Introduction

Imperial Greek Literature, Rhetoric and Lyric

At the beginning of the first century,[1] Dio Chrysostom – orator and (self-proclaimed) philosopher – kicked off one of his speeches on kingship apparently addressed to the Roman emperor (*Orr.* 1–4) with a vignette which ties politics and music together (*Or.* 1.1–2):

> φασί ποτε Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ βασιλεῖ τὸν αὐλητὴν Τιμόθεον τὸ πρῶτον ἐπιδεικνύμενον αὐλῆσαι κατὰ τὸν ἐκείνου τρόπον μάλα ἐμπείρως καὶ μουσικῶς . . . καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον εὐθὺς ἀναπηδῆσαι πρὸς τὰ ὅπλα τοῖς ἐνθέοις ὁμοίως· οὕτω σφόδρα ἐπαρθῆναι αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τοῦ μέλους τῆς μουσικῆς καὶ τοῦ ῥυθμοῦ τῆς αὐλήσεως.
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> The story goes that when the *aulos* player Timotheus gave his first exhibition before King Alexander, he showed great musical skill in adapting his playing to the king's character. . . . They say, too, that Alexander at once bounded to his feet and ran for his weapons like one possessed, such was the exaltation produced in him by the tones of the music and the rhythmic beat of the rendering.

The scene is based on a tradition which placed the *aulos* player Timotheus of Thebes at Alexander's court (cf. Ath. 12.538f); nor is Dio the only source for Timotheus' psychagogic power over the king (cf. Him. *Or.* 16.3–4).[2] This version, however, is also tailored to serve Dio's purpose: the anecdote provides an inferior comparison to what Dio is about to do and is effectively already doing; as he hastens to specify, whereas Timotheus' piping could only reignite Alexander's warlike sentiments,[3] Dio's address aims to

[1] Unless specified, dates are CE. Since I deal above all with Aelius Aristides (117–after 180), my focus will be on the second century; when useful or necessary, however, evidence and contexts earlier or later than that period will be taken into account.

[2] On Timotheus, see Stephanes (1988): n. 2417; West (1992): 366 n. 39; LeVen (2014): 32. Similar anecdotes were told about Alexander and other *aulos* players too, e.g. Plut. *De Alex. fort.* 335a. The tradition concerning Timotheus was picked up much later by John Dryden, who reimagined it in an ode in honour of St Cecilia, patron of music (*Alexander's Feast; or, the Power of musique*; 1697), then set in music by Handel (1736). Dryden, however, mistook Timotheus the *aulos* player for the more famous Timotheus of Miletus, poet and *kithara* player (16–18: 'Timotheus, placed on high | Amid the tuneful choir, | With flying fingers touched the lyre'); see Strohm (2004).

[3] Dio *Or.* 1.2 refers to Timotheus' performance as *orthios nomos* (similarly *Suda* O 573), a tune apparently characterised by high pitch: Barker (1984): 251; cf. Almazova (2020).

be inspirational for the emperor, to be identified almost certainly with Trajan, in both war and peace (4–8). No matter how different from Timotheus' music Dio wanted his speech to sound, however, it is evident that he still aspired to the same potency of inspiration exercised by the ancient musician; whether or not *Or*. 1 was ever performed before Trajan (most probably, not), what Dio portrays himself to be doing in this and the other kingship speeches is precisely striving to influence and control (Roman) power through Greek education, *paideia*.[4]

Dio's story suits my beginning at least as much as it does the opening of his speech, since it brings immediately into focus the key thematic and argumentative nexuses of this book. The first is my focus on lyric beyond just poetry and texts. Scholars have used the term 'lyric' both as including and excluding elegy and *iambos* alongside melic poetry – itself commonly divided into choral and monodic poetry.[5] As will become abundantly clear, I use 'lyric' as excluding elegiac and iambic poetry, to emphasise the full melodic vocal performance and musical accompaniment that characterised melic poetry (see μέλος, *melos*, 'song', but also 'melody, 'tune'; LSJ, *CGL*).[6] In turn, such a definition of 'lyric' cannot be limited to the melic poetry crystallised in the Hellenistic canon. As far as we know, for example, Timotheus of Thebes was not a lyric poet, and least of all one of the nine poets of the lyric canon. But Timotheus' figure and story may still be connected to lyric tradition, if by 'lyric' we mean the musical as well as poetic phenomena covered by μέλος, and by 'tradition' a gamut of expressions ranging from poems to performances, poetic tropes, musical icons and the stories told about them.[7] So defined, lyric tradition functioned for imperial Greeks as one of the sites and matrices – though so far a largely ignored one – of their engagement with ancient Greek literature and culture more broadly.

[4] Whitmarsh (2001): 200–3; on the date, context and possible performance(s) of Dio *Orr*. 1–4, see also 186–8, with further references.

[5] Cf. Miller (1994): 81–5; Kurke (2000); Budelmann (2009b): 2–5.

[6] This sense seems to have been prevalent in antiquity too: Budelmann (2009b): 3; Nelis (2012); Ford (2020): 64–5. On the relationship between λυρικός and μέλος/μελικός, see also §0.1; for the two notions in recent lyric scholarship, cf. Fearn (2020): 73.

[7] Timotheus may seem an *extreme* example to illustrate a notion of lyric that includes music: in Dio, his performance is purely instrumental, which would make him a musician rather than a lyric (i.e. melic) performer. As pointed out by Budelmann (2009b): 9, however, 'there will have been some degree of continuity between lyric and what we would conceptualise as just instrumental music'; not to mention that the *nomos* performed by Dio's Timotheus may be considered a lyric form (cf. Carey (2009): 26). Besides Dio, furthermore, Ath. 12.538f lists Timotheus among the *aulos* players performing with choruses (i.e. accompanying choral songs) at Alexander's Susa weddings. All in all, then, Dio's story helps me emphasise the centrality of music to my approach, while still activating a lyric connection.

The second nexus concerns the relationship between lyric and rhetoric. As suggested by Dio's choice of comparison, this relationship was potentially a close one: the activities of both singer (or musician *tout court*, in Timotheus' case) and orator were framed by and dependent on specific, and special, occasions, such as a court performance or an address to the emperor.[8] In such contexts, both musical performers and orators would deploy their skills to seduce and/or persuade their target audience – an aspect Dio is well aware of, when he evokes Alexander's reaction to Timotheus' music as the precedent for Trajan's response to *Or.* 1.

At the same time, the general kinship between rhetoric and lyric as genres 'of presence' depending on occasion justified a certain agonistic tension: as seen, Dio takes pains to explain that his speech will be more useful to the emperor than Timotheus' rousing tune was to Alexander; the orator's effectiveness is defined in competition with the musical performer's. This sense of competition was heightened by the fact that lyric performances were all but limited to ancient traditions: imperial orators still vied with contemporary singers and musicians for audience appreciation, and Dio himself was one of the most vocal speakers on the issue (see e.g. *Or.* 19.1–2, discussed in §2.3.1).

Last but far from least: power. Dio's text well exemplifies the entanglement between lyric and music, rhetoric and (imperial) politics. Precisely because both forms of performance were framed by occasion and were therefore characteristically situated within certain social and political contexts, lyric performances shared with rhetoric the potential for engagement with power. In particular, when taken as (agonistic) model or precedent for imperial rhetoric, lyric could mobilise distinctive political discourses, as in the case of Dio's Timotheus and the function of his music as inspiring and leading the ruler, which are then reflected, with marked differences, in Dio's own attempt to steer imperial behaviour. All of this, then, could be further complicated by the fact that Roman power and rulers – most (in-) famously Nero, but other emperors as well – interfaced with and appropriated some specific Greek lyric traditions for their political agendas and as vehicles for Roman imperial ideology.

This book pulls together these research threads – lyric tradition as broadly conceived, its relationship with rhetoric, and that with imperial politics – to offer the first sustained analysis of the presence and role(s) of lyric poetry and music within the Greek literature and culture of the

[8] This is, of course, especially true of epideictic rhetoric, traditionally associated with imperial orators through the term 'Second Sophistic', on which see p. 4.

Empire. Overall, my argument is that the place of lyric was special, marked and different from other strains of Greek tradition; crucially, this meant that lyric had the potential to contribute something different to discourses of Greek cultural identity construction, authorial self-fashioning and power negotiation between rulers and ruled. As a poetic genre, archaic and classical lyric texts showcased very individualised voices, while famous singing figures, with or without a (stable) textual tradition attached to them, lived on in the memory of imperial Greeks through myths and stories. Lyric tradition brought into play a diverse repertoire of voices and personas, together with the themes prominently associated with them (e.g. Sappho and erotic poetry; Pindar and the praise of winners; Orpheus' enchanting powers). Given their situatedness in terms of occasions and functions, moreover, lyric poems, figures and performances were uniquely tied not only to specific political contexts, as already mentioned, but also to specific locales, and thus may contribute to the expression and construction of local identities against the Panhellenic background bolstered by the Empire, and in contrast with the globalising spatial politics of Roman rule.

Ideally, therefore, lyric offered models of situatedness and distinctive voices especially to the imperial orators of the so-called Second Sophistic, who according to Philostratus' original use of the term (*VS* 481), practised epideictic (i.e. 'display') rhetoric often involving the impersonation of mythical and historical figures from the Greek past, and including a wide range of occasional pieces, such as addresses to local communities, encomia, festival speeches or funeral orations.[9] Yet if and how an imperial sophist engaged with (some) lyric models depended on his agendas and self-fashioning choices, as well as on his literary knowledge. As argued extensively in Part I, archaic and classical lyric poetry was *not* part of the mainstream literary education of the period but represented a more specialised and niche form of reading. As a result, when we consider an orator's engagement with lyric as literary and textual tradition, the ability and choice to refer to precise poems must be interpreted as a statement of sophisticated positionality in itself. This could not be more true than for the

[9] Philostratus' initial definition insists on the practice of fictional declamations (the main rhetorical form requiring impersonation), but the sophists he then considers practised different subgenres of occasional rhetoric. A wider use of the term than Philostratus', to refer broadly to the panorama of imperial literature and culture, is both possible and much debated: e.g. Whitmarsh (2001): 41–5; (2005): 3–10; (2013a): 1–7; (2017); Johnson and Richter (2017b). Since my ultimate focus lies on imperial rhetoric, however, I consider the 'Second Sophistic' primarily within Philostratus' terms of definition and limit my use of related terms to markedly rhetorical contexts and figures.

protagonist of this study, the second-century Mysian sophist Publius Aelius Aristides.[10] Among contemporary orators and Greek writers in general, Aristides stands out for his extensive use of some carefully selected lyric poets, which points to his superior *paideia* as well as to his display of it. At the same time, transcending the textual dimension, Aristides' engagement with lyric encompasses the construction of his own lyric persona, the mobilisation of lyric's local significance and the appropriation of the political dimension attached to lyric poetry and performances, thus providing a unique opportunity to explore and demonstrate my argument about the specificity of lyric within imperial culture.

The breadth of these preliminary observations, however, requires a brief overview of the rationale for bringing together lyric and imperial Greek literature, in the sophistic form of epideictic oratory, besides the introductory example offered by Dio. In what follows, I shall spell out why it is worth looking at lyric and imperial rhetoric, what the ramifications are of doing so by focusing on Aristides and what such a research may contribute to our picture of imperial Greek literature and culture, as well as to our understanding of Aristides' figure and work. In the process, I shall contextualise my approach within the ever-growing scholarship on imperial Greek literature and culture, explaining in what ways it departs from the few previous treatments of the presence of lyric in imperial culture, and from their results.

0.1 (Beyond) Detecting Lyric

That lyric poetry may be present in imperial Greek literary texts is not a complete surprise. But what has been left un(der)explored, and is much more interesting and consequential, is what the presence of lyric references in texts of the period meant for the authors, their audience/readers and their cultural milieu more widely. The interest in assessing both the transmission of classical texts and the scope of imperial literary education has prompted some scholars to scan the texts of some imperial writers for quotations and allusions to archaic and classical works, including lyric

[10] Although Aristides often uses 'sophist' in a derogatory way (see e.g. *Orr*. 28.127–8; 33.29), I follow Philostratus in including him among the 'second sophists' (*VS* 581–5), as, at least from where we stand, one of the top contenders in the arena of imperial epideictic oratory. Later in his life, Aristides also took a fourth name (Theodorus, i.e. 'gift of god') to signal his close relationship with the divine – the most important component of his self-presentation, as we shall see: *Smyrna* 144*5 and *HL* 4.53, with Downie (2013): 12–14.

poets. This is the case, for instance, of Graham Anderson's research on Lucian's 'classics', which looked at the number, frequency and format of Lucian's literary quotes.[11] Some twenty years after Anderson, Aristides' own extensive use of Pindaric poetry was the subject of a dissertation by Theodoros Gkourogiannis, who produced a taxonomic repertoire of Pindaric quotations organised by function in context (encomiastic, argumentative or purely 'ornamental').[12] It has been in particular thanks to Ewen Bowie, however, that this approach has been developed into a convenient tool for studying imperial texts. In a series of papers focusing in large part on lyric, Bowie has surveyed the diffusion of textual references, more or less explicit, to melic, iambic and elegiac poems in a broad range of imperial genres and authors, primarily in order to determine how well and through what sources these writers – Philostratus, Plutarch, the novelists and Athenaeus, as well as Aristides – knew the poetic texts they were citing from.[13]

This search for lyric quotes has made a substantial contribution to the study of imperial *paideia* and of the place held within it by lyric poetry; as my own recourse to them proves (Chapter 1), the analyses carried out by Bowie and others have the unquestionable merit of providing a handy overview of the circulation and readership of lyric. Yet such a quotation-oriented approach also presents two main blind spots, which make such statistics and taxonomies more useful as a starting point than as a definitive and organic framework of interpretation. The first issue concerns the type of references this approach sets out to detect. As we have mentioned the imperial experience of lyric was by no means limited to engagement with the poetic collections of the nine canonical lyric poets selected by the influential scholars of the Hellenistic period; other singers, real and mythical, and other song traditions which had no place in the Alexandrian processes of entextualisation and canonisation continued to play a role in the lyric imagination of the Empire. In discussions centred on performance rather than on the textual dimension of poetry, furthermore, rigid Hellenistic classifications of genre could give way to a looser and less artificial picture of ancient song culture. This was the case, for instance, with the pseudo-Plutarchean *On Music*, which traces the history of lyric based on musical and performative criteria, with the result that

[11] Anderson (1976), (1978). Anderson's approach in turn might be traced back to Householder (1941).

[12] Gkourogiannis (1999); for his classification, see 9–12. On Pindaric quotes, see also Vassilaki (2005); Rutherford (2012).

[13] Bowie (1997), (2000), (2008a), (2008b), (2009), (2010), (2021).

Archilochus' recitative iambi are discussed alongside paeans and citharodic *nomoi* (*De mus.* 1131f–1141d).[14] It was precisely new, ongoing (re-)performances that completed, and complicated, the picture.

When exploring the presence of lyric in imperial literature, therefore, looking exclusively at quotations misses the fact that lyric represented a complex system of reference encompassing texts, anecdotes, poetic icons, performative traditions as well as imagery and tropes, all elements which will instead be central to my arguments.[15] As anticipated when discussing Dio's incipit, and mine, with respect to terminology my choice to include all these phenomena under the lyric umbrella corresponds to the ancient notion of μέλος, and its later derivative μελικός (*melikos*), rather than to that of λυρικός (*lyrikos*). While μέλος and μελικός applied to diverse, ancient and more recent expressions of song culture, λυρικός appears to have been introduced as a result of Hellenistic classification and accordingly tended to be used with precise reference to archaic and classical lyric poets, the canonical nine especially (see e.g. *AP* 9.184, discussed in §1.3; Heph. *De sign.* pp. 73–4 Consbruch; Clem. Al. *Strom.* 5.14.136). It fits this picture that Aristides referred to his own (therapeutic) lyric compositions as 'melic' instead of 'lyric' (*HL* 4.31: ἐνῆγεν [i.e. Asclepius] δέ με καὶ πρὸς τὴν τῶν μελῶν ποίησιν; see further §2.3.2). But since it was mapped onto the complex and varied panorama of song culture, terminology too may oscillate and vary. Galen, for example, apparently treated μελικός and λυρικός as interchangeable when referred to poets (*De usu part.* 4 p. 366.1 Kühn: παρὰ τοῖς μελικοῖς ποιηταῖς, οὓς ἔνιοι λυρικοὺς ὀνομάζουσιν).[16] At the other end of the terminology spectrum, Philostratus used λυρικός for a variety of melic and more broadly musical contexts, including contemporary songs.[17] While such variations are impossible to trace conclusively, however, the maximalist notion of 'lyric' I have adopted here essentially

[14] See Gostoli (2011). Pseudo-Plutarch's different approach from Alexandrian categories may also be a result of the fact that his sources go back to the fifth and fourth centuries BCE, thus preceding the development of Hellenistic scholarship.

[15] Most recently, Musté (2022) has included imagery as part of her survey on poetry in Aristides; her approach, however, is not substantially different from previous repertoires and classifications of Aristides' poetic references.

[16] It is difficult to determine whether Galen had only ancient, canonical lyric poets in mind: the observation comes from a discussion of the strophic structure of lyric poems, which was not the exclusive preserve of archaic and classical poetry; Aristides followed the same strophic pattern in his μέλη (*HL* 4.31).

[17] Cf. Philostr. *VS* 515.9 (λυρικός as generically 'musical'); 620.13 (λυρικός to define the '*nomoi* for the lyre' composed by the sophist Hippodromus). For the origin and evolution of lyric terminology, see Färber (1936): 7–16, with further sources; Budelmann (2009b): 2–5.

corresponds to what (most) imperial Greeks (and Greek-speaking Romans) would have recognised as or connected to μέλος and attempts to account as much as possible for the wide range of lyric phenomena taking place under the Empire.

Once we take on an extended and more flexible perspective on lyric, furthermore, we unlock access to crucial dimensions of imperial Greek culture from an unprecedented angle; above all, we begin to appreciate how and why lyric tradition(s) fed into the processes of tradition and identity (re-)construction through which imperial Greek authors and audiences (i.e. civic communities, readers etc.) carved their place in relation to both their Greek past and imperial, Roman but also globalised present. This is the second, and more critical, blind spot in works on imperial habits of lyric quotation. Given their interest in issues of knowledge and circulation of archaic and classical poetry, studies centred on quotation patterns and distribution have programmatically avoided major questions concerning the literary agendas and cultural politics of the quoting authors.[18] To put it in other words, the focus on defining lyric knowledge has upstaged issues of lyric 'knowingness', understood as the shrewd display of the literary and cultural value of lyric by imperial writers.[19] Yet, in the last thirty years or so, groundbreaking and still-expanding scholarship on imperial Greek culture has exposed more and more the constructedness of identity(ies) within imperial literature and society, illuminating how the sense of the past of individual writers, social groups and cities functioned as a productive tool to shape their self-presentation and, as integral to this, their engagement with Roman rule.[20] Just like the identities that they contributed to form and fashion, Greek tradition and *paideia* were not stable realities but were continuously appropriated, adapted, de- and re-constructed as part of the

[18] Arguably, issues of rhetorical agenda are touched upon in the analysis of Aristides' Pindaric quotes by Gkourogiannis (1999), but his observations are very limited as he merely takes into account the immediate context where quotes occur. The importance of context and purpose has been recognised by Bowie (e.g. (2008a): 21); nonetheless, Bowie's focus remains predominantly on sources and format of citation. For discussions of Aristides' Pindaric reception which pay attention to the sophist's self-presentation aims, cf. instead Downie (2009) and (2013): 128–54.

[19] On 'knowingness' as the 'glue of social discourse' (722), cf. Goldhill (2006).

[20] For this major paradigm shift, see particularly Goldhill (2001a); Whitmarsh (2001); cf. most recently, and with a specific focus on late antiquity, Goldhill (2020). Examples of studies on individual authors include Elsner (1992) and Hutton (2005a) on Pausanias; Smith (2014) on Aelianus. For the notion of cultural identity as constructed and performed, rather than merely factual, see Hall (1990): 226 ('not an essence but a positioning'). Subscribing to this approach to identity, throughout the book I use terms like 'Greek' and 'Roman' not as rigid and watertight categories, but as ways to identify choices of cultural self-positioning, which could overlap and certainly converged in some everyday contexts; cf. Whitmarsh (2001): 22.

process.[21] When tackling the imperial reception of lyric, either in the restricted form of quotations used or as a broader system of traditions, figures and tropes as is attempted here, what is really worth probing is what lyric added to the sense of the past of imperial Greeks, and in turn in what ways their constructions, their making sense, shaping and, to an extent, engineering of their present and/through their past determined their versions of lyric.[22]

To be sure, so far similar issues have been raised and examined concerning genres and authors at the core of imperial literary education such as Homeric epic, Hesiod, Attic drama, oratory and philosophy.[23] But in relation to imperial *paideia*, lyric poetry was no 'usual' genre: for one thing, the linguistic variety exploited by lyric subgenres such as Lesbian monody or epinician poetry required that readers make use of scholarly resources to interpret Sappho's or Pindar's poems, which were accordingly restricted to a more advanced readership. At the same time, even lyric figures and traditions surviving in parallel with or independently from textual circulation stood out against the backdrop of mainstream education underpinned by epic and Attic models, for lyric singers and performances activated a range of idiosyncratic discourses concerning ideologies of the (authorial) self, community-making and the mediation between communities and ruling power. What, for instance, were the ramifications of evoking Alcaeus' poetry on *stasis* in archaic Lesbos under the efficient and (forcefully) peaceful rule of Rome? How could the chorus still be relevant as the quintessential Greek symbol of the polity when political agency rested ultimately in the hands of a single, Roman emperor? My discussion will tackle these and similar issues in order to expose the features of and the reasons behind Aristides' (re-)construction of lyric tradition, what his poetics of lyric (in prose; cf. §0.2) looked like, and how this was meant to, or may, work in the author's imperial

[21] See e.g. Kim (2010) and Greensmith (2020) on the transformative reception of Homer in imperial prose and poetry respectively. To stress notions of construction and manipulation of tradition, whenever linguistically acceptable I have emphasised the prefix 're-' (and, less frequently, 'de-') through the hyphen; cf. Greensmith (2020).

[22] The key term here is 'reception', which I specifically use throughout the book to refer to creative and productive engagement with lyric.

[23] Besides Kim (2010) and Greensmith (2020) for Homer, see e.g. Hunter (2014) and van Noorden (2018) on Hesiod; Peterson (2019) on Old Comedy. Richter (2011) analyses how discourses of natural genealogy developed by philosophers and orators in classical Athens fed into Greek identity strategies under the Empire. Closer to the matter in hand, Hawkins (2014) has reconstructed the imperial afterlife of *iambos* as a complex literary model for a series of Greek and Roman writers in poetry and prose. Cf. Modini (2022), where I argue for the need to explore the cultural politics of lyric reception well into late antiquity.

settings.[24] Precisely because Aristides' oratory interfaced with imperial communities and their own (re-)construction of tradition, furthermore, such an analysis will also throw light on the ways in which lyric was active in the identity strategies of imperial cities. Before we can delve into Aristides' lyric reception and its significance for our understanding of his figure and works, however, it is necessary to contextualise his choice of lyric as a model in relation to rhetoric's closeness to this poetic genre.

0.2 Aristides' Choice, and the Choice of Aristides

By the imperial era, the kinship between rhetoric, especially epideictic, and lyric as genres 'of presence' underpinned by occasion had a long history and was commonly acknowledged by rhetoricians. For instance, in the first of the two treatises on epideictic rhetoric attributed to Menander Rhetor (late third or early fourth century), readers are referred to Sappho, Anacreon, Bacchylides, Simonides and Alcaeus for examples of diverse hymns to the gods ('cletic', 'apopemptic', 'genealogical' and 'fictitious' hymns addressed to personifications; pp. 333.8–23, 340.12–16 Russell–Wilson). But lyric models may also come in handy when celebrating human patrons, censuring precise targets or advising rulers: for together with Homer and Hesiod, lyric poets 'praised and blamed many people' (p. 393.8: πολλοὺς μὲν ἐνεκωμίασαν, πολλοὺς δὲ ἔψεξαν), while 'always associating with kings and tyrants and giving them the best advice' (13–14: ἀεὶ συνόντες βασιλεῦσι καὶ τυράννοις συμβουλεύοντες τὰ ἄριστα).[25] That aims and attitudes of epideictic oratory may converge with those of lyric, and that they may often entail a careful combination of praise and advice, was apparently recognised by Aristides himself among

[24] Throughout the book as well as in the book title, I use 'poetics' to foreground two interconnected phenomena, or better two aspects of the same phenomenon: the creative principles informing Aristides' literary self-construction through his engagement with lyric, as well as the poetic nature of the model, which results in tension and agonistic self-positioning on the part of the prose writer.

[25] By including Archilochean blame in the examples provided by οἱ λυρικοί (p. 393.9–12: 'nor should you neglect Archilochus, who punished his enemies very adequately in his poetry, so that you will be able to make good use of him when you want to criticise people'), Menander Rhetor apparently adopted a broader notion of 'lyric' encompassing *iambos* alongside melic poetry; still, his use of λυρικός points to specific archaic and classical poets rather than to a wider, and longer, poetic tradition, see §0.1. Unlike Menander, Paus. 1.2.3 makes a distinction between poets like Anacreon, Aeschylus and Simonides, who consorted with powerful tyrants like Polycrates of Samos and Hiero of Syracuse, and Homer and Hesiod, who instead 'either failed to win the society of kings or else purposely despised it'.

others. Addressing the *Koinon* of Asia on the occasion of the dedication of Hadrian's temple in Cyzicus and taking the opportunity to recommend harmonious intercivic relations, Aristides explained that 'advice is not only proper of those who come to accuse', but it 'also suits those who bestow praise' (*Or*. 27.42: μηδὲ τῶν ἐπ' αἰτίᾳ παριόντων μόνων τὴν παραίνεσιν εἶναι νομίσητε, ἀλλ' ἔστιν καὶ τοῖς ἐπαινοῦσι προσήκουσα). As highlighted by Pernot, this definition of Aristides' rhetorical mission can certainly be traced back at least to Isoc. *Evag*. 78–9; but it is also, strikingly, almost identical to Aristides' definition of Alcman as 'the praiser and counsellor of maidens' from another text (*Or*. 2.129: ὁ τῶν παρθένων ἐπαινέτης τε καὶ σύμβουλος), a correspondence suggesting that the imperial orator conceived of his role in relation to contemporary communities as akin to that of the/an archaic lyric poet.

The idea of (epideictic) rhetoric as the prose counterpart, and successor, to lyric, then, has been revived and developed in modern scholarship. As early as the beginning of the twentieth century, a study on *Epideictic Literature* argued that ancient display oratory appropriated the most common *topoi* 'in the higher branches of poetry, especially the lyric'.[26] Closer to the present time, insightful work in this direction has been carried out by scholars like Donald Russell, William Race and, most prominently, Laurent Pernot to situate classical and post-classical rhetoric in relation to, and always ultimately in competition with, the poetical tradition in general and its lyric strand in particular.[27] Yet what has usually been missing from general surveys on the closeness of rhetoric to lyric, and especially those involving imperial rhetoric, has been some attention to specific authorial choices and, as a result, some detailed assessment of the level and depth of engagement with lyric poetry displayed by different orators; that is, while lyric models were available as a generic point of reference and precedent for orators, the choice to use them, and most importantly to use them extensively, came down to individual authors and depended on multiple intersecting factors, such as the extent of their acquaintance with lyric poems or their strategies of self-presentation. Among classical orators, for example,

[26] Burgess (1902): 166–94, with Race (2007): 511.

[27] Pernot (1993): 635–57; Russell (1998): 23–4; Race (1987), (2007). As pointed out by Race (2007): 509, the relationship between rhetoric and lyric functioned in the opposite direction too: while later rhetoricians and orators may look back to poetic models, rhetorical readings could be applied to poetic text. In modern times, this is the case of the paradigm-shifting approach argued for by Bundy (1962), but as scholia suggest, ancient scholars too 'employed concepts and terms derived from rhetorical analysis' to interpret Pindaric odes (Race (2007): 509). For an alternative take on the poetry–rhetoric relationship, see Walker (2000), where the origin of epideictic argumentation is traced further back to poetry.

both Gorgias and Isocrates appear to have engaged, with different aims and effects, with selected lyric paradigms, most prominently by taking on and reconfiguring values and techniques proper to epinician poetry like Pindar's; in both these cases, then, general genre kinship had developed into a more sophisticated, deeper interaction with and appropriation of the poetic model.[28] Something similar can be observed with Aristides' corpus: orators' choices must be considered all the more carefully in the context of imperial *paideia*, which, as we have anticipated and will analyse in detail in Chapter 1, was dominated by classical models *other* than lyric poetry. Despite the niche nature of lyric readership – or, better, precisely *because* of its more refined status – Aristides appears to have utilised selected lyric authors and texts, which he was familiar with from his literary training under the grammarian Alexander of Cotiaeum, as sources for textual allusions and models for his self-fashioning as occasional speaker and praiser. This literary and textual engagement, however, was part of a broader relationship with lyric precedents involving Aristides' appropriation of tropes, imagery and personas derived from certain lyric subgenres, overall pointing to a sustained and elaborate effort on the sophist's part to shape his persona and voices in lyric terms.[29]

Aristides' choice to engage repeatedly and sophisticatedly with lyric, in turn, underpins the choice of Aristides as the subject of my analysis. As we have seen (§0.1), the extensive number of lyric quotations, especially Pindaric, found in the *Orations* has already attracted attention; but with their excessive focus on quotation detection, the isolated analyses carried out so far have missed the chance to provide an adequately complex exploration of how Aristides' lyric reception worked and, most importantly, what was at stake in it. Besides throwing light on as major a chapter in the history of lyric in antiquity as the imperial era, exploring the re-uses and meanings of lyric poetry and music in Aristides' *Orations* may have a substantial impact on how we interpret his figure and works too. Although Aristides is without doubt one of the central authors of the Second Sophistic – certainly, one of the most productive and complicated to appreciate and understand – modern

[28] Gorgias: e.g. Worman (2002): 24, 157; Fearn (2017): 274; (2019): 232; Isocrates: Race (1987); Vallozza (1998); Ford (2002): 236–40. For Gorgias' familiarity with and allusion to lyric texts, see Pòrtulas (1991) on Pindar; on the possible relationship of the *Encomium of Helen* with Stesichorus' *Palinode*, cf. Luccioni (1997); Hunter (2015).

[29] It must be stressed that Aristides' lyric self-fashioning differed substantially from the practice of 'singing sophists' like Hadrian of Tyre (*VS* 589) and Favorinus (491–2), who, according to Philostratus, adopted a virtuoso *bel canto* style for their performances, tailoring their vocal effects to song and blurring the performative boundaries between orator and singer; in fact, Aristides abusively depicted such sophists as effeminate (*Or.* 34.47–8).

studies have contributed to establishing a somewhat-atomised view of Aristidean rhetoric by prioritising only a few of his texts and features, most prominently the puzzling *Sacred Tales* (henceforth *HL*) and Aristides' self-presentation as a chronically ill patient dependent on Asclepius' constant interventions for both physical deliverance and professional success.[30] To be clear, this specific work and self-presentation are essential components of Aristides' rhetoric; but an exclusive focus on the sophist as a medical and religious case (or curiosity) risks bringing out of focus the whole 'body' of Aristides' persona and literary activity, overshadowing equally constitutive aspects, such as his attempts at building diverse public voices to tackle current affairs or to praise both Greek subjects and Roman rulers. Interfacing in deep and complex ways with the trajectories and stimuli of imperial culture, and negotiating the author's own stance in relation to human as well as divine power, Aristides' writing reveals much more than a self-obsessed 'hypochondriac'.[31] After all, the need for a more holistic approach to Aristides was recognised by as early a reader as Libanius: writing to the orator, poet and philosopher Fortunatianus, who had just discovered the *Orations*, the fourth-century rhetorician recommended that Fortunatianus should not 'discriminate among his [Aristides'] works but must seek after everything, take advantage of everything, and leave out nothing', as dealing with a 'writer who has and offers power, if one wishes to use it' (*Ep.* 1262.1).[32]

In this book my approach to Aristides and/through his lyric reception is as comprehensive as possible, not because I deal with every Aristidean oration, but because I treat the texts which I discuss as the product of a coherent and unified thinker and writer.[33] This position, then, requires some remarks on

[30] See e.g. Behr (1968); Perkins (1995), esp. 173–89; Petsalis-Diomidis (2010); Israelowich (2012); Stephens (2013). Downie (2013) differs from this trend in that her discussion reintegrates the *HL* within the literary and rhetorical context of Aristides' production more widely. Other Aristidean texts often studied in isolation include *Orr.* 1 (*Panathenaicus*), 2–4 (*Platonic Orations*) and 37–45 (prose hymns): e.g. Oliver (1968); Milazzo (2002); Goeken (2012). Though in the form of collected essays on individual themes, Harris and Holmes (2008) and Pernot, Abbamonte and Lamagna (2016) have moved closer to a more integrated treatment of the *Orations* as a whole.

[31] Phillips (1952); cf. Brown (1978): 41 ('hypochondriacal gentleman of indomitable will'); on these and similar criticisms based on the *HL*, see Downie (2013): 25–8.

[32] See Cribiore (2008): 266, from which this translation is taken.

[33] For example, I do not discuss Aristides' declamations (*Orr.* 5–16); as these fictional pieces are set in Greek centres like Athens, Sparta and Thebes between the fifth and fourth centuries BCE or rework Homeric episodes, they build on the Homerocentric and Athenocentric strands of imperial *paideia*, rather than on the lyric and musical traditions which are central here. On lyric references, or lack thereof, in imperial declamations, see further §1.1.3. This does not mean that lyric references are totally absent from Aristides' declamations: cf. *Or.* 8.16 = Pind. fr. 76 Snell–Maehler.

how Aristides may have conceived of and published the texts which now form his corpus. As the production of a sophist who engaged in different forms of composition and performance – occasional orations and polemical addresses, but also the autobiographical narrative of the *HL*, much longer essays, and even lyric compositions in verse as part of the healing regime prescribed him by Asclepius – over a span of at least forty years, the formal and contextual diversity of Aristides' corpus is undeniable, so that any discussion bringing together different *Orations* must take their specificities into due account. At the same time, however, some internal and external evidence might support the idea that Aristides edited his works for publication and might have had a sense of his own production as an integrated, though diverse, project. According to Philostr. *VS* 583, when he was asked to declaim by Marcus Aurelius himself, Aristides refused to do so impromptu, replying that he was 'not one of those who vomit their speeches but try to make them perfect'. Besides polemically setting him apart from and *above* the numerous contemporary orators who practised improvised declamation, this remark apparently pointed to a distinctive feature in Aristides' approach to rhetoric: Aristides' superior artistic sophistication (585: τεχνικώτατος δὲ σοφιστῶν), Philostratus continues, was the result of 'long cogitation' (πολὺς ἐν θεωρήμασι). Did such reflection and care extend from the composition stage to that of publication? One of the divinely inspired dreams recorded in the *HL* suggests that this was the case. Replying to a doctor who was, once more, asking why he did not declaim, Aristides explains that for him it is more important 'to revise some of my writings; for I must also converse with posterity' (*HL* 5.52: ἐπελθεῖν τινα τῶν γεγραμμένων· δεῖ γάρ με καί τοῖς ὕστερον ἀνθρώποις διαλέγεσθαι). Even taking into account the careful literary self-presentation enacted by the *HL* (see Chapter 3), we have no reason to imagine that this depiction was substantially removed from what Aristides, as deeply concerned as he was with his self-portrait as an exceptional intellectual, took pains to do in reality. Tellingly, Aristides also points to his wish to 'revise' (*Or.* 32.40: ἐπισκέψασθαι) his works as the reason why his teacher Alexander never had a chance to catalogue his books.[34] Based on this evidence, it is not far-fetched to imagine that, if not all, at least part of the Aristidean corpus as we have it now was collected and edited for publication by its author, a conclusion which in turn justifies the integrated reading enterprise I propose here.[35]

[34] On both passages and their significance for Aristides' self-fashioning, see Downie (2013): 178–82.

[35] Further support is provided by the stability of some ideas and features throughout the *Orations*: e.g. Trapp (2017a): 332. As already specified, by arguing for a stable literary core within the corpus I do not mean to ignore or underestimate differences between texts.

As the catalyst for a more integrated interpretation of Aristides' works and self-presentation, the analysis of his lyric reception also throws new light on two distinct though interrelated aspects of the *Orations*: Aristides' negotiation of the relationship between prose and poetry; and his engagement with the political reality of the time. That this book sits as it does at the intersection of rhetoric and lyric is a direct reflection of how closely the two media of prose and poetry interact in Aristides' texts. In fact, Aristides has long featured in discussions of the ancient poetry/prose polarity thanks to some apparently hard-line statements on the precedence, chronological as well as in terms of value, of prose over poetry, made in one of his prose hymns (*Or*. 45, *To Sarapis*; see works cited in §3.2). No matter how polemically competitive his stance may be (presented), however, the fact that both within and beyond *Or*. 45 Aristides' prose continuously draws on and repurposes poetry through his use of lyric poems, figures, imagery and even metrical endings points to a sophisticated intermediality calling for closer, more sustained exploration. Where the prosaic and poetic strains of imperial Greek literature have usually been treated as polar opposites, with nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholarship emphasising the alleged dominion of prose, and a more recent, paradigm-shifting trend which has foregrounded the rich world(s) of imperial Greek poetry, Aristides' works require that we pay special attention to the constant and constantly re-negotiated interaction between prose and poetry.[36]

At the same time, zooming in on the song traditions appropriated and manipulated by Aristides opens up a new avenue for a re-evaluation of this sophist's relationship with imperial politics. As deeply enmeshed in the socio-political life of different groups and communities, once evoked specific lyric subgenres and forms, such as choral performances or epinician poetry, activated distinctive political meanings and implications. This access to political discourses as filtered through lyric reception is all the more consequential when dealing with an author like Aristides. Unlike other imperial writers such as Dio or Lucian, only rarely and patchily has Aristides' corpus attracted attention for its political dimension, with the sophist's stance towards imperial rule receiving partial and conflicting treatments. On the one hand, the apparent absence of explicit political statements in the *Orations*, Aristides' repeated (and successful) attempts to avoid

[36] Although Aristides' reception centres on *ancient* lyric tradition, the issue is enriched and complicated by ongoing lyric production and performance, including, first and foremost, Aristides' own composition and sponsorship of sacred choral songs: cf. §§2.3.2, 3.4.

administrative responsibilities (see his own account in *HL* 4.71–108) and his praise of the highly efficient imperial system established by Rome in *Or*. 26 have all brought some to conclude that Aristides had little to no issue with, nor indeed interest in discussing, the Roman system of rule; he accepted the status quo, enjoyed the benefits it guaranteed to members of the Greek elite like him and focused on his own rhetorical activity and religious interests. At the beginning of a study on Aristides' 'political ideas', for example, Stephen Stertz still pointed out that Aristides 'has, not entirely without justification, been thought of as lacking in profundity and not to be taken seriously as a political theorist';[37] while, according to Simon Swain, 'it is clear that he favoured the Roman system as it existed in practice in a way which is untrue of both Plutarch and Dio. There is only a very slight trace of any resignation about the Greek cities' dependency on Rome. . . . When he praises Roman peace and urbanisation, he meant it.'[38] On the other hand, more recent studies have approached the issue of Aristides' apparent political silence from the opposite angle: according to an interpretative line led by Pernot, it is precisely Aristides' omissions that can reveal his 'encrypted' political message, one far less supportive of Rome than it has usually been assumed; it is only by interpreting such 'eloquent silences' and apparently marginal remarks as instances of figured speech, which conveys political views safely in veiled terms, that we can gain access to Aristides' 'disenchanted attitude' and 'ambivalent feelings' towards Rome.[39]

This development is a welcome move towards a much-needed problematisation of Aristides' political dimension; but it also presents issues, some of which it shares with the opposite interpretation of Aristides as totally at ease with the Empire. The rhetorical nature of this literary form and the political circumstances in which it was produced undoubtedly require that we are alert to striking silences and peculiar remarks which may carry deeper though implicit or concealed meanings about the current state of affairs for Greeks under Rome (for an example of such a reading in my own analysis, see §4.3). At the same time, however, an excessive focus on identifying and decoding hidden meanings increases the risk of over- or misinterpretation, as may have been the case with some readings of the representation of Rome in *Or*. 26 (see §6.4). Furthermore, and more importantly, both scholars

[37] Stertz (1994): 1248. [38] Swain (1996): 260; see also 254–97.

[39] Pernot (2008); cf. Pernot (2021). Other discussions in line with this approach include Bowie (2013) and Jarratt (2016).

arguing for Aristides' untroubled acceptance of Rome like Swain and those who agree with Pernot's argument for figured speech as a way to unearth Aristides' political ambivalence have framed their analyses as attempts to get access to the sophist's 'true' political views. Yet, even more difficult to pin down than authorial intentions, personal political attitudes and feelings are ultimately inaccessible to audiences and readers, especially in texts such as Second Sophistic orations and essays, underpinned as these are by painstaking self-construction and positioning; as stressed by Whitmarsh, 'to identify an author's views on Rome from a text risks an arbitrary foreclosure of meaning'.[40] Even imperial Greek authors traditionally considered more politically vocal have now been interpreted through the lens of political self-positioning rather than of defined, and definable, allegiances.[41] Also as a consequence of the limited scholarly interest in Aristides' political dimension, though, this shift in approach has not yet reached the *Orations*. Exploring Aristides' (re-)uses of lyric traditions provides us with a new framework to reconsider how and why, precisely through poetry and song, Aristides represented, and as such negotiated, his own position as well as that of different imperial communities in relation to the ruling power of Rome. This line of enquiry has the potential to bring out the political watermark underlying Aristides' corpus: not just his treatment of political themes in texts explicitly linked to Rome like *Or*. 26, but the power discourses underpinning his self-fashioning and construction of (lyric) tradition in other texts, apparently less relevant to imperial politics (Part II). What will emerge is a more complex and nuanced picture than usually acknowledged: one that combines contextual pragmatism and elitist values with a treatment of contemporary affairs which is neither unconditionally celebratory of nor covertly resistant to Rome, but strategically open to ambiguity and to different interpretations from different, Greek or Roman, perspectives.[42]

[40] Whitmarsh (2001): 3; cf. Akujärvi (2005): 265: 'searching the *Periegesis* for evidence regarding the attitude or the opinion of Pausanias vis-à-vis the Romans is to look in the text for an answer that it cannot give'.

[41] On Dio see e.g. Whitmarsh (2001): 156–67; 181–216; Jackson (2017).

[42] For this reason, although I am fully aware that 'resistance' could, and can, take diverse and more nuanced forms than outright hostility (cf. e.g. the definition given by Alcock (1997): 111: 'continual processes of self-definition and cultural separation'), throughout the book I have not usually felt the need to apply this precise term to Aristides' self-positioning. For strategies of 'resistance' under Rome, see also Jolowicz and Elsner (2023); on the issues and cultural implications of the term, see esp. Goldhill (2023). On other forms of 'resistance' (to his illnesses and as political resistance portrayed in classicising declamations) in Aristides, cf. Guast (2023): 78–80, 85–6.

0.3 Intertextuality, Allusion and Pragmatics of Reading: A Note on Methodology

This book reads Aristides' *Orations* as the site of lyric reception, as a corpus of texts, that is, where lyric tradition is (re-)constructed, appropriated and repurposed. As such, some clarification on how my reading situates itself in relation to influential models of intertextuality is in order. If we use as reference the established, though in practice far from clear-cut, divide between 'allusion' and 'intertextuality',[43] to date treatments of imperial lyric reception have concentrated on the former by detecting lyric quotations and addressing *Quellenforschung* issues, whether in Aristides or other imperial writers (§0.1). As we have discussed, this approach offers a valuable starting point to map the presence of lyric in later texts; but the rigidity of models keen on pinning down specific textual imitation does not account for other forms of interaction between the receiving text and the breadth of ancient song tradition. My treatment of 'lyric' as a broader system of elements including anecdotes, imagery, tropes and performative modes moves closer to the notion of 'intertext' as a plurality of utterances and discourses, a discursive web not limited to actual literary works.[44] With intertextual models of reading going back to Bakhtin and Kristeva, moreover, my approach shares a focus on the social and historical 'text' as the (con)text with which the texts analysed interweave; Aristides' text is an 'intertext' in itself, since it constantly interacts with the 'text' of imperial society and politics.[45]

Yet, despite these convergences, a conspicuous difference separates my reading strategy from intertextuality or, at least, from 'intertextuality' as most rigorously conceived: where the open and fluid, virtually boundless, nature of the notion of 'intertext' has prompted critics to shift attention to readers as the producers of meaning on whom the recognition and

[43] Hinds (1998); for the 'divide between "allusion" . . . and "intertext"', cf. Greensmith (2020): 41.

[44] Cf. Kristeva (1980): 36–7, with Roudiez (1980): 15; Allen (2011): 35, 71, 227; Cheney (2012): 717. Genette's taxonomy of 'transtextuality' accounts for a range of interactions, but his focus remains on literary works: Genette (1997): 1–7. Intertextual studies on classical literature have emphasised the role of topoi, tropes and generic codes, indeterminate in terms of origins and filiation but no less influential than distinct individual models: cf. Conte (1986); Hinds (1998). My discussion of some lyric figures as part of Panhellenic or local memory (esp. Chapter 2) also deploys ideas formalised more systematically by cultural memory studies: see e.g. Dinter (2023): 1–9.

[45] Cf. the notion of 'ideologeme' in Kristeva (1980): 37: 'the concept of text as ideologeme determines the very procedure of a semiotics that, by studying the text as intertextuality, considers it as such within (the text of) society and history'. On the evolution of this approach from Bakhtin to Kristeva, see Allen (2011): 35.

activation of intertexts ultimately depends, my reading does not break with, and is in fact built around, the notion of the author as (a) source of meaning. I read the *Orations* as evidence of how Aristides the author represents, and in this way constructs, his experience and place in the socio-political and cultural setting of the second-century Greek East. While access to the thoughts and intentions of the 'real Aristides' is inevitably out of the question,[46] we can reasonably attempt to interpret his works, their (declared) aims and functions, as we have them. When it comes to lyric reception more in particular, then, what I am interested in is not primarily the range of lyric intertexts which the audience and readers of Aristides could, or can, mobilise, but how Aristides utilises and (re-)constructs lyric, as these processes of appropriation and manipulation emerge from his texts.[47] Throughout the analysis, therefore, I have preferred terms such as 'reference' and 'allusion', besides the less critically profound but more straightforward 'quotation', to 'intertext' and related vocabulary.[48] Insisting on intertextual terminology would have risked giving the impression that my analysis moves away from authorial construction, or at least from any attempt to reconstruct it in a sensible way.

This does not mean that I am merely interested in Aristides' engagement with lyric texts; other instances of lyric 'presence' (another term I have found useful) like the evocation of poets and singers or the reference to lyric modes of performance will be equally central to my arguments. But I focus on references, explicit or implicit, which may be reasonably treated as made and put to particular uses by Aristides. Of course, this approach brings with itself the customary issue of the recognition, and recognisability, of allusion: how can we be sure about the presence of certain lyric elements, when they are not made explicit? To what extent are we justified in assuming Aristides' engagement with a precise lyric precedent, if his text contains

[46] Cf. Hinds (1998): 47–8: 'one of the most famous and broadly acknowledged impasses in twentieth century criticism: the ultimate *unknowability* of the poet's intention . . . the irretrievable moment of authorial production'.

[47] For comparable methodological stances, cf. Whitton (2019): 43–50; Jolowicz (2021): 28–33. Despite discussing 'intertextual readings which might have been possible for ancient audiences' of Simonides (9), Rawles (2018) has 'not striven over-hard to avoid the natural tendency to infer an author as the source of the meaning detected in a text' (12 n. 28). On the usefulness of 'think[ing] with' the notion of an 'intention-bearing author', without excluding the presence of shared discourses as relevant intertexts, see the often-cited discussion by Hinds (1998), esp. 47–51 (50).

[48] I do not assume a substantial difference between 'allusion' and 'reference'; cf. Thomas (1986) with Hinds (1998): 21–5. As I use it, a 'reference' may concern a lyric text as well as other lyric elements and may be made explicitly or implicitly; as for 'allusion', I treat it as implicit and predominantly, though not exclusively, textual.

a mythological narrative first found in a lyric poem? Is a single verbal correspondence too little to argue for a deliberate allusion? In my discussions, I have resorted to established interpretative strategies, for example by taking into account whether other features besides verbal contacts (e.g. general content, syntax) may bring the two texts in question closer; whether an exclusive link may be postulated between the two texts as far as we can see from our (partial) access to ancient literature; and whether other instances of evident or potential contact (quotation, allusion, broader similarity) in other Aristidean texts may support the idea that he engaged with a precise lyric source.[49] As is to be expected, the allusions I identify and interpret allow for varying degrees of confidence; even in the case of allusions proposed more experimentally, however, these too will appear to fit trends of self-presentation and the appropriation of lyric distinctive to Aristides.

Intertwined with these considerations, and indeed underpinning them throughout, is my approach to Aristides as a reader, and writer, situated within different interpretative communities. In what forms and settings would Aristides have come in contact with lyric texts and figures? What experiences of lyric, how similar to or different from his, may his audiences have had, and with what differentiations in terms of their sociocultural status? These are some of the issues I examine in my discussion of the presence of lyric in imperial culture (Part I), before moving to explore the apparent aims and possible results of the use of specific lyric models in specific contexts, for example when Aristides was advertising his rhetoric or praising Athens (Part II). Far from being concerned exclusively with the author's perspective, therefore, my analysis will also take into account, case by case, the pragmatics of Aristides' engagement with lyric: that is, in particular, the use or lack of markers to signal lyric references in the *Orations*, and the significance of such choices for the understanding of audience and readers. Alongside unmarked quotations or allusions, the recourse to poets' names or hints about their identity would sometimes reveal Aristides' lyric sources to members of the audience and readers who, despite their elite status and *paideia*, did not share his familiarity with lyric authors. Again, in other circumstances the continued local relevance of certain poems and traditions may have guaranteed some level of recognisability even to lyric elements which Aristides has left completely undeclared.

[49] Cf. Whitton (2019): 44, who refers to 'exclusive resemblance in thought and expression' and 'accumulation, both locally . . . and globally'; cf. also Jolowicz (2021): 30.

0.4 Structure

This book is divided into two parts – one focusing on lyric as it may have been experienced in imperial culture more broadly and the other zooming in on the case of Aristides' lyric appropriation – which may be approached separately by readers, if they so choose. This division is, however, purely artificial, because the same key themes and dynamics underlie both discussions. The picture drawn in Part I is the necessary background to understand how lyric poetry, figures and traditions are deployed in the *Orations*, while Part II complements and adds depth to the general overview by exposing the workings of Aristides' extensive, and as such in a way unique, engagement with lyric.

There are two strands to Part I. Chapter 1 approaches the imperial presence of lyric in the form of the textual tradition of the nine canonical poets established by Alexandrian scholarship, reviewing the evidence for the circulation of archaic and classical lyric texts among students of literature and readers from the late Hellenistic period onwards. The picture emerging demonstrates the refined place of lyric poetry in relation to mainstream imperial *paideia*. It also shows that by the imperial period the reception of lyric subgenres and poets had taken the form of a crystallised system of voices, where each author activated distinctive thematic, ethnical, ethical and aesthetic associations. The association of individual poets with precise features, values and locales, however, was active beyond textual circulation. This is shown in Chapter 2, where the reconstruction of the imperial afterlife of lyric shifts to material evidence, such as portraits of lyric poets, and to legends about real or mythical singers which lived on in the Greek collective memory, especially locally. Together with ongoing (re-)performances, these lyric manifestations give us a glimpse into the wider circulation of lyric icons, potentially even beyond elite circles. More importantly, they all account for the continued cultural and political purchase of song and music under Rome.

With the remaining chapters, the analysis delves into Aristides' own lyric reception. The discussion, centred either on selected *Orations* or on single texts, starts with the selected lyric traits of the sophist's persona (Chapter 3), progresses to consider his deployment of lyric when dealing with the (self-)image and political affairs of two somewhat-peculiar Greek communities, Corinth and Rhodes (Chapters 4–5) and ends on the very issue of imperialism, with Aristides' lyric representation of Athens and Rome as ancient centres of imperial power (Chapter 6). This progression

goes hand in hand with the gradually expanding range of lyric elements considered, from Aristides' engagement with specific lyric texts to his mobilisation of musical notions. Despite these internal trajectories, however, the book is underpinned by some key strains, which have shaped my analysis and arguments throughout: the (re-)construction of literary tradition for self-fashioning purposes and the negotiation of the poetry/prose divide, the continuous processes of identity (re-)shaping taking place among imperial Greek communities and the dynamics of imperial Roman power as navigated by Greek subjects.