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Hippotrophia as citizen behaviour in archaic Greece

Alain Duploux

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From Homer to Solon

Continuity and Change in Archaic Greece

Edited by

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Hippotrophia as Citizen Behaviour in Archaic Greece

Alain Duplouy

1 Introduction

Archaic Greece has become the focus of growing interest for many historians and archaeologists who are seeking a more comprehensive picture of the Archaic *polis*, which goes well beyond the old-fashioned constitutional history. Following Oswyn Murray's *Early Greece* (2nd ed. 1993), lifestyles and behaviours have become a 'serious' topic, shedding new light on major aspects of ancient societies.

Before engaging in a discussion about citizen behaviours, however, I would like to state a few theoretical prerequisites. Without falling into historical revisionism or pure subjectivism, post-modern critical thought has proven how difficult it is to achieve historical objectivity. While there are facts that cannot be negated, writing history is also a matter of perspective and historiographical choices. Instead of perpetuating the illusion of neutrality, I prefer to state what I believe—or, to be more specific, what my own experience as a historian has taught me—the Greek *polis*, and, more precisely, the Archaic Greek *polis*, to have been.

2 The Greek City and Archaic Citizenship

What is the Greek *polis*? This is not, of course, an easy question. It is, in fact, possibly the most complex issue in the study of the ancient world, an issue that has been at the core of many discussions since the publication of Fustel de Coulange's *Cité antique* in 1864. It has generated hundreds of dedicated studies, which have defined various schools of thought. As Oswyn Murray once set out, metaphorically, 'the French *polis* is a form of Holy Communion', whereas the German *polis* 'can only be described in a handbook of constitutional law'.¹

¹ Murray 1990: 3. On the multiple historical approaches to the *polis*, see also Azoulay and Ismard 2007.

As Aristotle once stated, ‘the word *polis* has several meanings’ (πολλαχῶς γὰρ τῆς πόλεως λεγομένης) (*Pol.* 3.1276a 23). Among the three basic elements he considered in establishing the continuity and identity of a *polis*—that is territory, population, and government—, he explicitly favoured the government—and henceforth the constitution of a state—as the main defining criterion of a Greek city-state, regardless of whether its inhabitants remained the same or were entirely different people. This emphasis on political institutions has been at the core of a long-established research tradition, ranging from the *Griechische Staatsrecht* of the late nineteenth-century German scholars, to Louis Robert or Philippe Gauthier’s epigraphical approach to the Hellenistic cities, and to Mogens Hansen’s *Inventory of Archaic and Classical poleis*. According to Hansen, ‘the very heart of the *polis* concept was the citizen body understood as the participants in the city’s political institutions’.² As a community of citizens, the *polis* is therefore tied to a precise *politeia* or form of government. The division of power between the various political aspects of the *polis* (assembly, council, courts of law and officials) and the limited access to some of these allow us to distinguish three well-known types of constitution and their related positive and negative facets: monarchy and tyranny, aristocracy and oligarchy, democracy and the so-called *politeia*. From this perspective, political and judicial institutions are supposed to be at the centre of what really makes a *polis*: an entity sometimes described as ‘one of the most totally institutionalised societies in world history’.³

It is not my intention to enter here into a discussion of the inadequacy of such an approach, based on applying Aristotelian concepts to Archaic Greece. I have already stated, on various other occasions, why a constitutional history of Archaic Greece and many of the institution-related issues and approaches are actually biased toward fifth- and fourth-century political thought, and therefore, do not suit the nature of the existing evidence for pre-Classical Greece, neither from a political perspective nor from a social or economic one.⁴ If we want to understand the Archaic *poleis* without retro-projecting the Classical model, another approach should be adopted.

Thucydides (7.77.7), following Alcaeus (fr. 112.10, 426), once said ‘men make the city’ (ἄνδρες γὰρ πόλις). Despite the various events which occur within the history of a city, even the loss of its territory or a political revolution, the *polis* is to be conceived primarily as a community of citizens. The main issue is,

² Hansen 2006: 110.

³ *Ibid.*: 113.

⁴ Mainly Duplouy 2002; Duplouy 2005; Duplouy 2006.

therefore, to delineate the boundaries of the citizen group. This means distinguishing between insiders (who are allowed to take part in the community) and outsiders (who are excluded). As a society, the *polis* is tied to all the spheres of activity that the citizens share in their everyday lives. This means that, contrary to the Aristotelian perspective, the centre of the *polis* was not restricted only to the political activities performed in and through formal institutions. In Archaic Greece, what we may call the 'political' was embedded within society and actually related to a number of activities, whether they be social, judicial, political, military, religious, cultural, artistic, or economic.⁵

There is, of course, nothing original in thinking about the *polis* as a community of citizens, or as a social entity having an existence well beyond the domain of institutions. Twenty-five years ago, François de Polignac was invited to Copenhagen by Mogens Hansen to discuss just such a perception of the Greek city. He even proposed to 'reconsider the city' or, more precisely, to 'forget the city in order to consider the society' by getting rid of the very notion of *polis*, which might be more 'a misleading label than a heuristic concept'.⁶ Polignac's approach, strongly influenced by French anthropological structuralism, favours a holistic view of the *polis*, whereby religion and politics are intimately intertwined. He defines the Archaic city as 'a social entity founded upon a network of relations between the various members of a territorial community'.⁷ More precisely, by focusing on the function of the sanctuary within society, he has added his own contribution to assimilating the Greek city-state to the formal expression of religious cohesion.

Such a sociological or anthropological approach is no doubt itself biased by other principles. However, contrary to an institutional approach which rests on very little Archaic evidence, this approach better matches the available contemporary documentation, both textual and material, to which it can be applied.⁸

There is, of course, a fundamental difference between the Weberian 'city as institution' of Mogens Hansen and the Durkheimian 'city as society' of François de Polignac, which inevitably leads to two radically divergent conceptions of Archaic citizenship.⁹

5 On the 'political' sphere, see Schmitt-Pantel 1990; Ampolo 1996.

6 Polignac 1995b: 9.

7 Polignac 1995a: 78.

8 For a full development of this approach, see Duplouy 2019.

9 For a critical review of the different historiographical trends about archaic citizenship, see Duplouy 2018a.

Citizenship is a legacy of ancient Greece. The idea arose some three millennia ago, as a concept based on the participation in the social and political life of small-scale communities. However, it is only towards the end of the fourth century that we find an explicit statement of this concept. As a theoretician, Aristotle was mainly looking for a definition of citizenship that would be universal, despite the great political diversity among Greek states. According to him, the citizen is to be defined generically as 'a man who shares in the administration of justice and in the holding of office' (μετέχειν κρίσεως καὶ ἀρχῆς, *Pol.* 3.1275a 23). Among the *archai*, he included offices which had a time limit, whether or not they could be held several times, as well as the offices without limit of tenure, such as those of juror in the courts and member of the assembly. This definition has been widely accepted by historians of ancient Greece as a convenient way to think about the *polis* through its political institutions. It is at the core of Hansen's definition of the citizen: 'a citizen is defined as a person (*politēs*) who takes a part in the running of a *polis* by exercising his political rights'. More precisely, 'in the ancient Greek city-state culture, "citizenship" was what it has become again in the modern world: a person's juridically defined, inherited, membership of a state, in virtue of which that citizen enjoys a number of political, social and economic privileges in that state which a non-citizen living in the state is deprived of or can enjoy only to a limited extent'.¹⁰ Focusing on the geographical placing of sanctuaries and on cult activity, Polignac nevertheless proposed a quite different definition of early Greek citizenship: 'the constitution of the *polis* is to be conceived not only in terms of access to the *archai* and participation in political citizenship, but also as the gathering of different groups into a single effective body by allowing them all access to the same cults, assembling them around a number of common sanctuaries, and granting all of them the privilege of taking part in certain rituals: in short, the *polis* has to be considered also in terms of a religious citizenship'.¹¹ More precisely, 'participation in religious rituals guaranteed a mutual recognition of statuses and set the seal upon membership of the society, thereby defining an early form of citizenship'.¹² In these formulations, we find what is possibly the most clearly phrased manifestation of the discrepancy between these two divergent conceptions of Greek citizenship.

I strongly believe that the Aristotelian definition, as is deeply rooted in the philosophical and political thought of the Classical period, fails to account accurately for the previous centuries, and the dynamics of the emergent cities.

10 Hansen 2006: 111–112.

11 Polignac 1995a: 124–125.

12 *Ibid.*: 153.

Accordingly, I prefer Polignac's approach to the question, without necessarily reducing Archaic citizenship to religious citizenship only.

Usually considered as a granted status enshrined in legal criteria and institutional affiliations, citizenship has often been reduced to the mere 'membership' of a previously defined entity, turning any historical definition of Archaic citizenship into a discussion on state formation processes. Instead of 'membership', which introduces a view from the top, I prefer to describe Archaic citizenship as 'participation'. This is, in fact, the actual meaning of the word *metechein*, as used by Aristotle in defining citizenship. Besides attending the assembly and the council, which implies the formal institutions already explored by Aristotle and his modern epigones, the exercise of citizenship actually extended to all areas of collective activity: cults and rituals, public organisations and their imagined identities, trade and the economy, war and peace, etc. All spheres which contributed to sketching the outline of the citizen community. This is in fact implicit in the double meaning of the word *politeia* in ancient Greek, which was applied, on the one hand, to forms of government—usually the only side explored in modern historiography—and, on the other, to citizen lifestyles, also referred to as *nomoi*, *tropoi* or *epitēdeumata*.¹³ These are the behaviours of the citizens.

As I have proposed in various recent studies,¹⁴ I would prefer to define Archaic citizenship as a 'performance'. In the absence of a formal register certifying one's legal status in Archaic cities, the rights of a citizen had to be constantly demonstrated, in order to be acknowledged and accepted by others. Considering how deeply many aspects of Archaic institutions were actually embedded in social practices, we must place great emphasis on the manifold behaviours through which citizenship could be asserted or even claimed. Since participation in collective activities (such as banquets and hunting or shared rites and festivities) has been acknowledged as an efficient way to incorporate people into the citizen group, adopting the normative behaviours of citizens in all aspects of their lifestyle perhaps provided the best means of being acknowledged as a fellow citizen. In short, in order to be accepted as a citizen, one had first to behave like a citizen. Of course, patterns of behaviour greatly differ within the Archaic world, and practices that were highly valued in some cities could have been deprecated in others. It is also obvious that not all Archaic cities complied with this model, whether fully or partially. Defining Archaic citizenship is certainly not a matter of finding a unique and ever-valid standard or

13 Bordes 1982: 17. On political *epitēdeumata*, see Schmitt-Pantel 2009.

14 Duploux 2011; Duploux 2013; Duploux 2014a; Duploux 2018b. On performative citizenship, beyond ancient Greece, see Isin 2017.

criterion, such as that promoted by the Aristotelian philosophical model. In my view, one of the main challenges in the renewed interest for Archaic Greece is to explore the various mechanisms involved in the process of citizen-making.

Having explored various attitudes in previous studies, I focus here on horse-breeding (*hippotrophia*) as a specific form of citizen behaviour in Archaic Greece, and explore this topic both in texts and images.

3 A Short Definition of *Hippotrophia*

Liddell and Scott defined ἵπποτροφία (see also ἵπποτροφέω and ἵπτότροφος) as ‘breeding or keeping of horses, esp. for racing’ and gave examples from Pindar (*I.* 2.38), Plato (*Ly.* 205c) and Plutarch (*Ages.* 20.1), who all refer to horse racing and Panhellenic competitions. *Hippotrophia* is, indeed, usually associated with the behaviour of wealthy men. More precisely, it is frequently defined as a kind of hobby for the so-called aristocratic leisure class. As Solon put it in his poetry: ‘Happy is he who has dear boys, horse of uncloven hoof, hunting dogs, and a friend in foreign parts’ (fr. 23 West). It is also an important feature in the denigration of Alcibiades by Nicias, as reported by Thucydides (6.12.2), or in Demosthenes’ criticism of his rival Aeschines (18.320). Alcibiades praised himself as being the first man to have sent seven chariots into the lists at the Olympic games—‘a number never before entered by any private person’—and won the first, second, and fourth prizes on one occasion (Thuc. 6.16.2). Accordingly, Oswyn Murray made *hippotrophia* a characteristic feature of the aristocratic lifestyle, and defined it as a ‘rich man’s sport’.¹⁵ Beyond Alcibiades’ magnificent behaviour, the nature of this ‘rich man’s sport’ actually rests on the notion of ‘aristocracy’. As I argued in my book *Le prestige des élites*, the old notion of a nobility ruling Archaic cities and enjoying a life of pleasures, thanks to their riches, as a kind of leisure class, is obsolete.¹⁶ Conversely, honour and social esteem were key patterns in the construction of hierarchy. In ancient Greece, rather than being ascribed or inherited, elite status was mostly achieved through a constant investment in time, money, and energy-consuming practices. Depending on the local circumstances, there were countless opportunities in most *poleis* to show, maintain, or enhance one’s elite status. *Hippotrophia* was of course one of them, and it provided wealthy men with the much sought-after prestige they were looking for within their community.

15 Murray 1993: 204.

16 Duplouy 2006. See also Fisher and van Wees 2015; Ma 2016. *Contra* Stein-Hölkeskamp 1989.

Yet, despite being an extremely expensive practice, *hippotrophia* could also be a military requirement. More than a social status symbol associated with agonistic competitions, and beyond the prestige-inducing character of this behaviour, horse-breeding was also linked to the existence of cavalry units in citizen armies. Various Classical Athenian authors, such as Xenophon (*Oec.* 2.6) and Lycurgus (1.139), explicitly refer to individual contributions to the maintenance of a state cavalry in post-Periclean Athens, requiring the upkeep of a horse for military purposes, possibly with the help of various state-funded measures and incentives.¹⁷ This also leads, in various Hellenistic cities, to the creation of a formal military liturgy named *hippotrophia*.¹⁸ And yet, while ancient authors usually associate cavalry units with specific regimes or cities, their actual existence in the history of Archaic warfare is still much disputed.¹⁹

Aristotle refers to the rearing of horses as a typical feature of aristocracies, and links it specifically to the military organisation of various early Greek cities. 'And among the notables (τῶν γνωρίμων) there are differences in wealth and in the extent of their property—as, for example, in the breeding of horses (οἶον ἵπποτροφίας), since this is not easy for those without wealth to do. (That is why, indeed, there were oligarchies among those city-states in ancient times whose power lay in their cavalry (ἐν τοῖς ἵπποις), and who used horses in wars with their neighbours—as, for example, the Eretrians did, and the Chalcidians, the Magnesians on the river Menander, and many of the others in Asia.)' (*Pol.* 4.1289b 33–40, trans. Reeve). In the Aristotelian reconstruction of the past, 'the first constitution that arose among the Greeks after kingships also consisted of the defensive warriors. Initially, it consisted of the cavalrymen (ἐκ τῶν ἵππέων), since strength and superiority in war lay in them (ἐν τοῖς ἵππεύσιν).' (*Pol.* 4.1297b 16–19, trans. Reeve). Testimonials relating to the First Messenian War and the Lelantine War allude to the use of cavalry as a specific force in early Archaic Greece.²⁰ In accordance with the Homeric epics, pictorial representations on Geometric and Archaic vases clearly indicate that Archaic warriors used their horses principally for transportation as mounted infantry, whether or not the hoplites of the Classical period find their origins in this early form of warfare.²¹

Although the existence of fully fledged cavalry units in Archaic warfare continues to be disputed, horsemen were nevertheless a reality—and certainly a

17 On the state cavalry in post-Periclean Athens and its funding, see Bugh 1988; Spence 1993; Worley 1994: 70–74.

18 For Hellenistic cities, see Chandezon 2014.

19 Burckhardt 2001; Lubtchansky 2005: 13–31 offers a synthesis of the extant literature.

20 As emphasised by Worley 1994: 21–58.

21 As it has been recently argued by Brouwers 2007.

very impressive one—on many battlefields. As I will argue, in some Archaic cities horsemanship was, therefore, related to the performance of citizenship. While varying from one city to another, horse-breeding was not the only way to be considered a citizen, nor was it an obligation. However, in a military context, *hippotrophia* could certainly be valued as proof of citizen status, or even underpin a right to enfranchisement. There were many different situations in the different Archaic Greek cities: *hippotrophia* could be the absolute criterion for citizen status or—merely—one of many possible requirements among the multiple ways of achieving citizen status through participation and performance.

4 *Hippotrophia* in Texts

There are at least a dozen examples of horse-breeding cities, including: Boeotia, Crete, Thessaly, Cyprus, Euboea, Ionia, Southern Italy and Sicily, not to mention Athens and Sparta. I will focus here on a few more-or-less explicit case studies.

One of the clearest examples of evidence linking citizenship status with *hippotrophia* in Archaic Greece is found in Aeolic Cyme. In his excerpt of the Aristotelian *Constitution of the Cymaians*, Heraclides Lembos (second century BC) states (§ 39 Dilts): Φείδων ἀνὴρ δόκιμος πλείοσι μετέδωκε τῆς πολιτείας, νόμον θεῖς ἕκαστον ἐπάναγκες τρέφειν ἵππον, 'Pheidon, an esteemed man, gave more men a share in the citizenship, establishing a law which compelled everyone to raise a horse'. In his epitome, Heraclides refers to a time immediately posterior to the Persian conquest of Aeolis by Cyrus the Great in the 540s. He reports that Pheidon created legislation to enfranchise 'more men' (πλείοσι), who were required to breed horses. Although the phrasing of the original idea probably reflects the biases of fourth-century vocabulary (μετέδωκε τῆς πολιτείας and νόμον), there is no need to dismiss this piece of information which highlights the specificity of citizen status in Archaic Cyme. Pheidon clearly established a link between horse-breeding and citizenship. It is not possible to state whether the status or the behaviour—citizenship or horse-breeding—had priority over the other, but, in practice, both were probably interrelated as normative behavioural requirements for Cymaian citizens. The reform would certainly have offered a simple (if not self-sufficient) criterion for enfranchisement: breeding at least one horse—but possibly many more—was the minimum condition for a share in the Archaic Cymaian civic community.

Beyond Aeolic Cyme, many East-Greek cities were renowned for their horsemen, so much so that *hippotrophia* can perhaps be considered as a typical feature of the Eastern Greeks' conception of a citizen. Among them, Aristotle

names Magnesia on the Meander (*Pol.* 4.1289b 39–40), which he includes in the category of equestrian oligarchies. Aelian (*V.H.* 14.46) reports a pair of individuals, comprising a horseman and a servant carrying a javelin, with the addition of a hunting dog, as a typical Magnesian combat-technique. The reputation of the Colophonian horsemen was so well established that, according to Strabo (14.1.28), ‘in any obstinate engagement, on whichever side the Colophonian horsemen were engaged, they decided it’. Even the Lydian king Alyattes stood in fear of the Colophonian horsemen, whom he tried to bribe, and subsequently slaughtered (Polyaen. 7.2.2). All of these traditions reveal an essential aspect of Eastern Greek warfare. They may also allude to a specific criterion of citizenship, as documented for Cyme, although we lack any explicit link between *hippotrophia* and citizenship for these other Ionian cities.

The Chalcidian *hippobotai* offer a more convincing case, where *hippotrophia* seems to appear as citizen performance. Although ancient and modern historians usually considered them as an oligarchy,²² i.e. as an elite class of property holders that would have been a subgroup of the whole citizen body, the *hippobotai* of Chalcis fit well into an Archaic definition of citizenship through horse-breeding. There is, indeed, a strong association between the city of Chalcis and the *hippobotai*. Herodotos (5.77), our most ancient source on the subject, equated the territory of Chalcis with the ‘land of the *hippobotai*’ (ἐπὶ τῶν Ἰπποβοτέων τῆ χώρῃ), on which Athens settled four thousand *klerouchs* after defeating the Chalcidians in 506. A similar expression occurs in Aelian (*V.H.* 6.1), who refers to it as the ‘*hippobotan* land’ (τὴν Ἰππόβοτον καλουμένην χώραν). It should be added that during the second half of the sixth century, the Chalcidians minted silver coins bearing, on their obverse, facing views of a *quadriga* (*tridrachm*), a horseman with a second horse (*drachm*), and a lone horseman (*hemidrachm*). These symbols disappeared on coins from the early fifth century, and were replaced on the reverse by a wheel, ‘probably an abbreviation for the *quadriga* of the earlier issues.’²³ It is tempting to see the *hippobotai* as a group of horse-breeders who constituted the whole Chalcidian citizen body. *Hippotrophia* would have been a shared characteristic of the community, and perhaps a formal criterion for membership. It looks as though the Chalcidians had adapted the Homeric epithet ‘grazed by horses’, usually applied to the plain of Argos (Ἄργος ἰππόβοτον), to refer to their land, and by extension to its citizens. In precisely the same way, Euripides (*Or.* 1000) named the Argive king Atreus ἰπποβότης, ‘feeder of horses’, and Pindar (*I.* 4.14) praised the Theban

22 See Thalheim 1913; Lazenby 1996; Osborne 1998; Lubtchansky 2005: 23–26. See also a lengthier discussion in Duploux 2018b: 257–259.

23 Kraay 1976: 89–91.

Kleonymidai for being ἵπποτρόφοι. Similarly, Bacchylides (*Ep.* 11.114) describes the city of Metapontum as *hippotrophos* (ἵπποτρόφον πόλιν), ‘horse-nourishing’, leading Joseph Carter to refer to ‘a horse-breeding society’ in describing the sixth-century *polis*.²⁴ In Archaic Chalcis, *hippotrophia* was clearly associated with the performance of citizenship, whether or not it was an exclusive criterion.

Such a model of citizen *hippotrophia* also applies to Archaic Athens, although it was not the only feature of Athenian Archaic citizen participation, nor was it even a required one. The existence of a cavalry in pre-Periclean Athens has been a much-debated topic.²⁵ As Geoffrey de Ste. Croix suggested, ‘It is generally agreed that there was no *organised* cavalry force at Athens until the mid-fifth century (...) Nevertheless, there is not the least reason to doubt that there were always—before as well as after Solon—individual Athenians who possessed warhorses and used them on campaign, as “mounted infantry”’.²⁶ A horse-breeding qualification for citizenship in Archaic Athens is, of course, related to the discussion of the four Solonian property classes. As it is commonly accepted, the definition of these classes by Solon in early sixth-century Athens marked a major step in the political construction of the Athenian state. However, as argued 40 years ago by Claude Mossé,²⁷ this reconstruction is mainly due to fourth-century historiography, which installed Solon as the founding father of the Athenian democracy. This in itself raised doubts about the early existence of the so-called Solonian system. Although such an approach has often been considered as ‘post-modern’, ‘hypercritical’, or ‘pessimistic’, I recently proposed that we follow her path, by exploring the Solonian *telē* as occupational groups involved, among many others, in the construction of the Athenian *polis*.²⁸ To be specific, the Athenian *hippeis* were probably not a Solonian creation as a property class, distinguishing men able to collect from their estate a produce of three hundred dry and liquid measures jointly, but, rather, an existing group of horse-breeders and possibly—in wartime—cavalrymen. According to a tradition rejected by the Aristotelian author of the *Constitution of the Athenians* (7.4), ‘as some say’, the *hippeis* were ‘those who were able to keep a horse’ (ὡς δ’ ἔνιοί φασι τοὺς ἵπποτροφεῖν δυναμένους), adducing as proof their very name and Anthemion’s dedication on the Acropolis.

24 Carter 1994: 182.

25 See the discussion in Worley 1994: 63–69; Filser 2017: 401–403.

26 De Ste. Croix 2004: 15.

27 Mossé 1979. See also Raaflaub 2006.

28 Duplouy 2014a.

As Paulin Ismard has recently demonstrated,²⁹ Archaic Athens was actually composed not of a cohesive group of citizens having the same attributes and enjoying the same status, but of multiple lower-ranking communities partly defined in terms of their activity, such as members of a *deme*, *phrateres*, participants in sacred *orgia*, sailors, participants in dining or burial groups, members of a *thiasos*, or persons ‘who go away for plunder or trade’ (cf. *Digest* 47.22.4). These communities were the intermediaries that guaranteed the exercise of citizen rights, defining a very weakly integrated sixth-century city, within which there were multiple communitarian affiliations. Ismard demonstrated how, until Pericles’ law, it was the traditional communitarian customs of the various associations that fixed the rules by which an individual was affiliated to the general citizen community. As I proposed for the so-called Solonian *hippeis*, *hippotrophia* was an accepted behaviour in Archaic Athens, leading to the constitution of an informal community of Athenian horse-breeders and to the recognition of their citizen status thanks to their specific horse-breeding lifestyle.

Another well-known horse-breeding city was Archaic Sybaris.³⁰ Quoting Aristotle’s lost *Constitution of the Sybarites*, Athenaeus (12.520c) reports that the Sybarites ‘had carried their luxurious refinement to such a point that their horses were accustomed to dance to the flute even at their feasts’. The Deipnosophist then relates how their Krotoniate enemy took advantage of this custom by playing a tune on the battlefield and how the Sybarite horses danced away from the battle. What seems to be a ‘good after-dinner story’³¹ actually reveals the existence of a highly skilled ‘cavalry’, trained to perform specific routines.³² Classical dressage movements and training were intended to prepare powerful and agile horses not only for parade, but also, more specifically, for warfare. Highly skilled horses require collective involvement, and the so-called refinement of the behaviours of the Sybarites actually points to the existence of intensively trained horsemen, as it was part of Sybarite citizen education. According to Athenaeus (12.519c), ‘the horsemen of the Sybarites, more than 5,000 strong, paraded with saffron-coloured coats over their breastplates, and in summer their young men (οἱ νεώτεροι) journeyed to the Caves of the Nymphs on the Lusias river and there spent time in every form of luxury’. The *neoteroi*’s summer retreat to a sanctuary of the Nymphs is strongly reminiscent of some kind of initiation rite for citizens-to-be. More specifically, the word νεώτεροι is

29 Ismard 2010: 44–83.

30 For a more detailed study of the Sybarite tradition, see Duplouy 2018b: 262–269.

31 See Rutter 1970: 170.

32 See Lubtchansky 1993; Lubtchansky 1995: 43–69.

probably a rephrasing of an actual age group within Archaic Sybarite society, which was later equated with the late Classical and Hellenistic ephebic institution. It denotes the existence of young men trained as horsemen and destined to become citizens.

What we have in Cyme, in East Greek cities, in Chalcis, in Sybaris, and even in Athens, is not only an elite strategy, but also a behaviour explicitly linked to the practice of citizenship, mainly through military achievements or citizen education. In these cities, horse-breeders identified themselves as citizens and recognised the citizen status of their fellows through the shared practice of *hippotrophia*. By breeding—or simply riding—a horse they were accepted by other community members as legitimate and honourable partners. These people could reasonably claim participation in the life and values of the citizen community, although there may have been, depending on the city, other ways for an individual to achieve citizen status. *Hippotrophia* was not necessarily intended as the only citizen requirement, and even in these cities other criteria may possibly have defined citizens or led to their enfranchisement.

Of course, *hippotrophia* contributed to the definition of an elite group of horse-breeders, but this elite was integrated into the citizen community, and they fully complied with its values. There was no such thing as an anti-*polis* ideology,³³ or what Oswyn Murray once called ‘a small group working against the community’.³⁴ This elite—whatever we choose to name it—was in no way formally separated from other members of the *dēmos*. Beyond any social prestige generally associated with *hippotrophia*, these case studies are explicit examples of the citizen value of horse-breeding in various Archaic *poleis*. In these cities, *hippotrophia* perfectly fits in with a definition of Archaic citizenship conceived as a performance linked to specific behaviours and lifestyles.

5 *Hippotrophia* in Images

Hippotrophia was undoubtedly a very visually demonstrative behaviour. As part of a lifestyle, rearing—and possibly riding—horses allowed people to identify visually those who were without doubt members of the citizen community. Ancient images make this strategy obvious. Images are not only snapshots of ancient everyday life. They are, above all, representations of particular identities, transcriptions of the way things were supposed to be ordered in the citizen

33 *Contra* Kurke 1999; Morris 2000.

34 Murray 1983: 266.

world of the Greeks. They therefore also contributed to defining and continuously reasserting shared values. The role of such images was to illustrate an ideal state of the community through the depiction of expected collective or individual behaviours.

In Greek images we find numerous depictions of horses, riders, and charioteers from the eighth century onwards. In Geometric vases, rearing horses is more or less clearly signified through images representing grazing horses, or horses at the manger, especially in Argive, Athenian, Cycladic, and Euboean productions.³⁵ Referring to the specific lifestyle of the Euboean elite, J.N. Coldstream was the first to use the notion of *hippotropia* in relation to Euboean Geometric images.³⁶ In a recent paper, Pascal Simon and Samuel Verdan continue this research on Euboean *hippotropia* in relation to the so-called 'black-horses crater' (fig. 6.1), discovered in 1998 in Eretria by the archaeologists of the Ephoria.³⁷ This mid eighth-century pedestal crater bears on its two faces an unusual representation of a mare covered by a stallion. It comes from a funeral pyre that also comprised golden headbands, oriental artefacts, and a complete drinking set of vases. According to Greek and Swiss archaeologists, the entirety of this funerary material should be associated with the burial of a member of the Eretrian elite, which was locally known as the *hippeis*. According to Simon and Verdan, the mating scene—a very unusual image—was supposed to emphasise the status of horse-owner and, more precisely, his expertise in horse-breeding. The quality of the horses produced through an artificially controlled mating process is being emphasised in this image. Referring to Theognis' laments (1.183–192), Simon and Verdan establish an analogy between the purity of animal races and the nobility of human lineages through well-chosen mating or marriage. This fits perfectly, according to Simon and Verdan, with an 'aristocratic ideology'. There is certainly no doubt about the high social value of horse-breeding in Geometric Eretria. It is, however, more difficult to establish the exact nature of this 'aristocracy'. Was it a restricted elite among the whole citizen community? Were there other criteria for enfranchisement? Or was this the main criterion? Could it be possible that these *hippeis* represented all the citizens of Geometric and Archaic Eretria?

35 Coldstream 2008, s.v. 'horses' in the general index. More specifically, on Argive horses, Courbin 1966: 403–413; 482–483; 485–487; Sauzeau 2004. On Cycladic horses, see the papers quoted n. 40 and Zapheiroupolou 2003: 17–20. It is likely that dressage also existed in Archaic Athens; we clearly see it, for example, on a Proto-Attic *oinochos*, cf. Papadopoulos 2006: 132–133, fig. 125 A–C.

36 Coldstream 1981.

37 Simon and Verdan 2014.

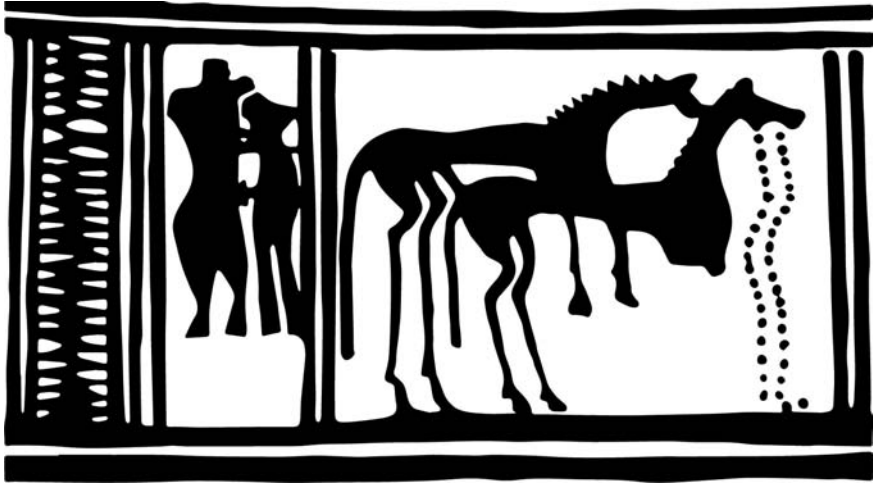


FIGURE 6.1 Eretria, Black-horses crater, graphical representation

VECTOR DRAWING FROM SIMON AND VERDAN 2014, FIG. 1B

Who were the Eretrian *hippeis*? The sources on this are few, vague, and all come from the Aristotelian school. Citing Eretria among the equestrian oligarchies (*Pol.* 4.1289b 39), Aristotle (*Pol.* 5.1306a 35) alludes more specifically to the ‘oligarchy of the *hippeis*’ (τὴν ἐν Ἐρετρίᾳ δ’ ὀλιγαρχίαν τὴν τῶν ἰππέων), whereas the Aristotelian author of the *Constitution of the Athenians* (15.2) mentions the support offered to Peisistratus by the ‘*hippeis* who controlled the government of Eretria’ (τῶν ἰππέων τῶν ἐχόντων ἐν Ἐρετρίᾳ τὴν πολιτείαν). Plutarch (*Amator.* 17 = *Mor.* 76of–761a), explicitly referring to Aristotle, alludes to the military superiority of the Eretrian horsemen (τοὺς δ’ ἰππέας) during an undetermined conflict between Chalcis and Eretria (perhaps the Lelantine War?). Finally, Strabo (10.1.10), quoting a sacred law inscribed on a stone exposed within the sanctuary of Artemis at Amarynthos—whom he had knowledge of thanks to the lost Aristotelian *Constitution of the Eretrians*, his primary source in Euboean political matters—, mentions a procession between the city and the sanctuary with ‘three thousand hoplites, six hundred horsemen (ἰππεύσιν) and sixty chariots’. There is evidence of the existence of a specific board of five hundred *hippeis* in mid-fourth century Eretria, and Denis Knoepfler has suggested that they were probably six hundred in Archaic times.³⁸ Accordingly, Eretrian *hippeis* were no less than the Six-Hundred of Massalia, whom Maurizio Giangliulio

38 Knoepfler 1985: 257.



FIGURE 6.2 Paros, *Polyandreion*, amphora A, graphical representation

VECTOR DRAWING FROM ZAPHEIROPOULOU 2006, FIG. 11

has proven formed the whole citizen body, and not a restricted elite.³⁹ As for the Chalcidian *hippobotai*, there are grounds to argue that the Eretrian *hippeis* were not—following the taxonomy typical of Classical political thought—an oligarchy, i.e. an elite subgroup within the whole citizen community, but might have represented all the members of the Geometric and Archaic *polis*.

Geometric Euboean images do not explicitly designate horsemen as citizens. Other examples, however, may be more obvious. Two Late Geometric *amphorae*, discovered in Paros, offer a discernible link between *hippotropia* and citizen status. The two Parian vases depict a battle scene where horsemen are fighting among chariots and infantrymen (fig. 6.2). These pots belong to a citizen *polyandreion*, probably as a result of the casualties that occurred in a battle between Paros and Naxos, in the late eighth century.⁴⁰ If the Eretrian ‘black-horses crater’ belongs to an elite burial (at least as it has been published), these Parian *amphorae* were deliberately made to publicly commemorate the deeds of two warriors honoured with their comrades. The content and purpose of the Parian *polyandreion* actually predate, by at least 250 years, the Athenian *dēmosion sēma* of the Classical era, yet already display all of the features of a public monument. The common burial has a strong citizen tonality and appears to have been the first celebration of the Parian community as a *polis*. In Geometric Paros, the whole citizen community therefore acknowledged horsemanship as a major military and public achievement, performed by a few (undeniably rich) citizens who contributed to the defence of the community. Although accepted as a citizen lifestyle, *hippotropia* was not, of course, the only way to express a Parian citizen identity, since infantrymen were also involved in the battle and its depiction.

Another major piece of Archaic art showing horsemen is the Chigi vase. In a recent book devoted to this Protocorinthian masterpiece, Matteo D’Acunto proposes a complete re-examination of the vase, from the context of its discovery in an Etruscan princely tomb, to the technical, stylistic, and icono-

39 Strabo 4.1.5; Val. Max. 2.6.7d; *Syll.*³ 591, 45. Cf. Giangiulio 2018.

40 Zapheiropoulou 1999; Zapheiropoulou 2006. See also Croissant 2008a; Croissant 2008b.

graphic features of the Corinthian painter.⁴¹ While scholars have often tended to consider the scenes in the three main zones disconnected from one other, D'Acunto follows J.M. Hurwit and M. Torelli in exploring these as a comprehensive iconographic program. D'Acunto reconstructs the web of signifiers, connecting the various scenes of the vase into a global ideological model, and stressing its conformity with the world of the Corinthian aristocracy. There is no doubt that such a masterpiece was commissioned by elite members of the Corinthian community. However, I am not persuaded that the inferred ideology was exclusively 'aristocratic'—provided that such an ideology actually existed—, as it was once suggested by Michael Shanks that such an ideology applied to the whole Protocorinthian figured production as well.⁴² The themes are, indeed, related to a fully citizen identity, rather than to an exclusive or *antipolis* 'aristocratic' code. Starting from the lower zone, the naked young men hunting fox and hare with *lagobola* and assisted by hounds should be interpreted as *epheboi* hunting in the *eschatia*. As demonstrated long ago by Pierre Vidal-Naquet, this activity located at the margin of the civic territory was part of the education process (*paideia*) of would-be citizens as the best preparation for war.⁴³ According to D'Acunto, the scene therefore symbolizes 'the passage to the status of adult warrior and citizen through *paideia*'.⁴⁴ The citizen tone of the upper frieze is obvious and has long been commented on: it depicts the clash between two phalanxes of hoplites, 'where possession of weapons grants individuals the status of citizens'.⁴⁵ D'Acunto nevertheless is hesitant with the interpretation of the central zone with the groups of riders, the chariot and the lion hunt: on the one hand, he describes it as 'a schematic representation of the upper classes of the Corinthian elite',⁴⁶ but on the other hand he proposes 'to interpret the two main zones of the Chigi vase as a symbolic "synthesis" of Corinthian society, represented as divided into three classes: chariot owners, *hippeis*, and hoplites'.⁴⁷ Such a partition of the Corinthian citizen community is actually reminiscent of the so-called Solonian property classes, which rather constitute—at least as I tried to demonstrate—groups of individuals using their lifestyle to demonstrate, and perhaps lay claim to, citizen status. Instead

41 D'Acunto 2013 (with Duplouy 2014b).

42 Shanks 1999 (with Duplouy 2001).

43 Vidal-Naquet 1986.

44 D'Acunto 2013: 172 (in detail: 48–52).

45 *Ibid.*: 175.

46 *Ibid.*: 172.

47 *Ibid.*: 174 (in detail: 70). On the two possible lines of interpretations, see p. 41, with a preference for the aristocratic one, unfortunately omitting recent work on the nature of Greek 'aristocracy'.

of depicting the ‘Corinthian *kaloi kai agathoi*’ only, as D’Acunto argues,⁴⁸ the Chigi vase may rather portray various activities fully accepted within the citizen ethics of Archaic Corinth. *Hippotrophia* as a mark of Corinthian citizen identity may further transpire through the cults of Athena Hippiā (or Chalinitis, ‘inventor of the bridle’) and Poseidon Hippios, as well as through the myth of Bellerophon and Pegasus, the latter being struck on Corinthian coins as the city’s emblem.⁴⁹

Turning to Athenian images, an iconographical survey once recorded more than a hundred surviving Archaic Athenian vases representing war-horses or mounted warriors,⁵⁰ whereas the *Beazley Archive* now lists nearly 2,400 Archaic and Classical Athenian vases—the majority of them in black-figure—depicting at least one horseman. Images are often explicit and accurate, so that they probably rely on models of everyday life in the city. More than a mere portrayal of contemporary lifestyle, these images also contributed to defining Athenian identity. According to François Lissarrague, the specific iconography of Athenian horsemen, dressed in the suggestive Thracian clothes echoing the fame of the Thracian riders, allowed this elite group to mark its rank among the community, while remaining within its political boundaries.⁵¹ Horsemen were not outsiders; they were part of the citizen group, both in images and in the accepted Athenian citizen lifestyle. Horsemen chose to build on their status as horse-breeders to justify their involvement in the citizen community or even to achieve enfranchisement within the *polis* as a specific group of citizens.

6 From Citizen *Habitus* to ‘Rich Man’s Sport’

As has often been noted,⁵² the notion of *hippotrophia* has a double association: it is related both to the agonistic sphere of local and Panhellenic games, that is to the world of the elite, and to the sphere of warfare, which concerns the whole citizen community for its defence. Agonistic *hippotrophia* has not been discussed in this chapter and, as shown by a comparison between the list of Olympic victors and that of the cities known for their cavalry, there was actually

48 Ibid.: 172 (in details: 52–70). Note that the expression *kaloi kai agathoi* is anachronistic; cf. Bourriot 1995; Bourriot 1996.

49 Detienne and Vernant 1974: 176–191.

50 Greenhalgh 1973: 111; 191–194 (catalogue). On Athenian images, see now Filser 2017: 398–565.

51 Lissarrague 1990: 191–231.

52 E.g. Chandezon 2014: 39; Étienne 2012.

no correlation between the socio-economic and political conditions required for training a team of horses for competitions and those required for maintaining cavalry units.⁵³ Depending on the local situation, *hippotrophia* could thus be related to competition or to warfare. Such a double association, both elitist and civic, for the same behaviour is not exceptional; it also applies for example to the nature of the symposium, which was both a particular feature of the so-called 'aristocratic lifestyle' and a collective activity pertaining to the practice of citizenship.⁵⁴ What then could be termed 'civic' in an undoubtedly expensive behaviour, which was certainly not accessible to everyone?

The main issue is perhaps to revise our conception of Archaic 'aristocracy' and its relation to the rise of the city-state. As I argued in *Le Prestige des élites* (2006), Archaic elites should not be understood through the prism of the usual notion of 'aristocracy', intended as opposed to the *polis*. Instead, the elites were in fact the first citizens. Ranks are a matter of degree among citizens, and elite has never been a legal status in itself. But we have to revise our conception of Archaic citizenship as well. Indeed, as a kind of performance too, Archaic citizenship was also a matter of involvement in behaviours accepted by other members of the citizen community. Although often associated with the elite, *hippotrophia* was also a citizen behaviour, among many others. All citizen behaviours allow the identification of specific groups of citizens, such as horsemen, hoplites, chariot- or plough-owners, etc. Contrarily to a legal or institutional approach, an anthropological approach to Archaic citizenship does not limit itself to defining a unique criterion of citizenship—the highest common denominator in common to all citizens. This is the 'ideal-type' methodology used by Aristotle. It rather acknowledges the existence of many different groups of citizens, with their distinctive characteristics, making up the Archaic *polis*.

In this perspective the notion of *habitus*, popularised by Pierre Bourdieu's sociology, can be meaningful. *Habitus* refers to the lifestyle, values, dispositions and expectations of social groups that are acquired through the activities and experiences of everyday life. In Bourdieu's own words, they are 'structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures'.⁵⁵ They are socially acquired schemata, sensibilities, dispositions and tastes that are repeatedly reproduced through individual behaviours, therefore reinforcing the strength of the *habitus* itself. By adopting a particular lifestyle, valued by the whole

53 Étienne 2005. On the costs of horse-breeding, see Hodkinson 2000: 312–317.

54 See the debate between Murray 1993: 207–213 and Schmitt-Pantel 1990. Węcowski 2014 offers a balanced view.

55 Bourdieu 1977: 72; Bourdieu 1990: 53.

citizen community, individuals behave in such a way as to be accepted as fellow citizens. Each city had its own citizen *habitus*, defining specific patterns of behaviours that allowed individuals to be identified as citizens. Beyond the mere identification of insiders, these lifestyles and behaviours may also have allowed participating outsiders to become more and more recognized as acceptable citizens-to-be. As already noted, in order to be accepted as a citizen, one had first to behave like a citizen. In this sense, *hippotrophia* was definitely a citizen *habitus* in several Archaic cities.

What happened afterwards in Classical cities, leading to a more exclusively elitist assessment of *hippotrophia*—as represented by Aristotle and his school—is probably linked to a major change in lifestyle within the main Classical *poleis*. This evolution is reflected in a passage of Thucydides (1.6), in which he opposes two different lifestyles: an old one, to *habrodiaiton*, made of luxury behaviours, and a new one, a more austere style of living which went along with the spread of athletics. Even though the historical trajectory was not that of a radical substitution of one lifestyle by the other, the former used to be common among Ionian people and in the old days of the Athenian *polis*, while the latter was first adopted by the Lacedaemonians and then, after the Persian wars, by the Athenians.⁵⁶ If *hippotrophia* can be somehow related to the former, it probably ended up having no place in the citizen *habitus* of many Classical *poleis*, modelled on the dominant examples of Athens and Sparta and on the practice of athletics. In this sense, the change from Archaic to Classical Greece is also, and perhaps primarily, to be investigated in terms of cultural change. Henceforth, *hippotrophia* became firmly and more exclusively tied to horse racing and Panhellenic competitions, to this ‘rich man’s sport’ in which Alcibiades excelled, and to the notion of these so-called ‘equestrian oligarchies’ of earlier times.

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⁵⁶ For a full discussion of the subject, see Duploux 2019.

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