Abstracts

Ilias N. Arnaoutoglou, *Cult and Craft: Variations on a (Neglected) Theme…*

The chapter investigates the interaction between cult and craft with the aim to assess the crucial, omnipresent but often presumed link between cultic activity and occupational associations in the Graeco-Roman world. The author suggests to distinguish between professional and craft associations in regards to the nature of the services provided. The chapter examines the different ways in which occupational associations display cultic activity, be it honouring distinguished individuals who have taken over, among other, religious duties, financing building or repairs in sanctuaries or temples, dedicating statues, altars, etc., performing sacrifices or libations, participating in festivals, receiving a benefaction with a cult element, administering a funerary endowment encumbered with the performance of rituals, and finally being part of the 'sacred economy'. The spectrum of religious initiatives undertaken by occupational associations is neither original nor distinguished. It is to a large extent predictable, since occupational associations follow closely the cultic practices of individuals and other public bodies. The only discernible link between a local cult and craft is noticed in Delos, where groups of people involved in trade dedicate to the Apolline triad and later to Rome; in the remaining cases it seems that there was not a consistent pattern of preference to a local deity, instead occupational associations tend to honour panhellenic deities. The author concludes that occupational associations did not necessarily worship the gods that are thought to be the 'patron deities' of their craft/trade, and that their cultic activities are embedded in the dominant set of socio-religious relations.

Jan-Mathieu Carbon, *Funerals and Foreigners, Founders and Functionaries: On the Boundary Stones of Associations from Kos*

In light of the publication of the third and fourth volumes of the *Inscriptiones Graecae* corpus for Kos, the article revisits the tomb markers and boundary stones of funerary grounds belonging to associations on this island (2nd c. BC–3rd c. AD, but primarily from the 1st c. BC–1st c. AD). Usually treated as rather uninformative texts, the boundaries in fact reveal a relative wealth of evidence about the cultic associations which thrived on Kos during the Hellenistic and Roman periods. More specifically, the chapter tackles

three principal and related issues: 1) the gods honoured and the cultic purpose of the groups, as well as the presence (or not) of foreigners as constituent members of the associations; 2) the information that can be gleaned from the boundary stones concerning representatives and officials of the groups, particularly their founders and/or leaders; 3) the wider question of the vocation and durability of these associations, viewed particularly under the lenses of the epigraphic habit and the reuse of the boundary stones. While underscoring both the superficial uniformity and the inherent diversity of the groups, the chapter contributes to understanding some of the key features of associations on Kos.

Michał Gawlikowski, *The Marzeḥa of the Priests of Bel and Other Drinking Societies in Palmyra*

This chapter offers a comprehensive overview of the archaeological and epigraphic evidence for associations in Palmyra, highlighting the drinking and feasting elements that informed their actions. Associations in Palmyra are fairly scantily documented in the epigraphic record, and information about their membership and activities is rather illusive. In 257/8 AD, Odainat, the first ever Palmyrene to become a Roman senator, was honoured by four private associations. In three out of four inscriptions—all written in Greek but one being bilingual—the word *symposion* is used as a generic term to designate the group. Whereas *symposion* in Greek stands normally for the 'drinking party', the Palmyrene inscriptions refer either to groups of people such as professional associations or to a room adequately equipped for convivial purposes. Inscriptions in Aramaic, on the other hand, employ the term *marzeḥa* as the standard term for associations. While their charts and rules are only partly preserved, we are much better informed about the association of the priests of Bel, undoubtedly the most important institution in the religious life of the city. Insights into the range of their activities can be gained if we turn our attention to the archaeological record. There is a substantial body of documents in the form of *tesserae*, in all likelihood admission tickets to social occasions, mostly private and very often of religious character. Only a few of these are explicitly related to religious societies in the light of the inscriptions they carry; yet, their iconography gives further testimony for drinking and feasting. In addition, a number of dining rooms have been excavated in Palmyra as well as in the countryside. At the same time, the epigraphic record further attests the presence of dining rooms. Whereas the name of Palmyrene associations reveals professional and/or religious affiliation, convivial aspects, notably drinking, would have informed their activities, providing the social and religious setting for fostering bonds and enhancing the sense of togetherness.

Matt Gibbs, *Artisans and Their Gods: The Religious Activities of Trade Associations in Roman Egypt*

The chapter examines the trade associations of Roman Egypt and the place of cult and ritual within them, primarily from the view of the Greek papyri, beginning in the reign

of Augustus, and through to the 4th c. AD. As the Greek documentary record clearly attests, trade associations were hardly uncommon in Roman Egypt. But rarely have the religious and socio-religious activities of these collectives, in particular, been considered to any great extent; where these associations are examined in current research, it is their relationship to, and their role in, the economy of Roman Egypt that is usually considered. Much of our evidence for these particular groups is related to activities, and payments for activities (even in terms of trade taxes), that are firmly entwined in what broadly constitutes the economy in Roman Egypt: requisitions, payments for services rendered, and receipts for taxation. As a result, we only see the religious activities of trade associations when it is overtly expressed or presented, and when chance finds are uncovered, for example in the νόμοι, or regulations, of these groups. Typically, however, associations in Egypt appear to have offered their members more than the simple satisfaction of their primary interests, whether these were social, economic, or religious in nature. As the author, and several others, have argued elsewhere, the collectives in Egypt linked by common trades were certainly no different, and offered their members advantages and benefits in a variety of contexts. Here, the paper examines broadly—and briefly—the extent to which religion not only affected, but also informed, the behaviour of trade associations and the lives of their members by considering the religious and socio-religious activities in which the members of these groups took part.

Claire Hasenohr, *The Italian Associations on Delos: Religion, Trade, Politics and Social Cohesion (2nd–1st c. BC)*

From ca. 125 BC, the Italians on Delos were organised in groups whose nature and function have long been disputed. The numerous dedications of *Hermaistai*, *Apolloniastai*, *Poseidoniastai* and *Competaliastai*, as well as those of oil and wine traders, and the liturgical paintings of *Compitalia* bear witness to an intense religious activity on behalf of members of the Italian community. However, a rigorous analysis of the available sources outlines a rather different picture. In this chapter, I argue that only one association existed, that of the *Italici*, that encompassed various sub-groups. The association of *Italici* gathered together people of a heterogeneous social background; yet, Italian origin was the bonding element among its members. The *Italici* claimed links to Rome and appeared as a power of first rank among the other foreign communities of Delos. It can thus be argued that their role was mostly political, economic and social. However, religion did indeed have an important role in the *Italici's* self-representation: first, it fostered the internal cohesion of the group, by integrating all the members whatever their geographical and social origin; second, it helped to promote the image of the community within the Delian cityscape, as indicated by the construction of the temple of Mercurius and Maia in the Agora of the Competaliastai. The worship of specific cults and the creation of various boards of *magistri* were surely intended to enhance social cohesion, so that slaves of Greek and foreign origin, and also the recently naturalised citizens from Syro-Palestine, could be integrated with the native Italians.

In any case, the large number of inscriptions, paintings and monuments discovered on Delos attests the vitality and success of the Italian associations.

Stéphanie Maillot, *Associations and Death: The Funerary Activities of Hellenistic Associations*

Drawing on the fundamental work by Th. Mommsen on the Roman *collegium funeraticum*, scholars for long had taken for granted that funerary associations comprised groups of lower social status in Roman society, *homines tenuiores*. Moreover, funerary associations were viewed as the predecessors of early Christian groupings in the light of a Christian, teleological perspective. Recent studies, however, have put into question the very same existence of the so-called *collegium funeraticum*. The chapter collects and discusses texts, from funerary inscriptions to boundary stones and decrees, that throw light on to a rather neglected topic, that of the funerary activities of Hellenistic associations, with a special focus on Rhodes and Kos, with material from Athens and Delos complementing the picture. Associations were actively involved in the funerals of their members, by setting up funerary monuments, organising and attending funerary ceremonies. Furthermore, associations could have their own burial grounds; inscriptions from Rhodes are quite informative in this respect as they attest the purchase of burial plots or the maintenance of existing ones. Funerary activities included funerary ceremonies as well as commemorative events in honour of deceased members, with the crowning of deceased benefactors being the most notable one. The paper attempts to explain the various reasons why associations took care of the dead, ranging from practical to religious and symbolic.

Mario C.D. Paganini, *Religion and Leisure: A Gentry Association of Hellenistic Egypt*

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis and an important contextualisation of *I.Prose* 40, a document that has escaped scholars' attention up to date; it records the various honours granted to a benefactor by a private association of landowners centred around the gymnasium, and active in a village in the neighbourhood of Alexandria in the late Hellenistic period. The text is particularly rich in details regarding the association's activities and agenda. Besides being an excellent insight into the position that the ruler cult and the gymnasium occupied in the life of a private association and into the ways in which religious activities were deeply rooted in the larger pattern of associational activities, it also provides abundant material for treatment and comparison. The chapter focuses on the social function of this association and on the extent to which religion—in this case the royal cult—informs its activities. It distinguishes in a useful way the invoked purposes in the text (the royal cult) from actual social incentives (networking and leisure activities with peers). In particular, it is examined how and why religion was very much embedded in the leisurely activities of this association. Religious practices were invested with socio-political relevance and represented a means to strengthen social bonds, sanctify associative meetings, solemnise members' support, widen social networks, and

assert aspects of group identity. Religion was often one of the various strategies by which the association would pursue its different aims at local and wider level. At the same time, the paper shows how the gymnasium, a typical Greek institution, occupied a particular position in the life and self-presentation of the association and to what extent it was made the centre of their activities. In accordance with the characteristic nature of the Ptolemaic gymnasium, the association may have been somehow responsible for the diffusion of a more Greek-oriented and socially concerned cult of the Royal House in the rural parts of the country, next to the local traditional cult of the Ptolemies as Pharaohs in practically every Egyptian temple.

Paschalis Paschidis, *Civic Cults and (Other) Religious Associations: In Search of Collective Identities in Roman Macedonia*

This chapter examines the different forms of religious organisation in Roman Macedonia—civic cults (old and new) and 'private' associations—with particular emphasis on the evidence pertaining to collective identity building. The old cliché of voluntary religious associations filling the religious and social void left by the waning cults of the declining *polis* has long been shown to be an oversimplification: all cults more or less operated within the framework of the *polis*, in most cases with minimal institutional intervention, while the differences in organisation, practice and religious character between civic cults and (other) religious associations appear far from fundamental. Therefore, a more fruitful approach would be to view religion in Roman Macedonia not in terms of old versus new or civic versus private and associative, but in terms of diverging paths to achieving a sense of communal belonging. Two such religious strands stand out in the available evidence. One involves a perception of strong local identity and manifests itself primarily in the lands west of the Axios, in the old Macedonian homeland, and in civic cults with an actual or perceived long history (e.g. cult of Zeus Hypsistos and Dionysos). The other strand focuses more on the mythical and ritual narratives per se; it manifests itself primarily in large cosmopolitan cities (e.g. cult of 'Oriental' deities and Dionysos in Thessalonike), in Roman colonies and in the east, often in the context of a voluntary association. In other words, in the world of religion as a formulative factor of collective identities, traditions built upon histories competed with traditions built upon stories.

Stella Skaltsa, *Associations in Ptolemaic Thera: Names, Identity, and Gatherings*

Five inscriptions attest the presence of associations in Thera—all dated to the 3rd and 2nd c. BC—when the island was the seat of the Ptolemaic fleet in the Aegean. The chapter offers insights into the self-fashioning of these associations and the mechanisms they employed to stress political affiliations and forge their identity. Associations of 'foreigners' co-existed with those of 'locals', thus manifesting a thriving associative life on the island. Locals and members of the Ptolemaic garrison were actively involved in the political structures to which they belonged, be it the *polis* or the garrison, but at the same

time by being members of associations they reinvented new roles for themselves and expanded their social or religious personas. In looking closely at the membership profile of associations in Thera, a certain degree of exclusivity becomes apparent. Exclusivity in membership, however, does not necessarily imply segregation from or of the local community. Interaction with the local community in Thera can be traced not in terms of membership in an association but in terms of worshipping the same gods and partaking in common cult and social practices.

Christian A. Thomsen, *The Place of Honour: Associations' Sanctuaries and Inscribed Honours in Late Classical and Early Hellenistic Athens*

The aim of the present chapter is to examine the connection between honour and religion, or more precisely between honorific practices and the maintenance of associations' sanctuaries. Classical and early Hellenistic Athens lends itself well as a case study for several reasons: First of all, it was at Athens that the phenomenon of public crowning took on its familiar form, a form which was adopted and reproduced all through the Hellenistic world. Secondly, it was at Athens, in the last quarter of the 4th c. BC, that private associations, precisely through the medium of inscribed honorific decrees, began to express their existence—at least in a form which is detectable to modern historians. The sanctuary, whether private or public, was the gravitational centre of the cultic and social life of many private associations. The importance of sanctuaries to associations is underlined by the fact that many associations acquired sanctuaries of their own. The sanctuary was also the preferred place for publication of associations' inscriptions which included a variety of genres (dedications, decrees, accounts, etc.). A recent trend in the study of (mostly public) epigraphy investigates the 'symbolic value' of inscribed monuments and their function in shaping perceptions of the bodies that issued them. This paper takes a similar view of the inscriptions set up by private associations and the sanctuaries in which they once stood, and attempts to shed further light on the relationship between the associations and the societies which they inhabited; for who exactly were the supposed audience for these inscriptions, and what attitudes and behaviour towards the association were they meant to inspire?

Monika Trümper, *Cult in Clubhouses of Delian Associations*

This chapter focuses on 'clubhouses', critically reassessing the existence, design, use, and significance of cultic facilities and sacred space in seats of associations in Late Hellenistic Delos. While only one single building is securely identified as the 'clubhouse' of an association by inscriptions found *in situ*, notably the *Établissement des Poseidoniastes de Bérytos*, typological comparisons suggest that several other buildings in Delos could have served a similar purpose, among these most prominently the 'Perfumery' in the *Quartier du stade* and possibly also the *Maison de Fourni* in the south of Delos. After a brief assessment of the sacred space in the *Établissement des Poseidoniastes*, the other potential 'clubhouses' are comparatively analysed for the following questions: do they include

safely identifiable cultic facilities and sacred space; what was the possible use and significance of these cultic facilities for the self-representation of the respective owners ('associations'); and ultimately, do the cultic facilities support the identification of the respective buildings as clubhouses and can they even possibly serve for reconstructing the main purpose and interests of the respective associations? It is shown that both the 'Perfumery' and the *Maison de Fourni* included safely identifiable cultic facilities, notably altars. However, the argumentation is substantiated by focusing on an intriguing, little studied phenomenon: the incorporation and artificial configuration of natural rock-formations, identified here as 'nymphaia' (artificially built grottoes), which are found in three Delian buildings, among them two potential 'clubhouses' (the 'Perfumery' and also the *Maison de Fourni*). Although the Delian grottoes clearly entailed a reference to nature, an allusion to a sacred-idyllic, bucolic-rural atmosphere and setting, the archaeological evidence remains inconclusive as to whether the Delian grottoes served as shrines. The conclusion contextualises the results within the local and wider Mediterranean context.

Philip F. Venticinque, *Dying to Belong: Associations and the Economics of Funerals in Egypt and the Roman World*

This chapter reconsiders the economics of association funerals beyond costs, mutual aid, and providing a decent burial for members. Charters and membership lists from Egypt reveal that association membership complemented and strengthened family and existing networks and was not only a way to compensate for a deficient social network or a lack of loved ones to turn to in difficult circumstances. Attendance at funerals and the long-term connections signalled by an individual who has chosen to be commemorated in this manner have larger implications within the group. As such, the paper examines the way in which funerals and rituals surrounding them outlined in charters help foster the creation and maintenance of bonds of trust between members, how funerals fit into the larger system of economic and behavioural norms focused on reputation and esteem, and what this can tell us about the way in which associations approached and understood the economic activities that supported membership in such groups. More than assuring a proper burial for the deceased, what seems to have been at stake and what associations attempted to control through regulations detailing requirements to adopt a proper mourning posture was the image and reputation of the association itself and that of the surviving members.

Sara M. Wijma, *Between Private and Public:* Orgeones *in Classical and Hellenistic Athens*

When considering the role of the Thracian *orgeones* of Bendis in Athenian *polis* religion and in Athenian society at large, it is generally agreed that this group constituted a special category to be considered strictly separate from the Athenian *orgeones* who since time immemorial had honoured certain local heroes with their *orgia*. Although the Athenians never made such a strict distinction, referring to a law mentioned in

Philochorus (*FGrHist* 328 F35), which states that "it is compulsory for the *phratores* to admit both *orgeones* and *homogalaktes*, whom we call *gennetai*", modern scholars stress the fact that the Thracian *orgeones* were 'aliens' and could as such impossibly be accepted by the phratries, who even far beyond the archaic period acted as the doorway to the citizen community by checking descent. Following the hesitant lead in Robert Parker's *Athenian religion* (1996), the paper reconsiders this modern distinction and emphasise that all groups of *orgeones* seem to have privately worshipped a hero or deity with rites (*orgia*) in a privately established shrine, while also performing a mediating role in the official religious structures of the *polis* at large. It was probably because of this role, also performed by the Thracian *orgeones* of Bendis—first attested shortly after 350 BC and the group of *orgeones* for which we have by far the most (epigraphic) evidence—that *orgeones* were officially accepted as members of the phratries and in that way came a long way in becoming members of the Athenian *polis* community at large, which was, up to an important degree, defined in cultic terms. This chapter argues that the *orgeones* worshipping Bendis functioned as mediators in Athenian *polis* religion.