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## **8 A later Hellenistic debate about the value of Classical Athenian civic ideals? The evidence of epigraphy, historiography and philosophy**

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### **8.1 Introduction<sup>1</sup>**

This chapter seeks to complement this volume's studies of particular mid- and later Hellenistic authors (Polybius, Diodorus Siculus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus), by offering a wide-ranging interpretation of the place of Classical Athens in later Hellenistic civic culture and political debates. It discusses, and places in its first-century BC context, the Stoic Posidonius' account of unrest in Athens in 88 BC, during the First Mithridatic War. It compares the ideas advocated by Posidonius in that account with those expressed in a range of contemporary texts. The resulting argument is that this comparison reveals traces of a lively later Hellenistic debate among Greek intellectuals and politically-active citizens about the value of different Classical Athenian civic ideals, both democratic and philosophical, in the new world of Roman power. This was a debate about whether different traditional civic ideals were vital or outdated, liberating or constraining, exemplary or questionable.

In concentrating on ideas about the status of the Athenian political past, this chapter offers a different perspective on the broader debates in the mid- and later Hellenistic world, well and intensively studied by modern scholars, about the political and moral questions arising from

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the Roman conquest.<sup>2</sup> It does so partly by giving weight to marginal, or submerged, views, preserved now only in asides in literary texts or in inscriptions, which suffered for their divergence from an emerging new consensus in the Roman world. The chapter is thus also an example of how comparing literary texts with inscriptions' rhetoric can lead to more complex and multi-faceted reconstructions of ancient ethical and political debates.

The first half of the article (sections 2 and 3) analyses the better preserved evidence for one side in these debates: the arguments of critics of certain Classical Athenian civic ideals, especially more utopian and community-centred ones. The second half (section 4) argues that it is also possible to excavate traces of the other side in these debates: the arguments of later Hellenistic thinkers and citizens who insisted on the continuing importance of those more community-centred Classical Athenian ideals.

## **8.2 Posidonius' Athenion: Radically Democratic Classicism**

In the course of the second century BC, the Romans established a dominant position in the Eastern Mediterranean. In the early first century BC, King Mithridates VI of Pontus led a revolt against Roman power in the Greek world, in what was to become known as the First Mithridatic War (89–85 BC). By 88 BC Athens had problems of its own. The traditional democratic Athenian constitution had probably remained in force, perhaps in diluted form, until very recently, when it had been suspended. The details are obscure, but it seems that repeated archonships by a single individual (Medeios) from 91/0 BC, and possibly also accompanying

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<sup>2</sup> See, for example, Bowersock 1965; Deininger 1971; Ferrary 1988; Thornton 1999; Champion 2004a.

internal unrest, had led one or more Athenian factions to appeal to the Roman Senate. In response, the Senate had probably ordered the temporary suspension of normal democratic institutions while it deliberated about Athens' problems. It was in these circumstances that the Athenians became involved in Mithridates' revolt.<sup>3</sup>

Posidonius' highly satirical and exaggerated,<sup>4</sup> but also analytical,<sup>5</sup> account of how the Athenians joined Mithridates<sup>6</sup> is quoted at length,<sup>7</sup> perhaps with some modifications or

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<sup>3</sup> On the background, see Badian 1976: esp. 106–108, 112; Malitz 1983: 340–57; Kidd 1988–1999: vol. II ii), 866–9; Habicht 1997: ch. 13; Haake 2007: 271–3; Grieb 2008: 132–8.

<sup>4</sup> See Ferrary 1988: 473, with *IG II*<sup>2</sup> 1714.

<sup>5</sup> Hahn 1989: 1328–31; Kidd (1997).

<sup>6</sup> This is Posidonius fr. 253 (= Athen. *Deipnosophistae* Book V, 211d–215d); see also now *BNJ* 87 F36 (edition, translation and commentary by K. Dowden). All Posidonius fragments are cited here by Edelstein-Kidd numbers. I have been guided in my translations of Posidonius by Kidd's.

<sup>7</sup> On the likelihood that Athenaeus quotes Posidonius directly at length here, compare most recently K. Dowden in *BNJ* 87 F36, citing earlier bibliography. This view was also defended by the principal modern expert on Posidonius, I.G. Kidd, on the basis of the style and language of the fragment: 'this looks to me like straight Posidonius, a quotation: the language is Posidonian and certainly not Athenaeian' (Kidd 1997: 41; compare Kidd 1988–1999, vol. II ii): 865; compare). Kidd also points out that Athenaeus introduces the account as a direct quotation: he says he will set out what Posidonius writes about Athenion, 'though it is rather long'; that would be a strange way to describe a paraphrase. Athenaeus' other uses of the same verb, ἐκθήσομαι, introduce verbatim quotations: see *Deipnosophistae* Book IX, 374a2–5; compare

editing,<sup>8</sup> by Athenaeus. According to Posidonius, the mediator between Athens and Mithridates was a teacher of philosophy with Peripatetic leanings: the Athenian citizen Athenion. Posidonius introduces Athenion as the son of an Athenian citizen, also called Athenion, who had been a keen disciple of the leading Peripatetic Erymneus. The younger Athenion's mother was an Egyptian slave-girl, but he was illegitimately smuggled onto the Athenian citizen-roll. Posidonius then describes Athenion's early life as a 'sophist' in Messene and Larissa.<sup>9</sup> This is in itself an interesting indication, very relevant to this volume, of the continuing prominence of Classical Athenian political and political philosophical discourse in the first century BC: Posidonius mobilises one of the main forms of Classical democratic invective, a charge of low, foreign birth and illegitimate citizenship,<sup>10</sup> alongside one of the leading forms of Classical Athenian philosophical invective, a charge of sophistry. The fact that some earlier Stoics had been less instinctively hostile to sophistry as an occupation, at least for the wise man (see Long's chapter in this volume), reinforces the point that Posidonius' approach harks back to a Classical mindset.

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Book III, 95a6–7. Direct quotation would also explain why Athenaeus introduces Posidonius as a philosopher active in Athens, Messene and Larissa, but Athenaeus is then presented (slightly differently) as a 'teacher' or 'sophist' working in these cities in the opening part of the main narrative, as if this is new information.

<sup>8</sup> Compare Malitz 1983: 341.

<sup>9</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 12–23. For philosophical teaching at Larissa in this period, compare Haake 2009; 2010.

<sup>10</sup> Compare Kidd 1988–1999, vol. II ii): 866; 1997: 42.

In Posidonius's account, the Athenian people elect Athenion as their envoy to Mithridates when Mithridates' revolt is gaining steam in Asia Minor. Athenion ingratiates himself with Mithridates, to the extent that he can write letters to the Athenians claiming that he is most influential with him, such that, 'not only having been released from their pressing debts, but also having recovered their democracy, they will live in concord and receive great gifts, both as individuals and as a community' (μη μόνον τῶν ἐπιφερομένων ὀφλημάτων ἀπολυθέντας, ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν δημοκρατίαν ἀνακτησαμένους ἐν ὁμονοίᾳ ζῆν καὶ δωρεῶν μεγάλων τυχεῖν ἰδίᾳ καὶ δημοσίᾳ). After Posidonius' Athenians respond enthusiastically to this proposal, Athenion makes an extravagant return to Athens, to a rapturous reception.<sup>11</sup>

A large crowd of Athenians and foreigners assembles in the Kerameikos and an assembly congregates. Posidonius' Athenion then stands on the podium built for the Roman praetors, before the Stoa of Attalos. Standing amidst these symbols of the patronage and power of external potentates in Hellenistic Athens, Athenion gives a speech emphasising traditional Athenian civic virtues and freedoms. He begins by claiming that, though his 'country's interest' (τὸ τῆς πατρίδος συμφέρον) is driving him to speak, the magnitude of his message is holding him back. After setting aside this feigned reluctance, Athenion then gives a detailed account of the remarkable developments in Asia Minor, before predicting that Mithridates' revolt will spread to Europe.<sup>12</sup> He then concludes by appealing to Athens' proud traditions:

‘τί οὖν’ εἶπε ‘συμβουλευῶ; μὴ ἀνέχεσθαι τῆς ἀναρχίας, ἣν ἡ Ῥωμαίων σύγκλητος ἐπισχεθῆναι πεποίηκεν, ἕως <ἂν> αὐτὴ δοκιμάσῃ περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἡμᾶς πολιτεύεσθαι δεῖ.

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<sup>11</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 23–58.

<sup>12</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 58–92.

καὶ μὴ περιίδωμεν τὰ ἱερὰ κεκλημένα, ἀγχιῶντα δὲ τὰ γυμνάσια, τὸ δὲ θέατρον ἀνεκκλησίαστον, ἄφωνα δὲ τὰ δικαστήρια καὶ τὴν θεῶν χρησιμοῖς καθωσιωμένην Πύκνα ἀφηρημένην τοῦ δήμου. μὴ περιίδωμεν δέ, ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, τὴν ἱερὰν τοῦ Ἰάκχου φωνὴν κατασεσιγασμένην καὶ τὸ σεμνὸν ἀνάκτορον τοῖν θεοῖν κεκλημένον καὶ τῶν φιλοσόφων τὰς διατριβὰς ἀφώνους.’ πολλῶν οὖν καὶ ἄλλων τοιούτων λεχθέντων ὑπὸ τοῦ οἰκότριβος, συλλαλήσαντες αὐτοῖς οἱ ὄγλοι καὶ συνδραμόντες εἰς τὸ θέατρον εἶλοντο τὸν Ἀθηνίωνα στρατηγὸν ἐπὶ τῶν ὄπλων. καὶ παρελθὼν ὁ Περιπατητικὸς εἰς τὴν ὀρχήστραν, ἴσα βαίνων Πυθοκλεῖ’ εὐχαρίστησέ τε τοῖς Ἀθηναίοις καὶ ἔφη διότι ‘νῦν ὑμεῖς ἑαυτῶν στρατηγεῖτε, προέστηκα δ’ ἐγώ. καὶ ἂν συνεπισχύσητε, τοσοῦτον δυνήσομαι ὅσον κοινῇ πάντες ὑμεῖς.’

“What then,” he said, “do I advise? Do not tolerate the anarchy which the Roman Senate has caused to be drawn out until it reaches a decision about how we should conduct our civic life. And let us not look on passively at our sanctuaries closed, our gymnasia abandoned, the theatre without assemblies, the law-courts without a voice, and the Pnyx, blessed with oracles of the gods, taken away from the people. And let us not tolerate, men of Athens, the sacred voice of Iacchus silenced, the holy temple of the two gods shut, and the schools of the philosophers without a voice.” After many other such things had been said by this common slave, the masses burst into chatter and came running together into the theatre, where they elected Athenion hoplite general. And the Peripatetic, having come onto the *orchestra*, ‘walking like Pythocles’, thanked the Athenians and said: “Now you are in command of yourselves, and I have taken on the

leading position. And if you combine your strength, I will be as powerful as all of you collectively.”<sup>13</sup>

Despite his promise that they will now govern themselves, the new *strategos* Athenion then seizes power and governs as a tyrant, keeping tight controls on the population and organising unsuccessful foreign ventures.<sup>14</sup> Little is known about the final fall of Athenion’s regime. Either his regime or, more probably, that of a successor, another philosophical tyrant, an Epicurean called Aristion,<sup>15</sup> was violently and decisively overthrown by Sulla’s army in 86 BC.

Posidonius thus offers a very striking account of a Peripatetic philosopher leading a radically democratic revolt in Athens in 88 BC. This is surprising to anyone familiar with earlier Athenian and Peripatetic ideology,<sup>16</sup> and earlier uneasy relations between Peripatetics and the Athenian democracy.<sup>17</sup> Some Hellenistic Peripatetics had enjoyed esteem in the Athenian

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<sup>13</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 94–110. As Ferrary (1988: 443–4) points out, there is obvious exaggeration in Athenion’s claims about anarchy: he has recently himself been appointed ambassador.

<sup>14</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 111–179.

<sup>15</sup> On the relationship between Athenion and Aristion, see Kidd 1988–1999, vol. II ii): 884–6.

<sup>16</sup> Note, for example, the severe criticisms of radical democracy in Aristotle’s *Politics*.

<sup>17</sup> Compare Canevaro, this volume, for early Hellenistic Peripatetic attacks on the anti-Macedonian democratic arguments and actions of Demosthenes. Another probable case is Demetrios of Phaleron’s role in running a non-democratic regime in Athens (317–307 BC),



democracy, and even participated in its civic and diplomatic life,<sup>18</sup> but it is still surprising to find in Posidonius' account a Peripatetic enthusiastically promoting, rather than simply collaborating with, Athenian democracy. Many modern historians have been highly sceptical of the historical accuracy of Posidonius' account, for this and other reasons. For example, some, such as Badian and Kallet-Marx, argue that Posidonius gives a highly misleading impression of popular revolt and even class conflict in Athens at this point.<sup>19</sup>

I will return briefly in the conclusion to the historical plausibility of Posidonius' account, but my focus is the account itself as key evidence for Posidonius' own political thinking and targets. Posidonius' Athenion is partly the stereotypical tyrant of much Greek historiography;<sup>20</sup> the development of his behaviour resembles, for example, that of Xenophon's Euphron of Sikyon, who also eventually emerges as a fully-fledged, oppressive tyrant after initially ambiguous political promises.<sup>21</sup> This further confirms the prominence of Classical Athenian models, in this case historiographical invective, in later Hellenistic debates. However, Posidonius' presentation is more subtle than a simple tyrannical stereotype: as clear from the quotation above, he gives Athenion highly idealistic, egalitarian and republican rhetoric, far more elaborate even than the promises of democracy given by Xenophon's Euphron.

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though the extent of his Peripatetic attachments and inspirations is debated, with some favouring scepticism: see Haake 2007: 60–82, esp. 67–9.

<sup>18</sup> See *IG II<sup>3</sup>* 1147 (226/5 BC), honouring the Peripatetic Prytanis of Karystos.

<sup>19</sup> Badian 1976: esp. 105, 108, 113; Kallet-Marx 1995: 207–208. Contrast, for example, Malitz 1983: 345; Grieb 2008: 132–8.

<sup>20</sup> Compare Bringmann 1997.

<sup>21</sup> Compare especially Xen. *Hell.* 7.1.44–6.

Even if Athenaeus did modify Posidonius' original account, it is highly unlikely that Athenaeus, rather than Posidonius, invented these parts of Athenion's rhetoric. Athenaeus' aim in this part of his work was to present examples of philosophers shamelessly contravening their doctrines, not expressing idealistic views, when participating in public life.<sup>22</sup> The more idealistic rhetoric attributed to him, almost certainly by Posidonius himself, serves partly to paint Athenion as a familiar radical democrat or demagogue.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, there is much more to Posidonius' portrayal of Athenion's ideology and rhetoric. When his Athenion appeals to the Athenians not to allow their civic traditions to be neglected, he refers with enthusiasm, not only to the democratic institutions of Pnyx and courts and to Athenian religious traditions,<sup>24</sup> but also to Athens' cultural and educational institutions, including even the gymnasia and philosophical schools. This seemingly elevated intellectual and cultural interest is hardly characteristic of a stereotypical bloodthirsty and shameless demagogue.

Moreover, many of Athenion's ideals had long been cherished by both democrats and non-democrats. Appeals to Athens' gods and religious traditions were certainly not the sole preserve of democrats. Similarly, Athenion's appeal to the Athenian people to take their future in their own hands, rather than allow their magistracies and institutions to lie vacant through ἀναρχία ('anarchy' or 'absence of magistrates'), evokes generic Classical civic ideals of collective

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<sup>22</sup> Compare Athen. *Deipnosophistae* Book V, 211de; 215bc (discussing Lysias, Epicurean tyrant of Tarsus).

<sup>23</sup> Compare Deininger 1971: 248–55; Badian 1976: 112; Malitz 1983: 348–52; Gruen 1984: 353; Dowden in *BNJ* 87 F36.

<sup>24</sup> For religion and demagogic rhetoric, compare Mari (2003).

participation, vibrant institutions, civic autonomy and civic self-sufficiency. In addition, Athenion has already appealed to other generic civic values which were certainly not uniquely democratic: for example, both concord (ὁμόνοια) and the common good of the polis (τὸ τῆς πατρίδος συμφέρον).

Posidonius' Athenion should therefore be seen as drawing on, and manipulating, a generic Classical civic ideal, which had been embraced across the social and ideological spectrum in Classical Athens: the good polis should be a close-knit community of educated, virtuous civic friends, dedicated to their city's political, religious and cultural life, who govern themselves through informed political participation and law. This was certainly not the sole 'Classical' civic ideal: Classical Greeks held a very wide range of ideas about the good polis.<sup>25</sup> The approach identified here had, however, long been widely popular, across the Greek civic world. Despite this ideal's wide popularity, Posidonius' Athenion's appeal to the traditional institutions and buildings of the Athenian polis shows that his version had a distinctive, nostalgic<sup>26</sup> focus on Classical Athens. Significantly, he has himself elected *strategos*, the principal office of Pericles and other Classical Athenian leaders.<sup>27</sup>

Crucially, Posidonius presents Athenion exploiting Classicising ideals, both narrowly democratic and more generic ones, to advocate transgression of certain standards apparently of great importance for Posidonius and his assumed audience. These include the sanctity of debt

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<sup>25</sup> For an overview, see Gray 2015: introduction and chapter 1.

<sup>26</sup> The Pnyx, for example, had probably by now largely been superseded by the theatre as the location for assemblies.

<sup>27</sup> Manuela Mari pointed this out to me.

contracts: Athenion's letters promise the overturning or artificial settling<sup>28</sup> of certain debts, possibly public but more likely private, and resulting *ὁμόνοια*.<sup>29</sup> Athenion also subsequently rides roughshod over the inviolability of established property rights more generally: on becoming tyrant, he confiscates the property of political opponents. Athenion's calls for solidarity and self-government also incite disregard for the principles of ordered, rule-governed and trustworthy diplomacy. He urges the Athenians not to acquiesce in Roman order and procedures, including the Senate's reasoned supervision of Athenian affairs.

Posidonius thus offers a satire on a particular type of Classicism: a particular, destabilising way of harking back to the more utopian and community-centred elements in Classical civic values and practices. His Athenion is a ridiculous and pernicious advocate of a move, conceived as a reversion, towards an extreme type of civic self-determination, which can impulsively set aside

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<sup>28</sup> Kallet-Marx (1995: 207) argues that Posidonius' Athenion could be taken to be implying that Mithridates' bounty will make possible the settling (rather than overturning) of all debts. Even in that case, Mithridates' intervention would compromise the principle that individuals should take responsibility for their own debts and obligations. However, there does, in fact, seem to be at least an undertone of threat, directed at the propertied, in Athenion's remarks.

<sup>29</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 26–30. The reference to concord adds to the probability that the reference to debts is to private debts, binding individuals to fellow Athenians or outsiders, probably including Romans. Indeed, the language of civic *ὁμόνοια* (on which see generally Thériault 1996: ch. 1) is very frequently used in Hellenistic honorary decrees for foreign judges, to celebrate the resolution of debt disputes between individuals: Dössel 2003: 263–4, 271–2. Badian (1976: 107–108) thinks that public (state) debts may be in question here, though the matter is open.

legal contracts and diplomatic agreements in the name of collective freedom, the common good, *ὁμόνοια*, and the defence of civic life, culture and institutions.

The ethical force of Posidonius' representation of Athenion is best understood in the context of Posidonius' broader ethical philosophy. It is important to make clear that Posidonius was not uniformly hostile to all forms of demanding ethics. He held, like all Stoics, that moral virtue is the only true good.<sup>30</sup> On the other hand, he was perhaps more prepared than many Stoics to recognise the force of immediate calculations of expediency as a rival consideration to virtue and true reason: unusually for a Stoic, he entertained the possibility of a conflict for an individual between what is expedient and what is morally right in a given situation.<sup>31</sup>

This was partly a reflection of the fact that Posidonius was almost certainly one of those later Stoics who took a particular interest in the practical ethical problems, not only of the sage, but also of ordinary men (those 'making progress' towards virtue) and how to educate and advise them.<sup>32</sup> The details of his resulting practical ethical teaching are difficult to reconstruct. The fragments of his historical writing show that Posidonius was certainly not hostile to all ideals of human sympathy and even solidarity: he repeatedly draws attention to the possible adverse consequences of brutality towards the less powerful, especially slaves.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> See, for example, Posidonius T81 and frs. 185–6.

<sup>31</sup> Cic. *Off.* 3.8 (= Posidonius fr. 41c, section 8), with Kidd (1988–1999), vol. II i), 188–9.

<sup>32</sup> See, for example, Kidd (1988–1999), vol. II ii), 585, with Posidonius frs. 176–7.

<sup>33</sup> See Posidonius fr. 51; compare frs. 59, 262.

Nevertheless, the types of fellow-feeling approved by Posidonius were predominantly hierarchical and paternalistic. Athenaeus quotes Posidonius commenting, in connection with the hierarchical relations between the citizens of Pontic Herakleia and the surrounding non-Greek population, the Mariandynoi, that many of those who cannot stand up for their interests, due to weakness in intellect, call on the help of cleverer superiors, offering other services in return.<sup>34</sup> In other words, the less intelligent require the sober, reasoned supervision of a more intelligent elite, which they can repay with work of their own.<sup>35</sup>

In light of his paternalistic outlook, it is quite easy to imagine Posidonius being favourable to judicious, occasional bending of contracts and rules, for the sake of stability. However, it is also easy to see why he would have been opposed to any systematic legal or political changes in the name of equality, strong community or collective freedom, of the kind championed by his Athenion.

A clue to Posidonius' approach to the precise ethical character and structure of good social relations is Athenaeus' report of Posidonius' approving summary of traditional Roman ethics: the main personal virtues are frugality and self-restraint, and the key to good social relations is justice and scrupulous care not to commit wrong against anyone (δικαιοσύνη δὲ καὶ πολλὴ τοῦ

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<sup>34</sup> Posidonius fr. 60. Posidonius perhaps advanced this parallel in connection with Attalus III's bequest of his kingdom to the superior power of Rome: K. Dowden in *BNJ* 87 F8 Commentary.

<sup>35</sup> Compare Kidd (1988–1999), vol II ii), 294–5, 870; Garnsey (1997), esp. 173. Consider also Posidonius fr. 284.

πλημμελεῖν εὐλάβεια πρὸς πάντας ἀνθρώπους).<sup>36</sup> It is difficult to reconstruct how exactly Posidonius would have interpreted ‘justice’ and ‘not committing wrong against anyone’. There is, however, a very interesting overlap in phrasing and approach with another first-century work, Cicero’s *De Officiis*, which had its own Stoic inspiration.<sup>37</sup> It is likely that Posidonius, like Cicero,<sup>38</sup> regarded a particular type of respect as an especially important component of these two values: unbending, unconditional respect for individuals’ legal and contractual entitlements, including property rights. It is also likely that, again like Cicero, Posidonius would have given great importance under these headings to the precise, ‘just’ requital of goods with equivalent goods. Indeed, emphasis on justice and avoidance of harm chimes with the ‘stress on agreement and contract’,<sup>39</sup> as well as strictly equivalent exchange of useful services, which marks Posidonius’ treatment of the subordination of the Mariandynoi to the Herakleians,<sup>40</sup> discussed above.

Significantly, alongside his other ethical concerns, Posidonius appears to have presupposed the importance of helping one’s home country, since he compiled a list of extreme cases of actions so appalling that a sage would not do them even to save his country.<sup>41</sup> He is unlikely, however, to have been in sympathy with the kind of extreme, emotional patriotism advocated by his

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<sup>36</sup> Posidonius fr. 266. Compare Posidonius fr. 273; see also Posidonius frs. 58–9, 63, 77, for criticism of over-indulgence.

<sup>37</sup> Compare Cic. *Off.*, esp. 1.20, 31.

<sup>38</sup> See Long 1995; compare section 3 below.

<sup>39</sup> Kidd 1988–1999): vol. II ii), 297.

<sup>40</sup> Posidonius fr. 60.

<sup>41</sup> Posidonius fr. 177.

Athenion: warm, nostalgic, community-centred ideals have to be kept within the limits of property rights, proportionality and protocol.

In the remainder of this chapter, I argue that Posidonius' approach to Athenion can be seen as a contribution to important later Hellenistic debates. The central point of controversy in those debates was whether property rights, financial contracts and other formal agreements are unconditionally inviolable, or whether they should sometimes be set aside for the sake of other values with at least an equally strong Classical pedigree, such as equality, freedom, virtue, tradition or solidarity. These debates must have been a response to the probable Roman-backed changes in culture and ethics, as well as law and institutions, which gave expanded freedoms and privileges to elite citizens, property-owners and creditors in the later Hellenistic Mediterranean.<sup>42</sup> As will be seen, supporters of the first alternative tended to criticise certain Classical Athenian ideals, while their opponents championed particular Classical Athenian traditions. However, it is important to emphasise that each side in these debates was selective among Classical Athenian political ideals, singling out particular values for attack or emulation; neither side's position rested on a comprehensive picture of Classical Athenian political thinking, and both downplayed the already strong Classical tendency to understand the polis in contractual terms.

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<sup>42</sup> These changes are emphasised by de Ste Croix and others in the Marxist tradition (see, for example, Briscoe 1967; de Ste Croix 1981: 300–326), but also acknowledged by others. See, for example, Bowersock 1966: 6–7, Gauthier 1985 and Fröhlich and Müller 2005 on the polis, with the specific case-studies in Grieb 2008: 196–8 (Cos) and 260–1 (Miletus). Kallet-Marx (1995: 71–2) sounds a sceptical note about any Roman suppression of Greek democracy and egalitarianism, emphasising long-term internal Greek shifts.



### 8.3 A Broader Later Hellenistic Reaction against Certain Classical Athenian Civic Ideals?

Political attitudes and targets similar to Posidonius' are more directly attested for some other mid- and later Hellenistic intellectuals favourable to Rome: there was a broad reaction in some quarters against certain traditional Greek, and Athenian, ideals of civic community, which relevant intellectuals attacked as an explicit foil. The most obvious comparison is with Posidonius' fellow mid- and later Hellenistic Stoics. Although it remains a controversial interpretation, there are strong grounds for believing that certain mid- and later Hellenistic Stoics made important adaptations to Stoic practical ethics. According to this highly plausible view, some Stoics of that era reacted against the more egalitarian and community-centred elements of Greek and Stoic political thought, including their Classical Athenian forms. In doing so, they strongly advocated the revision, devaluation or supersession of those ideals in favour of principles giving special moral weight to the rule of law, contracts and property rights; strict reciprocity and earned individual entitlements; and regulated, enlightened egoism.<sup>43</sup>

The cornerstone of this contested interpretation of some mid- and later Hellenistic Stoics' ethics and politics is Cicero's *De Officiis*. In that work, Cicero stresses the importance of good faith

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<sup>43</sup> See Erskine 2011: esp. chs. 5 and 6; Long 1997. Contrast Brunt 2013.

or *fides* as a central aspect of justice and virtue. A.A. Long argues<sup>44</sup> provocatively but effectively that Cicero is here principally interested in the kind of *fides* involved in scrupulously respecting property rights and financial contracts, if necessary at the expense of other values.<sup>45</sup> It is important to note that Cicero also uses much rhetoric about the common good and solidarity in the *De Officiis*. However, those notions are often pegged very closely to the upholding of property rights, strict entitlements and the existing social order,<sup>46</sup> and to strict reciprocity, rather than unconditional generosity.<sup>47</sup> As Long puts it, human solidarity, for all Cicero's praise of it, is made 'to consist primarily in respecting strict justice about property rights and business transactions'.<sup>48</sup>

The reason why Cicero's *De Officiis* indicates that a similar approach was prominent within contemporary Stoicism is that Cicero's work was very deeply indebted to the *On Duty* of the leading second-century Stoic Panaetius of Rhodes. If the *De Officiis* was not quite a quasi-translation of that work,<sup>49</sup> it was a faithful but imaginative Roman interpretation of it. A particular reason for believing that the inspiration for Cicero's approach to *fides* in that work came partly from one strand in contemporary Stoic thought<sup>50</sup> is Cicero's own presentation of

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<sup>44</sup> Long 1995.

<sup>45</sup> Note, in particular, Cic. *Off.* 1.23: *fundamentum autem est iustitiae fides, id est dictorum conventorumque constantia et veritas.*

<sup>46</sup> See Cic. *Off.* 1.20; 2.85.

<sup>47</sup> See Cic. *Off.* 1.20, 22.

<sup>48</sup> Long 1995: 239.

<sup>49</sup> See Brunt 2013: ch. 5.

<sup>50</sup> Compare Erskine 2011: 156.

aspects of mid- and later Hellenistic Stoic ethics in Book III. Cicero there presents Panaetius' mentor, the second-century Stoic Diogenes of Babylon, arguing that the just man is morally<sup>51</sup> obliged only to respect the letter of his legal and contractual obligations. A just trader, for example, has no moral obligation to reveal that goods he is selling are faulty.<sup>52</sup>

Moreover, Cicero presents the later Stoic Hecato of Rhodes, like Posidonius a pupil of Panaetius, drawing out the egoistic implications of this approach to ethics. Cicero quotes Hecato arguing that it is characteristic of the wise man, the Stoic sage, that he pursues the private interests of his family estate, within the constraints of custom and law. This is because the welfare of a city is, in fact, dependent on its individual members maximising, rather than sacrificing, their personal fortunes.<sup>53</sup> It is very likely that Hecato was here reacting against prominent Greek ideas about the primacy of the common good over private interests. His aim must have been to redefine the common good, in order to accommodate, and even celebrate, more egoistic impulses.<sup>54</sup>

This contract-focussed, quite egoist strand in Stoic practical ethics was certainly not unquestioned within the Stoa: indeed, Cicero presents Diogenes of Babylon engaged in a vigorous debate with his fellow Stoic Antipater of Tarsus, who insists on the importance of far

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<sup>51</sup> Contrast Annas 1997: esp. 158–60, criticised in Schofield 1999a: ch. 9.

<sup>52</sup> See Cic. *Off.* 3.50–7, 91–2.

<sup>53</sup> Cic. *Off.* 3.63.

<sup>54</sup> Schofield (1999: 175–6) compares Hecato with Adam Smith in this respect; compare Erskine 2011: ch. 5.

more robust ties of solidarity among all humans.<sup>55</sup> However, Cicero's evidence suggests that this new strand in the Stoa was a prominent and widespread one. It is likely that Posidonius shared with Diogenes of Babylon and Hecato of Rhodes, and probably also Panaetius, scepticism about any high-blown rhetoric about community, virtue and the common good which might substantially curtail individual freedom in using and preserving private wealth.

In this respect, relevant Stoics were in agreement with a prominent Roman line of thinking, represented by Cicero, which was instinctively suspicious of ambitious social projects, including Classical Athenian ones.<sup>56</sup> Cicero in the *De Re Publica* disparaged Greek ambitious, utopian theories of civic education; in the *De Officiis*, while he praised Peripatetic and Academic ideas highly, he announced that on the particular issue of duty (*officium*) he was minded to follow the Stoics,<sup>57</sup> who gave him a template for the picture of duty, partly centred on contractual *fides*, which he developed in that work. This is certainly not to deny that other Romans were attracted to more utopian and community-centred types of politics: there was rich diversity in Roman political thinking, as in Greek.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Cic. *Off.* 3.50–7.

<sup>56</sup> For Cicero's *De Re Publica* as a non-utopian adaptation of Greek paradigms, compare Asmis 2004: 590–1 (the good *res publica* as a 'partnership'). On the complex, difficult relationship between Roman political thinking and Greek ethics and utopianism more generally, compare Griffin and Barnes (1997); Gotter (2003).

<sup>57</sup> Cic. *Rep.* 4.3; *Off.* 1.2, 6.

<sup>58</sup> Compare Arena 2012.

Significantly for the concerns of this volume, the community-centred approaches of which relevant Greek Stoics themselves were suspicious would also have included much Classical Athenian ethical and political rhetoric, democratic and philosophical. Indeed, they would have included early Stoic political thought, especially Zeno's *Republic*,<sup>59</sup> which had arisen in the context of later Classical and early Hellenistic Athenian political and philosophical debates.<sup>60</sup> For example, Long's chapter in this volume brings out the utopian and anti-conventional character of Zeno's political thought, quite different from the strands of later Stoic political thinking emphasised here.

While Posidonius shared the approach under discussion here with some fellow Stoics, his relevant attitudes and aversions overlapped most closely with those of another intellectual, Polybius, Posidonius' forerunner as historian. Like Posidonius, Polybius shows strong hostility to certain types of Classical Athenian civic ideal, both democratic and more generic. Indeed, Posidonius' account of Athenian politics recalls Polybius' well-known hostility to radical democracy and popular agitation, both in theory and in practice. As Champion shows in this volume, an integral feature of Polybius' development of his sceptical position towards radical democracy was criticism of Classical Athenian internal politics.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> For the probable wider phenomenon of later Stoics reacting against earlier Stoic views betraying Cynic influence: Brouwer 2002: 202–203; Bees 2011: 34–6, both citing earlier bibliography. The Athenian honorary decree for Zeno quoted in Diogenes Laertius was probably forged in the first century BC (Haake 2013: 99–100), perhaps in the context of these debates.

<sup>60</sup> See recently Murray 2005; Bees 2011; Richter 2011: ch. 2.

<sup>61</sup> See also recently Grieb 2013.

Polybius was striving to display to Roman readers, and also to some Greeks, a reassuringly conservative approach to politics and property rights. This too chimes with Posidonius. Indeed, there are echoes in Posidonius' excoriation of Athenion's approach to finance of Polybius' regular hostility to calls for debt reform or overturning of debts in different parts of the Greek world, including by alleged tyrants or aspirants to tyranny.<sup>62</sup> A further shared symptom of this conservative approach was resentment of emotional and emotive rhetoric, which carried the threat of demagoguery. In the same way as Posidonius mercilessly satirised Athenion's rhetoric, Polybius heavily criticised excessively emotional or flamboyant rhetoric both in political speeches<sup>63</sup> and in works of history.<sup>64</sup>

In addition to an aversion to Classical Athenian radical democracy, Polybius also shared with Posidonius an aversion to some more generic Classical Athenian civic ideals, of philosophical, utopian and community-oriented types.<sup>65</sup> For example, Polybius was openly sceptical about the law-code drawn up by the Peripatetic Prytanis of Karystos for Polybius' home city, Megalopolis, in 222 BC, exposing it as a source of discord rather than stability.<sup>66</sup> Polybius' scepticism about this Peripatetic philosopher's laws probably had deeper intellectual roots. Lintott, Hahn and others have emphasised the distinctiveness of Polybius' vision of a

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<sup>62</sup> See, for example, Polyb. 15.21.3–5; 20.6.3–6, 7.4; cf. Ferrary 1988: 489–90; Eckstein 1995: 133–5; Champion 2007.

<sup>63</sup> Consider, for example, Polyb. 38.12.

<sup>64</sup> See Polyb. 2.56; 12.26d. Compare recently Marincola 2013; Thornton 2013b.

<sup>65</sup> Gray 2013b.

<sup>66</sup> Polyb. 5.93.

constitution combining elements of different constitutions (democracy, aristocracy, monarchy) in Book VI. Whereas earlier thinkers, including Plato and Aristotle, advocated a genuinely ‘mixed constitution’, a harmonious blend of contrasting citizens and institutions, Polybius reacted against earlier Greek approaches by favouring a dynamic, conflictual system. He advocated complex interaction, competition and bargaining, involving the possibility of both co-operation and antagonism, between contrasting citizens and institutions, regulated by institutional checks and balances, on the Roman model.<sup>67</sup>

Moreover, Polybius praises his home state, the second-century Achaian League, in a way which probably reveals self-conscious opposition to Aristotelian and Peripatetic demanding ideals of civic community. Polybius insists that the second-century Achaian League was simultaneously both a military alliance of states and very nearly an almost pan-Peloponnesian polis: only the lack of a circuit wall stood between it and qualification as a polis.<sup>68</sup> With this claim, he shatters the famous Aristotelian qualitative distinction between an alliance, which exists for the sake of mutual utility and mere life, and a true polis, which exists for the sake of the good life and virtue for all.<sup>69</sup> In Polybius’ view, there was no sharp qualitative distinction in the Achaian case: the League came to resemble a very large polis by expanding upon, rather than abandoning or transforming, the institutions and customs characteristic of a military alliance.

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<sup>67</sup> On the differences between Polybius’ and earlier approaches, see Lintott 1997: 78–9; Hahn 2009: 193–6; Gray 2013b: 339–40, 352–3.

<sup>68</sup> Polyb. 2.37.7–11.

<sup>69</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1280a34–1280b35.

The likelihood that Polybius was here directly taking issue with Peripatetic thought is greatly increased by the fact that, as scholars since von Scala have noted, he makes probable hostile allusions to the ideas in two passages of Aristotle's *Politics*, which, significantly, both concern Polybius' beloved Peloponnese.<sup>70</sup> First, Aristotle had claimed that there are limits to the possible size of a true polis; putting a wall around the Peloponnese would not make it a polis.<sup>71</sup> It is hard not to take Polybius' claim that a wall would have made the Achaian League an almost pan-Peloponnesian polis as a riposte to Aristotle's studied localism. Second, Polybius' theme of the relationship between a military alliance and a polis recalls a difficult Aristotelian passage, whose interpretation is contested, in which Aristotle discusses the relationship between polis, 'tribe' (ἔθνος) and military alliance. Aristotle probably there uses the Arcadians, Polybius' own ἔθνος, as an example of a federalised tribe which lacks the complex type of social integration characteristic of a true polis, because it remains fundamentally a prudential (military) alliance.<sup>72</sup>

Whether or not Aristotle intended to belittle the Arcadians and their style of federalism in that latter passage, it is probable that Polybius interpreted him or a Peripatetic successor as having done so. Indeed, Polybius' praise of the Achaian League as virtually a pan-Peloponnesian polis, based on principles of democratic equality, is a Peloponnesian, indeed Arcadian, riposte to any

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<sup>70</sup> See von Scala 1890: 134; Lehmann 2001: 58–60; also Gray 2013b: 338–41.

<sup>71</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1276a24–7.

<sup>72</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1261a22–9. Compare the interpretations of this passage advanced by Schütrumpf 1991–2005: Teil II, 164–6 and Lehmann 2001: 35–7; contrast Saunders 1995: 109 and Hansen 1999: 80–4.



Athenian or Peripatetic condescension or disdain concerning the political credentials and moral standing of Peloponnesian supra-polis institutions.

These different elements of Polybius' political thought made him an advocate of an ideal of what might be called a 'limited' polis, bound more by constitution and law than by far-reaching virtue and education. This approach certainly had Greek antecedents,<sup>73</sup> but it was more consistent with certain Roman ideas<sup>74</sup> than with much mainstream political thought in the Greek philosophical tradition.<sup>75</sup> A true, admirable polis need not be a very close-knit community committed to shared ideals of virtue, as in the Aristotelian ideal. Rather, it may be simply a very complex alliance or social contract of individual people and groups, each principally seeking their own interests within its formal constraints. Within a 'limited' polis of this type, marked by a significant degree of egoism and antagonism, the inviolability of property rights, contracts and law, on which Polybius elsewhere insists so vehemently, takes on particular importance: it is both a constraint against excessive self-seeking and a defence of individuals' private interests.

Significantly, Polybius even attempts, like the Stoic Hecato of Rhodes, to appropriate major value terms, such as virtue and the common good, for his own, more contractual political ideal. In his praise of the Achaian League, Polybius polemically insists that one could not find a *purer* system of *true* democracy, equality and freedom of speech than the Achaian League.<sup>76</sup> This is

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<sup>73</sup> See Gray 2015: ch. 1 and *passim*, on Greek 'Dikaiopolitan' approaches.

<sup>74</sup> E.g. those studied in Asmis 2004.

<sup>75</sup> Gray 2013b develops this case.

<sup>76</sup> Polyb. 2.38.6; see also Champion's chapter here.

an obvious challenge to the truly democratic character of the Classical Athenian democracy, distinguished by more far-reaching political equality among all socio-economic citizen groups, a far higher level of direct popular sovereignty, and a stronger ethos of solidarity. For Polybius, such features hindered, rather than promoting, ('true') democracy, equality and freedom, whether in Classical Athens or in contemporary Greece.<sup>77</sup> Polybius' work thus reveals, but also plays on, the ambivalence in Hellenistic thought, explored elsewhere in this volume,<sup>78</sup> concerning whether *demokratia* denotes popular, non-oligarchic government or, more blandly, any form of republican government.<sup>79</sup>

To sum up, there are important similarities between Posidonius, some fellow Stoics and Polybius: all shared a strong aversion to certain, more utopian and community-centred Classical Athenian civic ideals, also evident slightly later in Strabo's professed approach to political theorising.<sup>80</sup> For all these thinkers, a more contractual model of political life held the attraction over visceral, particularist patriotism that it could be extended across a much broader scale, whether a federal league or the whole Romanising Mediterranean cosmopolis. There were also important differences between these thinkers, especially between the contractarian Polybius and relevant Stoics, who continued to believe that moral and political values are grounded in nature. This meta-ethical disagreement need not, however, obscure convergences

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<sup>77</sup> Compare Polybius' criticism of developments at Cius at 15.21; also Champion (2004b).

<sup>78</sup> See, for example, Canevaro's and Champion's chapters.

<sup>79</sup> Compare Musti 1978: 127–8; contrast Kallet-Marx 1995: e.g. 207–208, who thinks that the word had in general lost its radical connotations.

<sup>80</sup> See Strabo 1.1.18, implicitly siding with Plato's Thrasymachos over more community-centred approaches.

in practical ethical and political thinking. Indeed, Posidonius' discussion of the mutual agreement between the Herakleians and Mariandynoi, discussed above, is almost an application of Polybius' model of hierarchical contractarianism among primitive men:<sup>81</sup> both models involve the consent of the weaker in rule by their more intelligent superiors. In this respect, these thinkers were developing certain distinctive earlier Greek ideas,<sup>82</sup> fusing them with Roman ones, but they were also moving very far from their explicit foil: prominent Classical Athenian ideals of solidarity, which made a respectable polis something much more than a social contract.

#### **8.4 Traces of Later Hellenistic Advocacy of Classical Athenian Civic Ideals, beyond Posidonius' Athenion**

There are, therefore, good reasons for thinking that Posidonius' stress on almost unconditional property rights and aversion to Classicising utopian rhetoric about civic community chimed with the approaches of some contemporary Greek intellectuals, as well as those of prominent Romans. This raises the question of these Greek intellectuals' precise motivations and targets. Were they attacking a straw man, or, at least, a political position which had long ceased to be prevalent in the Greek world, in order to ingratiate themselves with prominent Romans? Or were they, on the contrary, reacting against a live, vibrant strand of contemporary thinking? In this section, I identify traces in the surviving sources of the ideas and rhetoric of an opposing camp: articulate, uncompromising exponents of varied ideals of strong civic community. These Greeks challenged any suggestion that property rights or diplomatic protocol should

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<sup>81</sup> Polyb. 6.6.4–6.7.5; compare Hahn 1995; Griffin 1996: 271; Champion 2004a: 88.

<sup>82</sup> See Gray 2015: ch. 1 and *passim* ('Dikaiopolitan' values).

automatically take precedence over equality, solidarity and collective freedom. On the contrary, they should sometimes be sacrificed or adapted in accordance with the demands of those other ideals. Moreover, many relevant mid- and later Hellenistic Greeks drew on Classical models to reinforce their case.

It is important to make clear that the traces in question are fleeting ones. Relevant Greeks were on the losing side in heated political and cultural debates. Their opponents, both leading Romans and stauncher defenders of the Roman order among Greeks, had many opportunities to belittle and marginalise relevant ideas, and even remove or dilute the evidence that others advocated them. Nevertheless, if the different types of evidence for later Hellenistic political and ethical thought are analysed with a willingness to detect the weaker voices of the less powerful and less conventional, traces of eccentric and radical ways of thinking emerge.<sup>83</sup>

#### **8.4.1 Self-confident Later Hellenistic Democrats?**

Posidonius' Athenion's speech is one of the only traces of radically democratic rhetoric in later Hellenistic Athens itself. However, evidence from other parts of the Greek world contains traces of democratic self-confidence. The still rich epigraphic record shows that traditional participatory democratic institutions and practices, partly Athenian-inspired,<sup>84</sup> were under some threat, from long-term trends and Roman influence, but certainly continued to function.<sup>85</sup> In most cities the *demos* still retained a strong voice and significant institutional power,

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<sup>83</sup> Compare Arena 2012, on the Roman Republic.

<sup>84</sup> See the introduction to this volume and Canevaro's chapter.

<sup>85</sup> For an overview of the complex picture: Fröhlich and Müller 2005.

advertised in public inscriptions. The *demos*' power was exercised not least in assigning coveted honours to elite benefactors, through a complex negotiation.<sup>86</sup> This negotiation gave rise to formal honorary decrees passed and inscribed in poleis in honour of leading civic benefactors.<sup>87</sup> Since all such decrees would have been ratified by a vote in the assembly, after speeches and probably also discussion, there would have been scope for both elite, well-educated citizens and other members of the *demos* to influence their content.

Surviving decrees preserve some indications that still functioning democratic institutions were underpinned by explicit, self-conscious democratic thinking. In the second-century BC, for example, the *demos* of Kyme in Western Asia Minor awarded an honorary statue to the leading female citizen Archippe. In a display of continuing democratic self-confidence, Archippe's statue was to be crowned by a colossal statue of the Demos itself.<sup>88</sup>

There are even some traces of later Hellenistic democrats asserting the importance of popular sovereignty, equality and solidarity, even to the extent of questioning the privileges of elite citizens, property-holders and creditors. As Hamon has argued,<sup>89</sup> a trace of strikingly egalitarian principle is preserved in the middle of a varied later Hellenistic honorary decree for a benefactor, the decree of Pergamon for the gymnasiarch Metrodoros. As well as praising his general virtues and imaginative contributions to the gymnasium and festivals, the Pergamenes

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<sup>86</sup> Ma 2013, esp. ch. 2.

<sup>87</sup> On such decrees and their rhetoric in general, see in particular Gauthier 1985; Wörrle 1995; Robert and Robert 1989; Quaß 1993; Robert 2007: ch. 21.

<sup>88</sup> SEG 33.1035, ll. 1–3, with Ma 2013: 47 on the wider phenomenon.

<sup>89</sup> See Hamon 2012: 62–4.

praised Metrodoros for organising and leading parades of the young men of the gymnasium, on his own initiative, at a wide range of citizen funerals, such that ‘the thoroughly common people were no less honoured in this respect than those in superior positions’ ([τ]οὺς πανὸ δημοτικούς μηδὲν ἥσσον τῶν ἐν ὑπεροχῇ ὄντων ἐν τῷ μέρει τούτῳ τιμᾶσθαι).<sup>90</sup> He thus ensured that a grand funeral, with a quasi-official parade, usually a privilege for elite benefactors, was available to citizens from all parts of the social scale, including the lowest.

It is difficult to determine the exact political force of this claim. It must be significant that the decree dates to the period shortly after the tumultuous end of the Attalid monarchy in 133 BC, when Aristonikos had led an anti-Roman revolt in Asia Minor which probably had at least some populist colouring, as well as popular support from the poor and even the unfree.<sup>91</sup> Metrodoros’ behaviour, and the praise for it before the Pergamene assembly, could be interpreted solely as parts of a paternalistic attempt by an anxious elite to soothe popular discontent and resentment of elite privileges. It is true that neither Metrodoros’ actions nor subsequent praise for them overturned rigid status distinctions: they showed, rather, that those status distinctions could be set aside or concealed in a specific context. In this respect, this clause in the Metrodoros decree bears some comparison with the claim in a later Hellenistic decree of the city of Priene, also in Western Asia Minor, that a great benefactor invited slaves and foreigners to a breakfast, on equal terms with citizens, temporarily rendering insignificant the chance misfortune (τύχη) of slaves and the standing of foreigners.<sup>92</sup> Indeed, Metrodoros

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<sup>90</sup> H. Hepding, *MDAI (A)* 1907, 274–6, no. 10, ll. 19–23.

<sup>91</sup> See Strabo 14.1.38; Diod. Sic. 34/35.2.26.

<sup>92</sup> *I.Priene*<sup>2</sup> 69 (new edition of *I.Priene* 113), ll. 53–6; compare Hamon 2012: 70–1.

might be seen to emerge from the Pergamene decree as a paternalistic, quasi-monarchical patron of equality and solidarity, standing above the community.<sup>93</sup>

However, even if elite Pergamenes were motivated principally by a desire to disarm popular disaffection, they must at least have expected there to be self-confident egalitarians among the Pergamene people, to whom such rhetoric would appeal. Moreover, it is not necessary to be entirely cynical about the motivations of Metrodoros and his supporters themselves. Granting ordinary citizens a quasi-honorific funeral was a far more substantial challenge to the existing distribution of honour and privilege than merely inviting unfortunate neighbours to a special meal, clearly as guests rather than truly equal partners, as at Priene. Indeed, Metrodoros' actions went a long way towards setting poorer citizen families in a position of genuine honour, in a crucial, conspicuous and clearly political context. Since it was a matter of equality among citizens in access to a key symbol of civic honour and belonging, the value in question was quite different from the more general equality of all city-residents in access to less directly political goods, including medical care as well as hospitality, celebrated in other later Hellenistic decrees.<sup>94</sup> At these Pergamene funerals, and in passing this decree, the Pergamene elite and *demos* came together in support of quite a robust, political form of egalitarianism – what the young men in Metrodoros' charge celebrated as his *ισότης*.<sup>95</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Hamon 2012: 64.

<sup>94</sup> For a doctor's universal equality to all residents, see *IG V 1 1145* (Gytheion, first century BC), ll. 18–20.

<sup>95</sup> H. Hepding, *MDAI (A)* 1907, 274–6, no. 10, ll. 40–2, 47–9.

There are traces in other evidence of strong democratic self-confidence in mid- and later Hellenistic Asia Minor. In his *Pro Flacco* of 59 BC, Cicero attempted to discredit the cities of Asia Minor, including Pergamon itself, by describing them as governed by unpredictable and seditious assemblies, dominated by manual workers and other unreliable types. Classical Athens fell as a result of the immoderate freedom of its assemblies, so what hope is there that the assemblies of Phrygia and Mysia will show any restraint?<sup>96</sup> Similarly, Dionysius of Halicarnassus castigated the shamelessness and demagoguery which he held to be characteristic of Asianic oratory, which had colonised the cities of Asia.<sup>97</sup> The Metrodoros decree indicates that democratic self-confidence in the cities of Asia Minor, which was clearly sufficient to alienate conservative Romans and pro-Roman Greeks, could have stronger roots in egalitarian principle than Cicero and Dionysius themselves allow.

Self-confident mid- and later Hellenistic democrats could also mount opposition to contested debt contracts. One piece of evidence, from the second-century Peloponnese, gives insights into the kinds of opposition to which Polybius, in particular, was reacting. This evidence comes in the form of the words of a Roman official, in the famous letter of Q. Fabius Maximus Servilianus to the Dymaians of Achaia in the later 140s BC.<sup>98</sup> The letter contributes to restoring the *status quo* in Dyme after a period of unrest, in which a faction around a man called Sosos had overturned the new order established by the Romans after their defeat of the Achaian

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<sup>96</sup> de Ste Croix 1981: 310. See especially Cic. *Flac.* 16–17; cf. 57 (mentioning Tralles' assembly as well as Pergamon's).

<sup>97</sup> Dion. Hal. *On the Ancient Orators*, preface.

<sup>98</sup> *RGDE* 246; see in general Ferrary 1988: 186–99; Kallet-Marx 1995: 72–3.



League in 146 BC. That new order had included a political system, probably partly new<sup>99</sup> and more oligarchic than that in place previously,<sup>100</sup> for the Achaians, in their individual cities and probably also, maybe after a delay, in a reformed Achaian League.<sup>101</sup>

The opposition of Sosos and those around him to this new order was partly destructive: they had destroyed official civic records, leading to a situation of ‘non-fulfilment of contracts’ (ἀσυναλλαξία). In a touch strongly reminiscent of some of the pro-Roman, contract-centred rhetoric and re-evaluation of moral concepts discussed in the previous section, the contract-destroying revolt is said to have undermined the ‘freedom’ (ἐλευθερία) brought by the Romans to the Greeks.

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<sup>99</sup> Although the Dyme text refers to a restored (ἀποδοθείση) πολιτεία (Il. 9–10), consider Polyb. 39.5.2–3: Polybius helped the Achaians to get used to the πολιτεία ‘given’ (δεδομένη) by the Romans. Polybius’ language implies that the constitution imposed by the Romans had some new features. For discussion see Ferrary 1988: 191–4

<sup>100</sup> Paus. 7.16.9 suggests that L. Mummius appointed magistrates in Achaia according to a property qualification after 146 BC, which might well indicate that he established new, more oligarchic rules concerning eligibility for magistracies (compare Ferrary 1988: 192–4; but note the scepticism of Kallet-Marx (1995), 66–70).

<sup>101</sup> Paus. 7.16.9–10 suggests that Mummius initially abolished Greek federal συνέδρια, but restored them not long afterwards. Other evidence relevant to the debate about whether changes in individual cities and at the federal level were linked: Paus. 8.30.9 credits Polybius with establishing ‘constitutions’ in the plural; contrast the use of the singular in the Dyme inscription and Polyb. 39.5.2–3 (see previous notes).

Although Sosos' revolt was at least partly a revolt against financial agreements, almost certainly including debt contracts, it also had more constructive aspects: Sosos had proposed new laws, which are said to have been contrary to the new Roman-backed laws imposed after 146. It is impossible to be certain what these new laws entailed, though their association with overturning of contracts and their provocation of firm Roman opposition lend support to the view that they had egalitarian or populist aspects.<sup>102</sup> Later Hellenistic Greeks were certainly capable of formulating public principled arguments for the relaxation of debt contracts, based on considerations of common welfare. For example, in first-century BC Tenos, the *demos* praised a Roman creditor, L. Aufidius Bassus, for being lenient with the polis about repayment of debts, judging that, 'for himself, the salvation of the polis and good repute among all were greater than all wealth' (εἶναί θ' ἑαυτ[ῶι] πλούτου παντὸς κρείττονα πόλεως σωτηρίαν καὶ τὴν π[αρά] πᾶσιν ἀγαθὴν εὐφημίαν). They subsequently praised him for using the key democratic virtue of frank speech (*parrhesia*) to convince those putting pressure on the Tenians (τοὺς ἐπιβαροῦντας), probably including other creditors,<sup>103</sup> to desist.<sup>104</sup> Like a good Classical Athenian democrat, he used *parrhesia* to stand up to the stronger, on behalf of the weaker party.

These traces of evidence for later Hellenistic democrats' opposition to the entrenchment of creditors' power and freedoms suggest that the debt revolts regularly condemned by Polybius

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<sup>102</sup> Compare Ferrary 1988: 198–9; Thornton 2001a: Part I, ch. 3; contrast Kallet-Marx 1995: 72–3.

<sup>103</sup> For ἐπιβαρέω used to refer to indebtedness, compare the same inscription, *IG XII 5 860* (Migeotte *Emprunt* no. 64), ll. 9–10; cf. 31–2.

<sup>104</sup> *IG XII 5 860*, ll. 37–9, 49–52; compare the earlier attitude attributed to his father in ll. 10–12.

probably sometimes had a more systematic ideological basis than Polybius allows. Relevant socio-economic tensions, and associated popular agitation, almost certainly endured into the first century AD in some cities.<sup>105</sup> Later Hellenistic and early Imperial popular agitation in Greek cities was probably also sometimes entangled, as in Posidonius' picture of Athenion's Athens, with resistance to external interference, including Roman control, on the grounds of civic self-determination.<sup>106</sup>

It is not clear to what extent mid- and later Hellenistic democrats were consciously influenced by the Classical Athenian democracy, though it clearly was an obvious parallel for their opponents, including Cicero as well as Posidonius and Polybius. Athenian influence is not unambiguous in the examples considered in this section, though the Metrodoros decree does give pause for thought: the emphasis on egalitarian funeral arrangements for all citizens recalls the distinctive practices and ideology of Athenian public funerals and funeral orations, surely well-known in the Hellenistic world through the evidence of Thucydides and the Attic orators. The probability of a link is increased by the fact that other aspects of Hellenistic Pergamon's civic life were self-consciously modelled on the Classical Athenian democracy.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> On the Greek cities of the early Imperial period, compare Ma 2000; Thornton 2001b, 2008 (reconstructing the *stasis* which led to the provincialisation of Lycia, *SEG* 51.1832, A, ll. 16–30).

<sup>106</sup> Compare Thornton 1999, 2001b, 2008.

<sup>107</sup> See recently Thonemann 2013b, on the *astynomoi* law.

## **8.4.2 Traces of Later Hellenistic Assertion of Certain Classical Athenian Philosophical Ideals of Strong Civic Community**

### **The Role of the Hellenistic Peripatetics**

Even though explicit appeals to Classical Athenian democratic ideals are not widely attested, there is more evidence for later Hellenistic Greeks making direct appeals to broader Classical Athenian civic ideals, sometimes drawing on Classical Athenian philosophical models and doctrines. The argument of this section is that certain followers of Aristotle, and sometimes Plato, were at the forefront of these moves. Aristotle himself was obviously not connected solely with Classical Athens, though he did spend most of his working life there, but also with many other parts of the fourth-century world. Nonetheless, he was closely associated with Classical Athens by at least some Hellenistic Greeks: there is a Hellenistic forged Classical Athenian honorary decree for him.<sup>108</sup> Moreover, his school, the Lyceum, was more unequivocally rooted in Classical Athens.

The best evidence for later Hellenistic Peripatetic philosophers' approaches to practical ethical and political issues<sup>109</sup> is the first-century BC summary of Peripatetic ethics preserved in Stobaeus, traditionally attributed to the late Hellenistic philosopher Arius Didymus, who

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<sup>108</sup> Haake 2013: 94–6; see also below.

<sup>109</sup> For a broader survey of Peripatetic ethics, especially meta-ethics, see Inwood 2014.

flourished in the Augustan period.<sup>110</sup> That summary includes quite surprisingly cosmopolitan or universalist aspects, which suggest the influence of Stoic thought on Peripatetic ethics, also evident in other sources.<sup>111</sup> However, it also includes strong emphasis on more traditional Peripatetic concerns, especially the importance of close-knit human communities, including close-knit poleis.

Stress is laid on the traditional Peripatetic insistence on the social and political nature of all humans: ‘a human being is a co-operative and communal animal’ (φιλάλληλον γὰρ εἶναι καὶ κοινωνικὸν ζῷον τὸν ἄνθρωπον), in relations with family, fellow citizens and broader groups. This is because good relations with others are intrinsically choiceworthy: affection among humans ‘is choiceworthy on its own account (δι’ αὐτὴν αἰρετὴν) and not only because of its usefulness (μὴ μόνον διὰ χρείας).’<sup>112</sup>

The summary also expands on the practical consequences of basic Peripatetic ideas about human nature and relationships. The summariser claims that, since virtue makes a greater contribution to happiness than bodily or external goods, ‘benefaction (εὐεργεσία) will be established and gratitude (χάρις) and favour (εὐχαριστία) and humanity (φιλανθρωπία) and love of children and of brothers, and in addition to these love of country and of one’s father and one’s relations and, in accordance with proper function, readiness to share and goodwill

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<sup>110</sup> On this work, see recently Sharples 2010: text 15A, with commentary; Inwood 2014: 77–88.

<sup>111</sup> See Annas 1995; Inwood 2014: 55, 83–8.

<sup>112</sup> Sharples 2010: text 15A, section 4; the translations from this text in this chapter are those of Sharples, sometimes adapted.

and friendship and fairness and justice (ἢ τ' εὐκοινωνησία καὶ ἡ εὐνοία, καὶ ἡ φιλία, καὶ ἡ ἰσότης καὶ ἡ δικαιοσύνη) and the whole divine chorus of the virtues'.<sup>113</sup> The reference to εὐκοινωνησία ('readiness to share', 'good fellowship' or 'community spirit'), a rare word scarcely<sup>114</sup> attested in surviving Greek literature outside Stobaeus, immediately suggests that these types of benevolence and affection rely on very robust ideas of mutuality and community: it is important to share goods out of pure public-spiritedness, rather than merely observe contracts and strict entitlements. In Stobaeus' summary, an inference is drawn from this about the moral status of external goods, including wealth, office and capacities: they are good only in so far as the good man makes proper use of them (ἀφώρισται τὸ εἶναι ἀγαθὰ τῆ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἀνδρὸς χρήσει).<sup>115</sup>

One section of the Stobaeian summary indicates particularly clearly that Hellenistic Peripatetics reflected about the relationship between justice, solidarity and contracts: at what price should contracts be observed? In chapter 43, the summariser attributes to the Peripatetics a distinctively social, community-centred view of justice. For the Peripatetics, justice is a complex virtue, which involves 'piety (εὐσεβεία), holiness (ὁσιότης), goodness (χρηστότης), community spirit (εὐκοινωνησία) and fair dealing (εὐσυναλλαξία)'. Peripatetic justice is thus not merely a question of giving fair shares: it also involves 'goodness', subsequently defined as 'a disposition which does good to people voluntarily for their own sake'.

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<sup>113</sup> Sharples 2010: text 15A, section 12.

<sup>114</sup> But see Marcus Aurelius *Ta eis heauton* 11.20.

<sup>115</sup> Sharples 2010: text 15A, section 23. This was, in fact, a disputed question within the later Hellenistic Peripatos: Inwood (2014), 54–65.

Particularly relevant among the facets of justice listed is ‘fair dealing’ (εὐσυναλλαξία). Its presence in the list shows that the Peripatetics were keen to lay claim to respect for contracts as part of their ethical system. They were, however, also wary of excessive punctiliousness. They defined true ‘fair dealing’ as a mean between two extremes: at one extreme lies lack of fair dealing (ἀσυναλλαξία); at the other, another, less predictable vice which has no name of its own, but has something to do with ‘excessive legalism’ or ‘excessive justice’ (τὸ ἀκροδίκαιον). That doctrine may well contain a hint of self-conscious Peripatetic opposition to some contemporary Stoics’ and other Greeks’ rigid insistence on strict enforcement of contracts and justice, discussed above.

The word ἀκροδίκαιος is very rare, scarcely attested elsewhere outside lexica. It is closely related to the slightly less rare word ἀκριβοδίκαιος, used by Philo and some Christian authors. It was that latter word which Aristotle himself had used in defining the nature of ἐπιείκεια (‘decency’), which he regarded as a species of justice itself: the decent man is the one who does not insist on strict justice when it has bad consequences, but takes less than his share in such cases, even when the law is on his side (ὁ μὴ ἀκριβοδίκαιος ἐπὶ τὸ χεῖρον ἀλλ’ ἐλαττωτικός, καίπερ ἔχων τὸν νόμον βοηθόν, ἐπιεικῆς ἐστὶ).<sup>116</sup> This partly recalls the way in which citizens

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<sup>116</sup> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1138a1–2. Aristotle certainly does not argue in his discussion of ἐπιείκεια for disregard of law and legal principles, but rather for a subtle approach in difficult cases, informed by the lawgiver’s intention (compare Brunschwig 1996); but that lawgiver’s intention should itself always include concern for the common good of the polis and the ethical flourishing of its citizens (cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1280a34–b35).

of a good Aristotelian polis will make their formally private property ‘common in use’ when the need arises, rather than insist on their exclusive legal right to it.<sup>117</sup>

The fact that Aristotle and the Peripatetics made the attempt to define and analyse the uncommon Greek concept of the ἀκροδίκαιον suggests that they had a particular interest in addressing its ethical status. Significantly, the abstract noun ἀσυναλλαξία is also a rare word.<sup>118</sup> One of the few surviving occurrences is in Fabius Maximus’ letter to Dyme, discussed above, in which it was used to condemn the overturning of contracts by Sosos’ rebels. This unexpected similarity in unusual abstract vocabulary between the two apparently quite different texts is itself a vivid sign that the question of the ethical and political status of contracts moved to centre stage in both philosophical and popular ethics at this particular stage of Greek history.<sup>119</sup>

As well as insisting on particular traditional elements of Greek ethics, the later Hellenistic Peripatetics also retained a self-conscious interest in traditional political theorising, focussed on the small-scale polis. The Stobaeian summary of Peripatetic ethics ends with a quite faithful summary of key elements of Aristotle’s *Politics*, discussing, for example, constitutions, *stasis* and civic education. This section includes reflection on means of pursuing harmony within the

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<sup>117</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1263a37–9.

<sup>118</sup> For the opposite value, εὐσυναλλαξία, consider another work attributed to a later Hellenistic Peripatetic, but also influenced by Stoicism: [Andronicus of Rhodes] *On the Passions* Book II, 7.2, 1. 15: Εὐσυναλλαξία δὲ ἕξις ἐν συναλλαγαῖς φυλάττουσα τὸ δίκαιον; compare Glibert-Thirry 1977: ch. 2, esp. 11–29.

<sup>119</sup> For the related adjective ἀσυνάλλακτος in another later Hellenistic text concerned with the politics and ethics of debt contracts: Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 5.66.3; compare 1.41.1.



close-knit city-state, through common education and dining.<sup>120</sup> Moreover, Seneca claims that ‘some Peripatetics’ claimed that politics should be a fourth major branch of philosophy, alongside the three branches conventional in the Hellenistic period (logic, physics and ethics).<sup>121</sup>

Some Peripatetics, were, therefore, among the most concerted Hellenistic advocates of the particular civic ideal, prominent in the Classical period and beyond, of the autonomous, harmonious, close-knit polis of virtue, whose needs and values may sometimes legitimately override the sanctity of contracts or narrow ‘justice’. Significantly, relevant Peripatetic approaches were not necessarily confined to narrow philosophical circles. As Hahm and Sharples have argued, some leading Peripatetics, especially the second-century scholar Critolaus, enjoyed a significant public reputation, not least as highly visible anti-Stoics.<sup>122</sup> Moreover, biography represented a major, accessible Hellenistic genre in which Peripatetics were prominent, as authors and subjects. For example, the Hellenistic biographical tradition about Aristotle himself was complex and contested, with stories and counter-stories about Aristotle’s own political activities circulating for public consumption;<sup>123</sup> it was probably within the context of such disputes that the purported Athenian honorary decree for Aristotle was forged.<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Sharples 2010: text 15A, sections 45–52.

<sup>121</sup> Sen. *Ep.* 89.9–10 (Sharples 2010: text 5D).

<sup>122</sup> See Hahm 2007; Sharples 2010: esp. 1–2; compare Inwood 2014: ch. 3.

<sup>123</sup> See Aristocles of Messana fr. 2.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Haake 2013: 93–6.

Aristotle's writings themselves were probably also gaining a wider audience, partly through the efforts of Greeks of Asia Minor. Strabo claims that, around the beginning of the first century BC, Apellikon of Teos discovered 'Aristotle's books', presumably Aristotle's own copies of his works,<sup>125</sup> lying buried on peasants' land in the territory of the polis of Skepsis in the Troad.<sup>126</sup> Apellikon, a native of another polis of Western Asia Minor, published a hasty edition of the books. This itself suggests that he anticipated a ready market for them.<sup>127</sup> After Sulla captured Athens, he deported the books to Rome, as plunder. At Rome, the first scholarly work on the books was undertaken by Tyrannion of Amisus, a 'lover of Aristotle' (a φιλαριστοτέλης man) who had, appropriately, been given the birth-name of Theophrastos in his Pontic homeland in Northern Asia Minor.<sup>128</sup>

There are also signs that broader interest in the Classical Athenian philosophical schools, including the Peripatos, had an impact on civic life in the Greek cities, especially in Asia Minor. According to Posidonius, Apellikon of Teos was himself an associate of Athenion of Athens, because of their shared Peripatetic philosophical school (*hairesis*).<sup>129</sup> Similarly, Strabo claims that Diodoros of Adrammytion, who claimed to be one of the philosophers from the Academy

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<sup>125</sup> It is likely that other copies of many of his works, even esoteric ones, had remained available in the interim: see Barnes 1997; Primavesi 2007; Hatzimachali 2013: 3. The issue is, however, still debated (Schofield 2013: xv).

<sup>126</sup> Strabo 13.1.54.

<sup>127</sup> Hatzimachali 2013: 15.

<sup>128</sup> Strabo 13.1.54; Plut. *Sull.* 26.1. On his name: Hesychius Illustrius fr. 7, ll. 992–4 (Müller *FHG*).

<sup>129</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 156–7.

(τῶν τε ἐξ Ἀκαδημίας φιλοσόφων εἶναι) and also to be skilled in rhetoric (καὶ δίκας λέγειν καὶ σοφιστεύειν τὰ ῥητορικά), sided with Mithridates in the First Mithridatic War, slaughtering the council of his home city.<sup>130</sup> Strabo also recounts nearby how another Academic, Metrodoros of Skepsis, transferred his interest ‘from philosophy to politics’ and became involved at Mithridates’ court.<sup>131</sup>

It is, however, certain later Hellenistic honorific inscriptions of poleis of more southerly Asia Minor which offer the most vivid, though still fleeting, traces of practical appeal in Hellenistic cities to civic ideals inspired by Classical Athenian philosophies. Some such texts contain isolated but striking echoes of the ideas of fourth-century Athenian philosophical schools. Significantly, such rhetoric could serve to assert very substantial, demanding notions of the common good and of civic virtue. Such rhetoric reinforced the tendency of many such decrees to paint the good citizen as a ‘polis fanatic’.<sup>132</sup> Indeed, though the four striking claims analysed in the following paragraphs might look like isolated fragments within the relevant inscriptions, the four decrees in question all put continuous emphasis on far-reaching polis commitment and civic virtue.

The most striking example occurs in a decree of the Otorkondeis, a sub-division of the polis of Mylasa, dating to 76 BC. The benefactor Iatrokles is praised for helping individuals and the whole *demos*. He has also given loans and released certain struggling debtors from their debt contracts, even returning their deposits, ‘believing that justice is more beneficial than injustice’

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<sup>130</sup> Strabo 13.1.66.

<sup>131</sup> Strabo 13.1.55. For these two figures, see Ferrary 1988: 483–4.

<sup>132</sup> Wörle 1995.

(λυσιτελεστέραν ἡγούμενος τὴν δικαιοσύ[νην] τῆς ἀδικίας).<sup>133</sup> This claim echoes very closely Plato's *Republic*. Plato's Socrates claims towards the end of Book I, in his argument against Thrasymachos, that injustice is never more beneficial than justice (οὐδέποτε ἄρα, ὦ μακάριε Θρασύμαχε, λυσιτελέστερον ἀδικία δικαιοσύνης).<sup>134</sup> This is no simply random sentence of the *Republic* for the Mylasa decree to echo: Socrates goes on to develop precisely the argument summarised in this one line in the whole of the rest of the *Republic*, emphasising the intrinsic benefits of justice for the just man. The words in the decree can thus be seen as an allusion to the central concerns of Plato's *Republic*, including its defining interest in social and psychic harmony and the importance of citizens strongly identifying with the collective.<sup>135</sup> There is no reason to doubt the possibility of wide acquaintance with Plato: Plato's and Socrates' ideas were certainly held in high esteem around this time in nearby Miletus.<sup>136</sup>

Very significantly for the argument of this chapter, the probable allusion to the strongly community-centred ethics of Plato's *Republic* at Mylasa was used in a way which cast doubt on the justice of always scrupulously respecting debt contracts. In releasing people from oppressive debt contracts, Iatrokles was acting, not charitably,<sup>137</sup> but *justly*. Insisting strictly on property rights and debt contracts would have been both unjust and unprofitable. There is a clear contrast here with the claims of Polybius and some Stoics that strict observance of, and

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<sup>133</sup> *I.Mylasa* 109, ll. 4–10.

<sup>134</sup> Pl. *Resp.* 353e7–354a9; compare 354b7; 360c8.

<sup>135</sup> This theme in the *Republic* does issue in some explicit moral condemnation of profiteering through loan-giving: see, for example, 555e4–556b5.

<sup>136</sup> See Haake 2007: 228–31, discussing *I.Milet* 734.

<sup>137</sup> For that approach, see *SEG* 39.1243, col. III, ll. 38–47.

insistence on, contracts and formal entitlements is the route to both virtue and general well-being.

Although the most striking example involves a probable allusion to Plato, there are some similar traces of community-centred application of Aristotelian and Peripatetic ethics. The three most interesting cases derive from a single city, Priene, within quite a short time span (later second and first century BC). This is unlikely to be a coincidence: even if any one of the three would not be compelling in isolation, the combination of the three suggests that Peripatetic ideas were influential on later Hellenistic Prienian debates about wealth, virtue and citizenship.

The latest of these decrees is the first-century BC decree for the naturalised Prienian A. Aemilius Zosimos. That decree praises Zosimos for knowing that virtue alone brings the greatest fruits and rewards from a community of men, probably including foreigners, who hold ‘the fine’ in honour (συνιδὼν δ’ ὅτι μόνη μεγίστους ἀποδίδωσιν ἢ ἀρετὴ καρποὺς καὶ χάριτας π[αρὰ ξένοις κ]αὶ ἀστοῖς τὸ καλὸν ἐν τιμῇ θεμένοις).<sup>138</sup> The explicit reference to the capacity of virtue alone to bring the greatest benefits and rewards suggests an acquaintance with philosophical arguments in favour of virtue, which tended to stress the benefits of virtue for the virtuous agent. The particular approach of these lines evokes specifically Aristotelian and Peripatetic, rather than Platonic or Stoic, versions of the argument that virtue benefits the virtuous agent: the decree presents virtue as a strongly social and public-spirited disposition, which the members of a political community can join together in cultivating and valuing, in a

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<sup>138</sup> *I.Priene*<sup>2</sup> 68 (new edition of *I.Priene* 112), ll. 13–14.

way which is mutually beneficial for all of them.<sup>139</sup> Interestingly, the vision here of the Prienian political community as a mutually supportive group dedicated to honouring an abstract ideal of ‘the fine’ recalls precisely the Aristotelian or Peripatetic view to which, I suggested above, Polybius was self-consciously reacting in his portrayal of the Achaian League: the view that a polis necessarily exists for the sake of the good life, rather than utility or ‘mere life’.<sup>140</sup>

This decree for Zosimos picked up and developed the themes of some slightly earlier Prienian honorary decrees, especially the later second-century decrees for the brothers Athenopolis and Moschion. The decree for Athenopolis praises him for maintaining his good will towards his home city, ‘thinking that what belongs to himself most of all is the maintenance of assiduousness towards those conducting their lives together with him’ (νομίζων το[ῦτο α]ὐτῷ μέγιστον ὑπάρχειν τὸ τὴν πρὸς τοὺς συγανα<σ>τρ[ε]φο[μέν]ους ἐκτένειαν συντηρεῖν).<sup>141</sup> This again recalls the specifically Aristotelian and Peripatetic version of the eudaimonist idea that personal happiness is necessarily dependent on virtue: the thing which is most proper to a man (compare [α]ὐτῷ μέγιστον ὑπάρχειν) is the fulfilment of his natural function, which he achieves through virtuous activity of the soul (ψυχῆς ἐνέργεια<sup>142</sup> κατ’ ἀρετήν), guided by reason.<sup>143</sup> This part of the decree for Athenopolis also recalls the traditional Aristotelian and Peripatetic concern with humans’ interdependence, and its ethical consequences: a virtuous life for any individual must have a strongly social and public-spirited component, in as far as he is

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<sup>139</sup> On Aristotle’s commitment to this type of approach: Cooper 2010.

<sup>140</sup> See especially Arist. *Pol.* 1280a34–b35.

<sup>141</sup> *I.Priene*<sup>2</sup> 63 (new edition of *I.Priene* 107), ll. 17–21.

<sup>142</sup> Compare the decree’s ἐκτένεια, though it conveys ‘assiduousness’ rather than ‘activity’.

<sup>143</sup> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1098a7–18.

a human being and lives together with multiple others (ἢ δ' ἄνθρωπός ἐστι καὶ πλείοσι συζῆ).<sup>144</sup>

In other words, it is central to a good life to maintain good relations with those with whom one shares ties of interdependence (compare τοὺς συγνα<σ>τρ[ε]φο[μέν]ους).

In both the decree for Athenopolis and the one for Zosimos, the abstract language about virtue and its benefits had implicit practical implications about wealth and property: the good citizen does not hoard his wealth, insisting on his formal entitlement to use it principally for private purposes, but freely donates much of it to support the collective civic life of his fellow citizens. These practical implications were, however, spelled out far more clearly in the third relevant Prienian text, the later second-century decree for Athenopolis' brother Moschion. Moschion was praised for providing both money and sureties for loans from his personal fortune in a fiscal crisis, 'treating the property as common to all citizens' (διαλαβ[ών κ]οινὴν εἶναι τῆ[ν] οὐσίαν πάντων τῶν πολιτῶν).<sup>145</sup> There is a striking echo here of Aristotle's famous doctrine (mentioned above) that, although genuine communism is undesirable, citizens should be willing to treat their private property as 'common in use' in times of collective need.<sup>146</sup> A strong indication that the decree drafter intended Moschion to be seen as acting from a considered, intellectual position is that he does not simply describe him as in practice sharing his resources by making them common,<sup>147</sup> but attributes to Moschion himself this distinctive attitude to the nature of his property. He does so, like the drafters of the other decrees considered in these

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<sup>144</sup> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1178b5–6.

<sup>145</sup> *I.Priene*<sup>2</sup> 64 (new edition of *I.Priene* 108), ll. 89–97.

<sup>146</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1263a37–9.

<sup>147</sup> That kind of description finds parallels in texts unlikely to reflect Aristotelian influence: consider Dem. 20.44.

paragraphs, by using the participle of a verb of thinking, διαλαβ[ὼν] (compare ἡγούμενος, νομίζων and συνιδὼν in the other examples).

This case probably, therefore, represents another self-conscious allusion to fourth-century Athenian philosophical ethics. Like the probable Platonic allusion at Mylasa, this probable Aristotelian allusion calls into question any dogmatic insistence on the immutability of private property rights, or even any sharp barrier between public and private. Interdependent fellow citizens, all members of one *demōs*, in fact share many interests and goods, to an extent which more contractual notions of the polis cannot address. Benevolence to one's community, including willingness to adapt or bend property rights and debt contracts for the sake of justice, harmony and the common good, is integral to virtue.

Surviving honorary decrees preserve only a very small fraction of the civic discourse of later Hellenistic poleis. It is difficult to tell whether the strikingly Classicising claims in these four inscriptions of Mylasa and Priene were fragments of wider tendencies in the rhetoric of the later Hellenistic assembly, agora and gymnasium. Some other decrees do sometimes reveal similar overlaps with Peripatetic language and ideas.<sup>148</sup> The likelihood of a wider pattern is much increased by contextual evidence about later Hellenistic civic education. Later Hellenistic citizens would have imbibed Platonic and Peripatetic teaching, as well as other philosophical ideas, from varied sources. Some made trips to philosophical centres such as Athens and Rhodes, but many also benefited from philosophical teaching, lectures, reading and

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<sup>148</sup> See Gray 2013a.



debates in local gymnasia.<sup>149</sup> Indeed, the three Prienian decrees discussed above could reflect, for example, the evidence of one or two charismatic Peripatetic philosophy teachers.

Significantly, it is quite probable that many Hellenistic Peripatetics, in particular, concentrated their efforts on teaching and oral lectures and discussion,<sup>150</sup> aimed at educating active citizens, rather than on written dogmatic works. Cicero identifies the Hellenistic Peripatetics as leaders in rhetorical and political education.<sup>151</sup> Similarly, Dionysius of Halicarnassus advocated his own brand of rhetorical training and Classicism, oriented around the Attic orators, as a challenge to the Peripatetics' dominant position as teachers of rhetoric.<sup>152</sup>

An inscription which identifies sites of later Hellenistic philosophical education of ephebes at Athens mentions the Academy, Lyceum and Ptolemaion.<sup>153</sup> This too suggests that the older philosophical schools were dominant over the newer Hellenistic ones in civic education, in this particular case and probably also in the structure of the curriculum. Admittedly, philosophers from the newer schools, especially the Stoa, could sometimes lecture in the physical homes of

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<sup>149</sup> For the vibrant life of Hellenistic civic gymnasia, see Kah and Scholz 2004; for a particular example of philosophical studies in a polis, see *I.Iasos* 98.

<sup>150</sup> Compare Inwood 2014: e.g. 75.

<sup>151</sup> Griffin 1997: 9–10; Wiater 2011a: 33–40, discussing Cic. *De Or.* 1.43, 3.57–76, esp. 62; *Brut.* 119–20; *Tusc.* 2.9.

<sup>152</sup> See Wiater 2011a: 47–52, discussing Dionysius' *First Letter to Ammaeus*.

<sup>153</sup> *IG II<sup>2</sup>* 1006 (122/1 BC), ll. 19–20. Compare Haake 2007: 44–55.

the older ones.<sup>154</sup> However, they would have suffered the rhetorical disadvantage of having to do so within the traditional homes of their philosophical rivals.

A suggestive piece of evidence for the priorities of Hellenistic Peripatetic teachers is a rare case of a polis honouring a philosopher for his teaching:<sup>155</sup> a decree of c. 200 BC passed by the Samians in honour of a certain Epikrates of Herakleia. Significantly, this Epikrates was both explicitly identified as a Peripatetic and praised for having waived his fees specifically for those poorer citizens who were unable to pay (τοῖς τε [μὴ] δυναμένοις τῶν δ[η]μοτῶν τελεῖν [τὸν] ἐκκείμενον ὑφ' αὐτοῦ μισθὸν προῖκα [σχο]λάζων).<sup>156</sup> This example of Peripatetic social conscience, expressed in benevolent action and teaching, is useful for explaining the orientation of the rhetoric of some of the decrees discussed above. Epikrates probably belonged to a vibrant group of Hellenistic Peripatetics who were leading Hellenistic intellectual champions of demanding ideals of solidarity and tireless commitment to education and virtue.

As a result of the nature of the subsequent development of the Roman Empire and its Greek intellectuals and cities, only traces of the efforts and ideas of such Hellenistic Peripatetics remain, in Strabonic anecdotes, Stobaeian doxography and honorific inscriptions. Relevant Peripatetics probably did, however, have a key role to play in Hellenistic intellectual and political arguments: that of advocating the traditional, Classical small-scale, participatory, self-governing, solidaristic polis as still the fundamental, irreplaceable basis for a worthwhile human life, in opposition to the alternative ethico-political models and innovations advocated

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<sup>154</sup> Compare Ferrary 1988: 438–41; Haake 2007: 47, with n. 147.

<sup>155</sup> For some other recently published cases, see Haake 2009, 2010; in general, see Haake 2007.

<sup>156</sup> *IG XII 6 1 128*, ll. 21–4; cf. Scholz 2004, 119–20; Haake 2007, 185–90.

by Hellenistic Stoics, Academic Sceptics and Epicureans. These schools were, of course, like the Peripatetics, heterogeneous, with many internal disagreements about doctrines, not least concerning the question of how, if at all, the relevant school's ethical teaching should be applied to practical politics. Many were not interested in practical questions at all.<sup>157</sup> This tendency itself, however, created an opening for those philosophers, including certain Peripatetics, who did seek to bind theory and practice together more closely.

### **Posidonius' Athenion as a Peripatetic**

Posidonius' presentation of the Athenian tyrant Athenion, with which this chapter began, itself takes on a different complexion when put in the context of these broader roles of certain Peripatetics in Hellenistic political education and debates. Though it must remain a matter of interpretation, in the absence of explicit comment by Posidonius, a strong case can be made that Posidonius, as a philosopher himself, expected readers to infer a link between Athenion's Peripatetic leanings and some of his behaviour and rhetoric,<sup>158</sup> even though he also reveals many other, quite different ideological influences.

In the light of the role of certain Peripatetics as leading Hellenistic defenders of traditional community-centred polis ideals, it would have been easy for Posidonius' contemporary readers to deduce that Athenion was able to advocate those ideals with ease and authority before the Athenian audience (see section 2 above) partly because he had imbibed Peripatetic teaching,

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<sup>157</sup> Compare Gotter 2003: 174–5.

<sup>158</sup> Compare Ferrary (1988: 474–6): Posidonius indulges in 'anti-Peripatetic polemic', stressing the Peripatetic attachments of Athenion and Apellikon.

and had a reputation as a Peripatetic. This possibility is worth exploring further, because it adds a new dimension to the argument that certain later Hellenistic Peripatetics and anti-Peripatetics contested the value of Classical Athenian expressions of ideals of solidarity and equality, including the elaborations of those ideals by Aristotle and subsequent Peripatetics themselves.

This basic argument that Posidonius' Athenion should be seen partly as characteristically Peripatetic depends only on the fact that he expresses traditional civic ideals of polis autonomy and solidarity, as Hellenistic Peripatetic thinkers and teachers often did, in contrast to adherents of other Hellenistic philosophical schools, which had other priorities. The argument does not require that Posidonius' Athenion says anything more specifically Aristotelian or Peripatetic, though that would give it greater strength. It is true there is little *uniquely* Peripatetic in Athenion's specific words. This reflects, however, the nature of Peripatetic ethics, also evident earlier in this article. Aristotelians were distinguished in ethics and other fields by their method of collecting mainstream assumptions and thinking, and systematising them into philosophical form.<sup>159</sup> As already evident above, Aristotle and the Peripatetics laid great stress on widespread Greek civic values also given prominence by Posidonius' Athenion, including *ὁμόνοια*,<sup>160</sup> the common good or the good of the polis (*τὸ τῆς πατρίδος συμφέρον*)<sup>161</sup> and active political and

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<sup>159</sup> See especially Arist. *Eth. Nic.* I.4.

<sup>160</sup> See, for example, Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1167a22–b16, where Aristotle himself comments on this value's pervasive popularity.

<sup>161</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1278b21–3; 1279a25–31; 1280a25–1281a8; Sharples 2010: text 15A, sections 4 and 12.

civic participation.<sup>162</sup> They also, like Posidonius' Athenion, drew some strongly anti-egoistic conclusions from those community-centred values, condemning on ethical grounds both excessive insistence on strict financial entitlements (see above) and the practice of money-lending at interest.<sup>163</sup> By emphasising educational and cultural institutions among the central civic institutions he sees threatened, Posidonius' Athenion also taps into another central Greek civic preoccupation on which Aristotle and Peripatetics laid particular stress: the fundamental role of παιδεία (education) in sustaining united, free political life.<sup>164</sup>

Moreover, some aspects of Athenion's rhetoric do echo more specific Aristotelian and Peripatetic ideas. In the mouth of a Peripatetic, the castigation of the Athenians' acquiescence in 'anarchy' (ἀναρχία)<sup>165</sup> calls to mind Aristotle's famous 'political animal' argument: it is in men's nature that they aspire to live in civic communities of citizens under a constitution.<sup>166</sup> Athenion can be seen to be exhorting the Athenians to remember their fundamentally political nature as human beings: to stand up for the civic institutions which enable them to fulfil their true natures, through strenuous political participation. They should not leave to the Romans the crucial role of deliberating about the fundamental question of how they should conduct their

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<sup>162</sup> See, for example, Arist. *Pol.* 1253a1–4, 1277b7–16, 1283b42–1284a3; Sharples 2010: text 15A, section 47.

<sup>163</sup> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1138a1–2; *Pol.* 1258b2–8.

<sup>164</sup> Compare especially Arist. *Pol.* 1263b36–7; note also *Pol.* Book VIII. Compare Sharples 2010: text 15A, section 52.

<sup>165</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 94–103.

<sup>166</sup> See Books I–III of Aristotle's *Politics*.

civic life (περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἡμᾶς πολιτεύεσθαι δεῖ),<sup>167</sup> a role which Aristotle made central to the activities of good citizens, describing it in similar words.<sup>168</sup>

Most significantly of all, Aristotle himself explicitly deplores ἀναρχία. At one point, he criticises the fact that, in certain Cretan cities, powerful citizens can suspend the appointment of the leading magistrates (κόσμοι) at will; the resulting ἀκοσμία can breed civic strife and ἀναρχία, in a way which threatens to dissolve the civic community.<sup>169</sup> Aristotle's linking of absence of magistrates, imposed from above, with the collapse of the political community is strikingly close to Posidonius' Athenion's point that the whole civic life of the Athenians, including political, legal, religious, cultural and educational institutions, is being destroyed by their tolerance of Roman-imposed ἀναρχία, also involving literal 'lack of magistrates'. Posidonius could well have had in mind this Aristotelian argument or a similar argument by a later Peripatetic, now lost.

The overlaps with Peripatetic ideas raised so far do not involve obvious distortion of Peripatetic values, even if Athenion applies them in idiosyncratic ways. In at least one other case, it is plausible to interpret Posidonius' Athenion as applying in a clearly distorted, demagogic way a famous Aristotelian doctrine. The relevant part is Athenion's claim to the Athenians that they

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<sup>167</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 96–7.

<sup>168</sup> Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1112a28–34, for example, implies that reflection about how one's own community should πολιτεύεσθαι is a central part of deliberation: by contrast, no Spartan (for example) deliberates about how the Scythians would best conduct their civic life (πῶς ἂν Σκύθαι ἄριστα πολιτεύοιντο).

<sup>169</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1272b1–15.

are now commanding themselves, even if he has taken the lead; if they show solidarity, he will have as much power and potential as all of them combined (καὶ ἂν συνεπισχύσητε, τοσοῦτον δυνήσομαι ὅσον κοινῇ πάντες ὑμεῖς).<sup>170</sup> This recalls one of Aristotle’s famous, qualified arguments for a broad-based, rather than narrowly elitist, constitution: if many diverse citizens participate in a city’s politics, the virtue and wisdom of individual citizens is aggregated. According to Aristotle, the citizens become in this way almost ‘one person’, with many combined limbs and faculties of soul.<sup>171</sup> Posidonius’ Athenion is claiming to be almost the incarnation of this exceptional, imaginary super-individual, who combines within himself all the strengths which the Athenians possess collectively. It would not be surprising for the democrat-Peripatetic Athenion to evoke this particular point in Aristotle’s own work where Aristotle comes closest to fusing Aristotelian and democratic thinking.

The general style of Athenion’s rhetoric and leadership can also be seen as a distorted application of certain Peripatetic practices and values. Posidonius’ Athenion displays great rhetorical skill as a civic orator, capable of persuading an assembly, which is in keeping with many Hellenistic Peripatetics’ focus on rhetoric, discussed above. Moreover, in the course of his rhetoric, Athenion exhibits, as Kidd and Chaniotis have each emphasised, extravagant passions (πάθη) and desires, behaving like a theatrical actor, and stokes similar desires in the Athenian people.<sup>172</sup> Significantly, the Hellenistic Peripatetics maintained, now in a polemically anti-Stoic manner, a commitment to the Aristotelian idea that the passions (πάθη), suitably

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<sup>170</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 108–110.

<sup>171</sup> See Arist. *Pol.* 1281a42–b7.

<sup>172</sup> See Kidd 1988–1999: vol. II ii), 870, 873, 886; Chaniotis 2013: 202–204. For destabilising theatricality, compare Posidonius fr. 257, with Kidd 1988–1999: vol. II ii), 898–9.

moderated, should play a central, positive role in ethical deliberation and motivation.<sup>173</sup> Even if a Peripatetic observer would have condemned Athenion for far exceeding the bounds of ‘moderation of passion’ (μετριοπάθεια), Posidonius probably intended his portrayal to be a vivid example to readers less favourable to the Peripatetics of the dangers which Peripatetic sympathy with the passions might unleash.<sup>174</sup>

It is, therefore, highly plausible to interpret Posidonius’ Athenion as applying certain Aristotelian and Peripatetic ideas and practices, especially the more utopian and community-oriented ones, in radical, provocative ways. This Athenion must be seen as being highly selective among Aristotelian and Peripatetic doctrines, ignoring more moderate ones. He must also be seen as combining his particular idiosyncratic interpretation of Peripatetic ethics and politics with many other values, especially democratic ones, to innovative and destabilising effect.

A potential problem for this argument is that the account preserved in Athenaeus does contain two explicit claims that Athenion transgressed Aristotelian and Peripatetic standards. First, Athenion is accused of getting out of the way the ‘right-thinking citizens’ (τοὺς εὖ φρονοῦντας) of Athens on taking power as tyrant, contrary to Aristotle’s and Theophrastus’ ideas.

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<sup>173</sup> See the evidence collected and analysed in Sharples 2010: ch. 16; also Inwood 2014: e.g. 74.

<sup>174</sup> Compare Kidd 1997: 43, 45. On recent debates about Posidonius’ position on the passions, and its relationship with Stoic orthodoxy: Gill 2006: 266–290.



Subsequently, it is claimed that, while ruling as tyrant, Athenion forgot about Peripatetic principles in assigning rations to the Athenians more appropriate to chickens than to men.<sup>175</sup>

These comments could be taken to show that Posidonius did not wish Athenion to be seen as applying his Peripatetic ideas in any way during the events recounted. However, the two claims about Athenion contravening Peripatetic standards are the parts of the account most likely to have been added by Athenaeus: they directly support Athenaeus' aim of exposing philosophical charlatans, who failed to live up to their own teachings. Even if, as is more likely (see section 2), Posidonius was the author of the whole extract, these two claims do not present a major problem. The two remarks are not blanket assessments of Athenion's conduct, but comments on specific, clearly unjust actions, committed after Athenion has become an obvious tyrant. They do not necessarily apply to Athenion's earlier actions and words, including his speeches to the Athenians. Indeed, the second claim, that Athenion 'forgot' Peripatetic principles at this point (*ἐπιλαθόμενος τῶν δογμάτων τῶν τοῦ Περιπάτου*), clearly allows that he remembered them at earlier stages. It even implies it.

Posidonius probably, therefore, wished to suggest that Athenion initially relied on Peripatetic political ideals, especially in his rousing speeches to the Athenians, but cast them aside after gaining tyrannical power. In other words, he exploited certain Peripatetic ideals in a way which brought him into conflict with other, more respectable Peripatetic ideals. This interpretation is

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<sup>175</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 117–20, 157–60.

consistent with what is known of Posidonius' broader approach: he was favourable to some parts of Aristotelian and Peripatetic philosophy and argumentation,<sup>176</sup> but hostile to others.<sup>177</sup>

A strong case can, therefore, be made that Posidonius' portrayal of Athenion was a vitriolic satire, not only on certain radical applications of particular Classical Athenian civic ideals, but also on the specific role of certain Peripatetic ideas, thinkers and rhetoricians in the shaping and spreading of relevant approaches. In that case, the Athenion passage shows that Posidonius, like Polybius (see section 3 above), was strongly hostile to certain Peripatetic values and philosophers. The shared anti-Peripatetic animus of these pro-Roman thinkers, sceptical about strong community and equality, serves further to strengthen the case that certain Hellenistic Peripatetics were at the forefront of moves to apply certain Classical civic ideals, including Aristotle's own, in a way which questioned the existing distribution of power and property, and ideologies favourable to it.

## 8.5 Conclusion

There were vibrant later Hellenistic debates about the form of the best polis, and the implications for Greco-Roman relations. A significant number of later Hellenistic intellectuals stressed the overriding justice and inviolability of formal contracts, agreements and property rights. They did so partly in support of older Greek ideals, but also in reaction against other Classical Athenian ideals, under the influence of approaches prominent at Rome. They also advocated their case partly in reaction against dynamic opponents. These included both

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<sup>176</sup> See Posidonius T85; frs. 30–5, 142–9, 157–69.

<sup>177</sup> Posidonius fr. 70, ll. 42–59, with Kidd 1988–1999: vol. II ii), 636–8.

democrats and some who insisted on the more community-centred aspects of Classical Greek ethics, calling on certain Aristotelian and Peripatetic ideas, in particular, for support. Indeed, the evidence considered in section 4 suggests that a quite prominent, sharp-edged brand of Classicism was in circulation in some later Hellenistic circles. Ferrary is surely right that philosophical and rhetorical schools did not, as a general rule, serve as centres of resistance to Rome.<sup>178</sup> However, some philosophers, alongside other Greeks, probably did embrace forms of Classicism which challenged certain political, social and, above all, ethical changes associated with the Roman conquest.

The relevant brand of Classicism was sufficiently prominent and sharp-edged for Polybius, Posidonius and probably also some other Stoics to subject it to ferocious satire and opposition. The combination of this intellectual and ideological opposition with Roman military power and prestige must have been very successful. Indeed, more moderate forms of Classicism seem to have become dominant within the first century BC. These more moderate forms involved far less stress on radical equality, egalitarian solidarity, justice, democracy or untrammelled popular sovereignty. They gave prominence, instead, to ethical language about virtue, harmony, humanity, education and self-control, closer to Isocrates than to Demosthenes.<sup>179</sup>

This alternative Classicising language was, understandably, less likely to be used to advocate political change: indeed, its advocates were often strongly paternalistic, and very comfortable with the unequal *status quo* in politics and socio-economic life. On the other hand, such

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<sup>178</sup> Ferrary 1988: 489–90.

<sup>179</sup> Note that a Samian benefactor of the Augustan age even adopted the name ‘Isocrates’ (*IG* XII 6 1 293).

language could also be much gentler and more universalistic than the radical Classicism studied here: it helped to delineate a new model of cultural citizenship, centred on *paideia*, cosmopolitanism and *philanthropia*.

Direct Roman cultural and ideological intervention must have played a significant role in encouraging new, gentler forms of Classicism.<sup>180</sup> Nevertheless, another crucial contribution to the process came from Greek citizens and intellectuals themselves. The commonly quite flamboyant rhetoric of later Hellenistic poleis' honorary decrees often took much less radically egalitarian, politicised forms than those discussed in section 4: there was much praise for the education and humanity of civic benefactors, eager to ensure the welfare of their less fortunate fellow citizens, but also to advance ideals of culture and civilisation.<sup>181</sup> These types of honorific language overlap closely with the descriptions of the ethical and political virtues of good elites in both Diodorus Siculus and Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>182</sup> Those two intellectuals provide the most vivid evidence of a less radically egalitarian form of appeal to the Classical Athenian past, more cultural, ethical and cosmopolitan than directly political, in the later Hellenistic world; see the chapters by Wiater and Holton in this volume.<sup>183</sup>

This shift in prominent values helps to explain further why only traces of more radical forms of Classicism survive in the literary and epigraphic evidence preserved for us, through the filter of the Roman Empire. Indeed, even some later Hellenistic Peripatetics were influenced by these

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<sup>180</sup> See Spawforth 2012.

<sup>181</sup> See Gray 2013a; 2013c: esp. 150–2.

<sup>182</sup> See Gray 2013c: 151–2.

<sup>183</sup> Also the papers in Wiater and Schmitz 2011.

broad shifts. Some associated themselves closely with Roman power, as intellectual companions of the Roman elite: examples include Staseas of Naples, house-guest of Piso in Cicero's *De Finibus*; Cratippus of Pergamon, associate of Brutus and tutor of Cicero's son at Athens;<sup>184</sup> and Nicolaus of Damascus, associate and biographer of Augustus himself. Other Peripatetics of this period, now based at Rome and Alexandria rather than Athens, innovated in the development of another form of Classicism, similarly lacking in an immediate, sharp political edge, which was to become very prominent in the Roman Empire: commentary on Classical texts.<sup>185</sup> Some leading Peripatetics, such as Boethus of Sidon, Xenarchus of Seleuceia and Andronicus of Rhodes, concentrated on technical Aristotelian scholarship and fields such as logic and metaphysics.<sup>186</sup>

Being Peripatetic thus became as much about critical method and textual focus as about any substantial shared doctrines; there was probably no 'Peripatetic orthodoxy'.<sup>187</sup> This move from 'late Hellenistic' engagement with *doxai* and arguments to a 'post-Hellenistic' concentration on texts<sup>188</sup> was probably partly a reaction against earlier tendencies within the Peripatos, including its focus on teaching, civic engagement and imaginative elaboration of Aristotle's doctrines. Such a reaction would help to explain why the Stoicising Strabo praised these later, more technical Peripatetics for 'Aristotelising' (ἀριστοτελίζειν) better, harshly condemning

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<sup>184</sup> Cf. Haake 2007: 264–9.

<sup>185</sup> See Hatzimachali 2013: 1–2, citing M. Frede; cf. Inwood 2014: 75.

<sup>186</sup> Schofield 2013: xv–xvi, with Chiaradonna 2013 and Falcon 2013; compare Ferrary 1988: 466–7.

<sup>187</sup> Schofield 2013: xv, xvii–xviii.

<sup>188</sup> See Chiaradonna 2013.

earlier Peripatetics for merely ‘prattling about commonplaces’ (θέσσεις ληκυθίζειν).<sup>189</sup> As part of the same complex first-century BC developments, intellectual teachers encountered in this chapter, including Strabo himself and Dionysius of Halicarnassus as well as Cicero, sought to offer alternative programmes of political education to rival or supplement the traditional ones associated with the Peripatetics.

Significantly, the new, less radically egalitarian form of Classicism mainly superseded not only more radical forms of Classicism, but also the types of opposition to it identified in section 3: sharp polarisation mainly gave way to a broad consensus. Stoic ethical authors of the Imperial period, such as Seneca, Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius, do not display the hard-nosed insistence on unconditional property rights, law and strict justice, self-consciously hostile to strong ideals of community, attested for some later Hellenistic Stoics.

Despite these developments, more radical Classicising rhetoric did not entirely die out in the Greek cities. The old-fashioned ideal of civic autonomy and democracy could be expressed very trenchantly in civic language.<sup>190</sup> Moreover, as Ma has shown, advocates of moderate Classicism had to challenge more radical forms directly, suppressing the connotations of

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<sup>189</sup> Strabo 13.1.54; cf. Hatzimichali 2013: 13–14.

<sup>190</sup> See Thornton 2007: esp. 159–66, interpreting the political situation and rhetoric attested in *SEG* 53.659, from Maroneia; he cites earlier Greek parallels for that document’s rhetoric about civic autonomy (pp. 149–52). Thornton is in dialogue with the alternative, more oligarchic interpretation of the Maroneian situation in Wörrle 2004.

egalitarian community intrinsic to their cherished Classical canon.<sup>191</sup> Posidonius' satirical portrayal of Athenion's revolt is itself an important part of this story. By making Athenion appear ridiculous in his attempts to yoke together Classical Athenian radical democracy and Classical Athenian culture as an indissoluble pair, Posidonius contributed to detaching Classical Athens' cultural, intellectual and even ethical legacy from its radical democratic legacy. The resulting more cultural ideal of Athens was crucial to subsequent Roman Athenocentric philhellenism (see Ma, this volume).

There would, therefore, have been obvious incentives for Posidonius to invent a connection between radical democrats and Peripatetics in early first-century Athens. Nevertheless, some independent evidence lends historical plausibility to his account's general contours. Some sources indicate that philosophers of different schools were involved in political unrest at Athens around this time, both clashing with one another and becoming involved in wider social conflicts.<sup>192</sup> Moreover, it is quite plausible that this chapter's various different types of later Hellenistic appropriation of certain Classical civic ideals, democratic and philosophical, came together in Athens in 88 BC in an ostensibly incongruous coalition: a single, united, now particularly extreme political reaction, shared between erstwhile rivals, against Roman-inspired developments in the Greek world.<sup>193</sup> This would have been a major intensification of

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<sup>191</sup> Compare Ma (2000b); also (1994). Among ancient texts, see, in particular, Plut. *Prae. ger. reip.* 814a–c, with de Ste Croix 1981: 310–31.

<sup>192</sup> Cic. *Leg.* 1.53; Athen. *Deipnosophistae* Book XIII, 611b. See also Cic. *Brut.* 306; cf. Malitz 1983: 343–4. In general, see Ferrary 1988: 435–6, 476–81.

<sup>193</sup> There is probably, however, too little distinctively Aristotelian about *Agora* I 2351, an inscription recording early first-century BC constitutional changes, to merit the hypothesis of

the tendency already evident in section 4, in which citizens of later Hellenistic Mylasa and Priene appear to have adopted Classical philosophical ideals of solidarity in order to assert that private wealth must be used in keeping with the needs and values of the wider community, represented as a *demos* in their inscriptions.

This conclusion about the historicity of the alleged events at Athens in 88 BC is reinforced by another detail from Posidonius' account, which Posidonius himself presents as merely incidental. Posidonius gives some background information concerning Athenion's Peripatetic associate Apellikon of Teos. Before becoming involved in Athenion's regime, Apellikon had dedicated much effort to collecting ancient written works. He had not only bought the original copies of Aristotle's works, but also secreted some ancient Athenian decrees from the Athenian archives into his collection.<sup>194</sup> It is possible that Apellikon was simply an antiquarian, interested in collecting both old works of philosophy and ancient decrees. Could Apellikon not, however, have been interested in both types of document for far more pressing political reasons? Both Aristotle's books and ancient Athenian democratic decrees were potent symbols of central Classical Athenian ideals of civic self-government and collective endeavour. Those old ideals appear to have assumed a new and urgent relevance in the later Hellenistic world.<sup>195</sup>

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Peripatetic influence in that case; but such influence is posited in Oliver 1980; Antela-Bernárdez 2009.

<sup>194</sup> Posidonius fr. 253, ll. 147–57; see also Hatzimachali 2013: 4.

<sup>195</sup> Apellikon reportedly himself defended Aristotle's political engagement, writing favourably about Aristotle's friendship with the dynast Hermias of Atarneus (Aristocles of Messana, fr. 2, section 13; Ferrary 1988: 474). Could Apellikon even have been the source, with his interest



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in decrees and Aristotelianism, of the Hellenistic forged Athenian honorary decree for Aristotle (Haake 2013: 94–6)? M. Haake suggested this possibility to me.