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Articles

Callimachus, Cyrene, and the Carneia: Social Solidarity in the *Hymn to Apollo*

NICHOLAS D. CROSS

Abstract: Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* has been subject to multiple interpretations. Few, however, have recognized the social value of the hymn for the Cyreneans. This article proposes that the hymn's two descriptions of the Carneia festival in Cyrene (the inaugural one at the city's founding and the one in the time of Callimachus) shed light on the poet's intentions for the work. His depictions highlight how the Carneia fostered the social integration of Apollo's community. Callimachus' hymn, therefore, like a festival, encouraged his contemporary Cyreneans to appreciate the social solidarity they experienced during the reign of Magas.

Keywords: Callimachus, *Hymn to Apollo* (Callimachus), Cyrene, Carneia, Magas of Cyrene, social solidarity

1. Introduction

Callimachus' *Hymn to Apollo* is an enigmatic and versatile work that has prompted varying interpretations in recent years. Some scholars emphasize its value as a text in its own right and in conversation with other works of poetry.¹ Some highlight its semiotic, performative, or narratological features.² Others read it in a religious context.³ There have also been some historicist readings that have proposed various real life scenarios that might have inspired the writing of the hymn.⁴ The insights from these approaches are illuminating and advance a greater understanding of the hymn, and, taken together, they suggest that Callimachus did not have one specific goal for the work. It can be seen as a gift for the gods, a commentary on contemporary geopolitics, a criticism of other forms of poetry, and so on. It is commonly understood that this range of readings is a result of Callimachus' deliberate ambiguities in the hymn. This essay poses yet another reading for the hymn: a call for the Cyreneans to appreciate social solidarity.

This view builds on the work of Alan Cameron, who suggested that Callimachus not only wrote the *Hymn to Apollo* for the Cyreneans but also wrote it while visiting Cyrene in the 260s or 250s BCE.⁵ He bases his position on historical considerations and on an interpretation of "my king" in lines 26 and 27 of the hymn. This article, however, approaches the hymn with a focus on the common themes presented in the hymn's two Carneia festivals. The first half examines the description of the festival in the time of Callimachus. Although he obscures the place of and the participants in the festival, Callimachus seems to describe his contemporary Cyrenean community. He presents a unified group that receives promises of protection from Apollo in response to their worship. Protection and the welfare of the community would have been a primary concern for the Cyreneans during the time of King Magas, whom this article, following Cameron, considers to be the king mentioned in the hymn. The second half looks at the depiction of

¹ Bassi 1989; Cheshire 2005; 2008; Kampakoglou 2019.

² Bing 1993; Calame 1993; Morrison 2007; Fantuzzi 2011; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens 2012.

³ Petrovic 2011; 2012.

⁴ Cameron 1995; Brumbaugh 2016; 2019.

⁵ Cameron 1995, 9-11, 407-9. All dates are BCE.

the inaugural Carneia festival celebrated by the Cyrenean founders. Callimachus passes over centuries of civil discord to a period of harmony under the city's founder, Battus. The themes in this section, especially that of communal safety and wellbeing, are analogous to those in the first and link the Cyreneans of the past to those in the hymn's present. In these two sections Callimachus portrays a web of complex historical interactions, all functioning toward the religious and social integration of Apollo's community. Just as the festivals served to foster group identity, so did the *Hymn to Apollo*, which, *inter alia*, acted as a vehicle for encouraging civic solidarity among the Cyreneans of Callimachus' day.

2. The Carneia, the Cyreneans, and King Magas

The hymn opens in the midst of preparations for a festival, in which a narrator readies a chorus of youths for the arrival of Apollo, but much about this gathering is unclear. Where is the festival located? Who is the narrator, and who are the worshippers of Apollo? What is the significance that the hymn's *mise en scène* is a festival and not some other setting? These are questions that Callimachus does not explicitly answer, but it seems as though he is depicting a Cyrenean narrator and a Cyrenean chorus, at a festival in Cyrene. If this is indeed the case, then one should also expect that one of Callimachus' purposes in writing the hymn is to speak to the Cyreneans.

The festival takes place around a temple. In the very first lines the unnamed narrator announces that Apollo will soon arrive at one of his temples, but which one? Whereas the laurel branch that trembles evokes the temple of Apollo at Delphi, the palm that nods and the singing swan suggest the temple of Apollo on Delos (Callim. *Hymn* 2.1, 4-5).⁶ The association of the laurel branch and the swan is rather certain, but the inclusion of the palm hints to yet another possibility for the setting of the festival. As Frederick Williams interpreted it, the palm could be the one that was transplanted from Apollo's birthplace to Cyrene.⁷ A bronze copy of the Delian palm stood outside the temple of Apollo at Cyrene.⁸ At the least, as Stephen White suggests, the palm represents a "cultural" transplant from Delos to Cyrene.⁹ In fact, later in the hymn Callimachus raises Delos again in order to introduce the first Carneia festival in Cyrene. In that case, Delos functions as a literary bridge to Cyrene – and this is what Callimachus is doing in the opening passage with the Delian palm. The hymn, therefore, likely opens at the commencement of a Carneia in Cyrene during Callimachus' time. Mirroring the journey of Apollo to the festival, both of Callimachus' descriptions of the Carneia, the inaugural one and the contemporary one, open with the movement of Apollo from Delos to Cyrene.

Nor does Callimachus specify the identity of the participants at this festival. The narrator of the opening passage, in particular, is mysterious. It could be anyone: perhaps a presider of ceremonies, the choral leader, a priest, or even Callimachus.¹⁰ By line 8, however, when the speaker orders the young men to prepare to sing and dance, it becomes clear that he is the choral leader. If this festival is taking place in Cyrene, then the choral leader and the youths would be Cyrenean. The Carneia, moreover, was dedicated to the worship of Apollo, the patron deity of the Cyreneans.¹¹ It stands to reason that the participants would be from Cyrene.

Many have rightly noted the themes of combat and exclusion in the hymn, yet it should not be missed that these are also balanced with an emphasis on solidarity. The festival, as is the case for all such gatherings in ancient Greece, promoted the cohesion of

⁶ Morrison 2007, 124-25. On the variable spaces in the hymn, see Harder 2012, 81-86.

⁷ Williams 1975, 127-31; cf. Stephens 2015, 74.

⁸ Bonacasa and Ensoli 2000, 107.

⁹ White 1999, 177 n. 29.

¹⁰ On the narrator in the hymn, see Bing 1993; Depew 1993; Morrison 2007, 123-37; Fantuzzi 2011, 433-37; Petrovic 2011, 282-85.

¹¹ On Apollo's association with Cyrene, see Chamoux 1953, 301-11; Fraser 1972, 788-89.

the community and marked those present as being in a special relationship with their god. “L’*Hymne à Apollon*,” Francois Chamoux writes, “composé pour la grande fête religieuse et civique des Carnéennes, exprime avec conviction la foi commune qui maintenait la cohésion de la cité grecque, à son époque et en son lieu.” (The *Hymn to Apollo*, composed for the great religious and civic feast of the Cyreneans, expresses with conviction the common faith which maintained the cohesion of the Greek city, in its time and in its place.)¹² The fact that a festival defined group identity sheds light on Callimachus’ choice of a festival for the setting of the hymn. Choral performances, in which the performers act as representatives of the whole city, served to build community. In the same way poetry shapes group identity. In the case of the *Hymn to Apollo*, Callimachus writes a hymn that does the same things as the performance which it describes. Callimachus sets the hymn within the dramatic context of the Carneia because it, too, calls for group unity, that of Cyrene.

Accordingly, the choral leader orders the wicked (ἀλιτρός) to evacuate the sacred premises before Apollo’s arrival.¹³ For if there are any present who are unclean when Apollo appears and knocks with his foot on the door of the temple, they would be a source of pollution and thus an impediment to Apollo’s entry (*Hymn* 2.2-3). The inhabitants are divided into binary categories of, in the words of Michael Brumbaugh, the “in group (close to Apollo)” and the “out group (far from Apollo).”¹⁴ The festival is exclusive to only those who are pure and worthy to see Apollo. As a result, the in group adopts a new identity that marks them as being members of Apollo’s special community. Having overseen the separation of the audience, the choral leader then joins the rehearsal with the youths by playing the lyre and dancing with sprightly, audible steps (*Hymn* 2.11). Those involved in the preparations for Apollo’s epiphany have been thus far only the choral youths and their leader, but the consequences of their worship will extend beyond them, to the entire community.

Once Apollo arrives on the scene, he allows those who remain to see him and responds to their reception with promises of rewards that have an impact on all of Cyrene. For their worship Apollo guarantees the youths three rewards: marriage, long life, and the preservation of the city (*Hymn* 2.13-15). The first two are specifically for the youths and indicate that a future of good fortune is in store for them. But these rewards have implications for the city as well, in as much as a virile and long-lived citizenry is a boon to the whole community. The third reward, the city’s safety, is an obvious civic benefit.¹⁵ The identification of these particular rewards suggests that the Cyreneans in Callimachus’ time were concerned with matters of prosperity, security, and social solidarity.¹⁶ The youths must perform their worship in an acceptable fashion in order for Apollo to follow through on his promises. These reciprocal obligations, however, have broader implications beyond the parties; the prosperity and stability of the entire community depend on the youths’ worship. Since the rewards are shared by all, the choral leader calls the rest of the audience to be silent and attentive as the youths ready themselves to sing the song of Apollo (Ἀπόλλωνος ἀοιδή) (*Hymn* 2.17).

Before they sing, the leader stresses the broad consequences of the youths’ ritual duties by noting Apollo’s punitive power. If there are rewards of protection for those who worship Apollo, then, conversely, there is destruction in store for those who refuse to

¹² Chamoux 2007, 201. On the part festivals played in fostering group identity, see Cross 2020.

¹³ On Callimachus’ “poetics of exclusion,” see Bassi 1989. On purity regulations in the hymn, see Dickie 2002; Petrovic 2011, 270-73.

¹⁴ Brumbaugh 2019, 152-54.

¹⁵ Williams 1978, 26-27; Cheshire 2008, 360; Kampakoglou 2019, 255-56.

¹⁶ That these concerns occupied the Cyreneans is also reflected in the so called “Oath of the Founders,” a fourth-century inscription that may be the report of an original seventh-century decree of Thera concerning Cyrene’s foundation (*SEG* 9.3; cf. Dobias-Lalou 2017, 186-7). The document contains provisions for the prosperity, land distribution, and civic rights for the Cyreneans.

participate in that worship: it is tantamount to effrontery to Apollo and will be met with punishment. This is represented with the god's weapons (ἔντεα), the lyre and the bow (*Hymn* 2.18-19).¹⁷ In the cautionary tales of Thetis and Niobe (*Hymn* 2.20-25), Apollo's retribution touches his adversaries and beyond.¹⁸ He guided Paris' bow to kill Achilles but it is Thetis, Achilles' mother, who remains in lamentation. Whenever she hears the ritual cry "hie, hie" (ἦ ἦ, *Hymn* 2.2.25) to Apollo, she weeps because it reminds her of the god's role in her son's demise. Apollo also exacted vengeance against Niobe for bragging that she was greater than his mother Leto. He turned Niobe into stone but he also killed her children. These tales are dire warnings against misbehavior and reminders of the extent of Apollo's retribution. He will punish his enemies and those associated with them. To remind the Cyreneans of this, the narrator calls the chorus to repeat the cry "hie, hie" (ἦ ἦ) and concludes by reminding all that "it is an evil thing to strive with the Blessed Ones" (κακὸν μακάρεσσιν ἐρίζειν, *Hymn* 2.25).¹⁹ Apollo rewards his friends and harms his enemies, and this is felt by the entire group.

It is at this point that the narrator introduces another important member of the Cyrenean community whom, he warns, no one should oppose. He suddenly announces, "he who would fight with the Blessed Ones would fight with my king. He who fights with my king, would fight even with Apollo" (ὃς μάχεται μακάρεσσιν, ἐμῶ βασιλῆι μάχοιτο: ὅστις ἐμῶ βασιλῆι, καὶ Ἀπόλλωνι μάχοιτο, *Hymn* 2.26-27). The king's identity is ambiguous, and ever since antiquity scholars have been divided over who it is. The scholiast on the hymn thought it was Ptolemy III Euergetes, and some today follow this identification.²⁰ Euergetes took the Egyptian throne in 246, giving a *terminus post quem* for the composition of the hymn if indeed he is the king in question.²¹ Cyrene had been independent of Alexandrian control for a generation, until it returned to Ptolemaic control with Euergetes' marriage to the Cyrenean princess Berenice II.²² But the democratic population in the city firmly resisted Euergetes and Berenice's attempt to re-integrate their city into the Ptolemaic sphere of influence. It could be that Callimachus, working at this time in the Ptolemaic court, inserted the king into the contemporary section of his hymn to support Euergetes' attempt to consolidate his rule throughout North Africa and to caution the Cyreneans not to oppose the Ptolemies.²³ Doing so would be equivalent to opposing Apollo. If the Cyreneans would not resist, these young rulers in Alexandria could facilitate Apollo's rewards of security and social stability.

Alan Cameron objects that if the king was meant to be Euergetes then one might expect Callimachus, an admirer of Berenice, to mention the queen as well. Instead, Cameron proposes that the king is Magas of Cyrene.²⁴ Indeed, Magas is someone who was closely identified with the community. In 300, Ptolemy I Soter had sent Magas, his stepson from his second wife Berenice I, to Cyrene to put down a rebellion that had continued for the past five years.²⁵ Magas restored order in the city and then stayed on as its governor. After Soter's death in 283, when Magas' stepbrother Ptolemy II Philadelphus

¹⁷ On the lyre and bow in the hymn, see Brumbaugh 2019, 139-41.

¹⁸ On Thetis and Niobe in the hymn, see Bassi 1989, 225-26; Kampakoglou 2019, 258-59.

¹⁹ All translations are the author's. On the paean cry, see Kampakoglou 2019, 288-91.

²⁰ Fraser 1972, 652-53; Barbantani 2011, 190-91; Kampakoglou 2019, 270-78. Brumbaugh 2016, 89 proposes that it can refer to "any and every Ptolemaic king."

²¹ On the possible dates of composition, see Stephens 2015, 18-19. Brumbaugh 2016 suggests that Callimachus' hymn was written at some point during the Chremonidean War in the 260s and alludes to relations between the Ptolemies and Seleucids.

²² On Ptolemy's re-incorporation of Cyrene, see Rosamilia 2018. On Berenice in Callimachus' writings, see Clayman 2014, 24-26, 78-104.

²³ On the Ptolemies' foreign policy in the third century, see Bagnall 1976; Marquaille 2008.

²⁴ Cameron 1995, 9, 407-9; cf. Laronde 1987, 362.

²⁵ Paus. 1.6.8; cf. Chamoux 1956, 18-23.

ascended to the Egyptian throne, Magas distanced himself and Cyrene from Alexandrian oversight. He married the Seleucid princess Apama, minted a new set of coinage, and, most notably, declared himself “king” of Cyrene.²⁶ Magas’ autonomous rule over Cyrene put him at odds with Philadelphus. In the mid-270s he attempted an invasion of Egypt but never reached Alexandria because yet another revolt in Cyrene demanded his attention.²⁷ Although historically Cyrene was prone to civil discord, as discussed further below, this revolt was transitory. Upon his return Magas quickly regained control of the situation and during the last decade of his life, he oversaw a period of stability in the city and in his foreign relations. A ruler cult to him even materialized in the region.²⁸ He eventually reconciled with his stepbrother and promised Berenice, his only daughter, in marriage to Philadelphus’ son Euergetes.²⁹ If Callimachus had Magas in mind as the king of lines 26 and 27, then the *terminus ante quem* for the hymn is Magas’ death in 258. This places the context for the hymn’s Carneia festival during a time when Cyrene experienced relative security and was independent of Ptolemaic control.³⁰ In this case Callimachus includes the king to urge the Cyreneans to work with Magas as he managed the wellbeing and defense of the city.

Unfortunately, on the basis of lines 26 and 27 alone, it is impossible to determine whether the king is Euergetes or Magas, or whether Callimachus intends to admonish his audience not to oppose the Ptolemies or to celebrate the work of Magas – or something else altogether.³¹ As is so often the case, Callimachus obscures his principal meanings and leaves open the possibility for more than one interpretation. But if the festival in the hymn is the Carneia and the participants are Cyrenean, the likeliest candidate for the king is Magas. So much of this work reflects Cyrenean religion and society, and speaks directly to the Cyreneans. The depictions of the festival, narrator, youths, Apollo, and the king suggest that Callimachus has in mind his hometown and speaks to their concerns about the social cohesion and security affairs of their city. Thus far, Callimachus has shown how the interactions between Apollo and the choir have implications for their specific relationship as well as for the entire community. In the next major section, also describing a Carneia festival, he expands the setting even further to include the community, both past and present.

3. The Inaugural Carneia, Callimachus, and King Battus

In the song of Apollo the youths sing of the god’s remarkable physical attributes and his skills in healing, music, archery, and divination. They recount the legend of his time with Admetus, when he cared for the youthful king’s horses (*Hymn* 2.32-54). In this short song the youths emphasize that Apollo is reliable, that he will treat them as he did Admetus and follow through with his promises to them.³² In line 55, the original narrator, so it seems, returns to the forefront and introduces a narrative shift. He presents a new network of reciprocal relationships in the distant past that extends to the here and now. “This kind of interaction between the chorus, who in the narrative celebrate Apollo, and the figure of the narrator/speaker, who addresses his hymnal song to the god,” writes Claude Calame, “is analogous to the relations set up in the description of the colonists’ choral celebration of the Carneia. . . . A continuity is woven between these two temporal dimensions which aims

²⁶ On Magas as “king,” see *SEG* 9 112; *I. Cret.* II 17.1.10; cf. Bile 2005. On Magas’ coinage, see Laronde 1987, 359-61; Fischer-Bossert 2016.

²⁷ Paus. 1.7.1-3; Polyaeus 2.28

²⁸ Marquaille 2003, 27; Laronde 2007.

²⁹ Justin *Epit.* 26.3. The marriage did not take place immediately because after Magas died Apama offered Berenice to the Antigonid Demetrius the Fair.

³⁰ On the date of Magas’ death, see Buttrely 1997, 39-43; Rosamillia 2018, 271-73.

³¹ White 1999, 177 tentatively proposes that the king is Battus, the *oikist* of Cyrene.

³² Cheshire 2005, 333-35.

at superimposing them.”³³ This shift in time is signaled by another reference to Delos. “It is Apollo men follow when they map out cities,” the narrator remarks, “for Apollo always finds pleasure in cities having been founded. Apollo himself weaves the foundations” (Φοῖβω δ’ ἐσπόμενοι πόλιος διεμετρήσαντο ἄνθρωποι: Φοῖβος γὰρ αἰεὶ πολίεσσι φιληδεῖ κτιζομένησ’, αὐτὸς δὲ θεμελίω Φοῖβος ὑφαίνει, *Hymn* 2.55-57). The same word appears in the next line to represent the “foundations” (θεμελίω) of the Delian altar that Apollo, at just four years old, built.³⁴ The mention of Delos at this point points back to the poem. The Delian palm had introduced the description of the Carneia festival in Callimachus’ time and eventually led to Apollo’s promises to preserve the city. Likewise, the reference to the Delian altar leads to the description of the first Carneia festival at Cyrene and emphasizes Apollo’s role as a builder of the city’s foundations. The worship of Apollo exhibited in this hymn, therefore, highlights the god’s attention to constructing and conserving the community.

The section of the hymn on the colonization of Cyrene is so personally significant to the narrator that he associates himself with his hometown and its founder: “Apollo, too, pointed out my fertile city to Battus” (Φοῖβος καὶ βαθύγειον ἐμὴν πόλιν ἔφρασε Βάττω, *Hymn* 2.65). Just as the earlier narrator had united himself to the unidentified contemporary king, so here the narrator claims an attachment to the Battiads, the kings of Cyrene descended from Battus: “And [Apollo] swore to give the walls to our kings” (καὶ ὤμοσε τεῖχεα δώσειν ἡμετέροις βασιλεῦσιν, *Hymn* 2.67-68). Asserting his participation in the complex social system presented in the hymn, the narrator stresses an exclusive relationship with Apollo for himself and his own ancestors. Although Apollo might go by many epithets, such as Phoebus, Nomius, Boedromius, or Clarius, “I,” the narrator announces, “[call you] Carneius, for thus it was with my fathers” (ἐγὼ Καρνεῖον: ἐμοὶ πατρώιον οὔτω, *Hymn* 2.71).³⁵ The narrative voice shifts from third person to first. This, as Jessica Romney has recently argued for poets in archaic symposia, is the narrator’s way of proclaiming his authority within the group. It is a strategy by which the speaker asserts his role as spokesperson for the community and attempts to build consensus among the audience.³⁶

By inserting a first-person pronoun and possessive adjectives, the narrator also highlights his ancestral devotion to Cyrene’s Apollo Carneius and aligns himself with the political (Battiads) and religious (priests of Apollo) segments of the city. Although the narrator takes on a protean persona throughout the hymn, at this point it is safe to assume that it is Callimachus speaking. In fact, recent prosopographical studies have established that Callimachus, a descendant of the Battiads whose father’s name might have been Battus, had family members who were priests of Apollo or active patrons of Apollo’s temple. Some have even tentatively suggested that Callimachus was a priest, which fits the view that he is the choral leader who had prepared the Cyrenean youth for Apollo’s arrival.³⁷ Callimachus’ privileged association with Apollo Carneius originated with his ancestors and Battus at the colony’s founding and continued to his time. Callimachus, therefore, although he had been in Alexandria for his entire adult life, expresses through this hymn a personal interest in the wellbeing of Apollo’s community and his place of birth, Cyrene.

The narrator, Callimachus, then draws attention solely to the first Carneia festival that was held in Cyrene. An old Dorian celebration that lasted for nine days in late summer, the Carneia positioned Cyrene within the interstate network of other cities and

³³ Calame 1993, 46.

³⁴ On θεμελίω, see Williams 1978, 57. On the Delian altar, see Bruneau 1995.

³⁵ On Apollo’s epithets, see Chamoux 2007, 198.

³⁶ Romney 2020.

³⁷ Laronde 1987, 113-18; Cameron 1995, 7-9; Petrovic 2011, 283-85; Petrovic 2012, 302-4. White 1999 casts doubt on Callimachus’ father’s name and his royal lineage.

islands that worshipped Apollo.³⁸ In the festival at Cyrene, the participants gave thanks to Apollo Carneius as the one who guided their ancestors to Libya. Previously, Pindar and Herodotus had narrated Cyrene's colonization and the establishment of the Carneia in the new city, but Callimachus, a pithier poet, summarizes the events into just a few lines.³⁹ He traces the roots of his city and the Carneia back to Sparta. From there colonists took the festival to Thera. Then, Battus (Aristoteles) and other Theran colonists brought it to Asbystian land (Libya), to what would become known as Cyrene (*Hymn 2.72-76*). The celebration of the Carneia, therefore, reminded the Cyreneans of their roots and the god's reciprocating gift of safeguarding their city.

In the same way that the choral youths served as a conduit for Apollo's rewards of protection for the entire community, Battus' leadership catches his god's attention and guarantees the successful commencement and continuity of the city. The narrator emphasizes that in return for Apollo's guidance to Libya, Battus organized the space of the incipient city. As Apollo laid the foundation of the Delian altar, so Battus laid the foundations for the temple of Apollo, the symbolic axis of Cyrene.⁴⁰ Here, he also arranged for the first Carneia and dictated the precise rituals to perform. The colonists sacrificed many bulls, offered many prayers, and sang "hie, hie" (ἦ ἦ, *Hymn 2.77-80*). They decorated the altars with flowers and maintained an undying fire in Apollo's honor. Of course, there was also dancing. The colonists to Cyrene (the belted warriors of Lyco) performed a dance, perhaps a martial one, that particularly pleased the god of the lyre and the bow.⁴¹ The rituals honored Apollo and fostered a new identity for the colonists.

This passage hearkens back to contemporary Carneia when the audience was separated into those worthy and unworthy to see Apollo. The inaugural Carneia was inclusive of the nascent community, as well as of outsiders as long as they were identified with the core group. In the original festival the Theran colonists to Cyrene, all male, danced along with native women (yellow-haired Libyans) (*Hymn 2.85-88*).⁴² Callimachus reinforces this theme of integration with the account of the divine marriage of Apollo and Cyrene (*Hymn 2.90-92*). While tending the herds of Admetus in Thessaly, Apollo noticed the nymph, made her his bride (νύμφη), and brought her to North Africa. Remembering his own union with Cyrene, Apollo watches with great pleasure as the colonists dance with the native women, a symbolic representation of the first marriages of the new city. Apollo's love for his wife is channeled into pleasure for the male dancers and by extension their brides and the community as a whole. Indeed, the hymn announces that "Apollo saw no other dance more divine than that one" (οὐ κείνου χορὸν εἶδε θεώτερον ἄλλον Ἀπόλλων, *Hymn 2.93*). In response, Apollo "dispensed no more benefits to a city than he did to Cyrene" (οὐδὲ πόλει τόσ' ἔνειμεν ὀφέλιμα, τόσσα Κυρήνη, *Hymn 2.94*). The benefits, expressed in a unique variant of ὠφέλιμος, are not specified, or rather not repeated, since they are probably similar to the three rewards that were promised to the choral youths who danced at the beginning of the hymn. Indeed, it would be appropriate to grant new settlers promises of marriage, long lives, and the protection of their city. Such benefits would have been reassuring to the vulnerable group. "The sons of Battus," the narrator proclaims, "honored no other god more than Apollo" (οὐδὲ μὲν αὐτοὶ Βαττιάδαι Φοῖβοιο πλεόν θεὸν ἄλλον ἔπεισαν, *Hymn 2.95-96*). The benefits were for the dancing warriors but also for the entire community, at that time and in the future. It was an event that reminded

38 On the Dorian Carneia, see Petterson 1992, 57-72; Malkin 1994, 143-58; Robertson 2002, 36-74; Krummen 2014, 130-37; Kōiv 2015, 32-36.

39 Pind. *Pyth.* 4, 5, 9; Her. 4.150-159; cf. Mitchell 2000, 82-86; Giangiulio 2001; Austin 2008, 192-201; Calame 2014.

40 On the temple of Apollo in Cyrene, see Chamoux 1953, 303-9; Laronde 1987, 169-98.

41 On the military nature of the Carneia, see Malkin 1994, 154-56.

42 On relations between Greeks and Libyans, see Laronde 1990; Austin 2008, 205-10.

Callimachus' readers in Cyrene of a period of harmony in their past and the common identity they had as Apollo's people.

This would be significant to Callimachus' contemporary Cyrenean audience. It is notable that Callimachus focuses on the foundation of Cyrene and on his own time but passes over the history of social divisions among the Cyreneans during the archaic and classical periods. For most of its history, from its first kings up to Magas, Cyrene was plagued by stasis. Herodotus records the domestic and international conflict that troubled Cyreneans from the foundation of the city to the end of the sixth century. There were constant disagreements between the Battiad kings, nobles, and commoners over land, wealth, and rights. In the mid-sixth century, while King Arcesilas II battled his own brothers and their Libyan allies, divisions grew so wide within the city that an outsider, Demonax of Mantinea, was called in to arbitrate between the factions and design a new constitution for the city.⁴³ When the Persians invaded North Africa in 525, King Arcesilas III, having revived the old monarchical form of government, chose to medise in what seems to be an attempt to protect his kingship from his enemies at home.⁴⁴ The domestic competition continued until the mid-fifth century, when another aristocratic revolt erupted against the last Battiad king Arcesilas IV. After his death, the monarchy was abolished and Cyrene became a republic until the Hellenistic age.⁴⁵ None of this appears in Callimachus' hymn.

Once Cyrene reappears in the literary record, just before Callimachus' birth, it was once again afflicted by social divisions. According to Diodorus Siculus, in 322, the Spartan mercenary commander Thibron, with help from the democrats (δημοτικοί), occupied the city and drove out the wealthy (κτηματικοί, Diod. Sic. 18.19-21).⁴⁶ The latter petitioned Ptolemy I Soter, who responded by sending his general Ophellas to remove Thibron. To the dismay of many Cyreneans, Soter then annexed the city into his growing empire.⁴⁷ In 321, he dictated an oligarchic constitution (*diagramma*) which placed himself in charge of affairs and defined who was eligible for citizenship. He also put Ophellas in command of a garrison in the city.⁴⁸ The Cyreneans, however, did not accept these new conditions, and Ophellas eventually pursued a foreign policy that was independent of Alexandria, providing a model for his successor, Magas.⁴⁹ Neither do any of these instances of social conflict come into the *Hymn to Apollo*.

Callimachus was probably a young boy when Magas first came to Cyrene. The city had fallen into disorder yet again after Ophellas' death, so Soter sent Magas to regain control of the region. Magas did just that but he, too, eventually came to govern the city without consulting and even in opposition to the Ptolemies. He even adopted the title of king and, as suggested above, may have been the king that Callimachus had in mind earlier in the hymn. The last decade of Magas' rule seems to have been a relatively serene period for Cyrene. There is no record of civil discord or foreign intervention that would have unsettled city affairs. This uncommon period of tranquility must have struck Callimachus. During the reign of Magas in Cyrene Callimachus reached adulthood in Alexandria. One need not suppose, as Cameron does, that Callimachus visited Cyrene at some point in the 260s and 250s in order for him to be inspired to write this hymn.⁵⁰ Although he does not indicate it in the hymn, he knew Cyrene's history of perennial instability, and when

⁴³ Her. 4.160-161; cf. Chamoux 1953, 138-42; Waisglass 1956; Mitchell 2000, 87-90.

⁴⁴ Her. 4.162-165; cf. Chamoux 1953, 144-52; Mitchell 1966, 99-103; Mitchell 2000, 90-93; Austin 2008, 211-14.

⁴⁵ On the end of the monarchy, see Chamoux 1953, 202-9; Mitchell 1966, 108-10; Mitchell 2000, 93-97.

⁴⁶ Cf. Strabo 17.3.21; Laronde 1987, 41-84; Bosworth 1988, 291-92.

⁴⁷ Diod. Sic. 18.21.9. Although Cyrene had made an alliance with Alexander in 332, it remained outside of Macedonian control (Diod. Sic. 17.49.3).

⁴⁸ SEG 9.1; cf. Fraser 1958, 120-27; Laronde 1987, 85-94.

⁴⁹ Diod. Sic. 20.40-43; Justin. *Epit.* 22.7.4; cf. Laronde 1971; de Lisle 2021, 265-72.

⁵⁰ Cameron 1995, 9-11.

he learned of this state of relative social harmony under Magas, it must have reminded him of a similar state of affairs at the foundations of Cyrene. Indeed, it is notable that he ignores the past two centuries of domestic conflict and goes back to the beginnings and the first celebration of the Carneia for lessons for his people during Magas' reign. Through his depictions of the two Carneia festivals in the *Hymn to Apollo*, he seeks to impress upon his contemporaries the crucial importance of social solidarity. And this message would be accentuated even more if, as many have recently asserted, the hymn was performed publicly in a festival in Cyrene.⁵¹

In the celebration of the Carneia Cyrene's past and present were connected. Just as Callimachus makes his own relationship with Apollo dependent on his ancestry from Battus, so he connects the relationships of Apollo with the colonists and the contemporary youths. He emphasizes these diachronic ties between the two groups through the Carneia. It was a setting in which the participants were reminded of their identity as a unified group. They worshipped Apollo in the expectation that he would honor his promises to the colonists and to each group of worshippers afterwards. In response, their god watched over their entire community, past and present. Callimachus, therefore, chose a festival context for the hymn because it symbolized the message he had for his hometown during the time of King Magas.⁵²

4. Conclusion

The *Hymn to Apollo* is filled with ambiguities, but Callimachus is transparent about the social significance of the Carneia, a communal setting for the Cyreneans to celebrate their past and present solidarity.⁵³ "The hymn," comments Stephen White, "thus speaks above all with a civic voice and on behalf of the city as a whole."⁵⁴ Callimachus saw this hymn as an occasion to emphasize to the Cyreneans, especially the youths, the importance of appreciating social solidarity. He does this by placing the hymn's setting in a festival context. The two descriptions of the Carneia festival, the contemporary one in the opening lines and the inaugural one described later in the hymn, share structural and thematic features. Both are of course the same civic festival that honors Apollo. Both passages are introduced by something that has to do with Apollo and Delos. Each festival is exclusive to the community of celebrants and defines their group identity. The rituals of each festival are prescribed and must be done in an appropriate manner for Apollo to respond in the affirmative. Finally, in both festivals Apollo rewards the worshippers and, by extension, the entire community with his protection. The festival, then, as expressed in the *Hymn to Apollo*, contains an elaborate mosaic of roles which, when the actors fulfill their respective obligations, creates a picture of an integrated and harmonious society. This would be a particularly meaningful hymn for the Cyreneans during the final years of Magas' kingship.⁵⁵

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⁵¹ On the hymn's public performance, see Cairns 1992, 13-16; Cameron 1995, 63-65; Morrison 2007, 106-9; Acosta-Hughes and Stephens 2012, 115-16, 145-47. Challenges to this view are posed by Williams 1978, 2-3; Bing 1993, 189-90; Depew 1993; Gramps 2018.

⁵² Unsurprisingly, however, for a community characterized by stasis, not all supported Magas and much of his work was undone after his death (Justin *Epit.* 26.3). The city, thrown yet again into confusion, invited in some Arcadians to reform the government (Plut. *Phil.* 1.3-4; Polyb. 10.22.2-3).

⁵³ Attempts to interpret the cryptic epilogue of the hymn include Williams 1978, 86; Bassi 1989, 227-31; Cheshire 2005; 2008.

⁵⁴ White 1999, 177.

⁵⁵ The author wishes to thank Dee Clayman, Nicholas Wagner and Emyr Dakin for commenting on early drafts of this article.

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