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Foreword

I am pleased to present the 2014 volume of *Aisthesis*. In this year's review cycle, the third since the founding of the journal, we had the privilege of reading and selecting articles from a large and competitive pool of submissions, including a number of papers that would have qualified for publication had we not been constrained by limitations on space. The four articles chosen for inclusion here stood out from the beginning and represent some of the finest of undergraduate work in Classics, both nationally and internationally. Three of these articles, focusing respectively on zoomorphism, rivers in the *Iliad*, and Egyptian professional associations, stand as distinguished exemplars of *Aisthesis*'s traditional strengths in literary theory and social history. As for the fourth paper on Aristotle's account of *akrasia*, I am particularly proud, as a joint Philosophy and Classics major, to say that it marks our journal's first serious foray in the area of ancient philosophy, and I hope that the sophistication of its treatment will serve to set a standard of excellence for future articles in this field.

I wish to extend my thanks to all of those who contributed papers for consideration, and to the ASSU Publications Board and the Department of Classics for their generous support. To the diligent and committed members of the *Aisthesis* staff, especially the two who are now graduating, *forsan et haec olim meminisse iuvabit*.

Arthur Lau
Editor-in-Chief

TABLE OF CONTENTS

**Masked as Beasts: An Analysis of Zoomorphism
in the Cultural Imaginary of Hybridity**

Kenneth Lai

University of California, Irvine

1

**Deep-Flowing: Rivers and the Obstacles
to Heroic Aspirations in the *Iliad***

Joshua Grimm

Carthage College

14

An Aristotelian Defense of Strict *Akrasia*

Thomas Moore

St Hugh's College, University of Oxford

49

**Egyptian *Koina*: Urban Producers and
Upward Mobility in Roman Egypt**

Erik Federman

University of Chicago

70

MASKED AS BEASTS

An Analysis of Zoomorphism in the Cultural Imaginary of Hybridity

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ABSTRACT

One of the tasks of modernity is to unravel historic anthropocentrism. In my paper, I explore how zoomorphism (as opposed to anthropomorphism) captures early Greek identity. If it is in the discourse of animals that humans first apprehend themselves—mythology and fable both point this direction—then animal must, as it were, be closely read. I draw the need to rework human-animal relations from recent work on modernity done by Giorgio Agamben and Bruno Latour, who have pushed the analysis “beyond”—or better yet, “between”—cultural binaries. After building up a vocabulary with which to deal with how the Greek identity is transmitted through zoomorphism, namely man as the “savage beast” (“θήρ”) or as the grazing beast (“βιτόν”), I move on to an analysis of what I argue is a key breaking point of collectivity in Alcman Partheneion 1, expressed through various animal imagery. By contextualizing the zoomorph, I argue that animals play a larger role in the human imaginary than has been previously analyzed and, furthermore, that fragments such as Alcman 1 can be further analyzed insofar as they conform to and thus reveal contemporary Greek culture and identity.

What happens to the beast and the man when the two are conveyed as one figure? Anthropomorphism comes immediately to mind as a domineering literary trope—that is, beasts *qua* men. But if animals have constituted man’s “first symbols,” then anthropocentrism has obfuscated men *qua* beasts.¹ My argument is not, however, to produce a hopelessly conservative

¹John Berger, “Why Look at Animals?,” in *About Looking*, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980), 9. For Berger, the zoo has become the monument of both the reduction of animals to spectacle for humans, and of man to ecological noise for imprisoned beasts—the dissolution of meaning between man and animal. While Berger was perhaps not the first to suggest the dramatic disappearance of the animal from modern critique and culture, he has certainly been one of the most influential and most cited. Since his publication, multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary projects have undertaken the question “Why Look at Animals?”: among them Jennifer Ham and Matthew Senior, *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History* (New York: Routledge, 1997); Jennifer Wolch and Jody Emel, eds., *Animal Geographies: Place, Politics, and Identity in the Nature-Culture Borderlands* (London: Verso, 1998); Molly H. Mullin, “Mirrors and Windows: Sociocultural Studies of Human-Animal Relationships,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 28 (1999); Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman, *Thinking with Animals: New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism* (New York: Columbia UP, 2005); Marc Bekoff and Jessica Pierce, *Wild Justice: The Moral Lives of Animals* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2009); and Graham

project of reinventing history, but to reinvestigate the tracks that animals and the imaginary of animals have already left in and alongside the footprints of human beings. To reach back to the ancients, we must, as Agamben writes, undo the “anthropological machine” that has operated under the assumption that man achieves humanity by *transcending* beasts.² My approach is, in agreement with Agamben, close to that of Bruno Latour, who has argued that modernity must confront nature and culture not only through the processes of defining and distinguishing, or (“*purification*”) but also of mediation (“*traduction*”) in order to grasp the human-animal hybrids as entities “[r]éels comme la nature, narrés comme le discours, collectifs comme la société, existentiels comme l’Être” [real as nature, narrated as discourse, collective as society, existential as Being].³ That is, to approach a more critical understanding of the past, we must confront the space “in between” nature and culture.

One way of approaching this central locus is to excavate spaces of the Athenian imaginary that is between the spatial and imaginative frameworks that men and animals occupy—I will draw attention namely to figurative language. Specifically, I will examine the role that the trope of zoomorphism plays in enacting the agency of *both* men and beasts through time. As a “quasi object,”⁴ zoomorphism, the opposite of anthropomorphism, privileges the skin of the beast while recreating the human subject and preserving “the entire lived experience of quotidian and extraordinary interactions—embodied and imaginary, material and symbolic—that occur within space and in particular locations, and involve humans and animals in multiple forms of engagement and exchange.”⁵ The centrality of agrarian life in the Archaic and Classical periods of Greece is thus reaffirmed and traced back by the zoomorph.⁶

Huggan and Helen Tiffin, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment*, (New York: Routledge, 2010), all with the aim of recovering the symbolic and material spaces that animals have occupied throughout history.

²Giorgio Agamben, *The Open: Man and Animal*, trans. Kevin Attell (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2004), 92.

³Bruno Latour, *Nous n’avons jamais été modernes* (Paris: La Découverte, 1997), 20-21; 123. I have provided all French, German, and Greek translations in brackets following the original text. While Latour specifically refers to “quasi-objects” in the latter quote, he is theorizing a nonhuman entity that is not contained in nature, but that pervades both nature and culture, social and technological. Such is the very description of the zoomorph in the early Athenian imaginary that I discuss here.

⁴Ibid.

⁵Pearson, Susan J, and Mary Weismantel, “Does ‘The Animal’ Exist?: Toward a Theory of Social Life with Animals,” in *Beastly Natures: Animals, Humans, and the Study of History*, ed. Dorothee Brantz (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2010), 31-32. For

In this paper, I will examine the zoomorphic imagination of the beasts of the field. In order to develop my argument, I will specifically interrogate the imaginations of θῆρ (“savage beast”) and βοτόν (“the grazing beast”) across a survey of literature, from Homer to Plato, Archaic to Classical, spanning the periods in which agrarianism dominated Athenian life.⁷ By “zoomorphism,” I understand a trope that puts into the discourse the imbrications of men and beasts, whether the two are overlaid or contingent—whether men are actively imagined as beasts, or laid in close proximity to each other so as to foreground the unity and subsequent interchangeability of humans and animals. Zoomorphism alternately supplies the essence of rational, innocent, and civil man the skin of βοτόν and the effigy of the alienated, malicious, and irrational savage the hide of θῆρ.⁸ I suggest that these

Pearson and Weismantel, it is just as dangerous to take a purely material as it is to take a purely symbolic approach to studying the place of animals. As in Latour, the spaces “in between” must be sought.

⁶For the argument that agrarianism dominated the cares and concerns of Athenians from the end of the eighth century BC to the end of the fourth, from which I draw my time constraints, see Victor Davis Hanson, *The Other Greeks: The Family Farm and the Agrarian Roots of Western Civilization* (New York: The Free P, 1995). For a recent counter-argument, that elite interests were dominant over those of the “masses” in Athenian agro-pastoral culture and thus deserve greater critical attention, see Timothy Howe, *Pastoral Politics: Animals, Agriculture and Society in Ancient Greece* (Claremont: Regina Books, 2008). Alternatively, Hans Derks, *De Koe van Troje: De mythe van de Griekse ouheid* (Hilversum: Verloren, 1995) focuses heavily on the cattle as the dominant commodity in Greece. Since my analysis is not concerned with cultural and political hegemony, but with the underlying ideologies of figurative language, Hanson has been the more useful source.

⁷Hanson, 444.

⁸While these associations of θῆρ draw it dangerously close to the word’s secondary definition—“any fabulous monster,” as in the “Sphinx,” “Satyrs,” and especially a “centaur” (*LSJ Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “θῆρ”)—two points separate my analysis from that language of monstrosity. My use of θῆρ, first of all, deals with socio-cultural rather than physical characteristics; for a case of θῆρ as centaur, see Christopoulos, Karakantza, and Levaniouk, eds., *Light and Darkness in Ancient Greek Myth and Religion* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2010), 40; 62n90. Second, my referents to the zoomorphs are as entities “existentiels comme l’Être.” Outside of their ontic being as threat, that is, θῆρ as “fabulous monster” has no ontological meaning or historical agency and is thus rendered moot by its very definition. For an account of monsters as “super-normal sign stimuli,” intended to serve as exaggerated messages or examples, rather than ends in themselves (as in humans and animals), see Paul Shepard, *Thinking Animals: Animals and the Development of Human Intelligence* (New York: The Viking P, 1978), 98-103.

associations are linked by the significance of early-Greek agrarian life,⁹ the whole of which is in turn “refracted through the prism of herding.”¹⁰ To test my findings, I will lastly turn to Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1 as a case study in reading collective agrarian life into the undercurrents of zoomorphism.

To comment briefly on the economical nature of zoomorphism, which permits a cross-temporal and cross-generic reading, I believe that the power of reading animals is precisely in their apparent lack of history that has traditionally ejected them out of discourse.¹¹ While animals may have a conceivable genealogy, they live outside a perceivable history, yet they are always immanent in human history: from the nomadic hunt of beasts to their domestication, animals constitute the milestones of early civilization.¹² Such an image as the beast, then, interpermeates language, time, and thought *because of* its lack of language and history: “So lebt das Tier *unhistorisch* . . . es weiß sich nicht zu verstellen, verbirgt nichts und erscheint in jedem Momente ganz und gar als das, was es ist, kann also gar nicht anders sein als ehrlich” [“Thus does the beast live *ahistorically* . . . It neither knows how to dissemble, nor conceals, and appears in every moment entirely as what it is, nor can it be anything but honest”].¹³ For Nietzsche, the beast overcomes the Platonic veil of seeming (φαίνεσθαι) and simply is (εἶναι); its silence is one that can but render it as experience of time and place authentic (*ehrlich*). Indeed, the silence of animals is precisely why beasts are useful literary tropes, particularly in the literalizing nature of zoomorphism, so that animals are, to borrow Claude Lévi-Strauss’

⁹I avoid using the misleading terms “bucolic” or “pastoral,” which specify a *genre*, whereas my discussion understand zoomorphism as a *trope*. For the former, see David M. Halperin, *Before Pastoral: Theocritus and the Ancient Tradition of Bucolic Poetry* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1983).

¹⁰Jeremy McInerney, *The Cattle of the Sun: Cows and Culture in the World of the Ancient Greeks* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2010), 5. McInerney here includes all cultural fields: marriage, war, prestige, value, social interaction and hierarchies.

¹¹For the famous rejection of consciousness in animals by (circular) reason of their lack of language and thus of suffering and soul, see René Descartes, *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*, trans. Donald A. Cress (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1993), 32. For the argument that absence of language in animals constitutes its very presence and efficaciousness, see Cary Wolfe, ed., *Zoontologies: The Question of the Animal* (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 2003), especially her essay “In the Shadow of Wittenstein’s Lion: Language, Ethics, and the Question of the Animal,” pp. 1-58.

¹²This is precisely Berger’s point when he asks “Why Look at Animals?”.

¹³Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke*, ed. Karl Schlechta (München: C. Hanser, 1960), 211. Michel de Montaigne, *Œuvre complètes* (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), 472, makes a similar comment on thinking with animals: “Il nous faut abêtir pour nous assagir, et nous éblouir pour nous guider” [We must be as animals in order that we be wise, be blinded in order that we be guided].

understanding of the totemic animal, “non comme bonnes à manger, mais comme bonnes à penser” [not goods to eat, but goods to think with].¹⁴ Relieved of the burdens of history and deception, the zoomorphic beast functions as a raw outlet narrativizing (“narrés comme le discours”) the very *nature* of man, and, as a trope of contingency, acts as an unvarnished mirror to his being (“existentiels comme l’Être”).

As a reference of contingency, isolation and collectivity are alternately heralded by the presence or lack of collective events and instruments, dance (“μολπή”), for instance, or the pipe (“σῦριγξ”), which leads the dance.¹⁵ Implied in βοτόν is the capacity for justice and reason, the will to participate in social interaction, and the need to proliferate. For the θήρ, isolation is not only circumstance, but necessity; reason, civilization, and social intercourse are all denied it. As metaphor, zoomorphism carries the same implications, but with a stronger emphasis. Rather than working through the interstices of human-animal relations, which contingency hails, the human *assumes* animal form through metaphor, thus literalizing the hybrid and pushing both the zoomorphic entity and the implications of zoomorphism to the very fore.

This kind of play with language was largely available to the Athenian audience through the cultural memory of the transition into and importance of agrarian life, if not at least for the fact that between sixty-five to ninety-five percent of Greeks *lead* an agrarian life.¹⁶ For the agrarian, the separation of savage (θήρ) from domestic beast (βοτόν) would have been significant and vivid. While the savage animal (θήρ) symbolized the “confrontation with death” through the act of hunting (θηράω), cattle (βοτόν) signified the domestic process by which human society was beginning to take shape.¹⁷ As in the Nuer

¹⁴Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Le Totémisme aujourd’hui* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1980). In my translation, I follow Edmund Leach’s suggestion in *Claude Lévi-Strauss* (University of Chicago Press, 1989), 32n8, that “bonnes à penser” be properly understood as a pun on totemic categories, and thus “goods to think with,” not just the plural adjective, but the substantive meaning implied. This is particularly useful in my consideration of animals within the agrarian economic context.

¹⁵For the implied collectivity signified by μολπή, see for instance Nicholas Richardson, “Reflections of choral song in early hexameter poetry,” in *Archaic and Classical Choral Song: Performance, Politics and Dissemination*, ed. Lucia Athanassaki and Ewen Bowie (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2011).

¹⁶Hanson 446n3.

¹⁷Jeremy McIerney, *The Cattle of the Sun: Cows and Culture in the World of the Ancient Greeks* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 2010), 26; 33. While domestication had been around since at least in the 7th century BC in Greece, it was not a prominent mode of production until the introduction of the *polis*. For archaeological evidence of domestication at the time, see Peter Bogucki, “The Spread of Early Farming in Europe,” *American Scientist* 84 (1996), 244-245 and Joao Zilhao, “The Spread of Agro-pastoral Economies across

tribe, one of the primary evidences in the modern day of an agrarian society, the language of beasts would have constituted a significance bordering on an entirely “bovine idiom.”¹⁸ That is, as beasts began to play a larger role in quotidian life, they left their traces on the discourse and symbolism of the Athenian imaginary, from which zoomorphism emerges almost as an afterthought, an instinct that better understands the human in the mask of the beast.¹⁹

Plato provides the clearest distinctions between the two kinds of beasts in his *Menexenus*. Emphasizing, if dubiously, that the Greeks were not born from immigrant stock (“ἐπηλυς”), but were sprung up from the earth itself (“αὐτόχθονας”), Socrates claims that the Greek land deserves praise. Notably, the *autochthon*, besides its political ideology of Greek versus barbarian, strictly denotes *people*. When Socrates imagines the earth putting forth every kind of life, both savage and grazing beasts (“ζῶα παντοδαπά, θηρία τε καὶ βοτά”), he must be referring to people by analogue of animals: “ἡ ἡμετέρα θηρίων μὲν ἀγρίων ἄγονος καὶ καθαρὰ ἐφάνη, ἐξελέξατο δὲ τῶν ζῶων καὶ ἐγέννησεν ἄνθρωπον” [our own land was devoid of savage beasts and appeared pure, but picked out her animals and gave birth to man].²⁰ Having offered the first iteration of θηρία τε καὶ βοτά, the second iteration acknowledges the first component (“θηρίων”), but revises the second with ἄνθρωπον. By breaking the zoomorphic binary, the assumed existential beings with human conscience simultaneously occupy the posited ἄνθρωπον and the revised and expected

Mediterranean Europe: A View from the Far West,” *Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology* 6 (1993). Recent mtDNA evidence has substantiated these claims; see I. Teresa Cymbron, et al., “Microsatellite Diversity Suggests Different Histories for Mediterranean and Northern European Cattle Populations,” *Proceeding of the Royal Society of London B: Biological Sciences* 272 (2005). For an alternate account of domestication, usually defined osteologically rather than culturally, see Howard M. Hecker, “Domestication Revisited: Its Implications for Faunal Analysis,” *Journal of Field Archaeology* 9.2 (1982). For the rise and fall of agrarianism with the *polis*, see Hanson (1995).

¹⁸E.E. Evans-Pritchard, *The Nuer: A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (New York: Oxford UP, 1974), 18-19. Evans-Pritchard observed that, for the agrarian tribe, “all social processes and relationships [were defined] in terms of cattle” (29).

¹⁹That zoomorphism came early into Greek consciousness can be seen across various art forms. See, for instance, Paul Rehak and John G. Younger, “Review of Aegean Prehistory VII: Neopalatial, Final Palatial, and Postpalatial Crete,” *American Journal of Archaeology* 102.1 (1998) and Eleanor Loughlin, “The Calf in Bronze Age Cretan Art and Society,” in *PECUS. Man and Animal in Antiquity. Proceedings of the Conference at the Swedish Institute in Rome, Sept. 9-12, 2002* (Rome: The Swedish Institute in Rome, 2004).

²⁰Plato, *Menexenus* 237b, d. Greek texts are taken from the *TLG* database.

βοτά. Over against the savage beasts (“βοτά”), or barbarians understood, the Greeks emerge as a hybridized entity of grazing beasts and men: that is, they are posited as more than one but less than two. Thus hybridized, the “grazing beasts” (βοτά) take on the connotations of Greek men: autochthonous rather than foreign, reasonable rather than savage (“ἀγρίων”), breeding discriminately (“ἐξελέξατο δὲ τῶν ζῶων”) rather than producing mixed stock (“ζῶα παντοδαπά”).

But whereas βoτά is so fraught with the ideals of Greek identity, θῆρ indicates quite the opposite, pointing towards savagery and irrationality, an image that Euripides plays on in his *Orestes*. After Pylades and Orestes have exposed Electra to their plan to ambush Helen, they lay in hiding, and Electra’s dormancy brews angst, which quickly boils into a furious paranoia. The semichorus, too, imagines that they have seen a country-man (ἀγρότας ἀνῆρ) on the road, and Electra shrieks out:

ἀπωλόμεσθ’ ἄρ’, ὦ φίλοι: κεκρυμμένους
 θῆρας ξιφῆρεις αὐτίκ’ ἐχθροῖσιν φανεῖ
 [We are ruined, my friends; he will reveal
 at once to our enemies the sword-wielding beasts]²¹

At the height of her despair, Electra accesses the barren referent, the Nietzschean beast, whose being is laid bare. Orestes and Pylades she makes out to be savage beasts (“θῆρας”), so blindly abandoned are they to vengeance against Menelaus. That Electra’s subconscious, brought out by supreme anxiety, relates two men precisely not to *man* as such, but to a man-beast hybrid signifies the penetration of agrarian economy into Greek consciousness. In the raw state of fear, her basic instinct, perhaps triggered to grapple with rural life by the chorus’ imagined sighting of a country-man (ἀγρότας ἀνῆρ), is to reduce her own brother and his best friend to savage beasts, immoral, undemocratic, and impious understood, the opposite of the rational βoτά that Plato imagines springing up from Greek soil.

In the passages of Plato and Euripides I have briefly examined, the metaphors of beasts have represented rationality, race, and fertility. The assumption of man in the form of beasts has presented a man-beast hybrid with qualities that correlate to Greek identity. Similarly, contingency, a kind of zoomorphism, if nature and culture are understood as a hybrid, hails the social capacity of men, locating above all their proximity to society.

In the *ekphrasis* of the shield of Achilles, for instance, described in book 18 of the *Iliad*, the grazing herds hail the association and collectivity of Athenian society. In the city at war, the aggressing army comes to a “ποταμῷ, ὅθι τ’ ἀρδμὸς ἔην πάντεσσι βοτοῖσιν” [river, where there was water for all

²¹Euripides, *Orestes* 1269-72.

grazing herds]—given the hybrid nature of βοτόν already discussed, either cattle or men can be inferred.²² Sure enough, shortly the ambush is set,

δύω δ' ἄμ' ἔποντο νομῆες
 τερπόμενοι σύριγξι; δόλον δ' οὐ τι προνόησαν
 [and two herdsman followed

Giving delight with their pipes; and they foresaw no guile]²³

The very image of peace, the shepherd and the livestock move softly up to the river, which is open to all grazing herds (“πάντεσσι βοτοῖσιν”)—that is, both the shepherds and their beasts, the hybrid is implied if not by ambiguity, then by understood collectivity. Significantly the two shepherds play upon their σύριγξ, the instrument of μολπή, forming a society in miniature. That they foresee no guile (*ehrlich*) further distances them from the θήρ, which would otherwise be entrapped in a Hobbesian world of violence. At any rate, the βοτόν signifies collectivity in its intimate connection with shepherds and pastoral life.

The very opposite image is invoked in Sophocles' *Philoctetes*. On the island of Lemnos, we bear witness instead to hermetic isolation. As the chorus of shipmates and Neoptolemus go about the island, seeking out Philoctetes, the chorus describes the crippled hero:

κέϊται μῶνος ἀπ' ἄλλων
 στικτῶν ἢ λασίων μετὰ
 θηρῶν

[He lies alone away from others,

Among the spotted or shaggy / Beasts]²⁴

The contingency of *Philoctetes* and the wild beasts (“θηρῶν”) signifies an impenetrable loneliness, far away from society. The image of the θήρ amplifies *Philoctetes*' isolation and removal. As *Philoctetes* finally approaches, the very opposite portrait as that in the shield of Achilles is described: *Philoctetes* bellows and stumbles closer to them

ὡς οὐκ ἔξεδρος, ἀλλ' ἔντοπος ἀνὴρ,
 οὐ μολπὰν σύριγγος ἔχων,
 ὡς ποιμὴν ἀγροβάτας

[Not as a man far from home, but nearby,

Not engaged in a dance of the pipe,

As would be the countryside herdsman]²⁵

²²Interestingly, even this act of cattle raiding presupposes a collective context. See Peter Walcot, “Cattle Raiding, Heroic Tradition, and Ritual: The Greek Evidence,” *History of Religions* 18.4 (1979).

²³Homer, *Iliad* 520-1; 525-6.

²⁴Sophocles, *Philoctetes* 183-5.

Whereas βοτόν hailed community through the ritual of dance lead by σύριγγ, θήρ hails necessarily the opposite; the explicit absence of community-tied ritual (“οὐ μολπὰν σύριγγος ἔχων”), I argue, is the very suggestion of the savage beast, the antonym of the good, civilized Greek. Pushed off to margins and denied the ability to hear the Greek tongue, Philoctetes is stripped of all Greek identity; he is not only lonesome, but become the very hybrid of a savage beast. Alternately, when he is finally reintroduced into society, he begins to embody the βοτόν once more:

ὦ φίλτατον φώνημα: φεῦ τὸ καὶ λαβεῖν
 πρόσφθεγμα τοιοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς ἐν χρόνῳ μακρῷ.
 [O beloved utterance; Oh! to be saluted
 By such a man after so long a time]²⁶

Reintroduced the Greek society, Philoctetes is once more the innocent beast (*ehrlich*), unaware of Odysseus’ devious plot.

My analysis thus far has looked contextually at examples of zoomorphism in metaphor and in contingency. The connections I have drawn out do not render themselves as a formula of cultural materialism, but as a starting point to think about the poetical and cultural interstices of man and beast. The ahistorical animal produces a very raw image of man, from which the essentials of identity—communal, rational, violent, or otherwise—achieve a sustained level of contemplation, viewed through the foggy glass of the zoomorphic hybrid, the man-beast hybrid that vacillates between human and animal identity. If this analysis has been productive, then I have suggested an image that is not only embedded in a poetic context, but immersed in a cultural attitude, perhaps even deference to the beasts of the field. If this is right, that zoomorphism extends beyond its localized figuration into a web of cultural imaginary, then the associations of beasts can be teased out of fragments, for which the better part of context is woefully absent.

Such a case is Alcman’s *Partheneion* 1. If my work has been productive, then the implications of zoomorphism can be applied to one small instance thereof within the larger enigma of the poem. Although my analysis cannot explain the ritual of ceremony that pertains to Alcman 1, I hope to provide an insight into a method of thinking zoomorphically through the network set up by men and beasts and incited by the figuration, in turn, of women among beasts. In the passage I am concerned with, the chorus has begun singing of Agido, one of the chorus members:

ἐμὲ δ’ οὔτ’ ἐπαινῆν
 οὔτε μωμήσθαι νιν ἅ κλενὰ χοραγός

²⁵Ibid., 213-5.

²⁶Ibid., 234-235.

οὐδ' ἄμῳς ἐῆι δοκεῖ γὰρ ἤμεν αὐτα
 ἐκπρεπῆς τὼς ὤπερ αἴτις
 ἐν βοτοῖς στάσειεν ἵππον
 [But the glorious chorus leader
 Permits me neither to praise
 Nor to blame her in any way; for Hagesichora seems herself
 to be
 Pre-eminent just as if someone
 Should place her as a horse among grazing beasts]²⁷

But what does a horse have to do with grazing beasts?²⁸ We know by the flow of the poem that the analogy is expegetical to the chorus leader's quality of pre-eminence (ἐκπρεπῆς), and that she seems to be is reason enough to cease praising or blaming Agido. If such is the case, the horse must represent the grazing beast *par excellence*, and the remaining chorus members, grazing beasts of an inferior sort.²⁹ That is, the inherently collective and inherently rational and peaceful nature of the grazing beasts are exceeded by the ideal hybrid, the chorus leader, the one that can no longer remain in the collective, and the one to whom the chorus' attention must shift, away from Agido.³⁰ Since both praise and blame are lifted from Agido, both must be relocated upon Hagesichora, the chorus leader. The language of a race-horse (κέλης) among the grazing herd dramatically shatters the collective and pushes Hagesichora into the hybrid identity of θῆρ and βοτόν, isolation and collectivity, violence and rationality.³¹ In the state of hybridity, Hagesichora is shown to be a woman

²⁷Alcman 1.43-7. I follow Claude Calame, *Les Chœurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque*, vol. 2 (Rome: L'Ateneo and Bizzarri, 1977), 47-49, in understanding αὐτα as Hagesichora and—to follow my own claim that βοτόν transfers the image of collective—that this scene dramatizes a breaking-away from the collective chorus.

²⁸Almost certainly my analysis will have to disagree with Kyriakos Tsantsanoglou, *Of Golden Manes and Silvery Faces: The Partheneion 1 of Alcman* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2012), who calls βοτά a “disdainful term.”

²⁹Gregory Hutchinson, *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Commentary on Selected Larger Pieces* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001) comments similarly, and offers the possibility of βοτά representing all the women present as “less plausible” (87). The contrast of this passage to *Iliad* 2.480-1 is significant

³⁰My reading draws from Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi, “Initiating the Viewer: Deixis and Visual Perception in Alcman's Lyric Drama,” *Arethusa* 37.3 (2004), who understands the anonymous αἴτις as Alcman himself only insofar as Alcman has staged the chorus (315). If Hagesichora's break from the collective is nuptial, αἴτις can still be understood as an agent of the collective.

³¹Hutchinson notes Homer's *Iliad* 2.480-481 in contrast, in which Achilles stands out as a bull (ταῦρος βοῦς) among the herd (ἀγέληφι). This language is a variant of that of θῆρ

in transition, for which ripeness for marriage is the best reference for separation from the collective maiden chorus, away from autochthony and towards martial production. Read this way, I can at least argue with some confidence that the race-horse placed among the grazing herd destabilizes the agrarian status-quo and, equivalently, the referential status-quo, that of the maiden chorus and marriage-ready chorus leader.

As in the Nietzschean beast, the zoomorphic hybrid, read properly, cannot *but* be an “authentic” (*ehrlich*) representation of men and women. Shrugged of the burdens of history, the beast is repeatedly entering into the present, renewing its place at the agrarian center, and every time it does, the hybridization of nature and culture is reaffirmed. For by the meeting of a rational community with grazing herds or the mirror of savage beasts held up to the immoral, the isolated or the exiled, the dependence of man upon beasts is reconstituted, and a relationship of interdependence reimagined.

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DEEP-FLOWING

Rivers and the Obstacles to Heroic Aspirations in the *Iliad*

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ABSTRACT

The gap that exists between the power and control of the gods and the capabilities of mortals in the *Iliad* is at once obvious and at the same time obscure and complex. This is demonstrated most clearly through the character of Achilles, a hero who exceeds all mortal achievements in the *Iliad* and yet finds even his own limitations when he engages in combat with Skamandros in Book 21. At this juncture, the narrative clearly shows the boundary that Achilles cannot cross, both metaphorically and literally. Other heroes in the narrative also exceed mortal limitations, in one case even coming to grapple with gods and goddesses. At such moments, Homeric simile compares them either to rivers or to the victims of their natural force.

In this paper, I look at Diomedes and Aias, who are both directly referenced in river similes, and Achilles, who directly opposes a river divinity. My study seeks to demonstrate that the thematic implications of river similes in the *Iliad* magnify the boundary that restricts men to mortal limits. Those heroes who approach or transgress this boundary accrue serious consequences from the immortals.

Rivers are never quiet or gentle in the *Iliad*. As deities, they are active progenitors that spawn powerful lines, and they are divine forces that the greatest of heroes fails to subdue. As natural forces in the framework of the epic's similes, they are impassable boundaries and forces destructive to both nature and the works of mortals. The great bulk of similes is applied to heroes, and shows the limits that even the greatest of mortals is incapable of surpassing. The actual encounter that occurs between a river, both natural and divine, and the greatest of heroes, Achilles, only reinforces this boundary. Only with the aid of gods can mortals hope to wander into the vague territory between mortals and immortals, but even with divine aid, there is a point beyond which no mortal can pass. This thesis will examine the limits of mortal heroism in the context of river similes and the fight between Achilles and the river Skamandros.

Knowledge of this boundary does not appear to be readily accessible to the heroes, but instead is only stumbled upon or found. It is unfathomable to the reader of the *Iliad* that Diomedes, in the face of divinity, does not have the

sense or the fear to retreat.¹ In addition to his brief encounter with Apollo, he directly opposes Zeus' Will and must be repulsed with a blast of lightning in front of his chariot. At each point of repulsion, Diomedes is unsure whether he should retreat or stay. Only at the third thundering does Diomedes commit to the retreat (8.169-171). Diomedes ponders whether he should turn in his heart and his mind (κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν). This phrase occurs multiple times in the *Iliad*, and for the most part it denotes a point of indecision and uncertainty.² The poet has chosen this phrase to describe Diomedes' mind at a point far beyond his original confrontation with Apollo in Book 5. Apparently, the hero has not yet reconciled himself with the superiority of the gods.³ Achilles is genuinely astonished at his absolute defeat at the hands of the River Skamandros, thinking that Thetis deceived him and concealed from him his true fate. Consideration for the god's wishes is not made, and Achilles' only focus is on his objective to kill Hektor. He puts himself in opposition to the river god, putting priority on his own wishes and will. Diomedes quickly forgets his confrontation with Apollo and once again attempts to stare down the immortals. Achilles quickly forgets the complexity of Zeus' Will, a complexity that is revealed by the death of Patroklos. Although Achilles wished to be honored and this is accomplished by Zeus' Will, he did not take into account

¹ Scott (2009): 104-105 also notes this peculiarity about Diomedes, but finds explanation for this daring in Diomedes' inability to refuse or question the divine commands given to him.

² *Iliad* 1.193; Achilles ponders whether he should kill Agamemnon before Athena descends and tugs his hair. 5.671; Odysseus decides which opponents he should attack. 8.169; the above-mentioned episode between Diomedes and Zeus. 11.411; Odysseus ponders retreating or holding his position in front of a Trojan advance. 15.163; Zeus asks Poseidon to consider the consequences of opposing him. 17.106; Menelaos considers retreating from Hektor. 18.15; Achilles has suspicions of Patroklos' death before Antilochos gives him the actual message confirming these suspicions.

The other passages where this phrase appears indicates the heart and the mind are seats of greater understanding. The demise of Troy is intellected by the heart and the mind by both Agamemnon and Hektor. *Iliad* 4.163; Agamemnon reaffirms Troy's demise as he goes to the aid of Menelaus, who has been struck by Pandarus' arrow. 6.447; Hektor reaffirms the ultimate demise of Troy as he tells Andromache that he will not shrink from the fighting. This phrase is also used of Achilles, who cannot truly comprehend in his heart and mind the power of his divine armor. *Iliad* 20.264; Achilles cannot understand that his divine armor cannot be lightly penetrated by mortal weapons.

³ Scott (2009): 105 disagrees, as he sees Diomedes' confrontations with the gods rather as a mark of his inferiority as a hero. He cannot question the orders of Athena the first time, nor does he think to question her further encouragement to attack Ares after the stark warning by Apollo. As his motivation is entirely external, he cannot actually be credited with his deeds.

that it might indeed inflict other ills and evils upon him in remedying his disgrace by Agamemnon. Even so, he plunges into the river, certain that his confrontation with Hektor as prophesied by Thetis will come to fulfillment; he does not take into account any other aberrations or events that might precede his final confrontation with Hektor. He assumes that even a river god, the Skamandros, will simply let him be. In general, as soon as any sort of unforeseen complexity develops, Achilles begins to doubt the fate that has been prophesied to him. Achilles neglects to understand the boundary between mortals and immortals, believing himself to have the power of an Olympian merely because of the certainty of his own fate.

Perhaps this is informative to the epic as a whole. The fate of all men is to find their eventual end in death and this is their portion according to the ordering of the universe. Dione's reassurance to Aphrodite after her wounding specifies the many points at which mere mortals have given the gods injury and pain, but these recollections are of men of the past, men who have since descended into Hades and can no longer brook interference. Even then, their lives were soon to be filled with agony by retaliation from the greater gods and an even quicker passage to Hades than they might have expected. Apollo cautions Diomedes to stay back and "strive no longer / to make yourself like the gods in mind" (μηδὲ θεοῖσιν ἴσ' ἔθελε φρονεῖν) (5.440-441). There is something that mortals can transcend with their mind that they might not be able to with their strength. In the end, however, Hades steals both the mind and the strength of mortals.⁴ Diomedes faces a potential fulfillment of destiny multiple times, either by the wrath of Apollo or by the warning shots of Zeus.⁵ Diomedes could strive further, but he would risk being struck by the gods. Achilles is at the point of being drowned by the river, and only because he is fated to kill Hektor is he aided by other gods against the river. The heroes themselves are super-mortals, men who distinguish themselves above all others in deed and in mind. These men experience divinity up close and become ambiguous entities in the paradigm between mortals and immortals. Either with or without divine aid, these men can become brilliant entities that have the power to strive with gods and attempt at times to overpower them. Achilles and Diomedes both explicitly come to spar with gods, with the only expectation possible with such a brash act - victory. Diomedes' moment of brilliance ends after Apollo shows him the flat of his hand. Achilles' moment of brilliance, his *aristeia*, is almost extinguished in the river. Fate has more in store for him, as does the Will of Zeus, and the only reason he gains passage is divine

⁴ *Odyssey* 10.494-495, 11.29, 49

⁵ It is to be noted that, in both cases, these are precautionary measures by the gods; Apollo does not strike back at Diomedes, and Zeus will only warn him.

intervention. At each point, the heroes are encountered by the potential to overcome gods. Whether it is victory, defeat, or even withdrawal from such a battle, it is certain that the mortal will come to awareness of his portion, or receive it in due course. This paper restricts itself to understanding the relation that Achaian heroes have to the rivers they are likened to or attempt to cross, either in the epic itself, or in the parallel worlds Homer's similes evoke. These moments where the hero encounters a river show to Homer's audience mortality-its strength and its aspirations-at its utter limit, at its very brightest.⁶ To look at it in a different way, these encounters wash away their ambiguous status in the relations between gods and mortals. Their identity as mortals is solidified for the audience of the epic. Mortals die, and hence can never stand beside or transcend the deathless gods, even if they are minded to act as if they are immortal, as Diomedes does in his encounter with Apollo, or as if they understand thoroughly the nature of their own mortality, as Achilles does while in the midst of the Skamandros.

Diomedes

Homeric similes have long provided rich and fertile ground for scholarship and interpretation. Different approaches help readers delve deeper into the significance of similes, while others remove them from a place of any importance in scholarly research. It is evident, however, that the similes of the *Iliad* hold a comparable level of importance as the events in the narrative; they do not simply act as artifices to lift the reader out of the basic events of the narrative.⁷ Rivers in particular play an important role as emphases of the

⁶ Fenik 1968: 20 notes that, aside from fire, water is the subject for a simile most commonly used to describe the destruction caused by a warrior.

⁷ This paper will examine chiefly the connections that the similes have to the narrative, both in the immediate context, and in the epic as a whole. I am more inclined to agree with Edwards (1991): 30-34 that the simile's connection with the narrative is versatile, and cannot be confined to a single point of comparison. The simile can be linked to the narrative in its immediate context, but can also provide foreshadowing, support larger thematic developments in the epic as a whole, and even support multiple connections with the immediately surrounding narrative.

It is difficult to distinguish the poetic function of the simile from its function in the narrative. Edwards includes in his brief summary of the connection between the simile and the narrative locations where the simile's content branches far away from the context of the narrative, and the effect that this can have on the audience of the epic, as well as certain emotional impacts the imagery of the similes might have in connection with the events of the narrative. Although it is not the sole function of the simile, it is likely that one of its functions includes a kind of narrative relief, especially from lengthy battle scenes. Bassett (1921) examines the similes in light of their function as the ἠδύσματα of Homeric poetry. Edwards (1991): 35 agrees with Bassett that the purpose of the simile is

narrative situation and as access to the themes in each scene. They can delineate boundaries between the gods and men, as seen in Diomedes' *aristeia*. Rivers also represent the source of heroic power and the inevitable power of the Will of Zeus. Aias is powerless in the face of the fear that Zeus sends him, and Achilles, the greatest of mortals in the *Iliad*, cannot strive for more than a few

to stir the reader's imagination by bringing him/her out of the distant heroic world of Homeric epic and referring back to the world of common experience. The simile, according to Bassett, is an expression of the poet's abounding creative vision and is used by the poet to season and refresh his audience from certain monotony in the narrative.

"This may be mere mannerism, or it may be due also to the cumulative emotion of the story, and to the growing fatigue of the listener, which makes necessary more 'seasoning' (ἡδύσμα) in the dish of Homer's μεγάλη δαίς" (146). This emphasis on the function of the similes as refreshments for the reader is nevertheless overstated.

Both Scott (1974) and Moulton (1977) seem to derive their examination of similes from Eustathius and the bT scholia. Eustathius defines the Homeric simile as having four chief functions as the ἡδύσματα of the narrative: ἀξίσις (amplification of the narrative), ἐνάργεια (supply vividness, actuality), σαφήνεια (clarification), ποικιλία (varying the monotony, "embroidering"). Moulton (1977) seems particularly concerned with the way that the similes provide ἀξίσις. See Snipes (1988): 208-209. This paper is not focused on the poetic role that the similes play in the narrative. Rather, this paper will be primarily interested in the role that the similes play in the immediate context of the narrative and in the epic in its entirety. Buxton (2004): 141 labels this approach as "rhetorical-thematic."

Moulton (1977), in her analysis of simile, draws upon the examination of the immediate context of the similes, and the far-reaching connections between similes. Directly preceding her, Scott (1974): 4 looks at the placement of simile families in order to develop his analysis of similes in the light of oral composition, and also sees similes as utterly unnecessary to the development of the narrative. Although he does not put his statements in Eustathius' vocabulary, it is quite apparent that it references at least two of the four chief functions mentioned above:

"In its nature the simile is only a supplement that can lend momentary vividness to an episode or aid in emphasizing a vital fact. But by itself it cannot give luster to a shabby scene or immortalize an otherwise insignificant object; the narrative must achieve its results in its own way. Then, and only then, can the simile reinforce the development of the plot."

Coffey (1957) does not pay much attention to the broader implications of similes in the epic, but does not deny that these implications exist. Whitman (1965) provides a wonderful analysis of the synchrony between the poetically powerful and formulaic similes and images and the thematic unity of the poem as a whole. See his chapter on "Image, Symbol, and Formula," especially 114-127. In sum, this paper will follow the rhetorical-thematic approach of analyzing the similes, and will use these similes not only as inroads into interpreting the text as a whole, but as integral parts of the text that cannot be separate from the contexts to which they are compared.

lines against a lesser elemental god, the river Skamandros. In each case, the power of mortals is diminished and the greatness of immortals reinforced. In this paradigm, the first river simile applied to a hero occurs in Book 5 during Diomedes' *aristeia*.

Diomedes is likened to a swollen river in the midst of his *aristeia*, and later to a helpless man in the face of a river as he is curtailed by a god.⁸ Two different scenarios and perspectives are evoked for the readers of the *Iliad*, one of empowerment and one of humiliation. The direct relationship between the two similes in Book 5 provides a balance to the episode, providing flourish to the beginning of his *aristeia* and to its end.

The poet first likens Diomedes to a swollen river after the hero has been given divine inspiration by Athena. She is primarily responsible for the strength Diomedes is granted to commit his terrible and glorious deeds during the course of Book 5. Her fiery inspiration at the commencement of Book 5 is the first of a long string of interventions on his behalf. Within the first moments of his *aristeia*, Diomedes stirs the Trojans to anger over his slaughter of the sons of Dares. That a counterattack might not prematurely end his conquest, Athena escorts Ares off of the battlefield to clear the field of any gods that might intervene (5.35-38). Apollo is seated on the citadel of Pergamos, exhorting the Trojans to action (4.507-513), and only descends to the battle when Aineias falls from Aphrodite's grasp later in Book 5. By the work of Athena, Diomedes makes himself a formidable force across the battlefield. His fury is such that it is ambiguous which army Diomedes is supporting. It is early in this stage of his *aristeia* that he is likened to a river in winter flood (all English translations are taken from Lattimore's *Iliad*).⁹

Ὡς οἱ μὲν πονέοντο κατὰ κρατερὴν ὕσμίνην·
 Τυδεΐδην δ' οὐκ ἄν γνοίης ποτέροισι μετεῖη
 ἠὲ μετὰ Τρώεσσιν ὀμιλέοι ἢ μετ' Ἀχαιοῖς.
 θῦνε γὰρ ἄμ πεδίον ποταμῶ πλήθοντι ἐοικῶς
 χειμάρρῳ, ὅς τ' ὄκα ῥέων ἐκέδασσε γεφύρας·
 τὸν δ' οὐτ' ἄρ τε γέφυραι ἐεργμέναι ἰσχανόωσιν,
 οὐτ' ἄρα ἔρκεα ἴσχει ἀλωάων ἐριθηλέων
 ἐλθόντ' ἔξαπίνης ὄτ' ἐπιβρίση Διὸς ὄμβρος·
 πολλὰ δ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἔργα κατήριπε κάλ' αἰζήων·

⁸ The method of this thesis focuses on the similes where the direct referent of the river simile is the hero. River similes which follow to complete the image and have direct relevance to the first simile are then considered. For this reason, both Patroklos and Hektor escape this paper as viable subjects. See n.12, 19.

⁹ This first simile fits into Coffey's definition of the "proper" simile, i.e. one "in which one or more clauses containing a finite verb or verbs are attached to the original phrase of comparison. . ." (Coffey 1957: 113-114).

ὥς ὑπὸ Τυδεΐδῃ πυκινὰ κλονέοντο φάλαγγες
 Τρώων, οὐδ' ἄρα μιν μίμνον πολέες περ ἔοντες.

So they went at their work all about the strong encounter;
 but you could not have told on which side Tydeus' son was
 fighting,¹⁰

whether he were one with the Trojans or with the Achaians,
 since he went storming up the plain like a winter-swollen
 river in spate that scatters the dikes in its running current,¹¹
 one that the strong-compacted dikes can contain no longer,
 neither the mounded banks of the blossoming vineyards hold it
 rising suddenly as Zeus' rain makes heavy the water
 and many lovely works of the young men crumble beneath it.
 Like these the massed battalions of the Trojans were scattered

¹⁰ Kirk (1990) notes that this can mean one of two things: 1) that Diomedes is 'everywhere at once' or that 2) he is caught in the foremost collision of the closely compacted ranks. I am inclined, in light of the simile, to believe it is most likely the first of these conjectures. The nature of the river's destruction is forceful and ever-advancing. There is no damming up of the river as in Achilleus' damming of the Skamandros in Book 21, and therefore there is no sense that the river is being clogged up, just as the ranks of the Achaians and the Trojans would be clogged up if Diomedes is in the midst of the mass of bodies. Instead, the river's advance on the plain and inability to be halted by any obstacle makes it appear more likely that it is instead that Diomedes does not adhere to rank and file, and advances far beyond the Achaian ranks and well into the ranks of the Trojans. See his note on lines 85-86, p. 62-63.

Fenik (1968): 20 notes that Diomedes' ambiguous identity is an unparalleled detail in the rest of the *Iliad*, and interprets this detail as indicating his advance far into the Trojan ranks.

Benardete (2000) interprets this verse as signifying Diomedes' own independence and self-interest aside from that of the rest of the Achaian army. This self-interest is driven by the desire to win glory, and is a defining part of the heroic identity. The quest for the glory of heroes becomes an end in itself, and war for any other object (Helen, Troy's conquest, etc.) becomes irrelevant. See "The *Aristeia* of Diomedes," p. 54.

Fenno (2005): 490 sees both this simile and the simile applied to Aias at 11.492 as exceptions to his general thesis. His essay explicates the thematic associations made between the Greeks and the sea and the Trojans to rivers. Aias and Diomedes mix into the ranks of the Trojans, Diomedes so much so that he is indistinguishable from them. They assimilate the associations with rivers typically reserved for the Trojans as they push further and further into Trojan ranks.

¹¹ Fenno (2005) provides a very interesting analysis of the use of the dikes that are being overrun by the river. See the footnote on page 490. Also, see Kirk (1990) on verse 89-90, and 92.

by Tydeus' son, and many as they were could not stand against
him
(5.84-94).¹²

The river itself is swollen with the winter rains (ποταμῶ πλήθοντι ἐοικῶς χειμάρρῳ) and with the additional rains that Zeus sends down to earth (Διὸς ὄμβρος). In each case, the river is surpassing and destroying the boundaries set upon it by men that hope to tame the natural force of the water. Dikes and protective mounded banks are overcome (ἐκέδασσε γεφύρας) and the works made by men are destroyed by its force (ὕπ' αὐτοῦ ἔργα κατήριπε κάλ' αἰζηῶν).¹³ It is essential to notice that the poet gives no mention of the river destroying or surpassing its natural limits. This is not the case for such a simile applied to Aias, as will be seen later in the argument. The simile emphasizes the damage that the river wreaks on its artificial, human-constructed boundaries. The Trojans are equated to these "lovely works of the young men" that are receiving the brunt of this hydraulic force.

This destruction of the dikes and banks would seem to imply that this fighting strength is endemic to Diomedes, a potential strength that is being released. Whatever has been obstructing Diomedes from accomplishing these

¹² Kirk (1990) notes that this simile has many of the typical elements of a later simile applied to Patroklos' horses (16.384-393). Patroklos and this simile just barely escape analysis in this paper, as Patroklos is nowhere given a single explicit river simile where he is the referent. Fenik (1968): 20 seems to think that Patroklos is the direct referent of the river simile at 16.384, when the referents of the simile are the horses of the Trojans. Although Patroklos is the reason why these horses are running, and the concept of flight from a raging river is evoked in the simile, Patroklos is only implicated in this simile. There is a great difference between implication and direct reference. That being said, the similarities between Diomedes' encounters with the divine and Patroklos' brilliant yet brief *aristeia* cannot be entirely ignored and should be kept in mind throughout such an analysis as this. To briefly make a connection between Patroklos' encounter with Apollo and this paper, it is the only *aristeia* amongst the different Achaian heroes where such a direct correspondence between striving with divinity and death is to be found. A more voluminous argument must be put forward to prove this is the case with Diomedes. See notes on lines 87-94.

¹³ See Kirk (1990) on verses 87-92 for more on χειμάρρῳ, γεφύρας, and αἰζηῶν. The storms are winter storms gaining force from their descent down the mountains, and the γεφύραι are the dams used to obstruct their potentially damaging hydraulic force. The verbal form γεφύρωσεν is used in the sense of bridging a gap, and is used when Apollo fills in the trench in front of the Achaian Wall (15.357), but is still used when Achilles brings down the elm tree and dams the river Skamandros (21.245). The αἰζός is an especially vigorous young man, a mortal in his prime. Although they might not be ἀνέρες (as the later correspondence to ἀνθρώποι at 16.392 suggests), the energy of youth suggested in their constructions emphasizes the destructive nature of the river. On the distinction between ἀνθρώπος and ἀνὴρ see Benardete (2000): 16.

feats against the Trojans has been lifted, and he now clears the space before him as the Trojans flee his fury. Where the obstructions to the rivers in the simile are material objects, the obstruction to the warrior is more abstract. The strength and daring, granted by Athena, aid Diomedes in the transgression of these boundaries. Athena places within him this power through her inspiration. It is unclear, however, what is the measure of Diomedes' mortal strength and how he has broken free of his limitations. It is not easy to place Diomedes solidly in the schema of gods and mortals.

Thus far, Diomedes ranges within the purview of his instructions from Athena, and brings suffering to the Trojans as a mortal empowered by immortals. However, his zeal to attack Aineias and to kill him forces him against Apollo (5.431-444).¹⁴ Diomedes recognizes the god and yet insists on continuing the assault.¹⁵ These actions are clearly beyond his capability as a mortal and the license he is given by Athena.¹⁶ Although he strives with the god

¹⁴ Diomedes pushes against Apollo because he strives to strip Aineias of his armor. Kirk (1990): 88 notes that the spoils obtained in battle help formulate the hero's *kleos*. Diomedes strives against Apollo so that he may be immortal in song. Also see Kirk's note on lines 434-435.

¹⁵ Kirk (1990) notes the similarities that exist between the three-fold advance of Diomedes against Apollo and his final fourth repulsion with the three-fold charges of Patroklos at 16.702-706, 784-786, and Achilleus at 20.445-449. Dione's foreboding speech to Aphrodite emphasizes the risk that Diomedes takes in confronting divinities even when it is sanctioned by other gods. This foreboding seems to be confirmed by Patroklos' death directly after one of these three-fold advances (16.784-786), which takes place only 80 verses after a three-fold attack on a god (16.702-706). Achilleus warns Patroklos of this very possibility at 16.91-95. See notes on lines 436-439.

¹⁶ A brief note on Dione's comfort to Aphrodite is in order. Dione is not subtle in her opinion of Diomedes and the potential consequences he may find himself harvesting, even before he steps outside Athena's mandate. Among the hubristic mortals that she catalogues in her speech, she recounts Herakles' wounding of both Hera and Hades. Interestingly enough in her speech, she names him the "son of Amphitryon," thereby emphasizing his mortality and depriving him of his divine lineage in her story. Her diminishing of Herakles' lineage can only be maligning anything divine about Diomedes' lineage. As Kirk notes, she says of Diomedes something similar to what Skamandros will say to Achilleus at 21.214: "ὄς οὐκ ὄθεται' αἴσυλα ῥέζων" (5.403), "περὶ δ' αἴσυλα ῥέζεις ἀνδρῶν" (21.214-215). Both passages have the same sense of bitter helplessness. Dione exhorts Aphrodite to bear up under the injuries of mortals (5.381-383), and yet predicts his potential demise. It is a warning, and not a prophecy. There is little that Dione or Aphrodite can do, chiefly because of Athena's involvement in the situation (405). In the same sense, the Skamandros makes a reasonable plea to Achilleus to move his killing from his streams to the plain, having already endured a great amount of destruction in his waters. He cites support of the gods as the reason for his surpassing violence (21.215). See Kirk (1990): 103.

to some success, the god Apollo is not fighting back, but simply in a defensive posture over Aineias. It is certain that if Apollo did rouse himself up against Diomedes, the hero would find himself gruesomely outmatched. After the confrontation, Apollo summons Ares onto the battlefield to curb the hero's activity. He describes the nature of the assault as surpassing the usual capabilities of mortals, that he was "like more than a man" (5.459). The hero knowingly encounters the god against the instructions of Athena. He becomes accustomed to this new strength and fury and begins to adopt it as his own, conscious of his power, but not necessarily of its source. He suddenly is "like the gods in mind," willing to face immortals without fear.¹⁷ Thus ends Diomedes' *aristeia*.

Kirk (1990): 103 does make a claim that attacks on gods are against the natural order and "contravene Moira itself." The physical confrontation with Aphrodite is encouraged by Athena and sanctioned. Although a mere mortal challenging an immortal may be against the natural order, it cannot be against *Moira*. The gods do not attempt to cross Fate, and therefore it is impossible that Athena would sanction an unfated encounter. Mortals cannot go against fate, as is seen in Achilleus' final confrontation with Skamandros. To say that physical confrontations with immortals contravenes Fate itself does not seem to make much sense.

One other interesting thing to consider is Dione's claim that Diomedes is ignorant of the danger of attacking deities (5.405-409). She claims that he has no knowledge in his heart (οὐδὲ τὸ οἶδε κατὰ φρένα) of the consequences he could incur by his actions. Although it is not entirely clear if Diomedes has really learned anything from his encounter with Apollo, a debate emerges in his heart and spirit as he attempts to counteract the Will of Zeus later at 8.169-171 (μερμήριξε κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν). See Kirk (1990): 103.

¹⁷ According to Nagy (1979): 143-144, this is the climax of ritual antagonism between the hero and the god. Both Patroklos and Achilleus also encounter Apollo four times, and at the fourth time are labeled δαίμονι ἴσος. Whitman (1965): 114, eloquently summarizes Patroklos' comparisons to divinity, noting that his equality to gods is consistently tied by Homer with the edge of his life. One should recall Diomedes' encounter with Apollo and Dione's comforts to Aphrodite, as well as the threat of extermination by divinity which Apollo's warning and Dione's narrative show.

This similarity to divinity makes Diomedes an ambiguous entity. Evidence for his ambiguous identity and the confusion which his appearance sparks rests in the reaction that his *aristeia* elicits from Pandarus. At 5.180-191, Pandarus doubts Diomedes' identity, whether he is human or god. Although Jones does not agree, I find this as an incredible speech on the part of Pandarus. Jones (1996): 100 claims that Pandarus' speech does not show enough wonder or perplexity at Diomedes' identity. He sees Pandarus' vow to break his bow on his return home as mild frustration. This seems unlikely. Fenik (1968): 28 notes that there is no parallel to this vow or this speech in the rest of the *Iliad*, composed though it may be of typical elements. Pandarus is a designated archer, and therefore his bow is his heroic martial implement. Whitman (1965): 203 notes that the arms of a hero are part of his personality. For Pandarus to vow to break his bow would be

In the first river simile applied to Diomedes, only artificial boundaries are overcome and destroyed by the river. Diomedes is excellent enough to be mistaken for a god, as Pandaros indeed does. Athena gives him both fury against mortals and the ability to perceive gods as aids to him in his *aristeia*, and he excels those limits inherent in his mortality. After the encounter with Apollo, however, Athena is now nowhere to be found, and she does not come to Diomedes' aid as Hektor, Ares, and Enyo bear down upon him. The *aristeia* of Diomedes ends at his second river simile, and his moment of brilliance is extinguished.

Τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ῥίγησε βοῆν ἀγαθὸς Διομήδης·
ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀνὴρ ἀπάλαμνος ἰὼν πολέος πεδίοιο
στήη ἐπ' ὠκυρόω ποταμῷ ἄλλα δὲ προρέοντι
ἀφρῷ μορμύροντα ἰδὼν, ἀνά τ' ἔδραμ' ὀπίσσω,
ὡς τότε Τυδεΐδης ἀνεχάζετο

Diomedes of the great war cry shivered as he saw him
[Hektor],
and like a man in his helplessness who, crossing a great plain,
stands at the edge of a fast-running river that dashes seaward,
and watches it thundering into white water, and leaps a pace
backward,
so now Tydeus' son gave back ...
(5.596-600).

The movement from the first simile to the last shows a stark change.¹⁸ The first simile is grand in scale. The river simply destroys (σκεδάσσει) the dikes, nothing can contain the flow of the river (ἰσχανάω / ἔχω), and anything that attempts to obstruct the flow simply crumbles away underneath the force (κατερείπω). The destroyed objects are grand and beautiful (πολλὰ ἔργα κάλα). By the next simile, the power and grandeur of the first river is forgotten, and everything is humbled. The river is entirely confined in its power and destructive force. It is instead simply a natural transition of water from higher ground to the ocean (ὠκυρόω ποταμῷ ἄλλαδὲ προρέοντι). The water's only power is to stop the plans of an entirely resourceless man (ἀνὴρ ἀπάλαμνος), who cannot compare to the resourcefulness of the fair young man (αἰζήος). Diomedes is reduced in

as significant and stunning as if Aias vowed to cast off his shield or Achilles vowed to destroy his armor.

¹⁸ This pairing is recognized by Moulton as a dispersed sequence of similes. See Moulton (1977): 61-62.

grandeur from such a tremendous natural force to the victim of a mundane natural force.¹⁹ Whereas before he is capable of baulking the plans of the best mortals, he is now the least of mortals. Furthermore, the poet reminds his audience of Diomedes' insolence to Apollo. Just as Diomedes shrunk only a little from Apollo (ἀνεχάζετο τυτθὸν ὀπίσω),²⁰ so also the helpless man shrinks back from the river (ὀπίσω . . . ἀνεχάζετο).²¹ Once Athena leaves him, Diomedes no longer has the strength to wade into the battle lines, but instead retreats before the Trojan onslaught.

Diomedes, chastised by Apollo, begins to realize the error of standing against divinity alone, and advises those with him to retreat before Ares (5.600ff).²² He is likened to a man who is interrupted in the course of

¹⁹ Redfield (1994): 110, 143 sees this simile as comparing the raging river to Hektor. It should be noted that although this may be implied, Hektor is not directly referenced as a raging torrent. Scott (1974): 76 also sees this simile as comparing Hektor to the river, although he admits in his notes that Hektor is not directly referenced. Fenik (1968): 62 notes the peculiarity of this simile and compares it to the simile at 3.30, where Paris jumps back from Menelaos as a man who sees a snake. It seems odd to assert a comparison here of Menelaos to a snake, although Scott (2009): 72 recalls the snake simile applied directly to Hektor at 22.93. Here, however, Hektor is the direct referent of the snake simile at 22.93, and there is only an implication to Menelaos at 3.30.

²⁰ *Iliad* 5.443; Jones understates the significance of this passage as well. Apollo does not overwhelm Diomedes in combat, but merely throws him back enough for the full depth of his situation to sink in. The small distance which Diomedes retreats has less to do with a mortal underwhelmed by divine interaction than it has to do with the relative equality at which a divinely-inspired hero stands to a god. Jones claims that Diomedes does not retreat out of fear, but only to avoid Apollo's wrath. This seems contradictory. Why would he try to avoid Apollo's wrath if not out of the fear he has for it? The potential consequence that Apollo's wrath has for Diomedes is death and the end of his *aristeia*. The *kudos* of victory would be denied him and the *kleos* of poetry would be sufficiently diminished. See Jones (1996): 110.

²¹ *Iliad* 5.599-600

²² Whitman (1965) compares Hera's resistance to Zeus with Diomedes' resistance to immortal will. I make a further comparison: after his rebuke, Diomedes advises others to retreat with him in the face of Ares' assault. Hera, after her rebuke by Zeus, returns to Olympus and cautions the other immortals against interfering with Zeus' plans (134). To Whitman, Diomedes' daring in the face of immortal wrath is in correlation with the deities who support his enterprises, namely Athena and Hera. Both goddesses consistently resist Zeus' plan to glorify Achilleus because of the pain it will cause the Achaians (168-169). See also *Iliad* 8.425-431 and 15.103-112. Kirk (1990): 120 thinks it likely that Diomedes is not alone in noticing the gods that accompany Hektor's onslaught. This seems to contradict his earlier note for lines 597-600, where he notes that the simile emphasizes Diomedes' isolation and helplessness. He has to advise others to retreat with him. If Diomedes has fear at the sight, it would only seem logical that others would have

action that he wills by a natural boundary, one that cannot be altered by his strength alone and that will give him no account.²³ Where the previous river simile held Diomedes as the referent of a powerful river dashing its artificial boundaries, now Diomedes is the referent of a helpless man facing an insurmountable natural boundary.²⁴ The helpless man's fear is magnified by the sight of the river's foaming waters, just as Diomedes' helplessness in the face of divinity is magnified by his awareness of Ares and Enyo. Where before Diomedes is an ambiguous entity in the relations between mortals and immortals, his mortal and inferior position is reinforced. Fear of his own mortality and his sense of loneliness in the face of divine and mortal wrath drives him back.²⁵ Gods have no fear whatsoever of death, and the injuries they receive are surprising and painful, but ultimately nuisances that are quickly resolved. The gods, in their battles, do not consider the consequences of injuries. Zeus garners fear because he holds the power of casting gods down eternally to Tartarus, the closest equivalent the gods have to the consequences of death. Diomedes decides to escape in the face of

fled long before him. The ability given to him by Athena, to recognize immortals, has not left him, and it only makes sense that he is the sole interpreter of Hektor's newly revived assault.

²³ Whitman (1965): 139-140 sees the eventual conflict between Achilles and Skamandros as a threat to extinguish the fire of Achilles' *aristeia*. Although Diomedes' does not metaphorically dive into the river as Achilles' does in actuality, baulking the god's wishes, he must later be reassured and encouraged by Athena before he is willing to head back into battle again.

²⁴ Scott (2009): 108 notes that other subjects of similes typically describing strength and martial success are reversed to show Greek weakness at the latter end of Book 5:

“Prior to the entrance of Ares, Diomedes fought like a lion and a god, but as soon as the Greeks are halted, the winds sleep, the lions die, the tree similes connote death, and a simile subject that has described the strength of Diomedes, the river torrent, illustrates the limitations of the Greek effort.”

²⁵ Jones (1996): 110 notes that Diomedes is not said to have fear of Apollo, but is only interested in avoiding the god's wrath. This seems slightly counterintuitive. If Diomedes retreats in front of Apollo to avoid his wrath, this would mean that he is at least slightly conscious of the consequences of his action, and he tries to refrain from incurring those consequences. It only makes sense that his awareness of these consequences causes him some measure of anxiety or fear, and thus motivates him to retreat. It cannot be said conclusively, however, that Diomedes feels this fear and anxiety. He is like the gods in mind, willing to encounter the immortals without fear. His “cool reaction,” as Jones puts it, occurs in the midst of his *aristeia*. Just as Achilles must later begin to wrestle with the terms of his own mortality in the midst of the Skamandros, so Diomedes perhaps begins to understand his own limitations and that he has already exceeded them. In general, Jones frames his article as examining the interactions between humans and gods.

fear, unwilling to court the possibility of death.²⁶ Apollo's anger gives him fear, and his retreat from the god is out of fear of Apollo's wrath. The potential that the moments of a mortal life hold for death determine to a great degree the decisions made, just as Diomedes' decision to retreat from Apollo and then from Ares is motivated by this agonizing potential. It is as if during his *aristeia*, Diomedes entirely forgets his mortality. This is opposed to other heroes, like Sarpedon, who are acutely aware of the death spirits that hang about them.²⁷ The blazing hero in his *aristeia* appears to become reacquainted with his mortality to his own great astonishment.

The Aiantes

Telamonian Aias is assigned a single river simile during his stubborn defense of the crumbling Achaian lines against Hektor's advance. In many ways, the Aiantes really represent the state of the army by their involvement in defense or reinforcement. Trapp notes that Aias is the "great defensive warrior of the Achaeans" and his "chief prowess... is displayed when the Greeks are being hard pressed and driven back."²⁸ Here Aias is the strong and valiant 'bulwark of the Achaeans.'²⁹ His role as the bulwark of the Achaians represents when the Greeks are most on the defensive, and therefore the time in Zeus' plan to glorify Achilles when Patroklos approaches his doom. The Achaeans assemble around him as they would garrison a tower or a wall.³⁰ As the Wall of the Achaians sustains the Trojan onslaught, the Aiantes are the warriors in high demand, called upon at multiple points in the battle to stage an adequate defense, and really become the Wall's greatest defense. Telamonian Aias manages even to wound Hektor with a large boulder and give encouragement to the Greeks.³¹ Book 15 leaves the audience with the poignant image of Aias standing amongst half-burnt ships repelling the Trojan assault with a ship pike. It is then not

²⁶ Whitman (1965): 40 essentially agrees with this point. The limit that death poses for mortality is the reason why any human would try to restrain the passions of the spirit. Diomedes only pauses from his assault on Apollo because of his fear of death. He is willing to restrain his passions in order to continue living. Whitman notes that Achilles' disregard for the limitation of death allows him to become more godlike than man as he carries his passions to their extreme end.

²⁷ *Iliad* 12.326-328

²⁸ Fenik (1968): 49 notes a common "rebuke" pattern where either Hektor or Aineias is upbraided for abstaining from battle by a Lycian ally or Apollo in disguise, and the hero engages in the fighting, but the Trojans are eventually repulsed or caught in an even battle. In all cases, Aias is in the Greek counterattack.

²⁹ Trapp (1961): 273

³⁰ *Iliad* 11.591-594

³¹ *Ibid.* 14.409-424

out of place that in order for Zeus to glorify Hektor, Aias must be forced to retreat.

Book 11 is dominated by hunter/hunted and animal similes, therefore making this river simile stand out in the book. This single river simile describes Aias's attempts to quell the onslaught of the newly-revived Trojan army and their attempts to overwhelm lone Odysseus. Aias is not engulfed in divine flame, nor is a god urging him forward as in the case of Diomedes. On the contrary, the entire book spells for the Achaians a sudden turning-point in the battle, as Hektor is given the glory by Zeus to approach the ships and beat back most of the greatest of the Achaians, including Agamemnon, Odysseus, and Machaon.

Αἴας δὲ Τρώεσσιν ἐπάλμενος εἶλε Δόρυκλον
 Πριαμίδην νόθον υἷόν, ἔπειτα δὲ Πάνδοκον οὔτα,
 οὔτα δὲ Λύσανδρον καὶ Πύρασον ἠδὲ Πυλάρτην.
 ὡς δ' ὅποτε πλήθων ποταμὸς πεδίον δὲ κάτεισι
 χειμάρρους κατ' ὄρεσφιν ὄπαζόμενος Διὸς ὄμβρω,
 πολλὰς δὲ δρυὺς ἀζαλέας, πολλὰς δὲ τε πεύκας
 ἐσφέρεται, πολλὸν δὲ τ' ἀφυσγετὸν εἰς ἄλα βάλλει,
 ὡς ἔφεπε κλονέων πεδίον τότε φαίδιμος Αἴας,
 δαιζῶν ἵππους τε καὶ ἀνέρας· οὐδέ πω Ἐκτωρ
 πεύθετ', ἐπεὶ ῥα μάχης ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ μάρνατο πάσης
 ὄχθας πὰρ ποταμοῖο Σκαμάνδρου, τῆ ῥα μάλιστα
 ἀνδρῶν πίπτε κάρηνα, βοῆ δ' ἄσβεστος ὀρώρει
 Νέστορά τ' ἀμφὶ μέγαν καὶ ἀρήϊον Ἰδομενεῖα.

But Aias leaping upon the Trojans struck down Doryklos,
 Priam's son, but a bastard, and thereafter stabbed Pandokos,
 and so also Lysandros and Pyrasos and Pylartes.
 As when a swollen river hurls its water, big with rain,
 down the mountains to the flat land following rain from the sky god,
 and sweeps down with it numbers of dry oaks and of pine trees
 numbers, until it hurls its huge driftwood into the salt sea;
 so now glittering Aias cumbered the plain as he chased them,
 slaughtering men and horses alike, nor yet had Hektor
 heard, since he was fighting at the left of the entire battle
 by the banks of Skamandros river, where more than elsewhere
 the high heads of men were dropping, and the tireless clamour
 rising about tall Nestor and Idomeneus the warlike
 (11.489-501).

The simile follows the same essential motion as the simile at 5.87. Aias makes his offensive move, chasing the Trojans away from the Achaians, and is then compared to a swollen river (ὡς δ' ὅποτε πλήθων ποταμὸς δὲ κάτεισι χειμάρρους), just as Diomedes is compared to a river swollen with winter rains (ποταμῷ πλήθοντι ἔοικῶς χειμάρρω).³² The difference between the two similes lies chiefly in the objects that the rivers destroy. Whereas the river in Book 5 destroys works of mortals, the river in Book 11 sweeps away the detritus of nature, the dry oaks (πολλὰς δὲ δρυὸς ἀζαλέας) and pine trees (πολλὰς δὲ τε πεύκας). Like the simile at 5.597, the natural motion of the river is emphasized. It accelerates the debris in its current from the mountains (κατ' ὄρεσφιν) into the sea (εἰς ἄλλα), where the dry oaks and pine trees will become driftwood. The source of the river is Zeus' rain (Διὸς ὄμβρω), as was the source of the strength of the river at 5.87. The plains upon which both the warriors fight and the respective rivers spill are cluttered with the debris of the rivers' destruction and the destruction of the heroes. Aias and Diomedes fill up the plains of battle with corpses (κλονέω).

The imagery is set in the natural world, although the occurrences within them are violent and rare. The rivers themselves are over-full and violent, and not representative of rivers as a whole.³³ These rivers depart from the norms that men are used to, or the resourceful young men of 5.87ff would not have put their clearly inferior works in its path. Swelling beyond their normal boundaries, they cause destruction and alter both the artificial landscape and the natural landscape. Furthermore, these rivers are directly augmented by Zeus, and his violent storms provide the impetus behind their hydraulic force. Nevertheless, despite the seemingly unusual course of the rivers, they seem nevertheless to follow the natural cycle. Every winter, the extra rains produce this effect. This is an expected and entirely natural revolution of the seasons. In the same way, the heroes are not explicitly said to be crossing boundaries natural to their own limitations. Diomedes is given power by Athena, in the same way that the river he is compared to is given extra water by Zeus. He becomes an ambiguous entity in the world of mortals and immortals, identified as neither one nor the other. Ablaze with the glory that Athena plans to give him, he is clearly super-mortal. Aias needs no augmentation, but achieves this power by his own will.³⁴ Several lines

³² *Iliad* 5.87-88

³³ They are not "sweet-running," or ἔνυρρηίς.

³⁴ There is evidence to indicate that Aias' ordered retreat may in fact be an interrupted *aristeia*. Scott (2006): 108 notes that the river simile is typically associated with heroic strength. Only previously, a list of Trojans slain by Aias is laid out before us, "a customary marker of an *aristeia*." Even in retreat, Aias can still manage to halt the momentum of Hektor's assault, but does not receive his *aristeia*. Zeus quenches that status for Aias.

beforehand, Aias is explicitly denoted as *ισόθεος φώς*, a “man like a god” (11.472). He strides forward to defend his comrades, and in this action, can be compared to a river in winter spate. Aias makes a push against the Will of Zeus, with mild success. His stubbornness in the face of adversity is yet another part of his virtue as “bulwark of the Achaians.”³⁵ Later, however, Zeus puts fear into his heart and the great hero retreats before the Trojans. It is only when Hektor turns his chariot around to sweep against Aias that the hero finds himself in fear. Hektor and Aias have already come to a standoff before, and it comes to reason that Aias would become a major obstacle against Hektor’s rush towards the ships. Zeus has to instill the fear in Aias to ensure the retreat and the temporary excellence of Hektor.

The reliance that rivers have upon the rains of Zeus forms a strange metaphor for the power that Zeus grants to heroes.³⁶ Aias’ strength and courage continues to rage as long as it doesn’t conflict with Zeus’ will. Zeus has, however, granted to Hektor that he take to the Achaians ships and put them to the flame. Aias is powerless to obstruct Zeus’ will and is drawn back in fear, despite his own courageous attempts to resist it. Where Diomedes willfully obstructs Apollo’s will and knowingly encounters the god to get to his opponent, Aias has committed no such error, but is instead

³⁵ Aias is likened to a stalwart lion and to an intractable ass (11.548-565). The lion, denied of his opportunity to feast, is nevertheless reluctant to retreat. The ass is probably the most striking image, and maybe the most misinterpreted. Aias is stubborn in the face of his opponents, and really the simile emphasizes more the helplessness of the Trojans against him. The Trojans are mere children with sticks. Even when these rods are broken on the ass’ back, it does nothing to dissuade the ass from feeding on the crops. Trapp notes that these two similes are key pieces of evidence used by scholars to paint an unflattering image of Aias as a stupid and clumsy warrior whose sole virtue is in his size and strength. As Trapp (1961): 272 argues: “It is not stupid obstinacy that Homer portrays here, but rather stout resistance against the enemy striving to overwhelm him.”

³⁶ Fenno (2005): 492 sees the weather phenomena surrounding Zeus as especially significant (my emphasis):

“As Zeus supervises the war from atop Ida (8.47, 11.183), the thunder, lightning, and wind that repeatedly emanate from the mountain in the direction of the Greek ships are interpreted by both sides as portending Trojan success in battle (8.75-77, 170-71, 175-76; 12.252-57). In general, a rainbow may be seen as a Zeus-sent portent of war or stormy precipitation . . . , and lightning is a sign that Zeus is preparing either war or else torrential rain, hail, or snow (10.5-8).

Thus the Iliadic imagination explicitly conceives of battle as symbolically parallel to Zeus’ precipitation.”

Scott (2009): 82 emphasizes the pervasive power of Zeus in this part of the *Iliad* and establishes it as a major theme of Book 11.

unknowingly obstructing the Will of Zeus. The power of this simile is concentrated in the connection with nature and Zeus. The river, by its nature, drives itself down to the plain and to the sea, causing great destruction. However, its power originates ultimately in the rain of Zeus, just as the effectiveness of Aias' intervention is dependent upon the Will of Zeus.³⁷

Book 11 and Book 17 share in common the favor that Zeus has for the Trojans and the determination to magnify Hektor's strength. The body of Patroklos lies naked between the two armies, and schemes develop by both sides to gain it. The stubbornness of the Aiantes does not let up even in the face of Zeus' thunderbolt. Instead, Telamonian Aias makes a defiant prayer to Zeus requesting that he lift the mist that encloses the battle and allow them to at least die in the daylight. The Aiantes serve an almost identical purpose as Aias served in Book 11. They hold off the Trojan attack, protecting an orderly retreat, scattering the Trojans as these try to close in on them. Just as the lion at 11.480-481 scatters the scavengers from the deer's corpse, so at 17.725-729 does the boar constantly turn about and scatter the dogs that are tracking him in front of the main group of hunters. At each point, it is an orderly retreat. A rout is prevented by Aias constantly moving back to scatter the pursuers. At 17.746-753, the Trojans are likened to many rivers on a plain in collision with a great rock ridge that divides the plain evenly.

ὡς οἱ γ' ἔμμεμαῶτε νέκυν φέρον. αὐτὰρ ὀπισθεν
 Αἴαντ' ἰσχανέτην, ὡς τε πρῶν ἰσχάνει ὕδωρ
 ὑλῆεις πεδίοιο διαπρύσιον τετυχηκῶς,
 ὅς τε καὶ ἰφθίμων ποταμῶν ἀλεγεινὰ ῥέεθρα
 ἴσχει, ἄφαρ δέ τε πᾶσι ῥόον πεδίων δὲ τίθησι
 πλάζων· οὐδέ τί μιν σθένει ῥηγνύσι ῥέοντες·
 ὡς αἰεὶ Αἴαντε μάχην ἀνέεργον ὀπίσσω
 Τρώων·

...so these, straining, carried the dead man away, and behind them
 the two Aiantes held them off, as a timbered rock ridge
 holds off water, one that is placed to divide an entire plain,
 which, though flood-currents of strong rivers drive sorely against it,

³⁷ This simile may display the natural order that exists between the plans of mortals and immortals. Scott (2006): 111 suggests that Book 11 as a whole ultimately displays the natural martial superiority of the Achaians diminished by the plans of Zeus. Zeus perverts the natural order that exists between the armies of men and heroes, but his superiority and strength over mortals represents a natural paradigm.

holds them off and beats back the waters of them all to be scattered
 over the plain, and all the strength of their streams cannot break it;
 so behind the Achaians the Aiantes held off forever
 the Trojan attack
 (17.746-753).

The Aiantes' stubborn resistance in the face of the divinely-supported Trojans again holds the same natural elements as the simile applied to Aias in Book 11. The Aiantes are a wooded ridge holding off the swollen rivers, reversing the image applied to Aias in Book 11. Aias is defiant and works against the apparent Will of Zeus and straining against the glory he gives to the Trojans. The swollen rivers, fed by the storms of Zeus, do not have the same destructive power. In fact, as Edwards notes, this is the only river simile in the *Iliad* where the river is relatively impotent.³⁸ The glorification of Hektor and the Trojans is swiftly coming to an end, and the end of Book 17 sees the last time where the Trojans have the upper hand. Struggling to get the body of Patroklos back to Achilles, this resistance to the apparent Will of Zeus nevertheless is a necessary event for the greater purpose to be fulfilled. Suddenly, the power of the Trojans finds a rock ridge that it cannot overcome. The body of Patroklos will be retrieved by the Achaians, and soon afterwards the fire of Achilles will be apparent.

Book 21: Achilles and Skamandros

There are two realms in which rivers flow in the *Iliad*, one in simile, and the other in the narrative events of the epic itself. The turbulent river is an image that, although actual destruction and disturbance by rivers are not present within the narrative before Book 21, suddenly leaps out from simile into reality.³⁹ In simile, rivers are a destructive and terrifying natural force

³⁸ Edwards (1991): 747-751: "River-similes all depict storm-swollen torrents... This is the only instance where the fury of the river is checked and rendered harmless."

³⁹ As Whitman (1965): 118-119 notes:

"It is difficult to know whether the passage ought to be read as action or image. But the real point is that the distinction has broken down, as it often does in Homer. Since all his action is imagistic, it is no surprise to find on occasion that his images also act. Such passages are bold indeed; a few, such as the *Iliad's* Fight in the River, are unintelligible unless read as acting images. They announce the triumph of the poetic scheme over every naturalistic consideration."

The Skamandros later becomes an acting image out of the preceding similes, just as the progress of the fire of battle and heroic action will culminate in the actual fires of the sacking of Troy. There are certain areas of the *Iliad* where it is unclear whether the simile denotes an actual similarity and transformation or is simply descriptive. Edwards (1991)

connected either directly or indirectly to some immortal ruling power. However the battle between the divine river and mortal hero brings to the narrative the two parallels that the similes make evident. The antagonism between gods and mortals takes place in the narrative, while the tension between nature and mortals is evident in the simile. In Book 21, these two conflicts are merged into one battle.

The imagery of the previous river similes and narrative events converge in the River Battle. This continuity of the imagery is evident in Book 20, and these similarities anticipate a similar conflict for Achilles as that of Diomedes and of Aias against immortal power. Diomedes' *aristeia* and Aias' confrontation with the divine have displayed the mortal conflict with the natural world and mortal conflict with divinity. The images associated with Achilles' *aristeia* evoke the heritage of imagery from these previous episodes. At 20.490, the following simile is applied to him:

Ὡς δ' ἀναμαιμάει βαθέ' ἄγκεια θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ
 οὔρεος ἀζαλέοιο, βαθεῖα δὲ καιεταὶ ὕλη,
 πάντη τε κλονέων ἄνεμος φλόγα εἰλυφάζει,
 ὥς ὁ γε πάντη θῦνε σὺν ἔγχει δαίμονι ἴσος
 κτεινομένους ἐφέπων· ῥέε δ' αἵματι γαῖα μέλαινα.

As inhuman fire⁴⁰ sweeps on in fury through the deep angles
 of a drywood mountain and sets ablaze the depth of the timber
 and the blustering wind lashes the flame along, so Achilles
 swept everywhere with his spear like something more than a mortal
 harrying them as they died, and the black earth ran blood.
 (20.490-494).

and Dietrich (1983): 56-57 note the ambiguity of 19.350-351, when Athena comes down from Olympus like a hawk. Edwards (1991): 30:

“ἔϊκυῖα usually implies a metamorphosis, but her purpose and action suggest that the poet intends only to emphasize her speed.”

In any case, the reality of the simile and the reality of the Trojan war at times appear to converge. The imagery of the similes gain momentum and spring to life in the narrative. In other instances, the distinction between simile and reality can be ambiguous, as in the case with 19.350-351.

⁴⁰ “θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ” is used 12 times of fire in the *Iliad*; it is only used of the destructive fire Hektor wishes to bring to the ships (12.177, 12.441, 15.597 [θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ ἐμβάλοι ἀκάματον]), of Achilles in a fire simile (20.490ff.), Hephaestus' fire in Book 21 (342, 381), and the divine fire which consumes Patroklos' pyre (23.216). In each case, divinity controls the blaze of the fire, not mortals. Mortals are only granted this fire, but have no part in its control.

The simile applied to Aias in Book 11 is brought to mind as the mountain of dry wood (οὔρεος ἀζαλείοιο)⁴¹ is put to flame. The blustering wind (κλονέων ἄνεμος) also recalls the scattering of the Trojans (κλονέων πεδίων)⁴² as Aias advances upon them. Diomedes' short *aristeia* is also directly remembered. Diomedes' charge up the plain (θῦνε γὰρ ἄμ πεδίων)⁴³ echoes the current *aristeia* of Achilles, who like Diomedes is also denoted as "more than mortal" (θῦνε σὺν ἔγχεϊ δαίμονι ἴσος). The flowing of rivers is ominously mirrored in the flowing of the blood along the ground (ρέε δ' αἵματι γαῖα μέλαινα).⁴⁴

The confidence Achilles has in his strength as a fighter against such an opponent as Skamandros is rooted in the prophecy relayed to him by his mother Thetis.⁴⁵ His pursuit of the fulfillment of this morbid prophecy is driven by his desire for revenge against Hektor. This ambition, regardless of the preservation of his own life and of returning home, is spoken in no mean terms. The plan that Zeus had to honor Achilles is of no benefit to him now that Patroklos has been taken.⁴⁶ His life is no longer worth living, save one sole objective. This does not mean, however, that Achilles has entirely given up his claims on life. His thirst for revenge does not share the same place in his soul as his resignation of life. The desire to kill Hektor outweighs his desire for life, but it has not been exterminated in him.

κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι ὅππότε κεν δὴ
Ζεὺς ἐθέλη τελέσαι ἢδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι.

... then I will accept my own death, at whatever
time Zeus wishes to bring it about, and the other immortals
(18.115-116).

The temporal adverb τότε emphasizes the conditional nature of his acceptance. He will only begin to accept his mortality when Hektor lies dead.

ὦς καὶ ἐγὼν, εἰ δὴ μοι ὁμοίη μοῖρα τέτυκται,
κείσομ' ἐπεὶ κε θάνω· νῦν δὲ κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἀροίμην

So I likewise, if such is the fate which has been wrought for me,
shall lie still, when I am dead. Now I must win excellent glory...
(18.120-121).

⁴¹ Cf. *Iliad* 11.494: πολλὰς δὲ δρυὸς ἀζαλέας

⁴² *Ibid.* 11.496

⁴³ *Iliad* 5.87

⁴⁴ Cf. *Iliad* 5.88: ὅς τ' ὤκα ρέων ἐκέδασσε γεφύρας; 5.598: ἄλα δὲ προρέοντι

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 18.95-96. Thetis here mourns Achilles, as he has now determined to take revenge on Hektor.

⁴⁶ *Iliad* 18.79-93

Achilleus plans to win *kleos*, or the glory that will be brought to him by the memory of his exploits in song. He does not have any desire for the glory about which he may boast (*eukhos*), or the glory that comes from the victory of a single battle or encounter. *Eukhos* can only last in the voice of the warrior. Once he is dead, his boasts are fruitless. Indeed, his boasts can even be unmerited. *Kudos* is grand and glorious victory in battle, and is the glory that Hektor seeks. Hektor, however, wishes to remain alive at the end of the Trojan war, to relish in his victory. *Kleos* can be won with infamy and with glorious deeds, but it is the responsibility of those who succeed the hero in death to recount and proliferate. He does not wish to find reason to vaunt, and he does not wish for the victory in battle.⁴⁷ Rather, he seeks vengeance for Patroklos and the immortality granted to him by the memory of men. His determination to fulfill the prophecy is rooted in his desire for revenge. The result of his vengeance, the guarantee of his own death, is merely a coincidence. It is not certain that Achilleus has released the determination to live just yet. His very desire to live on in song speaks to his hopes of living beyond the fate of all men, beyond death. Only after Hektor is dead (τότε) will this become a chief consideration.

As Achilleus is in the midst of routing the Trojans, he is able to split the Trojan army into two contingents. One is headed directly towards the Skaian gates. Their only obstacle is the mist that Hera wraps them in in an attempt to halt their retreat from Achilleus. The Skaian gates, and Hektor, are in direct reach of Achilleus' wrath. Instead of hastening towards the object of his revenge, he instead decides to turn to the Trojans who have tumbled into the Skamandros river. The linear trajectory of Achilleus' *aristeia* is halted. Instead, it has become stuck in the river, circling in the waters (τύπτε δ' ἐπιστροφάδην).⁴⁸ It would seem then that Achilleus hesitates. The great Pelian ash spear rests against the trees lining the bank (21.17-18). He stops to collect twelve Trojans to put on the pyre of Patroklos, and here it is said that he is tired with the work of his slaughter (21.26-28). The clamour in the river is a distraction from his real objective, Hektor. He is no longer chasing Hektor but instead is running errands for Patroklos' funeral. It is unclear if Achilleus is committed to his own mortality. He delays his vengeance for unspecified reasons, and thereby delays his own demise.

Achilleus confronts two different prominent warriors along the banks of the Skamandros, Lykaon and Asteropaios. In the confrontations that both heroes have with death, a greater juxtaposition could not be drawn. Lykaon begs Achilleus to spare him, but seeing that the warrior is past taking prisoners

⁴⁷ On *eukhos* and *kleos*, see Nagy (1979): 44-45, 148.

⁴⁸ *Iliad* 21.20

for ransom, in a last sign of resignation, leans back and spreads his hands, ready to receive the fatal blow. He will not give Achilles resistance as he meets his fate. Thus Lykaon dies.⁴⁹ Asteropaios, inspired by the Skamandros river to fight Achilles, fights to the last to extricate the Pelian spear from the river bank so that he might stave off death. These attempts are futile, however, and he is killed from up close with the sword. The encounter itself echoes previous heroic encounters with gods. Four times, Asteropaios attempts to wrench Achilles' spear, the weapon that cannot be brandished by any other mortal, to save his own life. The verses recall Diomedes' encounter with Apollo, and Achilles' encounter with Apollo. All endeavors turn out to be futile. Although each of the heroes strains, they cannot reach their desired goal. For Asteropaios, however, it is a much humbler goal than to confront a god. He merely wishes to have an implement with which to defend himself, heroic though this implement may be. Asteropaios cannot accept his own doom, and he is even willing to try hopelessly to handle a heroic tool beyond his capabilities. Lykaon, on the other hand, though unwilling to die, nevertheless accepts his fate in a scene that is rarely rivaled in the *Iliad*. These two opponents appear to indicate two conflicting elements in Achilles' soul. Achilles does not choose death because he no longer cares about life. He decides to fulfill this prophecy to avenge Patroklos. He fears Aineias' spear-throw, a senseless fear, given that the armor that he now wields is an entirely immortal gift, incapable of being penetrated by mortal weaponry. The wound given to him by Asteropaios is much like the wound that is given to Aphrodite. In both cases, the disparity between mortals and immortals is implied. The gods are deathless, and therefore cannot have blood.⁵⁰ The strike on Aphrodite's wrist may be just as painful, but it cannot result in anything more serious. Achilles, as he is struck by Asteropaios' spear, is confirmed to be mortal. This is the only wound he receives in the *Iliad*, but it nevertheless confirms for us, and for him, that he is not divine. He is a man who can die. If Achilles is trying to undertake this venture against Hektor without having resolved in himself the certainty of his own death, he is trying to accomplish what Zeus will not dare to accomplish – resistance against Fate.

The River Fight itself holds elements of previous river similes, and recalls specifically Diomedes' confrontation with Apollo. Although Achilles is not the referent of a river simile in the *Iliad*, his destructive *aristeia* is similar to the movement and sounds of rivers. For example, the Skamandros pleads for

⁴⁹ Lykaon is a kind of friend to Achilles, addressed as such by him, a companion that shares the same eventual fate as his slayer, victim of the same law of mortality. See Whitman (1965): 160.

⁵⁰ Benardete (2000): 56

Achilleus to bring his destruction out into the plain (ἐλάσας πεδίον),⁵¹ just as previous rivers in simile have rushed out into the plain.⁵² The destruction that Achilleus will rage, μέμμερος, is similar to the sound of the crashing waters, μορμύρω.⁵³ These repetitive elements help to link the rivers preceding Book 21 with the climax of river-hero conflict.

Diomedes and Achilleus both encounter Apollo in similar scenes. Hektor, angered at the slaying of his brother Polydoros (20.419ff), takes up the sword against Achilleus (423ff), throws a spear which is deflected by Athena (438ff), and when Achilleus charges him, Apollo sweeps Hektor up and hides him (443ff). Achilleus then attacks Apollo four times before relenting (446ff).⁵⁴ Diomedes' unsuccessful assault against Apollo is all too similar. However, unlike Diomedes, Achilleus does not find this a great hindrance to his *aristeia*, and he feels no humbling.⁵⁵ Instead, it is an interference that only delays the inevitable. The same fear does not affect him.

Achilleus' battle with Skamandros emphasizes the magnitude of the hero's endeavours, as the narrative prepares the reader by recalling Diomedes' excesses. With the memory of Diomedes' repulsion by Apollo, the reader sees Achilleus proceed to push into the river itself, another ominous echo of previous events resounding as he splashes into the Skamandros' current. Although Apollo does not yet confront Achilleus in Book 20, Achilleus charges in like more than a man (ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἴσος).⁵⁶ Now, in Book 21, Achilleus leaps into the Skamandros like more than a mortal (δαίμονι ἴσος).⁵⁷ The river's anger has been stirring at the slaughter of two men born of rivers and at the slaughter of the Trojans in his currents. The tension builds to a breaking point as Achilleus leaps in carelessly where Diomedes would have given way long before. When Skamandros directly confronts Achilleus, pleading with him to move his destruction to the plain, Achilleus refuses and once more is said to be "like something more than mortal" (ἐπέσσυτο δαίμονι ἴσος).⁵⁸ At this point, the river reacts, and rouses itself to action. Just as Apollo struck back Diomedes' shield, so the Skamandros dashes itself against Achilleus' shield (21.241). Diomedes is also frequently said to be δαίμονι ἴσος, and he too is confronted by

⁵¹ *Iliad* 21.217

⁵² Cf. 5.87, 5.997, 11.492

⁵³ *Ibid.* 5.599

⁵⁴ Compare 16.704-706 and 20.447-448.

⁵⁵ Richardson (1993): 10-11 notes the basic parallelism between Diomedes and Achilleus.

⁵⁶ *Iliad* 20.447

⁵⁷ *Iliad* 21.18

⁵⁸ *Ibid.* 21.227

both Apollo and Ares.⁵⁹ Apollo requests of Ares that he join the battle in order to limit Diomedes' destructive capabilities, on the basis of his aggression against divinity.

Diomedes opposes Apollo in the midst of his *aristeia*, but is not arrogant enough to mock the god himself. When warned, Diomedes retreats, having realized that he is not equal to a god. The enraged Achilles mocks Skamandros twice, once as he throws the body of Lykaon into the river (21.120-135), and next as he finishes off Asteropaios (184-204). After he destroys Lykaon, he ridicules the Trojans for the defense that they are able to expect from Skamandros. Despite the many sacrifices of bulls and horses, Skamandros still lies silent and unopposed to the action in his waters and on his banks.⁶⁰ This is an unwarranted mockery, as Skamandros fields his own hero against Achilles, Asteropaios. This is the closest that Achilles ever comes to being killed by a mortal, as Asteropaios is the only mortal capable of physically wounding Achilles. Nevertheless, Skamandros' warrior is no match for Achilles.⁶¹

Achilles assumes this divine power, but nevertheless appeals to the gods for strength when he is in trouble in the midst of Skamandros' overpowering currents. He appeals to the power of the prophecy, and to the events of fate which have not yet been fulfilled. The certainty of fate is the basis for his confidence (21.275-278). This is not the claim upon which he asserts his power over Asteropaios, however. It is his bloodline and his genealogical proximity to the king of gods as opposed to Asteropaios' potamic bloodline. His partaking in the blood of the chief of gods justifies his strength. Implicitly, however, he is also asserting superiority over rivers. He labels Skamandros as impotent and incapable of defending the Trojans (21.129-131). His claim can mean one of two things. Either the river will

⁵⁹ Ibid. 5.438, 5.459 (Ares is requested by Apollo to oppose Diomedes on this basis), and 5.884.

⁶⁰ Each of the antagonists to the immortals takes action first. Diomedes attacks Apollo, and Apollo responds. Achilles has to first do such damage to the river that Skamandros pleads with him to cease. According to Whitman, the gods are always dependent upon human action, hence the placement of the Theomachia after the River Battle. Achilles essentially starts the battle between the gods. By provoking Hera to send Hephaistos into battle, he starts the Theomachia. See Whitman (1965): 139-140.

⁶¹ The scene where Asteropaios tries to wrench the thrown spear from the river bank is eerily reminiscent of Diomedes' charge against Apollo (5.436ff), Patroklos' charge against Troy (16.702ff), and Achilles' assault against Apollo (20.445ff). It might be noted that, Patroklos makes three charges against the Trojans, and it is at the fourth that he is struck by Apollo (16.784ff). Asteropaios is also struck down by Achilles as he tries to pull out the spear from the bank for the fourth time.

give no help and is indifferent, or it is powerless against him. His further vaunt of superiority poses a great disparity between Skamandros and Zeus. Skamandros obviously cannot match the Olympians in power, as is later seen in the book, and so much the greater is he incapable of matching himself against Zeus. The gap of power between the compared progenitors is enormous. Even if Achilles is lesser than Zeus, by this vaunt he could be putting himself on the same plane as Skamandros in power and martial capability. His actions and attitude towards the river's warnings seem only to confirm this. Although Achilles is certain that he will conquer all in his path to the Skaian gates, he intentionally puts himself in the way of the river, claiming, both implicitly by his vaunts and explicitly by his actions, that he is stronger than a god.⁶² This claim is inevitably put to the test.⁶³ Diomedes experiences a proximity to divinity in his *aristeia* that causes a brief lapse in the awareness of his own identity, both for himself and for those around him. On the other hand, Achilles claims that he is more powerful than an immortal. Achilles has not, in any certain terms, resolved who he is. At times, he is a mortal with profound vision into the certainty of fate. At others, he is a super-mortal, whose abundant strength can vie with gods. The struggle with the river, however, resolves this conflict for him.

Just as Diomedes is surprised to find that his fighting strength does not last forever in the face of divinity, so is Achilles startled and frightened by the advent of a humble death at the bottom of the riverbed. Achilles sweeps into the midst of the river, striking around him in all directions. He has also approached a boundary. If he crosses the river, he will make certain his own death. In confronting the river, he challenges the immortal power of Skamandros against his own semi-divine power. This boundary is nevertheless impassable for even Achilles, and only with the strength of Athena, the encouragement of Poseidon, and the aid of Hephaistos can Achilles proceed against Troy.

Achilles, in his plea for help from Zeus, compares himself to a swineherd boy swept away by the torrential river.

⁶² Richardson (1993): 63 notes that Achilles' speech is a superb piece of rhetoric, but horribly miscalculated. Its arrogance downplays even the greatest of the ocean gods, Okeanos.

⁶³ Although Diomedes gives back from Apollo and hesitates to face Ares, it is clear that the antagonism between the hero and the immortals does not give Diomedes enough fear or foreboding that he continues to strive against divine will. As Hektor and the Trojans are given the day to rout the Achaians, Diomedes hesitates to accept it. Although Zeus thunders in recognition of the Trojans, Diomedes does not immediately retreat. He turns back three times before retreating, recalling his charge against Apollo. Cf. 8.167-171.

νῦν δέ με λευγαλέω θανάτῳ εἴμαρτο ἄλῶναι
 ἐρχθέντ' ἐν μεγάλῳ ποταμῷ ὡς παῖδα συφορβόν,
 ὄν ῥά τ' ἔναυλος ἀποέρση χειμῶνι περῶντα.

But now this is a dismal death I am doomed to be caught in,
 trapped in a big river as if I were a boy and a swineherd
 swept away by a torrent when he tries to cross in a rainstorm.
 (21.281-284).

Achilleus, by his own words, is no longer represented in the terms of an elemental force, but as a mere mortal overcome by these forces.⁶⁴ What is even more peculiar is his clear recognition of this fact. Diomedes gives back after Apollo's rebuke, and Aias feels the fear of Zeus instilled in him, and respective similes are applied to them by the poet. Significantly, Achilleus applies a simile to himself, assigning himself the fate of a mere mortal at the hands of merely elemental forces, an entirely inglorious death. Where formerly his immortal bloodline appears to give him the powers requisite to gods as he boasts before the Skamandros, now he is diminished and diminishes himself to a lowly mortal incapable of overcoming these same elemental and natural forces. There is a small difference that makes this comparison stand in a separate category from the content of the potamic similes that this paper has examined thus far. Diomedes is compared to a man at the edge of a river, thrown back in fear by the mighty waters that are in his way. Diomedes retreats from this boundary without stepping directly into it. Achilleus, on the other hand, is in the middle of the river. He is a swineherd boy who has not stepped back from the banks of the river, but is instead plunged into its heart. Achilleus has not been thrown back from the boundary, but is struggling for breath at its very center. Here, at this location in the Troad, Achilleus is facing certain death. This death is against fate, and this is what the gods are supposed to guard against, as Athena, Poseidon, Hera, and Hephaistos eventually do. Achilleus suddenly holds little to no confidence in the prophesied events. The staunch determination upon which he settled at the beginning of his *aristeia*, to kill Hektor and then die at the hands of Apollo, suddenly melts away. Not even this destiny can ensure Achilleus defeats immortals in battle. Only with the direct and terrible aid of other immortals can he

⁶⁴ Richardson (1993): 76: "In 282 ἐρχθέντα means 'trapped'. ὡς παῖδα συφορβόν stresses the pathetic and dishonourable nature of this fate."

Also Scott (2009): 70: "Achilleus reduces his own situation to a scene of absurd futility—making such a death equal to the passive result of a child's mistake."

march once again against Troy. Achilleus doesn't defeat Skamandros; Hephaistos does.

Achilleus has obviously not resolved in himself that he must die after he kills Hektor. His terror at the prospect of death at the hands of the gods confirms this (21.248). He is surprised and terrified that his fate should meet him so quickly. So great is this to him that with each wave that overpowers him, Achilleus assumes that all Olympus has now turned against him (21.265-269). Achilleus indeed has not resolved himself to death until he has killed Hektor. In the certainty given to him by the prophecy, he attempts deeds which are divine and immortal. In facing the certainty of his own death after his slaying of Hektor, he assumes that until then he is strong enough to vie with immortals. In assuming immortal power, Achilleus invites a world of circumstances beyond fate to occur, including his own premature death. It is proven to all beyond a doubt that Achilleus is indeed mortal, thus Homer's curt statement: θεοὶ δὲ τε φέρτεροι ἀνδρῶν (gods are stronger than mortals).

As Achilleus flees the river's wrath, a unique simile is applied to him. Perhaps what is most noticeable about this simile is the conception of size. Previously, Achilleus is compared to a great massive consuming fire, while the Trojans are only small locusts huddling in the water, magnifying the power and force of Achilleus, while diminishing the strength of the host of the Trojans. The next simile which is applied to Achilleus comes several hundred lines later, and has a similarly interesting size comparison. At 21.257, Achilleus is compared to a gardener trying to manipulate a stream of water for his purposes, and the rivulet simply runs out of control.⁶⁵ The action of the simile concerns the sudden chase that has begun between Achilleus and the Skamandros, the river in a position of definite advantage to Achilleus.

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἀνὴρ ὀχετηγὸς ἀπὸ κρήνης μελανύδρου
 ἄμ φυτὰ καὶ κήπους ὕδατι ῥόον ἡγεμονεύη
 χερσὶ μάκελλαν ἔχων, ἀμάρης ἐξ ἔχματα βάλλων·
 τοῦ μὲν τε προρέοντος ὑπὸ ψηφίδες ἅπασαι
 ὀχλεῦνται· τὸ δέ τ' ὄκα κατειβόμενον κελαρύζει
 χώρῳ ἔνι προαλεῖ, φθάνει δέ τε καὶ τὸν ἄγοντα·
 ὡς αἰεὶ Ἀχιλλῆα κινήσατο κύμα ῥόοιο

⁶⁵ It is interesting to note that, at the beginning of Diomedes' *aristeia*, he is compared to a star bathed in the Ocean stream. Also, just as the star to which Diomedes is likened rises bathed in the Ocean stream, so does the beginning of Achilleus' *aristeia* correspond with the sun's setting into the Ocean stream (see 18.202ff).

καὶ λαιψηρὸν ἔοντα· θεοὶ δὲ τε φέρτεροι ἀνδρῶν.

And as a man running a channel from a spring of dark water
 guides the run of the water among his plants and his gardens
 with a mattock in his hand and knocks down the blocks in the channel;
 in the rush of the water all the pebbles beneath are torn loose
 from place, and the water that has been dripping suddenly jets on
 in a steep place and goes too fast even for the man who guides it;
 so always the crest of the river was overtaking Achilles
 for all his speed of foot, since gods are stronger than mortals
 (21.257-264).

The simile itself is quite benign. The pastoral scene shows a gentle rivulet run out of control to the mild perturbation of the man guiding the stream.⁶⁶ The best that the stream can do is displace a few pebbles.⁶⁷ The man constitutes the larger, orchestrating figure, while the stream is merely the manipulated object. The stream is small and incapable of producing harm to either the gardener's project or to the gardener. The contrast is astonishing and only emphasizes the situation that Achilles finds himself in at this juncture in the epic. Although he boasts greatness over the river by his lineage, he is simply not able to make good on his claims (21.184ff). Supposing himself capable of baulking the river's will, he suddenly finds himself manipulated by the whims of Skamandros. Although he is indeed the man who has lost control over the rivulet, he is also in some ways the rivulet himself, running just out of the reach of the gardener. He is both powerless and pursued, desperate and impotent. The Skamandros tries to catch up with Achilles and overpower him and is just out of reach, just as the gardener can barely contain the stream. The obvious referent, Achilles, is contrasted to a greater being that is largely in control of his surroundings, but has suddenly found himself incapable of controlling a rivulet.

These two similes show a dynamic progression across the first 300 lines of the twenty-first book. Achilles' *aristeia* is in full progression and nearing its terminus: the encounter with Hektor. Just as quickly as Achilles goes head-to-head with the power of Skamandros, he no longer holds the terror and strength in the battle. He is no longer an unwearying fire, but a gardener. His sword which opens the throat of Lykaon and split

⁶⁶ Richardson (1993): 74-75 notes that this simile is particularly effective because of the contrast between the violence of the river and the peaceful gardening scene. Porter (1972): 14 pays especial attention to the juxtaposition between the peacefulness of the simile and the violence of the narrative, and cites both this simile and the corresponding simile at 21.346 ff as examples of his thesis.

⁶⁷ Compare the γέφυραι of 5.89 and the ἔχματα 21.259.

open the belly of Asteropaios has its only equivalent in the simile to the mattock, which in the hands of the gardener cannot stop the runaway stream. Achilleus has suddenly been reduced in stature in a gaping leap from an elemental phenomenon of destruction to an incompetent gardener, a mortal with no heroic stature whatsoever.

The thematic movement here is dual. On the one hand, the essential conflict between mortals and the natural world are expressed in Achilleus' powerlessness before the river. This is clearly expressed in the similes. The gardener and his mattock try fruitlessly to restrain the small rivulet. The swineherd boy is quickly swept away by the elemental power of the river. The natural world is not subject to the expressions of mortal will, even in its smallest manifestations.⁶⁸ On the other hand, the difference between mortals and immortals, the vague and ambiguous line that lies between them, is evident. As Achilleus storms on the plain during his divinely-bestowed *aristeia*, his overwhelming power dwarfs the stature of the mortals around him. He is an all-encompassing firestorm against tiny insects. Skamandros' power has the same ability to diminish Achilleus' own power in relation to his own. Although Achilleus finds it within himself to challenge the divine river, he is quickly routed and forced to turn to divinity for help. Even as the best of the Achaians, he is small in stature in comparison with a lower god. In a way, the gardener simile seems to reflect Achilleus' mindset. His evident strength convinces him that he has the power to directly challenge a god. He is the overwhelming, powerful figure in control of his environment, encompassing even the natural, the elemental, as well as the divine. However, even in this distorted comparison of his own strength, the man cannot have power over the elemental and the natural. The power simply slips from his grasp as the stream takes its own course and upsets the work and aspirations of the gardener.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ The hostility between man and nature is noted by Edwards (1991): 35-36 as one of the chief subjects of Homeric simile.

“Thus the majority of similes contain recurrent subject-matter depicting mankind in a losing struggle with nature... In most of the similes, the departure from the narrative brings not a change from violence to peacefulness, but a change from the Trojan plain to hill, lowland, farmer's sheepfold, forest or sea, from nobly-born chiefs to farmers and shepherds, and from conflict brought on by human folly to that arising from mankind's unending struggle to survive in an often hostile world.”

Edwards also notes that this hostility between nature and mankind finds its climax in the combat between Skamandros and Achilleus.

⁶⁹ The poetic ambiguity of referents is employed elsewhere in the *Iliad*; see Buxton (2004): 153-155.

Achilleus emerges from the river, his mortal status affirmed.⁷⁰ Divine aid and the certainty of fate spurs him onwards towards the city. He no longer tarries in the river, but heads directly for the Skaian gates. It is significant that Apollo distracts Achilleus and tries to bring him back to the river, the place of liminality and uncertainty. Although furious at the deception, Achilleus no longer assumes strength against immortals, and though he wishes strongly that he could punish Apollo, he only utters angry speech. He knows he doesn't have the strength, and that this is not fated for him to do (22.20). He does not run away from Apollo in fear, as Diomedes does, or as Aias, for he no longer fears the loss of his own life. He has resolved within himself his own death, and will no longer strive against fate. He will fulfill the prophecy by slaying Hektor, and then go down himself into Hades.

The boundary that Skamandros represents is both natural and divine. Apollo's warning to Diomedes is compared to a mortal stumbling upon the power of nature. Achilleus stumbles upon the power of nature and divinity in Book 21, bringing to narrative reality what had only previously been displayed in simile. However, the events in narrative do not forget the comparisons that came before, although there are some key differences. Where the overflowing rivers in the similes of Book 5 and Book 11 hold a tenuous place in the natural order, perhaps neither entirely natural nor entirely unnatural, Achilleus' slaughter is obstructing the natural flow of the Skamandros, and this clearly confounds the natural order. Whereas beforehand each and every river crashes unobstructed to the ocean, the Skamandros cannot find his way to the ocean. The Skamandros' streams are filled with the carnage of Achilleus' *aristeia* to the point at which

⁷⁰ Mackie (1998): 335 notes that the scholia show evident confusion as Achilleus emerges from the firestorm of Hephaistos unharmed. Mackie makes comparisons between Book 21 of the *Iliad*, the Homeric Hymn to Demeter, the *Aethiopsis*, and the *Argonautica*, and presses the conclusion that Achilleus' immersion in fire and water shows either a transition either between mortality to immortality (Demophon and Demeter, Achilleus and Thetis in the *Aethiopsis*, *Argonautica*) or a transition from life to death (the funeral pyre predicted for Achilleus in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*). Having been immersed in the boiling waters of the Skamandros and having withstood the flames of Hephaistos, Achilleus' final approach towards Troy is symbolically connected with his death and immolation. It also seems likely that the crossing of the river Skamandros is symbolic of a crossing into the Underworld. Whitman (1965): 17 notes the symbolic references to an Underworld descent in Book 24 as Priam goes across the Skamandros to retrieve Hektor's body. Mackie (1999): 493-495 compares the nature of the river Skamandros as it is clogged with bodies of Trojans and is victim to Achilleus' slaughter to the indicated natures of the rivers of the Underworld mentioned in the *Odyssey*.

streams cannot flow, and the river no longer can hold its natural course (οὐδέ τί πη δύναμαι προχέειν ῥόον εἰς ἄλα δῖαν).⁷¹ The natural tendency of the river to flow to the ocean is expressed in the god's desire to restore this flow.

The nature of rivers in the *Iliad* is divine; the elemental nature of the river affects the nature of the divinity. The river, of course, does not move in an ordered and determined fashion. It is a chaotic flowing force that sometimes works to its own detriment. Achilles grabs onto an elm tree in the hopes that it will save him, but the tree is torn from the bank and proceeds to further dam up the river (21.240ff). The river-god represents both a natural force and divinity, and the nature of the god owes the traits of his nature as much to divinity as to his natural element. As seen in the simile applied to Aias in Book 11, the river wreaks destructive force on the environment around it as well. However, where the swollen river of Book 11 sweeps its acquired debris down to the Ocean, Skamandros is now doubly obstructed. Skamandros is both a god and a river, representing both divinity and nature. Achilles encounters both in Book 21 and is brought low by both.

The natural and the divine are directly associated with each other in simile, and in narrative. Both diminish the strength of mortals. Although mortals attempt to harness nature and attain divine strength, both are either denied them or bring destruction upon them. Zeus is the father of all rivers, and the source of the swollen rivers. His rain nourishes the destruction that is visited upon the environments surrounding the rivers, both natural and human. They are mutually-reinforcing concepts that diminish mortals to their actual status. Nature bests both the least of mortals, the swineherd boy, and the greatest of mortals, Achilles. Divinity, although it deigns to grant mortals super-mortal power, withdraws it at will. When divinity is confronted and assailed by mortals, it easily restrains and pushes them back. Achilles, instead of winning the *kleos* he seeks in the destruction of Hektor, might have been stopped by the river. Instead of a great pyre and burial mound to win him *kleos* for all time, he would have found his burial mound in the mire of the river, hidden away from the sight of men. Athena gives Diomedes his divine power that he may win *kleos*, but just as easily is prepared to take it away from him when he supersedes his mandate. Only in joint effort with Athena can Diomedes encounter gods and win his *kleos*. Only when Athena and Poseidon come to the distressed Achilles, who has called upon Zeus, is he given the strength to gain glory.

Conclusion:

⁷¹ *Iliad* 21.219

Achilleus is given strength directly by Athena, in a revival scene similar to that of Diomedes.⁷² Athena and Poseidon come down in the likeness of mortals and give encouragement to Achilleus. Athena then provides him with the strength to continue forward. However, Skamandros will not let up despite the aid that the Olympians provide his antagonist. He calls upon the Simoeis, with the hopes that they can hide Achilleus away forever under the slime and ooze of the riverbed. Specifically, Skamandros hopes to steal Achilleus' chances at *kleos*. Already having rejected a safe *nostos*, Achilleus could also have his *kleos* stolen from his as well. Providing him with a hidden burial mound, the Achaians would never find him. Achilleus could potentially be forgotten by future generations, with no landmark to remind posterity of his existence. Just as Ilos' barrow is a landmark that is remembered, so Achilleus' barrow would perpetuate his *kleos*.

Ultimately, the strength of heroes holds an ambiguous place in the relationship between mortality and immortality. They are stronger than normal mortals and have greater communion with the gods of Olympus. They can recognize and be approached by immortals and are given direct divine aid. However, these heroes commit a very mortal flaw. Diomedes forgets the orders of Athena, and clearly surpasses his limits as a man. He forgets that his divine power is granted by Athena, and is not his own. He is an unsettled entity with no certain relationship to the world around him, both divine and mortal. His reminder prevents him from receiving the wrath of immortals, for the Olympian gods are not unknown for curbing the stature of mortals who have no respect for divinity. Aias, although he is by nature a powerful hero, nonetheless is made powerless by the fear which Zeus gives him. The "bastion of the Achaians" flees by the slightest urging from Zeus. Once confronted with death, a true absolute, they turn back.

The boundary that exists is both natural and divine. Heroes are naturally inferior to immortals, although they might be able to briefly strive to attain immortal status. The attempt to strive leads to only one outcome – defeat and suffering.⁷³ In the *Iliad*, mortals cannot long vie with nature for superiority. Their attempts to contain rivers are destroyed and made fruitless. Even here, however, nature is intimately connected with divinity - the ultimate sources of these rivers lie in the storms that Zeus sends. The gap between mortals and immortals is a natural disparity.

⁷² Cf. *Iliad* 5.115ff

⁷³ Whitman (1965): 142: "Achilleus' absolute, like every heroic absolute, finds its *telos*, or fulfillment, not in dislocating the world as it is, but in self-destruction."

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AN ARISTOTELIAN DEFENSE OF STRICT AKRASIA

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ABSTRACT

In this paper, I argue that Aristotle aims in the *Nicomachean Ethics* to refute Socrates and preserve appearances by proving the possibility of weakness of will. Drawing on the 'non-Socratic Aristotelian interpretation model' recently espoused by David Charles, I argue that Aristotle recognizes a type of agent who intentionally and knowingly acts against a previous decision. I draw attention to the fact that any explanation of weakness of will that appeals to a cognitive failure on the agent's part ignores the possibility that Socrates would simply reject that a case of actual *akrasia* had been explained. To preempt this Socratic move, I believe Aristotle has to allow for a rational akratic agent. I offer an explanation of how an agent can consistently hold two seemingly mutually exclusive conclusions about how to act. Finally, in response to a Davidsonian worry, I defend the view that an agent can act rationally in her akratic action.

1. Introduction: The defense of the strict *akratēs*

*Akrasia*¹ is defined in the most general case as an agent's performing an action in spite of the agent's decision against so acting. Socrates famously held² that no one could intentionally act wrongly in full knowledge of what the correct action was, a doctrine which denies outright the possibility of *akrasia* (at least under a certain definition of *akrasia* as strict³). While Socrates would concede that we regularly witness people behaving in ways that an outsider would recognize as wrong or contrary to the agent's wellbeing, he would explain that such actions result from ignorance of some vital piece or pieces of information on the agent's part. This ignorance denies the possibility that the agent intentionally performs any act which he recognizes as prevented by a previous decision.

Despite this Socratic doctrine, on a common sense level it seems we have to admit that we do encounter cases, both in our own experience and in that of others, where one acts directly against a certain belief or policy about what the thing to do is, even while holding that belief firmly in mind. I know I

1 Usually translated as 'weakness of will' or 'incontinence'

2 Cf. *Protagoras* 357b ff.

3 My 'strict' *akratēs* is similar to what some commentators call the 'clear-eyed' *akratēs*, with perhaps the main difference that my agent is rational in a way some other commentators reject.

should not have a fifth coffee today, but I do anyway.⁴ Aristotle maintains in the *Nicomachean Ethics* at 1145b27-8 that Socrates' argument 'contradicts things that appear manifestly'.⁵ Most recent commentators, I believe, have been uncharitable in their reading of Aristotle's discussion of this topic by unfairly saddling him with a position similar to that of Socrates. This Socratic position is usually attributed to Aristotle by explaining his account of *akrasia* with reference to some ignorance, unintentionality, or irrationality on the part of the weak *akratēs*. Such an explanation would allow Socrates simply to reject that a case of actual *akrasia* had been addressed. This is where the philosophical puzzle of *akrasia* kicks in. Can we preserve the appearance that in everyday life people knowingly do what they have decided not to do without attributing a brand of ignorance to them in our explanation? I believe that answering this question by meeting Socrates' challenge head-on is the task that Aristotle has set himself in Book VII of the *Nic. Eth.* I submit that in order to refute Socrates and preserve appearances, Aristotle has to account especially for one particular type of *akratēs* among the several types he discusses. This special type of *akratēs* is the strict akratic, a rational agent who intentionally performs an action contrary to a previous decision of which she is aware at the time of acting.

In §2 I will present textual evidence that Aristotle recognizes the strict *akratēs* as one of several possible variations on the theme of *akrasia*. I will then argue that he explains strict *akrasia* as the result of a problem the agent has with the *conclusion* of the first syllogism⁶ when encountered with whatever tempts her to disobey it. In §3 I will outline four Socratic theses that threaten the possibility of strict *akrasia*. I will then offer evidence that Aristotle's theory of practical reasoning successfully defeats three of these theses, before suggesting

4 Cf. Davidson pg. 100 for the thought that I can have the 'unclouded, unwavering judgement that my action is not for the best, all things considered' and yet perform it without an external compulsion to do so.

5 οὗτος μὲν ὁ λόγος ἀμφισβητεῖ τοῖς φαινόμενοις ἐναργῶς; all translations are by Irwin, except where otherwise noted.

6 I have decided to use the terms 'first' and 'second' syllogism, rather than the terms 'good' and 'bad' in order to abolish the moral undertone in many discussions of *akrasia*. One can imagine a case where someone has decided to live a life in accordance with principles normally considered immoral, but, as a result of a bad conscience, e.g., behaves occasionally against this decision. This thought experiment still introduces a moral element, but it challenges the usual view by placing morality on the wrong side. In this respect, I agree with Davidson when he says that *akrasia* 'is not essentially a problem in moral philosophy, but a problem in the philosophy of action' (pg. 102, n.1). It should be noted, however, that I take this to be a philosophical observation rather than an exegetical point. *Akrasia* to Aristotle had strong ethical significance. For a view questioning Davidson on this point, see Callard *Remoralizing Weakness of Will* (forthcoming).

that, contrary to some recent commentators⁷, Aristotle needs to accept the rationality thesis if he is to succeed in refuting Socrates. In response to a Davidsonian worry concerning this last point, in §4 I will address how it might be possible for the *akratēs* to hold two seemingly mutually exclusive rational propositions simultaneously. My treatment of this point will bear some similarities to contemporary externalist accounts⁸ of rational *akrasia*. I will argue that such accounts attempt to allow the agent the rationality necessary to refute Socrates.

Throughout, I will be constructing a line of interpretation called by Saarinen the ‘non-Socratic Aristotelian interpretation model’.⁹ This model has many affinities with David Charles’ and his medieval predecessor Walter Burley’s account of *akrasia*. If my argument is convincing, I take it that its primary contribution will be in offering a charitable reading of Aristotle that allows him to do what I believe he wants to do, namely defend a common sense notion of strict *akrasia* against Socrates’ challenge.

2. Types of *akrasia*

What textual grounds are there for believing that Aristotle endorses an understanding of strict *akrasia* as defined above? First, Aristotle does not think *akrasia* can be explained merely by appealing to a difference between knowledge and opinion. Aristotle is responding to those who explain the phenomenon by saying the *akratēs* acts as he does because he does not have proper knowledge of what the thing to do is, but merely opinion against which he can easily rebel.¹⁰ This is a poor argument, as Aristotle notes at 1146b27-31:

εἰ οὖν διὰ τὸ ἠρέμα πιστεύειν οἱ δοξάζοντες μᾶλλον τῶν ἐπισταμένων παρὰ τὴν ὑπόληψιν πράξουσιν, οὐθὲν διοίσει ἐπιστήμη δόξης ἔνιοι γὰρ πιστεύουσιν οὐδὲν ἦττον οἷς δοξάζουσιν ἢ ἕτεροι οἷς ἐπίστανται: δηλοῖ δ’ Ἡράκλειτος.
 ‘If, then, it is the weakness of their conviction that makes people with belief, not people with knowledge, act in conflict with their supposition, it follows that knowledge will [for these purposes] be no different from belief; for, as Heraclitus makes clear, some people’s convictions about what they believe are no weaker than other people’s convictions about what they know.’

7 I have specifically Charles (1984) and Davidson (1969) in mind.

8 Cf., e.g., Audi (1990) and McIntyre (1990)

9 Pg. 139

10 Cf. *Nic. Eth.* 1145b34-5

Since people often hold as firmly to their beliefs as they would to a piece of actual knowledge, argues Aristotle, the supposition that people with opinion behave akratically because of some weakness of conviction not shared by someone with knowledge loses its grounding.¹¹ The strict *akratēs* acts in full knowledge of what he thinks he should do; however, what this is can just as easily be an opinion as a piece of real knowledge. Davidson makes¹² a similar point when he generalizes the puzzle of *akrasia* to the agent's attitude or beliefs, rather than restricting it only to instances where the agent's policy decision against which he later rebels is a piece of fully-fledged knowledge. I emphasize, however, that strict *akrasia* must be confined to instances of an agent's knowledge of his relevant attitude or beliefs if it is to answer the Socratic challenge.

After Aristotle makes this comment about knowledge and opinion, he goes on to distinguish several ways in which one can be akratic, only one of which constitutes strict *akrasia*. First, at 1146b31-35 he distinguishes between two ways of having knowledge (where opinion can perform the role of knowledge as explained above): one can have knowledge without using it or one can have knowledge while engaging actively with it. While you might have the knowledge that Greece is an arid country, before reading this sentence that knowledge was latent within you, or, as Aristotle might say, potential; after reading this sentence, however, that piece of knowledge has been called to your mind and you are now actively engaging it.¹³ These two ways of holding knowledge are sometimes referred to as 'first actuality knowledge' and 'second actuality knowledge' respectively.¹⁴ Here are Aristotle's words:

[T1]: ἀλλ' ἐπει διχῶς λέγομεν τὸ ἐπίστασθαι (καὶ γὰρ ὁ ἔχων μὲν οὐ χρώμενος δὲ τῇ ἐπιστήμῃ καὶ ὁ χρώμενος λέγεται ἐπίστασθαι), διοίσει τὸ ἔχοντα μὲν μὴ θεωροῦντα δὲ καὶ τὸ θεωροῦντα ἃ μὴ δεῖ πράττειν [τοῦ ἔχοντα καὶ θεωροῦντα]: τοῦτο γὰρ δοκεῖ δεινόν, ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰ μὴ θεωρῶν.

'But we speak of knowing in two ways; we ascribe it both to someone who has it without using it and to someone who is using it. Hence it will matter whether someone has the knowledge that his action is wrong, without attending to

11 Aristotle's own argument here is open to the objection that the view he refutes never explicitly appeals to a difference in strength between knowledge and opinion. His opponents, that is, might hold that a difference other than relative strength of conviction distinguishes the two.

12 Pg. 93

13 I owe this example to Robinson pg. 80

14 Cf. Pickavé and Whiting pg. 331 and *de Anima* 412a11 ff.

his knowledge, or he both has it and attends to it. For this second case seems extraordinary, but wrong action when he does not attend to his knowledge does not seem extraordinary.'

At this early point in the discussion, Aristotle distinguishes between the two broadest categories of *akrasia*. *Akrasia* involving an agent with first actuality knowledge I shall label type I, that involving an agent with second actuality knowledge type II. I shall further divide type I *akrasia* below. Aristotle's description of type II *akrasia* in T1 as *deinon* ('extraordinary', 'strange', or 'amazing') is important, since it seems to admit clearly the possibility of someone with second actuality knowledge committing an akratic act. This type II akratic is my strict *akratēs*, someone who turns against a previous decision while engaging with the information of that decision at the time of action. Aristotle's use of the word *deinon* to describe such a case points to the presence of a paradox in need of explanation. Aristotle says that type I *akrasia*, by contrast, does not seem strange in the same way, perhaps suggesting that it is of less philosophical relevance in responding to the Socratic doctrine.

Aristotle elaborates on type I *akrasia* in his next passage at 1146b35-1147a7 :

[T2]: ἔτι ἐπεὶ δύο τρόποι τῶν προτάσεων, ἔχοντα μὲν ἀμφοτέρας οὐδὲν κωλύει πράττειν παρὰ τὴν ἐπιστήμην, χρώμενον μέντοι τῇ καθόλου ἀλλὰ μὴ τῇ κατὰ μέρος: πρακτὰ γὰρ τὰ καθ' ἕκαστα. διαφέρει δὲ καὶ τὸ καθόλου: τὸ μὲν γὰρ ἐφ' ἑαυτοῦ τὸ δ' ἐπὶ τοῦ πράγματός ἐστιν: οἷον ὅτι παντὶ ἀνθρώπῳ συμφέρει τὰ ξηρά, καὶ ὅτι αὐτὸς ἀνθρώπος, ἢ ὅτι ξηρὸν τὸ τοιόνδε: ἀλλ' εἰ τότε τοιόνδε, ἢ οὐκ ἔχει ἢ οὐκ ἐνεργεῖ: κατὰ τε δὴ τούτους διοίσει τοὺς τρόπους ἀμήχανον ὅσον, ὥστε δοκεῖν οὕτω μὲν εἰδένα μὴδὲν ἄτοπον, ἄλλως δὲ θαυμαστόν.

'Further, since there are two types of premises, someone's action may well conflict with his knowledge if he has both types of premises, but uses only the universal premise and not the particular premise. For it is particulars that are achievable in action. There are also different types of universal, one type referring to the agent himself, and the other referring to the object. Perhaps, for instance, someone knows that dry things benefit every human being, and that he himself is a human being, or that this sort of thing is dry; but he either does not have or does not activate the knowledge that this particular thing is of this sort. These ways [of knowing and not knowing], then, make

such a remarkable difference that it seems quite intelligible [for someone acting against his knowledge] to have the one sort of knowledge, but astounding if he has the other sort’.

Aristotle here distinguishes within type I *akrasia* between those who do not have knowledge and those who do not engage (*ē ouch echei ē ouch energei*) their knowledge about a certain particular in the process of going through a practical syllogism. Whether the agent does not have the appropriate knowledge of a particular or has it but does not engage it, she will fail to transform her potential first actuality knowledge (contained in the major premiss) into active second actuality knowledge. Charles adverts to a subtlety in Aristotle’s use of the knowledge terms *epistasthai* and *epistēmē* in contrast with his use of the word *eidenai* which describes the type I akratic in T2 above.¹⁵ The terminological difference is between scientific knowledge that fits within a larger body of knowledge on the one hand, and the knowledge one has of a specific truth as the result, e.g., of perceiving a particular on the other. Charles mentions¹⁶ several passages in the *Nic. Eth.* in support of understanding *epistēmē* in the former sense, e.g. when Aristotle calls *epistēmē* at 1139b32 a demonstrative state (*hexis apodeiktikē*) that defines the capacity for deductive reasoning from suitable starting points.

Considering this distinction alongside Aristotle’s discussion of the structure of practical syllogisms in T2, we are in a position to understand how one might fail to have or to engage some relevant piece of knowledge concerning a particular. Aristotle first distinguishes between the two types of premiss in a syllogism, the major and the minor. He then claims that at least one type of *akrasia* is possible as the result of not using the minor premiss which applies to a particular in the correct way. Consequently, an agent can act against her major premiss, e.g. ‘Dry food benefits every human’, simply by not attaching a minor premiss correctly to it and, hence, not arriving at a syllogistic conclusion to recommend a particular course of action. Moreover, explains Aristotle, the major premiss has two aspects: part of it applies to the agent and another to the object. Thus, to arrive at the correct conclusion, the agent must apply part of the major premiss to himself and part to some object to arrive at the two intermediate premisses: A) ‘I am a human’ and B) ‘Chicken (e.g.) is dry food’. The agent can then deduce that ‘Dry food benefits me’ and ‘Chicken benefits me’. Finally, when these deductions are attached to the minor premiss ‘This is chicken here’ that results from the perception of a particular piece of chicken, the agent concludes ‘This chicken here benefits me’.

15 Cf. Charles (2009) pp. 45ff.

16 Ibid.

Now, Aristotle has said that the type I *akratēs* either does not have or does not engage appropriate knowledge of a particular. Since Aristotle says the type I akratic has knowledge in the *idenai* sense, he seems to be suggesting that the type I *akratēs* does in fact know *perceptually* that a particular piece of chicken is chicken, but simply either 1) does not have the scientific knowledge that ‘Chicken is dry food’ or 2) has this knowledge but does not engage it (it remains latent within him). In both cases, the problem is with one of the intermediate premisses above (most plausibly with B)¹⁷, since one of these is either not known or not activated. In either case, this akratic individual will not actively engage his knowledge of the major premiss ‘Dry food benefits every human’ and can therefore be understood as a type I agent. We can now distinguish within type I between the agent who does not have the relevant *epistēmē* of a particular and the agent who fails to activate it. At the end of T2 Aristotle contrasts both of these types with the type II akratic, whose case once again arouses interest and amazement: this agent’s situation is *thaumaston* (‘astounding’).

The main difference between these two types, I submit, is that neither type I akratic arrives at the conclusion of the first syllogism, while the type II akratic does. A passage at 1147b9-12 explains the problem of both type I akratic agents with reference to their failure to arrive at the conclusion of the first syllogism:

[T3]: ἐπεὶ δ’ ἡ τελευταία πρότασις δόξα τε αἰσθητοῦ καὶ κυρία τῶν πράξεων, ταύτην ἢ οὐκ ἔχει ἐν τῷ πάθει ὢν, ἢ οὕτως ἔχει ὡς οὐκ ἦν τὸ ἔχειν ἐπίστασθαι ἀλλὰ λέγειν ὥσπερ ὁ οἰνωμένος τὰ Ἐμπεδοκλέους.

‘Since the last proposition¹⁸ is a belief about something perceptible, and controls action, this is what the incontinent person does not have when he is being affected. Or [rather] the way he has it is not knowledge of it, but, as we saw, [merely] saying the words, as the drunk says the words of Empedocles.’

I find Charles’ and Crivelli’s argument for taking the word *protasis* to mean ‘proposition’ convincing.¹⁹ On this view, we can understand this word either as

17 The Greek in T2 suggests that in the case of the type I agent who does not have *epistēmē* of some particular, the agent does know the intermediate premiss A or (ἢ) B. I take it that the problem with this case of the type I akratic is that the agent does not know *both* intermediate premisses. The other case involves someone who does know both these premisses, but simply fails to translate this first actuality knowledge into second actuality knowledge.

18 I have altered Irwin’s translation from ‘premise’.

19 Cf. Crivelli and Charles (2011)

‘premiss’ or as ‘conclusion’, depending on context. Since the conclusion of a practical syllogism has elements of perception and can clearly be understood to control action, I think the term *protasis* in T3 should be taken to mean ‘conclusion’. This explains type I *akrasia* as resulting from a failure to arrive at the conclusion of the first syllogism. If we take *protasis* here to mean the last (i.e. minor) ‘premiss’ instead, then we would have trouble reconciling this description of an agent’s ignorance of a particular with the T2 passage indicating by the verb *eidenai* that the agent *does* have perceptual knowledge of the particular. According to my reading, the type I agent’s inability to arrive at the conclusion of the first syllogism results from a lacking or latent *epistēmē*.

It is not clear how we are meant to take the reference at the end of this passage to the ‘tipsy’ drunk reciting Empedocles.²⁰ Kenny goes so far as to say²¹ that it may be meant to illustrate one particular type of *akrasia* that may not be the same as the strict *akrasia* that interests us. I would suggest, though, that Aristotle means this as an analogy emphasizing the shared indifference of the tipsy drunk and the type II akratic, an individual who has arrived at the conclusion of a piece of practical reasoning, can recite it, but has become indifferent to it under an influence such as desire.²²

That this type II agent arrives at the conclusion of the first syllogism is confirmed at 1147a31-5:

[T4]: ὅταν οὖν ἡ μὲν καθόλου ἐνῆ κωλύουσα γεύεσθαι, ἢ δέ, ὅτι πᾶν γλυκὺ ἡδύ, τουτὶ δὲ γλυκὺ (αὕτη δὲ ἐνεργεῖ) , τύχη δ’ ἐπιθυμία ἐνοῦσα, ἢ μὲν οὖν λέγει φεύγειν τοῦτο, ἢ δ’ ἐπιθυμία ἄγει: κινεῖν γὰρ ἕκαστον δύναται τῶν μορίων
 ‘Suppose, then, that someone has the universal belief hindering him from tasting; he has the second belief, that everything sweet is pleasant and this is sweet, and this belief is active; but it turns out that appetite is present in him. The belief, then, [that is formed from the previous two beliefs] tells him to avoid this, but appetite leads him on, since it is capable of moving each of the [bodily] parts.’

This passage is definitive. The major premiss of the first syllogism is present in a form such as ‘Do not eat sweets’. A second universal premiss, ‘Everything sweet is pleasant’, is also present, serving as the major premiss of the second syllogism. The agent’s awareness that this thing in front of her is sweet

20 Cf. also 1147a19-20

21 pg. 176

22 Charles (2011) believes that this comparison indicates that the weak akratic lacks ‘rational confidence in what he says’ (pg. 196); however, my argument in §3 and §4 will make it clear why I think this cannot be the case.

constitutes the minor premiss of both syllogisms, and on this basis she reaches the conclusion not only of the second but also of the first syllogism. Two conflicting courses of action are recommended and desire swings the balance in favor of eating the sweet.

I have argued above that the type II agent arrives at the conclusion of the first syllogism. I take it that this condition alone is enough to indicate that the type II agent acts intentionally akratically, since he acts in full knowledge that his action conflicts with a previous decision. Aristotle confirms this suggestion at 1146a6-7, when he says that the prudent person differs from the *akratēs*, since ‘no one would say that the prudent person is the sort to do the worst actions *willingly*’ (my emphasis).²³ Given that the type II agent acts akratically intentionally, we must suppose that this agent has all of the relevant premisses of the second syllogism which lead to a conclusion conflicting with that of the first, and that, as a result, she recognizes her action as akratic. This *akratēs*, then, is the person Aristotle calls the weak akratic at 1150b19-22.

By contrast, since the type I akratic fails to reach the first conclusion by the time of action, it is only when she retrospectively identifies her error that she regrets her behavior. One consequence of this is that the type I agent will never perform an intentional akratic action. Like Charles²⁴, I do not deny that Aristotle recognizes as a type of akratic agent someone who commits unintentional akratic actions. I only claim that such an agent is not akratic in the strict sense in which Socrates is interested and in whose case the real philosophical puzzle lies.

3. How is (strict) *akrasia* possible?

In answering the Socratic challenge, Aristotle might be seen as attempting to give an answer to the question ‘How is strict *akrasia* possible?’. Robinson has contested the very basis of this question by suggesting²⁵ that it supposes from the outset the impossibility of *akrasia*. Experience, though, provides evidence for *akrasia*, and the fact of its existence surely provides no grounds for its irresolution. When Kant says that ‘the proper problem of pure reason is contained in the question: How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?’²⁶, we are surely not meant to think *he* doubts the existence of such judgements. So given that Aristotle thinks such a thing as strict *akrasia* exists,

23 φήσκει δ' οὐδ' ἄν εἰς φρονίμου εἶναι τὸ πράττειν ἐκόντα τὰ φαυλότατα. Cf. also Kenny pg. 163 for the idea that the common sense notion of the *akratēs* includes the idea of intentionality on her part.

24 Cf. Charles (1984) pg. 125

25 Pg. 88

26 *Critique of Pure Reason* B19, translated by Norman Kemp Smith

as §2 aimed to show, and that the question which heads this section is therefore valid, we must try to uncover Aristotle's answer.

In his book *Aristotle's Philosophy of Action*, Charles outlines four Socratic theses that might be taken to block the possibility of strict *akrasia*. Charles suggests²⁷ that Aristotle needs to present convincing cases against all these theses in order to refute the Socratic doctrine. I will outline these theses and the ways in which Aristotle might respond to three of them. I will then end this section with a departure from Charles' interpretation.

A. Socratic Theses²⁸

1. *The identity thesis* states that the conclusion of a practical syllogism is identical with performing the action recommended by the conclusion. If one holds this thesis, then strict *akrasia* is impossible since either one does not reach the conclusion of the first syllogism, perhaps like one of the type I agents above, or one reaches it and inevitably acts on it.
2. *The sufficiency thesis* states that the conclusion of a syllogism is always sufficient for action if the agent acts intentionally. If this thesis holds, the agent will either act intentionally on the conclusion of the first syllogism or not act intentionally at all, and in neither case will strict *akrasia*, which requires intentional action against the conclusion of the first syllogism, be possible.
3. *The uniqueness thesis* states that if, in conflict cases, a piece of practical reasoning produces a unique conclusion that x is better than y ($xBTy$) which the agent will act on if acting intentionally, then the agent must do x if acting intentionally. This thesis is inconsistent with the above claim that the strict *akratēs* should perform y intentionally against the decision to do x , since in such a case it would suggest that the *akratēs* had concluded $yBTx$ immediately before his action.
4. *The rationality thesis* states, in Charles' words, that '[i]f any action is intentional, it is rationally explainable'.²⁹ Charles believes that this thesis challenges strict *akrasia* because for something to be rationally explainable in a conflict case is for it to be explained as the better of two options on rational grounds. Moreover, it is rational to perform x if one concludes on rational grounds $xBTy$. If, then, one intentionally performs y , as the case of strict *akrasia* would have it, one acts irrationally; the thesis, however, prevents this as a possibility. Charles thinks Socrates' denial of intentional irrational action constitutes a denial of strict *akrasia*; however, as I will argue below, Socrates would simply view intentional irrational action as not strictly akratic. While

²⁷ Charles (1984) pg. 117

²⁸ Cf. op. cit. pp. 113-115

²⁹ Op. Cit. pg. 114

Aristotle needs to reject the first three theses, then, he needs to keep the rationality thesis, despite Charles' claims to the contrary.

B. Responses to the Socratic Theses

1. Aristotle can reject the identity thesis by allowing for a temporal gap between the conclusion of a piece of practical reasoning and the agent's acting on that conclusion. It should already be clear that if my argument in §2 is correct in saying that Aristotle allows for an akratic agent who arrives at the conclusion of the first syllogism without acting on it then Aristotle cannot have held the identity thesis.³⁰ More textual evidence, however, can be marshaled in blocking this thesis. I will appeal to three statements made by Aristotle.

At 1111b13-14, Aristotle states that 'the incontinent person acts on appetite [*epithumia*], not on decision [*prohairesis*].'³¹ One should read this claim alongside Aristotle's later definition of *prohairesis* (preferential choice) as something chosen as a result of deliberation, when he says at 1113a4-5 that 'what we decide [*prohaireton*] to do is what we have judged [to be right] as the result of deliberation'.³² To see that deliberation can result in a *prohairesis* concerning a particular action, I advert to Aristotle's claim at 1112b11-12 that 'we deliberate not about ends, but about what promotes ends'.³³ I would argue, then, that if the type II agent has previously arrived at a *prohairesis* as the result of a syllogistic deliberation, the fact that his akratic action issues not from that same *prohairesis*, but rather from another type of decision induced by *epithumia* ('sensual desire') offers firm evidence that Aristotle provides for a temporal gap between *prohairesis* and action. This explanation introduces an interesting exegetical problem, however, by suggesting that the akratic acts irrationally, i.e. not on the basis of some deliberation, despite Aristotle's claims elsewhere to the contrary. I will address this issue in §4.

2. To deny the sufficiency thesis, Aristotle needs to establish clear cases in which the result of a piece of practical reasoning need not provide sufficient motivation for action in the absence of external preventive factors. Only in this way can he maintain that an agent acts intentionally against the conclusion of the first syllogism. There is a passage that may be adduced in support of the sufficiency thesis at 1147a24-31:

[T5]: ἔτι καὶ ὧδε φυσικῶς ἂν τις ἐπιβλέψειε τὴν αἰτίαν. ἢ μὲν γὰρ καθόλου δόξα, ἢ δ' ἑτέρα περὶ τῶν καθ' ἕκαστά ἐστιν, ὧν αἴσθησις ἤδη κυρία: ὅταν δὲ μία γένηται ἐξ αὐτῶν,

30 Cf. op. cit. pg. 128

31 ὁ ἀκρατῆς ἐπιθυμῶν μὲν πράττει, προαιρούμενος δ' οὐ.

32 τὸ γὰρ ἐκ τῆς βουλῆς κριθὲν προαιρετόν.

33 βουλευόμεθα δ' οὐ περὶ τῶν τελῶν ἀλλὰ περὶ τῶν πρὸς τέλος.

ἀνάγκη τὸ συμπερανθὲν ἔνθα μὲν φάναι τὴν ψυχὴν, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ποιητικαῖς πράττειν εὐθύς: οἷον, εἰ παντὸς γλυκέος γεύεσθαι δεῖ, τουτὶ δὲ γλυκὺ ὡς ἐν τι τῶν καθ' ἕκαστον, ἀνάγκη τὸν δυνάμενον καὶ μὴ κωλυόμενον ἅμα τοῦτο καὶ πράττειν.

‘Further, we may also look at the cause in the following way, according to a physical approach³⁴. For one belief is universal; the other is about particulars, and because they are particulars, perception controls them. And in the cases where these two beliefs result in one belief, it is necessary, in one case, for the soul to affirm what has been concluded, but, in the case of productive beliefs³⁵, to act at once on what has been concluded. If, for instance, everything sweet must be tasted, and this, some one particular thing is sweet, it is necessary for someone who is able and unhindered also to act on this at the same time’.

It is possible to read Aristotle as making a distinction here between the ‘one case’ of theoretical deliberation, when the soul may affirm the conclusion without acting on it, and another case of practical deliberation whose conclusion results necessarily in immediate action in accord with the sufficiency thesis. Such a reading, however, is unwarranted.³⁶ In T5 Aristotle does not, in fact, use the word signaling practical deliberation in the second case above, but rather the word for productive (*poiētikē*) deliberation. This suggests that Aristotle is speaking of practical reasoning in general throughout the passage, without referring to theoretical reasoning at all. On this reading, the ‘one case’ mentioned above refers to a non-productive piece of practical reasoning that need not result in action at all. It is only in the productive case, suggests Aristotle, that action necessarily comes about.

It must be admitted, however, that Aristotle’s example of an agent who has to taste sweets at the end of T5 does not seem to be a case of specifically productive deliberation. This objection can be met, I believe, by looking ahead to what comes directly after the passage in the *Nic. Eth.* and by briefly adverting to Aristotle’s talk of preventive factors at the end of T5. Immediately after T5 at 1147a31-35 (T4 above), Aristotle goes on to discuss the case of an agent with two conflicting major premisses. Aristotle describes how, even in the presence of the conclusion of the first syllogism telling him to avoid the sweet, this agent acts on the conclusion of the second because of the presence of desire

34 I have altered Irwin’s translation from “referring to [human] nature”.

35 I have altered Irwin’s translation from ‘beliefs about production’.

36 My reading here is based on McDowell pg. 98

(*epithumia*). Aristotle supplies this example, I suggest, to illustrate an instance of non-productive practical reasoning whose conclusion the agent necessarily affirms and which *would have* led the agent to act in the absence of the hindrance of desire. Read in this way, we can see the example given at the end of T5 also as a case of non-productive, rather than productive, reasoning which necessarily results in the affirmation of the conclusion, but sufficiently motivates action *only* in the absence of a hindrance.

But surely, one might object, this hindrance will leave the sufficiency thesis intact by rendering the akratic action unintentional. This objection can be met, I think, by viewing the hindrance as the very reason to discard the sufficiency thesis. Charles takes this approach by emphasizing³⁷ that when Aristotle speaks of hindrance here, he could just as well be referring to factors internal to the agent as to obstacles outside the agent. Such internal factors could include logical reasons, moral positions, or, as T4 suggests, the presence of emotion. And, as I will argue below, such an emotional factor need not eliminate intentionality or rationality on the part of the agent. On this reading, then, far from supporting the sufficiency thesis, T5 presents the possibility that a certain syllogistic conclusion may fail sufficiently to motivate action in cases where internal factors prompt the agent to act intentionally against the conclusion.

3. It is in responding to the uniqueness thesis that I depart from Charles. I will briefly summarize what I take Charles' view of Aristotle's answer to the uniqueness thesis to be, and I will explain why I think this view concedes too much to Socrates. I will then present an alternative picture which I shall further support in §4.

The uniqueness thesis presents the problem that concluding $xBTy$ by comparing two mutually exclusive options on the same valuational scale rejects the possibility of acting intentionally and rationally against x . Indeed, acting against x on this view would suggest one had revised one's previous conclusion to $yBTx$. This would make strict *akrasia* impossible, since whatever action one performed intentionally and rationally would align with one's better judgement. Charles argues that Aristotle answers this challenge by saying that the akratic agent simply does not perform the action he believes to be best. So far, so good. The problem occurs, it seems to me, when Charles attributes this disobedience to better judgement to a type of irrationality on the agent's part.

Charles rightly believes that when weighing two competing options in *one piece* of practical reasoning, the two alternatives must be compared using the same valuational scale.³⁸ For example, when deciding whether or not to exercise, I might compare the two options under the valuational consideration of what

37 Charles (1984) pg. 129

38 Cf. op. cit. pg. 111

will contribute to a healthier lifestyle. If I fail to compare the two options in this way, it will be impossible to arrive at a conclusion of which option is to be preferred, since there will be different valuational considerations in favor of each. I agree that this is how a *single piece* of reasoning must work. However, in his answer to the uniqueness thesis Charles denies the possibility that two options could be compared in two separate pieces of practical reasoning, each of which applies different valuational considerations. He rejects³⁹ the idea that an action could seem good under one brand of valuational calculation and pleasant under another. He bases this claim on passages such as that at *de Anima* 433b5-10 which state that that which seems pleasant also seems good. Charles takes this to mean that even across separate rational calculations the same valuational consideration, that of the good, is applied. I believe that what Aristotle really means is that when deciding what course of action is good for one's life as a whole, one takes into account many different long-term considerations. This decision is conditioned by those considerations. When calculating what course of action is purely pleasant, however, one need not take into account such a long-term view. The pleasant action will seem good, then, in an unconditioned way only. And surely this difference marks a difference in valuational scale. This is, in fact, exactly what the passage from *de Anima* cited by Charles suggests. Because he does not read it in this way, however, he has to reject the uniqueness thesis while admitting a shared valuational scale across separate deliberations.

To resolve this issue, Charles appeals to irrationality. He holds that if one concludes $xBTy$ as the result of the first syllogism, one will not have a similar better judgement supporting one's akratic action, because a common valuational scale applies to all relevant judgements. Charles believes, though, that the akratic agent can arrive at the conclusion 'y is good' on the basis of non-rational desire. If so, then the judgement $xBTy$ need not conflict with the judgement 'y is good', and the agent, in doing y, would simply not be doing what she has rationally decided is the better course of action. She would instead be acting on a desire that leads her to view y as good in the context of that desire, 'even though the two courses share a common value'.⁴⁰ In this way, Charles defeats the uniqueness thesis by saying that in acting akratically the agent does not reformulate her first decision, but, rather, consistently holds $xBTy$ and 'y is good' on the same valuational scale.

Such an explanation successfully rejects the uniqueness thesis, but at the cost of sacrificing the rationality needed for strict *akrasia* to be possible. Indeed, Charles states that by acting against his *prohairesis*, the akratic acts against what he has decided is best and, therefore, against his 'inquiring intellect... and

39 Cf. op. cit. pg. 135

40 Op. Cit. pg. 137

calculation..."⁴¹ I take irrational behavior to be action incapable of rational explanation. If one views this irrational behavior as the result of some cognitive failure on the agent's part, it is easy to see that Socrates would view irrationality as a version of the ignorance which often explains *seemingly* akratic behavior. Hence, we must maintain the rationality thesis if we are not to surrender to the Socratic doctrine.

To this end, I argue that the akratic agent *does* arrive at the better judgement $yBTx$, contrary to the first better judgement, but that this second judgement is based on a different valuational scale. This difference in scale allows both judgements to remain intact. It might be objected that saying this subjects my argument immediately to the (perhaps weakened) force of the uniqueness thesis. However, I defend my position by appealing to a fundamental difference between the *prohairesis* $xBTy$ and the second judgement $yBTx$: the first is arrived at under an 'all-things-considered' condition in line with one's *boulēsis* (rational wish), while the second comes about at a temporal distance from the first contrary to one's *boulēsis*. In this way, I submit, the akratic can consistently hold two contrary better judgements on different valuational scales and act against the first judgement without revising it. Moreover, one can act intentionally and rationally on this second better judgement against the first, the very definition of acting strictly akratically. In the following section, I will explain how my understanding of *boulēsis* and *prohairesis* provides for this view *contra* Davidson.

4. *Boulēsis, Prohairesis, and Akratic Rationality*

My primary task here is to defend the notion that the strict *akratēs* decides on his akratic action rationally, i.e. that his akratic decision is analogous to his *prohairesis*, and differs from it only in not falling in line with *boulēsis*. I will briefly raise a Davidsonian worry and offer the sketch of a possible answer.

The key to my reading of Aristotle's account of strict *akrasia* is the thought that the akratic action is rational to the same extent that any action based on *prohairesis* is. This claim is important to avoid the weakness in Charles' account I identified in §3. Charles' reading is motivated by Davidson's conclusion that 'the incontinent man acts, and judges, irrationally'.⁴² Davidson holds this view because it seems that if one judges $xBTy$ *all* things considered but nevertheless does y , one is being irrational in contravening that which is recommended by all available evidence. I have tried to circumvent this problem in §3 by suggesting that the valuational scale leading to *prohairesis* differs from that leading to the akratic decision. However, if one makes a decision *all* things

41 Op. Cit. pg. 137

42 Pg. 112

considered, will not one have taken into account whatever factor (e.g. pleasure) eventually leads to the akratic decision? If so, then it seems the akratic choice irrationally ignores all the other evidence which outweighed that one factor in the original decision. To answer this serious objection, I will address an exegetical difficulty that a Davidsonian reading of Aristotle encounters. I will then appeal to Aristotle's account of rational deliberation and desire. I believe that had Davidson made full use of Aristotle's entire apparatus of rational deliberation, he would not have reached the conclusion he did.

If one denies rationality and calculation to the strict *akratēs* by rejecting the rationality thesis, then one has to work hard to make sense of passages in which Aristotle suggests the opposite. One passage, in particular, at 1142b16-20 strongly suggests rational calculation on the part of the akratic:

[T6]: ἀλλ' ὀρθότης τίς ἐστὶν ἢ εὐβουλία βουλή; διὸ ἡ βουλή ζητητέα πρῶτον τί καὶ περὶ τί. ἐπεὶ δ' ἡ ὀρθότης πλεοναχῶς, δῆλον ὅτι οὐ πᾶσα: ὁ γὰρ ἀκρατὴς καὶ ὁ φαῦλος ὃ προτίθεται ἰδεῖν† ἐκ τοῦ λογισμοῦ τεύξετα, ὥστε ὀρθῶς ἔσται βεβουλευμένος, κακὸν δὲ μέγα εἰληφώς.
 'But good deliberation is a certain sort of correctness in deliberation. That is why we must first inquire what [this correctness] is and what it is [correctness] about. Since there are several types of correctness, clearly good deliberation will not be every type. For the incontinent or base person will use rational calculation to reach what he proposes to see, and so will have deliberated correctly [if that is all it takes], but will have got himself a great evil'.

Aristotle suggests that good deliberation cannot be defined *only* in terms of its correctness, since akratic and base persons deliberate correctly when calculating successfully how to achieve the actions that make them akratic or base. It is, then, not *this* deliberation which sets the virtuous person apart, even though the deliberation can be said to have been successful or 'correct' in a sense. I adverted to two passages (1111b13-14 and 1113a4-5) in §3, the first of which claims that the akratic does not act on *prohairesis*, and the second of which defines *prohairesis* as that which results from deliberation (*boulē*). These two passages when taken together with T6, which indicates that the akratic uses rational calculation to arrive at a correct deliberation (*bouleuein*), seem to present an insurmountable interpretative obstacle.

One of the virtues of my reading of *akrasia* in Aristotle is its capacity to make sense of these three statements. As Anscombe rightly observes,⁴³ we have a significant problem here *only* if we understand any case whatsoever of

deliberation to result in *prohairesis*. If, however, we understand one type of deliberation as issuing in *prohairesis* and another type, that on which the akratic acts, as issuing in a decision which differs from *prohairesis* in some key respect, we are able to resolve the exegetical tension between these passages. The problem will simply be that Aristotle has failed to distinguish between the two types of deliberation by using the same word (*boulē* and its cognates) to describe both.

In what key respect, then, does *prohairesis* differ from the decision that results from akratic deliberation? In answer, I appeal to the difference between *boulēsis* and *epithumia*. *Boulēsis* in Aristotle is a specific type of desire (*orexis*) just as is *epithumia*: they differ in being for different ends.⁴⁴ *Prohairesis*, then, will be the decision which results from deliberation about how to realize one's *boulēsis*, while a temporary *epithumia* will encourage another type of deliberation resulting in the akratic decision which conflicts with the *prohairesis* previously arrived at. But what kind of desire exactly is *boulēsis*? To answer this, I will again advert to a passage (1112b11-12) mentioned in §3 that deliberation concerns what promotes ends, rather than ends themselves. If deliberation does not determine one's ends, then it seems reasonable to view *boulēsis* as accomplishing just that. *Boulēsis* sets certain ends or goals for success that an individual might have. It is not within one's power, however, to deliberate how to bring about this success directly, since certain external factors out of one's control will inevitably be involved. All that is required is that one's rational wish be for something that is humanly possible for one to achieve provided one successfully deliberates about individual actions leading to this wish as means to an end.

The decision to perform a certain action in the service of *boulēsis* will be one's *prohairesis*. In arriving at the *prohairesis*, one will take into account all of the necessary factors involved in achieving one's *boulēsis* down the road provided external misfortunes do not get in the way. To give an example of this process, one cannot deliberate about whether or not to be healthy.⁴⁵ To some extent, one's health will be dependent on external circumstances, e.g. whether or not one encounters a sick person at work. One certainly can make the rational wish, however, to remain healthy, and, after making this *boulēsis*, one can then deliberate about individual means to achieve this goal. If one decides that it will be necessary to avoid Bill who was sick yesterday at work in order to protect one's health, then one has arrived at a *prohairesis* in service of one's *boulēsis*.

44 Cf. *de Motu* 701a37, where Aristotle says that *orexis* can be *boulēsis*, indicating *orexis* 'applies to all cases of desire and not just to sensual desire' (Charles forthcoming).

45 Cf. Urmson pg. 55

The deliberation resulting in such a *prohairesis* need not be syllogistic. As Cooper notes⁴⁶, a practical syllogism is only the *part* of practical reasoning which connects some decision to a specific action based on that decision. *Prohairesis*, then, can be understood either as a policy decision in line with *boulēsis* or as a decision for a specific action in line with *boulēsis*. Given this, we can imagine a case where one has decided not to eat cake in general for the sake of health. Later, however, when confronted with a particular cake, one experiences an *epithumia* to consume it so great that one acts against the *prohairesis* to abstain. One's *boulēsis* is the strongest desire present in forming one's *prohairesis*, while *epithumia* aroused by the prospect of immediate pleasure overcomes the desire for health in producing the akratic decision. These conflicting desires are what produce the different valuational scales I posited in §3. The akratic individual is the person who has arrived at a *prohairesis*, yet acts against it at a later point in the presence of *epithumia*. This *epithumia*, however, need not prevent the akratic from arriving at an akratic decision through a process analogous to that of the first syllogism. Indeed, as Broadie has pointed out⁴⁷, if we deny such a process of deliberation in the akratic case, it becomes difficult to explain akratic actions which very often take the form of an action *x* done for the sake of some goal *y*. In this case, of course, the goal of the akratic action will conflict with one's *boulēsis*. But nothing need prevent the akratic from forming such a counter goal and drawing rational conclusions based on it.

Where does rationality fit in? If a rational decision consists in following the course of action that promotes whatever end one most strongly desires, we can easily see how eating a cake when one desires to do so above everything else is rational. On this view, the akratic agent acts rationally. However, one might object that this picture presents nothing other than a change in *boulēsis*. The agent, i.e., may simply have altered her decision from *x*BTy to yBTx. I suggest the fact that *boulēsis* and *epithumia* are desires differing in kind, rather than degree, responds adequately to this objection. I see no inconsistency in holding one course of action to be better based on one type of desire and another better based on a different type of desire. The akratic agent simply allows *epithumia* to outweigh his *boulēsis* while still maintaining his original *boulēsis* without alteration. Evidence that this is in fact what often happens is provided by the guilt that one feels *during the very act* of contravening a previous decision. A more virtuous agent, by contrast, would not experience *epithumia* either at all or to a significant enough degree to

46 Pg. 24

47 Pg. 181

overthrow his *boulēsis*. If one supposes that desire is by its very nature an irrational basis for action, then I can see no other alternative than the admission that all actions, at their sources, are irrational. Indeed, on this view, virtuously following one's *prohairesis* would also have an irrational source in whatever motivates one to follow a *boulēsis*.

The difference between *prohairesis* and the akratic decision on my picture boils down to something like the difference between what Audi calls⁴⁸ 'judgmentally autonomous' and 'holistically autonomous' actions. While the former are based on judgements of what one considers best given a certain disposition or wish (*boulēsis*) for what one wants, the latter are based on one's overall desires and ideals. Using this distinction, we can see that the akratic action may conflict with one's internal judgmental autonomy while rationally adhering to one's overall set of desires conceived holistically. On this externalist view, the same rational process leading to one's *prohairesis* can also inform one's akratic decision, albeit operating on a different valuational scale. I admit that it appears that the akratic individual's failure to take her overall set of desires into account in her all-things-considered view seems to condemn her as ignorant or irrational in forming her *prohairesis*. In response, I suggest that this failure results not from ignorance or irrationality, but, rather, from an uncontrolled fluctuation in her relevant desires. If I am correct in this regard, then the virtuous agent is distinguished from the akratic precisely in his ability, achieved through habituation, to eliminate or ignore akratic desires.

5. Conclusion

The medieval scholastic philosopher Walter Burley believed⁴⁹ that the akratic agent could reach the conclusion of the first syllogism and still act akratically, a possibility which, I have argued, is necessary to combat the Socratic challenge. Charles does much to support this view. However, I have suggested that Charles stops just short of defending an Aristotelian account of strict *akrasia* in his attribution of a type of irrationality to the akratic agent⁵⁰. This irrationality suggests that the agent holds the conclusion of the first syllogism in an 'off-color'⁵¹ way which, I fear, opens the door to Socrates to deny the possibility of *akrasia* by appealing to some ignorance on the agent's part. To forestall this

48 Cf. 278

49 For an account of Burley's views see Saarinen (1994) and Charles (2009) pg. 42.

50 For another attribution of irrationality and ignorance to the agent with which I disagree, cf. Moss pg. 154: 'Appetite wins out over rational desire precisely by knocking out the rational cognition on which that desire depends--by rendering the agent temporarily ignorant of the fact her action is bad.'

51 A phrase Charles frequently uses

Socratic move, I have tried to paint the picture of *akrasia* by attributing as much reason to the agent as possible. The strict *akratēs*, on my view, both maintains syllogistic form in akratic reasoning and consistently holds the two contrary decisions $xBTy$ and $yBTx$ on different valuational scales in a way which answers the uniqueness thesis. On such a picture, I have tried to explain *akrasia* as a decision based on a temporary desire which conflicts with *prohairesis* in line with *boulēsis*. It is not that the strict *akratēs* fails in some way to realize her akratic action conflicts with her previous *prohairesis*, it is rather that she realizes it to be the worse alternative on one scale and the better on another and acts against the all-things-considered view in the presence of the desire so to act. It is by taking such a position, I argue, that Aristotle might begin to respond to the Socratic challenge.

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EGYPTIAN KOINA:

Urban Producers and Upward Mobility in Roman Egypt

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ABSTRACT

Much attention has been given to professional associations in the Roman Empire, and a focus on epigraphic evidence has, historically, produced the argument that they operated mainly as social clubs that relied heavily on elite patrons for funding. Recent scholarship has challenged that opinion, focusing mostly on associations in Asia Minor, showing that they could be influential, affluent organizations, whose members sometimes even joined the political elite, sitting on city councils. This paper continues that challenge by focusing on groups of craftsmen in Roman Egypt during the first four centuries AD, where papyri offer a view of their inner-workings that is unavailable for other provinces. Looking at papyrological evidence, it shows that Egyptian professional associations were financially independent, well-respected organizations that provided their members with economic and social rewards. In light of this, it questions the absence of craftsmen among the Egyptian elite; while craftsmen in other parts of the empire seem to have been socially mobile, those in Egypt were not. It argues that the unpopularity of voluntary euergetism in Roman Egypt was responsible for this, depriving the province's professional associations the visible connection with the local elite that patronage afforded similar groups in other parts of the empire.

Introduction:

The Greco-Roman world was home to a number of different types of organized bodies that served many purposes. Among them were funerary associations that ensured the proper burial of their members, official sacerdotal colleges devoted to the worship of certain divinities or the imperial cult, groups of individuals occupied in the same profession, and, of course, ones which combined many different elements and are more difficult to define. The diversity of these groups is reflected in the many names used to describe them. Simply *collegia* in Latin, they are called *thiasoi*, *koina*, *orgeones*, and *eranoi*, among other things in Greek.¹ Modern historians and social scientists use no fewer terms, labeling them 'guilds,' 'voluntary associations,' 'clubs,' and 'private associations.' This paper will examine professional associations, whose

¹ Kloppenborg, J. "Collegia and *Thiasoi*: Issues in Function, Taxonomy and Membership." In *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World* ed. John Kloppenborg and Stephen Wilson (New York: Routledge, 1996), 16-3.

members shared a trade and were self-defined by it (e.g. the association of silversmiths of Ephesus).²

Despite the amount of research devoted to the subject, much about these groups remains unclear. The types of evidence concerning ancient professional associations contribute in large part to this lack of clarity. The majority of evidence is epigraphic, a medium that provides a limited view of association in the ancient world; inscription was public, quite expensive, and more suited for honorary purposes than describing the everyday workings of organizations. The treatment of these groups in literature is not particularly helpful, either. Authors refer to associations of craftsmen rarely, and, for the most part, as members of the agricultural elite, present them in a negative light. We are, therefore, given a narrow view of professional associations.

This has, historically, produced narrow interpretations. The evidence available, along with a limited understanding of the Roman economy, has led scholars to argue that professional associations were concerned only with immediate, convivial ends, reducing them to little more than social clubs.³ This argument is built, in part, on an understanding that the agriculturally dominant Roman economy would have marginalized the role of urban craftsmen. This marginalization, it has been argued, would have been both economic and social, barring craftsmen from high society and positions of importance as a result of the stigmatization of their professions; some have even claimed that associations in the eastern provinces were dissolved under the force of Roman law.⁴

However, these arguments are limited in their scope. They fail to account for the size and importance of the urban, production-driven economy, and the importance of the craftsmen who acted within it.⁵ In fact, recent studies

² Although these organizations are often called ‘guilds,’ I will not use this term to avoid the connotation with medieval guilds, which functioned in a different way. For ease of reference, I will also use ‘*koina*,’ as they refer to themselves in Egyptian papyri; or ‘*collegia*,’ as they refer to themselves in Latin epigraphy.

³ See Macmullen, R. *Roman Social Relations, 50 B.C.-A.D. 284* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974); Finley, M. I. *The Ancient Economy*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 138-139; Hopkins, K. *Death and Renewal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983); and Perry, J. “Organized Societies: Collegia.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Social Relations in the Roman World*, ed. Michael Peachin (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 499-515.

⁴ See Cotter, W. “The Collegia and Roman Law: State Restrictions on Voluntary Associations, 64 BCE—200 CE.” In *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World* ed. John Kloppenborg and Stephen Wilson (New York: Routledge, 1996), 74-89.

⁵ See van Minnen, P. “Urban Craftsmen in Roman Egypt,” *Münstersche Beiträge zur Antiken handelsgeschichte* 6 (1987): 31-88.

have shown that urban craftsmen were not marginalized in their communities, and that professional associations were prominent local actors.⁶ The impact of these organizations was felt in many different ways, and they were often the recipients of public honors, patronage, and special contracts.⁷ Furthermore, professional associations left tangible, physical marks on their communities as well, such as buildings constructed by associations of builders or carpenters; some streets were even named after the groups that occupied them.⁸ These studies have also shown that some craftsmen were able to attain political rank, sitting on municipal councils.⁹

Analysis of professional associations in Roman Egypt, where papyrological evidence allows for an un-paralleled view of certain aspects of their organization, supports and develops these arguments. Charters, contracts, letters, and other documents show that Egyptian professional associations served a wide range of functions, both economic and social. This paper will focus on the role of Egyptian professional associations in *metropoleis* such as Oxyrhynchus and Arsinoe, showing that they were prominent local actors, and that they conferred collective social status upon their members.¹⁰ That status was confirmed by the recognition of the local elite as well as by the community at large. A considerable percentage of the urban population of Roman Egypt

⁶ See van Nijf, O. *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East* (Amsterdam: Gieben, 1997); Liu, J. *Collegia Centonariorum: The Guilds of Textile Dealers in the Roman West* (Boston: Brill, 2009); Verboven, K. "The Associative Order: Status and Ethos among Roman Businessmen in Late Republic and Early Empire," *Athenaeum* 95 (2007): 861-893; and Venticinque, P. "Common Causes: Guilds, Craftsmen and Merchants in the Economy and Society of Roman and Late Roman Egypt" (University of Chicago Dissertation, 2009); for a discussion of the legality of professional associations, see Arnaoutoglou I.N. "Roman Law and *Collegia* in Asia Minor." *Revue Internationale des droits de l'Antiquité* XLIX (2002): 27-44, and Arnaoutoglou I.N. "*Collegia* in the Province of Egypt in the First Century CE." *Ancient Society* 35 (2005): 197-216.

⁷ For a discussion of the patronage of professional associations, see Andreau, J. "Fondations Privées et Rapports Sociaux en Italie Romaine (Ier-IIIe s. ap. J.C.)," *Ktema* II (1997): 157-209, and van Nijf, O. "Les Élités Comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles dans l'Orient Romain." In *Les Élités et Leurs Facettes: Les Élités Locales dans le Monde Hellénistique et Romain*, ed. Mireille Cèbeillac-Gervasoni and Laurent Lamoine (Rome: École Française de Rome, 2003), 307-323; for professional associations and special contracts, see Liu, "Occupation, Social Organization and Public Service."

⁸ Van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East*, 182.

⁹ See Verboven, "The Associative Order," 872, 887.

¹⁰ For a discussion of Roman Oxyrhynchus, its papyri and importance, see Turner, E.G. "Oxyrhynchus and its Papyri," *Greece & Rome* vol. 12 (63) (Oct., 1952): 127-137.

was engaged in craft and production, and the papyrological record shows that they were involved in their local communities and with the bodies that governed them. This involvement, through public honors and government contracts would have resulted in increased social visibility and prestige that, in turn, would have conferred importance upon professional associations.

Records from other parts of the empire show that these social rewards were not restricted to the association as a collective body. Instead, association and its benefits distinguished the upper echelon of membership, providing a social platform from which craftsmen could aspire to, and often achieve, esteemed positions within their communities. Evidence indicates that these wealthy craftsmen were able to join the ranks of the elite from leadership positions in professional associations, and to sit on administrative councils in many provinces of the empire. However, there is no evidence that this was the case in Egypt. Although the activities of Egyptian *koina* fall within models of social mobility constructed by modern scholarship, their members were apparently unable, or unwilling, to turn acquired social capital into upward mobility.

In Egypt, as in other parts of the Roman Empire, the urban elite was a ruling elite. Through membership on municipal councils (*curiae* in Latin, *boulai* in Greek) they formed an oligarchy. Council membership, for the most part, was both the criterion and the expression of elite status.¹¹ In gaining access to this curial class, this municipal oligarchy, craftsmen in many parts of the Empire became members of the elite.

This paper will examine the situation in Egypt, as it is presented in the papyrological record, between the 1st and 4th centuries AD. In doing so, it will look at the different ways in which professional associations gained recognition and conferred social gains upon their members with an eye towards established models of social mobility. It will show that, although members of Egyptian professional associations acted within the limitations of these models, none entered the curial class and, thus, the ranks of the elite. It will offer the reluctance of the Egyptian elite to act as patrons to these associations, denying them a visible connection to the upper classes and a chance to assert themselves within the local hierarchy, as a possible explanation for this lack of upward mobility. However, it will also show that Egyptian professional associations were marginalized neither socially nor economically, and that their members were not impoverished, were sometimes quite wealthy, and could become respectable members of society.

¹¹ Tacoma, L. *Fragile Hierarchies: The Urban Elites of Third-Century Roman Egypt*. (Boston: Brill, 2006), 12.

Section I: The Administration of Roman Egypt

Egypt had historically been divided into nomes, regions that took their names from their capital cities (e.g. Arsinoe was the capital of the Arsinoite nome). At the time of the province's annexation by Rome, only three cities in Egypt, Alexandria, Naukratos, and Ptolemais, were recognized as *poleis*.¹² However, the many *metropoleis*, although called towns in papyri, were just as urban from an economic and social point of view.¹³ When Rome added Egypt to its empire in 30 BC, it preserved these regions and urban designations.¹⁴ The Romans also preserved the institutions of Hellenistic culture that had been introduced during the Ptolemaic period.¹⁵ Under the direction of state officials, Egypt was, at first, ruled through traditional Greek magistracies.¹⁶ During this time, status was largely defined by ethnicity, and magistrates were recruited from the gymnasial class, a restricted group of citizens of Greek ancestry that was instituted at the beginning of the Roman period.¹⁷ Although they had long since been a fixture in other areas of the empire, it was not until the beginning of the 3rd century AD that the Romans created city councils in Egypt.¹⁸ By this time, ethnic boundaries had become less relevant, and social status was dependent on respectability and wealth.¹⁹ Furthermore, Roman citizenship, which had in most cases been withheld from native Egyptians, was extended to the province's entire population in 212 AD.²⁰

Many of the most informative documents about Egyptian professional associations date to the 1st and 2nd centuries AD. Because of the 3rd century changes in Egyptian urban administration, and the increased role of native Egyptians within it, using this evidence to comment on craftsmen in an urban context is dangerous. However, these papyri show that the members of professional associations were well off both socially and economically, long

¹² Lewis, N. *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 25. A fourth, Antinoopolis, was built by Hadrian in 130 AD.

¹³ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 11. For more on the distinction between *poleis* and *metropoleis*, see Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 11-12; for the urban status of *metropoleis*, see Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 50-68; see, also, Lewis, *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule*, 25-28. For the purposes of this paper, I will use 'city' and 'urban center' to refer to both.

¹⁴ Lewis, *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule*, 16.

¹⁵ Bagnall, R.S. *Egypt in Late Antiquity*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 55.

¹⁶ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 5.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 126.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 118.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 127: he notes that membership of the gymnasial class was not a requirement for councillorship, that few councillors mention gymnasial status, and that declarations of the gymnasial class rarely list elite families.

²⁰ Lewis, *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule*, 19.

before the changes of the early 3rd century. It is hard to imagine that their situation worsened with the establishment of city councils, the relaxation of ethnic boundaries, and access to Roman citizenship. In light of these documents, the absence of Egyptian craftsmen on city councils is even more striking.

The introduction of city councils in 200 AD relegated the management of Egypt to the Egyptian elite. City councils were responsible for the collection of taxes, the supervision of local finances, and the nominations of liturgists and magistrates.²¹ While liturgical positions and magistracies were held for a limited period of time, council seats were held for life.²² The size of these councils varied, with anywhere from 30 to 600 members attested to in the papyrological record; however, average membership seems to have been at around 100.²³ The presiding officer of the council was the *prytanis*, an individual responsible for calling the council to meet, ordering its agenda, acting as its executive, and representing it to outside powers.²⁴

The process of admission to a city council is unclear. However, it is certain that seats were not hereditary.²⁵ Potential members were probably required to have been residents of the city in question, and were definitely male, while the minimum age of a councilor is not explicitly stated in extant evidence, it probably lay between 24 and 36.²⁶ There was also a wealth qualification. This figure probably would have varied from city to city, but evidence from Oxyrhynchus and Hermopolis suggests 50,000 drachmas as a reasonable average.²⁷ Regardless of the requirements, council membership was a visible status marker, and must have been competitive.

Despite the competition, the council seems to have been accessible. The *Sortes Astrampsychi* was a popular oracular text in Egypt in the 3rd century AD, which presented around 100 questions, answering them by the circuitous consultation of numbers, dates, and tables. These questions were drawn from an odd collection of everyday problems and fears, and have been helpful in

²¹ Lewis, *Life in Egypt Under Roman Rule*, 119.

²² *Ibid.*, 120.

²³ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 133-134. For a more in depth discussion of council size in Roman Egypt, see Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 133-140.

²⁴ Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 59.

²⁵ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 122.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 128. Tacoma reaches this number by examining evidence from a number of Egyptian *metropoleis* and comparing it to more concrete numbers from other provinces of the empire; for a more detailed discussion of the ages of councilors, see Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 127-129.

²⁷ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 131. For a more detailed discussion of property qualifications, see Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 130-132.

reconstructing the social horizon and mindset of the average Egyptian. However, nestled among questions like, “am I to live for a time?” and “will I get the woman I want?” is the weightier “will I become a councilor?”²⁸ This last question, besides showing that the appeal of the *Sortes Astrampsychi* stretched across demographics, demonstrates that council seats were in contention and attainable.

Section II: Social Mobility in the Roman World and Egypt

Council membership was competitive throughout the Roman world, and in some regions it was attained by wealthy craftsmen and tradesmen. By the 3rd century AD, individuals outside of the landowning class had won seats on administrative bodies with enough regularity to draw the attention of the jurist Callistratus:

It is not right that those people who trade and sell objects of daily use be ignored as if they were worthless, even though they may be beaten by aediles. Indeed men of this sort are not barred from the decurionate or some other honor in their own cities; nor, indeed, are they disreputable. Nor, indeed, are those who have been beaten by the whip of an aedile denied honors, although the aedile rightfully exercised his office in doing so. Nevertheless, I think it shameful that people of this sort, having been subjected to beatings, be accepted onto a council, especially in those cities which have a wealth of respected men. For if there is a shortage of those men who ought to carry out public works, it is unavoidable that even these men, if they have the means, be invited into local office.²⁹

The commentary of the jurist, marked by the bias of the Roman imperial elite, shows that merchants and craftsmen (*qui utensilia negotiantur et vendunt*) could not legally be barred from office; however, it tempers that bias with realism. Callistratus is opposed to these men attaining office because he believes it is dishonorable (*inhonestum*). However, he is willing to concede that, if their

²⁸ *Sortes Astrampsychi* questions 44: *εἰ ἔχω χρόνον ζωῆς*; Question 55: *εἰ λαμβάνω ἤν θέλω γυναῖκα*; Question 88: *εἰ γίνομαι βουλευτῆς*; (Unless otherwise noted, all translations are my own).

²⁹ *Dig. 50.2.12: Eos, qui utensilia negotiantur et vendunt, licet ab aedilibus caeduntur, non oportet quasi viles personas neglegi. Denique non sunt prohibiti huiusmodi homines decurionatum vel aliquem honorem in sua patria petere: nec enim infames sunt. Sed ne quidem arcentur honoribus, qui ab aedilibus flagellis caesi sunt, quamquam iure suo ita aediles officio isto fungantur. Inhonestum tamen puto esse huiusmodi personas flagellorum ictibus subiectas in ordinem recipi, et maxime in eis civitatibus, quae copiam virorum honestorum habeant: nam paucitas eorum, qui muneribus publicis fungi debeant, necessaria etiam hos ad dignitatem municipalem, si facultates habeant, invitat.*

city has a shortage of men of standing (*paucitas [virorum honestorum]*), craftsmen and merchants would be suitable if they have *facultas*. While opposed to upward mobility on principle, then, the jurist accepts it as a necessity in the administration of the empire. This admission must have been in response to real circumstances, and reflects upon the situation of the empire in the 3rd century A.D.

The wording of this passage raises an important question about the criteria for holding office. The word '*facultas*' can mean both 'ability' and 'means,' an issue of interpretation that asks whether eligibility for council seats was established by wealth alone, or if other traits played a part as well. Koenraad Verboven argues that social mobility required both economic and social capital. Roman society had heavy plutocratic undertones, but wealth was not the only prerequisite for social status. Economic capital was only one element of the equation, and needed to be supplemented by social capital if a rise in social status was to be attained.³⁰ "Status lies in the eyes of the beholder," he states, "and is socially and politically effective only when it is recognized and acknowledged."³¹ Social capital is the affirmation of status; it is earned by the visibility and recognition of an individual as an important and respectable member of society. One's importance and credibility could be displayed in many ways: through the purchase of luxury items, essentially turning economic profits into prestige goods; the patronage of communities through the financing of public works; or by the accumulation of respectability and public esteem in other ways.³²

Professional associations could provide this credibility. Members could supplement economic capital with social capital from leadership positions in these organizations.³³ By allowing their leading members to become recognized through offices within the association and involvement in public works projects, they brought them to the forefront of their communities. Through connection with important public works, participation in public events, and even collective euergetism professional associations and their members were able to gain social capital.³⁴ However, although *koina* in Egypt

³⁰ Verboven, "The Associative Order," 863.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid., 872, 887. See, also, Tran, N. *Les Membres Des Associations Romaines: Le Rang Social Des "Collegiati" En Italie et en Gaules sous le Haute-Empire* (Rome: École Française, 2006).

³⁴ Ibid., 869-888. Verboven focuses on the connection of the *collegia naviculariorum* with the imperial *annona* and the *collegia centonariorum* with the Roman textile trade. For more on the *annona* and *collegia naviculariorum* see Houston, G.W. "The Administration of Italian Seaports during the First Three Centuries of the Roman Empire," in *Memoirs of*

provided many of the same services as those in other parts of the empire, there is no evidence that their members sat on city councils.

That is not to say that social mobility did not exist in Roman Egypt, and a model of cyclical mobility has been convincingly applied to the province. This model sees institutional hierarchies themselves as having been rigid, while their constituents, the individuals who held rank within them, constantly shifted in status.³⁵ The exchange between the ranks of the sub-elite and the elite was proportional, with almost an equal number of individuals changing place. Therefore, while individuals themselves rose or fell in status, there was no net change to the membership of the elite and sub-elite classes.³⁶ This model is not exclusive to Roman Egypt, and has been applied successfully to the Roman East as well.³⁷ In the East, many of the members of the sub-elite who gained council seats were craftsmen and merchants.³⁸ However, new entrants to the Egyptian elite seem to have exclusively been minor landholders.³⁹ The apparent lack of Egyptian craftsmen on city councils is notable because the papyrological record shows that they possessed considerable economic and social capital.

Section III: Egyptian Professional Associations and Economic and Social Capital

It is natural to associate Egypt with agriculture, and with good reason. Following the province's annexation, one-third of all the grain consumed in the city of Rome was grown on the banks of the Nile: an average of 6,000,000 artabae (around 135,000 tons) of grain a year.⁴⁰ However, urban production played an important part in the Egyptian economy as well, and many members of the local elite were able to take advantage of its profitability. One 3rd century AD contract shows that Septimius Serenus, the *prytanis* of a city council, owned a pottery workshop.⁴¹ Another records the lease of an oil workshop by an influential, political man to an oil maker, while a third

the American Academy in Rome 36 (1980): 157-171; see, also, Meiggs, R. *Roman Ostia* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973); for the *collegia centonariorum* and the textile supply of the Roman army see Liu, *Collegia Centonariorum*, 57-124.

³⁵ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 150.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 159.

³⁷ Zuiderhoek, A. "Oligarchs and Benefactors: Elite Deography and Euergetism in the Greek East of the Roman Empire." In *Political Culture in the Greek City After the Classical Age*, ed. Onno van Nijf and Richard Alston (Leuven: Peeters, 2011): 185-195.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 191; specific examples will be addressed in Section IV.

³⁹ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 261.

⁴⁰ Lewis, *Life in Roman Egypt*, 165.

⁴¹ *P. Oxy.* L 3596.

documents a councilor's letting of a dye-making workshop.⁴² This sort of involvement by the elite indicates that the perception of craft was not negative enough to dissuade them from profiting by it.

Egyptian craftsmen, too, profited by their trades, and they constituted a significant part of the province's economy.⁴³ They could become wealthy, and the charters of professional associations help to illustrate that wealth. These documents record weighty regular fees, and show that their members both were able to pay them and had strong incentives to do so. The best-preserved texts are two 1st century AD documents from the town of Tebtunis, in the Arsinoite nome. Both of these give examples of the cost of membership in an Egyptian professional association. The first, the charter of an unnamed *koinon* states a membership fee and lists a number of fineable offenses:

[...have chosen as president for the year] of Tiberius Caesar Augustus, Heron, son of Orseus, with whom they are compelled to feast monthly on the 12th, each one paying monthly the agreed upon 12 silver drachmas, equally assigned to each. Let it be possible for the president to exact a pledge against those not abiding by this and others rules. If anyone acts exceedingly drunk, let him be fined whatever seems best to the association. And if an assembly is announced to somebody and they do not attend, let him be fined 1 drachma if in the town, but 4 drachmas if in the city. If one marries, let him give 2 drachmas; for the birth of a son, 2 drachmas; of a daughter, 1 drachma; for the purchase of land, 4 drachmas; of a flock of sheep, 4 drachmas; of cattle, 1 drachma. If somebody comes upon him in trouble and does not join in helping to release him from that trouble, let him pay 8 drachmas. At feasts, let him sitting in the seat of another pay an extra 3 obols for his own place. If anyone prosecutes another or defames him, let him be fined 8 drachmas. If anyone plots against another or corrupts his home, let him be fined 60 drachmas. If anyone hands others into custody for a private debt, his bail will be valued at 100 silver drachmas for up to 30 days, within

⁴² For the lease of the oil workshop, see *P. Oxy.* LI 3639; for the dye-making workshop, *P. Oslo*. III 138.

⁴³ Van Minnen, "Urban Craftsmen in Roman Egypt," 38. Van Minnen estimates that at least 30-50% of the population of Oxyrhynchus was engaged in production. He supports this number with similar estimates from Panopolis and Hermopolis. For land and wealth distribution, see Bagnall, R.S. "Landholding in Late Roman Egypt: the Distribution of Wealth," *The Journal of Roman Studies* 82 (1992): 128-149. For the scope of occupations and craft in Egyptian *metropoleis*, see Bagnall, R.S. and Frier, B.W. *The Demography of Roman Egypt*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 71-74.

which time he will release the men. Let there be health! If any of the members dies, let everyone be shaved and feast for one day, each immediately donating 1 drachma and two loaves of bread. In the case of other human affairs, let there be a feast for one day. Let whoever does not shave their head be fined 4 drachmas. Let whoever, in the case of all these things, does not take part in the funeral or place a wreath on the tomb be fined 4 drachmas. Let other matters be in whichever way seems best to this association. Let this law be legitimate; having been approved by the majority, let it be returned to the president.⁴⁴

A monthly membership fee of twelve drachmas was costly, coming to 144 drachmas a year, an amount that would have fed a family of four for a year.⁴⁵ An individual able to pay such a fee regularly would have been rather well off. This charter also shows that fines were no less burdensome than regular dues. The association fined its members for a number of reasons, ranging from disrespect for the dead (4 drachmas) to stealing someone's seat at a feast (3 obols). The majority of offenses listed here result in either a 4 or 8 drachma

⁴⁴ P. Mich. V 243, ll. 1-14:[...ἐτ]ους Τιβερίου Καίσαρ[ος] Σεβαστοῦ Ἡρώνα Ὁρσεύτος σὺν ᾧ ἐπάναγκον/εὐωχείσθωσαν κατὰ μῆνα τῆ β,/ἐκάστου εἰς ἐπιμήν[ι]ου τελοῦντος τὰς ἐξ ἴσου κατ' ὄνομα κεκριμένας ἀργυρίου δραχμάς δέκα/ δύο , κατὰ δὲ τοῦ ἀδωσιδικουόντος ἐπι/τρούτων καὶ τῶν ἄλ[λων] ἐξέσται τῶι προστάτῃ ἐνεχυράζειν. ἐὰν δὲ τις ἐκπαροινήσει ζημιούσθω/ ὁ ἐὰν τῶι κοινῶι δόξηι./ἐὰν δὲ τιτι [ζ] σύλλο[γ]ος παραγγελῆι καὶ μὴ παραγένηται, ζημιούσθωι ἐπι μὲν τῆς κόμης/ δραχ(μῆν) μίαν ἐπι δὲ τῆς πόλεω(ς) δραχ(μάς) τέσσαρας./[ἐ]ὰν δὲ τις γαμήση, δότωι (δραχμάς) β, παιδογονίου ἄρρενο(ς) (δραχμάς) β, θηλείας/ (δραχμῆν) α, ἀγορασμοῦ ἐγγαίου (δραχμάς) δ, ἀγέλης προβάτων (δραχμάς) δ, κτηνῶ(ν)/ (δραχμῆν) α./ἐὰν τις παρίδῃ τινα ἐν ἀηδία καὶ μὴ συνενπισύσῃ ἐπι τῶι συλλύσαι αὐτὸν τῆς ἀηδίας,/ δ[ό]τωι (δραχμάς) η, ὁ δ' ἐν ταῖς εὐωχίας/ κατὰ κλισίαν προαναπέιπτων τοῦ ἑτέρου δότωι περισσότερον τριώβολον τοῦ ἰδίου τόπου/ ἕκαστος. ἐὰν τις τοῦ ἑτέρου κατη-/γορήσῃ ἢ διαβολὴν ποιήσῃται, ζημι(ούσθω) (δραχμάς) η. ἐὰν τις τὸν ἕτερον ὑπονομεύσῃ ἢ/ οἰκοφθορήσῃ, ζημι(ούσθω) (δραχμάς) ξ. ἐὰν τις πρὸς ἰδιωτικ(όν)/ παραδοθῆι, ἐγγυάσθωσαν αὐτὸν ἕως ἀργ(υρίου) (δραχμῶν) ἑκατὸν πρὸς ἡμέρ(ας) λ, ἐν αἷς/ ἀπευλυτήσῃ τοὺς ἀνδρας. Εἴη μὲν ὑγεία· ἐὰν τις τῶν/συνοδοιῶν τελευτήσῃ, ξυράσθωσαν πάντες καὶ ἐστιάτωσαν ἡμέρ(αν) α, ἐκάστου παραχρῆμα/ εἰσφέροντος (δραχμῆν) α καὶ κάκεις δύο,/ἐπι δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ἀνθρωπίνων ἐστιαν ἡμέρ(αν) α. ὁ ἐπι κεφαλικῶ μὴ ξυρησάμενος ζημι(ούσθω)/ (δραχμάς) δ. ὁ ἐπι πάντων μὴ μιανθείς/μηδὲ [στέ]μμα καταστήσας ἐπι τὸν τάφον ζημι(ούσθω) (δραχμάς) δ. Τὰ δ' ἄλλα ἃ ἐὰν τῶι κοινῶι/ δόξηι. Κυρια στωι ὁ νόμος ὑπογραφείς ὑπὸ τῶν/πλειίστων· κύριος τῶι προστάτῃ ἀποδοθήτωι..

⁴⁵ Venticinque, P. "Family Affairs: Guild Regulations and Family Relationships in Roman Egypt," *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies* 50 (2) (2010): 273-294. 274; see Duncan-Jones, R-P. *Structure and Scale in the Roman Economy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) for a more in depth discussion of the drachma and the value of wheat in Roman Egypt.

fine, or between one- and two-thirds the monthly cost of membership. Special contributions were also required on various occasions. A member was obliged to pay in the event of marriage (2 drachmas), the birth of a child (2 drachmas for a son, 1 for a daughter), the purchase of property (4 drachmas), or of livestock (4 drachmas for sheep, 1 drachma for cattle). These events were probably seen as occasions for rejoicing, and contributions were made as offerings of thanks.⁴⁶ The high price of membership proves that the members of this association were of at least moderate wealth.

A 1st century AD declaration of the *koinon* of salt merchants of Tebtunis imposes similar fees upon its members. However, it also shows a few benefits of association:

The 7th year of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator, the 25th of the month Kaisareios. Having come together, the undersigned men, the salt merchants of Tebtunis, have decided by common consent to elect from among themselves one Apunchis, son of Orseus, a good man, as both supervisor and collector of the public taxes for the coming eighth year of Tiberius Claudius Caesar Augustus Germanicus Imperator; this same Apunchis is to pay the tax of the same trade in full of the coming year, and [they have decided] that all should sell salt in the aforementioned town of Tebtunis and that Orseus alone has obtained by lot [the right] to sell gypsum in the aforementioned town of Tebtunis and the adjacent towns, for which [right] he will set aside, apart from the portion of the taxes which falls to him, another 66 silver drachmas; and, similarly, the same Orseus has obtained by lot Kerkesis, that he alone may sell salt therein, for which, similarly, he will set aside another 8 silver drachmas; and that Harmiusis, also called Belles, son of Harmiusis alone has obtained by lot [the right] to sell salt and gypsum in the town of Tristomos, also called Boukolos, for which he will pay, apart from the portion of the taxes which falls to him, another 5 silver drachmas, on the condition that they sell the good salt at 2½ obols and the light salt at 2 obols and the lighter salt at 1½ obols and by our measure or by that of the store-house. And if anyone sells [salt] for less than this, let him be fined 8 silver drachmas towards the common [treasury] and an equal amount towards the public [treasury]; and if any of them is found to have sold to a merchant more than one stater of salt, let him be fined 8

⁴⁶ Boak, A.E.R. "The Organization of Gilds in Greco-Roman Egypt." *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 68 (1937): 212-220; 215.

silver drachmas towards the common [treasury] and an equal amount towards the public [treasury]; but if the merchant intends to buy more than 4 drachmas [worth of salt], it is necessary that all sell to him jointly; and if anyone brings gypsum and intends to sell it abroad, it is necessary that he leave it among the [stores] of Orseus, son of Harmiusis, until he takes it abroad and sells it. It is a condition that they drink each month, always on the 25th, each one a chous of beer, [...] 1 drachma in the town, 4 drachmas abroad, 8 drachmas in the city. It is permissible for that same Apunchis to arrest on the street, in his home, or in the fields anyone not abiding by this law and who doesn't fulfill any of the public obligations or any of the claims made against him and to hand him over as aforesaid.⁴⁷

⁴⁷ *P. Mich. V 245*: ἔτους ἑβδόμου Τιβερίου Κλαυδίου Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος μηνὸς Καισαρήου κε. ἐλθόντος ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτῷ ὑπο-/γεγραμμένῳ ἀνδρες ἀλοπολυ τῶν ἀπὸ Τεβτύνεως ἐδοξασαν ἑαυτὺς κυνῆ γνῶμῃ προχίρῃσαι τινὰ ἐξ αὐτῶν ἀνδρα ἀγαθὸν/τὸν καὶ ἐπιμελιτῆν καὶ εἰσακτον τῶν δημοσίων Ἀπύνηχιν/Ὀρσεῦτος τοῦ ἰσίντος ὀγδώου ἔτους Τιβερίου Κλαυδίου/Καίσαρος Σεβαστοῦ Γερμανικοῦ Αὐτοκράτορος, τοῦ αὐτοῦ/Ἀπύνηχεος εἰσάγοντος τὰ δημόσια τῆς αὐτῆς ἐργασίας ἅπαντα τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἰσίντος ἔτους, καὶ πάντας ἐπὶ τὸ αὐ-/τὸ πολὶν το ταὶ ἅλα ἐν τῇ προκίμην κῶμῃ Τεβτύνι καί/κεκληρῶσθαι τὸν μὲν Ὀρσεῦν μόνον πολὶν το γυψος{μόνος} ἐν τῇ προκίμην κῶμῃ Τεβτύνι καὶ ἐν ταῖς συνκυ-/ροῦσι κῶμαις, ὑπὲρ οὐ διαγράψι χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπιβάλλοντος/αὐτῷ μέρους τῶν δημοσίων ἄλλας ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς ἐξήκοντα/ἑξ. καὶ ὁμοίως ὁ αὐτὸς Ὀρσεὺς κεκληρῶσθαι τὴν Κερκῆσιν τοῦ/πολὶν ἐν αὐτῇ μονος ἄλλα, ὑπὲρ οὐ διαγράψι ὁμοίως {ὑπὲρ τοῦ-/των} ἄλλας ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς ὀκτώ, καὶ κεκληρῶσθαι/Ἀρμιύσιν τὸν καὶ Βελλῆν Ἀρμιύσιος μονος τοῦ πολὶν/ἅλα καὶ γυψος ἐν κῶμῃ Τριστόμου τοῦ καὶ Βουκόλου, ὑπὲρ/οὐ τελέσι χωρὶς τοῦ ἐπιβάλλοντος αὐτῷ μέρους δημοσίων/ἄλλας ἀργυρίου δραχμὰς πέντε, ἐφ' ᾧ πωλήσουσι το ἅλα το καλὸν ἐξ ὀβολῶν δύο ἡμίους καὶ το λεπτόν ὀβολῶν δύο/καὶ τουπεὶ τὸ λεπτότερον ὀβολοῦ ἐνός ἡμίους τῷ τε/ἡ[μ]ῶν μέτρῳ ἢ τῷ τοῦ θησαυροῦ. ὡς ἂν τις πολήσι ἐλατ-/τω τούτω[ν] ζημιούσθω ὁ τοιοῦτος εἰς τὸ κυνὸν ἀργυρί-/ου δραχμὰς ὀκτὼ καὶ ἰς τὸ δημόσιον τὰς ἴσας, καὶ ἐὰν/[δέ] τις αὐτῶν εὐρηθῆ πεπρακῶς ἐμπόρῳ πλύω στα-/τήρος ἄλλος ζημιούσθω ὁ τοιοῦτος εἰς τὸ κυνὸν ἀργυρίου/δραχμὰς ὀκτὼ καὶ ἰς τὸ δημόσιον τὰς ἴσας. ἐὰν δὲ/{ω πλυ/ωι} /μέλλῃ ὁ ἔμπορος πλύω ἀγοράζιν (δραχμῶν) δέπανάγκον/πάγτος πολήσιν αὐτῷ κυνῶς. ἐὰν δὲ τις ἐνικῆ γυψος καὶ μέλλῃ πολὶν ἐπὶ ξένης ἐπάναγκον αἰαθήσε-/τε ἐν τῷ τοῦ Ὀρσεῦτος Ἀρμιύσιος μέχρι οὐ λάβῃ ἐπὶ/ξένης καὶ πολήσῃ ἐφ' ᾧ πίνονται κατὰ μῆνας αἰεὶ τῆ κε /ἑ[κ]αστος ζύτου χοῦν ἕνα, [...], ἐπὶ μὲν κῶμης (δραχμῆν) α, ἐπὶ δὲ ξένης (δραχμὰς) δ, ἐπὶ/δ[ὲ] τῆς] μητροπόλεος (δραχμὰς) η. τὸν δὲ ἀδωσιτικούντα /[καὶ μ]ῆ [ἀ]γαπλεροῦντά τι τῶν δημοσίων ἢ καὶ δέπανάγκον/πάγτος πολήσιν αὐτῷ κυνῶς. ἐὰν δὲ τις ἐνικῆ γυψος καὶ μέλλῃ πολὶν ἐπὶ ξένης ἐπάναγκον αἰαθήσε-/τε ἐν τῷ τοῦ Ὀρσεῦτος Ἀρμιύσιος μέχρι οὐ λάβῃ ἐπὶ/ξένης καὶ πολήσῃ ἐφ' ᾧ πίνονται κατὰ μῆνας αἰεὶ τῆ κε /ἑ[κ]αστος ζύτου χοῦν ἕνα, [...], ἐπὶ μὲν κῶμης (δραχμῆν) α, ἐπὶ δὲ ξένης (δραχμὰς) δ, ἐπὶ/δ[ὲ] τῆς] μητροπόλεος (δραχμὰς) η. τὸν δὲ ἀδωσιτικούντα /[καὶ μ]ῆ [ἀ]γαπλεροῦντά τι τῶν δημοσίων ἢ καὶ τῶν/[προσε]κκληθησομένων αὐτὺς ἐξίνα τῷ

The salt merchants of Tebtunis, like the unnamed *koinon* in *P. Mich.* V 243, elected an officer to preside over them for the year. This individual, again, was responsible for the administration and collection of dues and fees from individual members. They dined monthly and each member paid to help fund that meal (1 drachma in the town, 4 drachmas outside of the village, and 8 drachmas in the *metropolis*). The *koinon* had also secured a monopoly on the salt trade of Tebtunis and the adjacent towns, and paid the state for this privilege.⁴⁸ Furthermore, individual members, having been selected by lot, paid for monopolies on gypsum and salt in specific towns (Orseus paid 74 drachmas total for his monopolies on gypsum and salt; Hermiusis paid 5 drachmas). These monopolies eliminated competition, providing obvious economic benefits to the members of the association. The price-fixing and restriction on transaction size outlined in this ordinance also limited competition and assured that profits were shared among members. The willingness of individuals to pay significant amounts of money to be members of associations like the *koinon* salt merchants of Tebtunis or the unnamed *koinon* in *P. Mich.* V 243 shows two things: that they were able to meet the financial demands of membership, and that they considered its benefits worth the cost.⁴⁹

The ordinance of salt merchants of Tebtunis is the only record of such a monopoly held by an Egyptian professional association during this period. However, many documents show that *koina* were frequently hired for public works projects. These jobs were expensive and paid well, and they must have been another incentive for membership.⁵⁰ These types of contracts also highlight the reliance of the administrative elite on private organizations of craftsmen. There was poor, even absent, infrastructure in place for magistrates to fulfill the duties of their office, and they had to turn to private craftsmen for public works projects.⁵¹ One 4th century receipt records an association of ironworkers' request for reimbursement of the cost of iron used in such projects:

To Valerius Ammonianos and to Gerontios, mayor of Oxyrhynchus, from the association of ironworkers of the brilliant and most brilliant city of Oxyrhynchus through Aurelius Severus, son of Sarmatos, of

αὐτῷ Ἀπ-/[ύνχι] [ἐνε]χυράσζιν αὐτοὺς ἐν τε τῇ πλατέᾳ καὶ ἐν/[ταῖς οἰκί]αις καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀγρῶι καὶ παραδιδαναι αὐτοὺς/[καθὼς πρό]κττα.

⁴⁸ Boak, A.E.R. "An Ordinance of the Salt Merchants" *The American Journal of Philology* 58 (2) (1937): 210-219, 211

⁴⁹ For further benefits of association, see Venticinque, "Family Affairs."

⁵⁰ See, for example, *P. Oxy.* I.55, in which two kasiotic joiners request 4 talents and 4,000 drachmas in return for their work on a public thoroughfare.

⁵¹ Venticinque, "Common Causes," 67.

the same city, the monthly president of the same association. I have reckoned, with Aurelius Agathoboulos, son of Alexander, the banker of the public incomes of the state bank of Oxyrhynchus by the commission of the of the same most noteworthy mayor those things which we had agreed upon to be ordered to be paid to us for the sake of the price of wrought iron, coming out to be one hundred-weight, used towards the public works of the city at 6 full talents of silver. This receipt is legitimate and, having consulted it, I agree.⁵²

The figures involved in this transaction are quite large. The 6 talents, or 36,000 drachmas, requested by this association of ironworkers was an immense amount of money. To put this figure in perspective, it is over two-thirds of the 50,000 drachmas proposed as a wealth qualification for council membership.⁵³ This sum was paid, however, to cover the costs of iron used in public works, not as wages for the craftsmen. If the iron was used for a single job, it was certainly a large one; however, the use of the plural in the phrase δημόσια πολιτικά ἔργα (public works of the city) implies that this association of ironworkers completed multiple jobs for the city.

There are more examples of *koina* being offered public works contracts from early 4th century Oxyrhynchus. One papyrus bears the report of a monthly president of glass workers who were hired to work on public baths.⁵⁴ Another records the commission of two monthly presidents of an association of builders by the council of Oxyrhynchus; they were hired to inspect a house owned by the state.⁵⁵ These documents are proof that the state often relied on private, professional associations for the completion of public works. Many have argued that professional associations had been dissolved in Egypt.⁵⁶

⁵² *P. Oxy.* I 84. Οὐαλερίω Ἀμμωνιανῶ τῷ καὶ Γ[ε]ροντίω λογιστῇ Ὁξ(υρρυχίτου)/πα[ρ]ὰ τοῦ κοινοῦ τῶν σιδηρο-/χαλκῶν τῆς λαμ(πρᾶς) καὶ λαμ(προτάτης) Ὁξ(υρρυχιδῶν) πόλεως/δι(ἄ)/Αὐρηλίου Σευήρου Σαρμάτου ἀπὸ τῆς/αὐ[τ]ῆς πόλεως μηνιάρχου ἀπὸ τῶν/[αὐτ(ῶν)]. ἡρίθμημε παρ' Αὐρηλίου/Ἀγαθοβούλου Ἀλεξάνδρου δημοσίων/λη[μ]μάτων τραπ(εζίτου) Ὁξ(υρρυχίτου) πολιτικῆς/τραπέζης ἐξ ἐπιστάλατος/τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἀξιολογωτάτου λογιστοῦ/ἃ τετάγμεθα/ἐπισταλήνα ἐξωδιασασθαι ἡμῖν ὑπὲρ τιμῆς/σιδη[ρο]υ ἐνεργοῦ ὀλκῆς κεν-/τ[η]ναρ[ί]ου ἐνὸς χωροῦντος εἰς/δημόσια πολιτικά ἔργα/ἀργυρί[ου] (τάλαντα) ζ πλήρη./κυρία ἢ ἀποχή, καὶ ἐπ[ε]ρωτητεῖς ὦμ[ολ]όγησα.

⁵³ Tacoma. *Fragile Hierarchies*, 130-132. See section I of this paper.

⁵⁴ *P. Oxy.* XLV 3265.

⁵⁵ *P. Oxy.* XLIV 3195.

⁵⁶ For the argument that associations were illegal in Roman Egypt, see De Robertis, F.M. *Storia delle Corporazioni e del Regime Associativo nel Mondo Romano* (Bari: Adriatica 1971), 247-248 and 266- 267; Cotter, "The Collegia and Roman Law"; and Taubenschlag, R. *The Law of Greco-Roman Egypt in the Light of Papyri (332 B.C.-640 A.D.)* (Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1955), 647. For a comprehensive dismantling of this

However, the working relationships shown in these papyri prove that these groups were not only accepted by the administration, but also instrumental in the management of the province.

These types of public services elevated *koina* and their members in the eyes of the community and the provincial administration. The Roman government recognized the usefulness of these associations and honored their service. The *Digest* awards immunity from compulsory service to individuals who are members of professional associations that already provide services to the state.⁵⁷ This immunity was extended to Egyptian associations and craftsmen as well, and they were often excused from liturgical positions. A 2nd century AD judicial report from Oxyrhynchus addresses this exemption:

Of Isidoros of Eudaimon, his advocate said: “Epimachus, son of Gaius, assistant to the *strategos* of the fourth district nominated my [client], being a foreman of weavers and having many workmen in his factory, in place of himself. Such men have been exempted on account of being useful to the treasury and I urge you to order Epimachus to nominate someone else in place of himself, and I will read a report of Makrinos, having been dated to the 22nd year, Pharmouthi.” Hippias, the advocate said: “Epimachus said that he [Isidoros] is not a weaver, but a perfumer, and an honorable man.” Julianus said: “according to the decisions of similar cases, if he is a foreman of weavers he is able to use that same precedent and himself nominate another in place of himself.”⁵⁸

claim, see Arnaoutoglou, “*Collegia* in the province of Egypt in the First century A.D.” and de Ligt, L. “The *Collegia* and Roman Law: State Restrictions on Voluntary Associations 64 BCE-200 CE.” In *Mercati Permanenti e Mercati Periodici nel Mondo Romano. Atti degli Incontri Capresi di Storia dell’Economia Antica (Capri 13-15 Ottobre 1997)*, ed. Elio Lo Cascio, 237-252.

⁵⁷ *Dig.* 50.6.6.12: *Quibusdam collegiis vel corporibus, quibus ius coeundi lege permissum est, immunitas tribuitur: scilicet eis collegiis vel corporibus, in quibus artificii sui causa unusquisque adsumitur [...] id est idcirco instituta sunt, ut necessariam operam publicis utilitatibus exhiberent* (Immunity is granted to certain *collegia* or corporations, to which the right of meeting has been given by law: namely to those *collegia* or corporations, in which each member is added for the sake of his own craft [...] therefore, those which are established in order to provide work necessary for public needs).

⁵⁸ *P. Oxy.* XXII 2340, lines 3-24: Ισιδώρου Εὐδαίμων ῥή-/τωρ εἶπεν· Ἐπίμαχος Γαίου ὑποστράτη-γος δέλτα γράμματος ἀνέδωκεν τὸν/ἡμέτερον ἀνθ’ αὐτοῦ ἐργαστηριάρχην/ὄντα λινοῦ φων πολλοὺς ἐργαζομέ-/νους ἐν τῇ ἐργασίᾳ ἔχοντα. οἱ δὲ/τοιούτοι ἀφείθησαν διὰ τὸ χρήσι-/μο[ν εἶναι τῷ ταμει[ί]ω καὶ παρακαλῶ/[δὲ] κελεῦσαι σε τῷ [Ἐπιμ]άχῳ ἔτερον/[ἀνθ’ αὐτοῦ] ἀναδ[οῦνα κ]αὶ ἀναγν[ώ-]/[σομαῦπό]μνημ[α Μακρί]νου κε[χρ]ο- /νισμένον εἰς τὸ κβ Φαρμοῦ-/θι. Ἰππίας ῥήτωρ εἶπεν· ὁ Ἐπί-/μαχος φησιν μὴ εἶναι αὐτὸν/λινόφον ἀλλὰ μυροπώλην/εὐσχήμονα ἀνθρώπων. Ἰου-/λιανὸς

Isidoros of Eudaemon's defense relies on the exemption of foreman weavers from liturgical service. His advocate claims that his client's defense has legal precedents. That claim is supported by a 2nd century text from Philadelphia, which says that weavers in possession of more than one talent were exempt from serving in liturgical positions.⁵⁹ The practice of excusing certain craftsmen from liturgical duties underscored their importance to the community. Such recognition was an honor and a visible marker of status. A further indication of Isidoros' status is that he was offered as a candidate for the replacement for Epimachus, an assistant governor of the city. There was no distinction from an administrative point of view between a wealthy merchant and an established member of the local elite. Such equality, at least with regard to eligibility for liturgical positions, shows that urban craftsmen could rise to significant positions within their communities and is an expression of the social capital available to them. The fact that this document dates to the 2nd century AD is also interesting. To see craftsmen nominated for such important roles, in the case of Isidoros as a replacement for a political man, proves that they could become important and respected at a time when magistracies, even citizenship, were unavailable to them.

The adjective εὐσχήμων, in line 18 of the report, is another indication of Isidoros' social position. This is a difficult word to define, meaning 'elegant,' 'graceful,' 'decent,' and 'becoming' in different contexts. However, the meaning most fitting here is: 'noble,' or 'honorable.' In official documents this is an honorary adjective that denotes status and rank, irrespective of trade or membership to elite circles.⁶⁰ In fact, εὐσχήμων is often used as an honorary label for individuals who have already held certain offices or magistracies.⁶¹ Epimachus' referral to Isidoros as εὐσχήμων is significant. This label may indicate that he has already served in a position similar to the one he refuses in *P. Oxy.* XXII 2340. His social prominence and importance are made clear by the

εἶπεν· κατὰ τὰ ἐφ' ὄμο[ι-]/ων κριθέντα εἰ ἐστὶν ἔργα-/στηριάρχης λινούφος τῷ αὐ-/τῷ παραδείγ[μ]ατι χρῆσασθαι/δύναται κα[ὶ] αὐτὸς [ἀ]ντ' αὐτο[ῦ]/ἕτερον ἀν[αδοῦναι].

⁵⁹ *P. Phil.* 1. For a discussion of this text, see van Minnen, "Urban Craftsmen in Roman Egypt," 47. For a description and discussion of Egyptian liturgies, see Lewis, N. *Compulsory Services of Roman Egypt* (Florence: Edizioni Gonnelli, 1997).

⁶⁰ For further discussion of this word, see Venticinque. "Common Causes," 97-100. Venticinque finds that εὐσχήμων means different things depending on the situation. For example, in *BGUI* 147 and *P. Ryl.* II 236 it is used to describe village magistrates and officials. *P. Oxy.* LX 4063 sees it describe individuals responsible for the transport of grain. In all of these instances, however, εὐσχήμων is used to mark an individual's importance and status.

⁶¹ Venticinque, "Common Causes," 99.

grounds on which he petitions to be exempt from liturgical duty as well as the very language with which he is addressed. His immunity from compulsory service and his status as a *εὐσχήμων ἄνθρωπος* are both expressions of his social capital.

However, some Egyptian craftsmen did perform liturgical services. Upon the assumption of such a post, of course, any exemption from public service was lost. The willingness of individual craftsmen to forfeit their immunity shows that these positions could be helpful both socially and politically.⁶² A text from 3rd century A.D. Arsinoe lists two craftsmen among the candidates for overseer of the city's water supply and fountains.⁶³ Isidoros the oil manufacturer and Ammonios the construction worker ranked last on this list of candidates. However, their very nomination shows that these two craftsmen possessed the wealth required to fill such a position. Liturgies were expensive, and the men who carried them out financed and performed important duties. Although compulsory, the execution of these duties would have provided individuals with respectability as well as visibility as local benefactors.

A mid-2nd century A.D. text from the town of Muchis in the Arsinoite nome offers up two tradesmen as nominees to a council of elders:

To Eudoros, the governor of the Arsinoite districts of Themistos and Polemon, from Onnophris, son of Orsenuphis, and Panesneus, son of Orseus, and Pacheus, son of Chnubis, these three and the remaining elders acting on behalf of the office of the town secretary of the Muchis town, a statement of the elders and chief of police and other public servants for the current 22nd year of the emperor Antoninus Caesar. They are:

Elders:

Sasneus, son of Abobleus, grandson of Belleies and son of the mother Tapeteus from the village; he has a personal wealth of 500 drachmas. Chrusas, the elder son of Aruotos and the mother Tepeteus; he has a personal wealth of 400 drachmas.

Busbeitis, son of Orsenuphis, grandson of Chrusa, he is a butcher; he has a personal wealth of 400 drachmas.

⁶² Ibid., 154-155.

⁶³ SB XVI 12497, lines 40-50: εἰς ἐπιμέλιαν καστέλλου καὶ κρηνῶν μητροπόλ(εως) [/ δ Σαραπάμμων ὁ καὶ Ἄριος Νίλου τοῦ Ζωίλου ἀ[πὸ/ἔστ(ιν) ὁ τοῦ κενοῦ γεούχ(ου) ἐπ[/ η Ἰσιδώρος ὁ καὶ Ηρακλείδης Ηρωнос τοῦ Σωκ[ράτους/ἔστ(ιν) Ἄγαθος ἐλαιουργὸς ἐν [/ ε Θεόδωρος Ἰσιδώρου τοῦ Ἰσχυρίωνος ἀπὸ [/ ἔστ(ιν) υἱὸς Ἰσιδώρου οἰκ(οῦντος) ἐν τῷ [/ ζ Ἀμμώνιος Μάγνου τοῦ καὶ Μενούθου ἀπὸ Γ[υ(μνασίου)/ἔστ(ιν) Ἀμμώνιος φλυαίρως ἐργάτ[ης/β Ἀντώνιος Διόσκορος Ωριγένους Ἀλεξανδρέ[ως/ἔστ(ι) Διόσκορος Χριστιανός.

Ph[...], son of Phasis, grandson of Ph[...], called the weaver; he has a personalwealth of 400 drachmas.

[...], son of Pachis, grandson of Pachis; he has a personal wealth of 500 drachmas.⁶⁴

The nomination of a butcher and a weaver to a council of elders, like Isidoros' legal defense, underscores how important craftsmen could become in their communities. The council of elders was a prestigious institution, and councilors were raised socially by their membership.⁶⁵ This particular document is interesting because of its setting. The date, again, makes it clear that Egyptian craftsmen were able to become important local actors before the introduction of the city council in 200 AD. However, Muchis was only a town, and although the council of elders was a prestigious body, it does not compare to magistracies or the city council of a *metropolis* or *polis* as an expression of elite status.⁶⁶ While this document gives testimony to the fact that craftsmen could become important in their communities, it fails to show that they joined the ranks of an urban, oligarchic elite.

The posts for which these craftsmen were candidates, liturgical or otherwise, were important ones and they must have lent that importance to the men who filled them. These individuals were leading members of a mercantile sub-section of society. They owned workshops, employed others, and were wealthy enough to pay a significant amount of money to be members of professional associations. They were not marginalized, economically or socially, and their ability to organize and finance associations only adds to that point. Furthermore, their wealth and status allowed them to enter into working relationships with members of the Egyptian elite.

⁶⁴ BGUI 6. Lines 1-14: Εὐδώρω στρ(ατηγῶ) Ἀρσι(νοϊτῶν) Θεμιστ(ου) καὶ Πολ(έμωνος) μερίδων/παρὰ Ὀννώφρεως Ὀρσενούφεως καὶ Πανεσνέως/Ὀρσειούς καὶ Πάχεως Χνούβεως τῶν γ καὶ τῶν λο(ι)π(ῶν)/ πρεσβ(υτέρων) διαδεχομ(ένων) καὶ τὰ κατὰ τὴν κωμογρ(αμματείαν) κώ(μης) Μούχεως/γραφή πρεσβ(υτέρων) καὶ ἀρχεφόδων καὶ ἄλλων δημοσίων/πρὸς τὸ εἰσὶδ(ν) κβ (ἔτος) Ἀντωνίνου Καίσαρος τοῦ κυρίου. εἰσὶ δέ./πρεσβ(υτεροι)/-Σανσενὸς Ἀβόβλεως τοῦ Βελλείους μη(τρὸς) Ταπετεεῦτ(ος)/ ἀπὸ τῆς κώμης ἔχων πόρον (δραχμῶν) φ/ Χρυσᾶς πρεσβ(υτερος) Ἀρωῦτου μη(τρὸς) Ταπετεεῦτ(ος) ἔχων πό(ρον) (δραχμῶν) υ/ Βυρβεΐτις Ὀρσενούφεως τοῦ Χρυσᾶ μάγειρος [ἔχ(ων) π]όρο(ν) (δραχμῶν) υ/ Φ[.....] Φασει τοῦ Φας ἐπικαλ(οῦμενος) γέρδ(ιος) [ἔχ(ων) πό(ρον)] (δραχμῶν) υ/ [.....] Πάχεως τοῦ Πάχεως [.. ἔχ(ων) πό]ρο(ν) (δραχμῶν) φ.

⁶⁵ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 117.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*: "the place of [councils of elders] in the social spectrum would merit more attention than it has received thus far. What is certain, however, is that although they did have an elitist ring, they formed no match for the council. They had no share in local power, and they did not have a membership as constrained and exclusive as the council."

An early 2nd century letter addressed to the governor of the Apollonopolite Heptacomia nome illustrates the power of some craftsmen, and their relationship with the elite.

Papeireis to the most honored Apollonius, the *strategos* of the Apollonopolite Heptacomia nome, greetings. I want you to know that I, alone, was assigned to your nome, having requested it and Besarion having voiced his consent, with my private freighter of 4,000 artabae [capacity]. But after I was assigned, I was detained by the administrator [of the association of pilots] so that I might act as priest of the association of pilots. You would do well, dearest friend, to receive my [men], since I will not be present to pay my respects to your most honored self and trust that I am able to give service to you. You are not unaware that I have other [boats] [of a capacity of] 80,000 [artabae], sailing which I would have the means to sweep your nome clean.⁶⁷

This letter presents Papeireis, a leading member of the *koina* of pilots, as a wealthy and powerful man. He owned a sizeable fleet, and was able to deal with the shipping needs of entire nomes by himself. Furthermore, by introducing his final remark with “you are not unaware” (οὐκ ἀγνοεῖς), Papeireis makes it clear that he was well known to the administration as an able, capable pilot. His letter also shows his influence. Papeireis had successfully used contacts with the *procurator* of the nome and a certain Besarion in order to secure this particular contract for himself. Papeireis was a rich business owner, an employer, and an office-holder in the association of pilots. He had the economic and social resources to engage with the Egyptian elite and to leverage his interests, as well as the ability to act upon them.

Evidence from Roman Egypt shows that professional associations and their members served important roles in their communities, and were recognized for doing so. *Koina* were often awarded public works contracts, which shows that they were visible to the public and had good working relationships with the local elite. In return for these services to the state, some were granted immunity from compulsory services, a great honor. Furthermore,

⁶⁷ P. Giss. 11: Παπέριεις Ἀπολλωνίῳ στρατηγ(ῶ) Ἀπολλωνοπολεῖτου (ἑπτα)κωμίας τῷ τιμιωτάτῳ χαίρειν. γινώσκειν σε θέλω ὅτι ἐπεστά-λην εἰς τὸν ὑπό σοι νομὸν μόνος καὶ πλαιρειδῶν ὡς ἀρταβῶν {{ἀρταβῶν}} Δ ἐμοῦ αἰτησαμένου τὸν νομὸν/ Βησαρίωνος εἶπαντος. ἐπεσταλ{η\ν/}-μένος δὲ κατεσχέτην ὑπὸ τοῦ ἐπιτρόπου ὥστε εἰερατεύειν τοῦ χειρισμοῦ τῶν κυβερνητ(ῶν).] καλῶς οὖν προϊ[ήσ]ης, φ[ι]λτατε, σ[υ]ν-λαβόμενος τοῦ ἐμούς, ἐπ<ε>ἰ ἐγὼ οὐ πάρεμι προ[σ]κυνῆσαι σε τὸν τιμιώτατον [κ]αὶ σὺ μοι ἐπειρε-πε ὡς δυναμένῳ σοι ἐργασίαν δῶ-ναι· οὐκ ἀγνοεῖς ὅτι ἄλλας ὀκτὸ μν-ριάδες ἔχω πλ[οι]ῶν ἂν ἔξουσίαν ἔχλω/ ὥστε σαρωθῆναι σου τὸν νομὸν.

some, like Papeireis, were quite wealthy and had some influence in administrative matters. Others had both the means and ability to fill liturgical posts, with some even serving on local councils of elders. They seem to have achieved the social and economic capital required for upward mobility. Finally, papyrological evidence shows that they had already achieved many of these things by the 1st and 2nd centuries AD, a period when they were thought to have been restricted by ethnic discrimination. In light of this, it is even more striking that there is no evidence that any craftsmen sat on city councils after 200 AD and entered the ranks of the elite.

Section IV: Patronage

Many craftsmen in the West and Asia Minor aimed at elite status and achieved it. For example, a baker from Korykos, a goldsmith at Sardis, a physical trainer in Smyrna, a ship owner at Nicomedia, and a purple-dyer in Hierapolis all sat on city councils.⁶⁸ A wealthy shipping magnate from Ephesus even had an imperial recommendation for a council seat.⁶⁹ Individuals acting as patrons towards associations in which their fathers had held office provide further examples of this upward mobility.⁷⁰ Patronage was a defining characteristic of the relationships between professional associations and the elite in the ancient world, and one that helped both benefactor and beneficiary. However, it seems to have been one that was absent in Roman Egypt.

Patronage, a type of voluntary euergetism, has assumed a central role in the debate about professional associations. One third of the extant inscriptions set up by associations were honorary, and most of these recognized members of the local elite for acts of patronage.⁷¹ Individuals acted as patrons to organizations in many ways; some purchased the land on which meeting

⁶⁸ For the baker, see *SEG* 37, 1309; for the goldsmith, see Robert (1964), no. 14; for the physical trainer, see *I. Smyrna* 246; for the ship owner, see *TAM* IV 1.304; for the purple-dyer, see Judeich (1898), no. 156. For further examples, see Zuiderhoek, "Oligarchs and Benefactors," 191; and van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East*, 21-22.

⁶⁹ *IK* XV 1487. The emperor Hadrian went so far as to offer to pay for this man's entry fee.

⁷⁰ Verboven, "The Associative Order," 887; for examples of this phenomenon see Bollmann B, *Römische Vereinhäuser: Untersuchungen zu den Scholae der Römischen Berufs-, Kult- und Augustalen- Kollegien in Italien*. (Mainz: Verlag Philipp von Zabern, 1998), 205.

⁷¹ Van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East*, 74-75; van Nijf, "Les Élités comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles," 309; see Clemente, G. "Il Patronato nei Collegia dell'Impero Romano," *Studi Classici e Orientali* 21 (1972): 142-229, 144-156 for a list of inscriptions honoring patronage.

places were built, others donated the building itself; some improved local infrastructure at the behest of an association, or acted as its legal council; many simply gave monetary gifts.⁷²

Through patronage, individuals could assure themselves positions of prestige within their communities. While senators and *equites* were often patrons of professional associations, municipal oligarchs filled the role most regularly.⁷³ The frequency with which municipal oligarchs were benefactors of associations shows that this type of euergetism was an important political tool. Patronage, through the honorary inscriptions it usually produced, created a physical presence in the community that could be used to boost recognition and allow individuals to solidify their positions on the social ladder.⁷⁴ Furthermore, most cases of senatorial and equestrian benefaction occurred in instances where the patron had strong local ties to the region.⁷⁵ This strengthens the claim that these relationships were important elements of local politics.

Patronage was a part of Roman political culture and was dictated by culturally regulated norms.⁷⁶ A study of the average donations given to various recipients (cities, professional associations, religious associations, etc.) shows that patrons often gave similar amounts to similar groups.⁷⁷ This implies that a euergetistic standard governed these amounts.⁷⁸ Dedicatory inscription also frequently used vague and formulaic language, which indicates that patronage was a codified element of Roman social and political discourse.⁷⁹ Relationships of patronage were mutually beneficial and allowed members of the elite and the non-elite to interact with each other in a visible, public way; they offered benefactors prestige in return for their generosity, and associations status through their connection to wealthy members of the elite.⁸⁰

⁷² Van Nijf, *Professional Associations in the Roman East*, 95-108; van Nijf, "Les Élités comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles," 309-314.

⁷³ Clemente, "Il Patronato nei Collegia dell'Impero Romano," 186; Andreau, "Fondations Privées et Rapports Sociaux en Italie Romain (Ier-IIIer s. ap. J.C.)," 173.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 166; for a broader discussion of the role of euergetism in Roman politics, see Zuiderhoek, A., *Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire: Citizens, Elites and Benefactors in Asia Minor*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 184, 187.

⁷⁶ See Zuiderhoek, *Politics of Munificence in the Roman Empire*.

⁷⁷ Andreau, "Fondations Privées et Rapports Sociaux en Italie Romain (Ier-IIIer s. ap. J.C.)," 178.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

⁷⁹ Van Nijf, "Les Élités comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles," 314; Clemente, "Il Patronato nei Collegia dell'Impero Romano," 220.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 318.

Professional associations, as the beneficiaries of patronage, gained social rewards

in addition to economic ones. They used patronage to legitimize and solidify their social status in much the same way that their benefactors did. Local authorities controlled access to public space, and the process of erecting statuary and honorary inscription was often difficult.⁸¹ Nevertheless, as the amount of extant inscriptions prove, associations frequently made the effort to honor their benefactors publicly. In addition to the honorees, the dedicators themselves received distinction from these public displays of thanks.⁸² Beyond the honor gained from the use of public space, inscription gave associations an opportunity to publicly announce their position in the local hierarchy.⁸³ This opportunity for self-presentation benefitted both the elite patron and the association, as each enjoyed a public expression of social status.

However, this phenomenon was mostly absent from Egypt, and patronage is rarely attested to in the province. What little evidence there is concerns municipal oligarchs less often than members of the Alexandrian elite.⁸⁴ Furthermore, professional associations play no part in these examples. Voluntary euergetism, as opposed to compulsory services like liturgies, was a relatively late institution in Egypt, and it developed differently there than it did in the rest of the Mediterranean world.⁸⁵ Egyptian elites were rarely eager to act

⁸¹ Ibid., 307-8; see, also, van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East*, 113-116. Both texts rely heavily on analysis of TAM 3.1, 4 and TAM 3.1, 62, two 2nd century inscriptions from Termessos.

⁸² Pliny, *ep.* 1, 17: *neque enim magis decorum et insigne est statuam in foro populi Romani habere quam ponere* (it is not, indeed, more honorable or exceptional to have a statue in the forum of the Roman people than it is to place one there.); for further discussion, see van Nijf, "Les Élités comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles," 314.

⁸³ Van Nijf, "Les Élités comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles," 309; 318: *les beneficiaries principaux des usages épigraphiques (et honorifiques) étaient les notables, pour qui la plupart des inscriptions étaient dédiées, mais les monuments offrirent aux colleges une chance pour se présenter comme partie intégrante de la hiérarchie locale* (the principal beneficiaries of epigraphic (and honorary) inscriptions were the nobility, by whom the majority of inscriptions were dedicated, but the monuments offered *collegia* a chance to present themselves as an integral part of the local hierarchy).

⁸⁴ Tacoma, *Fragile Hierarchies*, 147.

⁸⁵ Van Minnen, P. "Euergetism in Graeco-Roman Egypt." In *Politics, Administration and Society in the Hellenistic and Roman World: Proceedings of the International Colloquium, Bertinoro 19-24 July 1997* ed. Leon Mooren (Leuven: Peeters, 2000): 437-469, 445. Van Minnen sees Egyptian euergetism as a

Greek import, the seeds of which arrived in the Ptolemaic period; he argues that the tradition of pharaonic monarchy and the absence of Greek cities caused it to take a form unique in the Mediterranean world. At first, euergetism was restricted to Greeks, and was

as benefactors and were reluctant to make expenditures beyond what was required of them by administrative offices. Magistracies were expensive undertakings, and there was no incentive to spend more than was necessary on voluntary donations.⁸⁶ The Egyptian elite found prominence, prestige, and even an arena for competition in fulfilling various magistracies.⁸⁷ Liturgical duties associated with public office seem to have fulfilled any ambition of euergetism on the part of the Egyptian elite.

Patronage was a source of social capital to both the benefactor and the beneficiary; it legitimized both as respectable and important social actors. The apparent absence of elite patronage as an established part of the Egyptian political process deprived *koina* of strong visible ties with the administrative class. These ties were important in solidifying the status of professional associations in other parts of the empire. Although the papyrological record shows that Egyptian craftsmen and their *koina* were able to negotiate and enter into business relationships with the administrative class, they lacked the socially charged, political exchange between benefactor and beneficiary. Professional associations in other provinces were able to use their relationships with elite patrons to produce social capital. It has been shown that Egyptian *koina* and their members gained social capital through public works contracts, immunity from compulsory service, and liturgical duties. However, this was clearly insufficient for any craftsmen or merchants to rise to the curial class. Their failure to enter the ranks of the elite is explained by a general lack of voluntary euergetism in Roman Egypt.

Conclusion

The professional associations of Roman Egypt during the first four centuries AD seem to have aided their members in attaining the social and economic capital necessary for upward mobility. Documents from Roman Egypt, from contracts to charters to personal correspondence, show that Egyptian craftsmen could become important members of society. However, there is no evidence that Egyptian craftsmen or merchants were able to enter the curial class. One explanation for this is the unpopularity of voluntary euergetism in Roman Egypt. This unpopularity deprived Egyptian *koina* of the

only directed towards the gymnasia (446). During the 2nd and 3rd centuries, by which time the Romans had placed Greeks in control of public affairs, it assumed a more prominent position in the scene of urban politics and administration; however, mostly in the form of compulsory spending associated with magistracies and liturgies, as opposed to voluntary patronage of towns, cities, and associations.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 454-455.

⁸⁷ Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity*, 56. van Minnen, P. "Euergetism in Graeco-Roman Egypt," 437-469.

social capital gained through the patronage of the local elite; through honorary inscription, professional associations in other provinces were able to broadcast their ties to the elite and to present themselves as integral parts of the local hierarchy.

However, the absence of this type of euergetism in Roman Egypt does allow for the role of the elite in the success and feasibility of these associations to be better assessed. An examination of professional associations in the Roman world that relies only on inscription gives the impression that these groups depended on the elite in almost all respects.⁸⁸ However, the papyri of Egypt show that professional associations could be profitable, self-sustaining organizations. They were ordered, with regularly elected leadership positions, and self-funded, with mechanisms in place to secure monthly dues from members, along with any fines that might be imposed. Instead of relying on elite donations, they were able to finance their own undertakings, like the monopolies on salt and gypsum secured by the salt merchants of Tebtunis, by levying funds from members. Although there is no record of their members entering the curial class, Egyptian papyri present professional associations as marginalized neither economically nor socially. Instead, they depict them as self-sustaining groups of craftsmen that were able to negotiate with the local elite and pursue their own interests.

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⁸⁸ Van Nijf, "Les Élités comme Patrons des Associations Professionnelles," 308: *Cette omniprésence servait à renforcer un même message: toute la vie civique était liée à, voire dépendait de, quelques familles riches et éminentes* (This omnipresence [of honorary inscription] served to reinforce a single message: the whole of civic life was tied to, indeed depended on, a few rich families).

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RESOURCES

JOURNALS

Brown Classical Journal, Brown University

<http://brown.edu/academics/classics/undergraduate-program/brown-classics-journal>

Persephone, student journal of Harvard Classics Club

<http://harvardclassicsclub.weebly.com/persephone.html>

Helicon, Yale Undergraduate Journal of Classics

http://www.yale.edu/classics/undergraduates_helicon.html

Vexillum, Undergraduate Journal of Classical and Medieval Studies

<http://www.vexillumjournal.org/>

Ephemeris, Classical Journal of Denison University

<http://www.denison.edu/academics/departments/classics/ephemeris.html>

CONFERENCES

Miami University Undergraduate Conference in Classics

<http://www.units.muohio.edu/classics/news/news.html>

Northwest Undergraduate Conference on the Ancient World at Willamette University

<http://www.willamette.edu/cla/classics/resources/conference/index.html>

High Tech Heritage, University of Massachusetts- Amherst

<http://scholarworks.umass.edu/hightechheritage/>

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