

BOOK REVIEW

Aegean Interactions: Delos and Its Networks in the Third Century. By CHRISTY CONSTANTAKOPOULOU. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017. Pp. xvii + 331. Hardback, \$125.00. ISBN: 978-0-198-78727-3

A *Aegean Interactions* is an ambitious book which seeks to interrogate the relationship between the citizens of the polis of Delos and outsiders who visited and patronized the island in the third century BCE. The Period of Independence (314 – 166 BCE) was a period during which Delos's place in the network of the Aegean was transformed. Further, the third century is, as described by Constantakopoulou, "a complicated and difficult century" to understand and study (6). The fundamental changes of the 3rd century offer up exciting opportunities to increase our understanding of Delos and its place in the Aegean world, while at the same time scholarship has been frustrated by the lack of a coherent narrative and the fragmentation of the available sources. These challenges have led many scholars to focus on establishing chronologies for the period and have prevented a full exploration of this exiting period. Constantakopoulou, while acknowledging the importance of establishing chronologies, attempts to move beyond these challenges and focus on the human interactions that we can observe on Delos during this period through the wealth of epigraphic evidence on the island, including thousands of inscriptions and the partially preserved Delian inventories. These allow Constantakopoulou to "explore different ways of making sense of the transforming landscape and region" (8).

Constantakopoulou uses a network approach to illuminate the human interactions between Delians and non-Delians, examining patterns of redistribution and consumption. Constantakopoulou's use of network theory is not the only thing that makes her work stand out as innovative and refreshing; she takes a regional approach, rejecting the view that Greek history should be centered around the polis. This allows her to interrogate groups that transcended the institution of the polis. Constantakopoulou also explores the role of insularity in the development of Delos and its social networks, as she did in *The Dance of the Islands: Insularity, Networks, the Athenian Empire, and the Aegean World* (2010). Further,

Constantakopoulou sets aside economic concerns to focus on social networks, and she argues for nuanced and multi-faceted explanations of the various actors engaged in these social interactions. Finally, Constantakopoulou rejects the view that Delos was dominated by regional powers, whether they were the Antigonids or Ptolemies, and makes a convincing case for returning agency to the Delians in many of their interactions with the dominant regional powers.

Aegean Interactions comprises an introduction to Delos in the 3rd century, followed by four case studies focusing on different types of interactions (the Islanders League, the monumentalization of the sanctuary, honours given by the polis of Delos, and dedications listed in the Delian Inventories) and a brief conclusion. Five appendices detail the data that Constantakopoulou has used for her analysis of the honours given by the polis of Delos and the dedications listed in the Delian Inventories.

In Chapter 2, Constantakopoulou takes up the Islanders League, arguing that we can only understand the League if it is set in the context of the political, religious and economic interactions of the islands of the southern Aegean prior to the end of the fourth century BCE. The League, Constantakopoulou argues, was not imposed from above but rather came about by continual negotiation between the Aegean islands and the dominant powers at the time. Further, the League is evidence of a strong regional island identity constructed by those living in the southern Aegean. In Chapter 3, Constantakopoulou examines the monumentalization of the sanctuary of Apollo on Delos, illustrating that the polis of Delos and individual Delians were engaged in that process as well as outside powers, such as the Antigonids or Ptolemies. Again, this case study highlights the agency demonstrated by the Delians themselves in shaping their public spaces in negotiation with other vested parties. In Chapter 4, Constantakopoulou analyzes the social network comprised by those who were awarded honours of proxeny, crowns and statues by the polis of Delos. The number of honorific decrees recovered on Delos is high compared to other sites, allowing a more comprehensive analysis than otherwise possible. Here, Constantakopoulou demonstrates the dense network connecting Delos to the Aegean and Mediterranean worlds. Further, her considerations of the motivations behind these awards position economic motives as one possible motive among many. Finally, in Chapter 5, Constantakopoulou takes up the Delian inventories to examine the network comprised of dedications on Delos. This is a fascinating section, in which Constantakopoulou is able to analyze this network based on distance, gender, individual vs. community and elite vs. non-elite status. Rather than an island dominated by

large regional powers, Constantakopoulou demonstrates that the majority of the dedications recorded came from the Delians themselves and from those on nearby islands.

Overall, *Aegean Interactions* is a welcome addition to the scholarship on Delos and the Aegean, providing a model for future studies that seek to adopt this fruitful network approach and illuminate social networks. Constantakopoulou takes up many challenging subjects and has done an admirable job of explaining her meticulous methodologies, the decisions that she made in her analysis and laying out the evidence on which her conclusions rest. Further, her innovative thinking presents new ways to consider interactions between individual communities and regions and large regional powers, returning agency and empowerment to those communities and regions.

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