

*Admission Procedures and Financial
Contributions in Private Associations
Norms and Deviations*

Nikolaos Giannakopoulos

Introduction

The self-perpetuity of Greek private associations and the continuous performance of their collective activities presupposed the ability both to admit new members and to draw regular contributions (that is to say, material support) from the existing ones. The diffuse evidence on the rules that regulated these essential aspects of the associations' internal functions has been thoroughly examined both in the pioneering works of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and in more recent studies.¹ The modest purpose of this chapter is to offer some, it is hoped, fresh remarks on certain aspects of these rules that bear relevance to issues related to the purpose of this volume. Associative laws and regulations cannot be viewed exclusively as administrative measures. They constituted, *inter alia*, instruments through which particular associations were constructing themselves as credible and respectable networks composed of equally credible and respectable members. In this respect, those rules that provided for the admission of members and the fulfilment of their regular financial obligations created real and imaginary moments within the associative time that enabled the most vivid demonstration, (re)confirmation and reproduction of the fundamental qualitative features that defined the associative identity, both at the individual and at the collective level. Within this framework, the present chapter will investigate the values endorsed by these rules, the image of the associations that they promoted and their relation to the broader social and civic environment. Here, I will mainly focus on evidence from mainland Greece, the Aegean islands and Asia Minor, but the rich material from Egypt will be also taken into proper account, mainly for the sake of comparison. The first section of this

¹ Ziebarth 1896: 140–2 and 156–7; Poland 1909: 274–7, 299–300, 437, 492–4; Arnaoutoglou 2003: 96–101.

chapter deals with the rules regulating admission into the *orgeones* of Bendis. The second section focuses on the regular financial contributions imposed by associations in the Hellenistic period. The third section examines the evidence relating to the Imperial period. The final section gives a brief general assessment in the light of the network paradigm issues raised by the editors of this volume in Chapter 1.

The *Orgeones* of Bendis

The well-known decree of the *orgeones* of Bendis at Piraeus (*CAPInv.* 230), dated to 330–324 BC, may be considered as the first document that provides comprehensive information on the rules regulating admission to a private association.² Lines 20–5 establish a two-stage procedure that includes first the payment of a uniform entrance-fee for all aspiring members and the registering of the contributors' names on a stele and then a process of scrutiny.³

The point that I would like to underline is that the decree itself provides us with a highly interesting but so far barely noticed clue regarding the potential audience to which these admission rules were addressed: it envisages the possibility of individual private sacrifices being offered not only by existing members but also by outsiders (the term *idiotes*, 'private individuals', that is to say, non-members, here is indicative) who, in so doing, were obliged to pay dues ranging from 1½ to 3 obols and, in addition, to hand over the skin and the thigh of the sacrificial offering to the priests and priestesses. This rule testifies to the existence of a circle of devotees who, despite their affiliation to Bendis, stood outside the association. The fact that they alone were subject to this sacrificial fee, as opposed to the members of the association who were declared immune, functioned as a material and symbolic mark of their exclusion.⁴ In my

² *IG* II² 1361. On the various issues concerning the character of this association, see Wilhelm 1902: 132; Ferguson 1944: 98–9; Ferguson 1949: 156–7; Garland 1992: 111–13; Mikalson 1998: 140–1, 152–3 and 155; Jones 1999: 257; Ismard 2010: 265–70; Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 38; Steinhauer 2014: 34–5, 48 and 92–3; Arnaoutoglou 2015: 39–49; Gabrielsen 2016a: 141–6.

³ On this admission procedure, see Foucart 1873: 10 and 12; Ferguson 1944: 99–100; Jones 1999: 257–60; Arnaoutoglou 2003: 98 (convincingly refuting Ferguson and Jones' view that before the decree's enactment membership to these *orgeones* was hereditary; I would simply add that the fragmentary clause at the beginning of the decree explicitly distinguishes between registered members and their descendants, so it cannot reflect previous rules for entering the association); Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 35–7.

⁴ *IG* II² 1361, ll. 3–6. It could be argued that the phrase '*orgeones* participating at the sanctuary' used to describe the collective may demonstrate that there were individuals who were not viewed as *idiotai* but as *orgeones* who nonetheless did not participate at the sanctuary. But the emphasis on the

view, this was exactly the group of people at which the provisions recorded in lines 20–5 were mainly targeted. These *idiotai* were persons familiar with the sanctuary and the cult of Bendis, with the relevant rituals and certainly with the members of the association, the use of the same sanctuary providing space and opportunities for cultivating social bonds with them. Paulin Ismard has recently emphasised the existence of a cultic network centred on Bendis and Artemis all over Attica, and the persons in question here were probably somehow involved in this.⁵ These outsiders – who were outsiders not to the cult of Bendis but to the group of its *orgeones* – were now encouraged to become full members of the association. Both the entrance-fee and the regular annual contribution of 2 drachmas paid by every member should be assessed against the background of the immunity enjoyed by the associates for their private sacrifices and the right to participate in the monthly common assemblies.⁶ This indicates that the more these non-associate *idiotai* were devoted to Bendis and the more they were willing to show this devotion by offering private sacrifices, the more financially attractive their eventual full participation in the association became to them.

The examination of each newcomer by the *orgeones*' assembly also favoured the aforementioned *idiotai*. The use of the verb *dokimazein* (δοκιμάζειν), 'to scrutinise, examine', indicates that this process was envisaged as being structured on the model of similar civic institutions.⁷ Although the decree of the *orgeones* did not refer to fixed questions addressed to the candidates, the evidence regarding those civic *dokimasiai*, 'examinations', on which we have detailed information (the *dokimasiai* of the Athenian ephebes before entering the demes, of the councillors and the magistrates), the manifestly cultic character of the *orgeones* and the information on associative *dokimasiai* from the Imperial period (discussed below) suggest that the questions posed concerned not only the moral qualities of the candidates but also their religious devotion, particularly to

sanctuary simply reflects the fact that this was the key element of the collective's identity (Gabrielsen 2016a: 145).

⁵ Ismard 2010: 270–2. If the split between an association of *orgeones* based at Piraeus and one based at the *asty* had already taken place by the time the decree IG II² 1361 was passed (Gabrielsen 2016a: 142–5), the members of the second association may have also constituted a potential target group for the provisions under examination here. But there is no evidence to press this hypothesis further.

⁶ IG II² 1361, ll. 17–20. Jones 1999: 257–60 conceived of these payments as a remedy for the lack of benefactions and endowments and as a means of dealing with the bad financial situation in which the *orgeones* found themselves. But such payments are very widespread in the world of private associations. They are not a particularity of the *orgeones* of Bendis, hence they need not be considered as indicative of financial problems.

⁷ Ustinova 2005: 185 and Feyel 2009: 42–4.

Bendis.⁸ In this respect, there can be no doubt that each candidate would have had to present his own credentials, and the individual sacrifices of the *idiotai* would surely have functioned as such.

Another point needs to be stressed. While the civic *dokimasia* was clearly an institution following popular election or appointment by lot (permitting the correction of what could be perceived as mistaken choices), the scrutiny of newcomers in the decree of the *orgeones* was technically not a confirmation of a prior choice made by the group – such a choice is not mentioned at all – but a deliberation on a candidate's application and an examination of his suitability, both conducted at the same time. In this respect, it could be argued that it was the payment of the entrance-fee and the registering on the stele that functioned as the equivalent to the civic election or appointment by lot. This symbolic statement on the part of the aspiring member about his willingness to share the association's cause was the preliminary stage of the admission procedure, to be followed and validated by the approval of the collective. Compared to the analogous civic process, this associative one was clearly more time-saving and convenient, both for the candidates and for the members of the controlling assembly.

But these differences concerned issues of procedure. In every other significant way the admission rules enacted by the *orgeones* of Bendis fit in perfectly with the overall tendency of private associations to be integrated into the public sphere.⁹ In this respect, scrutiny did not only serve the purpose of ensuring the suitability of new members. It also turned admission into a prize, elevating in this way the prestige both of the group (presented as a respectable and privileged organised body) and of its individual members who, in order to achieve participation, were to be examined as thoroughly as the Athenian citizens and magistrates were. The very fact that the approval of the association was granted in the standard democratic and egalitarian way of an individual vote, exactly as the Athenian judges voted individually in the scrutiny of civic magistrates, underlines this point.¹⁰

⁸ See Arnaoutoglou 2003: 98 and Feyel 2009: 25–6 and 115–80.

⁹ See, *inter alia*, van Nijf 1997 (for professional associations); Arnaoutoglou 2003: 21–2 and 154–5 (for democratic Athens); Suys 2005: 214; Gabrielsen 2007; Fröhlich and Hamon 2013b: 14–26. Arnaoutoglou 2015: 49 (on the *orgeones* of Bendis).

¹⁰ Feyel 2009: 176–9. As noted by Arnaoutoglou 2003: 99, scrutiny is not attested in other private associations of the Late Classical and Hellenistic periods. However, since our documentation does not include general regulations, such as the decree of the *orgeones* of Bendis, but decisions responding to specific needs of the issuing bodies, this lack of evidence should not be necessarily taken as evidence of absence. In fact, the regulations set up by Diomedon for the familial association

Money Contributions and Entrance-Fees in the Hellenistic Period

Besides the decree of the *orgeones* of Bendis, entrance-fees (Table 2.1) are also attested in a decree of the *thiasotai* of Artemis in Athens in 248/7 BC (*CAPInv.* 269). This group decided to erect a stele recording the names of their members, and newcomers were to be registered after the payment of the required *argyron*, ‘money’.¹¹ As the reference to this rule is incidental, the amount is not specified: it was obviously regulated by the law of the group mentioned in the same phrase. Regular financial contributions are attested in the second-century BC *Haliadan* and *Haliastan koinon* at Rhodes (*CAPInv.* 10), which charged each member 3 obols, payable at every meeting, for the purchase of a crown to be given as a posthumous honour to their leader Dionysodoros from Alexandria.¹² Moreover, in 57/6 BC, an association of Athenian *Heroistai* (*CAPInv.* 357) decreed that even those members who were absent from Attica had to pay half the contribution of 6 drachmas imposed on every associate, while those present in Attica but not attending had to pay the whole sum, termed *φορά*.¹³ To this evidence should be added various references to immunities granted by associations from Athens, Delos, Rhodes and Maroneia to those of their members who acted as benefactors.¹⁴

Commenting on the status of *asymbolos*, ‘exempt from contributions’, awarded to Telestas by the Rhodian *Adoniastai* (*CAPInv.* 1612), Durrbach

he founded on Hellenistic Cos prescribed a process of examination for allowing *nothoi*, ‘illegitimate children’, to participate in the sacred rites. Probably this examination aimed at certifying that these *nothoi* were indeed sons of existing members: see *IG XII.4* 1 348 D, ll. 146–9 (bibliography and discussion in *CAPInv.* 1919). Moreover, *dokimasia* is consistently present in the epigraphical record of the Imperial period (see below).

¹¹ *IG II²* 1298, ll. 16–20. On the interpretation of this clause as referring to entrance-fees and not just dues (as Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 114 understand it), see Arnaoutoglou 2003: 99 n. 32. On the status of the members of this group and its relation with the *thiasotai* of a goddess who issued an honorific decree followed by a list of members in 237/6 BC (*IG II²* 1297; *CAPInv.* 268), see Mikalson 1998: 149; Ismard 2010: 353; Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 113 and 135; Arnaoutoglou 2011b: 28–39; *CAPInv.* 269. Entrance-fees are also mentioned in a Demotic inscription with the regulations of an association of weavers at Coptos (*CAPInv.* 1963): each newcomer pays 90 deben.

¹² *IG XII.1* 155 d, ll. 22–3. See Foucart 1873: 43. On the context of this decision and the way it was implemented, see Gabrielsen 1994: 143–7.

¹³ *IG II²* 1339. On the character of this association, which seems to have celebrated the cult of Zenon, Pammenes and Diotimos from Marathon, see Geagan 1992; Baslez 2004: 107 and 115; Baslez 2006: 166; Ismard 2010: 362; Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 218–19. On regulating compulsory participation in associations, see Eckhardt in Chapter 3.

¹⁴ For a detailed treatment, see Poland 1909: 437 and 492–4. The rules of several Egyptian associations also imposed regular membership fees. See Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 *Evidence on entrance-fees and regular contributions (indirect evidence, e.g. mentions of immunities, is not included)*

CAPIInv.	Association	Entrance-fees	Regular contributions	Location	Date
1687	Unknown name		Monthly: unspecified sum	Memphis	391/0 BC
230	<i>Orgeones</i> (of Bendis)	Unknown sum	Annual: 2 drachmas for sacrifice	Piraeus	330–324 BC
269	<i>koinon ton thiasoton</i> (of Artemis)	Unspecified sum		Athens	248/7 BC
1689	Association of the temple of Horus-Behedet		Monthly: 1 kite	Pisais (Arsinoites)	223 BC
1686	Unknown		Unspecified sum	Arsinoites	192–100 BC
1971	Those of the association of . . .		2 deben	Krokodilon polis (Arsinoites)	179 BC
1932	The association of the Priests of Soknebtynis		Monthly: unspecified sum	Tebtynis (Arsinoites)	178–145 BC
1690	The association of . . .		Monthly: 5 deben	Arsinoites	137 BC
1970	Those of the association of (the companions?)		Monthly: 5 deben	Arsinoites	137 BC
10	<i>Haliadan and Haliastan koinon</i>		Three obols at every meeting for the purchase of a crown	Rhodes	II cent. BC
357	<i>To koinon ton Heroiston</i>		Phora of 6 drachmas	Athens	57/6 BC
1963	The troop/crowd of the weavers of Coptos	90 deben		Coptos	30 BC
1408	Unknown name		Monthly: 12 drachmas for banquets	Tebtynis (Arsinoites)	AD 14–37
1325	<i>He hiera synodos ton peri ton Breisea Dionyson techneiton kai myston</i>	Unspecified sum; possible reduce for <i>patromystai</i>		Smyrna	AD 80–83

349	<i>Synodos ton Herakliaston en Limmais</i>	sons of members: 16½ minas of pork; others: 33 minas of pork	<i>Phora</i> for <i>ekdoseis</i> (unspecified sum)	Paiania (Attica)	Early II cent. AD
1653	<i>Hymnodoi</i> of Augustus and Rome	Sons of members: 15 denarii to the gods and 7 denarii to each actual member + <i>choreion</i> , receiving a 50 per cent return; others: 100 denarii for sacrifices, 30 denarii to the gods and 15 denarii to each actual member.		Pergamum	AD 127–138
339	<i>Bakcheion (Iobacchoi)</i>	Sons of members: 25 denarii; brothers of members: 50 denarii; others: 50 denarii + libation	<i>Phora</i> for wine (unspecified sum)	Athens	AD 164/5
1659	Unknown name	Sons of members for over 5 years: 50 denarii; others: the whole sum (not specified)		Pergamum	II cent. AD
1912, 1939 and 1952	Worldwide association of Dionysiac artists	100 denarii (beg. of the 3rd cent.); 250 denarii (after c. AD 250)			III cent. AD
984	<i>Hiera Gerousia tou Soterou Asklepiou</i>	Sons of members: no entrance-fee; other relatives: 50 denarii; outsiders: 100 denarii		Hyettus (Boeotia)	After AD 212

and Radet observed, using the only available parallel at the time – the civic *ateleia* πασῶν τῶν συμβολῶν πορευομένοις εἰς τὰ Ἰτώνια, ‘exemption from all contributions for those travelling to the festival of Athena Itonia’, given to Kleophantos of Arkesine and his relatives – that the honorand was exempted not from monthly subscriptions but from payments for festivals, sacrifices and common meals.¹⁵ This connection between regularly required payments and sacrifices has been noted by several scholars.¹⁶ The point I would like to stress is that it was the official public discourse of the associations themselves, as expressed in their decrees, which perceived and recorded these ‘membership fees’ as being an integral part of and a prerequisite for the groups’ common activities. Civic parallels do exist. We now know that in Hellenistic Amorgos two more benefactors besides Kleophantos are attested to have financially supported the festival of Itonia, proclaiming that the participants were to be *asymboloi* or *ateleis ton symbolon*, ‘exempt from contributions’.¹⁷ Moving to a purely associative context, we find the Dionysiac artists in Cyprus (*CAPInv.* 1033) establishing a perpetual *asymbolos* festival in honour of their benefactor Isidoros: the association defined this event as one directly financed by the common treasury and not by individual contributions, as was normally expected to be done.¹⁸ The decree of the Tyrian merchants at Delos (*CAPInv.* 12) awarding to Patron the status of *asymbolos* and *aleitourgetos*, ‘exempt from compulsory services (to the association)’, recorded these privileges as being valid at every meeting of the association.¹⁹ A second-century BC decree issued by the Maroneian *therapeutai* (*CAPInv.* 937) declared the former priest Sokles to be

¹⁵ Durrbach and Radet 1886: 260–1 (for the same inscription, see *I.Rhod.Per.* 12). For Kleophantos, see *IG* XII.7 22, ll. 27–9. In the technical vocabulary of Greek corporate bodies, *symbole* denotes contributions imposed on the existing members. See Giannakopoulos 2013: 16–18.

¹⁶ Poland 1909: 494; Aneziri 2003: 182 n. 65.

¹⁷ *IG* XII.7 241 (Epinomides); *IG* XII Suppl. 330 (Agathinos). See Gauthier 1980: 206–7.

¹⁸ Le Guen 2001: I 308–10 no 66. See Aneziri 2003: 182.

¹⁹ *I.Delos* 1519, ll. 43–5. As far as the associative *leitourgiai* are concerned, we are in no position to know whether they were imposed only on the wealthiest associates or, as Foucart 1873: 44 has suggested, on all the members by some sort of rotation. Based on what we know of the civic *leitourgiai*, it could be argued that the associative ones were also imposed only on the wealthiest members. However, as we shall see below, the regular associative *eisphorai* and *symbolai* were paid by all the associates and, in this respect, they were manifestly different from their civic counterparts. Hence, in principle there is no reason to deny the possibility of associative *leitourgiai* being imposed on all the members. Admittedly, there is no evidence to support either of these hypotheses. In any case, the formulation of the decree for Marcus Minatius (see below n. 25) demonstrates that the *leiturgoi* of private associations were required to provide both personal work and financial support. In fact, the terms *leiturgoi* and *leiturgia* could denote the officials of associations. See *SEG* 41:74, ll. 27–8 (*Serapiastai* at Rhamnous; *CAPInv.* 350) and *SEG* 33:639, ll. 14–15 (*Sabazastai* at Rhodes; *CAPInv.* 2111). Hence *aleitourgesia* may refer to exemption from assuming such posts.

aleitourgetos kai aneiphoros pases eisphoras, ‘exempt from compulsory services and from all dues’, but at the same time emphasised the fact that the honorand was nonetheless entitled to take part in all the common affairs of the association.²⁰ Already in the late fourth century BC the *chous* (wine-contribution for banquets) from which Kalliades and Lysimachides – members of the *orgeones* of Amynos, Asclepius and Dexion (*CAPInv.* 229) – enjoyed *ateleia* was recorded as being applied to both of the association’s temples (*en amphoin toin hieroin*).²¹ The decree of the *orgeones* of Bendis (*CAPInv.* 230) explicitly ordered that the members’ annual payments of 2 drachmas, described with the verbs *δίδωμι*, ‘to give’, and *συμβάλλω*, ‘to collect’, were to be given to the religious officials, the *hieropoioi*, that is to say, to finance a collective sacrifice, as opposed to the individual ones mentioned at the beginning of the decree.²² Finally, the *phora*, ‘tribute’, of 6 drachmas to which the Athenian *Heroistai* (*CAPInv.* 357) were subject was also defined as a means to finance a communal event, as is indicated by the clause prescribing that the absent members should nonetheless pay, but without receiving their due share.²³

Admittedly, entrance-fees in particular and perhaps also the aforementioned *symbolai*, ‘contributions’, could produce a surplus that could potentially have been used to meet various irregular expenses.²⁴ However, this does not change the fact that, whenever the associative contributions and immunities are placed in a meaningful context by the associations themselves, they are advertised not as general subscriptions to be deposited in

²⁰ *I.Aeg. Thrace* E183.

²¹ *IG II²* 1252+999, ll. 11–12. On this association see Ferguson 1944: 86–91; Mikalson 1998: 145–6; Jones 1999: 254–6; Ismard 2010: 257–9; Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 43–7; Steinhauer 2014: 30–2.

²² *IG II²* 1361, ll. 17–20. See recently Arnaoutoglou 2015: 43–4.

²³ *IG II²* 1339, ll. 9–15. See Steinhauer 2014: 46. Based on the mention of the term *eranos* in the relevant clause, Foucart 1873: 42–3 argued that this was a monthly contribution.

²⁴ *P. Tebt.* I 118 (*CAPInv.* 1213) demonstrates that the common treasury could benefit from the surplus of contributions imposed for communal events such as banquets and feasts (see Arlt and Monson 2010: 121). It has been argued that the *Heroistai* and the *eranistai* from Paiania provided friendly loans to the associates (Raubitschek 1981: 97; Baslez 2006: 166–8; but see Arnaoutoglou 2003: 70–87 on the use of the term *eranos* for various kinds of associations), but if they did so, there is no evidence regarding the source of the money used for that purpose. Although Hellenistic associations frequently provided in various ways for the burial of their members (e.g. *IG II²* 1323 = *CAPInv.* 274; *IG II²* 1327 = *CAPInv.* 361; *IG II²* 1277 = *CAPInv.* 267; *IG XII.9* 1151 = *CAPInv.* 86; Marchand 2015 on Boeotia; Gabrielsen 1997: 123–5 on Rhodes; Maillot 2013: 207–10 on Cos; see also *P. Enteux.* 20 = *CAPInv.* 754, *P. Ryl.* IV 580 = *CAPInv.* 671 and *P. Ryl.* IV 590 = *CAPInv.* 674; discussion in van Nijf 1997: 50–3 and Steinhauer 2014: 113–18), there is no direct evidence linking entrance-fees or regular contributions with this practice. In fact, the purchase of a burial plot could be financed through the means of an irregular *epidosis*, ‘collection’ (Gabrielsen 1997: 125).

the common fund but rather as regularly levied payments in connection with and attached to the realisation of specific associative events.²⁵

The significance of this connection lies in the fact that these events had a well-defined spatial and temporal dimension, establishing a clear notion of a well-ordered associative space and time.²⁶ *Symbolai* may thus be seen as the result of rules that, by regulating access to this associative universe, articulated the reciprocal rights and duties both of the group vis-à-vis its members and of the members vis-à-vis the group. On the one hand, we find associative decisions that create, control, manage and offer material infrastructures, building space and opportunities, fixed in time, for the collective expression of religious piety. Within this framework the associations emerged as agents eager to publicly declare the transparent way in which they exploited the financial resources drawn from their members: contributions were always linked with pre-defined expenses of the collective.²⁷ On the other hand, we find that the members were entitled to make use of this associative space and time upon payments that were, at least implicitly, justified not only by reference to the contributors' status as associates but also – and in a much more emphatic way – in terms of their

²⁵ In this respect, the case of the *orgeones* of Bendis is highly indicative: they were more than willing to relieve themselves of the obligation to pay a *telos* 'dues', when they sacrificed as individuals. But this was not the case when the *orgeones* functioned as participants in a collective sacrifice organised by the group itself. To the aforementioned examples of immunities from contributions should be added the decree of the Berytian merchants at Delos (*CAPInv.* 9), awarding to the banker Marcus Minatius the right to be *aleitourgetos pases ascholias kai dapanes pases*, 'exempt from all obligations and costs' (*I.Delos* 1520, ll. 48–9). Moving to Rhodes, we find the *eranistai* of Adonis (*CAPInv.* 1612) honouring two more benefactors besides Telestas as *asymboloi*, granting them *ateleia* as well. See Pugliese Carratelli 1939/40: 147 no 1 for Sosikles and Demetrios. Five other Rhodian associations are equally known to have awarded an *ateleia* from all charges. See *IG XII.1* 155 (*CAPInv.* 10) and Maiuri 1925: no 46 (*CAPInv.* 2060; see also Gabrielsen 1994); *IG XII.1* 867 (*CAPInv.* 1821); Pugliese Carratelli 1939/40: 153 no 11 (*CAPInv.* 2049).

²⁶ As Arnaoutoglou 2003: 22 has eloquently remarked, associations 'set a rhythm of life for their members'. On regulations of space by associations, see Skaltsa in Chapter 5. The connection between members' financial contributions and associative space and time is highlighted in the rules of an association of worshippers of Zeus *Hypsistos* from Philadelphiea in Egypt (*P.Lond.* VII 2193 = *CAPInv.* 654): these rules prescribe monthly banquets in Zeus's sanctuary for all the *syneisphoroi*, 'contributing members'. The same connection is unsurprisingly manifest in records of extraordinary payments destined to support the associations' infrastructure or the realisation of communal events. For example, a third-century BC decree of the *Amphieraistai* of Rhamnous (*I.Rhamnous* 167 = *CAPInv.* 356) advertised the association's decision to invite its members to contribute at will to the rebuilding of certain parts of the sanctuary. Likewise, a decree issued by a Dionysiac *thiasos* at Hellenistic Teos (*SEG* 4:598 = *CAPInv.* 1684) referred to money given by the members for a festival in honour of the priestess Hediste, which seems to have been also financed by an endowment founded by the priestess. For a fragmentary decree concerning the organisation of an *epaggelia*, 'promise', by a Coan *thiasos*, see *IG XII.4* 1 125 (*CAPInv.* 1883).

²⁷ References to the accountability of associative officials (*IG II²* 1292 = *CAPInv.* 351; *Agora* 16 161 = *CAPInv.* 227) may be seen in the same light.

actual or anticipated presence in the various collective activities. Individual participation in the collective was not limited only to deliberating in the decision-making processes regarding the establishment of common events but also extended to an active involvement in bearing the cost of the execution of these decisions and the realisation of these events. Viewed in this light, *symbolai*, ‘contributions’, and *eisphorai*, ‘dues’, were envisaged as multi-functional tools of internal governance: they not only enabled the association to present itself as an independent, self-financing entity following rules that obeyed the principle of transparency, but they also promoted within the group a specific concept of membership based on commitment to constant active participation in all the different temporal and spatial aspects of associative life, which ensured the reproduction of the group as a living organism. The specific way in which the associates’ contributions were formalised, conceptualised and publicised expressed both the durable character of the ties that brought them together and the intensity of the association’s internal functions as a well-structured network of members.²⁸

It may, in a certain sense, seem natural to draw a similarity with analogous civic institutions and practices. The various mechanisms relating to the accountability of civic officials also highlighted the significance of financial transparency as a key element for the normal functioning of the city.²⁹ Paying taxes, justified in terms of civic suzerainty and property-rights on the various goods and resources that the citizens used, was a central element of citizen status.³⁰ As noted above, in demanding regular contributions private associations also acted as owners of communal space and time, that is to say, as micro-cities, while the payment of *symbolai* and *eisphorai* was a crucial element of the fundamentally participatory associative identity as well. Moreover, taxes as means of financing specific purposes and activities were levied by the Greek cities as well.³¹ However, there was a noteworthy difference that deserves some comment. Civic taxes were levied in proportion to property (as in the case of the Athenian *eisphora*) or to the extent to which each individual used the civic facilities and resources or proceeded to engage in commercial transactions

²⁸ On durability and intensity as features of social networks and private associations, see Arnaoutoglou 2011b: 43–4, Arnaoutoglou 2011a: 273–4 and Harland 2013a: 120. For contributions to Athenian demes as factors ‘reinforcing collective identity’, see Whitehead 1986: 151.

²⁹ Fröhlich 2004.

³⁰ See Chankowski 2007: 303–6; Liddel 2007: 210–307 (262–82 for financial obligations).

³¹ Gabrielsen 2013: 335–7.

(as in the case of the percentage or *ad valorem* taxes).³² Not all the citizens were called upon to pay the same taxes and not all the citizens liable to the same tax paid the same amount of money. However, associative *symbolai* and *eisphorai* demanded a fixed uniform sum from all.³³ In this respect, they were much closer to the various payments and offerings demanded by all those who, as private individuals, consulted oracles, were initiated in mysteries and performed sacrifices.³⁴ It seems that these religious ‘taxes’ had a much greater influence on the way associations regulated their members’ financial obligations than the concepts defining civic taxation. This uniformity of regular associative *symbolai* may, as a practice, seem, proportionately, to have been a heavier burden on the poor than on the rich, but in reality it worked the other way around. A wealthy Athenian citizen could boast about properly paying his *eisphora*, turning compulsion into an act of euergetism and highlighting his superiority and excellence within the citizen-body.³⁵ Regular associative *symbolai* and *eisphorai* left no room for such claims. They reflected equality, not internal hierarchy. It was mainly the extraordinary collections of funds that could permit the display of individual superiority, in terms of higher voluntary contributions.³⁶

Although associative euergetism did not operate within the framework of regularly levied contributions, it exercised a considerable impact on associative ‘fiscal’ rules: the immunities awarded as honours in response to

³² See Chankowski 2007: 307–19. On the Athenian *eisphora*, see Rhodes 1982: 1–13; Gabrielsen 1987; Christ 2007a: 146–8.

³³ Possible exceptions may be observed in late Hellenistic Egypt. The accounts of two associations record individual contributions of different amounts, which are sometimes called *symbolai*. They also refer to *asymboloi* members: see *SB III* 7182 (*CAPInv.* 856) and *P. Tebt.* III.2 894 (*CAPInv.* 863). It is not entirely clear, however, what kind of payments was included in these lists. As it is well known, the regulations of Egyptian associations prescribed additional payments from those members occupying associative offices (de Cenival 1972: 207–8; Monson 2006). In fact, the regulations in question (see Table 2.1) often drew a sharp difference between monthly contributions and ‘fees of office’; this difference was explicitly expressed even in lists of members and payments such as *P. Prague Dem.* 1 (*CAPInv.* 1690), where we find officials contributing strikingly higher sums than ordinary members. It appears that the concept of proportional ‘taxation’ was not unknown to Egyptian associations. It was institutionalised but functioned in relation not to income or property but to possession of associative offices. See also below n. 74.

³⁴ On these payments, see Sokolowski 1954: 153–9. ³⁵ Liddel 2007: 276.

³⁶ Hence, two lists of contributors to *thiasoi* (or a single one?) at Hellenistic Knidos (I. *Knidos* 39 and 23), with sums ranging from 3 to 5 drachmas and from 5 to 300 drachmas, respectively, seem to have recorded extraordinary *epaggelilai*, ‘promises (of money)’ (cf. I. *Knidos* 39, l. 29). See *CAPInv.* 836 and 839. It should be noted, however, that the aforementioned list of contributors to the *Amphieraistai* of Rhamnous (n. 26 above) recorded only names and not the donated sums of money. In this particular case, possible unequal contributions did not result in a publicly recorded expression of individual superiority.

benefactions actually constituted deviations from universal associative norms and created internal hierarchies.³⁷ A comparison with the similar tactics adopted by the polis illustrates this point. While private associations known to have offered immunities honoured their own members in this way, their hosting cities normally did not treat immunities as honours for their own citizens. Admittedly, Demosthenes' speech *Against Leptines* is a valuable testimony of the honorary immunities awarded to Athenian citizens, but the Athenian orator makes it absolutely clear that these fiscal exemptions concerned only specific non-military liturgies and not regularly levied *eisphorai*.³⁸ Athenian tribes are also known to have rarely honoured some of their members with exemptions, but again these concerned liturgies.³⁹ Hence, although this Athenian practice may be considered as a parallel to the aforementioned exemptions from associative *leitourgiai*, 'compulsory services', it can hardly be viewed as such to the exemptions from the regular associative *symbolai/eisphorai* or to the *ateleia* from the regular contribution to a collective banquet given by the *orgeones* of Amyntos, Asclepius and Dexion (*CAPInv.* 229) to two of their own co-associates.

Within this framework of deviations from standard associative rules as a form of honour, even the regulations regarding entrance-fees could be sometimes overlooked. In a second-century BC honorific decree issued by a Delian *synodos* (*CAPInv.* 859), the honorands were awarded several rather common honours, including the status of *aleitourgos*, but were also admitted into the association without having to pay the regular *eisodion*, 'entry fee'.⁴⁰ Although such exceptions do not seem to be as frequent as the immunities from *symbolai/eisphorai*, more impressive privileges at odds with normal admission procedures are also attested. A decree of a *synodos* of *geouchoi*, 'landowners', of Psenamosis (*CAPInv.* 38) in Ptolemaic Egypt admitted into the group the benefactor Paris, donor of a plot of land, declaring him *asymbolos*, *aleitourgetos* and *aneisphoros* but also awarding him the right to introduce three new members into the group without any

³⁷ On this aspect of associative euergetism, see Arnaoutoglou 2003: 147–53.

³⁸ Dem. 20.18, 20.26–8. According to the Athenian orator, such *ateleiai* had been awarded to Konon and Chabrias (Dem. 20.68–79). On this law, see Rhodes 1982: 13; Gauthier 1985: 112–13; Gabrielsen 1987: 15; Christ 2007a: 151–2. On exemptions, see also Hansen 1991: 114. Those given to orphans, archons, disabled persons and associations did not have an honorific character.

³⁹ Evidence for fiscal exemptions given by tribes and demes in Migeotte 2010: 59–60 nn. 20–1. Among the eleven inscriptions cited, only three concern exemptions given as honours to members of the honouring parties (*IG II²* 1140, *IG II²* 1147 and *SEG* 23:78).

⁴⁰ *I.Délos* 1521, ll. 16–19. The honorands were also declared *aleitourgetoi*.

charge.⁴¹ Similarly, the Athenian *Heroistai* (*CAPInv.* 357) gave to those who contributed 30 drachmas the right to introduce new members to the group.⁴²

Clearly, the Athenian *Heroistai* went significantly further than the Egyptian *geouchoi*, giving to the same privilege a fixed, institutionalised form: the deviation from the traditional admission-rules was not a decision taken ad hoc in response to an individual's services, but a general rule applicable to all those meeting well-defined criteria. This practice potentially deprived the association of the ability to determine collectively who was going to enter the body, allowing this fundamental function to be exercised by generous contributors taking individual decisions that had a significant effect on the composition of the association. The nature of the group in question may partly explain this: it was devoted to the cult of three distinguished Athenian citizens from a single family of Marathon and was probably presided over by the son of one of these heroised figures.⁴³ At least some of those willing to contribute 30 drachmas were surely relatives of the deceased heroes. These persons were both able and willing to open the group to their clients and personal connections and to promote even further a cult likely to enhance their own influence in the city.⁴⁴ Hence, the fundamental equality of the associates, materially expressed in their uniform contributions, was combined with a possibility of internal hierarchisation. There were of course methods that, if adopted, could effectively counterbalance this institutionalised superiority of certain individuals within the association. In AD 64, the *Gerousia* of Akmonia gave to a certain Demades the right to introduce an *asymbolos* member to the body, but his choice was subsequently sanctioned by vote.⁴⁵ Whether a similar approval was also envisaged in the decree of the *Heroistai* cannot be established, as the stele breaks off at that point and the whole context is not entirely clear.

⁴¹ *I.Prose* 40, ll. 31–4. For a detailed analysis of this inscription, see Paganini in press a.

⁴² *JG* II² 1339, ll. 15–18: ὁμοίως δὲ ἔδοξε ἐμβιβάζειν ἐξεῖναι τοῖς [τελοῦσιν ἔραν]ον δραχμῶν τριάκοντα κα[ί] — — — — — ὦν ἕξ δραχμῶν καὶ μὴ π. . . See the translation of this section in Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 218 and Arnaoutoglou 2003: 99 n. 34, who speaks of an entrance-fee.

⁴³ See n. 13 above.

⁴⁴ See Ismard 2010: 362, who rightly remarks that the location of the stele erected by these *Heroistai*, i.e. the sanctuary of Athena in the centre of the *asty*, 'town', indicates that this particular group sought to give an as widely public as possible dimension to the memory of its associative heroes.

⁴⁵ Giannakopoulos 2013: 18–23 on *SEG* 56:1489.

The Imperial Period

A group of inscriptions dated to the second and third centuries AD allows us to follow the evolution of the associative rules under examination here and to trace various kinds of combinations. These inscriptions include:

- a. A decree issued by the *Herakliastai* at Limnai from Paiania (*CAPInv.* 349), regulating various issues of the group's function.⁴⁶
- b. The well-known law of the *Iobacchoi* (*CAPInv.* 339).⁴⁷
- c. A decree of the Sacred *Gerousia* of Asclepius at Hyettus in Boeotia (*CAPInv.* 984) engraved on a stele, which also recorded two donations of small estates and a list of members.⁴⁸
- d. The foundation charter of a second-century AD association of *eranistai* from Paiania (*CAPInv.* 308).⁴⁹

The offerings of wheat flour ordained in l. 36 of the decree of the *Herakliastai* (διδότησαν δὲ τὴν σιμίδαλι πάντες τῇ δημοσίᾳ χοίνικι [.], 'all shall give the wheat flour according to the measure of the public choenix . . .'), have to be combined with the feast days to which the preceding lines 30–3 refer.⁵⁰ The *phorai*, 'dues', mentioned in lines 42–3 are explicitly defined as means of financing the *ekdoseis*, 'outgoings', made by the treasurer of the body (τὰς δὲ φορὰς καταφέρῃν τῷ ταμίᾳ ἐπάναγκες ἰς τὰς ἐγδόσεις, 'it is compulsory to hand over the dues to the treasurer for the expenses').⁵¹ Likewise, the participation of the *Iobacchoi* in the various meetings of the group depended on the payment of a well-defined *phora* for the purchase of wine, non-compliance bringing exclusion.⁵² In both

⁴⁶ *SEG* 31:122. See also the bibliography and the discussion in Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: no 50.

⁴⁷ *IG* II² 1368. The vast bibliography on the *Iobacchoi* is assembled in Jaccotett 2003: II no 5 and Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: no 51. As far as the admission rules are concerned see, *inter alia*, the recent treatment in Ebel 2004: 144–6.

⁴⁸ *IG* VII 2808. ⁴⁹ *IG* II² 1369. Bibliography in Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: no 49.

⁵⁰ On these feast days, see Lupu 2005: 187.

⁵¹ Raubitschek 1981: 97 thought that these *ekdoseis* refer to loans made by the *eranos* to its members, while Lupu 2005: 189 prefers to see them as contracts signed by the association for the provision of sacrificial victims and wood. Accepting this interpretation would mean that the contributions given by the associates to the *tamias* would have been used by the latter in order to pay the contractors. A Rhodian association (*CAPInv.* 2032) is attested to have honoured a benefactor for giving money to a bank account (ἐνθημα) opened by the association so as to finance contracts (ἐγδοσεις) let out for works in the collective's buildings. See *IG* XII.1 937, ll. 10–11 with Bogaert 1968: 215–16 and Fraser 1972a: 116–17.

⁵² *IG* II² 1368, ll. 42–9. See Ebel 2004: 145–6. It was perhaps from this contribution that the secretary appointed by the *tamias*, 'treasurer', was exempted (*IG* II² 1368, ll. 155–60). Another similar exemption concerns the *ateleia* and *aleitourgesia*, 'exemption from dues and compulsory services', awarded to a lifelong priest, either upon entering the association or upon assuming the

these cases, the prescribed *phorai* have to be understood as payments in cash, though the exact amount is not given. As in the Hellenistic period, private associations continued to link associative ‘taxes’ with the notions of active participation and financial transparency,⁵³ the members’ contributions being explicitly attached to specific associative events and activities.⁵⁴

The major change has to do with the place occupied by the principle of heredity in the admission rules. However, it should be stressed that there was no uniformity. In certain cases, family lineage allowed for lower entrance-fees. Thus, any member of the *Herakliastai* wishing to introduce his son was obliged to contribute 16½ minas of pork, while other individuals wishing to enter the association were bound to contribute 33 minas of pork.⁵⁵ According to the law of the *Iobacchoi*, the members’ sons were obliged to pay an entrance-fee of 25 denarii, while the fee for the members’ brothers was fixed at 50 denarii, and those indicatively styled as *me apo patros*, ‘not (receiving membership) from the father’, had to pay 50 denarii and to offer a libation. Furthermore, sons of members were to pay half the regular monthly contribution of wine until they reached puberty.⁵⁶ However, in the case of the *Gerousia* of Hyettus, a filial relationship with a member brought a complete exception: if any member died, the *Gerousia* had to elect his replacement from among his sons, newcomers paying no entrance-fee at all. If the deceased member had no sons, one of his closest relatives was allowed to enter the body, subject to an admission-fee of

priesthood, by a Megarian *synodos* of *thiasotai* of Dionysus (*CAPInv.* 1527) in the second century AD. See Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 290–2 no 60 and SEG 61:323bis.

⁵³ Another relevant example comes from Egypt. The charter of a private association from Tebtynis (*P.Mich.V* 243, dated to AD 14–37; *CAPInv.* 1408) prescribed monthly dues of 12 drachmas for the organisation of a monthly banquet. Moreover, several documents with accounts of private associations bear headings that explicitly link individual contributions with expenses for common events. See n. 74 below. The contributions in wine recorded in *O.Theb.* 142 (accounts of the *synodos* of the god Amenothes; *CAPInv.* 1385) were certainly used for banquets and other events.

⁵⁴ Once again, there is no direct evidence of any link between these payments and the provision of cash for loans and funerals. Ebel 2004: 145–6 duly highlights the different use of membership fees between the *Iobacchoi* and the *cultores Dianae et Antinoi* from Lanuvium (*CIL* XIV 2112; see Bendlin 2011). Nevertheless, the Augustales of Cassandreia who provided 75 denarii for the burial of their co-associates κατά τὸ δόγμα, ‘as per decree’ (Juhel and Nigdelis 2015: 103–7; see also *AE* 1991 no 1424 on a *collegium urbanorum* giving 50 denarii for the burial of a member) are very likely to have included such a (regular?) contribution among the obligations assumed by their members.

⁵⁵ *SEG* 31:122, ll. 38–9. This was an entrance-fee in kind, presumably intended to provide for a communal meal (see Lupu 2005: 188, who remarks that the minas refer to the weight of the animal, and Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 239–40). The fact that the relevant clause immediately followed the one relating to the sacrificial victim offered to Heracles supports this conclusion. Thus, the contribution imposed upon each entering member ultimately functioned as another opportunity for organising an event to bring together the associates.

⁵⁶ *JG* II² 1368, ll. 37–41 and 53–5.

50 denarii. Finally, an outsider entering the body had to pay an entrance-fee amounting to 100 denarii.⁵⁷ It should also be noted that in an inscription regarding a Chalcidian *synodos* centred on the local gymnasium, certain new members were stated as having been enrolled ἀπὸ κληρονομιῶν, ‘by hereditary right’, other newcomers being admitted ἀπὸ ἡβητηρίας, ‘chosen from among the former epebebes’.⁵⁸

Diversity also characterises the institution of *dokimasia*, ‘examination, scrutiny’. It was a necessary condition even for the sons of the *Iobacchoi*, as no one could enter the group unless his worthiness and suitability were tested by a process that involved an individual vote by each member.⁵⁹ But in the *Gerousia* of Hyettus, only those completely unrelated to the existing members were tested by the collective. This is a point worth emphasising. The association in question consisted of a small number of members, perhaps belonging to a circle of inter-related nuclear families.⁶⁰ The choice of the group’s name was a deliberate strategic move aimed at placing this association on a par both with the respectable ‘public’ *gerousiai*, ‘councils of the elders’, widespread in Asia Minor but sporadically attested on the Greek mainland, and, rather more directly, with organised groups of elders in the Peloponnese, affiliated with important local deities and mythical figures.⁶¹ Clearly, this small religious association envisaged itself as a highly esteemed family organ devoted to an important local cult.⁶² Hence, it was only natural that descent was conceived as an indisputable proof of a

⁵⁷ IG VII 2808 B, ll. 1–12. For a brief analysis of these clauses, see Oliver 1941: 29–30; Roesch 1982: 159; Van Rossum 1988: 66–8.

⁵⁸ IG XII.9 916. See Giannakopoulos 2012: 212–16. An inscription from Smyrna (*I.Smyrna* 731; *CAPInv.* 1325), dated around AD 80, lists new members of a Dionysiac association, probably a local branch of the oecumenical association, who had paid the entrance-fee, but also refers to *patromystai*, ‘sons of members’, who might have paid a lower fee. On entrance-fees to the worldwide association, see Table 2.1. The 850 denarii paid by a high-priest (*Pap.Agon.* 3, l. 15 = *CAPInv.* 1912) may not correspond to the fee normally demanded from newcomers. Regular contributions are implied by Hadrian’s decision that members awarded with Roman citizenship should continue to fulfill their financial obligations to the *synodos*. See SEG 56.1359 (*CAPInv.* 991).

⁵⁹ IG II² 1368, ll. 35–7 and 53–5. Recent discussion in Ebel 2004: 144. As already noted, an individual vote was well in accordance with the Athenian civic traditions; the connection of the *Iobacchoi* with the sphere of Athenian civic politics has been recently emphasised by Suys 2005: 205 and 213.

⁶⁰ See on this point Roesch 1982: 158–9, who bases his conclusions on the names included in the members’ list.

⁶¹ See Giannakopoulos 2008: 43–56, 289, 300–2 and 424–7. The difference between the *Gerousia* of Hyettus and the ‘civic’ ones is amply demonstrated by Van Rossum 1988: 66–8 contra Oliver 1941: 30. On ‘The Argive *gerontes* descended from Danaos and Hypermetra’ in Argos and ‘The sacred *gerontes* of Upesia descended from Kresphontes’ in Messene, see now Spawforth 2012: 169–79 with further bibliography. Similar tactics were adopted by professional groups in Philadelphia and Saittai, called *phylai*, ‘tribes’ (van Nijf 1997: 184).

⁶² Roesch 1982: 157–60.

newcomer's moral qualities; that is why, while relatives of members were simply elected, scrutiny was restricted to those completely unrelated to the existing members.⁶³

Conversely, family lineage appears to play no formal role in the admission rules of the *eranistai* from Paiania, an association explicitly formed on the basis of the bonds of friendship that united the original members.⁶⁴ The recruitment of new ones was the result of a process that, as in the case of the *Iobacchoi*, equated selection with the testing (note again the use of the verb *dokimazein*) of the moral quality and piousness of the candidates.⁶⁵ Admittedly, this examination was not performed by an assembly of the collective but delegated to a group of officials.⁶⁶ However, most of them were appointed by lot. Moreover, the parallel cases of the *Iobacchoi* and the *Herakliastai* of Paiania indicate that the basis for allotment was broad enough to include all the associates.⁶⁷ Consequently, it is quite safe to conclude that the *dokimasia* of new *eranistai* retained its traditional democratic character.⁶⁸ One cannot escape noticing that Athenian private associations still valued and preserved democratic procedures associated with the Classical Athenian democracy, such as sortition from among all the members of the community, even at a time when the host polis had abandoned them.⁶⁹

The following clause in the foundation charter of the *eranistai* prescribed that the *eranos* should be increased by means of generosities (*philotimiai*). This has been viewed as a reference to outsiders promising

⁶³ The difference in the vocabulary is in this respect highly indicative. The *Gerousia* 'elects' (ἔληται) sons of members, but an outsider is 'tested' (δοκιμα[σθ]ῆ). See *IG VII* 2808 B, ll. 5–10. It should be noted that in the familial association established by Diomedon on Cos (above n. 10), a process of *dokimasia* concerned only the *nothoi*, 'illegitimate sons'.

⁶⁴ See Arnaoutoglou 2003: 129. Sokolowski 1969: 104–5 argued that this association assumed the cost of its members' burials.

⁶⁵ *JG II*² 1369 ll. 31–8. On the common points between the *Iobacchoi* and the *eranistai* from Paiania in respect of the examination of new members, see Arnaoutoglou 2003: 99 and Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 231 and 234.

⁶⁶ A point already noted by Poland 1909: 276 and Feyel 2009: 374.

⁶⁷ For the *Iobacchoi*, see *JG II*² 1368, ll. 125–7: magistrates appointed by lot from among all the members. For the *Herakliastai* see also *SEG* 31:122, ll. 22–9: executive posts filled by lot from among all the members when those appointed refused to serve.

⁶⁸ On the democratic character of sortition, see indicatively Demont 2003: 39–44 and Taylor 2007.

⁶⁹ Magistrates and councillors were not allotted in Imperial Athens. Moreover, not all the citizens were eligible for these posts. See Geagan 1967: 3–5, 17–19, 75–6; Oliver 1970: 57–61; Sartre 1991: 221–2; Muñiz Grijalvo 2005: 271–2 on priesthoods. This contrast may invite us to rethink the implications of the whole relation between private associations and the imperial Greek polis, the first being perhaps more 'democratic' than the second in terms of organisation and function. In this respect, the associations' size and social composition need also to be taken into account. But this is a topic that cannot be treated here.

to provide contributions and hence achieve membership of the association.⁷⁰ However, it is equally probable that the clause on the *philotimiai* referred not to an additional admission rule but to contributions given by the existing *eranistai*, which were consequently viewed as means to increase the funds available in the common treasury and to enhance the overall situation of the association.⁷¹ In this respect, the aforementioned clause may have constituted an open call to all the *eranistai* to function as associative *euergetai*. The important point is that, whether referring to newcomers' entrance-fees or to members' contributions, the clause in question prescribed no standard amount of money. At the same time, however, voluntarism, an integral part of any *philotimia*, took the form of compliance with a formal rule integrated in the *nomos*, 'law', of the *eranistai*. This reflects the basic concept which characterises the *eranos* in question: *philia*, 'friendship'. If we view associative payments not only instrumentally, as sources of income, but also sociologically, as proofs of devotion, we can see how commitment to a group based on a *philia* that was stressed as being voluntary was conceptualised as an obligation that could not be measured in terms of fixed sums of money.⁷² Instead, it demanded – just like a civic *epidosis*, 'collection of donations' – the best possible of what a *philos*, 'friend', could offer, irrespective of his family origin.⁷³ In fact, the provision in question prevented the potential exclusion of poorer *philoι*, 'friends', while it encouraged wealthier ones to contribute as much as they wished or could afford.⁷⁴

⁷⁰ IG II² 1369, ll. 39–40: ἀξανάτω δ[ε] | ὁ ἔρανος ἐπιφιλοτιμίας, 'may the *eranos* be increased by means of generous acts'. On the interpretation of this clause, see Robert 1979: 159; Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 233.

⁷¹ For parallels of a similar use of the verb ἀξεῖν, 'to increase, augment', or its derivatives in an associative context, see IG II² 1297 l. 5–6 (a donation of a stele 'increases' the *koinon*) and IG II² 1343, l. 18 (a treasurer 'increases' the common fund) and l. 40 (those who will imitate the honorand will 'increase' the *synodos*).

⁷² Arnaoutoglou 1998b: 70 rightly remarks that the individual will of the original members was highlighted as the sole driving force for the creation of the association.

⁷³ Thus, although friendship in the ancient world was a bond conceived to be passed on from one generation to the next, the *eranos* in question prescribed no reduced payments for sons of members. On altruism and spontaneous generosity between equals as a feature of friendship, see Konstan 1997: 51–82.

⁷⁴ A *nomos*, 'law', issued by the *thiasos Amandou* at Physcus (IG IX.1².3 670 = *CAPInv.* 437; see also Kloppenborg and Ascough 2011: 292–4 no 61) fixed the members' financial contributions at the rate of 14 obols and no less. Although this stipulation was obviously targeted against those not paying their entire share, it also left room for those willing to contribute more. Unequal individual contributions are mentioned in several Egyptian papyri of the Imperial period as well. *P.Mich.* V 246 (AD 25–56; *CAPInv.* 1276) records contributions to the *synodos tou Harpochratou* in Tebtynis, with amounts ranging from 10 to 24 silver drachmas. *P.Lund* IV 11 (AD 169/70; *CAPInv.* 1860) includes a λόγος δ[ε] [ἀπάν]ης στολισμ[οῦ] θεῶν Διο[σ]κ[ο]ύρων, 'account of the

It has been widely held that in every period the associates' descendants and relatives constituted an important source from which new members were admitted.⁷⁵ This is, after all, quite a natural aspect of all such groups, generated by the various mechanisms of socialisation that characterise them. But there was an important novelty in the Imperial period that should be highlighted: it was only now that the privileged treatment of the existing members' relatives was formally integrated into sets of rules prescribing reduced entrance-fees. Are we to see these rules as means of materially facilitating the continuous presence of certain already tested families in the respective associations? A positive answer would presuppose that the reduced entrance-fees represented a significant financial benefit, but, although this may be at least partly true in the case of the sons of poorer associates, it is not necessarily so in the case of those of wealthier ones. Conversely, there can be no doubt that these lower entrance-fees carried an important symbolic significance: they formally linked the perpetuation of the collective's function and respectability with the expectation that the descendants of its members would carry on what was envisaged as a family tradition and duty.⁷⁶ Admittedly, this was in accordance with the general social and political climate of the Imperial period, similar tendencies towards a regularisation of the continuing presence of certain families through lower entrance-fees being observed in certain illustrious semi-public bodies, like the *hymnodoi*, 'choral singers', of Augustus and the goddess Roma at Pergamum (*CAPInv.* 1653), and, more importantly, but in a rather different way, in the civic councils as well.⁷⁷

expense for the vestment ritual of the gods Dioscuri', with payments varying from 20 drachmas (3 contributors) to 100 drachmas (6 contributors), including 10 contributions of 60 drachmas and 1 of 80 drachmas (it remains uncertain whether this was an organised religious association). *P.Athen.* 41 (first cent. AD; *CAPInv.* 1440), labelled as ἐκθεσις οἰνικῶν συνόδου ὄνηλατῶν τῶν ἕως Φαρμουθ(ι) 13, 'list of the expenses for the wine of the *synodos* of donkey-drivers up until 13 Pharmouthi', also records different payments for wine, apparently made during a period of time (a year?) until the 13th of the month Pharmouthi. The headings of these documents raise the possibility that they did not include (only?) regular membership fees, but other payments as well, such as fees of office (see above n. 33) or contributions destined to cover specific needs, perhaps levied in accordance with individual associative status (at least two of the contributors in *P.Mich.* V 246 were officials titled *kleisarchai*). The heading of the accounts of an association of sacred victors (λόγος τῶν δεδωκότων[ν] ἱερονικῶν) is equally inconclusive as to the nature of the payments included: *P.Oslo* III 144 (AD 272–275; *CAPInv.* 1381).

⁷⁵ Poland 1909: 275–6 and 299–300; Arnaoutoglou 2003: 35–6 and 63 (references to Isaeus 2 (*On the Estate of Menekles*) 14 and Isaeus 9 (*On the Estate of Astyphilos*) 30); Harland 2013a: 19.

⁷⁶ Cf. Arnaoutoglou 2003: 96.

⁷⁷ On the *hymnodoi*, see *I.Pergamon* 374 D, ll. 13–19. Price 1984: 90 observes that this was an exclusively elite association with extremely high entrance-fees, which, however, were considerably lower for the old members' sons. Similar provisions are included in two other Pergamene documents (Hepding 1907: 293–6 nos 18–19) regulating admission into associations (*CAPInv.*

This emphasis on the conservative values of family tradition, which were widely recognised in contemporary civic discourse, may be seen as another reflection of the tendency on the part of associations to gain respectability by emulating models drawn from political institutions.⁷⁸ It also highlights another factor frequently mentioned by recent scholarship: the extent to which private associations functioned as loci of relationships, complementary but not alternative to the ones fostered within family and kinship units.⁷⁹ We may thus observe the integration of informal family networks within a wider formal network provided by the associative structures and activities. Also of particular interest is the precise form that the privileged treatment of the associates' descendants took and its implications. As is well known, by receiving larger portions of food and higher sums of money in public banquets and distributions, councillors and gerousiasts were publicly viewed as persons of high civic status. In an inverse but similar way, the reduced entrance-fees paid by the associates' descendants undoubtedly gave the existing members a sense of superior identity, highlighting what was perceived as their and the entire collective's elevated status vis-à-vis the outside world.⁸⁰

Nevertheless, the rules favouring hereditary membership did not challenge the control exercised by the entire collective, at least at the final stage of the admission procedures. The *dokimasia* functioned as a weapon in the hands of the *Iobacchoi*, which they could potentially use to rule out any unsuitable future member. Even in the *Gerousia* at Hyettus, which was restricted in number and orientated towards specific families, it was the body that chose who among the deceased's sons or relatives were to be

1659), which may be identified as the local *gerousia* and the council (Van Rossum 1988: 68–77 and 239–40; Ventroux 2017: 114). In the first case, sons of presumably ex-members who had participated in the association for at least five years paid 50 denarii as an entrance-fee. However, if a son entered the association while his father was also a member or if his father had been an associate for less than five years, the newcomer paid the whole entrance-fee, the amount of which is not preserved on the stone. In the well-documented Bithynian case, a reduced *decurionatus honorarius*, 'honorary office of decurion', is not attested, only the determination of the *censores*, 'censors', to select first and foremost the descendants of 'honourable families'. See Sherwin-White 1966: 721–2; Fernoux 2004: 142–5; Bekker-Nielsen 2008: 67; Madsen 2009: 36–8; Fernoux 2011: 350.

⁷⁸ On family tradition in the civic discourse, see Gauthier 1985: 58 and Fernoux 2007.

⁷⁹ Bendlin 2011: 252–3 with further bibliography.

⁸⁰ Ebel 2004: 144; however, her conclusion that the reduced entrance-fees conveyed the message that the admission of outsiders was undesirable is rather problematic (see my remarks in the last paragraph of this section).

admitted.⁸¹ Poland found this curious.⁸² In fact it was not: although family lineage obviously mattered, priority was given to the collective, self-defined and self-advertised to the outside world as a union of equal members sharing an honorific status achieved after a thorough examination.⁸³

Moreover, the increased significance of the hereditary principle in the Imperial period did not lead to the transformation of associations into exclusively family groups. On the contrary, every association on which we have adequate information envisaged the admittance of outsiders as well. The higher entrance-fees demanded from them show how this admittance was conceptualised: these persons might not have been the heirs of a long-standing commitment to the common cause, but they were willing (and required) to counterbalance this lack by offering more and by exhibiting their *eunoia*, 'good-will', and *philotimia*, 'zeal, generosity', so as to acquire full membership on an equal footing. In this way, not only could the accepting body's decision be legitimised but a not insignificant sense of personal superiority and psychological satisfaction could also be offered to these newcomers, (self-) perceived as having achieved admission on their personal merit, as associative small-scale *euergetai*.

Final Remarks

Due to restraints of space, I have consciously avoided so far discussing a crucial topic – namely, whether the level of the fees set by associations could actually deter candidates from applying for membership. However, certain methodological remarks are necessary. The evidence presented above raises the question of how expensive participation in private associations was and how rich associates had to be. In this respect, several factors should be taken into account. As noted above, the various financial obligations imposed by associations could have worked as an additional informal selection mechanism, potentially discouraging or even excluding poor outsiders from attempting to become members. Moreover, the rules

⁸¹ The formulation of the relevant section in *IG VII 2808 B*, ll. 1–10 clearly demonstrates that no precedence was given to the first-born or to the closest relative. The choice of the newcomer, if more than one candidate existed, was in the hands of the body as a whole.

⁸² Poland 1909: 300.

⁸³ Undergoing a process of *dokimasia* was required for all the newcomers in the already mentioned Pergamene association *CAPInv. 1659*, even for the sons of old members. *I.Smyrna 218* contains a particularly interesting – in fact the only – mention of *dokimasia* in a professional association: the *sympiosis ton sypinadon* (probably workers of flax) granted burial in the association's grave chamber to members who had undergone examination (*CAPInv. 1138*).

prescribing the regular payment of membership fees could have driven existing members facing economic difficulties out of an association. Finally, not all associations were equally burdensome. Obviously, the very existence of entrance- and membership-fees suggests that the members of the associations mentioned in this chapter were persons with adequate means, willing to invest a portion of their income in achieving and maintaining their associative status.⁸⁴ Conversely, rather subjective factors such as a strong desire to be part of an association could potentially lead persons of rather modest means to acquire and sustain membership. One cannot escape noticing that any attempt to quantify all this is extremely difficult. It demands a lengthy analysis, taking into consideration factors such as wages, net output and subsistence levels, which are by definition highly uncertain and probably quite variable in space and time. The value of such an enterprise is indisputable but lies beyond the scope of the present investigation.

In terms of content, procedures and symbolic messages, the rules of private associations on admission and regular financial contributions displayed a tendency not only to respond to vital internal needs but also to construct in various ways a respectable collective identity, perceived as such both by the members and the outside world. A creative and flexible use of civic models highlighted the notions of transparency in the exploitation of financial resources and of responsible active involvement in common affairs; the principles of participation and equality were combined with – but not undermined by – a sense of hierarchy, created by ‘legitimate’ deviations from standard rules that took the form of individual immunities, rights to introduce new members and, in the Imperial period, reduced entrance-fees for the members’ relatives. Two points should be stressed. First, the egalitarian principle of a newcomer’s examination by the collective remained formally and officially valid even in the Imperial period, in accordance with various democratic survivals in the civic sphere, which coexisted with – but were not eliminated by – widespread tendencies towards oligarchisation.⁸⁵ Second, while the reduced entrance-fees levied on the existing members’ relatives functioned as marks of a superior status enjoyed by the associates and their families as well, the higher entrance-fees for other newcomers may be equally seen as mechanisms through which the admission of an individual with no family tradition was experienced by all the parties involved as an honourable distinction.

⁸⁴ Monson 2006: 224–8 on the members of Egyptian religious associations in the Fayyum.

⁸⁵ See indicatively Pleket 1998: 206–12 and van Nijf and Alston 2011: 9–14. See also above n. 69.

The *orgeones* of Bendis recruited new members from a wider network of people who had already integrated the cult of Bendis into their individual set of religious beliefs and practices. Other cult associations, as well as the *eranistai* from Paiania, also viewed individuals integrated into networks based on kinship, personal contacts and friendship as potential new members and took steps to formally encourage their admission. In this respect, private associations may be viewed as formally organised networks of members that depended on wider informal networks of related people and volunteers in order to ensure their perpetuity in time.

At a different level, the concepts of transparency, respectability, participation, egalitarianism and hierarchy, being widely accepted social and civic values, formed ‘ties’ that brought each individual association into contact with other similar structures and with the polis itself. Admittedly, these conceptual ‘ties’ were abstract and imaginary, in the sense that they involved a movement of ideas and practices, not official contacts and interpersonal relations.⁸⁶ But they may be seen as complementing the more formal bonds between private associations and public institutions and the people who controlled them, demonstrated by the place occupied by the former in the award of honours and in various public ceremonies.⁸⁷ This aspect of the associative admission and ‘fiscal’ rules enables us – and presumably the inhabitants of the Greek cities as well – to regard private associations as well-structured *koinoniai*, ‘communities’, forming part of a wider, diverse and plural *politike koinonia*, ‘political community’.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ On the concept of ties linking different nodes that form parts of a network and its applicability in ancient history, see Malkin, Constantakopoulou and Panagopoulou 2007; Rutherford 2007: 26–7; Vlassopoulos 2007b: 12–13.

⁸⁷ See, *inter alia*, van Nijf 1997: 73–206 and Harland 2013a: 71–139.

⁸⁸ On the use of these Aristotelian concepts within the framework of a network analysis, see Vlassopoulos 2007a: 71–96. Cf. Ustinova 2005: 189.