

HETAIREIAI: “LE DEGRÉ ZÉRO” OF ASSOCIATIONS?

By Ilias N. Arnaoutoglou

Summary: Aim of this contribution is to evaluate the nature of Athenian *hetaireiai* of the classical era on the basis of the essential criteria of private associations in Greco-Roman antiquity. This investigation demonstrates that *hetaireiai* display only a handful of the seven criteria and therefore should be regarded and treated not as fully-blown associations but as groups with a low degree of corporateness.

Introduction¹

In 1892 Ioannes Pantazides (an otherwise little-known, German-educated, Greek classicist) was elected Chancellor of the University of Athens. He devoted his inaugural speech to political *hetaireiai* in ancient Athens, a rather dull and uncritical exposition of the evidence on *hetaireiai* to the end of the fifth century. For Pantazides, they were groupings around prominent figures quite widespread since every rich and powerful gentleman could allow or tolerate the formation of a group of friends. *Hetaireiai* promoted the self-interest of their members thus corrupting the polity and destroying social cohesion and solidarity. Pantazides adopted the anachronistic division into aristocratic and oligarchic *hetaireiai*, on the basis of the leanings and policies of their main figures. Nevertheless, this approach was deeply influenced by the political environment in which Pantazides was operating; since 1863 the kingdom of

- 1 I am deeply honoured by and grateful to the organizers of the meeting on Vincent Gabrielsen's *genethlios hemera* for their invitation. My first encounter with Vincent was in a taverna, on a chilly January afternoon in Athens just before the launching of his brainchild the Copenhagen Associations Project. Since then we kept regular contact, in Athens and in Copenhagen, and I have enormously profited from our occasional disagreements mainly on the extent one can qualify a group as an association. I have decided to keep the oral character of my presentation. All dates are BCE unless stated otherwise.

Greece, at that time a constitutional monarchy, was led by George I, the Danish-born prince Christian, son of Christian IX, king of Denmark. The political life of the kingdom was dominated at the time by two political factions *qua* parties known by the names of their leaders, Charilaos Trikoupis and Theodoros Diliyannis, *Trikoupikoi* and *Diliyannikoi* respectively.² It was, therefore, more than facile for Pantazides to project his contemporary experience of politics to classical Athens.

Pantazides was not a lonely voice; most of the relevant literature in the 19th and the first half of the 20th century convey the same impression. Even George Miller Calhoun in his 1913 exhaustive and still useful study of political clubs adhered to such a vision. Calhoun 1913: 15-17 put forward an evolutionary model of *hetaireiai* from Homeric *hetairoi*³ to fifth-century Athens. His account was rightfully criticized, as far as *hetaireiai* and the manipulation of the Athenian legal system by them is concerned, by Nicholas Jones in his 1999 monograph on associations as an alternative to democracy. He observed that for most of the discussed features of the *hetaireiai*'s judicial function, there is no evidence for direct involvement of "political clubs" in such practices, a point that Calhoun himself conceded several times.⁴

Given the prolific literature on Athenian *hetaireiai*, I do not intend to engage with their role in the establishment of oligarchic regimes in 411/10 and 404/3.⁵ We have the excellent concise commentary of Simon Hornblower on the Thucydidean passages, Douglas MacDowell's commentary on And. 1 (*On the Mysteries*), three monographs in Italian (Sartori

2 For a summary account see Glogg 1979; a more detailed account in Kostas 2013: 437-44.

3 See Chroust 1954, Welwei 1992, and Esposito 2015.

4 See Calhoun 1913: 48 (friendly prosecutions), 54 (counter suits), 56 (*antidosis*), 63 (assassination), 75 (influence on juries), 93 (information regarding opponent's case)). Note, however, that in the most recent treatment of cooperation in litigation, Rubinstein 2000, there is no reference to *hetaireiai*. See also Anastasiadis 1999, on the historiography of political parties in classical Athens in connection to contemporary political thinking.

5 Note, however, that in Andocides' narrative about the profanation of the Mysteries there is no reference to *hetaireiai*; perhaps this is deliberate since *hetaireiai* by 399 had already acquired a "bad name." The casual atmosphere is indicated by the fact that Andocides' father Leogoras was present but asleep, And. 1 (*On the Mysteries*) 17.

1957; Ghinatti 1970; Pecorella Longo 1971) discussing thoroughly the evidence for the archaic and classical Athens, and a French prosopographical study (Aurenche 1974). More recently scholars focused on *hetaireiai* as attempts to appropriate “the social ties that the Mysteries provided” (McGlew 1999), as an agent promoting the regime change through vote rigging in elections and law courts (Bearzot 1999 and Bearzot 2013), and as posing a symbolic challenge to the dominant position of the *demos* (Rosenbloom 2004).⁶

All the above focus on the function of *hetaireiai* in classical Athens, while ignore their fundamental, I would dare say “structural”, elements. What is more pressing, I think, is reconsidering the tedious but crucial question “Can *hetaireiai* be regarded as associations?” and if so what kind of association?⁷ To my knowledge recently only Jones 1999: 223 grappled

- 6 An interesting strand of scholarship compares Athenian with Cretan *hetaireiai*, Talamo 1998 or Lesbian *hetaireiai* (Dimopoulou 2015: 60ff. and Caciagli 2016); others investigate other polities using *hetaireiai* as a heuristic tool, Mattaliano 2006: 49-64.
- 7 My impression is that while an *hetaireia* consists of *hetairoi*, *hetairoi* do not necessarily and always form an *hetaireia*; companion or comrade: Athens: *Agora* XVII 1034 (1st c. BCE/1st c. AD); *IG* i³ 1329 (late 5th c.); *IG* ii² 3743 (imp.); *IG* ii² 4826 (3rd-4th c. CE); *IG* ii² 7839a (1st c. CE); *IG* ii² 13129/30 (1st c. CE); *IG* iv 395 (Korinthos, 1st/2nd c. CE); *IG* iv 800 (Troezena); *SEG* 32.605 (Larissa, end 2nd c. CE); *IG* x(2) (1) 630 (Thessaloniki, end 2nd c. CE); *SEG* 56.714 (Neapolis, end 4th c.); *IGBulg* ii 714 (Nikopolis ad Istrum); *IG* x(3) (3) 1, 57 (= *I.Callatis* 69) (end 1st c. CE); *I.Rhénée* 143 & 348 (2nd/1st c.); *IG* xii(5) 676 (Syros, 2nd/3rd c. CE); *IG* xii(4) 2471 (= *IG* ix(1)² (2) 579) (Kos, 3rd c.). Asia Minor: Robert, *Carie* ii no. 88 (Herakleia Salbake, 2nd c.); *I.Iasos* 116; *SEG* 4.167 (Caria, Thyssanous, 3rd c.); *I.Erythrai* 9 (c. 350-344); *I.Ephesos* 3466A (Metropolis, 3rd /2nd c.); *I.Ephesos* 3466B (Metropolis, 3rd /2nd c.); *I.Ephesos* 3488 (Metropolis); *I.Smyrna* 512 (3rd c.); *TAM* 5.477 (Kollyda, 240/1 CE); *EΦΣΚ* 7 (1872/3) 23 (Kyzikos?, 37 CE); *I.Prusa* 24 (1st c. CE); *SEG* 35.1337 (Amastris); *St. Pontica* iii 86 (Neoklaudioupolis); *MAMA* 4.299 (Dionysopolis-Phrygia, 1st-2nd c. CE); *MAMA* 9.86 (Aizanoi, 130 CE); *Hierapolis di Frigia* I 600 no. 1 (2nd c.); *Hierapolis di Frigia* XIV.2 947 no. 3 (2nd c. CE); *SEG* 57.1371 (Hierapolis, 2nd c. CE); *SEG* 41.1260 (Termessos); *SEG* 57.1446 (Termessos, after 212 CE); *I.Kibyra* 364; *SEG* 53.1642 & 1645 (NE Lycia); *SEG* 52.1440 (Pamphylia); Heberdey – Wilhelm, *Kilikien*, 96 no. 179 (Kelenderis); *JHS* 12 (1891) 265 no. 56 (Dioskaisareia-Cilicia); *SEG* 60.1583 (Elaioussa Sebaste, Imp.); Marek, *Pontus-Bithynia Nord-Galatia* 172 no. 57 (Amastris). Syria: *IGLS* 4.1848 (230 CE); *SEG* 66.2091 (Tyre, 28/29 CE); *RA* 1904 III 236 no. 2 (Sidon, Hell.). Arabia: *IGR* iii 1342 (Gerasa). Egypt: *I.Egypte métriques* 68 (Memphis, 1st/2nd c. CE); 94 (Leontopolis, 1st c.). *SEG* 20.745 (Cyrene, 6th c.). Italy: *SEG* 43.661 (Rome,

with the question; but even he did not answer directly. He situated *hetaireiai* in the context of his four-axis scheme⁸ of constituent elements of associations, in which *hetaireiai* are classified as private,⁹ voluntary, temporary, and possibly instrumental groups. If *hetaireiai* can be regarded as fully fledged associations their corporate element is expected to be pronounced;¹⁰ if not, then *hetaireiai* may designate sometimes an association but also may point to a different (but need not be primitive or elementary) way of organizing collective action. Therefore, *hetaireiai* could be inserted at the lower end of the continuum of Greco-Roman corporate activities.

My engagement with the Copenhagen Associations Project led me to apply the criteria devised for assessing the corporate element in associations (name, descriptive term, members, composition of membership, durability, foundation, organization, property, dissolution) in other words the degree of “corporateness,” on Athenian *hetaireiai*.

Proper name

This is a particular verbal identifier used either by the group to distinguish itself or by other social actors to label it. The identifier may be a word describing cultural (κοινὸν Σαραπιαστῶν), professional (κοινὸν τῶν ἐργαζομένων), ethnic (Ἀδωνιασταὶ Ἀφροδισιασταὶ Ἀσκληπιασταὶ Σύριοι), geographical (ἡ σύνοδος τῶν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ πρεσβυτέρων ἐγδοχέων), personal (θίασος ὁ Φαινομάχου) or any combination of the above (e.g. κοινὸν Βηρυτίων Ποσειδωνιαστῶν ἐμπόρων καὶ ναυκλήρων καὶ ἐγδοχέων) elements of the group. However, there is no self-designation of *hetaireiai* since no

2nd/3rd c. CE); *IGUR* iii 1181; 1210; 1256 (Rome); *IG* xiv 2251 (Umbria). So, it would be unwise to postulate behind each and every reference to *hetairos* the existence of an *hetaireia*, Isoc. 4 (*Panegyricus*) 79, 174 and 4L (*To Philip*) 87.

8 Jones 1999: 30-33 underlines that these categories do not represent absolute and rigid categories but a “continuum of infinite gradations”.

9 See the crucial remark by Canevaro 2016: 61-63 of the private character of *hetaireiai* in Athens and their public character in Sparta or Crete.

10 With the term corporate I mean the degree or the extent to which an organization supersedes the total of its members and acts or is treated as something different from it.

documents issued by them survive (if they have ever been issued). The term *hetaireiai* is used by historians, orators, philosophers,¹¹ or intellectuals of the Roman period,¹² each of them with his own agenda. These designations rarely go beyond the expression *hetaireia hē* plus a personal name in genitive. In this respect the modern tendency to label groups calling themselves αὐτολήκυθοι, ἰθυφάλλοι,¹³ Τριβαλλοί,¹⁴ κακοδαίμονι-

- 11 Historians: Hdt. 5.66; Thuc. 8.92.4; X. *Hell.* 2.3.46; *AthPol* 20.1 with Rhodes 1981: 243-4 and Caciagli 2016: 39; *AthPol* 34.3 with Pecorella Longo 1971: 25-29; Rhodes 1981: 429-31. Orators involved in the events of the turbulent late fifth century, e.g. And. 1 (*On the Mysteries*) 100, Lys. 12 (*Against Eratosthenes*) 55, Isoc. 16 (*On the team of horses*) 6 used the term with its political connotation, while others like Isoc. 4 (*Panegyricus*) 79 & 174 represented them as part of a lost golden age. In passages from the Demosthenic corpus the term has retained some of the earlier politically tainted implications, D. 21 (*Against Meidias*) 139; [D.] 58 (*Against Theocrines*) 42. Philosophers: Arist. *Pol.* 1306 a32; 1313a 39-b8 with Jordovic 2011: 12-14; Pl. *Lg.* 9.856 b-c; R. 2.365d; Anaximenes, *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* 38.18.
- 12 E.g. Appian, *BC* 3.10.75; D.S. 10.11.1; D.H. *RA* 3.72.5; D. Chr. 4.132; D. Cassius 30-35.109.15; Plu. *Alc.* 13.4; *Per.* 14.2.
- 13 [D.] 54 (*Against Konon*) 16: ἰθυφάλλοις δὲ καὶ αὐτοληκύθοις συγχωροῦμεν εἶναι τοῖς υἱέσι τοῖς τούτου, καὶ ἔγωγ' εὖχομαι τοῖς θεοῖς εἰς Κόνωνα καὶ τοὺς υἱεῖς τοὺς τούτου καὶ ταῦτα καὶ τὰ τοιαῦθ' ἅπαντα τρέπεσθαι ("This man's sons are welcome, so far as I am concerned, to be *ithyphalloi* and *autolekythoi*; I only pray the gods that these things and all similar things may recoil upon Konon and his sons" – transl. DeWitt in Loeb).
- 14 [D.] 54 (*Against Konon*) 39: τὴν δὲ τούτου πρὸς τὰ τοιαῦτ' ὀλιγωρίαν ἐγὼ πρὸς ὑμᾶς ἐρῶ: πέπτυσμαι γὰρ ἐξ ἀνάγκης. ἀκούω γάρ, ὦ ἄνδρες δικασταί, Βάκχιόν τέ τινα, ὃς παρ' ὑμῖν ἀπέθανε, καὶ Ἀριστοκράτην τὸν τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς διεφθαρμένον καὶ τοιούτους ἐτέρους καὶ Κόνωνα τουτονὶ ἐταίρους εἶναι μεῖράκι' ὄντας καὶ Τριβαλλοὺς ἐπωνυμίαν ἔχειν· τούτους τὰ θ' Ἑκαταῖα κατεσθίειν, καὶ τοὺς ὄρχεις τοὺς ἐκ τῶν χοίρων, οἷς καθαίρουσιν ὅταν εἰσιέναι μέλλωσιν, συλλέγοντας ἐκάστοτε συνδειπνεῖν ἀλλήλοις, καὶ ῥᾶον ὁμνῦναι καὶ ἐπιορκεῖν ἢ ὅτιοῦν ("The contempt, however, which this fellow feels for all sacred things I must tell you about; for I have been forced to make inquiry. For I hear, then, men of the jury, that a certain Bacchius, who was condemned to death in your court, and Aristokrates, the man with the bad eyes, and certain others of the same stamp, and with them this man Konon, were intimates when they were youths, and bore the nickname Triballoi; and that these men used to devour the food set out for Hecate and to gather up on each occasion for their dinner with one another the testicles of the pigs which are offered for purification when the assembly convenes and that they thought less of swearing and perjurying

σταί,¹⁵ as *hetaireiai* is unhelpful, since members of these groups explicitly adopt a distinct particular name; paragraph 14 from the pseudo-Demosthenic speech *Against Conon* is eloquent: “He will tell you that there are many people in the city, sons of respectable persons, who in sport, after the manner of young men, have given themselves nicknames, such as *ith-*

themselves than of anything else in the world” – transl. DeWitt in Loeb). See Calhoun 1913: 31–33 and Taddei 2007: 289.

- 15 Lys. fr. 195 (Carey) *apud* Ath. 12.551d–f: ὅτι δὲ ἦν ὁ Κινησίας νοσώδης καὶ δεινὸς τᾶλλα Λυσίας ὁ ῥήτωρ ἐν τῷ ὑπὲρ Φανίου παρανόμων ἐπιγραφομένῳ λόγῳ εἴρηκεν, φάσκων αὐτὸν ἀφέμενον τῆς τέχνης συκοφαντεῖν καὶ ἀπὸ τούτου πλουτεῖν. ὅτι δὲ ὁ ποιητὴς ἐστὶ καὶ οὐχ ἕτερος, σαφῶς αὐτὸς ὧν σημαίνεται ἐκ τοῦ καὶ ἐπὶ ἀθεότητι κωμωδούμενον ἐμφανίζεσθαι καὶ διὰ τοῦ λόγου τοιοῦτον δείκνυσθαι. λέγει δ' οὕτως ὁ ῥήτωρ θαυμάζω δὲ εἰ μὴ βαρέως φέρετε ὅτι Κινησίας ἐστὶν ὁ τοῖς νόμοις βοηθός, ὃν ὑμεῖς πάντες ἐπίστασθε ἀσεβέστατον ἀπάντων καὶ παρανομώτατον ἀνθρώπων γεγενῆσθαι. οὐχ οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ τοιαῦτα περὶ θεοῦ ἐξαμαρτάνων ἃ τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις αἰσχρὸν ἐστὶ καὶ λέγειν, τῶν κωμωδοδιδασκάλων <δ'> ἀκούετε καθ' ἕκαστον ἐνιαυτὸν· οὐ μετὰ τούτου ποτὲ Ἀπολλοφάνης καὶ Μυσταλίδης καὶ Λυσίθεος συνεισιτῶντο, μίαν ἡμέραν ταξάμενοι τῶν ἀποφράδων, ἀντὶ δὲ νομηνιαστῶν κακοδαίμονιστάς σφίσις αὐτοῖς τοῦνομα θέμενοι, πρέπον μὲν ταῖς αὐτῶν τύχαις· οὐ μὴν ὥς τοῦτο διαπραττόμενοι τὴν διάνοιαν ἔσχον, ἀλλ' ὥς καταγελῶντες τῶν θεῶν καὶ τῶν νόμων τῶν ὑμετέρων. (“But that Cinesias was a man of delicate health, and badly off in other respects, we are told by Lysias the orator, in his oration inscribed, “For Phantias accused of illegal decree,” in which he says that he, having abandoned his regular profession, had taken to trumping up false accusations against people, and to making money by such means. And that he means the poet here, and no one else, is plain from the fact that he shows also that he had been attacked by the comic poets for impiety. And he also, in the oration itself, shows that he was a person of that character. And the words of the orator are as follows: - “But I marvel that you are not indignant at such a man as Cinesias coming forward in aid of the laws, whom you all know to be the most impious of all men, and the greatest violator of the laws that has ever existed. Is not he the man who has committed such offences against the gods as all other men think it shameful even to speak of, though you hear the comic poets mention such actions of his every year? Did not Apolophanes, and Mystalides, and Lysitheos feast with him, selecting one of the days on which it was not lawful to hold a feast, giving themselves the name of Kakodaimonistai instead of Noumeniastai, a name indeed appropriate enough to their fortunes. Nor, indeed, did it occur to them that they were really doing what that name denotes; but they acted in this manner to show their contempt for the gods and for our laws” – transl. Yonge in Loeb). See also Harp. s.v. *Kinesias*.

yphalloi, or *autolekythoi*, and that some of them are infatuated with mistresses”.¹⁶ The naming process echoing contemporary preoccupations is best reflected in a passage of Plu. *Per.* 16.1, who reports that certain comedians maliciously labelled the comrades (*hetairoi*) of Pericles as *neoi Peisistratidai*.¹⁷ In this case a distinct name is devised by sharp-tongued satirists suggesting an affinity of Perikles’ supporters with the Peisistratean regime. I would be even more skeptical in labelling similar groups as associations; four men meeting a few times a year to dine and challenge traditional norms (Lys. frg. 73 (Thalheim); [D.] 54.39), hardly constitute an association. These occasional gatherings of certain individuals, I think should be treated as *ad hoc* groupings.

Descriptive term

It means a term shared by several other associations on record. Actually, most of the testimonies about *hetaireiai* fall into this category; one may include the abstract noun τὸ ἐταιρικόν attested twice in Thuc. 3.82.5-6 (a passage concerning *stasis* in Korkyra and 8.48.3-4) and in the reported

16 [D.] 54 (*Against Konon*) 14: καὶ ἐρεῖν ὡς εἰσὶν ἐν τῇ πόλει πολλοί, καλῶν καγαθῶν ἀνδρῶν υἱεῖς, οἱ παίζοντες, οἱ ἄνθρωποι νέοι, σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ἐπωνυμίας πεποιήνται καὶ καλοῦσι τοὺς μὲν ἰθυφάλλους, τοὺς δὲ αὐτοληκύνους, ἐρῶσι δ’ ἐκ τούτων ἐταῖρων τινες (“He will tell you that there are many people in the city, sons of respectable persons, who in sport, after the manner of young men, have given themselves nicknames, such as *Ithyphalli* or *Autolecythi*, and that some of them are infatuated with mistresses” – transl. DeWitt in Loeb). Also [D.] 54 (*Against Konon*) 20: εἴτ’ ἐν μὲν τοῖς νόμοις οὕτως ἂν δ’ εἴπη Κόνων ἰθύφαλλοὶ τινὲς ἐσμεν ἡμεῖς συνειλεγμένοι, καὶ ἐρῶντες οὓς ἂν ἡμῖν δόξῃ παῖομεν καὶ ἄγχομεν, εἴτα γελάσαντες ὑμεῖς ἀφήσετε; (“This, then, is what is ordained in the laws; but if Konon says, “we belong to a club of *ithyphalloi* and in our love-affairs we strike and throttle whom we please” are you, then going to let him off with a laugh?” – transl. DeWitt in Loeb). See Taddei 2007: 289.

17 Plu. *Per.* 16.1: καίτοι τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ σαφῶς μὲν ὁ Θουκυδίδης διηγείται, κακοήθως δὲ παρεμφαίνουσιν οἱ κωμικοί, Πεισιστρατίδας μὲν νέους τοὺς περὶ αὐτὸν ἐταῖρους καλοῦντες (“Of his power there can be no doubt, since Thucydides gives so clear an exposition of it, and the comic poets unwittingly reveal it even in their malicious gibes, calling him and his associates ‘new Peisistratidai’” – transl. Perrin in Loeb). See Calhoun 1913: 5, 7, 18, 24.

law on *eisangelia* by Hyp. 4 (*For Euxenippos*) 7-8. However, the term *hetaireia* did not designate only an association but went well beyond that; it was so versatile that it could be used as a cult epithet of Zeus,¹⁸ to signify subgroups of citizens in archaic and classical Crete,¹⁹ a type of friendship,²⁰ prostitution²¹ or even herds of animals.²² In one occasion it is used as substitute of a group of individuals willing to testify in favour of Meidias, D. 21 (*Against Meidias*) 139:²³ μαρτύρων συνεστῶς ἑταιρεία, in an crafty way to associate the hybristic behaviour of Meidias with anti-democratic leanings. This kind of metaphor was used by Aristophanes in his *Knights*, 255: ὦ γέροντες ἡλιασταί, φράτερες τριωβόλου. The usages of the term *hetaireiai*, *hetairoi*²⁴ as groups throughout Greco-Roman antiquity shows that they are clustered in three distinct areas and two different

18 *I.Oropos* 675 with SEG 53.467 (3rd c.): θεσμὸν ἑταίρε[ίου Ζηνός]; Pollux i 24.

19 E.g. *I.Cret.* I ix 1 (Dreros, 3rd /2nd c.) and *I.Cret.* iv 72 (Gortyn, beg 5th c.). See Gagarin & Perlman 2016: 92.

20 *X. Hell.* 2.4.21; *Arist. Rh.* 1381b, 34: Εἶδη δὲ φιλίας ἑταιρεία οἰκειότης ... and Poll. iii 61; v 113-4. The use of the term by Bissa 2008 to describe partnerships to exploit silver mines is rather misleading.

21 *Artem. Oneirocriticon* 4.4: ἑταίρα ἔδοξεν εἰς τὸ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν εἰσεληλυθῆναι καὶ ἡλευθερώθη καὶ κατέλυσε τὴν ἑταιρείαν. Οὐδὲ γὰρ εἰς τὸ ἱερὸν πρότερον εἰσέλθοι ἄν, εἰ μὴ καταλύσειε τὴν ἑταιρείαν ("A courtesan imagined that she had entered the shrine of Artemis and she was freed and left behind her life as a courtesan. For one would not enter the shrine unless one had left behind one's life as a courtesan" – transl. D. E. Harris-MaCoy, Oxford 2012).

22 *Arist. HA* 8.5.1 (611b): Αἱ δὲ βόες καὶ νέμονται καθ' ἑταιρείας καὶ συνηθείας.

23 See MacDowell 1990: 356-7; Bearzot 1999: 300; Rubinstein 2000: 74, and Hendren 2015: 21-43. Similarly in [D.] 58 (*Against Theokrines*) 42 and *Is. frg.* 23 (Ὑπὲρ Καλυδῶνος πρὸς Ἀγνόθεον) 2 (Thalheim) *apud* D.H. *de Is.* 8 but in D. 21 (*Against Meidias*) 20 the term to describe the companions of Meidias imposing a change of mind is *hetairoi*.

24 Three early epigraphic attestations of the term *hetairoi* in *CEG* I 335 (*ZPE* 13 (1974) 264 no. 3) (Ptoion-Boiotia, c. 550-500): [ἄ]νδρες ἑταῖροι Δ[ῶρος Ἀλέχσανδρός τε Φίλων τε] | [ἄνθεσαν, Ἀπολλων, τόδε σοῖ περικαλλὲς ἄγ[αλμα]; *IG* i³ 1329 (Peiraieus, c. 420-400?): Ἀνθεμίδος τόδε σῆμα· κύκλῳ στεφάνουσι>ν ἑταῖροι | μνημείων ἀρετῆς | οὐνεκα καὶ φιλίας. Ἀνθεμίδης. | Ἡρόφιλε; and *SEG* 20.745 (Cyrene, early 6th c.): ἔστασαν ἑταῖρο[ι ---]. See Sartori 1958: 171, who distinguishes three different meanings of both terms in Plato: friendship, communione dottrinale, cooperazione occulta contro lo stato, followed by Aurenche 1974: 19.

periods, classical Athens, Roman Asia Minor²⁵ and Middle East. In the last two areas they are also attested epigraphically; at Elaioussa of Cilicia in late 1st c. BCE or early 1st c. CE there are two references to an *hetaireia* of *Sambatistai*, while at Dura-Europos, on the West-bank of the Euphrates, *synetairoi*,²⁶ among them an *archetairos*, contributed to the development of a plot of land devoted to a goddess and recorded the fact on a stele in 37 CE.²⁷ It seems odd but the term is not used by Hellenistic authors, I could find only one reference to it in Polybius regarding a Celtic tribe living in northern Italy.²⁸ This semantic plasticity allowed Greek authors of the Imperial era to coin the term for the followers of eminent Romans of the Respublica thus the term became synonymous of unrest, strife and sedition in the Roman mindset.²⁹

25 D. Chr. 4.132 (μερίδος καὶ ἑταιρείας ἀριθμεῖσθαι); 32.70 (Σιμάριστοι καὶ τοιαῦθ' ἕτερα ἑταιρειῶν ὀνόματα); 38.36 (τῇ Νικαέων ἑταιρείᾳ); 45.8 (μηδὲ καθ' ἑταιρείας πολιτεύεσθαι); 50.3 (μήτε ἑταιρεία τινι πεποιθώς).

26 *Synetairoi* also in GVI I 1270 (*CIJud* 2.1612); *LEgypte métriques* 94 (Leontopolis (Egypt), 14 BCE?); *IG* xii (5) 1104 (Syros, 2nd c.).

27 *SEG* 54.1481 (Anazarbos-Cilicia, 110 CE): ἡ ἑταιρεία Ἀθηνοδώρου; *JHS* 12 (1891) 236 no. 17 (Kanytela-Cilicia, 1st c. BCE/1st c. CE): ἡ ἑταιρεία τῶν Σαμβατιστῶν see also *LSAM* 80: ἑταῖροι καὶ Σαμβατισταί; *SEG* 34.1298 (Hierapolis-Phrygia, 2nd-3rd c. CE): ἡ ἑταιρεία Ἀρζιμνέων περὶ Στρατόνεικον; *SEG* 54.1381 (Termessos-Pisidia, beg. 3rd c. CE): ἑταιρείην; *SEG* 56.1920 (Gerasa-Arabia, end 2nd c.): οἱ τῆς τοῦ Διὸς τοῦ Ἀμμανα ἑταιρείας; *Excavations at Dura-Europos* 5, 114 (Dura-Europos, 54 CE): ἑταιρεία see also *YCS* 14 (1955) 129 no. 2 (Dura-Europos, 37 CE): συνεταῖροι, ἀρχέταιρος.

28 *Plb.* 2.17.12: περὶ δὲ τὰς ἑταιρείας μεγίστην σπουδὴν ἐποιοῦντο διὰ τὸ καὶ φοβερώτατον καὶ δυνατώτατον εἶναι παρ' αὐτοῖς τοῦτον, ὃς ἂν πλείστους ἔχειν δοκῇ τοὺς θεραπεύοντας καὶ συμπεριφερομένους αὐτῷ ("They (sc. Senones) made a great point, however, of friendship for the man who had the largest number of clients or companions in his wanderings, was looked upon as the most formidable and powerful member of the tribe" – transl. Shuckburgh in Loeb).

29 *Arrian*, *BC* 3.10.75 (τὴν Καίσαρος ἑταιρείαν); 3.11.81 (τῆς Πομπηϊανῆς ἑταιρείας); *D.S.* 10.11.1; 25.8.1; *D.H. RA* 3.72.5; 4.38.6 (τῆς περὶ Ταρκύνιον ἑταιρείας); 9.41.5; 11.3.3; 11.5.1; 11.23.6 (ἀριστοκρατικῶν ἑταιρειῶν); 12.1.11; *D. Cassius* 30-35.109.15; 37.45.2; 37.54.3 (ἐς δὲ τὴν πόλιν ἐσελθὼν καὶ ἐπαγγειλάμενος τὴν ἀρχὴν οὕτω τοὺς τε ἄλλους καὶ τὸν Πομπήιον τὸν τε Κράσσον ἐξεθεράπευσεν, ὥστε δι' ἔχθρας ἀλλήλοις ἔτι καὶ τότε αὐτοὺς ὄντας καὶ τὰς ἑταιρείας ἔχοντας); 52.36.2; 60.6.6-7; *Pliny, Letters*, 10.

Membership

Individuals participating in associations must be committed in pursuing a common, enduring goal. What is worth further investigation is not the obvious i.e. did *hetaireiai* have members but how one could become a member, how membership was delineated, the mechanism(s) of extracting or expressing consent and commitment. There is no information about the way(s) in which one could join an *hetaireia*, whether there were any formal or informal requirements. We do not know whether the social background or personal characteristics -especially age- of the candidates influenced their decision to join and the resolution of the group to accept them. Of course, the reference of Herodotus to the comrades of Cylon as *hēlikīōtai* indicates or implies an age group, what remains uncertain is whether the group was called *hetareīē* or this is a Herodotean projection.³⁰ As for the mechanism, we can only speculate about the existence of an oath of allegiance,³¹ a duty of silence,³² a ritual of some kind (e.g. initiation that may include acts flouting *polis*-law or the established social norms).³³ The sense of belonging could have been enhanced by orchestrating and performing similar acts. One of the links that glued together (even temporarily) members was allegiance or expectations from the prominent figure, apart from congeniality, age, and mutual interests (Calhoun 1913: 38-39). These various mechanisms show a reliance on *pistis* among individual members on a one-to-one basis and subsequently through networking, something that implies a resounding lack of corporate spirit. The size of *hetaireiai* is difficult to define in exact terms; scholars based on the evidence from Andocides and the Attic *stelai* (IG i³ 421ff.)

30 See Chroust 1954: 281, Jones 1999: 224; cf. Calhoun 1913: 14.

31 On oaths see the rather speculative discussion in Calhoun 1913: 34-35 and most recently Mitchell 2014: 69. An oath is mentioned in the *koinon* of *Eikadeis* in IG ii² 1258, 2-3 (324/3).

32 Disapproval of Andocides for testifying against his comrades, And. 1 (*On the mysteries*) 54, 63, 67. See also Lys. 6 (*Against Andocides*) 23; 12 (*Against Eratosthenes*) 43-47; 13 (*Against Agoratos*) 18-22; [D.] 54 (*Against Konon*) 25, 33, 37, [D.] 57 (*Against Euboulides*) 17-18.

33 See Calhoun 1913: 35-37 for initiation in [D.] 54 (*Against Konon*) and Furley 1996: 58-59.

have suggested that they were rather small groups, between 10-30 individuals,³⁴ and if we are to believe Lysias frg. 73 there were only four or a few more in [D. 54] (see above). It is a fair inference that, at least in late fifth-century Athens, they were all upper-class men of about the same age,³⁵ notwithstanding the references to Andocides' father or Konon of [D.] 54.

Organization (Officials – laws)

Private associations have, at least, rudimentary organization, that is an articulated *modus operandi* involving a division of labour and duties among its members, rank and file personnel, and fixed deliberation processes. *Hetaireiai* do not seem to have had anything similar. What do we know about their decision-making processes? Assuming that one of their main function was drinking parties (a glimpse is provided by And. 1 (*On the Mysteries*) 61 when he describes how he managed to call off an earlier attempt at parodying the Eleusinian Mysteries) or other informal meetings in a private place, then one should not expect to find any formal way(s) of deliberation but rather informal consultations over a cylix of wine.³⁶ In this case spontaneity and sentimental reaction may have played a decisive role. Even the terms implying some sort of magistrates, such as *archetairos* are late appearances.³⁷

34 So Calhoun 1913: 29-30, club of Andocides included c. 23 individuals. Aurenche 1974 suggested that the group of Leogoras did not have more than 40 members, Alcibiades' group 21, and Teucros 13 members; see also Connor 1971: 27-28, Furley 1996: 59, Rosenbloom 2004: 328. The average size of private religious associations in Hellenistic Athens included between 20 and 50 members (*IG ii*² 1297; 1325; 1335; 2343; 2347).

35 Connor 1971: 29; Aurenche 1974.

36 And. 1 (*On the Mysteries*) 61: διὰ ταῦτα εἶπον τῇ βουλῇ ὅτι εἰδείην τοὺς ποιήσαντας, καὶ ἐξήλεξα τὰ γενόμενα, ὅτι εἰσηγήσατο μὲν πινόντων ἡμῶν ταύτην τὴν βουλήν γενέσθαι Εὐφίλητος, ἀντεῖπον δὲ ἐγώ, καὶ τότε μὲν οὐ γένοιτο δι' ἐμέ ("I therefore informed the Council that I knew the offenders, and showed exactly what had occurred. The idea, I said, had been suggested by Euphiletus at a drinking-party; but I opposed it, and succeeded in preventing its execution for the time being" – transl. Maidment in Loeb). See Calhoun 1913: 6, 9, 24, 83, 113-14; MacDowell 1962: 137; Pecorella Longo 1971: 41ff.; Furley 1996: 57.

37 *Archetairos*: YCS 14 (1955) 129 no. 2 (Dura-Europos, 37 CE).

Durability

It is possible to argue that *hetaireiai* were intended to endure in time, even if that meant the life span of the individual around whom the group orbit. For example, we assume that Alcibiades' *hetaireia* (Plu. *Alc.* 13.4) was intended to last as long as Alcibiades was alive, but we do not know whether his *hetaireia* survived the reversals of his career. We also know the fate of the *hetaireia* of Thucydides, son of Melesias after his ostracism, it was "disbanded" by Perikles (Plu. *Per.* 14.2). In that sense, I think that *hetaireiai* were structurally unstable groups; they were more than *ad hoc* groups but, at the same time, they were not designed to outlive its central figure.³⁸ The Thucydidean *xynōmosiai* convinced by Peisandros to join forces and bring an end to the democratic regime in 411 were apparently more enduring groups (8.54.4: αἵπερ ἐτύγγανον πρότερον) since their aim was to influence judicial proceedings and elections of magistrates but how far back this goes we cannot know.

Foundation – Dissolution

This feature remains largely unascertainable; we may surmise that, at least sometimes, the central figure was instrumental in setting up the group or at least signal his condescension in forming one. In fourth-century Athens, the groups of *Ithyphalloi*, *Kakodaimonistai* did not proceed to a foundation act; they simply got together on certain occasions. Since in most Greco-Roman associations dissolution remained a *de facto* imposed eventuality, *hetaireiai* understood as an inherently unstable collectivity would have been dissolved as soon as their central figure(s) lost interest, retired or passed away. No formal declaration or decision of its members was needed.

38 Aurenche 1974: 42.

Property

There is no indication that *hetaireiai* owned any premises; most of their meetings and banquets took place in the houses of their members, e.g. And. 1 (*On the Mysteries*) 11-18 and the reports in the same speech that the profanation of Mysteries occurred in houses as far apart as the deme of Themakos (in the southern slopes of Hymettos), in the area of Olympieion and the house of Poulytion.³⁹

This rapid survey has demonstrated, I hope, that *hetaireiai* display only three out of nine defining elements of an association. They may have had a proper name, used a descriptive term and attracted members; but they appear to have only limited durability, not to have been organized with officers and by-laws, not to acquire property, and no formal foundation-dissolution processes. To my mind this suggests that they were not fully fledged associations; it is more likely that they were what I prefer to call low-corporateness associations.⁴⁰

Even if regarding *hetaireiai* as informal groups with a low corporate-index is increasingly acceptable,⁴¹ it does not explain its perseverance in fourth-century Athens. Despite *hetaireiai*'s tight association with the enemies of the *demos*,⁴² structurally similar groups continued to spring up. A different perspective to the investigation may be provided if we consider the collocation "le degré zéro de l'écriture." The phrase was coined in literary theory by Roland Barthes in 1950s to signify the implicit but changing over time requirements that *écriture* was conforming to. In a similar manner, we may reconsider whether the structural elements of *hetaireiai* (name, designation, membership) provided a template of collective action. In other words, were *hetaireiai* an organizational model, providing principles on how to organize collectivities, competing or even averse to the rule of the *demos* or a response to *demos* and its subdivisions as N. Jones put it? Does the subsequent prevalence of the "democratic"

39 Themakos, house of Pherekles; Olympieion, house of Charmides, and the house of Poulytion, Isocr. 16 (*On the team of horses*) 6; Plu. Alc. 22.3. See Connor 1971: 27-28.

40 Similar assessment by Connor 1971: 26.

41 E.g. Mitchell 1997.

42 E.g. Anaximenes, *Rhetorica ad Alexandrum* 38.18, with Pecorella Longo 1971: 26; Arist. Pol. 1305b 32.

template, as the numerous decrees of public and private associations⁴³ with a well-defined organizational apparatus and thus detectable in the epigraphic radar, mean that the organizational pattern of *hetaireiai* proved to be an impasse?

If the above questions sound plausible, then, we may speak of two distinctly different modes of organizing collective action; on the one hand an informal, with an embryonic articulation, centred round dominant personalities (i.e. powerful individuals providing access to resources, wealth, power, influence), with membership consisting of individuals of the same age or so (but not necessarily), with fuzzy or unclear rules of joining, at least to the outsiders. On the other hand, there was available a mode with a set of fixed rules of admission and concerted action (deliberation procedures, magistrates, regulations), sometimes even acquiring their own premises, transparency guaranteed by holding assemblies of their members, enhanced by the public display of their decisions (inscription on stone), use of writing, and appropriation of the *polis*-discourse both on the level of rhetoric as well as of symbols (crowning, monumental character of the publication).

Concluding Remarks

Bypassing the fruitless discussion of whether *hetaireiai* were something equivalent to modern political parties,⁴⁴ *hetaireiai* in classical Athens appear both as low-corporateness associations and as a model to organize collective action. The involvement of, at least, some of them in the political upheaval of the last decade of the fifth century, certainly discredited them. Nevertheless, their structural plasticity made them an attractive proposition. Thanks to their conceptual and organizational elasticity, they may have been functioning under a different name (or no name at all, since the descriptive term was telling enough!), adapted to a new social setting (in a symbiotic or parasitic relation), undetectable in our

43 Such as demes, phratries, *phylai*, *koina* of *orgeōnes*, *thiasotai*, *eranistai*, *Asklēpiastai*, *Sarapiastai* or other similarly labelled cult groups.

44 See Connor 1971, Aurenche 1974, Hansen 1991; Mitchell 1997, Anastasiadis 1999, and most recently Hansen 2014, Piovan 2015, and Anderson 2022.

sources.⁴⁵ The advent and eventual domination of the democratic *polis*-based model of collective action has obscured this aspect of *hetaireiai* and instead focused on their anti-democratic, destabilising function, a feature that survived well into the Imperial era.

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45 In this respect see Taddei 2007: 299 who regards groups of *autolekythoi*, *ithyphalloi*, *Triballoi* or *kakodaimonistai* as groups mutating to adapt to the requirements of the Cleisthenic reform.

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