

WHERE WAS THE METROON ON DELOS?

Perhaps the title of this paper is a little strong: there was a Metroon, a temple of the Mother of the Gods, on Delos and we can locate it with some certainty; the question is whether or not that Metroon was also used for the storage of "Public documents, as in Athens".¹

This is a problem which has not been fully examined before and the evidence seems to indicate that the temple and the archives were not housed in the same building, as has been assumed. I have tried to collect all evidence available which deals with the Metroon both as temple and as archives. Most of this is epigraphical and, as such, is incomplete and fragmentary. The architectural remains are of some help but only in a negative way, as will be seen below.

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The political history of Delos is generally divided into three periods: the first Athenian domination (700 - 514), the period of independence (514 - 478/77), the second Athenian domination (478/77 - 336).²

1. I became interested in the Delian Metroon while studying the Hellenistic Metroon in Athens. I should like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Homer Thompson, director of the Agora excavations, for his kindness in discussing the Hellenistic Agora with me. All dates in this paper are B.C. Certain abbreviations will be used: SCA - P. Roussel; Delos, *Colonia atheniense*, Paris, 1913; CE - P. Roussel, *Les Cultes Égyptiens à Delos*, Paris, 1920; Vallois - R. Vallois, *L'Architecture de Delos*, Paris, 1925; Hesp. VI - H. Thompson, "Buildings on the West Side of the Agora", *Hesperia* VI (1937) 1-225.

2. For a brief but adequate account of Delian history, cf. A. J. Lesquier, *A History of Delos*, Oxford, 1903.

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Perhaps the title of this paper is misleading: there was a Metroon, a temple of the Mother of the Gods, on Delos and we can locate it with some certainty; the question is whether or not that Metroon was also used for the storage of public documents, as in Athens¹. This is a problem which has not been fully examined before and the evidence seems to indicate that the temple and the archives were not housed in the same building, as has been assumed. I have tried to collect all evidence available which deals with the Metroon both as temple and as archives. Most of this is epigraphical and, as such, is incomplete and fragmentary. The architectural remains are of some help but mostly in a negative way, as will be seen below.

The political history of Delos is generally divided into three periods: the first Athenian domination (? - 314), the period of independence (314 - 167/6), the second Athenian domination (167/6 - 88)².

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DCA - P. Roussel, Délos, Colonie Athénienne, Paris, 1916.
CE - P. Roussel, Les Cultes Egyptiens a Delos, Paris, 1915-16.
Vallois - R. Vallois, L'Architecture Hellénique et Hellénistique a Délos, I, Les Monuments, Paris, 1944.
Hesp. VI - H. Thompson, "Buildings on the West Side of the Agora", Hesperia VI (1937) 1-226.
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For the period before 314, there is no material at all dealing with the Metroon¹. The inscriptions which concern our problem from the period of independence are very few and only mention the Metroon as a temple. It is with the last period that this paper is chiefly concerned. Only after 167/6 does the Metroon appear as a place of deposit for public records and this fact is obviously connected with the establishment of an Athenian cleruchy on Delos. Hence, the epigraphical evidence is very unevenly distributed over these three periods; this is partly chance, of course, but it can be used to reinforce certain conclusions about the Metroon.

We may begin with an indisputable fact: there was a Metroon, the temple of the Mother of the Gods, on Delos. It is first mentioned in an account of the hieropoei of the year 208, ID 365, 1.2:

-Υ ΤΟΥ ΜΗΤΡΩΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ὈΡΤΥΓΙΑΣ ΧΟΪΡΟΣ ΚΑΙ -

The beginning of the text is mutilated; the context, however, suggests

1. The publication history of the Delian inscriptions is very involved. They were originally included in Inscriptiones Graecae, vol. XI: nos. 105-289 (the period of independence: table of archons and accounts of the hieropoei, 314-250) in fasc. 2, edited by F. Durrbach and published in 1912; nos. 510-1348 (the period of independence: decrees, dedications, etc.) in fasc. 4, edited by P. Roussel and published in 1914. After the first World War, the French began their own series, Inscriptions de Delos (abbreviated ID) but continued the numbering of IG XI. Thus ID, nos. 290-371 (accounts of the hieropoei, 250-166, continuing IG XI.2) edited by Durrbach and published in 1926; nos. 372-509 (accounts of the hieropoei, 250-166, continued from previous volume; laws, contracts, etc. from period of independence) edited by Durrbach and published in 1929. (Illustrations of some of these were published by H. von Gaertringen in 1927 in IG XI, fasc. 3). And ID, nos. 1400-1496 (temple accounts and various items after 166) edited by Durrbach and Roussel and published in 1935; nos. 1497-2219 (decrees and dedications after 166) edited by Roussel and

that this section deals with some purificatory rites¹. It is only after 167/6 that the Metroon is again found in temple accounts: ID 1416, A, I, ll. 1 and 32-5 (157/6); 1417, B, I, ll. 33-36 (156/5); 1442, A, ll. 16-17 (146/5 or 145/4); 1452, A, ll. 28-9 (after 145/4)².

There can be no doubt from these inscriptions that the Metroon is located near the sanctuary of the Egyptian gods on the slopes of Mt. Kynthos. The formula is similar in all three accounts; following the inventory of the offerings in the temples of Isis and Anoubis are the words: *καὶ τὰδε λίθινα ἔκτος τοῦ δρομοῦ· ἑωιδίριον δύο πρὸς τῷ μητρολίῳ ἀεπίγραφον*. Roussel (DCA, 45, n. 6) at first wanted to identify the Metroon with the building near the Seralpseion C which was later positively identified as the Heraion. Vallois

M. Launey and published in 1937; nos. 2220-2879 (dedications, continued from the previous volume; and various lists and texts after 166) edited by Roussel and Launey and published in 1937. In 1950, ID, nos. 1-88 (periods of Ionian and Attic-Delian amphictyones: dedications, decrees, etc.) was published, edited by A. Plassart. In the preface to that fascicule, the publication of the remaining early inscriptions (period of the Athenian amphictyony) is promised, under the editorship of J. Coupry. Perhaps these will reveal new information about the early history of the Metroon.

1. Cf. commentary on ID 365 and Vallois, p. 87. The sanctuary of Ortygia is mentioned in other inscriptions but has not yet been located.
2. The Metroon is not expressly mentioned in ID 1452 but the list is clearly the same as in the other accounts. The entire inventory is abbreviated.

has conducted the most recent archaeological investigations; he would have the so-called Temple C in the Serapieion be the Metroon¹. Temple C is located at the end of the dromos leading from the main sanctuary; it is a small, prostyle structure of granite. Its oblique position in relation to the dromos indicates that it is an old building and antedates the construction of the dromos, already existing in 160 (ID 1417, B, I, l. 22). There are other remains around Temple C which are apparently connected with it and Vallois identifies the escharon mentioned in inscriptions as near the Metroon. The temple itself is small and stands alone; there are no other structures closely associated with it. Although no proof has so far been found which absolutely identifies Temple C as the Metroon, this attribution is relatively certain. It is in the right place and it has the plan of a temple with pronaos and cella.²

1. For a plan, cf. CE, pl. III and *Η. ΚΟΥΒΕΛΟΥΤΟΣ, Ὁδηγὸς τῆς Αἴδος* Athens, 1950, p. 122. More correctly, Vallois calls Temple C the οἶκος ὁ πρὸς τῷ Ἐσχαρῶνι of ID 440, A, l. 12 and τὸ Μητρῶον the name of the ἴερον of ID 1416, A, I, l. 35. For the purposes of this paper it is only necessary to have a building connected with the Metroon, no matter what the name given to it. I should like to say here, however, that I do not completely follow Vallois' argument. The οἶκος ὁ πρὸς τῷ Ἐσχαρῶνι is mentioned only once, between 190-180, not in an inventory of offerings but in connection with certain expenditures of buildings; nor is it provable that the οἶκος is in the Serapieion C. But the application of the name τὸ Μητρῶον to a ἴερον and not a building has a parallel in Athens: there is no mention in ancient authors of a γῆος in connection with the cult place of the Mother (Hesp. VI, p. 206). And Ortygia, mentioned with the Metroon in ID 365 is apparently the name of a place, not a temple (Vallois, p. 79, n. 2).

2. Cf. the early temple of the Mother and the temple proper of the Hellenistic Metroon in Athens (the second room from the south) * Hesp. VI, pp. 135-40 and H. Thompson, *Hesperia Supplement IV* (1940) addenda v.

On Delos, as in other places, the Mother was closely associated with Isis¹. A double image of the Mother (τὸ ἄγαλμα ... Μητέρας Θεῶν δύο) stood in the temple of Serapis along with images of Isis and Anubis (ID 1416, A, I, 1. 1; 1417, A, II, 1, 158; 1452, A, 1. 4).

Certain small reliefs found in Attica give us us some idea of how this double image may have looked. These show two Cybeles seated on thrones side by side in a temple-like structure and holding a patera in one hand and a tympanum in the other².

Two private dedications from the Serapieion C area identify Isis as the Mother of the Gods. The first dates from the end of the period of independence (IG XI.4, 1234):

κατὰ πρόσταγμα Ὀσειρίδας
Διὶ τῶν πάντων κρατοῦντι
καὶ Μητρὶ Μεγάλῃ τῆς πάντων
κρατοῦσῃ Ἀριστοκύδης Δημ.·
ρήτου καὶ Αἰτέμων Πυθίου.

The Μεγάλῃ Μητῆρ of line 3 is Isis in her capacity as Mother of the Gods and Ruler of the Universe. In 130/29 a certain Dionysios dedicated a base to Ἴσιδι Μητρὶ Θεῶν Ἀσ[τ]άρτη (ID 2101). In Egypt, also, Isis was called Μητῆρ Θεῶν, and in general she assumed the functions of the Great Mother Goddess.³

1. Isis was also identified with Demeter. Cf. IG XI.4, 1235; ID 2475 - dedications to Demeter from the Serapieion C area. For a discussion of the association of Demeter and Isis, cf. CE, p. 200, and references there.

2. One from the west slope of the Acropolis: Schrader, Ath. Mitt. 21 (1896) 280. From Attica: Conze, Arch. Zeit. 38 (1880) 3, pl. 2 no. 1. From Piraeus: Deltion 1888, 38. For other illustrations, cf. Friedrichs and Wolters, Die Gipsabgüsse Antiker Bildwerker (Royal Museum of Berlin) 1133, and Svoronos, τὸ ἐν Ἀθῆναις Ἐθνικὸν Μουσεῖον, pl. CXVIII, nos. 1921 and 1540. Also cf. CE, p. 228.

3. cf. CE, pp. 112, 132 and addenda, p. 295 where he notices that the epithet Παντοκράτειρα is given to Isis in a papyrus from Egypt.

There is only one private dedication from Delos to the Mother alone. This is IG XI.4, 1293, dated sometime in the 3rd century: **Ἀναξαρτέτη**

Τιμησὸν δήμου Μητρί Θεῶν. This was found in the theatre of the sanctuary of the Syrian gods. Atargatis was also assimilated with the Mother of the Gods, but in view of the proximity of the Syrian sanctuary to the Serapieion, it is possible that this dedication was originally set up in the Metroon.

The temple accounts which mention the Metroon do not give an inventory of objects within the building. ID 1417, B. I, ll. 33-6:

καὶ τὰδε [λίθιν]α ἔκτοσθε τοῦ δρομοῦ · σφιδάριε δύο πρὸς τῷ μητρῴδι // ἀγυπύραρον · ἄλλο παιδικὸν δεξιᾶς εἰσιόγτων, ἀνάθεμα Σώτ[α] · τύπ[λον, ἄρισ] // τεράς εἰσιόγτων, ἐν τῷ τοίχῳ καὶ θυμιατήριον χαλκοῦν, ἀνάθεμα Αἰσχύλου // Ἀθηναίου · καὶ τὰδε ἐκ τοῦ δρομοῦ ...

Is it possible to conclude that there were no offerings or so few that they were not inventoried, i.e. that the Metroon was a poor sanctuary and was overshadowed by the temples and offerings of the Egyptian gods?

To sum up the information about the temple of the Mother: it is a small temple in the Serapieion C, and it is not an independent sanctuary in so far as it has no other buildings exclusively associated with it. There was a very close connection between Isis and the Mother. Isis was worshipped near the location of the later Serapieion C as early as the beginning of the 3rd century and an Isieion was probably located here by 220¹. It is suggested that the presence of an Isieion and a Metroon led to the building of the temple of Serapis here and the consequent development and enlargement of the sanctuary. The **Μητὴρ Θεῶν**, however, gradually lost her importance (was she important here before?)

1. Vallois, pp. 95-6.

so that by the middle of the 2nd century she had few offerings and most of her dedications were in the dual form Isis-Mother of the Gods. In fact she is no longer the Greek *Μητρίε Δεῖω* but the alien goddess, Isis. The total impression, by mid- 2nd century, is of a sanctuary neither wealthy nor elaborate, situated in a remote region and closely associated with Isis and the Egyptian gods.

The evidence for the existence of a Delian Metroon for archives is all epigraphical. One fact is clear: public documents and contracts were only deposited in the Metroon after 167/6, i.e. after the establishment of the Athenian cleruchy. The organization of the cleruchy was similar to that of the mother city, with a boule and ekklesia, and Athens exercised a strict control over Delos in the early years. Decrees of the Delian assembly had to be ratified by the Athenian ekklesia; certain magistrates were appointed from Athens¹. It seems reasonable to suppose that in her reorganization of the island, Athens should also establish the procedure of using the Metroon as the repository for archives. It is a curious fact that Athens is the only city in which the Mother of the Gods is the protectress of the public records. This was originally due to location and convenience but by the 2nd century the Mother's guardianship of the state archives was firmly established in Athens. (In fact, shortly after the establishment

1. For a discussion of the organization of the Athenian cleruchy, cf. Laidlaw, Delos, 169-200 and W. Ferguson, Hellenistic Athens, London, 1911, 346-415.

2. Cf. Hesp. VI, pp. 205-6. I am informed that the modern Greek word for archives or register is *μῆτρῶον*.

of the cleruchy on Delos, the monumental Hellenistic Metroon was built.) The use of a Metroon as archives by the Athenians on Delos was sanctioned and in fact encouraged by the practice of the mother city.

All of the evidence for the Metroon as archives dates from ca. 156/5 to 145/4. The upper limit will be discussed later, in connection with the individual inscriptions. Curiously, the lower limit of 145/4 coincides with the last known decree passed by the cleruchs¹. It may be surmised that the practice of using the Metroon as archives ceased with the "disappearance" of the Athenian cleruchy, just as it was introduced when the cleruchy was established².

There are three inscriptions which specify that public officials are to deposit their accounts in the Metroon after their year of office is over³. These all fall within the years ca. 150-145/4. Other decrees which mention the rendering of accounts do not specify any other place

1. DCA, p. 27; although Ferguson, *Klio* 7 (1907) 236-240 would date the last decree to 131/0. Notice that the first instance of the new government of all the residents, Athenians and others, dates from 126/5.
2. Again new finds may invalidate this assumption. But Roussel, DCA, p. 27, in discussing the decrees of the cleruchs, all before 145/4, and the dedications and catalogues of the 'mixed' government of ca. 130 to 88, says, "M. Homolle, avait déjà observé ce fait; les découvertes nouvelles n'ont pas modifié la proportion suivant laquelle les textes de ces deux catégories doivent être classés chronologiquement."
3. Just as Athenian magistrates did: e.g. IG II-III² 840, l. 25; 956, l. 21; 1013, l. 52 and other references collected in FW, sv. Metroon.

1. For a discussion of temple law, see during the period of the dependence and of Athenian domination, cf. *Antiquities of the Jews*, vol. 1, "The Temple" in An Epitome of Jewish History, ed. by J. H. W. G. Millar, 1924, pp. 350-79.

of deposit; e.g. ID 1504, ll. 28-0, in honor of the gymnasiarch Georgias (148/7) only says: ... *κατεβάλετο δὲ καὶ τοὺς λόγους τοῖς νόμοις ἀ-//κο] λούθως ...*

ID 1500 is a fragmentary decree of the year of Zaleukos (ca. 150), concerning the agoranomoi. This is a crucial inscription and a full discussion of it will be deferred until later; now it is sufficient to notice lines 19-20: ... *καὶ] λό] γους κατε[βά] ογτο ἐν τοῖς κα[θη-]//[κ]ουσι]ν κ[ι]ρό]νους [εἰς τὸ ἐν Δήλῳ Μη]τ[ρ]ῶνιον [καὶ εἰς τὸ ἐν Ἀθήναις ...*

ID 1505 is a fragmentary decree of the cleruchs in honor of the agoranomoi during the archonship of Archon, 148/7 or 147/6. The relevant part is lines 6-8: ... *τοὺς]// τε λόγους πάντων τῶν χειρ[ι]σθ[έ]ων]των ὑφ' ἐαυτῶν ἐν τῷ τῆς ἀρχῆς χρόνῳ]// κατεβάλετο εἰς τὸ Μητρώνιον ἀκολούθως τοῖς νόμοις ...*

ID 1507 is a fragmentary decree in honor of οἱ ἐπιμεληταὶ τοῦ ἐμπορίου of the year of Metrophanes, 146/5 or 145/4. Lines 8-10 read: *τοὺς τε λόγους πάντων τῶν οἰκονομημένων ἐν]// [τῷ] τῆς ἀρχῆς χρόνῳ κατεβάλετο τοῖς νόμοις ἀκολούθως εἰς τὸ]//[μ]ητρώνιον ...*

The Metroon also became the depositing place for loan contracts after 167/6¹. During the period of independence, the contractual procedure for borrowing money from the temple treasures was comparatively simple. The borrower would have one or more guarantors and the *συγγραφή* would be placed in the hands of a third person. In the accounts of hieropoei, there are at least 17 cases in which the "depositaire" (sometimes one or more than one) is mentioned by name; these men are

1. For a discussion of temple loans, both during the period of independence and of Athenian domination, cf. Larsen, J.A.O. "Roman Greece" in An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome, IV, Baltimore, 1938, pp. 368-79.

all private individuals¹. After the establishment of the Athenian cleruchy the procedure was changed and regularized. It is described in detail in the temple accounts of the years of Anthesterios and Kallistratos, 157/6 and 156/5 (ID 1416, B, I, ll. 68 ff). Loans were now made for five years with the borrower providing guarantors; the **συγγραφή** was made in the presence of witnesses. No longer was the contract given into the keeping of a third person; in ID 1416 the **ἔφραγισμένη συγγραφή** was deposited with two bankers, Demon and Kleandros².

But this procedure was apparently found to be unsatisfactory, for in the following year the contract was placed in the Metroon.

ID 1419 is a very fragmentary account of the Athenian administrators of the temple treasures; "le document parait dater à peu près de la même époque que 1417 (i.e. 156/5)." The crucial lines are 13-14 (with

restorations made almost certain from lines 11 and 20): [...κατὰ **συγγραφήν**] // [τή]ν κίμεντην ἐν τῷ Μητροῶνι ἧς ...

1. These are IG XI.2, 203, 11.74-5(269 B.C.); 287 (250 B.C.) 11. 126-131; ID 290 (246 B.C.) 11. 130-6; 299 (240 B.C.) 11. 187, 190, 192-93, 195; 342 (ca. 229 B.C.), 11. 4, 6, 9-10; 354 (218 B.C.) 1. 15; 362 (209 B.C.) 11. 2, 4, 6, 8, 13; 363 (209 B.C.) 11. 40, 48; 365 (208 B.C.) 11. 10, 12, 17-8, 19, 20-1, 22-4; 372(200 B.C.) 1. 9; 396 (194 B.C.) A, 11. 44, 48, 51, 55, 58, 62; 406 (ca. 190 B.C.) passim; 407 (ca. 190 B.C.) 1. 38; 442 (179 B.C.) A, 1. 179, B, 11. 212-3, 216, 218-9; 449 (175 B.C.) 11. 14-5, 18-9, 22-3, 29-30, 35, 38-9, 40-41, 46; 458 (ca. 172 B.C.), 1. 32; 462 (ca. 170 B.C.) 11. 4-5, 24, 30-1.

2. This is the only time that the **συγγραφή** is mentioned as sealed. For bankers and banking on Delos, cf. Larsen, Roman Greece, 357-61. It is impossible to identify Demon and Kleandros; Larsen thinks they may have been Greeks of Greece proper. Perhaps from Athens??

1. Cf. the placing of wills in the Athenian Metroon, Diogenes Laertius 5, 107.

καὶ ἰστορίας ἐπὶ τοῖς Μετροῦσι Δημοσίου

The purpose of this was surely full publication of loan contracts; what better place than in the archives building?¹

For the inclusion of loan contracts in the public archives, the terminus post quem is established by ID 1416 and 1419. The earliest extant inscription dealing with the *λόγοι* of officials is dated ca. 150, i.e. after the introduction of the new procedure for loan contracts. Perhaps the practice of using the Metroon as archives was only instituted some years after the arrival of the Athenian cleruchs, when it was seen that such a central archives building was needed.

There can be now question then that loan contracts and the accounts of public officials after their year of office were to be deposited *ἐν τῷ Μετροῦσι*. That the Metroon was not the one in Athens but was actually located on the island of Delos can be

shown from ID 1500. In line 19 Roussel has restored: *[εἰς τὸ ἐν Ἀγλαῖ Μετ]τ[ρ]ῶσι[ον] [καὶ] εἰς τὸ ἐν Ἀθηναῖς*

In DCA, p. 44 n. 8, he explains: "La restitution que je propose paraît nécessaire; après Ἀθηναῖς il n'y a place que pour trois lettres et c'est une phrase nouvelle qui commence par ces verbe que je n'ai su compléter." This restoration seems assured and proves that a set of public records were kept on Delos; copies of them were sent to the Athenian Metroon.

Another fragmentary inscription may lend support, although its meaning is still very doubtful. In the temple accounts of the year 146/5 or 145/4 (ID 1442), in a section dealing with the transmission of sums from various places, is the phrase (b, l. 75):

1. Cf. the placing of wills in the Athenian Metroon, i. e. Epicurus', Diogenes Laertes X, 16.

καθολογιστάμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ Μητρώου Δημοτέλης και...

These officials are not mentioned elsewhere. They could be religious, although in the context and in view of the subordinate position of the temple of the Mother at this time, I think that improbable. The other explanation, that they are secular officials in charge of the archives, is perhaps more plausible; in this same section, there is mention of money received from bankers and these officials of the Metroon may have been included because of their general supervision of loan contracts. But this cannot be corroborated, either from other Delian inscriptions or from the practice in Athens.

Thus we have in Delos a Metroon as temple of the Mother of the Gods and a Metroon as archives. Are they one and the same building? Roussel implies that they are and Vallois follows him². That building is the Metroon in the Serapieion C. Yet there seems to me to be several factors which would argue against such an assumption. One is the

1. A δημόσιος was in charge of the archives in Athens, but he is never spoken of as καθολογιστάμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ Μητρώου cf. Demos. de falsa legatione, 129.
2. DCA, p. 45: "... il (le Metroon) servait, ainsi qu'à Athènes, d'archives publiques. Si l'on n'a pu déterminer l'emplacement de cet édifice, du moins est-il assuré qu'il était situé non loin des sanctuaires égyptiens." Yet cf. his (or Durrbach's) commentary on ID 1417, B, I, l. 33: "πρὸς τῷ Μητρώῳ. S'agit il du sanctuaire qui servait d'archives publiques ... ou d'une chapelle dans le sanctuaire égyptien même." Vallois, p. 87: "Au milieu du IIème siècle l'existence d'un temple ou d'un oikos est assurée: on y déposait des pièces comptable et des contrats." The context shows that he is thinking of the Serapieion C Metroon.

isolated position of the Serapieion C Metroon, on the slopes of Mt. Kynthos and far from the civic buildings and commercial centre of Delos.

The temple of the Mother is located in a sanctuary of foreign gods and occupies a subordinate position in that sanctuary. The building itself is small, with no extra rooms intimately connected with it, as in Athens.

There is no evidence to show that the Metroon in the Serapieion was used for the storage of public documents and probability is against it.

The primary function of an archives building is to provide a convenient and accessible place for the storage and exhibition of public documents¹.

I find it hard to believe that a Metroon such as that in the Serapieion would meet these requirements.

Where then should we look for the Metroon? When the Athenian cleruchs arrived, they wanted to house their public documents in a Metroon as in Athens, but they found the existing one inadequate. It is obvious that the depository of public records ought to be located near the other civic buildings, and I would suggest that we should look for it somewhere near the hieron of Apollo and the agora. This is a very tentative theory and has no archaeological or epigraphical support now; as far as is known now the only Metroon on Delos both before and after 167/6 is that in the Serapieion. We would then have to assume that the Athenians could arbitrarily create a new sanctuary of the Mother; or by that time perhaps the name Metroon could be applied to the archives building alone

1. Cf. Thompson's remark when discussing the Athenian Metroon, Hesp. VI, p. 206: "The public records were naturally kept as close as possible to the seat of the executive body." Surely this would also be the case on Delos.

without regard to its original religious meaning¹.

A large and complex building is not really demanded; probably the records were no longer stored in the Metroon after the dissolution of the cleruchy. One possibility is that it was located near the bouleuterion. A building in the hieron of Apollo has been tentatively identified as the meeting place of the boule, although it has not been fully published and there is still considerable doubt about it.² It is suggested by McDonald that one of the rooms may have been used for the archives, since we know from inscriptions that copies of official documents were deposited in the bouleuterion. Here we may note a curious fact: in many of the decrees dating from the period of independence, the proviso is often added that the decree be recorded *εἰς τὸ βουλευτήριον*

1. This is extremely tentative. Perhaps all that was needed was a cult statue and an altar; in Athens, only the statue is mentioned in ancient authors, not a *ναός* (cf. supra p. 4 n.1). The new Hellenistic Metroon had a room reserved for the goddess, but notice its position and size (between the two rooms reserved for archives), especially in comparison with the large north room, which I think is some sort of "reading room" - i.e. where the documents would be brought out for perusal, on the analogy of libraries. The whole plan of the Hellenistic Metroon suggests to me that the storing of archives had become more important than the worship of the Mother. Religious feeling demanded that she have some place of worship in the new building, but her religious role of Mother of the Gods was overshadowed by her functions as protectress of the archives.
2. McDonald, W., Political Meeting Places of the Greeks, Baltimore, 1943, pp. 182-4 discusses this building in detail and has a plan, pl. IX, fig. 12. He notes that the Guide Bleu for 1935 (p. 509) shows it right next to the prytaneion and calls it bouleuterion, query: "... un monument archaïque avec lignes de piliers intérieurs (peut-être le bouleuterion? ...); but the 1953 edition omits the parentheses. The Greek guide to Delos, published in 1950 follows the 1935 edition, in speaking of τὸ βουλευτήριον; Vallois, p. 25, in 1944 calls it *édifice Δ*, refuses to identify it positively but also suggest it may be a bouleuterion.

(probably on papyrus) and, on a stele, *εἰς τὸ ἱερόν*¹. Yet in the decrees passed after 167/6 (ID 1497-1524) this formula does not occur at all; the customary wording is *ἀναγράψαι δὲ τῶδε τὸ νόμισμα εἰς στήλην λιθίνην καὶ στήσαι ἐν*². It may be possible that the section of the bouleuterion which was reserved for the archives before 167/6 became the Metroon of the Athenian cleruchy. Of course this is negative evidence; the number of post 167/6 decrees preserved is relatively small and there is not word about copies being deposited in any building.

On the other hand, the Metroon may have been situated somewhere near the Thesmophorion in the hieron of Apollo, for the Mother and Demeter were closely associated in Athens³. These are only tentative suggestions but it seems reasonable to look for the Metroon in the vicinity of the other public and civic buildings.

1. E.g. IG XI.4, 514: *ἀναγράψαι δὲ τῶδε τὸ νόμισμα τῆν μὲν Βουλήν εἰς τὸ βουλευτήριον τῶν δὲ κροσίων εἰς τὸ ἱερόν ἐν στήλῃ λιθίνῃ...*
Also cf. McDonald, p. 157, but he does not mention that this proviso does not occur in decrees after 167/6.
2. E.g. ID 1497a. Sometimes an official is specified. The places of erection of the stelai are various: in the Artemision (ID 1497a, 1508); *παρὰ τὰς εἰκόνας* (1497b); in the sanctuary of Heracles (1489); in the office of the agronomoi (1500, 1505); *ἐν τῶν ἱερῶν* (1501); in the gymnasium (1504); in the office of the epimelètes (1507).
3. Cf. Hesp. VI, pp. 206-7.

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In summary, then, the Metroon in the Serapieion C was simply a temple of the Mother and was probably not used for the storage of public records. It was a small, relatively unimportant temple, isolated and almost engulfed in the sanctuary of the Egyptian gods. The use of the Metroon for the archives building cannot be shown to have begun before 167/6; it a practice introduced by the Athenian cleruchy and based on that of the mother city. Since the already existing Metroon was not suitable or adequate for the storage of the records, a new Metroon was established in the neighborhood of the other government buildings.

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