

THE THESEAN RITUAL LANDSCAPE.  
APPROPRIATION, IDENTITY AND  
ATHENIAN COLLECTIVE MEMORIES

EL PAISAJE RITUAL DE TESEO.  
APROPIACIÓN, IDENTIDAD Y  
MEMORIA COLECTIVA ATENIENSE

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ABSTRACT

A key aspect of Theseus's exponential growth in popularity between the 6<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, was an increased association with various festivals and their ritualized acts. Most prominently, it was the episode of the Cretan adventure that informed these rites. In their claimed, and emphasized, Thesean

RESUMEN

Un aspecto clave del crecimiento exponencial de la popularidad de Teseo entre los siglos VI y IV a.C. fue su creciente asociación con varios festivales y actos ritualizados. Fue especialmente el episodio de la aventura cretense el que dio forma a estos ritos. En sus reivindicadas y enfatizadas

aetiologies, these festivals are revealed as vital mechanisms by which the cultural collective memory of the hero was generated. Moving beyond simply approaching ritual as an expressive mnemonic object, this paper considers the contingent and re-constructive methods by which this collective memory was produced. Moreover, by examining the embodied experience of recalling Theseus, we are provided much firmer ground in commenting on their formative force on various Athenian identities.

etiologías teseicas, estos festivales se revelan como mecanismos esenciales mediante los cuales se generaba la memoria cultural colectiva del héroe. Más allá de abordar simplemente el ritual como un objeto de expresión mnemónica, este artículo analiza los métodos contingentes y reconstructivos mediante los que se produce la memoria colectiva. Además, al examinar la experiencia corporeizada del recuerdo de Teseo, podemos valorar sobre un terreno mucho más firme su potencia creadora de diversas identidades atenienses.

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#### PALABRAS CLAVE

Collective Memory; Embodied Cognition; Identity; Mnemotopography; Theseus.

#### KEYWORDS

Cognición corporal; identidad; memoria colectiva; mnemotopografía; Teseo.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

From the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE the figure of Theseus underwent an overt expansion in his narratological schema, visual depiction and presence within the socio-cultural/religious landscape of Attica.<sup>1</sup> A vital aspect of this latter phenomenon manifested in the appropriative emphasis and evocation of Thesean origins within various ritual contexts. The aim of this paper is to examine how those rites associated with the Cretan expedition, through claiming a Thesean aetiology and aspects of their physical execution, provided arenas in which collective memories essential to differing socialized identities were generated. In order to appreciate their formative force these rites, and the role of Theseus within them, will not be considered as monolithically inherited and experienced media, but rather as situationally contingent manifestations; structured by and structuring exterior socio-cultural realities of the 6<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>2</sup> Fundamentally, I aim to better illustrate how these rituals acted to cultivate a collective cultural memory of Theseus within their participants, employing the criteria established by Maurice Halbwachs and since refined by Jan Assmann.<sup>3</sup> This form of social memory relates to the origins of the group as based around distinct personages, places and episodes, requiring collective evocation and spatial orientation, such as via mnemotopography.<sup>4</sup> As will be seen, the commemorative recollection of Theseus did not act abstractly within these rituals, but in conjunction with specific spaces and episodes.

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1. Brommer, 1982, pp. 35-50; Calame, 1996, pp. 143-162; Neils, 1995, p. 17; Walker, 1995, pp. 20 and 35; Van den Hoff, 2010, pp. 177-179.

2. Rüpke, 2018a, pp. 11-15.

3. Assmann, 2012, pp. 21-45.

4. Connerton, 1989, p. 44; Halbwachs, 1992, p. 200.

I also aim to sensitize this examination by considering the manner in which the embodied experience and mimesis central to many of these rites could contribute to aged, gendered and civic identities.<sup>5</sup> This requires a consideration of the cognitive impact of a given rite, to which the religious modes theory of Harvey Whitehouse provides a helpful basis. Here “doctrinal” rituals, regular and low in sensory/emotive arousal, are argued as producing semantic memory and wider group identification, while irregular and dysphoric “imagistic” rites aid in smaller group fusion via shared episodic memories.<sup>6</sup> However I shall not rigidly apply Whitehouse’s definitions, but rather follow recent discussions on their applicability to ancient Greek religion by highlighting aspects that align either with the two modes, or indeed “cognitively optimal” and intuitive religious action.<sup>7</sup> In applying the theoretical frameworks of cultural memory studies and cognitive approaches to religion in tandem, we are provided with a fuller understanding and a new point of departure in analysing the mechanics and formative force of these rituals. Indeed rather than simply approach them as “institutional mnemonic objects”, we are afforded a clearer illustration of the socialized, and interactive, generation of collective memory within their participating groups.<sup>8</sup>

## 1. THE CRETAN ADVENTURE, ELABORATION OF THESEAN MYTH, AND PLUTARCH’S *LIFE OF THESEUS*

As noted above, the central narratological focus of the rites discussed below was that of Theseus’ journey to and return from Crete, which alongside his abduction of Helen and battle with the Lapiths against the Centaurs, belonged to the earliest development of Thesean myth.<sup>9</sup> The earliest textual mention of this episode is found in Homer who mentions Ariadne being killed by Artemis on Dia,<sup>10</sup> yet debates on this passage being a later 6<sup>th</sup> cent. interpolation still continue.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless Hesiod illustrates its being current during the late 8<sup>th</sup> cent. at least, noting an alternative fate

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5. Connerton, 1989, pp. 72-73.

6. Whitehouse, 2002, pp. 296-303; Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 674.

7. Larson, 2016, p. 193.

8. Beim, 2010, pp. 1-23.

9. Shapiro, 1991, p. 123; Neils, 1994, p. 942; Walker, 1995, pp. 15-20.

10. *Od.* XI 321-325.

11. Walker, 1995, p. 16.

for Ariadne who married Dionysus.<sup>12</sup> Sappho certainly composed on the expedition during the 7<sup>th</sup>-early 6<sup>th</sup> cent., as did Simonides during the latter 6<sup>th</sup> cent.<sup>13</sup>

Thus by the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE the Cretan adventure is firmly illustrated as an established episode within both epic and lyric compositions. It is from this period that we may discern the hero's emerging popularity in Athens itself.<sup>14</sup> The famous Françoise Vase (ca. 570 BCE) provides our first Attic depiction of the episode, illustrating the arrival of Theseus at Crete with the sacrificial youths and maidens and being welcomed by Ariadne.<sup>15</sup> From the middle of the century, newer episodes involving the taming of the Marathon Bull and the rape of Antiope first appear in ceramic and sculptural art. The so-called Saronic Cycle, the civilizing journey of the youthful Theseus from Troezen, also emerged after ca. 515.<sup>16</sup> It is also in the last quarter of the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. that an epic, epics/comedies, the *Theseis* are generally agreed to have been composed, while not directly mentioned until the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. by Aristotle.<sup>17</sup> The exact focus of this work, as well as its very existence, are still issues of debate and reciting them here does not serve our current purpose.<sup>18</sup> It is also unhelpful to attribute the promotion and elaboration of Theseus within Athens to any specific political personality, instead noting as far as possible contextual manifestations throughout the 6<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>19</sup> This includes the intersecting notions of Theseus' synoecism of Attica. Both Valdés Guía and Luce indicate this as emerging within the Solonian period, and his initiation of proto-democracy which naturally flourished after the reforms of Kleisthenes in 508 BCE.<sup>20</sup> Contextually significant aspects of the appropriative emphasis of Theseus will be discussed below, noting here that collective memory always proceeds in a re-constructive relationship to the present; a process vividly evident in Athens across the 6<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>21</sup>

Admittedly our primary source for commenting on these rituals is comparatively late, coming in Plutarch's *Life of Theseus*, which was likely composed towards the end of the authors' life in 120 CE.<sup>22</sup> As a work, the *Theseus* displays various levels

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12. *Theog.* 947-949.

13. Sapph., fr. 206; Simon., fr. 54 = Plut., *Thes.* 17, 6.

14. Bernabé Pajares, 1992, pp. 97-118; Walker, 1995, p. 46.

15. Hedreen, 2011, pp. 491-493.

16. Neils, 1987, pp. 32-37; Shapiro, 1991, pp. 134-136.

17. *Poet.* 1451a 19-21. Cf. Cingano, 2017, pp. 9-16.

18. Neils, 1987, p. 144; Bernabé Pajares, 1992.

19. Kron, 1976, p. 224; Calame, 1996, pp. 416-417; Walker, 1995, p. 47.

20. Kearns, 1989, p. 119; Luce, 1998, pp. 19-30; Goušchin, 1999; Valdés Guía, 2009, pp. 11-30.

21. Shapiro, 2012, p. 160; Cusumano, 2013, pp. 17-19.

22. Frost, 1984, p. 70.

of both typological and referential intertextuality, and his descriptions of Thesean ritual must be considered in relation to this. Most prominently the *Life of Theseus* naturally interacts with its moralized pairing with Romulus by Plutarch, wherein the foundational quality of both these figures is emphasized.<sup>23</sup> A primary aspect to this dual characterization is the initiation of religious festivals, that while coming in a fairly compartmentalized description in the *Life of Romulus* (21-22) are more sporadic in relation to Theseus. This certainly operates within the balancing parallelism which Plutarch constructs in this pairing, yet in contrast to *Romulus*, and indeed the other *Lives*, the *Theseus* is indicated as being a product of specific research. Beginning the *Theseus*, Plutarch falsely indicates that he will purify mythic elements out of his narrative (ἐκκαθαίρομενον λόγῳ τὸ μυθῶδες ὑπακοῦσαι καὶ λαβεῖν ἱστορίας ὄψιν, 1.3), nevertheless admitting them under scrutiny. In this way Plutarch frames his biography of Theseus outside of the historical inquiry of Polybius, instead adopting a form of historiographic archaeology that is applying scrutiny to “mythic” aspects.<sup>24</sup> This intertextual nod towards the historical methods of Polybius in fact establishes Plutarch’s divergent biographical focus, as engaged in the historiographic *archaiologia* of Diodorus and Dionysus.<sup>25</sup>

It is here that the validity of Plutarch’s *Life of Theseus* as a source for commentary on 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE ritual becomes apparent, as it included the direct citation of works and authors from those periods. Indeed the *Theseus* shows very little interaction with the rest of Plutarch’s corpus, instead adopting an expressly intertextual quality by frequently referencing the works of the Atthidographers and his own eye witnesses.<sup>26</sup> As a collection of authors, the so-called Atthidographers were focused on etymology, cult and various aetiological origins, employing both oral tradition and research into topography and physical remains; representing a social knowledge and communal memory of the past.<sup>27</sup> Not only does Plutarch employ these sources when describing the rituals under discussion here, but indeed adopts an antiquarian timbre himself, resting as we shall see below on oral accounts and his own observation. Thus as a source, while chronologically divorced from the periods under discussion here, the *Life of Theseus* provides a valuable framework for analysing the contingent and operational aspects of Thesean ritual in the Classical era. With these aspects of the

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23. Larmour, 1988, p. 362.

24. Cooper, 2007, p. 212.

25. Cooper, 2007, p. 222.

26. Cooper, 2007, p. 228; Brenk, 2017, p. 121.

27. Harding, 2008, pp. 2-12.

intertextual quality of Plutarch's *Theseus* in mind we will now examine the formative, mnemonic, potential of these "Thesean" rites.

## 2. THE *OSCHOPHORIA*. RECALLED LANDSCAPES AND EMBODIED REMEMBERING

The festival of the *Oschophoria* was celebrated on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Pyanopsion (October/November), and is widely recognized as relating to autumn sowing and the vintage.<sup>28</sup> Its structure of action, as described by Plutarch, consisted of a procession from an undisclosed shrine of Dionysus in Athens to the temple of Athena Skiras at the port of Phaleron where feasting and games took place.<sup>29</sup> That this framework existed in the Classical era is attested in the well-known 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE stele first discussed by Ferguson,<sup>30</sup> in which the *genos* Salaminioi are revealed as selecting the important roles of *oschophori* and *deipnophoroi* from their own number.<sup>31</sup> However the appropriate emphasis on the Thesean origins of this festival are indicated as beginning within the Archaic period.

Several elements of the *Oschophoria*, which will be detailed below, have led to the festival being identified as overtly Dionysian during the Archaic period up until the start of the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>32</sup> Indeed the festival even as it manifested in the later Archaic and Classical periods, has been suggested as containing distinct aspects of Bronze Age vegetation cults.<sup>33</sup> Valdés Guía has produced a detailed argument in underling how the rites of the *Oschophoria* had a long history by the date of the Salaminian decree and that it, like other festivals, underwent changes especially at the time of the conquest of Salamis in the early 6<sup>th</sup> cent.<sup>34</sup> The details of this "conquest" and the role of the *genos* Salaminioi in the cult of Athena Skiras are still issues of debate. For some the Salaminioi along with the cult were imported during the late 6<sup>th</sup> cent.,<sup>35</sup> or emigrated to Attica during the Dark Ages,<sup>36</sup> or indeed had no rela-

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28. Parker, 2005, p. 477; Larson, 2016, p. 214.

29. Pitz, 2011, p. 153.

30. SEG 21.

31. Ferguson, 1938, p. 6.

32. Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 187-203; Parker, 2005, pp. 213-217; for an alternative view see Scullion, 2007, pp. 196-201.

33. Simon, 1996, p. 21.

34. Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 195-200.

35. Walker, 1995, pp. 50 and 99.

36. Osborne, 1994, pp. 154-160.

tionship with the island at all.<sup>37</sup> A more convincing position is that taken by Lambert and Valdés Guía, who see the *genos* Salaminioi as being based within Athens/Attica during the Archaic period with close ties to the island.<sup>38</sup> They posit that the Solonian conflict with Megara and invasion of the island at the start of the century initiated the adaptation of the *Oschophoria*. Valdés Guía argues that this caused the “urbanization” of the cult at the centre of the *Oschophoria*, with the Salamis-Athens centric Athena Skiras replacing Aphrodite/Ariadne.<sup>39</sup> It is also likely that up until the late 6<sup>th</sup> cent., and possible establishment of a cleruchy by Kleisthenes, the island changed hands more than once. However by the end of the century the island was certainly being settled by Athenians,<sup>40</sup> while several black-figure vases depicting Athena in conversation with Dionysus from this period may depict the *Oschophoria*.<sup>41</sup> Thus while identified with the earliest Dionysian/Aphrodisian form of the *Oschophoria*, Theseus’ overt prominence in this festival throughout the Classical era is indicated as beginning in the 6<sup>th</sup> cent.<sup>42</sup> Indeed if the adjustment of the festival to include Athena Skiras was aimed at incorporating Salamis more fully into Attica, Thesean connections to the island would naturally be promoted, on which more below. Moreover while Dionysian elements are certainly present in Plutarch’s description of the *Oschophoria*, these are given specific Thesean aetiologies, while in the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. Salaminian stele Dionysus does not appear in conjunction with the festival, or indeed at all.<sup>43</sup> This certainly indicates, if not a complete elision of the god, an appropriative emphasis on existing Thesean elements in line with the introduction of Athena Skiras during the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.

In describing the *Oschophoria* Plutarch openly states his use of “the history” of the Atthidographer Demon (ταῦτα μὲν οὖν καὶ Δήμων ἱστορήκεν),<sup>44</sup> indicating its overt evocation of Theseus as being present in 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE. Plutarch also openly refers to oral tradition (οὐ γὰρ ἀπάσας αὐτὸν, “for it is said”),<sup>45</sup> while the familiarity of the descriptions suggest his having witnessed it himself.<sup>46</sup> The commemoration of Thesean aetiologies within the *Oschophoria*, present its composite rites as focusing

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37. Taylor, 1997.

38. Lambert, 1997, pp. 96-106; Valdés Guía, 2002, p. 127; 2005, p. 59.

39. Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 200-201.

40. *IG* I<sup>3</sup> 1.

41. Pitz, 2011, p. 160.

42. Valdés Guía, 2002, p. 187.

43. Ferguson, 1938, pp. 5-8.

44. *Thes.* 23, 3.

45. *Thes.* 23, 2.

46. Frost, 1984, p. 67.



on the re-enactive mimesis of his departure, return from Crete and foundation of the festival, within a holistic temporal framework. The procession itself would have acted to reiterate and spatially evoke the collective memory of these events through its physical mimesis. Mnemotopography is essential in cultivating cultural memory; allowing shared pasts to be anchored and evidenced most especially via collective pilgrimage.<sup>47</sup> In effect, the Oschophoric procession enabled the recollection of the Cretan adventure through the act of re-performing Theseus' original movement through the landscape towards the port. Moreover, the constituent elements of the ritual demonstrate the facilitation of an embodied remembering that would have aided in the construction of aged, gendered, *genos* and civic identities.

A notable feature of the procession was its being led by two *epheboi*, the *oschophori* as recorded on the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE stele, who adopted female attire and carried "vine branches" (τοὺς ὄσχοὺς φέροντες).<sup>48</sup> This has been cited as a glaring example of the Dionysian flavour of the *Oschophoria*, on which more briefly. Yet in Plutarch it is firmly correlated into the orbit of the Cretan expedition; replication of the subterfuge of Theseus who disguised two youths as maidens and upon returning "headed a procession" with them in this dress (αὐτόν τε πομπεῦσαι καὶ τοὺς νεανίσκους οὕτως ἀμπεχομένους ὡς νῦν ἀπέχονται).<sup>49</sup> The prominent position of vine branches during the processions, as well as its departure from a shrine of Dionysus, again suggest an older cultic focus of the *Oschophoria*. Plutarch however provides Thesean origins for this feature noting, along with Apollodorus,<sup>50</sup> it honouring the union of Ariadne and Dionysus. He also notes that it may simply be due to the fact that the Thesean expedition returned to Phaleron "at the time of the vintage". In any regard, the presence of vine branches is ascribed specifically to Theseus' return from Crete by Plutarch's 5<sup>th</sup> cent. source, Demon:

φέρουσι δὲ Διονύσῳ καὶ Ἀριάδνῃ χαριζόμενοι διὰ τὸν μῦθον,  
ἢ μᾶλλον ὅτι συγκομιζομένης ὀπώρας ἐπανήλθον.<sup>51</sup>

In claiming a distinct Thesean origin for this specific facet of the ritual, the *Oschophoria* provided its general participants with a material reminder of the origin of the festival. For collective cultural memory to formulate within groups such material signalling is

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47. Assmann, 2012, p. 44.

48. *Thes.* 23, 3.

49. *Thes.* 23, 3.

50. *Epit.* 1, 9.

51. *FGrHist* 327, 6 = Plut., *Thes.* 23, 3.

essential, whether via reproduction or relics ascribed to specific episodes from the past.<sup>52</sup> In this instance, we may suggest that the vine branches would have provided a visual testament to the foundation of the festival by Theseus for general attendees.

We gain a clearer understanding of how this collectively mnemonic communication could aid in the formulation of identity, if we consider the *epheboi* who carried the branches. As well as operationally evoking the journey to and return from Crete to the procession's participants, the dress of the youths entailed the active adoption of a character from this narrative.<sup>53</sup> Plutarch relates how Theseus taught the original youths to "imitate maidens in their speech, dress and gait" (διδάξαντα φωνὴν καὶ σχῆμὰ καὶ βάλισιν ὡς ἔνι μάλιστα παρθένους),<sup>54</sup> suggesting that as well as dress, the *oschophoroi* may have adopted a stylized form of movement also. This re-performance of Theseus' initial ruse and successful parade back to Athens, would clearly evoke the recollection of the Thesean origins of the festival. Such perceptions of direct continuation from the past into the present via ritualized forms is essential to collective memory.<sup>55</sup> Yet as individuals, the elision of the self through the wearing of female clothing and adoption of proto-typical characters, would have provided a distinct avenue for the formation of socialized identities.<sup>56</sup> Essentially this form of embodied narration would formulate the semantic memory of the *Oschophoria's* foundation in those participating youths; incorporating an episode from the wider collective past into their experience of the festival.<sup>57</sup> Moreover the episodic recollection of this experience can be suggested as enabling the "fusion" of the *oschophoroi* into a maturing age group. Indeed while Whitehouse suggests this manner of group cohesion as only coming about via dysphoric trauma, this has been criticized, with ecstatic, sensorially limited, or rites concerned with maturation having been noted as also enabling strong episodic memories. In the case of the *Oschophoria*, female dress would have both signalled and aided in forming the maturing identity of those participating young men.<sup>58</sup>

The description of female dress being adopted by the *oschophoroi* is singular to Plutarch's quoting of Demon:

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52. Alcock, 2002, p. 28; Jones, 2007, p. 12; Hewer and Roberts, 2012, p. 176.

53. Böhr, 2007, p. 70.

54. *Thest.* 23, 2.

55. Assmann, 2012, pp. 41-44.

56. Brown, 2013, pp. 58-60.

57. Connerton, 1989, p. 88.

58. Schjødt *et al.*, 2013, pp. 39-43; G. Downey in Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 684.

καὶ διδάξαντα φωνὴν καὶ σχῆμα καὶ βάδισιν ὡς ἔνι μάλιστα παρθένους ὁμοιοῦσθαι... αὐτὸν τε πομπεῦσαι καὶ τοὺς νεανίσκους οὕτως ἀμπεχομένους ὡς νῦν ἀμπέχονται τοὺς ὄσχοὺς φέροντες.<sup>59</sup>

Other Atthidographers such as Philochorus neglect to record it.<sup>60</sup> However transvestism played a vital role in the transitional points of various Greek heroes including Odysseus and Heracles.<sup>61</sup> In Plutarch's description of Theseus training the youths, we may also detect a more contemporaneous interaction with Statius' *Achilleid* of the 1<sup>st</sup> cent. CE. Here the transvestism of a youthful Achilles as achieved by his mother Thetis, is also brought about initially by the wearing of female dress and then by teaching him "how to walk and move and how to speak with modesty" (*et picturato cohibens vestigia limbo incessum motumque docet fandique pudorem*).<sup>62</sup> This may indicate Plutarch as operating within current literary templates, and we may tentatively suggest an intertextual reference here, but only insofar as it aligns with an already established aspect of Thesean myth.

Indeed the value of Plutarch's description of the *Oschophoria* is its presentation of a framework in line with other Greek rituals of male maturation, which were very often Dionysian in nature.<sup>63</sup> This has often been claimed as indicating both the Dionysian register of the *Oschophoria*, even within the Classical era, as well as its being an entirely initiatory rite.<sup>64</sup> While I do not mean to overtly argue against this position, I have already highlighted the diminished role of Dionysus in the ritual's aetiology and execution whilst also being aligned with Plitz, who views the maturation of youths as just one aspect of the *Oschophoria*.<sup>65</sup> Particular modes of ritual dress can act as the material media by which new identities are ascribed and communicated, and in the instance of the *Oschophoria* the donning of female garb distinctly indicates its Thesean framework as allowing for the formulation of the youths' wider socialization as maturing male citizens.<sup>66</sup> This was framed by the re-collective mimesis embodied in the dress and vine branches of the *oschophoroi*; where the semantic-cultural mem-

59. *FGrHist* 327, 6 = Plut., *Thes.* 23, 2-3.

60. *FGrHist* 328, 183. Cf. Harding, 2008, p. 62.

61. *Od.* V 333-462. Cf. Bolich, 2007, pp. 29-41.

62. *Achilleid.* I 330-333.

63. Leitao, 1995, pp. 131-137; Miller, 1999, p. 153; Jameson, 2014, pp. 62-63; Guardia, 2017, pp. 99-108.

64. Deubner, 1932, p. 143; Simon, 1983, p. 90; Walker, 1995, p. 100.

65. Pitz, 2011, p. 151.

66. Leitao, 1999, pp. 247-248; Lee, 2015, p. 204.

ory of Theseus' foundation of the festival would have intersected with the episodic memory of re-enacting it. This certainly represents "religion in the making", where the annual recollection would be appropriated by differing actors.<sup>67</sup>

Another instance of direct embodied mimesis, this time as enacted by general participants, also directly commemorated points from within the *Oschophoria's* claimed Thesean aetiology. Upon arriving at the shrine of Athena Skiras at the port of Phaleron, and during the pouring of libations, Plutarch describes that those present produced a distinctive cry of "Eleleu! Iou! Iou!" (ἐπιφωνεῖν δὲ ἐν ταῖς σπονδαῖς, Ἐλελεῦ, Ἰού, Ἰού, τοὺς παρόντας).<sup>68</sup> This prescribed exclamation has again been argued as indicating the *Oschophoria's* originally overt Dionysian character, with the apparent shift from joyous to mourning registers a recognizable feature of vegetation/fertility rites.<sup>69</sup> However Plutarch describes these distinct calls as deliberately re-enacting the cries of joy at Theseus' return, and sorrow at the death of King Aegeus who had leapt from the Akropolis thinking his son dead. The suicide of Aegeus as presented by Plutarch is in line with Apollodorus,<sup>70</sup> while also illustrating the possible appropriation of what was previously a recognized Dionysian aspect into the Thesean framework of the *Oschophoria*. Building his description on oral tradition (λέγουσιν, "they say")<sup>71</sup> if not a direct citation of any, at least surviving, works of the Attidographers, Plutarch provides an illustration of a re-performance of cultural memory. Commemorative re-performance of specific events are essential in generating the collective memory of a given cultural group's notion of a shared past, which are in turn essential to wider identity structures.<sup>72</sup> The proscribed repetition of this distinct cry, perceived as originating in the Thesean age, indicates the form of ritualized re-performance that provides temporal depth and perceived connection with the past.<sup>73</sup> This act would have indicated the competence and membership of the individual within the remembering group, where the direct referencing of a specific moment of the Athenian collective past was achieved via mimesis and within the landscape (the port of Phaleron) of its inception. Moreover, as with the *oschophoroi*, those that performed the cry may be said to adopt characters from this Thesean episode; the Athenians that welcomed him home. Again the suspension of the self,

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67. Rüpke, 2018a, pp. 108-115.

68. *Thes.* 22, 3.

69. Simon, 1983, p. 91; Calame, 1996, p. 335; Parker, 2005, p. 215.

70. *Epit.* I 10.

71. *Thes.* 23, 3.

72. Assmann, 2012, pp. 38-39.

73. Connerton, 1989, p. 59.

albeit briefly, would have allowed for the reinforcement of notions of a shared, and sacralised, history.<sup>74</sup>

A similar process of adopting figures drawn from the Thesean origins of the *Oschophoria* are again evident in designated female *deipnophoroi* (δειπνοφόροι, “meal-bearers”),<sup>75</sup> elected by, and from, the *genos* Salaminoi. They carried the food-stuffs within the procession to Phaleron and are described as sharing in the sacrifice at the shrine of Athena Skiras by Plutarch.<sup>76</sup> This sacrifice likely included one directly for Theseus, who in the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE received a pig from the *genos*.<sup>77</sup> Again, Plutarch’s description is cited as deriving from Demon (ταῦτα μὲν οὖν καὶ Δήμων ἰστόρηκεν),<sup>78</sup> however this aetiology is also presented by another Atti-dographer, Philochorus.<sup>79</sup> The *deipnophoroi* are thus concretely attested throughout the 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE with associated Thesean origins. The women themselves were likely chosen from the well-born, thus perfunctorily displaying their status, while adopting the role of “meal-bearers” suggests a form of public recollection that enables being socially situated via religious competence and narration.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, the *deipnophoroi* would have acted to communicate the collective past to the participating group by specifically evoking the mothers of the youths and maidens that were to be sacrificed to the Minotaur (ἀπομιμούμεναι τὰς μητέρας ἐκείνων τῶν λαχόντων).<sup>81</sup> This is described as a deliberate “imitation” (ἀπομιμούμεναι), which not only indicates the *deipnophoroi* as specific mnemonic roles, but also forms of embodied memory that would have reinforced the sexed and civic identity of the performers. Again we may discern a ritualized elision of the self that enables the formation of socially situated identities.<sup>82</sup> Certainly by adopting the role of prototypical mothers, the *deipnophoroi* would have demonstrated a display of *the* idealized gendered behavior for Athenian women.<sup>83</sup>

Such performative action can be understood here as endowing a religious agency, where the *deipnophoroi* performed the communication of collective memory to other participants in their adoption of distinct characters. This was emphasized in

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74. Rüpke, 2018b, p. 25.

75. *Thes.* 23, 3.

76. Ferguson, 1938, p. 6.

77. Ferguson, 1938, p. 8.

78. *FGrHist* 327, 6 = *Thes.* 23, 3.

79. *FGrHist* 328, 183. Cf. Harding, 2008, p. 62.

80. Parke, 1986, pp. 80-81; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 570.

81. *Thes.* 23, 3.

82. Waldner, 2000, pp. 103-112.

83. Pomeroy, 1975, pp. 65-68.

the “mothers” telling stories at “the festival”, most likely after the sacrifice at Phaleron and the initiation of feasting, which was again conceived as a repetition of the Thesean episode (καὶ μῦθοι λέγονται διὰ τὸ κάκεινας εὐθυμίας ἔνεκα καὶ παρηγορίας μύθους διεξιέναι τοῖς παισὶ).<sup>84</sup> Indeed Plutarch’s description of the *deipnophoroi* directly acting in “imitation” (ἀπομιμούμεναι) of the “mothers” (μητέρας) clearly indicates a generation of the collective memory of Theseus within the *Oschophoria*. In performing as the “mothers”, those chosen women would have engaged in a recollection that provided an avenue by which their civic identity as Athenian women was both embodied and displayed.<sup>85</sup> Naturally the spatial arena of Phaleron would have supported this; intersecting re-performance with the landscape of its initiation.

The *Oschophoria* would have generated the collective memory of the Cretan adventure via various points of direct mimesis, adoption of Thesean roles, and spatial evocation. In the instance of the *oschophoroi* and *deipnophoroi*, we are provided an insight into how such mnemonic practice could cultivate socialized and religious identities.<sup>86</sup> By replicating the Thesean origins of the festival itself, for at least these two groups the *Oschophoria* provided a form of embodied recollection that would have enabled the formative expression of their aged and sexed identities within a wider civic/religious context. While not conforming precisely to Whitehouse’s “imagistic” mode, if we consider the experience of the *Oschophoria* from the perspective of the *oschophoroi* and *deipnophoroi*, we can see how in constructively communicating the collective memory of Theseus these participants were afforded the forms of episodic memory required for group fusion.<sup>87</sup> Indeed while the *Oschophoria* certainly aligns with general aspects of the “doctrinal” mode, being centrally supervised and routinized in action, as an annual festival it is not high-frequency. However in both the distinct performances of Thesean characters and replication of the festival’s origin, such as through the procession and cry, we can certainly see how the *Oschophoria* would have produced and relied on semantic memory. In recalling this episode from the collective past the wider civic and cultural identity of the festivals participants would have been reinforced.<sup>88</sup> As Larson has underlined, uniformly assigning any Greek ritual to either imagistic or doctrinal modes is unhelpful, and indeed tends to lean towards the “natural” cognitively optimal/intuitive position.<sup>89</sup> However we

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84. *Thes.* 23, 3.

85. Assmann, 2010, p. 100.

86. Rüpke, 2018b, p. 26.

87. Manier and Hirst, 2010, pp. 255-257.

88. Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 679.

89. Larson, 2016, pp. 193-195.

are granted a better understanding of the formative aspects of the *Oschophoria* by considering the differing forms of memory generated through the experience of doctrinal and imagistic aspects.

### 3. THE *PYANOPSIA*: THESEUS' RETURN FROM CRETE AND RITES OF MATURATION

The day immediately following that of the *Oschophoria*, the 7<sup>th</sup> of Pyanopsion, was held the *Pyanopsia*, and again recalled Theseus leaving Attica and returning from Crete. While firmly Apolline in nature, not least due to the date of the 7<sup>th</sup> which was sacred to the god in the Athenian religious calendar, this festival claims an overt Thesean aetiology in its description by Plutarch.<sup>90</sup> This has been argued as being a product of both Salaminian religious interests at Phaleron from the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, and indeed the general popularity of Theseus throughout the 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>91</sup> Nevertheless, how far Theseus was simply “grafted on” or found an appropriative emphasis within the *Pyanopsia* from the 6<sup>th</sup> cent., is difficult to establish.<sup>92</sup> In any regard, the Apolline framework is itself given a Thesean origin in Plutarch; after burying Aegeus, Theseus “gave thanks to Apollo on the seventh day of the month” having returned safely from Crete (θάψας δὲ τὸν πατέρα, τῷ Ἀπόλλωνι τὴν εὐχὴν ἀπεδίδου τῇ ἑβδόμῃ τοῦ Πυανεσιῶνος μηνὸς ἱσταμένου).<sup>93</sup> In fact, as a god concerned with political life and the maturation of youths into adult citizens, Theseus, as the quintessential *epebos* and citizen, is repeatedly tied to Apollo Delphinios in Athenian tradition.<sup>94</sup> Importantly in relation to our focus on collective memory, Plutarch notes another aetiology (on which more below) in his description of the ritual, concluding however that the Thesean origin is the more popular (οἱ δὲ πλείονες ὡς προείρηται).<sup>95</sup>

The first aspect of the festival described as stemming directly from Theseus was that of a communal feast as based around a distinct meal of boiled beans, which in fact supplies its *aition*.<sup>96</sup> The “custom” of this meal is attributed to Theseus, blending the last of the provisions of the returning youths into “one pot” before arriving at Phaleron:

90. Mikalson, 1975, pp. 69-70; Parker, 2005, p. 480.

91. Parker, 1997, p. 315.

92. Larson, 2016, p. 215.

93. *Thes.* 22, 4.

94. Graf, 2009, pp. 209-211.

95. *Thes.* 22, 5.

96. Parke, 1986, p. 75.

ἡ μὲν οὖν ἔψησις τῶν ὀσπρίων λέγεται γίνεσθαι διὰ τὸ  
σωθέντας αὐτοὺς εἰς ταῦτ' οὐκ ἀμείξει τὰ περιόντα τῶν σιτίων καὶ  
μίαν χύτραν κοινήν ἐψήσαντας συνεστιαθῆναι καὶ συγκαταφαγεῖν ἀλλήλοις.<sup>97</sup>

Further, the so-called *eiresione* (εἰρεσιώνη), a branch of olive wood covered in wool and fruits and carried by *epheboi* during the festival, mimicked the one such as “Theseus used at the time of his supplication” [to Apollo] (ἐκφέρουσι κλάδον ἐλαίας ἐρίῳ μὲν ἀνεστεμμένον, ὥσπερ τότε τὴν ἰκετηρίαν, παντοδαπῶν δὲ ἀνάπλεων καταργμάτων).<sup>98</sup> The carrying of these branches was also accompanied by a song:

εἰρεσιώνη σῦκα φέρει καὶ πίονας ἄρτους  
καὶ μέλι ἐν κοτύλῃ καὶ ἔλαιον ἀποψήσασθαι  
καὶ κύλικ' εὐζωρον, ὡς ἂν μεθύουσα καθεύδῃ.<sup>99</sup>

“Eiresione for us brings figs and bread of the richest, brings us honey in pots and oil to rub off from the body, Strong wine too in a beaker, that one may go to bed mellow”

These aspects of the ritual again belie their origin as a vintage festival of an Apolline order, where the fruits of the harvest accompany a meal of unremarkable ingredients to signal the transition into a period of abundance.<sup>100</sup>

Thus Apollo is the recognized focus of the *Pyanopsia*, but his worship is conducted via a specific commemoration of Theseus’ original supplication to the god before sailing to Crete, and his victorious return. As with the *Oschophoria* we again have an asynchronous Thesean narrative within a ritual whole, yet the manner in which these two points related to each other operated sequentially; *eiresione* boughs/supplication, moving towards the feasting/return of the hero. The boughs, as with those held by the *oschophori*, would have provided general attendants with a material reminder of Theseus’ Cretan journey, and while it is uncertain as to whom consumed the proscribed meal of beans, this would have allowed for an embodied engagement with this collective memory.

In relation to those *epheboi* who carried the *eiresione*, the *Pyanopsia* is again illustrated as an arena in which differing forms of collective memory could inform their identity as maturing citizens. Parker suggests that we envisage the *Pyanopsia*

97. *Thes.* 22, 4.

98. *Thes.* 22, 5.

99. *Thes.* 22, 5.

100. Parke, 1986, p. 76.



as a diffuse festival, with some depositing their branches in the Temple of Apollo Delphinios in Athens while others carried out similar acts across Attica.<sup>101</sup> This is certainly suggested in a 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE sacrificial calendar from Elusis, which while fragmentary notes the provision of a *pannychis* “all night revel” by a “priestesses from Eleusis” on the 7<sup>th</sup> of Pyanopsion.<sup>102</sup> Indeed the alternative aetiology of the festival noted by Plutarch also suggests the centrality of *epheboi* within the festival: “some writers say these rites are in memory of the Heracleidae” (καίτοι ταῦτά τινες ἐπὶ τοῖς Ἡρακλείδαις γίνεσθαι λέγουσιν).<sup>103</sup> As is necessary for the cultivation of collective cultural memory, the *Pyanopsia* (at least for those *epheboi* who deposited their branches in the Temple of Apollo Delphinios) spatially anchored the past into the landscape.<sup>104</sup> The mnemotopography associated with this temple also recalled the arrival of Theseus to Athens from Troizen, including the quasi-museological display of the place he spilled Medea’s cup of poison.<sup>105</sup> The temple thus displayed physical traces of the arrival of the proto-typical *ephebos* into the city of Athens and her citizenry.<sup>106</sup> In context of the *Pyanopsia*, this space would only reinforce the image of Theseus the Athenian *ephebos* and citizen *par excellence*.<sup>107</sup> This intersection between commemorative mimesis and mnemotopography would naturally communicate the cultural memory at the core of the festival to general participants, while inscribing it in the *epheboi* via embodied experience.

Again while not containing any dysphoric elements, the *Pyanopsia* can be understood as enabling forms of episodic memory that would cause a fusion amongst participating *epheboi*. Not only do we again see the elision of the self and replication of Theseus’ actions, but the likely annual exclusivity of the roles would make it a non-repeated religious experience.<sup>108</sup> Moreover if the “all night revel” was common place, this suggests the form of arena in which the depletion of sensory accuracy enables the formation of cohesive episodic memory.<sup>109</sup> As such, the *Pyanopsia*’s commemoration of Theseus’ Cretan adventure afforded the young men of Attica with the means by which to learn/display semantic memory essential to their civic and cultural identity,

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101. Parker, 2005, p. 480.

102. IG II<sup>2</sup> 1363, ll. 15-20.

103. *Thes.* 22, 5.

104. Alcock, 2002, pp. 28-30.

105. Paus, I 19, 1. Cf. Greco *et al.*, 2011, pp. 469-474.

106. Hölscher, 2018, p. 118.

107. Shapiro, 1992, p. 44.

108. Whitehouse, 2002, p. 307.

109. Schjødt, 2019, p. 369.

while its embodied experience could enable the fusion of the maturing *epheboi* as a conceptual group. In essence, the *Pyanopsia* illustrates the mnemonic processes which “renders persons, objects and events meaningful by setting them into temporal, spatial and social frames”.<sup>110</sup>

Similar processes are evident in the foot race that either accompanied this ritual or the *Oschophoria*. Plutarch does not mention this race, but it does occur in the 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> cent. CE description by Athenaeus who is in turn quoting the 1<sup>st</sup> cent. BCE grammarian Aristodemus of Nysa. While providing an incorrect date (the 3<sup>rd</sup>), this has been identified with the *Pyanopsia*.<sup>111</sup> As with Oschophoric procession, the race is described as being run from a shrine of Dionysus in Athens to that of Athena Skiras at Phaleron (τρέχουσι δ’ ἐκ τοῦ ἱεροῦ τοῦ Διονύσου μέχρι τοῦ τῆς Σκιράδος Ἀθηνᾶς)<sup>112</sup> with the runners again carrying seasonal “branches of fruit” (τρέχειν δ’ αὐτοὺς ἔχοντας ἀμπέλου κλάδον κατάκαρπον τὸν καλούμενον ὤσχον).<sup>113</sup> Deubner however noted that the race course is here likely confused with that of the procession.<sup>114</sup>

The winner was rewarded with a special cup, a *pentaplous*, in which were mixed wine, honey, oil, and cheese (οἶνον ἔχει καὶ μέλι καὶ τυρὸν καὶ ἀλφίτων καὶ ἐλαίου βραχὺ)<sup>115</sup> before feasting with the other runners (καὶ ὁ νικήσας λαμβάνει κύλικα τὴν λεγομένην πενταπλόαν καὶ κωμάζει μετὰ χοροῦ).<sup>116</sup> Acquisition of a special drink and foodstuffs for the *epheboi*, certainly aligns with Plutarch’s description of the *eiresinoe* carriers, and indeed the feast mentioned in this context by Aristodemus may also be the prescribed meal of beans. While no specific Thesean aetiology is attached to the foot race in our surviving sources, its course may have included the mnemotopographically charged arena of Phaleron, especially if the meal of beans was eaten at its conclusion. Indeed if this meal was perceived as replicating that originally made by Theseus upon his return, then the port would have been its natural setting. Moreover Robertson’s argument that the runners were conceptually equated with the youths that left for Crete, is given credence in Plutarch’s description of the *Pyanopsia* where the *epheboi* mimic other aspects of Cretan adventure.<sup>117</sup> As with the ritualized transvestism in the *Oschophoria*, the

110. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 583.

111. *FGrHist* 383, 9. Cf. Robertson, 1992, p. 124.

112. Ath., XI 92.

113. Ath., XI 92. See also Kadletz, 1980, p. 370.

114. Deubner, 1932, p. 145.

115. Ath., XI 92.

116. Ath., XI 92.

117. Robertson, 1992, pp. 124-126.

display of athletic prowess also indicates an act of public maturation as framed by the collective evocation of the ritual's Thesean origins.<sup>118</sup>

While our evidence relating to the *Pyanopsia* is not as full as that regarding the *Oschophoria*, with the foot race still often assigned to the latter, it does illustrate several features essential to generating collective cultural memory. Not only did several points in the festival claim a direct continuation and mimesis of Thesean action, but by doing so in the Temple of Apollo Delphinios, and possibly Phaleron, the spatial evocation inherently required of cultural memory was enabled.<sup>119</sup> Participation in the *Pyanopsia* most certainly provided a context by which forms of semantic memory and civic identity could be formulated as based around the memory figure of Theseus. Moreover, the constituent experience of the festival from those *epheboi* who carried the *eiresione*, took part in *pannychis* or foot race, or even in collective singing and feasting, indicates sensory and emotive parameters that would aid in formulating episodic memory. In re-enacting the Thesean past, social competence was both expressed and embodied. By at least the 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, the prominent evocation of Theseus during the *Pyanopsia* would have generated the collective memory of the Cretan adventure in association with its mnemotopography and embodied mimesis of its foundation.<sup>120</sup>

#### 4. THE *KYBERNESIA*. HERO WORSHIP AND THE LOCALIZATION OF SALAMINIAN MEMORY

While we have seen how the evocation of Thesean aetiologies aided in producing forms of collective memory conducive to both wider and smaller identity groups, it is also apparent on the level of the *genos*. Most prominently this was the grouping of the *genos* Salaminoi, whose religious duties are attested on the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. stele mentioned above.<sup>121</sup> As we have seen, this *genos* was responsible for the organization of the *Oschophoria*, selecting *oschophori* and *deipnophoroi* as well as sacrificing to Theseus and maintaining the cult of Athena Skiras.<sup>122</sup>

However the localization of Salaminoi identity was more prominently reinforced within the commemorative recollection that framed the *Kybernesia*, celebrated on

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118. Golden, 2004, p. 104.

119. Assmann, 2010, pp. 109-111.

120. Jones, 2007, pp. 44-45; Assmann, 2012, p. 34.

121. *SEG* 21; Ferguson, 1938.

122. Mikalson, 1975, p. 51; Parker, 2005, p. 475.

the 8<sup>th</sup> of Boedromion (September/November). The port of Phaleron was once again the focus of this ritual while its aition, the sea “pilot’s festival” (τὰ Κυβερνήσιά),<sup>123</sup> illustrates its nautical tone. Plutarch’s brief description of this rite is done so in expressed reference to the Atthidographer Philochorus, stating that Theseus received his look-out man and pilot for the voyage to Crete from the king of the island of Salamis, Skiros:

φιλόχορος δὲ παρὰ Σκίρου φησὶν ἐκ Σαλαμῖνος τὸν  
Θησέα λαβεῖν κυβερνήτην μὲν Ναυσίθοον, πρῶρέα δὲ Φαίακα.<sup>124</sup>

These sailor-men, namely Nausithoös and Phaiax, were directly commemorated within the *Kybernesia*. As well as employing Philochorus, Plutarch notes how this episode is evidenced in the landscape by their tombs which “Theseus built at Phaleron near the temple of Skiras” (μαρτυρεῖ δὲ τούτοις ἡρῶα Ναυσιθόου καὶ Φαίακος εἰσαμένου Θησέως Φαληροῖ πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Σκίρου ἱερῷ),<sup>125</sup> and which provided the physical focal point of the rite. 4<sup>th</sup> cent. Salaminian religious duties illustrates required sacrifices to these two heroes as well as Poseidon and another hero, Teukros, on which more briefly. Interestingly Plutarch notes an alternative pilot for the ship as mentioned by Simonides, yet supports his own use of Philochorus by underlining the wider consensus that the *Kybernesia* commemorated Nausithoös and Phaiax (καὶ τὴν ἑορτὴν τὰ Κυβερνήσιά φασιν ἐκείνοις τελεῖσθαι).<sup>126</sup> This broadly illustrates the means by which culturally available “memory schemata” operate in conjunction with “institutional objects”, such as memorials, in the selective generation of collective memory.<sup>127</sup>

In particular, the names of these heroes belie the older, pre-Thesean, form of the *Kybernesia*. Indeed they are reflective of the sailors *par excellence* of the heroic age, the Phaiakians, as present in Homer. Within the figure of Nausithoös we may have a familial connection with the divine focus of the rite, Poseidon Hippodromios, if he is indeed that named by Homer as son of the god.<sup>128</sup> It is perhaps unwise to claim that Theseus had no part in earlier manifestations of the *Kybernesia*, however the appro-

123. *Thes.* 17, 6.

124. *FGrHist* 328, 111 = *Thes.* 17, 6.

125. *Thes.* 17, 6.

126. *Thes.* 17, 6.

127. Beim, 2010, p. 18.

128. *Od.* VII 55-57. Cf. Kearns, 1989, p. 39; Larson, 2016, p. 214. See also Jacoby’s comments, *FGrHist* IIIB Suppl. I 347, n. 9.

priation of Nausithoös and Phaiax as Salaminians and the centrality of the hero in its aetiology, indicates a deliberate “shaping of tradition” by the *genos* Salaminioi from the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>129</sup> This can again be assigned to the emphasis on the connections between the island and the *genos* in the wake of the conflict with Megara, the invasion of Solon and its eventual annexation by at least the end of the century.<sup>130</sup> Moreover, where Nausithoös may have been celebrated as the son of Poseidon in the *Kybernesia*, it was surely Theseus that came to be emphasized in this role, especially as the ritual related to the Cretan adventure. In the wake of the Athenian victory at Salamis, and her own emergence as a naval power within the Delian League, Poseidon enjoyed a considerable renaissance in the visual and religious landscapes of the city.<sup>131</sup> In this context, where Theseus had been previously described as the son of King Aegeus, the hero came to be increasingly depicted as the son of Poseidon. Bacchylides dithyramb 17 provides our most vivid demonstration of this association in which the young Theseus is challenged by Minos on the journey to Crete to prove his divine paternity by descending into the ocean. Indeed the victorious sea journey to Crete, as well as the concept of Theseus as Poseidon’s son, naturally proved popular in context of Athenian naval ambition and supremacy.<sup>132</sup> In any regard, for participants who took part in the Classical era, the understanding of Theseus as a son of Poseidon would have been part of the cognitive schemata which would have informed the collective remembering central to the *Kybernesia*.<sup>133</sup>

The inclusion of Theseus into a festival structure that honored particular heroes and Poseidon, is certainly in keeping with his escalating popularity from the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE. As the *Kybernesia* illustrates, this included Theseus being worshipped alongside his divine father every 8<sup>th</sup> day on the month.<sup>134</sup> However the particular nature of the festival also indicates how the likely deliberate inclusion/emphasis of a Thesean aetiology, would have aided in constructing a localizing collective memory for the *genos* Salaminioi. Nevertheless, the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE stele detailing the cult responsibilities of the Salaminioi demonstrates that within the *Kybernesia*, while still responsible for providing sacrificial victims to the god and heroes, the *genos* did not officiate the entire festival.<sup>135</sup> Indeed it is likely that due to the

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129. Parker, 1997, p. 315.

130. Walker, 1995, p. 51; Valdés Guía, 2002, pp. 175-185.

131. Neils, 2000, pp. 189-191.

132. Shapiro, 1992, p. 37; Mills, 1997, pp. 34-40.

133. Beim, 2010, p. 9.

134. Mikalson, 1975, p. 51.

135. Ferguson, 1938, pp. 8 and 27.

principle divine focus being Poseidon, the *genos* Phoinikes, who held his priesthood at Phaleron, organized the festival.<sup>136</sup> Yet the mnemotopography and ritual consumed during the *Kybernesia* reiterated a form of collective remembrance that allows for localized identities and “place bonding” to be cultivated.<sup>137</sup> This is something indicated by the presence of the hero Teukros in the ritualized honouring of the *Kybernesia*.<sup>138</sup> This figure represents a Salaminian hero derived from the island and utterly divorced from Phaeacian and Thesean associations. Again, the promotion of Nausithoös and Phaiax as being Salaminian, and acting within the Thesean framework, most likely rested with the *genos*. As we have seen, the narrative of Philochorus recognizes the pair as deriving from the Island of Salamis itself, while their hero cult is established inside Attica by Theseus on his return from Crete.<sup>139</sup>

In claiming a Thesean origin, the *Kybernesia* reflects the ideological and functional incorporation of Salamis into the politico-religious landscape of Attica during the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE. Debates regarding this “conquest” have been discussed above, but what is important to note here is the manner in which for members of the *genos* Salaminioi, the *Kybernesia* afforded the positioning of identity into time and space.<sup>140</sup> The Salaminian connection to the Cretan adventure represented by Nausithoös and Phaiax, including their memorials being established in Attica proper by Theseus, would have provided a culturally shared collective memory that reinforced their own group identity.

As well as the tombs, the port of Phaleron is illustrated as containing various mnemotopes relating to the Cretan adventure, Theseus, and Salamis. Plutarch describes how the tombs were built “near the temple of Skiros” (πρὸς τῷ τοῦ Σκίρου ἱερῷ),<sup>141</sup> the king of Salamis who gifted the sea-men. Moreover while the cult of Athena Skiras is indicated as manifesting in Phaleron during the Archaic period, there was certainly a temple to the same goddess on Salamis itself.<sup>142</sup> Indeed Strabo suggests that this was located on Cape Skiradion,<sup>143</sup> the place at which Plutarch describes Solon’s invasion of the island beginning.<sup>144</sup> Strabo also states that Skiras was

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136. Kearns, 1989, p. 120; Parker, 1997, p. 317.

137. Scannell and Gifford, 2009, pp. 1-5.

138. Ferguson, 1938.

139. *FGrHist* 328, 111 = *Thes.* 17, 6.

140. Assmann, 2012, p. 38.

141. *Thes.* 17, 6.

142. Hdt., VIII 94. Cf. Papachatzis, 1989, p. 179.

143. Strabo, IX 1, 9.

144. Plut., *Sol.* 9.

itself the older title of the island of Salamis,<sup>145</sup> suggesting both the installation, and deliberate association with Salamis, of the cult of Athena Skiras at Phaleron began in the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>146</sup> I shall not dwell on the interpretive difficulties relating to the differing manifestations of Skiros, the execution of the cult of Athena Skiras on Salamis, or indeed possible relation to the festival of the Skira, but rather underline how the apparent relationship between Attica and Salamis was evident in the mnemotopography of Phaleron.<sup>147</sup> This was also the case for the Cretan adventure and Theseus. The, albeit late, description of the Temple of Athena Skiras by Pausanias in the 2<sup>nd</sup> cent. CE, notes altars to gods, the eponymous Phaleros and “the children of Theseus” (καὶ παίδων τῶν Θησέως).<sup>148</sup> Indeed Phaleros and Akamas, the son of Theseus, were held to have colonized Cyprus.<sup>149</sup> Androgeos, son of Minos, also had an altar there, which is identified by Pausanias through employing local antiquarian knowledge:

ἔστι δὲ καὶ Ἀνδρόγεω βωμὸς τοῦ Μίνω, καλεῖται δὲ Ἡρώος· Ἀνδρόγεω δὲ ὄντα ἴσασι οἷς ἔστιν ἐπιμελὲς τὰ ἐγγώρια σαφέστερον ἄλλων ἐπίστασθαι<sup>150</sup>

For the identity of the *genos* Salaminoi, association with the island of Salamis was stressed via association with the sea, while claiming close relation with Theseus emphasized their being situated in Attica.<sup>151</sup> Within the ritual commemoration of the *Kybernesia*, the explicit focus on tombs of Nausithoös and Phaiax would have provided the material evidence by which such associations could be prominently communicated within a state festival. Essentially, the appropriative emphasis on the Thesean origins of the tombs and their ritualized veneration would act to spatially and temporally cement their localized identity in relation to both the island and Attica. As physical mnemotopes, these memorials provided the material media essential for the generation of wider cultural collective memory, evoking foundational acts, figures and landscapes, while also referencing the specific group past of the *genos* Salaminoi.<sup>152</sup> Indeed while not officiating, the *genos* would have their group past

145. Strabo, IX 1, 9.

146. Taylor, 1995, pp. 290-291; Parker, 2005, p. 215.

147. Kearns, 1989, p. 198; Häland, 2012, pp. 265-266; Hölscher, 2018, p. 118.

148. Paus., I 1, 4.

149. Valdés Guía, 2005, pp. 62-65.

150. Paus., I 1, 4.

151. Kearns, 1989, p. 40.

152. Jones, 2007, p. 23; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 572.

reiterated back to them and general participants, with the island's role in the Cretan adventure being the very cause of the *Kybernesia*.

The performative and physical arenas of the *Kybernesia* are illustrated, in their evocation of Thesean origin, as providing the form of ritualized communication essential to cultural memory.<sup>153</sup> Within a context of ever growing popularity for the hero, the annualized interaction between officiates, the *genos* Salaminoi, and general participants, would have allowed for the structuring of differing identity forms via this commemorative act.<sup>154</sup> In essence, the *Kybernesia* composed of a group recollection that would inform the production of semantic and broader civic-cultural identity, whilst also allowing for the reiteration of a *genos* specific past and group memory.<sup>155</sup> The appropriation of Theseus, indicates how the generation of collective memory relies on the contingent interaction between institutional media, such as a festival or memorial, and the socially disseminated understanding of the past.<sup>156</sup> This included spatially situating the memory of Theseus' return from Crete in the material index provided by the tombs.<sup>157</sup> How the world is appropriated indicates the means by which individuals and groups avoid alienation and instead stimulate resonance with wider socio-cultural frames, and within the *Kybernesia* this was performed dualistically.<sup>158</sup> While the Athenian state had ideologically and literally come to incorporate the island of Salamis into itself, so those members of the *genos* Salaminoi in Attica are illustrated as appropriating the memory of the pan-Athenian hero as a means by which to orientate themselves.<sup>159</sup>

## 5. THE *DELIA*. THESEAN MIMESIS AND IONIAN IDENTITY

Within the latter half of the 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, the strategically important island of Delos also hosted a re-emphasis on the memory figure of Theseus within the Pan-Ionian festival of the *Delia*.<sup>160</sup> This annual/quadrennial celebration was cited as being founded by Theseus, with the island a recognized destination on the return voyage back

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153. Calame, 2009, p. 25; Assmann, 2012, p. 41.

154. Rüpke, 2018a, p. 14.

155. Manier and Hirst, 2010, p. 258.

156. Beim, 2010, pp. 5-10.

157. Jones, 2007, pp. 12-15.

158. Rosa, 2019, pp. 124-126.

159. Kearns, 1989, p. 120.

160. Connor, 1970, pp. 143-48; Walker, 1995, pp. 13 and 43; Kowalzig, 2007, p. 91; Shapiro, 2019, pp. 215-218.



from Crete. Athenian participation at the *Delia*, which took place on the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> of Thargelion (May/June), comprised of a *theoria* of a chorus of *korai* and *epheboi*, a ritual ambassador and athletes. While recognized as Pan-Ionian, in the context of the island's "purification" and restoration of the *Delia* under Athens in 426 BCE, the overt evocation of the memory of Theseus central to this festival is illustrated as emphasizing an Atheno-centric identity.<sup>161</sup>

Indeed this was not the first Athenian purification of the island, as Peisistratus had removed all burials visible from the sanctuary of Delian Apollo to which he likely added the monumental *porinos naos*, during the 540s BCE.<sup>162</sup> This has been recognized as a move from tyrannic Athens to formulate an Ionian identity with the city at its conceptual core; something which found a functional reality when the treasury of the Delian League was moved to Athens in 454 BCE.<sup>163</sup> The sanctuary came under increasing Athenian control through the rest of the century including the establishment of an Athenian-only board of amphictyons, and the purification of 427/426 BCE prohibiting burial, dying and giving birth on the island.<sup>164</sup> It is in this context that we can view the purposeful emphasis on Thesean origins within a renewed *Delia*; signalling Athenian control of the island whilst making manifest an Atheno-centric Ionian identity.<sup>165</sup> This reformed festival naturally provided a more attractive outlet for Athenian self-expression during the Peloponnesian War, than did the great Pan-Hellenic Games.<sup>166</sup>

Thucydides describes how at the time of Athenian re-institution the *Delia* had in fact fallen from renown, with a larger quadrennial version now also established:

ἦν δέ ποτε καὶ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλη ξύνοδος ἐς τὴν Δῆλον τῶν  
Ἰώνων τε καὶ περικτιόνων νησιωτῶν.<sup>167</sup>

He also directly quotes the *Homeric Hymn to Apollo* in order to illustrate the older version of the festival:

ἀλλ' ὅτε Δήλω, Φοῖβε, μάλιστα γέ θυμὸν ἐτέρφθης,

161. Parker, 2005, p. 81.

162. Hdt., I 62, 2; Thuc., III 104, 1-2.

163. Constantakopoulou, 2007, pp. 65-67.

164. Thuc., I 8, 1; III 104; Diod., XII 58, 6.

165. Schachter, 1999, pp. 172-174; Constantakopoulou, 2007, p. 73.

166. Parker, 1997, p. 150.

167. Thuc., III 104.

ἔνθα τοι ἑλκεχίτωνες Ἴάονες ἠγερέθονται  
 σὺν σφοῖσιν τεκέεσσι γυναιξί τε σὴν ἐς ἀγυίαν:  
 ἔνθα σε πυγμαχίη τε καὶ ὄρχηστύϊ καὶ αἰοιδῆ  
 μνησάμενοι τέρπουσιν, ὅταν καθέσωσιν ἀγῶνα.<sup>168</sup>

“Here the Ionians gather (...) walking the path of your precinct...delight your heart with boxing, dancing and singing. Every time they hold these games it is you they remember.”

Amongst the new additions, Thucydides also notes how the Athenians included a horse race (καὶ ἵπποδρομίας, ὃ πρότερον οὐκ ἦν).<sup>169</sup> Interestingly neither Thucydides, nor his earlier source (7<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE)<sup>170</sup> mention the Thesean aetiology for the *Delia*, and we may suggest this element of the festival as finding especial emphasis in the “new” Athenian manifestation.<sup>171</sup> Arguments positing a Pan-Ionian origin for Theseus, especially by Herter,<sup>172</sup> have been convincingly negated, and we should view his evocation during this reformed *Delia* in relation to his wider representation of Athenian superiority.<sup>173</sup> This is not to suggest that the recollection of Theseus in any way suppressed the cultivation of Ionian identity, but rather aided in doing so via the prism of an Athen-centric memory figure. Where narratives of autochthonic origin had framed conceptions of the Athenian collective past from the late 6<sup>th</sup> cent., notions of Ionian identity are discernible after the Greco-Persian War and establishment of the Delian League.<sup>174</sup> Again, the ritualized commemoration of Thesean foundational acts that framed the *Delia* are thus indicated as operating in a context of a wider aesthetic celebration of Ionian identity, whilst also emphasizing Athenian superiority.<sup>175</sup> This is certainly the picture presented by Plutarch who describes Nicias leading a chorus “in lavish splendour” (καὶ τὸν χορὸν ἄγων κεκοσμημένον πολυτελῶς καὶ ἄδοντα διὰ τῆς γεφύρας ἀπεβίβαζε)<sup>176</sup> at the festival. Here he bestowed funding for sacred banquets for the Delians, while dedicating a bronze palm-tree which was itself

168. *Homeric Hymn of Apollo* 145-148.

169. Thuc., III 104.

170. Burkert, 1979, pp. 53-60.

171. Chankowski, 2008, pp. 50-74.

172. Herter, 1936, p. 225; 1939, p. 245.

173. Walker, 1995, pp. 12-13.

174. Connor, 1993, pp. 201-206; Hall, 1997, pp. 51-56.

175. Parker, 1997, pp. 150-151.

176. *Nic.* 3, 5.

a recognized mnemotope of the island (καὶ γὰρ τοῦτο τῇ στήλῃ ἐνέγραψεν, ἦν ὡσπερ φύλακα τῆς δωρεᾶς ἐν Δήλῳ κατέλιπεν).<sup>177</sup>

Let us now examine the constituent aspects of the festival illustrated as providing the means by which collective memory is constructed, and how the experience of recalling Theseus would inform differing identities.

Plutarch describes the aetiology of the *Delia* as originating when Theseus, returning from Crete, put in at Delos and sacrificed to Apollo while also dedicating a statue of Aphrodite Ariadne had given him “in his temple”:

ἐκ δὲ τῆς Κρήτης ἀποπλέων εἰς Δήλον κατέσχε: καὶ τῷ θεῷ θύσας  
καὶ ἀναθεὶς τὸ ἀφροδίσιον ὃ παρὰ τῆς Ἀριάδνης ἔλαβεν.<sup>178</sup>

Key elements of the festival, choral singing, athletic contests, the prize of the palm leaf, and distinctive *geranos* “Crane” were also founded by Theseus:

ποιῆσαι δὲ καὶ ἀγῶνά φασιν αὐτὸν ἐν Δήλῳ, καὶ τοῖς νικῶσι  
τότε πρῶτον ὑπ’ ἐκείνου φοίνικα δοθῆναι.<sup>179</sup>

This episode was certainly prevalent during the 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE at least, as evidenced by Pherekydes, who notes that the *theoria* sent by Athens was also initiated by Theseus in honor of Apollo and Artemis.<sup>180</sup> Indeed it is suggested that the members of the chorus sent to the *Delia* were conceived as a re-collective mimesis of the youths and maidens from the Cretan adventure.<sup>181</sup> Plato relates the *theoria* sent to the *Delia* as stemming from a Thesean origin, with it representing the fulfilment of the vows to Apollo for his and the youths safe return:

τῷ οὖν Ἀπόλλωνι ἠϋξάντο ὡς λέγεται τότε, εἰ σωθεῖεν,  
ἐκάστου ἔτους θεωρίαν ἀπάξειν εἰς Δήλον.<sup>182</sup>

177. *Nic.* 3, 6. Cf. Marks, 2016, pp. 161-164.

178. *Thes.* 21, 1.

179. *Thes.* 21, 2.

180. *FGrHist* 3, 149; Simon, 1996, p. 12.

181. Larson, 2016, p. 214.

182. *Pl.*, *Phaedo* 58b.

Aristotle also describes the chorus sent to Delos as unmarried “youths” (ἡθέους), a term specifically used to describe the Thesean *epheboi* elsewhere,<sup>183</sup> also mentioning that the chorus members and procession leader were picked together:

καθίστησι δὲ καὶ εἰς Δῆλον χορηγούς καὶ ἀρχιθέωρον  
τῷ τριακοντορίῳ τῷ τοὺς ἡθέους ἄγοντι.<sup>184</sup>

Bacchylides describes the “twice Seven Youths” as ἡθέους throughout Ode 17, and while designed to be sung by Keans, it suggests the Thesean register of the *Delia* in the 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE.<sup>185</sup> Both Plato and Aristotle also illustrate the fact that the *theoria* delegation journeyed to the festival in a ship understood as being the very one employed during the Cretan expedition:

ἔστι τὸ πλοῖον, ὡς φασιν Ἀθηναῖοι, ἐν ᾧ Θησεύς ποτε εἰς  
Κρήτην τοὺς ‘δὶς ἑπτὰ’ ἐκείνους ᾤχετο.<sup>186</sup>

τριακοντορίῳ τῷ τοὺς ἡθέους ἄγοντι.<sup>187</sup>

Plutarch also describes this “thirty-oared ship”, stating that it was preserved until the late 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE (τὸ δὲ πλοῖον ἐν ᾧ μετὰ τῶν ἡιθέων ἐπλευσε καὶ πάλιν ἐσώθη, τὴν τριακόντορον, ἄχρι τῶν Δημητρίου τοῦ Φαληρέως χρόνων διεφύλαττον οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι).<sup>188</sup>

Thus in journeying from Athens to the *Delia*, those members that made up the *theoria* performed a continuation of Theseus’ proto-typical sacrifice and foundation of athletic contests. The choruses are suggested as being envisioned as directly mimicking the youths and maidens, while the entire crew was literally framed by the material evidence of the Cretan voyage. Commemorative ceremonies naturally aid in the formulation of collective memory via the “depictive representation of past events”.<sup>189</sup> Indeed the *theoria* dualistically honored the foundation of the *Delia* by Theseus, while also adopting characters drawn from this episode. While for older members of the *theoria*, such as ambassadors and chorus leaders, journeying to Delos would have reinforced the semantic memory of this episode in the Athenian past,

183. Parker, 2005, p. 81.

184. A., *Ath.Pol.* 56, 3.

185. Mills, 1997, p. 39.

186. Pl., *Phaedo* 58a.

187. A., *Ath.Pol.* 56, 3.

188. *Thes.* 23, 1.

189. Connerton, 1989, p. 72.

for younger members it would have afforded a potent means by which this collective memory was generated bodily.<sup>190</sup> The ship itself would have provided an immersive experience of a material testament to Theseus' Cretan adventure, something that would have reinforced the adoption of Thesean characters by the chorus.<sup>191</sup>

The most vital mnemonic act of the *Delia* rested in the performance of the so-called "Crane" dance that Theseus and the twice seven youths initiated. While Plutarch does not expressly link this dance to the *Delia*, Callimachus presents this association in the 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. BCE. For his description of the dance however, Plutarch does employ the testimony of the 4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> cent. BCE philosopher Dicaearchus of Messana:

ἔλαβεν, ἐχόρευσε μετὰ τῶν ἡϊθέων χορείαν ἣν ἔτι νῦν ἐπιτελεῖν  
 Δηλίου λέγουσι, μίμημα τῶν ἐν τῷ Λαβυρίνθῳ περιόδων  
 καὶ διεξόδων, ἐν τινὶ ῥυθμῷ παραλλάξεις καὶ ἀνελίξεις ἔχοντι γιγνομένην.<sup>192</sup>

"he danced with his youths a dance which they say is still performed by the Delians, being an imitation of the circling passages in the Labyrinth, and consisting of certain rhythmic involutions and evolutions"

Simon has suggested that as ritualized dance was often perceived as direct mimesis in Greek antiquity, the *geranos* "Crane" (τῆς χορείας ὑπὸ Δηλίων γέρανος)<sup>193</sup> was understood as a direct continuation of the Thesean original.<sup>194</sup> In his Hymn to Delos, Callimachus describes the dance as an effectually embodied commemoration of its Thesean initiation:

αἱ δὲ ποδι πλήσσουσι χορίτιδες ἀσφαλές οὐδας.  
 δὴ τότε καὶ στεφάνοισι βαρύνεται ἱρὸν ἄγαλμα  
 Κύπριδος ἀρχαίης ἀρήκοον, ἦν ποτε Θησεὺς  
 εἶσατο σὺν παιδεσσιν, ὅτε Κρήτηθεν ἀνέπλει.<sup>195</sup>

Here the "girls of the choir beat with their feet the secure ground" dancing around the "holy image...of archaic Cyprus that Theseus set up with the youths". Moreover the dance is again recognized as imitating the winding nature of the Labyrinth;

190. Connerton, 1989, pp. 45 and 72.

191. Jones, 2007, p. 44; Assmann, 2012, p. 39; Hamilakis, 2014, p. 168.

192. *Thes.* 21, 1-2. Trans. Perrin, 1914.

193. *Thes.* 21, 2.

194. Simon, 1996, p. 11; Nagy, 2013, p. 227.

195. *Hymn to Delos* 305-310.

καὶ γναμπτὸν ἔδος σκολιοῦ λαβυρίνθου,  
 πότνια, σὸν περὶ βωμὸν ἐγειρομένου κιθαρισμοῦ  
 κύκλιον ὠρχήσαντο, χοροῦ δ' ἠγήσατο Θησεύς.<sup>196</sup>

“After fleeing the maze they danced...in a circle...and Theseus led the choir”.

The dance is likely to have been performed by Delians even within the context of the Athenian re-organization, however if the choir sent by Athens was promoted as mimicking the youths of the Cretan adventure, then we can imagine that it was they who accompanied it.<sup>197</sup> Callimachus illustrates that the dance had as its material focal point the statue of Aphrodite, held to have been dedicated by Theseus. Moreover Plutarch describes the dance as encircling the famous “Keraton”, an altar to Apollo constructed entirely of bull horns:

ἐχόρευσε δὲ περὶ τὸν Κερατῶνα βωμὸν,  
 ἐκ κέρατων συνηρμοσμένον εὐωνύμων ἀπάντων.<sup>198</sup>

This altar is also mentioned by Callimachus in the *Hymn to Apollo*, where it is constructed by Artemis (60-64) and was in fact a primary mnemotope in the Delian landscape throughout antiquity, gaining association with Homer as well as Theseus.<sup>199</sup> As a medium by which the collective memory of Theseus was generated and communicated to participants of the Delia, the “Crane” dance evoked its Thesean origins through embodied mimesis, material cultural and the narration of the Labyrinth episode.<sup>200</sup> Ceremonial dance acts as a key method by which collective pasts are re-experienced by cultural groups, in effect signalling continuity with that past, something which has been shown as equally formative on the identity of participants and audience alike.<sup>201</sup> For Athenian members of the chorus and audience, the “Crane” dance would have provided the forms of spatial evocation and perceptions of continuity essential to collective cultural memory. While perhaps not performing the dance the overt focus on Theseus, who had by the late 5<sup>th</sup> cent. come to represent

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196. *Hymn to Delos* 310-314.

197. Kowalzig, 2007, pp. 56-59.

198. *Thes.* 21, 2.

199. Marks, 2016, pp. 164-167.

200. Connerton, 1989, p. 44; Halbwachs, 1992, p. 84.

201. Buckland, 2001, pp. 1-16.

Athens itself, would have underlined an Athens-centric cultural memory as a core element to a Pan-Ionian festival.<sup>202</sup> Indeed for the other attendees, this recollection of Theseus would have operated in the discernible Thesean flavor of the reorganized Delia that stressed the centrality and superiority of Athens in relation to her allies.<sup>203</sup>

For those that performed the dance and accompanied it with choral singing, this evocation of Theseus and the twice-seven youths demonstrates forms of embodied experience vital to episodic memory and group fusion.<sup>204</sup> While not overtly ecstatic, the dance as described by both Plutarch and Callimachus is emphasized in being a winding and shifting performance, conducted in relation to the “beat” as established by the choir’s singing and stamping feet. Again, whether this chorus was made up of those dancing or others in attendance, is difficult to establish. However, this form of collective singing would have aided in stimulating both relational identities amongst the singers, and collective identities between chorus/dancers and audience.<sup>205</sup> While energetic dancing and group singing was a common feature within Greek ritual, its ability to create episodic memory was here supported by its likely being performed at night. Inscriptions detailing accessories for the chorus from the 3<sup>rd</sup> cent. BCE, make repeated reference to torches, wicks, lamps and olive oil required for burning them: ἔλαιον καὶ ἐλλύχνια τοῖς φανοῖς.<sup>206</sup> Sensory deprivation during ritual experience, such as darkness, has been shown to allow its episodic recollection to be framed by collective narratives shared after the event.<sup>207</sup> The notion that the dance was both intricate and completed in the dark is also supported by the mention of ropes (ῥυμοὶ) which may have guided the dancers/chorus.<sup>208</sup>

As with rites discussed above, while not adhering to the dysphoric framework posited by Whitehouse, the carnivalesque experience of dancing and singing at night would have afforded the “fusion” of participants.<sup>209</sup> The re-enactment of the Thesean “Crane” dance did so within the mnemotopographic, and materially evidenced, landscape of the original. By evoking a distinct figure, episode and space it undoubtedly illustrates its acting as a medium for the generation of collective cultural memory.<sup>210</sup>

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202. Chankowski, 2008, pp. 109-118.

203. Parker, 1997, pp. 150-151.

204. Volgsten and Pripp, 2016, pp. 144-164.

205. Rutherford, 2004, pp. 82-90; Pearce, 2017, pp. 196-198.

206. *ID* 316, ll. 75-80.

207. Schjødt *et al.*, 2013, p. 45; Schjødt, 2019, pp. 367-368.

208. Arnold, 1933, p. 455.

209. Wertsch and Roediger, 2008, p. 323; Downey, 2014, p. 684; Larson, 2016, p. 192.

210. Halbwachs, 1992, p. 200; Assmann, 2012, pp. 38-43.

The embodied experience of re-performing this “memory” is also suggested as enabling forms of episodic memory required of group fusion. Adoption of Thesean characters by the dancers/chorus, the apparently complex and winding nature of the dance, group singing and its taking place in near darkness, all indicate embodied, mnemonic, experiences. If the dance was performed by a choir of Delians, then this experience may have supported notions of Athens-centrism. However it may have also reinforced the localized identification and smaller group cohesion of the performers who, while enacting an episode emphasized as Athenian, did so through their own display of religious competence.<sup>211</sup> Naturally if the Athenian choir took part, the experience would have allowed for a more engrossing adoption of the twice-seven youths with whom they were clearly identified in the context of the *Delia*.

While the dance firmly demonstrates elements of an “imagistic” ritual experience, the *Delia* was a calendrically regular, and especially in the context of the Athenian renewal, centrally organized festival. While again not aligning completely with the “doctrinal” religious mode, we gain a better understanding of the *Delia*’s ability to generate, or at least express, an Athens-centric identity by considering overlapping elements. As noted above, Bacchylides suggests that Theseus was indeed a prevalent aspect of the *Delia* even before its re-organization, and semantic memory would naturally formulate in a ritual context which vividly underlined its foundation by the hero. Yet in the context of overt Athenian control, we may discern the form of directorial authority by which fixed interpretations are communicated to the group.<sup>212</sup> While still celebrated as a Pan-Ionian festival, the generation of semantic memories regarding Theseus at the *Delia* during this period would have thus been framed by a retrojection of Athenian influence and supremacy into the island’s foundational past. How much this enabled an identification with Athens from other participants, including the Delians who were themselves expelled from the island for a year in 422 BCE,<sup>213</sup> is elusive. Indeed within the 4<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, the recollection of Theseus within the *Delia* did so in a context of expressed resistance to Athenian control of the sanctuary.<sup>214</sup> For those Athenians established on the island and the visiting *theoria* however, the commemoration of Theseus would have undoubtedly functioned to reinforce wider civic/cultural identifications.<sup>215</sup> The festival’s celebrated Thesean foundation – from its dancing, athletic and choral contests, the statue of Aphrodite and

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211. Kowalzig, 2007, p. 82; Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, pp. 576-577.

212. Assmann, 2012, p. 41; Whitehouse and Lanman, 2014, p. 680.

213. Thuc., V 1.

214. Constantakopoulou, 2016, pp.125-138.

215. Manier and Hirst, 2010, p. 258.



the Athenian delegation enacting a fulfilment of the hero's oath to Apollo – suggests the display of a cultural memory that would have aided in orientating the relationship between the city-state and her Ionian allies within the Delian League.

The recollection of Theseus in the *Delia* of the latter 5<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, is demonstrated as providing a legitimization of the wider religio-political authority of Athens in relation to her Ionian allies. For differing participants, the memory of the hero would have been contingent on exterior socio-political developments in Athens, the Delian League and the island of Delos itself. Episodic memories forged during the “Crane” dance likely formulated a cohesive bonding between those that performed it, while the over-arching emphasis on Theseus iterated the semantic/cultural memory conducive to group identifications. Essentially the festival provided an arena in which differing social relationships could be cultivated and re-enforced through collective memory of Theseus.<sup>216</sup>

In Athens the absence of the *theoria* initiated a strict maintenance of city-wide purity including the cessation of executions, most famously that of Socrates in 399 BCE.<sup>217</sup> This restriction indicates the liminal quality of “ritual time” as standing apart from the everyday; where the abstract temporality of the Thesean past framed the experience of time in the day-to-day workings of the city.<sup>218</sup> As the delegation would have engaged with a visceral recollection of the Thesean voyage back from Crete, so the city of Athens itself re-awaited the return of “Theseus” to Phaleron in the form of his ship and the representational youths who had honored the oath sworn by the hero to Apollo.

## 6. CONCLUSION: THE PROCESSION TO THE DELPHINION AND THE THESEAN RITUAL LANDSCAPE

The claimed and emphasized Thesean aetiologies within the rituals discussed above, are indicated as providing the required material media, mnemotopic evocation and embodied experiences by which the collective cultural memory is generated.<sup>219</sup> Rather than representing a petrified canon, the Cretan adventure manifested contextually within these festivals in conjunction with wider socio-cultural developments and requirements. Indeed we have seen how by engaging with this collective memory,

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216. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 583.

217. Xen., *Mem.* IV 8, 2.

218. Bradley, 1998, p. 85.

219. Assmann, 2012, pp. 38-41.

differing forms of group identity were provided arenas in which to be cultivated, expressed and imposed.

To conclude this examination the little recorded rite dated to the 6<sup>th</sup> of Mounichion (April/May) will be considered next to these phenomena. This ritual was formed of a procession of young women to the Temple of Apollo Delphinios near to the Akropolis, who carried olive branches crowned with wool as with the *epeheboi* during the *Pyanopsia*.<sup>220</sup> Plutarch is here again our primary source, and while no Atthidographer is cited, the description of the ritual is consistent with the author's wider historiographic *archaiologia*.<sup>221</sup> As noted above, the Temple of Apollo Delphinios was heavily associated with the hero. In first arriving at Athens it is here that Theseus is identified by Aegeus,<sup>222</sup> while Pausanias describes how being taken for a young woman by the temple's builders, he threw a pair of oxen over its roof in a show of masculine virility (Θησεὺς δὲ ἄλλο μὲν αὐτοῖς ἐδήλωσεν οὐδέν, ἀπολύσας δὲ ὡς λέγεται τῆς ἀμάξης τοὺς βοῦς, ἢ σφισι παρῆν, τὸν ὄροφον ἀνέρριψεν ἐς ὑψηλότερον ἢ τῷ ναῷ τὴν στέγην ἐποιοῦντο).<sup>223</sup> The date of the 6<sup>th</sup> of Mounichion was recognized as that on which Theseus supplicated Apollo at his temple and then departed for Crete, from which the procession is recognized as emerging.<sup>224</sup> While little can be gleaned from these details, we are still able to posit on how the procession acted to cultivate collective memory and inform participant's identities.

1) *Appropriative emphasis*. As with the other rituals above, the procession to the *Delphinion* is indicated as manifesting situationally, with its Thesean aetiology likely emerging from the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE. While an evidently Apolline rite, the date of the 6<sup>th</sup> in fact points to it being originally related to Artemis who was also worshipped in the *Delphinion*.<sup>225</sup> Indeed Simon has underlined Artemis as having a prominent position in the earliest versions of the Cretan adventure, and the procession may echo this older relationship.<sup>226</sup> Nevertheless, the rite as recorded by Plutarch has Apollo as its divine focus, and Theseus' supplication to the god as its cited origin. While admittedly elusive, the apparent elision of Artemis in favor of Apollo suggests an adjustment in line with prevalent conceptions of Theseus' relationship with these gods.

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220. Deubner, 1932, p. 201; Calame, 1996, p. 143.

221. Frost, 1984, p. 67.

222. *Thes.* 12, 3.

223. Paus., I 19, 1.

224. *Thes.* 18, 1.

225. Mikalson, 1975, p. 140.

226. Simon, 1996, pp. 12-15.

2) *Maturation and social identity*. An older Artemisian form for this procession is perhaps evidenced in the sole participation of young women, for whom Artemis oversaw female maturation rituals in various contexts and guises.<sup>227</sup> This does not mean that Theseus as a memory figure would have been previously absent, but rather Apollo was not the likely divine focus. In any regard, the Thesean aetiology that framed this rite provided an authoritative precursor to what would have been a display of the young women's socio-religious competence. We may again detect elements of embodied mimesis; replicating Theseus' own oath to Apollo while perhaps dualistically evoking the maidens bound for Crete. Such facets of ritualized experience have been illustrated above as allowing for fused bonding, while the replication of a prototypical act would have supported wider identity forms via the commemoration of a shared past for performers and general participants alike.<sup>228</sup>

3) *Mnemetopography*. The procession as a physical act, would have aided in spatially anchoring the memory of Theseus into the landscape by replicating the movement of his own religiously charged journey to the Temple of Apollo. Collective memory relies on its being positioned into space, and the ritual journey carried out by the young women would have both embedded and evoked the cultural remembrance of this episode from the Athenian heroic past.<sup>229</sup> Athens and its surrounding landscapes housed various Thesean mnemetopes, however it was through acts such as the procession to the *Delphinion* that they would be able to formulate collective memory.<sup>230</sup>

4) *Materiality*. The boughs carried by those in the procession, again as in the *Pyanopsia*, directly referenced those supposedly dedicated by Theseus in the temple. This may again indicate the appropriation of a directly Thesean origin for a pre-existing aspect of the procession. Religious communication "requires materiality"<sup>231</sup> and is vital in the formulation of collective memory.<sup>232</sup> While obviously not as potent as the tombs at Phaleron or the Thesean ship, the branches would have communicated the memory of the Thesean origins of the procession to its members and audience.

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227. Lee, 2015, pp. 200-203.

228. Connerton, 1989, p. 82.

229. Assmann, 2012, p. 42.

230. Alcock, 2002, pp. 28-32; Hölscher, 2018, pp. 118-121.

231. Albrecht *et al.*, 2018, p. 570.

232. Jones, 2007, p. 42.

5) *Religious “modes”*. While little is gleaned from Plutarch’s description of the procession, we may reasonably suggest that the experience of the *korai* would have enabled episodic memory. While not dysphoric in any sense, themes of maturation and character adoption during the rite indicate potential frameworks for fused identity. Likewise, as an organized state ritual that would have been administered by religious authorities, the procession generally aligns with the “doctrinal” mode. However, as with all the rites discussed above, neither of these definitions fit neatly with this ritual, and we should perhaps approach it as cognitively intuitive overall.<sup>233</sup> Nevertheless by noting “imagistic” and “doctrinal” elements, we gain a clearer picture of how differing forms of collective memory were likely generated and their potential to inform differing identities.

6) *Cultural remembering*. Cultural memory deals with the shared origins, heroic figures and important landscapes of groups. It requires communication through mimesis, mnemotopography and various material reminders in the form of ritualized acts.<sup>234</sup> The procession would have clearly operated as a medium by which the Athenian collective memory of Theseus was generated and expressed; re-performing his original supplication within its established mnemotopography.

By considering the contingent nature and experience of ritual, we are provided with firmer ground in commenting on its formative properties. In this paper I have aimed to consider these issues in relation to the mechanics by which collective memory was generated, not simply expressed. For those rites that claimed Thesean origin, we have seen how the hero was subject to situational emphasis in relation to wider socio-political and religious realities. Collective memory is ever a product of the present, and the manner in which the Cretan adventure was commemorated indicates how the past is selectively emphasized to “serve contemporary goals”.<sup>235</sup> Through a direct examination of the media by which the collective memory of Theseus was itself generated, we have seen how these rituals acted to spatially anchor the hero into the landscape through re-enactment, and often in conjunction with either material evidences or reminders. While never attempting to conform these rituals to rigid definitions of “doctrinal” or “imagistic” religious modes, these frameworks have been helpful in considering how episodic and semantic memory was formulated therein. In the

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233. Larson, 2016, p. 192.

234. Wertsch and Roediger, 2008, p. 324; Assmann, 2010; pp. 110-111.

235. Pantel, 2013, p. 433.

cases of direct mimesis, adoption of Thesean characters and sensory elision we have seen the potential for bonding between participating groups via embodied cognition. Likewise, the routinized commemoration of Theseus through re-performance, material evidencing and mnemotopography allowed for the display of maturing, sexed, *genos* and civic identity. Indeed, as the central hero and representative of Athens from the 6<sup>th</sup> cent. BCE, the notion that any collective recollection of Theseus contributed to a wider Athenian group identification is uncontroversial. However, by shifting focus towards the mechanics by which this was produced we have gained a fuller picture of the contingent quality and experience of the collective memory of Theseus.

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