

Princeton/Stanford Working Papers in Classics

Remapping the Mediterranean:
The Argo adventure Apollonius and Callimachus

Version 1.0

May 2007

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Abstract: This paper was written for *Culture in Pieces*, a Festschrift in honor of Peter Parsons.

Callimachus and Apollonius were poets writing in Alexandria, a newly established Greek city on the north east coast of Africa that lacked defining narratives of space, indigenous gods and heroes, or founding families. I argue that both poets turned to the legend of the Argonauts to link Libya and Egypt with Greece as a strategy in crafting a legitimating myth for the Ptolemaic occupation of Egypt. The textual argument focuses on the gift of a clod of Libyan earth to one of the Argonauts in Pindar's *Pythian 4* and at end of the *Argonautica*, and the Argonaut fragments at the beginning of Callimachus' *Aetia*.

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Recent studies have taught us the importance of landscape in the construction of the Greek imagination. Place is an intricate blend of the real and the imagined: composed of a location's natural phenomena, like mountains and rivers; the divine associations these phenomena inspire, expressed in stories and rituals; and the boundaries imposed by culture that generate categories of inclusion or exclusion.¹ Consider, for example, the immensely potent myth of Athenian autochthony and how it is articulated in the funeral oration embedded in Plato's *Menexenus*. Autochthony breeds virtue in contrast to the familiar migrating (and foreign) ancestors claimed by other Greeks:

οὕτω δὴ τοι τό γε τῆς πόλεως γενναῖον καὶ ἐλεύθερον βέβαιόν τε καὶ ὑγιεῖς
ἐστὶν καὶ φύσει μισοβάρβαρον, διὰ τὸ εἰλικρινῶς εἶναι Ἕλληνας καὶ ἀμιγεῖς
βαρβάρων. οὐ γὰρ Πέλοπες οὐδὲ Κάδμοι οὐδὲ Αἴγυπτοὶ τε καὶ Δαναοὶ οὐδὲ
ἄλλοι πολλοὶ φύσει μὲν βάρβαροι ὄντες, νόμῳ δὲ Ἕλληνες, συνοικοῦσιν ἡμῖν.

So strong and healthy is the nobility and freedom of the city (sc. Athens), and so averse to foreigners in its nature, because we are pure Hellenes and unmixed with foreigners.

For no descendants of Pelops or Cadmus or Aegyptus or Danaus or any others who are foreign in nature, but Hellene in culture live among us. (245c-d)²

If who you were and how you thought of yourself was to a large extent formed by where you lived and the accreted mythologies of that place, some of the earliest surviving Greek poetry provides testimony to the importance of arranging and remembering the stories that delimited local identities. Much of Hesiod, for example, provided a conceptual organization of space and boundaries in the forms of catalogues that linked a specific human group to a place and to its divinities via genealogical (usually matrilineal) descent.³ Foreigners like Cadmus or Aegyptus or Danaus held pride of place in many of

¹ Leontis 1995, 17-25; Cole 2004, 7-29.

² Hall 2002, 214 where the passage is discussed at some length in the context of 'Hellenic' identity.

³ West 1985, 1-11, and see the discussion in Hall 1997, 83-88 on "decoding the genealogical grammar."

these genealogies—a constant reminder that the boundaries between Greek and non-Greek were permeable and often subject to revision.

In contrast to the places populated by heroes who predated or returned from the Trojan war, or colonies that might boast of a venerable mother city, Alexandria was new, a space that Greeks had only begun to inhabit after 332 BCE. It had no defining narratives of place, no indigenous or founding families, no gods. We can document that the earliest settlers, who were mostly from Cyrene and the Cyrenaica, Macedon and Thessaly, Ionia and islands of the southern Mediterranean, continued to identify not with their new home but with their places of origin.⁴ They styled themselves, for example, Cyrenean, or Samian or Thessalian. Callimachus offers us some insight into this world in an unplaced fragment from the *Aetia* when an Athenian resident in the city is found celebrating not a local festival, but the *Anthesteria* from his home city of Athens (fr.178.1-2 Pfeiffer). Alexandria specifically lacked origin myths, and we can see this deficiency being remedied in the opening sections of the *Alexander Romance*, with its narratives of Alexander as the city's *oikist* (1.31-33). The first poets of the city—Callimachus, Theocritus, and Apollonius—made important links with earlier Greek poetry by emphasizing the connections of Menelaus and Helen with the local landscape: the opening of the *Victoria Berenices*, for example, designates the Pharos as Helen's island, alluding to an alternate version of her elopement to Troy with Paris (fr. 383 Pfeiffer + SH 254.5-6). This Helen was detained in Egypt and returned chaste to her husband while Paris made off only with her *eidolon*.⁵ Similarly, Apollonius in a now almost non-existent poem identified Canopus (or Canobus) as the helmsman of Menelaus who fell asleep on the Egyptian shore, where he was fatally bitten by a snake.⁶ 'Canopus' occurs in the *Prometheus Bound* (846) as the name of the coastal region of the westernmost branch of the Nile. The original Greek use of the name may have derived from local Egyptian

⁴ Mueller 2005, 42.

⁵ Stesichorus apparently recounted this version of the Helen myth, which now survives in Herodotus 2.113-120 and in Euripides' *Helen*.

⁶ Fr. 3 Powell, and see Krevans 2000, 80-4. She notes that P. B. Schmid in his 1947 study of Apollonius' *ktisis*-poems already claimed that Apollonius was connecting "Egyptian locales with the earliest cycles of Greek saga." (78 and n. 32).

usage, but by the Hellenistic period, Apollonius and others translated the landscape from the alien to the familiar by incorporating the region (via the story of the helmsman) into the cycle of *nostoi*, or adventures of Greek heroes returning from the Trojan war.⁷

These examples, however, also illustrate the limits of this sort of mythic remapping: Alexandria lacked a past, and attempts to link it with Homer or the heroes of the Trojan war simultaneously reinforced the marginality of the new landscape in relation to old Greece. What Alexandria needed was a myth devoted to its own space that might reverse the inherited hierarchies of place. The argument of this paper is that Callimachus and Apollonius both turned to the legend of the Argonauts with its implicit and explicit links to Libya and Egypt to craft a legitimating myth for Greek occupation of an older, richer culture that might coincidentally serve to legitimate the new rulers, a parvenu line of Macedonians struggling to maintain their hold in Egypt and to extend their sphere of influence in the islands and cities that ringed the Mediterranean.⁸ In considering how these two early Ptolemaic poets appropriated and shaped the Argo adventure, we can gain some insight into the processes of cultural formation taking place in the early city. This undertaking is complicated by the fact that Callimachus' Argonauts represent for us truly 'culture in pieces' — only a handful of fragments from the first book of the *Aetia* survive. For that reason, I shall begin with one earlier poem, Pindar's *Pythian 4*, then turn to Apollonius' *Argonautica*, as reference points in order to establish a baseline for interpretation before considering Callimachus.

The story of the Argonauts and their expedition to recover the Golden Fleece was extremely old.⁹ Homer in the *Odyssey* was familiar with a venture that already had many of the features of the later epic: in book 12, Circe remarks about the *Planctae*:

οἷη δὴ κείνη γε παρέπλω ποντοπόρος νηῦς
Ἄργῶ πασιμέλουσα, παρ' Αἰήταο πλέουσα·

⁷ Canopus, of course, does not occur in the *Odyssey*, and if he figured in pre-Hellenistic versions of Menelaus and Helen in Egypt, the sources are now lost. Narratives of return were immensely useful in forging genealogical links to the heroic past; each hero might stop in several places before finally reaching his home city.

⁸ Bagnall 1976, 156-8.

⁹ For the intersection of the *Odyssey* and the *Argonautica*, see West 2005.

καί νύ κε τήν ἔνθ' ὄκα βάλεν μεγάλας ποτὶ πέτρας,
ἀλλ' Ἦρη παρέπεμψεν, ἐπεὶ φίλος ἦεν Ἰήσων.

The only seafaring ship to pass though that way was the Argo, of interest to all, sailing back from Aetes. And her too would it have cast immediately upon the great rocks but Hera sent her through, seeing as Jason was dear.

References to Jason or his crew surface in a wide variety of genres ranging from the genealogically shaped poems of Hesiod,¹⁰ to Mimnermus' elegies, to Greek tragedy (Euripides' *Medea* is the most well known), to lost epics, to mythographers like Dionysus Scytobrachion, who was a near contemporary of Callimachus and Apollonius.¹¹ However, the sole surviving intact treatment of the story of the Argonauts before Apollonius comes not from epic, but from Pindar: *Pythian 4*, one of several victory odes written for the Battiad kings of Cyrene. 299 lines long, it is often described as Pindar's most 'epic' poem, and would surely have felt at home in the Hellenistic period. It is a dense narrative that tells its story more through allusion to or ellipsis of seemingly well-known events than by recounting them in any detail. Scholars have certainly noted the many overlaps between the Pindar's epinician and Apollonius' epic, but usually they belong to a general tally of which writer included which events from some notional whole story. Yet, if *Pythian 4* is read as a more central intertext for Apollonius and for Callimachus, in the sense of an earlier work whose meanings form an essential part of the subsequent texts' signification, we can begin to see how the distinctive elements of one particular colonization myth was adapted to accommodate early Alexandria.

Pindar's narrative was written for Arcesilaus IV, the king of Cyrene, to commemorate his victory in the chariot-race at the Pythian games in 462 BCE.¹² At the time of the writing

¹⁰ The Libyan adventures seem to have featured in the *Megalai Ehoiai* (F 253), on which see D'Alessio 2005, 195-9.

¹¹ For a detailed survey consult Dräger 1993.

¹² It was the second of two odes that celebrated that victory: the other (*Pythian 5*) was more typical in length and style.

Arcesilaus' Battiad rule was being seriously threatened by political unrest, and the strategy of *Pythian 4* is to present a case for the reinstatement for an exiled member of the aristocracy, Demophilus, as a integral part of the poet's argument. The adventures of the Argonauts are framed by a brief tribute to the victor and a rather longer closing plea for the return of Demophilus. The link between this contemporary political frame and the myth is the figure of Euphemus. He was a member of the crew of the Argo, but also the ancestor of the Battiads of Cyrene. The logic of the juxtaposed parts is that even though Euphemus forgot the instruction of the oracle, the divine will in time was fulfilled. Just so, we may infer, it is the divine plan that Demophilus be reinstated. Arcesilaus can comply or obstruct, but in the latter case can only delay its inevitability.

Pythian 4 begins at the end of the adventure, where the Argonauts have broken their return journey on Thera. Callimachus begins his Argonaut sequence close by: at “Anaphe, neighbor to Laconian Thera” (fr. 7. 23 Pf. = 9.23 Massimilla) while Apollonius ends his poem on Anaphe (4.1717). On Thera, Medea foretells the founding of the royal house of Cyrene.

καὶ τὸ Μηδείας ἔπος ἀγκομίσαι
 ἐβδόμα καὶ σὺν δεκάτῃ γενεᾷ Θή-
 ραιον, Αἰήτα τό ποτε ζαμενῆς
 παῖς ἀπέπνευσ' ἀθανάτου στόματος, δέσ-
 ποινα Κόλχων. εἶπε δ' οὕτως
 ἡμιθέοισιν Ἰάσονος αἰχματᾶο ναύταις·
 “Κέκλυτε, παῖδες ὑπερθύμων τε φωτῶν καὶ θεῶν·
 φαμί γὰρ τᾶσδ' ἐξ ἀλιπλά-
 κτου ποτὲ γᾶς Ἐπάφοιο κόραν
 ἀστέων ρίζαν φυτεύσεσθαι μελησιμβρότων
 Διὸς ἐν Ἄμμωνος θεμέθλοις·”

[Battus was destined] to fulfill the words of Medea in the seventeenth generation on Thera, words that the mighty daughter of Aetes, the mistress of the Colchians, once breathed from her immortal mouth. She spoke as follows to the demigod crew of spear-carrying Jason. “Harken, sons of high-spirited mortals and gods. I say that from this sea beaten land (sc. Thera) the daughter of Epaphus (sc. Libya)

will one day be planted with a root of famous cities amid the foundations of Zeus Ammon.” (*Pyth.* 4.14-16).

She explains that a clod of Libyan earth (βώλακα δαιμονίαν, 4.37) that had been previously given to Euphemus by a son of Poseidon, was destined, when washed into the sea to come to rest on the island of Thera; and from there in the fullness of time, Battus, one of Euphemus’ descendants, would come to colonize Libya. Through its instrumentality, Euphemus would become the ancestor of the Cyrenean royal house: after seventeen generations, his descendants would migrate from Lemnos to Sparta to Thera and thence to Libya--the land of Zeus Ammon.

The clod of Libyan earth given as a gift that comes to rest on Thera, that is, on Greek soil, confers by its migration an autochthonous claim to Libya, which subsequently becomes Greek in fulfillment of the prophecy.¹³ Pindar imaginatively links the lengthy process to a fecund sexuality--Libya is first described as a white breast (ἀργινοέντι μαστῶ, line 8), and as a feminine space to be plowed. Jason's plowing of the barbarian soil of Colchis—when he undertakes the tests set by Aeetes--anticipates the actions of the descendants of Euphemus, who in the fullness of time come to plow the fertile soil of Libya. The Argonauts' coupling with the Lemnian women is again likened to plowing. And the resulting 'seed of Greek heroes' in their turn are the destined 'plowers' of Libya. As Pindar puts it, now reverting to his own voice:

καὶ ἐν ἀλλοδαπαῖς
σπέρμ’ ἀρούραις τουτάκις ὑμετέρας ἀ-
κτῆνος ὄλβου δέξατο μοιρίδιον
ἄμαρ ἢ νύκτες· τόθι γὰρ γένος Εὐφά-
μου φυτευθὲν λοιπὸν αἰεὶ
τέλλετο· καὶ Λακεδαιμονίων μιχθέντες ἀνδρῶν
ἤθεσιν ἐν ποτε Καλλίστην ἀπώκησαν χρόνῳ
νᾶσον· ἐνθεν δ’ ὕμμι Λατοί-
δας ἔπορεν Λιβύας πέδιον
σὺν θεῶν τιμαῖς ὀφέλλειν, ἄστῳ χρυσοθρόνου (254-61).

¹³ See Calame 2003, 109 for the logic of this ‘marine’ autochthony.

And then in foreign fields (sc. the beds of Lemnian women) did the allotted days or nights receive the seed of your splendid prosperity. For there the race of Euphemus was planted and came into existence forever after. Sharing in the customs of men of Lacedaemon eventually they settled on an island once called *Kallistê*. From there, Leto's son granted you the plain of Libya to make rich with the favor of the gods, to govern the divine city of golden-throned Cyrene (254-61).

In Pindar's account, therefore, the entire adventure of the Argonauts unfolds as an *aition*, and one with ramifications for the contemporary world of the victor. The specific rhetoric of the *aition* is the manifest destiny of that Libyan clod, even when, or especially when, the human instruments do not understand the process. The Pindaric dynamic is a movement from a moment shrouded in the mists of the past (the time of the guest-gift of the clod) to the island of *Kallistê*/Thera (the place where Medea prophesies and from whence Battus sets out for Libya), and from Thera to the cultivated fields of North Africa. The juxtaposition of the disparate prophecies from successive time periods reinforces the inevitability of the events—as if the god were constantly sending reminders.¹⁴ And as a result, in Pindar the expedition of the Argonauts assumes cosmic importance, a necessary step in the divinely prompted colonization of North Africa. To take this a bit further, and employ the structuralist arguments of Claude Calame: within Pindar's scheme the union of Jason and Medea serves as a precursor of the reunion of Greece and Libya in the properly submissive hierarchy in which barbarian female--whether women or land--is tamed and plowed and rendered fertile by Greek male conquest. Thus Jason sleeping with Colchian Medea, Euphemus sleeping with the Lemnian woman, who bears the ancestor of Battus, and ultimately Battus and his colonizers sleeping with Libyan women are all linked by divine plan. And in another Cyrenean poem, *Pythian 9*, divinity actually establishes the paradigm--the whole colonizing chain is begun by Apollo himself taming by conquest and inseminating the eponymous nymph, Cyrene.¹⁵

¹⁴ Calame points to five distinctive temporal planes (2003, 47).

¹⁵ Calame discusses these texts and their 'isotopies' in a number of places: see especially 1990, 287-92 and 1993, 38-40 and notes as well as 2003, 54-5.

In his *Hymn to Apollo* Callimachus employs these same tropes of colonization, the conquest of local women, though a bit more discretely: Apollo sleeping with ‘bride’ Cyrene and the Spartan/Theran colonists joining in the dance with the local Libyan women:

Σπάρτη τοι, Καρνεῖε, τόδε πρώτιστον ἔδελθον,
δεύτερον αὖ Θήρη, τρίτατόν γε μὲν ἄστῳ Κυρήνης.
ἐκ μὲν σε Σπάρτης ἕκτον γένος Οἰδιπόδαο
ἦγαγε Θηραίην ἐς ἀπόκτισιν..... (72-4)

ἦ ῥ' ἐχάρη μέγα Φοῖβος, ὅτε ζωστῆρες Ἐννοῦς
ἄνδρες ὠρχήσαντο μετὰ ξανθῆσι Λιβύσσης,
τέθμια εὔτε σφιν Καρνειάδες ἤλυθον ὄραι.
οἱ δ' οὐπω πηγῆσι Κύρης ἐδύναντο πελάσσαι
Δωριέες, πυκινὴν δὲ νάπησ' Ἄζηλιν ἔναιον.
τοὺς μὲν ἀναξ ἴδεν αὐτός, ἐῆ δ' ἐπεδείξατο νύμφη
στάς ἐπὶ Μυρτούσσης κερατώδεος, ἦχι λέοντα
Ἵψηλις κατέπεφνε βοῶν σίνιν Εὐρυπύλοιο (85-92).

Sparta, O Carneian, was your first foundation, and then Thera, and third was the city of Cyrene. From Sparta the sixth generation of Oedipus led you out to their colony at Thera.... Indeed Phoebus rejoiced greatly when the belted warriors danced with the yellow-haired Libyan women, when the due season for the Carneia came. The Dorians were not yet able to approach the springs of Cyre, but lived in thickly wooded Azelis. These did Phoebus himself see, and showed to his bride, standing on horned Myrtussa, where the daughter of Hypseus killed the lion that was a bane to Eurypylus’

In this poem, however, Callimachus omits the clod of earth given to Euphemus. Rather his focus is on the latter part of the long history: Apollo’s prophecy to Battus. He marks the transition from Sparta to Thera to Cyrene and identifies the Cyrenean royal house as having descended in six generations from Oedipus.¹⁶ For Cyrenean Callimachus these

¹⁶ *Pyth.* 4.283; for fuller genealogical details see Hdt. 4.145-9. Dräger 1993, 228-286 discusses the Battiad genealogies as they occur in Hesiod, Pindar, and Herodotus; see his

genealogies are not bits of lore gleaned from lucubrations over obscure writers of local histories, rather they constitute the defining myths of his own polis, important elements in his construction of self: these are promises made about ‘my city’ to ‘my kings’ and ‘my ancestors’ (*hAp.* 65-71).¹⁷ Despite the omission of earlier events we can be sure that Callimachus is operating in the same frames of reference as *Pythian 4*. The story of the clod Irad Malkin describes as follows:

The fundamental Greek charter myth of Libya includes Sparta, Thera, and Cyrene...[s]pecifically, this charter myth articulates a colonial right of possession. It is the story of the original clod of earth—a piece of Libyan soil, *pars pro toto*—granted to the mythic ancestor of the real founder of Cyrene, Battos. This ancestor was the Minyan Euphemus, one of the Argonauts.¹⁸

Callimachus’ emphasis on the proximate cause of the Cyrene foundation, namely, Apollo’s Delphic prophecy to Battus, within a *paean* to Apollo for the wellbeing of the city makes excellent sense. Especially since Callimachus claimed the Battiads as ancestors. The Argonauts and the gift of Libyan soil belong to a pre-history of events in the Apollo hymn and even when omitted from the narrative they cannot be far from the surface.

Callimachus layered time in his Apollo hymn in an analogous way to Pindar—the narrative moves between Callimachus in present time, Apollo and Cyrene as the mythological founders, and the first colonists celebrating the rite of the Carneia on Libyan soil. Apollonius too experiments with a layering of time in his epic. Most obviously, when he constructs an adventure that takes place in the pre-Homeric world, and creates opportunities for the Homeric world to intrude into his own text. This is particularly visible in book 4, when the adventurers reach the Odyssean landscape of the western Mediterranean, stopping at Circe's island, and later at the court of Alcinous and Arete on Phaeacia, where Jason and Medea are married. Apollonius has his Argonauts also encounter the Sirens, and much is made of their

very useful schematic on p. 276. See Calame 2003, 86-101 for the transformation of Pindar’s ‘fractured narrative’ into ‘political’ time in Herodotus.

¹⁷ See West 1985, 87 for the fascinating conjecture that Eugammon of Cyrene incorporated elements from local Cyrenean mythology into his *Telegonia*.

¹⁸ Malkin 1994, 174.

passage through the *Planctae*--a subject (as we saw above) that was already scripted by Circe in the *Odyssey*. In Apollonius' version, Thetis and the sea-nymphs carry the Argo through these treacherous waters. Peleus, who is a member of the Argo's crew and Thetis' estranged husband, remind us that they are the parents of Achilles, who is as yet a child. The adventures of Heracles present an even more complex temporal picture: since Heracles was for a brief time a member of the expedition, he appears in the present as well as in the future and the immediate past. After he leaves the expedition in search of Hylas, much of the area that the heroes traverse provides an opportunity to allude to Heracles' recent presence. In book 4, for example, the Argonauts seem to catch sight of Heracles just after he has stolen the apples of the Hesperides as he passes on his way to the underworld for his final adventure. In Apollonius, thus, heroic events seem always already have happened, whatever their actual temporal relationship to the events of the poem. I suggest that this layering of heroic events through the allusive as well as actual presence of both Homeric heroes and Heracles in the text is a deliberate construct to create the impression of narrative inevitability similar to that of Pindar, where the simultaneous presence of several generations linked in prophecy restricts the potential for heroic action.

But unlike Pindar, Apollonius' tells the events of his story in chronological order, but in such a way that his poem appears framed Pindarically. Allusions to the Pindaric texts are prominent at the beginning but especially at the end of the *Argonautica*,¹⁹ where Apollonius concludes his narrative with this same clod of Libyan earth. In place of Medea's vatic outpouring, Apollonius sets out the gift exchange as a lengthy incident at book 4.1550-90, and lest we fail to take the point the event is reprised at very end where the connection between the clod and the white breast of Libya (Pindar's ἀργινοέντι μαστῶ) is worked out in a rather baroque dream sent to Euphemus.

Ἄλλ' ὅτε δὴ κάκειϊθεν ὑπεύδια πείσματ' ἔλυσαν,
 μνήσατ' ἔπειτ' Εὐφημος ὀνειράτος ἐννουχίῳ,
 ἄζόμενος Μαίης υἷα κλυτόν· εἶσατο γάρ οἱ
 δαιμονίη βῶλαξ ἐπιμάστιος ᾗ ἐν ἀγοστῶ
 ἄρδεσθαι λευκῆσιν ὑπὸ λιβάδεσσι γάλακτος,
 ἐκ δὲ γυνή βῶλοιο πέλειν ὀλίγης περ εὐούσης

¹⁹ Hunter 1993, 152-3.

παρθενικῇ ἰκέλη· μίχθη δέ οἱ ἐν φιλότῃτι
 ἄσχετον ἱμερθεῖς· ὀλοφύρετο δ' ἤυτε κούρη
 ζευξάμενος, τὴν αὐτὸς ἐῷ ἀτίταλλε γάλακτι·
 ἢ δέ ἐ μιλχιόισι παρηγορέεσκεν ἔπεσσι·
 “Τρίτωνος γένος εἰμί, τεῶν τροφός, ὦ φίλε, παίδων,
 οὐ κούρη· Τρίτων γὰρ ἐμοὶ Λιβύη τε τοκῆες.
 ἀλλὰ με Νηρηῖος παρακάτθεο παρθενικῆσιν
 ἄμ πέλαγος ναίειν Ἀνάφης σχεδόν· εἴμι δ' ἐς αὐγὰς
 ἠελίου μετόπισθε, τεοῖς νεπόδεσσιν ἐτοίμη.”

But when they had loosed their ship's cables in calm weather, Euphemus then recalled a dream he had had at night, when he was honoring the glorious son of Maia. The divine clod seemed to him to be at his breast held in his arms and suckled by white drops of milk, and from the clod, small though it was, came woman like a young virgin. Overcome by strong desire he lay with her, but lamented as though he had coupled with his own daughter whom he had nourished with his own milk. But she soothed him with gentle words: “I am of the race of Triton, my friend, your children's nurse, not your daughter, for Triton and Libya are my parents. Entrust me to the maiden daughters of Nereus so that I may dwell in the sea near Anaphe. I return again to the sun's rays, when I am ready for your descendants.

Apollonius employs the same colonizing trope—sexual conquest (though here nicely tinged with incest averted) and Pindar's term—*δαίμονιη βῶλαξ*—for the clod of earth.²⁰ But Pindar's *δαίμονιη βῶλαξ* was forgotten (*Pyth.* 4. 41) and destiny's plan delayed when it was inadvertently washed into the sea. In Apollonius Euphemus recounts his dream to Jason, whose behavior vis-à-vis divinities has been prescient throughout the poem. Jason understands the significance of the clod and thoughtfully explains its importance for the reader:

βῶλακα γὰρ τεύξουσι θεοὶ πόντον δὲ βαλόντι
 νῆσον, ἵν' ὀπλότεροι παίδων σέθεν ἐννάσσονται

²⁰ See Calame 2003, 61-3 on the clod as nurturer of the *genos* of Euphemus.

παῖδες, ἐπεὶ Τρίτων ξεινήιον ἐγγυάλιξε
τὴνδε τοι ἠπείροιο Λιβυστίδος· οὐ νύ τις ἄλλος
ἀθανάτων ἢ κεῖνος, ὃ μιν πόρεν ἀντιβολήσας.”

“Ὡς ἔφατ’· οὐδ’ ἀλίωσεν ὑπόκρισιν Αἰσονίδαο
Εὐφήμος, βῶλον δέ θεοπροπίησιν ἰανθεὶς Καλλίστη, παίδων ἱερὴ τροφὸς
Εὐφήμοιο·

“When you have cast the clod into the sea, the gods will make an island, where the future sons of your sons shall dwell, since Triton gave you this piece of the Libyan land as a guest gift. It was no other immortal than he who gave it to you when he met you.” ...So he (sc. Jason) spoke and Euphemus did not ignore the answer of the son of Aeson, but rejoicing at this prophecy he cast the clod into the deep. From it arose an island, Kalliste (= Thera), the holy nurse of the sons of Euphemus (4. 1750-3).

Let me now attempt to position this within its contemporary context. Libya had more than one colonial settlement, and the clod of earth ‘granted to the mythic ancestor’ could be invoked to justify more than one foundation. Further, Libya included the whole stretch of North Africa from the Kinyps (the river that separated Carthaginian territory from Greek) to the shrine of Zeus Ammon, and in most ancient geographers it stretched as far as the west bank of the Nile. Strabo, for example, has a long discussion in his first book about the consequences of using the Nile to divide Asia from Libya (C32). When the world is thus divided, Alexandria, which lies some 25 miles west of the Nile, also falls within the clod’s entitlement.²¹ I suggest that the effect of the Pindaric framing is to add a dimension of foundation narrative to Apollonius's epic that implicitly extended the range of Pindar's prophecy to include the new Libyan foundation of Ptolemaic Alexandria. It is quite possible that when Apollonius wrote his poem, Cyrene was once

²¹ If this seems to be a geographic stretch for us, it was uncontroversial for Hellenistic audiences. Posidippus certainly thinks Alexandria is in Libya in his Pharos epigram (A-B 116.3), as does Callimachus in the *Apotheosis of Arsinoe* who has the deified Philotera exclaim upon seeing the smoke from her sister Arsinoe II’s funeral pyre: ἠγά τι μοι Λιβύα κα[κοῦται]; I am grateful to Alessandro Barchiesi and G-B D’Alessio who called this to my attention.

again under Ptolemaic control. This would have happened after the union of Euergetes and Berenice II, the daughter of Magas, the ruler of Cyrene, in 241 BC.²² But in fact Apollonius strips his version of the colonization myth of any Cyrenean particularity. Jason speaks only of a piece of Libya. Because epic necessarily falls in the heroic past, it may be that explicit ties to contemporary Alexandria contravened generic sensibilities (though it clearly did not for Virgil). But there may be another reason for Apollonius' temporal positioning of his poem that I will return to at the end of this paper. Meanwhile, there is an aspect of Apollonius' story that nudges the reader towards Greek claims to not just to Libya, but explicitly to Egypt. At least from the time of Herodotus Colchis was associated with Egypt, and Herodotus informs us in book 2 of his *Histories* that the Colchians seemed to him to be Egyptian, namely, the descendants of soldiers from the army of the Egyptian pharaoh, Sesostris, who supposedly ranged as far as the Black Sea in his conquests (2.103-4). Sesostris' exploits occur as well in the *Alexander Romance* and in Apollonius' near contemporary, Hecataeus of Abdera.²³ Apollonius himself (although he does not name the king) identifies Colchis as a foundation of Sesostris (4.272-9). Thus within the logic of foundation myth (as we saw in Pindar), Jason's plowing of Colchian soil and his sexual conquest of Colchian/Egyptian Medea anticipates and confers legitimacy on the Argonauts' descendants, who in the fullness of time will return to the region from which the Colchians themselves originally came.

And now to turn to our 'culture in pieces': the tale of the Argonauts embedded in Callimachus' *Aetia*. Let me start by situating it within its broader narrative frame. According to an epigram in the *Palatine Anthology*, in the dream sequence of Callimachus' encounter with the Muses at the opening of the *Aetia*, Callimachus moves Libya to Helicon.²⁴ We might infer that at for his dream he is in Cyrene, though later at

²² Bagnall 1976, 25-7. It should be remembered that Ptolemy I was instrumental in setting up the Cyrenean *politeuma*, and that in the early Ptolemaic period Cyreneans were the largest Greek population group within Egypt. Clarysse 1998, ? points out the Jason was a popular Cyrenean name in this period, and it occurs in documents and inscriptions within Egypt, so even without explicit connections a contemporary audience was likely to make the connections.

²³ See my discussion, 2003, 32-6.

²⁴ AP 7.42.5: εὔτέ μιν ἐκ Λιβύης ἀνείρας εἰς Ἑλικῶνα.

the beginning of book 3 and the end of book 4 he is securely located in Alexandria.²⁵ Within the *Aetia* as a whole the temporal frame oscillates between a Callimachus who locates his persona in the ‘real time’ and space of Libya (Alexandria and probably Cyrene) and the hyperspace of his conversation with the Muses. Within these spaces he narrates events that range from the pre-Homeric to the very recent, the consequences of which are manifested by rituals, objects, or foundations in locations throughout the Mediterranean. Book 1, for example, begins at a time when Minos’ sea power controlled the Mediterranean, a control that the Ptolemies aspired to; when Jason and his companions undertook a sea voyage to the edges of the known world that in many respects resembled the expedition of Alexander; when Heracles, who was cultivated as an ancestor of the Ptolemies, undertook his labors. Within these earlier *aitia* we often find foundation stories and geographical references that appear to remap or de-center the Mediterranean world, moving away from Athens and Sparta and Corinth and Thebes, to Illyria and Epirus, South Italy, Sicily, North Africa, the islands controlled by the Ptolemies—Samos, Paros, Thera—and the areas of the Ionian coast of the most interest in Ptolemaic expansion.

The framework for the first two books of the *Aetia* is a conversation between Callimachus and the Muses that constantly makes hearers aware of the role of memory in preserving and transmitting the discrete pieces of regional cultures that form the subject of the individual stories.²⁶ Callimachus begins by asking the Muses about the Graces. The next *aition* introduces the Argonauts. Why, Callimachus asks the Muses, do they celebrate the rites of Anaphe with abuse? The Argonauts return at the end of book 4; the last *aition* but one (fr. 106-8), tells of the Argonauts’ abandoning an anchor at Cyzicus.²⁷

²⁵ See Parsons 1977 for the construction of these two books framed by an epinician for Berenice’s victory at the Nemean games at the beginning of book 3 and the dedication of the lock of her hair as the final poem of book 4. Both poems locate themselves in Alexandria.

²⁶ For the temporal layers of the poem see Harder 2003.

²⁷ The object itself is anonymous, but derives its significance by attachment to a heroic story—thus the local rock was ‘really’ an anchor of the Argonauts. This anecdote from Appian’s *Syriakê* (63) provides a valuable perspective on these relics: Seleucus was

Thus we have a rudimentary ring composition in which the Cyzicene anchor focuses our attention back to the events of the earlier sequence. The final *aition* in the collection is the *Coma Berenices*, which brings us to the world of contemporary Alexandria, and also Cyrene. The marriage of Ptolemy III and Berenice II is the proximate cause for the poem about the lock, and also for reunification of Egypt and Cyrene. The fourth book ends with the creation of a new star: Berenice II dedicates a lock of her hair for the safe return of her husband, Euergetes, from the Syrian war. Subsequently, Conon, the court astronomer, discovers the hair has become a new “star among the old” (fr. 110.64 Pf.). With this final *aition* mythological events from the past converge to end in Alexandria, a city that now controls Cyrene and, as a result of Ptolemy III’s Syrian campaign, has extended its influence much further in the eastern Mediterranean and Aegean.²⁸ In the lock, become star, the city now has its own distinctive, place-marking object that other ages and other peoples will remember when they look up in the night sky.²⁹ Or rather the city now has the power to invest an adventitious object with its own symbolism for future peoples to acknowledge.

Callimachus’ Argo adventure now consists of six papyrus fragments that certainly belong to the same *aition*, a number of notices from the scholia to Apollonius’ poem that convey information about it, and handful of fragments that might belong, because they are similar to material found in Apollonius.³⁰ The fragments that have been located in this action already number at least 100 lines.³¹ Even if what we have of the *aition* represents less than half of the original, the extreme degree of narrative compression resembles *Pythian 4* more closely than other available models. Ostensibly, Callimachus does not set out to tell the entire story of the Argonauts but only to account for the ritual abuse in

killed by Ptolemy Ceraunus, as he (Seleucus) was bending over a local altar as he tried to discover whether it was left by the Argonauts or the one of the *Nostoi*.

²⁸ Hölbl 2001, 46-51.

²⁹ See Harder’s discussion of the end of the *Aetia* as “the Present as the Past of the Future” (2003, 303-6).

³⁰ Fr. 37, 484, 584, 602, 617, 673, 706, 716 Pf.

³¹ In comparison, the episode of Acontius and Cydippe has at least 120 lines, the *Coma Berenices* 95 lines, and the *Victoria Berenices* (if we accept all the fragments that D’Alessio 1995 would include) was over 170 lines.

Apollo’s worship on Anaphe. Thus the sequence has a natural end that seems to fall around fragments 19-21 Massimilla, which relate how Medea’s serving women innocently precipitate the events that the rite subsequently commemorates. Callimachus’ tale is told as a flashback, and like Pindar’s *Pythian* it begins toward the end of the adventure—at Thera’s neighbor, Anaphe. The muse Calliope seems to be the principal speaker. Calliope, like Medea, begins by relating the details of colonial enterprise: in her own voice she tells Callimachus about the Colchian settlements in the west, noting that: “these things would come to fulfillment in the future” (fr. 12.6 Pf. = 17.6 Massimilla). In a later fragment, when the Argonauts, have been caught up in oppressive darkness, she gives us Jason’s prayer as he beseeches Apollo. Jason has only mentioned the point where the adventure begins when the text breaks off:

ἀλλ’ ὄγ’ ἀνι]άζων ὄν κέαρ Αἰσονίδης
 κοὶ χέρας ἤέρ]ταζεν, Ἰήιε, πολλὰ δ’ ἀπείλει
 ἐς Πυθὸν πέ]μψειν, πολλὰ δ’ ἐς Ὀρτυγίην,
 εἴ κεν ἀμιχ]θαλόεσσαν ἀπ’ ἤέρα νηὸς ἐλάσσει·
]. ὅτι σὴν, Φοῖβε, κατ’ αἰσιμίην
 πειρματ’] ἔλυσαν ἐκ[λ]ηρώσαντό τ’ ἔρετμά
]. πικρὸν ἔκοψαν ὕδωρ·
]...ἐπώνυμον Ἐμβασίοιο
]...εν.. Παγαεαῖς·

But the son of Aeson, grieving in his heart, raised his hands to you, *Hieie*, and promised to send many gifts to Pytho, many to Ortygia, if you would drive away the inauspicious (?) cloud from the ship...because Phoebus, at your instruction, they loosed the hawsers and filled out the oar banks,...struck the bitter waters; ...name of Apollo the Embarker...at Pegasae. (fr. 18.5-13 Pf. = 20.5-13 Massimilla)

Given its purpose—to remind Apollo that they have been acting in response to his directives—Jason’s prayer need only recall a few interactions with the god, and we might infer from the fact that the adjective ἀμιχθαλόεσσαν is used elsewhere only in describing Lemnos, that much of the Argo adventure was conveyed allusively.³² The last three

³² Homer, *Iliad*. 24.753, *hAp*. 36, and see the very helpful discussion in Massimilla on fr. 20.8. It is possible, since Lemnos contained a volcano that the adjective refers to the smoke that precedes eruption and the birth of a new island. But Bettarini’s suggestion

surviving fragments (fr. 19-21Pf = Massimilla) are probably spoken by Calliope in her own voice. They tell of Apollo breaking up the gloom and of Medea's servants whose behavior initiates the rites.³³

The fragment begins:

κῶς δέ, θεαί, ι . [. . .] μὲν ἀνήρ Ἀναφαῖος ἐπ' αἰε[χροῖς
 ἦ δ' ἐπὶ δυ[σφήμοις] Λίνδος ἄγει θυσίην,
 η . . . τήνε[. . .] τὸν Ἡρακλῆα σεβίζηι,
 . . . ἐπικ[. . .] ὡς ἤρχετο Καλλιόπη·
 Αἰ[γλήτην] Ἀνάφην τε, Λακωνίδι γείτονα Θήρη,
 π[ρῶτ[ον ἐνὶ μ]νήμη κάτθεο καὶ Μινύας,
 ἄ[ρχομενος ὡς] ἤρωες ἀπ' Αἰήταο Κυταίου
 αὐ[τίς ἐς ἀρχαίην] ἔπλεον Αἰμονίην
]εν, ὁ δ' ὡς ἴδεν ἔργα θυγατρ[ός
] ἔλεξε τάδε·
 [] κα[. . .] ἔθνος] Ἴήνες ἀλλα μενε . . . []
 [] πάντα δ' ἀνατρά[πελα·
 [] οὔ[θ]ε ἐ[ποιήσαν]τό με φόρτον,
 [] οὔ[θ]ε νή[ι]ον ὅ [σφε] φέρει
 [] αὐ[τανδ]ρον [] Ἥλιος ἴστω
 καὶ Φ[αῖς] [ποταμῶν ἡμε]τέρων βα[σι]λεύς·

Why, Goddesses, does a man of Anaphe with insults and Lindos with blasphemies perform a sacrifice...honor Heracles...Calliope began: Apollo the Radiant and Anaphe, neighbor to Thera, first fix in your memory and the Minyans, beginning from when the heroes sailed back from Cytaean Aeetes toward ancient Haemonia...and when he saw his daughter's deeds...he spoke thus: "Ionian race...everything is overturned...hasten? They have betrayed me...hasten...the ship that carries him men and all...Helios and Phasis, king of rivers, stand by me... (Fr.7: 19-34 Pf. + SH 249A = Massimilla 9.19-40).

Even in its fragmentary state we can see the emphasis placed on landscape and its constituent peoples: Thera is identified as Laconian: an obvious reference to the myth of

that the adjective means 'inauspicious' and refers to the Lemnian women is equally attractive (2003, 82-3).

³³ The story is related in Conon (8) as well, though there is considerable debate about how much of Conon is an accurate reflection of Callimachus. See Pfeiffer's long note (vol.1, 17) and Livrea 2006, 96.

Libyan colonization. Argonauts are the genealogically potent ‘Minyans’. Thessaly is given its older name of Haemonia.³⁴ Aetes is Cytaean. Cytaea is identified as the name of the town where Medea was born, and it is usually taken as a generic alternative for Colchian (especially in Latin poets).³⁵ However, Cytaea is not near the Phasis, but at the southern entrance to the Bosphorus, so the name is more likely particularize the Colchian landscape, which by the third century was studded with Greek settlements: one town (Nymphaion) seems even to have commemorated an embassy or visit from an early Ptolemy in a wall depicting sailing ships, one of which was named Isis with the name enclosed in a cartouche.³⁶ Calliope’s use of ancient names serves to remind us that place is a palimpsest of past inhabitants, current descendants or their replacements, and the ever-present possibility of change.

Calliope’s remarks provide a snapshot of the Colchian settlements in the Adriatic, first Pola, on the coast of northern Illyria, then Orician Amantine, which was, according to Stephen of Byzantium, near Corcyra and Oricus. Calliope tell us that when they were unable to catch the Argonauts, some of the Colchians:

οἱ μὲν ἐπ’ Ἰλλυρικοῖο πόρου χάσσαντες ἔρετμά
 λαῖα πάρα ξανθῆς Ἄρμονίης ὄφιος
 ἄσιτυρον ἐκτίσσαντο, τό κεν ‘Φυγάδων’ τις ἐνίκοι
 Γραικός, ἀτὰρ κείνων γλῶσσει ὀνόμηγε ‘Πόλας’

Dropping their oars by the Illyrian strait, by the stone snake of yellow-haired Harmonia, they established a small town, which a *Graikos* would call ‘of the Exiles’ but their tongue named ‘Pola’... (fr. 13 Massimilla).

And in the next fragment we are told:

Φαιήκων ἐγένον[τ]ο . . [
 ἐσμὸν ἄγων ἑτέροις ι .[.]...[

³⁴ The scholium on Ap. Rh. 3.1090 quotes Rhianus as saying: “Once the older generation called it Pyrrhaia, from Pyrrha, the ancient wife of Deucalion, but then Haemonia from Haemon, who was a stalwart son of Pelasgus, and Haemon sired Thessalus from whom the people have taken the name Thessalian.” (= Rhianus 25 Powell).

³⁵ Mayer 1986, 50.

³⁶ It also may implicitly distinguish Aetes’ Colchian period from the time when (according to Eumelus) he was king of Corinth (see, e.g., Pausanias 2.3.10).

ἔκτισε Κερκ[υ]ραῖον ἐδέθλιον, ἔνθ[εν ἀν’ αὖτις
στάντες Ἀμια.ντίγην ὄκικισαν Ὀρικήν.
καὶ τὰ μὲν ὧς ἤμελλε μετὰ χρόνον ἐκτελέεσθαι

...of the Phaiacians they were...leading a band by others? ...established a Corcyrean settlement, and migrating from there they settled Orician Amantine . And these things would come to fulfillment in the future. (fr. 17 Massimilla)

There seems to have been a strong tradition of Colchian settlement in the Adriatic, which is recorded in Roman as well as Hellenistic and later Greek sources. Local islands were even called the Apsyrtides.³⁷ Calliope’s account continues to acknowledge these competing cultural layers. The two names for one space, *Pola* and *Phugadon*, imply non-Greek and Greek cultures living in close proximity. While *Graikos*, which was not the standard name for Hellenes but for northwestern Greek peoples around Epirus and Dodona later incorporated into the broader category of Hellene, reminds us that even the seemingly stable identity of ‘Greek’ was always under construction and revision.³⁸ Orician Amantine³⁹ suggests an even more complex cultural layering: the Colchians in question had first settled in Corcyra, and when expelled, they moved into this new area. According to pseudo-Scymnus, for example, it was originally founded by the Euboeans returning from Troy (442-3), and was also a region where Cadmus had exercised power.⁴⁰ But why does Callimachus devote so large a portion (relatively speaking) of the extant remains to Colchian settlements? One reason, surely, is that these areas were particularly familiar in contemporary events. For example, Pyrrhus, who was related to Ptolemy Soter by marriage, when he was king of Epirus added southern Illyria to his

³⁷ Ps.-Scymnus 373, Str. 315.

³⁸ West 1985, 52-6. Malkin 2003, 148-50. *Graikos* becomes the standard name for Greeks used by the Romans and other peoples of the west. While Aeetes, looking from the east (in the passage quoted above) speaks of ‘Ionians’ (Ἰόνες), a regional designation for Greeks in the East that outsiders came to apply to Greeks generally. See Massimilla’s commentary on fr. 9.29.

³⁹ See Malkin 1998, 78-9.

⁴⁰ See Massimilla’s commentary on fr.14.4.

territory.⁴¹ Then, as a result of a subsequent marriage to Agathocles' daughter Pyrrhus gained control of Corcyra (her dowry) and Oricum. Also Illyrian tribes were causing constant disruption to the delicate political balance in Epirus and Macedon during this period, a circumstance that regional dynasts could ill afford to ignore when plotting their campaigns of territorial expansion.

A local rock formation is described as the 'stone of the yellow-haired snake,' an allusion to Cadmus and Harmonia. Cadmus, of course, was a central figure in Greek genealogical mapping: a Phoenician, he migrated to Greece and settled in Thebes, but at the end of his life, in accordance with Apollo's instructions he and his wife went to Illyria, where they were turned into snakes that the monument commemorates. Cadmus is a tangible reminder of the central (one might even say normative) role the outside colonizer played in Greek myth, and his kin included Illyrius, the eponymous ancestor of Illyria, and Membliarus, the colonizer of Anaphe. Cadmus was also an ancestor of the Battiads of Cyrene who traced descent from Oedipus (as we saw in Callimachus' Apollo hymn). It is distinctly possible, as Enrico Livrea observes, that Eurydice, Alexander's Illyrian grandmother, who was the wife of Amyntas III, traced her descent from Harmonia.⁴² At the very least, these two regions—Illyria and Epirus—contributed a number of maternal ancestors to Philip and Alexander. Thus the reference to the story of Cadmus might reasonably be understood as a compliment to the ancestors of Alexander, or even the Ptolemies, who tried to link their own lineage to Alexander. If this is right then Colchian migrations complete the circle: Egyptians settling in Colchis, Colchians settling in Illyria and Epirus, the territory from which Philip's maternal ancestors came, and finally Alexander, with his Illyrian blood, and the Ptolemies, who claimed descent from Macedonian kings, conquering and settling Egypt, complement and extend the Sparta-Thera charter myth, and reinforce the inevitability of Greek migration back to Ptolemaic Alexandria.

⁴¹ While Pyrrhus was on his Italian campaign it is possible that Ptolemy II provided a military presence to protect his Epirote kingdom (so Hölbl 73 n.105).

⁴² 2006, 98 and n. 29.

In the opening of this paper I suggested that Apollonius' tale was in part setting the stage for the Ptolemaic colonization of Egypt, an event far in the future that necessarily fell outside of his epic. Callimachus' poem engages with the charter myth of North Africa as well, though both Alexandria and Cyrene are present in his text. His version begins: Ἀιγλήτην Ἀνάφην τε, Λακωνίδι γείτονα Θήρη. Apollo is Callimachus' patron deity, Thera the mother city of his city, Cyrene. He begins the *aition* then not far from where he left off in the prologue—Apollo and Cyrene. We cannot know what further details of the myth Callimachus included—Euphemus and the clod? the clod becoming Thera? In a slightly later fragment (fr.19.10 Massimilla), when the Argonauts are disoriented by the enclosing darkness, the reference to Nonacrine Kallisto (the Great Bear), whom they can no longer see, is surely a pun on *Kallistê*, the earlier name for Thera (as we saw in the passage of Pindar quoted above). Like the Great Bear (Kallisto) *Kallistê* is also invisible, either until Apollo and his prophecy makes its future clear or until it rises from the sea.⁴³ But this is speculative. What we do know is that Ἀιγλήτην Ἀνάφην τε, Λακωνίδι γείτονα Θήρη is where Callimachus begins. It is also where Apollonius ends.

It is well known that more than a few lines in these six fragments of Callimachus' compressed tale have close parallels in Apollonius, not clustered in one place, but scattered throughout the longer text. This cannot be accidental. The two texts, by virtue of careful appropriation, are designed to call attention to their interrelationship. Callimachus' version is likely to be prior.⁴⁴ But an argument can be made in the other direction: namely, that Callimachus deliberately borrowed from and compressed Apollonius' tale in such a way that readers of both would be aware that Callimachus begins where Apollonius ends.⁴⁵

⁴³ As in Apollonius' version.

⁴⁴ In support of this, Robert Albis makes the clever suggestion that at 1.418-9 Apollonius imitates Jason's prayer to Apollo in Callimachus (fr. 18. 6-7: πολλὰ δ' ἀπείλει ἐς Πυθῶ πέμψειν, πολλὰ ἐς Ὀρτυγίην), placing in Jason's mouth the remark that: 'you are responsible for my labors' (αὐτὸς γὰρ ἐπαίτιος ἔπλευ ἀέλθων). He argues that ἐπαίτιος was a punning reference to the *Aetia*. See also Hunter's comments, 1993, 123.

⁴⁵ Writing into another poet's poetic chronology is not unfamiliar in the Alexandrian environment: Theocritus' *Idyll* 17 takes up the chronology of Callimachus' *Hymn to*

Apart from questions of *imitatio* or *aemulatio* or simple plagiarism, what might be the point of this kind of what one might call extreme intertextuality? Of deliberately constructing one poem in such a way that the other becomes a de facto allusion to and in some cases almost quotation of the notionally prior text? The key is Thera. Thera has no independent poetic life. When it does occur in Pindar and in Callimachus' Apollo hymn, it inevitably signals Greek claims to North Africa. If Apollonius ends the *Argonautica* by leaving the fulfillment of those claims to a later time, Callimachus' *Aetia* takes up that narrative and extends it to the Ptolemaic present. By embedding elements of one poet's version in the other's in such a way that they form an apparent temporal sequence, the promise in the one comes to be fulfilled by the trajectory of the other. If in Apollonius Thera does not yet exist (Euphemus' clod will become the island), in what we now have of Callimachus, Thera⁴⁶ is already present as part of the triptych of our charter myth—Sparta—Thera— []. We are left to fill in the brackets. But Thera is now embedded within Callimachus' larger temporal unit that—wherever the poet and his Muses wander in their narratives—has been anchored in not just in contemporary Cyrene but comes to its end in Libyan Alexandria. In fact, the *Aetia* ends with one final *aition* in which Cyrene and Alexandria have been reunited by virtue of the marriage of Berenice and Ptolemy Euergetes.⁴⁷ At the end of Callimachus' poem Alexandria is a place no longer on the margins but central, both to its own mythology, and to the Mediterranean. Even the heavens, thanks to the catasterized lock, have been enlisted to proclaim the arrival and centrality of the Ptolemies.

Delos, at the point where Callimachus leaves off: the birth of Ptolemy II in Cos. See Stephens 2003, 164-5.

⁴⁶ Thera continued to be a Ptolemaic possession for centuries, Bagnall 1976, 123-34.

⁴⁷ It is possible that the union of Acontius and Cydippe in book 3 prefigures the royal marriage as healing a political rupture. The two are descended respectively from Codrus (Athens) and Minos (Crete). Callimachus' first *aition* features Minos mourning the death of his son, who was killed by the Athenians, the reason for the long-term enmity between the two powers.

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