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Philosophy of Education and the Later Hellenistic Polis¹

Abstract:

This chapter argues that some citizens of later Hellenistic poleis took a much greater and deeper interest than their predecessors in controversies in the philosophy of education. This case is made through close analysis of some later Hellenistic honorary decrees, especially *I.Sestos* 1, *I.Iasos* 98 and *I.Priene* 112. This evidence shows that some later Hellenistic citizens took an interest in the psychological processes involved in education, stressing the importance of habituating citizens through repeated action and of positively shaping citizens' habits, desires and emotions. It also shows that some later Hellenistic citizens sought to give a fundamental place to polis structures, institutions and values in educational theory and practice. In both of these respects the ideas of the citizens in question closely resemble Aristotelian thinking about education. This should be seen partly as a product of the volatile social and political circumstances of the late Hellenistic period, which provoked reflection along Aristotelian lines about education as a means of preserving or promoting civic solidarity. Nevertheless, it should probably also be seen as a result of philosophical influence on civic ideas: Aristotelian and other fourth-century thought had had time to diffuse into the mainstream; and some late Hellenistic citizens probably engaged directly with philosophical texts and arguments.

1. Introduction

In Samos in the early Roman Empire, a civic benefactor was honoured with a statue accompanied by the following inscription:

[ἡ β]ουλὴ καὶ ὁ δῆμος
Γάϊον Ἰούλιον Σωσιγένους υἱὸν
Ἀμυνίαν, τὸν καλούμενον Ἴσοκράτη,
φιλόσοφον Ἐπικούρηον, πλεῖ[σ]τα
τὴν πόλιν ὠφελήσαν[τα,] Ἥραϊ.²
The Council and the People [dedicated this statue of] Gaius Iulius
Amynias, son of Sosigenes, known as Isocrates, an Epicurean
philosopher, who has helped the city most greatly, to Hera.

¹ I would like to thank Dr Angelos Chaniotis, Dr Charles Crowther, Professor Terence Irwin, Dr John Ma and Dr Oswyn Murray for help with this chapter. I would also like to thank for their comments the participants in a Graduate Ancient History Work-in-Progress seminar in Oxford in Trinity Term 2007, at a conference on 'Lokale Eliten unter den hellenistischen Königen' in Frankfurt in September 2007 and at a workshop on 'Ethics and Epigraphy' in Oxford in April 2008.

² *IG* XII 6 1 293.

The combination of attributes ascribed to Amyntas is incongruous: he is both compared with Isocrates, the rhetorician and anti-philosopher, and described as an adherent of a philosophical school. Even more incongruous is the praise of a supposed Epicurean for devoted civic service, and the decision to honour him with a statue: Epicureans expressed contempt for civic participation and honours, dismissing civic statues as non-natural and non-necessary pleasures.³ In this case, intellectual attributes and allegiances were apparently attributed very lightly, with little concern for the arguments of the great thinkers concerned: Classical figures had become little more than great names which could be invoked in public contexts to gain prestige. Nevertheless, slightly earlier than this, in the years c. 150-50 BC, there was a period in which the themes and arguments which dominate Classical ethical works were sometimes of great importance in public debate within Greek cities, especially in Western Asia Minor.

2. The Sophistication of the Ethical Content of Later Hellenistic Honorary Decrees

The principal evidence for the ethical and political content of Hellenistic civic ideology comes from honorary decrees for leading citizens. These were probably drafted, and spoken before the civic assembly, by elite, educated citizens: either the honorands themselves, called upon to give an account of their conduct or whole lifestyle, or their supporters.⁴ However, in order for these decrees to be ratified, their language and content had to appeal to the rest of the citizen-body.

As a result, their content can be interpreted as a product of political negotiation:

³ Long and Sedley (1987) text 21I = scholion on Epicurus *Kyriai Doxai* 29. Cf. Haake (2007) 190-4.

⁴ E.g. *I.Priene* 4, ll. 14-22. Cf. Fröhlich (2005) 255 (on the general phenomenon).

they include elements derived both from popular expectations and from elite aspirations.

The honorary decree was in some ways an intrinsically ‘Aristotelian’ institution: by recognising the virtuous character of an honorand, the honouring citizen-body established a relationship with that honorand comparable to Aristotle’s ‘character friendship’, which Aristotle probably regarded as the ideal type of bond between citizens.⁵ The content of honorary decrees from the Classical period onwards also had important generic similarities with Aristotelian ethics: virtue oriented to the common good was usually prominent. However, the similarities become far more interesting in some decrees passed after *c.* 150 BC. As I intend to argue in another article, several honorary decrees of the poleis of Asia Minor passed after that date contain sophisticated ethical ideas about character, the good life, wealth, the polis and individual fulfilment. These ideas are often strongly reminiscent of fourth-century ethical thought in general, and of Aristotle’s thought in particular.

The relevant ideas and arguments gave a central place to virtue and citizenship in the rewarding human life. They had a particular appeal for a wide range of polis citizens in the later Hellenistic period, a time of crisis in which fundamental assumptions and social institutions were under threat. Civic poverty, the disappearance of royal benefactions, extreme polarisation of wealth, the attraction of lifestyles outside the polis for the wealthy and the cultural confusion associated with the arrival of the Romans all made citizens receptive to ideas which could

⁵ Irwin (2007) 226-7.

both sustain poleis as viable social entities and provide justifications for their existence.

There are a range of explanations for the overlap between some later Hellenistic civic language and that of fourth-century thought in relation to questions of virtue, self-interest and the polis. In some cases it was probably due merely to shared assumptions and ethical culture, in the face of similar social problems. However, there may have been a gradual diffusion of fourth-century ideas into popular consciousness: possible modern parallels include the gradual diffusion into modern popular morality over one or two centuries of Kantian human-rights theory or of the Utilitarian emphasis on the prevention of human suffering.⁶

In addition, there were almost certainly some direct allusions to philosophical works. For example, in a decree of the Otorkondeis of Mylasa (of 76 BC), the benefactor Iatrokles was praised for ‘thinking justice more beneficial than injustice’ (λυσιτελεστέραν ἡγούμενος τὴν δικαιοσύ[νην] τῆς ἀδικίας).⁷

This claim echoes closely both Socrates’ words in rejecting Thrasymachos’ arguments in Book I of Plato’s *Republic* (οὐδέ ποτ’ ἄρα, ὦ μακάριε Θρασύμαχε, λυσιτελέστερον ἀδικία δικαιοσύνης, ‘injustice is never more beneficial than justice, Thrasymachos’)⁸ and the overall argument of that work.

Similarly, the Prienian decree for Moschion (120s BC) contains the claim that he gave money to his city in a crisis, ‘treating his property as common to all citizens’

⁶ Prof. T. Irwin suggested to me the diffusion analogy and the Utilitarian example.

⁷ *I.Mylasa* 109, ll. 9-10.

⁸ *Pl. R.* 354a8-9; cf. 354b7; 360c8.

(διαλαβ[ών κ]οινήν εἶναι τῆ[ν] οὐσίαν πάντων τῶν πολιτῶν).⁹ This closely recalls Aristotle's argument in the *Politics* that, in the ideal state, there should be private property, but citizens should treat their private property as 'common in use'.¹⁰

The focus of this chapter is the engagement of some later Hellenistic decree-drafters, principally from the poleis of Asia Minor, with problems in the philosophy of education. In relation to education there was a similar marked increase in the levels of interest, detail and sophistication of honorary decrees after about 150 BC.¹¹ When decree-drafters expressed precise ideas about education which can be compared with philosophical discussions, the ideas they expressed were strongly reminiscent of fourth-century thought.

The increased prominence of educational questions in decrees was partly a reflection of the social dominance of civic elites and their cultural ideals,¹² but negotiation between elite benefactors and the rest of the citizen-body is also relevant to explaining this development. Claims to superior education, and to resulting superior virtue, were one basis on which members of the elite could justify to fellow citizens their unequal power and resources.¹³ The public expression of sophisticated philosophical ideas about education allowed elite members to flaunt the fact that they had themselves benefited from an education of the relevant type. Moreover, benefactors' provision of education to other citizens through the gymnasium was one of the civic services to which they could

⁹ *I.Priene* 108, ll. 91-2.

¹⁰ Arist. *Pol.* 1263a37-9.

¹¹ Cf. Haake (2007) 55, 273-5.

¹² *Ibid.* 279-80.

¹³ Kleijwegt (1991) 86-7; Scholz (2004) 116; Haake (2007) 282.

draw attention in their self-justification, and one which would be all the more impressive if they could show that it was a contribution based on philosophical principles.

However, the prominence of educational themes was not purely a reflection of social bargaining. In a period of extreme polarisation of wealth and civic poverty, in which formal regulations and liturgies were increasingly ineffectual in sustaining civic life,¹⁴ education of all citizens (especially wealthy citizens) was essential to creating the public-spirited dispositions which could prevent social catastrophe. Some elite decree-drafters gave public expression to this ethical and social function of education, and offered complex reflections on the form which education should take in order to achieve it. These decree-drafters' emphasis on polis-centred education and resulting intellectual achievement and ethical virtue can also be viewed in the context of the curtailing of poleis' autonomy in the Hellenistic period: it was consistent with the trend for Hellenistic poleis to lay claim to cultural achievement and autonomy, to compensate for lost political and military autonomy.¹⁵

3. Philosophy of Education in the Hellenistic Period

Ethical education was a longstanding area of debate between philosophical schools.¹⁶ Whereas Platonists and Stoics made the acquisition of virtue exclusively or principally a matter of learning principles and arguments, Aristotelian theorists gave more prominence to the habituation of the agent's

¹⁴ E.g. Fröhlich (2005) 254-5.

¹⁵ Momigliano (1977) 43-6; Dreyer (2004) 217-18, 228.

¹⁶ E.g. I. Hadot (1969); P. Hadot (1995) 291-2.

desires, feelings of pleasure and pain and emotions.¹⁷ In Aristotelian thought, another major philosophical concern was the relationship between the polis and education (*παιδεία*): it was held that appropriate education of citizens was indispensable for social harmony, and that it should therefore be an aim of polis institutions.¹⁸

Education was probably a prominent topic in later Hellenistic philosophy. Later Hellenistic Epicureans advocated new, self-consciously personal and apolitical educational techniques, including, for example, daily confession by pupils and teachers.¹⁹ Unsurprisingly, Epicurean approaches find very little parallel in the polis-oriented educational rhetoric of decrees. As for the Stoa, education appears to have gained an increasingly important role in Stoic thought in the course of the Hellenistic period: in the third century, Chrysippus argued that the virtuous man should educate others;²⁰ and there was probably a second-century move within the Stoa towards a greater interest in the moral development of ordinary mortals (as opposed to perfect sages).²¹ Moreover, the philosophical activity of second- and first-century Peripatetics may have been much more vibrant, and enjoyed a much greater public profile, than traditionally thought.²² Given the centrality of education to Aristotelian ethical and political thought, Peripatetics of this period probably helped to encourage philosophical interest in the topic.

¹⁷ I. Hadot (1969) 106-7; Long and Sedley (1987) vol. I, 374.

¹⁸ Arist. *EN* 1103b3-6.

¹⁹ See Konstan, Clay, Glad, Thom and Ware (1998).

²⁰ D.L. 7.121.

²¹ Long and Sedley (1987) vol. I, 427.

²² Hahn (2007).

Aristotle's own arguments and ideas concerning education were probably themselves accessible in some form. Despite Strabo's claim that the works of Aristotle were rediscovered only in the first century BC,²³ it is probable that, as Moraux argued, Aristotle's works had remained available in the interim: the exoteric works quite widely, and the esoteric works at least in philosophical centres.²⁴ Indeed, Strabo's story may relate only to Aristotle's own copies of his own works: other copies may have been plentiful.²⁵ In addition, Peripatetics had continued to promote Aristotelian ideas throughout the Hellenistic period, and at least some of them probably used arguments and language directly derived from, and closely reminiscent of, Aristotle's own. Critolaus, for one, was a promoter of Aristotelian ideas,²⁶ whether or not he had direct access to them. For all of these reasons, it is reasonable to suppose that there was a strong Aristotelian presence in philosophy and public intellectual debate about education in the period under consideration in this chapter (in the second century as well as the first), quite possibly nourished by Aristotle's own texts or, at least, by close derivatives of them.

All philosophical approaches to education current in the later Hellenistic period, including both Classical ideas and recent variations on them, were probably fairly easily accessible to elite decree-drafters. There were a number of ways in which polis citizens could be exposed to philosophical ideas: by studying in a philosophical centre (such as Athens or Rhodes),²⁷ by listening to the lectures of

²³ Str. 13.1.54.

²⁴ Moraux (1973-2001) Bd. 1, 10-11.

²⁵ Barnes (1997) esp. 13-14, 65-6.

²⁶ Critolaus frs. 10, 16 Wehrli.

²⁷ *SEG* 39.1243, col. I, ll. 22-4.

travelling intellectuals,²⁸ by engaging in philosophical study and debate, within the polis gymnasium²⁹ or in the course of ephebic training,³⁰ or by reading philosophical works available in gymnasium libraries.³¹

The argument of this chapter is that those later Hellenistic decree-drafters who expressed abstract ideas about education consciously or unconsciously supported the Aristotelian approach to ethical education, sometimes in conscious or unconscious opposition to more Stoic approaches. This mirrors the Aristotelian and anti-Stoic tendencies which can be identified in the abstract ideas expressed in some decrees of this period on the subjects of virtue, the good life and citizenship. Aristotelian tendencies in some decree-drafters' thinking about education are not to be found in references to the content of the curriculum, although there was probably a shift to a more wide-ranging intellectual curriculum in many poleis after *c.* 200 BC.³² Rather, an Aristotelian approach is evident in some decrees' analyses of the psychological processes involved in ethical education and the contribution of the polis to those processes.

4. Decrees' Engagement with Philosophical Debates about Education

a) Habituation through Repeated Action

Some later Hellenistic decree-drafters were influenced by the argument that, in order to become virtuous, it is necessary to perform virtuous actions repeatedly, so that the soul is habituated into a state of virtue. This argument was fundamental to

²⁸ *I. Sestos* 1, ll. 74-6. Cf. Scholz (2004) 119; Ameling (2004) 155-6; Schuler (2004) 186.

²⁹ *I. Iasos* 98, ll. 15-16.

³⁰ A general philosophical education, including exposure to the teachings of different philosophical schools, is attested as part of the Athenian ephebic curriculum from 122/1 to 38/7 BC: Burckhardt (2004) 203-4; Haake (2007) 44-55.

³¹ Maiuri, *Nuova Silloge*, no. 11.

³² Scholz (2004) 110-111. Contrast I. Hadot (2005) 18-25.

Aristotle's ethical thought: according to him, although many people 'take refuge in arguments' in their attempts to become virtuous,³³ the only true way to achieve the stable disposition which is a prerequisite of virtuous action is to repeatedly perform the actions which a virtuous person would perform.³⁴ It probably remained a distinctively Aristotelian doctrine: the 'training' (ἄσκησις) advocated by other philosophical schools consisted principally in learning and meditating on doctrines and rational arguments.³⁵ As I. Hadot points out, it would have been inconsistent with Stoic doctrines about emotions and about the soul for Stoics to give a place in ethical education to the positive habituation of non-rational faculties, designed to make them supportive of virtue.³⁶ The closest non-Aristotelian parallel for the Aristotelian approach is Musonius Rufus' claim that a process of ἄσκησις of the body (as well as of the soul) is necessary for virtue.³⁷ However, Rufus advocates only a negative programme of bodily habituation, involving endurance of hot, cold, thirst and other testing conditions, not a positive programme involving strenuous imitation of virtuous activity. Indeed, Rufus' approach is consistent with the general character of most programmes proposed by post-Classical philosophers as means of regulating emotion: the emphasis was on the control or even eradication of emotion, not on the cultivation of positive emotions, conducive to, or constitutive of, virtue.³⁸

An epigraphic application of the argument associated with Aristotle occurs in the Sestian decree for the leading citizen Menas (120s BC). During his second

³³ Arist. *EN* 1105b12-13.

³⁴ Arist. *EN* 1105a17-1105b18.

³⁵ P. Hadot (1995) 108-10, 191, 214-15.

³⁶ I. Hadot (2005) 106.

³⁷ Muson. *Diss.* 6, ll. 28-44.

³⁸ See Sorabji (2002) chs. 13-16, esp. 213-25.

gymnasiarchy, Menas arranged sacrifices and contests in the gymnasium, ‘urging the young citizens (νέοι) towards practice and love of exertion, as a result of which the souls of the younger people, competing in [or straining towards] courage, were excellently directed in their characters towards virtue’:

προτρεπόμενος δὲ διὰ τῆς τοιαύτης φιλοδοξία[ς] πρὸς
ἄσκησιν καὶ φιλοπονίαν τοὺς νέους, ἐξ ὧν αἱ τῶν νεωτέρων
ψυχαὶ πρὸς ἀνδρείαν ἀμιλλώμεναι καλῶς ἄγονται τοῖς
ἠθεσιν πρὸς ἀρετήν.³⁹

In these lines, the decree-drafter claims that virtue became instilled in the characters of the Sestian νέοι because they repeatedly performed actions intended to emulate courageous actions.⁴⁰

This application of the principle that virtue is acquired through a certain type of ἄσκησις recalls a specific section of Aristotle’s work: Aristotle himself comments, in the context of his discussion of friendship, that, when all men compete (or strive) to perform fine deeds (πάντων δὲ ἀμιλλωμένων πρὸς τὸ καλὸν), the community flourishes and individuals achieve virtue, ‘the greatest good’.⁴¹ It is significant that the participle ἀμιλλώμενοι occurs in both the Aristotelian passage and the decree from Sestos, and that both present ἀρετή as the result of the process for individuals: both texts express in similar language the theory that virtuous dispositions can be instilled in the souls of individuals

³⁹ *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 70-72. Cf. Gauthier (1982) 227, n. 52.

⁴⁰ Compare the references to ‘competing (or striving) towards virtue’ (ἀμιλλᾶσθαι πρὸς ἀρετήν) in a near contemporary decree for Apollonios of Metropolis: *I.Metropolis* 1, face B, ll. 6, 33.

⁴¹ Arist. *EN* 1169a8-11.

through sustained competition to perform, or collective striving after, excellent activity. The drafter of the Sestian decree may well thus have been inspired by Aristotle's text or by a similar text in the more recent Aristotelian tradition. The reference to ψυχὰι, rare for an honorary decree, counts in favour of philosophical inspiration.

Related ideas underlie parts of the first-century BC Iasian decree for the ephēbarch Melanion:

- 1 ἐπειδὴ Μελανίων Θεοδώρου προ-
γόνων ὑπάρχων εὐεργετῶν τῆς πόλεως,
ἄξια πράσων τῆς ἐκείνων ἀρετῆς ἐμ πᾶσιν
καλοκἀγαθικῶς ἀναστρεφόμενος ἀνὴρ κα-
5 λὸς κἀγαθὸς ἐστὶν καὶ εὐσεβῶς μὲμ πρὸς τὸ
θεῖον διάκειται, φιλοστόργως δὲ καὶ ὡς πρέ-
πον ἐστὶν ἀνδρὶ σῶφρονι καὶ πεπαιδευμένῳ
προσφέρεται τοῖς γονεῦσι καὶ τοῖς λοιποῖς
συγγενέσιν, εὐνοικῶς δὲ καὶ φιλοδόξως καὶ πρὸς
10 πάντας τοὺς πολίτας ὑπεξάγει, ἀπὸ τε τῆς
πρώτης ἡλικίας ζηλωτῆς τῶν καλλίστων γινό-
μενος ἀνέστραπται ἐν τῷ γυμνασίῳ φιλοπονῶν
καὶ φιλομαθῶν καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ κάλλιστα ἐπιδιδούς
ἑαυτόν, ἐν τε τοῖς οἰκείοις τῆς ἡλικίας παιδεύμα-
15 σι καταγινόμενος καὶ ἐν τοῖς κατὰ φιλοσοφίαν
λόγοις ἰκανὴν ἔξιγ καὶ προκοπὴν ἐσχηκῶς ἀνα-
στρέφεται σωφρόνως καὶ ἀξιοζηλώτως καλὸν
ὑπόδειγμα τῆς ἰδίας προαιρέσεως καταβαλλό-
μενος, καθόλου τε καὶ λέγων καὶ πράσων τὰ
20 κάλλιστα καὶ ἐνδοξότατα διατελεῖ ἐμ πᾶσιν
στοιχῶν τῇ τε ἰδίᾳ ἀρετῇ καὶ δόξῃ καὶ τῇ διὰ προ-
γόνων ὑπαρχούσῃ αὐτῷ καλοκἀγαθίᾳ⁴²

Since Melanion son of Theodorus, whose ancestors were benefactors of the city, doing things worthy of their virtue, and in all cases behaving in a fine and good way, is a fine and good man; and is piously disposed to the divine; and behaves in a loving way and as

⁴² *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 1-22. Cf. Scholz (2004) 113-14; Haake (2007) 231-4.

befits a temperate and educated man towards his parents and his other relatives; and is disposed with good will and love of glory towards all the other citizens; and, having been from his earliest youth a striver after the finest things, conducted himself in the gymnasium as a lover of effort and a lover of learning and dedicated himself to the finest pursuits; and having busied himself in the appropriate educational activities of his youth, and having had, in his rational education in philosophy, a suitable disposition and made suitable progress, conducts himself temperately and as a striver after appropriate things, giving a fine example of his own moral purpose; and in general continues to do and say the finest and most honourable things, conforming with his own virtue and reputation and with the nobility belonging to him from his ancestors....

The section concerning Melanion's own early education emphasises the development of his character through repeated physical and mental activity in emulation of fine models.⁴³ It is significant that no adverbs are used in the lines relating to his early training,⁴⁴ which is consistent with the Aristotelian principle that adverbs should be used only in relation to the activities of those who have already acquired the associated states of character.⁴⁵ Discounting the generic introductory lines, it is only at the end of the description of his youthful training that adverbs are used: it is commented that 'he conducts himself temperately and as a striver after appropriate things (ἀξιοζῆλῶτως)'. The implication is that the earlier process of imitation and habituation had led Melanion towards a state of virtue which justified the use of adverbs to describe his activities.⁴⁶

The author of this decree also took an interest in the relationship between virtuous activity and virtuous dispositions in adulthood. In the opening lines of the decree, it is claimed that, 'doing things worthy of (his ancestors') virtue, in all cases behaving in a fine and good way, he is a fine and good man' (ἀξια πράσων

⁴³ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 11-13. Cf. Kleijwegt (1991) 242.

⁴⁴ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 10-16.

⁴⁵ Arist. *EN* 1105a26-33.

⁴⁶ Prof. T. Irwin suggested this argument to me.

τῆς ἐκείνων ἀρετῆς ἐμ̄ πᾱσιν καλοκάγαθικῶς ἀναστρεφόμενος ἀνὴρ
καλὸς κάγαθός ἐστιν).⁴⁷ Wörle dismisses this passage as a characteristic
example of circular logic allegedly common in later Hellenistic decrees, ‘narrow
and unconsidered’, according to which Melanion could be called a virtuous man
on account of his virtuous behaviour, and his actions virtuous on account of his
status as a virtuous man.⁴⁸

However, Wörle’s interpretation underestimates the possible sophistication of
this part of the decree. A first possible non-trivial interpretation is that the drafter
was claiming that it is virtuous action, not an innate or acquired disposition, which
constitutes virtuous character. However, it is unlikely that the author of this decree
took such a reductionist view of good character: in the other parts of the decree,
the drafter showed an explicit interest in *states* of character (ἐξίς, ἀρετή), distinct
from mere continuous behaviour. A second possible interpretation is that the
drafter was claiming that Melanion’s consistent excellent behaviour provided
evidence for his excellent character. A third possibility is that these lines reflect
the drafter’s commitment to the Aristotelian position that the end of the political
life is not merely a state of virtue, but a state of virtue accompanied by activity in
accordance with it:⁴⁹ the drafter may have wished to make clear that Melanion
fulfilled both requirements.

However, a fourth possibility is the most interesting one: these lines may reflect a
conscious adoption by the author of the decree of an Aristotelian approach to the

⁴⁷ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 3-5.

⁴⁸ Wörle (1995) 247.

⁴⁹ Arist. *EN* 1095b29-1096a2.

maintenance of virtue. This possibility relies on a causal interpretation of these lines: Melanion maintains and reinforces his character as a ‘fine and good man’ (ἀνὴρ καλὸς καὶ ἀγαθός) by continuously⁵⁰ behaving ‘in a fine and good way’ (καλοκαγαθικῶς ἀναστρεφόμενος). Such a doctrine of habituation could have been a product of independent thought. However, the later reference to Melanion’s philosophical studies and use of the epigraphically very rare word ἕξις⁵¹ count in favour of philosophical influence. Moreover, the claim that Melanion maintains his ‘fine and good’ character by performing ‘fine and good actions’ would have been an application of a version of Aristotle’s argument at *Nicomachean Ethics* 1103b17-22, where he also uses the verb ἀναστρέφεσθαι:

ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς ἐπιθυμίας ἔχει καὶ τὰ περὶ τὰς ὀργάς· οἱ μὲν γὰρ σώφρονες καὶ πραῖοι γίνονται, οἱ δ’ ἀκόλαστοι καὶ ὀργίλοι, οἱ μὲν ἐκ τοῦ οὕτως ἐν αὐτοῖς ἀναστρέφεσθαι, οἱ δὲ ἐκ τοῦ οὕτως. καὶ ἐνὶ δὴ λόγῳ ἐκ τῶν ὁμοίων ἐνεργειῶν αἱ ἕξεις γίνονται.

The situation is also similar in cases involving desire and anger. Some become temperate and gentle, some vicious and arrogant, because the former behave in one way and the latter in another way in these cases. So, in one argument: from the same activities come the corresponding states.

This passage of Aristotle applies partly to the habituation of the young, who have not yet acquired virtuous states, but it probably also applies to adults, who must continue to cultivate and reinforce their moral dispositions: Aristotle says that it is necessary to undergo habituation ‘from youth’, not merely ‘in youth’.⁵²

Admittedly, Aristotle says only that states come into being (γίνονται) through

⁵⁰ The use of ἐμ παῖσιν evokes repeated virtuous action, while the verb ἀναστρέφομαι implies consistent behaviour.

⁵¹ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 15-17.

⁵² Arist. *EN* 1103b24.

repeated actions, not that they are maintained by repeated actions. Nevertheless, the process of ‘becoming’ presumably continues until a state of ‘full virtue’ has been achieved; it continues even when basic virtuous dispositions have been acquired. It would have been a predictable development for Hellenistic Aristotelians to make more explicit the role of repeated action in maintaining as well as creating states of character.

The drafter of the decree for Melanion could well thus have been directly inspired by Aristotle’s text or by a derivative work offering a similar argument in similar words. He could well have consciously echoed ἀναστρέφεσθαι. Moreover, he could well have directly applied the Aristotelian principle by using an adverb, to describe Melanion’s repeated actions, and then the corresponding adjective, to refer to the disposition reinforced by them. The use of the adverb καλοκἀγαθικῶς would have been justified in Aristotelian terms, because Melanion had by this point obtained a basic virtuous disposition. However, his virtuous disposition still needed to be reinforced through repeated virtuous action. The close similarity with the Aristotelian passage significantly adds to the plausibility of the interpretation that these lines refer to habituation. The existence of an allusion to the Aristotelian passage (or a derivative of it) would also explain the apparent oddity of the language, recognised by Wörrle.

If ideas about habituation did underlie claims in the decree in the ways suggested here, part of the implication was that the virtue ‘belonging’ (ὑπάρχουσα) to

Melanion from his ancestors⁵³ was not in itself a sufficient qualification for civic leadership, analogous to the inherited virtue of Hellenistic kings.⁵⁴ Rather, it needed to be supplemented by the virtue achieved and maintained through repeated virtuous action, or itself cultivated through such action.

b) Reason and Emotion in Literary and Philosophical Education

Another method of moulding the soul emphasised in some later Hellenistic decrees was literary and philosophical education. A striking tendency was to favour an Aristotelian approach over a Stoic approach: habituation of the pupil's desires, feelings of pleasure and pain and emotions must accompany perfection of his reason. An interesting example occurs in the first Prienian decree for Zosimos (c. 84 BC), in the reference to Zosimos' provisions for the education of Prienian ephebes:

ἔτι δὲ σφαίρας καὶ ὄπλα καὶ τὸν ἐπιστά[την τὸ]ν τῶν ἐφήβων.
τοῖς ἐκ φιλολογίας γραμματικόν, δι' [ᾧ]ν μὲν τὸ σῶμα
βουλόμενος ἄοκνο[ν] τυγχάνειν, δι' ᾧν δὲ τ[ὰ]ς ψυχ[ὰ]ς πρὸς
ἀρετὴν καὶ πάθος ἀνθρώπινον προάγεσθαι.⁵⁵
... still [he provided] balls and weapons and a grammatical tutor of the
ephebes for the philological branch, through which he wished on the one
hand to make their bodies unhesitating and on the other to lead their souls
towards virtue and a human condition [or 'human' or 'humane' emotional
disposition].

It is difficult to be certain about the translation of *πάθος ἀνθρώπινον*. As indicated in the translation above, it presumably means 'human condition' or 'human' or 'humane' 'emotion' or 'emotional disposition'. The type of 'human

⁵³ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 21-22.

⁵⁴ Gauthier (1985) 56-7.

⁵⁵ *I.Priene* 112, ll. 74-76. Cf. Scholz (2004) 113, 124.

condition’ described in this way in other inscriptions is ‘death’.⁵⁶ In this case, by contrast, if ‘human condition’ is the best translation, the reference must be to the characteristic condition of living humans. Even with this meaning, the phrase would probably refer indirectly to the emotional sensibilities of the young citizens: when used to refer to ‘the human condition’, the phrase *πάθος ἀνθρώπινον* can describe the propensity of humans to experience certain emotions in particular circumstances.⁵⁷ Although the decree-drafter may have had this notion of a ‘human condition’ in mind, the phrase was probably in this case a more direct reference to the emotions or emotional tendencies of the young citizens: *πάθος ἀνθρώπινον* is presented as something towards which *the souls* of the young were led, and a ‘πάθος of the soul’ is an emotion.⁵⁸

One possible indication of the meaning of ‘human’ emotional tendencies is the quasi-Stoic epigraphic formula praising individuals for ‘bearing misfortune in a human way (*φέρειν ἀνθρώπινως*)’,⁵⁹ which presumably implies that they bore it in a decent, restrained way. Along these lines, the reference to a *πάθος ἀνθρώπινον* could imply that the young Prienians were equipped with a disposition to respond to misfortune in an appropriate ‘human’ way. However, the

⁵⁶ E.g. *IG V 2 266* (Mantineia 46-43 BC), l. 20; *FD III 1.303* (Delphi, late first century BC or early first century AD), ll. 8-9; *IG II² 1365* (Athens, first century AD), l. 27.

⁵⁷ Plu. *Cor.* 31.1.

⁵⁸ Them. *in de An.*, p. 107, ll. 7-8, 17-21 (Heinze); *LSJ* s.v. *πάθος* (II). Another inscription in which *πάθος* is probably used with this meaning, also in connection with education in the gymnasium, is a graffito from the gymnasium of Pergamum: ‘those from the comrades of Artemidoros in sensibility’ (*οἱ ἐκ τῶν Ἀρτεμιδώρου κατὰ πάθος συνήθων*) (Hepding (1907) 373, no. 135).

⁵⁹ *IG IV² 1 86* (Epidaurus, first century BC- first century AD), l. 25; *I.Knidios I 72* (decree, probably of Aphrodisias, Nysa or another Carian city, for a Knidian woman, first-second century AD), ll. 13-14; *IG XII 7 393A* (Aegiale, Amorgos, first-second century AD), ll. 1-2; *IG XII 7 394* (Aegiale, Amorgos), ll. 22-3; *IG XII 7 405* (Aegiale, Amorgos), ll. 30-31; *MAMA 8 412a* (Aphrodisias), ll. 2-3; *MAMA 8 412b* (Aphrodisias), ll. 20-1; *MAMA 8 412c* (Aphrodisias), ll. 19-20.

fact that a *πάθος ἀνθρώπινον* is juxtaposed with virtue as the aim of education in philology, in an idealistic description of education in the gymnasium, makes it likely that the intended notion of ‘human’ emotional tendencies was broader and more positive: it probably encompassed the full range of emotional tendencies considered to be appropriate for humans, and capable of stimulating or aiding virtuous civic action. These were probably thought to include humane tendencies.

The moral status of the emotions (*πάθη*) was a traditional area of philosophical controversy. In Aristotelian philosophy, *πάθος* is not regarded as intrinsically counter-rational: it simply originates in the non-rational part of the soul.⁶⁰ A virtuous agent does not suppress all emotion: rather, a virtuous agent necessarily has moderate emotions (emotions in a mean between two extreme emotions).⁶¹ The tendency to experience these moderate emotions constitutes part of the virtue of character which helps virtuous agents to make good ethical judgements and motivates them to act in accordance with them.⁶²

By contrast, the Stoics were notoriously hostile to the *πάθη*.⁶³ In mainstream Stoic thought, the *πάθη* are inappropriate impulses resulting from assent to false value judgements.⁶⁴ An important doctrine in Stoic educational theory was that habituation should subdue the passions to good impulses (i.e. impulses deriving from reason). At approximately the same time as the Zosimos decrees from

⁶⁰ Asp. in *EN*, p. 44, ll. 21-4 (Heylbut).

⁶¹ Arist. *EN* 1106b16-23.

⁶² Arist. *EN* 1144b30-1145a6.

⁶³ E.g. Long and Sedley (1987) text 65A = Stob. vol. II, p. 88, l. 8 – p. 90, l. 6 (Wachsmuth). In general, see Sorabji (2002), esp. chs. 13-14.

⁶⁴ Long and Sedley (1987) vol. I, 419-23; Irwin (2007) 297-300.

Priene, Posidonius argued that habituation and time could have a substantial effect in configuring the *πάθη* not to oppose rational motivations.⁶⁵ It is true that Chrysippus had argued that even the perfect sage possesses ‘good feelings’ (varieties of *εὐπάθεια*).⁶⁶ However, he and other Stoics would have severely diminished the distinctiveness of Stoic ethics if they had attributed any substantial role to these ‘good feelings’ in the virtuous man’s ethical evaluation or motivation. It is more likely that Chrysippus and other Stoics claimed that states of *εὐπάθεια* are good principally because they do not oppose rational judgement and motivation.⁶⁷

The reference in the first Zosimos decree to the instilling of a *πάθος* ἀνθρώπινον in the ephebes of Priene therefore indicates support for a theory of education strongly consistent with Aristotelian thought: the *πάθη*, properly habituated, can be an aid to virtuous activity.⁶⁸ It may even represent a piece of conscious anti-Stoic polemic.

In connection with the relative importance in education of reason, on the one hand, and habits, desires and emotions, on the other, the drafter of the Iasian decree for Melanion took the view that the two should work in concert. In connection with Melanion’s own upbringing, first discussed above, the decree

⁶⁵ Long and Sedley (1987) text 65P = Galen *Plac.* 4.7.39-41; Posidonius fr. 165. Posidonius subscribed to a view about the nature of the emotions divergent from the Stoic mainstream: he held that emotions are not always false judgements. However, as the passage quoted shows, he did think that the emotions should be subjugated to reason. See Sorabji (2002), chs. 4 and 6.

⁶⁶ D.L. 7.115-16; Long and Sedley (1987) vol. I, 420.

⁶⁷ Graver (2007), esp. chs. 2-3, has, however, recently argued that *εὐπάθεια* plays a more active role than generally acknowledged in the life of the Stoic sage.

⁶⁸ As in the Sestian case, the reference to *ψυχὰς*, rare for an honorary decree, supports the hypothesis of philosophical engagement.

relates that he has been an imitator of fine models ‘since his earliest youth’, shown a love of effort and learning in the gymnasium, and worked hard in his educational activities.⁶⁹ Finally, there is a comment on his philosophical education: he had ‘a suitable disposition (ἰκανή ἔξις) and made suitable progress (προκοπή)’ in his philosophical studies.⁷⁰ The fact that this item is placed last suggests that it was chronologically the last part of his upbringing. If so, the ‘suitable state’ mentioned is probably the state of character which Melanion had developed through the intensive ethical habituation emphasised in relation to the earlier parts of his upbringing. The implication of the juxtaposition of ἰκανή ἔξις and προκοπή would then be that ethical habituation is required in order to imbue the soul with a disposition receptive to philosophical arguments: Melanion was able to make progress in philosophical study (of ethics and other fields) because he already possessed appropriate habits and dispositions (an ἰκανή ἔξις of his own soul), which probably incorporated emotional elements. His rational philosophical studies then completed the development of his character, adding the intellectual dimension required for him to be truly self-controlled (σώφρων).

This association of ideas recalls an argument of Aristotle. According to Aristotle, pleasure and pain can destroy an agent’s ability to perceive the ‘first principles’ of practical reasoning: principles concerning the general goal of action.⁷¹ An agent’s dispositions with regard to pleasure and pain must, therefore, be habituated appropriately, so that he is able to grasp those first principles. As Aristotle

⁶⁹ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 10-15.

⁷⁰ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 15-17.

⁷¹ Arist. *EN* 1140b16-18.

comments, verbal arguments for virtuous activity are inadequate for this purpose, since they are effective in persuading only those who are already virtuous.⁷² Other means are required to instil virtue of character, a type of state (ἔξις)⁷³ which enables individuals to experience pleasure and pain in the correct circumstances⁷⁴ and to make correct ethical evaluations and appreciate ethical arguments.⁷⁵ The drafter of the decree for Melanion could simply have coincided in his views with Aristotelians, but it is probable that he was aware of Aristotelian advocacy of these ideas. The likelihood that there is an echo of Aristotelian or Peripatetic philosophy in these lines is increased by the fact that ἔξις is, as mentioned above, a very rare word in inscriptions: its unusual use here might well be due to a philosophical allusion.

The use of the word προκοπή to describe educational progress, also attested in a few other inscriptions of the Hellenistic and early Imperial periods,⁷⁶ also associates these lines with philosophical debates about education. Προκοπή was used by Stoics to refer to the moral development of imperfect men.⁷⁷ In the later Hellenistic period, possibly in connection with their increased interest in practical ethics, some Middle Stoic theorists appear to have regarded προκοπή, and how it could be achieved, as an important topic of philosophical discussion.⁷⁸ The Rhodian connections of this development in Stoicism (through Panaetius and

⁷² Arist. *EN* 1179b4-10.

⁷³ Arist. *EN* 1105b19-1106a13.

⁷⁴ Arist. *EN* 1104b3-1105a16.

⁷⁵ Cf. Burnyeat (1980); Sorabji (1980); Charles (1984) 180, 182.

⁷⁶ See *FD* III 4.59, l. 8; *IG* IX 2 639, l. 4; *SEG* 33.671, l. 12; *IMylasa* 909, ll. 8, 33; Merkelbach and Sahin (1988) 104, no. 5, l. 34.

⁷⁷ E.g. Long and Sedley (1987) text 59I = Stob. vol. V., p. 906, l. 18 – p. 907, l. 5 (Wachsmuth); Long and Sedley (1987) text 61T = Plu. *Comm. Not.* 1063ab.

⁷⁸ E.g. Long and Sedley (1987) vol. I, 427.

Posidonius) make it reasonable to suppose that it influenced the way Melanion's personal development was presented at Iasos.

However, even if the drafter of this decree made a conciliatory gesture towards contemporary Stoicism, his position was fundamentally Aristotelian and anti-Stoic. Arius Didymus summarises the leading Stoic Chrysippus' list of 'preferred indifferents' relating to the soul: things which are desirable for a man's soul but do not contribute to his happiness in the strict Stoic sense. He mentions a good natural state (εὐφροσύνη), progress, intellectual qualities, a moral state (ἔξις) and appropriate technical skills.⁷⁹ The order in which the items are listed gives the impression that the first two items (a good natural state and good rational and educational progress) are more fundamental than, or even give rise to, the other items in the list, including a moral disposition. The drafter of the Melanion decree referred to ἔξις and προκοπή in the opposite order, in order to make a more Aristotelian point: rational philosophical arguments for being virtuous can only be appreciated if the student has an appropriate moral disposition. Admittedly, the drafter may have been using ἔξις to mean something similar to the 'good natural state' (εὐφροσύνη) in Chrysippus' list. However, the emphasis on habituation, imitation and striving in the rest of the decree, especially the description of Melanion's pre-philosophical education in the immediately preceding lines,⁸⁰ suggests that an acquired, not an inherited, moral ἔξις is meant. It is not appropriate to 'take refuge in arguments' until the soul has been properly habituated.

⁷⁹ Arius Didymus *apud* Stob. vol. II, p. 80, l. 23 – p. 81, l. 4 (Wachsmuth).

⁸⁰ *I.Iasos* 98, ll. 10-15.

There are, therefore, indications in some later Hellenistic decrees of support for the doctrine that the habituation of faculties of the soul other than reason is a fundamental aspect of education, a necessary condition for the formation of virtuous character.⁸¹ Moreover, these decrees suggest that these other faculties have a positive role in leading the soul towards virtuous action: they serve to motivate the citizen to perform virtuous actions; and they may even be what makes it possible for him to develop his reason and philosophical understanding, so that he can perceive what is the virtuous action in given circumstances.

c) The Educational Role of the Polis

In many later Hellenistic decrees, polis institutions were presented as central to παιδεία. Elite drafters of decrees were partly motivated to stress this aspect by the prudential consideration that a considerable proportion of their benefactions were dedicated to the gymnasium, especially as a result of the disappearance of (already infrequent) royal benefactions to polis gymnasia after c. 150 and the lack of interest of Roman benefactors in polis gymnasia.⁸² Philosophical arguments allowed them to present these contributions not as self-indulgent participation in activities of interest only to a cultural elite, but as a philosophically justified element in the activities of the virtuous man and good citizen.

⁸¹ Cf. Kleijwegt (1991), 84. Compare the reference in the decree in his honour to Polemaios of Colophon ‘nourishing his soul with learning’ (συντρέφων μαθήμασιν) (*SEG* 39.1243, col. I, ll. 3-4): the metaphor of ‘nourishing the soul’ suggests something other than the mere assimilation of facts and arguments.

If the Artemidoros concerned was a teacher or gymnasiarch, the graffito from Pergamum written by οἱ ἐκ τῶν Ἀρτεμιδώρου κατὰ πάθος συνήθων (Hepding (1907) 373, no. 135) could also reflect the attitude that education involves the cultivation of a certain emotional disposition.

⁸² Ameling (2004) 134, 137, 160-1.

Nevertheless, drafters' interest in παιδεία probably also reflected a commitment to the particular social and political ideal that the polis should be 'made one through παιδεία'.⁸³ By presenting the polis as the indispensable context for imbuing citizens with the dispositions and knowledge necessary for virtue, elite drafters of decrees could both glorify their πάτρις⁸⁴ and present a concrete mechanism by which social cohesion and communal success could be perpetuated.

Stress on the educational role of the polis is reflected in praise for honorands' protreptic role *qua* citizens: their role as citizens in urging and inspiring the young towards virtue. For example, Menas of Sestos is praised for urging (προτρύπομενος) the city's νέοι towards virtue in the gymnasium.⁸⁵ The verb προτρύπεσθαι is also used in several other decrees in descriptions of citizen honorands' educational activities, principally in schools and gymnasia.⁸⁶

The use of the verb προτρύπεσθαι in such clauses recalls the interest of fourth-century literary and philosophical authors in the protreptic role of the virtuous man and citizen.⁸⁷ Xenophon claims that Socrates did not corrupt the young, but rather urged (προτρύπεσθαι) the young towards virtue.⁸⁸ Isocrates makes

⁸³ Arist. *Pol.* 1263b36-7.

⁸⁴ Cf. Dreyer (2004) 227.

⁸⁵ *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 38-9, 70-1.

⁸⁶ *I.Ephesos* 6 (Ephesos, second century BC), ll. 16-18, 27-8; *SEG* 22.110 (Athens, 79/8 BC), ll. 16-17; *IG* II² 1042 (Athens, 41/0 BC), ll. 18-19; *IG* II² 1043 (Athens, 38/7 BC), l. 19; *I.Mylasa* 909 (Hydai), l. 54.

⁸⁷ On uses of προτρύπεσθαι in honorary decrees recalling fourth-century ethical literature, cf. Robert (1960b) 213; (1967) 12, n. 1.

⁸⁸ Xen. *Mem.* 1.2.64.

Nikokles advise his subjects to προτρέπεσθαι the young towards virtue.⁸⁹ This interest in the protreptic role of virtuous men and citizens endured in Hellenistic philosophy. Stoics held that the wise man should participate in politics and urge (παρορμᾶν) others towards virtue.⁹⁰ The second-century Peripatetic Critolaus apparently made the educational role of the virtuous man explicitly political: he claimed that the political role of the good man is not to be involved in founding cities, but to educate the young to obey the laws.⁹¹ The authors of decrees which referred to the protreptic role of honorands thus at least shared important concerns with, and may have been directly inspired by, literary and philosophical authors.

References to the educational contributions of individual benefactors related overwhelmingly to their involvement in the education of ephebes and νέοι, groups made up of the male children of wealthier citizen families. However, the drafters of honorary decrees also showed a concern with the political and ethical education, by less formal means, of the wider citizen body, something essential in the absence of subsidised universal education for citizens.⁹² A prominent reflection of this was drafters' interest in the educational purpose of honorary decrees themselves, often expressed in hortatory clauses. Some hortatory clauses present honours simply as an incentive for others to contribute to the city,⁹³ but others reveal a more philosophical approach to the educational function of the

⁸⁹ Isoc. 3.57.

⁹⁰ D.L. 7.121. Chrysippus put this into practice, writing a protreptic work advocating the life of virtue as the only fulfilled (εὐδαίμων) life: Plu. *Comm. Not.* 1060d7-10.

⁹¹ Critolaus fr. 35 Wehrli.

⁹² Kleijwegt (1991) 76-9; Scholz (2004) 107-8.

⁹³ E.g. *Iliasos* 98, ll. 26-31.

decrees of which they form part: they express a wish to προτρέπεσθαι⁹⁴ or (less commonly) παρορμᾶν⁹⁵ citizens, and sometimes also others, towards virtuous or public-spirited activity.

Hortatory clauses of this type are one of the main signs of decree-drafters' support for the view, fundamental to much fourth-century ethical literature, that it is a legitimate and, indeed, necessary function of polis institutions to imbue citizens with virtuous characters and aspirations. They show that decree-drafters did not endorse the view that the polis and its institutions should play only a restricted, purely regulatory role, guaranteeing the rule of law and resolving conflicts but not seeking to promote substantial ethical virtue, an approach probably common in strands of contemporary Stoic and Roman thought.⁹⁶ In most cases the sharing of an approach with fourth-century thinkers probably reflected shared culture rather than direct influence. However, in at least one case, it may well be possible to detect direct philosophical influence: the hortatory clause of the decree for Menas of Sestos may well have been inspired by the *Nicomachean Ethics* or by later works in the Aristotelian tradition.

⁹⁴ *I.Illion* 2 (decree of the festival confederation of Athene Ilias for a citizen of Abydos, last third of the third century BC), ll. 23-7; Migeotte, *Emprunt*, no. 102 (Halikarnassos, 275-250 BC), ll. 21-4; *IG XII 6* 1 146 (Samos, third century BC), ll. 18-21; *IG XII 7* 388 (Aegiale, Amorgos, 200-150 BC), ll. 15-19; *ID* 1502 (Delos, 148/7 or 147/6 BC), ll. 20-22; *I.Sestos* 1 (Sestos, later second century BC), ll. 86-92; *SEG* 39.1243 (Claros, later second century BC), col. V, ll. 18-25; *SEG* 28.952 (Kyzikos, second half of second century BC), ll. 3-5; *IG VII* 18 (Megara, late second or first century BC), ll. 25-6; *SEG* 48.1117 (Cos, first century BC), ll. 10-16; *IOSPE* I² 356 (Chersonesos, 27 BC-AD 14), ll. 6-7; *IG V 2* 515B (Lykosoura, after AD 14), ll. 32-3; Cousin and Diehl (1890), 97-9, no. 4 (Halikarnassos), ll. 8-10.

⁹⁵ *SEG* 39.606 (Morrylos, 185-180 BC), ll. 18-21; *SEG* 34.553 (Demetrias, c. 150 BC), ll. 7-9; *SEG* 23.447 (Magnesian κοινόν, 150-100 BC), ll. 11-17; *SEG* 12.306a (Demetrias, 117 BC), ll. 3-4; *I.Sestos* 1 (Sestos, later second century BC), ll. 86-92.

⁹⁶ Long (1995), (1997).

Towards the end of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle repeats his claim about the inadequacy of verbal arguments for virtue by themselves: verbal arguments are sufficient to ‘urge and inspire’ (προτρέψασθαι μὲν καὶ παρορμηῆσαι) towards virtue only those among the young who have a predisposition to it.⁹⁷ He then argues that good polis laws are necessary to equip all young citizens with virtuous habits.⁹⁸ He goes on to claim that the habituation instilled by these laws can make citizens responsive to ethical arguments when they reach adulthood: he states that one view (which he appears to endorse) is that lawgivers should ‘stimulate and urge’ (παρακαλεῖν and προτρέπεσθαι) towards virtue those citizens who have benefited from a good training of their habits, while retaining punishments for those whose habits remain unsatisfactory.⁹⁹

Aristotle thus uses two different pairs of words of exhortation in his discussion of the protreptic role of the polis: first, προτρέψασθαι and παρορμηῆσαι, and, second, παρακαλεῖν and προτρέπεσθαι. It may be significant that the first of these combinations of words of exhortation is used in the hortatory clause of the decree for Menas of Sestos: the decree is passed in order that others may be ‘urged’ (προτρέπωνται) towards virtue and ‘inspired’ (παρορμωμένων) towards love of glory:

ἵνα οὖν καὶ ὁ δῆμος φαίνεται τοὺς καλοὺς καὶ ἀγαθοὺς τῶν ἀνδρῶν τιμῶν καὶ τοὺς ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἡλικίας φιλοτίμους γινομένους περὶ τὰ κοινὰ καὶ φιλοδοξεῖν προαιρουμένους ἀποδεχόμενος καὶ ἐν χάριτος [ἀ]ποδόσει μὴ λείπηται,

⁹⁷ Arist. *EN* 1179b7-8

⁹⁸ Arist. *EN* 1179b11-1180a30.

⁹⁹ Arist. *EN* 1180a10-14.

θεωροῦντές τε καὶ οἱ λοιποὶ τὰς περιγινόμενας τιμὰς ἐκ τοῦ
δήμου τοῖς καλοῖς καὶ ἀγαθοῖς, ζηλωταὶ μὲν τῶν καλλίστων
γίνωνται, προτρέπωνται δὲ πρὸς ἀρετὴν. ἐπαύξηται δὲ τὰ
κοινὰ παρορμωμένων πάντων πρὸς τὸ φιλοδοξεῖν καὶ
περιποιούντων ἀεὶ τι τῇ πατρίδι τῶν καλῶν.¹⁰⁰

In order therefore that the people should appear to be honouring the good and fine men and welcoming those who have been lovers of honour since their earliest youth with respect to common affairs and who have made a moral choice to be lovers of glory, and that the people should not be deficient in giving thanks; and so that the rest, seeing the honours given by the people to the fine and good, may become strivers after the finest things and may be urged towards virtue, and common affairs may be improved as a result of all being inspired to love glory and always achieving something fine for their country....

Admittedly, there is no necessary verbal echo of the Aristotelian text or of a later text deriving from it: the combination of προτρέπω and παρορμάω is attested several times in literary passages referring to exhortation of various types, though not in any other inscription.¹⁰¹ However, the probability of an allusion to the Aristotelian text or to another text in the Aristotelian tradition is increased by the context. As suggested above, the drafter of the decree for Menas had earlier struck a possible Aristotelian chord with the claim that ‘competition in’, or ‘striving after’, courage habituated the characters of the souls of the young towards virtue.¹⁰² The same Aristotelian passage possibly alluded to there, or a later derivative of it, is also relevant to the hortatory clause: the hortatory clause contains the claim that ‘common affairs (τὰ κοινὰ) are improved’ when all are urged towards virtue, a sentiment very close to Aristotle’s claim that widespread

¹⁰⁰ *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 86-92.

¹⁰¹ Plu. *Cat. Min.* 54.7; Plu. *Aetia Romana et Graeca* 276a8-9; Gal. 5.53 (Kühn); [Dion. Hal.] *Rh.* 8.9; J. *AJ* 12.166; Areius Didymus *apud* Stob. vol. II, p. 55, l. 1, and p. 55, l. 2 (Wachsmuth); Artem. 3.37.

¹⁰² *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 70-72, and Arist. *EN* 1169a6-11.

striving after virtue secures both the common good and the good of individuals.¹⁰³

There are also references to τὰ κάλλιστα in both places.¹⁰⁴

Nevertheless, the strongest argument that there is a direct allusion to Aristotle or the Aristotelian tradition is that the whole construction of the decree can be interpreted as yielding an argument very similar to that offered by Aristotle at the end of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Menas had earlier supervised the education of the young of Sestos.¹⁰⁵ As argued above, Menas' educational provisions for the young were principally aimed at imbuing their souls with virtuous characters through prolonged habituation: Menas saw to the 'good order' (εὐταξία) of the ephebes and νέοι,¹⁰⁶ and offered them an example of 'training' (ἄσκησις) and 'love of exertion' (φιλοπονία).¹⁰⁷ This recalls Aristotle's argument at the end of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (summarised above) that polis laws and education should imbue the young with good characters by prescribing consistent virtuous activities for them. Against this background, the subsequent hortatory clause of the decree recalls the next step in Aristotle's argument: the decree's exhortation towards virtue was addressed to full-grown citizens, who would have benefited from the rigorous practical polis education discussed earlier in the decree. It was such citizens, successfully educated and habituated, who could, as in Aristotle's argument, respond to such verbal exhortation.

¹⁰³ Arist. *EN* 1169a8-11.

¹⁰⁴ *I.Sestos* 1, l. 90, and Arist. *EN* 1169a9.

¹⁰⁵ *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 30-35, 67-86.

¹⁰⁶ *I.Sestos* 1, l. 31. Compare Aristotle's presentation of the gymnasiarchy as one of the magistracies which exist to promote 'orderly behaviour' (εὐκοσμία) in aristocratic poleis (Arist. *Pol.* 1322b37-1323a3).

¹⁰⁷ *I.Sestos* 1, ll. 70-1.

Admittedly, the honours themselves can partly be seen as belonging to Aristotle's first, non-intellectual form of citizen education: the material rewards conferred, as opposed to the language and intellectual content of the honorary decree, were expected to incite citizens towards virtue. However, the language and intellectual content of the honorary decree were probably also regarded as contributing to the protreptic role of the 'honours': it would have been odd to use high-register words such as *προτρέπω* and *παρορμάω* to refer to the mere provision of incentives. This approach to the educational function of honours was made explicit in the near contemporary Colophonian honorary decree for Polemaios, which expresses the hope that the *βουλή* and *δῆμος* will be seen to be honouring good men, who have provided 'demonstrations of virtue' (*δείγματα τῆς ἀρετῆς*), and, through their example, to be 'urging' (*προτρέπομενοι*) individuals to perform good services.¹⁰⁸ In the Sestian case, therefore, the author probably intended to make a distinctively Aristotelian argument. The shared argument may have been a result of shared culture, but the combined verbal and contextual similarities make it likely that the drafter had an awareness of Aristotle's work or of the Aristotelian tradition.

In addition to emphasising the function of decrees' hortatory clauses as a specific public means of educating citizens, decree-drafters also took an interest in the more nebulous ways in which a polis and its culture influenced the characters of its citizens. For example, some decree-drafters claimed that their polis had a distinctive ethical culture which both influenced citizens and set a standard for them to strive towards. In the Colophonian decree for Polemaios, it is commented

¹⁰⁸ *SEG* 39.1243, col. V, ll. 18-25.

that Polemaios made himself ‘appropriate’ (οἰκῆον) to the ‘character’ (ἦθος) of the polis (τοῦ τῆς πόλεως ἦθους) in his good treatment of refugees who sought assistance in Colophon.¹⁰⁹ This notion of an ἦθος of the polis resembles, and may have been inspired by, the Aristotelian claim that each πολιτεία has a distinctive ἦθος.¹¹⁰ However, it could also have been a product of everyday language and thought, of the kind on which Aristotle himself had drawn in the fourth century. There is an epigraphic parallel in a private epitaph from Thessaly, which commemorates a man who intelligently cultivated education (παιδεία) and imbued in all the ‘common ἦθος of the polis of Larymna’.¹¹¹ This too could have had a philosophical inspiration, but it is more probable that it is a result of shared culture and possible diffusion of philosophical ideas.

5. Conclusion

Many drafters of later Hellenistic honorary decrees took a close interest in the connections between virtue, education and the polis. In some cases, drafters expressed sophisticated ideas about education strongly reminiscent of fourth-century ideas about education, especially Aristotle’s, using language strongly reminiscent of fourth-century works. This was probably sometimes due only to shared approaches to similar questions. However, it is likely that fourth-century ideas did influence civic language, both through long-term diffusion and because

¹⁰⁹ *SEG* 39.1243, col. III, ll. 36-7.

¹¹⁰ *Arist. Pol.* 1337a14-15; *Rh.* 1366a12.

¹¹¹ *JG IX* 1 235, ll. 2-4.

some drafters engaged directly with philosophical arguments. In any case, decree-drafters had little sympathy with the ideas favoured by traditional Stoics.

The evidence presented in this chapter leads to the paradoxical conclusion that the ‘Classical’ polis ideal received an unprecedented level of publicity and support in the later Hellenistic period, and principally in Asia Minor. It was in later Hellenistic Asia Minor that some politically-active citizens most eloquently used public political documents to present their poleis as centres of ethical education and cultural enlightenment.

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Epigraphic abbreviations used

IG
SEG
FD
MAMA
IOSPE
I.Ephesos
I.Iasos
I.Ilion
I.Knidos
I.Priene
I.Metropolis
I.Mylasa
I.Sestos
Nuova Silloge
Migeotte, Emprunt