

## BOOK REVIEW

*Aegean Interactions: Delos and its Networks in the Third Century.* By CHRISTY CONSTANTAKOPOULOU. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. x + 331. Hardback, \$110.00. ISBN: 978-0-19-878727-3.

In this volume Christy Constantakopoulou continues the work on insularity and networks in ancient Greece that she has published in a number of articles and an outstanding first book, *Dance of the Islands*.<sup>1</sup> Her introductory chapter lays out the context of this body of work, explaining the recent scholarly interest in networks, insularity and regionalism, always fully engaged with the work of other scholars, with the theoretical underpinnings of these studies and with the methodological difficulties and pitfalls associated with them. Finally, she explains her focus on Delos in its period of independence in the long third century BCE before its liberation from Athenian control in 314 and until the Athenians recovered control in 166. The remarkable abundance of epigraphic evidence from Delos for this period, she argues, allows us insights into the social and economic history of a period that resists chronological narrative due to the paucity of historical sources. Her contribution moves the scholarship on 3<sup>rd</sup>-century Delos from its hitherto economic and political preoccupation to other aspects of society.

Following the introduction, the book proceeds by studying four aspects of 3<sup>rd</sup>-century Delos: the Islanders' League, honorary decrees, monumental building and the dedications recorded in the temple inventories. Constantakopoulou aims at possibilities and flexibilities: the islanders could have enjoyed greater freedom of action, not necessarily constrained by the Hellenistic monarchs, than previous scholars have assumed. Rather than a tool by which the kings controlled them, the Islanders' League gave islanders opportunities to negotiate with the great powers, and grants of honors constituted recognition of past benefits, affirmation of current gratitude and a claim on future benefits. The Delians must have participated in negotiations about what monuments to construct and where

<sup>1</sup> Christy Constantakopoulou, *The Dance of the Islands: Insularity, Networks, the Athenian Empire, and the Aegean World. Oxford Classical Monographs* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

to place them in the sanctuary, even when the funds came from royal courts. These negotiations concerned not only economic and political transactions (the preoccupation of previous scholars) but also social and religious, for the embellishment of the sanctuary enhanced its appeal as a pilgrimage site to people of all classes and both genders from many places throughout the Greek world.

Although the evidence for honors and dedications does not allow full social network analysis in the formal sense, it does let Constantakopoulou offer insights into regional participation in the “community of worship” created by the pilgrims who came to Delos: more intense in the southern Aegean; less so further abroad, but still pan-Mediterranean. Most originally, the author can make conclusions about participation by gender: at the local level women participated much more than they did in other Greek sanctuaries.

This very expensive book suffers from almost no errors, even in the extensively-quoted Greek, and sports the author’s beautiful photograph of Delos on the jacket. It has numerous maps, plans, tables and charts and concludes with five appendices that tabulate the evidence used in the analysis. Although the author has the luxury of footnotes, she uses the inhumane author-date reference system, which she makes even more unwieldy by including not the expected reference list but a normal bibliography. The book concludes with a general index, a geographical index and a source index.

Constantakopoulou demonstrates a thorough and critical familiarity not only with the inscriptions but also with the relevant scholarship; she also demonstrates a remarkable generosity of spirit in citing other scholars appreciatively. Even where she offers significantly different results she never fails to affirm how much she depends on earlier Delian scholars. This generosity extends to her personal comments in the introduction about the current refugee crisis overwhelming the islands she loves; her concern for ancient movement of people and their goods and ideas now has “a poignancy that [she] could have never anticipated” (8).

Every scholar of Delos and ancient society, especially with reference to insularity and networking, must consult this work, brimming with new and nuanced insights into the world of third-century Delians unknown to us outside the epigraphical evidence, inhabiting a tiny island with a major sanctuary far from the great poleis and royal courts.

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