This thesis has been submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree (e.g. PhD, MPhil, DClinPsychol) at the University of Edinburgh. Please note the following terms and conditions of use:

- This work is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, which are retained by the thesis author, unless otherwise stated.
- A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge.
- This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the author.
- The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the author.
- When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given.
Honour in the *oikos.*
Reciprocity, respect, and recognition in fourth-century Athens

Bianca Mazzinghi Gori
PhD Thesis

Submitted in satisfaction of the requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH
2023
## Contents

**FRONT MATTER** ........................................................................................................................................... I

- Lay summary .................................................................................................................................................. ii
- Abstract .......................................................................................................................................................... v
- Abbreviations ................................................................................................................................................ vi

**INTRODUCTION** ........................................................................................................................................ 1

- Structure of the thesis ............................................................................................................................... 3
- Overview of methodological and theoretical tools ..................................................................................... 5

**CHAPTER 1: HONOUR IN THE OIKOS** ................................................................................................... 12

- Introduction ................................................................................................................................................ 12
  1.1 Family relationships: *axia*, cooperation, and the economy of *timē* .................................................. 12
  1.2 *Philia*: respect, obligations, and intersubjectivity .............................................................................. 18
  1.3 Forms and expressions of *timē* in interpersonal interaction............................................................... 24
  1.4 *Aidōs*: *philía*, recognition respect, and knowing one’s place ......................................................... 28

**CHAPTER 2: INFANTS’ PSYCHOLOGY AND THEIR TIMĒ** ..................................................................... 31

- Introduction ................................................................................................................................................ 31
  2.1 Scenes of interaction with babies ........................................................................................................ 32
  2.2 Modern accounts of developmental psychology ................................................................................ 35
  2.3 Plato’s and Aristotle’s views of infants ............................................................................................... 40
2.4 Infants’ *thymos* in Plato and Aristotle ................................................................. 46
2.5 *Aidōs* and infants in Plato................................................................................. 50
2.6 *Aidōs* and infants in Aristotle ........................................................................ 57
2.7 *Philia* in infants ............................................................................................... 68
2.8 *Mimēsis* in Plato’s and Aristotle’s accounts of infants ................................. 73
2.9 Other grounds for respect towards babies .......................................................... 78

CHAPTER 3: THE HONOUR OF CHILDREN .................................................................. 82

Introduction............................................................................................................. 82
3.1 Children’s emotional development: Cyrus in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* ........... 83
3.2 ‘Honour thy father and mother’: social norms and reciprocity ....................... 86
3.3 Learning to be father and son. Moschion and Demeas in Menander’s *Samia* .... 94
3.4 Averting rivalry and striving for equality and fairness: siblings and friends ........ 102
3.5 *Paideia*: honour as instrument and content................................................... 108
3.6 Children and the *polis*: finalising identities in the wider context.................. 111

CHAPTER 4: THE HONOUR OF WOMEN .................................................................. 119

Introduction............................................................................................................. 119
4.1 *Dikē, nomos*, and *axia*. Normative accounts of the role of wives .................. 121
4.2 Literary and forensic narratives of perceived shortcomings on the part of wives ... 128
4.3 The perfect wife: funerary commonplaces....................................................... 144
4.4 Unmarriageable lovers: *hetairai* and *pallakai*............................................... 151
4.5 Female work and careers: *philia*, pride, and honours ...................................... 162
4.6 Other spheres for women’s *timē* ...................................................................... 169
CHAPTER 5: THE HONOUR OF SLAVES

Introduction

5.1 Honour as a tool of slave management

5.2 Honour dynamics in master-slave relationships

5.3 Conflicts and resentment towards masters

5.4 Wider relational contexts

5.5 Not just slaves: slaves’ multifaceted identities

CONCLUSION

APPENDIX: THYMOS IN PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES
Front matter

Signed Declaration

I declare that I am the author of this thesis, and that the work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification.

Chapter 5 is an expanded version of Mazzinghi Gori (forthcoming).

Edinburgh, 27/01/2023

Bianca Mazzinghi Gori
**Lay summary**

This thesis examines dynamics of honour and respect in families of fourth-century BCE Athens by looking in particular at the subordinate members of Athenian families, namely children, women, and slaves. As this thesis contributes to affirm, the Greek word normally translated as honour, *timē*, has a much broader meaning than our current notion of honour. Classical Athens was a patriarchal society that heavily relied on slave labour; for this reason, it is often assumed that the subordinate members of the family such as slaves and women had no claims to respect. By focusing on the subordinate members of Athenian families, the thesis aims to show that the Greek notion of honour was able to accommodate bidirectional honour, recognition, and respect. As we shall see, this means that these dynamics involve simultaneous attention for one’s own standing and for that of others’, as well as a concern with what we think that others think of us. Thanks to the bidirectionality of honour, the subordinate members of the *oikos* were engaged in complex interpersonal dynamics, within which their claims to recognition are intertwined to those of others.

In the first Chapter, I provide an overview of the expressions that honour dynamics can take in the context of the household. First of all, I show that honour was regarded as an essential aspect of relationships in general: symmetrical and asymmetrical relationships alike were conceptualised in terms of each party’s respective worth and of mutual honour and respect. Moreover, the family is conceptualised as a cooperative enterprise, to which all members contributes according to their specific roles and worth. Therefore, all members deserve recognition in so far as they fulfil their role.

In Chapter 2, I investigate the issue of infants’ honour, addressing the question of whether it is possible that infants have honour at all. I discuss at length Plato’s and Aristotle’s views of infants’ psychology, highlighting the problems in their accounts as well as the potentiality for a recognition of infants’ honour. As modern developmental psychology shows, even infants are involved in honour dynamics: they expect adults to treat them in certain ways and express their upset when they do not receive the proper attentions. I argue that, in spite of Plato’s and Aristotle’s caution, other case studies acknowledge these claims to respect on the part of infants.

Chapter 3 looks at the honour of children first in their relationships with parents, siblings, and friends, and then in their education and socialisation. In the case of relationships with parents, gratitude is the key theme: children were expected to honour their parents and be
grateful for all the care they received from them. However, parents needed to respect their children: as shown in all the other chapters, asymmetry does not exclude reciprocity. In the case of peers, the main theme is the tension between affection and envy, which depends on the tension between equality and individuality. These relationships were thus a good arena for children to learn how to balance self-assertion with respect for others. In their education and socialisation, honour can be seen as both instrument and content: children’s desire to be recognised and to emulate role models is harnessed by parents and teachers to teach them what is honourable and dishonourable. Mechanisms of honour and recognition are also harnessed in the polis to socialise children to their social roles.

Chapter 4 is devoted to women’s honour. I start by stressing the utmost importance of reciprocity and cooperation in conceptualisations of marriage, which was also based on a division of entitlements and prerogatives: wives had their own sphere of influence in the household, and husbands were expected to respect their authority. The ideal husband-wife relationship was based on mutual love and esteem. When things went wrong, some leniency was regarded as praiseworthy; extra-marital sex was not seen a priori as tainting the wife’s purity, but attention was paid to the wife’s intentions. Although their claims could easily be ignored, even lovers and pallakai could lay claims to respect on the basis of their love and relationship with a man. In addition to their relationships with men, women could attain recognition and pride also through paths such as their work or involvement in religious activities. Thus, the honour of women appears very complex and nuanced, and women appear capable of exploiting honour dynamics to defend and increase their status.

In Chapter 5 I consider slaves. As I show, even master-slave relationships can accommodate reciprocity and mutual expectations, although reciprocity was sometimes exploited as an instrument of slave management on the part of masters. Regardless of the quality of their relationship with masters, however, our case studies show that slaves had a distinct sense of dignity and of their entitlements to fair treatment. Moreover, they could shape their identity and self-esteem beyond their legal status, for instance by identifying with their ethnic group or stressing their professional expertise.

Overall, the thesis shows that honour dynamics in ancient Athens were often cooperative and inclusive rather than competitive and exclusive; thanks to its flexibility and bidirectionality, moreover, the Greek notion of honour could empower the subordinate members of the
household, enabling them to negotiate their claims and develop their sense of self-worth and self-esteem.
Abstract

This thesis investigates honour and recognition dynamics in fourth-century Athenian oikoi, looking in particular at the subordinate members of the family. Through a balanced combination of textual analysis and multi-disciplinary approaches, this thesis reassesses the experiences of children, women, and slaves, while contributing to a reassessment of timeō more generally along the lines of modern theories of recognition. The aim is to show that timeō is a bidirectional mechanism that pervades all sorts of interactions, allowing for complex interpersonal dynamics even in starkly asymmetrical relationships.

The first chapter briefly sketches the various expressions of timeō in the interpersonal sphere, while the second chapter looks more specifically at the possibility of recognition dynamics involving infants. In this chapter, much attention is devoted to ancient and modern accounts of infants’ psychology: as I argue, some ancient sources agree with modern accounts of infants’ psychology as essentially intersubjective. Intersubjectivity is the conceptual basis for the understanding of honour put forth in this thesis: the various case studies examined throughout the thesis demonstrate the fundamental awareness of the inextricable links between one’s own timeō and the timeō of others.

Chapters three, four, and five investigate the honour of children, women, and slaves respectively. Particular attention is given to the recognition they could obtain and expect in their relationships with other members of the oikos. Despite their subordinate status vis-à-vis their parents, husbands, and masters respectively, these categories were able to leverage the reciprocity inherent in relationships of all sorts, putting forth claims to recognition and respect. In addition to this, other paths were available to accrue honour and recognition, both in and out of the oikos, thanks for instance to athletic achievements, religious associations, or professional expertise.

This thesis therefore contributes to a reassessment of timeō as a fundamentally cooperative mechanism based on bidirectionality, while also shedding light on the experiences of the subordinate members of the family in fourth-century Athens from an innovative perspective. As this thesis shows, timeō dynamics enabled children, women, and slaves to negotiate their claims to respect and defend their right to recognition.
Abbreviations

AIO: Attic Inscriptions Online website.
CGL: Diggle et al. (2021).
DTA: Wünsch (1897).
IG: Inscriptiones Graecae.
LSJ: Liddell, Scott, and Jones (1966).
SEG: Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum.
TrGF: Nauck (1889).
Introduction

To many of us, the English word ‘honour’ is likely to evoke anachronistic images of duels, of repudiated wives and daughters, of hierarchies and obsequiousness; many of us might believe that honour is something that belongs to the past and that we should not be nostalgic about.\(^1\) However, these preconceptions do not do justice either to the role that honour played in the past, or to the role that it plays in our society, in spite of the reluctance to mention it. In the context of modern philosophy, thinkers such as Kwame Anthony Appiah, Alexander Welsh, and Frank Henderson Stewart have called for a reappraisal of the concept of honour, which according to them must be seen as not separated from, but germane to and ultimately comprising other connected phenomena such as respect, dignity, and morality.\(^2\) The work of historians such as Linda Pollock has shown that, in other cultures like that of early modern England, honour’s primary function was to ensure smooth relationships, and that it went hand in hand with virtue.\(^3\)

A similar shift had already begun to take place in the previous decades with regard to the Greek concept for honour, \textit{timē}, with scholars emphasising that the Greek notion of honour can have to do with both competition and cooperation, and with self- and other-regarding considerations.\(^4\) This thesis aims to strengthen this broad, rich, and flexible understanding of \textit{timē} by looking at honour dynamics in fourth-century Athenian households. By focusing on the private side of \textit{timē}, my purpose is to bring out the role that \textit{timē} played in daily interactions and family relationships. In particular, this thesis focuses on the subordinate members of the \textit{oikos}, with the additional goal of shedding light on their experiences and evaluating what role \textit{timē} dynamics might have for them in a patriarchal, hierarchical, and slave-owning society.

---

\(^1\) Bowman (2007) is an example of a (problematic) nostalgic view of honour, narrowly interpreted as having to do merely with hierarchy, machismo, power, and the like.

\(^2\) Stewart (1994); Welsh (2008); Appiah (2010).

\(^3\) Pollock (2007).

\(^4\) See especially the works of Douglas Cairns (e.g. (1993), (1996), (2011), (2019a), (2020a)), Mirko Canevaro (e.g. (2016), (2018), (2020)), Øyvind Rabbås (2015); see already Riedinger (1976), (1980). See also in general the ERC project ‘Honour in Classical Greece’ (University of Edinburgh, 2018-2023), of which this thesis represents one output.
aim in the thesis is thus to highlight the complexity and flexibility of the ancient Greek conception of honour and to show that *timē* could also become an instrument in the hands of subordinate categories to negotiate their standing and defend their claims to respect. The hope is therefore also to restore the dignity of the people who were most oppressed in fourth-century Athenian society.

I shall do so by favouring an emic rather than an etic approach. In spite of the difficulties in retrieving the genuine perspectives of people such as children, women, and slaves as opposed to the overrepresented freeborn men, the aim will be to reconstruct the ways in which these groups experienced and conceptualised *timē* dynamics without importing in the analysis modern evaluative and moral standards. Several chapters will begin with an overview of normative accounts on the role, standing, and consideration of the people involved: these analyses will help us frame the investigation of the case studies in terms of the categories and insights that thinkers and philosophers familiar with fourth-century Athens brought into their reflections. As for the case studies, epigraphic evidence will prove particularly precious as it sometimes preserves the voices of marginalised people speaking directly about their experiences. Forensic speeches will also be helpful in showing the tensions that could emerge between normative views of relationships and ethical standards on the one hand and the complexity of reality on the other. Last but not least, in all chapters I shall rely heavily on Menander’s comedies, harnessing the richness with which they depict scenes of interaction between characters belonging to the same or to different *oikoi*.

The emphasis on the sources and on the emic perspective is complemented by a strong reliance on a multidisciplinary and cross-cultural approach. Far from standing in opposition, the two methodological choices enrich each other. Modern disciplines such as philosophy and

---

5 Emic refers to ‘the cultural insider’s perspective’, while etic labels ‘the perspective of an outside observer’ (Vivanco (2018)). The distinction was first proposed by linguistic anthropologist Kenneth Pike (1954), who extrapolated the words from the terms ‘phonemic’ and ‘phonetic’, and is now widespread in both anthropology and linguistics.

6 In the last decades, most scholars have finally set aside their qualms about harnessing Menander as a source for social history. See e.g. Giglioni Bodei (1984); Lape (2004) for socio-cultural readings of his comedies; with regard to family dynamics, see Patterson (1998), pp. 185–225; and Cox (2002a) specifically on slaves. For discussions of Menander’s value as a source for socio-cultural history, see e.g. Hunter (1994), p. 85, n. 26 (p. 217); Patterson (1998), pp. 191–194, with further references, as well as Cox (2002b). See more recently Lape and Moreno (2014) on both Old and New Comedy. This thesis will show that, in most cases, the results that we can extrapolate from Menander’s comedies find confirmation in other sources.
psychology in particular will offer essential insights into honour dynamics, providing the vocabulary and tools to describe and analyse them. Whenever possible, I shall compare the results from modern science and theories with the evidence of ancient sources, in order to gauge the extent to which ancient and modern phenomena were experienced in similar or different ways. I shall present all the theoretical and methodological frameworks employed in the thesis in the final section of the introduction, but I shall first provide an overview of the structure of the thesis in the next section.

Structure of the thesis

This thesis comprises five chapters. In Chapter 1, I shall begin by offering an overview on relationships and honour dynamics in the household that will work as an introduction for the following chapters. In order to have a framework for the analysis of the case studies in the rest of the thesis, I shall introduce in this preliminary discussion the key themes and elements with which we shall deal in more detail in the rest of the thesis. In particular, I shall deal with charis, philia, and with specific emotions and virtues connected to timē and relevant to a domestic context. The following chapters will each revolve around a specific category. I shall begin by looking at infants in Chapter 2: most of this chapter will be dedicated to an investigation of infants’ psychology, in order to probe whether or not infants could be a party to honour dynamics. In this chapter, I shall heavily rely on modern developmental psychology and I shall introduce my theoretical framework, with special regard for accounts of intersubjectivity and theories of recognition. The insights gathered from modern accounts will enable us to appreciate some crucial underlying elements that might otherwise go unnoticed in the ancient sources. I shall also compare scenes of interaction as depicted in literary sources with what Plato and Aristotle have to say about infants and their psychology. This chapter will thus lay the basis for all the following chapters, providing a framework for understanding the role of recognition dynamics in human psychology, and offering insights specifically into some key loci of honour.

While the first two chapters are more general in scope, addressing overarching questions connected to the psychology and sociality of honour, the following three chapters are more focused on children, women, and slaves, and their status within the oikos. In Chapter 3, I shall look at the honour and relationships of children in the oikos. I shall follow them in their development and observe them in the different relational spheres in which they were involved.
In particular, I shall consider their relationships with parents, as well as with siblings and peers. I shall also investigate their education, and the ways in which their identities were shaped through various institutionalised practices and public experiences. When dealing with parent-child relationships, I shall also include cases involving grown-up children, as the learning process on how to behave and how to fulfil their roles continued even as they grew into adults. As we shall see, *timē* was at the core of these various experiences. In Chapter 4, I shall turn to the issue of the honour of women. I shall concentrate first of all on marriage, comparing normative accounts with cases of real or alleged shortcomings on the part of a wife first and second with the idealised depictions that we can find in funerary inscriptions. I shall then consider the cases of *hetaira* and *pallakai*. Another section will be devoted to women as workers, while the final section will consider other spheres in which women could accrue *timē* and develop a sense of self-worth. The honour of slaves is the theme of my fifth and final chapter. In this chapter too, I shall begin by investigating first of all their relationships with the head of the household, which, as in the case of women, was regarded as the defining relationship in a slave’s life. As I shall aim to show, however, slaves had more agency than commonly acknowledged in negotiating their *timē* vis-à-vis their masters. Furthermore, their sense of honour and pride did not depend exclusively on their relationships with the head of the *oikos*, as we shall see by looking at their interactions with other people and their experiences more generally in and out of the *oikos*.

My investigation of the honour of all these groups does not aim to be exhaustive, either in the selection of case studies, or in the issues examined. The scholarship on all these categories is immense and providing a complete account of all the issues at stake would go beyond the scope of this thesis. When talking of women’s, slaves’, or children’s honour, my aim is rather to problematise some aspects and to reassess some issues by changing the way we look at honour itself. As I hope this thesis will demonstrate, *timē* was a broad, flexible, and pervasive mechanism, which was often used in cooperative ways and was rooted in all cases in mutual expectations and obligations, as well as in a sense of fairness and justice. With particular regard to the subordinate members of the household, moreover, *timē* also represented a powerful tool for negotiating their claims to respect in starkly asymmetrical relationships.
Overview of methodological and theoretical tools

My analysis will rely on a rich range of theoretical tools and perspectives: I shall present here a general overview of the theories and approaches upon which I shall draw. One first foundation for my investigation is represented by the notion of intersubjectivity, which denotes the basic fact that we do not exist qua subjects independently of our fellow human beings. While philosophers like Descartes and Kant have implanted in our cultural tradition individualistic notions of the self, Greek culture, by contrast, assumed our basic interdependency. This becomes particularly evident when investigating timē as I aim to show, timē was conceived as a relational dynamic, co-constituted by all the subjects involved, as well as influenced by the cultural context. Although the Greeks did not have a corresponding word, intersubjectivity is the best tool to account for the relational and co-created character that emerges as an essential feature of timē. With interaction being so crucial to timē, and even more so with regard to timē in the private sphere, modern theories of social interactions offer indispensable frameworks and concepts to analyse relationships and scenes of interaction. On a theoretical level, I endorse philosopher Shaun Gallagher’s Interaction Theory as a general framework to explain how we make sense of others and interpret their actions, emotions, beliefs and so on. As he maintains in opposition to Theory of Mind (in both its two ramifications, so-called Theory Theory and Simulation Theory), thanks to our embodied and intersubjective nature, we have access to direct perception and interpretation of others’ states.

---

7 According to the Oxford Dictionary of social sciences (Calhoun (2002)), intersubjectivity ‘concerns the relations between people, rather than within them (subjectivity) or beyond them (objectivity or transcendental reality). More generally, it describes a broad trend in twentieth-century philosophy and social science that privileges communication between people and shared understanding over individual consciousness and concepts of objective knowledge.’ See also the summary in Gallagher (2020) and the broad overview offered by Crossley (2012).

8 See Gill (1996) for a study on the different notions of self in ancient Greek and modern cultures. Gill describes both Descartes’ and Kant’s notions as individualistic, with the difference that in Descartes the self is objective, whereas Kant regards it as subjective. By contrast with these two individualistic notions, the Greek notion of the self is described by Gill as ‘objective-participant’. I believe that the notion of intersubjectivity provides an even better lens for analysing the ways in which ancient thinkers and laypeople conceived and experienced timē. By contrast with the objectivity envisaged by Gill, I believe that intersubjectivity is better capable of accounting for the role of, for instance, phantasia and co-creation in the way the Greeks conceptualised interaction, ethics, cultural transmission, and so on.

9 Gallagher (2020).
On a more practical level, in my analyses of specific interaction cases I shall employ the notions elaborated by sociologist Erving Goffman to describe and interpret social interaction, following the pioneering work of Ruth Scodel on face-work in Homer.\textsuperscript{10} Notions as ‘face’, ‘deference’, and ‘demeanour’ will prove extremely helpful to capture fundamental aspects of *timē* dynamics. Once again, employing words that do not find neat correspondence with Greek terms must not be seen as an interpolation: as we shall see, all the concepts formalised by Goffman only help us isolate each time an aspect of the broad and rich functioning of *timē* and other related Greek concepts that our sources identify with precision, even when they do not label it.\textsuperscript{11} Both deference and demeanour, for instance, can be used to pinpoint some precise meanings that belong in the semantic fields of honour. *Timē* and its cognate verbs, for instance, can sometimes refer to the deference or lack thereof shown to somebody; *aidōs* too sometimes denotes deference, while at times being more focused on demeanour.

More generally, the landscape of honour that emerges from exploring the functions of *timē* and related concepts, such as *aidōs*, *thymos*, or *axia*, requires broad and rich theoretical frameworks. Modern theories of recognition such as those of Axel Honneth represent the ideal instrument to gain a comprehensive and coherent perspective on *timē*.\textsuperscript{12} As we shall observe in our investigation, *timē* can take many different forms: sometimes it is the regard we show to a superior, sometimes it can be represented by a concrete gift, sometimes it is the respect we have even towards subordinate people, and so on. However, at the core of any expression of honour stands the value assigned to oneself and to the other person involved in any given interaction or relationship. Recognition, therefore, provides an inclusive enough framework to take account of the various functions and directions that *timē* might display. As an expansion of recognition theories, I shall often recall philosopher Stephen Darwall’s categories of different forms of respect, especially the distinction between recognition and appraisal respect put forth in his

\textsuperscript{10} Goffman (1956), (1967); Scodel (2008).

\textsuperscript{11} That a strictly terminological approach is too narrow is recognised by Aristotle himself: in his discussion of virtues and vices in the *Ethics*, he often refers to nameless concepts (see the overviews of virtues and vices in *ENVII*, 1107a28-1108b7, and *EEII*, 1220b36-1221a4); it is clear that the gap only affects the language, while the concepts that Aristotle refers to are easily understood and actually belong to common understanding of the range of behaviour.

\textsuperscript{12} Honneth (1995). As we shall see, Honneth focuses on three forms of recognition: love, rights, and esteem. As this thesis focuses on the private sphere and personal relationships, I shall not deal much with rights as a form of recognition and of *timē*, on this, see e.g. Canevaro (2020).
article from 1977. While recognition respect is connected to dignity and defined as putting limits on our behaviour towards someone, Darwall defines appraisal respect as esteem for excellent performance, which need not influence our conduct. As I shall argue in more detail soon, there are some problems in this distinction; if handled with care, however, Darwall’s ideas of recognition respect and appraisal respect can have good heuristic value. Keeping in mind that there is no such clear-cut distinction between the two aspects, recognition respect and appraisal respect can help us unpack time dynamics from different perspectives.

More fruitful for my inquiry, by contrast, is Darwall’s account of what he calls the second-person standpoint: as we shall see, time is strongly rooted in reciprocity and mutual accountability, which are the characterising features of Darwall’s second-person standpoint. As I shall argue in more detail at the end of this overview, however, second-person considerations are not sufficient by themselves to account for the richness of time dynamics. The second-person standpoint is complemented by, and goes hand in hand with, third-person factors, expressed in cultural norms and collective assumptions. These interwoven dimensions are also encompassed by intersubjectivity theories. As we shall see in more detail in the chapter devoted to the intersubjectivity of infants, the primary form of intersubjectivity that characterises human infants is strictly dyadic, allowing babies to engage in interactions based on mutuality and emotional attunement with an adult. Subsequently, babies develop so-called joint intentionality, consisting in the capacity to share an adult’s attention and intention over an object. Finally, three-year old babies also develop so-called collective intentionality, which enables them to understand the collective, shared, and abstract nature of social and cultural norms.

Among the cultural entities into which we are socialised thanks to collective intentionality, of particular interest for our enquiry on honour are so-called status-roles (or status functions). These expressions refer to those collectively recognised and defined roles

---

13 See Darwall (1977).
15 See Parsons (1952), pp. 25–26; Beattie (1959), pp. 46–47, n. 10 for the notion of status-role; for the equivalent expression ‘status functions’ see Searle (2010), (2017), p. 7: ‘The distinctive feature of human social reality, the way in which it differs from other forms of animal reality known to me, is that humans have the capacity to impose functions on objects and people where the objects and the people cannot perform the functions solely in virtue of their physical structure. The performance of the function requires that there be a collectively recognized status
that bring with them specific prerogatives, duties, obligations, and rights. The label of status-role is thus useful for recalling both the collective and the cultural nature of certain functions (such as the roles of citizen, wife, slave) and the set of obligations and prerogatives that each role encompasses. In the thesis, I shall often refer simply to roles, implying the collective and normative aspects that the concept of status-role brings out more explicitly. As we shall see, for the various roles the balance between duties and rights could vary widely: in the case of slaves, for instance, the corresponding status-role was defined as almost completely devoid of rights. However, no one’s identity was necessarily pigeonholed into just one role. As this thesis demonstrates, even the subordinate members of the oikos had ways to negotiate their identities and statuses. In this respect, a relevant notion is that of affordances, elaborated by James Gibson with regard to his ecological psychology: affordances are the actions that a physical environment allows an organism with certain characteristics to do, and are thus intrinsically interactive.\footnote{Gibson (1979), pp. 127–137.} Given that we are dealing with cultural and social dynamics, the affordances we shall investigate are more specifically cultural affordances, encompassing the culturally and socially scripted aspects of roles and honour dynamics such as expectations, norms, interpretation of others’ intentions, and so on.\footnote{On cultural affordances, see Ramstead, Veissière, and Kirmayer (2016).}

With regard to the collective dimension of timē dynamics, I shall also draw upon sociologist and philosopher Pierre Bourdieu’s theories, employing concepts such as feel for the game and habitus.\footnote{Bourdieu (1977), (1998).} In his reflections on societies, hierarchies, and honour, Bourdieu reached pessimistic conclusions on the role of recognition dynamics: according to him, even when forms of recognition are bestowed on marginalised groups, this constitutes merely another strategy to reinforce the power of the dominant groups, thus representing a form of méconnaissance.\footnote{On méconnaissance, see in particular Bourdieu (1977), pp. 5–6 and passim.} One of the objectives of my study is therefore also to consider what role timē dynamics played that the person or object has, and it is only in virtue of that status that the person or object can perform the function in question. Examples are pretty much everywhere: a piece of private property, the president of the United States, a twenty-dollar bill, and a professor in a university are all people or objects that are able to perform certain functions in virtue of the fact that they have a collectively recognized status that enables them to perform those functions in a way they could not do without the collective recognition of the status.'
for the subordinate members of the *oikos* that this thesis is concerned with, in order to see whether the forms of recognition that we shall observe are ultimately reducible to examples of *méconnaissance*.

Part of my argument against Bourdieu’s thesis on *méconnaissance* will also rely on theories of human developmental and evolutionary psychology. Michael Tomasello in particular has shown that babies are much more cooperative than we normally think; furthermore, he has also pointed out the connections between cooperation and roles. According to him, the ‘notion of social role is ... indissociable, psychologically speaking, from cooperation’. Society is conceived as a cooperative enterprise, and roles represent the way in which everybody can contribute to this enterprise; by definition, social roles are collectively recognised and endorsed, and this endorsement is based on the fact that they are regarded as useful to society itself.

Finally, another framework I shall adopt to analyse some aspects of the collective side of *timē* dynamics is the model of the economy of esteem developed by Geoffrey Brennan and Philip Pettit. This model will be particularly useful in my chapter on slaves, to interpret some dynamics in the ways slaves could fashion their self-image and self-worth. Applying the model of the economy of esteem will allow us to gauge how broader phenomena that permeate the whole of society might reverberate in the private sphere. Indeed, throughout the thesis, the focus on the family and interpersonal relationships will not be interpreted narrowly: as the categories that we shall investigate were conceived primarily as members of the *oikos*, it is also relevant occasionally to broaden the perspective, and look at their possibilities for *timē* beyond the walls of the house.

Having drawn this comprehensive overview, I would now like to discuss in more detail Darwall’s notion of recognition respect, which is as useful as it is problematic. In Darwall’s definition, recognition respect encapsulates the recognition and deference that we must show towards a person on the basis of a certain feature that he or she has; this feature can vary and determines in what ways we must factor recognition respect in our behaviour. For instance, we can respect any person qua human being, and we might therefore show recognition respect by

---

20 See however Bourdieu (1999) for a smoother view of honour and recognition dynamics, with less emphasis on *méconnaissance*.
considering everyone as a bearer of basic human rights. We can respect teachers qua teachers, by responding to their questions if we are students or by treating them with the proper deference if we are the student’s parents. And we can respect our friend qua our friend. The examples I made to illustrate recognition respect can be used to illustrate a tension in its potential applications. In the case of a friend, my recognition respect is based on my relationship with her. In the case of teachers, I can have recognition respect towards all teachers qua teachers, regardless of whether or not I know them personally; if I know them, however, my recognition respect will also depend on what exactly my relationship with them is (whether, for example, I am their student, their student’s parent, or the headmaster).

In order to understand what exactly distinguishes these cases, we can harness some tools that Darwall himself has contributed to develop, namely the second-person and the third-person standpoints. Darwall focuses on the second-person standpoint as the perspective that the parties involved in a relationship or interaction adopt when they see each other as mutually and equally accountable. According to him, morality is therefore intrinsically second-personal, and must be contrasted with ‘honor ethics’ and ‘honor respect’, a subset of recognition respect, whereby we show respect to a role rather than to a person.\(^{24}\) This distinction is problematic, however; as the following discussion will show, \(\text{timē}\) is much more complex, comprising all the instances of both appraisal and recognition respect, ‘honour respect’ included. Moreover, even that of being a person is a status, which depends on certain criteria.\(^ {25}\)

More generally, I would like to raise the point that second-personal and third-personal considerations need not stand in opposition, just as honour need not stand in opposition with morality. Collective, third-personal considerations often demand respect towards second-personal aspects; conversely, personal relationships are most of the time also cast in terms of specific configurations with widely shared normative underpinnings. Various case studies in this thesis will confirm this point explicitly: particular personal ties are informed by social norms, and social norms dictate second-personal attitudes of mutuality, leniency, and esteem. Furthermore, respecting somebody by taking account of her role stands in no opposition with morality: although sometimes one’s role might impose some specific constraints, there is always some room for second-personal attitudes. As we shall see in Chapter 5, for instance, even slaves

\(^{24}\) See Darwall (2013).

\(^{25}\) See for instance Rabbås (2015) for this criticism.
could hold their masters accountable. They had to respect specific boundaries and be careful not to appear rebellious, but, within these limits, there was still room for a second-person perspective.

To conclude, Darwall’s recognition respect provides a useful tool to analyse essential factors in honour dynamics, such as deference, obligations, recognition, and so on. For this concept to be truly helpful, however, we need to employ it in more flexibly than Darwall would allow, especially with regard to the distinction between second- and third-personal perspectives. As I shall argue in section 1.2 of Chapter 1, Aristotle himself refers to something very similar to recognition respect in his account of *philia*. Moreover, as we shall see throughout the chapters, often the most important principle prescribed by collective, third-personal norms and expectations is nothing else than reciprocity itself, the very essence of any second-personal perspective. We can now start exploring these dynamics by looking at ancient conceptualisation of honour and relationships.
Chapter 1: Honour in the oikos

Introduction

This thesis revolves around relationships in the household. It is necessary, therefore, to assess first of all what role honour played in relationships in general and in the oikos specifically. The Greek term philia comprises positive and not merely transactional relationships; in this introductory chapter, I shall account for the relevance of timē in the family and then proceed to provide a more general account of philia that emphasises its relevance for a study of timē in the household. I shall rely in particular on Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics, which represents the richest account of the concept. One aim in my analysis is to unpack some of Aristotle’s remarks on philia, with the aim of highlighting further implications for a reassessment of timē.

In order to do so, I shall draw upon some modern frameworks that are especially helpful in describing and analysing honour dynamics in relationships. In particular, I shall harness the notion of intersubjectivity and philosopher Stephen Darwall’s notions of recognition respect and of the second-person standpoint. These notions and insights will shed light on Aristotle’s conception of philia and, consequently, on timē as well. In this chapter, I shall also introduce some specific loci of honour to sketch a partial picture of the role of honour in human psychology. This investigation will serve as an introduction for the questions we shall explore in Chapter 2 with regard to the honour of infants. The second aim is to suggest that an exploration of philia and others loci of honour allows us to appreciate the intersubjective underpinnings of timē.

1.1 Family relationships: axia, cooperation, and the economy of timē

Aristotle famously describes human beings as political animals (e.g. Pol. I, 1253a3: πολιτικὸν ζῶον). In addition to this more famous description, in a passage from the Eudemian Ethics Aristotle recognises another essential feature of our species: we are not only a πολιτικὸν ζῶον,

---

26 On the oikos, Lacey (1968) still provides a fundamental overview on families in Classical Greece; see also Pomeroy (1997); Patterson (1998); Ferrucci (2006), (2007), (2013b); Rawson (2011). On the intrinsic connections of economy and morality in the oikos, see Booth (1993); see now Hinsch (2021).
but also a domestic animal, oικονομικὸν ζῴον (EE VII, 1242a24). As Jorge Torres puts it in an enlightening study of the biological roots of Aristotle’s account of philia,

The household occupies quite a unique place in Aristotle’s ethical, political, and biological thought, existing at the intersection of Aristotle’s biology and ethicopolitical thought: the household is a socio-economic institution, indeed the atomic unit of the city-state, but it is also a biological phenomenon that differentiates the human mating system from that of other animals.27

As Aristotle himself explains, this has significant consequences for his ethical account. To the note on our nature as domestic animals, the philosopher adds that the household represents a kind of philia (οἰκία δ’ ἐστὶ τις φιλία, 1242a28), and that it is in the household that the very origins of philia, politeia, and of to dikaion can be identified (ἐν οἰκίᾳ πρῶτον ἀρχαὶ καὶ πηγαὶ φιλίας καὶ πολιτείας καὶ δικαίων, 1242b1-2). Thanks to our nature as domestic animals, some koinōnia and some form of justice would exist even if there were no polis (1242a27-28).

The connection between our domestic and our civic sociality is highlighted by the fact that, in this same passage from the Eudemian Ethics and in two different passages from the Nicomachean Ethics (V, 1134b9-18; VIII, 1160b23-1161a31), Aristotle looks at the various relationships that he regards as constitutive of the household through the lens of political models. In the passage from the Eudemian Ethics, Aristotle limits himself to noticing that the relationship between husband and wife constitutes a koinōnia, that the one between fathers and sons corresponds to the one between natural rulers and natural subjects, and that the one between brothers falls into the category of hetairikē philia.28 The most detailed comparison is to be found in Aristotle’s discussion on philia in book eight of the Nicomachean Ethics (1160b23-1161a31). Aristotle looks at the four relationships that he regards as constitutive of the oikos, the ones between parent and child, master and slave, husband and wife, and between siblings,

---

27 Torres (2021), p. 21. As stressed by Torres, Aristotle believes human beings to be ‘pairing animals’ before and more than social animals, and the oikos to be prior (in developmental, not teleological, terms) to the polis; see e.g. EN VIII, 1162a16-18: ἀνδρὶ δὲ καὶ γυναικὶ φιλία δοκεῖ κατὰ φύσιν ὑπάρχειν: ἀνθρώπος γὰρ τῇ φύσει συνεναστικὸν μᾶλλον ἢ πολιτικόν, δῶς πρῶτον καὶ ἀναγκαίωτερον οἰκία πόλεως, καὶ τεκνοποιία κοινότερον τοῖς ζῷοις.

28 Arist. EE VII, 1242a32-40: γυναικός δὲ καὶ ἀνδρός φιλία ὡς χρήσιμον καὶ κοινωνία: πατρὸς δὲ καὶ υἱόν ἢ αὐτὴ ἥπερ θεοῦ πρὸς ἀνθρώπον καὶ τοῦ εὐ ποιήσαντος πρὸς τὸν παθόντα καὶ ὅλος τοῦ φύσει ἀρχοντος πρὸς τὸν φύσει ἀρχόμενον: ἡ δὲ τῶν ἀδελφῶν πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἑταρική μάλιστα ἢ κατ’ ισότητα ... ταῦτα γὰρ ὡς τὸ ἱσον ζησοῦντων λέγεται.
equating each of them to a specific political regime. The relationship between parent and child is thus likened to a monarchy, since parents care for their children, while the one with slaves is closer to a tyranny, because only the interest of the master counts in it. On the other hand, the relationship between husband and wife is equated to an aristocracy: as we shall see in closer detail in the chapter on women, according to Aristotle husbands should recognise and respect their wives’ specific spheres of authority and competence, without interfering in them. Finally, siblings’ relationships correspond to a timocracy, on account of their equality. As Aristotle makes clear in the way he frames his statements on husband-wife and siblings’ relationships especially, the blueprint for these equations consists in a framework of distributive justice based on differences in each member’s worth, *axia*. Aristotle acknowledges this explicitly while talking about husband and wife relationships: the husband’s superiority is not absolute but κατ’ ἀξίαν, and it would be παρ’ ἀξίαν if he failed to respect his wife’s own *aretai*. In the case of siblings, their equality is also, and primarily, equality in *axia*, as underlined by the parallelism with citizens, who all want to be equal and *epieikeia*. The centrality of *axia* in this account of the fundamental relationships of the *oikos* is a first and crucial proof of the relevance of honour in an analysis of family relationships, since Aristotle often uses *axia* for what common Greek language refers to as *timeĩ* in the sense of claims, rights, and entitlements. In concrete terms, both words refer to the worth or value of something; in metaphorical terms, both *axia* and *timeĩ* can refer to somebody’s value, worth, or desert. While *timeĩ* covers both ‘objective’ and ‘subjective’ components of honour, however, the synonymy with *axia* only involves the ‘subjective’ side of *timeĩ*. In ordinary language, *timeĩ* can denote on the one hand the intrinsic value or worth of something and somebody’s desert and dignity, and, on the other hand, the various forms of recognition and honour that can be offered in recognition of that value or desert. The description of relationships among siblings as timocratic underlines this correspondence: in Aristotle’s terms, siblings have the same *axia*, and their relationships correspond to timocracy because that is the regime where there are no superior and inferior


30 See Rabbãs (2015); Cairns (2020a).

31 Cf. LSJ s.v. ἀξία and τιμή; for a study of the concrete and metaphorical meaning of *timeĩ* in inscriptions, see Müller (forthcoming).
parties (as in aristocracy and husband-wife relationships), and in which citizens want to be equal and *epieikeis*, that is good and therefore deserving of the due honours.

The *oikos* is thus conceptualised as a unit organised around principles of distributive justice. It is important to acknowledge, however, that this distribution does not depend on a single criterion: although Aristotle does attribute great importance to fixed elements in one’s identity and status (such as age, gender, and legal status) to determine one’s *axios*, he also makes clear that there are other factors at stake, such as one’s character, and all the aspects that are connected with relationships and interaction themselves. For instance, in a passage devoted to conjugal affection, he recognises that the *philía* between husband and wife can also be based on virtue if they are both *epieikeis* (*EN* VIII, 1162a25-26); and he admits that, although a free member of the *oikos* cannot be friend to a slave qua slave, she can be friend to him qua *anthrōpos* (*EN* VIII, 1161b5-6). Furthermore, one’s *axios* crucially depends on one’s contributions to the *oikos*. Indeed, the *oikos* is also conceptualised as a cooperative unit, and this is actually the foundation for the conceptualisation of relationships in the *oikos* in terms of distributive justice. According to Aristotle, unlike with other animals, among human being couples live together not just in order to raise children, but also, more generally, for the sake of the needs of life, and do so by contributing each according to their specific qualities (*EN* VIII, 1162a18-23):

\[
\text{τοῖς μὲν οὖν ἀλλοίς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἡ κοινωνία ἐστίν, οἱ δὲ ἄνθρωποι}
\]
\[
\text{οὐ μόνον τῆς τεκνοποίεις χάριν συνοικοῦσιν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν εἰς τὸν}
\]
\[
\text{βίον: εὐθὺς γὰρ διήρηται τὰ ἔργα, καὶ ἔστιν ἔτερα ἄνδρὸς καὶ}
\]
\[
\text{γυναικός: ἐπαρκοῦσιν οὖν ἄλληλοις, εἰς τὸ κοινὸν τιθέντες τὰ ἴδια.}
\]

For the other animals, the community goes only as far as childbearing. Human beings, however, share a household not only for childbearing, but also for the benefits in their life. For the difference between them implies that their functions are divided, with different ones for the man and the woman; hence each supplies the other’s need by contributing a special function to the common good. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

Therefore, the family is built upon a division of roles that allows all members to do their part and thus contribute to the shared goal of living together. The contributions can be of all sorts,
ranging from strictly economic and practical ones, to interpersonal ones.\textsuperscript{32} Crucially, it is by virtue of this cooperative framework that the \textit{oikos} is also conceptualised in terms of distributive justice: as we saw, Aristotle focuses on the typical roles that define the \textit{oikos}, describing them in terms of \textit{axia} and distributive justice. As psychologist and anthropologist Michael Tomasello points out, roles and cooperation do indeed go hand in hand.\textsuperscript{33} This has important implications for our investigation on \textit{timē} as we shall see, cooperative aspects are paramount in \textit{timē} dynamics. Not only is appropriate pro-social behaviour honourable and honoured, but most social roles come with a certain level of \textit{timē}, in recognition of the contributions that should come with that role. Thus, \textit{timē} functions as a crucial support system for any cooperative enterprise involving roles: \textit{timē} can represent the reward that one can expect and is entitled to get in recognition of the proper performance of one’s role.\textsuperscript{34}

Finally, and in connection with this last point, according to Aristotle \textit{timē} is also the means by which it is possible to balance unequal forms of \textit{philia}.\textsuperscript{35} At one point, Aristotle states that the asymmetry should be counterbalanced with the inferior party offering more affection (\textit{philēsis}) to the superior party, in proportion to the latter’s \textit{axia}.\textsuperscript{36} In another passage, the philosopher rephrases this point by stating that asymmetrical relationships can be balanced if the inferior party, who benefits from the superior party with regard to either wealth or virtue, pays back the benefaction by offering \textit{timē} to his benefactor, for \textit{philia} demands what is possible rather than what is actually due (\textit{ENVIII}, 1163b12-15):

\textsuperscript{32} Similar ideas can also be found, as we shall see in the following chapters, in other texts such as Xenophon’s \textit{Oeconomicus}; with regard to economic contributions specifically, a nice illustration of these dynamics can be found in Xenophon’s \textit{Memorabilia} 2.7, where Aristarchus’ female relatives surpass him in economic contributions to the \textit{oikos} and reproach him for his idleness.

\textsuperscript{33} Tomasello (2020).

\textsuperscript{34} This applies both to the \textit{oikos} and to the \textit{polis}, which were both conceptualised as cooperative enterprises. In the context of the \textit{polis}, a \textit{sui generis} case was represented by slaves, whose status entails the negation of \textit{timē}. However, as I shall show in my chapter devoted to slaves, in the \textit{oikos} even slaves could, within certain limits, claim respect and recognition for their contribution to the shared life and goals of the family.

\textsuperscript{35} See e.g. \textit{ENVIII}, 1163b3-18.

\textsuperscript{36} Arist. \textit{ENVIII}, 1158b23-28: άνάλογον δ’ ἐν πᾶσαις ταῖς καθ’ ὑπεροχήν οὐσίαις φιλίαις καὶ τὴν φίλησιν δεῖ γίνεσθαι, οἶνον τὸν ἀμείνω μᾶλλον φιλεῖσθαι ἢ φιλεῖν, καὶ τὸν ὦφελιμώτερον, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ἐκαστον ὀμοίως: ὅταν γὰρ κατ’ ἄξιαν ἢ φιλεῖσις γίνηται, τότε γίνεται πως ἰσότης, δ’ δὴ τῆς φιλίας εἶναι δοκεῖ.
οὕτω δὴ καὶ τοῖς ἀνίσοις ὑμιλητέοιν, καὶ τῷ εἰς χρήματα ὑφελομένῳ ἥ εἰς ἀρετὴν τιμὴν ἀνταποδοτέον, ἀποδιδόντα τὰ ἐνδεχόμενα. τὸ δυνατὸν γὰρ ἡ φιλία ἐπιζητεῖ, οὐ τὸ κατ’ ἄξιαν.

This, then, is how we should treat unequals. If we benefit from them in money or virtue, we should return honour, and thereby make what return we can. For friendship seeks what is possible, not what accords with worth. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

As far as the conceptualisation of *timē* is concerned, in this passage we can find a poignant expression of a cooperative, non-zero-sum understanding of *timē* dynamics: *timē* is here presented as something that anybody can offer, unlike material resources. Therefore, thanks to *timē* and its non-zero-sum nature, anybody has the possibility of reciprocating a favour, even when they lack the means to pay it back with material goods. In unequal relationships, the inferior party can thus always reciprocate the contributions of the superior party by showing her the proper *timē*, which everyone, even the poor and helpless, can afford to give. This is the same mechanism in play with regard to cooperation and social roles. Therefore, the *oikos* is structured on what we might call an economy of *timē* from the point of view of both roles and of individual relationships. As we shall see throughout the thesis, *timē* is the basic currency for all sorts of interactions, straddling third-person, collective considerations on the one hand and second-person, individual considerations on the other. The basis for this is the bidirectionality of *timē*, evident for instance in the semantic range of the Greek notion of *aidōs*, whose role I shall investigate in closer detail in section 1.4.

Considerations of worth and desert (Aristotle’s *axia*, ‘subjective’ *timē*) on the one hand and of due recognition and deference on the other (‘objective’ *timē*) are thus essential in Aristotle’s account of the family. As we shall see throughout the thesis, this is not just an idiosyncrasy on Aristotle’s part: all domestic relationships are in fact conceptualised and experienced in term of honour and recognition dynamics. Another point worth emphasising regards the connection between honour and *philia*: while, in the last passage examined, Aristotle refers to honour, as mentioned already, Aristotle states elsewhere that unequal relationships can be equalised by the inferior party also by offering more *philēsis* (*EN* VIII, 1158b23-28). As I aim to show also in

37 The reference is to the economy of esteem theorised by Brennan and Pettit (2004).
my analysis of the case studies in the following chapters, *philia* can be seen as a form of *timē* in so far as it is seen as a form of positive recognition and regard.\(^{38}\) In the next section, I shall delve further into the connections between *philia* and honour. In particular, I shall first highlight the importance of reciprocal (albeit not necessarily equal) claims and obligations in Aristotle’s account of *philia*, and I shall then suggest that, on his account, *philia* should be seen as thoroughly intersubjective.

### 1.2 *Philia*: respect, obligations, and intersubjectivity

As we have seen, Aristotle conceptualises the *oikos* in terms of *philia*. With the three books devoted to it across the *Eudemian* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*, *philia* occupies a place of honour in Aristotelian ethics.\(^{39}\) In this section, I shall argue that Aristotle’s account of *philia* reveals a great deal about *timē* too. In particular, I believe that his notion of *philia* presupposes the kind of honour dynamics that philosopher Stephen Darwall describes in terms of recognition respect and the second-person standpoint. I shall then begin by examining the place that Aristotle assigns to claims and mutual duties in his account of *philia*, in order to highlight its relevance for a discussion of *timē* in the private sphere. After that, I shall proceed to explore the potential of *philia* as a *locus* of intersubjectivity: as I would like to suggest, in the way he presents it, Aristotle shows awareness of the intersubjective nature of *philia*.

We can start from Aristotle’s definition of *philia*. According to Aristotle, *philia* consists in a situation where two parties have *eunoia* towards each other and are both aware of this mutuality in friendly feelings (see for instance *EN* VIII, 1156a1-5). Mutuality and reciprocation are thus at the core of *philia*, as I shall show throughout the thesis, these are also essential ingredients of *timē* dynamics.\(^{40}\) In fact, the mutuality that accounts so intrinsically for *philia* is not limited to mere feelings of affection. As I shall argue, Aristotle’s account of *philia* is very

\(^{38}\) In *EN* VIII, 1559a13-27, Aristotle draws a line between *to phileisthai* and *to timasthai* on account of the fact that people want the latter for its own sake and the former for something incidental to it (either opportunistic desires or because they want confirmation of their worth). However, in this same passage Aristotle also acknowledges that being loved seems close to being honoured (*τὸ δὲ φιλεῖσθαι ἐγγὺς εἶναι δοκεῖ τοῦ τιμᾶσθαι, 17-18*). In fact, as we shall see in the sources analysed in the next chapters, *philia* was experienced as a form of regard and recognition. For a modern perspective, see Honneth (1995), who regards love as one of the three basic forms of recognition, together with rights and esteem.

\(^{39}\) On *philia* in Aristotle, see e.g. Whiting (2006); Pakaluk (2009); Torres (2021).

\(^{40}\) On the crucial importance of reciprocation in *philia*, see also e.g. Xen. *Hier*. 1.33-38.
clear in stressing that mutuality also extends to obligations and claims to respect. Throughout his discussion of *philia*, in fact, Aristotle takes pains to demonstrate his belief that each different form of *philia* entails different kinds of obligations. One particularly telling passage comes from the eighth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1559b-1560a):

> ἐοικε δὲ, καθάπερ ἐν ἀρχῇ εἴρηται, περὶ ταύτα καὶ ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς εἶναι ἢ τε φιλία καὶ τὸ δίκαιον. ἐν ἀπάσῃ γὰρ κοινωνίᾳ δοκεῖ τι δίκαιον εἶναι, καὶ φιλία δὲ ... καθ’ ὅσον δὲ κοινωνοῦσιν, ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐστὶ φιλία: καὶ γὰρ τὸ δίκαιον. ... διαφέρει δὲ καὶ τὰ δίκαια: οὐ γὰρ ταύτα γονεῦσι πρὸς τέκνα καὶ ἄδελφοῖς πρὸς ἀλλήλους, οὐδ’ ἐταίροις καὶ πολίταις, ὡμοίως δὲ καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων φιλίων. ἔτερα δὴ καὶ τὰ ἄδικα πρὸς ἐκάστους τούτων, καὶ αὔξησιν λαμβάνει τῷ μάλλον πρὸς φίλους εἶναι, οἷον χρήματα ἀποστερῆσαι ἐταίροιν δεινότερον ἢ πολίτην, καὶ μὴ βοηθῆσαι ἄδελφῳ ἢ ὀθνεῖς, καὶ πατάξαι πατέρα ἢ ὀτινοῦν ἄλλον. αὔξησθαι δὲ πέφυκεν ἀμα τῇ φιλίᾳ καὶ τὸ δίκαιον, ὡς ἐν τοῖς αὐτοῖς ὅντα καὶ ἐπ᾽ ὅσον διήκοντα.

As we said in the beginning, friendship and justice would seem to be about the same things and to be found in the same people. For in every community there seems to be some sort of justice, and some type of friendship also. ... And the extent of their community is the extent of their friendship, since it is also the extent of the justice found there. ... What is just is also different, since it is not the same for parents towards children as for one brother towards another, and not the same for companions as for fellow citizens, and similarly with the other types of friendship. Similarly, what is unjust toward each of these is also different, and becomes more unjust as it is practiced on closer friends. It is more shocking, for instance, to rob a companion for money than to rob a fellow citizen, to fail to help a brother than a stranger, and to strike one’s father than anyone else. Justice also increases with friendship, since it involves the same people and extends over an equal area.

(Transl. Irwin (1999))

To understand this passage, it is necessary to keep in mind that Aristotle is here referring to a broad notion of *philia*, as something that can be found in all sorts of *koinōniai*. The examples he
provides underpin this reading: Aristotle refers here not just to cases of proper friendship, but also to other kinds of relationships, such as the one between ruler and ruled and the one between the old and the young.\footnote{See Pakaluk (1998) \textit{ad loc.} on the interpretative issues of this passage and the chapter from which is taken.} Of particular relevance in this passage is the reference to matters of justice: each form of \textit{philia} is characterised by specific forms of justice. The expressions employed by Aristotle to talk about justice here are \textit{to dikaion} and \textit{ta dikaia}. To unpack this passage, then, it is necessary to investigate first of all the meaning of these expressions. In the following analysis, therefore, I shall focus on the connections between \textit{philia} and justice. The aim will be to suggest that Aristotle’s account of \textit{philia} implies something similar to Darwall’s recognition respect, in both its second-person and third-person aspects. As I shall show in section 1.4, furthermore, by highlighting these dynamics in his account of \textit{philia}, Aristotle effectively retrieves some of the traditional features of \textit{aidōs} that he neglects in his treatment of that concept.

Let us begin by investigating the connections between \textit{philia} and justice.\footnote{On the links between \textit{philia} and justice in Aristotle, see Curzer (2012), pp. 223–289; Gallagher (2020), pp. 240–241.} In a passage that precedes the one we are attempting to interpret, Aristotle makes another comment on the relationship between \textit{philia} and justice (\textit{ENVIII}, 1155a26-28):

\begin{quote}
καὶ φίλων μὲν ὄντων οὐδὲν δεῖ δικαιοσύνης, δίκαιοι δ’ ὄντες προσδέονται φιλίας, καὶ τῶν δικαίων τὸ μάλιστα φιλικὸν εἶναι δοκεῖ.
\end{quote}

Further, if people are friends, they have no need of justice, but if they are just they need friendship in addition; and the justice that is most just seems to belong to friendship (Transl. Irwin (1999)).

The word used here is \textit{dikaiosynē}. According to Aristotle, \textit{dikaiosynē} is something that \textit{philoi} do not need; conversely, however, \textit{dikaiosynē} seems to need \textit{philia}. Hence, by \textit{dikaiosynē} Aristotle is referring to something different from what \textit{to dikaion} and \textit{ta dikaia} encapsulate in the previous passage: while \textit{to dikaion} and \textit{ta dikaia} are implied by \textit{philia}, in this passage \textit{dikaiosynē} is something potentially disconnected from \textit{philia}, which should ideally be integrated into it. By \textit{dikaiosynē}, Aristotle refers here to justice as an impartial attitude that is not concerned with

\footnote{See Pakaluk (1998) for a discussion of the passage, which belongs to a series of arguments whose interpretation is not completely straightforward.}
who the other person involved is and in what relation she stands towards us. In *philia*, however, we cannot be impartial and ignore who the other person is, given that *philia* is about nothing but the very relationship with that other specific person. Incidentally, the fact that Aristotle wishes *dikaiosynē* to have some element of *philia* shows that he thought that justice should not ignore altogether contextual factors: by also integrating some element of *philia*, *dikaiosynē* reaches a more complete state. At any rate, this passage makes clear that what is at stake in the passage on the role of *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* in *philia* is not an abstract form of justice. Rather, *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* evidently encapsulate an embedded element characterised by an essentially second-person perspective: in particular, *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* refer to the reciprocal claims and obligations that characterise any given relationship.\(^{44}\) The examples provided by Aristotle show that these relationships can even be starkly unequal, but, as I shall argue at length throughout this thesis, asymmetry does not rule out reciprocity. As we shall see with regard to all the subordinate members of the *oikos*, all relationships, even the ones between masters and slaves, accommodate honour dynamics based on reciprocity and mutual obligations.

As Aristotle underlines, however, each specific kind of *philia* leads to a different form of *ta dikaia*: the claims that obtain between father and son differ from those that obtain between brothers. Not only that, but, we can add, the claims of a father towards his son are also different from the claims of the son towards the father. This brings us to the point that the focus on the second-person perspective is far from incompatible with a third-person standpoint: the examples that Aristotle provides are specific kinds of relationship that are collectively recognised and culturally framed, with normative expectations shared by society at large. In other words, these are examples of what modern sociology refers to as status-roles or status functions, which we can here refer to as roles more simply.\(^{45}\) Constituting the socially determined forms that *philia* can take, roles thus involve key third-person factors: these socially defined relationships must adhere to collectively held norms, and often also to legal and institutional guidelines and constraints. However, as I shall argue throughout the thesis and especially with regard to women, far from conflicting with the third-person architecture that upholds roles, the second-person standpoint is interwoven into the very fabric of roles. This is

---

\(^{44}\) This meaning is more clear in some translations, such as Rackham (1934) who translates with ‘mutual rights’ and ‘claims of justice’.

\(^{45}\) See p. 7 in my Introduction with n. 15 above.
the point that Aristotle too makes in the second passage we considered: *dikaiosynē* should go hand in hand with *philia*.

The passage from which we started further confirms this interpretation. As I argued, *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* refer to the reciprocal claims and obligations that define any given form of *philia*. Each specific role can be seen as a container shaped in a specific way on the basis of cultural assumptions, and meant to be filled with its particular set of rights and duties, which can be either symmetric or asymmetric. What Aristotle wants to underline in this passage is that every relationship is characterised by different sets of expectations and obligations.\(^{46}\) What counts as respectful or disrespectful behaviour in one relationship and from one of the parties involved might not count as such, or at least not to the same extent, in a different relationship or from the other party. In the light of the analysis made so far, the relevance of what Aristotle refers to with *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* for our investigation on the private side of honour is patent. As I shall point out throughout the thesis, issues of respect, honour, and lack thereof in relationships among members of the *oikos* are framed in terms of reciprocity and shared normative claims, with the two aspects being presented as interdependent. We shall see that one or the other might be emphasised more depending on what specific case of *philia* we are dealing with as well as on contextual factors, but always in ways that presuppose their interconnection. So interpreted, *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* appear very close to Stephen Darwall’s notion of recognition respect that I introduced and discussed in the Introduction. Recognition respect, just like *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* in Aristotle’s account of *philia*, is about what we owe to somebody on account of her role vis-à-vis ourselves. Furthermore, as we saw in the Introduction, when employing the notion of recognition respect it is sometimes necessary to recognise the relevance of both second-person and third-person perspective and considerations. Aristotle seems thus to acknowledge and thematise some of the aspects that Darwall describes.

There is another important aspect to be investigated in the opposition between different forms of justice, which helps us shed light on other aspects of honour dynamics. When he talks about utility friendships, Aristotle mentions *en passant* that *to dikaion* can be either *agraphon* or *kata nomon*. Within the context of his discussion of utility friendship, this distinction translates into a more specific distinction between two forms of utility friendships, which Aristotle labels as *ēthikē* and *nomikē* respectively. The latter involves the stipulation of a

\(^{46}\) On the interconnectedness of justice and friendship in Aristotle, see also Curzer (2012), pp. 275–289.
contract, while the former relies on the tacit assumption that benefits, even if bestowed freely and out of friendship, will be reciprocated. This point illuminates both the importance of charis, on which I shall delve in section 1.3, and the implicit nature of norms of social interaction. Aristotle begins his discussion of ethics with the warning that ethics is not an exact science: in ethics, the goal is to achieve phronēsis, practical wisdom, that is the capacity to make good evaluations and decisions based on the specific context of the problem. This principle applies to timē too: honour does not have to do with specific rules, but must be rather understood in terms of Bourdieu’s notions of habitus and feel for the game, and of Goffman’s interplay of deference and demeanour. In general, timē is about reciprocity and balancing one’s claims to respect with those of others; however, the concrete application of these general principles is a matter of phronēsis, of intuition more than knowledge. This is the main reason why, as our case studies will reveal, it can be so easy to go wrong as far as timē is concerned.

To conclude this section, I would like now to address another fundamental aspect of Aristotle’s (and of the Greek more generally) conceptualisation of philia, namely its intersubjective underpinnings. In his account of philia, Aristotle does not miss any opportunity to stress the importance of equality, sameness, and reciprocity: by its very definition, philia can only be such when the two parties involved reciprocate their eunoia for each other and are aware of that (e.g. EN VIII, 1155b28-1156a4). Aristotle stresses the importance of equality (isotēs) for friendship (1158b28), and notes that every friendship is based on some similarity (καθ’ ὁμοιότητα τινα, EN VIII, 1156b20). The consummation of the idea of sameness in philia is achieved in all the passages where Aristotle comes to speak of one’s friend as ‘another self’ (ἔστι γὰρ ὁ φίλος ἄλλος αὐτός, EN IX, 1166a32; ἔτερον αὐτόν 1169b7; ἔτερος γὰρ αὐτός ὁ φίλος ἐστίν, 1170b7). As I would like to suggest, in the light of this and other aspects of his account, we should acknowledge that Aristotle is framing philia as an intersubjective experience. The idea of the philos as another self, ἔτερος αὐτός, is in itself, I believe, a sufficient proof of this: the paradoxical idea of another self is a beautiful expression of the essential interdependence of two people whose relationship amounts to more than the sum of its parts. Most notably, in fact, in the case of the virtuous person Aristotle goes so far as to draw an equation between self-love and friendship: as the virtuous person is of one mind with herself, so will she be also with her

48 On the idea of the friend as another self in Aristotle and other philosophers, both ancient and modern, see Lynch (2019), pp. 24–50.
friend. And in general a virtuous person will be disposed towards his friend just as he is disposed towards himself (πρὸς δὲ τὸν φίλον ἔχειν ὡς πρὸς αὐτόν, EN IX 1166a30). Furthermore, philoi are said to share in each other’s emotional states: throughout his account of philia, Aristotle makes abundant use of syn- compounds, especially for verbs expressing emotional states, such as synēdomai, synchairō, synalgeō. As Aristotle notes, given the extent to which our friends share our pain, sometimes it is even preferable not to share our pain with our friends, because we do not want to cause them to suffer (EN IX 1171b4-13): the implication is that a friend cannot help but share in the other person’s emotional state. In the Rhetoric, Aristotle even says that we cannot pity our closest philoi, because we share in their own misfortune (II, 1386b17-24); conversely, we feel pity when we think that a misfortune could befall on us or our friends (1386a2-3). Once again, sameness, sharing, and interdependence are underscored as essential features of philia: in this we can see an acknowledgement on Aristotle’s part that friendship is intersubjective, as friends are seen as connected in such a deep way that they live in what we might describe an emotional symbiosis.

More generally, this interdependence also regards the reciprocal claims and expectations that we have observed with regard to the meaning of ta dikaia and to dikaion in the first part of this section. As we have seen, Aristotle stresses on multiple occasions that friends depend on each other, are expected to be attuned to the other’s desires, needs, and emotions, and have claims and expectations towards each other. All these aspects concur to create an essentially intersubjective view of friendship; as I hope that this thesis will show, moreover, in framing philia in these terms Aristotle is reflecting the common perception of the phenomenon.

1.3 Forms and expressions of timē in interpersonal interaction

In the previous sections, we have seen that relationships were conceptualised in terms of timē and in ways that closely correspond to modern frameworks such as intersubjectivity and recognition respect. We can now look at some of the ways in which honour dynamics manifested in the family. Because of the pervasiveness of honour dynamics in any relationship and interaction, this investigation will necessarily be limited and proceed by samples rather than aiming at providing an exhaustive account: my aim here is merely to introduce in general terms

---

49 See e.g. EN IX, 1166a8, 28; 1171a8, 30, 33; 1171b12.
phenomena and themes that we shall be able to observe more concretely while dealing with case studies in the following chapters of the thesis.

In the previous sections, I have often touched upon the importance of reciprocity in *timē*. In Greek, this essential aspect of honour is covered by the semantics of *charis*, ranging from reciprocity to gratitude, from grace to favour, thus representing both a general mechanism in its meaning of reciprocity and a value in its meaning of gratitude.\(^{50}\) As we have seen, *philia* is conceptualised in terms of reciprocity: in cases of unequal relationships, Aristotle states that reciprocity and gratitude are to be ensured and manifested by requiting with extra *philēsis* or *timē*. Thanks to the fact that everyone can afford showing more affection and deference, reciprocation is always possible; therefore, serious failures in reciprocation constitute shameful shortcomings that threaten the relationship itself as well as the standing of the defective partner. As we shall see in Chapter 3, anxiety over lack of due *charis* emerges especially with regard to parent-child relationships.\(^{51}\) However, reciprocity and gratitude were paramount in all relationships; in Chapter 5, we shall find cases of *charis* even towards slaves.

In spite of the importance of reciprocity, however, a merely reciprocal understanding of *timē* would be too narrow; if we look at how *timē* works, we can see that the picture is indeed much more complex than that. As we shall see with regard to *aidōs* in the next section, and as we shall observe in our analysis of case studies in the following chapters, *timē* accommodates a simultaneous focus on one’s own and others’ standing, on our face and social image as well as on the face and social image of others. In addition to this, *timē* also involves others’ perception of our conduct, but also our own construal of the image that others might have of us. We can talk of bidirectionality as opposed to reciprocity to account for this more complex kind of dynamic.\(^{52}\) Other aspects of *timē* dynamics support this overall framework of interdependence

\(^{50}\) On reciprocity, see in general the volume by Gill, Postlethwaite, and Seaford (1998), especially with the contributions of Gill (1998) and Van Wees (1998) on the anthropological background. On the conceptualisation of friendship in terms of reciprocity and exchange, see van Berkel (2019); on the uses of the rhetoric of *charis* in Xenophon see Azoulay (2004).

\(^{51}\) This is mainly due to the fact that in their case there is a strong delay in reciprocity; see Torres (2021) for the idea of ‘lagged-reciprocity’ between offspring and progenitors among human beings and other ‘superior’ animals.

\(^{52}\) The distinction has been suggested to me by Douglas Cairns, who has drawn this distinction to accommodate the results of his studies (e.g. (1993), (2011), (2019a), (2020a)), which have brought out all the bidirectional rather than merely reciprocal features of *timē*. 
and bidirectionality. For practical reasons, I shall focus once again on Aristotle’s discussions of the various relevant elements, looking in particular at his presentation of virtues in the *Ethics* and of *pathē* in the *Rhetoric*; in the case of both, recent critical accounts have highlighted the centrality of *time* in Aristotle’s accounts.

With regard to virtues in particular, Øyvind Rabbås has argued that all of them entail a concern with the worth of one of the subjects involved, either the agent or the other person. According to Rabbås, in Aristotle’s ethical account virtue can be defined in general as the proper attitude towards the worth of oneself and of others. In fact, many of the virtues are explicitly connected with aspects of *time*, moreover, many are explicitly related to interaction and relationships themselves. For our purposes, we can here single out as particularly revealing examples the virtues of friendliness, to describe which Aristotle borrows the word *philīa*, and dignity, *semnotēs*, which only features in the Eudemon list (II, 1220b38–1221a13). The first one, friendliness, has undoubtedly to do with proper deference towards others: as Rabbås puts it, ‘friendliness is the oil that keeps the social machinery going’, ensuring that we treat others respectfully. In fact, Rabbås seems to believe that each virtue is concerned either with the worth of the agent himself or with that of the other person involved. Given the bidirectionality of *time*, however, even when one of two sides is more evident, the other must be at stake too. A stronger focus on demeanour admittedly characterises dignity, *semnotēs*, but it is clear that, for instance, an excessively friendly attitude risks being self-effacing, while an excess in *semnotēs* can be taken as arrogance against others. Thus, Aristotle’s treatment of *philīa* and *semnotēs* confirms the bidirectional character of honour dynamics. In Aristotle’s account,

---


55 See e.g. *ibid.*, p. 630: ‘In the virtues we have looked at so far, the persons referred to under the person parameter have been other people, those affected by the agent’s action. But in some of the virtues the person parameter refers to the agent himself.’ A full investigation of all the cases discussed by Rabbås is beyond the scope of this brief overview, but it would be worth pursuing it.

56 The semantics of *semnos* highlight this ambiguity, ranging from reverend, august, and noble to proud and haughty (cf. LSJ, s.v. II and III).

57 If we accept that all or at least most virtues are simultaneously concerned with taking proper account of one’s and others’ worth, this might provide a further justification for Aristotle’s choice of denying *aidōs* the status of virtue. As we shall see in sections 1.4 and especially 2.6, in its traditional meaning *aidōs* would be the ideal candidate
virtues are *hexeis*, dispositions, and part of our purpose in our life as human beings is to become better and better at practising them; our nature as social animals, in particular, makes it imperative for us to learn how to act and be disposed properly towards the *timē* of others and ourselves. As Rabbås underlines, interpersonal relations are the most important context (or arena, in his own terms) for honour dynamics.\(^5^8\) The case studies in the following chapters will confirm how much effort it can take not only to strike and negotiate the proper balance between one’s and others’ worth, but also to refine one’s attitude and learn from one’s mistakes.

In addition to these dispositional expressions of honour, the sphere of *pathē* is also paramount: all forms of interaction with others are bound to elicit some emotions, and many of them depend on issues of *timē* and social comparison, highlighting their intrinsic bidirectionality. Anger and shame are the two emotions that are prototypically connected to honour. I shall deal at length with *aidōs* in the following section as well as in the following chapter, but let us examine *orgē* and its connections to *timē*. According to Aristotle (*Rhet. II*, 1378a30-1379b36), *orgē* arises when one believes that he has been treated with *oligōria* (in one of its three forms, *kataphronēsis*, *epēreasmos*, and *hybris*), that is in a way that denies his worth. Moreover, *orgē* involves a desire for *timōria*, meaning that it aims at redressing the slight.\(^5^9\) Cases of attacks to one’s *timē* thus represent the prototypical scenario for anger, and they are also the ones that Aristotle singles out in his definition of anger; however, as pointed out by Cairns and Mantzouranis, Aristotle’s examples show that *orgē* must be understood in broader terms, given that it can also be provoked, for instance, by unintentional omissions in regard. What is most important for our purposes is that anger emerges from Aristotle’s treatment as the appropriate emotional reaction to *oligōria*. When one feels that he has not been shown the proper recognition and regard, one has a right to feel anger.

We can take the opportunity to introduce here also the notion of *phantasia*.\(^6^0\) In Aristotle’s caption, anger arises διὰ φαινομένην ὀλιγωρίαν (*Rhet. II*, 1378a30): with this expression, Aristotle underlines that what counts is the way in which the subject, the person feeling the

---

\(^5^8\) Rabbås (2015), p. 634.

\(^5^9\) On the meaning of *timōria* as redress rather than revenge, see Cairns (2015)

\(^6^0\) On *phantasia*, see e.g. Caston (1996), (2009); Moss (2012); Rabinoff (2018).
emotion, construes the situation. Therefore, *phantasia* is a crucial element to understand processes of social interaction. As we shall see in the analysis of our case studies, each person can construe a given situation differently with regard to honour dynamics; for instance, somebody could see something as insulting while others do not see it in the same way, and a given act can appear either warranted or unwarranted. *Phantasia* highlights the importance of one’s point of view, but without making it a matter of pure subjectivity. As we shall see, one’s construal of situations is regulated by shared criteria, and interaction with others can help us modify our interpretation of events.

*Orgē* and *aidōs* are not the only emotions connected with honour. As shown by Cairns and Mantzouranis, a simultaneous concern with one’s and others’ worth also features in Aristotle’s discussion of many other emotions. As they argue, the account of several *pathē* in the second book of the *Rhetoric* is permeated by Goffmanesque concerns with one’s own and others’ social image, but also with one’s construal of the image that others have of one. Many of the emotions analysed by Aristotle presuppose, among other factors, expectations about the deference that others should have towards us, preoccupations with our own demeanour and self-image, or a sense of entitlement over certain goods on the basis of our sense of self-worth. These concerns are at the core of social life in general and, as we shall see by examining the case studies, emotions are paramount in motivating people to negotiate their *timē* vis-à-vis others’ *timē*. One crucial element that stands at the intersection between virtues and emotions and that is fundamental for an understanding of *timē* is *aidōs*, with which I shall deal in the next section. In this chapter, I shall focus mainly on the place and role that *aidōs* can play in honour dynamics; this discussion will pave the way for a more detailed treatment of some interpretative issues connected to *aidōs* that will emerge in the investigation on infants’ psychology and their *timē* in Chapter 2.

### 1.4 *Aidōs: philia*, recognition respect, and knowing one’s place

As shown by Douglas Cairns in his study of the notion, purely competitive views of Greek concepts of honour crumble away if we consider the role and importance of *aidōs* in Greek ethics. In its broad range of meanings, *aidōs* encapsulates the respect due to others, the ability

---

61 Cairns and Mantzouranis (forthcoming).
to cognise what is honourable and what is dishonourable, the shame over one’s past conduct, as well as the inhibition felt at the prospect of shameful behaviour, also covering our notions of modesty, bashfulness, and embarrassment. In this section, I shall highlight the connections between \textit{aidōs} and \textit{philia}, as well as the closeness of \textit{aidōs} to Darwall’s recognition respect. In section 1.2 above, I analysed Aristotle’s account of \textit{philia} and the role of \textit{to dikaion} and \textit{ta dikaia} within that account, suggesting that they had to do with Darwall’s recognition respect. In this section, I want to show that, in addition to this modern counterpart, \textit{to dikaion} and \textit{ta dikaia} also have to do with \textit{aidōs}.

The connection between \textit{aidōs} and \textit{philia} dates back to Homer: \textit{philia} is one of the most important grounds for \textit{aidōs}, in the sense that \textit{philoi} must be treated with particular deference.\footnote{See in general Cairns (1993).} As noticed by Riedinger with regard to the Homeric poems specifically, \textit{aidōs} comprises in fact two dimensions, a more impersonal and abstract one and a personal one, rooted in one’s relationship with another person.\footnote{Riedinger (1980) distinguishes between two types of \textit{aidōs} in Homer, a more abstract one versus a personal one: the latter is based on relationships, that is on \textit{philia}. See also Van Wees (1992), pp. 76–77. For similar conclusions also on later authors, see Cairns (1993), pp. 89–100, 174–175, 212–213, 223–224, 273–276. For an anthropological perspective on honour and the duties towards one’s dear ones, see in general Pitt-Rivers (1966).} When it is based on interpersonal relationships, \textit{aidōs} tends to increase in proportion to the closeness of the relationship, being more strongly felt towards a parent than towards a less close friend. Likewise, in his account of \textit{philia} Aristotle stresses that \textit{ta dikaia} increase proportionally with \textit{philia} itself: the closer the bond, the greater the expectations and reciprocal claims. However, in spite of Riedinger’s distinction between the ‘two kinds’ of \textit{aidōs}, \textit{aidōs} does in fact unify the personal and the social, by representing in general an awareness of roles, both social roles and interpersonal roles. I feel \textit{aidōs} towards a \textit{philos} not merely on a one-to-one basis, but also on account of the fact that he is my friend, and that being friends represents a status-role within the given cultural context. In the case of \textit{aidōs} too, therefore, the second-person and the third-person perspective go hand in hand. Interpersonal relationships such as friendship, marriage, kinship, and so on constitute status-roles and are thus regulated through widely held normative expectations. As we shall see in the analysis of normative accounts of marriage, for instance, ancient authors were keenly aware of the integration between second- and third-person factors in relationships. Relationships come

---

\textsuperscript{63} See in general Cairns (1993).

\textsuperscript{64} Riedinger (1980) distinguishes between two types of \textit{aidōs} in Homer, a more abstract one versus a personal one: the latter is based on relationships, that is on \textit{philia}. See also Van Wees (1992), pp. 76–77. For similar conclusions also on later authors, see Cairns (1993), pp. 89–100, 174–175, 212–213, 223–224, 273–276. For an anthropological perspective on honour and the duties towards one’s dear ones, see in general Pitt-Rivers (1966).
with an expectation of mutual *aidōs* and reciprocity in general, and respecting the other person is an essential form of respect also towards the values of one’s society.

Another essential aspect of *aidōs* that is worth highlighting at this point is the awareness of one’s place and worth, which represents the other side of the coin of *aidōs* qua respect towards others. As evident in its meanings of prospective and retrospective shame, *aidōs* has to do with self-respect and the awareness of one’s role. In Goffmanesque terms, *aidōs* also stands for the capacity to assess correctly the specific dynamics of deference and demeanour *vis-à-vis* the other person as embedded in a particular relationship. Comprising both self- and other-regarding considerations, as well as both interpersonal and cultural factors, *aidōs* illuminates the bidirectionality that stands at the core of *timē*. *timē*, to which *aidōs* intrinsically belongs, is focused at the same time on one’s own and the other’s standing, role, and face, and manifests as a dynamic process in which these two aspects interact and co-determine each other. Moreover, the respect that *aidōs* encapsulates is not indiscriminate, but varies according to the context and the specific relationship with the other person. As we saw with regard to *philia*, *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* change according to the specific relationship.

As we shall see in a section devoted to *aidōs*, however, in his account of *aidōs* Aristotle does not thematise this aspect of the concept, privileging its meanings of shame and inhibition and obscuring the function of *aidōs* as the positive respect we owe to the people we interact with, its status as *hexis*, and as the capacity to discriminate *kala* and *aischra*. As my points on *to dikaion* and *ta dikaia* in section 1.2 above show, however, although he chooses not to thematise it in his account of *aidōs*, Aristotle was aware of these essential factors in relationships and chooses to bring them out in his account of *philia* instead. I shall deal again with *aidōs* and more specifically with the problems posed by Aristotle’s account in section 2.6 of the next chapter, devoted in general to the *timē* of infants.

---

Chapter 2: 
Infants’ psychology and their timē

Introduction

When we talk about ‘the honour of women’ or ‘the honour of slaves’ in Classical Athens we do not have any troubles understanding what we are referring to, even if at first we might tend to think about it in an antiphrastic manner, in the sense of ‘the deprivation of honour’ of both categories. Talking about the honour of children, on the other hand, can leave us bewildered: what does it mean for children to have honour? Can children have honour? Can they be involved in honour dynamics? Answering these questions is made more difficult by the fact that children are rarely presented as characters in our sources, and very little is said about what they did in their daily life and what their perspectives and experiences were like. Most of the information regards the way adults saw and treated them, and the experiences that children were involved in, both in the oikos and the polis level. Thankfully, however, the last decades have seen an impressive surge in the literature about childhood in antiquity: several companions and volumes now illuminate various aspects of the topic, with particular attention to archaeological evidence.\footnote{For general introductions and companions on children and childhood in ancient Greece, see e.g. Golden (1990), (2015); Grubbs, Parkin, and Bell (2013); Aasgaard and Horn (2018), and some contributions in Hübner and Ratzan (2009); Rawson (2011); Bloomer (2015). For archaeological accounts, see e.g. Cohen and Rutter (2007); Beaumont (2013); Oakley (2014); Sommer and Sommer (2015); Beaumont, Dillon and Harrington (2021). On children in literature, see Ingalls (1998); Griffiths (2020). For an up-to-date bibliography, see Panidis (2022a).}

My argument throughout this and the following chapter is that not only were children involved in honour dynamics, but that they were explicitly understood as being involved in honour dynamics. In this chapter specifically, my aim is to answer the questions on children’s honour from the perspective of infants’ psychology, which will allow me to investigate children’s honour more generally in Chapter 3. I shall first explore the way(s) in which the two major thinkers of fourth-century Athens, Plato and Aristotle, described and conceptualised children’s psychology. The work of scholars such as Mark Golden has luckily started to dispel the ingrained belief that Greek parents did not care as much for babies as we do; my
investigation will follow this line of interpretation, focusing on whether children were respected and how this respect manifested itself.\textsuperscript{67} Because of the lack of evidence, I shall follow Golden in his method of supplementing data with ‘subjective impressions’ when it is impossible to do otherwise.\textsuperscript{68} Furthermore, I shall draw extensively on a multidisciplinary and cross-cultural approach, relying especially on contemporary developmental psychology.

2.1 Scenes of interaction with babies

In the fifth book of his \textit{Histories}, Herodotus narrates the story of how the baby Cypselus, who would become the tyrant of Corinth, survived the Bacchiadae’s first attempt to murder him (92c3):\textsuperscript{69}

\begin{quote}
τὸν λαβόντα τῶν άνδρῶν θείη τύχῃ προσεγέλασε τὸ παιδίον, καὶ τὸν φρασθέντα τούτο οίκτος τις ἵσχε ἀποκτεῖναι, κατοικίρας δὲ παραδιδότα τῷ δευτέρῳ, ὁ δὲ τῷ τρίτῳ, οὕτω τε διεξήλθε διὰ πάντων τῶν δέκα παραδιδόμενον, οὐδενός βουλομένου διεργάσοθαι.
\end{quote}

[The baby] providentially happened to smile at the man, and this sight filled the would-be assassin with pity and stopped him killing the child. Feeling sorry for the baby, the first man passed him on.

\textsuperscript{67} Golden (2015). The most cited evidence for the opposite interpretative line is the widespread custom of exposure: see Golden (2015), pp. 75–76, with references to scholars such as Robert Garland who saw the practice of exposing children as a sign that Greek parents did not care for them as much as we do (Garland (1985)). In the last decades, however, scholars have started challenging the assumption that exposure was so widespread as commonly thought, even in the case of female and disabled children: see for instance Scott (2001); Sneed (2021). On exposure in general see also Lacey (1968), pp. 166–167, and more recently Grubbs (2013); on the issue of girls’ exposure in particular, see Golden (1981), who investigates it from a demographic point of view, while Patterson (1985) questions Golden’s methodological choices; for a more recent demographic and comparative study on femicide, see Scheidel (2010). On exposure in the Roman empire, see e.g. Harris (1994). For a cross-cultural perspective and a positive answer on the issue of whether children were generally cared for and respected, see Pollock (1983), who thus dispels views such as that of Ariès (1960) according to which the idea of childhood is a recent social construct.

\textsuperscript{68} ‘Once again, subjective impressions are a necessary supplement to the quantitative approach’ Golden (2015), p. 95.

\textsuperscript{69} Of course, Herodotus, let alone Cypselus, did not live in fourth-century Athens, but I decided to include this episode nonetheless because of the scarcity of sources that depict with such extraordinary detail and vividness intersubjective dynamics involving infants. Given that they have not yet been socialised, moreover, we can presuppose a high level of universality or cross-cultural validity in phenomena regarding very small infants.
to the third, and so on, until he had been passed around all ten, none of whom could bring himself to the deed. (Transl. Waterfield (2008), adapt.)

According to Herodotus, Cypselus (who will actually be given this name later) owes his life to the fact that in this episode he providentially happened to smile: it is his smile that somehow prevents the man who had the task of killing him from doing so. Herodotus explains this effect in terms of pity, oiktos, and pity is undoubtedly a fitting emotional response in such an episode. According to Aristotle, pity arises in cases of undeserved suffering (Rhet. II, 1385b13-14). Therefore, this passage opens up crucial questions about the possibility of children’s axia and claims to respect. What is the assassin’s pity based upon? And why is it that the assassin only changes his mind when the baby smiles? In Greek thought and language, these questions can all be phrased in terms of honour, time. In this chapter, I am interested in exploring the conceptual and psychological bases for infants’ time, if they indeed had any, in Classical Greek thought. Can infants have time? Did adults respect infants and recognise them as agents? What are the psychological bases of time and how far back can they be traced in infancy? Although the now burgeoning scholarship on childhood in ancient Greece often claims that children were generally respected and cared for much more than we tend to credit the Greeks with doing, the issue of infants’ time and of its psychological bases is still neglected.

A passage from Menander’s Samia provides us with a promising direction for our investigation. In this scene, Moschion’s ex nurse notices that his baby lies on a couch, screaming and crying. She then picks it up, comforts and holds it until it stops crying (225-226, 238-244):

ἐπὶ κλίνης μὲν ἔρριπτ’ ἐκποδῶν
to paidion kekragos ... idoo sa de

to paidion kekragos hemelimenon,
...
proserxetai
kai tauta de t’ koina- ‘φίλτατον τέκνον’

70 Konstan (2004) claims that the Greek notion of pity is always based on desert, but see n. 160 below against this idea.
71 On the role of babies in Menander’s comedies, see Heap (2003).
The baby’d been dumped screaming on
A couch out of the way. (…)
She saw the child
Ignored and screaming
(…) she went right up to it and said
The usual things, ‘My darling baby’ and
‘Great treasure—where’s your mummy?’ Then she kissed
And danced it round. (Transl. Arnott (2000))

This passage might appear quite banal in its content: the baby cries, somebody pampers him, he stops crying. However, this passage represents extraordinarily precious evidence for our investigation of infants’ timē. The keyword here is ἠμελημένον, ‘ignored’, ‘neglected’ (239): nobody was taking care of the baby, and the lexical choice implies that this was a shortcoming on the part of the adults involved. The only person who pays attention to the baby and understands his needs is, unsurprisingly, Moschion’s ex nurse. The nurse immediately notices that the baby needs some attention and fondles it until he stops crying (ἐπάύσατο κλάον, 244-245): thus, she is able to comfort the baby by simply rocking and addressing him with tender words.72 The fact that a baby demonstrates with his whining a need for emotional attention might seem obvious for us, but it actually has momentous implications for our views on honour.

In order to make sense of this passage, as well as of the anecdote on baby Cypselus, it is necessary to borrow some conceptual and experimental tools from modern developmental psychology and philosophy. As for the latter, theories of recognition such as those of Axel Honneth are particularly enlightening. In the passage from Samia, for instance, the baby was not crying because of hunger or other merely physical needs, but out of a need for recognition, as Honneth would put it: the infant’s cries express a claim to emotional attention, which both the nurse and Menander acknowledge and validate.73 Employing the vocabulary of Johann Gottlieb Fichte, the infant’s cries represent an Aufforderung, an invitation or summons that only

72 This is what contemporary developmental psychologists define as a ‘protoconversation’. For the origin of the notion, see Bateson (1975).
an agent can be thought to make: the fact that the nurse recognises and responds to this summoning demonstrates her recognition of the baby qua agent.\(^{74}\)

In addition to philosophy, modern developmental psychology is of particular interest as a cross-cultural lens on babies’ \textit{timē} in ancient Greece. In the following sections, I shall gather both ancient and contemporary insights about human and developmental psychology, in order to show, at the end of these complementary overviews, that babies do engage in a ‘struggle for recognition’, and that this aspect of their psychology was acknowledged also in ancient views on children’s psychology. Let us begin with an overview of modern accounts of infant psychology, in order to acquire a set of notions and insights that, as I shall show, will shed precious light on the ancient sources.

\section*{2.2 Modern accounts of developmental psychology}

In the twentieth century (but building on nineteenth-century foundations), first philosophy and then the social sciences were revolutionised by the intersubjectivist turn.\(^{75}\) The notion of intersubjectivity, with its rejection of both merely objectivist and subjectivist takes on reality, is at the core of modern developmental psychology too.\(^{76}\) Generally speaking, interaction with other human beings is seen as the dimension where babies (and adults alike) co-create their reality and their understanding of the world. In this section, I shall introduce some of the main theories, such as those of Colwyn Trevarthen, Michael Tomasello, and Andrew Meltzoff, with special attention to the findings that help us better understand the issue of infants’ honour. Developmentally, three main stages of intersubjectivity can be identified, starting with primary intersubjectivity.\(^{77}\) Primary intersubjectivity, also referred to by Tomasello as the phase of emotion sharing, expresses children’s capacity to interact dyadically with adults in their first nine months of age, in the form of embodied emotional alignment. Around their ninth month, children also develop secondary intersubjectivity, that is a form of person-person-object

\(^{74}\) On Fichte’s notion of \textit{Aufforderung}, see e.g. Wood (2006); Gottlieb (2019); Gallagher (2020), pp. 187–189.

\(^{75}\) See the Introduction above, n. 7.

\(^{76}\) Researchers have employed the term in a variety of ways; with regard to developmental psychology in particular, see Beebe \textit{et al.} (2003) for a comparison of Trevarthen’s, Meltzoff’s, and Daniel Stern’s notions of ‘intersubjectivity’.

\(^{77}\) The following overview of the main developmental stages relies on Tomasello (2019a). On primary intersubjectivity in particular see also Trevarthen (1979), (1998); Gallagher (2020), pp. 101–106 provides a short resume of studies and findings. See also Negayama \textit{et al.} (2015) for a nice recapitulation of primary intersubjectivity and some applications in an experiment comparing Scottish and Japanese mothers and children.
awareness: nine-month old babies are capable of recognising an adult’s intentions with regard to an object and of interacting with the adult according to so-called shared intentionality. Finally, around the baby’s third year, so-called collective intentionality emerges: children become able to understand objective and normative aspects of their cultural environment.

The experiments on primary intersubjectivity have tremendous implications for the question of infants’ honour. As several studies have shown, infants are attuned to the adult’s facial expressions and movements from birth (one study carried out by Meltzoff examines 42-minutes-old children). Various experiments demonstrate that, when adults do not respond adequately to infants’ emotion sharing, babies become visibly upset, manifesting this by interrupting the interaction through visual cut-off. Already at this stage, therefore, babies have some expectations about how emotion sharing and proto-conversations with adults should go: this is the first form of a sense of fairness and of expectations of mutuality that represent important and often unacknowledged characteristics of infants’ psychology. Moreover, this shows that babies’ behaviour and reactions are dictated by a need for recognition: as Gallagher stresses, ‘Honneth’s account of recognition starts too late in the developmental story’, ignoring embodied primary intersubjectivity. Furthermore, Gallagher challenges Honneth’s reliance on Winnicott’s notion of the child-mother undifferentiated oneness: as Trevarthen in particular has demonstrated, ‘even in primary intersubjectivity there is a very basic self-other differentiation’, which makes genuine interaction possible. This fundamental point must be complemented with the ‘like me’ model developed by Andrew Meltzoff. This notion, which can also be described as ‘self-other equivalence’, further undermines the traditional views of children’s ‘solipsistic’ nature. As Meltzoff’s research shows, infants are capable of mapping their

---

78 See especially Meltzoff (1985), (1990); Trevarthen (1998). See Hrdy (2011) for an explanation of the evolutionary value of primary intersubjectivity: this capacity enabled children to establish emotional bonds with adults, in order to secure their attention and care in the context of the kind of cooperative child-care that humans uniquely employed.
79 See e.g. Murray and Trevarthen (1985); Gallagher (2020), pp. 104, 198–199, 240; see Eibl-Eibesfeldt (1989) for more examples and references. Other studies show that even very small infants experience anger; see e.g. von Salisch and Saarni (2011) for an overview.
80 On babies’ sense of justice and injustice in interaction, see Gallagher (2020), p. 240, with further references.
own experiences onto the behaviour of others, and *vice versa.* At first, this applies to bodily movements, but it then expands, gradually encompassing cognitive aspects, thus providing the foundation for social cognition. This notion can therefore be seen as the foundation for the mutuality of recognition and for the bidirectional aspects of honour dynamics.

Turning to secondary intersubjectivity, as I have mentioned, around the ninth month babies become able to engage with an adult in cooperative acts. In this way, both the child and the adult retain their individuality but also become part of a joint agent, a ‘we’: in Tomasello’s words, ‘The partners in joint agency relate to one another dyadically, second-personally, in face-to-face interaction.’ This resembles what philosopher Stephen Darwall refers to as the second-person standpoint: in a second-person perspective, I respect you on the basis of a personal relationship based on mutual obligations, expectations, and accountability. Secondary intersubjectivity additionally paves the way for the learning of roles: at this stage, children start to learn that roles are necessary for cooperation, are reversible, and lead to an acknowledgement of self and other equivalence; between the two agents involved in a joint act, mutual obligations and responsibility obtain. However, as Gallagher underscores, the passage from a ‘you-and-I’ dynamic to a ‘we’ dynamic means that also the external world enters the relationship. The notion of secondary intersubjectivity overlaps with that of joint intentionality, since the ‘we’ is defined on the basis of a shared attention towards a third element. As Gallagher puts it, ‘Whereas primary intersubjectivity is paradigmatically dyadic (self-other), secondary intersubjectivity is triadic (self-other-world).’ From a cognitive point of view, this paves the way for other important aspects of honour, such as what sociologist Georg Simmel referred to as a *dritte Instanz,* that is the role of an audience or a normative order in addition to the two parties involved.

This step is followed by the emergence of collective intersubjectivity. Around their third birthday, a second momentous revolution occurs, with children going through the ‘objective turn’. Cognitively, children are now able to differentiate between the subjective and the

---

84 Tomasello (2019a).
87 On the *dritte Instanz* see Simmel (1908), although he employs the expression specifically for competition, rather than honour dynamics.
objective; this means, among other things, that they can now understand the nature of social norms as issuing from society as a whole. Although children are capable of social self-regulation even before their third birthday (that is of aligning their behaviour, notably their linguistic and communicative behaviour, to that of others), when they turn three they also start developing so-called normative self-governance. This means that they start to adjust their behaviour to the objective normative order (that is, the culture) of their group:

Whereas three-year-olds self-regulate their thinking socially to some degree, by the end of the preschool period the self-regulating agent has become enculturated and internalized so that now the child is coordinating and evaluating her own thinking from the perspective of ‘we’ as the ‘objective’ perspective of the group. The objective perspective of the group is embodied in the group’s norms of rationality, so we may now speak of normative self-governance.\(^{88}\)

Using the terminology with which we described honour dynamics, we can also say that the reference group can now encompass not just people that the child has met or can potentially meet, but people in general (or at least the people that the child conceives as members of his or her society).\(^{89}\) Finally, when they are around six or seven years old, children gradually enter into a fourth phase, referred to by Tomasello as the one of ‘reason and responsibility’. In this phase, children learn to give reasons for their behaviour. Not by mere coincidence, of course, this is also the stage where they typically begin school: by this age, children are ready to start reflecting on their own behaviour and on the world around them. In this way, they can start to acquire a deeper understanding of all the cultural and social expectations and norms thanks to which they will gradually become fully socialised adult human beings.

\(^{89}\) In- and out-group dynamics have strong effects on children’s social perception, that is how children perceive and conceptualise others. Studies have shown that, unfortunately, ‘children as young as 4 years of age have already acquired implicit biases about ethnicity and other socially constructed categories of persons’ (Ramstead, Veissière, and Kirmayer (2016), p. 1, with further references); see in general Gallagher (2020), pp. 149–154 for an overview, further references, and for the implications of these studies for social psychology; see also below, n. 158 in section 2.8. For in- and out-group dynamics with regard to honour in general, see Stewart (1994); Welsh (2008); Appiah (2010).
In addition to all these points about intersubjectivity and the sense of fairness, another aspect of contemporary developmental psychology to be stressed is the results about infants' cooperativeness: studies have found that from a very early age children start helping others and are happy when they see that others get the help they need. This is a very telling finding for our investigation, as it radically undermines the idea of human beings, and children especially, as intrinsically selfish and competitive. In the light of these studies, it becomes clear that the cooperative aspects of honour are by no means a matter of mere méconnaissance. It is zero-sum understandings of honour and human motivation more generally that deviate from the standard trajectory in human psycho-sociality, not the other way round. Finally, the points about infants' sense of self and their intersubjectivity are also supported by findings on emotional development. Taking anger and shame, recent studies have shown that children start to experience them very early. Studies on anger confirm the points about infants’ sense of fairness and of their own claims to respect, while the findings on shame show that soon after their first birthday infants worry about the impression they make on others.

To sum up, this overview of modern developmental accounts show that honour is very much relevant for infants too, especially for aspects such as their sense of self and of their claims, their intersubjectivity, reciprocity, fairness, and cooperation. Despite the two millennia that separate modern psychology from ancient Greek culture, the findings collected so far can be used for a cross-cultural investigation of infants’ timē, given that they emerge before the acquisition of language and culture and the acquisition of reflective capacities. In the next section, I shall look at Plato’s and Aristotle’s observations on infants and their psychology, in order to gauge whether and to what extent they acknowledge infants’ status as agents that can

---

90 See e.g. Trevarthen (1979); Hepach et al. (2019); Tomasello (2019b); Barragan, Brooks and Meltzoff (2020); see also in general Tomasello (2019a), pp. 219–248 on prosociality.
91 On méconnaissance, see Bourdieu (1977), pp. 5–6, and the Introduction above, with n. 19 and 20.
92 See von Salisch and Saarni (2011) for an overview on infants’ anger; see Camras et al. (1998), (2007) for studies on cross-cultural differences in infants’ expression of anger. On shame, see especially Botto and Rochat (2018), (2019); of particular interest is also Colonnesi et al. (2013) on coy smile in 4-month-old babies: as the authors conclude, this expression of shyness with strangers is a sign of social competence and sensitivity.
93 See Botto and Rochat (2018), (2019) for studies on what they call Evaluative Audience Perception (EAP): they show that infants as young as 14 months already have EAP, that is they (a) assume that one’s own behavior or appearance could be, or will be, evaluated by others either positively or negatively; and (b) have a general preference toward eliciting positive as opposed to negative evaluations from others’ (2018, p. 1723).
participate in social interaction. As we shall see, the two philosophers sometimes focus on infants’ passivity, but some passages also allow for different views. In the following sections, I shall therefore discuss in closer detail some elements that can help us appreciate a more nuanced picture that more closely reflects what the passages introduced in section 2.1 above suggested about infants’ involvement as agents in dynamics of interaction and recognition.

### 2.3 Plato’s and Aristotle’s views of infants

In several passages, both Plato and Aristotle presuppose a view of children as passive beings.\(^9\) However, this stands in direct contradiction to other observations from both thinkers. In this section, I shall highlight the tensions that emerge in Plato’s and Aristotle’s account of children’s psychology: the aim will be to unearth a vision of even very small children as active participants in interpersonal exchange and in recognition dynamics. As I aim to show, the convergence between modern developmental studies and theory, Plato and Aristotle, and evidence of folk psychology in ancient texts is striking. Correctly understood, all three sources confirm that much should be conceded to children in terms of \(\text{timē}\) dynamics.

Let us start by reviewing some passages that instantiate Plato’s and Aristotle’s vision of children as passive beings. In the second book of the *Republic* (377a-c), Socrates explains that the younger the children the more malleable they are: since small children will retain any impression they receive, it is crucial to expose them only to good and noble things. This passage, which refers to good tales in particular, seems to imply that children absorb without any filter whatever they are exposed to; they are like empty vessels that must be filled with good things only. Similarly, in the seventh book of the *Politics* (1336a40-1336b36), Aristotle recommends sheltering children from anything base and illiberal, to ensure that children do not absorb unworthy behavioural patterns. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle says that nobody would feel \(\text{aischynē}\) before children or animals (*Rhet.* II, 1348b23-24), implying that they do not count as moral agents, while in the fifth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1134b9-18) he goes as far as denying the possibility of injustice towards one’s own small children: like slaves, children are here conceptualised by Aristotle as part of one’s possessions, so it would be absurd for someone to damage what constitutes a part of oneself. From the point of view of children’s psychology,

---

\(^9\) Specifically on Plato’s views of children, see Grahn-Wilder (2018); on Aristotle’s, see McGowan Tress (1997), Fossheim (2018).
subjectivity, and rights, these passages might be taken as evidence that children could not be respected as agents and were mainly seen as passive recipients of any beliefs, values and evaluative criteria that they will be exposed to in their environment.

In other passages, however, the implications about children’s psychology point in a different direction. In the seventh book of Plato’s _Laws_ (791c-794a), for instance, in the context of a discussion on the education of children from three to six years old, an age in which games and play are the main educational means, the Athenian Stranger gives advice on how to make sure that children do not become _dyskoloioi_ or _tapeinoi_. This passage offers us remarkable insights into children’s entitlement and sense of self-worth. According to the Athenian Stranger, punishment is essential in this phase to avoid the risk that children might grow up spoilt because of excessive _tryphē_ and lack of familiarity with unpleasant experiences (793e). However, punishment must not be excessively harsh and demeaning, lest children are humiliated too much and develop a slavish attitude (793e-794a). Excessive _tryphē_ would make them _dyskoloioi_ and _akracholoi_, while its opposite, described as a form of _doulōsis_, enslavement, would make them _tapeinoi_ and _aneleutheroi_ (791d). These couples of adjectives undoubtedly refer to children’s sense of their _timē_. In the former case, they would have an inflated sense of _timē_ and would therefore be easily irritable by any trifle because of excessive and unwarranted claims and expectations. In the latter, by contrast, they would have a deficient sense of _timē_ and they would lack the dignity that should characterise the freeborn. Interestingly, according to the Athenian Stranger excessive punishment would make children _misanthropoi_ too, and unfit to live with others (791d).

An obstacle to this interpretation might be represented by the fact in some of these sentences refer to _neoi_ rather than _paides_; _neoi_ designates the young men citizens in their twenties who are active in political life but who are not fully matured _andres_ yet. Although in this last specific sentence the subject is _neoi_, however, the general argument that the Athenian is making regards the upbringing of children from birth. The presence of _neoi_ as a subject can thus be easily explained, because the ultimate focus is on the results that earliest education can have on the characters of the future citizens, and this passage can be used as evidence for the

---

95 See in 791d: ἡ μὲν τρυφὴ δύσκολα καὶ ἀκράχολα καὶ ὀφόδρα ἀπὸ σιμερῶν κινούμενα τὰ τῶν νέων ἦθη ἀπεργάζεται.

96 On _neoi_, see Kennell (2013).
psychology of small children. As the Athenian Stranger underlines, the very first upbringing has tremendous effects on one’s character, so it is important that babies be brought up in the right way to ensure they develop the proper *ēthos* thanks to good habit, *ethos* (792e). As the rest of the section shows, infants should therefore be habituated even before they are born to a balanced mixture of pleasures and pains. We must then infer that, according to the Athenian Stranger, children begin to form a sense of their claims and sense of entitlement even before they are three. Through the right mix of pleasures and pains, infants will develop the proper sense of what they are due, that is neither absolute and indiscriminate satisfaction, nor belittlement and total lack of recognition and comfort. Thus, the way in which infants are treated directly affects their sense of *timē*. For this reason, adults should be careful when punishing babies: the goal is to discipline them, but without going too far. Children must be disciplined just enough so that they do not become spoilt, but their sense of dignity and warranted entitlement must not be damaged, lest they become like slaves. This passage thus provides remarkable insights into infants’ *timē*, demonstrating that Plato was aware of the fact that infants had a sense of their entitlement to certain forms of recognition.

Further insights into Plato’s vision of children are offered by another passage from the seventh book of the *Laws* where the Athenian says that, as soon as they are separated from their mothers and nurses, children must be chaperoned by the *paidagōgos* first and by teachers later, who will both ‘bridle’ children. The reason for this lies in children’s psychology (808d):

\[
\text{ὁ δὲ παῖς πάντων ἃριων ἐστι δυσμεταχειριστότατον· δού χάρ μαλιστα ἔχει πηγήν τοῦ φρωνεῖν μήπω κατηρυμένην, ἐπίβουλον καὶ δριμὺ καὶ ύβριστότατον θηρίων γίγνεται.}
\]

And, of all wild creatures, the child is the most intractable; for in so far as it, above all others, possesses a fount of reason that is as yet uncurbed, it is a treacherous, sly and most insolent creature.

(Transl. Bury (1926))

---

97 Pl. *Leg.* VII, 792e: κυριώτατον γὰρ οὗν ἐμφυέται πάσι τότε τὸ πᾶν ἰθος διὰ ἔθος (‘For because of the force of habit, it is in infancy that the whole character is most effectually determined’, transl. Emlyn-Jones and Preddy (2013)); τότε must be linked back to τὸν ἀρτίως νεογενή, ‘the new-born babe’, in the preceding sentence.
The interesting word here is obviously ὑβριστότατον. It goes without saying that *hybris* has crucial implications for honour, as it prototypically denotes unwarranted self-assertion in which the *hybristēs* indulges out of sheer pleasure, without any regard for the *timē* of others. If *hybris* is attributed to children in this sense here, then the passage could be taken to imply that, first, infants have a sense of self and of their entitlements to *timē*; second, that they are involved in interactions qua agents; and, third, that they have ways to communicate these claims or at least to express this sense of entitlement; and, finally, that an adult like Plato had some awareness of all this. It is not obvious, however, that the passage should be interpreted along these lines. *Hybris* can also be employed metaphorically, especially with regard to animals and even plants; while in the case of the former the question might be open to discussion, in the case of plants a straightforward connection of *hybris* with notions of self-entitlement and sense of *timē* is out of the question. If the reference to *hybris* in this passage from the *Laws* belongs with the occurrences related to plants and animals, then it could be taken at most to indicate children’s disobedience to adults and their unruliness, without any bearing on their *timē*. After all, although children are here described as *thēria*, beasts. However, although children are here described as *thēria*, they are at the same time credited with *to phronein*, albeit in an undisciplined form, which sets them apart from animals. In fact, the other adjectives have to do with deviant usages of this very capacity: both *epiboulos*, literally ‘plotting against’, and *drimys*, ‘shrewd’, evidently refer to the fact that children use their ‘undisciplined’ thinking capacities in ways that resist and undermine the order that adults would want them to abide by. Therefore, the reference to children as animals should in fact be taken in a metaphorical sense: in this passage, children are associated with animals in the sense that they must be tamed, as the Athenian immediately says after these lines.

In the following lines, some of the points that we found in the previous passages about *tryphē* and punishment resurface, albeit from a different perspective. The Athenian Stranger now recognises that children must be treated as freeborn by disciplining them with means such as school and lessons. However, he adds that children must also be treated as slaves: whenever a child goes wrong, anyone has the duty to punish him (808e-809a). Although the Athenian Stranger does no longer seem concerned with the demeaning effects of punishment, the two

---

99 On the metaphorical nature of references to the *hybris* of plants and animals see Fisher (1995), with important reassessments by Cairns (1996).
passages are so close both textually and thematically that we cannot ignore the implications of the former for the latter. As we saw in the previous passages, punishment was thematised with special attention for its impact on children’s sense of self-entitlement. In the passage we are currently examining, this aspect is less explicit, but I would argue that it is still the key to understand both the passage and also the reference to children’s *hybris*. One reason for this is the distinction made between ways in which the child is treated as a free person, ὡς ἐλεύθερον, and ways in which he is treated as a slave, ὡς δοῦλον (808e). In the previous passage, this distinction was brought up with regard to the necessary moderation in punishments. The Athenian has thus already taught us, as it were, what effects punishments can have on children’s attitude and self-conception, and his observations in the first passage provide the background for these further comments.

This supports the interpretation that the description of children as *hybristotatoi* has bearing on the issue of their *timē*. The relevance of *timē* considerations in the discourse on punishment locates the reference to *hybris* in the same discourse too. Importantly, the reference to *hybris* must be seen as an expression of the Athenian Stranger’s (and Plato’s) construal of children’s attitude, not necessarily as an objective description: in the way they go against adults’ expectations and order, children are disrespecting them and showing that they still do not know their place, which is why they have to be ‘bridled’ with teaching and punishments. While the previous passage revolves around the effects of pleasures and pains, here the stress is more on the thoughts, ideas, and behaviour that children should or should not have. On the one hand, this is achieved through teaching, which provides models and proper standards of thought and behaviour. On the other, children are discouraged from misbehaviour through punishment.

Compared to the former passage, the passage we are now dealing with features a more negative view of children: they stand out negatively among *thēria* and there is virtually no concern with the detrimental effects of excessive punishment. The Athenian’s perspective on children seems to have shifted: because children are *hybristotatoi* among all beasts, they must be disciplined and punished severely. Furthermore, here the emphasis lies less on the children’s sense of self-entitlement and more on their disrespectful attitude towards adults. In this way,

100 See Canevaro (forthcoming-b) for a study on cases where superiors construe as *hybris* the attitude of their inferiors (such as slaves in general, or a person like Thersites in the *Iliad*), claiming that they do not know their place.
both sides of *timē* are thematised: while the previous passage was concerned with children’s
demeanour and their sense of self-worth and dignity, here the focus is more on their deference
towards others. The two aspects are of course strictly intertwined: the difference is a matter of
thematisation, and actually highlights the complementarity of the two passages. In fact, the
second passage presupposes the first: having ensured that children develop enough dignity not
to become slavish and *tapeinoi*, more emphasis is given to the risk of them becoming too self-
entitled. The aim, moreover, is the same as in the previous passage: as the last sentence in this
passage confirms, the purpose is to ‘redirect their natural development along the right lines, by
always setting them on the paths of goodness as embodied in the legal code’. Ultimately, the
preoccupation is still how to bring up children in the best way possible.

Finally, another crucial hint to this radically different perspective lies in the role played
by *thymos* in the two philosophers’ views on infants’ psychology. In the fourth book of the
*Republic* (441a-b), Plato states that even new-borns are full of *thymos*:

καὶ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς παιδίοις τούτῳ γ’ ἂν τις ἰδοι, ὅτι θυμοῦ μὲν εὐθὺς
genómema městá ēst, λογισμοῦ δ’ ἐνιοὶ μὲν ἐμοὶ δοκοῦσιν
oudenote metaxamabánein, oí dè polloi ὑψε ποτε.

You can be sure to find this in children because at birth they are
immediately full of spirit, but some seem to me never to have
acquire any share of reason, although most of them do sometime
eventually. (Transl. Emlyn-Jones and Preddy (2013), adapt.)

This statement is echoed by Aristotle in a passage from the seventh book of the *Politics* (1334b23-
25), in which the he also affirms that all the three basic forms of desire, including *thymos*, are
present in children from birth:

θυμὸς γὰρ καὶ βούλησις, ἐτὶ δὲ ἐπιθυμία, καὶ γενομένους εὐθὺς
ὑπάρχει τοῖς παιδίοις, ὁ δὲ λογισμὸς καὶ ὁ νοῦς προϊούσιν
ἐγγίγνεσθαι πέφυκεν.

---

101 Pl. *Leg.* VII, 809a: κατευθυνέτω τὰς φύσεις αὐτῶν, ἂεὶ τρέπων πρὸς τάγαθν κατὰ νόμους (transl. Saunders (1980)).
The subject is the *nomophylakos* in charge of children’s education.
For spirit, wish, and also appetite are present in children right from birth, whereas reasoning and understanding naturally develop as they grow older. (Transl. Reeve (1998))

According to both Plato and Aristotle, then, children are equipped with *thymos* from the moment they are born. *Thymos* is a famously difficult term to interpret in both authors: both Plato and Aristotle make use of the term in an original way, sometimes reflecting its contemporary usage as a synonym for *orgē* and sometimes expanding its semantics, by recovering some of the different meanings that the word covers in Homer.  

The amount of scholarship on the meaning of *thymos* in their works testify to the difficulties in interpreting Plato’s and Aristotle’s uses of and comments on the term. In the Appendix, I offer an overview of Plato’s and Aristotle’s references to *thymos* and of the main critical interpretations. In spite of the interpretative difficulties, however, there is wide agreement on the fact that both authors connect *thymos* with *timē*: as a species of desire and a locus of motivation, *thymos* has to do in general with self-assertion and with desire for recognition of one’s social image. This makes the attribution of *thymos* to infants particularly interesting. Can we take Plato’s and Aristotle’s statements on the *thymos* of infants as an acknowledgement of their desire for recognition? In the next section, I shall attempt to gauge whether the attribution of *thymos* to infants has any bearing on their *timē*.

2.4 Infants’ *thymos* in Plato and Aristotle

Scholars who have explored the connections between *thymos* and honour in Plato and Aristotle found the passages about infants’ *thymos* very problematic. Justin Gosling, one of the first scholars to see the fully developed form of *thymos* in connection with *philotimia* (and manly behaviour in particular), commented that, in the case of small children, ‘all we can find are aggressive tendencies’. In defending his thesis on *thymos* as characterised by an element of

102 Cairns (2019b).


self-reference that provides the basis for our desire for esteem from others as well as from ourselves, John Cooper speculates:

perhaps Plato counts these cases of anger as motivations of the same kind as Leontius’ and Odysseus’ because he sees them as the central primitive phenomena which get transformed, as we mature, into the full-fledged competitive desire for self-esteem that expresses itself partly in anger like Leontius’ and Odysseus’, as well as in the admiration and emulation of others, the disdain for anything lowly, and the aspiration for solid accomplishments which we have found attributed to θυμός in Books VIII and IX.\textsuperscript{105}

Cooper then goes on to say that ‘screaming two-week old babies and ferocious dogs presumably have no self-conception’, and so ‘though their anger may express some primitive form of competitiveness, it is at any rate not a form that has anything to do with self-esteem that their anger expresses’.\textsuperscript{106} However, the scene from Menander’s \textit{Samia} that we examined in the first section of this chapter, as well as the implications of the passages from Plato’s own \textit{Laws} for infants’ and babies’ sense of entitlement can be taken to suggest that Cooper’s reservations should be revised.

With regard to both Plato’s and Aristotle’s statements on infants’ \textit{thymos}, it is commonly accepted that these attributions mainly refer to the anger of infants: as I mentioned, in contemporary ordinary Greek \textit{thymos} had the meaning of anger, and when the two philosophers attribute it to infants, the main phenomenon that they seem to rely on is infants’ outburst of anger.\textsuperscript{107} However, in both philosophers these references should also be taken in a more dispositional sense: the focus is not only on the occurrent sense of anger qua \textit{pathos}, but also on a more general disposition to get angry.\textsuperscript{108} In the passage from Aristotle, in particular,

\textsuperscript{105} Cooper (1984), p. 16. In terms of the general interpretation of \textit{thymos}, I do not believe that we must see it as necessarily competitive, as Cooper believes. See the Appendix for a more detailed discussion of Plato’s and Aristotle’s uses of \textit{thymos}.

\textsuperscript{106} Cooper (1984), pp. 15–16.

\textsuperscript{107} See Hanson (2004) on babies’ and children’s anger, from the \textit{Iliad} to Galen; on their predisposition to anger and passion in general, see also Golden (2015), p. 7.

\textsuperscript{108} See Cairns (2019b) on passages in Aristotle that hint to the dispositional nature of \textit{thymos} as a \textit{dynamis}, such as the passage in the \textit{Politics} (VII, 1327b-23-36) on the different levels of \textit{thymos} across various peoples, where \textit{thymos} is explicitly labelled as a \textit{dynamis}. 

47
*thymos* is clearly recalled as one of the three species of desire, *orexis*. That both statements, furthermore, look at wider psychological dispositions is also made clear by the fact that the positive affirmation of their *thymos* (plus *epithymia* and *boulēsis* in Aristotle) is coupled with the negation of other broader capacities such as reason. The problem, therefore, is to understand whether the anger and the underlying disposition towards it that the two philosophers attribute to infants have any bearing at all on their *timē*. Theoretically at least, possibilities can range widely, depending on how we interpret the uses of *thymos* in the two authors and in what sense we take their attribution of it to infants. In the Appendix, I discuss the uses of the term in both philosophers: one uncontroversial aspect is that they both acknowledge the connection between *thymos* and *timē*, although their views of this connection differ in focus. In general, as shown in the Appendix, for both of them *thymos* can be a reactive force towards self-assertion and *timōria*. However, Plato gives a more complex picture of the development of *thymos*, which can come to embrace *aidōs* and therefore a concern with *to kalon* for its own sake. On the other hand, Aristotle does not expand much his picture of *thymos* in this direction; however, by contrast with Plato, he stresses that *thymos* is connected to *philia*, on the basis that we grow more angry towards our friends than towards strangers. At any rate, given Aristotle’s focus on the reactive character of *thymos* and Plato’s developmental account, according to which *thymos* starts as a more reactive and impulsive drive, the reactive aspect is probably central to both their statements on infants’ *thymos*.

With regard to Plato, one big problem is represented by his pairing of infants and animals, which seems to exclude the possibility that infants’ *thymos* might have to do with *timē*. While it is out of the question that the reference to infants’ *thymos* might presuppose all the fully fledged functions that Plato assigns to *thymos* in adult psychology, the opposite interpretation, namely that *thymos* has no implication whatsoever for infants’ *timē*, should be ruled out too, as supported by passages from the *Laws* that we discussed before. As I argued, Plato demonstrates some awareness that infants have a (still undeveloped) sense of self. In my interpretation, furthermore, when he says that children are the *hybristotatoi* among wild beasts Plato wants to

---

109 The fact that *thymos* is attributed to both infants and animals has been regarded as problematic by scholars also because of a reluctance to admit that animals too might have complex social and psychological experiences. However, both modern science and arguably Plato and Aristotle themselves leave open such possibilities. The question goes beyond the scope of my investigation, but see e.g. de Waal (2007); Jaeggi, Stevens and Van Schaik (2010); Marmot and Sapolsky (2014); Furuichi (2019) for examples of complex social dynamics among primates.
characterise them as (unwarrantedly) self-assertive. In the light of these considerations, therefore, I believe that also the statement on infants’ thymos has implications for infants’ timē. The fact that infants’ and children’s self-entitlement is acknowledged in the Laws makes it possible to imagine that the attribution of thymos to infants presupposes that they possess a sense of their worth and have claims to recognition. As we saw in section 2.3, Plato tends to frame their sense of entitlement that underpins their thymos as largely unwarranted. The passages from the Laws depict infants and children as beasts to be tamed; after they are three years old, punishment must be exercised to ensure that they do not develop excessive self-entitlement. This is, I believe, the reason why, as we shall see in section 2.5 below, the Athenian Stranger tends to frame aidōs as something acquired: for him, children are born insolent, and must somehow be tamed and taught their place. Furthermore, I believe that we must see in the development of aidōs, which has in Plato a distinctly thymoeidic nature, the necessary premise for the concern that thymos has for to kalon. Only properly raised infants, habituated to the proper mix of pleasures and pains, can have a balanced sense of entitlement, but Plato seems to believe that most infants have an inflated sense of their entitlements to satisfaction and recognition, given that their mothers and nurses take pains at satisfying them as much as possible. Therefore, as suggested by Cooper, I believe that we must see the ‘spirit’ of which infants are full as an undeveloped form of the fully fledged thymos that we can find in grown-up people.

With regard to Aristotle, as we saw, thymos is attributed to infants together with the other two species of desire (epithymia and boulēsis). I would suggest that also in Aristotle’s case the fact that infants have thymos has implications for their timē, but without the negative evaluation that Plato gave of infants’ psychology. We can start by asking if we can identify any specific objects of infants’ thymos. As I discuss in the Appendix, many scholars have seen in Aristotle’s thymos a desire for honour. Cooper, for instance, interprets Aristotle’s thymos as a ‘passionate response to the fine’, although Jimenez has questioned this reading, stressing that Aristotle keeps thymos and aidōs separate and that only the latter is characterised by a drive towards to kalon.\(^{110}\) Although some of Aristotle’s passages on thymos and the number of critical interpretations that underlie the connections of Aristotle’s thymos with honour testify to a more complex picture, it is true that Aristotle chooses not to stress the role of thymos as a

motivational force to pursue *to kalon* for its own sake. Rather, he thematises *thymos* especially as a reactive force that aims at restoring the proper balance in cases of apparent slights and injustices. For this reason, the overlap of *thymos* with anger is much greater in Aristotle than it is in Plato. Moreover, given that it is not connected to *aidōs* and to the appreciation of *to kalon*, Aristotle’s *thymos* appears somewhat less developmentally complex than Plato’s: while Plato talks at length about the need to correctly educate and develop one’s *thymos*, Aristotle never hints at any developmental trajectory as far as *thymos* is concerned.\(^{111}\)

However, Aristotle’s *thymos* is also firmly rooted in a sense of one’s *axia* and a desire for recognition; the fact that it is so close to anger and that it aims at *timōria* demonstrates that Aristotle’s *thymos* too is anchored in honour dynamics.\(^{112}\) Therefore, its attribution to infants does indeed have significant implications for infants’ sense of self and self-entitlement. The implications, I believe, are similar to those of Plato’s attribution of *thymos* to infants: infants have a sense of their entitlement to emotional recognition and get angry when they do not receive it. By contrast with Plato, however, Aristotle does not stress the unwarrantedness of infants’ sense of self-entitlement. In the following two sections, I shall look at the role of *aidōs* for Plato’s and Aristotle’s accounts of infants’ psychology. This enquiry will complement the observations connected to *thymos* and will expand the picture on the *timē* of infants.

### 2.5 *Aidōs* and infants in Plato

Let us start by looking at the role of *aidōs* in Plato and its implications for the issue of infants’ *timē*. As shown in the Appendix, Plato often connects *thymos* to *aidōs*; in order to explore more fully his ideas on children’s psychology and ethical development, it is therefore necessary to investigate in more depth also the place and functions he assigns to *aidōs*. As I aim to show, Plato’s account of *aidōs* is at times contradictory and requires a great amount of unpacking and integrations. Even if the majority of his statements about *aidōs* seem to present it as something acquired later in life, other passages suggest that things could be seen differently. We can start from the *Republic*, where some of the references to *aidōs* regard the attitude of the young towards their elders: not knowing who their biological parents are, the young will show the *aidōs* due to parents to all of their elders. In the most interesting passage, Socrates reflects on

\(^{111}\) See the Appendix for a more detailed discussion of the issue.

\(^{112}\) On the intrinsic connection between anger and *timē*, see section 1.3 above.
what it means for children to regard all elders as if they were their parents (Resp. IV, 463b-e). He wonders whether this will be only a matter of words, or whether this belief will determine the actual behaviour of children towards adults. Opting for the latter, he then specifies how this aim can be achieved: all adults will need to repeat over and over again in children’s ears the importance of respecting one’s parents, insisting on the religious and moral sanctions that they would incur if they did not behave with the *aidōs* due to parents.\(^{113}\) *Aidōs* refers here to respect and deference, encompassing both the internal attitude and the external behaviour. Furthermore, Plato here emphasises the role of fear in instilling the proper habitus: the insistence on the sanctions is used as a tool of persuasion.\(^{114}\)

Throughout the *Laws*, the main emphasis is on the acquisition of *aidōs*. In the second book of the *Laws*, *aidōs* is presented as something that must be secured and exercised in specific ways. The Stranger dwells at length on the importance of *aidōs*, defined as a good fear of ill repute among friends, and suggests moderate wine drinking as the best way to acquire it, by means of a form of controlled exposure to impudence and shamelessness (*Leg. II*, 671b-672d). The people that can be trained through this method are grown-ups: symposia are said to have this therapeutic effect also thanks to the power of wine of softening the souls and making them malleable again (671b-c). Given that small children were excluded from symposia, they are surely out of the picture in this case. Furthermore, the process is described as acquisition, *ktēsis* (672d). Similarly, in the third book, *aidōs* is something that the Athenians had acquired (ἐκέκτηντο) from their laws (699c), and in the fourth book *aidōs* is one of the goods that the divine beings that rule over human beings bestow on them (παρεχόμενον, 713e).

The most interesting passage can be found in the fifth book, where Plato describes *aidōs* as the most precious legacy that parents can bequeath to their children.\(^{115}\) It is worth reading the full passage (V, 729b-c):

---

\(^{113}\) Resp. IV, 463d: αὐταὶ οἱ ἢ ἄλλαι φήμαι ἐξ ἀπάντων τῶν πολιτῶν ύμνήσουσιν εὐθὺς περί τὰ τῶν παιδῶν ὡτα καὶ περὶ πατέρων, ὦς ἂν αὐτοῖς τις ἀποφήνη, καὶ περὶ τῶν ἄλλων συγγενῶν; (‘Will you have these, or different reports from all the citizens constantly ringing in the children’s ears from their earliest years regarding whoever is pointed out to them as their fathers and other members of the family?’, transl. Emlyn-Jones and Preddy (2013)).

\(^{114}\) See in general Cairns (1993), pp. 370–392 for the strong connection in Plato’s works between fear and *aidōs*, which the philosopher presents mostly (but not only) in the traditional fashion, as the fear of ill repute.

\(^{115}\) The idea is traditional, as demonstrated by the fact that Plato is here paraphrasing Theogn. 409-410 (οὐδένα θησαυρὸν παισὶν καταθήσῃ ἀμείνω / αἰδοῦς, ἢ τ’ ἀγαθοῖς ἀνδράσι, Κύρν`, ἔπεσε).
What we should leave our children a lot of is respect, not money, and we think we can leave it to the young by punishing them when they are disrespectful. But the reality is that this is not the effect of the lecturing the young get nowadays, lectures telling them the young should be inhibited and ashamed of everything. Better advice, from a lawgiver with his wits about him, would be that the old must show respect for the young. Above all, they must be careful not to allow any of the young to see them, or for that matter hear them, doing or saying anything they should be ashamed of – since where the old have no sense of shame the young too are inevitably lacking in respect. The best education for the young – not to mention the people themselves – is not preaching sermons, but being someone who throughout his life practises himself what he preaches to others. (Transl. Griffith and Schofield (2016), adapt.)

The most important legacy that parents can bequeath to their children is, according to the Athenian Stranger, *aidōs*. The speaker criticises the current way in which parents and educators aim at achieving this result: simply admonishing the young and telling them that they must πάντα αἰσχύνεσθαι, be inhibited at everything, is not a great strategy in the Stranger's eyes.\(^{116}\)

---

\(^{116}\) I have modified the translation of this expression, reading πάντα as an accusative neuter plural rather than an accusative masculine singular: if Plato were talking about deference towards people, it would have made more sense to employ the plural πάντας. Furthermore, I have also duplicated the expression in translating the verb...
What is needed most is that adults set an example, by always behaving with *aidōs*. The phrase with which the Athenian encapsulates his view, *αἰσχύνεσθαι τοὺς νέους*, must be understood in the sense of both ‘feeling *aidōs* before’ the young, ‘having respect’ for them as observers and evaluators of one’s actions and conduct, but also ‘feeling shame before’.

The bidirectionality of honour dynamics is thus stressed as the very means through which *aidōs* can be developed. This creates a seemingly circular process: the idea is to reinforce *aidōs* by leveraging *aidōs* itself. In spite of the apparent paradox, this is exactly how these dynamics work. In order to unpack them, it is crucial to distinguish between different components of *aidōs*. On the one hand, as with *timē* more generally, we can identify within the notion of *aidōs* the general psychological mechanism that we can describe by drawing on the notion of intersubjectivity. The idea of *αἰσχύνεσθαι τοὺς νέους* implies the exploitation of this mechanism: adults are invited to engage with young people adopting what philosopher Stephen Darwall refers to as second-person standpoint, and entering therefore a relationship of mutual accountability.

On the other hand, *aidōs* designates the awareness, slowly acquired and practised, of the different roles that each individual involved in the interaction plays, as well as the proper combination of deference and demeanour that these roles demand. Furthermore, this aspect also comprises the general awareness of and respect towards the norms, the values, the overall cultural framework, of one’s community. While the first is, according to modern accounts at least, a universal and innate predisposition in human beings, this second aspect depends on socialisation and on a long process of learning from and with others.

In general, we clearly see in this passage as well as in the ones previously analysed that the central features in Plato’s *aidōs* are the abilities to factor the other person’s role and claims.

---

*aischynomai* to express both the retrospective and prospective sense. The fact that in the following sentences the focus is on *aidōs* towards people is due to the fact that the interpersonal dimension is suggested by the Athenian Stranger as the best means to foster the interiorisation of norms and values themselves. For a parallel, see the expression *ὁ πάντα αἰσχούμενος* in Arist. *EN* II, 1108a34-35 to describe the person affected by the vice of *kataplēxis*, consisting in an excess of the mean represented by *aidōs*: this person is so shy that he feels indiscriminate shame at everything.

117 It must be noticed that the passage begins with a reference to *paides* but then always refers to *neoi*, a term that designates young men in their twenties, when they are already active as citizens but are regarded as still immature; see Kennell (2013). I shall first analyse the dynamics at stake and then reflect on the issue posed by the reference to *neoi*.


119 See Goffman (1956) on deference and demeanour and interaction ritual; and see Bourdieu (1977) on habitus.
into our behaviour, and therefore to actively respect them, as well as to care for the other’s evaluation of our behaviour, and consequently to feel inhibition or shame appropriately. The second-person standpoint and collective intentionality are thus unified in this broader perspective: collective intentionality makes us receptive to more abstract kinds of roles, those defined by cultural norms, but we take on a role whenever we engage in interpersonal interaction. Plato shows himself aware of both dimensions and unifies them in his treatment of *aidōs*: in this passage from the *Laws*, Plato emphasises very well the personal, relational aspect of socialisation. Compared to the passage from the *Republic* in which elders needed to scare children with the sanctions that would befall them if they did not behave with the proper *aidōs*, the psychology of education presupposed in this passage is much more complex and encompasses the admiring respect for figures of authority that represents the ‘positive’ side of *aidōs*, complementing the ‘negative’ side of *aidōs* as a form of fear.

Although it is necessary to take in account the bidirectionality of honour to explain the effectiveness of the Athenian Stranger’s advice, and although we can extrapolate from this a great deal of information on Plato’s conception of *aidōs*, we must also notice the contradictions and limits of this very passage. Indeed, even here Plato strongly limits the acknowledgement of the importance of intersubjectivity and of a predisposition towards *aidōs* in children. In this passage, after all, the term used is not *paides* but *neoi*. Plato seemingly admits this respectful and emulative attitude only in grown-up young men, not in children.\textsuperscript{120} Moreover, *aidōs* is still framed as something that adults can bequeath to young men, rather than something that children can gradually develop from an embryonic disposition. Finally, the *aidōs* that parents must bequeath to their children seems to correspond more to the respect towards a precise set of values and roles than to the general ability to appreciate differences in value and role.\textsuperscript{121}

So far, it is still not clear what Plato’s thoughts are on the origins of *aidōs* qua mechanism. It is worth examining at this point Plato’s *Protagoras*, concerned with the question of the

---

\textsuperscript{120} See n. 117 above and Kennell (2013) on *neoi*.

\textsuperscript{121} In section 3.1, I shall distinguish in more detail between (1) *aidōs* as mechanism, that is as the psychological predisposition that even very young children have to heed adults and appreciate difference standing, (2) *aidōs* as the proper respect towards norms, roles, and other people in general, and (3) *aidōs* as the occurrent *pathos* of shame and inhibition. This will help me to explain why *aidōs* is often framed as something that people acquire only at a certain age.
teachability of virtue, where Plato focuses on *aidōs* qua mechanism. In this dialogue, references to *aidōs* itself only occur in the myth delivered by the eponymous character. According to Protagoras, Zeus asked Hermes to provide each and every human being with *aidōs* and *dikē*, to make all of them able to live properly as members of political communities (322c-d).\(^{122}\) After the myth, Protagoras no longer mentions *aidōs* as such. In the *logos* that he delivers immediately after the myth, arguing for the view of virtue as teachable and thus attainable through education, Protagoras speaks of *aretē* generally or of specific virtues such as *dikaiosynē* and *sōphrosynē*. Before that, however, the sophist further reinstates the point that everybody is expected to share to some degree in justice and in the rest of civic virtue (μετέχειν δικαιοσύνης τε καὶ τῆς ἀλλής πολιτικῆς ἀρετῆς, 323a) with the observation that anyone who declared oneself unjust would be regarded as mad (323a-c). Despite the different terms employed, the myth and the observation in 323a-c clearly serve as a premise that allows Protagoras to argue for the teachability of virtue. In order to prove that virtue can be taught, Protagoras needs first to establish that all human beings have a potentiality for developing *aretē*, and this potentiality is what *aidōs* and *dikē* stand for in the myth: Zeus wants human beings to have *aidōs* and *dikē* so that they can live together in *poleis*. Moreover, the reference in 323a-c to ‘the rest of civic virtue’, τῆς ἀλλής πολιτικῆς ἀρετῆς, comprises *aidōs* too, given the parallelism with the pairing of *aidōs* and *dikē* found in the myth.\(^{123}\)

Plato’s representation of *aidōs* thus verges on aspects of collective intentionality. Qua the capacity to appraise and respect social norms and collectively sanctioned roles, *aidōs* is crucial in assuring the smooth functioning of civic relationships. In this dialogue, therefore, Plato proves himself aware of the possibility of conceiving *aidōs* as a predisposition that all humans beings shared for sociality. While, as seen in the previous discussion, Plato mostly uses *aidōs* to refer to the fully developed attitude of proper deference and respect, the *Protagoras* allows for a view of *aidōs* as the general mechanism for positive, cooperative intersubjectivity, that everyone possesses in a potential and at first undeveloped form. However, Plato never explicitly recognises that this predisposition might be manifest in infants already. As we have seen, Plato can go as far as to see children as hybristic creatures: he recognises their intersubjectivity, but seems to regard as unwarranted and therefore negative the self-asserting drive manifested in


\(^{123}\) As we shall see in section 2.6 on *aidōs* in Aristotle, he also describes *aidōs* as *politikē*, *mutatis mutandis*. 
their thymoeidic nature and behaviour; children’s claims to recognition must be tamed rather than indulged, while the connections between thymos and aidōs seem to be thematised only for grown-ups. As I hope to have shown in the analyses of the various passages, however, Plato presupposes that children have the capacity to care about what their elders say; although Plato seems reluctant to talk of aidōs in the case of children, in ordinary Greek this form of respect and deference towards the precepts imparted by an authority would be described as aidōs.

This being said, the problem remains of how to explain not only the connections between thymos and aidōs, but also the process of education more generally. As the scholars who have dealt with thymos and aidōs in Plato have pointed out, Plato rightly subsumes aidōs in his conception of thymos because of their concern with to kalon.124 It is thanks to the concern of thymos with to kalon that children can appreciate music. Thanks to their appreciation of music and of to kalon (and to the balancing effects of gymnastics too), they can develop their thymos in the proper way; the ultimate aim is to lead children to have the proper aidōs towards the norms and roles of their society. In this concern with to kalon we can also see further evidence that infants’ and children’s honour is not only about self-assertion; even if he focuses on the negative side of their timē, Plato shows himself aware of their predisposition towards the positive side of timē dynamics, with the attention towards to kalon and proper respect towards values and roles.

Important insights on these aspects are also offered by a passage from the tenth book of the Republic, where Socrates talks about the aidōs and philia that he has always had towards Homer since he was a child (Resp. X, 595b-c).125 This passage can reveal a great deal about aidōs and children’s psychology. First of all, according to it, aidōs is something that a child, a pais, can already have in a developed form. The aidōs and the philia that the child Socrates had towards Homer are the results of his virtual relationship with Homer through the enjoyment of Homer’s works. More can be unpacked out of this passage if we consider it together with a passage from Protagoras about traditional education: children must be taught mousikē, which comprises literature too, so that they would then feel zēlos for the heroes of the past and try to imitate them. The zēlos referred to in the Protagoras must be linked to the aidōs felt by the child

125 ‘And this makes it difficult for me to say what I have to say, because I’ve had a kind of fascinated admiration for Homer ever since I was young’, transl. Waterfield (1993): καίτοι φιλία γέ τίς με καὶ αἰδώς ἐκ παιδὸς ἔχουσα περὶ Ὅμηρου ἀποκωλύει λέγειν.
Socrates in the *Republic* towards Homer: thanks to music and poetry, children come to admire some people and deeds as far greater than them. To be able to do so, they must have some sort of *aidōs*-mechanism that enables them to appreciate the value of poetry and literature and to feel *zēlos* for the deeds of the heroes celebrated by poets. *Zēlos* can also be seen in connection with *thymos*: heroes are both admirable and admired, and children’s *thymos* would make them feel *zēlos* for these characters, since emulating them would be a way to pursue honour and self-assertion. Through music, therefore, children gradually develop the right habitus in general and, in particular, the proper *aidōs* towards all persons, values, objects, and so on that deserve it. Thanks to the respect and awe experienced by them (towards their parents, or when listening to music and literature), children can not only learn the proper values and absorb the proper habitus, but also, consequently, temper down the excessive self-assertion of their *thymos*. As we have seen, Plato draws a complex if contradictory, reticent, and incomplete picture of the connected roles of *thymos* and *aidōs*. In the next section, I shall turn to Aristotle, examining the role of *aidōs*, with special attention to its relevance for infants’ and children’s psychology.

### 2.6 *Aidōs* and infants in Aristotle

Although he has much more to say on *aidōs*, Aristotle’s account is even more contradictory and intricate than that of Plato. In this case too, our discussion will be mainly a matter of probing *lacunae* and trying to see the implications beyond the inconsistencies. Scholars such as Douglas Cairns and Marta Jimenez have already investigated the issue thoroughly in their fundamental and enlightening studies of *aidōs* in Aristotle.\(^{126}\) In this section, therefore, I shall rely on these contributions, expanding on their implications for infants’ psychology. In particular, I am interested in the question of whether infants can be regarded as possessing some form of *aidōs*, and, if so, of what kind, and with what consequences for our investigation. Qua the anticipatory fear of *adoxia* that helps us to avoid doing something *aischron*, *aidōs* is seen by Aristotle as a praiseworthy attitude in young people only, for adults are expected to be so virtuous as to not even take into consideration possibly shameful conduct.\(^{127}\) As much as he insists on the

---

\(^{126}\) Cairns (1993); Jimenez (2020).

\(^{127}\) In the fourth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1128b15-20), Aristotle observes that those *neoi* who display *aidōs* are praised, because, even if it cannot be regarded as a virtue, *aidōs* befits *neoi* in so much as they are still learning and it is acceptable for them to go wrong. In the *Rhetoric*, *neoi* are described as *aischynteloai* (*Rhet. II, 12.10,*
importance of aidōs in the behaviour of older children and young adults, he never attributes aidōs to infants.

However, it is nonetheless possible to argue that Aristotle’s works allow for an embryonic form of aidōs in children. Jimenez’s study is one of the last contributions to this argument. Building on Cairns’ account, and on Burnyeat’s thesis on ethical development in Aristotle, Jimenez has recently defended the role of shame as a motivator for ethical development. Accepting Burnyeat’s thesis of the importance of the pleasure of to kalon in Aristotle’s view of ethical development, she argues that it is shame that makes children responsive to this kind of pleasure. As she stresses, shame can play such a positive role (not just in Aristotle’s but also in our culture) in ethical development because of three essential features: self-reflectivity, other-relatedness, and the responsiveness to moral considerations beyond (I would add ‘material or strictly physical’) pleasures and pains. According to her, Aristotle identifies a specific kind of pleasure connected to the good, and she believes that shame, far from being a mere aversion to the aischron, has the role of making us responsive to this kind of pleasure, thanks to its connections with honour. She argues that, in Aristotle’s opinion, moral development consists in the ‘reorienting and shaping of the already present capacity to enjoy nobility and be pained by the shameful’. This capacity would correspond to the inborn and under-developed form of shame, as opposed to the fully fledged form that shame should acquire after a good and successful habituation process.

It can be noticed that, in this resume of Jimenez’ position, the English term shame rather than the Greek terms aidōs or aischynē has been used, to reflect the scholar’s own use and the focus of her enquiry. In fact, although sometimes she hints at other features of the Greek aidōs, most of the time she focuses on its meaning of shame, either retrospective or prospective. This

1389a29); see also e.g. Plato’s Charmides and Xenophon’s Cyropaedia for the association between young people and aidōs.

128 On aidōs and ethical development in Aristotle, see Burnyeat (1980) (for whom pleasure is the main drive towards virtue, and shame is ‘the semivirtue of the learner’, p. 79), Cairns (1993), pp. 393–431; see also Curzer (2012), according to whom it is pain instead that drives us towards virtue, but aidōs acts as a catalyst for these painful but formative experiences: e.g. it is by internalising punishment that we start to believe in the right values. Jimenez (2020) represents the most recent account, investigating shame as the main mechanism for ethical development.


aligns to some extent with Aristotle’s idiosyncratic employment of the term *aidōs*: the philosopher himself tends to privilege the meanings of *aidōs* as both retrospective shame and prospective restraint, with some heed paid to the meaning of *aidōs* as desire for praise, but to the detriment of the traditional meaning of *aidōs* qua respect towards others and qua dispositional trait of character.\(^{132}\) The choice of translating *aidōs* as shame, however, runs the risk of flattening the possible deviations in Aristotle’s own uses, which I aim to highlight in the course of my analysis. Furthermore, despite the narrow focus in Aristotle’s treatment of the concept of *aidōs*, his contemporaries would inevitably have in mind also the other traditional meanings of the word. In the following analysis, therefore, I shall on the one hand show the limits of Aristotle’s treatment of *aidōs*, and on the other expand the scope of some of his observations in order to apply them to the broader, traditional, notion of *aidōs*.

I would like to start by discussing some passages that can help to assess Aristotle’s employment of *aidōs*. The most exemplary passage for this is the one at the end of the fourth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*. In this passage, Aristotle justifies his choice of not including *aidōs* in his overview of virtues. It is worth reporting the passage in full (1128b10–33):

> Περὶ δὲ αἰδούς ὡς τινὸς ἀρετῆς οὐ προσήκει λέγειν· πάθει γὰρ μᾶλλον ἐοικεν ἢ ἐξει· ὀρίζετα γοῦν φόβος τις ἀδοξίας ... οὐ πάση δ’ ἡλικία τὸ πάθος ἀρμοζει, ἀλλὰ τῇ νέᾳ· οἴομεθα γὰρ δεῖν τοὺς τηλικούτους αἰδήμονας εἶναι διὰ τὸ πάθει ζῶντας πολλὰ ἀμαρτάνειν, ὑπὸ τῆς αἰδοῦς δὲ κωλύεσθαι· καὶ ἐπαινοῦμεν τῶν μὲν νέων τοὺς αἰδήμονας, πρεσβύτερον δ’ οὐδεῖς ἀν ἐπαινέσειν ὅτι αἰσχυντηλός· οὐδὲν γὰρ οἴομεθα δεῖν αὐτὸν πράττειν ἐφ’ οἷς ἐστὶν αἰσχύνη, οὔδὲ γὰρ ἐπεικοῦς ἐστὶν ἢ αἰσχύνη, εἶπερ γίνεται ἐπὶ τοῖς φαιλοῖς (οὗ γὰρ πρακτέον τὰ τοιαῦτα· εἰ δ’ ἐστὶ τὰ μὲν κατ’ ἀληθείαν αἰσχρά τὰ δὲ κατὰ δόξαν, οὔδὲν διαφέρει· οὐδέτερα γὰρ πρακτεία, ὡς οὐκ αἰσχυντέον) ... τὸ δ’ οὕτως ἔχειν ὡςτ’ εὶ πράξαι τι τῶν τοιούτων αἰσχύνεσθαι, καὶ διὰ τούτ’ οἴεσθαι ἐπεικικὴ εἶναι, ἄτοπον· ἐπὶ τοὺς ἐκουσίους γὰρ ἢ αἰδός, ἐκῶν δ’ ἡ ἐπεικικὴς οὐδέποτε πράξει τὰ φαῦλα. εἰ δ’ ἄν ἡ αἰδός εἰς ὑποθέσεις ἐπεικεῖς εἰ γὰρ πράξαι, αἰσχύνοιτ’ ἂν· οὐκ ἔστι δὲ τούτο περὶ τὰς ἀρετὰς. εἰ δ’ ἦ

---

ἀναισχυντία φαύλον καὶ τὸ μὴ αἰδεῖσθαι τὰ αἰσχρὰ πράττειν, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον τὸν τὰ τοιαῦτα πράττοντα αἰσχύνεσθαι ἐπιεικές.

It is not appropriate to treat aidōs as a virtue; for it would seem to be more like a feeling than like a state [of character]. It is defined, at any rate, as a sort of fear of disrepute. ... Further, the feeling of aidōs is suitable for youth, not for every time of life. For we think it right for young people to be prone to aidōs, since they live by their feelings, and hence often go astray, but are restrained by aidōs; and hence we praise young people who are prone to aidōs.

No one, by contrast, would praise an older person for readiness to feel aischynē, since we think it wrong for him to do any action that causes aischynē. For a feeling of aischynē is not proper to the decent person either, if it is caused by base actions; for these should not be done. If some actions are really disgraceful and others are base only regarded as such, that does not matter, since neither should be done, and so he should not feel aischynē. ... It would be absurd that one regarded himself as decent only because he would feel aischynē if he were to do a disgraceful action. For aidōs is concerned with what is voluntary, and the decent person will never willingly do base actions. Aidōs might, however, be decent on an assumption; if one were to do [disgraceful actions], one would feel aischynē, but this does not apply to the virtues. If we grant that it is base to feel no aischynē or aidōs at disgraceful actions, it still does not follow that to do such actions and then to feel aischynē at them is decent. (Transl. Irwin (1999), adapt.)

This passage showcases Aristotle’s decision to prioritise the meanings of aidōs as prospective and retrospective shame (encompassing aischynē), and to deny to it the status not only of virtue, but of hexis more generally. 133 Aristotle scotomises the traditional meaning of aidōs qua respect and capacity to allocate honour and deference correctly, as well as its dispositional sense in general. The Aristotelian version of aidōs is thus appropriate only for young people, because it

133 See in particular Cairns (1993), pp. 414–419 for an enlightening analysis of the passage and the issues it poses.
is acceptable for them not only to be shy and inhibited, but also to go wrong and consequently be ashamed, given that they are still in the process of learning.

In spite of this revisionist approach to the notion of aidōs, however, other passages let some different views, or at least tensions with Aristotle’s idiosyncratic treatment, emerge. Several meaningful insights can be gathered from Aristotle’s discussion of politikē andreia, the kind of courage based on aidōs. I examine the twin passages in Nicomachean and Eudemian Ethics also in my discussion of Aristotle’s notion of thymos in the Appendix. We can analyse them here with a look at the role played by aidōs. According to the philosopher, the courage based on aidōs is the best among the imperfect forms of andreia on account of its praiseworthy concern over reputation and honour (ENIII, 1116a26-30):


This is most like the [genuine] bravery described above, because it results from a virtue; for it is caused by shame and by desire for something fine, namely honor, and by aversion from reproach, which is shameful. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

Aristotle makes it clear that aidōs is about an internalised desire for to kalon in itself: thanks to aidōs, we align to the conception of to kalon defined on the basis of what is honoured and what is reproached in one’s community. This is also the reason why the kind of courage based on aidōs is called politikē andreia, as it depends on the wider normative order, as expressed in laws, public honours, and public sanctions. What makes politikē andreia still defective is the dependence on others’ opinion to identify the noble. As Jimenez aptly comments,

citizen soldiers with shame do not aim at external incentives but, instead, do courageous actions on account of their nobility and for their own sake, even if they depend on the external guidance provided by honors and reproaches from those around them, and in general, by the social system of praise and blame.134

---

In addition to this, the passage on *politikē andreia* also allows us to observe a tension with other senses of *aidōs* that Aristotle tends otherwise to ignore. The *aidōs* that motivates the citizen soldiers also takes the form of respect: they heed their laws and their fellow citizens, and are able to give proper value to the right sources of authority. Furthermore, Aristotle also refers here to *aidōs* explicitly as a virtue, to account for the closeness of *politikē andreia* to *andreia* proper; I shall discuss the issue of the status of *aidōs* as a virtue in more detail shortly.

Another meaningful passage that helps us to have a more nuanced picture of the meanings of *aidōs* in Aristotle comes from the seventh book of the *Politics*, in a section devoted to the best circumstances for reproduction. In giving advice on the age at which people should get children, Aristotle considers issues of *aidōs* too. In particular, Aristotle recommends that men should not have children until they have reached a certain age, because an excessive closeness in age between fathers and children would result in a lack of *aidōs* (1335a3-5):

> ἥτε γὰρ αἰδώς ἤπτον ὑπάρχει τοῖς τοιούτοις, ὡσπερ ἡλικιώτας, καὶ περὶ τὴν οἰκονομίαν ἐγκληματικὸν τὸ πάρεγγυς.

For there is less respect for them, as for contemporaries, and the closeness in age leads to conflict over the management of the household. (Transl. Reeve (1998))

In this passage, *aidōs* has to do with difference in status, and particularly with the respect and deference due to a father, who must be in a position of superiority. As this and the other passages show, therefore, despite Aristotle’s attempts to (re)define *aidōs* in a way that accommodates his agenda on virtue and ethical development, tensions and deviations surface nonetheless. We can now turn again to the issue of *aidōs* in infants, which will enable us to discuss other issues in Aristotle’s general treatment of the notion of *aidōs*.

It is worth starting by gathering all the arguments in support of the presence of an embryonic form of *aidōs* in infants: this will also help us understand what kind of potentiality infants have for *aidōs* and what the implications of this might be. One way to approach the

---

135 See Bertelli, Canevaro, and Curnis (2022) ad loc. for excellent comments on this passage. See my section 3.3 below for a situation of imbalance between father and (adoptive) son: at the beginning of Menander’s *Samia*, father and son treat each other with excessive equality, while the ending restores the proper hierarchy.

136 On potentiality and actuality as pillars of Aristotle’s thought in general, see Lear (1988), pp. 55–95.
issue is to discuss one of the main problems in Aristotle’s picture on *aidōs*, namely its classification as either *pathos*, *dynamis*, or *hexis*. As Cairns has demonstrated, despite Aristotle’s insistence that *aidōs* is only a *pathos*, sometimes he also leaves room for its traditional dispositional status.\(^{137}\) Qua *dynamis*, *aidōs* can be regarded as innate according to both the *Eudemian* and the *Nicomachean Ethics*. As reconstructed by Cairns, both seem to concede that *dynameis* are innate, despite substantial differences: while the latter adopts a narrow conception of *dynameis* merely as the capacities to experience *pathē*, the *Eudemian Ethics* allows for a richer understanding that goes in the direction of equating them with innate traits of character and as ‘biologically given’.\(^{138}\) In this perspective, the Eudemian position strikingly approximates the results yielded by modern developmental psychology, especially if we consider it together with Aristotle’s conviction that *physis* has a limited weight in ethical development (see *Pol. VII*, 1332a40-1332b8): the development of personality, which entails the shaping of one’s emotional experiences and responses, depends not only on *physis*, but also primarily on habit (*ēthos*) and secondarily on learning (*didachē*).\(^{139}\) These two last elements are precisely about socialisation: Aristotle is thus not far at all from an account such as the one offered by Tomasello that sees children’s development as the result of the combined effect of innate predispositions on the one hand and socialisation and experience on the other hand.\(^{140}\) Predispositions alone are not sufficient to determine the developmental outcome, which will heavily depend on the baby’s interaction with other human beings. As we have seen, in modern developmental psychology these processes are described in terms of intersubjectivity; I shall address the issue of the place of intersubjectivity in Aristotle’s account of infants’ psychology later.

\(^{137}\) Cairns (1993), pp. 411–431, followed (without sufficient acknowledgement) by Raymond (2017). On the other hand, Jimenez (2020) inclines towards seeing it as a *pathos*, although she believes that the threefold distinction should be interpreted more loosely, so that the ‘mixed nature’ of shame, with its dispositional aspects, could be appraised; at any rate, however, she agrees with Aristotle in denying *aidōs* the status of a virtue.

\(^{138}\) Cairns (1993), pp. 405–410 for a detailed discussion of Aristotle’s differing statements on the topic throughout his works (quote p. 405).

\(^{139}\) See Bertelli, Canavarro, and Curnis (2022), *ad loc* for a discussion of Aristotle’s different remarks on the topic throughout his works.

\(^{140}\) Tomasello (2019a).
So far we have more or less played along with Aristotle’s choice of selecting only some meanings of *aidōs*, namely retrospective shame and prospective restraint, and of denying to it the meaning of respect towards others, as well as its status of *hexis*, let alone of virtue. However, the inconsistencies, contradictions, and gaps left open by his dismissal of crucial aspects of the traditional notion of *aidōs* authorise us to reconsider some of his positions and go beyond his own limitations. As Cairns put it, ‘several of Aristotle’s explicit pronouncements on *aidōs* are disappointingly negative or unsatisfactorily limited’.\(^{141}\) Therefore, it is often important to read between the lines or to reconstruct the *lacunae*, as Cairns has brilliantly done in his book with regard to many of the issues in Aristotle’s treatment of *aidōs*. Cairns concluded his analysis of *aidōs* in Aristotle writing that ‘Aristotle’s only real error … is to ignore its dispositional aspect by denying it the status of *hexis*’.\(^{142}\) Let us then turn to *aidōs* qua *hexis* and possibly qua (albeit provisional) virtue, retrieving its traditional meaning of respect and function as a virtue.\(^{143}\)

With regard to virtues especially, it is possible to find stronger support for the presence of an embryonic form of *aidōs* in Aristotle’s account of *aretē* as the result of a process of *teleiōsis* in the *Physics* (246a10-246b3, 247a2-3) and *Metaphysics* (1021b20-21), where the philosopher gives precise indications about the development of virtues. While other processes involve *alloiōsis*, that is a change in quality, the emergence of virtue constitutes a process of *teleiōsis*, that is of completion and development from something that presents the same essence from the beginning. If we take *aidōs* in its traditional function qua the virtue of allocating properly deference and respect and of distinguishing between *kala* and *aischra*, then these passages leave no doubt on the fact that infants possess some incipient form of this virtue. The issue arises, however, of what exactly this embryonic *aidōs* might look like, and what the implications would be. A passage from the second book of *Nicomachean Ethics* further clarifies the process of *teleiōsis* of virtue, specifying that the embryonic form of virtue consists in a capacity to develop the virtue (*EN* II, 1103a24-26):

\(^{141}\) Cairns (1993), p. 430.
\(^{143}\) Aristotle’s account is controversial also with regard to the question of whether *aidōs* can be seen as a virtue or not. In a passage (*EN* III, 1116a26-30), *aidōs* is explicitly captioned as a virtue, although in *EN* IV, 1128b10-30 this possibility is categorically denied. One of the reasons for this is the fact that Aristotle focuses on the meaning of *aidōs* as retrospective and prospective shame, ignoring the traditional meaning of *aidōs* qua respect. See Cairns (1993), pp. 414-428 for a thorough discussion of the issue and all the relevant passages.
And so the virtues arise in us neither by nature nor against nature. Rather, we are by nature able to acquire them, and we are completed through habit. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

In order for the virtue actually to develop, it is necessary that habit steps in and brings it to maturity. Without practice and habit, it would not be possible for teleiōsis to take place at all.144

However, a passage from the sixth book of Nicomachean Ethics allows for richer forms of incipient virtues. In this passage, Aristotle acknowledges that infants can feature incipient forms of virtues and character dispositions (EN VI, 1144b4–10):

For each of us seems to possess his type of character to some extent by nature; for in fact we are just, brave, prone to temperance, or have another feature, immediately from birth. But still we look for some further condition to be full goodness, and we expect to possess these features in another way. For these natural states belong to children and to beasts as well [as to adults], but without understanding they are evidently harmful. (transl. Irwin (1999))

As both Cairns and Jimenez have stressed, the introduction of the idea of physikai hexeis strongly supports the possibility that aidōs might be innate too, as one of the ‘proto-virtuous resources’, as Jimenez would put it, that the passage refers to.145 If infants can have a form of aidōs, we can now address the question of its implications for our enquiry on infants’ honour

144 This is confirmed in the passage that follows immediately (EN II, 1103a26-1103b2), where Aristotle draws a distinction between how the capacity for physical senses work as opposed to those for virtues. In the case of sight, for instance, we have it and then we start to use it, whereas with virtue one must start to perform virtuous acts in order to develop a virtuous hexis.

and intersubjectivity. In what we have discussed so far with regard to Aristotle’s treatment of
aidōs, there was virtually no hint of intersubjectivity. This represents a significant break from
the traditional function of aidōs, which is precisely about interaction, face-work, and cognising
the value of both people and values. We can introduce the issue by going back to Jimenez’
arguments and theses. I believe Jimenez’s conclusions can be further expanded, by emphasising
some implications that she disregards altogether, particularly about the role of intersubjectivity
and of pleasure in Aristotle’s account. As I said already, Jimenez builds her argument also on
Burnyeat’s suggestion about the role of pleasure in Aristotle’s ideas of ethical development.
Although she speaks of shame, sometimes she also refers to the meaning of aidōs as the pleasure
that derives from honour. However, her discussion of this kind of pleasure does not fit very well
into her account of shame in infants. In fact, Jimenez never provides any example of pleasures
that even children could experience beyond the sphere of merely material or physical pleasures.
When she talks about the pleasures connected to shame, she usually refers to pleasures
connected to the performance of noble actions, which is hardly relevant in a discussion of
infants’ psychology.

The notion of intersubjectivity provides plenty of scope for this enquiry, suggesting the
direction in which we should look to discover the specific forms of pleasure that infants could
experience and that could lead them towards the path of virtue. In the light of the contemporary
insights on primary intersubjectivity in particular, attention and recognition – and lack thereof
– can be interpreted alongside the aidōs-specific pleasure that Jimenez identifies. The most
obvious form of pleasure connected to aidōs, and one deeply entrenched in any parent-child
relationship, is the pleasure of being recognised, and of being appreciated and praised (to be
considered, of course, together with the complementary pain of being reproached, blamed,
or despised). Jimenez was actually not at all far from this conclusion. In fact, despite the
tentativeness with which she suggests the idea of the inborn character of aidōs, she identifies a
description of this initial form of aidōs in a crucial passage at the end of the Nicomachean Ethics
(X, 1880b6-7).

προούπάρχουσι γὰρ στέργοντες καὶ εὐπειθεῖς τῇ φύσει.

For his [scil. a father’s] children are already fond of him and
naturally ready to obey. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

66
Jimenez recognises *aidōs* in the inborn feelings that Aristotle attributes here to infants, commenting that ‘this natural emotional tendency to respond with affection and deference to those in our close social circle is, I think, precisely the beginning of a sense of shame’.

This is perfectly right if we ignore the limitations of Aristotle’s account and choose instead to work with the traditional and broader notion of *aidōs* (and if we therefore substitute the term *aidōs* in lieu of ‘shame’ in Jimenez’ book and argument itself). In its meanings of deference and respect, *aidōs* is the best way to conceive of the predisposition that this passage attributes to infants for the heed they pay to their parents. Particularly in *eupeitheis*, we can read the respect that characterises *aidōs*, as well as the awareness of a difference in status upon which this respect is grounded. The following quote from Cairns goes in a similar direction:

> If *to kalon* is the intrinsic and irreducible end of virtuous action, it must be supplied in the individual by that process of habituation which gives rise to *aretē*, in that process, during which the individual is brought to regard *to kalon* as pleasant and *to aischron* as unpleasant, *aidōs* will be indispensable, both as the force which makes one sensitive to the opinion of those, such as parents and teachers, who constitute the media through which one learns to subscribe to the standards of one’s society, and as the basis for one’s acquired sense of the intrinsically *aischron* or *kalon*.

This is the same conclusion that we reached with regard to Plato’s works too. Both philosophers appear reluctant to acknowledge some traditional functions of *aidōs*; sometimes, however, they refer to these traditional aspects. Moreover, although both philosophers say little about the role of *aidōs* in infants’ psychology, there are indications that they both allow for the presence of a predisposition to *aidōs* in babies.

As we have seen, Aristotle’s account of *aidōs* itself offers little scope for an interpretation of *aidōs* as a *locus* of intersubjectivity. It is worth considering, therefore, whether intersubjective dynamics might surface in other elements of Aristotle’s ethical system. In the passage discussed by Jimenez, for example, it is worth devoting more attention to *stergontes*, a word that clearly refers to some form of *philia*. In the following section, I shall therefore look

---

for other potential *loci* of intersubjectivity in Aristotle’s view of children, namely *philia* and *mimēsis*.

### 2.7 *Philia* in infants

This section addresses the question of whether *philia* too can have implications for infants’ psychology and for their *timē*. As we have seen in the previous section, in the tenth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle attributes feelings of affection and deference to infants towards their parents. The aim in this section is therefore to investigate the role of *philia* in infant psychology. If, as I argued in section 1.2 of Chapter 1, Aristotle’s account of *philia* is in general intersubjective, what are the implications for infants’ psychology? Once again, the first task is to probe whether or not infants can be said to be involved in *philia*.

In a passage from the eighth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* that we shall analyse in closer detail later, Aristotle says that children only start to have *philia* towards their parents later in their lives, once they have acquired *synesis* or *aisthēsis* (*EN* VIII, 1161b25-28). Shortly before, however, Aristotle had said that *philia* comes naturally for both parents and children towards each other (*EN* VIII, 1155a17-21). As we have seen in the section on *aidōs*, the passage from the tenth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics* goes in the same direction, claiming that children are predisposed to love and obey their fathers. The apparent contradiction can be solved by looking at developmental psychology. In developmental terms, *aisthēsis* is one of the basic capacities with which animals in general are born with;\(^\text{148}\) the point, with the coupling of *synesis* or *aisthēsis*, is thus not that infants will start to love their parents once they develop these capacities, but that they will do so once they acquire the specific awareness or perception that their parents are their parents. However, this also must happen very early, especially with mothers: as modern experimental studies show, infants learn to recognise their mother’s voice even before they are born.\(^\text{149}\)

---

\(^{148}\) On the meaning and function of *aisthēsis* in Aristotle, see Rabinoff (2018). As she persuasively shows, Aristotle’s *aisthēsis* is an ethically meaningful and cognitively rich function, informed by the intellect and providing ethical information.

\(^{149}\) See e.g. Sai (2005); Barthell *et al.* (2007); Marin, Rapisardi, and Tani (2015). It might be that Aristotle’s point is so tentative on account of the fact that infants might take more time to recognise their fathers, but Barthell *et al.* (2007) demonstrate that infants recognise their fathers very early too.
Even if we rejected the possibility that infants acquire the *synesis* and *aisthēsis* of who their parents are very early, we could still interpret this passage as allowing for infants’ *philia* by taking into consideration the difference between actuality and potentiality, similarly to what we did in the case of *aidōs*. When he says that children can only develop *philia* towards their parents once they have acquired first *synesis* and *aisthēsis*, Aristotle might be employing the word *philia* in a stronger sense, as the relationship based on knowledge of each other’s character. On the other hand, when he refers to the *philia* that children naturally feel towards their parents, he is talking about the inborn predisposition to affection between parents and children that can be observed among not only human beings but also other species. Just as in the case of *aidōs*, therefore, it can be useful to differentiate a not fully developed form of *philia* that can be present since birth, and a fully developed form that takes years, and deep familiarity with the other person, to develop. After all, *philia* features in the *Ethics* as a virtue and Aristotle notoriously regards virtues as the result of a lifetime of practice, crowned with the knowledge of the motivation (*to hou heneka*). In the case of *philia* based on character, furthermore, Aristotle notes how long it can take to truly get to know a person well enough as to be able to appreciate their character and thus become proper friends (*ENVIII, 1156b26-32*). As we observed in the section on *aidōs*, Aristotle believes that virtues develop in a process of *teleiōsis*, an idea that allows for the presence of embryonic forms of the virtues. In the case of *philia*, the passages that I have mentioned in support of the presence of *philia* in infants not only confirm this point but can also provide insights into what this natural *philia* might look like.

Having dispelled the difficulty posed by this apparent contradiction, we can now investigate more in depth the implications of infants’ *philia*. The main aim is to figure out whether the intersubjective nature of Aristotle’s account of *philia* can also obtain in the case of infants. I would also like to retrieve some of the insights gathered in our discussions of *aidōs*, as some of the aspects that Aristotle had neglected in his narrow definition of *aidōs* resurface nonetheless in his observations about *philia*. Quite unsurprisingly, all the references to infants’ *philia* regard their affection towards their parents. As we have seen, Aristotle believes some form of similarity to be at the root of *philia*; this is also the case for *philia* between parents and children. In a very rich passage from the eighth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, which also embraces the note on children’s *philia* for their parents as emerging later in life, Aristotle spells out the grounds for the mutual affection between parents and children (*1161b16-30*):
Friendship in families also seems to have many species, but they all seem to depend on paternal friendship. For a parent is fond of his children because he regards them as something of himself; and children are fond of a parent because they regard themselves as coming from him. A parent knows better what has come from him than the children know that they are from the parent; and the parent regards his children as his own more than the product regards the maker as its own. For a person regards what comes from him as his own, as the owner regards his tooth or hair or anything; but what has come from him regards its owner as its own not at all, or to a lesser degree. The length of time also matters. For a parent becomes fond of his child as soon as they are born, but children become fond of the parent when time has passed and they have acquired some comprehension or [at least] perception. And this makes it clear why mothers love their children more [than fathers do]. A parent, then, loves his children as [he loves] himself. For what has come from him is a sort of other himself; [it is other because] it is separate. Children love a parent because they regard themselves as having come from him. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

As Aristotle puts it, parents love their children as being part of themselves. We could say that, in the case of parents’ philia towards their children, similarity is effectively consubstantiality. Likewise, children love their parents because they know that they derive from them. In section
1.2, I argued that the stress on sameness is one of the intersubjective elements of Aristotle’s account of *philia*. In this passage, however, in spite of the focus on the sameness that ties parents and children, there is no stress on the overall intersubjective aspects of their relationship. We can believe that infants’ *philia* towards their parents is intersubjective too if we apply Aristotle’s considerations on *philia* in general to this special case, but Aristotle does not stress this aspect in this passage on infants’ *philia* towards their parents.

We can expand our picture by considering some connections between *philia* and *aidōs* that we discussed especially in section 1.4 of Chapter 1. As we saw in section 2.6 on *aidōs* in Aristotle, Jimenez recognises in a passage from book ten of the *Nicomachean Ethics* a reference to the incipient sense of shame that, in her reconstruction, enables infants to initiate the process of ethical development. Let us quote and reconsider the passage again (*ENX*, 1880b6-7):

προϋπάρχουσι γὰρ στέργοντες καὶ εὐπειθεῖς τῇ φύσει.

For his [scil. a father’s] children are already fond of him and naturally ready to obey. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

As I noted earlier, if Aristotle – and consequently Jimenez – were accepting the traditional notion of *aidōs*, with its complex spectrum of meanings ranging from shame to respect, then we could definitely see in ‘this natural emotional tendency to respond with affection and deference to those in our close social circle’ an instance of *aidōs*, since the respect that this passage describes would have normally been described in Greek precisely as *aidōs*. Although, as we have ascertained, Aristotle chooses not to thematise respect in his treatment of *aidōs*, we are nonetheless left with *philia*, which *stergontes* obviously recalls. In this passage too, then, Aristotle might be subsuming into his account of *philia* some of the traditional aspects of *aidōs* that he otherwise neglects. This is underpinned also by the fact that, when talking about children’s *philia* towards their parents, Aristotle stresses both children’s obedience towards their parents and, more generally, the asymmetry of their relationship. This is obviously the case in this passage, which describes children as both predisposed to love their father (*stergontes*), and as εὐπειθεῖς τῇ φύσει, naturally obedient towards them. The idea of *philia* is juxtaposed to what we might refer to as *aidōs* in its traditional meaning of deference;

---

importantly, moreover, children’s tendency to obey their parents is presented as intrinsic to their nature.

In a passage from the eighth book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, children’s *philia* towards their parents is presented as analogous to that normally directed by human beings towards the gods (*EN* VIII, 1162a4-9):

έστι δ’ ἡ μὲν πρὸς γονεῖς φιλία τέκνοις, καὶ ἀνθρώποις πρὸς θεούς, ὡς πρὸς ἄγαθόν καὶ ὑπερέχον· εὖ γὰρ πεποίηκας τὰ μέγιστα· τοῦ γὰρ εἶναι καὶ τραφῆναι αἴτιοι, καὶ γενομένως τοῦ παιδευθῆναι· ἔχει δὲ καὶ τὸ ἡδὺ καὶ τὸ χρήσιμον ἡ τοιαύτη φιλία μᾶλλον τῶν ὀθνείων, ὥσω καὶ κοινότερος ὁ βίος αὐτοῖς ἔστιν.

The friendship of children to a parent, like the friendship of human beings to a god, is friendship toward what is good and superior. For the parent conferred the greatest benefits on his children, since he is the cause of their being and nurture and of their education once they have been born. This friendship also includes pleasure and utility, more than the friendship of unrelated people does, to the extent that [parents and children] have more of a life in common.

(Transl. Irwin (1999))

This passage is extremely rich in insights about *philia*, honour, and parent-child relationships. Children’s *philia* towards their parents is grounded in a fundamental asymmetry, precisely like the one between human beings and gods. This asymmetry, interestingly, is framed here not in terms of power and authority, but in terms of virtue and benefactions, and it is this superiority in goodness and benefactions that constitutes the basis for children’s *philia* towards their parents. This has certainly to do with *charis*, understood as gratitude and reciprocity, but also, I would like to suggest, with the traditional meaning of *aidōs* as the capacity to appraise and respect properly specific roles (both the ones more grounded in collective intentionality, such as the role of a ruler, and the ones more grounded in joint intentionality and personal relationships, such as the role of a parent). Although the idea of *charis* is certainly implied, and although *charis* is usually at the forefront in any discussion of parent and child relationship, Aristotle focuses here rather on the respective statuses of parents and children, as seen from
the perspective of the children themselves.\textsuperscript{151} Children are described as being aware of their parents’ superior status, which is based on their virtue and their role as benefactors. This recognition of the other person’s role and claims vis-à-vis ourselves is precisely one of the major aspects of \textit{aidōs} that Aristotle neglected to account for in his treatises. In this case, the philosopher gives no indication about the age at which children can display or develop this awareness. Although it is doubtful that Aristotle would attribute this awareness to infants, we might look at this issue in the light of the considerations made with regard to infants’ \textit{philia} towards their parents. In other words, we can look at this aspect too of \textit{philia} between parents and children in terms of actuality and potentiality and developmental processes: children can perceive their parents as superior and good from the start, but this perception itself probably must be seen as something that develops from an embryonic to a fully fledged form that comprises awareness of one’s and the other’s role. In this process, \textit{philia} also develops, arguably from a form of attachment to a more complex relationship and affection.

To recapitulate the points made so far, children’s love towards their parents is characterised by the awareness of their respective roles. They love their parents because they know that they are superior, and because of all the benefactions they receive from them. Children’s \textit{philia} towards their parents, therefore, is essentially constituted not just of affection, but also of respect, gratitude, and awareness of roles. Traditional Greek thought would have described these aspects in terms of \textit{aidōs}, whereas Aristotle prefers to reframe respect as an aspect of \textit{philia}. Although his picture requires a great amount of conjecturing, Aristotle’s account of \textit{philia} thus represents another key dimension of infants’ honour. Additional material about intersubjectivity and honour in Aristotle’s, but also Plato’s, picture of children’s psychology and development lies, I believe, in their ideas about the role of \textit{mimēsis}. In the next section, I would therefore like to focus on Aristotle’s and Plato’s belief on the essential role of \textit{mimēsis} in infants’ development, in order to enlighten another possible locus of intersubjectivity and honour dynamics in their accounts of infants’ psychology.

2.8 \textit{Mimēsis} in Plato’s and Aristotle’s accounts of infants

Recent studies have emphasised the importance of \textit{mimēsis} in both philosophers’ accounts of ethical development. As these studies have shown, in their treatises both Plato and Aristotle

\footnote{See section 1.3 above on \textit{charis} in general and section 3.2 on \textit{charis} in parent-child relationships.}
presuppose that children have a predisposition for imitation, and they both suggest exploiting this aspect for educational purposes. Building on these interpretations, I would like to maintain that *mimēsis* can be seen as another locus of intersubjectivity: by engaging in *mimēsis*, we effectively tune into the other person’s subjectivity; furthermore, imitation fosters an alignment with the other person that can strengthen the equation between oneself and the other. I shall here discuss together Plato’s and Aristotle’s observations, as I agree with Mark Jonas that the two philosophers are very much aligned on the role of *mimēsis* in education.

*Mimēsis* is a prominent theme especially in Aristotle’s *Poetics*. In his explanation about the origins of poetry, he accounts for the role of *mimēsis* in human nature and psychology (1448b5-10):

> ἐοίκαι δὲ γεννῆσαι μὲν ὄλως τὴν ποιητικὴν αἴτια δύο τινὲς καὶ αὖταί φυσικά. τὸ τε γὰρ μιμεῖσθαι σύμφωνον τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ἐκ παιδῶν ἔστι καὶ τούτῳ διαφέρουσι τῶν ἄλλων ζῴων ὑπὸ μιμητικῶτατὸν ἐστὶ καὶ τὶς μαθῆςις ποιεῖται διὰ μιμήσεως τὰς πρώτας, καὶ τὸ χαίρειν τοῖς μιμήμασι πάντας.

It can be seen that poetry was broadly engendered by a pair of causes, both natural. For it is an instinct of human beings, from childhood, to engage in mimesis (indeed, this distinguishes them from other animals: man is the most mimetic of all, and it is through mimesis that he develops his earliest understanding); and equally natural that everyone enjoys mimetic objects. (Transl. Halliwell (1995))

This passage shows that Aristotle sees *mimēsis* as an intrinsic element in human psychology: as human beings, we have a natural tendency to engage in *mimēsis* from childhood, and it is thanks to this predisposition and to the pleasure that comes with it that we can start to learn. The expression τὸ μιμεῖσθαι clearly expresses the action of imitating rather than the experience of

---

152 On *mimēsis* in aesthetics see in general Halliwell (2002). On the educational value of imitation in Aristotle, see in particular Fosheim (2006), (2018); Bertelli, Canepro, and Curnis (2022) ad 1340a14-42; see also some insightful remarks by Rabinoff (2018), pp. 152–153.

153 Jonas (2017), who takes a leaf out of Kristjánsson’s (2014) paper for the idea that some purported differences between Plato and Aristotle (especially in their ideas on education) should be reconsidered.
enjoying a representation, as argued by Fossheim on the basis of this and other passages from the Poetics.

The joy that is natural to us and is here set forward as the joy of learning is not that of seeing the representations of others so much as that of oneself doing the representing.  

The fact that children have an instinct for mimēsis and that it is through mimēsis that they begin to learn shows the importance of interpersonal aspects: children are actively engaged in this process and it is in their engagement with others that they develop their first forms of understanding.

Another important point emerges from Plato’s and Aristotle’s remarks on the importance of sheltering children from negative models and narratives (e.g. Pl. Resp. III, 395cd, 401c-d; Arist. Pol. VII, 1336a39-1336b27). Following Fossheim and other commentators, I believe that these recommendations should be interpreted in terms of active mimēsis rather than mere passivity to influences. Being raised by slaves, for instance, would lead children to imitate slaves and in this way acquire a slavish habitus, to put it in Bourdieu’s terms. In this case too, what emerges is the intersubjective essence of mimēsis and therefore of infants’ and children’s psychology. This point can be further developed thanks to a brief yet extremely revealing note in the sixth book of Plato’s Republic (500c), where Socrates says that it is impossible not to imitate what one admires:

\[
\text{ἤ ὦ ἐὰν ἐβαλλήν ἔται, ὡς τὰς ὀμιλεῖ ἀγάμενος, μὴ μιμεθώθαι ἐκεῖνο;}
\]

\[\]

\[\]

---

155 Fossheim (2006); Canevaro very pertinently comments and recapitulates ad Arist. Pol. VII, 1336a39-1336b27: ‘La combinazione della natura imitativa dei bambini e dell’efficacia dell’abitudine nell’educarne l’ethos ... è ragione delle proibizioni enunciate in questo passo, che costituiscono una forma di censura che dev’essere esercitata dai paidonomoi: i bambini non devono passare troppo tempo con gli schiavi, per evitare di acquisire abitudini schiavili; non devono essere esposti al turpiloquio perché l’esposizione a comportamenti illiberali sviluppa un ethos illibere; per lo stesso motivo non deve essere loro permesso di vedere rappresentazioni artistiche o teatrali indecenti, né di assistere a giambi e commedie’ (Bertelli, Canevaro, and Curnis (2022)).
'Or do you think it possible not to imitate the things to which anyone attaches himself with admiration?' (Transl. Shorey (1937))

*Mimēsis* is here connected to admiration: far from being an indiscriminate and passive reception and reflection of external stimuli, the choice and agency of *mimēsis* are stressed here. Socrates is talking in general and is not referring specifically to children, but I would suggest that his observation should be taken to apply to infants and children as well. This finds support in a passage from the *Protagoras* (326a) where a similar idea is predicated with regard to school-age children: at school, students are taught about the heroes of the past so that they might feel *zēlos* and thus yearn to imitate them. These two passages rely on the assumption that *mimēsis* is no blind reflection of the environment. As implied by ὁ μιλεῖ in the passage from the *Republic*, proximity (corresponding to *synousia* or *oikeiotēs* in Greek terms) certainly plays a significant part in what we come to imitate. However, admiration too largely determines our choice: we select the people or things we imitate, and this selection depends on both proximity and admiration, or appraisal respect in Darwall’s terms.

We can now go back to the passage with which I started this chapter, and reconsider the scene with baby Cypselus smiling at his would-be assassin in the light of our exploration of the issue of infants’ *timē*. Let us quote the passage again (Hdt. V, 92c3):

---

156 I choose Shorey’s translation here, because I believe that the verb *agamai* must be interpreted here in its meaning of ‘to admire’ rather than more generally ‘to enjoy’. Socrates is talking about the realities that the person who has freed herself from the cave has experienced outside, and to which she now tries to assimilate herself. Socrates is therefore talking of superior entities, and the person’s attitude must consist specifically in admiration rather than mere enjoyment.


158 This also finds a parallel in modern accounts of social cognition and developmental psychology. In general, ‘imitation by infants is not mere reproduction or repetition of movements made by another individual, but it serves interpersonal functions’ and ‘is, even for newborns, an emotionally charged mutual influence’ (Trevarthen and Aitken (2001), p. 7). As Gallagher (2020), p. 150 reports, a study (Likowski *et al.* (2008)) demonstrates that, in adults at least, ‘non-conscious processes of automatic mimicry of others’ expressions, gestures, and body postures are less frequent for dehumanized out-group members’; and see above, n. 89 in section 2.2, on the effects of in- and out-group dynamics on children’s social perception. Social cognition and perception are thus shaped by cultural factors, such as narratives of humanisation and dehumanisation. In ancient Greece, for instance, the dehumanising narratives and practices to which slaves were subject might have had the effect of leading children not to imitate them, despite what is suggested by Plato’s and Aristotle’s concerns about children acquiring a slavish habitus if they spend too much time with slaves.
[The baby] providentially happened to smile at the man, and this sight filled the would-be assassin with pity and stopped him killing the child. Feeling sorry for the baby, the first man passed him on to the third, and so on, until he had been passed around all ten, none of whom could bring himself to the deed. (Transl. Waterfield (2008), adapt.)

As I have already stressed, the passage raises many crucial questions. We can now attempt to answer them, in the light of the results about infants’ psychology and intersubjectivity collected so far. The crucial question is why the man changes his mind on seeing the baby smiling; the answer to this lies in primary intersubjectivity.

The man (correctly, and, most importantly, intuitively) interprets the baby’s smile as a Fichtean Aufforderung, an invitation to recognise the baby as agent and respond appropriately in the interaction. Generally, the right way to respond to a smile is to reciprocate it. As studies on primary intersubjectivity show, mimēsis goes both ways, as adults engage in imitation of infants too.\(^{159}\) The would-be assassin is thus caught in a contradiction between his intention to kill the baby and the intersubjective drive to respond to the infant’s claim to recognition. This also means that the man’s change of attitude shows that he now sees the baby as an agent. The man’s pity is thus based on a recognition of the baby’s status qua agent and of his claims to recognition.\(^{160}\) By looking at the baby and seeing his smile, the man has found himself, willingly or unwillingly, in a situation of interaction and proximity with the baby.\(^{161}\) Because of primary intersubjectivity, this creates expectations of mutuality; as the functioning of supplication shows, contact, either physical or visual, makes the suppliants’ demands more difficult to

---

\(^{159}\) See Trevarthen (1979) for interesting studies on this mirroring effect from adults.

\(^{160}\) In this interpretation, this episode shows that the notion of axia that underpins pity is much wider than desert, pace Konstan (2004). It is not an appraisal of the baby’s desert that saves him, but the intersubjective acknowledgement of the Aufforderungen that others make of us, and the feeling that we are now enmeshed in the mutual obligations and expectations that arise in any given interaction with someone that we recognise as an agent. See Cairns (2004) for a discussion of Konstan’s ideas on pity and desert.

\(^{161}\) See Cairns (2005) on the range of meanings and consequences of gaze, looks, and lack thereof.
dismiss. The would-be assassin is in the same position of the person whose knees somebody is clutching: ignoring her pleas is now a serious infringement of the mutuality that interaction tends to create. Recognising the strength of the principle of mutuality, the man feels unable to kill the baby. The episode is thus a powerful illustration of the importance of intersubjectivity in the case of infants too, of the role of imitation and its bidirectionality, and an acknowledgment of infants’ status as agents capable of putting forth legitimate claims to recognition.

2.9 Other grounds for respect towards babies

I would like to conclude this chapter by looking at some case studies of interactions with infants that shed light on other expressions and grounds of time dynamics involving infants. So far I have focused on second-personal aspects of time dynamics, arguing that infants were thought to have a sense of their claims and that adults felt the invitation, the Aufforderung, to respond to these claims and interact with infants according to intersubjectivity and reciprocity. In this section, I want to turn towards other aspects. As we shall see thanks to some insightful case studies, babies could be respected on the basis of a variety of considerations, including their potential status or their ties with somebody. As I shall stress in these cases too, however, different kinds of considerations often go hand in hand. Complementarity rather than contradiction obtains between, in particular, second- and third-person elements.

An interesting remark can be found in Menander’s Samia, in the lines that immediately follow the passage that we examined in section 2.1. As we saw, in that passage the old nurse acknowledges and responds to the baby’s Aufforderung. In the next lines, the nurse reproaches the other slaves for failing to take care of the baby on the day of his father’s wedding. This suggests that, in the nurse’s eyes, the baby is entitled to receive special attention on account of being the groom’s child, or at least not to be disregarded in the frenzy of the preparations for the wedding. The groom is certainly entitled to special regard on the day of his wedding, and this special treatment should extend to his baby too. In this case, therefore, it is the baby’s relationship to the hero of the day that the nurse emphasises as grounds for her plea that the other slaves show care and regard to the baby.

162 Men. Sam. 253-254: ‘τί τοῦτ’; ἐν τοῖς γάμοις τοὺς πατρὸς τὸν μικρὸν οὐ θεραπεύετε;’ (‘What’s going on here? On the day of his father’s wedding you don’t look after the baby?’, my transl.).
A similar point is also made in Menander’s *Epitrepontes*, which contains two interesting passages about the respect due to an infant: the play revolves around the unknown identity of a foundling baby, and raises the point of his potential legal status as well as of his possible blood ties to other characters of the play. One of the two passages occurs in the third act: the slave *hetaira* Habrotonon makes the point that, if the baby is the son of the citizen Charisius, his slave Onesimus would deserve to die if he let the baby be reared as a slave (467-469). In Habrotonon’s perspective, allowing the child of an Athenian citizen to grow up as a slave would be nothing short of criminal. In the way she frames this point, Habrotonon gives special emphasis to the fact that the baby might be Charisius’ child. It is in this eventuality in particular that Onesimus would do something heinous if he let the baby grow up as a slave. The idea that the freeborn baby should not be brought up as a slave is here strictly connected to considerations of personal connections. The emphasis here is thus not just on the child’s potential legal status *per se*, but also on his personal connections: the child is described as the son of Onesimus’ *trophimos* and this very relationship is stressed as the main ground on which Onesimus should feel concerned about the baby’s fate. This is probably due to the fact that an appeal that addresses Onesimus personally is more forceful than one based on general ethical norms, as the slave is presented as a not very clever and generally self-interested character. After having meddled too much in his master’s affairs, Onesimus is now scared to do anything that might upset Charisius and thus earn him a beating; by contrast, Habrotonon needs him to do his best to discover more about the child’s paternity and she is now trying to persuade him to act. By stressing the baby’s potential connection to Charisius, Habrotonon implicitly hints at what would happen if Charisius found out that Onesimus did not do anything for his putative child. For a person that, in Aristotle’s terms, heeds *phobos* more than *aidōs*, the potential consequences that Onesimus himself would incur make a much stronger point than the moral duty to save a free-born child from slavery. At any rate, the idea seems to be that letting a free-born baby pass as a slave is bad enough in itself, but when the baby in question is the son of one’s master this is even worse. Therefore, this is an example of how considerations based on personal ties could go hand in hand with more general claims about justice.

A further perspective on similar problems is offered by the slave Syriscus in the private arbitration over the baby’s tokens against the slave Davus in act two (238-358). Davus was the one to find and take up the exposed baby, with the idea of rearing him; soon after that, however, he changed his mind about and had second thoughts about raising the baby. When Syriscus had
begged him to give him the child, Davus had therefore given the baby to him. Syriscus is now claiming for the baby the objects that Davus had found with him, also by means of a prosopopeia (303-307). As I shall stress, in this case we can see particularly clearly how infants could be thought of having rights in a legal sense. As the scene depicts a private arbitration, the perspective in the passage is mainly legal. In his speech, Syriscus puts emphasis on the baby’s legal rights: the baby is not a thing, but a sōma, a person, and he is being wronged (σῶμι ἀδίκοιμων, 318): the objects belong to him, and Davus is acting like a thief (τὸν λελωποδυτηκότ’, 312). Sōma is arguably the vaguest possible designation from a legal or social point of view; Syriscus’ point is therefore independent of the child’s legal status. In this case, the grounds for the respect owed to the baby thus consists in the fact that he is a human being, a person. Just on account of him being a person, the baby has the right both to own something and to not be deprived of what belongs rightfully to him.

Syriscus further strengthens this point by holding the baby and underscoring that he is speaking on behalf of the baby himself. With this twofold move, Syriscus is clearly trying to create a direct relationship between the infant and Smicrines, the old man that will act as arbiter between the two slaves. Holding the baby to be seen by Smicrines is a way to create a situation of embodied interaction between the baby and him, so that it will be easier for Smicrines to see the baby as an agent endowed with rights and claims and to feel obligations towards him. By saying that it is actually the baby who is speaking, Syriscus further stresses both the baby’s status as an agent capable of putting forth claims to respect and his direct interaction with Smicrines; in this way, he is thus fostering Smicrines’ sense of involvement and responsibility towards the child. The interactive context that Syriscus creates resembles in crucial ways the scene of Cypselus’ attempted murder: physical proximity strengthens the obligations to respect and mutuality that a subject can feel towards the other person. In other words, Syriscus is harnessing specific intersubjective mechanisms (embodied reciprocity and recognition of the other’s agency and Aufforderungen) to reinforce Smicrines’ recognition of the validity of the claims he is making on behalf of the baby.

---

163 See Gomme and Sandbach (1973); Furley (2009) ad loc. for comments on the lexical choices in these lines. As Sandbach notes, sōma has here the meaning of human being, person, which is a standard meaning of the word when it is not qualified. Until the fourth-century at least, as reflected also in the Attic orators (cf. e.g. Dem. 20.77, αἰχμάλωτα σώματα; Aesch. 1.16, οἰκετικὰ σώματα), sōma needs to go with specific attributes to identify slaves, whereas in Polybius it can refer to slaves without further qualifications (see LSJ, s.v. II.2; CGL s.v. 7).
In the following lines (320-337), Syriscus turns to the possibility that the child might be of free status and should therefore be given the opportunity to discover who he really is. He makes the twofold point that these objects belong to the baby, and that they represent the baby’s only chance to discover his real identity: not only would keeping the baby’s tokens amount to theft, but, as Syriscus stresses, it might also be the case that the child is of free status, and maybe even of noble birth. Syriscus thus endorses the point made by Habrotonon in the previous passage: a free-born child has the right to be reared as such, or at least, when there can be no certainty about the legal status, to have all the available means to find the truth about it. In the light of this second argument, therefore, the preceding one appears even more striking, based as it is on the mere fact that the baby deserves to be treated with justice simply as a human being, regardless of his legal status. Syriscus’ claim that Davus is committing adikia against the baby is then definitely confirmed by Smicrines’ verdict: he assigns the tokens and the baby to Syriscus, recognising that he was trying to help the baby and defend him from adikia, while he condemns Davus for the injustice that he was committing (355-357).\footnote{Men. *Epitr.* 355-357: οὔ γνώσομ’ ἐίναι μὰ Δία σοῦ / τοῦ νῦν ἄδικοῦντος, τοῦ βοηθοῦντος δὲ καὶ / ἐπεξιόντος τάδικεῖν μέλλοντι σοι.}

Overall, therefore, ancient literary texts demonstrate that in everyday reality infants were recognised as agents that could take part in interactions based on mutuality and that deserved recognition and respect. Literary sources are thus strikingly close to modern developmental accounts, depicting manifestations of what we can describe as primary intentionality in modern terms. On the other hand, the recognition of infants’ intersubjectivity and of their claims to respect is less straightforward in Plato and Aristotle. Although they both sometimes hint at these aspects of infants’ psychology and experience, Aristotle appears cautious in ascribing intersubjectivity to infants, while Plato seems to acknowledge it, but frames in negative terms infants’ self-assertion and their claims to recognition. Nonetheless, both philosophers recognise that infants have a predisposition to engage in honour dynamics: by developing *aidōs* and by interacting with others, infants slowly get closer to being agents capable of assessing properly their own and others’ value and engage in interactions regulated by *timē*. The next chapter, devoted to an investigation of the honour of children in the oikos, will allow me to discuss from a different perspective and shed further light on several issues raised in this chapter.
Chapter 3:
The honour of children

Introduction

In Chapter 2, I argued that even infants were regarded as agents endowed with a sense of self and self-entitlement and capable of putting forth claims to recognition. In this chapter, I shall look more generally at the timē of children, especially in their relationships within the oikos, with a brief look at wider contexts. Since the main focus here is on the question of how status and recognition are affected by relationships more than by age, I shall refer to children mainly in the sense of sons and daughters. For this reason, and also because of the scarcity of evidence on younger children, I shall include case studies of grown-up children too. I shall begin this chapter by going back to some of the issues discussed in the previous chapter with regard to developmental aspects of the psychology of honour. I shall do so by looking at Xenophon’s description of Cyrus as a young boy in Cyropaedia. Section 3.2 shall be devoted to parent-child relationships, given their obviously foundational role in any person’s life. In section 3.3, I shall examine a case study that illuminates key aspects of parent-child relationship by focusing on Menander’s Samia, which revolves around the relationship between a man and his adoptive son. In section 3.4, I shall then turn to relationships with peers, both siblings and friends. In this chapter, we also have the chance to investigate the very teaching of honour: as we shall see, not only are children taught what is honourable and what is dishonourable, but they also learn through the very mechanism of honour. In other words, we shall observe both the transmission of the ‘filler’, that is all the cultural elements that constitute the normative order, and the shaping of the mechanism itself. This gives us the opportunity to investigate children’s socialisation into roles: in section 3.5, I shall focus on paideia, whereas in section 3.6 I shall sketch an overview of children’s roles and their socialisation in the polis more generally.

Throughout the chapter, I shall argue that, as demonstrated by contemporary developmental psychology, in their interactions with adults first and with peers later, children in Athens as in all cultures tended to develop a sense of their social identity based on a

165 For references on children and childhood in ancient Greece, see the introduction to Chapter 2, n. 66.
166 The normative order corresponds to Appiah’s notion of ‘honour code’, see Appiah (2010).
cooperative attitude, by learning to appreciate the importance and the functioning of roles, justice, mutuality and respect. Moreover, this is also the way in which adults conceptualised children’s development. Whenever possible, I shall point out the distinctive features that differentiate Athenian society from ours. In particular, I believe that the tension and balancing between the desire to stand out and the call for equality are particularly important for understanding Athenian culture and education.

3.1 Children’s emotional development: Cyrus in Xenophon’s Cyropaedia

In the previous chapter, in our overview of the various loci of honour in infants’ psychology, we have often touched upon questions of children’s emotional and psycho-social development. In this section, I shall discuss a case study that allows us to see this development in progress: in the first book of his Cyropaedia, Xenophon describes Cyrus’ childhood and teenage years, providing interesting remarks about his attitude and his understanding of social norms. In particular, Xenophon focuses on Cyrus’s transformation in his teenage years (ὡς δὲ προῆγεν αὐτὸν ὁ χρόνος σὺν τῷ μεγέθει εἰς ὥραν τοῦ πρόσηβον γενέσθαι, 1.4.4) from a naively enthusiastic and talkative child to a quiet and bashful boy. At a certain age, Cyrus filled with aidōs so much ‘that he actually blushed whenever he met his elders’ (ἀἰδοὺς δ᾽ ἐνεπίμπλατο ὡστε καὶ ἐρυθραίνεσθαι ὁπότε συντυγχάνοι τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις, 1.4.4). By saying that Cyrus ‘filled’ with aidōs, Xenophon seems to imply that Cyrus did not have aidōs before, or at least not to a considerable degree. This is supported by a comment in 1.3.3, in a passage where, when he was still a child, Cyrus brazenly asked his grandfather why he honoured his cupbearer Sacas so much, in front of Sacas himself. Xenophon captions this question as the sort of thing that a boy who is not shy yet might say (προπετῶς ὡς ἄν παῖς μηδέπω ὑποπτήσσων). The verb employed, ὑποπτήσσω, captures both the shyness and the deference that are among the essential features of aidōs. This reinforces the conclusion that Cyrus did not have aidōs as a child.

However, the description of his attitude prior to these changes defies this inference. For instance, Xenophon makes clear that Cyrus’ previous talkativeness was not a matter of impudence (ἐκ τῆς πολυλογίας οὐ θράσος διεφαίνετο, 1.4.3). Moreover, Cyrus had always shown

167 Transl. Miller (1914).
168 See LSJ s.v.: the verb can mean ‘crouch down’, ‘bow down to’ somebody, and thus ‘be modest or shy’, as in this passage.
deference and respect towards his grandfather Astyages, albeit in very affectionate, naïve, and confidential ways (see for instance 1.3.2, 1.4.2). Therefore, the actual meaning of the sentence on Cyrus filling with aidōs must not be that he acquired it abruptly without having it before. Rather, as our investigation in Chapter 2 suggests, aidōs must be seen as a capacity that gradually develops from an embryonic form towards its fully fledged form. For the purpose of the analysis, and to explain why aidōs is sometimes framed as something that people acquire only at a certain age, it can be useful to distinguish between three specific aspects of aidōs: (1) aidōs as mechanism, that is as the psychological predisposition that even very young children have to heed adults and appreciate difference standing; (2) aidōs as the proper respect towards norms, roles, and other people in general, and (3) aidōs as the occurrent pathos of shame and inhibition. The fact that (2) and (3) represent the outward manifestations of (1), and the fact that they are the ones that increase and develop can be seen as the reason why people are said to acquire aidōs rather than developing it. This being said, I believe that these phrasings are a case of metonymy rather than literal statements: the sources that we have examined in sections 2.5 and 2.6 show that there was an awareness of aidōs as a general predisposition. Given that what is needed for good social interaction is not the general predisposition but its fully fledged and appropriate manifestations, (2) and (3) are focalised more often than (1), which is probably given for granted. The fact that development is framed as acquisition suggests that (2) and (3) were perceived as developed enough when they manifested to a certain degree, as if there was some sort of threshold.

The change in Cyrus’ attitude indicates that he is now more aware of the timē differential that separates him from his elders. Cyrus’ understanding of social norms and his awareness of his own and others’ timē has evolved: in particular, he seems to ‘know his place’ better now, and he now adheres to the normative expectations that his environment has towards boys of his age and status. Moreover, as the second part of the sentence shows with the reference to Cyrus blushing, aidōs is here employed mainly in its meanings of shame and inhibition. Although he had enough aidōs already as a very young child so as to respect selected individuals such as his grandfather, he has now acquired a better awareness of his status (which, due to his young age, is inferior to that of his elders) and that of others. This leads him to be more restrained: as
Xenophon says in the prosecution of the sentence that we have been unpacking, Cyrus also stops to run towards everyone in a ‘puppy-like’ way as he used to do before (1.4.4).\(^{169}\)

A change like this is perfectly explainable in terms of developmental psychology, with the gradual development of collective intentionality.\(^{170}\) At first, Cyrus did not fully understand social norms and abstract expectations, nor was he able to appraise fully the value of others. Moreover, he behaved according to the *aidōs* based on *philia*, that is along the lines of the second-person standpoint and of primary and joint intentionality: he was affectionate and respectful towards his grandfather, but he was unaware of other levels of norms and standards. The reference to his puppy-like way of greeting everyone alike is an example of his past naïveté, which also determined awkward outcomes in various episodes of his childhood, to the point that Xenophon feels the need to justify Cyrus’ peculiar behaviour.\(^{171}\) Growing up and learning more about social expectations and roles, Cyrus then acquires the kind of collective intentionality that leads him to understand more abstract forms of norms and values and thus to respect all elders: the generality of τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις indicates that Cyrus has now generalised the value he assigns to age as a crucial factor in attributing *τιμή*. Furthermore, we can see in these changes also what Tomasello refers to as the passage from social self-regulation to normative self-governance: thanks to collective intentionality, children internalise values and develop a cooperative identity that is not dependent solely on the concrete possibilities of being approved or disapproved of.\(^{172}\) Their behaviour now reflects more and more their alignment with collective values, and children develop a persona: they want to project a positive image of themselves, which entails some basic level of cooperativeness, as shown so well by Cyrus.

In addition to *aidōs*, Cyrus also demonstrates from very early on the pronounced *philotimia* that characterises him as an adult too, and in 1.3.3 he is described as *philokalos* and *philotimos*.\(^{173}\) It is clear that Cyrus is *philotimos* in that he wants to behave honourably, rather

---

\(^{169}\) Xen. *Cyr.* 1.4.4: τὸ σκυλακώδες τὸ πάσιν ὀμοίως προσπίπτειν οὐκέτα ὀμοίως προσπετεῖ εἰχεν.

\(^{170}\) On collective intentionality, see Tomasello (2019a), e.g. pp. 19–20. See also my Introduction above, and section 2.2.

\(^{171}\) For awkward outcomes of Cyrus’ naïveté, see e.g. 1.3.9, where Cyrus apes his grandfather’s cupbearer Sacas and provokes Astyages’ and his mother’s laughter. For justifications from Xenophon, see e.g. 1.4.3, where Cyrus’ attitude is justified on the basis of his overall naïveté and affectionate disposition (ἀπλότης καὶ φιλοστοργία).

\(^{172}\) Tomasello (2019a), pp. 36–37, 276.

\(^{173}\) On *philotimia* in general, see e.g. Dover (1974), pp. 230–233; Whitehead (1983); Ferrucci (2013c), (2013a); Canevaro (2016), pp. 78–80; on *philotimia* in Xenophon, see especially Keim (2018); Illarraga (2020).
than just wanting to be honoured. He loves beautiful things and receiving gifts and forms of recognition, but he is also keen on distributing gifts and honours himself: in 1.3.7, he donates all the meat he has received from Astyages to the servants in recognition of their good services. Notably, among the good services he credits the servants with, he also lists the fact that one servant takes good care of Astyages (τὸν πάππον καλῶς θεραπεύεις) and another honours Cyrus’ mother (μου τὴν μητέρα τιμᾷς). By doing this and by having this general attitude, Cyrus offers us a very nice demonstration of the bidirectional and non-zero-sum character of *timē*. He knows that the more he honours others, the more honourable and honoured he himself will be; he cares about his social image and want to deserve the good opinion that others have of him, and promotes his own honour by properly valuing and honouring others. Although Cyrus is characterised as an exceptional young boy, moreover, his psychological and emotional development as described by Xenophon chimes with the results yielded both by modern developmental accounts and by our discussion of Plato’s and Aristotle’s views of infants’ and children’s psychology. Although they still need to develop and refine their experience and understanding of honour dynamics, they are already capable of desiring recognition, respect others, and bestowing honour and recognition onto others by acknowledging their merits. In section 3.4, I shall provide further examples of Cyrus’ mastery of honour dynamics even as a teenager, with regard to his relationships with his friends. Before we turn to children’s relationships with their peers, however, let us examine the very first relationship in a child’s life, that with parents.

3.2 ‘Honour thy father and mother’: social norms and reciprocity

The relationship with one’s parents is surely among the most crucial experiences in one’s life. In this section, I shall look at honour dynamics within these relationships. A scene that embodies the ideal state of parent-child relationships can be found in Xenophon’s *Symposium*, where the young boy Autolycus is being celebrated for his victory in the pancratium. During the party, his father is asked what he is most proud of (ἐπὶ τίνι μέγα φρονεῖς, 3.23), and he answers that it is obviously his son. When Autolycus is asked the same question, everybody expects him

174 On parent-child relationships, see e.g. Golden (2015), pp. 68–97; see Strauss (1993) on the ideological implications of father-son relationships and conflicts; on generational conflicts as depicted in literature, see Susanetti and Distilo (2013).
to be most proud of his victory, given that it was such a glorious achievement. Autolycus, however, answers that he is most proud of his father. On saying this, he blushes and leans against his father, clearly manifesting *aidōs*. This signals that their mutuality in pride and recognition is framed in the proper asymmetrical roles: the fact that Autolycus shows the proper *aidōs* means that he knows his place and is aware of his father’s superior authority. At the same time, far from being a hierarchical and zero-sum game, honour increases when bestowed upon others even in asymmetrical relationships. Thanks to the bidirectionality of *timē*, Autolycus’ respect for his father reinforces his father’s pride in him as well as his own honour; the extraordinary regard that Autolycus and his father demonstrate towards each other makes both of them particularly admirable. The fact that they admire and honour each other further proves that the esteem they receive from the other is not just warranted, but also particularly valuable. Thus, Autolycus and his father embody the ultimate ideal for a father-son relationship: mutual pride and regard, coupled with respectful awareness of each one’s role.

This is what Socrates reminds his son Lamprocles of in Xenophon’s *Memorabilia* 2.2. In this chapter, the boy is cross with his mother Xanthippe for her annoying attitude. Socrates then reminds Lamprocles that his mother has cared for him since the very moment he was born, and that it would be shameful for him not to act with gratitude towards her. This is especially the point of the last few paragraphs (2.2.13-14), where Socrates reminds Lamprocles of how badly ungrateful people and people who fail to fend appropriately for their parents are regarded by other citizens: the *polis* sets punishments and *atimia* for this kind of behaviour. Failing to respect such an important duty would represent a disgraceful shortcoming, as Lamprocles would prove unable to heed the fundamental values of his community and would therefore lose his fellow citizens’ trust. Interestingly, therefore, failing to repay *timē* in one’s role as son has implications for one’s *timē* as a citizen. Not only does honour increase when bestowed upon others, but, conversely, it might decrease if one fails to honour others properly, as one subsequently loses honour in the eyes of the community.

In addition to these third-personal aspects of relationships between parents and children, second-person elements and considerations are obviously also crucial. Indeed, whenever
parent–child relationships are at stake, reciprocity and *charis* are keywords.¹⁷⁵ In section 1.4, I briefly discussed *charis* as one of the pillars of Greek ethics in general and as a crucial feature of relationships and honour dynamics. As I anticipated there, issues of *charis* are particularly pressing in the case of parent–child relationship, perhaps also on account of the great delay in reciprocity.¹⁷⁶ Given the huge sacrifices that parents endure for their children, the latter should always nurture *charis* towards them, honouring and sustaining them when they are old; parents’ tender care and protection of their children is seen as a way to secure support and recognition in old age. In general, Athenians were much more straightforward than we are in acknowledging their expectations regarding the practical benefits of any given relationships. This is neither materialistic nor individualistic: practical benefits are presented as a token and an expression of honour and recognition, and the relationship itself is the focus, not the selfish interests of the individual.¹⁷⁷ The child, in particular, would need to obey his parents and display *charis* towards them, primarily by being lenient with them, knowing his place, and being ready and willing to support and care for them when they get old.¹⁷⁸ This attitude must be understood in the context of an understanding of these relationships as cooperative: the ‘role’ of the parent consists in taking care of the child during infancy and childhood, and the ‘role’ of children is to take care of

¹⁷⁵ See e.g. van Berkel (2019), pp. 124–200: ‘down to the 4th-century BCE, the dominant conception of filial duty was an implicit Gratitude Theory’ (p. 133). She collects (p. 148, n. 96 and 97) a number of passages from fifth- and fourth-century Athenian sources where parent–child relationships are described in terms of *charis* Ar. *Av.* 1356–1357; [Arist.] *Oec.* i.iii.3; Eur. *IA* 1228–1230; Men. *Xen.* fr. 354, Men. *Sam.* 18, Alexis fr. 280, Lyc. 1.53, Arist. *EN* VIII, 1163b22–27. See also Azoulay (2004), pp. 327–370 specifically on Xenophon’s use of the idea of paternal and filial *charis*, especially as a metaphor for power.

¹⁷⁶ See Torres (2021) on ‘lagged reciprocity’ in parent–child relationships as seen by Aristotle.

¹⁷⁷ For a strong statement of this, see Xen. *Hier.* 7.7–8: Hiero explains that gifts and codified forms of deference do count as important expressions of honour, but only when one’s external deference towards somebody else corresponds also to actual subjective deference and esteem towards the other person. What counts, therefore, is the relationship itself and the genuine character of both parties’ feelings and deference.

¹⁷⁸ Reciprocity was perceived to be so binding that it was important to limit it from the very start in the case of *nothoi*, illegitimate children. This is the interpretation advanced by Daniel Ogden in his studies on bastardy in ancient Greece (Ogden (1996), (2009)). He discusses the late evidence for a pair of laws, both ascribed to Solon, that, ‘taken together, speak[s] clearly of a desire to dissolve bonds of succession, finance, and maintenance comprehensively between fathers and their *nothos*’. The first law regards the so-called ‘bastard’s portion’, the sum that could be bequeathed to *nothoi*, as a way to ‘dissolve a father’s obligations of finance and maintenance toward his bastard children’; the second law exempts *nothoi* from the duty to assist their parents and thus seek to ‘dissolve the *nothos* child’s reciprocal obligations of finance and maintenance toward his father’ (see Ogden (2009), p. 109).
their parents in old age.\footnote{See the references to the concept of status-role in the Introduction, and the point about Tomasello (2020) and the ‘role of roles’ in cooperation. I shall expand on this point below in this same section.} Parents and children are part of a shared enterprise and have, therefore, a common goal: the benefactions that parents bestow on children in their first years of life start the cycle of reciprocity, calling for \textit{charis} and for a cooperative attitude. Mutual honour and respect thus represent, or are meant to represent, the very grammar of these dynamics.

One point to notice in this passage is that Lamprocles seems to be particularly annoyed because his mother’s behaviour humiliates him. The elements that paint the picture of Xanthippe’s attitude are Lamprocles’ reference to her ‘harsh temper’ (τὴν χαλεπότητα, 2.2.7), Socrates’ paradigmatic reference to a bear’s and a mother’s ‘ferocity’ (ἀγριότητα, ibid.), Lamprocles’ claim that Xanthippe says things ‘you wouldn’t listen to for anything in the world’ (λέγει δ’ οὐκ ἂν τις ἐπὶ τῷ βίῳ παντὶ βούλοιτο ἀκοῦσαι, 2.2.8), and the metaphorical reference to the threats and ‘the worst things’ that actors say to each other in tragedies (οίταν ἐν ταῖς τραγῳδίαις ἀλλήλους τὰ ἐσχατὰ λέγωσιν, 2.2.9). This last passage makes clear that Lamprocles perceives his mother’s words as insults directed at him. The boy seems therefore to be troubled by Xanthippe’s excessively critical and scathing attitude towards him. Furthermore, he seems to denounce implicitly a lack of reciprocity on her part. This is what his words seem to suggest when he replies to Socrates that, even if he might have been a nuisance to his mother when he was a small child, he never caused her any shame (οὐδὲπώποτε ἄυτήν ... οὔτ’ εἶπα οὔτ’ ἐποίησα οὐδέν, ἐφ’ ὑσχόνθη, 2.3.8). By contrast, Lamprocles apparently feels belittled with no good reason by his own mother.

Lamprocles’ brief objection that he never caused Xanthippe any shame allows us to unpack some further aspects connected to honour. Honour is once again confirmed to be in general a crucial concern in parent-child relationships; more specifically, Lamprocles (described at the start of the passage as Socrates’ oldest son) feels belittled by his mother, and construes her attitude as disrespecting him.\footnote{See section 1.3 on \textit{oligōria} in Aristotle’s account of anger.} Socrates, on the other hand, will invite him precisely to reappraise the situation and to reach the conclusion that his mother cannot mean any harm to him, so there is no reason to feel belittled or disrespected. We have here clear evidence of how \textit{timē} is a matter of negotiation, as well as of interpretation and construal, or \textit{phantasia} in
Aristotle’s terms. On the one hand, Lamprocles tries to defend his claims to respect (and his right to some form of timōria) within an asymmetrical relationship. On the other hand, he is forced to recognise that actually it was this defensive attitude itself that was disgracing him, while his mother’s attitude did in no way moot his honour. The importance of negotiation and the fact that a given situation can be construed differently strengthen the idea that, when we talk about time, we are dealing with intersubjective experiences, co-created by the various agents involved.

This passage from Xenophon’s Memorabilia is particularly fascinating also with regard to the functioning of roles, collective intentionality, and cultural affordances. With regard to the topic of this paragraph, Lamprocles is reminded that his mother is not just his mother, but a mother, in the sense of the status-role underpinned by society. Being the child in a mother-child relationship thus transcends the you-and-me dimension that one can experience thanks to primary and secondary intersubjectivity, and also requires collective intentionality, which enables us to appreciate the status-roles embedded in our relationships. Any given relationship that falls into a social framework such as marriage, friendship, and so on (it is arguably impossible to find a case that evades any social framework) is not just about personal obligations, but is also about social norms, expectations defined by a whole normative order. Lamprocles is reminded that, qua son, he ought not to be so angry with his mother for her peevishness. Socrates’ generalising tone and the stress he puts on sanctions from the gods and from the state act as a reminder that we are in the realm of collective intentionality and cultural affordances.

However, reciprocity and personal obligations are far from elided: rather, they are subsumed into a higher and wider framework, within which Xanthippe’s bad temper is reconfigured within the frame of her status-role. Regardless of her grouchiness, she has fulfilled her role as a mother, always caring for her child despite his tantrums and his spiky behaviour when he was little. Like fathers, mothers have specific responsibilities towards their children; compared to fathers, they

---

181 See section 1.3 on the role of phantasia in Aristotle’s account of emotions in the Rhetoric and on its importance in processes of social interaction.

182 For cultural affordances, that is features of the social environment that can activate an agent’s actions, see Ramstead, Veissière, and Kirmayer (2016).
were seen as loving them even more generously and selflessly.\textsuperscript{183} Mothers’ status-role was thus framed in terms of dedicated and indefatigable care, and selfless and disinterested love; children’s status-role was reversely framed in terms of \textit{charis}, obedience, and compassionate leniency towards their mothers.

The notion of roles and collective expectations thus bridge the gap between the personal and the social. To recapitulate, the underlying idea – here applied \textit{exempli gratia} to relationships with one’s mother, but applicable to any other socially recognised relationship – is the following: ‘she is your mother, and she has fulfilled her role as such, loving and caring for you; in return, you have to support her and put up with her shortcomings, acting in accordance with the normative expectations of our culture and society’. Personal obligations and social expectations go in this case hand in hand, reinforcing each other and strongly encouraging the child to act in a certain way and to take into account the cooperative aspects of his or her social life and experiences. As we saw in Chapter 1, this idea is mirrored in ancient reflections on two crucial notions, \textit{philia} and \textit{dikē}. \textit{Philia} can be taken to encapsulate the realm of the second-person standpoint, of joint intentionality, reciprocity, personal obligations; conversely, \textit{dikē} can be seen as capturing the third-person dimension, with collective intentionality, social norms, impersonal and abstract expectations. This explains why \textit{charis} had such a pivotal role in Greek culture: collective norms dictated reciprocity and mutual justice and respect in all sorts of relationships.

We can look at some of the aspects in play here also through the lenses of Darwall’s recognition and appraisal respect.\textsuperscript{184} Arguably, Xanthippe is not the perfect mother: she is peevish and annoying. In Lamprocles’ perspective, she has no claim to the appraisal respect that a particularly good and kind mother might attain. In Socrates’ perspective, however, as Socrates highlights, she has fulfilled impeccably all the duties that her role as a mother brings with it.\textsuperscript{185}

\begin{flushleft}
\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{183} For this commonplace, in addition to some references in this very passage (Xen. \textit{Mem}. 2.2.5), see e.g. Arist. \textit{EN} VIII, 1559a27-33. In Aristophanes’ \textit{Clouds}, mother-beating is regarded as worse than father-beating (1142-1443). This might also be due to the general fact that harming women (and similarly children) is seen as much more serious than harming adult men on account of the former’s greater vulnerability and defencelessness. However, it is surely also a matter of the expectations of due \textit{charis} of a son towards his mother.

\textsuperscript{184} Darwall (1977).

\textsuperscript{185} It is tempting to see in this a difference between a more collectivistic society as the ancient Athenian one and a more individualistic one as our own: in parenthood especially, we might say that we are now placing a greater
\end{flushleft}
Moreover, Socrates’s observations imply that, regardless of performance and appraisal respect, Xanthippe would be entitled anyway to recognition respect as a mother. Her fulfilment of the maternal role is conceptualised as a benefaction and this produces an expectation of charis; therefore, recognition respect also grants her the right to a certain (negotiable) amount of leniency, which is one of the forms that charis towards parents was expected to take.

As I specified before, Socrates’ speech is a reminder to his son Lamprocles of the functioning of these social norms, for Lamprocles is old enough to be socialised already into this kind of mechanism, at least partially. As we all know, however, repetita iuvant, and even older children need both to be taught informally and to be sometimes reminded explicitly of the social expectations they should have already picked up by themselves. This is all the more true because we are not dealing with set of rules that children can learn once and for all, but something that can be ‘felt’ more than it can be known. Bourdieu’s notions of habitus and feel for the game are particularly helpful to describe this aspect of social norms and expectations. Given the complexity of social norms and their highly context-specific character, one needs to develop a good feel for the game and a proper habitus too. The former captures the ability to act in an appropriate manner in the social field, while the latter refers to the general attitude and demeanour. Furthermore, as this passage shows, norms, roles, and expectations are subject to a great degree of interpretation and negotiation, and they are not imposed on children in a passive way. Lamprocles believes that he has been mistreated enough to have the right to complain, and, although in this case Socrates reappraises the situation differently, it might happen that parents actually fail to behave properly towards their children. In this case, children have the right to put forth and negotiate their own claims to respect and recognition.

As we shall see also in the case of women and slaves, the discourse of timē and of reciprocity in respect and expectations enables subordinate individuals to negotiate their claims, defending their interpretation of the situation, and asking for reason-giving from the

emphasise on appraisal respect towards parents’ performance as the basis of one’s positive attitude towards them (and figures of authority more generally: teachers in primis). Performance is constantly monitored, and its evaluation weighs more in one’s assessment of how much respect is due to the other person, whereas the idea that a certain amount of respect is due on the basis of one’s role regardless of current performance has less appeal. However, in this case at least we can downsize the impression of such a strong cultural difference by observing how familiar Lamprocles’ protests against Socrates’ admonitions sound to us. It is surely not a matter of black and white oppositions, but of oscillations and negotiations between two co-existing tendencies.

See Bourdieu (1977), (1998), and the Introduction above.
‘superior’ person. Surely, they need to show deference and take special precaution while doing so in order not to step out of line, but the normative order also binds fathers, husbands, and masters to be just and respectful, albeit in different and asymmetrical ways. Ultimately, the essential aim as far as \textit{timē} is concerned is developing an intuitive understanding of how to balance properly one’s claims and those of others in any specific situation, taking into account personal obligations as well as social norms, roles, and expectations.

As the texts analysed so far show beyond any doubt, \textit{timē} is a crucial aspect of parent-child relationships. Far from being about rigid hierarchies, blind obedience, and unquestionable authority, \textit{timē} is a flexible mechanism, based upon reciprocity in respect and open to negotiation, as also shown in a passage from Menander’s \textit{Epitrepontes}. In this play, the young woman Pamphile, who is already married, has to remind her father Smicrines that, by forcing rather than persuading her, he will act not as a father, but as a master towards a slave (οὐκέτι πατήρ κρίνοι ἄν, ἄλλα δεσπότης, 715), meaning that he will fail to behave as a father should. This is an important example of the fact that even a daughter was entitled to demand respect from her father. Similarly, in Lysias’ \textit{Against Diogeiton}, the daughter of the defendant challenges him (in a speech reported by the speaker) for his treatment of her children. Diogeiton, who is also his grandchildren’s uncle, is accused of having disrespected and failed them in multiple respects, as a grandfather, an uncle, and a guardian. As stressed by Diogeiton’s daughter (Lys. 32, 12), the fact that he is bound to his grandchildren in more than one way amplifies his guilt: this is because each relationship would impose obligations, on account both of \textit{philia} and of the social norms attached to each role, and in the case of multiple relationships all the obligations would add up. This example shows well that even daughters could rightfully challenge their fathers in cases of patent injustice. Finally, another interesting example of \textit{timē} dynamics in parent-child relationships comes from Lesis’ inscription, an authentic letter written on a lead tablet by the young slave Lesis and directed to his mother. In the letter, Lesis asks his mother to help him get out from the workshop where he is currently working because the boss maltreats him. By addressing his mother, Lesis is implicitly leveraging her duties towards him.\footnote{SEG 50:276; the tablet was found in a well located in the Athenian Agora and was first published by Jordan (2000); see Harris (2004) for some important reassessments. I shall discuss Lesis’ letter in greater detail in Chapter 5 as evidence for a young slave’s sense of \textit{timē}.}

These examples show that both children themselves and adults were well aware of the mutuality of respect and recognition in parent-child relationship as a principle, enshrined into
a cooperative understanding of relationships. Children were encouraged to see the respect that they were meant to show to their parents as a way to accrue honour themselves, as the passage about Autolycus and his father in Xenophon’s *Symposium* shows. Another interesting aspect of that passage is that the father seemingly heeds the advice given in Plato’s *Laws* about showing *aidōs* towards the young to ensure that they acquire it properly. While Autolycus’ attitude can more easily be seen as an example of *aidōs*, also his father’s attitude can be described in terms of *aidōs*, as he shows that he values his son by expressing pride in him. While engaging and interacting with their parents, therefore, Athenian children could also learn more generally that in their culture *timē* was not a zero-sum game. An important part of growing up was also learning how to balance one’s claims to respect and recognition with those of others: being the most important and pervasive asymmetrical relationship in a child’s life, parent-child relationships were the first and most important dimension where children had to learn to ‘know their place’. Ultimately, relationships with one’s parents were strongly asymmetrical, and were meant to be like that; however, asymmetry does not rule out reciprocity in respect. In the next section, I shall analyse at length a peculiar case study for (adoptive) father-son relationships, where issues of asymmetry, honour, and respect are thoroughly explored.

### 3.3 Learning to be father and son. Moschion and Demeas in Menander’s *Samia*

Menander’s *Samia* is fascinating for its insights on the difficulties in getting relationships right even when both parties love and respect each other very much. The play revolves around Demeas’ relationship with his adoptive son Moschion: despite its peculiarities, or maybe precisely because of them, their relationship and its development throughout the play can illuminate various aspects of honour dynamics within parent-child relationships. As commentators have shown, their relationship is as strong as it is unbalanced with regard precisely to honour related features; and precisely because of this, it constitutes a good example of how things should not go, while also suggesting some solutions.

---

188 Pl. *Leg.* V, 729b-c; see section 2.5 above.

189 See especially Grant (1986) and Golden (2015, 88). I shall follow the former in many of his observations on the relationship between the two characters. On the *Samia*, see also in general Keuls (1973) and Ingrosso (2013) more specifically on filial relationships. On filial relationships in Greek and Roman comedy, see also Sherberg (1995).
With regard to Moschion’s origins we know virtually nothing: we only know that he was adopted by Demeas when he was still a child, and that since then Demeas always strove to offer him the best opportunities possible; however, it is clear that, were it not for Demeas’ choice of adopting him, Moschion would have fared much worse.190 The prologue delivered by Moschion at the beginning of the play introduces his and Demeas’ character and some unusual features of their relationship. Moschion recalls how, thanks to Demeas, he was spoiled as a child (ἐτρόφησα ... ὃν παιδίον, 7-8) and describes this lavish upbringing as a benefaction (εὐεργέτει γὰρ ταῦτα μ’, 9). Employing his adoptive father’s wealth, Moschion was also able to excel (διέφερον, 14) by engaging in expensive liturgies once he became an active Athenian citizen (probably as soon as he finished his ephebate).191 Summing it up, Moschion acknowledges that δι᾿ ἐκείνον ἦν ἀνθρώπως, he became a person thanks to Demeas (17), and claims that he responded with the due gratitude by being a well-behaved person (17-18: ἀστείαν δ’ ὦμως τούτων χάριν τιν’ ἀπεδίδουν· ἦν κόσμιος). This serves as a foil to Moschion’s current dejection: he has committed a mistake (ἡμάρτηκα γάρ, 3), and this explains why he uses the imperfect to say that he was a decent person ( البعόσμιος, 18). For Moschion has raped their neighbour’s daughter and she has just given birth to a baby. Moschion promised the girl and her mother that he would marry her, but he is scared of Demeas’ reaction: their neighbour, Niceratus, is very poor, and such a marriage might be diminishing for their rich and influential oikos.192 Later on, he explicitly says that he feels aischynē before Demeas (αἰσχύνομαι τὸν πατέρα, 67). This mirrors an episode that Moschion recounts in the prologue: some time before, Demeas had fallen in love with a hetaira from Samos, but he was ashamed of this and tried to conceal it (21-27). Only when Moschion realised what was going on and encouraged him to pursue her, did Demeas resolve to take the

190 As implied by Moschion when he says that it was thanks to Demeas (and his financial support) that he was a person (17: δι᾿ ἐκείνον ἦν ἀνθρώπως); see Sommerstein (2013), p. 16, and p. 107 ad loc. for further comments on Moschion’s excessive estimation of money and luxury.
191 Sommerstein (2013), pp. 103–104.
192 Menander’s plays often advocate for union and cooperation across different social strata: see Giglioni Bodei (1984) on what the scholar refers to as Menander’s ‘politica della convivenza’. In terms of honour, Menander’s comedies suggest that it is praiseworthy for a rich oikos to develop bonds with a poorer but ethically respectable family, while the latter should not feel ashamed to accept help in this relation. The ending of the Dyskolos illustrates this (utopian) picture very nicely.
hetaira with him. What is particularly interesting here is that, according to Moschion, Demeas was inhibited because of his aischynē towards Moschion in particular.

As depicted in the first scenes of the play, Moschion and Demeas’ relationship may appear as very strong, positive, and grounded in mutual esteem and respect. As we shall see better, however, this is not the whole picture; a Greek audience would probably have picked up on some alarm signals sooner and more easily than us.193 As the play will make clear too, their relationship tilts towards a dangerous equality: while we might regard equality as a positive ideal in parent-child relationships, Greeks believed that relationships like these were intrinsically asymmetrical, and that this asymmetry was to be respected. As I shall show also with regard to slaves and women, however, asymmetry did not rule out mutuality and respect.

Moschion and Demeas’ relationship is also peculiar because of its adoptive nature. A comment made by Sommerstein clarifies one implication of the adoptive rather than biological nature of their relationship:194

Each of the two parties might well thus feel that his affection and respect for the other could not be taken for granted and had to be constantly proved; and each, both before and during the action of the play, is at pains to prove it, except when stronger emotions overpower them.

Performance thus prevails over blood ties in their relationship. The high degree of respect they show to each other is based on how they have behaved so far towards each other and towards others more widely. Moschion knows that he has benefitted enormously from Demeas’ wealth and social capital.195 As for Demeas, when he starts suspecting that Moschion might have fathered a child from Chrysis, in an attempt not to jump to conclusions and become prey to anger he will remind himself that Moschion has always been kosmios towards him. Only at the end of the play they will seemingly start to respect each other on a more stable basis, namely their identities as father and son. In Darwall’s terms, they finally start to rely on recognition respect rather than appraisal respect, by recognising each other qua father and son respectively rather than constantly evaluating each other’s and their own performance.

195 For the notion of social capital, see e.g. Bourdieu (1986).
With regard to Demeas’ benefactions, we can also notice that Moschion’s professed acknowledgment of their role in his life conceals a different perspective. As Sommerstein comments, the choice of the expression ἐτρύφησα in line 7 is a sign of this. Even if the negative connotation of the verb is elided when one is acknowledging the good treatment received from somebody else, ‘we may come to wonder whether Demeas may indeed have been over-indulgent to his adopted son, unintentionally encouraging him to believe that the comforts and pleasures of life were his automatic entitlement’. This interpretation is reinforced by the fact that, even when he sets the intention of describing Demeas’ tropos, Moschion ends up describing the liturgies he himself fulfilled thanks to Demeas’ wealth (6-18). As Sommerstein comments:

All the actions that would help to give Moschion a reputation for public spirited munificence he speaks of as his own, though he knows well that it was Demeas’ money that was being spent on them. Even in an excursus whose objective is to praise Demeas, Moschion cannot help giving evidence of his self-centredness.

Moschion’s self-centredness continues until the very end of the play. In the fifth act, Moschion chooses to take revenge on Demeas for his suspicion against him. He decides to set up a pantomime, pretending that he wants to go abroad to demonstrate his resentment. After sending the slave Parmenon to announce his (pretended) departure, Moschion realises that his plan might turn out quite badly, with the possibility of Demeas flaring up with rage and letting him go. In that case, the result would be of utter ridicule for Moschion (γελοῖος ἐσομαι, νὴ Δί’, ἀνακάμπτων πάλιν, 686). Despite these creeping doubts, Moschion goes through with his pretence. Luckily for him, Demeas reacts in an admirably balanced way. It is worth examining his speech in its entirety (694-713):

[Μοσχίων,]
ὅτι μὲν ὄργιζει, φιλῶ σε, κοῦχῇ μέμφομαι τί σοι.
eἰ λελύπησαι γὰρ ἀδίκως, αἰτίαν ἕγωγ' ἐχω.
ἀλλ' ἐκείν' ὤμως θεώρει· τίνι πικρὸ[ν] τὸ πράγμα'; ἐμοὶ.
eἰμὶ γὰρ πατήρ. ἐ[γ]ώ ποτ' ἀν]αλαβὼν σε παιδίον

197 Sommerstein (2013), 102, ad 10-16.
198 On the ending of the play in particular, see Anderson (1972); Masaracchia (1978).
ἐξέθρεψ'. εἰ̂ σοι [χρόνος τις γέγονεν ἡδὸς τοῦ βίου, 
tοῦτόν εἰμ’ ὁ δοῦς [έγωγε], δι’ ὅν ἀνασχέσθαι σε δεῖ 
kai τὰ λυπήσαντα [παρ’ ἐμοῦ, καὶ φέρειν τι τῶν ἐμῶν 
ὡς ἃν ὑπ. οὐ δικαί[ως] ἤτισάμην τι σε. 
ηγόνη’· ἡμαρτον· ἐμάνην. ἀλλ’ ἐκεῖν’ ὑ[θὸς σκόπει, 
εἰς ης τοὺς ἄλλους ἁμαρτών, σοῦ πρόνοιαν ἡλικ[ήν 
εἴχον, <ἐν⟩ ἐμαυτῷ τ’ ἔτηρουν τοῦ[θ’ ὃ δὴ ποτ’ ἦγνόουν· 
οὐχ’ ης ἐκθροίς ἐθηκαν ἑπιχαίρειν. οὐ δὲ 
tὸν ἐμὴν ἁμαρτίαν νῦν ἐκφέρεις, καὶ μάρτυρας 
ἐπ’ ἐμὲ τῆς ἐμῆς ἁνοίας λαμβάνεις. οὐκ ἄξιω, 
Μοσχίων. μὴ ἡμημονεύσῃς ἡμέραν μου τοῦ βίου 
μίαν ἐν ἡ διεσφάλην τι, τῶν δὲ πρόσθεν ἐπιλάθη. 
pόλλ’ ἔχον λέγειν, ἐάσω. καὶ γὰρ οὐ καλῶς ἔχει 
πατρὶ μόλις πείθεσθ’, ἀκριβῶς ἢσθι, τὸ δ’ ἐτοίμως καλὸν.

[Moschion],

I love you for being angry, and I don’t [blame you]. If you’ve 
Been unfairly wounded, [I accept] responsibility. 
Yet you must consider this too. Who’s been hurt by [this affair]? 
[I have!] I’m your father. I adopted you [once] as a child. 
I have brought you up. If [any moment] in your life’s been sweet, 
I provided this for you, and that’s why you should tolerate 
Acts [of] mine that may distress you, and put up with all my faults, 
As a son should. I accused you wrong[ly], didn’t know the facts, 
Made an error. I was crazy. But [take due account of] this: 
How I favoured your own wishes when I’d acted badly to 
Others, how I always kept my false suspicions [to] myself. 
I have never publicised them for my enemies to crow 
Over. Now, though, you have advertised my blunder, you create 
Witnesses against me of my folly! I don’t think that’s right, 
Moschion. Don’t just remember one day in my life when I 
Made a slip, and overlook the times that came before. I could 
Add much more, but I’ll stop there. Do realise, it isn’t good 
To obey a father grudgingly—no, cheerfully is best! 
(Transl. Arnott (2000))
After an initial positive note, Demeas criticises Moschion’s gesture, redefining their roles and relationships. First of all, we can notice the openness with which Demeas holds both himself and Moschion accountable. This is an important aspect of what Stephen Darwall describes as the second person standpoint: mutual accountability provides the grounds for mutual expectations, moral demands, and respect.\(^{199}\)

In a relationship like theirs, holding each other accountable is a novelty. So is Moschion’s anger against Demeas, and this is why Demeas ‘loves him for being angry’ (695): by being angry, Moschion shows first of all that he cares very much about Demeas’ opinion of him.\(^{200}\) In particular, Moschion is indirectly saying that he cares so much about their relationship that the thought that Demeas could have such suspicion against him is so intolerable to force him to leave. Secondly, Demeas also sees in Moschion’s anger a sign that he is growing up and that he is developing a more proper sense of self-worth. However, as Demeas points out, Moschion failed both to evaluate the situation in a more complete and balanced way, and to seek a resolution of the issue directly with Demeas. Demeas points out all the considerations that Moschion failed to take into account, stressing especially the benefactions and care that he lavished on him. As a son, Demeas argues, Moschion should have shown *charis* and leniency, balancing the only mistake that Demeas was ever guilty of with the memory of everything that Demeas did for him. Moreover, although Moschion was entitled to feel offended by his father’s suspicion, it was not right on his part to take public vengeance on him without first trying to solve the issue eye-to-eye with him. As Demeas stresses, Moschion staged his gesture outside the *oikos*, making his revenge public; by so doing, Moschion switched to a third-person standpoint, bypassing the second-personal display of anger and request for excuses (that Demeas had already provided in 537-538). With this speech itself Demeas is thus providing Moschion with an example of how he should have dealt with the issue: Demeas reacts to Moschion’s mistake by addressing him second-personally, hinting at his negative emotional reactions but also taking account of all the positive aspects of their relationship. Being angry is right and just, but one must deal with one’s anger and with its cause in a responsible way, which is also what Demeas had so painfully tried to do when he thought that the baby was Moschion’s and Chrysis’.\(^{201}\)

\(^{199}\) Darwall (2006).

\(^{200}\) See section 1.3 above on the role of anger as the appropriate response when a situation is construed as an instance of *oligöría*.

\(^{201}\) On the role of anger in the play, see especially Groton (1987).
In addition to this, Demeas is also implicitly teaching Moschion that, in a case like theirs, what should count the most is the relationship with each other. In his monologue at the beginning of the act, Moschion said that his aim was to frighten Demeas (αὐτὸν φοβήσαι βούλομαι, 635), so that he would never again treat him unfairly (μᾶλλον εἰς τὰ λοιπὰ γὰρ φυλάξειθ’ οὗτος μηθὲν εἰς μ’ ἄγνωμονεῖν, 636-7). However, we can surmise that another less declarable (and less conscious?) intent was at stake, namely Moschion’s desire to inflict a humiliation on Demeas, who seems well aware of this, in rebuking Moschion for exposing his mistake to all his enemies. Moschion was certainly more focused on reasserting his impugned timē than cultivating his relationship with Demeas. However, as Demeas’ speech teaches him, defending one’s honour should not be done in a way that harms one’s relationship with one’s friends. Demeas does therefore a great job in defusing the threat created by Moschion’s lack of responsibility and reasserting the basis of their relationship by stressing the importance of philia, charis, and mutual respect. Most importantly, he redefines their relationship by re-establishing the correct roles: he counters the excessive equality that had characterised their relationship so far and reinstates the due differences and asymmetries that were regarded as necessary in relationships between parents and children. Moschion is reminded of his duties: as a son, he must bear with leniency his father’s occasional shortcomings, keeping in mind all the favours received. Moschion thus receives a lesson in humility, and Demeas concludes his speech reminding him that it is not kalon to obey a father grudgingly. This passage is thus a parallel to Memorabilia 2.2, where Socrates reminds Lamprocles of the functioning of roles and of the wider normative order that influences and shapes the reciprocity of their relationships. Although every relationship entails a degree of reciprocity, this very reciprocity must not be interpreted alongside a ‘tit for tat’ principle or as equality. It is rather a matter of mutual responsibility – and responsibilities – as entrenched in the specific duties, obligations, and expectations

202 That his timē was impugned by Demeas’ suspicion is largely a matter of Moschion’s own subjective interpretation (that is of phantasia), for Demeas had apologised already (537-538). But his timē is objectively impugned by the fact that he raped the girl and that he failed to tell his father promptly about that and his intention of marrying her. Therefore, we could suggest that Moschion projects all the responsibility of his impugned timē onto his relationship with Demeas. At any rate, his pantomime is a way for the comic poet to achieve poetic justice and proper timōria, by first benevolently punishing (through Demeas’ rebukes) Moschion for his childlike and spoilt attitude, second honouring Demeas for his commitment to fairness and proper respect towards others, and third reinstating the ultimate value assigned to affectionate and respectful relationships in themselves.
connected to a certain status-role. During his speech, Demeas’ and Moschion’s roles as father and son are highlighted: by saying things like, ‘I am your father’, ‘as a son you should...’ (698, 702, 712), Demeas seems to inaugurate a new phase in their relationship in which the two of them will no longer feel the need to prove their worth constantly, but will finally feel assured about their relationship and their identities as father and son respectively.  

This can happen because the vicissitudes of the play have demonstrated not only that both care very much about each other, but also that both of them are fallible and make mistakes. Their previous face was grounded in an ethical perfectionism that hindered the development of actual trust in each other. With this previous face irremediably shattered, both are allowed to recognise mistakes in themselves and in the other, without seeing in this a deadly threat. Moschion still has not learnt all of this perfectly, but Demeas is clearly able now to teach him the correct attitude. Shame was so prominent at the beginning of the play exactly because of their perfectionist face: anything they did that fell below their impossibly high standards provoked shame and prevented them from being open with each other. Now that they have assessed their fallibility and vulnerability better, they can hold each other accountable without the fear of permanently disrupting their relationship. Once again, furthermore, the cooperative nature of timē and the fact that it is not a zero-sum game have been underscored.

As we have seen, at the end of the play, Demeas has finally taken up the role of the authoritative paternal figure, while Moschion has been given a lesson in humility and responsibility. In this way, the issue of excessive equality between the two main characters has been solved. In the next section of the chapter, I shall focus on proper relationships with peers, namely friends of more or less the same age and siblings. While in asymmetrical relationships the challenge was for children to balance their claims with those of a superior, in this case the challenge is how to balance correctly one’s claims and those of an equal. As I aim to show, this can have very interesting connections with Athenian ideology more generally.

203 See further Grant (1986) on the restoration of the proper asymmetry in the ending of the play.
204 See Goffman (1956), (1967) on the notion of face.
3.4 Averting rivalry and striving for equality and fairness: siblings and friends

From a psychosocial point of view, relationships with peers are qualitatively different from (and secondary to) relationships with adults, with the former being based in symmetry and equality as opposed to an infant’s and a child’s asymmetrical relationship with an adult. The intrinsic difference that contemporary developmental psychology sees between children’s relationships with adults on the one hand and with their peers on the other is familiar in Greek thought, as shown, most famously, in Aristotle’s discussion of equal and unequal *philiai*, that is, relationships between either equal or unequal people. With regard to honour dynamics, relationships between equals create symmetrical, horizontal honour and respect, but they also open the way to rivalries and envious comparisons. Especially during childhood, competition can arise over recognition from adults, as well as struggles in defining one’s identity and worth vis-à-vis others.

Siblings are often the first peers we interact with. Normatively, siblings were expected to have the greatest affection and respect for each other, but it is clear, for instance from forensic speeches, that things could go differently in reality. It is important to keep in mind that, unlike what happens in many cultures, in Athens male first-borns were not entitled to the greatest share of their *oikos* and that the estate was divided fairly among all male children, while female children were given a smaller portion in the form of a dowry. Legally at least, siblings of the same gender were conceived as equal, with age playing a lesser role than in other cultures. In his *Memorabilia*, right after the chapter on Lamprocles and Xanthippe, Xenophon devotes a chapter to the friction between Chaerecrates and his elder brother Chaerephon (*Mem.* 2.3). Chaerecrates complains that his brother is kind with everyone but him; as Socrates soon figures out, however, Chaerecrates is in turn bent on holding a grudge against Chaerephon, out of pride.

---

205 See Tomasello (2019a), e.g. p. 8: children become able to interact meaningfully with their peers only when they are three years old.


207 See Cox (1998), pp. 105–129 on siblings relationships especially in forensic speeches, with references to cases of tensions and conflict. For other examples of relationships and tensions among brothers in Menander, see Cox (2006). A testament to these tensions in a much later period can be found in Plutarch’s *De Fraterno Amore*, where Plutarch acknowledges how easy it can be for envy and competition to develop among siblings, and suggests ways to ensure that siblings (but he talks especially about brothers) respect and honour each other.

208 Aristotle always underlines the equal nature of sibling relationships: see e.g. *EN* VIII, 1161a3-5, 25-27.
Socrates therefore advises him to take the initiative in being kind to his brother, explaining that there is nothing shameful in anticipating a friend in benefactions (ἡ ὅκνεις, ἔφη, ἀρξαί, μὴ ἀισχρὸς φανής, ἐὰν πρῶτερος τὸν ἁδελφόν εὖ ποιῆς; καὶ μὴ πλείστου γε δοκεῖ ἀνήρ ἐπαίνου ἄξιος εἴναι, ὃς ἀν φθάνη τοὺς μὲν πολεμίους κακῶς ποιῶν, τοὺς δὲ φίλους εὐεργετῶν, 2.3.14). Chaerocrates raises the issue of the age differential, making the point that the senior, not the junior, should take the initiative. Socrates, however, replies that the younger should show greater deference to the older, thus restating the principle of the direct proportion between age and axia. Socrates is confident that, as soon as Chaerocrates adopts this kind and benevolent attitude, Chaerephon will immediately reciprocate, for he is philotimos and eleutherios (2.3.16). With this pair of adjectives, Socrates encapsulates central elements of reciprocity and timē dynamics. Philotimos refers to Chaerephon’s desire to engage in positive and constructive competition over something honourable. Eleutherios, literally ‘worthy of a free person’ and so ‘liberal’, ‘generous’, means that Chaerephon will be able to appraise the value of Chaerocrates’ benefaction and will be generous in reciprocating them. This passage is therefore noticeable for the vividness with which it depicts the difficulties that siblings might encounter in maintaining a good rapport, such as resentments, perceptions of being treated differently, and pride. Moreover, it once again confirms the crucial relevance of timē with respect to any given relationship, while also stressing its non-zero-sum and flexible character.

An excellent testament to the will and commitment to preserve equality and philia in spite of these possible obstacles is provided by the epitaph of two sisters (IG II² 5673): 209

καὶ ζώσαι πλούτου πατρικοῦ μέρος
εἶχον ὁμοίως, | τὴν αὐτῶν φιλίαν καὶ
χρήματα ταύτ’ ἐνόμιζον.

When they were alive, they shared their father’s wealth equally,
and regarded their love for each other and possessions as the same.
(My transl.)

This epitaph stresses the perfect equality that governs the relationship between the two sisters, both in economic terms and with regard to philia. The distribution of both wealth and philia is a form of recognition and is thus an important indicator of honour. The sisters’ equality and

---

mutual affection are seen as grounds for praise: the two sisters were able to embody the ideal of mutual affection and respect between siblings. The implication is that this ideal situation could not always be taken for granted and represented instead a praiseworthy accomplishment.

Tensions similar to the ones that could threaten relationships with siblings could emerge in friendships too. A passage from Plato’s *Lysis* can help us bring into focus some interesting aspects (207b–d):

Then I, looking at Menexenus, asked him: Son of Demophon, which is the elder of you two? It is a point in dispute between us, he replied. Then you must also be at variance, I said, as to which is the nobler. Yes, to be sure, he said. And moreover, which is the more beautiful, likewise. This made them both laugh. But of course I shall not ask, I said, which of you is the wealthier; for you are friends, are you not? Certainly we are, they replied. And, you know, friends are said to have everything in common, so that here at least there will be no difference between you, if what you say of your friendship is true. They agreed. After that I was proceeding to ask them which was the juster and wiser of the two, … (Transl. Lamb (1925))

Lysis and Menexenus are best friends. However, Socrates’ questions unearth some competition between them: in particular, they seem to compete for superiority in age and nobility. Identification and differentiation are two equally strong psychological needs in human beings: we need to feel that we belong somewhere and that we are part of an in-group with which we can identify, but we also need to feel special in some ways, and find our own specific identity.
This is what Honneth refers to when he distinguishes between rights and esteem as forms of recognition: in our culture, rights are assigned equally to each citizen, whereas esteem also takes into account our own unique individuality. Friendship is particularly interesting for considering the interaction between these two factors, and this passage from Lysis illuminates the tension: both friends regard the other as equal, but they also compete with each other. After Socrates has given the proud Lysis a lesson in humility, the boy asks him to do the same with Menexenus. Socrates asks him why, since Menexenus is eristikos, good at debating. Lysis explains that it is for this very reason: he wants Socrates to trounce him (ινα αυτόν κολάσης, 211c). This desire can have a twofold explanation: on the one hand, since Lysis has just been humiliated by Socrates, he wants Menexenus to undergo the same treatment so that equality is restored between the two of them. On the other hand, the fact that Menexenus’ eristic ability is highlighted suggests that Lysis might also vent here his envy for his friend’s superiority in this field. Lysis’ attitude can be described as determined to some extent by phthonos as defined by Aristotle in the Rhetoric. According to Aristotle, phthonos is a pain that we feel when somebody similar to us in some respects has a certain good and we would like them not to have it, not because we would like to have it for ourselves, but just because we begrudge it (Rhet. II, 1387b22-1388a30). Lysis shows signs of phthonos towards Menexenus: he seems to begrudge his friend’s eristic ability (or rather his reputation for it).

The tension between individuality and conformity is a common phenomenon of honour dynamics: as Frank Henderson Stewart would put it, horizontal and vertical honour can sometimes pull in different directions. In Athens this might have been particularly strong, as the democratic ideology of equality coexisted with the notion that one also had to prove one’s aretē. In the case of relationships between young people, moreover, this tension was likely to be even stronger, as young persons might not have yet a stable notion of what their aretai are; as the passage from Lysis suggests, rivalry and envy would probably appear quite frequently in relationships between young people, who are starting to feel the need to develop their own sense of identity and self-worth, while also experiencing the need to conform to the group.

\[\text{Honneth (1995).}\]

\[\text{For a modern perspective see in general James (1993). This tension is especially common in friendships between teenage children, who are starting to feel the need to develop their own sense of identity and self-worth, while also experiencing the need to conform to the group.}\]

\[\text{On horizontal and vertical honour, see Stewart (1994).}\]

\[\text{See Canevaro (forthcoming-c) on this tension within the ideology of Athenian democracy and citizenship. See also the final section of this chapter.}\]
a young person’s friendships. However, these relationships were still based upon *philía* thanks to their characteristic mutual respect and affection, friendships and relationships with siblings might in fact offer a framework within which young Athenian friends could learn to strike a good balance between the desire to cultivate the bond with their peers on the one hand and envy and the desire to excel on the other. Relationships with siblings and peers were therefore the ‘arena’ where children first experienced some of the tensions that one must learn to navigate with regard to honour.\(^{214}\) In particular, thanks to these interactions they could learn to curb their desire for superiority and self-assertion and to balance it with that of others, internalising a non-zero-sum conception of honour.\(^{215}\)

A nice representation of various honour dynamics among friends is offered by Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*, which, albeit set in a foreign context, offers a picture of the best possible attitude towards friends and friendship that might be expected from a child. The young Cyrus is extremely *philōtimoς*, and his attitude towards friends and friendship can thus be very insightful. First of all, his grandfather succeeds in persuading him to stay with him in Media by promising to let him play with the other boys (3.14). Cyrus thus demonstrates that he is very fond of engaging with his peers and making friends, and he also proves very good at that. As an adolescent, he knows already how to deal with his peers (1.4.4):

\[
καὶ γὰρ ὃσα διαγωνίζονται πολλάκις ἡλικίας πρὸς ἀλλήλους, οὐχ ἅρ κρείττων ἤδει ἄν, ταῦτα προικάλειτο τοὺς συνόντας, ἀλλ’ ἀπερ ἐν ἤδει ἑαυτόν ἠπτότα ὡντα, ἐξήρχε, φάσκων κάλλιον αὐτῶν ποιήσειν, καὶ κατηχθεν ἤδη ἄναπτῶν ἐπί τοὺς ἱπποὺς ἢ διατοξευσόμενος ἢ διακοινοτιούμενος ἀπὸ τῶν ἱππών οὔπω πάνυ ἔποχος ὡν, ἡττώμενος δὲ αὐτός ἔφ’ ἑαυτῷ μάλιστα ἐγέλα.
\]

for in all the contests in which those of the same age are wont often to engage with one another he did not challenge his mates to those in which he knew he was superior, but he proposed precisely those

\(^{214}\) For the use of the term arena in relation to honour dynamics, see Rabbâs (2015).

\(^{215}\) Moreover, precisely because of the non-zero-sum character of honour dynamics, they would also learn that competitive strive towards excellence need not stand in opposition to the ideology of equality. A cooperative enterprise such as the *polis* and the *oikos* need all members to exercise their specific qualities and skills at their best. By conceptualising *areté* as contributing with one’s best qualities to a cooperative enterprise, Athenian democratic ideology was able to accommodate the drive towards excellence.
exercises in which he knew he was not their equal, saying that he would do better than they; and he would at once take the lead, jumping up upon the horses to contend on horseback either in archery or in throwing the spear, although he was not yet a good rider, and when he was beaten he laughed at himself most heartily.

(Transl. Miller (1914))

Cyrus is characterised as gifted with extraordinary social skills and his view of friendship is closely connected to considerations of *timē* and reputation. Rather than aiming at proving superior to his peers, he challenges them in the contests where he is still not so good at, and reacts cheerfully at his own defeat laughing at himself. By doing so, Cyrus is averting the *phthonos* that the other boys might feel for him, given that he is the cherished grandson of the king and that everyone loves him. He manages to do that by nicely working with his own and his friends’ face: he honours his friends by letting them win and he shows he can bear these defeats cheerfully. To put it briefly, he knows that honour is a non-zero-sum mechanism, and that he will gain respect by respecting and honouring his peers. Noticeably, he also promotes a cooperative and light-hearted spirit, without taking himself too seriously and thus creating a relaxed environment. By so doing, he clearly gives priority to the relationship with his peers itself rather than to the sports they are practising, and this amounts to giving authentic recognition to his friends. In the *Rhetoric*, Aristotle couples his discussion of *phthonos* with *zēlos*, which he construes as its positive alternative in dynamics of social comparison (II, 1388a31-1388b28): when somebody comparable to us in enough respects to be construed as similar to us outdoes us in a specific respect, we feel *phthonos* if we have a bad disposition and *zēlos* if we have a good one.216 Although Aristotle is referring to adults with already stable characters, Cyrus proves that he has an incipient good disposition because he behaves with *zēlos* rather than with *phthonos* towards his peers. Instead of preventing them from achieving a level of superiority, he strides against them in order to practise and do better. As we shall see in the next section, *zēlos* is a particularly important emotion for the process of *paideia* too.

216 See Cairns and Mantzouranis (forthcoming) for a discussion of the relevance of *axia* in Aristotle’s account of emotions in the *Rhetoric*. As they highlight, even *phthonos* is based on considerations of worth, as the person experiencing *phthonos* believes that the other person is not worthy of some goods or good fortune.
3.5 *Paideia*: honour as instrument and content

Children are particularly interesting for investigating honour for two main reasons: first, they allow us to discuss the maturational basis of honour as a psycho-social mechanism; second, by focusing on them we can examine how this very mechanism gradually develops, and how it is adjusted and filled with specific values. The latter point is encapsulated in the Greek term *paideia*: *paideia* is education widely understood, overlapping with our idea of socialisation in general. In Plato’s *Protagoras*, the eponymous character gives a famous account of traditional *paideia*. He starts with the very first years of life, where everyone in the *oikos* strives to teach the child and make it as good as possible (325c-d):

> ἐκ παιδῶν σμικρῶν ἀρξάμενοι, μέχρι οὗ περ ἂν ζώσι, καὶ διδάσκουσι καὶ νουθετοῦσιν. ἐπειδὰν δέττον συνή τις τὰ λεγόμενα, καὶ τροφὸς καὶ μήτηρ καὶ παιδαγωγὸς καὶ αὐτὸς ὁ πατήρ περὶ τούτου διαμάχονται, ὅπως ὡς βέλτιστος ἔσται ὁ παῖς, παρ’ ἕκαστον καὶ ἐργὸν καὶ λόγον διδάσκοντες καὶ ἐνδεικνύομενοι, ὅτι τὸ μὲν δίκαιον, τὸ δὲ ἀδίκον, καὶ τὸδε μὲν καλὸν, τὸδε δὲ αἰσχρόν, καὶ τὸδε μὲν ὅσιον, τὸδε δὲ ἀνόσιον, καὶ τὰ μὲν ποιεῖ, τὰ δὲ μὴ ποιεῖ· καὶ ἕάν μὲν ἐκὼν πείθηται: εἰ δὲ μή, ὡσπερ ξύλον διαστρεφόμενον καὶ καμπτόμενον εὐθύνουσιν ἀπειλαῖς καὶ πληγαῖς.

Beginning from when their children are small, for as long as the parents live, they teach and advise their children. As soon as a child understands what is said more quickly than he did before, his nurse and mother and pedagogue and his father himself fight over this – how the child might be best – teaching and showing him that for every deed and word this is what’s just, this is what’s unjust, and this here’s the fine, and this the ugly, and this here the holy, and this the unholy and ‘do these things’ but ‘don’t do these’. And if he willingly obeys, good – but if not, as though he were a piece of warped or bent wood, they straighten him out with threats and blows. (Transl. Arieti and Barrus (2010), adapt.)

---

217 See e.g. Morgan (2011); Pritchard (2015) on *paideia* in Athens and in general Too (2001); Bloomer (2015). For some traditional and general accounts of *paideia* see Jaeger (1939); Marrou (1956); Beck (1964).
All the adult members of the *oikos* participate in the educational process, by teaching the child through their words and their example. Honour and shame are among the central objects of their teaching (διδάσκοντες καὶ ἐνδεικνύοντες, ὅτι ... τόδε μὲν καλὸν, τόδε δὲ αἰσχρὸν). The adults’ general purpose is phrased as ὅπως ως βέλτιστος έσται ὁ παῖς, so ‘that the child might be best’. Interestingly, according to Protagoras, educators only rely on positive methods at first; only if the child proves defiant to this kind of soft persuasion and teaching do they resort to punishments. The implication is that, generally speaking, children are disposed towards heeding their parents and other authoritative adults. Seemingly, only some children will require harsher educational methods.

Protagoras then goes on to describe education at school, emphasising its continuity with education within the family (325d-326b):

...
In this passage, the psychological mechanisms that are in play in the formative process are described more explicitly. Not only is honourable ethical behaviour the main object that parents want teachers to transmit to their children, but emotional dynamics connected to honour and social comparison are also crucial as the very instruments of education. Poetry, for instance, succeeds in leading boys towards virtue thanks to zēlos, which can be translated as admiration or emulation: children will feel attracted to the deeds of the heroes of the past praised in the songs they learn at school, and will thus emulate them.219 Admiration and imitation are

---

presented as the two rails that guide the child towards the proper habitus. In other words, zelos represents some virtuous or proto-virtuous resource in children, which drives them towards the imitation of to kalon. Not only heroes and gods, but also teachers should be able to inspire and positively influence children. Especially in the later stages of education, when well-off boys would sometimes associate with an influential individual (like Socrates and all the sophists), synousia was regarded as particularly important: spending time with a virtuous man would equip the young with the proper social and ethical examples, helping them to refine their habitus and their understanding of to kalon.

In order to be good teachers and properly educate the young, adults should always be aware that they have a huge responsibility to behave well. This point emerges with particular strength in the passage from Plato's Laws that I have examined in section 2.5 in which the Athenian declares that all adults should αἰσχύνεσθαι τοὺς νέους (V, 729b-c). The passage is also interesting in that it gives Plato’s evaluation of the prevailing way of ethically educating children. The Athenian, Plato’s spokesperson, deplores the educational method of reprimanding children and telling them that they must feel shame and inhibition with regard to everything (πάντα αἰσχύνεσθαι). Although he does not explain clearly the grounds for his criticism, the reason must be that this method is too negative, as far as the reproaches are concerned, and too abstract: the injunction to ‘reverence everything’ is so general and vague that it amounts to nothing more than a hollow formula. Aidōs is about discerning and appraising the different value of other people, of norms, and so on: telling children to have aidōs for everything does not make any sense, for people, norms, and things in general vary in their time and one cannot show aidōs indiscriminately. We might of course doubt that this is what actually happened in Plato’s time, as the statement sounds like an outright exaggeration. At any rate, the passages from Plato’s Laws too confirm the relevance of honour in education, both as instrument and content. In the next section, I shall turn to the socialisation of children within the polis more widely.

3.6 Children and the polis: finalising identities in the wider context

In the last section, I have focused on education processes within the family and at school; as I highlighted at the beginning of that section, however, paideia is much more than that. The

220 The idea is very much traditional (cf. for instance Theognis’ insistence on the effects of good vs. bad company on the young, e.g. 30-37, 305-308), but it might have been revived (and transformed) with the sophists.
ultimate goal of socialisation in any Greek polis was not merely to assist children in a process of moral development or acquisition of basic knowledge, but to acculturate them into a wider ethical development, taking ‘ethical’ in the etymological sense of ēthos. Each child was expected not only to develop the appropriate ēthos required by his or her social identity (or identities), but also to assimilate the overarching ēthos of the polis, especially in the case of future citizens. In Bourdieuan terms, children needed to develop the proper habitus and feel for the game; in the terms of modern developmental psychology, children needed to develop appropriately collective intentionality, correctly internalising social roles, norms, values. In addition to the education processes that we have investigated in the previous section, this pervasive socialisation was also achieved through more structured and public-oriented processes, such as rituals, competitions, and other experiences promoted by and enshrined in the polis. In this section, I shall offer a quick overview of these processes and discuss their implications. This will allow me to start introducing some of the issues connected to gender and legal status that I shall deal with in greater detail in the next two chapters; for this reason, I shall focus mainly on future Athenian citizens, both male and female, and slaves, whereas I shall disregard the issue of the socialisation of metic children.

Let us begin with future citizens, for whom, as we shall see, socialisation was structured at the highest degree. In addition to the Amphidromia and the dekatē, the private rituals that welcomed them as new members of the oikos, the journey of legitimate Athenian children towards their socially fully fledged adult selves started with their registration in their father’s

---

221 Following the distinction as understood for instance by Williams (2006), pp. 6–7, I prefer to use the term ‘ethical’ here in the light of its etymology, to refer to the holistic aspect of identity formation (cf. the use of ēthos as character, overall disposition); ‘moral’ could convey too narrow a focus on one’s moral principles. Greeks had no specific notion for what we label ‘morality’: in a sense, everything was ‘moral’ for them, in that whatever constitutes ‘morality’ for us was subsumed into issues of identity, status(es), and wider forms of justice.

222 See Morgan (2011) on children’s education and socialisation into a certain ēthos, and Bertelli, Canevaro, and Curnis (2022) ad Arist. Pol. VIII.1, with further references. As Canevaro highlights, according to Aristotle ‘il carattere dei cittadini deve essere allineato alla costituzione’, because ‘nessun cittadino appartiene a sé stesso, ma tutti sono parte della città’.

223 See Bourdieu (1998) for the expression; and see in general Bourdieu (1977) for examples of the embodied, embedded, dispositional nature of much of culture and normative order.
phratry.\textsuperscript{224} Around their third year of age, Athenian children, males and females alike, started to take part in religious activities.\textsuperscript{225} When they were seven, however, boys started to attend schools, and from this moment on the socialisation of boys and girls diverges considerably. Both would continue to engage in religious events, but boys’ lives would start to encompass a wider variety of social activities, whereas religion remained the main avenue for girls’ public socialisation.\textsuperscript{226} Some of these experiences were very selective: Athenian (elite) girls could hope to be selected for prestigious ritual functions, such as acting as an arrhēphoros. Experiences such as these would socialise girls not just into their role qua female Athenian citizens, but also into their class identity. Being very selective, these functions would bring honour and elevate the status of both the girl and her family.\textsuperscript{227}

This obviously applied to boys too. A relief dedicated to Apollo from the Pythion in the deme of Icaria commemorates the children that took part in a sacred delegation from Athens to Delphi.\textsuperscript{228} As Lawton comments, these delegations were rare, and the children who took part in them often belonged to the upper echelons of Athenian society.\textsuperscript{229} Therefore, as in the case of girls’ exclusive ritual activities, these experiences would represent for boys too an opportunity to develop a sense of their social status and their role in their community. Compared to his female peers, however, a boy could be involved in many more and more varied social

\textbf{Notes}

\textsuperscript{224} See Golden (2015), p. 20 on the Amphidromia and the dekatē, and pp. 21-24 on the enrolment in the phratry of all males and at least some females, with further references in n. 10 (p. 163).

\textsuperscript{225} See Garland (2013) on children and religion in Athens, and Beaumont (2013), pp. 75–76 especially on children’s initiation to the public religious life during the Anthesteria, with the Choes ritual.

\textsuperscript{226} On the involvement of young girls in Athenian religious life, see Golden (2015), pp. 40–42. See also Blok (2017) for an interpretation of women’s involvement in religion as the basis for their citizen status.

\textsuperscript{227} For the pride that girls could feel for these experiences, one can also consider the passage in Aristophanes’ \textit{Lysistrata} (641-647) that has often been mistaken for a sketch of women’s \textit{cursus honorum}; see the discussion in Golden (2015), pp. 41–42. We have later evidence for the pride of the family from three inscriptions, all dating back to the very end of the second century BCE, \textit{SEG} 52.138, \textit{IG} II\textsuperscript{2} 1034 + 1943 and \textit{IG} II\textsuperscript{2} 1942; see Lambert and Schudeboom (2019), (2020); Lambert (2020). See also Lawton’s (2007), pp. 55–56 comments on the depiction of girls in Classical Attic votive reliefs: by contrast with the modest poses of younger female children and adult women, \textit{parthenoi} ‘seem to be on display’, with poses and features that ‘allude to their attractiveness’; as Lawton further comments, ‘\textit{parthenoi} were in several ways conspicuous in gaining a certain amount of recognition outside their natal household’, thanks to their involvement in ritual activities.

\textsuperscript{228} The relief dates back to c. 370 BCE and is now in Rome (Museo Barracco 41); see Lawton (2007), pp. 51–53 for further references and other reliefs with prepubescent male children.

\textsuperscript{229} Lawton (2007), pp. 51–52.
experiences, both cooperative and competitive. In addition to their involvement in religious experiences, for instance, boys took part in several athletic and music contests. On the one hand, these activities could develop their competitiveness and desire for self-assertion; on the other, experiences such as being part of a chorus for a dithyrambic competition would promote the cooperation in the group. Victories could increase enormously a boy’s prestige. In the passage from Xenophon’s *Symposium* that I analysed in section 3.2, the guests expected Autolycus to be most proud of his victory; however, he makes an even better impression on everyone by saying that what he is most proud of is actually his father. Moreover, defeats might help boys to learn humility. Therefore, these experiences seem designed to help boys develop a proper sense of the right balance between self-assertion and pride on the one hand and humility and equality with others on the other. A major milestone in a boy’s life was the ritual of the *koureion*, which sanctioned his full membership in his phratry; after that, he was finally enrolled in a deme and, in the times when the institution was functioning, he would subsequently go through the all-embracing experience of serving as an ephebe. At this point, he could engage in the life of the *polis* as an active citizen. However, he would still be a *neos* until he turned thirty: this decade was seen as a crucial time for young men to further refine their still imperfect habitus and feel for the game.

We could gain some insight into how this time of coming of age might be perceived and lived by a young Athenian man thanks to the prologue that Moschion delivers at the beginning of Menander’s *Samia*. In this speech, which I had examined in section 3.3 for its depiction of Moschion and Demeas’ relationship, Moschion also talks about his process of becoming an active citizen (10-11, 13-17):

εἶτ’ ἐν θεράφην οὐδὲν διαφέρων οὐδενός,
τὸ λεγόμενον δὴ τούτο, τῶν πολλῶν τις ὢν·
(...) τῷ χορηγεῖν διέφερον
καὶ τῇ φιλοτιμίᾳ· κόνας γὰρ ἔτρεψέ μοι,

230 Cf. Aristotle’s picture of *neoi* in the *Rhetoric* (II, 1389a3-1389b12): they can be arrogant because they do not yet know failure; cf. Cairns (2020b).

231 The *koureion* took place during the Apaturia and entailed the ritual of cutting a boy’s hair short; see Lawton (2007), pp. 57–58 for reliefs depicting boys with very short hair, alluding to this ritual, and further references.

232 On the Athenian *ephebeia*, see Casey (2013) and on *ephebeia* in general see Kennell (2015).

233 On *neoi*, see Kennell (2013).
Moschion first recalls his enrolment in his adoptive father’s deme (ἐνεγράφην, 10) and then underlines his equality vis-à-vis his peers (οὐδὲν διαφέρων οὐδενός, 10; τῶν πολλῶν τις ὄν, 11). As Sommerstein comments, this statement serves as a foil for the following declarations, where Moschion voices his pride in the distinguished activities and benefactions (all funded with Demeas’ money) with which he started his political life. Moschion sees them as a way to stand out (διέφερον, 13). The key word here is obviously philotimia (14): it is the desire for recognition that motivates Moschion to invest so much in the public sphere. Interestingly, the prologue relates the public side of Moschion’s life to his private relationship with Demeas, dissolving any dichotomy: one crucial aspect of father-son relationships that emerges here is that of social capital, and it is important to see the numerous connections and reciprocal influences between what we conceive of as private and what we conceive of as public. Being an active and distinguished citizen is probably also a way for Moschion to prove himself worthy of being adopted by such a rich citizen as Demeas.

As we have seen, socialisation was structured into specific public experiences especially in the case of future male citizens. Future female citizens, for whom marriage and the birth of the first child represented the culmination of their social identity, shared some of their male peers’ experiences, especially in the religious sphere, with some additional ones that were meant for

---

234 With the expression οὐδὲν διαφέρων οὐδενός (10), Moschion might be alluding to his ephebate, considering that the play was likely written when the ephēbeia, as reformed by Lycurgus, still lasted two years; see Sommerstein (2013) ad loc.
235 For the notion of social capital, see Bourdieu (1986).
females only, but the number of formative activities for girls never matched that for boys. In the case of slaves, the category defined by absolute atimia on the political and legal level our sources on their socialisation processes are virtually non-existent, mainly because in their case these processes were probably mostly informal. In a way or another, in more or less structured forms, all members of society were socialised into their role, no one excluded: even the most marginalised categories needed to learn their place in the polis. While young future citizens went through a series of rituals and other formal processes, a slave child learnt that she was a slave, and how she had to behave qua female slave, not through some institutionalised practice, but through the daily contact with the overall social and cultural contexts, where she would observe the behaviour and condition of fellow male and female slaves, how they were treated by others, and so on, continuously absorbing knowledge about roles, norms, values, and thus developing a certain habitus and feel for the game compatible with those. In fact, we could say that the very lack of socialisation processes for slaves was part of the polis’ strategy of denying them recognition.

With some simplification, we could see some proportionality between the degree of structuring of formative experiences and the position of each category within the social fabric: male citizens have the most structured path, followed by citizen women, and so on, down to slaves at the bottom of the social scale. This rough tendency need not lead us into the trap of the ‘men’s club’ model of the polis, but can open interesting questions about honour in the polis. Why were things like this? Why was it so important that Athenian boys went through so many institutionalised experiences? First, most of these activities were a source of honour in themselves: being recognised as members of a group such as the phratry or the deme, for instance, was a way to have a certain status recognised, namely as a potential citizen or as finally one. Contests involved the enticements of glory and victory; rituals in general involved visibility

---

236 Slaves did take part in the Anthesteria (see e.g. Parker (1996), p. 294), and it might be that this allowed them to develop a sense of belonging in the community. However, this hardly counts as a socialisation event for young slaves into their roles comparable to the ones that future Athenian citizens went through. In Chapter 5, I shall highlight other venues that slaves could exploit to develop a sense of identity, self-worth, and belonging, not necessarily towards the polis, but more often towards other communities. For a general approach to the role of various communities and informal networks, see Taylor and Vlassopoulos (2015). On slave children, see in general Heinen (2012).

237 As I shall argue in Chapter 5, nonetheless, slaves could rely on other forms of recognition.
and the opportunity to play a role in valued collective activities. In some of these experiences, only a few boys or girls could be chosen for a certain role, and being the chosen ones in these selective occasions was a source of great honour. Second, some answers to these questions lie in the connections between honour, group identity, and membership that we have explored from different angles. Collective experiences, such as participation in a choir, serving as an ephebe and so on, had the effect of strengthening the sense of belonging to a certain group, which represents a remarkable boost to one’s sense of self-worth and self-entitlement, especially when the group in question has a high social standing.²³⁸

Therefore, not only did all these processes help children to learn more about their role and actively perform their social identities, but they also motivated individuals to endorse their social roles, by harnessing social and psychological reinforcements. The fact that the polis invested the most in would-be male citizens is certainly due at least partially to the fact that their involvement in the polis surpassed that of all other categories, and that they were involved in the widest variety of activities. For free male Athenian children, knowing that they would soon become citizens and having a taste of the timē that this would bring with it could serve as a positive reinforcement before they came of age. However, as we shall see in the next two chapters, this is not the whole story as far as timē is concerned. Institutionalised experiences promoted by the polis were not the only ways in which people could develop a sense of their identity and roles; women of any legal status and slaves of both gender were able to derive a sense of their worth and entitlements through other forms of membership, values, and activities.

Given that each social identity within the Athenian community comprised both claims to respect and responsibilities, the key concepts to understand these social dynamics are once again that of distributive justice, cooperation, and axia as based on one’s contribution to a cooperative enterprise. Relationships and roles were organised and structured upon a principle of cooperation from the oikos up to the polis.²³⁹ Given that cooperation is always based on each individual’s or group’s specific contribution, the overall organisation and the structure of roles

²³⁸ These dynamics could be analysed according to the model of the ‘economy of esteem’, developed by Brennan and Pettit (2004).

²³⁹ See Tomasello (2020), cf. p. 14: ‘Collaborative activities with individual roles are ... the natural home of normative attitudes about ‘what we owe to each other’ (Scanlon (1998)). And they scale up quite naturally to societal roles in the cooperative activities of a cultural group.’
both in the *oikos* and the *polis* follows, or should follow, principles of distributive justice. Within this cooperative framework, at any rate, Athenian democratic culture was nonetheless characterised by the same tension that we observed in the section on children’s relationships with their peers. On the one hand, the ideology of equality was transmitted as one of the cornerstones of Athenian citizens’ identity; on the other, male citizens especially were encouraged to excel and to stand out. As we have seen, children could experience this competition with *phthonos*, trying to bring their rivals down; but they were encouraged to experience it instead with *zēlos*, trying to become better themselves. In this way, as Aristotle would say, good *philotimia* was fostered and the tension between equality and individual excellence could be subsumed into the framework of differentiated contributions and *aretai*. From the point of view of children, the processes that we have been investigating in this section helped them to accept their current subordinate status more easily. As we have observed in the previous sections, learning their place and being humble was something that all children were expected to achieve as a result of the various educational processes they went through, irrespective of their legal and social status. However, this does not imply that they could not be respected or honoured: the very fact that they acknowledge their subordinate role and prove able to appraise the *timē* of others demands honour and respect.

Canevaro (forthcoming-c) has studied this tension within the ideology of Athenian democracy and citizenship, focusing especially on the award of honours, drawing on Darwall’s notions of appraisal and recognition respect Darwall (1977). In this dimension, as he shows, the tension is produced by two opposite drives: the first ‘is to generalise as much as possible appraisal respect for successful performance while accommodating all of its manifestations within the remit of the standard horizontal honour of the citizens’. The second ‘opposing drive is one to provide through the honour system a means for remarkable (and, particularly, wealthy) individuals to accrue differential appraisal respect above the baseline of the *timē* associated to citizenship, yet still without solidifying this into a form of rank-based differential recognition respect, and still with the *dēmos* fully in control of the means and ideology underpinning the system’.
Chapter 4:
The honour of women

Introduction

In the previous chapter, we have seen how an important aspect of honour dynamics in the case of children is their socialisation into the proper social roles, norms, and expectations. Although I only briefly touched upon these issues there, a major difference in socialisation processes was represented by gender. In this chapter, which focuses on the honour of women in fourth-century Athens, I shall explore some of the results of this process. The question of women’s roles and position has been investigated extensively and continues to attract attention. The leading questions in this investigation concern the ways in which women’s roles were conceived and experienced, and the ways in which women took part in and shaped honour dynamics. There is no doubt that women occupied a subordinate position on many levels: as is well known, Classical Athens was a place where women were required to have a kyrios, a male representative, in their legal dealings, and where Aristotle could write that women were by nature inferior (Pol. I, 1254b 10-14). Luckily, however, the idea that women in Classical Athens were isolated and devoid of any agency and authority has long been debunked. As scholars have now recognised, no such thing as a univocal and unified female status can be described: if we look at the sources, a woman’s status depended on a range of factors, such as status at birth, marital status, legal status, and social status.

---


242 Already McClees (1920) noticed that inscriptions defy the ideology of women’s exclusion from certain spheres of action; and see in general Gomme (1925). More recently see e.g. Cohen (1989), (1991), pp. 133–170; Brock (1994); Kosmopoulou (2001); Lewis (2002); Ferrucci (2008); Papakonstantinou (2014); Sebillotte Cuchet and Doherty (2016); Blok (2017). For an overview of trends in scholarship, see Farioli (2020).
Rather than providing an additional general overview, I shall once again focus on specific case studies, showing that they support a more inclusive and nuanced interpretation of *timē*. By taking into account a diverse range of sources, I shall provide a varied and complex picture: in addition to normative treatises, my main sources in this chapter will be New Comedy, oratory, and inscriptions, especially gravestones and curse tablets. In analysing these sources, I shall privilege as much as possible an emic rather than an etic approach. The emic attention to the viewpoints that emerge from the sources themselves will be complemented once again with modern accounts; in particular, I shall draw here on Michael Tomasello’s insights on cooperation and the role of roles. Throughout this chapter too, I shall be concerned with the aspects of honour that have to do with relationships and interaction, as well as with those that have to do with social roles and norms. As I have been arguing and as we shall see more clearly than ever in this chapter, these two dimensions need not be seen as separate, but they actually overlap and permeate each other.

Marriage is arguably the institution that best illustrates the coexistence and reciprocal influence of claims based on social norms and claims based on interpersonal interaction and relationships. In the next section, therefore, I shall first of all deal with normative accounts of women’s role within marriage. In the second section, I shall then look at case studies that revolve around real or alleged breaches of marital loyalty committed by wives. This analysis will allow us to assess how the conceptualisation of marriage that we shall unearth in section 4.1 translates in real life and how the honour of women is affected when some disruption in the marriage occurs. In section 4.3, I shall then look at the reverse of the coin: by examining funerary stelae, I shall analyse the scripts through which the perfect wife was described and praised. In section 4.4, I shall complement this investigation on marriage by considering the case of unmarriageable women involved in sexual or quasi-marital relationships, namely *hetairai* and *pallakai*. Finally, in sections 4.5 and 4.6, I shall look instead at how women could develop pride and attract esteem in other spheres. In section 4.5 in particular, I shall focus on women as workers, while in section 4.6 I shall consider other domains, such as religion or the legal sphere. In these sections, we shall observe how women could articulate their identities in wider contexts, sometimes stretching and even openly defying the limits put on their possibilities of action.

---

243 Tomasello (2020).
As I aim to show throughout this chapter, women’s honour could take many forms. In the case of female citizens, of wives, and of other socially recognised roles, women’s \textit{timē} has a strong third-person character, being based on collective norms. On the other hand, women’s \textit{timē} can also be seen from a second-person standpoint, in the sense of the claims to respect and mutuality that emerge in all sorts of relationships. Importantly, as I said before, these two aspects are often intertwined. Finally, women are not just honoured for their roles and their contributions to enterprises such as the \textit{oikos}, the \textit{polis}, and so on, but can also be individually esteemed for their specific qualities in a variety of domains (moral, interpersonal, professional, and so on).

4.1 \textit{Dikē}, \textit{nomos}, and \textit{axia}. Normative accounts of the role of wives

In this section, I shall examine some aspects of the main normative accounts on the role of wives. Xenophon’s \textit{Oeconomicus} is surely one of the most quoted texts in any account of the status of wives in Ancient Greece: its narrative of how things should work in the ideal \textit{oikos} concedes a great deal to the possibility of female honour (and slaves’ honour too, as we shall see in Chapter 5). According to Ischomachus, husband and wife complement each other thanks to their different sets of predispositions: the husband is predisposed to perform all sorts of outdoor activities, whereas the woman finds her place in the \textit{oikos}. Although this might appear intrinsically debasing and paternalistic to a modern reader’s eyes, this subdivision is seen as the basis for the wife’s \textit{timē} within the \textit{oikos}.

As Ischomachus explains to his incredulous wife, if she fulfils her role, she can even surpass him in honour. Within the \textit{oikos}, the wife is the real authority, being in charge of all the various domestic activities and also acting as a judicial authority: she must hold not only all her subordinates, but also Ischomachus himself.

\footnote{Interestingly, the picture that emerges from Xenophon’s \textit{Oeconomicus} resembles the perspective offered on marriage and women’s position by archaic sources, as analysed by Van Wees (2005). Van Wees notes that in archaic Greek poetry wives can receive recognition and esteem on the grounds of their beauty, their weaving, as well as their character. According to Van Wees, in Classical sources wives are no longer honoured on these grounds as they were in archaic sources. The scholar interprets these data as the consequence of social changes, leading to a situation where having to marry a daughter was more a problem than an opportunity. This discussion is beyond the scope of my investigation, but the similarities with Xenophon’s \textit{Oeconomicus} might be taken as either challenging this idea and downplaying the difference between archaic Greece and Classical Greece, or as the sign of a further change, possibly influenced by the economic and demographic effects of the Peloponnesian War.}
accountable for their shortcomings, which she can also punish with fines.\footnote{See for instance Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.15-40, with Pomeroy (1994) \textit{ad loc}. See 11.25 for the wife punishing Ischomachus with fines.} As Ischomachus anticipates, the sweetest accomplishment for her will be to prove better than him and make him her servant.\footnote{Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.42: τὸ δὲ πάντων ἠδιστον, ἐὰν βελτίων ἐμοῦ φανής καὶ ἐμὲ σὸν θεράποντα ποιήσῃ.} In this we find a clear acknowledgement even on the part of a man of female \textit{philotimia}, understood as women’s desire for honour and as the pleasure that they can experience when they gain special honour.

The jurisdiction of Ischomachus’ wife and her ability to accrue honour are strictly confined to the \textit{oikos}.\footnote{See in particular Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.20-26 on the distinction between female and indoor vs. male and outdoor tasks.} His and her respective excellences, \textit{aretai}, draw a sharp line between outdoor and indoor activities: no mention is made of any activity available to women outside of the perimeter of the \textit{oikos}, where the man is expected to operate instead. As we shall see in the last sections of the chapter, however, these boundaries were much more permeable than they appear in such normative accounts. At any rate, this subdivision is predicated on the complementarity of what we can also describe as the husband’s and the wife’s respective \textit{axia}.\footnote{See the introduction for the interpretation of \textit{axia} in the sense of one’s standing as based on the specific contributions and merits that belong with one’s particular role within a group or society.} Within the cooperative enterprise of the \textit{oikos}, the woman has claims to greater \textit{axia} than the husband, being naturally better in managing it and contributing to it more. This recalls what philosopher Michael Tomasello says about the role of roles: roles can only be understood in the framework of a cooperative enterprise, which gives value to everyone’s specific contribution.\footnote{Tomasello (2020).}

The connection between one’s contribution in a shared enterprise and phenomena connected to honour such as pride and esteem can be further discussed by considering some other points made in the \textit{Oeconomicus} in relation to female morality in general and the wife’s character in particular. As Ischomachus explains to his wife, female \textit{sōphrosynē} is not all about restraint: there is also a positive side to it, which is activated by earnestly contributing to the welfare of the \textit{oikos}.\footnote{Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.15-17.} In accordance with the economic focus of the treatise, earnest effort in increasing the wealth of the household is for Ischomachus’ wife a means to accrue distinction and esteem, in recognition of the excellent performance of her duty. The more she will work for

\begin{flushright}
\footnote{See for instance Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.15-40, with Pomeroy (1994) \textit{ad loc}. See 11.25 for the wife punishing Ischomachus with fines.}
\footnote{Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.42: τὸ δὲ πάντων ἠδιστον, ἐὰν βελτίων ἐμοῦ φανής καὶ ἐμὲ σὸν θεράποντα ποιήσῃ.}
\footnote{See in particular Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.20-26 on the distinction between female and indoor vs. male and outdoor tasks.}
\footnote{See the introduction for the interpretation of \textit{axia} in the sense of one’s standing as based on the specific contributions and merits that belong with one’s particular role within a group or society.}
\footnote{Tomasello (2020).}
\footnote{Xen. \textit{Oec.} 7.15-17.}
\end{flushright}
the *oikos*, the more pride and esteem the wife will be able to get. For the female head of the household, furthermore, this job also entails exercising power and authority over all the other members of the *oikos*, which further increases the *timē* she will get for her endeavour.

The wife’s *dianoia* is described as masculine (ἀνδρική) and proud (μεγαλόφρων). Megalophrosynē is a typical component of the semantics of honour, sometimes carrying negative implications of excess and arrogance; here, however, the adjective is used in a laudatory sense: Ischomachus provides an undoubtedly positive example of her megalophrosynē, telling Socrates of how she gave up using make up and instead tried to become more beautiful not by deceit, but through physical exercise, as soon as he told her to do so. The example shows that Ischomachus’ wife is megalophrōn in the sense that she has a strong and proper *philotimia*. She strives for *timē* based on truth and virtue; she wants to please her husband, but she is ready to learn that she must do so by counting on her actual worth, rather than on appearances. It must be noted that *megalophrōn* is here coupled with *andrīkē* in the description of the wife’s *dianoia*. Megalophrosynē is evidently seen as a natural feature of men; however, although men are the most obvious holders of these dispositions, from Ischomachus’ (and Xenophon’s) perspective, *philotimia* is something that singles out some particularly praiseworthy women and slaves, as we shall see better also in the chapter on slaves. Moreover, it is significant that even in the case of women (and slaves) an attitude like this is regarded as deserving praise: as long as one does not trespass the boundaries of one’s status, being *philotimos* is praiseworthy, as *philotimia* is understood as the desire to live up to one’s role in the best way possible.

---


252 It was out of *megalophrosynē* that Xerxes ordered to dig a canal and bridge the Hellespont, according to Herodotus’ conjecture (Hdt. 7.24), and see in general Cairns (1996) on the negative implications of ‘thinking big’. For *megalophrosynē* as positive see e.g. Hdt. 7.136, where Xerxes is induced by it to spare the Spartan heralds instead of killing them in return for the murder of his ambassadors. In Xenophon, the noun is never used, and the adjective only seldom: in two of the other three instances, the adjective means ‘proud’ in a positive sense (in *Eq.* 11.1.3 a horse must be megalophrōn in character; in *Ages.* 11.11.2, Agesilaus is praised for being megalophrōn without any hybris but rather with good judgement), while in the third occurrence it denotes horses’ self-confidence against the enemy (*Cyr.* II, 1.29.11). On the other hand, the expression *megalophrēsin* occurs often in Xenophon’s works (with almost 50 occurrences), both in the meaning of being self-confident and of taking pride in something. The latter meaning recurs especially in the *Symposium*, in which all guests are asked to say what they take most pride in. In the former meaning, *megalophrēsin* can be sometimes unwarranted and/or excessive. See Hau (2012) for an analysis of *phron-* words in Xenophon although she neglects the adjective megalophrōn, and she arguably overstates the negative implications of some occurrences.
We can now turn to Aristotle, who also has interesting observations on the wife’s *axía* vis-à-vis her husband and *vice versa*. In book five of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, he distinguishes women’s position in the *oikos* from those of children and slaves (*EN* V, 1134b9-18). While the latter can be seen as part of the possessions of the head of the household, he does not have the same authority over his wife. The kinds of justice that obtain for children (τὸ πατρικὸν δίκαιον) and slaves (τὸ δεσποτικὸν δίκαιον) fall into τὸ οἰκονομικὸν δίκαιον, while justice towards one’s wife is of the *politikon* kind (*EN* VIII, 1160b24-1161a5). A free woman exercises her rule over some areas of the life of the household: in this division between husbands’ and wives’ competencies, Aristotle sees the analogue of the equality based on *axía* that should obtain in the political domain. A similar distinction is made in book eight, where the husband’s rule over his wife is described as ἀριστοκρατικὴ ἀρχὴ, whereas for instance one’s rule over one’s children is *basilikē* and over one’s slaves *tyrannikē* (*EN* VIII, 1160b23-1161a33). This description as *aristokratikē* must be understood along the lines of what Aristotle says in the first book of *Politics*, where he concedes that women (in addition to other categories, slaves included) have their own *aretai* (*Pol.* I, 1260a10-33). There are thus, for instance, two different kinds of *sōphrosynē*, one proper for men and the other for women, and likewise two kinds of courage: ἀρχικὴ ἀνδρεία, *courage of command* for men, and ὑπερητικὴ ἀνδρεία, *courage of subordination*, for women. The idea of ἀριστοκρατικὴ ἀρχὴ must then take into account the complementarity of predispositions between husband and wife, just as Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* stresses.

*Axía* is thus at the core of Aristotle’s conceptualisation of marriage too. Although he conceives marriage as the husband’s rule over the wife, the husband rules not absolutely but κατ’ ἀξίαν, which entails that whatever falls into the woman’s authority should be left to her (*EN* VIII, 1160b33-35). If the husband were to take over and fail to let his wife rule over what she is rightly in charge of, his rule would degenerate into an oligarchic one that would no longer be κατ’ ἀξίαν (*EN* VIII, 1160b35-37). By recognising that both husband and wife are entitled to specific forms of power and authority, Aristotle is also acknowledging that they are entitled to specific and complementary forms of recognition and *timē*. Marriage is thus an asymmetrical *koinōnia*, based on cooperation and on a principle of distributive justice, which assigns authority and honour in proportion to *axía*. Finally, a brief note in the *Politics* confirms that Aristotle was well aware of the importance of mutual claims and obligations in marriage. According to him, the age at which people should marry must be determined by considerations about life
expectancy and fertility, because *staseis* and *diaphorai* are likely to arise when one of the spouses becomes impotent before the other (*Pol.* VII, 1334b35-37). As Canevaro underlines, this remark implies first that in the most desirable situation fulfilling mutual obligations and respecting mutual claims is the foundation of marital interaction. Second, the reference to *stasis* clarifies that both parties have expectations towards each other and a sense of their claims to satisfaction in the marriage. The legislator must therefore take account of both the husband’s and the wife’s needs, claims, and expectations.\(^{253}\)

With regard to the role of mutuality and reciprocity in conceptualising marriage, it is worth reading a passage from the first book of the pseudo Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, whose author advises men on how to treat their wives:\(^{254}\)

> Πρῶτον μὲν ὁνὸν νόμοι πρὸς γυναῖκα, καὶ τὸ μὴ ἀδικεῖν οὕτως γὰρ ἂν οὐδ’ ἀυτὸς ἀδικοῖτο· τοῦθ’ ὑφηγεῖται δὲ [ὀ] καὶ ὁ κοινὸς νόμος, καθάπερ οἱ Πυθαγόρειοι λέγουσιν, ὥσπερ ἤκετιν καὶ ἂρ’ ἔστινς ἡμένην ως ἕκιστα δεῖν [δοκεῖν] ἀδικεῖν· ἀδικία δὲ ἀνδρὸς αἱ θύραξε συνουσία γινόμεναι.

We begin then with the rules that should govern a man’s treatment of his wife. And the first of these forbids him to do her wrong; for if he observes this, he is not likely himself to suffer wrong at her hands. As the Pythagoreans declare, even the common rule or custom of mankind thus ordains, forbidding all wrong to a wife as stringently as though she were a suppliant whom one has raised from the hearthstone. And a man does wrong to his wife when he

\(^{253}\) See Bertelli, Canevaro, and Curnis (2022) *ad loc.*, with further reference to Kraut (1997), pp. 150–152.

\(^{254}\) [Arist.] *Oec.* I, 1344a8-12. The *Oeconomica* as we have it is a composite work and only the first book is datable with reasonable grounds to the fourth-century. See the introduction in Tredennick and Armstrong (1935), pp. 323–325, and more recently Zoepffel (2006), pp. 211 and 239–243, who thinks that even the third and last book, which deals more extensively with marriage and with the role of the wife and which we only have in Latin translations, might date back to the fourth-century Peripatus. If that were true, we would have an incredibly rich material about the honour of women and the ways in which husbands were encouraged to respect them. However, Zoepffel eventually concludes that the original might have been written anytime between the second half of the fourth century BCE and the second century CE, which makes it too uncertain to use it as a source for an enquiry specifically on fourth-century Athens. See also more recently Valente (2011).
associates with other women. (Transl. Tredennick and Armstrong (1935))

From the perspective of the author, reciprocity and mutual respect are at the heart of marriage. The husband should shun from any injustice, if he does not want to receive any injustice in turn. It is worth noticing here first the caveat that αἱ θύραζε συνουσίαι qualify as adikia. Sexual intercourse with slave girls and hetarai hired for symposia is probably not the target of this statement, as such relations could take place within the house while the θύραζε seems to refer specifically to the affairs that took place outside. Therefore, although there are still different standards for men and women, this text implies that even the honour of one’s wife was seen as putting some boundaries on a man’s sexual life. Asymmetry does not rule out reciprocity; on the contrary, both asymmetry and reciprocity are at the heart of marriage. The metaphor of the suppliant is extremely interesting with regard to honour, as supplication works by specifically changing normal honour and power structures. By descending into such a structurally weak position, suppliants gain in exchange an extraordinary entitlement to respect, as made clear by the traditional reference to Zeus epitimētōr, as the god himself bestows timē on the suppliant. By stating that husbands must treat their wives as if they were suppliants, the author is on the one hand acknowledging women’s vulnerable status, and on the other affirming their right to be treated with special honour and respect.

Last but not least, the most remarkable aspect of this text is the crucial role assigned to issues of law and justice, nomos and dikē. The author refers to some nomoi governing one’s relation with one’s wife, and more generally to a κοινὸς νόμος that commands the utmost respect towards one’s wife. The comparison with supplication reinforces this point, as supplication is a paradigmatic case of a phenomenon governed by widely shared norms. All three of the authors that we have introduced so far insist therefore on some sort of law and justice, and on the wife’s entitlement to her share of authority and honour within the household. Both husband and wife are thus subject to something that is wider than their marriage. The author of the Oeconomica is essentially describing the functioning of the wider normative order within which marriage represents an enterprise based as much on internal cooperation between

---

256 On supplication, see especially Gould (1973); Naiden (2006).
husband and wife, as on external cooperation, given that the couple must recognise the values and needs of the society they live in.

This is what Aristotle’s *Politics* in general illustrates particularly well. 257 Society is conceived as a community of households, governed by a specific normative order; the structure of the *oikos* is dependent on the needs of the society as a whole, and these needs define and bestow importance upon all the various roles of the agents involved. The roles within the *oikos* are therefore shaped by common norms and expectations, which both the husband and the wife have to respect. Women obviously play a crucial role in the reproduction of society: this role is thus conceptualised in terms of *dikē* and *nomos*, a point that Aristotle and the Aristotelian *Oeconomica* explicitly acknowledge. As the passages have shown, marriage is conceptualised as a cooperative enterprise, based on the complementarity of husband’s and wife’s *axia* and functions. On the one hand, the complementary roles of husband and wife grant men and women rights and reciprocal claims to honour and respect. On the other, they also impose duties and obligations on both of them: Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* in particular illustrates these two facets, stressing both the wife’s rights over the *oikos* and her husband’s, and her duty to perform her role satisfactorily in all its obligations. As I mentioned before, this finds a parallel in Tomasello’s ideas about the role of roles in society: thanks to collective intentionality, human beings are able to conceive of society as a cooperative enterprise, and social roles are what allows us to make this cooperative enterprise work. 258 Given that social roles come with the duty to contribute in specific ways to society, in order to sustain the enterprise and the satisfactory performance of social roles, it is important to give adequate recognition for the contributions made by each member, providing psychological and social incentives for the performance of the roles. Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* illustrates this aspect very well: Ischomachus instils pride in his wife for her role in the *oikos*, harnessing her *philotimia*.

These aspects could be framed in terms of appraisal respect, in the sense of the special esteem that is awarded to excellent performance. As the passages have shown, however, esteem and appeals to one’s *philotimia* are not the only honour-dynamics in play in this overall mechanism. In fact, social roles come with a specific form of recognition respect: others have a duty to recognise one’s role and to act according to the claims to respect that the role enables

---


258 Tomasello (2020).
one to make. This emerges clearly especially in the Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, with the stress on the respect that a man owes to his wife: as we saw, this respect was framed in terms of wider forms of justice, stressing the connection between reciprocal recognition respect between husband and wife on the one hand and aspects of what we can describe in terms of collective intentionality on the other. In other words, recognition respect towards social roles upholds the social structure based on the differentiation of roles and conceptualised as a cooperative enterprise. Importantly, this form of respect is compatible with asymmetry, as individuals must show each other the proper recognition respect also in asymmetrical relationships. As the passages show, in marriage recognition and respect must go both ways. Moreover, the respect that the spouses must show each other is not limited to the recognition respect that society attaches to a specific role. Intrinsically linked to third-person aspects, second-person aspects are also crucial. Husband and wife must relate to each other in a second-person perspective, rooted in mutual accountability. From this point of view, there was considerable room also for the appreciation of the other’s character and specific qualities, as we saw especially in the *Oeconomicus*, where Ischomachus gives credit to his wife for her proud *dianoia*. In the next and the following sections, we shall observe other examples of this attitude, and of the inextricable connection between third-person and second-person forms of respect and honour.

### 4.2 Literary and forensic narratives of perceived shortcomings on the part of wives

In the previous section, we have gathered normative accounts of how marriages should work. In this section, we shall look at some stories, both literary and forensic, revolving around some issues in marital relationships. These texts will help us evaluate how normative standards were experienced in reality and how conjugal problems were dealt with; the aim is to understand better how much and in what ways women were honoured and respected as wives. With its focus on the fate of a married couple of Athenian citizens, Menander’s *Epitrepontes* is an excellent case study for this investigation. The play revolves around Charisius’ estrangement from his wife Pamphile on finding out that she has given birth to a bastard child: he abandons their home, hires the slave *hetaira* Habrotonon and moves in with her into a friend’s house. We might start with the dialogue between Pamphile and her father Smicrines. The latter is still unaware that Pamphile was raped and had borne a baby, and is trying to persuade her to divorce Charisius. At this point in the play, all characters believe that the child’s parents are Charisius and
Habrotonon and expect Charisius to keep the bastard child and manumit the *hetaira*. Smicrines is characterised as a greedy man and his main motivation for wanting Pamphile to divorce Charisius is the fear that his son-in-law will consume Pamphile’s entire dowry on the *hetaira* and their bastard child. Smicrines tries to scare Pamphile by depicting a scenario in which Charisius’ attention and affection will be divided between his legitimate wife and his lover. In such a situation, however, Pamphile would be unable to compete against the *hetaira*, who can count on her shameful seduction tactics to secure Charisius’ preference for her.

After Smicrines’ speech, Pamphile takes the floor to defend her decision to stay married to Charisius. The text here is unfortunately largely conjectural, but the content of some parts is clear enough. After having discarded her father’s arguments, Pamphile maintains her duty, and thus her right, to stay loyal to her husband regardless of his misfortunes. In 815-821 she says:

\[
\ddot{o} \ \mu\epsilon \gamma \nu \varepsilon \pi\alpha \varsigma \ \alpha\varpi\tau\iota\varsigma, \ \alpha\iota\sigma\chi\rho\omicron \omicron \ \tau\iota \ [\mu\omicron\] \\
\epsilon\nu\acute{\eta}\kappa\acute{\alpha} \varsigma \ \acute{\alpha} \pi\omicron\lambda\epsilon\acute{\iota}\acute{\theta} \ \acute{o}\delta\tau\omicron\varsigma \ \varepsilon\acute{\epsilon}\tau \ \acute{\alpha} \tau\iota \ [\varphi\omicron]\acute{\gamma}\acute{\omega} \\
di\acute{\alpha} \ \tau\omicron\upsilon\omicron\varsigma; \ \acute{\alpha} \pi\omicron\tau\omicron\upsilon\omicron\nu\acute{\sigma} [\nu\tau\omicron \mu\epsilon \nu \ \sigma\nu\epsilon\upsilon\upsilon\tau\iota\acute{\eta}\omicron\sigma\omicron\upsilon\sigma\upsilon\sigma\varsigma, \ \acute{\alpha} \ \acute{\alpha}[\pi\omicron\rho\omicron] \acute{o}\varsigma \ \acute{\delta} \ \acute{\eta}, \ \mu\acute{e} \ [\acute{e} \iota\varsigma] \\
\acute{\alpha} \ \acute{\upsilon}\tau\omicron \ \pi\omicron\acute{o} \iota\delta\omicron\omicron \acute{\omicron}; \ \acute{\acute{\alpha}} \ \tau\omicron\omicron \ \phi\omicron\upsilon \varsigma \ \tilde{\alpha} \ \lambda\lambda\acute{\iota} \ \acute{\epsilon}[\gamma\omega \ \kappa\omicron\iota\nu\nu\nu\omicron\varsigma \ \acute{\eta}\lambda\theta\omicron \ \tau\[\emptyset \ \beta\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\upsilon \ \kappa\acute{\alpha}\acute{\iota} \ \tau\iota \ [\chi\upsilon\eta]\varsigma. \\
\acute{\acute{\epsilon}} \ \tau\omicron\omicron \acute{\iota}\kappa \acute{\iota} \ \acute{\omicron} \ \sigma\omicron \ \tau\omicron\upsilon\omicron \ \tau\omicron\upsilon\omicron\nu.
\]

What you said just now is a vile imputation to me. He’s a lost soul? So then I should run for that reason? Did I marry him just to share...

---

259 The dialogue has been restored almost completely in the last years thanks to some new discoveries. I shall follow the last comprehensive edition of the text offered by Furley (2021); for previous reconstructions, see Römer (2012, 2015); Casanova (2013); Furley (2013), (2016); Bathrellou (2014a).

260 As the latest discovery has shown, Pamphile’s speech begins at 799 (Römer (2015); Furley (2021)); in the first sentences, Pamphile probably commences her speech with a *captatio benevolentiae* towards her father. After the *exordium*, Pamphile then replies to the points made by her father, quoting his words and refuting them. In 806-807, she draws a distinction between herself, who ‘has done nothing wrong’ (*ηδικηκυιαν*), and other women ‘who err’ (*αμαρτωλας*); this is probably her first argument, which would actually consist in a *praeteritio* (being introduced by *εωμεν*, ‘let’s not talk about *scil. the other women who err*’), possibly because it was too painful, *λυπηρον*). In her second point, she argues that there is no shame in the current situation, whereas what is truly shameful for Pamphile is Smicrines’ injunction to avoid Charisius; see my comments below. On *Epitrepontes*, see now also Sommerstein (2021).
According to Pamphile, being married entails sharing everything, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer. Smicrines’ suggestion that she leave Charisius appears shameful (αἰσχρόν, 815) to her: her role as a wife obliges her to support and stay loyal to her husband in spite of all adversities. Aischron makes clear that honour is at stake here; μοι might be supplemented at the end of the line, stressing the impact of Smicrines’ intentions on Pamphile’s own time. However, as Pamphile implies, both Pamphile’s and Charisius’ time would suffer from this, for in fact they are deeply intertwined. Pamphile believes that she would act with disrespect towards Charisius if she left him because of his misfortune, and by doing so she would dishonour herself: abandoning him would represent a disgraceful shortcoming on her part. Moreover, Pamphile’s words convey not only her rejection of dishonourable conduct but also positive pride in her role. The first person verb ἦλθον (817, 820) emphasises her active contribution in the constitution of their family and her awareness of the obligations and rights that came with that; with the future οἶςω (821) Pamphile restates her choice and asserts her fortitude. Of particular relevance is the word κοινωνός (companion, 820): marriage is a koinōnia, a partnership, sanctioned by social recognition and norms, and entailing mutual claims and obligations. 261 In stressing her identity as Charisius’ koinōnos, Pamphile prioritises the specific rights, duties, and virtues that her role as a wife brings with it.

In particular, Pamphile implicitly interprets her duties alongside loyalty, leniency, and compassion, which were held among the prototypical virtues for a wife. While Smicrines regards Charisius as guilty for his overall behaviour (leaving his wife, fathering a nothos, spending time and money on a hetaira...), Pamphile dismisses his charges by employing the verb ἔπταικεν (821), which equates Charisius’ actions with an atychēma. 262 In so doing, Pamphile goes even too far in downplaying Charisius’ own shortcoming in living up to his role as her koinōnos; however, the

---

261 On marriage as a koinōnia and on koinōniai in general see the beginning of Aristotle’s Politics (I, 1251b1-1253a40).
262 Having had a bastard child could be regarded as an unintentional misfortune, atychēma. It was certainly an atychēma for Pamphile, as she had been raped; and it is assumed by Pamphile that it had been an atychēma for Charisius as well. In New Comedy, drunkenness can be considered as a mitigating factor for young men who committed rape; see e.g. Scafuro (1997), pp. 252–259. See further discussion on this below.
fact that she has given birth to an illegitimate child explains her attitude, which remains instead absurd to Smicrines’ eyes. As we shall see, furthermore, the ideals of leniency and compassion will be then adopted by Charisius too, which is a remarkable indication that mutual respect was much more important in husband and wife relationship than we normally assume. Pamphile’s engagement in the discussion reveals a remarkable degree of autonomy and confidence. Regardless of the specific points she makes, she is all but a passive pawn in the hands of her male relatives. Staying with Charisius is presented as her own choice, not as a matter of mere obedience. Although the authority of her husband and of her father is not erased, Pamphile places herself in a dialectical relationship with them, assuming that they need to take account of her point of view. Pamphile is the play’s heroine, and she is clearly presented as the embodiment of virtue.\textsuperscript{263} being a virtuous woman can thus comprise not only showing compassion and loyalty towards one’s husband, even when he is wrong, but also determine what is truly honourable for oneself and defending one’s views. For Pamphile, the most honourable conduct entails staying loyal to each other, irrespective of the results of Charisius’ (and her own) misfortunes, which are subsumed in a framework of shared vulnerability and thus met with compassion and leniency.

Pamphile’s words resonate to some extent with those of another female character, who similarly has to defend her marriage against her father: in the fragment transmitted by Papyrus Didot, commonly regarded as a New Comedy \textit{adespoton}, the problem lies in the fact that the heroine’s husband has become suddenly poor.\textsuperscript{264} The heroine makes the point that (14-26):

\begin{quote}
\begin{align*}
\text{ἐστ’} & \text{ ἀνδρὶ καὶ γυναικὶ κείμενος νόμος,} \\
\text{τῷ μὲν διὰ τέλους ἦν ἔχει στέργειν ἄεί,} \\
\text{τῇ δ’ ὅσ’ ἄν ἀρέσκῃ τάνδρι ταύτ’ αὐτὴν ποεῖν.} \\
\text{γέγονεν ἐκεῖνος εἰς ἐμ’ οἷον ἥξιον,} \\
\text{ἐμοὶ τ’ ἀρέσκει πάνθ’ ἀ κάκείνῳ, πάτερ.} \\
\text{ἀλλ’ ἐστ’ ἐμοὶ μὲν χρηστός, ἤπόρηκε δὲ.} \\
\text{sὐ δ’ ἀνδρὶ μ’, ὡς φής, ἐκδίδως νῦν πλουσίῳ,} \\
\text{ἲνα μὴ καταζῷ τὸν βίον λυπουμένη.}
\end{align*}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{263} A different question is Pamphile’s rhetorical expertise: some scholars think that here ‘Menander has abandoned the crudity of realism in order to create one of the finest defences of marital loyalty’ (Arnott (2004), p. 277).

\textsuperscript{264} The fragment from P. Didot 1 also features as \textit{TrgG} fr. 953 Nauck (Nauck (1889)) and as \textit{Sel. Pap.} iii 34 (Page (1942)). See Gomme and Sandbach (1973), pp. 723–729. On the paternity of the fragment, see also Bühler (1963).
καὶ ποῦ τοιαῦτα χρήματ’ ἔστιν, ὦ πάτερ,
ἀ μᾶλλον ἀνδρὸς εὐφρανεῖ παρόντα με;
ἡ πώς δίκαιον ἔστιν ἡ καλῶς ἔχων
τῶν μὲν ἁγαθῶν με τὸ μέρος ὃν εἴχεν λαβεῖν,
tοῦ συναπορηθήναι δὲ μὴ λαβεῖν μέρος;

For wife and husband there is a law laid down: for him, to love his woman for ever till the end; for her, to do whatever gives her husband pleasure. All I demanded, my husband has been to me, and all that please him, father, pleases me. You say he is good to me but he is poor! So now (you tell me) you give me in marriage to a man of wealth, that I may not live all my life in distress. Where in the world is all that money, father, which – if I have it – will cheer me more than the man I love? How is it just or honourable that I should take my share of the good things he had, but in his poverty take no share at all? (Transl. Page (1942))

The heroine’s attitude is strikingly similar to Pamphile’s, as she also defends her choice of staying with her husband. Of particular interest in this passage is the focus on the _nomos_ laid for husband and wife, consisting in complementary obligations towards each other; in particular, the husband’s duty is here specified as the duty to love ( _stergēin_ ) his wife, who in turn must do what she can to please him. With a striking resemblance to the ideas that we found in treatises such as the Aristotelian _Oeconomica_ in the previous section, marriage is seen here in terms of a wider, collective framework. Both husband and wife must respect and be faithful to the _nomos_ upon which the institution of marriage is founded. This is strengthened by the reference to justice and honour in 24 ( _δίκαιον, καλῶς_ ): evidently, in this case too the heroine’s father made the point of her daughter’s respectability. Just as Pamphile does with Smicrines, the anonymous woman reverses his arguments, claiming that the real shame would come from abandoning her husband for his present misfortune (which in this case is literally a misfortune, as he seems to have fallen into poverty), not from sticking with him in these difficult circumstances. Marriage is a commitment, and it is a matter of honour to stay committed to it.

This point is inscribed in the perspective of collective intentionality: the _nomos_ represents the perspective of society and of the normative order. However, the point on the _nomos_ goes hand in hand with and is complemented by the focus on second-person attitudes: marriage is
based on the relationship between the two spouses, who are responsible to each other not just on the basis of the *nomos* they acknowledge at the moment of their wedding, but also on the basis of their mutual knowledge, affection, and esteem. The respect that the heroine of the fragment feels and wants to have towards her husband is directed both at his status qua husband as sanctioned by the normative order, but also at him qua individual and qua the person she loves. The young woman gives strong relevance to the character and past behaviour of her spouse. In 17, she says that he proved such a husband for her as she wanted him to be. The choice of the verb *axioō* implies that the woman demanded that her husband’s attitude towards her matched her sense of self-worth and her claims to respect. She says that her husband satisfied her in these expectations, and that he was a *chrēstos* husband. While the awareness of their roles vis-à-vis society and the normative order are the basis for her recognition respect for their roles qua husband and wife, the knowledge of his good character is the basis for her love and her respect towards him as a particularly good and beloved husband. Normatively, the two aspects were ideally as tightly linked as possible, as the heroine herself stresses in 15: it is part of the role of a husband to love, *stergein*, his wife. As we have seen already and we shall see again, mutual esteem and affection were regarded as a crucial feature in the ideal picture of marriage. To conclude on this fragment, therefore, failing to respect the ‘covenant’ of marriage would represent a grave affront not just to the other person, but also to widely endorsed norms, and would thus be disgraceful for the person who chose to act in this way.

We can now turn again to *Epitrepontes*. The dialogue between Smicrines and Pamphile is overheard by Charisius, thus triggering in him a dramatic *metameleia*. Before he overhears the dialogue, he has discovered that he fathered a *nothos* too, as the slave Habrotonon has persuaded him that he raped her and that she had then borne his baby. It is only when he listens to Pamphile defending him and their marriage, however, that he understands how wrong he was in condemning his wife.²⁶⁵ Before Charisius himself comes on stage to deliver his monologue, the slave Onesimus describes his master’s distress and reports some of his words (888-891, 894-899):

`ὦ γλυκυτάτη` δὲ `τῶν λόγων οἷς λέγεις`  
ἀνέκραγε, τὴν κεφαλὴν τ’ ἀνεπάταξε σφόδρα

²⁶⁵ For a good analysis of these passages and for some of the observations I share in my analysis, see Traill (2008), pp. 191–196.
In this first block of lines, one of the most important aspects is Charisius’ reappraisal of his wife’s character and of her excellence as a wife (οἱ ἡμέροις γυναῖκα). As we saw in other texts, the appraisal of a spouse’s character is a crucial element in the degree of respect and esteem that obtain in a couple. Pamphile’s words just showed him the depth of her kindness, compassion, and devotion towards him and their marriage, wiping away all his previous indignation and suspicion. Pamphile has proved herself worthy of the recognition respect owed to an excellent wife, while Charisius failed to show even the basic compassion and respect.

In these lines we can also see a rehabilitation of Charisius’ own love towards his wife. Because of the fragmentary state of the play, we have little information about Charisius’ perspective before this point, but we know that although he hired the hetaira Habrotonon he did not have sex with her. This is a strong hint that he was very much in love with Pamphile even when he thought ill of her, and that he could not bring himself to act as his anger and disappointment were advising him to do. We can imagine that, as it happens frequently in New Comedy, he was torn between his love towards Pamphile on the one hand and his anger, grief,
and hatred against her caused by a mistaken belief about her conduct. In these lines, especially with the vocative ὧ γλυκυτάτη (888), Charisius fully endorses his love for her again. In fact, Charisius’ dramatic change of heart is triggered by the very emotional experience of feeling himself loved by Pamphile despite his harsh behaviour towards her: indeed, the emotional effects of Pamphile’s words on Charisius are put in relief, as in Onesimus’ description of Charisius’ extreme distress and his violent gestures against himself (878-900).

Another crucial factor in these lines is the stress on mutuality: now that he knows how kindly and compassionately Pamphile reacted to the news that her husband fathered a nothos, he sees in his opposite reaction an unpardonable lack of mutuality. To comment better on this point, we can now introduce the monologue that Charisius himself delivers a few lines later (908-922):

ἐγὼ τις ἀναμάρτητος, εἰς δόξαν βλέπων
καὶ τὸ καλὸν ὡ τί πότ’ ἐστι καὶ ταῖσχρόν σκοπῶν,
ἀκέραιος, ἀνεπίπληκτος αὐτὸς τῷ βίῳ—
εὖ μοι κέχρηται καὶ προσηκόντως πάνυ
τὸ δαίμόνιον—ἔνταῦθ’ ἔδειξ’ ἀνθρωπός ὄν.
ἢ τρισκακόδαμον, μεγάλα φυσάξ καὶ λαλεῖς;
ἀκούσιον γυναικός ἀτύχημ’ οὖ φέρεις,
αὐτὸν δὲ δείξω σ’ εἰς ὅμοι ἐπταϊκότα.
καὶ χρήσετ’ αὐτὴ σοι τὸτ’ ἥπιως, σὺ δὲ
ταύτην ἀτιμάζεις ἐπιδειχθῆσει θ’ ᾧ ἅμα
ἀ’τυχῆς γεγονὼς καὶ σκαιός ἀγνώμον τ’ ἀνήρ.’
ὅμοια γ’ εἶπεν σὺ σὺ διενόου τότε
πρόξ τὸν πατέρα; κοινωνὸς ἥκειν τοῦ βίου
φάσκουσα κλοῦ δεῖν τάτυχημ’ αὐτὴν φυγεῖν
τὸ συμβέβηκός, σὺ δὲ τὸν ψηλὸς σφόδρα

A faultless man, eyes fixed on his good name,
A judge of what is right and what is wrong,
In his own life pure and beyond reproach—
My image, which some power above has well
And quite correctly shattered. Here I showed
That I was human. ‘Wretched worm, in pose
And talk so bumptious, you won’t tolerate
A woman’s forced misfortune. I shall show
That you have stumbled just the same yourself.
Then she will treat you tenderly, while you
Insult her. You’ll appear unlucky, rude,
A heartless brute, too, all at once.’ Did she
Address her father then [as] you’d have done?
‘I’m here,’ [she said], ‘to share his life. Mishaps
Occur. I mustn’t run away.’ You’re too
Superior... (Transl. Arnott (1979))

The monologue is replete with themes connected to honour and can help us unpack various issues connected to the honour of women in particular. As in the preceding lines, Charisius underlines the mismatch in his and Pamphile’s attitude: he insulted her, while she treated him kindly. As we saw in the previous section, mutuality was regarded as the core foundation for marriage. It is only when he listens to her speech that Charisius changes so completely his understanding of the situation. The experience of being treated with honour and respect despite his behaviour and his circumstances leads Charisius to revise radically his understanding of the situation. Pamphile’s speech gives him the model of a praiseworthy reaction in a similar predicament: as we saw, Pamphile shows both love and regard for the normative expectations attached to marriage, thus aligning both second-person and third-person forms of respect. By contrast, in the way he reacted to Pamphile’s atychēma, that is abandoning their house and hiring Habrotonon, Charisius reacted in merely retaliatory terms, cutting Pamphile off and disregarding altogether her perspective and feelings. Even with regard to third-person aspects, Charisius’ reaction differed very much from Pamphile’s: while he worried about his doxa, she was ready to tolerate a demeaning arrangement in order to do what she thought was truly honourable, that is honouring Charisius and her own role as a wife. On the other hand, Charisius seems to have thought of the marriage mostly in terms of what he could and should expect from Pamphile, with little concern for what he owed her in terms of leniency and respect.

Charisius has now finally realised how wrong he was in thinking and behaving like he did. A major theme in these lines is the contempt he now feels towards himself, who was so proud of himself before. Charisius recalls with bitter sarcasm his concern with doxa and his self-righteousness. The reference to doxa implies a subject having a certain opinion of Charisius’ actions; this subject might be either physically present or not, corresponding in this case to an
internalised audience or reference group. In Charisius’ case, the subject seemingly corresponds to the virtual peer group of enlightened and virtuous men to whom Charisius believed he belonged. As commentators have long been highlighting, Charisius is characterised as a quasi-philosopher, and the monologue is replete with hints of his philosophical interests. Some elements are obvious references to Socratic themes: the question τί ἐστι, the prosopopoeia, the representation of what we would describe as conscience as a supernatural power. However, the abstract Socratic quest for the true essence of to kalon is bound to fail: it is only when he overhears Pamphile’s words that Charisius realises that he had been disrespectful towards her, denying her the syngnōmē (897) and eleos (see 899) that she displayed for him. Rather than Charisius’ intellectual reflections on virtue, it is the concrete experience of being treated with compassion and respect that allows him to reach the best moral insight.

As Charisius now clearly sees, his unwarranted disregard towards Pamphile’s feelings and intentions was a disgraceful manifestation of ignorance, and his treatment of his wife now appears arrogant to him. In fact, we can read in the monologue an implicit self-accusation of hybris. First of all, Charisius is here referring not to a specific action, but to his general attitude, and highlights the pleasure that came from it: the daimonion accuses him of megala physan, of giving himself airs, describing his smug and self-satisfied disposition, which is also encapsulated by ὑψηλὸς σφόδρα (922). Charisius now condemns the pleasure he felt in impersonating the infallible virtuous man (see especially 908–910), and insists on his fundamental foolishness in miscalculating his standing so much. Finally, he overestimated his claims and disregarded Pamphile’s, dishonouring her: although Charisius was not driven by any particular desire to humiliate Pamphile, he was so self-satisfied with his reputation for virtue that he did not even realised he was trampling on her time. It is clear, on the basis of what

266 See e.g. Gaiser (1967), pp. 25–26; Jäkel (1984), pp. 14–15; Furley (2009), pp. 20–21. It is not my aim here to discuss Menander’s relationship with the Peripatus; even if we reject the idea that he was Theophrastus’ pupil, however, Menander’s plays do reflect some of the central Aristotelian concerns. On the question, see e.g. Tierney (1936); Barigazzi (1965); Gaiser (1967), and more recently Cinaglia (2011), (2012); Casanova (2014).

267 Menander seems thus to be more here in tune with Aristotle in suggesting that virtue is chiefly a matter of practice and habit, rather than theoretical investigation alone.

268 On hybris, see Fisher (1995); Cairns (1996); Canevaro (2018). As Cairns and Canevaro both stress, its dispositional aspect is particularly important to understand how hybris was conceptualised.

269 Such a harsh acknowledgment of his mistake provides a ground for Charisius’ redemption: as commentators have underscored, he acknowledges the truth before he discovers that he himself was Pamphile’s rapist and thus the
Charisius reproaches himself about in 908-912 and of what the *daimonion* tells him (915), that the notion of human vulnerability and fallibility is crucial here.\(^{270}\) The prosopopeia of the *daimonion* in lines 914-918 underscores the contrast between the divine and the human sphere, and serves precisely to remind Charisius of his limited status as an *anthrōpos* and emphasise his moral arrogance.\(^{271}\) As an *anthrōpos*, he should have kept in mind that misfortunes can happen to everyone, and should have therefore reacted to Pamphile’s situation with greater understanding.\(^{272}\)

Because of this emphasis, this passage has been seen as revolutionary with regard to the honour of women, with scholars talking about unprecedented pleas to equality and equal rights, but this is clearly not the case.\(^{273}\) Albeit based on mutual respect, marriage was conceived as an asymmetrical relationship, and *Epitrepontes* too reflects this asymmetry. Despite the call for mutual leniency, a woman was expected to put up with much more than her husband before she or her *kyrios* decided that divorce was a viable and legitimate option: in *Epitrepontes*, Pamphile is cast in a positive light for not wanting to divorce her husband despite the fact that he fathered a *nothos* and that he will divide his attention between her and Habrotonon with the child. Smicrines’ determination to end her daughter’s marriage is motivated by economic, rather than

---

270 See Furley (2009), p. 237, ad 915-917. On the role of human intrinsic vulnerability in Greek conceptualisation of pity, see Cairns (2004): Charisius failed to take pity on his wife because he failed to take human vulnerability and fallibility into account; now he is construing this lack of pity as *hybris*. See Cairns (2020a) on *hybris* as due to a misperception of oneself as infallible and invulnerable.

271 On the editorial issues posed by the *daimonion*’s speech, see for instance Furley (2009), pp. 236–237: the use of future tense is the main proof that Charisius introduces a direct speech by this imaginary voice. At any rate, the *daimonion* is to be interpreted as a way for him to express his self-criticism. As Furley puts it, ‘we may conclude that, because there is a sliding, or hidden, transition from Charisios’ words to the *daimonion*’s and back again, that the effect is deliberate: it serves to emphasize the identity of Charisios’ thought-processes with the explicit criticism of the *daimonion*: after all, the *daimonion* is conceived as an inner voice. What is more natural than that a person’s words should hardly be distinguishable from those of his/her inner voice?’

272 Erring as part of the human experience is a commonplace, especially in contrast with divine omniscience and as a ground for requests of forgiveness. In Eur. *Hipp.* 615, the nurse begs Hippolytus to have syngnōmē, on the ground that all mortals err; in Xen. *Cyrop.* 6.1.37, Araspas thankfully praises Cyrus for being *syngnōmēn tōn ἀνθρωπίνων ἀμαρτημάτων*. See also Diodotus’ speech in Thuc. 3.45 on the intrinsic tendency in human beings to be mistaken and commit *hamartēmata*.

moral, evaluations; Charisius could sincerely believe he was acting in the most respectable way by leaving Pamphile.

Another reason why we cannot talk of equality here is Athenian attitudes to sexual violence: since in this case the birth of the nothos child is obviously caused by an act of sexual violence, Konstan’s hypothesis about the meaning of atychēma as referring to the birth of a nothos rather than to the sexual violence itself does not erase the issue.\(^{274}\) Although the raped woman was generally (but not exclusively) regarded as an innocent victim, the responsibility of the man was not always fully acknowledged. A major criterion to evaluate the moral responsibility of the culprit is his motivations and his subsequent behaviour towards the woman and the child, when his act led to a pregnancy: as Edward Harris has argued, sexual violence was only regarded as a crime when it was construed as hybris, and condemned not so much for its impact on women, but on the honour of their male relatives.\(^{275}\) This is a premise in Charisius’ current attitude towards himself: in his perspective, the same ‘misfortune’ befell both his wife and himself. What he so bitterly regrets is not his act of sexual violence, nor the fact that he fathered a nothos, as both these events are likely part of his misfortune: he was drunk when he committed the offence and he is now willing to provide for his child and its alleged mother, Habrotonon, and this is enough to excuse him. Rather, he reproaches himself for the fact that, when the same misfortune happened to Pamphile, he treated her as if she were guilty. As we can infer from 914, Charisius probably never doubted his wife’s lack of consent in the sexual encounter that led to the pregnancy: the daimonion accuses Charisius for not tolerating his wife’s involuntary misfortune, ἀκούσιον ἀτύχημα, seemingly reflecting Charisius’ conviction before the last developments. Gender equality as we conceive it now is not at stake here: Charisius regrets having applied a double standard to Pamphile and himself not in the sense that he failed to judge their respective circumstances on a basis of exact equivalence, but in the sense that he did not take into account in a balanced way their two complementary roles, nor the basic respect that he owed Pamphile in a second-person standpoint. What counts in this case is rather a re-affirmation of the complementarity and mutual dependency of conjugal roles.


\(^{275}\) Harris (2006b).
Furthermore, with regard to the idea that Menander is here advocating revolutionary and unprecedented ideals, the plea for leniency towards Pamphile is actually not unparalleled. A passage from Xenophon’s Hiero (3.4) states:

ὅταν γε ἀφροδισιασθῇ κατὰ συμφοράν τινα γυνήν, οὐδὲν ἦτον τούτου ἐνεκεν τιμῶσιν αὐτάς οί ἄνδρες, ἐάνπερ ἢ φιλία δοκῇ αὐταῖς ἀκήρατος διαμένειν.

When a woman has been forced to have sex by some misfortune, their men do not honour them any less on this account, if of course the friendly love of the women remains untainted. (Transl. O’Connor (2018))

In this passage, interestingly framed as a description of a matter of fact, the understanding attitude finally endorsed by Charisius is presented as the normal reaction. The choice of the verb timao underlines the importance of women’s honour as desert and of honour as the recognition of their desert: when it is a matter of symphora, misfortune, their lack of responsibility allows wives to retain intact both their honour and their philia towards their husbands. The latter, therefore, can honour them as they always did, since loyalty and philia are in this case presented as the main grounds for timē towards one’s wife and they are not under question in cases of sexual violence and symphora. This passage thus constitutes remarkable evidence that women’s intentions were crucial in the assessment of their responsibility and in the husbands’ reaction to a case of extramarital sex.

While in the passage from Xenophon’s Hiero and in Epitrepontes the intention and therefore the morality of the woman is not really mooted, Lysias’ first speech, On the Murder of Eratosthenes, presents a more complex situation. The speech comes from a dikē phonour. Euphiletus killed Eratosthenes, his wife’s lover, when he caught them in bed together. In the background story recounted by Euphiletus, we can see another picture of a successful marriage (before things went wrong). Euphiletus recounts the story of his marriage from the very beginning: at first, as long as he was still not familiar with his wife, Euphiletus tried to find a sensible balance in keeping an eye on her but with no excesses, so as to not annoy her (Lys. 1.6: οὕτω διεκείμην ὡστε μήτε λυπεῖν μήτε λίαν ἐπ’ ἐκείνη εἶναι δ’ τι ἄν ἐθέλη ποιεῖν). This is a nice remark that helps us imagine how couples could navigate the first phase of their marriage, when they still needed to build trust. Euphiletus appears concerned both with his own honour and
with respecting his wife: he needs to control her, but wants to do so in a way that she can find respectful. With the birth of their first child, Euphiletus believes he can trust his wife more, seeing this as a great bond of intimacy (ἡγούμενος ταύτην ὑοίκειότητα μεγίστην ἐἶναι, 6). Giving birth to a child (especially a boy) was seen as a special achievement on the part of a wife, who was then treated with a higher level of recognition respect: the birth of the first child marked in fact an upgrade in the woman’s status, with a passage from nymphē to gynē.276 This is reflected by Euphiletus’ change in attitude towards his wife: he does no longer keep watch on her as he used to do, and he entrusts all his affairs to her. The wife then proves an excellent housekeeper, so much that Euphiletus states that she was the best of all wives, πασῶν ἡν βελτίστη (7). This demonstrates Euphiletus’ respect and esteem for his wife: she performs her duties as a wife and housekeeper with distinction, earning her husband’s trust and esteem.

In the only scene of interaction described, they treat each other just as an ordinary couple might do, with a mixture of light bickering and playful intimacy (12-13). By that point, however, Euphiletus’ wife was already involved in an extra-marital affair with Eratosthenes, as he discovers from a woman sent by Eratosthenes’ former lover. At that point, he makes sure he catches him in the act and kills him as a punishment for moicheia. Leaving aside the questions related to the legitimacy of Euphiletus’ revenge, it is worth investigating here the role of the wife in the events and their implications for her honour.277 To do so, it is necessary to start by dealing in more detail with the concept of moicheia.278 Although it is often translated as adultery, moicheia is in fact best translated as seduction, as it could be committed even against unmarried women. Moreover, the translation as seduction best reflects the asymmetry intrinsic in the concept: it is the man that commits moicheia against a woman, as expressed with the use of the active forms of the verb moicheuō. By contrast, women are said to suffer moicheia: in the woman’s case, the passive form is used (moicheuomai). Analytically, then, the focus is on the man’s responsibility. However, the woman’s responsibility was acknowledged too, as implied by the legal consequences. A woman caught in moicheia incurred a form of atimia: in the Against Timarchus, Aeschines reports that adulterous women were not allowed to adorn themselves nor

276 See e.g. Lee (2012); Taraszkiewicz (2012); Demand (1994) on motherhood more generally.
277 On the legitimacy of Euphiletus’ revenge, see Carey’s introduction to the speech in Carey (1989), pp. 59–63.
278 On moicheia, see e.g. Harris (1990); Cantarella (1991); Foxhall (1991); Carey (1995).
to take part in public sacrifices; if they did, people were allowed to beat them and dishonour them publicly.\textsuperscript{279}

In general, Euphiletus’ account of the events and of the aftermath of the \textit{moicheia} leaves many questions open with regard to his wife’s honour, and her role in the \textit{moicheia} is described in an ambiguous manner. On the one hand, far from playing a passive role, Euphiletus’ wife actively collaborates in the extramarital relationship, and the humorous dialogue between Euphiletus and her actually showcases her ability to create the best circumstances for her encounters. On the other hand, however, Euphiletus’ narrative also gives an opposite perspective, and the wife’s responsibility is at times downplayed. In the paragraphs that describe the very first phases of the \textit{moicheia}, she is cast as the object of Eratosthenes’ actions (\textit{ὅ ὁμοίως, διαφθείρεται, ἀπώλεσεν αὐτήν}). In 16, the \textit{moicheia} is framed as an act of \textit{hybris} and corruption on Eratosthenes’ part: Eratosthenes is said to be behaving with \textit{hybris} both towards Euphiletus and his wife by the old woman who informs Euphiletus of the affair (ὁ ὠρβρίζων εἰς σὲ καὶ τὴν σὴν γυναῖκα). Finally, in the speech with which Euphiletus supposedly addressed his enemy before killing him, he declared him guilty of choosing ‘to commit this crime (ἀμάρτημα ἔξαμαρτάνειν) against my wife (εἰς τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμήν) and my children rather than to obey behaving responsibly and obeying the laws’.\textsuperscript{280}

Such statements adhere to the analytic asymmetry of the concept of \textit{moicheia}, casting the wife as a victim, rather than an accomplice, of Eratosthenes’ seduction, as if it had not been a matter of her choice.\textsuperscript{281} The reference to Eratosthenes’ \textit{hybris} against both Euphiletus and his wife is particularly interesting; husband and wife are put on the same level and associated as victims of \textit{hybris}. It must be noted that this point is made by the old woman sent by Eratosthenes’ former lover: she might have a vested interest in depicting Eratosthenes as the only one to blame at all, and casting Euphiletus, his wife, and the other woman as victims of his \textit{hybris}. However, it is also important to keep in mind that, when \textit{hybris} is at stake, the victim is

\textsuperscript{279} Aeschin. 1.183: τὴν γὰρ γυναῖκα ἥ’ ἦν ἀλλ’ ἐμοίχος, οὐκ ἐξε ὁμοίωσεις, οὐδὲ εἰς τὰ δημοτελή ἱερὰ εἰσίναι, ἵνα μὴ τὰς ἀναμαρτήσεις τῶν γυναικῶν ἀναμειγνυμένη διαφθείρη: ἐὰν δ’ εἰσὶ ἠ κοσμήται, τὸν ἐντυχόντα κελεύει καταρρηγνύναι τὰ ἱμάτια καὶ τὸν κόσμον ἀφαιρέεσθαι καὶ τύπτειν, εἰργάμενον θεάτην καὶ τοῦ ἀνάπηρον ποίησαι, ἀτιμών τὴν τοιαύτην γυναικα καὶ τὸν βίον ἄβιστον αὐτή κατασκευάζων. See all the comments by Fisher (2001).

\textsuperscript{280} Lys. 1.26, transl. Todd (2000).

\textsuperscript{281} As the remark made by the old woman suggests: οὐ μόνον τὴν σὴν γυναῖκα διέφθαρκεν ἄλλα καὶ ἄλλας πολλὰς ταύτην γὰρ [τὴν] τέχνην ἔχει (Lys. 1.16-17: ‘he has seduced not only your wife, but many others as well. He makes a hobby of it’, transl. Todd (2000)).
expected to have the proper reaction and defend his or her dignity and claims to respect. Clearly, Euphiletus’s wife fails to respond as her status demanded; on the contrary, she accepts this form of *hybris* and so loses her honour as a respectable and faithful wife. This implication is strengthened by the use of the semantics of corruption. Eratosthenes is said to have corrupted and ruined Euphiletus’ wife (4: ἐκείνην τε διέφθειρε; 8: χρόνῳ διαφθείρεται; ἀπώλεσεν αὐτὴν): although the wife is once again presented as the object of Eratosthenes’ actions, the implication here is that her character and intentions were tarnished. Even if it was Eratosthenes who led her astray, she accepted the affair and the *hybris* that it represented. These formulas might thus be taken as hinting to the *atimia* that the woman brought on herself by letting Eratosthenes seduce her. Framing the *moicheia* as something that corrupts and spoils his wife, Euphiletus indirectly acknowledges the woman’s loss of honour and status. The verb *diaphtheirō* also occurs in Euphiletus’ comparison of the effects and seriousness of sexual violence and *moicheia* (1.32-33):

Thus the lawgiver, sirs, considered that those who use force deserve a less penalty than those who use persuasion; for the latter he condemned to death, whereas for the former he doubled the damages, considering that those who achieve their ends by force are hated by the persons forced; while those who used persuasion corrupted thereby their victims’ souls, thus making the wives of others more closely attached to themselves than to their husbands, and got the whole house into their hands, and caused uncertainty as to whose the children really were, the husbands’ or the adulterers’. In view of all this the author of the law made death their penalty. (Transl. Lamb (1930))

οὖτως, ὃ ἀνδρείας, τοὺς βιαζομένους ἐλάττονος ἰημίας ἀξίους ἐγινα τοὺς πείθοντας: τῶν μὲν γὰρ θάνατον κατέγνω, τοῖς δὲ διπλὴν ἐποίησε τὴν βλάβην, ἠγούμενος τοὺς μὲν διαπραττομένους βία ὑπὸ τῶν βιασθέντων μισεῖοι, τοὺς δὲ πείσαντας οὕτωσι αὐτῶν τὰς ψυχὰς διαφθείρειν, ὡστε οἰκειοτέρας αὐτοῖς ποιεῖν τὰς ἀλλοτρίας γυναικῶν ἡ τοῖς ἀνδράσι, καὶ πᾶσαν ἐπὶ ἐκείνοις τὴν οἰκίαν γεγονέναι, καὶ τοὺς παιδας ἀδήλους εἶναι ὑποτέρων τυγχάνονσιν ὄντες, τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἢ τῶν μοιχῶν. ἀνθ᾽ ἃν ὁ τὸν νόμον τίθεις θάνατον αὐτοῖς ἐποίησε τὴν ζημίαν.

Thus the lawgiver, sirs, considered that those who use force deserve a less penalty than those who use persuasion; for the latter he condemned to death, whereas for the former he doubled the damages, considering that those who achieve their ends by force are hated by the persons forced; while those who used persuasion corrupted thereby their victims’ souls, thus making the wives of others more closely attached to themselves than to their husbands, and got the whole house into their hands, and caused uncertainty as to whose the children really were, the husbands’ or the adulterers’. In view of all this the author of the law made death their penalty. (Transl. Lamb (1930))

143
According to Euphiletus, *moicheia* is worse than sexual violence because of the doubts it casts on the paternity of the children, and the effects it has on the wife’s feelings.\(^{282}\) This point resonates with the idea expressed in *Hieron* that husbands do not honour their wives any less even if they happen to have extramarital sex κατὰ συμφοράν, provided that they retain their *philia* towards them intact. *Oikeiotēs* and *philia* are in this case synonyms in describing the affection and trust that was considered as paramount among married couples.

These passages, as well as those from Menander’s *Epitrepontes*, are thus very significant with regard to women’s honour. First, we have another confirmation that loving one’s husband was regarded as a very important aspect in the performance of a wife’s role. Second, these passages show that a woman’s honour was evaluated in a complex way. We have thus another confirmation that *timē* is always contextual and influenced by a multiplicity of factors. In the case of wives, these could be their character, their *philia* towards husbands, the satisfactory fulfilment both of their practical duties in the *oikos* and of their role as mothers, and so on. Even in the case of extra-marital sex, the honour of the woman involved was assessed in a complex way, taking account of the context, her intentions, and her feelings. This point coexists with the asymmetry that characterises marriage in Greek thought: husbands and wives did not enjoy equal rights or equal standing, but within this asymmetry both parties were expected to relate to each other with reciprocity, respect for each other’s role, compassion, and leniency.

### 4.3 The perfect wife: funerary commonplaces

In the previous section, we have looked at stories of real or purported shortcomings on the part of wives. In this section, I shall turn to sources that tend to reflect reality through an idealising lens, namely funerary inscriptions.\(^{283}\) Cross-culturally, epitaphs often provide an idealised, flawless portrait of the person deceased: in the case of epitaphs for women, this characteristic

\(^{282}\) The paternity of children was particularly important at Athens, given that citizenship depended on being the child of two Athenians. Harris (1990), (2006b) has disputed the fact that, from the legal point of view, *moicheia* was regarded as worse than rape; see Carey (1995) for a defence of the traditional view.

\(^{283}\) On funerary stelae for women see Leader (1997); Burton (2003); see Vérilhac (1985); Schirripa (2010); de Andrade (2011) on women in funerary epigrams. On funerary epigrams in general see Tsagalis (2008), providing a literary analysis of fourth-century Attic epigrams, and González González (2019), who devotes a chapter specifically to women (pp. 93-111). See Humphreys (1983); Houby-Nielsen (1996); Osborne (1997) for wider interpretations on Athenian women’s position based on funerary practices and monuments.
allows us better to understand how the ‘perfect wife’ and the perfect conjugal relation were conceptualised. As we shall see, mutuality in affection and honour are often stressed as essential features of happy marriages. We could start from Melita’s gravestone (IGII² 12067):  

χαίρε, τάφος Μελίτης χρηστή γυνή ἐνθάδε κεῖται | φιλοῦντα | ἀντιφιλοῦσα τὸν ἄνδρα Ὄνησιμον ἡσθα κρατίστη. |

tοιγαροῦν ποθεὶ θανοῦσάν σε, ἡσθα γάρ χρηστή γυνή. —— |
καὶ σὺ χαίρε, φιλτατ' ἄνδρων, ἀλλὰ τοὺς ἐμοὺς φίλει. |

Greetings, tomb of Melita; a good wife lies here. You were the best in loving back your loving husband Onesimus. So he misses you now that you are dead, for you were a good wife. Greetings to you also, dearest husband; but do love my children. (My transl.)

The inscription, rather monotonously, praises Melita as a χρηστή wife and insists on the reciprocity that obtained between her and her husband Onesimus: the reciprocal affection between Melita and her husband Onesimus is stressed and embedded in the eulogy, as another element that adds to the praise of the dead wife and of Onesimus himself. Onesimus was not the mere recipient of his wife’s services, but he positively honoured his wife in her lifetime by loving her. Kratistē is interesting from this point of view: following Daux, the term is to be understood in connection with ἀντιφιλοῦσα, expressing Melita’s excellence in reciprocating

284 The stele (which can also be found as GAE 39 and CEG 530) comes from the Piraeus and is datable around 350 BCE (Clairmont (1970), pp. 117–119; Daux (1972), p. 545; Tsagalis (2008), pp. 250, 300).
286 A similar note is found in another tombstone, which was found in Rhodes but could be connected to Athens because of its Attic style, GVI 893 = GAE 32 = Clara Rhodos 9 (1938) 83. The stele is set by Calliariista’s husband as a μνημόσυνον φιλίας, a memorial of their love; see Clairmont (1970), who dates the stele ‘late in first quarter of 4 century’.
287 Some scholars (see e.g. Clairmont (1970), pp. 118–119) have seen in φιλοῦντα ἀντιφιλοῦσα a parallel to Plato’s and Aristotle’s accounts of philia, with their stress on ἀντιφιλεῖν (Pl. Lys. 212c-d; Arist. EN 1155b28, 1157b30, 1159a30, EE 1236b2); see González González (2019), p. 96, against the possibility of actual philosophical influences on the epitaph.
Onesimus’ love.\textsuperscript{288} Although Onesimus expresses it in a very peculiar way, the emphasis on mutuality that we find here is the dominant theme throughout our investigation so far. This suggests that this point is key to the Athenian notion of marriage and, consequently, to the theme of wives’ honour. Rather than being conceived merely in terms of rights or obligations, marriage was regarded as being founded upon mutuality. Melita’s gravestone shows how this could result in an amplification effect of love and \textit{timĕ} the spouses almost seem to compete in loving and honouring each other.

The adjective \textit{chrēstē} also deserves attention. As Claire Taylor suggests, \textit{chrēstos} captures the notion of a good service, either to the \textit{polis} or to the \textit{oikos};\textsuperscript{289} the fulfilment of one’s specific social role is thus paramount in assessing one’s virtue once one is dead. Such an understanding of \textit{chrēstos} might imply an asymmetry of power: the service often comes from a subordinate towards a superior entity, be it the \textit{polis}, as it happens more often in fifth-century sources, or a member of the household, as demonstrated by the abundance of this epithet in slaves’ stelae.\textsuperscript{290} This is strong evidence of the importance of social roles for the evaluation of one’s virtue and honour. No social role is inherently incompatible with honour, but one must fulfil it without falling short nor trespassing its limits. In addition to Taylor’s analysis, a wider interpersonal meaning of \textit{chrēstos} must be acknowledged. Among its meanings, there are also ‘good, kindly’;\textsuperscript{291} within the notion of good service, it is important to recognise that \textit{chrēstos} also conveys an idea

\textsuperscript{288} Following Peek (1955) and rejecting Clairmont’s (1970) translation, Daux (1972), p. 545 translates ‘ce mari (Onèsimos) qui t’aimait, tu l’as aimé de ton côté comme aucune femme jamais n’a aimé son mari (ou: autant que femme jamais a aimé son mari).’

\textsuperscript{289} Taylor (2017), pp. 229–230. She argues that we can observe a semantic shift from a more public-oriented meaning, which prevailed in our fifth-century texts, to the fourth century, when it occurs more with regard to the domestic sphere. While in the fifth century \textit{chrēstos} mainly designates the political and social elites, during the fourth century it abounds in funerary stelae, especially for subordinate groups, namely women, metics, slaves; it is so overrepresented in the last category that it is often taken as a proof of one’s servile status. However, this difference might be due to an imbalance in the kinds of sources available for the two periods, rather than to an actual semantical shift. Less convincing is the idea that the meaning of \textit{chrēstos} differs substantially from that of \textit{agathos}, advanced by Tod (1951), p. 186: while the latter ‘may represent an abstract virtue of the human soul,’ \textit{chrēstos} ‘may denote goodness in action, goodness which finds an outlet in the service of those in the home or the community, helpfulness’, as both are actually used in the two senses.

\textsuperscript{290} There are also other semantic patterns, however: the gods can be \textit{chrēstoi} too, for instance. They can bestow favours on humans, while retaining their superior position; see LSJ II.3, with Hdt. 8.111.

\textsuperscript{291} See LSJ, s.v.
of affection, goodwill, and goodness rooted in specific relationships. This mitigates the potential asymmetry of the service relation, emphasising the interpersonal aspects. This interpretation could be seen as illuminating the relational nature of social statuses: the Greeks envisaged social statuses as creating an interconnected system, in which all members of society had both obligations and claim rights towards the others. As we shall see in the following chapter, slaves were the only category to whom rights were denied in the public domain, but, as I shall argue, even they could enter into a level of mutuality thanks to actual interpersonal relationships. With regard to women in particular, Taylor notes that the adjective is used with regard to ‘their performance of wifely duties’. However, being a wife was not only, and arguably not even primarily, about housework. The fact that Onesimus gives absolute prominence to his own affection for Melita shows that in the case of husbands and wives the focus was on their unity and concord, that is on the relationship itself, rather than on correctly implementing some practical tasks.

Although in the Oeconomicus Xenophon emphasises the wife’s industriousness as the proper fulfilment of her role, many other texts that we are encountering suggest that mutual affection and respect were regarded as more important. While it is obvious that, because of the practical and economic focus of the Oeconomicus, Xenophon would give pride of place to the wife’s practical duties there, New Comedy as a genre does not take into account the practical duties of wives at all. As we can observe, funerary stelae too focus on the interpersonal merits much more than on the practical ones. Loving one’s wife can take many forms. With regard to this, and also to the wife’s disinterested love for her husband and her disregard for wealth, we can discuss Dionysia’s funerary stele. In this inscription (IG II² 11162), Antiphilus praises his deceased wife, Dionysia, for preferring him and sōphrosynē to jewels and clothes:

οὐχὶ πέπλους, οὐ χρυσὸν ἑθαύμασεν ἐμ βίωι ἦδε,
ἀλλὰ πόσιν τε αὐτῆς σωφροσύνην τε ἑτέρων·
ἀντὶ δὲ σῆς ἡβής, Διονυσία, ἡλίκιας τε
tόνδε τάφων κοσμεῖ ὁς πόσις Ἀντίφ[ιλος].

---

292 IG II² 7406, 12067, 12335, see Taylor (2017), p. 229, n. 136, who also quotes a Menandrian proverb comparing a chrēstē gunē to the rudder of the house (Men. Mon. 155).
293 The inscription can be found also as GAE 20 and GVI 1810.
It was not robes and gold that his woman admired while she lived; no, it was her own husband and good sense [that she loved]. But instead of her youthful beauty, Dionysia, it is your grave here that your husband Antiphilus adorns. (Transl. Clairmont 1970)

In this stele too, marital feelings and mutual reverence are presented as laudatory items. Her husband praises Dionysia on the grounds of her preference for him and virtue over jewels and gifts. As we shall see in more detail later, gifts and jewels were regarded as one of the ways in which husbands were expected to show fondness and regard towards their wives. In addition to that, they were also signs of a wife’s faithfulness, as unfaithful wives were not allowed to wear any adornment. Saying that Dionysia ἐθαύμασεν σωφροσύνην expresses her virtue: Dionysia’s husband is stressing that his wife loved him and cherished virtue not to get any reward, but for the sake of love and virtue per se. Dionysia’s philia was disinterested and based on virtue, which are the requirements set by Aristotle to define the noblest form of philia.

Funerary stelae have been seen by scholars as one of the few domains were women could be praised publicly. The idea of epainos, praise, is in fact common in female gravestones. An interesting epitaph is that of Archestrate, dated to the mid-fourth century (IG II² 7227):

πλείστου μὲν καὶ ζῶσα [τ]ρόπων σῶν ἐσχες ἑπαίνον, |
Λυσάνδρου Πιθέως | Ἀρχεστράτη ἔγγονε, καὶ νό[ν] |
[Ἄ]ξειπες σοιοί φίλοις μέγαν πόθον, | ἔξοχα δ' αὐτῆς | ἄνδρι, |
λιπόσα φάος | μοιριδίω θανάτωι. |
vac. 0.020
εὔσεβή ἀσκήσασα βίον | καὶ σώφρονα διόνυσκω, | ἡνίκα |
μοι βιότου μόροσιμον ἠλθε τέλος. |
vac. 0.020
πένθος μητρὶ λιπόσα κασιγνή|τωι τε πόσει τε

On the symbolic function of jewels in funerary stelae, see Leader (1997).
295 See Aesch. 1.183, reporting that adulterous women were not allowed to adorn themselves.
296 On philia based on virtue, see Arist. EN VIII, 1156b7-25.
297 The idea that women could not aim to be praised publicly rests in particular on Pericles’ words in his funeral speech in Thuc. 2.45.2, according to which in the case of women the greatest kleos consists in being talked about the least (Ἡς ἄν ἐπ’ ἐλάχιστον ἀρετῆς πέρι ἡ ψόγου ἐν τοῖς ἄρεσσι κλέος ἦ). Schaps (1977) discusses the orators’ tendency to avoid mentioning respectable women’s names, providing an explanation for it.
298 The inscription also features as CVI 1986 and CEG 543.
You received lavish praise even when you were alive, Archestrate, offspring of Lysandrus of Pithus, because of your character, and now you leave great longing to your friends, especially to your husband, now that you have left the light, because of destined death. I die after I practised a pious and chaste life, as the fated end of life came for me. I die, leaving grief to my mother, to my brother, to my husband and to my child; I am covered by this earth, which is common to all the dead. This is me, Archestrate, daughter of Lysandrus of Pithus (My transl.).

This exceptionally long funerary inscription, divided into three parts, revolves around Archestrate’s virtues, the praise (ἔπαινον, 1) she had received throughout her life, and her relatives’ reactions to her death. The statement that she received epainos is important in that it implies that, at least in a private setting, praising a good woman was normatively regarded as a positive thing to do.299 The second section voices Archestrate’s own pride for her virtue: the verb askeō underlines the practical striving for virtue, here specified as eusebeia and sōphrosynē, and captures the motivational and behavioural aspects of Archestrate’s philotimia. Finally, Archestrate is represented as wife and mother, as well as a daughter: the stress on the grief of all her relatives underscores her closeness with them. The particular stress on the husband’s pothos clarifies that her role as a wife has special priority over her other relationships and roles.

The epitaphs of Chaerippe (IG II² 13040) and Anthippe (IG II² 10672) are very close in phrasing and describe their epainos as more explicitly gender-based: both ascribe to the dead woman ‘the greatest praise for women among humans’.300 As Tsagalis illustrates, there are here

299 The claim that women could only be praised after their death is still fairly widespread; see e.g. Osborne (1997), p. 4: the cemetery is ‘the only place where the public display of a respectable woman was acceptable’ (he ignores female priesthoods completely). Just (1989), p. 93 only admits the possibility of ‘posthumous honour’.

300 Chaerippe’s epitaph (cf. also GV 891 and CEG 493; probably in. IV sec.): ὡστις ἔπαινος ἄριστος ἐν ἀνθρώποις γυναικῶν, / Χαιρίππη τούτῳ πλείστον ἔχουσ’ ἔθανεν / μνημεῖον δὲ ἀρετῆς παῖδιν ἐμοῖς ἐλιπεν. Anthippe’s epitaph (also GV1705 and CEG 546, m. IV sec.): πλείστον ἐν ἀνθρώποις γυναικῶν / ἔσχες ἔπαινον | πασῶν, Ἀνθίππη, / νῦν τε θανοῦσα ἐτ’ ἔχεις.
two distinct groups of people, one in reference to the comparison made (γυναικῶν), the other one in respect of a real or fictive audience (ἐν ἀνθρώποισιν) [sic] ... The function of the two reference groups is not the same: the formulaic expression ἐν ἀνθρώποισι denotes the entire society as the framework delineating the bestowal of praise. On the other hand, the second reference group (γυναικῶν) specifies the kind of recognition the deceased has received: passers-by and readers are left to infer that Chairippe’s virtue was based on certain female qualities she possessed.\footnote{Tsagalis (2008), pp. 178–179.}

In Chaerippe’s case the basis for her epainos can be further specified also with regard to her wifehood and motherhood. The third and last line reads μνημεῖον δὲ ἀρετῆς παισίν ἐμοῖς ἐλιπεν. Hansen corrects ἐλιπεν to ἐλιπον, but the third person form makes perfect sense: Chaerippe’s husband is speaking about her in the third person, testifying to her role as wife and mother. Not only was Chaerippe virtuous, but she also fulfilled the two most important roles in a woman’s life, becoming a wife and a mother. Anthippe’s stele is vaguer, only adding that she retains her epainos even after her death.

As these examples show, funerary stelae lavish praise on women, celebrating their unblemished virtue and philia for all their dear ones. Clearly, gravestones present an idealised portrait of the deceased, but for this very reason they are also an excellent source to reconstruct the discourse of female honour. Although they can rarely be taken as direct evidence of the point of view of the women involved, funerary stelae reveal a great deal about how women’s honour and philetimia were envisaged and shaped. As grounds for praise, they often couple the deceased’s extraordinary virtue and her fulfilment of familial roles, especially as wife and mother. As we have seen, an affectionate and respectful attitude towards the husband is a recurrent ground for praise. In the case of Melita’s stеле in particular, special prominence is given to the reciprocal philia with her husband. This resonates with what we had observed in Menander’s comedies, in which mutuality of feelings and respect was assumed to represent the ideal relation between husbands and wives. Being koinōnoi in their conjugal relationships, both wives and husbands are aware of the nature of their marriage as a cooperative enterprise upheld
by social norms, within which both of them had to fulfil their respective roles; this very cooperation is also the basis for distributive justice as far as honour and respect were concerned. The funerary stelae examined so far focus mainly on women’s virtuous character, *tropoi*, and their familial relationships. As we shall see later, moreover, sometimes other features manage to enter this discourse: in addition to their virtue and domestic roles, women’s praise could also be based on other accomplishments. Before turning to this topic, however, I shall devote a section to the honour of women involved in sexual and affective relationships but who were not eligible to become proper wives. This investigation will allow us to appreciate even further how nuanced the reality of women’s honour could be.

### 4.4 Unmarriageable lovers: *hetairai* and *pallakai*

In this section, I want to examine the reverse of the coin of the roles that I have been examining so far. The texts considered mostly focus on proper, ‘wedded’, wives, who are for the largest part either citizens or at least free. As we have observed, their honour is shaped both by third-person factors such as the widely held norms about marriage and the complementary roles of husband and wife, and by second-person dynamics, such as esteem for the woman in her own individuality and, especially, mutuality of respect and affection. In this section I want to explore some case studies about *pallakai* and *hetairai*. As I aim to show, even in the most extreme case of slave *hetairai*, interpersonal dynamics and mutuality ensure that some level of respect could always find some room, for instance on the basis of love and virtuous character.

The language of *timē*, which as we have seen is frequently applied with regard to wives, recurs also with regard to non-married female partners in some plays of Menander. In *Perikeiromene*, Glycera is the *pallakē* of Polemon, a citizen and a soldier. She is free and, as only she knows, she is also a citizen. In the typology of *pallakai* suggested by Sommerstein, she belongs to the group of free women who cannot marry a man because they lack a male *kyrios*.

At the beginning of the play, Glycera suffers what might be seen as *atimia* at the hands of her partner. He cut her hair, believing that she let a potential lover hug her, whereas Glycera had

---

302 Among the texts I considered, the woman of lowest status is probably Melitta, Onesimus’ wife; it is likely that Onesimus and Melitta are metics and that their union counts as marriage. On the problem of ‘metic marriage’, Ogden (1996), pp. 133–135 argues that the law regulated marriages among metics too. On immigrant women in Athens, see Futo Kennedy (2014).

303 Sommerstein (2014).
only allowed Moschion to hug her because she knew that the boy was her real brother. The word *atimia* is used by the goddess Agnoia in the prologue she delivers, after the description of the events (167-168):

\[\text{ὡς' εἰ τοῦτ' ἐδυσχέραινέ τις}
\text{ἀτιμίαν τ' ἐνόμισε, μεταθέσω πάλιν.}
\]

So, if this
Shocks anyone and seems disgraceful, he must change
His views. *(Transl. Arnott (1996))*

Agnoia rejects the label on the basis of the positive effects that Polemon’s act will lead to, but it is clear that this negative evaluation was expected to be the most natural response. It is difficult to gauge how much Glycera’s actual innocence weighed in such a judgement; however, the play repeatedly condemns Polemon’s impulsive violence, showing that such retaliatory and demeaning behaviour was regarded as unacceptable (187-188, 491-492, 723, 986-987, 1016-1022). Unlike Pamphile in *Epitrepontes*, Glycera feels profoundly insulted and considers as broken the bond with Polemon. As a *pallakē* and as a free woman lacking a male *kyrios*, Glycera is free to choose for herself and to leave Polemon without having to go through any legal procedure.\(^{304}\)

This is what Pataecus, a friend of Polemon and of Glycera in particular (it will turn out that she is actually his daughter), explains to him in an interesting dialogue. While Polemon speaks of Glycera as his wife (489: ἐγὼ γαμετὴν νενόμικα ταύτην) to prove his rights on her, Pataecus points out that she is ‘her own mistress’ (497: ἡ αὐτής ἐστ’ ἐκείνη κυρία), and insists on her right to leave him (491-493):\(^{305}\)

\[\text{ἡρεσκες αὐτῇ τυχὸν Ἰσως, νῦν δ’ οὐκέτι.}
\text{ἀπελήλυθε[ν δ'] οὗ κατὰ τρόπον σοῦ χρωμένου}
\]

---

\(^{304}\) On Glycera’s status see for instance Furley (2015), pp. 9–12. Glycera has been brought up by a woman, probably a metic, passing her off as her daughter. Glycera is free, but she lacks the requisites to be a proper wife, because she has no male *kyrios*. When Pataecus is revealed as her father, Glycera is restored to her citizen status and enabled to marry Polemon. Although the play is probably set in Corinth, Athenian conventions about statuses and women’s legal standing seem to be in play anyway.

\(^{305}\) On Polemon’s claim in 489, see Gomme and Sandbach (1973), pp. 505–506, ad 487: Polemon ‘must mean that he thought of their union as permanent, and that he regarded her with the same sort of respect as he would have had for a true γαμετή.’ See also Furley (2015), p. 138, ad 490: ‘That the play is set in Corinth has no influence on the common parlance about marriage.’
αὐτῇ.

Perhaps
She liked you—now she doesn’t any more.
She’s left because you’ve treated her so badly! (Transl. Arnott (1996))

According to Pataecus, Polemon’s gesture was disrespectful enough to justify the break-up, regardless of what had happened between Glycera and Moschion: at this point in the play Pataecus still believes that Glycera could actually be infatuated with Moschion (708-721), but this does not seem to weigh on Pataecus’ judgement. The implication is that Polemon crossed a line in the respect he owed to his mistress: recognition respect is here clearly at stake, and the bases on which this was grounded are arguably, in this case, Glycera’s status as a freeborn woman, and the respect that should stem from Polemon’s *philia* towards her.306

Pataecus persuades Polemon to refrain from seeking *timōria* through a violent act of self-help, and to rely instead on persuasion as the best way to solve problems among lovers. Polemon, still deeply distraught, asks him to be his ambassador (506-510).307

Γλυκέρα μὲ καταλέλοιπε, καταλέλοιπε μὲ
Γλυκέρα, Πάταικ’. ἀλλ’ ἐξερ ὁῦτω σοι δοκεῖ
πράττειν—συνήθης ἡσθα γὰρ καὶ πολλάκις
λελάληκας αὐτῇ πρότερον—ἔλθὼν διαλέγου,
πρέσβευον, ἰκετεύω σε.

Pataecus, Glycera has left
Me, left me—Glycera! But if you settle
On action—you were friendly, in the past
You’ve often talked to her—well, go and talk
To her, be my ambassador, I beg you! (Transl. Arnott (1996))

---

306 On recognition respect, see Darwall (1977).
Pataecus is referred to as Glycera’s synēthēs, friend and intimate.\textsuperscript{308} This undermines the idea that it was disgraceful for free women to have male friends external to their oikos.\textsuperscript{309} Moreover, the play stresses that Glycera can count on a social network for support: in addition to the friendship with Pataecus, she can count on ties also with other women. On leaving Polemon’s house, she had taken refuge in their neighbour Myrrhine’s house, and the rich citizen woman was able to offer her help and protection.

Polemon further begs Pataecus to act as his ambassador, adding (513-516):

\begin{quote}
αὐτὴ ἡ σωτηρία τοῦ πράγματος.
ἐγὼ γὰρ εἶ τι πόσον ἥδικης ὄλως,
εἰ μὴ διατελῶ πάντα φιλοτιμοῦμενος,
tὸν κόσμον αὐτῆς εἰ θεωρήσαις—
\end{quote}

All success in this attempt
Depends on it! You see, if I have ever
At all wronged her... if I don’t keep on trying
My best, in every way... if you could see her things... (Transl. Arnott (1996))

Polemon is here attempting to put together some lines of self-defence. ‘Forgetting in his agitation that he has just shorn off her hair’,\textsuperscript{310} he maintains that he has always treated Glycera with the utmost respect in the past, avoiding any adikia and having instead an attitude of philotimia towards her. Respect as refraining from adikia and honour as positive deference are two sides of the same coin, in Polemon’s self-defence. He claims that he never fell short of the minimum respect that was due to her, and that he showed for her particular forms of supererogatory honour. The term φιλοτιμοῦμενος is of particular significance in this context.\textsuperscript{311}

\textsuperscript{308} See Furley (2015), p. 140, ad 508–509, showing that synēthēs is used to describe Pataecus’ relationship with Glycera, and not with Polemon: ‘the imperfect reflects the change in the family relationships now Glycera has left.’

\textsuperscript{309} On an ideological level, male and female friendships were only acceptable when the woman was a hetaire, as in Aspasia’s or Theodote’s case, see Lewis (2002), pp. 205–208; but, as Lewis herself concludes, reality might be different, as suggested by the iconography of men and women talking together in public space.


\textsuperscript{311} On its meaning Sandbach comments: ‘Here used either in the sense ‘showing a love of honour’ (not ‘love of honours’, i.e. ambitious, or rivalling others), or more probably to mean ‘in earnest endeavour’, sc. to treat her well: πάντα is acc. of respect, cf. Xenophon, Ὀικον. 4. 24, ἀεὶ ἐν γε τι φιλοτιμοῦμενος’ (Gomme and Sandbach (1973), p.
Explicitly bringing out the theme of honour, this lexical choice fits into the specific semantics that permeates the whole play: Polemon’s identity as a soldier influences the overall lexical structure of *Perikeiromene*, with a prominence of military and public vocabulary applied to to the private sphere too.\(^\text{312}\) Polemon’s language in this scene is particularly frantic and the reference to *philotimia* is quite elliptic, but we might unpack it with reference to the forensic script: in legal contexts, public expenditures could be mentioned as indirect proof of one’s good character and innocence, and Polemon seems to reproduce this exact rhetorical practice to persuade Pataecus of his past and future goodwill towards Glycera.\(^\text{313}\) As it happens in forensic speeches, he claims to be innocent (ἔγὼ γὰρ εἰ τι πώποτ’ ἡδίκηχ’ ὀλως, 514), and his benefactions constitute a proof of this. Polemon’s past, present, and future *philotimia* towards Glycera prove his love for her, demonstrating that he has a right, from his point of view, to *charis* and *syngnōmē*. The reciprocal nature of honour is key here: Polemon stresses his endeavours to respect and honour his partner, grounding his plea on them.

We can further reflect on the implications of this use of *philotimia* in terms of gender roles and their specific forms of honour. In Polemon’s words, Glycera is put into the role of the *polis* qua beneficiary of *euergesia*. According to the political and forensic script, the *polis* plays the dominant role, with the liturgist cast in the subordinate position.\(^\text{314}\) Likewise, Polemon describes his attitude towards Glycera as a form of service, a *servitium amoris*. In fact, with regard to the adjective *philotimos* in civic discourse, it has been noted that its meaning corresponds sometimes to ‘patriotic’ rather than ‘ambitious’.\(^\text{315}\) This seems to be the case also here, *mutatis

---

\(^\text{312}\) The conflict between Polemon and Glycera, for instance, is repeatedly described as a war or battle: in the passage we have examined, Polemon asks Pataecus to act as an ambassador (πρέσβευσον, 510). See in general Furley (2015), pp. 30–32.


\(^\text{314}\) On euergetism, see Gygax (2016); Gygax and Zuiderhoek (2021)

Polemon’s aim is to demonstrate his love and respect for Glycera; the kosmos Polemon mentions in the following line is a concrete example of his feelings. Loving one’s partner, respecting her, and giving her gifts are thus the private and romantic equivalents of euergetic acts. Within romantic relationships, women can thus be envisaged as occupying the superior position, and love can be conceptualised as a bestowal of honour. Moreover, the equation between Glycera and the polis underlines the fact that, at least from Polemon’s point of view, Glycera occupies now a position of power and honour, being able to determine Polemon’s fate by either staying with him or abandoning him. As Pataecus has explained to him, Polemon must accept Glycera’s freedom to leave him when she does not like him anymore, corresponding to the polis’ freedom to reward a benefactor with an honorific decree. This form of freedom does not exclude normative expectations, though: as I have stressed, charis and reciprocity are fundamental here. Polemon has been honouring Glycera, that is, he has bestowed timē on her. By doing so, however, he has acquired the right to put forth claims to reciprocity. In other words, bestowing timē on Glycera also becomes the ground (or the proof) of Polemon’s own timē; being respectful and showing the proper devotion to one’s partner is here put forth as an adequate demonstration of one’s worth and desert.

However, this is how Polemon sees things, while other characters might have different perspectives. Polemon’s violent gesture, over which he had completely glossed, is sufficient for Glycera to see things in the opposite way; when Pataecus asks her to forgive Polemon and return to their house, she replies (722-723):

[εἰς ἑτέραν τινὰ
 ύβριζετω τὸ λοιπὸν.

Let him be abusive against another woman, from now on! (My transl.)

Glycera construes Polemon’s act as hybris. She feels deeply offended and regards Polemon’s behaviour as unacceptable and unforgivable. She makes this a point of self-respect; her sense of her own timē emerges even when she rejects as absurd Pataecus’ suspicion that she really had a fancy for Moschion, asking οὐδ’ αἰσχ[ύνομαι; (717), ‘and I don’t feel ashamed?’.

Aristotle notes that normally in unequal philiai the superior receives honour, the inferior some sort of profit (EN VIII, 1163b3-5). This confirms that here Polemon implies that Glycera is in a superior position.
Pataecus urges for a more understanding attitude towards Polemon and disapproves of her decision to move out permanently from his house, he respects her choice (748-749):

ΠΑΤ. [πραχθή]σεται
tοῦτο <γε> γελοιον. ἄλλ' ὑπὲρ πάντων [ἐ]χρῆν
ὁρᾶν στὸ —
ΓΛΥΚ. ἐγὼ δα τᾶμ' ἀριστῇ.
PATAECUS It shall be
Done. It’s absurd—you should have [looked at] all
The angles...
GLYCERA (interrupting) I know my own business best. (Transl. Arnott (1996))

This is a surprisingly powerful assertion of a woman’s confidence in her ability to choose what is best for herself, even against the wishes and the advice of the two men Glycera was closest to. The fact that Pataecus respects her autonomous choice and does what she asks is significant, especially when we consider the gap between them in terms of age and status. Pataecus is old and is of citizen status, but Glycera deals with him on a level of equality, asserting her ideas about her honour without any trace of subservience. This shows that even in a friendship where the woman is ‘inferior’ with regard to gender, age, and status at the same time, she could be respected and supported in her decision, despite the fact that the man does not agree with them.

The play eventually favours Pataecus’ conciliatory point of view: when Glycera discovers that Pataecus is her own and Moschion’s father and she thus turns out to be a citizen girl with a kyrios, all the frictions dissolve. Polemon realises that he acted as an alastōr and zēlotypos anthropōpos (986-987, ’miscreant and jealous fool’, as Furley translates),317 and Glycera forgives him. Her maid Doris announces to Polemon that Glycera will go back to him (990, πορεύσεθ᾽ ὡς σεθ᾽). Later her father comments on her decision (1006-1008):

πάνυ σοῦ φιλῶ τὸ [ν]ῦν διαλλαχ[θήσομαι].
ότ’ εὐτύχηκας, τότε δὲ[χεοθ]αι τὴν δίκ[ὴν
τεκμήριον τοῦτ’ ἐστ[ιν Ἐλλήνος τρ[όπου.

I greatly like your ‘[I’ll] now make it up’.
Accepting a fair settlement when you’ve
Been lucky—that’s a mark of [Greek] beha[viour]! (Transl. Arnott
(1996))

These lines give access to Glycera’s own words, in which she once again asserts her individual will;\(^{318}\) this time, the uncompromising indignation of the previous acts gives way to a conciliatory attitude, conceived as a peace treaty among former enemies. As Pataecus underlines, Glycera does not exploit the upper hand she gained to further demean Polemon in this virtual negotiation. On the contrary, now that she is finally experiencing a good twist, she finally chooses to be more lenient and cooperative and to forgive Polemon; and this, Pataecus adds, is the Greek \(\textit{tropos}\). This comment confirms the idea that \textit{tимē} is a non-zero sum game that rewards pro-social and cooperative attitude.

With regard to the honour of women, this passage is particularly meaningful because it shows that, despite the poetic necessity of achieving reconciliation in the play’s ending, Glycera’s autonomous will is not erased; on the contrary, the fact that she wants to marry Polemon is stressed and is part of the desirable outcomes. A similar situation can be found in Menander’s \textit{Misoumenos}, where the heroine Crateia similarly resents her lover to the point of humiliating him (so much that in 36-37 he exclaims ‘I’m miserably treated with \textit{hybris} by the

\(^{318}\) I disagree with Konstan (1987), according to whom Glycera is ‘deprived of authority over herself’. Following Traill (2008), pp. 149–155, I believe that (1) here it is particularly important to stick to an emic rather than an etic interpretation; (2) Glycera is actually empowered by the discovery of her status as a citizen woman with a proper \(\textit{kyrios}\) (see 1007, \(\epsilon\ὑ\tau\acute{\upsilon}\chi\kappa\alpha\zeta\)); and (3) her authority over herself is not erased by the necessity of a reconciliation in accordance with dramatic convention. As long as she lacked a \(\textit{kyrios}\), Glycera had no protection against Polemon’s impulsiveness, thus she was not wholly free to choose, as her vulnerability posed limits to what she could risk. With her father’s support, instead, she could divorce from Polemon were he to mistreat her again. Moreover, her autonomous will is not at all chocked by her new citizen status, as her reported speech in 1006 shows; as we saw with Pamphile in \textit{Epitrepontes}, furthermore, the idea that citizen women were condemned to be quiet requires some reassessment. Konstan’s reading of Glycera’s fate disregards, I believe, her own perspective: we may disagree with her choice, but it seems undeniable that it is presented (by Menander) as her choice. What changes is not the mechanism (honour), but the filler (values, criteria for choices etc.). Glycera’s choice, besides, appears to me to be wholly understandable within the emotional and relational context of the play. Polemon had first insulted Glycera, but – as Pataecus’ advice hinted at – even Glycera’s unflinching attitude was in some way a disregard of the norms of reciprocity, as she ignores the evidence of Polemon’s own vulnerability, which Pataecus took pains to stress.
captive girl’), but, once she realises that he was innocent, she finally asserts her desire to marry him (again through a reported speech, with a poignant ‘yes!’). Glycera’s and Crateia reactions and decisions thus say a great deal about women’s agency, self-respect, and familial and social relationships: these two examples show that women’s agency and will could be regarded as important and worthy of respect.

A good case study for another category of pallakai comes from Samia, where, in the events that precede the action of the play, the Athenian citizen Demeas fell in love with Chrysis, a free hetaira of Samian origin, and made her his pallakē. While Glycera and Crateia are restored to their original citizen status, Chrysis is a true foreigner and her fate is to be Demeas’ pallakē. In this position, however, she has a respected role in the oikos: she is in charge of domestic activities, is regarded and cherished as the mistress by the slaves, and makes friends with her citizen neighbours, just as a citizen wife would do. The play, however, underlines the precariousness of her status too: Demeas first threatens to dismiss her when he mistakenly believes that she failed to expose their bastard child; then he actually casts her out of the oikos, when he suspects her of cheating on him with his adoptive son. In this scene, Demeas accuses her of taking undue advantage and overindulging in her good fortune (τρυφᾶν γὰρ οὖν ἡπίστασ’, 376). In 391-397, he reminds her of her dire prospects as a hetaira:

δῆσει σεαυτήν νῦν ἄκριβως ἢτις Ε.  
αἱ κατὰ σε, Χρυσί, πραττόμεναι δράχμας δέκα  
μόνας ἔτεραι τρέχουσιν ἐπὶ τὰ δεῖπνα καὶ  
πίνουσα ἄκρατον ἄχρι ἃν ἀποθάνωσιν, ἢ  
πεινῶσιν, ἢν μὴ τοῦ ἐτοίμως καὶ ταχὺ  
ποώσιν. ἔσει δ᾽ οὐδενὸς τοῦτ’, οἰδ᾽ ὅτι,  
ἡττον σύ, καὶ γνώσει τίς οὖν ἡμάρτανες.

You’ll see exactly what you are! The others of Your type dash to their parties, where they charge  
A mere ten drachmas and knock back strong wine  
Until they die—or else they starve, if what  
They do’s not quick and willing. But I’m sure

319 Men. Mis. 36-37: ἐλείν ύβρίζομαι / ... ὑπὸ τῆς αἰχμαλώτου.
320 See 969: ‘ναί,’ φησί, ’πάππα, βούλιζομαι’.
You’ll know this just as well as anyone.
You’ll find out what you are and how you blundered! (Transl. Arnott (2000))

The key words here, in *Ringkomposition*, are ὀψεὶ ἡτὶς εἶ ... γνώσει τὸς οὖς ἡμᾶρτανες. What Demes refers to is Chrysis’ identity as a *hetaira*; being a (former) *hetaira* who had the rare blessing of becoming a rich citizen’s *pallakei*, she should not have wasted the chance that she had been given to enjoy a life of comfort. Demes focuses especially on the economic repercussions on her lifestyle; just to scratch out a living, Chrysis will be forced to accept any hiring; according to Demes, she cannot hope to earn more than ten drachmae, a very low sum for *hetairai*. The point about Chrysis’ price range is also a metaphor for her overall *timei*, with the purpose of expressing Demes’ utter contempt; all the emphasis on her identity as a *hetaira* obviously points in that direction too. Demes is voicing an essentialist view of status and identities, whereby Chrysis’ alleged *hamartia* has proved that she is actually despicable and unworthy of anything good, as the stereotypes about *hetairai* suggested: social and economic statuses are here conflated with moral predispositions and character.

The audience knows how unjust this judgement is, given that throughout the whole play Chrysis has demonstrated exceptional generosity and bravery. Because she did not want Moschion’s (Demes’ adoptive son’s) baby to be staying with a nurse in a separate house, she offered to cover for Moschion and passed his child as hers, even if she knew that Demes did not want her to raise any *nothoi*. She stays loyal to Moschion even when Demes throws her away, demonstrating that she is willing to lose everything to help him and the baby. Demes’ action is criticised also by other characters, who believe that the only reason for it is that Chrysis chooses to rear her *nothos* child. Once Demes has thrown Chrysis out of his house, Niceratus, Demes’ neighbour and friend, is incredulous and thinks that Demes has gone mad (405-420). In 453-473, Moschion confronts his father over this: he asks Demes what his *philoi* will think of him, implying that Demes’ gesture would incur communal reproach. At any rate, the events in the play show how dangerously exposed to changes of fortune *pallakai* were: Demes threatens to cast Chrysis out when he discovers that she kept a *nothos*, and then he actually throws her out.

321 For *hetairai*, ‘the normal daily rate would be 25-30 drachmae’ (Sommerstein (2013), p. 224). However, *hetairai* could not expect to be hired very often, so their income was probably not comparable to the daily 2-2.5 drachmae that a skilled worker earned around 329/328.

322 An analogous metaphors occurs in Men. *Per. 380-382*: see my chapter on slaves for an analysis of the passage.
when he gets convinced that she cheated on him. *Pallakai* were under no widely held *nomos* and their legal rights were very limited. The only form of obligation they could count on was the informal kind of obligation and expectation of mutuality that come with *philia*, which, however, cannot offer any strong guarantee, as Chrysis finds out at her own expense. At the beginning of the play, when she offered to pass Moschion’s child as her own, she was warned that Demeas would get mad at her, but she replied that he was in love and for this reason he would not stay mad with her for long (80–83). As it turns out, by contrast, when he perceives a conflict between his *erōs* for Chrysis and his duties as citizen or as father, Demeas prioritises the latter.\(^{323}\) Obligations based on these kinds of feelings and relationships, therefore, were quite unreliable.

This does not mean that these kinds of claims to respect were not perceived, however, as Chrysis’ and her friends’ assumptions suggest. A *pallakē* was likely to feel disrespected if her partner abandoned her with no strong enough reason. In Antiphon’s *Against the Stepmother*, Philoneus, a friend of the speaker’s father, decides to put his slave *pallakē* in a brothel. The speaker’s stepmother exploits these circumstances to use the *pallakē* as a pawn to kill the speaker’s father (Antiph. 1.14):

\[\text{αἰσθομένη δ’ ὅτι ἀδικεῖσθαι ἔμελλεν ὑπὸ τοῦ Φιλόνεω,}
\[\text{μεταπέμπεται, καὶ ἐπειδὴ ἤλθεν, ἔλεξεν αὐτῇ ὅτι καὶ αὐτῇ ἀδικοῖτο}
\[\text{ὑπὸ τοῦ πατρὸς τοῦ ἡμετέρου.}
\]

on hearing of the wrong intended by Philoneus, she sends for her, informing her on her arrival that she herself was also being wronged by our father. (Transl. Maidment (1941))

She then persuades her to administer a (poisonous) ‘love potion’ to the two men, who subsequently die. The word ἀδικεῖσθαι is key here: being put in a brothel by her own lover is not distressing not just because of the concrete consequences, but also because of the insult received.\(^{324}\) The reference to *adikia* makes clear that the *pallakē* feels that her claims to respect are trampled upon, and the speaker’s stepmother understands and exploits these feelings. Although, from a legal point of view, Philoneus was entitled to do whatever he wanted with her, the slave *pallakē* expected a better treatment, on account of their relationship. The desire and

\[^{323}\text{See in particular 130-136, 270-280, 325-356.}\
\[^{324}\text{It should be noted that the verb *adikeō* can be used in erotic contexts in cases of unrequited love. However, the meaning is still that of wronging (see LSJ s.v.), so the idea of *adikia* is still very much relevant.}\]
expectation to be loved and respected emerges also, for instance, in Lysias 1, where we are provided some insight into the perspective of another female character in the speech, namely Eratosthenes’ former lover. The woman felt offended when he deserted her in favour of Euphiletus’ wife and construes as a form of adikia the fact that her lover disregards and abandons her, and is angry with him. In Apollodorus’ Against Neaira, Neaira abandons Phrynion because ‘she was treated with wanton outrage by Phrynion, and was not loved as she expected to be, and because her wishes were not granted by him’. As these last examples show, these expectations from the part of a pallakē were not always regarded as warranted or respected. The women’s need to feel loved is at least acknowledged as a claim they lay on their lovers, even in non-marital relationships, but it is a claim that can be ignored or easily discarded as unwarranted.

To conclude this section, sexual relationships created in women, even in slave women, a sense of entitlement to reciprocity in obligations and respect. Being loved is a special form of recognition, which increases one’s sense of self-worth and thus one’s time. As an interpersonal experience, love entails expectations towards the loved person, which correspond to a Fichtean Aufforderung, as the subject implicitly invites the other person to respond. Once a relationship has started, furthermore, the expectation of reciprocity strengthens. A failure to meet this expectation adequately or an unjustified interruption in the relationship can therefore be construed as a form of disrespect; however, slave women or unwedded partners were more exposed to disregard, and their claims to support and respect could be easily dismissed.

4.5 Female work and careers: philia, pride, and honours

Even in ancient Athens, women’s experiences were not limited to their relationships with men; as recent trends in scholarship have started to highlight, social life was much richer and more

---

325 Lys. 1.15: αὐτῇ δὲ ὃργιζομένη καὶ ἀδικεῖσθαι νομίζει, ὅτι οὐκέτι ὁμοίως ἐφοίτα παρ’ αὐτήν (‘This woman was angry with him and felt herself wronged, because he no longer visited her so regularly’, transl. Lamb (1930)). Medea is an obvious further example of a woman that feels wronged when her partner chooses another woman over her.

326 [Dem.] 59.35: Ἑπείδη τοῖνυν ἀσελγῶς προύπηλακίζετο ὑπὸ τοῦ Φρυνίωνος καὶ οὐχ ὡς ἔφετο ἡγαθότα, οὐδ’ ύπρέτει αὐτῇ ἡ ἐβουλεύτο... (transl. Murray (1939), adapt.).

complex than normally assumed in the case of otherwise marginal categories.\(^\text{328}\) With regard to women in Classical Athens, funerary inscriptions in particular illuminate other significant areas of their lives. Female labour and its social implication represent a widely researched field: it is now universally acknowledged that not only domestic but also outdoor labour was an everyday reality for most women.\(^\text{329}\) Although normative accounts from ancient authors speak about this as a dishonouring activity for citizen women, if we look at sources such as gravestones it becomes clear that not only was this a normal part of women’s lives, but it could also be a paramount way for them to attain praise and develop pride.\(^\text{330}\) Phanostrate’s epitaph, datable to the mid-fourth century, occupies a place of honour in accounts of female professions (\textit{IG II}^2 6873).\(^\text{331}\)

\[\text{μαία καὶ ιατρός Φανοστράτη ἐνθάδε κεῖται}
\[ο]ὐθενὶ λυπη<ρ>ά, πᾶσιν δὲ θανοῦσα ποθεινῆ.

Phanostrate, midwife and doctor, lies here. She caused pain to no one, and now that she is dead she is longed for by everyone. (My transl.)

It would be extremely interesting to know more about Phanostrate’s legal and social status: as reconstructed by Daux, the title mentions a citizen man identified with the demotic \textit{Melitēs}; it is thus possible, although far from certain, that Phanostrate was his daughter or wife, and therefore a citizen herself.\(^\text{332}\) While being a nurse (μαία) is the most common occupation for female workers, Phanostrate is the only woman to be identified as a doctor (ιατρός) in fourth-

---

\(^{328}\) See Taylor and Vlassopoulo (2015) on the importance of various communities and networks, even of informal nature and capable of bringing together people of very different statuses and background.

\(^{329}\) See e.g. Brock (1994); Kosmopoulou (2001); Taylor (2017), pp. 129–148.

\(^{330}\) For examples of the problems that an Athenian female citizen could incur because of her work, see Demosthenes’ \textit{Against Eubulides}: the speaker’s mother’s citizenship was contested because of her job as a nurse (Dem. 57.42). See my discussion of this text below.

\(^{331}\) The inscription can also be found as \textit{GVI} 342 = \textit{CEG} 569 = \textit{CAT} 2.890 = \textit{GAE} 53.

\(^{332}\) Daux (1972), pp. 550–553. See the comments by Lambert and Totelin (2022): ‘It may be that, since there is no other indication of her relationship to the man from Melite, we would be justified in assuming that, as would be the case with a male referred to in this way, the man was her father; or he may have been her husband’. As they add, however, ‘it cannot be entirely ruled out that she was or (perhaps less unlikely) had been a slave of the man from Melite.’
century sources. The higher level of specialisation obviously ensured Phanostrate a special reputation and *timē*. Although the epitaph gives no insight into her point of view, it is likely that her professional success made her proud of herself too.

More evidence of Phanostrate’s success and honour might come from a different inscription, in which a Phanostrate is mentioned in a dedication to Asclepius:333

Φανοστράτη—–?—–
vacat 0,021
Δηλοφάνης ἀνέθηκε Χο[λαργεύς εἰκόνα τήνδε], /
tῆς αὐτοῦ θυγατρὸς Δ[——] εὐξαμένης; /
Λυσιμάχης γὰρ μητρὶ —— — — — —— /
χεῖρα μέγας σωθῆρ —— — — — — ,
vacat 0,03
ἐπὶ Πατ[αίκου ἱερέως].

Phanostrate [. . . ?]
Delophanes of Cholargus dedicated [this likeness] his own daughter D- [having vowed it] for on [her?] mother Lysimache . . .
[you laid your?] hand, great saviour . . .
In the priesthood of Pat[αίkos] (Transl. Lambert (2022))

The most plausible interpretation is that Delophanes dedicated a statue of this Phanostrate to Asclepius on behalf of his daughter, who wanted to celebrate her mother Lysimache’s healing. Given the medical nature of the dedication, it is likely that this Phanostrate is the same person as the doctor of the gravestone.334 This is an extraordinary example of how a woman (whose legal status is unfortunately unclear) could attain such a degree of esteem with regard to her own profession to be celebrated with a statue set up in a sanctuary. It is worth noting that both sources lay stress especially on reciprocity between women. The relief on Phanostrate’s gravestone features a *dexiōsis* between Phanostrate and another woman (Antiphile),

333 *IG* II3 4 700; the editor Jaime Curbera has corrected the reading of the name from the masculine to the feminine version of the name; see Curbera (2017).
334 Curbera (2017); Lambert (2022).
accompanied by four children;\textsuperscript{335} the dedication was promoted by the daughter of Delophanes after her mother recovered (presumably thanks to Phanostrate’s *technē*). Women achieved, received, and bestowed honour on each other, and could do so also in more public ways.\textsuperscript{336} Although the statue represents a private dedication, its public setting represents a further honour for Phanostrate.

In the gravestone too, the universality of the opposition οὐθεν vs. πάσιν could be a hint of its public character, as if Phanostrate’s activity was not limited to a domestic and micro-relational sphere, but extended in a wider dimension. I was able to find only two parallels for the expression πάσιν ποθειν-;\textsuperscript{337} in all other attestations, πάσιν is either specified by φίλοις *vel sim.* in reference to their emotions, or is used with regard to the possible onlookers in phrases like πάσιν ιδέσθαι. Although it is possible to interpret πάσιν as referring to Phanostrate’s *philoii*, its vagueness might also be construed as a sign of Phanostrate’s fame and of the benefits that the wider community could receive from her. As Taylor appropriately comments:

\begin{quote}
The identification of Phanostrate as *maia* and *iatros*, and the Hippocratic corpus which relies, in part, on women’s knowledge and expertise about birth, suggest that midwifery and medicine could be economically profitable activities, but also show that they were firmly rooted within women’s social relationships. No doubt the range of expertise was wide, and the regularity of women’s employment or assistance at births varied according to circumstance, but it is likely that, like wet-nursing, midwifery was an arena in which women could increase their capabilities, gain
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{335} See Daux (1972), pp. 550–554 for the correct description of the relief and of the text, which Clarmont (1970) described inaccurately.

\textsuperscript{336} Comparing fifth- and fourth-century epitaphs, Eva Stehle has noticed a shift as far as women are concerned: according to her, ‘in the fourth century women’s domestic virtue becomes a matter for public praise’ (Stehle (2001), p. 185). On the general shift observable in fourth-century grave stelae towards a stronger focus on the *oikos* and on a markedly emotive discourse, see references in Stehle (2001), p. 182, n. 12.

\textsuperscript{337} In IG\textsuperscript{II} 12974 (= GVI 1499 = CEG 564), πασιν ποθεινόν is said of a small boy; in IG\textsuperscript{II} 13086 (= GVI 81 = CEG 494), the restored πασι [ποθεινή] refers to the deceased woman.
social value, and cement social ties between themselves and other women.\textsuperscript{338}

Professional services between women and female homosociality in general represented particularly favourable contexts for women to experience success and gain esteem, even when the official ideological standards ran against them.

Melitta’s gravestone (\textit{IG II}² 7873) is remarkable as far as the language of honour is concerned: \textsuperscript{339}

\begin{verbatim}
[[Μέλιττα]] Ἀπολλοδώρου
ἰσοτελεῖοθυγάτηρ
Μέλιττα
tίτθη.
ἐνθάδε τὴν χρηστὴν τίτθην κατὰ γαῖα καλύπτει | ἵπποστράτης καὶ νῦν ποθεὶ σε, καὶ ζῶσαν σ’ ἐφίλουν, τίτθη, καὶ νῦν σ’ ἔτι τιμῶ | ο(exports) καὶ κατὰ γῆς καὶ τιμήσω σε ἄχρι ἄν ζῶ | οἶδα δὲ σοι ὧτι καὶ κατὰ γῆς, εἶπερ χρηστοῖς γέρας ἐστίν, πρῶτει σοι τιμαί, τίτθη, παρὰ Φερσεφόνει Πλούτωνι τε κεῖναι.
\end{verbatim}

Melitta, nurse, daughter of the \textit{isotelēs} Apollodorus. Here the earth covers Hippostrate’s good nurse, Melitta, and now she misses you. I loved you when you were alive, nurse, and I still honour you now that you are under the earth, and I shall honour you as long as I live. I know that, if there is a reward for good people, even below the earth for you above all honours are in store from Persephone and Plouton. (My transl.)

I shall leave aside some of the disputes surrounding the identification of the people mentioned, and assume, as most scholars do, that the dead person is the nurse Melitta, daughter of the \textit{isotelēs} Apollodorus, and that the tomb was commissioned by her ex-nursling Hippostrate. \textsuperscript{340}As

\textsuperscript{338} Taylor (2017), p. 145.

\textsuperscript{339} The inscription also features as \textit{GVI} 747 and \textit{GAE} 25.

\textsuperscript{340} This is the interpretation given by Daux (1972), pp. 532–535; Brock (1994), p. 337; Futo Kennedy (2014), pp. 135–136. Clairmont (1970), followed by Kosmopoulou (2001), p. 290, demonstrates serious confusion in saying that Melitta is not properly free because the status of \textit{isoteleis} was midway between metics and slaves.
for Melitta’s status, if she is really the daughter of an isotelēs it seems safe to presume that she was a free non-citizen woman, of a higher status than most other metics thanks to the privilege of isoteleia granted to her father. Once again, we find an expression of female reciprocity, a relationship in which one of the two women manifests her charis towards the other. Melitta is described as τὴν χρηστὴν τίτην: as we observed before, chrēstē refers to the proper fulfilment of one’s social role, but also to the mutual ties that her serviceability has created within the relationship with Hippostrate. The affection and mutuality are here even more evident than in Melita and Onesimus’ case, and their connection to honour is made explicit. Melitta’s excellent service as a nurse has created a strong relationship and eventually converted into extraordinary timē displayed to her by Hippostrate. Melitta’s service was not merely professional: her relationship with Hippostrate is described as philia, and the implicit equation of ἐφίλουν with τιμῶ and τιμήσω illuminates the centrality of honour in the understanding of philia. According to Hippostrate, Melitta is worthy of timai as geras for her chrēstotēs, with the πρώτει further underscoring the almost competitive excellence of the nurse. It is their very relationship that provides the basis for the honour that Hippostrate assigns to her nurse. Her chrēstotēs is inscribed within their philia and we might say that it actually captures Melitta’s excellence itself in being part of that relationship.

So far, we have examined cases where the praise is bestowed on a woman by someone else, usually their male relatives or a woman who benefited from the woman’s professional activity. The next inscription casts light on one side of the issue that scholars often claim as irretrievable, namely women’s own perspective on their honour. IG II² 4334 is a dedication by Melinna to Athena Ergane:

χεροὶ τε καὶ τέχναις ἔργων
tόλμαις τε δικαίαις
θερψαμένη τέκνων γενέαῖν
ἀνέθηκε Μέλιννα
σοι τήνδε μνήμην, θεὰ Ἐργάνη,
ὡν ἐπόνησεν
μοῖραν ἀπαρξαμένη κτεάνων,

---

341 The connection between timē and philia is topical already in Homer: Riedinger (1976), pp. 247–248. See also my comments in Chapter 1.
Melinna, having raised her children with her hands and through the skills of her labours, and with righteous courage, set up this memorial to you, goddess Ergane, offering a share of the goods she earned through her labour, honouring your benevolence (Transl. Taylor (2017), p. 146, n. 133, adapted).

One first interesting feature of this dedication is the fact that Melinna puts herself in a relation of reciprocity with the goddess, returning with *timē* the *charis* by which Athena granted her success. However, Melinna’s dedication is most remarkable for the unmistakable pride in herself that she voices for having raised her children (apparently) on her own, through her honest hard work. The expression τόλμαις δικαιαις is particularly telling, as it stresses the moral worth of her efforts while at the same time reclaiming such a traditionally un-feminine value as *tolma*, which borders on excessive forms of courage even when applied to men. Melinna seems to identify with that workers’ pride that we can trace with respect to farmers, both free and slave, in a text such as Menander’s *Dyskolos.* The lexical choice of *tolma* suggests that Melinna was aware that this was not the expected behaviour: from a certain perspective, she overstepped the boundaries set for her role, but she defends her trespassing as just. We might paraphrase the text, bringing out its implicit premises, in the following way: ‘Missing a man who could economically support their children, Melinna did so on her own, working hard, as men are normally supposed to do, to be able to bring up her children’. In other words, Melinna defies the blame that working women could incur, claiming for herself the recognition of her hard work and of her struggle to raise her children.

Melinna’s defence of her activity finds a parallel in Demosthenes’ *Against Eubulides*, where the speaker defends his mother’s (and his own) status as a citizen despite her job as a nurse. The woman was forced to start working to support her two children during a period when her

---

342 On this dedication, datable to the second part of the fourth century, see McClees (1920), p. 23; Vérilhac (1985), pp. 111–112 (dating it to the third century), and Taylor (2017), p. 146.

343 See my comments on *Dyskolos* and workers’ pride in Chapter 5.

344 According to Vérilhac (1985), pp. 111–112, the expression shows that Melinna had faced reprobation for her autonomy. This might be the case, but responses to her situation might also be more differentiated; some people might have agreed with her construal of the situation because of the necessity to support her children.
husband was absent. Although this choice cost so dearly to the speaker, he still defends it saying that it was both necessary and appropriate, given his mother’s poverty (57.42). By saying that this choice was appropriate, the speaker defends his mother’s work as an honourable way to care for her children in such hard circumstances. As the passages considered in this section have shown, therefore, the relationship between labour and honour is much more complex than normally assumed. Women and men alike could go against the standard evaluations and reconfigure female labour as honourable and just rather than dishonourable and demeaning. In the next section, we shall consider other spheres in which women could express, negotiate, and develop their influence and their *timē*.

**4.6 Other spheres for women’s *timē***

In the previous sections, we have examined different kinds of evidence showing that women could achieve honour and praise in a variety of ways: not just by being good wives, daughters, and mothers, but also for their professional expertise, and for moral qualities and attitudes that do not necessarily conform to ideals of modesty. The strength of character of fictional women such as Glycera and Pamphile is confirmed by historical parallels such as the doctor Phanostrate and the working mother Melinna. In fact, one of the most striking results is the variety of forms that women’s honour can take; in this section, we shall look at further forms that women’s honour could take, and to additional spheres in which it could emerge. An unusual perspective on women’s role in social networks is provided by curse tablets. Zinon Papakonstantinou, in an article about the individuals mentioned in judiciary *defixiones*, underscores the unexpected role played by women, who are seemingly ‘envisaged as part of the network of legal adversaries.”

We could examine for instance a part of the triple curse written on a lead tablet dated around 375 BCE.\(^{347}\)

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Καταδ[έ]ω} & \leftarrow \|E|λ|η|νη\{η\} |v \mathrm{pros} [\tau\nu]\vspace{10pt} \\
\text{Ερμην τόν Έριόνιον καὶ [π-]} & \\
\text{ρός τὴν Φερσεφόνην καὶ [π-]} & \\
\text{ρός τὴν Λήθην καὶ νόν αὐ-} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

---

\(^{345}\) Dem. 57.42: τῇ μέντοι ὑπαρχοῦσῃ πενίᾳ ἱσως καὶ ἀναγκαῖα καὶ ἀρμόττοντα ποιοῦσα.

\(^{346}\) Papakonstantinou (2014).

τῆς καὶ ψυχὴν καὶ γλώσσαν
καὶ ἔργα τὰ περὶ τῆς πρὸς ἦ-
μᾶς δίκης λέγει, καταδέ-
ω ἀπαντᾷ ' αὐτῆς: Κ<α>ταδέ-
ω {δεω} δὲ348 καὶ τὸς μάρτυ-
ρας α[ύτ]ῶν ἀπαντας καὶ
tὸν [πολ]έμαρχον κ[α]ὶ τὸ
dικαστήριον τὸ τὸ πολεμάρχο
πρὸς τὸν Ἡρίον[ίον Ἐρ[μ]ήν
καὶ πρὸς τὴν Φερσήνη[ν]
καὶ πρὸ [ς τῆ]ν Λήθην, κα[τ]αδ[έω]
κα[ι] συ[νδίκ]ος ἀπαντας τὸς με-
τῇ ἕκει[ν]ην καὶ ἀπα[ντ]άς
[τὸ]ς [μετ’ αὐτὸς].

I bind down Eirene before Hermes Erionius and Persephone and
Lethe; I bind her mind, her soul, her tongue, and the elements she
prepares to say in the process against us; and I bind anything that
belongs to her. And I bind all their witnesses and the polemarch
and the lawcourt (the one of the polemarch) before Hermes
Erionius and Persephone and Lethe; and I also bind all the
supporters who stand on her side and all the people who stand on
their side. (My transl., based on Costabile (2001))

The reference to the polemarch excludes a citizen status for Eirene, who can then be a metic or
a freedwoman. According to Costabile, the fact that her kyrios is not directly mentioned
demonstrates that Eirene was regarded as the real opponent by the author of the curse.349 This
can be seen as the sign of an informal kind of power on Eirene’s part, who was evidently able to
proceed against her opponent and to gather the necessary support from her social network.
Although it is undoubtedly a negative one, this is a form of recognition too. If Eirene had enough
influence to take part actively in a dispute like this and pose a threat to someone else’s time, her
standing must have been not negligible at all.

348 For this reading, see Costabile (2001), p. 170.
Even if this is the only curse where a woman has such a pivotal role, being the main opponent herself, women are routinely mentioned as part of the entourage of male opponents. For example, in *DTA 39*, another judiciary curse tablet (as made clear by the reference to *syndikoi*) that contains a list of names, six out of seventeen names are women’s names. This would be a rather remarkable ratio if we could take it to express the various degrees of power and influence exerted by the various characters and threatening the author of the curse. This is the interpretation favoured by Papakonstantinou, who concludes that in Athens ‘women had, through their involvement in formal or informal aspects of litigation, as much power in influencing the outcome of a trial as men’.\(^{350}\) It is this potential influence that probably earned them the virulent attacks of the curses. Even curse tablets, therefore, although in an antiphrastic manner, agree with the complex and multi-faceted picture drawn by the previous case studies with regard to women’s honour.

Another inscription from the mid-fourth century, *IG II³ 4 635*= *IG II² 2934*, testifies to a specific social dimension within which women could develop their sense of self-worth:

οἱ πλυνήσι : Νύμφαις : εὐξάμενοι : ἀνέθεαν : καὶ θεοῖς πᾶσιν,
Ζωαγόρας : <Ζ>ωκύπρου : Ζώκυπρος : Ζωαγόρου : Θάλλος : Λεύκη
Σωκράτης : Πολυκράτους : Ἀπολλοφάνης : Εὐπορίωνος :
Σωσίστατος

Having made a vow, the launderers dedicated this to the Nymphs and all the gods. Zoagoras son of Zocyprus, Zocyprus son of Zoagoros, Thallus, Leuce, Socrates son of Polycrates, Apollopheanes son of Euporion, Sosistratus, Manes, Myrrhine, Sosias, Sosigenes, Midas. (Transl. Lambert and Tufano (2021))

Out of twelve dedicants, two, Leuce and Myrrhine, are women. The status of the members and the nature of their activity are disputed. It is likely that the group probably has some religious functions;\(^{351}\) we seemingly have a rather heterogeneous group, surely comprising both free and


slave, and even different generations, probably including a father and son couple (Zoagoras son of Zocyprus, Zocyprus son of Zoagoras); Claire Taylor believes that the free men are metics, whereas Stephen Lambert leaves open the possibility for them to be even Athenian citizens.\(^{352}\) The text is too meagre to provide all the information we would like to have about the honour dynamics that could take place within such a group. Some inferences might however be drawn by observing the order of the names. The four names that are followed by a patronym are all among the first six names. The names that could more easily identify slaves, Manes, Sosias, and Midas, are all among the last five. As far as women are concerned, however, Leucē’s name is placed between the two couples marked by patronyms, whereas Myrrhine’s name comes together with the typical slave names such as Manes or Sosias. Following Taylor’s suggestion, the most likely explanation is that Thallus and Leucē are slaves and belong to Zoagoras and Zocyprus (or to the latter only), while Sosistratus and the following belong to Apollonphanes and perhaps Socrates.\(^{353}\) The order could thus suggest that social and legal statuses influenced the hierarchy within the group.

As Taylor notes, however, groups such as this also challenge the usual structures of inequality, ‘because they force us to recognize the consequences and value of belonging’.\(^ {354}\) Membership in a group generally has the effect of strengthening one’s sense of identity and self-worth, as one feels that one is contributing to something whose value is recognised by all the other participants.\(^ {355}\) For all the dedicants here mentioned, being part of a community such as this, capable of commissioning a dedication, and having their names inscribed on it, could have been a source of pride and honour. Furthermore, this kind of association no doubt increased their social networking, presumably providing even the socially humbler members with forms of support from the others. It is likely that their activity also connected the washers with citizens, given that the Nymphs’ cult involved Athenian citizens too.\(^ {356}\) We can imagine that the membership of this cultic association positively impacted upon the standing of the slaves and,

\(^{352}\) Taylor (2017), pp. 224–226; Lambert and Tufano (2021); ‘Some are named with patronymics (the father-and-son pair Zoagoras and Zokypros, Sokrates, Apollonphanes), perhaps suggesting higher status (citizens? metics?) than the others.’


\(^{354}\) Taylor (2017), p. 226, with references to similar groups and networks.

\(^{355}\) On the importance of membership for esteem, cf. e.g. Brennan and Pettit (2004), pp. 195–221.

for the purposes of this chapter, of the female slaves especially, with regard to their external recognition from the community and consequently to their sense of identity and pride.

With regard to civic religion and official religious institutions, various scholars have seen them as the sphere that enabled citizen women properly to take part (metechein) in the polis, and was thus the conceptual basis of their citizenship.357 Certainly, for Athenian women religion was a paramount source both of sense of belonging and identity, thanks to regular participation in civic rituals and festivals, and of pride and honour, in the case of specific services as priestesses or in other capacities, such as basket carriers. Religion contributed considerably to reinforce women’s sense of belonging to the polis, although it was not the only sphere thanks to which Athenian women felt that they could contribute to the polis and attain public recognition. As we have seen in the first sections of this chapter, women’s status qua wives and mothers was also framed as part of a collective, shared enterprise; even their domestic roles were seen as an active fulfilment of their roles within the polis.

The epitaph of Chaerestrate, daughter of Menecrates from the deme of Icaria, shows how public religious functions could be coupled to a woman’s role in the family (IGII² 6288):

μητρός παντοτέκνου πρόπολος
σεμνή τε γεραιὰ | τῶιδε τάφωι κεῖται
Χαιρεστράτη, ἢν ὁ σύνευνος | ἔστερξεν
μὲν ζῶσαν, ἐπένθησεν δὲ θανούσαν· |
φῶς δ᾿ ἔλιπ’ εὐδαίμων παῖδας παῖδων ἐπιδοῦσα. |

Chaerestrate, the revered and honourable servant of the all-engendering mother (Cybele), is buried in this very grave, whom her husband loved when she was alive and mourned after her death; she left the light (of life) in happiness, after having seen the children of her children. (Transl. Tsagalis (2008))

Chaerestrate’s illustrious services as Cybele’s priestess are juxtaposed to the aspects that we have observed in other epitaphs in which the emphasis lies more on the woman’s cherished

position in the family. The blessing that Chaerestrate enjoyed in living long enough to know her grandchildren is grounds for praise also in epitaphs for men; 358 interestingly, Chaerestrate is the only old woman to be represented as such in a relief, the norm being that even old women were depicted as beautiful and young. What is notable for our purposes is the equal weight given to the prestige that Chaerestrate has attained because of her activity as a priestess, and to her successful relationships in the family. If, in parallel Herodotean Histories, Solon were asked who the happiest woman is, he might well indicate somebody like Chaerestrate, who, similarly to Tellus, could count on loving relationships in her oikos, lived long enough to see her grandchildren, and enjoyed public recognition on top of that as the respected and honoured priestess of Cybele. 359

358 See e.g. SEG 43:88, Euphranor’s epitaph from Rhamnous, with the observations by Lougovaya (2008), pp. 30–31, who adduces further parallels.

359 Cf. Hdt. 1.30.3-5.
Chapter 5:
The honour of slaves

Introduction*

Slaves are certainly not the most obvious case study for an investigation on honour in fourth-century Athens.360 Indeed, a view most notably epitomised by Orlando Patterson defines their status in terms of an absolute lack of honour.361 However, a now burgeoning corpus of scholarship has challenged the account given by Patterson, demonstrating how slaves in Classical Greece could exhibit agency and pride, and even enjoy membership to various groups in which legal status was not important.362 In the case of Athens, however, the anti-Pattersonian criticism has sometimes been taken too far.363 As Canevaro has argued, we must not deny that Athenian institutions and public ideology took pains to deny slaves any possible claim to a civic timē, while the lack of legal protection virtually left them exposed to all sort of atrocities.364 Aristotle himself uses the image of an empsychon organon, a living tool, to talk about slaves, showing that also on a theoretical level slaves could be conceptualised as little more than objects.365

In contrast to the political and legal sphere, however, the interpersonal and social sphere left open other ways for slaves to experience and express their honour.366 As we shall see, within the oikos the honour of slaves could be openly recognised. This chapter will thus investigate the honour of slaves from a micro-social perspective, looking at slaves’ relationships revolving

* This chapter is an expanded and slightly modified version of Mazzinghi Gori (forthcoming).
360 For general overview of slavery in Greece, see e.g. Fisher (1993); Klees (1998); Lewis (2018). On slavery and honour, see now Lewis, Canevaro, and Cairns (forthcoming).
361 Patterson (1982), pp. 86–88, with his definition of slavery as the ‘permanent, violent domination of natally alienated and generally dishonoured persons’.
362 See e.g. Vlassopoulos (2011), (2018) and the volume co-edited with Taylor (Taylor and Vlassopoulos (2015)).
363 Fisher (1995) in particular has argued that the inclusion in Athenian law of slaves among the groups against which hybris could be committed proved that slaves were regarded as having a basic right to respect.
365 Arist. EN 1161b4: ὁ γὰρ δοῦλος ἐμψυχον ὀργανόν, τὸ δ᾽ ὀργανὸν ἀψυχὸς δοῦλος.
366 Lewis (2017), pp. 45–46: ‘slaves cannot be simply removed tout court from the dialectic of esteem and honour that characterizes social relations in any society, even if slave status does usually carry some taint of dishonor.’ See also Canevaro (2018), p. 121.
around both the *oikos* and other social contexts. In the first half of the chapter, I shall focus on the strictly interpersonal aspects of honour: master-slave relationships will be the first thread of my analysis, followed by an account of other interactions, such as with other slaves and with people external to their *oikos*. The second half of the chapter will consider the paths open to slaves to shape their identity and sense of self-worth in wider social contexts. As we shall see, the two perspectives are in reality entangled: even when the focus is on one’s identity, the intersubjective dimension is key anyway, given that identity is defined essentially through in- and out-group dynamics. This aligns with the complexity of *timē* as an overarching mechanism regulating social interactions and structuring one’s sense of self.

### 5.1 Honour as a tool of slave management

Master-slave relationships can better illustrate these ideas. What I aim to uncover with regard to the following case studies is the functioning of reciprocity as a crucial factor that shaped not only relationships themselves, but also a slave’s sense of honour. As I mentioned in the Introduction, Axel Honneth’s observations on this topic are particularly enlightening: the philosopher underscores the intersubjective dimension of human nature, considering it as dependent on relations of mutual recognition. From his perspective, the reciprocity inherent in human relationships is of primary importance in the development of one’s basic sense of identity and self-worth. Even in conflictual or asymmetrical relationships, moreover, whenever some degree of recognition is attained, then both the parties involved enter a normative order that sets both rights and limits for both of them. As we shall see, even if from a legal point of view fair treatment of slaves is wholly supererogatory on the part of masters, our sources point in the direction of normative expectations on masters’ behaviour. This is due to the interpersonal dimension that obtains in the *oikos* in contrast with the abstract nature of the law: through interpersonal proximity, relationships with slaves could be subsumed in the same patterns of reciprocity that were denied to slaves on the institutional level. It is significant in this respect that, shortly after his description of slaves as tools, Aristotle claims that it is possible

---

367 My analysis aims at uncovering the relevance of honour more specifically, but many scholars have already stressed how these relationships could go against legal and ideological barriers. See for instance Bäbler (1998), pp. 35–36.

to be friends with slaves not qua slaves but qua *anthrōpoi*:\(^{369}\) the closestness granted by daily intercourse is capable of giving way to an acknowledgment of slaves as persons and even to bonds of friendship.

Sometimes reciprocity was acknowledged but in instrumental ways. Well-known passages from Xenophon’s *Oeconomicus* nicely show how reciprocity could be harnessed by masters in order to foster loyalty and goodwill in their slaves.\(^{370}\) According to Ischomachus, Xenophon’s mouthpiece in the dialogue, some slaves are more eager for honour than for food; the best way to manage *philotimoi* slaves is through praise rather than punishment (13.9). Ischomachus also makes sure to single out good slaves visually, by providing them with better clothes (13.10); those who pursue *dikaiosynē* out of *philotimia* rather than out of *philokerdeia* are treated by him like free men and even like *kaloi kagathoi* (14.9). In these ways, Ischomachus creates a neat hierarchy among slaves, defining different levels of *timē*, determined by the moral performance of his servants. Through Xenophon’s text, we can then see how honour could be exploited as an instrument of slave management.\(^{371}\) The interest here is not in the honour of those persons per se, but rather in its practical results.

A similar attitude characterises the Peripatetic *Oeconomica*.\(^{372}\) The author of the first book similarly recommends to treat good and bad slaves differently, and he includes other ideas (I, 1344b, 4-9):

\[\text{(...)}.\]

Slaves, again, are no exception to the rule that men become worse when better conduct is not followed by better treatment, but virtue and vice remain alike unrewarded. Accordingly we must keep watch over our workers, suiting our dispensations and

---

\(^{369}\) Arist. *EN* VIII, 1161b5-6: ἧ μὲν οὖν δοῦλος, οὐκ ἔστι φιλία πρὸς αὐτὸν, ἥ δὲ ἀνθρώπος.


\(^{371}\) On strategies of slave-management in general, see Porter (2019), with pp. 82-129 specifically on *Oeconomicus*. See also Porter (2021) on the paternalism of this particular kind of strategy. See also Canevaro (forthcoming-a).

\(^{372}\) See n. 254 in section 4.1 with information and references on the *Oeconomica*. 
indulgences to their desert; whether it be food or clothing, leisure or chastisement that we are apportioning. (Transl. Tredennick and Armstrong (1935))

The most interesting feature of this passage is the role assigned to ἀξία. Slaves should be treated κατ’ ἀξίαν, that is according to their value and worth. The inclusion of slaves in this dynamic of justice and honour is highly significant, notwithstanding the predominance once again of the masters’ perspective.373 Their purposes probably lack any humanitarian nuance, but, if the implication is that slaves will behave better when deservedly punished or rewarded, this clearly allows for a recognition even on masters’ part of normative expectations for a fair treatment.

After this introduction to the instrumental exploitation of reciprocity with slaves recommended in treatises on the management of the oikos, we can now turn to case studies of master-slave relationships, in order to see whether reciprocity was always exploited instrumentally by masters, or whether there was the possibility of more genuine cases of mutuality in affection and respect.

5.2 Honour dynamics in master-slave relationships

Some case studies from Menander’s plays can offer us a glimpse of master-slave relationships as observed from the point of view of slaves themselves – at least as Menander imagines and portrays them.374 In accordance with the picture depicted by Xenophon and the Aristotelian

373 Ps.-Arist. also makes explicit the mechanism of honour in his account of slaves’ management (1, 1344a, 29-31): ὁμιλία δὲ πρὸς δούλους ὡς μήτε ὑβρίζειν ἑαν μήτε ἀνίαν, καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἐλευθερωτέροις τιμῆς μεταδίδοιναι, τοῖς δὲ ἐργάταις τροφῆς πλῆθος ('In our intercourse with slaves we must neither suffer them to be insolent nor treat them with cruelty. A share of honor should be given to those who are doing more of a freeman’s work, and abundance of food to those who are laboring with their hands’, transl. Tredennick and Armstrong (1935)).

374 For an overview on Menander’s slaves, Krieter-Spiro (1997). On slaves in Greek comedy more generally, see Akrigg and Tordoff (2013). In the introduction (Tordoff (2013)) denies to comedy the status of as a source for the actual history of slavery. See however Pritchard (2012) for a rehabilitation of Aristophanes as a source for cultural history. On the ideological function of slaves in comedy, Wiles (1988) and Wrenhaven (2019) conclude that comedy portrays slaves in a negative way in order to strengthen the citizens’ sense of identity; the latter, in particular, relies on a mistaken view of Greek society as a zero-sum system. For an opposite view on similar mechanisms in Aristophanic comedy, see Sommerstein (2009). With regard to Menander, most scholars have taken a purely literary approach in their studies on slaves, expressing scepticism on the connection with real life (e.g. Hunter (1994); Konstan (2013), pp. 83–85; but see e.g. Giglioni Bodei (1984); Lape (2004), with Patterson (1998), pp. 185–225 concerning family dynamics and Cox (2002a) specifically on slaves. Cox (2013) and Bathrellou (2014b) focus on
Oeconomica, among Menander’s slaves too some differences in status need to be noticed. Speaking roles are normally assigned to those slaves who enjoy close relationships with their masters; in the case of a big household with several slaves, these characters are thus endowed with a remarkable authority in comparison with their fellow slaves. The passages we shall examine are thus representative only of very close relationships between master and slave.

Staging arguably the most brilliant Menandrian slave, the play Aspis is particularly rich in insights about slaves’ roles, time, and reciprocity. The slave Davus believes that his young master Cleostratus was killed in battle, which means that Cleostratus’ sister becomes an epiklēros, and that their property, including Davus, will be acquired by the relative who will marry her. Cleostratus’ evil and decrepit uncle, Smicrines, sees in this an opportunity to lay his hands on Cleostratus’ wealth, and plans to marry his young niece. Smicrines tries to induce Davus to help him in achieving his goals (187–93):

ΣΜΙΚΡΙΝΗΣ ταῦτ’ οὖν ὅν τρόπον πράττοιτ’ ἀν ὀρθῶς καὶ σὲ φροντίζειν ἔδει οὐκ ἄλλῳ τρισί ἔλθει.

ΔΑΟΣ Σμίκρινη, πάνυ μοι δοκεῖ τὸ ῥήμα τοῦτ’ εἶναι τὶ μεμεριμνημένον, τὸ ‘γνῶθι σαυτόν’. ἐμένειν τοῦτῳ μ’ ἔκα, ὡς τ’ οἰκέτῃ δεὶ μὴ πονηρῷ ταῦτ’ ἐμοὶ ἀνάφερε καὶ τούτῳ τόπῳ παρ’ ἐμοὶ ἔστει λόγον.

SMICRINES You too should have been thinking how to have This done correctly. You’re involved here.

DAVUS Smicrines,

That proverb seems so very wise to me,
‘Know who you are.’ Let me comply with it.
Pass on to me and question me about

Menandrian slaves’ ability to connect with other slaves and to shape their lives irrespective of their relationships with masters. On Menander’s slaves qua barbarians, see Petrides (2017).

Useful analyses of such aspects are to be found in Krieter-Spiro (1997). She recognises a hierarchy among slaves, which is usually mirrored in the dramatic relevance of the characters: see particularly pp. 72-73 on privileged slaves.

Aspis features three connected oikot Smicrines’, his younger brother Chaerestratus’ (the good uncle in the play), and their orphan nephew Cleostratus’.
Those matters which concern a not dishonest slave. (Transl. Arnott (1979), adapt.)

To Smicrines’ complaint that Davus is not caring enough for his plans, Davus replies that he prefers to stick to what is suitable for a ‘not dishonest’ slave. Davus justifies his refusal by appealing to an interpretation of the Delphic maxim γνῷθι σαυτόν as ‘knowing one’s place’: getting involved in legal affairs does not fall into the expectations attached to the role of a slave, as Davus soon reiterates when he observes that legal matters are free people’s business.377 Given the enterprising spirit that Davus will show in the second act, however, his words are clearly an understatement, meant to eschew any involvement in Smicrines’ scheming. Davus is ironic in sketching the narrowest conception possible of the duties and possibilities of a slave, but his argument is nonetheless forceful against Smicrines’ efforts exactly because of the traditional character of the notion invoked. Furthermore, Davus’ pride in his qualities actually shines through his ironic self-description as a not dishonest slave: the understatement is a brilliant way to prevent Smicrines from asking him to do something that would turn him into a ponēros slave, but behind this exaggerated expression of humility Davus is clearly asserting his timē and requesting adequate recognition of it.

Especially notable here is the way Smicrines attempts to enmesh Davus in his scheming. Now that he has something to gain from the relatives he had neglected for years, Smicrines tries to build up a relationship of reciprocity with Davus:378 by saying οὐκ ἀλλότριος εἶ, he is talking about Davus’ oikeiotēs, that is his closeness, intimacy, and feelings of belonging in the family. While a slave qua slave was conceptualised as being external to all communities and excluded from any sense of belonging, in the actual life of the oikos slaves could often develop ties of oikeiotēs and friendship. As Aristotle says, ‘there can be no friendship with a slave as slave, though there can be as human being’:379 the intervention that Smicrines requires from Davus is not part of the basic duties of a slave, but is rather the kind of concern that one would expect from a philos. As we saw in Chapter 1, oikoi were communities based on philia, which entails

379 Arist. EN VIII, 1161b5–6: ἢ μὲν οὖν δούλος, οὐκ ἔστι φιλία πρὸς αὐτόν, ἢ δ’ ἄνθρωπος.
mutual concern, reciprocal respect, and shared interests.\textsuperscript{380} If Davus were a \textit{philos}, he would be not just entitled, but also obliged to take an active interest in matters related to his \textit{philoi}. By taking part in the life of the family, even slaves become part of it and acquire a role, that is a form of \textit{timē}, that is based on common membership and affection and that transcends the limitations with which their legal status is conceptualised.\textsuperscript{381} Albeit disingenuously, Smicrines is treating Davus as a fully integrated member of the \textit{oikos} (the fallacy in his argument being that Smicrines, and not Davus, is the truly estranged person in Cleostratus’ family). By so doing, Smicrines speciously flatters and honours the slave, treating him not as a slave but as a \textit{philos}, thus assigning him a greater \textit{timē} in the hope of getting him to reciprocate. On his part, Davus escapes from Smicrines’ enticements by laying out a very basic version of a master-slave relationship based on the mere execution of orders, and ruling out the wider forms of reciprocity with which Smicrines was trying to lure him into his scheming. The implication is that, conversely, good master-slave relationships would transcend the mere dynamics of ownership and obedience, giving scope to broader forms of concern and mutual honour and support.

Later on, Smicrines realises that Davus is not willing to cooperate, significantly stressing Davus’ disregard for him (with the sarcastic πολύ τ’ ἐμοῦ πεφρόντικε, 392), thus underscoring the relevance of honour dynamics in their interaction. He then exclaims ‘I’m glad he’s given me an excuse for looking over items there without further generosity (\textit{philanthrōpōs}) towards him, but with benefit to me’ (394–396).\textsuperscript{382} Smicrines justifies his now openly covetous behaviour on the basis of Davus’ failure to grant him the proper recognition and to act in accordance with reciprocity towards him. As long as Davus seemed to foster Smicrines’ interests, he felt forced to display insincere humane feelings; given the alleged breach of reciprocity, the miser behaves according to his usual selfishness and insults Davus by calling him \textit{drapetēs}, runaway (398). The standing of this particularly virtuous slave creates a context in which a morally defective citizen feels the need to abide by the moral standards set by his social inferior. These dynamics are interestingly framed in terms of moral expectations and mutual recognition and claims, whereas

\textsuperscript{380} On \textit{oikoi} as built upon \textit{philia} see e.g. Arist. \textit{EN} VIII, 1160b23–1162a34; see also Booth (1993), pp. 20–39, who argues, however, that slaves could not take part in \textit{philia} (pp. 67–73).

\textsuperscript{381} See Patterson (1998), pp. 196–197 on \textit{oikeiotēs} in Menander, also in the case of master-slave relationships.

\textsuperscript{382} Men. \textit{Asp.} 394–396: πρόφασιν εἰληφ’ ἁμενος / πρὸς αὐτὸν ὡστε μὴ φιλανθρώπως ἔτι / ταὐτ’ ἐξετάζειν, ἄλλ’ ἐμαυτῷ συμφόρως.
no emphasis is put on legal status, with the exception of the last sentences: once reciprocity is
ruled out, Smicrines insults Davus by calling him *drapetēs*, a stock term of abuse against slaves.

It is worth to investigate the implications attached to the word *philanthrōpōs* (395), which
should be understood alongside the interpretation given by David Konstan of *to philanthrōpon*
in Aristotle’s *Poetics* as a sympathetic emotional reaction ‘unrelated to desert, justice or
status’.

Similarly, the associated noun *philanthrōpia* generally denotes a gratuitous benevolent attitude, transcending any duty or obligation.

Of course, Smicrines’ ‘generosity’ was anything but gratuitous, and the emphasis on Davus’ desert reveals his deviation from the usual semantics of *philanthrōpia*, twisted to fit the ‘do ut des’ logic that emerged in the previous passage. Smicrines’ *philanthrōpia*, specifically directed towards Davus (πρὸς αὐτόν, 395), can also bear interesting implications for the honour of slaves. Canevaro has already shown that, with regard to legal contexts, mentions of *philanthrōpia* towards slaves do not demonstrate the recognition of any *timē* to slaves qua slaves.

Even in this case, it is clear that the basis for Smicrines’ *philanthrōpia* towards Davus was not any basic dignity that Smicrines may acknowledge to him, but only his influential role among Cleostratus’ *philoi*, which Smicrines sees as instrumental for the management of Cleostratus’ property. There is thus no affirmation here of *philanthrōpia* directed at a slave qua slave, but rather a confirmation of the contextual *timē* that a slave could attain within a household by establishing relationships of trust and *philia*.

In fact, the relationship with Smicrines is construed in the play as the negative reversal of a respectful interaction between master and slave, whereas a completely different picture is described by Davus regarding his relationship with Cleostratus in the prologue (1–18). Davus there expresses his genuine affection for his master, coupling it with his (now dashed) hopes to be rewarded for his goodwill, *eunoia* (12), and to be finally allowed to have a peaceful old age as a reward for it.

With regard to this relationship, Davus proudly refers to his own contributions to it (τῶν μακρῶν πόνων, ‘my long labours’, 11) and asserts his identity as Cleostratus’

---


385 Canevaro (2018), in particular on Dem. 21.48: ἀκούετ’, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναίοι, τοῦ νόμου τῆς φιλανθρωπίας, ὃς οὐδὲ τούς δούλους ὄβριζεν ἀξίοι.

pedagogue (ἐγὼ δ’ ὁ παιδαγωγός, 14). Moreover, the passage well captures the functioning of reciprocity in positive master-slave relationships, with the interplay between mutual esteem, gratitude, and expectations. In describing a relationship based on affection that calls for mutuality in benefactions, Davus is framing his relationship with Cleostratus as philia.\(^{387}\) As we have seen in Chapter 1, philia is of crucial importance in assessing honour dynamics: philoi must be held in special regard and one has special obligations towards them.\(^ {388}\)

A very close parallel for the kind of expectations and responsibilities recalled by Davus is a passage from speech 47 Against Evergus and Mnesibulus in Demosthenes’ corpus, considered as spurious.\(^ {389}\) While he was not there, Evergus and Theophemus burst in the prosecutor’s house to seize some of his property. The prosecutor’s wife was having lunch with their children and his former nurse. The old woman had been manumitted by the speaker’s father, had lived with her husband for a while, and had then moved again into the prosecutor’s oikos when she became a widow (ps. Dem. 47.55–56). On seeing the two men grabbing furniture and other objects, the nurse hides a cup in her bosom. Evergus and Theophemus attack and beat her until they get the cup, leaving her in such terrible conditions that she dies a few days later. This leaves the prosecutor in a quandary about how to seek redress for his former nurse’ death and he eventually asks the exēgētai for advice, explaining what had happened and stressing the nurse’ eunoia (68). They answer that the law does not entitle him to proceed with a legal action, as the woman was not formally attached to him either as relative or as slave (69–70): the independent life that the woman had led after her manumission rescinded the legal ties which enabled a master to take action when one of his slaves was killed (72). The emotional and moral ties that the former slave had created with the speaker during her service had not been rescinded, however. Of special interest for us are the feelings of respect and responsibility that the

---

\(^{387}\) Aristotle (EN VIII, 1155b33) draws a distinction between eunoia and philia: for eunoia to count as philia, the affection must be mutual and recognised by both parts. See Konstan (2006), pp. 172–174.

\(^{388}\) This is what Aristotle is referring to in EN VIII, 1160a7–8: αὔξεσθαι δὲ πέρας ἀμά τῇ φιλίᾳ καὶ τῷ δίκαιον, ‘it is natural that the claims of justice also should increase with the nearness of the friendship’ (Rackham (1934)). What Aristotle says here must be interpreted in terms of expectations, obligations, and claims to respect and honour. This was part of traditional Greek ethics: on the intimate connection between philia and timē as observable already in Homer, Riedinger (1976), pp. 247–248; Van Wees (1992), pp. 76–77. See also in general Cairns (1993) for this form of respect as part of the meanings of aidōs, and see my observations in section 1.5 of Chapter 1.

\(^ {389}\) See Scafuro (2021), pp. 297–298, mentioning, but not fully endorsing, the possibility that the author is Apollodorus.
prosecutor shows towards his former nurse. Their relationship had clearly been very good and he introduces her as affectionate and loyal, ἄνθρωπος εὖνος καὶ πιστή (55). When she was left alone after her husband’s death, he felt obliged to help her by welcoming her in his oikos. He comments on this gesture with a general principle: ‘one must not suffer that his former nurse or pedagogue live in want’. The emotional and moral bonds created during such a long-term and close relationship as the one with a nurse or a pedagogue transcend the legal level and produce a durable attitude of respect and responsibility towards the former slave. As Xenophon’s Oeconomicus also shows very well, these interpersonal processes should be interpreted in terms of timē. A master-slave relationship often starts in a very unidirectional manner with a set of rules imposed by the master on the slave. In other words, the master puts forth an honour code for the slave to observe; if the slave abides by the rules, he gains timē and the master’s trust, and in this way reciprocity ensues, for the master is now obliged to respect the slave’s claims to timē, lest he loses his own standing as a just man. The slave is thus entitled to his own set of timai, such as support in want and old age, fair and respectful treatment, or good clothes, as Ischomachus recommends in Oeconomicus. This relation can be understood in terms of charis, of gratitude on the master’s part for their slaves’ loyalty. It may be surmised that also slaves could go beyond the requirements of duty and in so doing they might gain special deserts: this might ultimately be the meaning of eunōia, understood as the affective surplus which slaves could add to the execution of their chores and which called for special regard from their masters.

The picture of ps.-Dem. 47 is then the exact complement of the one depicted by Davus in the Aspis, this time seen from the master’s point of view. The forensic evidence overlaps with the literary representation found in the Aspis: taken together, the two texts confirm that at least privileged slaves such as nurses and pedagogues were likely to develop relationships of affection and reciprocity with their masters, within which their timē was recognised and sanctioned through a respectful treatment and through the bestowal of appropriate timai. The oikos is thus a context in which slaves could find their path to timē thanks to the accessibility of the direct interpersonal dimension. The closer a slave was to their master, the greater was the degree of reciprocity and thus of timē attainable, which also entitled the slave to act upon it, for instance

390 Ps. Dem. 47.56: ἀναγκαῖον σὸν ἢν μὴ περιθέειν ἐνδεεῖς ὧν τὰς μήτε τιτθήν γενομένην μήτε παιδαγωγόν.
391 For some observations and reflections on the implications of children’s relationships with the slaves of their families, especially nurses and pedagogues, see Golden (1988), (2015), pp. 122–136.
giving them the right to make demands. These texts provide strong counterarguments to Bourdieu’s idea of *méconnaissance*: according to him, the real substratum of recognition dynamics is pure and adversarial domination, which is only misrecognised as a reciprocal relationship based on mutual acknowledgement and respect.\(^{392}\) But, even just looking at Ps. Dem. 47, the very fact that an ex-master still felt obliged to his former servant (after her death and in spite of the absence of any legal procedures which could underpin a similar attitude) strongly questions such a competitive and self-interested account of human motivations. Moreover, *Aspis* shows that slaves themselves could recognise and defuse instances of instrumental exploitation of reciprocity and recognition. In cases of positive master-slave relationships, by contrast, reciprocity and respect could be genuine.

A passage from Menander’s *Dis Exapaton* confirms and perfectly sums up these results. In this scene, Moschus’ liaison with a courtesan is being deplored by his father, his pedagogue, the slave Lydus, and Moschus’ friend, Sostratus. Moschus’ father asks Sostratus to scold his friend; Lydus, prevented from joining Sostratus in this task, gives him further directions on how to address him (15-17):

\[
\begin{align*}
\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\omicron\, & \Sigma\omicron\omega\sigma\tau\rho\alpha[r]e, \\
\chi\rho\eta\sigma\alpha\, & \pi\kappa\rho\omicron\omicron\, \epsilon\lambda\alpha\upsilon\nu\, \epsilon\kappa\epsilon\omicron\omicron\nu\, \tau\omicron[\nu]\, \acute{\kappa}r\alpha[t]\eta:\ \\
\acute{\alpha}π\alpha\nu\tau\alpha\ & \alpha\iota\sigma\chi\omicron\omicron\nu\epsilon\, \gamma\acute{\alpha}\rho\, \acute{\eta}\mu\acute{\alpha}\acute{s}\, \tau\omicron[\upsilon]\, \acute{\phi}\lambda\omicron\upsilon\omicron\nu\omicron\nu.
\end{align*}
\]

Savage him, Sostratus, assail
That libertine! He shames us all, his friends! (Transl. Arnott (1979))

Unfortunately, the play’s poor state of preservation does not allow us to know more about the Lydus’ relationship with his two masters. However, there could be no clearer declaration of the reciprocity in *timē* and of the affective bonds between master and slave. The language of shame, *aischyṇē*, marks unequivocally the presence of *timē*-dynamics. The use on Lydus’ part of the first-person plural with reference to Moschus’ friends unmistakably clarifies that Moschus’ behaviour is tainting Lydus’ honour too. By choosing the word *philos*, moreover, Lydus hints at the affection that ties him to Moschus: here again, the affective dimension seems crucial in transcending the mere ownership-dimension and in creating a stronger mutuality. Within a relationship of *philia*, the honour of each of the persons involved can no longer be seen as

\(^{392}\) See Bourdieu (1977), pp. 5–6 and *passim*, and the Introduction above.
isolated from the honour of all the others. In the group formed by the bonds of *philia*, the actions of any of its members will have repercussions on the honour of all his *philoi*. In view of this connection between *philia* and honour, *oikoi*, which Aristotle acknowledged as communities revolving around *philia*, can be considered also as communities of honour. This is obvious in the case of women and children, given that inappropriate conduct was often seen as a threat to the honour of their families. This is exactly the idea that Lydus is referring to; as the text stands, a slave can declare that his young master’s behaviour is dishonouring him, just as a father might say about his son. More importantly, in the way master-slave reciprocity is here portrayed, no apparent trace is left of the asymmetrical standing normally determined by legal status. Rather, Lydus’ remark suggests a symmetrical relationship, like one between two *hetairoi*, bound by equality and affection. Finally, Lydus’ words imply a high level of self-respect too, with his plain concern for his own honour: it seems safe to infer that this sense of self-worth originates from the whole background of Lydus’ relationship with Moschus, from his childhood to his coming-of-age. The shared life within the *oikos* creates a community of honour of which even slaves can be part; furthermore, a privileged slave like a pedagogue could attain such a high status in it to conceive of himself as an equal to his pupil. In conclusion, this section has shown that, by complying with the right standards of behaviour, slaves can earn the right to a basic respect and raise claims, for instance not to be punished undeservedly. As we have seen in relation to *eunoia*, slaves could also contribute more than was expected of them and then further increase their status and entitlements. Overall, then, different levels of *timē* and different *timai* were available for slaves; far from being necessarily null, their *timē* could be increased, negotiated, and defended. To test these results, in the next section I shall examine cases of conflicts between slaves and masters.

### 5.3 Conflicts and resentment towards masters

When considered from the perspective of honour, a positive and close master-slave relationship could grant a slave a considerable degree of *timē*. In households large enough to have a number of slaves, however, not all slaves could enjoy such a privileged position.\(^393\) Indeed, the majority

---

\(^393\) We can easily suppose that, especially within big households, where occasions of close intercourse were lacking, the least important slaves might well have had much worse experiences compared to those we have collected. With
of slaves probably had very loose contacts with their masters, which severely curtailed the possibility of developing any reciprocity. In most cases, the regime of constraints, hardship, and lack of freedom normally imposed on slaves was bound to create resentment towards masters, as a plethora of sources attest.\footnote{394} Despite the frequent reminders to slaves that they were at the mercy of their masters’ will and even if they were constantly humiliated, however, slaves could still be far from feeling deprived of honour. Hostility towards masters seems to be actually construed by slaves themselves precisely in terms of \textit{timē} and respect; in fact, some of the evidence we shall review shows how they could also challenge or negotiate to some extent their own masters’ rights over them.

The idea that masters had unlimited power over slaves needs perhaps a reassessment. If we look at some sources, it is clear that criteria of justice and desert could be brought up in the discourse about violence and punishments; interestingly, not all sources can be placed in a single position with regard to this question, which shows that there must have been room for negotiation and discussions. A meaningful view on these matters is voiced by Parmenon in Menander’s \textit{Samia}, as he comes back onto the stage in act five after his flee in act three, when his master Demeas had threatened to brand him in an outburst of fury. Parmenon now asks himself why he had run away despite his innocence (641-644, 652-654):

\begin{quote}


η τὸν Δία τὸν μέγιστον, ἀνόητόν τε καὶ

εὐκαταφρόνητον ἔργον εἰμὶ ἐγγεσμένος.

οὐθὲν ἀδικῶν ἔδεισα καὶ τὸν δεσπότην

ἔφυγον. τί δ’ ἦν τούτου πεποιηκὼς ἁξίων;

... τί Παρμένων ἔνταῦθα πεπόηκεν κακόν;

οὐθέν. τί οὖν οὕτως ἔφυγες, ἄβελτερε

καὶ δειλότατε;

I swear by mighty Zeus that I have done

A deed that’s foolish and contemptible!

Though innocent, I quailed and ran away

From master. Yet what had I done to justify

\end{quote}

\footnote{394 See e.g. Men. \textit{Asp.} 385-386, \textit{Georg.} 56-58, Pl. \textit{Resp.} IX, 578e.}

regard to Menander’s \textit{Dyskolos} in particular, Konstan (2013) has noticed how differently master-slave relationships are depicted depending on the wealth and size of the respective households: in smaller \textit{oikoi}, masters and slaves are more closely connected, whereas relationships are looser in the case of bigger (and wealthier) households.
This? ...
What crime has Parmenon committed here?
None! So why did you run away like that,
You fool, you coward? (Transl. Arnott (2000))

The semantics of injustice (ἀδικός, 643), the idea of desert, and the adjective εὐκαταφρόνητον (642), ‘contemptible’, that is ‘not deserving the normal degree of time’, are hints of the relevance of honour in Parmenon’s monologue. In particular, his words are a manifestation of self-respect, albeit expressed with an ‘amusing combination of self-exculpation’ and ‘self-condemnation’. 395 Parmenon believes that he should have stood up to face Demeas’ unjust threats, as his innocence demanded, whereas running away was like admitting to his alleged responsibility. In 645–655, he reviews the events to judge who the real culprit was, and he always acquits himself, with third-person verdicts such as Παρμένων οὐκ αἴτιος, ‘Parmenon had no responsibility’ (658). The conclusion is that he had no reasons to run away: in insulting himself (ἀβέλετε καὶ δειλότατε, ‘you fool, you coward’, 653–654), Parmenon sanctions his own failure to act in accordance with the due self-respect. This dialogic attitude can be seen as a way of splitting himself into an inferior self, who failed to respect his own time, and a superior self, who is presently judging negatively the former and who thus demonstrates the proper concern with his own honour. 396 In this way, Parmenon can defend his own self-image and acknowledge his failure to live up to it at the same time. In this case, no judgement is expressed against the master himself: at the end of the speech, by contrast, Parmenon makes the point that being physically punished hurts the same whether deserved or not (654–656). Parmenon stresses here his own responsibility to act in accordance with his time, by not running away and maybe trying to persuade Demeas that he was mistaken. In this passage too, therefore, the assumption is that an innocent slave would expect no unjust treatment from his master. Demeas is characterised on the whole as just and considerate: one implicit premise in Parmenon’s speech is that if Demeas knew the truth he would not have punished him undeservedly. This seems to be confirmed by Demeas himself in the scene of his fury: in spite of his anger, he had expressed some reluctance to hurt Parmenon, even though he believed that Parmenon had actually done something wrong. 397 Despite the

396 On the monologue in general, see Lamagna (1998), pp. 410–413 for some interesting observations about Parmenon’s attempts to regain some credit.
397 Men. Sam. 306–7: ἔγὼ σε μαστιγοῦν ... οὐ βούλομαι διὰ πολλά.
(comic) emphasis on the actual physical consequences, therefore, Parmenon’s perspective on the prospect of punishment is framed in terms of honour, claims to respect, and self-respect.

There are, however, other sources, also non-literary, in which the slave’s indignation is directed against the master. In the Rhetoric, Aristotle suggest that masters should always chastise their slaves verbally before beating them, so that slaves understand that they are guilty and are less indignant at the punishment (II, 1380b16-19):

καὶ ἐὰν ἀδικεῖν οἰων ται αὐτοὶ καὶ δικαίως πάσχειν [οὐ γίνεται ἡ ὀργὴ πρὸς τὸ δίκαιον] οὐ γὰρ ἔτι παρά τὸ προσήκον οἰων ται πάσχειν, ἢ δ’ ὀργὴ τούτο ἢν. διὸ δεῖ τῷ λόγῳ προκολάζειν ἀγανακτοῦσι γὰρ ἠττον κολαζόμενοι καὶ οἱ δοῦλοι.

And [men grow mild] if they think that they themselves are wrong and deserve what they suffer, [anger is not aroused against what is just]; they no longer think that they are being treated otherwise than they should be, which, as we have said, is the essence of anger. Wherefore we should inflict a preliminary verbal chastisement, for even slaves are less indignant at punishment of this kind. (Transl. Freese and Striker (2020))

Although Aristotle is fully endorsing the right for masters to beat their slaves, his recommendation adumbrates the typical emotional reaction slaves might show in cases of physical punishment. The wording implies that τὸ ἀγανακτεῖν is something to be expected from slaves (‘even slaves are less indignant at punishment of this kind’) and, taking the reference to ὀργῇ into account, we must interpret it specifically as ‘being indignant’ rather than just ‘being vexed’. What is essential to extrapolate from this is that slaves had their own ideas about just and unjust punishments, and that they were perfectly capable of experiencing anger when they felt undeservedly mistreated. Aristotle and his fellow masters were thus fully aware that slaves resented them for their punishments and so took pains to justify punishments.

398 Cf. Kennedy (2007); Freese and Striker (2020); Cope and Sandys (2006) translates ‘for even slaves are less vexed at being punished (when treated in this way)’, whereas Barnes (1984) opts for ‘aggrieved’.

399 On the basis of Aristotle’s account of anger, Konstan (2006), pp. 55–56 draws the conclusion that slaves are excluded from feelings of anger. As I hope to have demonstrated, however, the possibility that a slave felt angry was acknowledged by masters (and Aristotle) themselves.
Luckily enough, we also possess a unique evidence of a slave’s own point of view. The fourth-century lead tablet written by the young slave Lesis himself is remarkable in giving us direct access to a slave’s voice. As argued by Harris, it is likely that Lesis was a slave working as an apprentice in a foundry, to whose owner his master(s) had entrusted him:

Λῆσις ἔπιστέλλει Ξενοκλεῖ καὶ τῇ μητρὶ μηδαμῶς περιδὲν αὐτὸν ἀπολόμενον ἐν τῷ χαλκείῳ, ἀλλὰ πρὸς τὸς δεσπότας αὐτὸ ἐλθέν Καὶ ἑνεφέσθαι τι βέλτιον αὐτῷ. Ἀνθρώπωι γὰρ παραδέδομαι πάνυ πονηρῶι μαστιγώμενος ἀπόλλυμαι ὑπὲρ ἐργαζόμενοι μᾶλλον μᾶλλον.

Lesis is sending a letter to Xenocles and his mother asking that they by no means overlook that he is perishing in the foundry but that they come to his masters and that they have something better found for him. For I have been handed over to a thoroughly wicked man; I am perishing from being whipped; I am tied up; I am treated like dirt – more and more! (Transl. Harris (2004))

The letter provides a genuine declaration of how a slave might construe an excessively harsh treatment as a lack of respect. As Canevaro has demonstrated, through his letter Lesis denounces disrespectful treatment that tramples on his claim to time. It is not just about his boss’s ponēria; the boss’s behaviour can be described as illegitimate, adikon, and more specifically as an illegitimate humiliation (cf. the idea conveyed by προπηλακίζομαι, ‘being treated with contumely’). Not only does Lesis assume that the owner of the foundry does not have the right to ‘treat him like dirt’; he also has enough sense of self-respect and of his own entitlements to actively try to change his situation for the better, by appealing to his mother’s and Xenocles’ intervention, asking them to persuade his masters to do something. Lesis is thus implicitly leveraging his entitlement to a fair treatment even on his masters’ part. The fact that he is probably a young boy is of particular interest, as we have here a unique perspective into the honour of a very young slave. As we saw in Chapter 1, infants were regarded as having a basic

---

400 On children as slaves, see in general Heinen (2012).
401 SEG 50.276; the tablet, datable to the fourth century, was found in a well located in the Athenian Agora and was first published by Jordan (2000); see Harris (2004) (whose translation has been provided here) for some important reassessments, in particular about Lesis’ servile status.
402 Canevaro (forthcoming-a).
sense of their entitlements and claim; depending on how children were then treated and brought up, this embryonic sense of their *timē* could be either encouraged or stifled. In Lesis’ case, the fact that he was probably brought up since birth as a slave evidently did not smother his sense of self-worth. We could surmise that his mother played a role in nourishing and fostering his *timē*, as we shall see in the next sections, master-slave reciprocity was certainly not the only path to *timē* left open to slaves to develop their sense of *timē*. As this section has shown, slaves had claims to respect independently of the quality of their relationship with masters. In the following section in particular, I shall look at interaction with other members of the *oikos* as well as with people that did not belong to the *oikos*.

### 5.4 Wider relational contexts

In the previous sections, we have mainly considered one-to-one relationships, but it is necessary to consider wider relational spheres, such as the enlarged honour-groups composed of more slaves belonging to a single *oikos*. As I have highlighted already, only a few slaves would gain a prominent position in the *oikos*; all the others would have probably been excluded from a very close relationship with masters. Although we do not have much evidence about the dynamics that would emerge among slaves in such circumstances, we can imagine that tensions arose easily between the most important slaves of the household and all the others. This must be all the more true because these prominent slaves often acted as *epitropoi*, stewards, and thus controlled their fellow slaves in lieu of the masters. ⁴⁰³ In spite of its metaphorical purpose as a transposed representation of Athenian politics, the first scene from Aristophanes’ *Knights* draws precisely on the hostility that could occur when one slave acquired power over the others. The master of the *oikos*, Demus (representing the Athenian people), has recently bought a new Paphlagonian slave (i.e., the demagogue Cleon). The Paphlagonian is succeeding, unscrupulously, in cajoling and deceiving Demus, while at the same time making the other slaves’ life impossible by slandering, threatening, and having them unjustly beaten. All the purely comic elements aside, the picture from *Knights* nicely illustrates the hostility that slaves must have felt towards their privileged fellows; *Knights* might also be reliable in describing the slaves’ competition for their masters’ favour. The main strategy pursued by the Paphlagonian for this purpose consists in flattering the master and humiliating or debasing his peers: a slave

---

⁴⁰³ On *epitropoi* and *tamiai* (female privileged slaves), see Porter (2019), pp. 119–128.
can compete against his fellow slaves by paying extra homages to the master and undermining their peers’ desert and *time*. This shows well the systemic character of honour, whereby in a group one’s standing depends to an extent on the relational positioning of all the actors involved.

In some Menandrian plays there are other traces of the abusing attitude that a relatively powerful slave could have towards his less fortunate fellows. In *Perikeiromene*, on finding out that his fellow slaves had let the master’s mistress leave the *oikos* without stopping her, Sosias addresses them as *ιερός φύλα θηρία* (366), literally ‘sacrilegious beasts’, a deeply insulting expression. The same Sosias later abuses the slave flute-girl Habrotonon with nasty sexual innuendos and outright insults (482-485):

> καὶ γάρ, Ἀβρότονον,  
> ἔχεις τι πρὸς πολιορκίαν σὺ χρήσιμον,  
> δύνασαι τ’ ἀναβάίνειν, περικαθῆσθαι. ποὶ στρέφει,  
> λαικάστρι; ἡσχύνθης; μέλει τούτων τί σοι;  

> Look, Habrotonon—  
> You’re handy in blockades —can climb erections,  
> And squeeze... You tart, where are you going? Embarrassed?  
> Something I’ve said offends you? (Transl. Arnott (1996))

Furley suggests that Sosias speaks like this in an attempt to save his own face, after having been harshly dismissed by his master Polemon. In other words, Sosias is seeking some sort of redress for his impugned honour by offending a weaker slave, a behaviour that might have been quite common for slaves like him, always exposed to their masters’ whim, but endowed with some power over their fellows. Regrettably, we lack further evidence of such exchanges, but, from a cross-cultural perspective, that of taking it out on the weakest seems to be a fairly widespread behaviour. Sosias’ self-assertion is clearly depicted as negative, as it is expressed as a gratuitous negation of someone else’s claims to *time*. Both passages contribute to Sosias’ characterisation as arrogant and aggressive, and the implication is that it is wrong on his part to abuse his fellow slaves.

---


With regard to the *aulētris*, this passage is also valuable in that it offers us a rare glimpse into a female slave's *aidōs*. Habrotonon is a non-speaking character, and her reaction can only be reconstructed from Sosias' words. His questions 'you turn your face? ... Embarrassed?' (484–485: ποῖο στρέφει; ... ἡμιχνύνθης;) caption her gestures of embarrassment and humiliation, and possibly indignation, at such an offensive treatment. This shows how even a female slave, possibly used to providing sexual services as part of her duties, would feel humiliated by an incongruous equation, expressed in a public context, between her identity as a person (her *timē*) and the demeaning activities connected to her legal status. Slave *aulētrides* too, therefore, had claims to respect.

As Sosias demonstrates, self-assertion could sometimes take the form of unwarranted aggression and insults. However, competition and antagonism of this kind need not rule out the possibility of cooperative attitudes. In a scanty fragment from Menander’s *Perinthia*, we find a desperate appeal to camaraderie among slaves belonging to the same *oikos*, at the point when a bonfire is about to be lit around the altar on which the slave Davus took refuge. Following the master Laches’ orders, other slaves carry the brushwood and the fire, while Davus cries for help (4-7):

```
ἀφείητ᾿ ἄν, Γέτα,
σύν]δουλον ἄντα, καὶ διασώσαι[τ; ε]ὗ πάνυ
οὐκ] ἄν μ᾽ ἀφείητ’, ἄλλα περιόψεοθέ με;
οὔτ]ω πρὸς ἄλληλους ἔχομεν;

Please, let me go,
Getas—your [fellow] slave—and save me? Very [good]—
[Not] let me go? And turn your back on me?
Is [that the way] we treat each other? (Transl. Arnott (1996))
```

---

407 On the actual functions of *aulētrides* and on the prejudices about their sexual availability, see e.g. Lewis (2002), pp. 95–97; Goldman (2015), pp. 36–50.

408 On the relation between private and public in shame and on the connections between shame and identity cf. e.g. Fussi (2018).

409 Porter (2019), pp. 127–128 leaves this possibility open also in the case of asymmetrical relationships like those between *epitropoi* and their non-privileged fellows.
Davus invokes a principle of solidarity among people sharing the same condition. The virtually certain supplement σύνδουλον encapsulates the ties created by the fact itself of being fellows; the stress on πρὸς ἀλλήλους touches on assumptions of reciprocity and mutual help. Of particular interest is περιόψεος: ‘turning your back on me’ does not exhaust its meaning, which also comprises a dispositional aspect, ‘looking on without regarding’. The verb περιοράω thus hints to the relevance of honour: if the other slaves choose not to help him, they will fail to show the proper regard that Davus expects from them qua their syndoulos. The implications of this passage can be unpacked by taking into account the connections between respect and vulnerability: a lack of the due respect owed to someone often stems from a misperception of one’s own status, seen as both superior and unshakable. Qua slaves, Getas and the others are all potentially subject to the same violence that Davus is experiencing. They should therefore respect and empathise with him, on the grounds that their own timē is no more stable than that of their now debased peer.

Menander’s Heros is particularly interesting in that it uniquely displays an enamoured slave, Davus, and offers examples of interaction between slaves belonging to different oikoi. The play starts with a visibly distressed Davus approached by Getas, who immediately assumes that the reason for Davus’ despair has to do with a particularly severe punishment incurred after some misdeed. Getas promptly offers Davus help and support (6-11):

τοιούτον ἔστιν, ὦ πόνηρε σύ.
εἶτ’ οὐκ ἔχρην, κερμάτιον εἰ συνηγμένον
σοὶ τυγχάνει τι, τ[ό]_uri’ ἐμοὶ δοῦναι τέως
εἰ συγκυκάς] τὰ κατὰ σεαυτὸν πράγματα;
φιλῶ σε, Δάε, καὶ σὺνάχθομαι γέ σοι

411 See the ed. pr. (Grenfell and Hunt (1908), p. 152); Sandbach (1972) mentions also the synonymous restoration ὁμὸ]δουλον.
412 See Cairns (2020a) on hybris in particular as due to a misperception of one’s fallibility and vulnerability.
413 Its poor state of preservation represents a serious loss for the study of slaves in Menander. In addition to Getas and Davus, other slaves are listed among the characters (Sophrona, probably an old nurse, and Sangarius). Moreover, the plot revolves around the mistaken identity of two twins, who were raised by a freedman passing them off as his own children. The slave Davus is in love with the female twin and gets close to marry her, before her identity as a citizen is revealed. Further findings from Heros might illuminate substantially issues of slaves’ honour.
εἰ προσδοκάς λυπηρά.
It’s something like that, you
Poor thing... So shouldn’t you have given me
Your savings—any you’ve perhaps amassed,
[If you’re mis-managing] your own affairs?
[I like you, Davus, and] I sympathise
[If] troubles [lie ahead]. (Transl. Arnott (1996))

Getas’ offers are those to be expected from a *philos*, and as such Getas presents himself if the restoration φιλῶ σε is correct (10). His claim to *philias* is further reinforced by his assurance that he shares Davus’ feelings (συνάχθηκαί γέ σοι, 10). In Fichtean terms, Getas’ implies that as a friend he naturally empathises with Davus’ distress and sees in it an invite, an *Aufforderung*, to empathise and offer practical help.416

This passage is aptly complemented by a scene with two *apophora*-bearing slaves in *Epitrepontes*.417 As we saw in section 2.1 of Chapter 2, the slave shepherd Davus found an exposed baby but soon changed his mind about raising him, on the grounds of the financial impact that

---

414 Nor Arnott (1996) nor Gomme and Sandbach (1973) comment on Getas’ offers. I am inclined to think that they are not as sincere as they appear; Getas seems to aim at Davus’ savings rather than at helping him, which would be more in tune with the comic strategy of juxtaposing serious and farcical tones. At any rate, this does not invalidate the conclusion regarding cooperation as the standard for similar interactions: whether sincere or not, Getas’ offer to help Davus seems to align with the expected behaviour, as confirmed by the other passages considered. The restoration φιλῶ σε, Δᾶς, καὶ συνάχθηκαί is suggested by Arnott (1996), who follows the suggestion ἐπεὶ φιλῶ σε καὶ συνάχθηκαί advanced by van Leeuwen (1908).

415 See section 1.3 on the importance of sharing the other person’s feelings for *philia* and its intersubjective implications.

416 Incidentally, this passage also suggests the possibility for slaves to put aside a nest egg, not only in the case of those who lived and worked autonomously outside the *oikos*, but even those who lived in the household. When he learns of Davus’ ἔρως, Getas pulls his leg saying that his master must have overfed him (16-17), which implies that Davus was not working autonomously, but resided in the *oikos*. Slaves were not granted anything like property rights, and their masters retained the right to take anything from them, but this is still a precious hint that even domestic slaves were able to manage at least small sums of money. We can presume that even small savings could increase a slave’s pride and sense of agency.

417 On *apophora*-bearing slaves (who enjoyed more autonomy and privileges than other slaves) see Kazakévich and Kamen (2010); Kamen (2013), pp. 19–27. It is important to underline, however, that from a legal point of view even for *apophora*-bearing slaves their privileged autonomy ‘was a de facto arrangement at the discretion of the owner, and did not grant the slave any right to the remainder’ (Lewis (2018), p. 43).
raising a child could have. When Syriscus, a charcoal-burner, saw him distressed and learnt about the child, he begged Davus to give it to him, as his wife had just lost a baby.\(^{418}\) We can now examine some aspects of their interaction, as recalled by Syriscus in the private arbitration over the baby’s tokens. As Syriscus recounts, when Davus accepted to give him the baby, Syriscus was so grateful that he even kissed Davus’ hands (273-274), ‘a mark of respect he [sc. Davus] will not have frequently enjoyed’\(^{419}\). Notwithstanding the legal controversy that puts them one against the other in the play, at this stage their relationship was decisively cooperative. Syriscus showed interest in Davus’ problems and expressed his charis with peculiarly honorific gestures like the hand-kissing; Davus himself describes Syriscus as his συνήθης (259), implying a degree of mutuality and reciprocal support.

A passage from Menander’s Sikyonioi contains a scene of interaction between slaves who did not know each other before. On being sold as captives to a certain man, the slave Dromon and his trophimē are reassured by another slave (11-14):

\[
\text{παλίμβολος δὲ τῷ θεράποντι πλησίον}
\]
\[
\text{τῷν αὐτόθεν τις ἔτερος ἄμα πωλουμένων}
\]
\[
\text{‘βέλτιστε, θάρρει,’ φησίν, ὅ Σικυώνος}
\]
\[
\text{ἡγόρακεν ύμας, ἡγεμών χριστός σφόδρα …’}
\]

Near the slave another of the men

On sale there (he’d been through this hoop before)

Said ‘Sir, cheer up! This man from Sicyon

Who’s bought you is a commander, very fine …’ (Transl. Arnott (2000), adapt.)

Far from treating his fellows with envy for their good fortune, the anonymous slave addresses Davus with respect (βέλτιστε, 13) and shows disinterested support.\(^{420}\) The in-group here is not

---

\(^{418}\) All this information is provided through the two speeches delivered by Syriscus and Davus in the arbitration that gives the play its title (cf. 250 ff.). After the episode of mutual benefit in the woods, the two slaves entered into a quarrel about the tokens that Davus had found with the child. Syriscus claimed the tokens on behalf of the baby and, as Davus refused to hand them in, they agreed to have their case judged by a passer-by in a private arbitration.

\(^{419}\) Gomme and Sandbach (1973), p. 311, ad Epitr. 273.

\(^{420}\) On this scene, see Bathrellou (2014b), p. 51, highlighting the respect and humanity displayed by slaves even in such a difficult moment.
oppositional: there is no hint here of a slave versus free opposition and thus of the common foe principle. The idea of a shared vulnerability is capable of transcending these binary structures, by implying that we are all liable to falling under a bottom line, and that for this reason no one should presume themselves superior to others, but should instead grant them the due respect.\textsuperscript{421} It is meaningful that this attitude is displayed by an anonymous παλίμβολος, a slave who had already been sold in the past, and who had probably reached the bottom.\textsuperscript{422} A dividing line can nevertheless be drawn by moral desert. The παλίμβολος slave underscores both the commander’s and Davus’ (presumed) moral worth, thus virtually creating an – in this case – oppositional in-group, which excludes anyone who does not qualify as βέλτιστος or χρηστός. A questionable conduct seemingly constitutes ground for losing one’s right to respect. This dynamic was perfectly illustrated in the scenes with Smicrines and Davus from Menander’s \textit{Aspis}: whilst having to behave with a minimal deference towards his new master-to-be, Davus clearly lacks any real respect for the greedy Smicrines.

Lesis’ tablet vouches for a similar moral criticism; another example occurs in Menander’s \textit{Dyskolos}, where the slave Davus, belonging to the young and poor Gorgias, saw the rich Sostratus talking to Gorgias’ sister and presumed that Sostratus was trying to seduce her. When Sostratus meets Gorgias and Davus, he wins Gorgias’ trust declaring his love and his desire to marry the girl, but he fails to win Davus’ trust. Unlike Gorgias, who appreciates Sostratus’ goodwill in spite of his privileged social status, the slave cannot overcome his mistrust for Sostratus’ spoilt appearance and does not appreciate his stubbornness in insisting that he wants to marry the girl. It is Davus, however, that eventually suggests a plan for Sostratus to meet the girl’s bad-tempered father in the most favourable circumstances: as the slave suggests, Sostratus should join them for their daily work in the fields, in order to appear in a favourable light should the girl’s father turn up in the nearby field. Davus’ true intentions, however, are revealed in an aside (371-374):

\begin{quote}

\textbf{βούλομαι}

\textbf{ως πλείστον ἡμᾶς ἐργάσασθαι τήμερον,}

\textbf{τοῦτόν τε τὴν ὀσφὸν ἀπορρήξανθ’ ἀμα}
\end{quote}

\footnote{On the connection between honour and fallibility and vulnerability, see e.g. Cairns (2020a).}

\footnote{This is suggested also by the word παλίμβολος itself, which has a range of negative meanings; the idea of being re-sold was used as an insult for slaves, cf. the synonym παλίμπρατος (see LSJ \textit{ad voces}).}
The slave had been previously described very sympathetically as loyal and earnestly concerned with his *oikos* (26, 218–232). Despite his regard towards his own family, or maybe just because of it, Davus exhibits a starkly aggressive attitude towards Sostratus. What is notable here is that the slave is striking out at a citizen: the huge difference in socio-economic and legal status does not prevent the slave to show contempt towards a citizen because of moral reasons.

As other passages from *Dyskolos* state explicitly (286–287, 803, 832–834), people must prove themselves morally worthy, *axioi*, of their good fortune. However, the perceptions and evaluations that the various characters in the play have of others’ *axia* can differ widely. As far as Sostratus is concerned, Gorgias soon acknowledges Sostratus’ fundamental goodness, whereas Davus remains suspicious of him. We might surmise that Gorgias’ attitude is influenced to an extent by his and Sostratus’ shared membership in the *polis*: belonging to the in-group of Athenian citizens possibly creates some sense of obligation towards each other. Davus, on the other hand, cannot trust somebody who, like Sostratus, never had to toil and despises him for his spoilt leisure, thinking that he is just wasting his and Gorgias’ time. In Davus’ eyes, one’s hard work is the best proof of one’s moral worth and Sostratus’ speech alone does not prove it. As we shall discuss more extensively in the last section, the whole play underscores earnest labour as a means to gain pride and *timē*, grounded on one’s responsibilities to one’s *oikos*. The sense of self-worth stemming from his toil enables Davus to feel superior from a moral point of view to an undeservedly rich citizen like Sostratus. The pattern is similar to what we have observed in *Aspis* with regard to Davus and Smicrines: even there, Davus’ sense of self-worth allows him to despise a rich citizen from a moral point of view. One’s *timē*, however, is not solely determined by one’s moral standing: both in *Aspis* and *Dyskolos*, the slaves must still show some respect for the *timē* of the two citizens involved because of their social, economic, and legal superiority.423

The conclusion is nonetheless striking: if, as Martha Krieter-Spiro has shown with regard to

---

423 For what we can regard as ‘recognition respect’ (Darwall 1977), see e.g. *Men. Dysk.* 302, where Davus is tersely silenced by Sostratus.
Menander’s comedies, slaves belonging to a well-off oikos could look down on citizens of a lower status from a socio-economic point of view, it appears, therefore, that even slaves belonging to a poor oikos could look down on rich citizens because of moral evaluations.  

As far as other slave-citizen relationships are concerned, other sources show slaves helping citizens not belonging to their oikos or implying that they share something in terms of honour or accountability. In Ps.-Demosthenes 47, the commotion caused by Evergus and his brother Theophemus in the prosecutor’s house prompts the slaves from the neighbouring oikoi to rush to help their neighbours as they could, that is by calling for witnesses. One might wonder whether slaves’ relationship with their masters was of any relevance at all here, or whether they rushed because of a sense of mutual accountability towards the neighbours themselves. Such a dichotomy, however, is probably misplaced here. The motivation behind the slaves’ intervention was probably multifaceted: they might have anticipated their masters’ will to support their neighbours, while at the same time feeling some autonomous obligation towards them. In a neighbourhood, moreover, ties were likely to be formed also with other slaves, so that the slaves might have acted also for their obligation towards their fellows (included, in this case, the former nurse who died as a result of Evergus and Theophemus’ violence).

A different take on interactions with citizens can be extrapolated from the scene we have considered before from Menander’s Epitreponetes. Having agreed to submit their dispute to an

424 For slaves from a well-off oikos looking down on citizens of a lower status from a socio-economic point of view, see also Krieter-Spiro (1997), pp. 72–73.
425 Ps.-Dem. 47.60: ἀκούοντες δὲ οἱ θεράποντες τῶν γειτῶν τῆς κραυγῆς καὶ ὀρόντες τὴν οἰκίαν πορθουμένην τὴν ἐμῆν, οἱ μὲν ἀπὸ τῶν τεγὼν τῶν ἑαυτῶν ἐκαλίστρουν τοὺς παριόντας, οἱ δὲ καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐτέραν ὅδον ἐλθόντες καὶ ἱδόντες Ἀγνόφιλον παρίσταν ἐκέλευσαν παραγενέσθαι. προσελθὼν δὲ ὁ Ἀγνόφιλος προσκληθεῖς ὑπὸ τοῦ θεράποντος τοῦ Ἀνθεμίωνος, ὃς ἑστὶ μοι γείτων, εἰς μὲν τὴν οἰκίαν οὐκ εἰσῆλθεν (οὐ γὰρ ἤγετο δίκαιον εἶναι μὴ παρίσταν γε τοῦ κυρίου) ἐν δὲ τῷ τοῦ Ἀνθεμίωνος χωρίῳ ὄν ἕωρα τά τε σκέψη ἐκφερόμενα καὶ Ἐδεργον καὶ Θεοφιόμον ἐξεύλτας ἐκ τῆς ἐμῆς οἰκίας (‘The servants of the neighbours, hearing the tumult and seeing that my house was being pillaged, some of them called from the roofs of their own houses to the people passing by, and others went into the other street and seeing Hagnophilus passing by, bade him to come. Hagnophilus, when he came up, summoned by a servant of Anthemion, who is a neighbour of mine, did not enter the house (for he thought he ought not to do so in the absence of the master), but, standing on Anthemion’s land, saw the furniture being carried off and Evergus and Theophemus coming out of the house’, transl. Murray (1936)).
426 In this scene, the literary filter is probably thicker than in the other Menandrian passages examined. The arbitration scene is probably modelled on a scene from Euripides’ Alope, which means that some details might have

199
 arbitrator, Syriscus and Davus ask a passerby, Smicrines, to judge on the matter. As Smicrines reacts with contempt to their request, Syriscus replies (231-236):

πάτερ, δὸς τὴν χάριν:
μὴ καταφρονήσῃς, πρὸς θεῶν, ἐν παντὶ δεῖ
καὶ τὸ δίκαιον ἐπικρατεῖν ἀπαντάχοι,
καὶ τὸν παρατυχάνοντα τούτου τοῦ μέρους
ἐχειν πρόνοιαν· κοινὸν ἐστὶ τῷ βίῳ πάντων.

Do us
The favour, sir. In gods’ name, do not despise us! 428
On all occasions justice should prevail,
The whole world over. Any man should feel
Concerned about it—that’s a general
Rule of society. (Transl. Arnott (1979), adapt.)

Leaving aside the question of whether slaves were allowed to resort to a private arbitration like this one, we can in any case appreciate the different levels of deference and demeanour in play in this exchange. 429 While Smicrines scorns Syriscus’ demand, the latter treats him with an impeccable obsequiousness, while at the same time claiming the due respect. The plea μὴ καταφρονήσῃς in 232 hinges on the presumption that even two slaves were entitled to some form of deference. In this case, the deference consists in accepting their request to hear their case. It is possible that Syriscus and Davus’ entitlements in their interaction with a citizen is stronger by virtue of their independent activity as apophora-bearing slaves, but the way Syriscus frames his argument leads toward a more general interpretation. Syriscus adds a gnōmē in support of his plea: given that justice is fundamental for human life, everyone should take

been included to recall the model, regardless of their compatibility with the reality of fourth-century Athens; see Gomme and Sandbach (1973), p. 303. However, the conclusions that we can draw with regard to slaves’ honour are consistent with the picture that emerges from other passages.

427 Men. Epitr. 228-231: ὦ κάκιστ’ ἀπολούμενοι, / δίκας λέγοντες περιπατεῖτε, διφθέρας / ἔχοντες; ‘Damn you! Traipsing round in working clothes, presenting cases?’ (transl. Arnott (1979)).

428 Arnott (1979) translates ‘don’t be snooty’, which I think does not express well Syriscus’ deferent attitude towards Smicrines and obscures the notion of the two slaves’ entitlement to a certain respect.

429 Commentators skirt the issue, which would certainly deserve some investigation. See Goffman (1967) on deference and demeanour.
care of allowing τὸ δίκαιον to prevail on all occasions. Syriscus’ gnōmē obviously aims at convincing Smicrines to judge their case. Something more might be made out of it, however, given its relation to μὴ καταφρονήσῃς. Syriscus’ argument relies on the premise that all humans have an interest in justice, as underpinned by the last words κοινόν ἐστι τῷ βίῳ πάντων. This point can be interpreted in the sense of a universal desire for justice. The underlying idea in Syriscus’ speech would then be that this universal yearning constitutes a basis for a form of mutual respect among moral agents. We can paraphrase this point: ‘The two of us are looking for justice, with which you should always feel concerned. Therefore do not despise us, but cooperate with us in our search for justice.’

Overall, the general picture we get from these texts is that slaves were likely to form connections of mutual support; cooperation rather than antagonism seems to be the rule both outside and within the oikos. Fundamental aspects of honour dynamics such as respect, gratitude, and mutual recognition fully find their place in interactions between slaves; as we have observed, these attitudes are often expressly conceptualised in terms of honour and mutual claims to respect. When a bond of philia exists between two slaves, reciprocity, affection, and gratitude support one’s claims to respect. Even slaves who did not know each other previously can nonetheless bond on the basis of their shared vulnerability and common fate, together with considerations of moral worth, determining an in-group of good people. In spite of their irremediably inferior status, moreover, slaves could put forth claims to recognition and respect even in their dealings with citizens. This was often made possible by an acknowledgment of some common ground: morality and justice are sometimes expressly invoked as domains in which citizens and slaves alike are expected to follow certain standards. In fact, without some recognition of impartiality and the potential for generalisation there is hardly any concept of justice at all.

430 Something with which Honneth would very much agree with, see Honneth (1995), pp. 163–165.
431 This is what philosopher Darwall (1977) would call recognition respect.
432 This would chime with e.g. what Protagoras says in the homonymous dialogue written by Plato, as we saw in section 2.5 in our investigation on ἀιδός. According to Protagoras, all human beings must share a minimum of civic virtue in order for society to exist at all; this civic virtue can be framed as ἀιδός and dikaiosynē.
433 A further example of mutual help comes from the Dyskolos, where Simiche, Cnemon’s daughter’s former nurse and the only slave belonging to his oikos, suggests asking Davus, Gorgia’s slave, to help them recover a mattock fallen into the well. On the social networking through which slaves could seek help and support as depicted in Menander’s comedies see also Cox (2013).
This is not to deny that masters and other free people could easily mistreat slaves. Even in the case of slaves constantly mistreated and humiliated by their masters, however, honour could be tapped into also as a way to mitigate these experiences. Indeed, as we shall see in the next section, slaves’ life experiences were not all connected to their identity qua slaves. Up to now, we have mainly considered the relational aspects of honour, namely reciprocity, respect, cooperation, and their opposites. In the following section, I intend to focus on the ties between honour, pride, and identity. In particular, the aim here is to investigate some of the sources of honour that were available for slaves independently of their servile status and of their relationship with masters or other members of the *oikos*. As we shall see, from slaves’ own point of view, their identities were far from flattened on their servile condition. On the contrary, they could shape their pride and sense of identity with reference to a range of other features.

5.5 **Not just slaves: slaves’ multifaceted identities**

We can start this section by turning again to Menander’s *Aspis*, examining a passage in which Davus exchanges some pointed remarks with the slave waiter that has been hired for the wedding of Cleostratus’ sister and who is probably a rented-out slave rather than an *apophora*-bearing slave. The waiter is commenting on Davus’ loyal behaviour towards his dead master’s *oikos* (238-245):

> ΤΡΑΠΕΖΟΠΟΙΟΣ κακὸς κακῶς ἀπόλοιο τοίνυν, νῆ Δία,

434 For the distinction between *apophora*-bearing slaves (who enjoyed more autonomy and privileges) and rented out slaves (*andrapoda misthorouonta*, who were instead subject to a double exploitation) see Kazakévich and Kamen (2010); Kamen (2013), p. 19. For Sandbach, the waiter ‘is probably a slave, rather than a freedman, but perhaps one carrying on his trade for himself and paying his master an ἀποφορά’ (Gomme and Sandbach (1973), ad *Asp*. 238 ff). Scholars of New Comedy tend to think that cooks are to be seen as freedmen, whereas waiters, who need to attend to cooks’ instructions, are more likely slaves. Some maintain that comic cooks cannot be slaves on the basis of a passage from *Deipnosophysiae*, where Poseidippus is said to be the only comic poet to have staged a slave cook (Ath. *Deipn*. 14.77.13-14, Poseid. fr. 25 K-A), cf. Dohm (1964), pp. 67–68; Webster (1974), p. 33; Lowe (2000), p. 358. Others leave the possibility open that some cooks can be slaves, as their typical names like Sicon, ‘coming from Sicily’, suggest (Krieter-Spiro (1997), pp. 26–31; Beroutsos (2005) ad 223, Cox (2013), p. 168). One solution might be that Poseidippus staged a slave cook belonging to one of the *oikoi* involved in the play, rather than hired from the market. For waiters as slaves or freedmen, cf. Krieter-Spiro (1997), pp. 31–33; Beroutsos (2005) ad 232 notes: ‘The only *τραπεζοποιὸς* whose social status is attested was a homebred slave’, with reference to *IG* I 422, ll. 70ff. (*SEG* 13.13); according to him, however, we cannot exclude that there were free waiters as well as free cooks. For a literary approach to the status of cooks in Menander, see Scodel (1993).
. . .] δει παποηκώς, ἀπόπληκτε· χρυσίν ἔχων τοσοῦτο, παῖδας, ἥκεις δεσπότη
tαύτ’ ἀποκομίζων, κούκ ἀπέδρας· ποταπός π[οτ’ εἰ;
ΔΑΟΣ Φρύξ.  
ΤΡΑΠ. οὔδεν ἱερόν· ἀνδρόγυνος, ἡμεῖς μόνοι
οἱ Θρακεῖς ἔσμεν ἄνδρες· οἱ μὲν δὴ Γέται,
"Απόλλων, ἄνδρεῖον τὸ χρήμα· τοιγαροῦν
γέμουσιν οἱ μυλῶνες ἡμῶν.

WAITER Be damned to you then [damnably], by Zeus,
If [that’s what (?)] you’ve done! Senseless fool!
When you had so much money and slaves, you’ve brought them all
Back for your master? You didn’t disappear? Where do
You come from?

DAVUS Phrygia.

WAITER That means you’re no good,
A queer. We Thracians, though, we’re men, unique—
The Getic tribe, by Apollo—yes, real men.
That’s why we fill the grain-mills. (Transl. Arnott (1979))

The waiter not only presents himself without any reference to a master of his, but actively contrasts the master-slave bond which unites Davus to Cleostratus. His legal status does not seem to influence to any great extent his sense of honour and identity. Eftychia Bathrellou has highlighted the relevance of this passage for appreciating the various dimensions of a slave’s life and identity outside of their relationship with masters: the waiter’s ‘primary self-identification is not as a slave to a master, but as member of an ethnic group, the Thracians and specifically the Getai, for whose character and practices he feels immense pride.”

While the passages we have seen in the previous sections focused on trust and loyalty as grounds for honour, in the waiter’s case the honour group is formed by his fellow countrymen. As Bathrellou aptly frames this point, ‘this is not a private, solitary perception of identity; as the use of the first person

plural throughout the passage makes clear, the waiter thinks of himself as part of a collectivity’.

A well-known epigraphic parallel to the Aspis passage as far as ethnic pride is concerned is Atotas’ funerary inscription, dating to the second half of the fourth century BCE and coming from the area of Laurion:

'Ατώτας μεταλλεύς.
Πόντου ἀπ’ Εὐδεξίου Παφλαγών μεγάθυμος 'Ατώτας
ἡ γαίας τηλοῦ σῶμ’ ἀνέπαυσε πόνων.
tέχνη δ’ οὕτις ἔριζε· Πυλαιμένου δ’ ἀπὸ ρίζης
eἰμ’, ὡς 'Αχιλλῆς χειρὶ δαμεῖς ἐθανεν.

Atotas, miner.
Great-hearted Atotas, a Paphlagonian from the Hospitable [Black] Sea, far from his land has rested his body from toil. Nobody rivalled [me] in skill. I am from the race of Pylaimenes, who died, conquered by the hand of Achilles. (Transl. Hunt (2015))

Atotas boasts of his Paphlagonian origins, equating them to an ennobling Trojan descent. A second piece of epigraphic evidence collected by Peter Hunt in his study on claims of Trojan origins on the part of slaves in Athens is the funerary inscription belonging to Mannes Orumaeus, whose status, according to Hunt, is at best that of an ex-slave (IG I² 1361):

Φρυγῶν δ’ ἀριστος ἐγένατ’ ἐν εὐρύχοροισιν Ἀθήνα<ι>ς,
Μάννης Ὀρύμαιος, ο μνήμα τὸδ’ ἐστὶ καλὸν.
'καὶ μὰ Δί’ οὐκ εἴδον ἐμαυτὸ ἀμείνω ὑλοτόμον.'

---

436 Bathrellou (2014b), p. 44.
437 IG II² 10051; the inscription is now lost. Although it remains uncertain whether Atotas had gained his freedom, 'as far as we know, even the most skilled, managerial foreigners in the mines at Laurion were originally slaves' (Hunt (2015), p. 136, with further references).
438 On Atotas’ pride for his origins and for his professional excellence see also Bäbler (1998), pp. 93–96.
439 Concerning Mannes’ stele cf. Hunt (2015), pp. 139–140; Ramsay (1918), pp. 150–151, reporting an approximate dating to 450–425 BCE, commented: ‘The inscription is certainly jocular, and perhaps not really an epitaph ... The war in which Mannes died was perhaps a drinking-bout’. Ramsay’s dismissal seems however quite feeble, especially in the light of additional evidence, like Atotas’ gravestone. See also Bäbler (1998), pp. 96–97; she regards both Atotas and Mannes as slaves, but points out how legal status finds no role to play in the two epitaphs.
ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ ἀπέθανεν.

The best of the Phrygians in spacious Athens, Mannes Orumaeus, this is his noble monument: ‘And, by Zeus, I did not know of a better woodcutter than me.’ He died in the war. (Transl. Hunt (2015))

Just as in Atotas’ inscription, both ethnicity and skill in one’s activity are here presented as sources of pride and social acknowledgement. In addition to this, the reference to Mannes’ death in war also ‘quietly asserts his ultimate service to Athens while it insists loudly on his Phrygian background and his skill at his trade’.

Of special interest are the two comparisons that assert Mannes as the best both among the Phrygians and among his fellow woodcutters, as I shall comment in more detail below, the epitaph lays claim to appraisal respect for Mannes’ excellence, stressing his superiority.

Given these converging expressions of pride about three distinct ethnicities, the Thracian, the Paphlagonian, and the Phrygian, we can, together with Hunt, draw some conclusions: first, foreign communities in Athens were seemingly able to nurture a sense of identity and pride and, second, some slaves at least could participate actively in the social life of their ethnic communities, from which they gained a sense of honour and self-worth. One major avenue for both processes was represented by religion, which sometimes intersected with ethnicity. The cult of the goddess Bendis, for instance, was one of the experiences that could foster the unity of the Thracian community in Athens: typical slaves’ names frequently recur in the epigraphic evidence for the cult and ‘there are signs that Bendis became popular in the mining region of Laurion, where Thracian slaves were doubtless numerous.’ Indeed, looking at documentary evidence, Hunt suggests that ‘the more autonomy a slave had from a master the more easily she

441 The Phrygians here referred to are not necessarily the inhabitants of Phrygia as a whole, as they might also be either the Phrygian slaves in Athens or the inhabitants of an area in Athens called Phrygia. See Hunt (2015), p. 140, and Ramsay (1918), p. 150.
442 Hunt (2015), cf. e.g. p. 146: ‘If slaves were to maintain more of their culture than a mute awareness of origin and difference, not only independence from their masters but also some reinforcement from a larger ethnic community was necessary: they required continued contact with their birth culture, either in the form of other slaves or of foreign communities in Attica.’
443 Parker (1996), pp. 170–175, quote p. 174, with further references about the sociology of the cult.
could maintain her own culture’. This is underpinned by cross-cultural comparison with New World societies, where

Domestic slaves were constantly expected to show deference. The pressure to conform to their master’s expectations could be intense, since masters took a much greater interest in the subtleties of their behaviour and were able to exercise a more penetrating surveillance. Such slaves had a greater opportunity and more reasons to assimilate; the slaves living in separate quarters, mainly agricultural workers, were allowed far more autonomy in their demeanour, way of life, and customs.

We might rephrase Hunt’s conclusion with a closer look at honour and the passage in *Aspis*. Undoubtedly, the boastful Thracian draws on his own notion of what is honourable: in opposition to what he sees as unmanly obedience, the waiter puts forth an understanding of *timē* that rejects dependence on and moral ties towards one’s masters. This needs to be evaluated together with the Thracian’s probable status as a rented out slave: while Davus belongs to his *oikos* and derives his pride from the esteem he gained within his relationship with Cleostratus, the waiter evidently lacks a strong connection to an *oikos* with which he might identify, and his apparent independence with regard to any *oikos* dimension clearly plays a role in his rejection of loyalty towards masters. However, he finds opportunities for his sense of recognition and self-worth through the identification with the values of his ethnic group.

With all the incompatibility between the Thracian’s defiance and Davus’ loyalty, this scene is surely a piece of stock comedy, but, as suggested by Hunt in the quote above, it most probably reflects reality in showing that slaves more integrated within the *oikos* could have an idea of honour more strongly influenced by their relationship with masters. Slaves’ notion of what is honourable or dishonourable could then be determined by whether they carried out their chores within the *oikos* or outside of it, and in the former case by whether their relationships with masters were as good as the one between Davus and Cleostratus or as bad as the one between Davus and his potential new master Smicrines. In the latter case, what is truly

---

honourable for Davus is to help the good members of his oikos against the threat posed by Smicrines. Unlike the latter or the Thracian waiter, Davus chooses not to act according to his own advantage, but prioritises his ethical principles and his loyalty towards his beloved master, even after his death. While for Davus his oikos is an essential source of honour and influences his moral perspective, the waiter finds other bases for his sense of recognition and self-worth by relating to his ethnic group and to its values.

The difference between Davus’ and the waiter’s attitudes can be further explained by taking into account the model of the ‘economy of esteem’ developed by Geoffrey Brennan and Philip Pettit: in their analysis, members of any given society take part in an underlying competition for esteem, and develop different strategies according to their social positioning. Their results show that most people tend to strive for esteem by performing according to the accepted social norms; in the case of marginalised individuals, however, for whom this strategy is not profitable enough, the tendency is to create sub-groups that serve as their own honour groups and within which esteem will be pursued according to counter-cultural standards (and through high-risk behaviour). Brennan and Pettit’s model accommodates well Davus’ and the waiter’s opposite attitude, allowing us to draw further inferences. In the context of Athenian society, Davus is able to get esteem from his oikos and endorses its values, which overlap with the values of the Athenian community, whereas the waiter, who does not seem to be part of any oikos or any other mainstream Athenian network, identifies with a marginal subgroup and endorses counter-cultural values. Davus’ identity and timē are so strongly rooted in his membership of the oikos that he prioritises loyalty towards his beloved master, even after his death. The waiter, on the other hand, sees this loyalty as a weakness, because he sees no real honour in slaves’ relationships with their masters; to him, timē lies outside of the oikos and encompasses a different value system. The analysis based on the model of the economy of esteem combines with Hunt’s point mentioned above on how slaves maintained their original culture in different ways, depending on their degree of integration within the household.

---

Despite the comic force of the scene, therefore, these comparisons strongly suggest that it reflects reality more than one could suspect.

An additional parameter for an honourable identity put forth by the waiter is that of gender ideology, which he correlates with ethnicity. The Thracian is drawing on widespread stereotypes, according to which Thracians, and Getai in particular, were regarded as the embodiment of a stark masculinity, whereas Phrygians were seen as effeminate. A commonplace attribute of Thracians’ stereotypical identity was also their proverbial sexual prowess. In a Menandrian fragment (fr. 877 K-A), another member of the Getai tribe boasts about their akrasia with regard to women, claiming that they usually have no less than twelve wives, even if twelve is certainly a comic exaggeration, other sources confirm that polygamy was common among Thracians. While Greek morality favoured self-restraint, among Thracians an exuberant sexuality was thus construed as an honourable trait. Therefore, also the waiter’s interpretation of gender ideology has a counter-cultural twist, and differs radically from the Athenian notion of ‘being a man’. The divergence from canonical ethics further underpins the idea that the waiter reflects the attitude ascribed to marginal communities according to the economy of esteem.

We can better comment upon this point by considering another passage from Menander’s Perikeiromene, where two slaves belonging to different oikoi engage in a conflict, acting as representatives of their respective masters. The conflict revolves around Glycera, the mistress of the soldier Polemon: believing she had cheated on him with their neighbour’s son Moschion, Polemon cut Glycera’s hair, an outrageous gesture that pushes Glycera to take refuge in Moschion’s house. At this point, a skirmish takes place between the soldier Polemon’s slave, Sosias, and Moschion’s slave, Davus. Sosias accuses Davus of abducting a free woman, while Davus replies with insults (375-383):


452 Men. fr. 877 K-A: οὐ σφόδρ’ ἐγκρατεῖς / ἐσμεν ... γαμεῖ γάρ ἡμῶν οὔδὲ εἰς εἰ μὴ δέκ’ ἡ / ἐνδέκα γυναῖκας, δώδεκ’ ἡ πλείους τινές.

453 Hdt. 5.6, 16; [Arist.] fr. 611.58 [Rose] = Heraclid. Lemb. fr. 58 [Dilts].

... 

In line 380, Sosias' indignant answer sums up a certain ideology of what it meant to be men, ἄνδρες εἶναι, as a warning for Davus to stop with his insults. In the context of a fight like this, being men entails – at least in Sosias' perspective – the appropriate ability to avenge the insults received; in asserting his and his fellows' manliness, Sosias is stating that they will not tolerate any slight to their honour. If the restoration in 379 is correct, the idea is expressed also with reference to emotional reactions: χολὴν ἔχειν encapsulates the ability to feel the appropriate degree of anger when confronted with forms of atimia, so as to neutralise the menace of accepting the atimia by not reacting against it, given that a lack of proper anger and of attempts to seek redress would ratify the factual occurrence of atimia. Concerning slaves, this is...
particularly relevant, since a failure to manifest anger when appropriate could be seen as a mark of a slavish spirit.\textsuperscript{455} As we saw also in section 5.3, the sources demonstrate that free people were well aware that slaves experienced anger; the metaphorical connection between excessive mildness and slavery stemmed from the mere fact that slaves were not allowed to manifest their negative emotions, especially when reacting to their masters’ mistreatment.

In this passage, the language of masculinity combines with military imagery: Sosias’ master, Polemon, is a military officer, and Sosias serves him as a soldier too. Davus draws on this to belittle them: when he claims that they are only worth a very little pay, Davus is obviously talking of their \textit{timē}, exploiting the analogy between concrete and metaphorical value.\textsuperscript{456} Although he is no soldier, Davus replies to Sosias as if he belonged to a rival gang of soldiers: in using the first person plural, he probably refers to the members of his \textit{oikos} in general. Although the actual protagonists of the conflict are two citizens, Polemon and Moschion, not only do their slaves identify with their masters’ interests, but they identify completely with their masters’ honour too. Together with those of their masters, it is the slaves’ own manliness and \textit{timē} that are at stake, whereas their status as slaves is reconfigured in terms of the more honourable position of soldiers \textit{vis-à-vis} their commander.

To go back to the aspects considered in section 5.4, this passage also shows how two slaves belonging to two different \textit{oikoi} could interact with each other in a conflict. The martial vocabulary underscores the in- and out-group mechanism in play and introduces the possibility of a violent escalation: Davus in particular tries to disparage the opponents’ identity, while Sosias threatens to resort to violence to redress the insults. Although violence and aggressive assertion of one’s honour might seem to prevail here, it must be noted that the scrimmage is not only about the honour of the two parties (as in a zero-sum situation) but is still framed in terms of justice: both slaves think that they have a right to \textit{timōria}, believing that it was the opponent who insulted first. Sosias’ exclamation \textit{πράγματος \[ά\]σελγούς} (383) makes clear that he sees Davus’ behaviour as a transgression of justice in general; in the following lines (484–5), Sosias tries to stop a passer-by to ask him to witness. This further underlines the relevance of an

\textsuperscript{455} See for instance Arist. \textit{EN V}, 1132b33-1133a 4: \textit{δουλεία δοκεῖ εἶναι εἰ μὴ ἀντιποιῆσαι} (‘they feel they are in the position of slaves’ when they cannot requite evil with evil). See section 5.3 above, n. 399, where I already questioned Konstan (2006), pp. 55–56 in his claim that slaves could not experience anger.

\textsuperscript{456} See section 1.1 above.
objective (third-person) moral standpoint, confirming that honour has to do with justice rather than with violence, which is just an extreme means to restore the right.457 Going back to the passage in Aspis, in that case ἄνδρες εἶναι was used differently, in connection with the (allegedly) typical proclivity of Thracian slaves to defy their masters and undertake reckless actions with no regard to loyalty nor to punishments. The waiter’s interpretation of gender ideology seems however a comic exaggeration, created as the diametrical opposite of the idea of ‘being a man’ that was part of the ideal of citizenship. As the majority of surviving texts reveals, for a citizen ‘to be a man’ meant an appropriate ability to feel anger when wrongfully insulted as much as an ability to control one’s emotions and reaction.458 Respect towards the honour of others was always an insurmountable boundary in one’s assertion of one’s own timē, a principle that the Thracian waiter subverts altogether.459

In addition to the observations about gender, it can be helpful to comment further on other points, such as the opposition of ‘us’ and ‘you’ and the way in which the two slaves act as integral members of their respective groups. Although the actual protagonists of the fight over Glycera are Polemon and Moschion, not only do their slaves identify with their masters’ interests, but they identify completely with their masters’ honour too. We have here two distinct and conflicting groups, engaging in a competitive struggle for honour; this takes the shape of a military fight and touches on themes of manliness and proper susceptibility to insults. Together with that of their masters, it is their own manliness and timē that are at stake, whereas their status as slaves is reconfigured in terms of the more honourable position of soldiers towards their commander. All this matches well with the strategies we had observed as regards ethnicity: slaves could give prominence to various features of their identity, exhibiting them as badges of honour. The honourable trait is often set against its dishonouring opposites, as in the case of Thracian masculinity contrasted against Phrygian effeminacy, or in the case of the presence or absence of military valour. From this point of view, such self-enhancing tactics can be markedly

458 See Konstan (2006), p. 58, with further references: ‘too quick a temper is as much a fault as no temper at all, and Aristotle takes irascibility to be a sign of moral incontinence and vacillation (NE 1103b19). The inability to govern one’s passions bespeaks softness and a lack of self-control, and this, in popular ethics as well as in Aristotle, was imagined to be characteristic of women.’
459 See Cairns (1993) on aidōs as expressing these principles of balance between self- and other-regarding considerations.
exclusive and hierarchical. On the other hand, the sense of belonging to the group identified by a certain trait is essential in providing the trait itself with a strong socially shared value, within the group, peer solidarity and equality seem to prevail, as hinted at by the waiter’s and Atotas’ pride in their ethnic groups. In the case of Mannes, his ethnic identity is instead shaped in the terms of an excellence within the ethnic group itself; one might wonder if this is due to the fact that Phrygians were thought to be especially defective from the point of view of manliness and assertiveness. At any rate, the proud assertion of one’s identity seems always to bring with it a degree of competition; in- and out-group dynamics play a crucial role in defining one’s identity and social worth. As far as manliness is concerned, a similarly adversarial attitude interestingly characterised also the struggle for honour among slaves in the USA as reconstructed by David Doddington, who has highlighted the degree of in-group violence exerted to reinforce certain standards of honour. It is important to pinpoint, however, that in our passage from Perikeiromene we are dealing with a single moment of disruption within an honour code meant to safeguard social relationships. As Linda Pollock has shown with regard to early modern England, despite their obviously greater conspicuousness, the occasional outbursts of violence and hostility are not to be taken as the real essence of an honour code, but as the extreme forms of regulation when infractions occur. This seems to be the case even for slaves in Classical Athens: in the texts we are collecting, violence is never put forth as an aim in itself; many of the passages we have examined demonstrate that even for slaves respect and cooperation were the default mode. This is implied by the last passage from Perikeiromene itself: the original violence, Glycera’s presumed abduction, and the insults received from Davus are seen by Sosias as a breach in an honour system, as clarified for instance by the exclamation πράγματος [ά]σελγοῦ[ς. Conversely, Davus regards as outrageous the charges pressed against him. Both of them seem to imply that violence is only justified when it is used as the means to restore the right distribution of honour, whereas the initial violence or disrespect are condemned. This passage from Aspis

463 Pollock (2007).
thus shows how, outside of the *oikos*, honour dynamics could translate into patterns of in- and out-group conflicts. Clashes among citizens could be reflected by scrimmages among their slaves, who could draw on an honour-discourse, bringing up for instance the idea of basic qualifications to honour, with regard to criteria such as manliness and courage.\(^{464}\)

In close relation to gender, even family roles and experiences need to be factored in when accounting for slaves’ autonomy in shaping their identities.\(^{465}\) As a matter of fact, domestic slaves were largely dependent on their masters’ will about their relationships. From the masters’ viewpoint, slaves’ sexuality and relationships were another aspect of their management, which should be controlled and harnessed so as to maximise their loyalty.\(^{466}\) In Menander’s *Heros*, which extraordinarily features a slave in love with a girl, the enamoured slave, Davus, first of all went to speak with his master, who graciously granted him a conditional permission to live with (συνοικεῖν) his beloved. We might imagine that *apophora*-bearing slaves could enjoy a greater freedom. In *Epitrepontes*, Syriscus has a wife and can autonomously choose to raise the foundling, exactly as Davus contemplated doing before he changed his mind. We may imagine that, as long as they were able to pay the *apophora*, *apophora*-bearing slaves could have a family, although masters probably retained the power to severe any ties.

Recent discoveries and studies have provided evidence that family relationships and affection among slaves were usually met (or were expected to be met) with some basic respect. A recently published fragment from Hyperides brands as cruel the separation of relatives taken as war captives, adding that even slave dealers – certainly not the most compassionate or decent figures – refrain from separating slave families.\(^{467}\) While this practice was thought to be

\(^{464}\) Slaves could also be used as muscle-force when their masters had to recur to forms of extra-legal self-help: see Porter (2019), pp. 152–157, who argues that the expression θεράποντας παρασκευάσασθαι used in Lys.1.42 refers to the custom of summoning one’s slaves in cases of violence exerted in private score-settling, ‘not to provide witnesses for a proceeding court case, but to provide muscle’. Considering the presumably universal strength of the common-foe principle, we can surmise that in these cases a sense of belonging to one’s *oikos* would ignite slaves against their masters’ enemies and push internal animosities aside.


\(^{466}\) Cf. e.g. Xen. *Oec.* 9.5 and Ps.-Arist. *Oec.* 1344b.

\(^{467}\) Hyper. *Against Timandrus*, ff. 138r–135v. Cf. Tchernetska (2005), and Tchernetska et al. (2007). Jones (2008) provides a comparison with Roman law and offers some alternative readings, interpreting the sentence about slave-dealers as an *a fortiori* argument.
unparalleled until Roman times, Schmitz has recently provided a parallel in which the sale of a mother with her two children is probably recorded.\footnote{Schmitz (2011) on IG I\textsuperscript{1} 422. The inference can be drawn because the three slaves, two females and one male, all identified as Thracians, are listed one after the other, but only the first, a woman, is accompanied by the sum payed. Since this price would be excessive for a single female slave, it is highly probable that this is the total price for the whole family.} Without questioning the absence of any legal recognition of slave families, these documents seemingly mirror a reality in which ties of blood and affection were regarded as worthy of a basic recognition. Within their families, slaves would presumably find other forms of recognition, as I suggested with regard to Lesis, whose sense of self-worth might have been fostered by his mother. The importance of family roles for pride and self-esteem should apply even more to the adult members of a family: being responsible for others, they should feel a stronger sense of self-worth. Moreover, the role they play in the family would represent an important part of their sense of identity and it would call for gratitude and recognition, as a contribution in a shared and cooperative enterprise.\footnote{See Chapter 1 on the importance of roles for honour.}

Another fundamental path to honour available to slaves was their own labour. We have already noticed this point briefly with regard in particular to Atotas’ and Mannes’ inscriptions and to Dyskolos, where the slave Davus exhibited pride in his and Gorgias’ hard work and despised Sostratus’ leisure. On closer inspection, there are meaningful differences between Dyskolos and the two gravestones. In the former, the horizontal bonding between farmers prevails, whereas no attention is paid to the rank-order within the peer-group. Within the in-group, shared labour cuts across legal statuses, as in fact happens for Gorgias and Davus, thus creating a horizontal rather than hierarchical structure, where cooperation is crucial. Farming in particular is thematised as a proof of moral worth, so much that the out-group of the wealthy is met with hostility and prejudices about their laziness and arrogance.\footnote{Men. Dysk. 277–286, 366–370, 755, 775. For prejudices against the wealthy (especially from Gorgias, Davus and Cnemon), see Dysk. 258, 356–357, 367.} Dyskolos thus presents labour as an activity that, regardless of its outcomes, entitles to respect all the people carrying it out earnestly, with subsequent moral and practical implications.\footnote{Davus’ and Gorgias’ pride in their ability to sustain their oikos through their work aligns with the arguably universal feelings of disadvantaged social groups that are aware of the injustice of their status.} In the gravestones, on the other hand, the stress is on technical excellence and competitive performance: Atotas and
Mannes present themselves as ‘the best’ in their crafts, laying a claim to special esteem.\textsuperscript{472} The two gravestones on one hand and Dyskolos on the other thus demonstrate how pride in one’s activity could be experienced and expressed by slaves in a variety of ways: for Davus it has much to do with his responsibilities towards his family, while Atotas and Mannes see it rather in terms of rank and competition for esteem.

The contrast between the two models can be better illustrated by recalling Stephen Darwall’s opposition between recognition respect and appraisal respect.\textsuperscript{473} Recognition respect is connected with dignity, in that it applies to all the members comprised in a group, granting them certain forms of recognition. Appraisal respect, on the other hand, is the kind of respect that has to do with esteem for extraordinary performance. Moreover, while, according to Darwall, recognition respect manifests in one’s behaviour towards the recipient of recognition respect, appraisal respect need not influence one’s behaviour towards the recipient. In the light of Darwall’s definition, Davus’ attitude might be analysed in terms of recognition respect, whereas appraisal respect can be invoked to describe Atotas’ and Mannes’ gravestones, which focus on agonistic performance, granting respect only to those who rank first. As I argued already, however, Darwall’s rigid bipartition must be tempered, as these examples themselves show. In the case of Dyskolos, a strong verticality is retained outside of this community of workers, as Davus’ contempt towards the outsider Sostratus shows all too clearly; moreover, performance cannot be ignored altogether, given that the peasants’ sense of self-esteem is based on their hard work. Conversely, the two gravestones show that appraisal respect too can have pragmatic implications: the texts that praise the two workers for their excellent performance demand that passers-by stop and pay the due honours to the tombs.\textsuperscript{474} Thus, what Darwall classifies as appraisal respect has no less pragmatic force than recognition respect: excellence demands deference, as the two inscriptions examined clearly implicate. In fact, esteem for the

\textsuperscript{472} In the words of the philosopher Stephen Darwall (1977; see also 2006, 2013), we can describe as ‘appraisal respect’ what we find in the two stelae, and as ‘recognition respect’ what emerges in Dyskolos; appraisal respect has to do with esteem and excellent performance, whereas recognition respect is due on the basis of some feature of the recipient.

\textsuperscript{473} Darwall (1977).

\textsuperscript{474} Darwall (1977), p. 39: ‘Unlike recognition respect, one may have appraisal respect for someone without having any particular conception of just what behavior from oneself would be required or appropriate by that person’s having the features meriting such respect. Appraisal respect is the positive appraisal itself.’
technical or professional skills of a slave could lead to major factual results. A well-known case is that of the slave Pasion, whose success as a banker granted him a social capital that resulted in his manumission and subsequent enfranchisement as a citizen.\textsuperscript{475} In Demosthenes’ \textit{Against Phormio}, we can appreciate how the slave Lampis’ success as a \textit{nauklēros} puts him in a position of substantial equality in his professional dealings with other free merchants;\textsuperscript{476} his free colleagues apparently saw him as their peer on the basis of his economic status.\textsuperscript{477}

A final and fundamental dimension for slaves’ honour is religion. As I mentioned briefly above with regard to the Thracian cult of Bendis, religion was a sphere where ethnic pride could be nurtured; even when disjointed from ethnicity, religion was in general a major factor in terms of membership and collective experiences. Inscriptions, such as the launderers’ inscription that we examined in section 4.6 of Chapter 4, attest to the presence of religious groups that probably comprised both slaves and free people. A votive inscription from Laurion was dedicated (possibly to Heracles or the Lydian god Men) by a group of \textit{eranistai}, who were most likely mine slaves.\textsuperscript{478} This and other sources confirm that, thanks especially to religion, slaves took part in a variety of associations and networks, both formal and informal, which often brought together slaves and free people.\textsuperscript{479} Even among mine slaves, arguably the most debased category in all

\textsuperscript{475} Pasion’s life and career are described piecemeal in various orations (Isocr. 17, Dem. 36, 45, 46); see e.g. Fisher (1993), pp. 77–78; Kamen (2013), pp. 22–23. On the economic success of some slaves mentioned in Isaeus’ orations, see Ferrucci (2002), who notes that slaves could attain integration either through domestic relationships or through their business (p. 32). See Carrière-Hervagault and Mactoux (1974) for similar conclusions about slaves mentioned in Demosthenes’ speeches. On slaves in forensic speeches in general, see Carrière-Hervagault (1973); Ferrucci (2002).

\textsuperscript{476} Lampis’ status as a slave has been sometimes disputed, but his identification as τῷ Δίωνος ὀικέτη, Dio’s servant (Dem. 34.5), seems quite compelling. See Fisher (2008), p. 130, Kamen (2013), p. 23, who inserts Lampis in her treatment of privileged slaves, and Carrière-Hervagault and Mactoux (1974), pp. 90–91.

\textsuperscript{477} Lampis’ attitude seemingly displays the awareness of such a privileged status, as the plaintiff accuses him of arrogance, τόλμα, cf. Dem. 34.20; in paragraphs 36–37, the plaintiff argues that Lampis had shown contempt against all Athenians in shipping grain to Acanthus rather than to Athens, despite having received a special exemption from Athenian taxes. Despite his amoral conduct, his social capital was so high that he could behave with contempt against a whole city; his status as a slave is completely overshadowed by his economic power.


\textsuperscript{479} See Taylor (2015) for a collection and discussion of the evidence. To mention just one example, of particular interest is \textit{IG II²} 4 635 (= \textit{IG II²} 2934), the ‘washers’ inscription’, which testifies to a composite group which included both men and women, both free and slaves. See also Taylor (2017), pp. 224–226.
Attica, some paths were available to build a sense of community and identity, and therefore to increase one’s sense of self-worth.\footnote{\textit{IG II²} 2940; see Vlassopoulos (2011), p. 125; Hunt (2015), pp. 134–135: ‘Scholars who have studied the epigraphic evidence for foreign cults in Attica generally agree that many of the dedicants and even the officers listed on inscriptions are probably slaves.’ On mine slaves, see in general Lauffer (1979).}

Professional expertise, ethnicity, and membership to religious associations are thus only some examples of the paths available to slaves to foster their honour. The sources we have examined confirm that slaves had fully developed subjectivity and agency; beneath the ideological front of the negation of slaves’ honour on the political and legal level, slaves were \textit{de facto} fully fledged members of communities of honour, as both they in the first person and the free authors of most of our case studies were ready to acknowledge. Just as it happens in the case of free people, honour seems to be the basic currency for all sorts of interactions even when slaves are involved. Although free people sometimes tried to harness instrumentally slaves’ participation in an economy of esteem, slaves’ honour also imposed moral expectations and limits to the former’s conduct. Even from an objectively disadvantaged position, therefore, slaves had opportunities, in all sorts of contexts, to negotiate their honour and to leverage honour dynamics in their favour. It is important to bear in mind that this possibility did not translate into a general acknowledgement of slaves’ inherent dignity and humanity on all levels and that Athenian citizens were careful not to leave any ground for claims to \textit{timē} in the political and legal sphere.\footnote{Canevaro (2018).} However, this was not the only story: in the more informal and interpersonal contexts, different realities – and narratives – found ways to emerge. Exactly because of their disadvantaged status, looking at slaves is thus an excellent way to unpack honour dynamics.
Conclusion

We have now reached the end of our investigation into some of the many forms that the discourse and the realities of timē could assume within Athenian oikoi. As I hope to have shown, the relational life of the oikos was woven with both the discourse and the practices of timē. Athenian oikoi in the classical period were certainly hierarchical structures, built upon slavery and patriarchy; however, subordinate categories such as children, women, and slaves could exploit this very currency of interactions to defend themselves from instances of disrespect, by invoking justice and reciprocity, as well as claims and obligations, as principles that everyone should abide by. They could do so not just on the basis of the reciprocal claims that arise in interactions thanks to the second-person standpoint, but on the basis of widely held ideas on how relationships and interaction in general should work. Indeed, these two aspects go hand in hand, as there were widely shared normative expectations that all sorts of relationships entailed some level of mutuality in recognition and respect. As we have seen, the subordinate members of the oikos engaged in all aspects of honour dynamics. They experienced honour-related emotions, defended their claims to respect, and acknowledged the relevance of the dominant norms and values for their honour. The fact that their relationships with their parents, husbands, and masters were intrinsically asymmetrical did not leave them outside of the currency of honour; as our investigation has revealed, asymmetrical relationships can nonetheless accommodate mutuality and bidirectional respect.

In Chapter 1, I have introduced some of the themes that have accompanied our investigation in the rest of the thesis, providing a preliminary sketch of the role of honour and recognition in the oikos and of some of the forms and expressions they could take. One aspect I focused on especially is philia. As I hope to have shown also throughout the following chapters, philia is of crucial relevance to honour for a twofold reason: first, because any given case of philia entails bidirectionality in regard and respect, and, second, because affection and philia themselves can be regarded as forms of regard and honour. As we have seen in more detail in Chapter 2, intersubjectivity provides the necessary framework for understanding timē in terms of a basic human predisposition to bidirectional interpersonal experiences, which applies even to babies. As has emerged from our discussion, infants are predisposed to take part in recognition dynamics, have a sense of their entitlements and claims, and engage with adults in
complex interactions. Adopting a multi-disciplinary approach, I have compared modern and ancient accounts, showing that ancient texts closely mirror the results on infants’ intersubjectivity and involvement in honour dynamics yielded by modern developmental psychology. Infants were recognised as agents capable of putting forth claims to recognition and respect; philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle and other writers such as Herodotus and Menander acknowledge the complexity of babies’ psychology and of their interactions with others. Moreover, our exploration of the psychology of honour in infants has allowed us to explore further loci and expressions of honour and intersubjectivity and raise questions about their development in human psychology. Given that infants have an embryonic sense of honour, it is important to make sure that they develop it correctly. As we saw, a crucial part of their early education was ensuring that they correctly developed aidōs and learnt to distinguish properly honourable and dishonourable things.

Chapter 3 offered the opportunity to expand on some of the issues raised in Chapter 2. By looking at children’s relationships in the family and their socialisation inside and outside the oikos, I have stressed the importance of honour as both the instrument and the content of paideia. In their education and socialisation, parents and teachers harness children’s desire to be recognised and to emulate role models to teach them what is honourable and dishonourable. One objective of this process was to help children to develop a proper sense of their claims vis-à-vis others’, which often meant being humble and properly honouring others. As both Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 have shown, however, although children were indeed subordinate and needed to learn their place, they had the right to certain forms of care and respect. Often, adults defended infants’ and children’s claims when they were not met appropriately, but, as shown for instance in Lesis’ letter, even children could occasionally advocate for themselves and negotiate to some extent their claims to honour and respect. Thus, timē appears to be an instrument that subordinate individuals could harness to defend themselves, and that worked to ensure solidarity and cooperation.

This also applies to women, as we saw in Chapter 4, where I started by examining how marriage was conceptualised in terms of nomos and dikē. Both husband and wife have claims to timē on the basis of their cooperation in an enterprise sanctioned by social norms. However, what this nomos prescribes is first and foremost bidirectionality: husbands and wives are expected to show each other mutual respect, deference, and affection. Marriage is not all about social roles: in several sources, couples emphasise their attachment to each other and prioritise
their feelings and the esteem for their partner’s virtue as the main grounds for honouring them. Privileging an emic rather than an etic perspective has proven particularly important in the case of women: although the formal incapacities and the limits imposed by a predominantly patriarchal culture appear to us as inherently dishonouring, Athenian women’s sense of honour was far from smothered. In many cases, we have met proud women, capable of asserting their autonomous subjectivity, and ready to fight to defend their self-respect. Our investigation of women’s honour has brought up all the relevant aspects of timē, from self-respect to honorific tributes, from dignity to esteem, from deference to demeanour. From a social point of view, women were credited with their own set of prerogatives and honour, justified by their specific roles within society, understood as a collective cooperative enterprise. Although it is true that their role was conceptualised as revolving around the oikos, the oikos must be seen as a microcosm embedded in a wider context. Both at the level of the oikos and of society, therefore, women’s position, obligations, and claims were regulated by widely upheld norms, and framed in terms of justice. Moreover, reality was more complex and varied: women could attain honour through other paths, such as work and religion, and they could also receive public recognition of their roles.

Finally, Chapter 5 has drawn a varied and nuanced picture of slaves’ honour. Although their status was conceptualised as deprived of any claims to timē on the public level, the sources that we have examined show that slaves could nonetheless pursue honour and respect, as the ideological denial of their timē on the legal and political level did not necessarily reverberate on the private or informal levels. Oikeiotēs and philia with one’s masters created room for reciprocity and mutual honour and respect; more generally, honour dynamics emerge in all sorts of interactions (between slaves as well as between slaves and citizens, for instance). Moreover, slaves could fashion their identity, sense of self-worth, and entitlements to respect in an autonomous manner. As we have observed, in addition to the path of oikeiotēs or in lieu of it, slaves could express, cultivate, and defend their self-image in a variety of ways, choosing the communities, parameters, and values with which to identify, thus asserting their own version of axia and timē.

On a methodological level, this investigation further confirms that a merely terminological approach would do no justice to the richness and complexity that any interpersonal dynamic such as honour requires. As humans, we are complex social beings, with complex social and psychological experiences, and complex ways of expressing,
communicating, and narrating these experiences. Even when it is not explicitly recalled, honour surfaces in a variety of ways, and appreciating its pervasiveness is crucial both in learning more about honour itself, and in interpreting ancient sources more fully. For these reasons, a cross-cultural and multi-disciplinary approach is necessary to shed light on it.

Overall, the fact that relationships of all sorts were framed in terms of bidirectional claims and obligations enabled subordinate categories to negotiate their status and defend their claims to respect. From the point of view of the dominant ideology and of the free-born men that embodied it, however, this negotiation needed to respect precise boundaries. All the subordinate members of the oikos needed to know their place and be careful not to overstep some limits. When things went wrong, they could complain, hold their parents, husbands, or masters accountable, and question their conduct, but this was regarded as acceptable only as long as they still paid respect to the hierarchical order, recognised their subordinate status, and avoided any hint of rebellion. At the same time, nonetheless, by honouring and thus fulfilling their subordinate role, they would accrue honour and increase their claims to respect and recognition. We have seen an example of this in the chapter on women with Pamphile’s refusal, in Menander’s Epitrepontes, to leave her husband, despite the humiliating treatment she was receiving from him: she chooses to honour her commitment to the marriage, arguing that the real dishonour would come if she abandoned her husband.

This being said, some case studies have also illuminated situations where individuals belonging to the inferior categories openly defied the limits imposed on them. An extraordinary example of this is Melinna’s inscription, in which the woman proudly celebrates her labour, defiantly described as dikaiai tolmai. In Chapter 5, other examples regarded slaves that preferred other reference groups and different normative orders to the ones linked to the oikos and to the values of fourth-century Athens. These cases strongly undermine the idea that honour dynamics are intrinsically and invariably in the service of the maintenance of status quo and of méconnaissance. Far from that, honour could – and still can be – an essential instrument in the hands of the oppressed, both to hold the oppressors liable to charges of unjust behaviour and to sustain their own forms of pride and their own sense of worth and values.

Another crucial point regards the distinction between self- and other- regarding considerations and attitudes. As all our case studies confirmed, timē is always conceptualised in terms of the proper balance between one’s and others’ claims, although notions of the right balance are always open to different interpretations and to negotiation. This has to do with the
fundamentally intersubjective dimension within which honour is experienced and conceptualised, and this balance must therefore be understood in dynamic terms. In other words, timē is not about a fixed arithmetic calculation and comparison of the determined worth of each of the individuals involved, but is bidirectionally determined in the interaction itself. The way I treat someone reflects both on the other person and on me, and vice-versa; the interplay of deference and demeanour from each of the parties involved continuously determines their status vis-à-vis each other.

The persons and characters that we have encountered through our case studies were often concerned as much with their own as with the other persons’ timē, showing the interconnectedness of the two. Even in cases of competitive behaviour, moreover, this competitiveness is still framed in terms of a normative order, and is thus not zero-sum; we have observed these dynamics especially in the chapter on slaves, where they often stemmed from in- and out-group oppositions. Competitive behaviour towards one’s opponents is framed as warranted and rooted in a certain conception of worth and desert. Moreover, the bidirectionality of honour implies that the honour of masters, parents, and husbands also depends on the way they treat the other members of the household: an Athenian citizen who mistreats his children, wife, and slaves unwarrantedly cannot be regarded as a just person, and this will affect his timē in the eyes of the other persons.

To close on a methodological note, this investigation further confirms that a merely terminological approach would do no justice to the richness and complexity that interpersonal dynamics such as honour require. As humans, we are complex social beings, with complex social and psychological experiences, and complex ways of expressing, communicating, and narrating these experiences. Even when it is not explicitly recalled, honour surfaces in a variety of ways, and appreciating its pervasiveness is crucial both for learning more about honour itself, and for interpreting more fully the ancient sources and the societies that they reflect. In conclusion, I hope that this thesis has achieved its aims of further validating an understanding of honour as a flexible and inclusive mechanism and of illuminating the ways in which the subordinate members of the oikos could experience and harness it.
Appendix:

Thymos in Plato and Aristotle

In this Appendix, I offer an overview of the uses of *thymos* in Plato and Aristotle and of the main critical interpretations. I shall start with Plato’s uses of *thymos* first, and then turn to Aristotle. Let us start with a discussion of the meaning of *thymos* in Plato by reviewing the most relevant passages and critical interpretations. Several relevant passages are to be found in the *Republic*, in connection with the illustration of the tripartite model of the psyche. According to this model, the *thymos* (or *to thymoeides*) is intermediate between appetite, *to epithymētikon*, which has to do with the physical and material sphere, and reason, *to logistikon*. Plato introduces the model in the fourth book of the *Republic*: the first reference to *thymos* is in the passage that we have considered in sections 2.3 and 2.4 of the thesis with regard to the presence of *thymos* in infants (441a-b). In that passage, Plato describes new-borns as full of *thymos* in the attempt to demonstrate that something else must be presupposed in addition to appetite and reason: infants do not possess reason yet, but there is something in them that is not reducible to the *epithymētikon*. In fact, as Socrates observes, infants are full of *thymos*.

In two other passages, Socrates provides examples of *thymos* as something that stands in opposition with either appetite or reason. The first passage is the anecdote about Leontius, full of desire at the sight of some corpses, and at the same time ashamed of this vile impulse and indignant at himself (*Resp*. IV, 439d-440a). Socrates explains that in Leontius’ contradictory behaviour and thought process we can see the conflict between the *epithymētikon* on the one hand and *thymos* on the other: the *epithymētikon* only heeds physical pleasure and satisfaction, while *thymos* brings about an evaluative attitude, based on considerations of *to kalon* as opposed to *to aischron*. Leontius’ anger in itself and these considerations undeniably link *thymos* to the realm of *timē*, a connection confirmed by all the other passages. The second

---

1 I take the tripartite model in a metaphorical sense, following Cairns (2014), (2021); for opposite views, cf. e.g. Hobbs (2000), pp. 31–34; Bobonich (2002); Wilburn (2021), pp. 3–26; see also in general Barney, Brennan and Brittain (2014). For a discussion of the lexical differences between *thymos* and *thymoeides*, see e.g. Hobbs (2000), pp. 31–34.

2 This Leontius is probably a fictional character, ‘possibly to be identified with a character in a fragment of the comic poet Theopompus (fr. 1 Kock), who was notorious for his love of boys “as pale as corpses”’ (Emlyn-Jones and Preddy (2013) *ad loc.*).
example made by Socrates to establish that there is a *tertium quid* in addition to reason and appetite is the famous passage from the *Odyssey* in which Odysseus exhorts his heart, full of anger and eager to exact *timēria* on the disloyal female servants, to be patient and wait for the right time to get revenge (*Resp*. IV, 441b–c; cf. *Od*. 20.17). In this case, the opposition is between *thymos*, which urges Odysseus to seek immediate *timēria*, and *to logistikon*, which counsels prudence and calm in order to achieve *timēria*. Here again, we have another link between *thymos* and *timē*. *Thymos* is active in cases of desire for *timēria*, which *thymos* would tend to pursue immediately. The passage stresses the impulsive and spirited nature of *thymos*, by contrast with reason that is able to calculate the unintended consequences and to evaluate when it is better to wait and restrain oneself.

In Book two, before the tripartite model was introduced, Socrates had given important information on *thymos* in his remarks on what the guardians of the ideal city should be like (*Resp*. II, 375a–376c). Socrates argues that their main characteristic must be to possess a thymoeidic nature. According to him, this would by necessity come with an indiscriminate harsh disposition (*agriotēs*) towards everyone else, for ‘a thymoeidic nature is opposite to a mild nature’ (ἐναντία γάρ που θυμοειδῆ πραεῖα φύσις, 375c). This natural indiscriminate harshness should therefore be neutralised by incorporating in their education the philosophic element (*to philosophikon*), thanks to which guardians would become able to discern between friends and enemies. When he talks more extensively about education in Book three, Socrates explains that the right balance between thymoeidic and philosophic dispositions must be struck through a proper combination of gymnastics and *mousikē*, which constitutes the second stage in the educational process and which also comprises literature (410b–412a). While gymnastics hardens the soul and strengthens *thymos*, music (correctly dosed) has the power to smooth its excesses and guide it towards a more mature, balanced, and philosophical attitude.

In book nine, Socrates recapitulates some elements of *thymos*, although the three *eidē* are interestingly presented at this point as different species of desires. The *thymoeides* aims at prevailing, winning and having good repute (τὸ κρατεῖν ... καὶ νικᾶν καὶ εὔδοκιμεῖν ... ὑψηλάθαι, 581a), and is described as *philonikos* and *philotimos* (581b). With words like *eudokimein* and

---

3 Throughout the *Republic* (see e.g. *Resp*. IV, 434d–435d for an argument about the possibility of this analogy), the tripartition of the soul reflects the tripartition of society: the lower class is associated with *to epithymētikon*, soldiers with *thymos*, and philosophers with *to logistikon*. See however e.g. Williams (1973); Smith (1999) for a critical take on the analogy and the tripartition itself.
This passage is the most explicit in connecting *thymos* with honour, *timē*. However, simply acknowledging the link between *thymos* and *timē* is not enough, and it is necessary to investigate what conceptualisation of honour is at stake. The fact that Plato’s *thymos* is not simply *philotimos* but also *philonikos* and aims at *kratein* and *nikan* alerts us to the possibility of an ambiguity in terms of what concepts of honour and of the disposition displayed by the *thymos* we should presuppose. The motivation represented by *thymos* is sometimes described negatively, as in 586c-d, where the behaviour of a *thymoeides* disjointed from reason is described. Pursuing the satisfaction of *timē*, *nikē*, and *thymos* without reason, one will obtain it either through *phthonos* because of *philotimia*, or through violence because of *philonikia*, or through *thymos* (here to be understood as ‘outbursts of anger’) because of peevishness, *dyskolia*.

These possible negative outcomes were exemplified in book eight, in the sketch about the son of the *philosophos* man that turns into a timocratic person because of the negative influences of his mother and their servants (549b-550b), becoming *hypsēlophrōn* and *philotimos*. These passages support the possibility that Plato’s *thymos* can lead to unwarranted assertiveness and misplaced competitiveness.

As most scholars have pointed out, however, if we look more closely at the passages listed before, we easily see that the picture is much more complex than that. In the fourth book, in the part between the passage on Leontius and the one on Odysseus, Socrates underscores how *thymos* will lead to opposite reactions depending on evaluations of *dikē*: when one is aware of having deserved a punishment, one’s *thymos* will not want to get aroused against the punisher (οὐκ ἐθέλει πρὸς τοῦτον αὐτὸν ἐγείρεσθαι ὁ θυμός, 440c). Conversely, if one believes one has been treated unjustly, one will endure patiently any hardship in order to get *timōria* (440c-d). This shows that *thymos* does not produce blind reactions in any case of maltreatment, but is able to evaluate whether or not a slight is warranted. Secondly, in the Leontius anecdote we can notice unmistakable signs of shame: Leontius first covers his eyes and then, when he eventually

---


5 Resp. IX, 586c-d: περὶ τὸ θυμοειδὲς οὐκ ἔτερα τοιαῦτα ἀνάγκη γίγνεσθαι, ὡς ἂν αὐτὸ τοῦτο διαπράττηται ἢ φθόνῳ διὰ φιλοτιμίαν ἢ βίᾳ διὰ φιλονικίαν ἢ θυμῷ διὰ δυσκολίαν, πλησμονὴν τιμῆς τε καὶ νίκης καὶ θυμὸ διώκων ἄνευ λογισμοῦ τε καὶ νοῦ; (‘But what about the passionate side? Aren’t there other things like this which must motivate anyone who succeeds in satisfying this part; ambition motivated by envy, or craving for success motivated by force, or passion motivated by peevishness, as he pursues the gratification of his ambition, success, and passion without reason or thought?’), transl. Emlyn-Jones and Preddy (2013)).
yields to his *epithymia*, insults himself. In these gestures and reactions we can see important aspects of *aidōs*: there is the sense of *aidōs* as respect (for the corpses and the moral norms attached to dead bodies, in this case), the prospective sense of *aidōs* as inhibition from a shameful action, as well as the retrospective sense of the shame felt for doing a shameful action.  

Most notably, as Leontius’ example shows clearly, *thymos* also enables us to distinguish between *kala* and *aischra*. The connections between *thymos* and *aidōs* are brought out also in the *Phaedrus*. The good horse, which stands for *thymos*, is said to be a lover of honour accompanied by temperance and *aidōs* (253d, τιμῆς ἔραστης μετὰ σωφροσύνης τε καὶ αἴδους). When the person sees the loved one, the good horse does not leap up immediately towards the *erōmenos*, because it is constrained by *aidōs* (αἰδοὶ βιαζόμενος, 254a). After the bad horse has drawn the chariot in front of the beloved, the good horse is full of *aischynē* and *thambos* (254c). After a while, thanks to the charioteer’s constant efforts to keep the bad horse in check, the bad horse is humbled and tamed, and from that moment the soul can follow the beloved with *aidōs* and awe (αἰδουμένην τε καὶ δεδιυμένην, 254e).

On the basis of the passages examined, scholars have offered various interpretations, which in a way or another all revolve around honour. Gosling, one of the first scholars to emphasise the connections between *thymos* and honour, thought that *thymos* has to do with *philotimia* and with ideals of (especially manly) behaviour.  

Cooper argued that the essence of *thymos* lies in a ‘self-reference’ that emerges in competitiveness and in the desire to have both self-esteem and esteem from others. More recently, Hobbs, who underlines the complexity of the notion, has stresses the importance of positive aspects like emulation and the responsiveness of *thymos* to beauty and, particularly in the case of children, to the reason of others.  

Richardson Lear interprets the Platonic *thymos* as the seat of an innate desire for beauty, while Jorgenson speaks of a drive to excel that depends on what reason identifies as excellence. According to Burnyeat, *thymos* captures the concern for status that we possess qua

---

6 On the intimate connection between *thymos* and *aidōs*, which I shall consider in more detail later, see Cairns (1993), pp. 381–392.
10 Richardson Lear (2006); Jorgenson (2018).
social animals.\textsuperscript{11} Finally and most recently, Wilburn has advanced an interpretation of Plato's \textit{thymos} as comprising also a soft side, responsible for feelings of friendships and fellowship.\textsuperscript{12}

Hobb's stress on the complexity of the notion is a particularly beneficial reminder that we must not necessarily look for one single essence of \textit{thymos}, capable of explaining all instances. With this caveat in mind, however, we can highlight some overarching elements. First of all, scholars are right in underscoring the interpersonal factor in all Plato's references to \textit{thymos}. When \textit{thymos} is described as \textit{philonikos}, \textit{philotimos} and aiming at \textit{eudokimein}, this characterisation only makes sense in an interpersonal context. Even the degenerate manifestations of \textit{thymos}, such as the \textit{phthonos} produced by \textit{philotimia} in the absence of reason, or the haughtiness of the son that turns into a timocratic person, can only be understood within an interpersonal dimension. Moreover, \textit{thymos} is clearly connected to aspects of \textit{timē} such as social referencing and attention for one's self-image. Therefore, \textit{thymos} hints at the intersubjective dimension within which \textit{timē} dynamics take place.

In order to understand better the implication of Plato's \textit{thymos} for honour, I believe that we must be very specific about what conceptualisation of honour we need to presume in order to frame correctly the discussion on the meaning of \textit{thymos}. Let us first of all summarise the content of the passages seen before. Let us recapitulate on the characteristics of \textit{thymos} that we have observed so far. On the one hand, Plato's \textit{thymos} wants to pursue \textit{to kalon} and avoid \textit{to aischron}, is sensitive to judgements of justice and fairness, and is connected with \textit{aidōs} in the sense of both respect and of shame. On the other hand, \textit{thymos} is associated with indiscriminate \textit{agriotēs} as its natural attitude, and with an unwarranted desire for superiority. It also tends to be concerned with appearances rather than with the real value of something, as exemplified in the note about the degenerate guardians that lose their philosophic elements and let \textit{thymos} govern in their souls: they start to covet and acquire wealth, but stealthily, because they are still concerned with others' opinion of them, but have now lost the interiorised values and are ready to do wrong in secret (\textit{Resp.} VIII, 548b). By stressing the importance of education and reason, Plato differentiates between an educated versus an uneducated version of \textit{thymos}. When it is not educated and shaped by reason, \textit{thymos} is described by Plato as expressing a competitive understanding of honour, which values superiority and appearances rather than good social

\begin{flushleft}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{11} Burnyeat (2006).}
\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{12} Wilburn (2021).}
\end{flushleft}
relationships and principles in themselves. It is important to stress, however, that competitive does not mean zero-sum: even the uneducated version of *thymos* entails a sense of justice and fairness. In the passage that I have cited already about the guardians becoming ruled by *thymos* rather than by reason, the fact that they are still concerned with their own reputation means that they care for what other think of them and therefore for shared values.

One fundamental feature of the Greek notion of honour that is crucial to understand what *thymos* is its bidirectionality. *Timē* is always embedded in interactive dynamics; not only it has to do with a complex interplay of deference and demeanour, and of one’s and others’ claims to respect, but it also entails simultaneous attention and regard for one’s and other’s attitude and face, within a dynamic process. In the passages that showcase negative outcomes of *thymos*, *thymos* is characterised by a not only excessive, but also mono-directional focus on one’s desire to receive deference and recognition from others. This desire does not pay attention to the sources nor the grounds of that deference, is not counterbalanced by a reflection on one’s effective claims to respect, and does not take into account the complexity of the interaction. It takes education first and reason later to teach *thymos* to pursue what is honourable for its sake rather than mere approbation, to be aware that one has to deserve *timē*, and that *timē* has to do with bidirectionality rather than sheer self-assertion. A well-trained *thymos* cares appropriately for one’s self-image as well as for those of others, and feels *aidōs* when one falls short of one’s standards. In other words, education and reason teach *thymos* that, far from being about mere self-assertiveness, *timē* has to do with bidirectionality and desert.

This being said, we need not follow Plato in drawing such a stark dichotomy between the educated versus an uneducated version of *thymos*. Before reassessing this point, I shall now turn to Aristotle, as discussing his uses and understanding of the term can help us reassess some aspects of Plato’s *thymos*. Even in the case of Aristotle’s works, the role of *thymos* is ambiguous enough to allow for a wide variety of scholarly interpretations, ranging for instance from the one argued for by Pearson, according to whom anger is the core meaning of *thymos*, to the one recently supported by Ludwig, who stresses the connection of *thymos* with *philia* especially. Undoubtedly, if we collect the relevant passages, the picture that emerges is quite complex. The

---

13 Pearson (2012); Ludwig (2020). For other interpretations that contain some significant ideas and that I shall discuss later on, see Cooper (1996); Fossheim (2018) (in an article focusing on Aristotle’s views of children); Saenz (2018); Jimenez (2020). In addition to these, see also Koziak (2010), who unconvincingly argues that *thymos* corresponds with the sphere of emotions in general.
starting point is represented by a passage in *De Anima*, where Aristotle classifies desire into three specimens: *epithymia*, *thymos*, and *boulēsis* (414b3-4). While *epithymia* is easily identified with the appetite for physical and material pleasures and *boulēsis* with the will determined by rational deliberation, the essence of *thymos* as a category of desire remains more obscure. In the seventh book of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, in a passage ‘redolent of Plato’, thymos is compared to a hasty servant and to an impetuous dog for its way of listening to reason but reacting too quickly to what reason dictates (1149a26-35):

\[
\text{ἔοικε γάρ ὁ θυμὸς ἀκούειν μὲν τι τοῦ λόγου, παρακούειν δὲ, καθάπερ οἱ ταχεῖς τῶν διακόνων, οἱ πρὶν ἄκουσαι πᾶν τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκθέουσιν, εἶτα ἀμαρτάνουσι τῆς προστάξεως, καὶ οἱ κύνες, πρὶν σκέψασθαι εἰ φίλος, ἀν μόνον ψοφήση, ὑλακτοῦσιν: οὕτως ὁ θυμὸς διὰ θερμότητα καὶ ταχυτῆτα τῆς φύσεως ἄκουσας μὲν, οὐκ ἐπίταγμα δ᾽ ἄκουσας, ὡμὲν πρὸς τὴν τιμωρίαν. ὃ μὲν γὰρ λόγος ἢ ἡ φαντασία ὅτι ὑβρὶς ἢ ὀλιγορία ἐξῆλθαν, ὃ δ᾽ ὠπέρ συλλογισάμενος ὅτι δεῖ τῷ τοιοῦτῳ πολεμεῖν χαλεπαίνει δὴ εὐθὺς.}
\]

For spirit would seem to hear reason a bit, but to mishear it. It is like overhasty servants who run out before they have heard all their instructions, and then carry them out wrongly, or dogs who bark at any noise at all, before looking to see if it is a friend. In the same way, since spirit is naturally hot and hasty, it hears, but does not hear the instruction, and rushes off to exact a penalty. For reason or appearance has shown that we are being slighted or wantonly insulted; and spirit, as though it had inferred that it is right to fight this sort of thing, is irritated at once. (Transl. Irwin (1999))

This passage brings out some important features of Aristotle’s thymos. First of all, the passage illustrates the strong connection of Aristotelian thymos to anger. Thymos is said to flare up when reason identifies some disrespectful treatment, either *hybris* or *oligōria*, and its purpose is to get timōria, features that also characterise orgē in the description that the philosopher makes of it in the *Rhetoric* (II, 1378a30-1380a4). Related to this first point, there is also the

---

14 Cairns (2019b).
implicit claim that *thymos* is concerned with issues of justice, particularly with one’s claim to respect. The task of evaluating instances of disrespect is here assigned to reason, and *thymos* reacts to what reason construes as *oligōria*.

*Thymos* also has a prominent role in the accounts of one of the imperfect kinds of courage, both in the *Nicomachean* and in the *Eudemian Ethics*. The kind of courage based on *thymos* lacks fundamental ingredients of *andreia* as a virtue proper, namely deliberate choice (*proairesis*) and purpose (*to hou heneka*), but it nonetheless represents the most natural form of courage (*physikōtatē*, *EN* III, 1117a4-6). In the *Eudemian Ethics*, this statement is supported also with a reference to children: the fact that children are the best fighters is mentioned as evidence for the observation that *andreia* grounded in *thymos* is *malista physikē* (*EE* III, 1229a28-29). Most revealingly, the courage based on *thymos* is contrasted with the courage based on *aidōs*, labelled by Aristotle as *politikē andreia* and described as the best among the imperfect forms of courage. Those who are motivated by *aidōs* worry about their reputation, striving therefore to achieve honour and avoid dishonour. As pointed out by Jimenez, these different kinds of *andreia* show that, by contrast with Plato, Aristotle disjoins *thymos* and *aidōs*.\(^{15}\) I shall discuss later the implication of this point.

The passages on the form of courage based on *thymos* can be connected to some remarks that Aristotle makes in the seventh book of the *Politics* while illustrating differences in the *ēthos* of various peoples with regard to *thymos* and *dianoia*, due to their geographical location and the impact of climate on their disposition. Aristotle observes how peoples that are full of *thymos* are free, while peoples that lack *thymos* are usually subjugated (*Pol*. VII, 1327b24-29). Although Aristotle does not dwell on explaining why that is so, it is quite easy to infer that this observation has to do with the links between *thymos* and *andreia*. Peoples can maintain their freedom if they are brave and fight back when menaced. Right after these remarks comes one of the densest passages on *thymos* to be found in Aristotle’s works. After saying that Greeks are characterised by a good balance of *thymos* and *dianoia*, Aristotle goes on (1327b38-1328a15):

\[\text{φανερὸν τοῖνυν ὦτὶ δεῖ διανοητικοὺς τε εἶναι καὶ θυμοειδεῖς τὴν φύσιν τοὺς μέλλονται εὐαγώγους ἔσεσθαι τῷ νομοθέτῃ πρὸς τὴν ἀρετήν. ὅπερ γάρ φασὶ τίνες δεῖν ὑπάρχειν τοῖς φύλαξι, τοὶ φιλητικοὶς μὲν εἶναι τῶν γνωρίμων πρὸς δὲ τοὺς ἀγνώτας}\]

\(^{15}\) See Jimenez (2020), pp. 95–104.
It is evident, then, that both spirit and intelligence should be present in the natures of people if they are to be easily guided to virtue by the legislator. Some say that guardians should have precisely this quality: they must be friendly to those they know and fierce to those they do not. Now, spirit is what makes them be friendly. For spirit is the capacity of the soul by which we feel friendship. A sign of this is that our spirit is roused more against associates and friends who we think have slighted us than against strangers. ... Ruling and being free invariably derive from this capacity; for spirit is both imperious and indomitable. But it is not correct to claim that guardians should be harsh to those they do not know, since one should not treat anyone in this way. Nor are magnanimous people naturally harsh, except to wrongdoers, though they are harsher to companions they think are wronging them, as we said earlier. And it is reasonable that this should be so. For in addition to the wrong they have suffered, they consider themselves to have been deprived of the benefit companions owe to one another. (Transl. Reeve (1998), adapted)

Many important points are made in this passage. Aristotle is here clearly engaging with Plato’s *Republic*, with particular reference to the passages on the character that guardians should possess. Before we consider the relation with the *Republic*, we can notice first of all the insistence on the idea expressed in the above passage on the connection between *thymos* and...
eleutheria: thymos is aēttēton, indomitable, meaning that it will fight against any threat of subjugation. This idea is here coupled with the characterisation of thymos as archikon: not only is thymos concerned with one’s freedom, but it also comprises a tendency to command others. In this, Aristotle’s thymos resembles Plato’s thymos in its characterisation as philonikos and its drive towards superiority.

However, the dispute with Plato that surfaces in this passage enlightens a very meaningful difference in their conceptions of thymos. In the idealised society of Callipolis, Plato wanted the guardians to be thymoeideis, so that they could be harsh against enemies and protect the city properly. According to him, however, thymos would make them harsh against friends too: for this reason, he concluded that guardians should also be philosophoi, a characteristic that would allow them to recognise friends and be mild with them. Aristotle disagrees with this point: it is actually thymos itself, he argues, that allows us to philein. As evidence for this claim, Aristotle makes the point that we get angry with friends more than we do with strangers when we believe we have been belittled. At the end of the passage, with regard to megalopsychoi, Aristotle further explains that they get angry especially with friends when they commit some injustice against them, because of the failure to reciprocate a benefaction. Aristotle then goes on to add that one should not be harsh towards anyone, unless in cases of adikia: for this argument, Aristotle refers again to megalopsychoi, who are said to be harsh with wrongdoers only. Once again, the relevance of evaluations about dikē and desert in thymos is confirmed. The point about megalopsychoi serves as a second piece of evidence for the idea that thymos does not produce indiscriminate harshness towards others.

The variety of Aristotle’s statements on thymos has puzzled many scholars. Some of them have tried to simplify the picture: Giles Pearson, for instance, has dismissed this last passage and the other ones that moved the focus away from the meaning of thymos as orgē, believing that

16 This reading of Plato’s Republic has recently been challenged: Wilburn (2021), whose interpretation of Plato’s thymos is very close to the Aristotelian notion of thymos, has argued that what Plato’s text actually refers to is not an opposition between thymos on the one hand and a mild and philosophic disposition on the other, but a distinction between two sides of thymos itself, an aggressive one and an affectionate one. He consequently reads Aristotle’s passage as agreeing with Plato’s position. However, I believe that his interpretation is not supported either by Plato’s Republic or by Aristotle’s Politics.

17 As Ludwig (2020), p. 45 notes, this is the only passage where Aristotle explicitly says that thymos has a role to play in megalopsychia.
anger was the central phenomenon captured by the term.\textsuperscript{18} Most scholars have instead rightly accepted the complexity of the notion, stressing sometimes some general aspect that characterises it, and underscoring, implicitly or explicitly, its closeness to the sphere of timē. Hallvard Fossheim, for instance, sees Aristotle’s thymos as characterised by a self-reflective character, while for Victor Saenz thymos cognises social rankings, both as value and disvalue. John Cooper has seen in thymos a ‘passionate response to the fine’, a sort of proto-virtuous resource that is aligned to some extent with the noble and that enables even children to initiate their ethical development. Marta Jimenez has recently challenged this interpretation, arguing that in Aristotle thymos is disjointed from aidōs and never explicitly related to a concern over to kalon.\textsuperscript{19}

However, although it is true that, by contrast with Plato, Aristotle treats thymos and aidōs as two separate phenomena and ignores the relationship between them, Aristotle’s thymos is still characterised at least by a concern over axia. The connection of thymos with anger and with a desire for timēria makes clear that Aristotle’s thymos is rooted in one’s sense of one’s dignity and worth, that is one’s axia in Aristotelian terms;\textsuperscript{20} in other words, Aristotle’s thymos is concerned with to dikaion, what one is due. It is not out of a gratuitous desire to gain superiority over others that thymos worries about one’s status vis-à-vis somebody else, but out of a concern with getting relative positioning right. The fact that thymos is described as archikon in the passage on peoples characterised by thymos (Pol VII, 1327b38-1328a15) can be explained if we allow for these peoples to believe that they deserve to rule over others. The concern with one’s axia also accounts for the importance of thymos for the megalopsycho: the megalopsycho is aware of his worth and wants it to be correctly assessed by others too. The first and the second point together also help explain the connection drawn by Aristotle between thymos and philia: as we have seen in section 1.2 of the thesis, philia is concerned with ta dikaia, in the sense of the reciprocal claims to respect that obtain in any given relationship.

Another distinctive feature of Aristotle’s thymos is its concern about freedom. The passage we discussed from the seventh book of the Politics (1327b38-1328a15) started with the observation that citizens should be both dianoētikoi and thymoeideis in order to be easily guided by the legislator towards virtue. A crucial passage in this respect is a note where Aristotle

\textsuperscript{18} Pearson (2012).
\textsuperscript{19} Jimenez (2020), pp. 95–103.
\textsuperscript{20} On axia in Aristotle as what one is due, see Campeggiani (forthcoming).
maintains that there is no *hybris* in *thymos* (*EN* VII, 1149b23). This confirms that Aristotle’s *thymos* is not about indiscriminate or unwarranted self-assertion. As the connection with *philia* also shows, Aristotle’s *thymos* does not necessarily rely on a vertical structure of statuses nor on a competitive understanding of honour; therefore, is not incompatible with obedience. On the contrary, it can comprise horizontal bonds and cooperative behaviour. This has to do with another distinctive characteristic of Aristotle’s *thymos*, namely its reactive nature. While Plato’s *thymos* can be connected with emulation and with a motivation to pursue *to kalon* actively, Aristotle’s *thymos* seems to be limited to reactions to others’ actions. This clarifies the contrast between the courage based on *thymos* and the one based on *aidōs*: the people whose courage is based on *thymos* act bravely in so much as they react to others’ aggression or injustice, whereas people who are motivated by *aidōs* act bravely because they want to respect the normative expectations that their community has towards them.

In a way, Aristotle’s *thymos* is concerned primarily with you-and-me relationships (what we can refer to in terms of primary and secondary intersubjectivity) and with the reciprocal claims to respect that obtain within such relationships. This stands in contrast with Plato’s *thymos*: by connecting it to *aidōs*, Plato characterises *thymos* as a locus for the development of social and cultural awareness, that is of habitus. On the contrary, although he stresses its sensitivity to hierarchies and its desire for self-assertion and *timōria* in cases of perceived threats to one’s standing, Aristotle avoids characterising *thymos* as something that motivates people to pursue what is honourable for its own sake.

For some aspects of their ideas of *thymos*, therefore, the two philosophers stand in agreement: *thymos* has to do with the interpersonal dimension and particularly with the pursuit of *timōria*, producing anger as an impulsive reaction to acts construed as unwarranted forms of disrespect. Both in Plato and in Aristotle, furthermore, as many scholars have stressed already, *thymos* is concerned with issues of status. On the other hand, the most conspicuous differences lie in the fact that Aristotle does not link *thymos* and *aidōs*, while he associates *philia* and *thymos* in opposition to Plato’s passage on the character of guardians. Therefore, while Plato thematises *thymos* as a motivational drive that can incorporate proper awareness of values and that can pursue what is honourable for its own sake, Aristotle has a narrower conception of *thymos*.

---

21 See Stewart (1994) for the difference between vertical and horizontal honour, and Welsh (2008) for the claim that honour is always ultimately horizontal, as it obtains among peers.
Considering the way he take pains also at keeping *aidōs* separate from virtue, we should be aware of the consequences of Aristotle’s inclination to compartmentalise things. His remarks on the manifestation of the *thymos* of *megalopsychoi* when they are angry against their friends demonstrate that *thymos* can be a part of virtue. A significant difference between Plato’s and Aristotle’s accounts of *thymos* ultimately lies in the fact that Aristotle focuses on the reactive character of *thymos*, whereas Plato, while acknowledging the reactive aspects of *thymos*, also gives considerable space to what we might refer to as the pro-active nature of *thymos* as a drive towards excellence and *to kalon*.

This might be due to the fact that Aristotle defines *thymos* as just a category of desire. What can be developed and trained is not the desire itself, but the attitude that the person comes to have towards that desire, vis-à-vis a variety of other factors and considerations, such as other desires, issues of appropriateness, etc. However, given that, in the last books of the *Republic*, Plato too comes to talk of *thymos* as a category of desire, and given that his previous description of *thymos* as a ‘faculty’ of the psyche must be understood in metaphorical terms, we should be ready to accept that Plato himself would actually agree to a considerable extent with Aristotle’s view. However, we might say that, by incorporating *aidōs* into his account of *thymos*, Plato allows for some development in *thymos*, for, as we have seen in sections 2.5. and 2.6 of the thesis, *aidōs* does in fact develop. Therefore, we might imagine that Plato’s *thymos* develops to the extent that *aidōs* develops, thanks to one’s increasing awareness of roles and social norms. In the light of this, we can also challenge the dichotomy between the uneducated and the educated version of *thymos*. As a desire for proper self-assertion, *thymos* cannot have an educated and uneducated version. What can be educated is the person as a whole, who gradually learns how to properly balance her own claims to respect with that of others, and how to live as a fully socialised agent within the normative context of her society.

---

22 See especially Cairns (2014), (2021), and n. 1 above for further references.
Acknowledgments

My first thanks go to my supervisors Douglas Cairns and Mirko Canevaro, for offering me this incredible opportunity to grow both as a scholar and a person, and for always supporting my search for meaning. This thesis owes much to both. I am grateful to Douglas for prodding me to aim higher than I thought I could and for encouraging me to cultivate my desire to understand; I am grateful to Mirko for his precious encouragement and for all the inspiring reflections and conversations that we shared. I would like to extend my sincere thanks also to my examiners, Prof. Ruth Scodel and Dr Richard Rawles, for the stimulating discussion that we had together. Special thanks go to the other members of the HCG team: to Kleanthis Mantzouranis, for being the most Aristotelian colleague one could ever hope to have; to Matteo Zaccarini, for always being present and supportive even from afar; and to Linda Rocchi, who shared with me the seemingly impossible task of finishing a PhD. Heartfelt thanks go to David Lewis, on whom I have always been able to rely as a source of academic insights as well as of encouragement.

I would also like to thank all the colleagues that have been part of the HCG experience: Marika Pulkkinen, Pia Campeggiani, Christopher Degelmann, Florian Sittig, and all the others who spent some time with us and from whom I learned a lot. I would like to thank especially Lisa Raphals, Moritz Hinsch, and Deborah Kamen for the helpful and stimulating discussions. Special thanks go to Theodora Hadjimichael, for her extraordinary generosity in advising and encouraging me. I am grateful to all the HCA community and to Kim Czajkowski in particular for her precious guidance as my mentor. Last but not least, I would like to thank Luigi Battezzato (semel supervisor semper supervisor), without whom this journey would not have started at all.

The most beautiful part of these four years has been all the friends that have accompanied me throughout the PhD. Warmest thanks go to Ambra, Beatrice, Clara, Giovanna, Lucilla, and Viola, for being there both in the difficult as well as in the happy moments, and to my amazing office neighbours, Oliver and Matteo: their company considerably lightened the last months of the PhD. Special thanks go to Antonio, for all his tips and support, and to Vera and Angeliki, whose advice and support have helped and will help me more than they can imagine. I am particularly grateful to Giulia, Caterina, Valeriia, Yolanda, Laura, Martina, Olivia, Victoria, and all the other friends who have accompanied me in this journey. Flavia and Giovanni both deserve my heartfelt thanks for always being there for me. I am also grateful to all the life-long friends.
such as Marta, Camilla, Agnese, Giulio, Eleonora, Tomas, Lorenzo, Alberto, Andrea, and all the others who have helped me to take the right steps on many occasions. Special thanks go to the amazing members of my Scottish oikos: James, Caterina, and Prerita have been an incredible source of encouragement and support, offering me a sense of belonging and making me always feel at home.

I am most grateful to my family. My sister Maria’s unrelenting perseverance and extraordinary dedication have been a constant source of inspiration, and I have often found the right answers by looking up at her. My mum Patricia and my dad Stefano deserve my greatest gratitude for the generosity and commitment with which they have always discreetly supported me. In their actions and behaviour I first observed the best expressions of the dynamics that are examined in this thesis, which is also a recognition of everything they have done for me.
References


Canevaro, M. (forthcoming-c) ‘Timê, Athenian citizenship and “falling short”’.


Lambert, S. and Schuddeboom, F. (2019) ‘IG II2 1942: Honours for the girls who worked on the robe for Athena (ca. 100 BC)’, *AI*, 16 June. Available at:


258


