. Studies on the function of ritual often claim that it is the ritual itself, rather than the deity or the signified, that subconsciously bolsters both individual cognitive structure and group like-mindedness, thereby creating an innate sense of belonging to a larger community.[52] Durkheim described the 'collective effervescence',[53] or emotional energy, brought on by ritual, but this goes even farther. As Assmann states, the festival community transcends not only the experience of the everyday, but even the group of mortals who are present.[54] The past is clearly part of the present at sanctuaries—memories are preserved in inscriptions but also other less official wall writings, such as 'graffiti' and material dedications, and sometimes tombs lining the sacred way.[55] Festivals in these sacred spaces blur the boundaries between the living and the dead but also the mortal and the divine. The growing testimonies of epiphanies in the Hellenistic era, often inscribed on the very walls of the temple of the manifesting god, bears witness to an increasing need

to tangibly locate the divine within a community.[56] Meadows speaks of the 'Great Transformation' in the later second century BCE as cities increasingly promote a tutelary deity, and the types of epiphanies recorded are generally those in which the deity actively protects his or her community.[57] All of this points to a multitude of participants, past, present, and supernatural, that were sensed in various ways at festivals.

Therefore, when we look at the social networks that were being forged via sanctuaries, we should consider them against the larger canopy of the perceived festival community, present and past, mortal and divine, but also local and global.[58] The victor lists, as mentioned above, are a small mirror of this: the collection of names represents at some level the continued presence of the contestants themselves at the sanctuary. The same may be said of lists of priests, or the delegates, and of course the great marble host, the throng of honorific statues and inscriptions, reminding visitors of those who deserve to be remembered.[59]

There were many reasons to invest in festivals and to participate in them. The memory culture of festivals and their antiquity continuously expanded with the spread of urbanism. As cities were founded or reorganised, new festivals emerged (see Figure 5.1), yet even with these, tradition and the appearance of an ancient past were critical factors to their success.[60] Another Leon, from Stratonikeia, revived the festival of Zeus during his priesthood at nearby Panamara in the early second century BCE.[61] His efforts began with researching the history of the shrine and discovering old documents, *archaia grammata*,[62] from which he construed ancient honours and rights of *asylia*, which he then used to persuade the communities of the shrine to further invest in the festival.[63] This action shows the weight given to historical claims and a desire to involve others where possible, even at a regional scale. Epiphanies further confirmed the investment of the deity in his or her community. Delphi was the prime authority that could confirm *asylia* for shrines, but involving the kings was also vital in the Hellenistic era.[64] Later this power shifted to Rome, and at Panamara the saving epiphany of Zeus gained it recognition of *asylia* from the Roman senate.[65] Grand festivals celebrating the antiquity of cult, especially those with games, clearly appealed to a shared system of values that encompassed both the weight of the past, the spectacle of ritual, the element of victory and human achievement, and divine and political authority.

The question in the Hellenistic era is exactly which community was being shaped at these festivals. As the city put itself on display, these extravagant urban festivals were increasingly directed towards the Greek world at large, as noted especially by Robert and Parker.[66] Others have moreover observed the general thickening web of cities and inter-urban interaction in this period.[67] While it is no surprise that such festivals could attract people from far and wide, it is important to examine how these connections were forged and the degree of intentionality in order to understand this nascent 'small world' of festival ties.

Activating ritual ties

An important factor in studying the formation of ties in the ancient Greek world is that this world largely considered itself to be connected already. Latent networks, based on kinship, myth, or historical reciprocity, were activated at festivals through ritual. Festivals created their own potent social realities and so it mattered very much who attended them. Depending on their openness, they could attract a wide-ranging crowd, including religious travellers, such as Pausanias, as well as merchants selling food and other goods (festivals often had market functions), and of course the locals themselves. Slater even argues that they drew 'mimes, jugglers, strong men, sideshow artists, story-tellers, animal shows'.[68] But a concerted effort was often made to invite certain other cities or individuals who were considered especially important. These invitations were carefully construed, either by the organisers of the festival, usually the priests and personnel, or by the civic body, and the responses of acceptance were inscribed at the sanctuary. As hubs, festivals thus provided channels of interstate diplomacy. They often overlapped with other forms, such as the public honour of *proxeny*, through which individuals in one city represented the interests of another.[69] Cities used festivals to bond at different scales, starting from within, then outwards to other cities in the region or across the Mediterranean and beyond. The growing inter-urban connectivity evident in the Hellenistic world has been analysed by Ma in terms of 'peer polity interaction'.[70] Drawing largely on epigraphic data, he identifies various indicators of links: *syngeneia*, or kinship; *asylia*, the widespread recognition of the inviolability of a sanctuary; *theoria*, delegations representing various cities at festivals; and arbitrators, or 'foreign' judges who presided at court hearings to ensure a neutral, non-biased outcome. Inscribing these links does not just record the event, but actively reproduces the connections, perpetuating them over time as a mental map of connections.[71] Ma is primarily interested in the institutionalised forms of interaction and stops there. Yet, all of his indicators in fact surface within the context of festivals (with the possible exception of the arbitrators, although they were publicly honoured during a festival). It is worth focusing on especially the factors of declared kinship (*syngeneia*), the commissioning of delegations (*theoria*), as well as the positioning of contestants, which Ma does not include but which we believe is essential in the context of festivals,[72] in order to better understand how these relationships were framed.

Syngeneia

The authority of the past, through relations and traditions, is a strong connective (or divisive) force which is arguably at its height in ties of kinship. As Herodotus states, the Greeks believed themselves to be linked through blood, speech, and religion.[73] In the Hellenistic world, *syngeneia* features

prominently among diplomatic relations as cities strive to display their Greekness, but also their interdependencies.[74] With festivals as the primary outlet of civic identity, *syngeneia* increasingly appears as a persuasive argument for communal engagement. In Caria, pre-*polis* sanctuaries often thrived as the common centre of a kinship group that identified itself as a *syngeneia* and that operated as a (semi-)autonomous body. An example is the Pelekos *syngeneia* that regularly met during the festival of the Carian god Sinuri, near Mylasa (Figure 5.1).[75] The community founded its collective identity in the cult and especially through its rituals, which brought them together and which they used to publicly honour their members. Even as the area was absorbed by Mylasa in the Hellenistic era, the shrine remained a focal point for the *syngeneia*, although it operated under a different name.[76] *Syngeneia* was more commonly used as a qualifier in interstate relations. At the sanctuary of Zeus at Panamara, near Stratonikeia, an unnamed priest wrote numerous letters to various surrounding communities, inviting them to join in the festival and mysteries of Zeus and appealing to their shared *syngeneia*.[77] This more common usage implies a distant shared ancestor, whether through blood or myth. Kinship ties were significant bartering chips and came with a sense of obligation, as Ma pointed out in the case of Kytenion in Boiotia and distant Xanthos (Figure 5.1).[78] The fact that they were often based on mythical ancestry should not be taken lightly, as mythical time was considered a deeper dimension of historical time, and just as authentic.[79] The appeal of *syngeneia* demonstrates a real or at least desired sense of brotherhood, whether this concerned a sub-division of a city, extended over an entire region, or spanned the known world. The usage of this term is a firm indication of the perceived network behind the intentional links being reified and commemorated through festivals.

Delegations

Besides general participation, a claim of *syngeneia*, or at least a shared heritage, was commonly used to engage delegations, or *theoroi*. This is clearly the case with the theoric connections established by Magnesia on the Maeander. When the initial announcement, in 221/220 BCE, of the new festival for Artemis Leukophryene failed to draw the crowds they were hoping for, the Magnesians renewed their efforts and launched an impressive diplomatic offensive, in which some 160 cities and kings were approached to secure their acknowledgment of the *asylia* (inviolability) of the sanctuary, but especially their participation in the festival through *theoroi* and athletes.[80] The extant epigraphic record shows the strategies of these missions and the appeal to religious authority but especially to a common heritage in order to ensure a positive response. Rutherford neatly summarises the arguments used by the Magnesians into four types: the epiphany of the goddess; affinity of kinship; reciprocity for services rendered; and peer pressure.[81] In several cases these relations were couched in specific terms of *syngeneia* as

well as *philoi* (friendship).[82] Wiemer argues that both the festival and these missions emanated from the underlying goal of the Magnesians to promote their history.[83] He observes how the embassies traversed the Greek world armed with a dossier that included the Delphic oracle mandating the festival, but also documentation demonstrating shared histories with individual poleis, and the deeds performed by Magnesia for the Greeks at large. The 'intentional history' of the Magnesians stated in the official narrative in *I.Magnesia* 17, and in their brief to Epidamnos (*I.Magnesia* 46), but especially in *I.Magnesia* 20, the fabricated document from the federation of the Cretans that presumably substantiated their claims of antiquity and migration to Asia Minor.[84] The text was apparently faked, but no one called their bluff on it as their claims were deemed legitimate.

Wiemer is correct to emphasise the role of the past in their argumentation, but it is equally clear that festival connectivity offered the Magnesians a strategy for securing their position in the present. Like the letters from the Stratonikeian priest discussed above, the Magnesian envoys were not just after any kind of public recognition, but were carefully constructing their place in the Greek world by reactivating old ties to other cities, and investing in their own deep past. Festivals such as the Leukophryena were directed at the Greek world, but inter-urban festivals could also be targeted to a very specific subset, such as federations, for example, the Doric Hexapolis in the Dodecanese.[85] In either case, the deliberation of these embassies makes clear that these were anything but 'random' or weak-link ties. Given the diplomatic nature of the connections, this should not surprise us, yet the semantic intimacy speaks of a deep, intense, and even affective relationship at an inter-urban level, more so than we would normally associate with interstate politics.[86] Relations of personal trust surely developed in the process, and the same individual could fulfil the position multiple times. Moschion, son of Kydimos, was *theoros* on various occasions for Priene, but also an important benefactor who ensured the supply of grain for the city.[87] Delegates were usually drawn from the elite and represented a tight and trusting relationship with the city. They were selected with great care by the council and then confirmed by public election.[88] This was the responsibility of the *polis*, although a person aspiring to the function may have been able to arrange the appointment himself. Rutherford observes this in at least two instances: Demosthenes of Athens was said to have volunteered as *arkhitheoros* (chief delegate) to Olympia in 324 BCE so that he could meet Nikanor of Stagira;[89] Theopropos from Kalynda in Caria, went to Ptolemaic Alexandria in 247 BCE as *theoros*, using the trip to conveniently arranging matters of private business.[90] Both cases illustrate the further complexity of festival networks as actors take on different roles simultaneously.

Festival delegations were a push-pull process, with the hosting city wanting to attract participation, an audience of peers to impress, and cities wanting to impress others as well. The urban counterpart of the travelling *theoros* was the *theorodokos*, the representative within the city who hosted

the *theoros* during his stay and ensured the success of his mission. This was also a diplomatic post and 'economic status and participation in foreign affairs and state religion [...] contributed to the selection of individuals to serve as *theorodokoi*', as Perlman surmises.[91] Returning to network theory, we could easily designate *theoros* and *theorodokos* as brokers establishing a weak tie between the strong-tie networks of their respective poleis, were it not for the fact that there was no perceived structural hole between these cities. Instead, they were already imagined as part of a larger interdependent community, and the underlying links were deliberately and carefully crafted. Although the individuals may not have known each other personally, the collective memories of their *poleis* already intersected and it is this overlap of identities that was being reactivated through festival ties.

Competitors

The goal of theoric missions was to establish channels of communication and tighter connectivity between communities, underscoring their agency in festival networks. Yet another kind of network agent may be found in the contestants, those who performed the network through multiple musical and athletic *agones*.[92] Much has been written on this topic and it is my aim here to focus only on the intentionality behind their participation. Contestants were not randomly chosen, but underwent careful training and selection as they represented their hometown.[93] In this regard it should be observed that most poleis across the Hellenistic world had a *gymnasion*, if not theatre and *stadion*, of their own.[94] Human excellence, evidenced through local but especially interstate competitions, was a value shared across the Greek world, and was cultivated from an early age onwards. The abundance of '*nike*' graffiti, especially in late imperial cities in the east, shows the deep permeability of this concept in society.[95] Victory was embedded in the Greek social imaginary and contestants could acquire pop-star status, but this should not overshadow their role as ritual actors too.[96]

Victors were amply rewarded by their own native *poleis* and received high publicity.[97] This was kept in public memory, not just by the archives, but by having the 'sacred victors', the *hieronikai*, or winners at the sacred games (especially the big four panhellenic festivals of Olympia, Delphi, Nemea, and Isthmia) appear in public events time and again, wearing their crowns. In Pergamon, for example, the *hieronikai* take their place next to the chief magistrates such as the archons, the generals, the priests and priestesses of the twelve gods and of the ruler cult, the gymnasiarchs, and the ephebes as they welcomed the return of the king, Attalos III, into the city.[98] In the imperial period, sacred victors could be included among governing bodies, as a decree from Aphrodisias shows, which lists after the *boule*, *demos*, and *gerousia* (council of elders), the *hieronikai*, the *pleistonikai* (winners of multiple games), and the *stephanitei* (crowned victors).[99] At a more organised level, the Dionysiac artists, actors who travelled to theatrical contests, were

often considered a para-civic organisation and were called upon to organise and finance festivals. Aneziri has shown that their participation is generally solicited and formalised (even with fines being assigned to performers who fail to show up).[100] Participation was not always tidily organised and Slater is right to argue that the lines between the 'fringe performers' and the more official participants should be blurred when it comes to the spectacle value.[101] While the haphazard connections would certainly increase the value of weak-tie contacts, this does not diminish from the very intentional connections that were being established through the contestants in the main events. In fact, their involvement should be regarded as part of the 'push' factor by cities, but also by gymnasiarchs, *agonothetes*, and of course the individual contestants who wanted to appear, and to win, at the festival in question and before an audience of peers.

Victorious performances could have political resonance. In her study of the middle ground between Phoenician and Greek relations, Corinne Bonnet discussed the case of Diotimos of Sidon who competed and won the chariot race in the Nemean games around 200 BCE.[102] Especially the inscribed epigram of his victory is interesting, as the poet situated Diotimos's victory as a win not just for Sidon, but also for Thebes by framing it through deep ties of mythical kinship between Thebes and Sidon via Agenor, first king of Sidon and son of the king of Argos, and father of Phoenix (founder of Phoenicia), Europa, and Kadmos, founder of Thebes and credited with introducing the Phoenician alphabet to the Greeks. Diotimos' win at Nemea meant a glorious reunion between Sidon and Thebes, calling for a celebration on both sides. The popularity of such panhellenic games was vast, due not only to the antiquity of cult, but also simply, and circularly, to their central place in the common knowledge and shared value system of Hellenic culture. The magnetism of victory was further reinforced by epinikian poetry, particularly Pindar, in his exaltation of athletes and their near godlike qualities. Building on Kurke's argument of the economy of kudos, Aloni recently examined this poetry in connection with cities, concluding that such epic praise surfaces more in cities defined by prominent elite families (that produce winners) than in more egalitarian communities where collective civic identity is foregrounded.[103] Nonetheless, epinikian poetry, along with commemorative statues and ceremonial appearances, would have contributed significantly to the high value placed on victory and the social capital of winners across the Greek world.

The commemorative nature of this kind of mediatisation shows another dimension of connectivity that festivals, and particularly the contestants, could offer—that with the past. Victor lists are, again, especially interesting in this regard.[104] Normally there would normally be little or no overlap between successive victors, except for those competing in circuits within roughly the same generation, and most would not have known each other personally. At the surface, this would problematise placing them within a social network, since the model assumes a transmission of ideas via direct

communication or contact. Nonetheless, victors are connected to each other through a community of stone, whether in lists or sculpture; a community that was made very public, and one which rising athletes surely aspired to join. So although they could never have met face to face, Andromedes of Corinth, for example, who won the *stadion* in the 119th Olympiad (304 BCE), may nonetheless have felt a kind of kindred camaraderie with his compatriot Desmon, who won in the same event, but centuries before, in the 14th Olympiad (724 BCE).[105] The inscriptions themselves inspire admiration but also create ties in the mind of the reader, whether athlete or spectator, and that is surely one of their primary intentions. More than an inventory, such inscriptions forged a new community, one of victors, and one that transcended time by interjecting the past into the present.

Agency is thus located both in the actions of individuals functioning as brokers, the *theoroi* and *theorodokoi*, and the competitors. Agency is also found in objects such as inscriptions, statues, but also coins that connect the city, the god, and the festival,[106] and the (for us) more ephemeral objects, such as the crowns won and later dedicated—all of these bore testimony to the expanding festival community over time. Ultimately it is the larger framework of the community, the common heritage, the reactivated *syngeneia*, or brotherhood that generates and is in turn regenerated by these festival connections.[107] These ritualised ties were anything but random. They were deliberately put in place to strengthen the network across boundaries of territory, region, and kingdoms. While there were surely casual and even 'random' visits that would further the knowledge of festivals across different communities,[108] festivals served as a conduit for ties shaped by kinship, heritage, parity, and reciprocity, and served to draw cities together in an increasingly tighter network of inter-urban communities. Of course, none of this would have had any effect without the presence of the crowd, who had a normative role of their own and whose participation was critical in the flow of information across the Greek world. This common knowledge is key to the function of festival networks.

Common knowledge through ritual

If festivals were a prime vehicle for creating inter-urban ties across the Greek East, this is because ritual was the oil that ensured a common foundation. In the first section we observed the central role of festivals in not only retaining but also producing cultural and collective memory. Yet besides this institutional function, it is the subliminal effect of rituals themselves that are especially coercive in both structuring the community and aligning the individual mind within this community. Festivals clearly had a certain logic of their own.[109] Different from the routine of quotidian life, they were highly regulated, as the plethora of ritual norms, or 'sacred laws' demonstrates.[110] While no two festivals were exactly the same, as Slater argues, there was a shared grammar of interaction through which the general rules were understood by all, despite the local variations.[111] This grammar is part of the language

of ritual. One of the most detailed examples is the lengthy prescription of behaviour at the Andania festival near Messene.[112] This document contains precise instructions on preparations for the procession and festival, such as abstinence, uniform attire that ensured a measure of equality among the participants, but also the prohibition of certain kinds of behaviour and penalties, reinforced with corporal punishment (by whip). Where competitions were concerned, the rules of the game were even more strictly monitored to ensure fair play. Such regulations enforced a common approach and their inscription was intended to disseminate common knowledge. Yet even without prescriptions, festivals are in themselves normative in their expectations of collective behaviour, as with the unspoken but nonetheless reinforced regulations at bluegrass festivals, discussed above.[113] The combination of rules with rivalry is an especially a powerful accelerator of common knowledge, making the thrill of victory that much more intense.[114] 'We Won!' is not so much a statement of fact as a cry of collective emotion, bringing with it the sense of belonging to something immensely larger than oneself.[115]

Yet at the same time, rituals work at a much more intuitive, subliminal level. In their research on the cognitive science of religion, McCauley and Lawson argue how the human brain is wired for ritual, creating synaptic shortcuts that enhance thought processes.[116] Their approach focuses on how neural pathways are reinforced by the compulsive nature of ritual, in which things must proceed in a particular fashion, with the correct words, gestures, or objects, in order not to fail. This is especially effective in collective ritual, where the element of performing the ritual correctly, but especially of performing it correctly together, triggers an unparalleled sense of unity and belonging. Turner identifies the resulting *communitas* as 'the direct, immediate, and total confrontation of human identities which tends to make those experiencing it think of mankind as a homogeneous, unstructured and free community'.[117] Like Assmann, Turner underscores the alterity of the ritual experience, but positions ritual as antithetical to the structure of everyday.

Key is the performance itself. Drawing on Goffman and Durkheim, Randall Collins' theory of interaction ritual chains (IRC) emphasises the importance of physical assembly in ritual as people engage in a 'homogeneity of movement, synchrony'.[118] Festivals facilitate this kind of spontaneous organisation as bodies naturally react to each other; for example, the synchronous applause after a good performance at a modern festival or concert. An example from the ancient world is found at Panamara (Figure 5.1), where during an attack at the sanctuary the population continuously 'shouted in a great voice, Great is Zeus Panamaros'.[119] Although provoked more by stress than ritual, this example nonetheless shows the kind of collective organisation that can spontaneously take place in a large gathering, as people, that is, bodies respond to each other. As with swarms, Barabási argues for the self-organisation of the 'scale-free' networks that spontaneously turn disorder into order.[120] This is especially relevant to the emotional energy of such situational social interactions charged by ritual, again Durkheim's 'collective effervescence'.[121]

Game theorist Chwe observes the efficacy of 'rational rituals', mass ceremonies, as coordinating mechanisms that create a joint focus, thereby generating common knowledge.[122] Common knowledge, in his view, is the underlying guide in decision-making. This works for both mass ceremonies in place, for the ancient world think of sacrifices, feasting, but also competitions, and those on the move, such as processions. Such public spectacles are a factor in aligning collective thought.[123] Ancient festivals and their spectacles also worked in this way. As with Collins' IRC theory, the innate common knowledge gained by doing the same thing together, in the same way and at the same time, ensures a subliminal kind of bonding that may later find expression through myths and aetiologies. Collins emphasises physical co-presence, while Chwe further stresses the importance of eye-contact in instantaneously conveying emotions and triggering the mutual reciprocity of thought, that is, 'I know that you know that I know… etc.'.[124] Ritual space is thus most powerful in what Chwe calls the 'inward-facing circle', a centralising ceremonial space that facilitates mutual eye-contact and intensifies the collective experience, similar to what Huizenga called the 'magic circle', a space where other rules apply.[125] These are powerful, volatile spaces, and we should remember that besides collective harmony they are also the scenes of mass riots and violence, for exactly the same reasons.[126]

With the power of communication that these spaces possess, and the need to communicate to increasingly larger audiences, it is little wonder that the surge of inter-urban festivals went hand in hand with the appearance of theatres, stadia, and enclosed peristyle sanctuaries, often kilometres away from the urban centre. All of these served to separate the visitor from the surrounding environment and focus public attention inward.[127] As more and more cities across the Greek East developed their prime sanctuaries along similar lines and for this exact purpose, we should consider these spaces as network repeaters of common knowledge, disseminating this sameness, albeit with couleur locale, via the wide-ranging audience that convened at the shrines.[128]

These places and their festivals reproduced common knowledge that reinforced the strong ties linking communities across the Mediterranean and well beyond. Knowledge of the festival, the rituals, the winners and the myths, all helped to create a festival culture that spanned across the Greek world. Yet more than as rational ties, the kind of common knowledge produced through ritual was profoundly subliminal and cemented these relations in a visceral way, probably fostering the same kind of emotional energy felt among modern festival-goers. In this sense they engendered a portable community, much like the bluegrass festivals discussed by Gardner, even though individuals could come and go, the sense of community remained constant.[129] The material act of leaving something of one's self behind in these places, for example, through votives as gifts for the gods, testimonies of miraculous healing, or informal writings or markings on architecture ('graffiti') testify to a need to belong, 'I too was here', and a desire to perpetuate one's presence over time.

The portable community that emerged from these festivals lent their participants the role of broker, in communicating the common knowledge from the festivals to their homelands and beyond. Besides the athletes, musicians, and official delegations (*theoroi*), others who were less formally involved, the story-tellers, street artists, soothsayers, merchants and peddlers, tourists and the public-at-large, were also ritual agents in this sense, spreading the word whether intentionally or out of excitement or for other reasons. Furthermore there is a sense of spectacle rivalry, culminating in the imperial period, wherein the burden generally lay with the priests to make their festival a most memorable event for all attending, as we already saw with Leon and Panamara.[130] Whether the spectacles were intensive enough to qualify as one of Whitehouse's 'flashbulb memories' may be debated, but they surely led to an altered sense of time as Assmann argued, situating the memory of festival in a different level of cognisance than quotidian experience.[131]

Rituals are undeniably central to the formation of community in every age, but ancient festivals had the additional dimension of divine sanction and (perceived) weight of the past. The spectacles, the games, the sacrifices, the processions and hymns, all took place under the watchful gaze of the gods and heroes. Religious authority and deep tradition were the main drivers behind the rituals, and were also what made them such strong shapers of society, even with seemingly new elective cults.[132] Again this had to do with the shared value system that was cyclically reinforced through festivals. Festivals were not solely dependent on strong tie networks, but they certainly helped to create them, fostering even stronger bonds among the participants. The common knowledge that proceeded from this was deeply entrenched, and surely one of the reasons that a traveller could readily feel at home in festivals across the ancient world. While there were certainly the obvious local differences, they shared the same underlying festival grammar; like bluegrass festivals, they generated a common ground for the increasingly portable communities.

Conclusion

This consideration of the context and strength of festival ties in antiquity has brought us to three main points pertaining to time, intentional relations, and common knowledge. In the first place, the festival was a prime locus of collective memory, and was central to urban identity. Festivals are time machines in the sense that they transcend the quotidian experience of life. They provide an alternative experience through ritual, often in a spatial setting separated or even far removed from the everyday world, presumably even for much of the rural population living in the countryside of the city. Despite their alterity, major festivals laid the foundations of social and urban structure, with political events marked by festival cycles. At the same time, sanctuaries were urban memory banks, harbouring dedications to

the gods, but also state archives, public and honorific decrees, lists of winners of contests that had been hosted, but also multiple layers of dedications, sometimes for several generations or over centuries. The sense of deep time increased the authority of the festival as well as its fame and the scope of attention that it was likely to attract.

In the second place, the position of the city in the larger world of cities was shaped through the dynamics of festivals contacts. Strategies, sometimes highly complex as with Magnesia, were deliberately crafted to appeal to other communities. Ties were intentionally forged through kinship, overlapping collective memories and myth. Both push and pull factors were at work as hosting cities sought to ensure the acknowledgment and participation of key players and royal powers, and as invited cities saw opportunity to put themselves on display before their peers by sending their best delegations as well as their best contestants. Much was at stake on every side. Yet in the end host, delegation and contestant, who may well have met for the first time personally during the festival, would have envisaged themselves as part of the same 'extended' family, in a strong-tie network. Meanwhile, the roles of the agents of this network shifted and overlapped, for example, *theoroi* may have had other business matters to attend to while friendships and other relationships surely spontaneously formed as business combined with pleasure.

Finally, through their rituals, these festivals served as highly effective conduits of common knowledge. Cognitive science has underscored ways that ritual aligns thought processes.[133] Collective ritual especially enables common knowledge to be transmitted almost instantaneously. In successful rituals, situational body interaction and synchrony trigger a subliminal feeling of belonging. Essential here is not the meaning, symbolism or knowledge of the ritual, but the ritual itself and the very fact that it is performed collectively. The memory of the event is often retained through inscriptions, imagery and objects, architecture and the very topography, which in themselves become transmitters, or agents, of common knowledge over time. Common knowledge goes much further than a shared experience as it is normative and implies a measure of group predictability. This, combined with the necessary mobility, is what makes turns participants of these expanding festival networks into a portable community, as the underlying grammar of the individual rituals became more and more aligned with the larger festival culture.

This festival culture was a circular production system, as it was the product of perceived strong ties while forging them at the same time. Most interesting is the need to actually come together. It was not enough to simply acknowledge a festival, but delegations were expected and rituals were to be performed jointly. These networks collapsed both the physical and cultural distance between the urban centres of the new Greek world as local communities sought a connection to what they perceived as a shared Greek past. This emerging festival network was purposefully crafted, and the brokers carefully selected before being brought together. This solicited a propinquity,

especially within the context of ties of kinship and friendship, that would have fostered the sort of homophily, that is, 'birds of a feather', that leads to strong-tie networks and especially group-think, even though these groups spanned much of the eastern Mediterranean and well beyond.[134]

No ancient historian will be surprised at the deliberation with which contacts were forged, given the abundance of documentation in this regard. The essential problem lays in the application of network theory as defined in the small-world model, where innovation is presumed to come from outside the strong-tie network, seen as static, via brokers as random links, that is, weak ties. The primary aim of this chapter has been to establish that the broker role at sanctuaries was not randomly filled but, on the contrary, was a process carefully construed by all parties involved and built on what was believed to be pre-existing relationships based on kinship, myth, or reciprocity. While the locus of innovation in this network remains for a future study, this chapter offers some important considerations. In the first place, festival networks allowed for an extremely rapid transfer of information via ritual as coordinating mechanism and the strength of the festival ties, especially as these networks gathered momentum and grew increasingly dense. In the second place, before turning to external factors, usually applied to interpret these expansion and changes in ritual, the internal factors within a festival community need to be examined much more closely. The assumption that strong-tie networks are by nature static is surely false, considering group dynamics and internal asymmetries. Social and political imbalances in themselves lead to change.[135] Finally, external factors need not always be negative, such as anxiety, impending irrelevance or a crisis in faith. What if cities found new opportunities in reaching out beyond their borders, and securing not just alliances but also new avenues for trade, or sometimes even a good solution to an internal crisis?[136]

In sum, the binary classification of ties as either weak or strong is not particularly informative regarding festival networks. In contrast with modern urban anonymity, the ancient Greek world was generally framed within a known reference system, in which everyone, and every community or city, and every sanctuary had a place. Moreover, actors in festival networks fulfilled a variety of roles simultaneously, some of them official and deliberately crafted, while other encounters will have been more spontaneous. Broker functions took place at many levels, and second-degree ties, that is, ties emerging between two communities connected for differing reasons to a third common community, need to be examined more closely, as does the emergence of clusters and asymmetries in these networks. Of course, numerous other connections must have randomly developed side-by-side with these intentional networks. People of all kinds were drawn to festivals and their paths crossed, but they also crossed city streets and open countryside in the same physical environment. A next step would be to investigate the variety and overlap of interests, levels of social connections and portable communities that evolved from these intentional ritual networks.

Abbreviations

BNJ Worthington, I. (2006–) *Brill's New Jacoby* (online revised edition of Jacoby's *Die Fragmnete der Griechischen Historiker* I–III), https://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brill-s-new-jacoby (accessed 2021).

CGRN Carbon, J.M., S. Peels and V. Pirenne-Delforge (2016–) *A Collection of Greek Ritual Norms* (CGRN), Liège http://cgrn.ulg.ac.be (accessed 2021).

FD **III** Colin, G., R. Flacelière, A. Plassart and J. Pouilloux (1930–1976) *Fouilles de Delphes. Tome III, Épigraphie. Fasc. IV, Inscriptions de la terrasse du temple et de la région nord du sanctuaire, 4 vols*. Paris: de Boccard.

iAph Reynolds, J., C. Roueché and G. Bodard (2007) *Inscriptions of Aphrodisias*, http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007/index.html (accessed 2021).

I.Ephesos Engelmann, H. and D. Knibbe (1979–1984) *Die Inschriften von Ephesos. 8 vols. in 9 parts, with a Supplement*, Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, 11,1–17,4, Bonn: Rudolf Habelt.

I.Iasos Blümel, W. (1985) *Die Inschriften von Iasos*, Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, Band 28, Bonn: Rudolf Habelt.

I.Lindos Blinkenberg, C.S. and K.F. Kinch (1941) *Lindos. Fouilles et recherches, 1902–1914. II: Inscriptions publiées en grande partie d'après les copies de K. F. Kinch, avec un appendice contenant diverses autres inscriptions rhodiennes*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

I.Magnesia Kern, O. (1900) *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander*, Berlin: Spemann.

I.Priene Hiller von Gaertringen, F. (1906) *Inschriften von Priene*, Berlin: Reimer.

IvP Fränkel, M. (1890) VIII. Die Inschriften von Pergamon. Teil 1. Bis zum Ende der Königzeit, Altertümer von Pergamon, Berlin: Spemann.

I.Stratonikeia Şahin, M.Ç. (1981–2010) *Die Inschriften von Stratonikeia, 3 vols., Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien, Bd. 21–23*, Bonn: Habelt.

MAMA VIII Calder, W.M. and J.M.R. Cormack (1962) *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiqua (MAMA) VIII: Monuments from Lycaonia, the Pisido-Phrygian borderland, Aphrodisias, Publications of the American society for archaeological research in Asia Minor, 8*, Manchester: University Pressin assoc. with the Society.

Syll.3 Dittenberger, W. (1915–1924) *Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum, 3rd ed.*, Leipzig: Hirzel.

Notes

1. This chapter is part of a triad (also Williamson in press a and b) written during a research fellowship at the Max-Weber-Kolleg at the University of Erfurt, in the context of the project 'Religion and Urbanity: reciprocal formations'. The research also stems from the projects 'Deep-mapping sanctuaries' and

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2. Smith 2019, 67–87, and 69, with the metaphor 'prehistoric Woodstock'. On Göbekli Tepe: Notroff et al. 2014, with references.
3. E.g., Morgan 1990; Malkin 2011. See also the contributions in this volume by Mooring and Daniels.
4. *SEG* 35, 1476; Petropoulou 2006, for a pre-urban context of this foundation as part of a *synoikismos*; Roueché and Sherwin-White 1985.
5. Chaniotis 1995, the Database of Hellenistic Athletes (University of Mannheim) http://www.athletes.geschichte.uni-mannheim.de, and the Connected Contests database (University of Groningen) http://www.connectedcontests.org.
6. Duffy and Waitt 2011, 44.
7. *Syll.*^{3} 390, l. 22, *FD* III 4:357, l. 15–17. On the surge in festivals and crowned games: Robert 1984; Chaniotis 1995; Parker 2004a; Slater and Summa 2006; Mann 2018.
8. Esp. Chaniotis 1991; discussions in Beck and Wiemer 2009a.
9. Van Nijf and Williamson 2016, and now the project in Groningen: 'Connecting the Greeks. Multi-scalar festival networks in the Graeco-Roman period', see *connectingthegreeks.com*.
10. See introduction, also among many others: Kadushin 2012; Barabási and Pósfai 2016; and on objects: Knappett 2008; Brughmans et al. 2016.
11. Granovetter 1973.
12. Described in Malkin 2011, 36–39, with references.
13. Watts and Strogatz 1998; also Malkin 2011, regarding the development of the Archaic Mediterranean into a 'Small Greek world' via colonisation.
14. Barabási and Pósfai 2016, 72–111 discusses this problem in detail.
15. McPherson et al. 2001; White 2008; Kadushin 2012, 35.
16. These are being incorporated in the online database http://www.connectedcontests.org.
17. Examples abound. The Lykaia festival, for example, was believed to be among the oldest games, while being steeped in local myth (e.g. Paus. 8.2.1–2); the Lindian 'chronicle' blurs any boundaries between mythological and historical time, measured through votive objects and their donors, discussed further below, along with other examples.
18. Gardner 2004.
19. Gardner 2004, 170, and 156, citing Bellah et al. 1985 on the difference between segmented lifestyle enclaves and communities of memory. See also Turner's *communitas*, in which festivals provide a necessary anti-structure to the structure of everyday life, creating alternative communities that are distinct from the city or the state, Turner 1974a. Also, Duffy and Waitt 2011, 55: 'the festival is, in fact, a paradoxical thing; festival events function as a form of social integration and cohesion, while simultaneously they are sites of subversion, protest or exclusion and alienation. It is precisely this paradoxical nature that creates the festival's socio-spatial and political significance for notions of community and belonging'. cited in Frost 2016, 571.
20. Gardner 2004, 163, cites 'norms of inclusivity, intimacy, and simple and natural living' as the three key motives that participants list for travelling thousands of miles to attend such festivals.

21. Boyer 1990.
22. E.g. Bruit Zaidman and Pantel 1992, 63–79; Wijma 2014. See also the Collection of Greek Ritual Norms (CGRN), http://www.cgrn.ulg.ac.be, for further discussion.
23. Sourvinou-Inwood 1990, 304–305, 'The Greek polis articulated religion and was itself further articulated by it…'; for a critical view, see Kindt 2012.
24. Discussed in Beck and Wiemer 2009b; Funke and Haake 2013.
25. Bluegrass festivals are, by contrast, 'institutional lite', Gardner 2004, 174.
26. Durkheim 1912; Rüpke 2015 on structure and agency; Williamson in press a discusses the inclusiveness of festival space.
27. *CGRN* 52 (Erchia); *CGRN* 156 (Mykonos); see Carbon 2015, 539–543.
28. Williamson 2020, 149.
29. Christesen 2007, Tables 3–5, and 45–160 on Hippias of Elis, his context, motives, and methods.
30. Polybios *Hist.* 1.3, for example, dates his narrative to the 140th Olympiad (220–216 BCE) and *Hist.* 12.10.4, on Timaeus' construction of chronologies based on comparative lists, discussed in Christesen 2007, 277–289.
31. See further Christesen 2007 on the accessibility of the texts.
32. On the rise in historicity, see esp. Herrmann 1984; Chaniotis 1988; Gehrke 2001; Dillery 2005; Beck and Wiemer 2009a; Chiai 2013.
33. Prominent examples include Syriskos of Chersonesos and the authors of the Lindian 'chronicle'; see among others Rostowzew 1920; Higbie 2003; Dillery 2005; Platt 2011.
34. *IG* 12.6.1.285; *BNJ* 540 T1 (transl. A. d'Hautcourt, 2007): ὁ δῆμος ὁ Σαμίων | Λέοντα ᾿Αρίστωνος |χαλκὸς ἀπ᾿ ἠερίας δρυπτόμενος |νιφάδος, (5) | καὶ τὸ σιδάρειον κάμνει σθένος· ἁ δ᾿ ἀπὸ δόξας | ἄθραυστος φάμα πάντα μένει βίοτον. | τᾶς δὲ Λέων ἐκύρησε κατὰ πτόλιν, ὃς περὶ πάτρας | πράξιας εἰς πινυτὰς ἄγαγεν ἱστορίας, | ὑμνήσας Ἥραν αὐτόχθονα καὶ πόσα ναυσὶν (10) | ῥέξαντες σκύλοις ἱερὸν ἀγλάισαν. Also discussed and translated in Dillery 2005; Chaniotis 1988.
35. Gehrke 2001.
36. Due to the abundance of claims to *asylia* in the Greek world, the Roman emperor Tiberius held a council in 23 BCE, investigating each case, Tacitus, *Ann*. 4.14. Belloni 1984; Rigsby 1996, 580–586.
37. Rigsby 1996, 394–398, and no. 2, discussing Herrmann 1960, 90–93, no. 5. The inscription confirms the *asylia* of Samos together with that of Kos, for the Asklepieion.
38. Especially connections to Homeric heroes, see also Scheer 1993.
39. Ma 2003; Beck and Wiemer 2009a.
40. *I.Magnesia* 20, Wiemer 2009, 88 discusses the Cretan formulas; also below.
41. *I.Lindos* 2; Kosmetatou 2012. Other interpretation of the inventory of votives: Gehrke 2001; Shaya 2005; Platt 2011, 161–169.
42. Assmann 1991.
43. Halbwachs 1925; Assmann 1995, 129, drawing on Aby Warburg's Mnemosyne Atlas project with the term *retrospektiven Besonnenheit*. On sanctuaries and collective memory, see also Alcock 2002; Beck and Wiemer 2009a; Cusumano 2013 among many others.
44. Whitehouse 2004.
45. McCauley and Lawson 2002.
46. Chaniotis 1995; Chaniotis 2013.
47. Bremmer 2007; Mylonopoulos 2006, esp. 71–84.
48. Schmitt Pantel 1990; Schmitt Pantel 1992; Strootman 2018.
49. Nielsen and Nielsen 2001; Mylonopoulos 2006, 77–79.
50. Winkler and Zeitlin 1990; Kyle 2007; Mikalson 2007; van Nijf 2013a; Mann 2017.

51. Chaniotis 1988; Lonsdale 1993; Naerebout 1997; Kowalzig 2007b.
52. Geertz 1980; Chwe 2001; McCauley and Lawson 2002.
53. Durkheim 1912.
54. Assmann 1991, 26: 'Die Gemeinschaft, die im Fest zusammenfindet, geht aber über die Gruppe der real Anwesenden hinaus. Zu ihr gehören typischerweise die Toten und – damit zunächst aufs engste zusammenhängend – das Heilige oder Kosmische'.
55. Esp. in Asia Minor at outlying sanctuaries, as at the Asklepieion in Pergamon, Labraunda, Panamara. This topic is understudied.
56. A prominent example is the epiphany of Zeus at Panamara, near Stratonikeia in Caria, *I.Stratonikeia* 10, discussed in Rivault 2018. On epiphanies: Rostowzew 1920; Wheeler 2004; Platt 2011; Petridou 2016. On epiphanies and temples, Williamson 2018.
57. Meadows 2018, on coinage. On epiphanies: Rostowzew 1920; Wheeler 2004; Platt 2011; Petridou 2016. On epiphanies and temples, Williamson 2018.
58. A similar host of witnesses—past and present, tangible, and intangible—may be observed at Ephesos, in the Salutaris Procession (Rogers 1991) or the inclusion of statues of tribes, personifications, deities, and local heroes at meetings of the popular assembly in the theatre of Ephesos (*I.Ephesos* 28–36), as discussed by Chaniotis 2007. The inclusion of human and non-human ritual agents is further discussed in Rüpke 2015.
59. Traveller Pausanias is careful to elaborate on monuments and local stories at sanctuaries, in his *Periegesis*, written in the second century CE.
60. Chaniotis 1995.
61. van Bremen 2004, who discusses this from a political perspective.
62. *I.Stratonikeia* 7, line 4.
63. *I.Stratonikeia* 7, lines 4–9, 'from the [letter]s? and from the old documents, and having reconstructed that the above-mentioned honours and (grants of) *asylia* adhered to Zeus and to the Panamareis, he persuaded the entire people to make the sacrifices more splendid and better and going to certain *demoi* he persuaded them, too, to participate in sacrificing'. transl. van Bremen 2004, 240–241. This was issued by the Panamareis, the community at the shrine. Inscriptions from other communities include Kallipolis (*I.Stratonikeia* 1401) and the Laodikeis (*I.Stratonikeia* 1401), both in translation in van Bremen 2004, 241–244.
64. As at Magnesia on the Maeander, *I.Magnesia* 16, or Bargylia *I.Iasos* 613, discussed in Wiemer 2009, 117.
65. *I.Stratonikeia* 10 records the epiphany of Zeus; Rivault 2018, with references. Panamara put the *polis* of Stratonikeia in the unique situation of defending (successfully) the rights of *asylia* at both shrines before the council of Tiberius, Tacitus, *Ann*. 4.14, mentioned above.
66. Robert 1984; Parker 2004a.
67. Rostovtzeff 1941, 1056–1057; Millar 2004, 131; Beck and Wiemer 2009a; Meadows 2018.
68. Slater 2007, 44.
69. Festival delegates were often awarded *proxeny*, see Kowalzig 2007a and especially Mack 2015.
70. Ma 2003. Peer polity interaction was developed by Renfrew and Cherry to interpret the Bronze Age networks of the Aegean, Renfrew and Cherry 1986. See also Chiai 2013, although he does not discuss connections in these terms.
71. Ma 2003, 21: 'All these symbolic maps do more than just reflect or participate in peer polity interaction: to a great extent, they *are* peer polity interaction'.
72. See the website *connectedcontests.org*.

73. Hdt. 8.144.2 ‘the kinship of all Greeks in blood and speech, and the shrines of gods and the sacrifices that we have in common, and the likeness of our way of life’ as one reason for never surrendering to the Persians.
74. On *syngeneia* in interstate contexts see esp. Bresson and Debord 1985; Jones 1999; Curty 2001; Patterson 2010.
75. Wilhelm 1947; Williamson 2016 and 2021.
76. The *syngeneia* of Pormounos appears at the end of the fourth or early third century, Robert 1945.
77. *I.Stratonikeia* 25 (Alinda), 27 (Nysa), 33–35 (unnamed), 37 (Miletos), probably all from the imperial period; see also Williamson 2013.
78. *SEG* 38.1476, discussed in Ma 2003, 9–12; also Chiai 2013, 86. Kytenion appealed to Xanthos for aid in building their city wall, elaborately spelling out their common ancestry and arguing that by supporting their endeavour the Xanthians would not only be doing them a favour, but also to all the Aetolians, Dorians, and even King Ptolemaios. Although Xanthos ultimately gave them very little, the inscription, inscribed in the temple of Leto at Xanthos, bears witness to their acknowledgment of the obligation.
79. As the fluidity in the Lindian ‘chronicle’ or the Parian marble shows; Dillery 2005; also Patterson 2010.
80. *I.Magnesia* 16, and *I.Magnesia* 17–87, nearly 100 cities appeared only in lists. Rigsby 1996, 179–279, nos. 66–131. On the crowned games: Slater and Summa 2006; Thonemann 2007.
81. Rutherford 2013, 271. He also stresses the use of primary sources and the ‘mini-library’ that the Magnesians carried with them as evident in *I.Magnesia* 17 and 20, ‘perhaps they even performed the poetic texts for the benefit of their audience’.
82. *Syngeneia* appears in at least thirteen cases. Besides Antioch in Persis and Antioch in Pisidia, both of which were partly colonised by Magnesians, the relations with Knidos, Gonnoi, the Phokian League, Megalopolis, Messene, Epidamnos, Chalkis, Mytilene, Syracuse, and two unknown cities, are framed as *syngeneia*, and in many cases *philoi* as well.
83. Wiemer 2009, 87.
84. Chaniotis 1999; Carless Unwin 2017, 169–188. On ‘intentional history’, Gehrke 2001.
85. Mann 2018, 306–307.
86. Sjoukje Kamphorst addresses the language of connectivity in her doctoral thesis, ‘Carving communities in stone. Inscriptions as a medium of Hellenistic interactions’, at the University of Groningen. On the use of kinship and *philia* to express relations within the city, see van Nijf 2013b.
87. *I.Priene* 108.
88. On theoric appointments see Rutherford 2013, 156–173, and Perlman 2000, 37–62 on the duties and appointment of the *theorodokoi*.
89. Dem. 82, cited in Rutherford 2013, 164, n. 53. In the same note, Rutherford refers to an unpublished oracle at Dodona, in which the inquirer asks whether he should act as *theoros*.
90. Rutherford 2013, 164, and 257–258, n. 35, referring to Zenon Papyrus 59341(a), with further references. The business matter pertained to the reimbursement of 250 drachmas that he had paid for wine at a festival at nearby Kypranda.
91. Perlman 2000, 45.
92. van Nijf and Williamson 2016; Mann 2018.
93. van Nijf 2010, 2011.
94. Jones 1964, 10 argues that if a place like Jerusalem had a *gymnasion* (II Maccabees 4:12–15), then most other cities would have had one too.

95. Remarked by Ziebarth 1909, 104. My thanks to Onno van Nijf for relaying this reference.
96. Mann 2017 gives a good discussion of the dismissal of sport as a religious event in scholarly tradition; also Murray 2014, van Nijf 2013a.
97. Slater and Summa 2006; Slater 2015; Mann 2018.
98. *IvP* 1.246, found near the harbour town Elaia.
99. *iAph* 13.124; *MAMA* VIII.495.
100. Aneziri 2007.
101. Slater 2007, 45.
102. Bonnet 2013, 50–52, with references.
103. Kurke 1993; Aloni 2012.
104. The online database of performers, http://www.connectedcontests.org, is largely based on such lists.
105. As recorded in Eusebius' *Chronographia*, listed in Christesen 2007, 30–31, 388–389.
106. Festival coinage: Nollé and Nollé 1994; Meadows 2018.
107. Rüpke 2015, 351: 'Structure and agency constitute each other…'
108. E.g. Slater's 'fringe performers', or tourists like Pausanias, or the two women in Herondas' fourth mime who visit the Asklepieion on Kos, but also merchants, and the crowd at large.
109. Assmann 1991, 22–23.
110. E.g. Parker 2004b; Carbon and Pirenne-Delforge 2012.
111. Slater 2007. See also Parker 2018, who finds enough consistency in ritual norms across the Greek world to be suggestive of 'something we can call Greek religion'.
112. Deshours 2006; Wiemer 2009, 96–101; Gawlinski 2012.
113. Gardner 2004.
114. Appadurai 1996, on cricket in India as a 'hard' form of British culture that was entirely absorbed locally.
115. Caillois 1961; Serres 2011.
116. McCauley and Lawson 2002; McCauley and Lawson 2007. Rüpke 2015, 358 discusses the problems of such cognitive approaches in explaining ritual diversity.
117. Turner 1974b, also Boissevain 2016, 623 on dynamic festivals: '*Communitas* is an ideal status that can be achieved, albeit temporarily, by celebrating together'. On *communitas* and ancient festivals, Kowalzig 2007a, Iddeng 2012.
118. Collins 2004, 33–35; Durkheim 1912; Goffman 1974.
119. *I.Stratonikeia* 10, line 13: ἔτι δὲ ἀναβοώ̟ν[των] μεγάλῃ τῇ φωνῇ Μέγαν εἶναι Δία Πανάμαρον.
120. Barabási and Pósfai 2016, 110.
121. On emotion and ritual, see esp. Chaniotis 2010.
122. Chwe 2001.
123. Chwe 2001, 22–23, on the role of ceremony as coordinating mechanism in the French Revolution, with references. Also McCauley and Lawson 2002; Collins 2004, 31–36; Whitehouse 2004, on cognitive focus through emotional intensity of ritual.
124. Chwe 2001, 30–33, also noting the obsession with round communal spaces in the French Revolution; also Tomasello 2009.
125. Chwe 2001, 30–35; Huizinga 1949; Williamson in press a.
126. Collins 2004, 42 regards the transformative role of ritual mobilisation in broader terms, also in connection with revolutions.
127. Discussed at length in Williamson in press a.
128. Discussed at length, with examples, in Williamson in press a, also b.

129. Gardner 2004, 174: 'Devoted members of the RMBS attend festivals faithfully and arrange their work and vacation schedules to ensure consistent attendance from festival to festival and from year to year'.
130. Discussed above. See also Chaniotis 1997; Koch Piettre 2018; also Rüpke 2013 and the 'logic of escalation'; Rüpke 2015.
131. Whitehouse 2004; Assmann 1991.
132. Martin 2006; Price 2012.
133. E.g. Whitehouse 2004; Chwe 2001; Collins 2004.
134. On homophily and group-think: McPherson et al. 2001; White 2008. See also Mooring (this volume).
135. White 2008; Mack 2015 on asymmetric proxeny relations.
136. Mackil 2004 on cities in the face of dissolution.

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