

Article

Citizenship as Barrier and Opportunity for Ancient Greek and Modern Refugees

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Abstract: Some dominant traditions in Refugee Studies have stressed the barrier which state citizenship presents to the displaced. Some have condemned citizenship altogether as a mechanism and ideology for excluding the weak (G. Agamben). Others have seen citizenship as an acute problem for displaced people in conditions, like those of the modern world, where the habitable world is comprehensively settled by states capable of defending their territory and organised in accordance with interstate norms, which leaves very limited space for the foundation of new communities with their own meaningful citizenship (H. Arendt). This paper engages with these prominent approaches, but also with more recent arguments that, when handled and adapted in the right way, the practices and ideology of citizenship also present opportunities for the displaced to form their own meaningful communities, exercise collective agency, and secure rights. It is argued that the evidence from ancient Greece shows that ancient Greek citizenship, an early forerunner of modern models of citizenship, could be imaginatively harnessed and adapted by displaced people and groups, in order to form effective and sometimes innovative political communities in exile, even after opportunities to found new city-states from scratch became quite rare (after c. 500 BC). Some relevant displaced groups experimented with more open and cosmopolitan styles of civic interaction and ideology in their improvised quasi-civic communities. The different kinds of ancient Greek informal ‘polis-in-exile’ can bring a new perspective on the wider debates and initiatives concerning refugee political agency and organisation in the ‘provocations’ in this special issue.

Keywords: Refugees; exile; city-state; polis; Ancient Greece; citizenship; agency; cosmopolitanism

1. Introduction

Both ancient and modern refugees have suffered or enjoyed a very complex relationship with the ideal and practice of citizenship: citizenship has sometimes been a barrier to security or political participation, and sometimes an opportunity for exercising agency and rediscovering communal life. Since the European refugee crises of the mid-twentieth century, analysts of the refugee predicament have tended to concentrate on the problematic dimensions of citizenship for refugees. This trend in twentieth-century thinking is the subject of Section 2 below. Most influentially, H. Arendt stressed that their exclusion from national citizenship deprived twentieth-century refugees even of supposedly universal and unconditional human rights, which became meaningless without the protections and mutual obligations arising from citizenship in a settled state.¹ Arendt’s arguments were developed and intensified by G. Agamben (e.g., [Agamben 1995, 1998](#)), in his argument that refugees exist in a state of ‘bare life’, excluded from the ‘good life’ of citizenship in a way which reinforces the privileges, security,

¹ ([Arendt 1943](#)); compare ([Arendt \[1951\] 1968](#), pp. 290–302). For recent analysis see ([Douzinas 2007](#); [Stonebridge 2011](#)).

and self-understanding of citizen insiders at the expense of refugee outsiders.² In his view, citizenship is so intertwined with exclusion and oppression that refugees must lead the way in developing new, truly just forms of identity and interaction which transcend citizenship as a model altogether.

Recent work in Refugee Studies has underscored how treatment of refugees by settled citizens and states, even apparently benevolent granting of asylum or aid, often expresses and entrenches unequal power relations, including historical inequalities between different parts of the world.³ There has, however, also been an interesting recent reaction in Refugee Studies against the dominant paradigm. Relevant new contributions do not downplay the challenges and exploitation which refugees face, but they do stress refugees' capacity to respond to them. The historical work of [Gatrell \(2013\)](#), for example, has brought into focus the degree of political agency and participation which many modern groups of refugees have succeeded in exercising, from German Jews to Palestinians, especially through imaginative and determined harnessing of their own cultural history and traditions.

Some political theorists have even called into question the uncompromising suspicion of citizenship which has been championed by Agamben. In reaction against Agamben's picture of the modern refugee camp as a depoliticised space, which deprives refugees of political agency, [Sigona \(2015\)](#) has argued that refugee camps can in fact be centres of complex forms of political participation and agency: he coins the word 'campzenship' to describe the new types of cosmopolitan, flexible quasi-citizenship possible in refugee camps.⁴ For his part, [Grbac \(2013\)](#) even explicitly appeals to the ancient categories of *civitas* ('citizenship') and polis ('city-state') as metaphors to describe what he sees as the underestimated political complexity of some refugee camps.

These new theoretical models cohere with many of the practical examples in the other contributions to this collection, which discuss improvised political and communal activities on the part of contemporary refugees, who sometimes even adopt and adapt civic forms, even when subject to numerous severe pressures. The adaptations of citizenship norms and practices which are discussed in this collection include what Ligia Nobre and Anderson Kazuo Nakano ([Nobre and Nakano 2017](#)) call 'urban citizenship': the flexible adaptation of citizen activities among the varied residents of large cities, including refugees, in order to create new forms of democratic participation. They also include examples which fit very directly the new models of the refugee camp proposed by Sigona and Grbac: improvised shared institutions for regulating conflict and sustaining community life in Palestinian refugee camps. Alessandro [Petti \(2017\)](#) admits that the Dheisheh Refugee Camp in the West Bank is not a 'city', but insists that it has paradoxically still succeeded in becoming 'civic': the refugees live in a 'suspended condition', but have 'developed distinctive systems of civic management outside of state and municipal institutions', through which shared problems are resolved through 'informal processes and interpersonal negotiations'. These include 'constant internal debate' about shared problems, such as the building of houses and roads. Samar [Maqusi's \(2017\)](#) study of refugee camps in Jordan and Lebanon also brings out this collective concern with the shaping of space and architecture within the refugee camp, partly as a way of asserting collective authority over shared space. This includes adaptation of the standard spatial models for a refugee camp stipulated from above. Such local initiative within refugee camps can lead, in [Petti's \(2017\)](#) words, to a distinctively 'civic form of cohabitation' among refugees with multiple identities. As the studies here make clear, these adapted civic forms cannot, of course, compensate fully for the lack of the protections and rights of regular citizenship; but they can provide opportunities for internal political participation and even redress, as well as an effective basis for claiming external recognition from powerful settled states.

This development in Refugee Studies also coheres well with recent trends in the study of refugees in Ancient History: recent studies have shown that refugees and other mobile groups

² Compare ([Zetter 1991](#)) for the way bureaucratic labels and procedures can serve to disadvantage, and constrain the agency of, the stateless; compare ([Fassin 2010](#), esp. chp. 5).

³ See, for example, ([Bhambra 2015](#)); compare earlier ([Said 1984](#)).

⁴ Compare ([Redclift 2013](#); [Pasquetti 2015](#)).

in the ancient Mediterranean were tenacious and resourceful in finding ways to retain or reinvent communal links or political agency.⁵ To give some broad background to ancient Greek conditions, the focus of this contribution, the ancient Greek world was made up of a wide range of autonomous or semi-autonomous city-states (poleis).⁶ This complex network of poleis took shape in the Archaic period (c. 750–480 BC). In that period, the partly voluntary, partly forced movement of Greeks from the Aegean around the Mediterranean, where they participated in new city foundations in (for example) Sicily and South Italy, was an important factor in creating and consolidating the polis as the dominant political and cultural form. The Mediterranean-wide network of Greek poleis, each with their own traditions and constitutions, was sustained through the subsequent Classical (c. 480–323 BC), Hellenistic (c. 323–31 BC), and Roman Imperial (after 31 BC) periods. Both the Hellenistic and Roman periods saw the polis model expand further beyond its traditional reach, including further into Asia, Africa, and Western Europe.

The exiles and refugees whose lives and activities can be reconstructed from our evidence for ancient Greece were usually former citizens of a particular city-state (polis) who had been driven out through war or civil war. The existence of a wide range of competing poleis led to incessant warfare between them, at least until the Romans established a single controlling authority across the whole Greek world (and beyond) to regulate disputes. Ongoing wars led to frequent large-scale displacement. Inter-city disputes in turn sharpened the intrinsic tendencies of many Greek cities to fission through civil war, which very often led to exiling of the defeated faction and its supporters.⁷ To these man-made expulsions through war and civil war, it is necessary to add refugee crises resulting from natural disasters, which could create whole ‘wandering poleis’ of refugees.⁸

In this contribution, I explore how the ancient Greek evidence can provoke thought among, and offer complex practical precedents to, modern theorists and others interested in how those who have been displaced have through time developed their own political and cultural institutions and activities, seizing the opportunities of citizenship in order to overcome some of the barriers it presents. The ancient Greek exiles and refugees studied below (especially in Section 3) were particularly adept at harnessing citizen roles and institutions to assert power and agency. The ways in which they did so are very relevant to modern debates about the possible potential of ‘campzenship’ as a model for refugees, which can also point towards new forms of political life for non-displaced communities.

Some major differences between ancient and modern refugees should be borne in mind throughout the discussion. For example, non-Greek exiles and refugees are not at all prominent in our evidence for ancient Greek history. Refugees from beyond the narrow Greek world feature quite prominently in Greek myth and tragedy, whether as quite sympathetic victims of war (Euripides’ *Trojan Women*) or as more dangerous outsiders (such as the Danaids, from Egypt, in Aeschylus’ *Suppliant Women* and the other lost parts of its trilogy). However, their real-life counterparts, fleeing into the Greek cities from a different cultural or ethnic area, probably slipped relatively invisibly into the subordinate categories of metics (resident, registered foreigners) or even slaves in their host Greek cities, without leaving many marks on the historical record. The direct surviving evidence results from the efforts of Greek exiles and refugees who were sufficiently recognised and politicised to make a mark on interstate diplomacy or internal city politics. The groups discussed here, were, therefore, exiles and refugees who remained within a relatively homogeneous world, in which Greek ethnicity and language were dominant.

This meant that the exiles and refugees we can study in detail in ancient Greece did not have to confront a challenge faced by many modern refugees: that of gaining recognition and political agency

⁵ See, for example, (Garland 2014; Gray 2015; Isayev 2017b).

⁶ For detailed evidence and an overview: (Hansen and Nielsen 2004).

⁷ On expulsions of citizens of Greek poleis through war and civil war, see, for example, (Balogh 1943; Seibert 1979; Garland 2014; Gray 2015, chp. 5–6); on outsiders in the Greek cities more generally, see (Whitehead 1977; McKechnie 1989); on ancient literary representations of exiles, see (Gaertner 2007).

⁸ See (Mackil 2004).

as a new ethnic and linguistic group living alongside a much more numerous and well-established ethnic and linguistic group (or several), membership of which is usually closely bound up with citizenship and political participation in the host nation. Nonetheless, the divisions even within the ancient Greek-speaking world should not be underestimated: each city had its own separate citizenship, representing membership of a particular descent-group with ties to particular gods, myths, and traditions.⁹ Whether this can be compared to modern versions of ‘racialised citizenship’ is open for debate,¹⁰ but the sharp divisions of identity between different Greek communities created similar potential as in modern cases for tensions between insider citizens and outsider refugees.

2. Ancient Greek Citizenship and the Refugee in Agamben and Arendt

Since Arendt and Agamben have drawn the most explicit links between ancient Greek citizenship and refugee crises, ancient and modern, it is worth exploring their arguments in detail, and how recent research in Ancient History can help to question and modify them. Agamben has probably done most among influential modern theorists to call into question the attractions of ancient Greek citizenship as a model or inspiration for modern refugees. He sees the ancient Greek polis, and ancient Greek political theory, at the root of the modern dynamics of exclusion through citizenship. He draws particular attention to Aristotle’s idea, which is designed to capture wider Greek thinking, that, in order to qualify as a true polis, a community must be dedicated to the good life for all: it must enable all members to flourish through the kind of civic education which enables them to develop their aptitudes and virtues to the full. A polis may come into being for the sake of ‘bare life’ or mutual survival—mutual non-aggression and basic co-operation to secure the necessities of life—but it endures for the sake of the good life (Aristotle *Politics* 1252b27–30; 1280a7–1281a10). Agamben takes this position to have a sinister corollary, not spelled out by Aristotle: a good city has to be insulated against any sign of ‘bare life’, or basic humanity without the trappings of a privileged education and lifestyle.

According to Agamben, this category of ‘bare life’, or humanity stripped to its raw core, was represented in the ancient world by the outlaw, deprived of all the protections and shared bonds of communal life and condemned to roam in the interstices between cities. In the modern world, for Agamben, this category of ‘bare life’ is occupied by refugees confined to camps, whose practical and symbolic exclusion from mainstream society preserves the stability and privileges of the settled states which supervise the camps, usually through transnational organisations.¹¹ States and their citizens can define themselves against this ‘bare life’, confined to camps and stripped of dignity, identity, and civilisation, including any political identity or autonomy. The refugees in question suffer a degrading condition, but Agamben thinks that they can also help to develop a utopian future in which the status distinctions, exclusivity, and exploitation intrinsic to ancient and modern citizenship will be overcome.

Agamben’s particular reading of Aristotle is open to question. Even though Aristotle clearly does value the collective pursuit of the good life over mere co-existence and survival, a true polis for Aristotle in fact comes into being in the first place for the sake of mere ‘life’. It then builds upon, rather than merely excluding or denying, shared activities that are focussed on collective survival, such as military co-operation, agriculture, and trade.¹² However, Agamben’s broader picture of the exclusivity at the heart of the Greek polis is difficult to dispute: even though ancient historians have recently stressed that status categories, including barriers between citizens and outsiders, were often more permeable in practice than previously thought,¹³ Greek poleis tended to give centre stage and

⁹ See recently (Blok 2017).

¹⁰ For a careful argument for the relevance of the modern concept of race (and racial exclusivity) to ancient Athenian citizenship, see (Lape 2010).

¹¹ See (Agamben 1998); the ‘Introduction’ sets out the basic thesis, including the relevance of Aristotle.

¹² Compare (Finlayson 2010, esp. pp. 106–16), developing this and other objections based on Aristotle’s text.

¹³ See (Cohen 2000; Vlassopoulos 2007).

most political power to male citizens. This left at a disadvantage much of the resident population, including women, slaves, and immigrants, let alone transient refugees and other migrants.

Nonetheless, Agamben's uncompromising rejection of the whole tradition of Greek or Greek-inspired citizenship neglects the fact that Greek citizenship ideals and practices were double-edged: they could empower the incumbent male elite to organise themselves effectively to marginalise outsiders, but they could also, by the same token, enable those outsiders themselves to develop their own political and communal identities, activities, and institutions. For example, some scholars have stressed how those on the margins of polis life could find an alternative focus of co-operation, power and identity in the multiple voluntary associations of the Greek world, in which diverse people came together to worship a shared god. Such groups were often based on a shared identity, such as that of workers in the same trade or expatriates of the same origin living in a particular place. These associations could be composed of citizens of the host poleis or of immigrants; there was increasing mingling of the two groups within a single association after around the second century BC. Tellingly, these associations often imitated the institutions and the ideology of a polis in microcosm, including a decision-making assembly, officers who were appointed by the community, and collective practices, including cult and the honouring of benefactors. The resulting honours were often inscribed on stone, which makes the life of many of these associations accessible to modern historians.¹⁴ Most of the rest of this article (especially Section 3) will explore how the basic approach developed by these associations—the co-option of polis ideas, institutions, and practices by outsiders as a source of power, protection, and pride—was also harnessed by ancient Greek exiles and refugees, who often formed their own informal 'poleis-in-exile', retaining agency and dignity, even in the most difficult conditions.

For her part, H. Arendt, Agamben's inspiration on refugee questions, was much more ambivalent about the Greek polis, recognising its double-edged, simultaneously emancipatory and exclusive character. Especially in *The Human Condition* (Arendt 1958), Arendt even sees the participatory Greek polis of active citizens as a model for the good society, a crucial corrective to the deficits of modernity: Greek citizens succeeded in engaging in true politics, by coming together in agora and assembly to act and deliberate in common and develop a shared understanding of the world, unconstrained by pre-conceived, fixed ideas or socio-economic interests. On the other hand, Arendt was also very sensitive to the exclusivity and injustices of the Greek polis world. Prefiguring Agamben, she argues in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (see Arendt [1951] 1968), that complex states, such as the Greek polis or modern nation-states, tend by their very nature to find it difficult to accommodate differences between individuals within the population. Such differences and marks of individuality are hallmarks of the private sphere, but they cannot easily be accommodated in the public sphere of equal citizens:

The reason why highly developed political communities, such as the ancient city-states or modern nation-states, so often insist on ethnic homogeneity is that they hope to eliminate as far as possible those natural and always present differences and differentiations which by themselves arouse dumb hatred, mistrust, and discrimination because they indicate all too clearly those spheres where men cannot act and change at will, i.e., the limitations of the human artifice. The "alien" is a frightening symbol of the fact of difference as such, of individuality as such, and indicates those realms in which man cannot change and cannot act and in which, therefore, he has a distinct tendency to destroy. (Arendt [1951] 1968, p. 301)

Like Agamben, Arendt thus sees the 'alien' as posing an existential threat to citizen-states, which can be partly defused through exclusion.

In Arendt's picture, the intrinsic exclusivity of citizen-states did not have such devastating consequences in the ancient Greek Mediterranean as in the modern world. According to her, much of even the accessible world was still open, unclaimed territory at the time of the ancient Greeks: it was

¹⁴ For detailed discussions of such voluntary associations, and their crucial role for outsiders, see, for example, (Arnaoutoglou 2003, 2011; Gabrielsen 2007; Ismard 2010).

possible for the excluded to migrate and establish a new community elsewhere, in which they could exercise the natural human propensity, recognised by Aristotle, to life in common in a polis, governed by speech and reason. They did so by forming so-called ‘colonies’ or ‘homes-from-home’ (*apoikiai*) in different parts of the Mediterranean.

However, in Arendt’s view, things already began to change at the time of the Roman Empire. The Romans came to conceptualise their whole empire, spanning the Mediterranean and beyond, as almost an extension of the city of Rome itself, ‘as though the whole world were nothing but Roman hinterland’. Arendt sees this as a result of conceptual differences between the Greeks and the Romans. Whereas the Greeks were prepared to entertain the idea of starting afresh on new territory, provided that they could build meaningful communal life there, the Romans saw themselves as inextricably tied to the soil of Rome:

unlike the Greeks, they [the Romans] could not say in times of emergency or overpopulation, “Go and found a new city, for wherever you are you will always be a polis.” Not the Greeks, but the Romans, were really rooted in the soil, and the word *patria* derives its full meaning from Roman history. The foundation of a new body politic, to the Greeks an almost commonplace experience, became to the Romans the central, decisive, unrepeatable beginning of their whole history, a unique event (Arendt [1961] 2006, pp. 120–21)

Like all such broad generalisations, Arendt’s thinking here, as she traces the origins of notions of authority and tradition in her essay ‘What is Authority?’, can be questioned: it would be equally, or more, plausible to present the Greeks as often more fixated on particular territory occupied by a particular descent-group, and the Romans as more openly welcoming of wandering and the kind of mixed city population which results. Moreover, groups of Roman soldiers and citizens frequently established communities or *coloniae* around the Mediterranean, which were themselves partly microcosms of Rome itself.¹⁵

Nonetheless, there is a grain of truth in Arendt’s analysis. There had never been quite so much free, unoccupied territory as Arendt’s presentation implies: Archaic Greek wandering founders of new cities more often had to defeat or collaborate with a pre-settled non-Greek population. However, Arendt’s narrative captures well the fact that it became much more difficult for wandering refugees to establish their own new cities *ab initio* once the Mediterranean and surrounding regions became more intensively settled by states militarily strong enough to deter new foundations on their territory by wandering refugees. The obstacles to new foundations by wandering Greeks on the model of the *apoikia* became even more unassailable once the Mediterranean and its hinterland became quite uniformly subject to overarching imperial control, first by the different Hellenistic kingdoms and eventually by the lone Roman hegemon.

For Arendt, Roman developments set European civilisation on a decisive path, which she spells out in her late (posthumously published) essay ‘Introduction into Politics’:

Whatever Rome’s limitations in this respect, there is no doubt that the concept of foreign policy—of politics in foreign relations—and consequently of the idea of a political order beyond the borders of one’s own nation or city is solely of Roman origin. The Roman politicization of the space between peoples marks the beginning of the Western world—indeed, it first created the Western world as world. (Arendt 2005, pp. 189–90)

Although she does not spell out the development in the same work, Arendt probably saw this Roman legacy as one of the factors which led, in the very long term, to twentieth-century refugee

¹⁵ On mobility as key to Roman identity, and the various consequences summarised here, see, for example, (Purcell 1990; Dench 2005; Isayev 2017a).

crises. In her much earlier work, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, Arendt was clear that a large part of the problem lay in the fact that there was now no available territory in which the displaced could establish new communities. This deprived them of the opportunity to build the self-governing institutions necessary to make their 'human rights' practically meaningful, because they would create a space in which they could assert and exercise their 'right to have rights':

We became aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, only when millions of people emerged who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation . . . The trouble is that this calamity arose not from any lack of civilization, backwardness, or mere tyranny, but, on the contrary, that it could not be repaired, because there was no longer any 'uncivilized' spot on earth, because whether we like it or not we have really started to live in One World. Only with a completely organised humanity could the loss of home and political status become identical with expulsion from humanity altogether. (Arendt [1951] 1968, pp. 296–97)

For Arendt, the lack of available space for new autonomous settlements leaves refugees reduced to their bare humanity, unable to adopt a meaningful political identity or exercise rights, unless they can gain acceptance in some pre-established community. This passage immediately provokes the objection that there had for a long time been no truly vacant ('uncivilised') territory for refugees to settle; earlier foundations had usually involved clashes with existing inhabitants. Nevertheless, the practical obstacles to twentieth-century refugees establishing their own independent states are clear.

Arendt's reflections in *The Origins of Totalitarianism* recall the argument which she originally developed at the height of the refugee crisis in 1943. She argued then that Jewish refugees in the USA were resorting, or having to resort, to one of two unsatisfactory identities: on the one hand, that of the 'parvenu', seeking to integrate passively into the host American society; or, on the other, that of the 'pariah', insisting on a separate Jewish identity. In the absence of political structures corresponding to such a separate Jewish identity, this latter approach was tantamount, in Arendt's view, to falling back on a claim to recognition on the basis of mere humanity. Such a reliance would always be problematic because human rights can never be more than formal or theoretical for those without citizen membership of a political community capable of upholding them. Arendt's own preference was that refugees should become an 'avant-garde' of their societies, crafting new ways of approaching life in common which would transcend the failed nation-state model, without lurching to the other extreme of purely formal cosmopolitanism.¹⁶

Arendt's diagnosis was partly a reaction to the particular situation of the 1940s, but subsequent studies have shown a similar dynamic in other modern refugee crises: the nature of modern citizenship often makes it difficult for refugees to find some middle way between, first, assimilation to a host society and, second, insistence on their lost or threatened ethnic-religious identity without the protection of corresponding political institutions with international recognition, which leaves refugees reliant on humanitarian support. Malkki (1995a, compare (Malkki 1995b)), for example, considers broadly similar contrasting options to be available to later twentieth-century Hutu refugees from Burundi who sought refuge in Tanzania: some Hutu refugees adopted mobile, fluid identities in the cities of Tanzania, where they had often had to give great weight to the dictates of instrumental economic rationality; but others settled in refugee camps, where they preserved and developed familiar Hutu rituals and customs which laid stress on purity.

Close empirical analysis of the evidence for ancient Greek exiles and refugees can help to allay some of the pessimism of Arendt, as well as the deeper pessimism of Agamben, about Greek-inspired citizenship as an inspiration for modern refugees. As noted in the introduction and earlier in this

¹⁶ (Arendt 1943, especially the closing parts).

section, the explosion in Greek city foundations around the Mediterranean in the period c. 750–500 BC, which included foundations by groups of refugees,¹⁷ was not so easily sustained after c. 500 BC. It became ever more difficult, in an increasingly densely settled Mediterranean of states with the military capacity to defend their territory from outsiders, for mobile groups to find unclaimed (or conquerable) economically sustainable territory on which to found a new independent city. As also noted above, the conquests of Alexander the Great in the second half of the fourth century BC launched a new wave of Greek city foundations, especially in Asia Minor, the Levant, and North Africa, but those were almost always under the supervision of the new large kingdoms, with their complex armies and administrative systems. This period after c. 500 BC when it was no longer straightforward for displaced groups to make spontaneous city foundations was also, not coincidentally, a period of intensification in interstate rules and structures, developed among densely packed states:¹⁸ it was not, *contra* Arendt, the Romans who first established complex rules and institutions binding different states and created genuine interstate politics, even if the Roman imperial peace raised the integration of the Mediterranean to a new level.

These changes after c. 500 BC did not, however, curtail forever the capacity of the displaced to co-opt the ideal of citizenship in order to develop their own exile communities, with meaningful agency. In other words, this change did not force new refugees to choose between full assimilation in existing settled communities or a depoliticised identity as human beings in need. On the contrary, as explored in the rest of this contribution, Greek exiles and refugees found imaginative and effective ways to act and interact as ‘citizens-in-exile’ *even* when they were hosted on the territory, or sometimes in the urban centre, of a pre-existing polis. They developed improvised, flexible versions of civic institutions and activities, partly inspired by the voluntary associations introduced above, which they could sustain even while participating in their host community.

That is to say, ancient Greek civic models and institutions were not as monolithic and tied to territorial possession as Arendt, let alone Agamben, suggests: even when the displaced could not found their own new polis, and the interstate sphere was no political or institutional vacuum, they could still reproduce, adapt, and reinvent the polis template to suit their own needs. This made it possible for them to engage in political participation internally, resolving internal disputes and forging collective policy. Equally importantly, it enabled them to participate meaningfully in interstate diplomatic and religious structures; this gave them a political voice with which to claim powerful settled states’ recognition and protection from below, rather than relying solely on benevolence from above. As in similar modern cases, these tendencies could not secure as many protections and entitlements as would be guaranteed by regular citizenship in a settled polis. However, they went some way in that direction, as well as opening up opportunities for new forms of political participation and agency in defence of entitlements. Contrary to what Arendt suggests, therefore, the usefulness of Greek citizen ideals and practices for the displaced was not exhausted once they could no longer relatively straightforwardly slip outside established state and interstate structures and found a new city; Greek citizenship also offered a rich resource to displaced Greeks in a much more comparable situation to many of the contemporary refugees who feature in this collection, with no option but to reside in pre-established states or camps, under the supervision of the more powerful and subject to established interstate rules and structures. In other words, ancient Greek citizenship has something to offer in refining models of ‘campzanship’ (compare Introduction).

¹⁷ Consider Thucydides 6.5.2 on the participation of a group of exiles driven out in civil war from the city of Syracuse, called the Myletidai, in founding another Sicilian city, Himera. Compare Herodotus 1.165–8, on the citizens of Phocaia in Western Turkey who fled their home city to escape the Persian commander Harpagos, after which some of them founded a short-lived new city in Corsica, together with some earlier Phocaian arrivals who had founded an earlier settlement there; after the failure of that first new settlement in war, some of the remaining refugees founded a new settlement at Hyele/Elea in South Italy.

¹⁸ See, for example, (Low 2007; Mackil 2013).

3. Citizenship and ‘Poleis-in-Exile’ in the Classical Greek and Hellenistic Worlds

The institutions of a Greek polis could be endlessly adapted and revised in order to suit different communities. Settled poleis themselves could experiment with improvised, scaled-down versions of their institutions: for example, when the Athenians in the fourth century BC established a controversial cleruchy (a settler community of Athenian citizens with continuing strong links to Athens itself)¹⁹ on the previously independent island of Samos, this new community was endowed with a Council of 250 members, a literal halving in size and structure of the central Athenian Council of 500.²⁰ Even within a settled polis local sub-divisions (for example, Athenian demes or ‘villages’) were often structured as a microcosm of the polis as a whole.²¹

In a phenomenon which is crucial for the argument here, communities of displaced citizens could craft their own adaptations of civic institutions to form ‘poleis-in-exile’, without any direction from a settled polis—and often even as a challenge to a settled regime at home. I have analysed this phenomenon, also identified by earlier scholars,²² in detail elsewhere.²³ I try to offer here a summary of some of the most interesting cases, more accessible to non-specialists.

The densely packed Greek state system meant that exiles often had to form their ‘poleis-in-exile’ in the interstices between states, especially border regions or other marginal territory which could not easily be controlled by settled poleis. Their adaptation to these unpromising environments provides a striking case of Isayev’s (2017b) ‘compelled agency’ by displaced people. Perhaps most famously, when a Spartan-backed oligarchy took power in Athens after Athenian defeat in the Peloponnesian War (404–3), some of the resulting Athenian exiles established a stronghold at Phyle, on the margins of Athenian territory, from which they fought against the incumbent regime, with quite rapid success.²⁴ Their internal political organisation is not very well recorded. However, after the re-establishment of democracy, the Athenians commemorated the Phyle-exiles as part of a broader Athenian ‘*demos-in-exile*’ which had preserved the Athenian democratic spirit, and also some of its structures, while the city itself was in oligarchic hands.²⁵ As part of this broader movement, the larger community of Athenian democratic exiles in the Athenian port of the Piraeus probably held assemblies and raised funds collectively.²⁶

Like the democratic Athenians at Phyle, exiles from other cities, oligarchic as well as democratic, are known to have exploited strongholds in marginal locations to attack a hostile incumbent regime, through raiding²⁷ or even siege.²⁸ Such groups could also demonstrate disciplined, complex organisation, on a civic model: oligarchic exiles from the city of Phlius in the north-eastern Peloponnese organised themselves, with Spartan help, into well-drilled communal dining groups, on the model of Spartan *syssitia* (common messes), which were crucial to the organisation of the settled Spartan polis. This impressed the Spartans to such an extent that they offered further aid.²⁹ In another example of oligarchic exile organisation on the margins, a band of mobilised oligarchic exiles from the island of Siphnos, roving the Aegean in the early fourth century, is known to have appointed formal magistrates-in-exile to lead a military attempt to recapture their home city.³⁰

¹⁹ Compare (Moreno 2007, p. 94).

²⁰ See (Hallos and Habicht 1995).

²¹ Compare (Osborne 1990).

²² (Seibert 1979, pp. 312–14; Gehrke 1985, pp. 224–29).

²³ (Gray 2015, chp. 6, with many further details, including on earlier scholarship).

²⁴ Xenophon *Hellenica* 2.4.2–7.

²⁵ E.g., Rhodes and Osborne 2003 = Rhodes–Osborne, *GHI* 4; Plato *Apology* 20e8–21a2; Lysias 25 and 31, esp. 31.9; Demosthenes 20.48; Aeschines 3.181, 187, 208. Cf. (Forsdyke 2005, pp. 262–63).

²⁷ Thucydides 4.75.1 (pro-Spartan Samian exiles harrying their island polis from a stronghold on the mainland, Anaia); Diodorus 13.65.4 (anti-Spartan Chian exiles harrying the incumbent regime in their island polis, also from a stronghold on the mainland, Atarneus).

²⁸ Xenophon *Hellenica* 5.3.16–17.

²⁹ Xenophon *Hellenica* 5.3.17.

³⁰ Isocrates 19.38.

Other ‘poleis-in-exile’ on the margins are best attested for us from their recorded diplomatic interactions with favourable settled poleis, which themselves must have played a crucial role in securing the exile community’s stability and wider recognition. For example, when the Athenians set up a new naval confederacy of poleis for mutual aid, concentrated around the Aegean islands and coastline, in 378/7 BC, they set up an inscription recording its terms and institutions, partly in order to stress that this was a less imperialistic venture than the fifth-century Delian League had been. The monument included a comprehensive list of the members of the confederacy. Among them were ‘the Zacynthians on the Nellos’, clearly a pro-Athenian dissident group which had broken away from the main island polis of Zacynthos (allied with the rival Spartans at this point) and established a competing stronghold in a place called the Nellos.³¹ Their participation in the confederacy presupposes sophisticated political agency and organisation, though we have no further information about their precise structure. The Athenian reference to them as still ‘Zacynthians’ represents a rejection, presumably shared with the exiles, of any suggestion that they had lost their legitimate Zacynthian citizenship through their exile.

It was often the case that the tensions between settled city-states opened up opportunities for displaced groups to establish poleis-in-exile on territory which neither side could conclusively claim. A smaller-scale rivalry than that between Athens and Sparta was that between the neighbouring middling poleis of Ephesos and Priene on the west coast of modern Turkey and Samos on the nearby Aegean island. There lay at the intersection between their territories on the Aegean coast³² a contested mountainous region known as ‘the Karion’, the subject of an interstate arbitration process between Priene and Samos in the second century BC. As the record of that arbitration process inscribed at Priene shows, it was in this interstitial location that, at the beginning of the third century BC, some Prienian exiles established a stronghold.³³ These Prienian exiles were dissidents hostile to an incumbent regime which was led by a certain Hieron, identified by his opponents as a tyrant. They are known to have constituted themselves as a polis-in-exile: they sent copies of their collective decisions (decrees), probably carried by envoys from their exile community, to the polis of Rhodes.³⁴ It was quite probably the same group of Prienian exiles who sent an embassy to the neighbouring polis of Ephesos around this time, which successfully secured help. The picture is, however, complicated by the fact that this latter development is recorded in a decree of Ephesos, which identifies these Prienian exiles as having successfully fought to secure ‘the Charax’ or ‘the Fort’ for the benefit of the Ephesians.³⁵ This does not, however, exclude the possibility that this is the same group; the Ephesians could even have been using their own distinctive name for what was otherwise known as ‘the Karion’, which would be a further indication that it was part of a contested landscape, claimed by different poleis, which by consequence offered a refuge for exiles. The Ephesians took pains to identify these exiles as still legitimate citizens, rather than exiles lacking in civic identity and entitlements: they were the ‘citizens (*politai*) from Priene in the Charax’.

Another way in which ‘poleis-in-exile’ and other displaced groups could participate in Greek interstate relations, gaining recognition and credibility, was to make themselves visible at the great shared centres of Greek religious life, especially the sanctuaries and athletic festivals at Delphi and Olympia, which were themselves noted as places of refuge and asylum. Settled poleis and other states commonly used these sanctuaries and their activities as an opportunity to advertise their achievements, piety, and interests and to communicate with other states. Certain exile groups are known to have imitated these characteristic activities of settled states, successfully reintegrating themselves into

³¹ (Rhodes and Osborne 2003 = Rhodes–Osborne, GHI 22, ll. 131–34; Seibert 1979, p. 117; Gehrke 1985, p. 198).

³² On the importance of the Aegean coast, especially the mainland territories of the neighbouring island poleis (*peraiai*), as marginal territory hospitable to exiles, compare (Constantakopoulou 2007, pp. 250–51).

³³ (Magnetto 2008, pp. 34–45 (new edition of I.Priene 37, a record of the second-century Rhodian arbitration between the Samians and Prienians concerning the Karion), ll. 87–105, with analysis on pp. 113–18).

³⁴ (Magnetto 2008, pp. 34–45, ll. 95–98, 101–2).

³⁵ I.Ephesos 2001, ll. 3–5.

the interstate community, despite their otherwise marginal and interstitial position. Their activities included the establishment of monuments at Delphi and Olympia. The preserved inscriptions from those monuments offer rare direct glimpses into the political rhetoric and self-presentation of Greek exile groups.

In the fifth century BC, certain residents of Messenia, the neighbouring region to Sparta which had long been under direct Spartan rule, were forced into exile after attempting to revolt against Sparta, presenting themselves as the legitimate heirs of the ancient Messenians enslaved by the Spartans centuries earlier. The Athenians helped these exiles to establish a stronghold in the polis of Naupaktos, a position on the Gulf of Corinth strategically crucial in the fifth-century rivalry between Athenian and Spartan power. During the Peloponnesian War these Messenians at Naupaktos set up victory monuments, together with their Naupaktian hosts, at both Olympia and Delphi, with accompanying inscriptions, to celebrate successes over the Spartans and their allies. The Olympia monument included the famous ‘Nike of Paionios’, preserved in fragments which have been reconstructed by modern archaeologists.³⁶ The exiles styled themselves as ‘the Messenians’, in the same style as incumbent citizens of a home polis would do (e.g., ‘the Athenians’), a strong and self-confident claim to legitimacy as citizens of a (not yet physically existing) polis.

Two centuries later (c. 220–217 BC), a similar intervention was made by a group of exiles from Achaia, a region in the north of the Peloponnese which was the traditional centre of a confederacy, the Achaian League,³⁷ quickly coming to dominate the whole Peloponnese. Like most of the other groups which have been mentioned so far, these exiles had been forced into marginal and contested territory: the region of Skiros or Skiritis in the disputed borderlands between Sparta and the region of Arcadia (now part of the Achaian League). Their home state, the federal Achaian League, was in these years at war with the rival powerful confederacy from north of the Gulf of Corinth, the Aetolian League. These Achaian dissidents set up a monument at Delphi, a centre of Aetolian power, to honour their Aetolian benefactor, called Simos:

[Κλεό]πατρος καὶ οἱ φυγάδες Σῖμον [Σίμ?]ου
Αἰτωλὸν [ἐσ]τεφάνωσαν ἐν Δελφοῖς εἰκόνι
χαλκῇ ὅτι τὸν [Σ]κίρον λαβὼν ἀπέδωκε
Κλεοπάτρῳ καὶ τοῖς φυγάσι [τ]οῖς ἐξ Ἀχαιῶν.

Kleopatros and the exiles honoured Simos, son of
Simos, an Aetolian, with a bronze statue because,
having captured Skiros, he gave it back to Kleopatros
and the exiles from Achaia (FD III 4.239).

Though it is clear that these exiles were using the setting and interstate prominence of Delphi to gain recognition for their political identity, legitimacy, or even autonomy, their nature as a political group is much more complex and hybrid than in the other examples which I have discussed, where polis identity seems axiomatic. These exiles identified with a whole region, Achaia, rather than a single polis. They also gave special prominence in their self-presentation here to a single leader, Kleopatros, probably a rebel Achaian leader who had defected to the Aetolians’ cause with some followers. This suggests that they were conscious of the model of a royal or mercenary army with a single unquestioned leader, as opposed to the civic model of shared command and collective sovereignty. It is also interesting that they explicitly acknowledged their dissident and marginal status: they did not style themselves as ‘the Achaians in Skiros’ (compare ‘the Zacynthians in the Nellos’ above), but rather as ‘the exiles from Achaia’.

This does not, however, indicate that they were abstaining from staking a claim to represent the true interests of the Achaian League. It is striking that they claimed that Simos ‘restored’ to them (ἀπέδωκε) the region of Skiris. Since this is the formal diplomatic language of restitution of rightful territory,³⁸ these exiles were claiming to be legitimate recipients of disputed territory which, to their

³⁶ Olympia: *IoO* 259; Meiggs-Lewis *GHI* 74; Delphi: *FD* III 4.1; *SEG* 32.550. On these monuments and their contexts: (Luraghi 2008, esp. pp. 191–94). For a guide to epigraphic abbreviations such as those in this note, see the list published in the *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*.

³⁷ On Greek federal states, see recently (Mackil 2013).

³⁸ Compare [Demosthenes] 7.6, cf. 28, 35.

minds, rightfully belonged to the enlarged Achaian League (by now including Arcadia), of which they were legitimate representatives. Since the Achaian League by now had only one principal magistrate (*strategos*),³⁹ they could even have intended Kleopatros to be seen as a rival to the incumbent Achaian *strategos*: as the truly legitimate defender of Achaian interests. It is worth pointing out that the Achaian League was itself based on continuing ideals and practices of citizenship: individual member cities retained their traditional citizenships, but the model of citizenship was also co-opted and adapted at the larger federal level itself. This unusual exile group was thus itself, like the others discussed here, co-opting for its own ends a political identity and model that was based on citizenship—in this case, an already experimental and adapted form of citizenship.

There were, therefore, multiple ways in which Classical and Hellenistic refugees roughly corresponding to Arendt's first group—those who survived on the margins, insisting on the identity that was denied to them by others through exile—could adapt citizen practices and citizen identity to exercise agency and gain recognition. Interestingly, it was equally true for Classical and Hellenistic refugees approximately corresponding to Arendt's second group—those who found refuge in a host society in an urban context, assimilating to some degree to the host culture⁴⁰—that citizenship offered an effective model for improvised adaptation. Indeed, displaced groups settled in the urban centres of host cities could exploit citizen models to preserve or develop a distinctive identity, as a basis for significant agency, rather than simply disappearing into the host environment. Such cases provide our best evidence for the complex internal organisation of 'poleis-in-exile'.

In most known cases, 'poleis-in-exile' in host cities involved fellow exiles and refugees from a single polis congregating in an improvised quasi-civic community in the new city centre, usually without the level of direct military mobilisation shown by the marginalised groups I discussed above, but generally with a similar level of political engagement. In 348 BC, Philip II of Macedon, the father of Alexander the Great, who was in the process of entrenching Macedonian power across northern Greece, destroyed the uncooperative city of Olynthos, the centre of a hostile confederacy, the Chalcidian League. The resulting Olynthian or 'Chalcidian' refugees were dispersed around the Aegean and beyond, but could still congregate in groups. One such group found refuge at Myrina on the north-eastern Aegean island of Lemnos, which at the time hosted an Athenian settler community (cleruchy) like the one on Samos (compare above). This exile community was sufficiently organised and recognised to receive a grant of land from the Athenian settler community, and to pass a decree in honour of a benefactor from that community:

[.....] ἐπειδὴ καὶ ὁ δῆ[μος] ὁ Ἀθ[ην]αίων ὁ
ἐν Μυρίνῃ οἰκῶν ἔ[δ]ωκεν χωρίον τοῖς Χαλκιδεῦσιν,
στήσαι τὴν στήλην τὴν περὶ τοῦ ἐπιμελητοῦ καὶ
ἀνεπιτεῖν τὸν κήρυκα Διονυσίων τῷ ἀγῶνι τραγωιδῶν
ὅτι Χαλκιδεῖς οἱ ἐν Μυρίνῃ οἰκοῦντες στεφανοῦσι τῷδε
τῷ στεφάνῳ τὸν ἐπιμελητὴν Θεόφιλον Μελίτωνος
Ἀλωπεκῆθεν ἀνδραγαθίας ἕνεκα κ[α]ὶ δικαιοσύνης τῆς
εἰς τοὺς Χαλκιδεῖς τοὺς ἐν Μυρίνῃ οἰκοῦντας.

Since the *demos* of the Athenians living in Myrina gave a plot of land to the Chalcidians, set up the inscription concerning the *epimeletes* [magistrate of the Athenian cleruchy] and let the herald announce at the contest for tragedies at the Dionysia that the Chalcidians living in Myrina crown with this garland the *epimeletes* Theophilos, son of Meliton, of Alopeke, on account of his virtue and justice towards the Chalcidians living in Myrina. (IG XII 8 4)

It was a characteristic practice of ancient Greek settled states, including confederacies as well as poleis above all, to pass honorary decrees for benefactors like this one, as a way of expressing shared ethical values and publicising incentives for civic contributions. The 'Chalcidians living in Myrina' thus successfully imitated one of the principal activities and forms of expression associated with ancient Greek citizenship, in order to assert political agency. It is interesting that, like the Achaian exiles which I discussed above, they tapped into a specifically federal (Chalcidian) identity, which was

³⁹ Polybius 2.43.2.

⁴⁰ I have discussed in (Gray 2017) ancient debates about asylum and refuge and their modern resonance, citing there much earlier bibliography on this question; see earlier especially (Lonis 1993).

already an improvised adaptation of the civic model on a new scale and for new purposes. They also had close at hand another model of improvised, adaptable, and in this case mobile, citizenship: as noted above, the institutions and ethos of an Athenian cleruchy (like the one at Myrina) represented an experimental reproduction and adaptation of traditional civic institutions to suit new conditions.

A polis which had earlier suffered a similar fate to Olynthos was the city of Plataea in Boeotia in Central Greece, which was destroyed by the Spartans and Thebans after a long siege in 427 BC, near the beginning of the Peloponnesian War. The Plataeans had long been close allies of the Athenians. After their exile, the Athenians took the unusual step of extending Athenian citizenship to all the Plataeans who found refuge with them in Athens.⁴¹ This must have strongly encouraged the Plataean community at Athens to assimilate to Athenian culture. Nonetheless, the Plataeans at Athens also maintained an identity and consciousness apart. When in the early fourth century a man called Pancleon was suspected of making an illegitimate claim to Athenian citizenship, his first line of defence was to claim to be one of the enfranchised Plataeans: he must have calculated on the jury's familiarity with apparent outsiders who turned out to be genuine Athenians by virtue of being Plataean. The community of Plataeans at Athens was, however, still sufficiently cohesive and organised to offer checks on such claims to membership.

The speaker of Lysias' speech 23, prosecuting Pancleon as an illegitimate citizen, claims to have undermined his credentials by checking with the Plataean community at Athens itself: first with a well-known Plataean elder, then with other Plataeans, and finally with the rest of the Plataean community, which, he was told, gathered on the last day of every month in the Athenian cheese market. One of the Plataeans who was present in the cheese market did, however, claim to have lost a runaway slave matching Pancleon's name and description.⁴² Respectable Plataeans were thus expected to gather regularly as a collective body, with a distinctive Plataean identity and sense of Plataean civic community which they could combine with their new role as Athenian citizens.

It is impossible to tell exactly what happened at the monthly cheese-market meetings of Plataean exiles in addition to socialising, but it is suggestive that many settled poleis, like Athens itself, had an obligatory monthly meeting of the civic assembly (*kyria ekklesia*), at which the most important decisions were taken. A more unambiguously political assembly of exiles who had found refuge in a host polis comes from the third century BC: the citizens of Megalopolis in the Peloponnese, expelled from their polis by their traditional enemies, the Spartans, in 223 BC, held an assembly in their host city of Messene to reject Spartan peace overtures, a decision which was much praised by the second-century BC Megalopolitan historian Polybius.⁴³ This was a much more improvised assembly, not regularised like those of the Chalcidians and Plataeans, but it did represent the constitution of a more fleeting 'polis-in-exile' at the heart of a host polis.

The Chalcidians in Myrina, the Plataeans in Athens and the Megalopolitans in Messene formed their exile communities after the destruction of their home cities. It was, however, also possible for an exiled faction from a still existing city based in a host city's urban centre to take the more controversial step of forming an obviously temporary and provisional 'polis-in-exile' to deny the legitimacy of the incumbent regime at home. Legal speeches and historical accounts portray exiled factions with their base in Athens in the fourth century BC behaving in this way. Plutarch, a much later source, reports the community of exiles from Thebes resulting from the Spartan seizure of their city in 382 BC imitating and co-opting democratic institutions during their stay in Athens: they listened to speeches by their leading figure, Pelopidas, in an improvised assembly and took formal decisions by vote, as a settled polis would do.⁴⁴ Interestingly, these exiles succeeded in establishing a long-lasting democracy in

⁴¹ See especially Thucydides 3.24; [Demosthenes] 59.104–106.

⁴² Lysias 23.6–8; compare (Garland 2014, p. 184).

⁴³ Polybius 2.61.4–12.

⁴⁴ Plutarch *Pelopidas* 7.1–8.1. Note the reference to an assembly (*plethos*) and to formal, polis-like decisions (τὰ δεδογμένα; ἔδοξε τοῖς φυγάσι).

Thebes after their return home,⁴⁵ which was partly inspired by their exile experiences. In a source closer to the time, Aeschines reports in a speech of 343 BC that later exiles from Thebes' region of Boeotia held a meeting to elect advocates to speak on his behalf.⁴⁶ This is another interesting case, like those of the Chalcidians and Achaians, of an exile group forming improvised institutions based on a federal, rather than single-polis, identity. Perhaps federal identities and improvised federal institutions provided a source of unity for quite disparate refugees from the same region, among whom no single polis had enough representatives to construct a more particularist 'polis-in-exile'.

Classical and Hellenistic exiles' adaptations of civic institutions and community could also be more original than the imitation of polis or federal features by a group of fellow exiles from one polis or region who had found refuge together somewhere. Fellow exiles from the same place could also maintain connections at a distance, forming something that was closer to a 'diaspora polis' than a local 'polis-in-exile'. The early fourth-century oligarchic exiles from Siphnos mentioned above maintained lines of communication across different parts of the Aegean.⁴⁷ Similarly, the wide diaspora of Samian exiles dispersed around the Mediterranean by the Athenian capture of their island in 365 BC, the prelude to the establishment of the Athenian cleruchy (compare above), maintained a cohesive identity as a Samian *demos*, which they put back into practice on their return after 322 BC. The returned Samians collectively commemorated the services of benefactors in different parts of the Mediterranean to the '*demos* when it was in exile'.⁴⁸

Perhaps an even bolder step, which chimes with some of the modern case-studies discussed elsewhere in this collection, was to adapt civic identity and institutions in a more cosmopolitan way: to imagine and construct quasi-civic communities which cut across traditional divisions of origin and status.⁴⁹ The original cosmopolitan thinkers of fourth-century Athens, the early Cynics and Stoics, included several displaced philosophers. These included Diogenes the Cynic, exiled from his home polis of Sinope on the south coast of the Black Sea for some offence, perhaps corrupting the city coinage for which he was responsible,⁵⁰ and his fellow Cynic Crates, a refugee from the destruction of his home city of Thebes by Alexander the Great in 335 BC.⁵¹ These outsider philosophers devised the ideal of a literal 'cosmopolis' or world city, the natural home of all wise and virtuous men, who recognise that territorial and status distinctions are arbitrary and contrary to nature. To this way of thinking, no-one can become an exile merely through physical expulsion; true 'citizenship' depends on recognising nature's requirements of justice and virtue, and recognising one's affinity (across space and time) with like-minded people.⁵² As well as developing these intellectual consolations for outsider status, these philosophers formed in practice a mixed, vibrant community of debate and critique in fourth-century Athens,⁵³ which gave birth to the long-lasting Cynic and Stoic schools.

Displaced and migrant Greeks who were not philosophers also experimented with forms of sociability which retained some of the meaningful communal interaction of the polis while embracing some of the openness of a cosmopolis. Plutarch, for example, alludes to a mixed community of refugees from war and unrest in the Greek mainland and islands who found refuge in third-century Alexandria in Egypt, where they benefited from funds passed on to them from the Ptolemaic government by the exiled Spartan king Cleomenes.⁵⁴

⁴⁵ See Plutarch *Pelopidas* 13; (Buckler 1980).

⁴⁶ Aeschines 2.142.

⁴⁷ See Isocrates 19.21–4, 40.

⁴⁸ IG XII 6 1 17–40 (cf. 42–43), with (Shipley 1987, pp. 161–64).

⁴⁹ Compare (Joly 2002) for a similar distinction between categories of modern refugees.

⁵⁰ Diogenes Laertius 6.20–1.

⁵¹ Compare Diogenes Laertius 6.93.

⁵² See esp. Diogenes Laertius 6.49, 63. On these fourth-century innovations and the tradition they launched, see recently (Murray 2004; Rohde 2011; Hamon 2011; Müller 2014).

⁵³ Compare the story of solidarity between Zeno of Kition and Crates of Thebes in Diogenes Laertius 7.2–3.

⁵⁴ Plutarch *Agis and Cleomenes* 53.5.

In this context, a crucial phenomenon was one already sketched in Section 2, which becomes increasingly visible through epigraphy in the course of the Hellenistic period: the tendency of migrants or visitors of mixed origins to form, or participate in, voluntary associations bound by cult or professional interests (compare above) in their host cities, sometimes in collaboration with local citizens.⁵⁵ In a way crucial to the concerns of this section, these cosmopolitan associations, with their quasi-civic institutions binding together individuals of different origins, could count exiles among their members. Around 300 BC, an exile from Olynthos in northern Greece (destroyed in 348 BC, compare above), resident and enjoying privileges at Athens, but still identified as ‘Olynthian’, played a prominent role as secretary in a cult association (*thiasos*) at Athens.⁵⁶ More thoroughly mixed quasi-civic associations in Hellenistic Athens included the heterogeneous, improvised communities of soldiers and mercenaries who came together at Athenian forts to honour their benefactors. One such community listed its disparate members in the inscription of an honorary decree. The list included a man called Theodoros whose ethnic affiliation (‘Achaian’) was erased.⁵⁷ Perhaps he wished to signal that he was declaring himself an exile from the Achaian League, with which Athens was at war at the time of the inscription (c. 235 BC);⁵⁸ he had found a new focus of civic membership and belonging in this more informal mixed community of fellow fighters.

These last examples of ‘citizens-in-exile’ came closest in the Greek world to meeting Arendt’s challenge of achieving an ‘avant-garde’ refugee identity, which transcends traditional exclusive citizenship without moving to the other extreme of purely abstract, formal and impersonal cosmopolitanism. These examples are thus particularly well-suited to comparison with the experiments in status- and identity-crossing forms of improvised community that are discussed in contemporary refugee studies, including in Sigona’s model of ‘campzanship’, and also elsewhere in this collection, especially in the discussion of cosmopolitan interaction within Dheisheh refugee camp by Petti. Members of such associations resident in major urban centres, such as Athens, must have been adept at mingling and balancing different identities and affiliations, something that was already evident in the case of the Plataean exiles who were naturalised at Athenians, but persisted in holding a monthly Plataean meeting in the Athenian cheese-market. Their host cities thus partly prefigured the pluralist modern cities, hosts to refugees (Johannesburg, Berlin), which Katharina Richter (2017) discusses in this collection.

The ancient examples reveal the opportunities offered by the citizen model to outsiders who wished to build their own, more open outsider communities, but also the tenacity of the exclusive citizenship regimes of their host cities. Indeed, it was partly the power inequalities and exclusions which resulted from strict rules of citizenship which provoked outsiders to develop these alternative models of civic community, defined in opposition to them. It might be thought that these cosmopolitan outsider communities simply brought consolation and a brake on outsiders’ discontent, rather than exercising genuine political influence: cosmopolitan associations of philosophers and migrants could not influence the course of politics to the extent that the more traditional ‘poleis-in-exile’ from particular poleis did. It is true that there was no dramatic overthrow of traditional citizen exclusivity. Nonetheless, change over centuries is visible: it is striking that, by the later Hellenistic period and early Roman Empire, the citizenship regimes in Greek city-states did tend to become more fluid and open to outsiders.⁵⁹ The cosmopolitan ideas and practices of certain exiles and refugees can be counted among the many social and cultural factors which helped to bring this change about.

⁵⁵ See especially (Ismaard 2010, chp. 5); (Arnaoutoglou 2011).

⁵⁶ IG II² 1263.

⁵⁷ I.Eleusis 196, l. 117.

⁵⁸ Compare Plutarch *Aratus* 33–4.

⁵⁹ See the papers in (Heller and Pont 2012).

4. Conclusions

Citizenship was not merely a force of exclusion or oppression in the case of the displaced of ancient Greece; its processes and ideals could also be harnessed by the displaced themselves to build effective improvised communities in exile. It is clear from the examples in Section 3 that relevant displaced groups almost always relied on support from powerful settled states. Displaced groups' adoption of quasi-civic forms might sometimes have rendered them more susceptible to control from these outside powers; it also kept them embedded within the normative consensus, focussed on the polis as the best form of society, in the Greek civic world. Nonetheless, it is difficult to dispute that adoption and adaptation of civic forms also gave displaced groups agency and autonomy, especially when it enabled them to make interventions in interstate diplomacy and war as if they were settled states. Reproducing civic models in new forms also gave outsiders an alternative focus of pride, dignity, and community, as is particularly evident in the record of associations and communities of the marginalised at Athens.

This all suggests that the model of ancient Greek citizenship need not be straightforwardly rejected in search of entirely new models of political community (Agamben); ancient Greek citizenship was, in fact, double-edged rather than straightforwardly oppressive, since it could itself be a resource for outsiders. It is true, as Arendt argued, that the most spectacular examples of co-option of citizenship by the displaced were new foundations of cities by exiles, mainly attested for the Archaic Greek world (before c. 500 BC). Nonetheless, even after the exhaustion of new opportunities for spontaneous city foundation, in a densely packed world of states protective of their territory in which sophisticated interstate norms were in play, ancient Greek displaced individuals and groups still found new ways to adapt civic principles and institutions in improvised 'poleis-in-exile'. These phenomena encourage a re-thinking of modern citizenship, which is partly descended from the Greek form: in its roots it is much more flexible, mobile, and open to reinvention than often allowed, and need not be tied to any particular place or even ethnicity. A more complex and open-ended understanding of citizenship can, as in the ancient Greek case, open a rich variety of opportunities for political interaction and agency on the part of both the displaced and their hosts.

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