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CONTENTS

STUDIES

ANCIENT HISTORY

Vasileios SPANOS
DELINEATION OF THE EARTH'S BEST SON. 3

John Brendan KNIGHT
POWER, POSITION, AND PRACTICE. MILESIAN ELITES ON THE MOVE. 17

Stephen DeCASIEN
NAVAL RAM PORTRAYALS IN ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME. 38

Kublay KOCAK
THE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF ANATOLIA IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE: TRADE, AGRICULTURE, AND URBAN CENTERS. 53

ARCHAEOLOGY

Yusuf POLAT
TRACES OF RITUAL: AN ANALYSIS OF THE ROCK-CUT SANCTUARY AT ESKİŞEHİR YAZILIKAYA/MIDAS FORTRESS. 60

Boaz ZISSU, Amos KLONER
THE FINAL DWELLING: FUNERARY ARCHITECTURE AND BURIAL CUSTOMS AT HELLENISTIC-PERIOD MARESHA. 72

Eugen S. TEODOR, Daniela CRISTEA-STAN
A CONSTRUCTION FORTLET AT BĂNEASA. 130

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MATERIAL

Cristian Ioan POPA, Alin TODERESCU
ON PREHISTORIC PATHS AND MOUNTAIN ROUTES: METAL ARTEFACTS FROM THE HILLS AND MOUNTAINS OF CUGIR. 151

Gayane POGHOSYAN
SYMBOLIC INTERPRETATION OF THE RITUAL SCENE ON THE GOLD MEDALLION FROM TOPRAK-KALE. 185

Ünal DEMİRER
METAL LAMPS FROM ANTALYA MUSEUM. 190

ARCHAEOMETRY

Beatrice CIUTĂ
FOOD DIET AND RITUAL PRACTICES AT APULUM. A COMPARATIVE ARCHAEOBOTANICAL STUDY. 203

DIGITAL AND VIRTUAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Radu-Alexandru BRUNCHI, Andrei ASĂNDULESEI, Felix-Adrian TENCARIU
CUCUTENI UNEARTHED: A 3D JOURNEY THROUGH TIME. 215

NUMISMATICS

Ergün KARACA, Ömer TATAR
PROVENANCED LATE CLASSICAL AND HELLENISTIC PERIOD ROYAL COINS FROM EASTERN THRACE. 225

Sergiu MATVEEV, Vlad VORNIC, Lazari DERMENJI
THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE ROMAN REPUBLICAN COINS WITHIN THE PRUT-DNISTER AREA. THE CASE OF THE DENARIUS RECENT DISCOVERY IN CAJBA*. 244

Cristian GĂZDAC, Adrian-Daniel STAN
"PAY THE TROOPS, FORGET THE REST!" PATTERNS OF HOARDING: MILITARY VS. CIVILIAN ENVIRONMENTS IN THE MID–3RD CENTURY AD. 251

Cristian GĂZDAC, Vitalie BÂRCĂ, Cristian FLORESCU
PARS PRO TOTO IN AN *INTERPRETATIO SARMATICA OCCIDENTALIS.* THE ROMAN COINS IN SARMATIAN GRAVES FROM THE NECROPOLIS TIMIŞOARA – *HLADIK 1* (ROMANIA). 262

IN MEMORIAM

Csaba SZABÓ
MANFRED CLAUSS AND THE STUDY OF ROMAN MITHRAS IN THE 21ST CENTURY. 287

REVIEWS

Matthew G. MARSH
Alexios G.C. Savvides. *The Cross and the Sacred Fire: Byzantium and the Sassanids (4th–7th Centuries) – An Overview of Relations between the Eastern Graeco-Roman Empire and Pre-Islamic Persia,* Athens, Hêrodotos, 2022, 270p.+xlii, ISBN 978–960–485–422–6. 291

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POWER, POSITION, AND PRACTICE. MILESIAN ELITES ON THE MOVE

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Abstract: This study examines the migration of elite groups from Miletos in the Archaic and early Classical periods, exploring the ways in which social positions, position-practices, and migrant capital functioned as structuring mechanisms and resources within both emigrant and immigrant contexts. Through an analysis of the roles of status, kinship, and economic networks, this article highlights the ways in which elites navigated displacement, leveraging their access to material and symbolic resources to facilitate movement and maintain social standing. A particular focus is placed on the institution of exile, both as a punitive measure and as a strategic mechanism within intra-elite competition. By tracing the trajectories of elite Milesians, their embeddedness within broader Mediterranean networks, and their role in the establishment and development of immigrant settlements, this study aims to deepen our understanding of migration as both a structurally conditioned and agent-driven phenomenon. The examination of elite position-practices, such as symposiastic culture, funerary display, and patron-client relationships, reveals how migration was not simply a matter of movement but also of the reproduction and renegotiation of status in new environments. In doing so, this study contributes to ongoing debates on social mobility, the agency-structure dialectic, and the intersection of political upheaval and migration in the ancient Greek world.

Keywords: *Elites, Migration, Miletos, Black Sea*.

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of migration in the ancient Greek world has traditionally been understood through the lens of economic necessity, demographic pressure, or state-led colonisation. However, such interpretations fail to capture the complex interplay of social structures, agency, and position-practices that conditioned migratory movements. While the establishment of new settlements and trading enclaves across the Mediterranean and Black Sea is well-documented, the processes underpinning these movements often lack explicit theoretical underpinning. This study seeks to address this gap by focusing on the movement of Milesian elites, examining how their social positioning, networks, and access to migrant capital shaped their decisions and experiences of migration.

The Archaic and early Classical periods witnessed profound transformations in the Greek world, marked by cycles of political upheaval, stasis, and shifting balances of power within the polis. In Miletos, one of the most politically dynamic and outward-looking city-states of the period, elite groups played a crucial role in the structuring of migration. Whether as pioneers of new settlements, patrons of trading networks, or victims of forced exile, Milesian aristocrats carried with them not only their wealth but also their institutional practices, social norms, and symbolic capital. By examining the evidence for elite networks, kinship structures, and mechanisms of exclusion and expulsion, this study reconstructs the conditions under which Milesian elites migrated, the opportunities and constraints they faced, and the ways in which they reproduced their status in new environments.

Building on theoretical frameworks of social positioning and migrant capital, this study interrogates the role of elite agency in shaping migration junctures. How did aristocratic Milesians navigate the challenges of exile? In what ways did their existing social roles facilitate or constrain movement? To what extent did they succeed in re-establishing their power and influence in new contexts? By addressing these questions, this article contributes to broader discussions on the nature of mobility in the ancient world, the intersection of social structures and individual agency, and the long-term impact of migration on both emigrant and immigrant societies.

SOCIAL POSITIONS AND POSITION-PRACTICES

The intricacies and complexity of the relationship between social positions and agency are dynamic. They exist within a framework of obligations, expectations, and opportunities that both enable and constrain action. By examining position-practices—the intersection of social roles and structured practices—we can better understand how individuals navigate their social environment, exercising agency within the constraints and possibilities afforded by their positionality. This discussion is particularly relevant when analysing historical and proto-historical contexts, where reconstructing the lived experiences of individuals relies on the identification of roles, resources, and social dynamics and first-hand accounts are lacking.

Anthony Giddens identifies social position as an "identity that carries with it a certain range (however diffusely specified) of prerogatives and obligations that an actor who is accorded that identity (or is an 'incumbent' of that position) may activate or carry out: these prerogatives and obligations constitute the role-prescriptions associated with that position. A social identity is essentially a category, or a typification, made on the basis of some definite social criterion or criteria: occupation, kin relation, age-grade, etc" and argues that it involves "the 'positioning' of individuals within a 'social space' of symbolic categories and ties".[1]

Ira J. Cohen and Rob Stones note that Giddens notion of social position fails to adequately explain the ways in which the practices stemming from these structures could in turn restructure the composition of subsequent social positions. To do so they introduced Roy Bhaskar's concept of position-practices, a "point of contact between human agency and social structures",[2] as a "meso-level conceptual bridge"[3] with "identifying criteria, prerogatives, and obligations … made manifest in ways that others can and do acknowledge in institutionalised modes of interaction".[4] In other words, socially positioned practices (position-practices) occur within a structured and institutionalised social space which, by virtue of their enactment as related to the structures which provide them with their potential vista of actions, can act to concretise the structures from which their potentiality derives. Nevertheless, as Cohen notes "circumstantial variations will occur in any given instance of the reproduction of position-practices. Situational contingencies, matters of 'style', mistakes in conduct, and strategic forbearance from engaging in conduct – all must be taken into account".[5] All of these potentialities reside within the way in which the agent chooses to utilise or neglect their positionally situated practice options and provides a tool to place individual and group agency within a social structure.

Here we take social space to mean the interactive vista available to a particular agent within a societal structure, be they cultural, social, economic, political, psychological etc. Shilling further refines this notion, adding that "social positions consist of bundles of practices that are expected to be carried out by those occupying particular social places".[6] Cohen has identified social roles as "a specific subcategory of social positions which involve face-to-face encounters, well-defined identities, and normative definitions of 'expected' behaviour".[7] This definition moves us from positions, as inhabitable slots within a social structure, to the specific "prerogatives and obligations" attached to the role and its incumbent.[8]

These "prerogatives and obligations" have variously been described as "places, functions, rules, tasks, duties, rights",[9] the "powers, resources, obligations, duties, ideology",[10] and a "set of structured practices which position incumbents can and do perform".[11] These roles can be institutional (magistrates, priests, generals, citizens etc.), cultural (poets, orators, philosophers, artists), economic (vocational, hierarchical, etc.) and social (family, friends, tribesmen, enemies etc.). This list is not exhaustive and individuals will, of course, inhabit multiple positions simultaneously. In archaic Greece, an individual may contiguously be a son, a father, a brother, a citizen, a poet, a general and a jury-member, for example.

The specific positional resources drawn on in any given practice are "tied to particular times and places".[12] In other words, the positions in which they are incumbent offer a range of resources which they can draw on to undertake particular practices. Conversely, their positioning may inhibit other practices. For example, if an elite Milesian needed a large pithos for a particular reason, their elite status means that they would probably purchase it (with the resources available through this social position), rather than make it (due to attitudes disparaging participation in handicrafts). At the same time, one manufacturer may be a client (such as an enslaved person they have manumitted) which would condition their decision to buy the object from this particular craftsperson rather than another due to the social relationship between their role as former master, and the craftsman's role as formerly enslaved by them. Finally, they may decide that they no longer need a pithos and do none of the above. Thus, even within the simplest practices of everyday life, agents draw upon these social positions to make decisions or non-decisions.

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[1] GIDDENS 1979, 117–118; GIDDENS 1984, 81.

[2] BHASKAR 1979, 43.

[3] STONES 2005, 65.

[4] COHEN 1989, 210.

[5] COHEN 1989, 210.

[6] SHILLING 1992, 80.

[7] COHEN 1989, 208.

[8] COHEN 1989, 210.

[9] BHASKAR 1979, 51.

[10] STONES/JACK 2016, 1149.

[11] COHEN 1989, 210.

[12] CHOULIARAKI/FAIRCLOUGH 1999, 21.

The "horizon for action" however, is not limitless.[13] It is characterized as both "a movement to concrete action" and a "resolution to act here and now in a specific way".[14] Even for the agent, this step, as with the others, may not be immediately perceptible, functioning on an unconscious or semi-reflexive plain. In this sense, it can reflect planning or opportunism and can be influenced by both feedback from previous decisions as well as "articulable explicit reasoning".[15] Finally, the actor "executes" a particular action aimed at particular outcomes within specific contemporary contexts.[16] The outcomes, despite having been weighed up, can also entail negative consequences, or create new problems.[17] Eva Morawksa argues that this practical-evaluative agency entails the making of "practical and normative judgements among alternative possible trajectories of action",[18] while Karen O'Reilly sees it as key to the formation of what she calls "conjuncturally specific internal structures",[19] in other words the specific sets of internal structures or habitus that an actor draws upon in a given situation.

Practicing positions in a system of position practices can be identified as the multitude of socio-cultural identities simultaneously held by agents. This is particularly relevant when trying to map out structures and agency within proto-historical contexts.[20] While we do not have first-hand accounts, interviews or texts produced by immigrants from which to explore their migration decisions, much scholarship has been expended exploring different roles, statuses – essentially practicing positions – in the ancient world. Through a granular analysis of these roles, we can begin to illuminate the vistas of opportunities, resources and constrictions accrued to them as incumbents in particular roles.

MIGRATION CAPITAL

Capital has become an important dimension of understanding the ways in which people and groups can have access to particular opportunities or potential decisions. Distinction is often made between human capital, social capital and cultural capital. Social capital with its emergence through networks of relations has been a particularly fruitful heuristic tool in studies of contemporary migration.[21] Yet some scholars have also identified problems between the idea of social networks as a "source" of social capital, and the actual capital accumulations derived from these networks.[22] Anthias argues that a network does "not always function directly as forms of social capital that can be drawn on for social advantage in direct ways",[23] while Garip seeks to shift the ontological weight of social capital in migration contexts by conceptualising it "as a resource (information about or assistance with migrating) that recipients (potential migrants) access through their social ties to sources (prior migrants)".[24]

When studying historical or proto-historical migration, this view of social capital can be restrictive. The concept itself and its emergence through networks of relations notwithstanding, many scholars place it within an agent's determinacies.[25] In other words, capital in this sense is often something to be *used* by the agent, even subconsciously, as a means of achieving some predetermined goal. No doubt some forms of capital can be thought of in this way. However, I would argue that migration capital cannot be exclusively bracketed as such. The question that Garip asks – why do outcomes differ between migrants with the same access to capital? – is key to this problem.[26] In other words, we turn to the problematic of why do more people *not* migrate than do. This suggests two sides to migration capital as I see it; 'positive' and 'negative'. It is important to point out that positive and negative do not relate to the individual or group's experience or value system. Instead, it is in relation to whether the particular form of capital is "migration-facilitating" or migration restricting.[27] Does access to a particular type or form of capital make it easier or harder, or more or less possible, to migrate regardless of the agent's strategic goals? Wealth, for example; at a certain level of access, can often be characterised as an important form of migration capital. However, in the ancient world this is not necessarily the case. Wealth in land, flocks, and property is left behind when one migrates, tied as it is to the emigrant space. Therefore possession of this capital may in fact be negative migration capital with respect to the agent's wish to retain it. At the same time exile is often a devastating social event, yet because it enforces movement (at least assuming that death is not the agent's preference i.e., Socrates), it can be seen as *positive* migration capital.

In this model therefore, capital forms the bridge between migration processes and practices to the extent that it represents the potentiality for migration under given conditions. The extent to which groups of potential migrants can make migration decisions in a given social context or field is conditioned through the various matrices of social, cultural and economic capital available to them and their relative conversion potential into migration capital i.e., the resources needed to migrate.

The concept of capital encompasses the physical, mental and relational resources available to actors which are transferable

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[13] STONES 2005, 65.
[14] EMIRBAYER/MISCHE 1998, 999.
[15] EMIRBAYER/MISCHE 1998, 999.
[16] EMIRBAYER/MISCHE 1998, 999.
[17] GIDDENS 1984, 10–11.
[18] MORAWSKA 2011, 5.
[19] O'REILLY 2011, 29.
[20] The term proto-historical is used by YNTEMA 2000 to describe the eighth and seventh centuries, and particularly migration during this period. A proto-historical era is one for which limited contemporary literary evidence survives and thus researchers are reliant on later texts and archaeological material to undertake historical reconstructions.
[21] e.g. PALLONI, *et alii* 2001; HAUG 2008; RYAN 2011.
[22] RYAN/EREL/D'ANGELO 2015, 10.
[23] ANTHIAS 2007, 788.
[24] GARIP 2008, 593.
[25] LIN 1999.
[26] GARIP 2008.
[27] KIM 2018, 263.

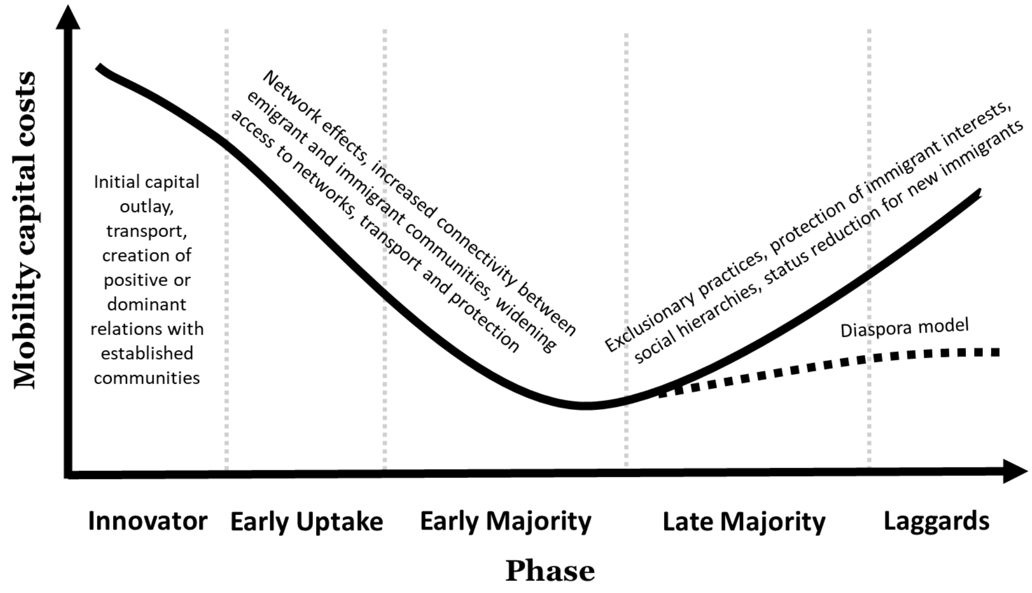
Mobility capital costs
Initial capital outlay, transport, creation of positive or dominant relations with established communities
Network effects, increased connectivity between emigrant and immigrant communities, widening access to networks, transport and protection
Exclusionary practices, protection of immigrant interests, social hierarchies, status reduction for new immigrants
Diaspora model
Innovator
Early Uptake
Early Majority
Late Majority
Laggards
Phase

Fig 1. Mobility capital at different stages of the migration trajectory.

between types and facilitate opportunities for different modes and actions of agency within and between contextual fields.[28] Capital plays an important mediating role in migration contexts. Some types of capital can encourage and facilitate movement, while others act to restrain the ability of actors to enact migration projects.[29] As Bourdieu has observed, the key to the efficacy of capital lies in its transferability between different types, such as from cultural to economic.[30] In migration contexts this applies to the ability of actors to transfer capital from emigrant contexts, such as political and economic power, and the ability to move and migrate through networks in immigrant and thoroughfare spaces. Hence, the means to transfer the negative migration capital of immovable wealth into positive migration capital comes through its literal transference into movable wealth and the ability to store and access it outside of the emigrant community.[31]

There is also an important temporal element in the suitability and efficacy of types of capital in migration processes (Fig. 1). High levels of capital tend to be important amongst innovator migrants.[32] For example, the ability to access mobile or migrant infrastructures not yet highly developed in the early temporal stages of migration – such as transport and labour resources – but necessary to create liveable conditions in the immigrant area, are important.[33] Furthermore, access to supra-communal social networks, such as relations with elite or controlling groups in the immigrant area which can be developed through the exchange of intrinsically or extrinsically valuable material and economic capital such as trade relations or gift-exchange relationships, can also be converted into migration capital and facilitate movement.[34] Other forms of social capital that may represent negative accumulations in the emigrant community, such as weaker familial and communal ties, may also be transferred to migration capital, rendering the processes of rupture less constraining.[35] Conversely, at later temporal stages, once a threshold of migration has passed, the required social capital for migration may begin to decrease.[36] Expanded social networks between immigrant and emigrant areas become accessible to more potential migrants, while economic requirements and migration infrastructure become more readily available.[37]

MIGRATION AND STATUS

Having set out the ways in which social positions, position-practices and migrant capital function, I will now discuss the role of status and migration. In this section I focus on archaic elites, their practices, and access to potential migrant capital. The discussion particularly leans on the phenomenon of elite exile. In this section I will analyse the evidence for the practice of exiling elites in the archaic period and the ways in which this institution as a position-practice and affective structure for positionally situated agents created migration junctures. The second elite position practice I will explore will be networks. This discussion will focus primarily on socially positioned groups who claimed distinguished ancestry from a single (putative) progenitor. I argue that access to networks like this were an important form of elite migrant capital, facilitating the retention of resources and creating social networks of obligation in immigrant communities.

The identity, composition and delineation of elite groups in Archaic Greek poleis has undergone significant re-assessment in recent decades.[38] Much of the discussion on elites has centred around evidence from the Greek mainland, particularly Attica and Sparta, which has then been extrapolated to create models of development applied to other Greek poleis further afield. At Miletos in particular, stories about the Ionian migration and an early monarchy which gave way to an oligarchy sometime in the eighth century have gained particular currency despite the lack of contemporary evidence.[39] It is more likely that at Miletos, as at most other Archaic poleis and neighbouring city-state settlements (such as those of Caria and Phoenicia), a discrete group of individuals, alongside their families and social circles, strived to limit access to political power and positions.[40] At various times, individual or familial groups may have come into political ascendancy and established systems of power and control, which are normatively termed tyrannies, aristocracies, or oligarchies. Nevertheless, the absolutist nature of such regimes is open to question.

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[28] BOURDIEU 1986.

[29] DE HAAS 2010.

[30] BOURDIEU 1986, 24.

[31] There are many references in ancient works to the institution of safekeeping wealth out with the *polis* to which the individual belongs. See for example HDT. 6.86.5.

[32] DE HAAS 2010, 1599.

[33] DE HAAS 2010, 1603.

[34] DE HAAS 2010, 1603.

[35] DE HAAS 2010, 1609.

[36] DE HAAS 2010, 1608.

[37] DE HAAS 2010, 1594.

[38] VAN WEES/FISHER 2015.

Elite status could be advertised and enhanced through a variety of signification strategies including heroic/mythologizing genealogies, dining and drinking practices, marriage alliances, gift exchange, material culture display – both exoticizing and domestic, including architectural sponsorship and statuary – success in local and panhellenic athletic competition, overseas wealth acquisition, warfare and the foundation of new settlements.[41] Recent scholarship has offered a more nuanced picture of the interaction of these strategies. The role of peer recognition and the ability to access resources and social capital, as opposed to hereditary descent, are now recognised as the underpinnings of elite status.[42] Ancient literary traditions abound with instances of mobile and migratory elite individuals and, while this may in part be an inevitable result of the elite bias of this source material, it surely indicates that elite individuals and groups were on the move throughout the Mediterranean and Black Seas in the Archaic period.[43] To be sure, traditional historical-positivist account of overseas settlement posit an important role for elite individuals, in the role of *oikist*.[44] Others stress the role of *poleis* governed by elites in the establishment of state-sponsored migration settlements.[45] Conversely, scholars applying historical-constructivist approaches, while rejecting the role of state apparatus in the impetus towards migration, have likewise recognised the necessity of the role of elite individuals in organising acts of migration and medium to long-distance mobility.[46]

What these approaches have in common is the recognition of an important role for elite individuals and groups in migration process. In general, they had better access to capital, resources and influences that could be utilised in the actual process of migrating from one place to another. Emmanuel Greco describes elites as possessing "the necessary means (ships and crews), including a leader for the expedition (the *oikist*), himself often a member of the aristocracy" while "he and his *hetairoi* formed the nucleus of the colonising force".[47] Thomas Figueira uses the term "patronal colonization" to describe Athenian overseas settlements in the sixth century and suggests "this involved an elite person gathering settlers among his *hetairoi*, client-followers, and others dislocated by unsettled agrarian conditions".[48] More succinctly, Osborne credits "charismatic individuals", presumably from the elite, as the organisers of overseas movement.[49] In essence then, the ability of elite members of society to organise and aggregate resources formed an important element in the mechanics of migratory acts. At the onset of migration processes, the capital outlay for the migrant tends to be at its highest. Therefore, in the earliest migration periods, there was almost certainly a necessity for individuals able to organise transport opportunities and manage human and labour resources to facilitate migratory movements.

This leaves us with the question of what prompted movement by these individuals. The ancient sources almost unanimously attribute the migration of elite individuals to the creation of untenable circumstances in the home community, be it civil discord, external pressure, or as punishment for criminal acts in the form exile.[50] Furthermore, recent studies have also discussed the role of population control and relief from intra-elite competition as key considerations in the migration of elites.[51] Conversely, others have posited the roles of resource acquisition and prestige as motivating the migration of elite individuals and groups.[52] Overall, migration of elites in Archaic Greece has been accounted for by explanations of endogenous 'push' migration, and exogenous 'pull' motivations.

I would argue that one of the keys to understanding hierarchical social status in Archaic Greece is through the ability to monopolise violence. Miletos had many tyrants who capitalised on this prerogative,[53] yet these individuals ruled at the turn of the sixth and fifth centuries during a time of changing practices of migration. For the previous 250 years, as the trajectory of pre-Persian Wars migration took shape, access to power was negotiated between elite syndicates. The balance of power between them could be the difference between, on the one hand, power – wealth – prestige; on the other, emigration – death – dishonour. Yet their terms of organisation persisted. Even under the pressure of the latter, their positional practices continued to reinforce their social status regardless.

Hetairia and *Stasis*

Elite groups bound by ties of invented kinship, obligation or interests are often termed *hetairia*.[54] In Homeric epic these groups have been viewed as a kind of *mannerbund*,[55] warrior bands who fight and raid together under a *basilieus*.[56] In the archaic period these *hetairia* can be thought of as semi-closed groupings who participated in cultural activities such as the symposium,[57] hunting,[58] genealogies, marriage alliances, funerary rituals, material culture, gift exchange, the acquisition of 'foreign' objects, and the style, size and placement of statuary and architecture.[59] Lynette Mitchell's enumeration of the keys to *arête* ('virtue') – success in panhellenic sports competitions, the foundation of cities, and warfare – also seem to have played an important role in the matrices of practices underpinning elite identity.[60] Some scholars argue that the rise of democratic forms of government and the *demos* as a wider identity grouping diminished the role of the *hetairia* in warfare and politics, making their networks a venue for the propagation of forms of elite culture and ideologies separated from the *polis*.[61]

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[39] GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020, 81–86.

[40] DUPLOUY 2006.

[41] DUPLOUY 2006; WECOWSKI 2014; GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020.

[42] DUPLOUY 2006; VAN WEES/FISHER 2015; GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020.

[43] MCGLEW 1996, 162–166; ROSE 2012, 140–141.

[44] MALKIN 1987, 9, 70, 95, 133, 261; RAAFLAUB 2004.

[45] GWYNN 1918; GRECO 2011; FIGUEIRA 2015.

[46] OSBORNE 1998; HALL 2008; VAN WEES 2013.

[47] GRECO 2006, 170.

[48] FIGUEIRA 2015, 317.

[49] OSBORNE 1998, 268.

[50] DOUGHERTY 1993; DOUGHERTY 1998; BERNSTEIN 2004; TSETSKHLADZE 2006, xxix; ULF 2022.

[51] FIGUEIRA 2015.

[52] GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020, 114–117.

[53] Histaious and Aristagoras are the best attested. See GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020 for a detailed analysis.

[54] ULF 1989, 227–238; WELWEI 1992; KONSTAN 1997, 31–34, 46; DONLAN 1989.

Indeed, in Archaic monodic poetry – a style inextricably linked with closed elite groups contexts like the symposium[62] – explicit mention of *hetairia*, as opposed to the *demos* occurs far less than in epic.[63] The term is used as a direct address to a companion,[64] a term for a peer threatened by slander from the citizens (*politai*),[65] and in other contexts too fragmentary to identify.[66] The Theognid corpus contains the most extensive use of the term and its derivatives. The main recurring theme here is uncertainty over the reliability of *hetairiae*.[67] The good *hetairos* is characterised as in possession of wisdom (*γνώμη*) and strength (*δύναμις*),[68] enriching themselves (*χρήματα ποιοῦ*) through just (*δίκαιος*) means,[69] sound of mind and spirit (*σώφρονα θυμὸν*),[70] and like a brother (*κασιγνήτου*).[71] Theognis' anxiety over *hetairiae* is further illustrated by his claim that,

> "οὐδείς τοι φεύγοντι φίλος καὶ πιστὸς ἑταῖρος:
> τῆς δὲ φυγῆς ἐστιν τοῦτ᾽ ἀνιηρότερον."
>
> "To the exile, none is a faithful and trustworthy *hetairos*,
> This is no less grievous than the exile itself."[72]

It is unsurprising that, for Theognis, exile should be characterised by the absence of good *hetairiae*. However, for other poets, the cohesion of the *hetairia* could be strengthened by exile, notwithstanding threats from within. Thus, Alcaeus;[73]

> "… ἄ[γι]τ᾽ εὔνοον
> θῦμον σκέθοντες ἀμμετέρα[ς] ἄρας
> ἀκούσατ᾽, ἐκ δὲ τῶν[δ]ε μόχθων
> ἀργαλέας τε φύγας ῥ[ύεσθε·
> τὸν Υ̓́ρραον δὲ πα[ῖδ]α πεδελθέτω
> κήνων Ἐ[ρίννυ]ς ὤς ποτ᾽ ἀπώμνυμεν
> τόμοντες ἄ [
> μηδάμα μηδ᾽ ἔνα τὼν ἐταίρων"
>
> "Come, well-disposed
> in spirit, to receive our prayer
> and hear it. Save us from wearisome,
> painful exile, while
> the son of Hyrros is pursued by the Eryines. Cutting ourselves
> we swore never to [renounce?] our comrades (*hetairon*)"[74]

Here we can see the *hetairia* appears to be bound by a blood oath, in which betrayal was punishable by the furies. At the same time, the reiteration of the oath brought about through this betrayal acts as a reminder to the group of their obligations and repositions them against their erstwhile comrade who has become paradigmatic of the power and necessity of the oath for the group of exiled *hetairon*. In monodic poetry, therefore, the *hetairia* represent elite groups exhibiting ties of friendship, support and obligation, in some instances regulated by oaths. The heroic *hetairia* seem to have formed the self-conscious basis for these groups. However, as we see from the Theognidae and Alcaeus, the fidelity of these groups was not always stable and could fracture into factionalism or experience members defection to other *hetairia* groups or individuals in possession of political power, as seems to be the case on Mytilene with Pittakos.

We have very few explicit mentions of *hetairia* in archaic Miletos. The fragment of Phocylides mentioned above may be thought to imply an anti-democratic sentiment opposed to the people, however, the use of the term *politai* as opposed to *demos* – in other words the 'citizens' not the people as a whole – may reflect a more restricted form of citizenship at Miletos in the Archaic period. The only explicit mention of *hetairia* in a Milesian context, of uncertain date, comes in an account of *stasis* in the *Greek Questions* section of Plutarch's *Moralia*. In answer to the question 'Who were the Milesian aeinautai?' (*'τίνες οἱ ἀειναῦται παρὰ Μιλησίοις'*), he provides the following explanation:

> "τῶν περὶ Θόαντα καὶ Δαμασήνορα τυράννων καταλυθέντων, ἑταιρεῖαι δύο τὴν πόλιν κατέσχον, ὧν ἡ μὲν ἐκαλεῖτο Πλουτὶς ἡ δὲ Χειρομάχα. κρατήσαντες οὖν οἱ δυνατοὶ καὶ τὰ πράγματα περιστήσαντες εἰς τὴν ἑταιρείαν, ἐβουλεύοντο περὶ τῶν μεγίστων ἐμβαίνοντες εἰς τὰ πλοῖα καὶ πόρρω τῆς γῆς ἐπανάγοντες: κυρώσαντες δὲ τὴν γνώμην κατέπλεον, καὶ διὰ τοῦτ᾽ 'ἀειναῦται' προσηγορεύθησαν."
>
> "When the tyrants around Thoas and Damasenor were removed, two *hetaireia* gained control of the polis called *Ploutis* and *Cheiromacha*. The more powerful prevailed and their group took control. When they sat in council to deliberate on important issues, they would board their ships and put far out to sea and once they had ratified their decision

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[55] See MURRAY 1983b.

[56] See now ESPOSITO 2015.

[57] BURKERT 1991, 18.

[58] BARRINGER 2001, 7–15.

[59] DUPLOUY 2006.

[60] MITCHELL 2013; GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020.

[61] ROESLER 1980, 33–37; STEIN-HÖLKESKAMP 1989, 91.

[62] ROSSI 2020, 339–340.

[63] See MIMNERMUS F 22 and ALCMAN F 80 for references to *hetairia* in the context of epic narratives.

[64] ARCHILOCHOS F 168.3 West.

[65] PHOCYLIDES F 5 Gerber.

[66] ALCAEUS F 150 Campbell.

[67] THEOGNIS 1.79, 91, 93–100, 113, 115, 415, 529–30, 595, 643–4, 645–6, 851–2, 1169, 1311–8.

[68] THEOGNIS 1.411–2.

[69] THEOGNIS 1.753.

[70] THEOGNIS 1.754.

[71] THEOGNIS 1.1164.

[72] THEOGNIS 1.209–210.

[73] On *hetairia* in Alcaeus see NAGY 2004; DAVIDSON 2013; KANTZIOS 2018.

[74] ALCAEUS F 129.

> they would sail back, thus they were termed the ‘Perpetual Sailors’”.[75]

In this passage, Plutarch seems to account for three separate power wielding groups at Miletos. First, “the tyrants around Thoas and Damasenor” have been convincingly shown to represent a group of individuals, within whom the named individuals probably had some important leading function.[76] We should probably assume that this group was essentially oligarchic, though the exact terms of membership remain opaque. Then there follows a period in which two *hetaireia, Ploutis* and *Cheiromacha* vie for control. Their identification as *hetairia* points to elite groups of the type we have identified, yet most scholars, drawing upon their seemingly indicative appellations, have chosen to see them as manifestations of capital and labour.[77]

The identity of the *Aeinautai* has also engendered much debate.[78] First, the whole passage is clearly identified as providing an *aition* for the name of this group.[79] Various suggestions have been posited to explain this. Two main lines of interpretation exist. The first sees in them an official body of state, while the second argues for a more informal party with shared interests. Many scholars have sought to locate them as part of a trading aristocracy of “merchant princes”,[80] though this conception seems to owe as much to analogies with other historical polities, such as the Hanseatic league, as to the evidence from Archaic Miletos. Others have argued that they were a corporation of ship-owners,[81] or a *hetairea* related to the *molpoi*.[82] Influenced by the contemporary British empire, Helbig saw them as a kind of naval police force, while some have suggested that they represented the commanders and admirals of the Milesian fleet,[83] analogous to the Athenian *Naukrariai* and *Trierarchs*.[84] Less anachronistic interpretations suggest that they may have been keepers of the public hearth, the officials of the Delphinion,[85] foreign policy officials[86] or officials with unspecified duties.[87]

More recently, scholars have sought to link the *aeinautai* to the performance of *embateria* rites at Miletos, the opening of the sailing season in the spring.[88] This argument is most fully developed by Noel Robertson, who argues that the perpetual nature of the *aeinautai* “suggests that the council of Miletus conducted the embarkation rite month by month throughout the season” and that “Civic routine has made … the councillors of Miletos into ‘perpetual sailors’”.[89] Conversely, Figuiera has recently pointed out that the word *aeinautai* itself carries some interesting connotations, denoting as it does that “their lifestyle defied the canons of seasonality” and was “formulated around their prowess as sea captains and willingness to bear absences routinely transcending earlier canons of temporality”.[90]

To return to the originally designated *hetairia*, *Ploutis* almost certainly indicates either an emic or etic definition of this group as categorised by their wealth. However, the semiotic implications of *cheiromacha* have proven far more difficult to pin down. Within Marxist or elite-middling[91] discourses this group has been variously conceptualised as either labour, or non-elites.[92] Yet, Plutarch often retrojects anachronistic ideas of *stasis* as between elites and non-elites,[93] meaning we should not immediately assume that the names of these groups are indicative of class. The *Cheiromacha’s* definition as an *hetaireia*, with its aristocratic connotations, seems to belie these conceptualisations. If we are to take Plutarch at face value and assume that *Cheiromacha* is the name used for a group within the Milesian elite (a *hetairia*), or at least one constituted around an individual or family group, then the meaning of the word can hardly be synonymous with ‘labour’, unless it is to be taken pejoratively. *Cheiromacha* is a compound of *χειρός*, in this context probably meaning either the hand or something done by the hand, and *μάχη*, which we can take to mean fighting or battling. This is rare in the extant literature.[94] Its literal definition, which seems to be something like “hand-fighters”, has been taken to represent either those who were too poor to own their own weapons,[95] or a middling group of hoplites who were opposed to a hippic elite or an “established warrior nobility”.[96]

There is however an alternative explanation which has received little attention. While *cheiromacha*, as a noun, is only used by Plutarch and Eusthatius, Apollodorus names one of the sons of Electryon and Anaxo, Cheiromachos

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[75] PLUT. *MOR*. 21.32.

[76] GORMAN/GORMAN 2000.

[77] GUTH 2017, 14 suggests that both should be seen as “a relatively small group championing the interests of a social class.”, while MAC SWEENEY 2013, 64 offers the view that *Cheiromacha* were “hand-workers” and thus we are dealing with “socio-economic factors”. See also GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020, 84 n. 107 with literature.

[78] HESYCHIUS *S.V.* describes them as “*ἀρχῆς ὄνομα παρὰ Μιλησίοις*”. ROBERTSON 1987, 382 n.333 argues that Hesychius either got this information from Plutarch’s source or another Milesian historian as the *arche* of the Aeinautai is not explicitly mentioned by Plutarch.

[79] GORMAN 2001, 108; GUTH 2017, 15.

[80] MEYER 1893, 366; BUSOLT 1920, 177 n.175; HALLIDAY 1928, 146; AVRAM 1996, 246.

[81] GLOTZ 1928, 68.

[82] GUTH 2017, 13–15.

[83] HELBIG 1898, 396.

[84] WILAMOWITZ-MOELLENDORFF 1906, 78; BRAVO 1977, 29.

[85] WACHSMUTH 1874, 481; HERDA 2016, 66.

[86] GRAHAM 1964, 98; HERDA 2016, 64 Both cite GLOTZ 1928, yet the point the point *he* makes is that the elite controlled this corporation and *also* founded colonies, not that the Aeinautai did. In reference to the Aeinautai at Chalcis (*IG* 12(9) 909; *IG* 12(9) 923), he states that “The Knights of Chalcis … founded colonies in Thrake and in the West and controlled the flourishing corporation of ship-owners (*aeinautai*)”.

[87] i.e., GORMAN 2001: 110 an “obscure name for a corporation of functionaries” or SIMONTON 2017, 190 “unremarkable but oddly named magistracy”.

[88] BRÜCKNER, *et alii* 2014, 119; HERDA 2016, 64–65.

[89] ROBERTSON 1987, 383–384.

[90] FIGUEIRA 2015, 330. Aeinautai also appear at Chalkis in the third century where they are described as a *koinon* (IG 12(9) 909; IG 12(9) 923) and Eretria in the late fifth century (SEG 24 989; Petrakos 1963). In the former case ROBERTSON 1987, 384 argues that “It is not surprising that in later times the civic term should be adopted by private persons celebrating the embarkation rite; the civic term epimenioi was adopted more generally by private groups.” While the latter appear to him to be a group operating in the same vein as the Milesian group.

[91] For this approach see KURKE 1999; MORRIS 2000.

[92] BURN 1962, 214; ZURBACH 2019.

[93] PEER 2023.

[94] The only other attestations of the word are in the works of the twelfth century CE Byzantine scholar EUSATHIUS OF THESSALONICA *OD.* 1426.5, who suggests that the word, in the form of the phrase *cheiromacha plethys* – which CULLHED 2016, 315 translates as “multitude battling with their hands” – appears in other authors known to him that have not survived to the present.

[95] RUZÉ 1986, 163.

[96] GORMAN 2001, 110.

(*Χειρίμαχον*).[97] While it is unlikely that Plutarch’s text itself originally designated the Cheiromacha as a patrilineal group (i.e. Cheiromachidai),[98] it seems possible that this was the origin of the name in his source which then became a common noun to highlight the distinction between the Cheiromacha/idai and the Ploutis.

While Plutarch’s text offers an aition for the name of the *aeinautai*, the connected story of Thoas and Damasenor and the two *hetaireia* seems to have little actual connection other than offering an historical context. Indeed, Plutarch is not even clear as to which group, Ploutis or Cheiromacha, prevailed and became the *aeinautai*. I would argue then, that the narrative itself is a compound of different historical events and groups. The Cheiromacha, rather than being a non-elite group opposed to the elite *ploutis*, may have been a *hetairea* which traced its descendance to a figure called Cheiromachos, possible even the mythological figure named by Apollodoros.

The evidence surrounding *hetairia* in archaic Greece suggests that these elite groups played a significant role in shaping political, cultural, and social dynamics. While Homeric hetairia emphasized warrior bonds, later manifestations in the archaic period integrated cultural and ideological functions within elite circles, often intertwined with symposium traditions and poetic discourse. The anxieties expressed in monodic poetry highlight the precarious nature of such bonds, susceptible to factionalism and political shifts. The case of Miletos, as seen in Plutarch’s account, further complicates our understanding, indicating that *hetairia* could engage in governance and stasis, with their identities and functions evolving over time. Ultimately, the interplay between elite networks, political power, and shifting social structures underscores the fluid and contested nature of *hetairia* in archaic Greek society.

Exile and Emigration

To what extent did these periodic social conflicts and agglomerations of power into the hands of individual tyrants or elite groups structure emigration opportunities for those whose access to political and social capital was adversely affected by their exclusion from systems of power and accumulation? Some tantalizing evidence may be found in the epigraphic corpus, specifically the inscription known to modern scholarship as the ‘Milesian Banishment Decree’. Discovered in 1905 during the excavations of the North Market area of the city, the inscription is carved onto the pedestal of a missing stele. It appears to be an addition or continuation of a larger text which may have adorned the lost stele.[99] It reads:

[......15.......]σ[..5.. τ]ὸ̣[ς Ν]υμφα̣ρήτο καὶ Ἄ̣λ̣κιμ̣[ον]
[καὶ Κ]ρεσφόντην τ̣[ὸ]<ς> Στρατώνα̣κτος φεύγεν τὴν ἐπ’ αἴμ̣[ατ|ι]
[φυγὴν] καὶ αὐτὸς̣ [κα]ὶ ἐκγόνος, καὶ ὅς ἄν τινα τούτωγ κατ̣[α]-
[κτείν]ε̣ι, ἑκατὸν [στ]α̣τῆρας αὐτῶι γενέσθαι ἀπὸ τῶν
[χρημά]τ̣ων τῶν Ν̣υμ̣[φαρ]ή̣το. τὸς δ̣’ ἐ̣πιμη̣νίος, ἐπ’ ὧν ἂν ἔλθωσ̣|ιν
[οἱ κατ]α̣κτείναντ̣ε̣[ς], ἀ̣ποδο͂ναι τὸ ἀργύριον. ἢν δὲ μή, αὐτὸ||[ς]
[ὀφε]ίλεν. ν δὲ ἡ πό̣λ̣ι[ς ἐ]γκ̣ρα̣τὲ̣ς γένηται, κατακ̣τε͂ναι
[αὐτ]ὸς τὸς ἐπιμηνίος̣, [ἐ]π’ ὧν ἂν λαφθέωσιν. ἢν δὲ μὴ κατα-
[κτ]ε̣ίνοσιν, ὀφείλεν ἕ[κ]α̣στον πεν̣τήκοντα στατῆρας.
τὸν δ’ ἐπιμήνιον, ἢμ μὴ προ̣θῆι, ἑκα̣τὸν στατῆρας ὀφείλε[ν]
καὶ τὴν ἐσιο͂σαν ἐπιμηνίην ἀὶ ποιε͂ν κατὰ τὸ ψήφισμα·
ἢν δὲ μή, τὴν αὐτὴν θωιὴν ὀφείλεν.

[...N]ympharetos’ sons, and Alki[mon]
[and K]resphontes, Stratonaktos’ sons; will be exiled (*pheugen*) for blood-guilt.
[Exiled (*phugen*)] with them, their descendants. And any who
[execute (*kteinei*)] them will (*gnesthai*) get 100 staters from the
[property] of Nym[phar]etos. Those who are Epimenoi when the executioners (*katakteinantes*) request it, will make that payment.
Failing this, the former will be liable. If the *polis* can (*genetai*) seize (*egkrates*) the latter, they will be executed (*kataktenai*).
Those who are Epimenoi in office at the time will be
executioners (*katakteinosin*). If they fail, each will be liable for 10 staters.
If the (presiding) Epimenios fails to put this forward, he shall be liable for 100 staters
and all future Epimenoi will put this decree forward
or be liable for the same amount.[100]

Due to its stratigraphy and orientation, the inscription was originally assigned to the pre-Hellenistic period. Since then, numerous attempts have been made to contextualise and date the inscription more accurately. Based on the letter forms, Albert Rehm, suggested an early fifth century date,[101] while Gustaz Glotz, who made an in-depth study of the inscription, proposed that the small amounts levelled for fines and rewards made more sense in the context of the middle of that century, based on the relative poverty of Miletos illustrated by its small contributions to the Delian league.[102] Based on the letter forms and content, others have opted for a wider date range from 470–440.[103]

Anja Slawisch has proposed a date at the very beginning of the fifth century, during the Ionian revolt from Persia, based on a number of factors.[104] First, she draws attention to similarities between the Banishment Decree and the Aeakes inscription from Samos in the form of the *theta*, *kappa*, *rho* and the oblique *nu*. Yet, as has been observed by Alexander Herda,[105] there is little actually resemblance between the *nu*. It does not appear to be especially oblique on the Banishment inscription, while that of the Aeakes text clearly is. The

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[97] *BIBL.* 2.4.5. Other names with the root *χειρός*, Cheiroboulos and Cheirokrates are attested at Thasos between the sixth and fifth centuries (*IG* 12 (8) 280) and Cilician Korykos around the second and first centuries (HEBERDEY-WILHELM, *Reisen* 71,155).

[98] Personal names with the suffix *μάχα* are exclusively female. *Μάχα*, in the vocative case, suggests that we are dealing with a name invoking the use of fighting by hand. Interestingly, the only other attestation of *Πλουτὶς*, in the feminine is as a name FEISSEL, *et alii*. 2016, no. 137.3.3.

[99] SLAWISCH 2011 argues that the surviving text was part of the lost inscription, while others believe that the stele contained an earlier proscription text, possibly as early as the mid sixth century, to which the surviving lines were later added e.g. GLOTZ 1906, 521; GORMAN 2001, 233–234.

[100] MILET. VI.1 187. First published by WIEGAND 1906, 254. See also PIÉRART 1969 and FACELLA 2018.

[101] VON GERKAN 1922, 100.

[102] GLOTZ 1906, 524–528.

[103] FORNARA 1986, 65.

[104] SLAWISCH 2011.

[105] HERDA 2019.

sigma and *omega* also show divergences.[106] Nevertheless, as Slawisch points out,[107] the letter forms of the Banishment inscription do not seem to bear a distinctly close resemblance to those of the *lex sacra* for Poseidon Helikonios of 434/3.[108] She further argues that the use of *stoichedon* style may be indicative of an earlier date than previously supposed and, as Patricia Butz has argued, some of the earliest precursors of this style may date as early as the first half of the sixth century.[109] It was certainly in use in Attica and Samos by the second half of the century. Based on the letter forms alone then, a possible date for the inscription between c. 540 and c. 434/3 is possible, while the use of *stoichedon* style argues for a similar temporal span.[110]

A more precise chronological marker may be found in the presence of NymphGaretos on the decree. Slawisch rightly draws attention to the presence of a homonymous Nympharetos on the Milesian *aisymnetai* list.[111] The dating of the names on this list has been the subject of much debate. In general, there are three plausible frames for the earliest names present. The simplest derives from counting back from the relatively secure date of Alexander the Great's entry in 334/3,[112] which results in a date of 525/4 for the initial entries on the list.[113] Peter Rhodes has argued that Alexander's entry should in fact be dated to 333/2, while the presence of two names in a single line should be taken to indicate the presence of usurping officials rather than as entries for separate years. This results in a date of 522/1 for the beginning of the list.[114] The third potential dating arises from the observation that there may have been a break in the list coinciding with the period between the Persian sack of the city in 494 and 479 when a Milesian contingent is recorded at the Battle of Mykale.[115] This would render a date of around 540/39 for the first entries on the list or, following Rhodes and Cavaignac, 537/6. Therefore, we are left with three potential dates for the Nympharetos named on the list, 518/7, 515/4 or 503/2.

The lower date for the Banishment inscription also requires further reanalysis. Most scholars have tended to place it in the context of the Milesian revolt from the Delian league in the middle of the fifth century, mentioned by Pseudo–Xenophon.[116] The context of the find, however, gives some cause to question this conclusion. The remaining block was situated in a layer beneath the level of the Hellenistic north market and did not share the alignment of the buildings of this period.[117] The area of the north market was levelled in the Classical period following the Persian destruction of the city, but the first buildings do not seem to have been constructed there until the fourth century. Thus, the base and lost stele, if erected following the sack, would have stood on an undeveloped piece of ground. A date prior to the Persian sack resolves this anomaly. Taking into account the letter forms, the use of *stoichedon* style, the name of Nympharetos, and the stratigraphy of the find; it seems clear that the Banishment Decree should be dated between c. 517–494. The 'banishment decree' can be taken as direct, though relatively late, evidence for the practice of exiling elites at Miletos during the Archaic period.

The banishment decree is not the only surviving evidence for the practice of elite exile at Miletos. One of the earliest commentators on the text, Gustav Glotz, observed that it bore a number of remarkable similarities to a fragment of Nikolaus of Damascus.[118]

> "ὅτι ᾽Επιμένης μετὰ ταῦτα αἰσυμνήτης ὑπὸ τοῦ δήμου χειροτονεῖται λαβὼν ἐξουσίαν κτείνειν οὓς βούλεται. καὶ ὃς τῶν μὲν παίδων ᾽Αμφιτρῆτος οὐδενὸς οἷός τ᾽ ἦν ἐγκρατὴς γενέσθαι (ὑπεξῆλθον γὰρ παραχρῆμα δείσαντες), τὰ δὲ ὄντα αὐτοῖς ἐδήμευσεν καὶ ἀργύριον ἐκήρυξεν, εἴ τις αὐτοὺς κτείνειεν. τῶν δὲ κοινωνῶν τοῦ φόνου τρεῖς ἀπέκτεινε, τοῖς δὲ ἄλλοις φυγὴν προεῖπεν1· οἱ δὲ ᾤχοντο. οἱ μὲν δὴ Νηλεῖδαι κατελύθησαν ὧδε."
>
> "Epimenes was made *Aisynmnetes* by the demos' assembly's acclamation, authorized to execute at will. And yet, Amphitretos' children's seizure could not be done (they having fled secretly in fear). He confiscated their wealth as a reward for any who executed them. Three who had made common purpose in the murder were executed, while all the rest were condemned to exile. In this way, the Neleidai were removed."[119]

These similarities are worth recounting in detail. First there is the role of Epimenes/the *Epimenoi*. In the banishment decree they are a group of city officials, taking office for the duration of a month, while in Nikolaus Damascus' telling, Epimenes is *aisymnetes* voted in by the *demos* with power to enact death sentences (*kteinein*), which he does to some of the conspirators (*apekteine*), and also the power to exile (*phuge*) others who are seized (*egkrates*). In the banishment decree the *epimenoi* are responsible for ensuring payment for the killers (*kteinei, katakteinantes*) of the exiled (*pheugen, phuge*) fugitives Alkimos, Kresophontes and the sons of Nympharetos or, if they are caught by city officials, (*egkrates*) of carrying out the executions themselves (*katakteinosin*). If they fail to do this, they are liable to a fine. In the Banishment Decree rewards are to be paid from the, presumably confiscated, estate of the dead Nympharetos, while Nikolaus Damascus claims that Epimenes confiscated the inheritance of the sons of Amphitres and offered some or all of it as a reward for their execution.

These similarities strongly suggest an intertextual relationship between the inscription and the account given by Nikolaos. Furthermore, this fragment is not the only extant part of the story dealing with the early history of Miletos and the Neleidai. It is preceded by the events described in F52 of Nikolaos of Damascus, while even earlier events are described by Konon.[120] The earlier part of this story, which recounts the murder of the Milesian Basileus Leodamas and the usurpation of Amphitres, takes, as its primary focus, the arrival of two Phrygian youths with relics of the *Kabeiroi*. The implication here is that this story is primarily etiological. It is set against the backdrop of the struggles over the kingship of early Miletos, but in reality, it probably functioned as much as an explanatory tale for the worship of the *kabeiroi* in historical times.

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[106] The table of similarities in SLAWISCH 2011: 426, Tb. 1 acknowledges differing *epsilons*, but her illustration of the other letters questioned by HERDA 2019: 92 n.8 i.e. *E, Σ* and *Ω* do not seem to resemble those on the Banishment decree, though eta does seem similar between the two.

[107] SLAWISCH 2011, 428.

[108] EHRHARDT 2003; HERDA 2019, 98 n. 98.

[109] SLAWISCH 2011, 427–429; BUTZ 2010, 77–103.

[110] For the dating of the Aeakes inscription see BUTZ 2010: 85 with literature.

[111] SLAWISCH 2011, 428–429, *MILET* I.3 122.24.

[112] *MILET* I.3 122.81.

[113] KAWERAU/REHM 1914, 141–153.

[114] RHODES 2006, 316. It has also been suggested that these may represent suffect officials replacing individuals who had died before the end of their period in office see further GORMAN 2001: 114 n.51.

[115] On the Persian sack see now LOHMANN 2021; HERDA 2019.

[116] *ATH. POL.* 3.11; GLOTZ 1906, 524–528; BARRON 1962; MAC SWEENEY 2013, 51.

[117] GLOTZ 1906, 518 n.512; GORMAN 2001, 233–234; SLAWISCH 2011, 425, 428.

[118] GLOTZ 1906, 516–524.

[119] *BNJ* 90 F53 = CONSTANTINOS VII PORPHYROGENNETOS, *EXCERPTA DE INSIDIIS*. 19.15 De Boor.

This may also give us an insight into the relationship between the banishment decree and the narrative recounted in Nikolaos of Damascus. It has been observed that Nikolaos or, more likely, his source, misread or misunderstood the role of the *Epimenoi* in the decree. Their part was subsequently transposed onto a named individual, Epimenes. While this is a common enough name, these arguments rely on complex linguistic explanations which require a series of misunderstandings that remain speculative.[121] It is more likely, in my view, that the transfer of the powers of Epimenes to the *epimenoi* between Nikolaos and the banishment decree, is a deliberate change. It is possible that this represents a mythologising of the events recounted in the decree. There are many examples of mythological precedents being used to justify contemporary actions in the Archaic Greek world. One need only think of the curse of the Alkmaeonidai, trotted out on more than one occasion to justify their expulsion from Athens.[122] Are we dealing with a similar situation here? While it has been observed that reconstruction of Nikolaos' specific sources is an almost impossible task, those authors who we can say he relied on, with reasonable certainty, such as Ephorus and Xanthus, may have had access to early traditions regarding Miletos.[123] The latter may even have lived early enough to have seen the inscription *in situ*.

The temporal dynamics of the two narratives are key to their interpretation. Nikolaos' story is set earlier than the Banishment inscription. It is located within the early years of Miletos' history. In many ways, if it is indeed an etiological justification for the decree, we can adduce that it may have originated even earlier or at least around the same time. An analogous situation to the one that I am describing here is revealed in a second century BCE inscription found in the Delphinion at Miletos. It describes an enquiry by ambassadors from Apollonia-on-the-Rhyndacus as to whether their city was a Milesian foundation. The text reads:

> “[ἔ]δοξεν τῆι βουλῆι καὶ τῶι δήμωι· οἱ ἄρχοντες εἶπαν· ἐπεὶ πεμ-
> φθείσης πρεσβείας πρὸς τὸν δῆμον τὸν Μιλησίων περὶ τοῦ ἀνα-
> νεώσασθαι τὴν ὑπάρχουσαν πρὸς αὐτὸν τῶι δήμωι ἡμῶν
> διὰ τὴν ἀποικίαν συγγένειαν Μιλήσιοι διακούσαντες
> τῶν πρεσβευτῶν μετὰ πάσης εὐνοίας καὶ ἐπισκεψάμενοι
> τὰς περὶ τούτων ἱστορίας καὶ τἆλλα ἔγγραφα ἀπεκρίθησαν
> τὴν πόλιν ἡμῶν ἐπὶ τῆς ἀληθείας γεγενῆσθαι ἄποικον”

> “By decree of the council, the demos, and the archons; we sent ambassadors to the Milesians to learn whether we were a Milesian foundation. The ambassadors were heard by the Milesians with all sincerity and they adjudged, having consulted the histories and other writings, that our city was indeed founded from there.”[124]

The problem with the Milesian response to this enquiry is that Apollonia was almost certainly an Attalid foundation, thus very unlikely to have any claims to Milesian origin.[125] Yet for this claim to have any force, it must have had some plausibility. Indeed, if Apollonia was looking to tie itself to Miletos and its reputation for founding cities, then it was mutually beneficial to come up with an ancient foundation story in the Milesian archives. I would suggest that we are seeing something similar with the relationship between the Banishment inscription and Nikolaos' text. The latter, in this interpretation becomes a way of legitimizing the former. If the Banishment decree is recording the removal and condemnation of individuals who associated themselves with the founder of the city, Neleios, then it is possible that the narrative of the Neleidai's earlier banishment, on much the same terms, was used as a pretext to vindicate the actions of the historical Epimenoi. After all, the namesake (and originator?) of their office had proceeded in the same way to neutralize the Neleidai and so, despite the harshness of the terms, they were acting within historical precedent. It seems reasonably plausible to suggest that both the text of the banishment inscription and the mythologised story found in Nikolaos of Damascus are contemporary. The former records an actual event in late Archaic Miletus, while the latter was used to justify the actions of the community and the role of the *epimenoi* as enforcers of the decree.

The interplay between exile, political power, and historical narrative in Archaic Miletos is a complex and revealing one. The Banishment Decree provides concrete evidence of elite expulsion as a tool for maintaining control within the city, while the later account by Nikolaos of Damascus suggests an effort to frame such actions within a legitimising historical and mythological precedent. The parallels between these sources indicate that political exile was not only a practical measure, but also a phenomenon embedded within Milesian collective memory. This interplay between historical action and myth-making underscores the ways in which political power and social belonging were negotiated through both recorded decrees and retrospective narrative constructions.

Networks of Relations

Why were the Neleidai connected to this anachronistic explanation of a late sixth to early fifth century banishment decree? The most obvious explanation is that those named in the decree, namely the sons of Nympharestos, and the sons of Stratonaktos – Alkimos and Kresphontes – had some connection to the Neleidai. Both Kresphontes and Alkimos have homonymous counterparts connecting them to Neleus of Pylos. The former is the Heraclid founder of Messenian Pylos,[126] from where Neleus is supposed to have come, while the latter is named as a son of Neleus.[127] Despite this neither Nympharetos nor Stratonaktos imply any Neleid connections. Even so, this offers the tantalising implication that the Banishment decree records the removal of individuals associated with the Neleidai. The earliest mention of a Neleios as Miletos' founder occurs in Herodotus[128] and his grave was said to have been located on the left-hand side of the sacred way just outside the gate of the city.[129] He is said to have established an altar to Poseidon on Cape Monodendri,[130] which may have represented the place where the first migrants to Milesia were supposed to have come ashore.[131] Neleios also seems to have been connected to the cult of Artemis Kithone, whose temple was located on the Archaic Milesian acropolis of Kalabaktepe.[132]

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[120] *BNJ* 26 F1 = PHOT. *BIB*. 186.44.

[121] HERDA 2019, 178 n.171.

[122] PLUT. SOL. 30.3; ATH. POL. 20, HDT. 5.62; THUC. 6.59; DEM. 21.144.

[123] See TOHER 1989 for a discussion of Nikolaos' sources.

[124] *MILET* I.3; 155.

[125] GREAVES 2010, 14–15, 128; KNIGHT 2019, 57.

The fullest account of Neleios ancestry is provided by Hellanikos.[133] His family tree is said to include Poseidon, Deukalion, Neleus and Kodros. Yet, there appear to be two competing versions of Neleios origins which are reconciled in Hellanikos genealogy. Allusions to Neleios' Pylian ancestry through Neleus and his Athenian ancestry through Kodros, appear early. The former may be alluded to as early as the last third of the seventh century by Mimnermus who claims that Kolophon was settled from Pylos, "Neleus' city" ("*Νηλήϊον ἄστυ*").[134] Strabo also states that Neleios "was Pylian by birth" ("*Νηλεὺς ἐκ Πύλου τὸ γένος ὤ̋ν*").[135] No specific source is given by Strabo for this snippet of information, though it is preceded by a fragment of Pherykydes of Leros/Athens,[136] which may imply that it came from his work. In this passage, Strabo notes that Pherykydes named the leader of the Ionian migration as Androkles son of Kodros of Athens,[137] yet Neleios is given an explicitly Pylian origin. Is it possible, then, that Strabo or Pherykydes was aware of the existence of a tradition of Neleios' Pylian origins, but also a tradition connecting the offspring of Kodros to the Ionian migration? Indeed, in relation to the Ionian migration, both Neleios and Kodros were featured in the fifth century *Ionika* of Panyassis of Halicarnassus.[138] As early as the late seventh to early sixth centuries, a narrative attributing to Athens a role as metropolis of the Ionian *poleis* was also in circulation.[139] It is impossible to say, as some scholars have claimed, whether the Athenian origin of the Ionians was fifth century propaganda[140] and, subsequently, whether Neleios' Pylian origins represent a Milesian version of their own foundation.

For the purpose of my argument the important conclusion to draw is "the antiquity of the stories" related to Neleios.[141] This confirms the possibility of the existence of a group or groups in Archaic Miletos who claimed descent from the mythic founder of the *polis*. It seems apparent that the notion that Miletos was founded by an individual named Neleios can be traced back to the Archaic period, possibly as early as the seventh century. Therefore, it remains for us to explore evidence which indicates the existence of the Neleidai, and determine whether such a designation could have been used around the time that the Banishment Decree was enacted.

Evidence for a group which claimed descent from the founder of Miletos is mostly confined to epigraphic and onomastic documents. Two inscriptions – an undated document from Miletos which names the "*Νειλεϊδ[ῶν...]*",[142] and a monument from Didyma, dated to the imperial period (ca 66 CE), specifying the Neleidai as a Pelagonid phratry from Teichioussa – attest to the group.[143] The term Pelagonid, as has been observed by Huxley,[144] may imply a connection with the Pylian Pelagon mentioned in the Iliad.[145] In addition to these documents, a number of names recorded at Miletos between the fifth and first centuries may have Neleid allusions. The earliest of these is an inscription on a round altar dedicated to Hekate uncovered in the area of the Delphinion. It can be dated to the years immediately prior to the Ionian revolt, around 500–494, and names Leodamas a homonym of one of Miletos early *basilieus*.[146]

The second name with Neleid allusions appears on the Molpoi inscription, where one of the aisymnetes' *proshetairoi* is named as Kreuthes of the Boread tribe.[147] This name is shared with the step-father of Pylian Nēleus.[148] According to Hellanikos, Boros, the eponymous hero of the Boreads, was an ancestor of Neleios.[149] A date between 449 and 444 for the laying down of the *Molpoi* statutes, and thus Kreuthes, seems plausible.[150] Other Neleid names do not appear with any regularity at Miletos until the Hellenistic period, when there are two individuals with the name Nelios in 238 BCE and the first century BCE respectively[151] and a Neilostratos in 177 BCE.[152] In sum, Naoise Mac Sweeney is right to surmise that "evidence for a Neleid clan in Archaic and Classical Miletus is not overwhelmingly robust. However, … a number of public and official figures in the city had names that were associated with their oikist. It is unsurprising that some leading aristocrats within the city made strategic use of the Neleios myth for their own dynastic self-aggrandisement."[153] However, in comparison to the reasonably large number of names from Archaic and early Classical Miletos, Neleid adjacent appellations are few and far between.[154] This leads to the question of whether there are any other sources of evidence to identify the existence of a Neleid group in the Archaic period.

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[126] APOLLOD. BIBL. 2.8; DIOD. SIC. 15.66, ISOC. 6.22; PAUS. 2.18; 4.3–5; 4.16; 4.31; 8.5; 8.29; PL. LEG. 6.683D–685D; *BNJ 70* F116 = STRAB. 8.4.7.

[127] SCHOL. *IL.* 11.629.

[128] HDT. 9.97.

[129] PAUS. 7.2.6; HERDA 2006.

[130] STRABO. 14.1.3.

[131] SCHILARDI 2019, 113.

[132] CALLIM. *HYM.* 3.225.

[133] *BNJ* 4 F125.

[134] F9 GERBER = *BNJ* 578 F 3.

[135] STRAB. 14.1.4.

[136] *BNJ* 3 F155.

[137] *BNJ* F155 = STRABO 14.1.3.

[138] *BNJ* 440 T1 = SUDA, *s.v. Πανύασις*.

[139] SOLON F 4A West.

[140] i.e. HALL 1997, 51–53.

[141] MAC SWEENEY 2013, 15.

[142] *MILET* VI.3 1440.

[143] *I.DIDYMA* 229.

[144] HUXLEY 1966, 165 n.127,

[145] IL. 4.295.

[146] *MILET* 1.3 129; JEFFREY 1961, 343 no. 334, pl 364; *BNJ* 26 F1, 90 F52. See HERDA 1998, 18 n. 36 for the popularity of the name Leodamas at Miletos throughout the Hellenistic period.

[147] *MILET* I.3 133.3.

[148] According to *OD.* 11.237, Pylian Nēleus' father was apparently Poseidon.

[149] *BNJ* 4 F 125; BARRON 1962, 4 n.26; HUXLEY 1966, 32 n. 127.

[150] GREAVES/KNIGHT/RUTLAND 2020, 109 n.251.

[151] *MILET* VI.2 788; *IG* II.2 9802.

[152] *I.DIDYMA* 464.

[153] MAC SWEENEY 2013, 52.

According to Alain Duplouy, a series of Archaic statues uncovered by Olivier Rayet and Theodore Wiegand south of the city wall may have come from the Heroon of Neleios mentioned by Pausanias.[155] He notes the presence of a number of inscriptions mentioning Artemis and concludes that these statues originally came from the Temple of Artemis Kithone situated on Kalabaktepe.[156] Furthermore, the workshop in which these were made has also been identified in close proximity to the temple, while a further pair of analogous statues, which seem to have been made there, have been identified at Ak-Yenikoy .[157] This leads Duplouy to consider whether the dedicand of these monuments may have had a connection to a cult of Neleios in the Archaic period connected to the worship of Artemis Kithone. He also speculates on the existence of a quasi-sacred way between Kalabaktepe and Assessos, along which these statues were dedicated.[158] Indeed, Assessos plays an important role in the narrative of the conflict between the Neleid brothers, Leodamas and (Am)Phitres, recounted by Nikolaos of Damaskos.[159] It also features in the story of the Assessian Antheus and Neleid Phobios told by Aristotle[160] and the writers of the *Milesiaka*.[161] According to the latter, Antheus was a hostage at Miletos and, although the circumstances of this detention are not mentioned in any extant sources, we might surmise that the story was connected to a foundation narrative for Milesian control of Assessos which may have been established sometime in the Archaic period. Slawisch also connects the group subjected to exile in the Banishment Decree, with the cult buildings and statues at Kokkinolakka.[162] The deliberate destruction of this complex, one which is not mentioned as a stopping point in the Molpoi inscription, is speculated may have been connected to the banishment of the Neleidai. While this argument is speculative, the existence of this complex, along with its monumental statues, provides confirmation of Duplouy's thesis that the Milesian elites used strategically placed monumental sculpture as a form of self-aggrandisement, asserting their status within their peer-groups and the wider Milesian populace.[163]

Another form of elite self-definition enumerated by Duplouy, the use of genealogies, offers a further avenue to help us to understand exactly who and what the Neleidai were. Elite groups in the Archaic period were multifarious in their formation and status claims, and the existence of hereditary aristocracies were rare. As van Wees and Fisher observe, of those that are attested, "most of these groups are named after a city-founder or other early king, and the –idai and –adai suffixes are usually taken to indicate descent: 'sons of … Neleus' … But the same suffixes were used for fictive kinship groups".[164] The Neleidai need not represent a closed group exhibiting actual descent from the leader of the first migrants to Miletos. Rather this status was a social construct, designed to reinforce and establish status amongst their peers. It is possible that it is this kind of self-aggrandisement that Herodotus criticises in Hekataious, who apparently "made a genealogy where he bound himself in descent in the sixteenth generation to a god".[165] Indeed, according to Hellanikos,[166] Neleios himself was descended from a god in the ninth generation, which demonstrates the ways in which these constructions might work in practice. Therefore, when we are talking about the Neleidai, what we are describing is a positionally practicing group with shared notions of the past and shared practices in the present.

The same could be said for the Molpoi.[167] While the Neleidai were linked to Artemis Kithone and her sanctuary on Kalabaktepe, as well as, probably, the altar of Poseidon at Monodendri and the temple of Athena at Assessos, the Molpoi were intimately connected to Apollo at the Delphinion and Branchidai-Didyma, as well as the other deities at whose rural shrines they performed rites on their procession between the two. I have already recounted the evidence for civil discord between different groups at Miletos during the Archaic period, the *Aeinautai*, *Ploutis* and *Cheiromacheia*. All of these should probably be envisioned in a similar way to the *Molpoi* and the Neleidai. They were communities of practice, in the technical sense. In other words, groupings of individuals and families with shared practices, not necessarily focused on descent. Furthermore, it seems clear that there must have been some overlap between these groups. For example, as we have seen, Nympharetos acted as *aisymnetes* of the *Molpoi*, yet was banished along with individuals with connections to the Neleidai, while we have further evidence for names linked to the Neleidai present in both the *aisymnetai* list and in the Molpoi inscription. We are not looking at groups in fundamental opposition with one another, as is often imagined by scholars and ancient commentators, in particular, those who see *stasis* at Miletos as an ideological or class-based i.e., the elites or aristocracy against the *demos* and/or the middle classes. This interpretation is anachronistic. Instead, what we seem to see is overlapping groups trying to assert their power and status amongst themselves and to the wider population.

This has implications on how we conceptualise the interaction between *stasis*, exile and migration. In many Archaic poleis, cycles of elite competition, conflict and exile were impermanent.[168] The exile of today may be the tyrant of tomorrow. If this was the case for Miletos, then would we expect to be able to trace the permanent migration of these elites to the relatively far-flung regions of the Black Sea?

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[154] See *LGPN* Vb for details of names at Miletos throughout antiquity.

[155] PAUS. 7.2.6; HERDA 2013, 92–94.

[156] DUPLOUY 2006, 223–226.

[157] DUPLOUY 2006, 226–227, 233–234.

[158] DUPLOUY 2006, 232–234.

[159] *BNJ* 90 F52.

[160] NIC. DAM. F 566 Rose.

[161] *BNJ* 496 F1.

[162] SLAWISCH 2011, 429–430. Located just off the sacred way between Miletos and Branchidai-Didyma in the Stephania hills. The site is published by TUCHELT/SCHNEIDER/SCHATTNER 1996.

[163] DUPLOUY 2006, 203–235.

[164] VAN WEES/FISHER 2015, 3.

[165] HDT. 2.143.1.

[166] *BNJ* 4 F125.

[167] *MILET* I.3 133. See also BRODER 2006; HERDA 2006; BACHVAROVA 2020.

[168] FORSDYKE 2011.

Exiles such as the Mytilenian Alcaeus seem to have stayed close to home. Much the same is recorded in the narrative of Leodamas' exile at Assessos and is suggested by Hekataious in Herodotus, when he advises the Ionian rebels to fortify the island of Leros from where they can continue the conflict with Persia.[169]

In conclusion, the Neleidai and other elite groups in Archaic Miletos functioned as dynamic communities of practice rather than rigid aristocratic lineages. Their claims to descent from mythic founders served as tools for status assertion, interwoven with religious, political, and social networks. The overlapping affiliations between figures named in the Banishment Decree and groups such as the Molpoi suggest that elite competition was not strictly oppositional but rather fluid and contested within shifting power structures. This has significant implications for our understanding of exile and migration in the Archaic period. Rather than permanent displacement, exile in Miletos may have often been a temporary state within cyclical power struggles, challenging the assumption that political upheaval led directly to widespread elite migration to distant colonies. Instead, exiled elites may have remained in regional proximity, continuing to vie for influence within evolving frameworks of power.

ELITE IMMIGRANT PRACTICES

So far, it has become clearer how the practices and capital linked to elite social status within the emigrant community can influence migration opportunities—either by facilitating, shaping, or restricting movement at key junctures. Turning towards immigrant communities, however, we are faced with a significant problem. If some migrants had increased access to means for developing economic capital within the immigrant community, how can we identify agents occupying elite positions during and after their migration? Evidence for elite practices can be seen at different locales in a variety of contexts. Yet how can we identify whether these were practiced by exogenous or endogenous elite positioned agents?

Burial

By the second half of the sixth century BCE, there is clear evidence for the establishment of elite groups at several immigrant settlements in the Black Sea. At Istros, the earliest burials in the tumular necropolis tombs XX, XVII and XIX all strongly suggest that they were the resting places of individuals with significant social and economic capital within the community.[170] Their location adjacent to one another may even suggest that all of the individuals inhumed there were connected with a specific social group, possibly even a single extended family. The problem with this evidence is that we have no way of establishing the genesis or nature of this group's elite position. By the time of the first burial in tomb XX, between 560–550, the settlement had been in existence for at least seventy years. It is *possible* that the occupant of this tomb – and its slightly later neighbours (ca. 550–525) – was an immigrant from Miletos. In reality, there is no way to determine this with any certainty.

Casting our gaze north, Tomb T-A95 at Orgame, lying in sector 2 of the necropolis and not far from the later wall of the citadel, provides a clearer example of elite immigrant social practices. The pottery surrounding the funeral pyre suggests that the cremation of the deceased occurred within the first phase of the settlement.[171] Given the lack of identifiable indigenous inhabitation at the time,[172] the individual was almost certainly an immigrant, probably Milesian. The earliest assemblage includes a Vallet-Villard A2 Ionian cup from Miletos or Samos, a fragmented Vallet-Villard A1 cup, Klazomenian and Lesbian amphorae, three East Greek *oenochoe* and a handmade vessel all dated between 650 and 600.[173] The funeral deposition itself consisted of a cremation on a wooden pyre surrounded by a ring of stones, carried out over a 0.8 m deep pit located in the centre of a burned area with a surface area diameter of approximately 8m. Inside the pit was a layer of ash, bones and ceramic fragments around 0.3m deep, while there is evidence that sheep and goats were sacrificed as offerings to the deceased in front of the pit.[174] Little remains of the deceased were found leading to speculation that they were buried in a *larnax* which was later looted.[175] Following the cremation, the area was covered by a very large tumulus, around 42m in diameter, creating a focal point in the local landscape and for the subsequent development of the necropolis.[176]

The extent of the funeral rites themselves implies that the deceased was part of the early elite at Orgame – possibly even the *oikist* himself. Simultaneously, evidence for the continuing practice of cultic rites at the site demonstrates the importance of their memory to the community and their descendants. For this purpose, the tumulus was surrounded by an offering trench of varying depths in which were deposited fragments of amphorae, *kraters*, *lekani*, *oenochoe*, *kantharoi* and fish dishes, amongst other items.[177] The first depositions in this trench were consecrated immediately after the construction of the tumulus (in the second half of the seventh century), and imply an important role for consumption of food and drink as components of the rites propitiating the decedent.[178]

In addition to T-A95, two further tumuli (B–95 and C–96) can be dated to the turn of the seventh to sixth centuries.[179]

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[169] HDT. 5.125.

[170] The original excavators interpreted these as evidence of their Thracian, Getic or even Scythian character, ALEXANDRESCU/EFTIMIE 1959; KURTZ/BOARDMAN 1971, 317; HUGHES 1991, 68; OPPERMANN 2004, 21–22 This may stem from the nativist ideology present in Romanian archaeology during the communist period DODD/KNIGHT Forthcoming Recent analysis has tended to cast these burials as idiosyncratic and, given the differences between them and the rites practices in the Istrian *chora*, the predominantly Greek character of the grave goods – with similarities to heroic funerary practices described in epic poetry – it may be more profitable to place them within a context of cultural dialogue i.e., ALEXANDRESCU 1994; DAMYANOV 2005; DONNELLAN 2021; FOWLER 2021.

[171] LUNGU 2019, 134.

[172] ȘTEFAN, *et alii* 2021; AILINCĂI 2016; AILINCĂI/MIRIȚOIU/SOFICARU 2006.

[173] LUNGU 2000–2001, 173–175; DUPONT/LUNGU 2021.

[174] LUNGU 2000–2001, 173.

[175] A small piece of gold shaped like a leaf found in the tumulus has been posited to have once adorned it LUNGU 2000–2001, 173.

[176] LUNGU 2000.

[177] LUNGU 2000, 70.

[178] LUNGU 2019, 136–137.

[179] DUPONT/LUNGU 2021.

C–96 covered two burials (m.1 and m.2.). The first contained a fragmentary Villard A1 Ionian cup and a North Ionian ring *askos*, both point to a date between the last quarter of the seventh and the first decade of the sixth century BCE.[180] The only grave good found in m.2 was a second North Ionian ring *askos* in the slightly later Transitional II style, suggesting a date around 610–575 BCE.[181] B–95 covered seven burials and an *enchytrismos* inhumation.[182] M.3 was the earliest, dated between 625 and 590 BCE. It contained two fragments of MWG II/ SiA Ic *oenochoe* (identified as coming from a Hellespontine production centre), a fragmentary Ionian rosette bowl, and a *deinos* stand next to the burial. No more than a decade later a second individual was inhumed in burial m. 4. The grave goods associated with this burial included a Middle/Late Corinthian *arbyballos*, a grayware *oenochoe*, a *deinos* stand, and the rim of a Lesbian amphora. Following these burials, m.5, m.6, m.7 and m.8 (the *enchtyrismos*), span the period between the roughly the first third and the end of the sixth century BCE.

The excavators have identified these as evidence for "the practice of funerary rites on the spot over generations".[183] Given that they are found in the earliest part of the necropolis, Sector II, alongside tumulus A–95, indicates a deliberate association between all three. If T-A95 belonged to an elite migrant, which seems very likely, then we might read B–95 and C–96 as the resting places of their family or migrant companions. Furthermore, we have to bear in mind the extent to which burial represents the practice not just of the inhumed individual, but of those who construct the tomb, deposit the grave goods and construct the tumulus. In this sense, the Orgame tumuli strongly point towards the practices of a group emphasizing their association with one another and, particularly, the occupant of T-A95. The burial itself and the explicit connections made between the deceased and those who were able to utilise the resources needed for its construction and depositions, point towards a group consciously portraying their own importance in the early community. Given the short interval between the T-A95 burial and tumulus, and the earliest burials in B–95 and C–96, it may be that a group of (at least) *ten* elite migrants were laid to rest there, exhibiting a system of relations which simultaneously indicated both hierarchy and egalitarianism. It may even be that the fact that the individual in T-A95 predeceased their companions acted as the catalyst for their positioning as *oikist* and founder of the settlement.[184] The survivors then gave their colleagues prominent places in the memorial landscape of the community on the occasions of *their* passings.

Symposia

The inventory of tomb T-A95 points to a second sphere of elite practice beyond funerary customs. In the Archaic period the symposium was an important practice marking out elite groupings.[185] The presence of sympotic wares early in the trajectory of migration to particular sites can potentially be identified as a marker of status position practice. This is somewhat problematized by the lack of coarse ware and handmade pottery in Greek styles. However, as Richard Posamentir has observed, these kinds of material may simply not have been retained during excavations, particularly those of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries CE.[186] Indeed, in most cases, the earliest Greek pottery found at the sites under investigation consists of consumption wares.

At Orgame, in addition to the finds in the necropolis, four MWG I/SiA Ib *oenochoe* and a fragment of a *dinos* (?) dating between 640 and 630 BCE were uncovered in the settlement area.[187] At nearby Istros, the neck of a MWG II/SiA Ic *oenochoe* was uncovered in the sacred area.[188] Across the settlement a variety of other late seventh century consumption wares have been found.[189] Looking north, the dating of the earliest pottery from Berezan has been the subject of serious debate,[190] broadly speaking though it seems to have appeared around 630 BCE. The seventh century material includes bird bowls,[191] cups and *kylikes*,[192] *oenochoae*,[193] plates,[194] and a *hydria*.[195] Likewise, the settlements at Taganrog,[196] dated to the last third of the seventh century, Pantikapaion[197] and

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[180] DUPONT/LUNGU 2021, 75–76.

[181] DUPONT/LUNGU 2021, 76.

[182] DUPONT/LUNGU 2021, 72–75.

[183] DUPONT/LUNGU 2021, 69.

[184] See KNIGHT 2021 for the suggestion that the idea of the *oikist* may have developed through the practice of migration rather than as a precursor.

[185] MURRAY 1983a; MURRAY 1983b; MURRAY 1983c; WECOWSKI 2014 c.f. YATROMANOLAKIS 2009.

[186] POSAMENTIR 2006, 159.

[187] MĂNUCU-ADAMEŞTEANU 2000.

[188] ALEXANDRESCU 2007, 330–331, no. C337, pl. 353. While Alexandrescu identifies this between MWG I and II (630–620 BCE), the decoration seems to me more similar to the examples of MWG II/SiA Ic (630–610) based on the criteria and examples given by SCHLOTZHAUER/KERSCHNER 2005, 23–33, esp. 25–26 nos. 40, 41, 45, 49, 50.

[189] Oenochoe ALEXANDRESCU 1978, nos. 18, 21–23, 26–29, cups ALEXANDRESCU 1978, no. 769; ALEXANDRESCU 2007, no. C172, bowls ALEXANDRESCU 1978, no. 209, 220–223; ALEXANDRESCU 2007, no. C53, C54, C65 and plates ALEXANDRESCU 1978, nos. 82–84, 90, 91

[190] See TSETSKHLADZE 2019, 3–4, 11–13 for the latest discussion on these problems. In general, I think TSETSKHLADZE 2012, 334 is right to argue that "all the chronological ranges given … in some degree or other, fall within the last third of the 7th century. In short, it is entirely reasonable to assign all our examples to this latter, single period, rather than looking to over-refine the differences within a very limited body of evidence.".

[191] Б.89–28; Б.67–54; Б.65–73.

[192] БЭ 2005. 34/204; БЭ 2010.44/366; БЭ 2013.13/81; ILYINA 2015, 223, 225 no. 220, 241; БЭ 2005.32/201; БЭ 2005.32/288; БЭ 2005.33a/202; БЭ 2005.39/ 313; БЭ 2006, 46/232; CHISTOV/ILYINA 2012, 24–27, 173 nos. 116.171–174, 178; БЭ 2014 20/130; БЭ 2013 56/262; БЭ 2013 56/263; БЭ 2010 49/418; БЭ 2013 25/183; БЭ 2012 52/252; БЭ 2013 59/318; БЭ 2013 59/320; БЭ 2010 34/280; БЭ 2014 29/203; БЭ 2014 23/159; БЭ 2013 59/328; БЭ 2013 3/21; БЭ 2013 3/22; БЭ 2013 10/71; БЭ 2010 34/278; БЭ 2013 56/264; БЭ 2012 36/222; БЭ 2013 58/292; БЭ 2013 63/370; CHISTOV *et alii* 2020: 34–35, 300, fig. 7, 8.4–10; Б69–138; SCHLOTZHAUER 2006, 162, fig. 167; ILYINA 2005, 75–77, nos. 71–10; Б.68–27; SOLOVYOV 2005, no. 12.

[193] БЭ 2004.15/50; ILYINA 2006, 115, no. 111; CHISTOV/ILYINA 2012, 24–27, 176, nos. 119.171; KOPEIKINA 1982, 8, fig. 2.7; БЭ 2010 50/536 (CHISTOV *et alii* 2020, 37, 310, fig. 17.3); Б.89–242.

[194] БЭ 2004.31/132; БЭ 2004.10/34; БЭ 2004/16/57; ILYINA 2006, 116, nos. 136–138; KOPEIKINA 1982, 14, 17, fig. 11; БЭ 2012 56/270; БЭ 2012 56/271); БЭ 2013 25/182; БЭ 2012 58/272 (CHISTOV *et alii* 2020: 35, 304, fig. 11.1–4); Б.69–29 SOLOVYOV 2005, no. 14.

[195] БЭ 2012 36/225; БЭ 2012 36/226 (CHISTOV *et alii* 2020, 37, 309, fig. 16.1).

[196] KOPYLOV 1996, 329–331, fig. 321; KOPYLOV 2000, 3–5, figs. 1, 2.1–4.

[197] Two bird bowls TOLSTIKOV 2017, 13; TOLSTIKOV/ASTASHOVA/SAMAR 2017, 559; TUGUSHEVA 2017, 94, 111, nos. 111, 112, seven north Ionian *dinoi* TUGUSHEVA/TOLSTIKOV 2015, 352, 367; TOLSTIKOV 2017, 13; TUGUSHEVA 2017, 111–112, nos. 114–110 and one Aeolian example from the London group, found during the excavations of the Old Museum in 1945 TUGUSHEVA/TOLSTIKOV 2015, 352; TOLSTIKOV/ASTASHOVA/

Apollonia[198] – both established around the last decades of the seventh century BCE – show similar patterns of early consumption wares.

Sympotic verse was also inscribed onto vessels around the middle to the second half of the sixth century BCE at these settlements. However, as these examples appear subsequent to the initial migration it is difficult to ascertain whether or not they can be ascribed to an immigrant elite grouping, or one that developed locally. Nevertheless, at Berezan, changes in architecture and settlement plan occurred around this time which can be ascribed to incoming migrants.[199]

The earliest example of sympotic graffiti in the Black Sea was uncovered at Berezan in the 1976 season. It is inscribed on a type IX banded Ionian cup.[200] This form seems to have existed between the beginning and the end of the second third of the sixth century, with this particular specimen dated to around 550 BCE by the excavators.[201] The text, carved onto an unglazed band below the rim, reads:

> "ΜΑΙΝΕΣΘΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΡΑΝ"

Μαίνεσθαι is a common verb in the present infinitive meaning 'to rage'.[202] It is found in the works of Homer, Euripides, and Sophocles amongst others.[203] *Ερᾶν*, a verb in the present active infinite, can be interpreted as "to love". The form *ερᾶν* is used frequently by Euripides.[204] The poetic register of these phrases suggests that the inscription is a verse, with its connection to tragedy and epic suggestive of a symposiastic content. Similarly, Yu. A. Vinogradov has identified an inscribed Ionic symposiastic verse on an ostracon found in 1989 at Taganrog.[205] It can be dated to the second half of the sixth century BCE through the use of the Ionian epichoric alphabet, particularly the Z shaped sigma, the alpha with slanted cross bar and the omega with sloping hastas.[206] The fragment, written in so called "Schlangenshrift" boustrophedon style,[207] can be read as:

> "]ΗΣ ΠΕΙΝΗ
>]ΚΑΓΩ ΠΕΙΝΩ
>]ΔΙΜ ΗΡΗΚΑ"

In the first line, *πείνη*, a verb in the second person imperative can be translated as "be hungry for", while the contractive pronoun *κᾱ̓γώ (καὶ ἐγώ*, "and I") and the subjunctive first person singular *πεινῶ*, suggest the second line can be read as "I too hunger". The final complete word, *ἥ̯ρηκᾰ*, a first person singular indicative verb can be translated as "I win". This translation, though literal, aligns well with the idea that this is related to the symposium. The first line may be an address to the company, before the the focal point shifts the speaker's desires and then rewards.

Vinogradov reconstructs the first two lines as hexameter verse and the third as a flawed catalectic trochaic dimeter, confirming that this inscription is symposiastic verse.[208] Furthermore, given the rarity of words ending *-διμ*, his suggestion that the final line includes *κύδιμ[ος]* is eminently plausible.[209] His reconstruction – taking *πείνη* and *πεινῶ* as metaphorical – is,

> "[εὐθυμί]ης πεινῆ
> κἀγὼ πεινῶ [τε ἄεθλα]
> νῦν τὰ κύ]διμ᾽ ἥρηκα"
>
> "Long for (revelry!)
> I too passionately desire it and (rewards
> now) I have won most glorious".

If this is indeed close to the original, and there seems little reason to doubt it given the surviving lexemes and the context of the inscription, then this is clear evidence for symposiastic performance at Taganrog in the sixth century BCE. Indeed, an unpublished papyrus fragment from Oxyrhynchos, provisionally dated to the late Archaic/early Classical period, has been initially identified as recounting the death of a Milesian aristocrat somewhere nearby on the Tanais river (m. Don) and could have been performed either in a funereal or symposiastic context.[210]

The evidence from burial practices, sympotic wares, and inscribed verse suggests that elite immigrant groups in the Black Sea region actively maintained and displayed their status through shared cultural practices. The presence of grand tumuli, imported wares, and poetic inscriptions points to the deliberate continuation of elite markers of identity, reinforcing social cohesion among elites. While the precise origins of these elites – whether exogenous or locally emergent – are difficult to determine with any certainty, their participation in established Greek elite traditions indicates that migration did not necessarily disrupt existing hierarchies but rather provided opportunities for their reassertion in new contexts. This underscores the adaptability of elite networks and their ability to perpetuate power through ritual, material culture, and communal expressions of status.

CONCLUSIONS

Overall, the central role of elite groups in structuring migration processes in the ancient Greek world is clear. Far from being passive victims of political upheaval, Milesian elites actively engaged in the negotiation of status and

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SAMAR 2017, 559; TUGUSHEVA 2017, 111, no. 113. In addition, fragments of a North Ionian *oenochoe* also date from this period TUGUSHEVA 2017, 122, no. 157.

[198] See now DAMYANOV 2024.

[199] CHISTOV 2021; CHISTOV 2022.

[200] BOARDMAN/HAYES 1966, 113–124.

[201] SOLOVYOV 2005, no. 267.

[202] *LSJ S.V.*

[203] HOM. *IL.* 5.717; EUR. *PHOEN.* 1127; *IA.* 42; SOPH. *OC.* 1537.

[204] EUR. *CYC. 555; HIPP. 347; HEC. 358; HEL. 1639; HERACL. 318; PHOEN.* 359; *TRO.* 732.

[205] VINOGRADOV 2000.

[206] JEFFREY 1961, 325–344.

[207] With the first line reading left to right, the second right to left, and the third left to right but with the letters turned upside down.

[208] VINOGRADOV 2000, 18.

[209] *Κύδιμος* is a relatively rare term, apart from its use as a name, it appears most frequently as an epithet of Hermes HOM. *HYMN.* 4; HES. *THEOG.* 938. Nevertheless, as VINOGRADOV 2000, 18 observes, its use in PIND. *OL.* 14.24 seems to be closest to the context of this inscription.

[210] P.Oxy. inv. 112/54. *Our Boys Lost in Fragments. Three New Texts of Greek Literature*. Presentation by Marco Perale on 28/03/2017 at the University of Liverpool. <<https://www.liverpool.ac.uk/events/event/?eventid=84477>> [Last accessed 24/03/2025].

power, both within their home communities and in the settlements to which they migrated. The concept of migration capital provides a valuable heuristic tool for understanding how access to social networks, material wealth, and institutional knowledge shaped the experiences of elite migrants. Whether through the maintenance of symposiastic traditions, the reinforcement of patron-client relationships, or the strategic use of kinship narratives, Milesian elites found ways to preserve and adapt their social positions in new environments.

At the same time, the case of Milesian migration demonstrates the complex and often ambivalent relationship between forced and voluntary mobility. Exile, while frequently a punitive measure, could also function as an opportunity for elite consolidation and expansion, allowing displaced aristocrats to leverage their networks in ways that ultimately reinforced their influence in new contexts. The role of elite migrants in establishing social and political structures in new settlements suggests that migration was not simply a matter of demographic movement but was deeply enmeshed with processes of identity formation, social hierarchy, and institutional development.

Overall, this provides us with a more nuanced understanding of ancient migration, challenging simplistic dichotomies between exile and voluntary movement, displacement and agency, adaptation and continuity. By examining the ways in which Milesian elites navigated these dynamics, we gain insight into the broader mechanisms of power, social reproduction, and cultural transmission that underpinned the expansion of the Greek world.

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