FAMILIAL DIMENSIONS OF GROUP IDENTITY: "BROTHERS" (ΑΔΕΛΦΟΙ) IN ASSOCIATIONS OF THE GREEK EAST

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The language of familial relation, particularly the term "brothers" (ἀδελφοί), is prominent in Paul's letters and subsequently becomes common in segments of early Christianity.[1] Recent decades have witnessed a number of studies that pursue the meaning of this figurative language *within* Christianity, including works by Robert J. Banks, Wayne A. Meeks, Klaus Schäfer, Karl Olav Sandnes, Joseph H. Hellerman, and Trevor J. Burke.[2] Yet, with the exception of scholars such as Peter Arzt-Grabner and Reidar Aasgaard, who begin to address Greco-Roman uses of sibling language more fully, none has sufficiently explored epigraphic and papyrological evidence for fictive kinship within small-group settings or associations in the Greek-speaking eastern Mediterranean.[3]

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[1] E.g., 1 Thess 1:4; 2:1; 3:2; 4:1; 5:1, 4, 12; Matt 5:22–23; Acts 2:29; 3:17; 13:15; 1 Pet 2:17; 5:9; Jas 1:2; 2:1; 3:1.

[2] Robert J. Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community* (1980; reprint, Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1994); Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 85–89; Klaus Schäfer, *Gemeinde als 'Bruderschaft': Ein Beitrag zum Kirchenverständnis des Paulus* (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe 23, Theologie 333; Bern: Peter Lang, 1989); Karl Olav Sandnes, *A New Family : Conversion and Ecclesiology in the Early Church with Cross-Cultural Comparisons* (New York: Lang, 1994); Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters: A Socio-Historical Study of Kinship Metaphors in 1 Thessalonians* (JSNTSup 247; London: T&T Clark, 2003). For earlier studies, see especially K. H. Schelkle's article: "Bruder," *RAC* 2:631–635.

[3] Peter Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers' and 'Sisters' in Documentary Papyri and in Early Christianity," *RivB* 50 (2002): 185–204; Reidar Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers and Sisters: Christian*

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One reason for this neglect is that, although many scholars rightly point to the importance of Paul's use of fictive kinship for understanding group identity, this is often expressed by scholars in terms of sectarianism (in a sociological sense). Thus, Meeks is among those who correctly emphasize the community-reinforcing impact of the term "brothers" as used in Pauline circles. Yet Meeks goes further to argue that Paul's use of "brothers" is indicative of how "members are taught to conceive of only two classes of humanity: the sect and the outsiders."[4] The use of affective language within Pauline circles was an important component in "the break with the past and integration into the new community."[5] Most Christian groups strongly set themselves apart from society, and the common use of familial language is one further indicator of this, from this perspective.

An important assumption behind this argument for a sectarian understanding of fictive family language is that such usage is, in some sense, *unique* (or at least peculiar) to early Christianity and, to a lesser extent, its close relative, early Judaism.[6] In this view, such modes of address were not common or significant within small-group settings, organizations, or cults in the Greco-Roman world. It is common among some scholars of early Christianity, such as Meeks and Hellerman, both to assert the rarity of fictive family language within associations or "clubs" and to discount evidence of such usage that does exist in these contexts as lacking any real implications for a sense of community.[7] Although Meeks admits that fictive sibling terminology was "not unknown in pagan clubs and cult associations," for instance, he does not further explore the evidence, and he dismisses some cases he is aware of as insignificant and pri-

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Siblingship in Paul (Early Christianity in Context; London/New York: T&T Clark, 2004), esp. chs. 4–7.

[4] Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 86 (also see pp. 85–88); cf. Robin Lane Fox, *Pagans and Christians* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1986), 324–25; Sandnes, *New Family*; John H. Elliott, *A Home for the Homeless: A Social-Scientific Criticism of I Peter, Its Situation and Strategy* (2nd ed.; Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990), 165–266.

[5] Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 88.

[6] Both Franz Bömer and Meeks emphasize the uniqueness of Christian usage and, when they address questions of possible cultural antecedents, emphasize Jewish influence (Bömer, *Untersuchungen über die Religion der Sklaven in Griechenland und Rom* [Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse 10; 2nd ed.; Wiesbaden: Verlag der Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, 1981] 179; Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 87).

[7] See Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 225 n. 73; Walter Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults* (Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1987), 45; Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 324–35; Thomas Schmeller, *Hierarchie und Egalität: Eine sozialgeschichtliche Untersuchung paulinischer Gemeinden und griechisch-römischer Vereine* (SBS 162; Stuttgart: Katholisches Bibelwerk, 1995), 16–17; Wayne O. McCready, "*Ekklesia* and Voluntary Associations," in *Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World* (ed. John S. Kloppenborg and Stephen G. Wilson; London/New York: Routledge, 1996), 59–73; Joseph H. Hellerman, *The Ancient Church as Family* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2001), 21–25.

marily indicative of "Roman influence."[8] Meeks, like Robin Lane Fox, Walter Burkert, and others stresses the differences between associations and Christian (and Jewish) groups and the familial language issue is one component in this contrast.[9] Implied or stated is the idea that, in contrast to Christian groups, most associations (including groups of initiates in the mysteries) lacked a developed sense of community (they were mere "clubs"). In some ways, early Christian groups are taken as ideal or true communities.

There is no such consensus concerning fictive kinship terms among scholars of Greco-Roman religions, epigraphy, and associations specifically. Beginning with Erich Ziebarth in the late nineteenth century, several scholars briefly note occurrences of sibling language within associations. Yet these scholars are generally divided on whether the practice was relatively common or infrequent in the Greek East.[10] Several, like Franz Bömer, Franz Poland, and others who depend on them, argue that the practice of using familial terms for fellow members ("brothers") was relatively unknown in Greek associations.[11] Furthermore, Bömer suggests that the cases where it is attested in Greek inscriptions are due to Roman or western influence, and therefore lacking significance for understanding association life in the Greek East.[12]

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[8] Meeks, *First Urban Christians*, 87. Cf. Bömer, who considers fictive brother language "un-Greek" (*Untersuchungen*, 172).

[9] Lane Fox, *Pagans*, 85, 324–25; Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 30–53.

[10] Erich Ziebarth, *Das griechische Vereinswesen* (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel, 1896), 100–101; Jean-Pierre Waltzing, *Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les Romains depuis les origines jusqu'à la chute de l'empire d'Occident* (Mémoires couronnés et autres mémoires publiée par l'Académie Royale des Sciences, des Lettres et des Beaux-Arts de Belgique 50; Brussels: F. Hayez, 1895–1900), 1:329–30 n. 3 (on the West primarily); Franz Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesens* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909), 54–56; A. D. Nock, "The Historical Importance of Cult-Associations," *Classical Review* 38 (1924): 105; Mariano San Nicolo, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen zur Zeit der Ptolemäer und Römer* (Munich: Beck, 1972), 1:33–34 n. 4; Schelkle, "Bruder," 631–34; Bömer, *Untersuchungen*, 172–78; P. M. Fraser, *Rhodian Funerary Monuments* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1977), 74, 78, 164–65 nn. 433–37; Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 45, 149 n. 77; John S. Kloppenborg, "Egalitarianism in the Myth and Rhetoric of Pauline Churches," in *Reimagining Christian Origins: A Colloquium Honoring Burton L. Mack* (ed. E. A. Castelli and H. Taussig; Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1996), 259; Onno M. van Nijf, *The Civic World of Professional Associations in the Roman East* (Dutch Monographs on Ancient History and Archaeology 17; Amsterdam: J. C. Gieben, 1997), 46–49; Yulia Ustinova, *The Supreme Gods of the Bosporan Kingdom* (Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 135; Leiden: Brill, 1999), 185–88; Philip A. Harland, *Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003), 31–33; Richard S. Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* (WUNT 161; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003), 76–77.

[11] Poland suggests that the only clear case of fictive "brothers" in associations involves the "adopted brothers" at Tanais (*Geschichte*, 54–55). All other potential cases of which Poland is aware are too readily dismissed as Christian or as involving real siblings.

[12] Bömer, *Untersuchungen*, 172–79; cf. Poland, *Geschichte*, 54–55 (see also pp. 371–73).

By contrast, studies by A. D. Nock, Mariano San Nicolo, Karl H. Schelkle, P. M. Fraser, and G. H. R. Horsley suggest that, despite the partial nature of our evidence, familial terminology may have been more common within cults and associations in the Greek East (and elsewhere) than often assumed.[13] Apparently no one has assembled and fully discussed the range of epigraphic evidence we do have, and considerable evidence has come to light recently. Presenting and discussing the Greek inscriptional and papyrological evidence for fictive familial address here may help to clarify this issue in a more satisfactory manner.[14]

In this article, some intriguing first-century archaeological evidence from Paul's home province, Cilicia, serves as an entryway into the language of belonging within unofficial associations and guilds, particularly the language of fictive kinship and the metaphor of sibling solidarity. The aim is to draw attention to familial expressions of identity within associations and cults of various kinds with special attention to the Greek-speaking, eastern part of the empire. I argue that there is no reason to minimize the significance of familial expressions of belonging within "pagan" contexts in the Greek East while doing the contrary in the case of Christianity. In both cases we are witnessing processes whereby connections could be formed, expressed, and solidified, creating or

Several other scholars depend, in whole or in part, on Poland and/or Bömer. Meeks cites Poland in support of his claim that brother language was rare in associations (*First Urban Christians*, 225 n. 73). Van Nijf, who does deal with some instances, cites both Poland and Meeks when he suggests that this "type of affective language is relatively common in the West . . . but rare in the East" (*Civic World*, 46 n. 73). Although not dismissive of the evidence, Kloppenborg nonetheless cites both Bömer and Meeks and suggests that familial language of belonging was "perhaps the most striking innovation of Pauline associations" (Kloppenborg, "Egalitarianism," 259; cf. Ascough, *Paul's Macedonian Associations*, 76 n. 18).

[13] Nock emphasizes the importance of fraternal language in associations of both the East and West, going so far as to argue that the "cult-association is primarily a family" (Nock, "Historical Importance," 105; see also S. C. Barton and G. H. R. Horsley, "A Hellenistic Cult Group and the New Testament Churches," *JAC* 24 [1981]: 26). San Nicolo discusses ἀδελφοί together with φίλοι ("friends"), suggesting that both were commonly used, at least in Egypt (*Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 1:33–34 n. 4). Fraser rightly challenges Poland and suggests that "brother" language was somewhat common in associations (in this case ethnic-based groups are in mind), despite the vagaries of our evidence (see Ustinova, *Supreme Gods*, 185–88). In *NewDocs* V 4 (p. 73), Horsley similarly critiques Nigel Turner's dismissal of the use of ἀδελφός within associations, citing several instances of its use.

[14] Epigraphic abbreviations in this paper follow the new standard outlined by G. H. R. Horsley and J. A. Lee, "A Preliminary Checklist of Abbreviations of Greek Epigraphic Volumes," *Epigraphica* 56 (1994): 129–69. In addition, *IJO = Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis* (3 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004). Papyrological abbreviations follow John F. Oates, Roger S. Bagnall, William H. Willis, and Klaas A. Worp, *Checklist of Editions of Greek and Latin Papyri, Ostraca, and Tablets* (BASPSup 7; 4th ed.; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), also available in an updated version online at http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html.

maintaining a sense of community. This way of putting it may show that I am not concerned with oversimplified issues of "borrowing" and genealogical cultural connections, nor with the unanswerable question of whether Paul derived his usage solely from Jewish (e.g., synagogues) or from Hellenistic (e.g., associations) contexts, contexts that were less compartmentalized than often assumed. Instead, I am concerned with exploring shared ways of expressing identity and belonging in small-group settings of the Greco-Roman world.

The nature of archaeology and epigraphy limits the degree to which we should expect to be able to witness or evaluate such relational expressions, which are more suited to personal address (e.g., personal letters or face-to-face encounters as sometimes described in narrative or historical sources). Nonetheless, there are clear indications that some "pagans," like some Jews and some Christians in the first centuries, did express a sense of belonging in an association, guild, or organization by identifying their fellows as "brothers" (or, less often attested, "sisters"). The Greek evidence that we do have spans the eastern part of the empire, including Asia Minor, Greece, Macedonia, the Danube, the Bosporus, and Egypt. Furthermore, the evidence dates to the centuries both before and after Paul of Tarsus, further suggesting that we should not so lightly dismiss its continuing significance within various social and religious settings.

I. Cautions on the Nature of Sources

Meeks and others who follow him suggest that brother language was rare in Greco-Roman ("pagan") associations or cults and relatively common in Christian groups. Yet it seems that these scholars have not taken into account a key difference in the genre of our sources for early Christian groups as opposed to associations. We have personal letters pertaining to early Christian groups (reflecting personal interactions), but rarely have any literary or epistolary evidence for the internal life of associations. Instead, we have (public) monuments, including honorary inscriptions and epitaphs.

This has important implications for the assessment of things such as fictive familial language and its relative frequency or importance in Christian, Jewish, or other Greco-Roman settings. In inscriptions (with their formal restrictions) there would be few occasions to make reference incidentally to the day-to-day language of belonging that was used in real-life settings (beyond the title of the group, for instance). The Jewish epigraphic evidence is instructive on this point, for although we know that fictive sibling language was used by some Jews in the Hellenistic and Roman periods (as reflected in the literature), so far we lack inscriptions that attest this use of "brothers" among members of Diaspora

synagogues.[15] More importantly, although early on we find fictive uses of "brothers/sisters" in the mouths of educated Christian authors, such as Paul, most epigraphic attestations of the use of "brothers" considerably postdate our earliest inscriptional evidence for Christianity, which begins about 180 C.E. Although "brother" is commonly used in the literature, the earliest Christian epitaphs that have been found do not use fictive sibling language at all.[16]

So the probability remains that even if particular ("pagan") associations did use such fictive sibling language on a regular basis in real-life settings to indicate a sense of belonging, this would *rarely be expressed* on an honorary monument for a benefactor or on an epitaph. Relative rarity of expression on monuments should not be confused with rarity of practice. What this does mean is that we should pay special attention to the available Greco-Roman materials, rather than ignoring or dismissing them based on issues of presumed infrequency or insignificance.

II. Asia Minor, Greece, the Danube, and the Bosporus

References to "brother(s)" or "sister(s)" (ἀδελφός, -οί / ἀδελφή, -αί) in Greek inscriptions are, of course, not uncommon, especially in epitaphs, but we have the difficulty of assessing when such references are to fictive rather than "real" siblings. Thankfully, there are occasions when we can be confident in

[15] E.g., 1 Macc 12:10, 17; 2 Macc 1:1; 4 Macc 13:23, 26; 14:1; Josephus, *J.W.* 2.122, and, of course, the Dead Sea Scrolls. See the indexes of *CIJ* and *IJO* I–III, for instance. Meeks readily dismisses inscriptional evidence for brother language that does exist because of its supposed infrequency, asserting that "[m]ost likely . . . the early Christians took their usage from the Jews" (*First Urban Christians*, 87). Yet Meeks does not cite any epigraphic cases of the Jewish usage (for the first two centuries), and what he does not mention is that we lack such evidence at this point (notwithstanding the few references to "brotherly/sisterly love" [φιλάδελφοι], only some of which are likely figurative). There is an inconsistency in Meeks's approach.

[16] So far as I am aware, there are no clear cases of fictive sibling language in Christian inscriptions and epitaphs from the Greek East and Asia Minor before Constantine, including the Christians for Christians inscriptions of Phrygia, for instance (see Elsa Gibson, *The "Christians for Christians" Inscriptions of Phrygia: Greek Texts, Translation, and Commentary* [HTS 32; Missoula, MT: Scholars Press, 1978]; cf. Graydon F. Snyder, *Ante Pacem: Archaeological Evidence of Church Life before Constantine* [2nd ed.; Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2003], 210–65). It is notoriously difficult to identify Christian papyri with certainty, but there are a number of instances of "brother(s)/sister(s)" or "beloved brother(s)" as forms of address in letters that are quite securely Christian, particularly those dating to the third, fourth, and fifth centuries. See, e.g., *NewDocs* IV 124; and Snyder, *Ante Pacem*, 270–72 (F), 273–77 (I), 278 (L), 282–84 (Z), 284–85 (CC). One of the difficulties here is that the scholarly assumption that "pagans" did not tend to use such terms of familial address has been a criterion for identifying letters as Christian based on the presence of brother language. For example, see the discussion of *PRyl* IV 604 further below, which is now clearly established as "pagan" but still wrongly categorized as Christian by Snyder, *Ante Pacem*, 281–82 (Y) and others.

recognizing the figurative use of sibling language, including a clear case from first-century Cilicia.

A series of tombs discovered carved into the mountain rock in the vicinity of Lamos in central Rough Cilicia (southwest of Tarsus, just inland from Selinos) pertains to collective burial sites of associations dating to the period before Vespasian.[17] The majority of these common memorials make no mention of a title for the group or of terminology that members would use in referring to one another. In most of these shared tombs there is simply a list of members' names with no further self-identification (*IKilikiaBM* II 197, 198, 200, 202), or a statement of the leader's name followed by the list of "those with him" (οἱ μετ᾽ αὐτοῦ; *IKilikiaBM* I 34; *IKilikiaBM* II 201). Certainly there are clear signs of belonging in all of these cases in the sense that these individuals consciously "joined together," as one inscription puts it, and they were concerned to ensure that only their members and no one else was to be buried there (*IKilikiaBM* I 34).

So although there are several associations at this locale, in only one of them do we incidentally catch a glimpse of the terminology of belonging that could be used among members, in this case fictive brother language. The inscription in question (*IKilikiaBM* II 201) from Lamos reads as follows:

Column a = Lines 1–20

Rhodon son of Kydimasas, Selgian, and those with him: Pyramos son of Pyramos, Selgian, Mindyberas son of Arestes, Selgian, Aetomeros Manis, Lylous son of Menos, Selgian, Ketomaneis son of Kibrios, Zezis son of Oubramis, Kendeis son of Zenonis, Aigylis son of Oubramis, Dinneon son of Pigemis, Selgian. This is our common memorial and it is not lawful for anyone to bury another body here. But if anyone buries another here let him pay a pair of oxen and three *mina* (= 100 δραχμαί) to Zeus, three *mina* and a pair of oxen to Apollo, and three *mina* to the people (δῆμος). But if anyone should go up and wish to sell his common ownership (κοινωνεία), it is not lawful . . .

Column b = Lines 21–35

For it is not lawful to sell from abroad (or, possibly: sell outside the group), but let him take from the common treasury 30 *staters* and let him depart. But if some brother wants to sell, let the other brothers (ἀδελφοί) purchase it. But if the brothers so wish, then let them receive the coins mentioned above and let them depart from the association (κονοῦ [*sic*]). But whenever someone dies, and has no one to carry out the funeral . . .[18]

[17] G. Bean and T. Mitford, "Sites Old and New in Rough Cilicia," *AnSt* 12 (1962): 209–11, nos. 33–35; *IKilikiaBM* I 34; *IKilikiaBM* II 197, 198, 202, 205; cf. *IKilikiaBM* II 189–202 for Lamos generally. The tombs are dated to the time of Vespasian (69–70 C.E.) or earlier based on the fact that they use δραχμαί rather than *denarii*, which suggests that they date to the period before Vespasian joined Rough Cilicia with the Cilician plain (see notes to *IKilikiaBM* II 196).

[18] Lines 21–35: ἔξοθεν πωλῆσαι, ἀλλὰ λαμβανέτω ἐκ τοῦ | κοινοῦ στατῆρες τριά|κοντα καὶ

Fragmentary *column c* follows.

The membership in the association consists of ten men under the leadership of Rhodon from Selge, and four other members are likewise immigrants from that city in Pamphylia. We know from several other tombs in the vicinity (near the modern sites of Adanda and Direvli) that Selgian immigrants were particularly prominent in the profession of masonry.[19] The Rhodon in question is likely to be identified with the artisan who carved another tomb in the area (*IKilikiaBM* II 199) and who was responsible for some sculptural work at nearby Selinos (no. 156). It may well be that the members of this association shared this profession, though this is not expressly the case. It may also be that most or all of the members (beyond the Selgians) were immigrants to the area.

What interests us most here is the incidental reference to terminology of belonging used among members of the group. In the context of outlining rules concerning members' share in the tomb and the question of selling this share, the group had decided to emphasize the need to ensure that portions within the tomb remained among members of the group, and they consistently refer to such fellow members as "brothers."[20] In the event that one of the "brothers" wished to "go up," perhaps to his hometown (Selge may be in mind), then he must not sell from abroad, or outside of the current membership. Instead, the departing member should receive his payment back or the other "brothers" may purchase the portion. The final stipulation (before the lacuna) is unclear but seems to suggest that if a number of the members decide to leave (returning to their hometowns perhaps), then they too may receive their payments back.

There are other cases from Asia Minor involving fellow members of an association or cultic organization who likewise employ brother terminology. A number of inscriptions pertaining to functionaries in cults at several locales, many of which also refer to "victory" (νίκη), appear to use the term "brother" as a designation for a priest. At Halikarnassos (southwestern coast) there are two, perhaps three, monuments on which priests (ἱερεῖς) in a temple are referred to as "brother priests" (ἱερεῖς ἀδελφοί).[21] A similar dedication for victory involv-

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ἀποχωρείτω. | ἐὰν δέ τινος ἀδελφὸς | θελήσει ἀποπωλῆσ|αι, ἀγοραζέσθωσαν οἱ | ἕτεροι ἀδελφοί. εἰ δὲ μὴ | θέλωσιν οἱ ἀδελφοί, τό|τε λανβάντωσαν τὸ π|ρ|ογεγραμμένον κερ[μ]|άτιον καὶ ἐκχωρείτω[σα|ν] ἐκ τοῦ κονοῦ [*sic*]. ὅταν δέ | τις ἀποθάνῃ καὶ μὴ συ|νεξενένκῃ τις.

[19] Cf. *IKilikiaBM* I 34; *IKilikiaBM* II 196, 197, 198, 199, 200.

[20] In the notes to *IKilikiaBM* II 201, Bean and Mitford point out that two members are indeed blood brothers (sons of Oubramis), but these editors were a bit confused by lines 25–33 since it did not dawn on them that "brothers" was being used in a fictive manner of members in these lines. Also see van Nijf (*Civic World*, 46–49), who recognizes that this is an example of fictive sibling language.

[21] *IGLAM* 503 a and b; C. T. Newton and R. P. Pullan, *A History of Discoveries at Halicarnassus, Cnidus, and Branchidae* (London: Day, 1862–63), 2:704–5, no. 12c; cf. G. E. Bean and

ing subordinate temple functionaries has been found at nearby Mylasa, in which two men are called "good, brother under-priests" (καλῶν ἀ|δελφῶν ὑποιερέ|ων; *IMylasa* 544). A considerable distance north and east, at Synaos in the Aezanatis valley, a recently discovered epitaph of the second century involves an individual functionary consecrated to the god (a ἱερός) who is referred to as "brother ἱερός" (*MAMA* X 437; cf. *SEG* 43 [1993]: 893). Although we know very little about these functionaries, a pattern of usage is becoming clear that extends beyond just one locale. It would be difficult to explain these cases away as references to real brothers who happened to be fellow priests, as Poland seems aware.[22] The term "brother" could be used of fellow functionaries as a term of belonging in the setting of sanctuaries, as we shall also find in Egypt.

Other evidence is forthcoming from Asia Minor, the Aegean, and Greece, this time involving unofficial associations. A monument dedicated to "god most high" (Theos Hypsistos) at Sinope in Pontus, which need not be considered Jewish in any way, refers to the group as "the vowing brothers" (οἱ ἀδελφοὶ εὐξάμενοι).[23] Although less than certain, it is quite possible that the four named men on a grave (ἡρῷον) from the vicinity of Iasos who refer to themselves as "the brotherly-loving and unwavering male shippers of Phileros" (τῶν Φιλέρωτος φιλαδέλφων ἀνδρῶν ναυκλήρων ἀπλανήτων) may not literally be brothers, but rather members of a guild under the leadership of Phileros.[24] It is worth noting that there are comparable figurative uses of "brotherly love" or

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J. M. Cook, "The Halicarnassus Peninsula," *Annual of the British School at Athens* 50 (1955): 103, no. 17; *IAsMinLyk* I 1. These and other "victory" inscriptions that have been found at Halikarnassos, Mylasa, Didyma, and Kos are sometimes etched (almost as graffiti) onto preexisting monuments (cf. *IMylasa* 541–564). Unfounded is the suggestion of G. Cousin and Ch. Diehl (followed uncritically by F. H. Marshall in the notes to *GIBM* IV 920 and 934) that all of the victory inscriptions, especially those that mention "brothers," are Christian epitaphs or remembrances referring to victory through death or martyrdom ("Inscriptions d'Halicarnasse," *BCH* 14 [1890]: 114–18, no. 18). See *IKos* 65 and 69–72, where W. R. Paton and E. L. Hicks reject the previous view and more reasonably suggest that these inscriptions refer to victory in competitions (cf. *IKos* 65 and *IMylasa* 554, which involve ephebes). It is worth mentioning the possibility that some of these are dedications by priests within guilds of athletes or performers, where ἱερεύς was a common title for a cultic functionary (see the discussion of athletic guilds further below).

[22] Poland prefers to dismiss these apparent cases of pagan "brother priests" by categorizing the inscriptions as Christian, citing no evidence in support (*Geschichte*, 55); he is likely depending on the problematic suggestion of Cousin and Diehl (see previous note). Secondarily, he suggests that if they are pagan, then these are real brothers.

[23] G. Doublet, "Inscriptions de Paphlagonie," *BCH* 13 (1889): 303–4, no. 7; cf. Ustinova, *Supreme Gods*, 185–86. It is unsatisfactory to reject this case without discussion with a claim that this is Jewish syncretism (and therefore not Greek), as does Bömer (*Untersuchungen*, 173). Poland mentions this case but suggests that these are probably real brothers (*Geschichte*, 55).

[24] M. G. Cousin and G. Deschamps, "Voyage de Milet à Marmara," *BCH* 18 (1894): 21, no. 11. On the literal use of brotherly or sisterly affection among blood relatives see *NewDocs* II 80 and III 74; *MAMA* VIII 132, line 13; *IBithynia* III 2 (= *IKlaudiupolis* 75), 7, and 8.

"familial affection" (φιλάδελφοι) in connection with fellow members of an association at Latium (Italy) devoted to Hygeia (*IG* XIV 902a, p. 694 [addenda]) and among members of Jewish groups in Egypt, Rome, and, possibly, Syria.[25] Quite well known are the uses by Paul and the author of 1 Peter of the terminology of "brotherly/sisterly love" (φιλαδελφία) of the relationship among members of Christian congregations, as when Paul exhorts the Roman Christians to demonstrate "heart-felt affections toward one another with brotherly love" (τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ εἰς ἀλλήλους φιλόστοργοι) (Rom 12:10; cf. 1 Thess 4:9; 1 Pet 1:22; 3:8; Heb 13:1; 2 Pet 1:7).

In connection with such means of expressing affection, it is important to point out another clear case from Asia Minor in which similar terms of familial closeness are used among members of an association, even though brother language is not evident. In an epitaph from Tlos in Lycia, the members of a cult society (θίασος) honor a deceased member, setting up the grave stone "on account of" their "heart-felt affection" (φιλοστοργία) for the deceased cult society member (ὁ θίασος ἐπὶ Μάσα τῷ [θια]σείτα l[φ]ιλοστοργίας ἕνεκε[ν; *TAM* II 640).[26] With regard to the root for love or affection (φιλ-), it is worth noting that the term "dear ones" or "friends" (οἱ φίλοι) was a common means of expressing positive connections with others within associations, particularly in Asia Minor (cf. 3 John 15).[27] And we shall soon encounter instances where the terms "brothers" and "friends" are used almost interchangeably as designations of belonging within associations in Egypt.

There are other incidental references from around the Aegean that attest to the use of fictive sibling language within associations. In discussing the associations of late Hellenistic Rhodes, P. M. Fraser draws attention to two cases where sibling language is likely used of fellow members of immigrant associations.[28] The clearer of the two involves a funerary dedication for a man and a woman who are also termed "heroized siblings" (ἀδελφῶν ἡρώων). As Fraser points out, this is a clear case where the basic meaning of "blood brothers" is

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[25] For likely figurative Jewish use, see *IEgJud* 114 (near Heliopolis; first century B.C.E. or first century C.E.), *IEurJud* II 528 (Rome), and *IJO* III Syr70 (with David Noy's notes; cf. 2 Macc 15:14). Cf. *IEgJud* 86, *IEurJud* II 171 (Rome; third–fourth centuries C.E.) (either literal or fictive). Also see 1 Pet 3:8.

[26] On the meaning of φιλοστοργία ("affection" or "heart felt love," as Horsley puts it in one case), see L. Robert, "Lycaonie, Isaurie et Pisidie," *Hellenica 13* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1965), 38-42, and, more extensively, Horsley in *NewDocs* II 80, III 11, and IV 33 (cf. Rom 12:10). Horsley had not yet encountered this case, it seems.

[27] Associations using φίλοι: *IGLAM* 798 (Kotiaion, Aezanatis valley); *IIasos* 116; *IMagnMai* 321; *IDidyma* 502 (a Dionysiac group); *IMylasa* 571-75; *TAM* V 93 (Saittai; 225 C.E.); *ISmyrna* 720; *MAMA* III 580, 780, 788 (Korykos); *IPontBithM* 57 (= *SEG* 35 [1985]: 1337; Amastris, Pontus); *IPrusaOlymp* 24 (first century C.E.); *IAsMinLyk* I 69 (Xanthos, Lycia). Cf. *IG* II.2 1369 (Athens; second century C.E.); *IG* III 1081, 1089, 1102 (Athens; c. 120s C.E.; ephebes); *IGUR* 1169 (Rome).

[28] Fraser, *Rhodian Funerary Monuments*, 74, 78, 164–65 nn. 430–37. Cf. *NewDocs* II 14.

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not possible. He argues that although the meaning of "spouse" as in Egyptian papyri remains a possibility, it seems "more plausible to regard both parties, male and female, who are foreigners, as 'brothers' in the sense of fellow members of a koinon."[29]

In a similar vein, Onno van Nijf, who in other respects downplays the frequency of brother language, nonetheless discusses a third-century inscription from Thessalonica in Macedonia. This involves a collective tomb of an association with individually allotted niches: "For Tyche. I have made this niche in commemoration of my own partner out of joint efforts. If one of my brothers dares to open this niche, he shall pay . . ." (*IG* X.2.1 824). Interestingly enough, as van Nijf argues, here one sees fictive sibling language of belonging alongside a concern to preserve this particular niche from further use by the very same fellow members of the association. "Brotherhood apparently failed to prevent some brethren from reopening niches to add the remains of another deceased person, or even to remove the remains of the lawful occupant."[30]

There are also some surviving instances from Greece and elsewhere in which those of a common occupation or common civic position, sometimes members of an ongoing guild or organization, address one another as "brother" in a figurative sense. A third-century decree from Chalkis in Euboia (Greece) involves an important civic board (συνέδριον) and the people (δῆμος). In response to a temple warden's (Aurelius Hermodoros) generous benefactions to the sanctuary, Amyntas and Ulpius Pamphilos propose that Hermodoros's descendants be honored with continuous possession of this temple-wardenship (likely of Tyche). The inscription happens to preserve the statement of the clerk of the *synedrion,* who seeks a vote on whether the members of the board agree to grant these honors "according to all of your intentions and the proposal of the brother Pamphilos" (*SIG*³ 898 = *IG* XII.9 906, lines 18–20).[31] Here a fellow member of the organization is clearly addressed as "brother" in an incidental manner that suggests that this was normal practice in this setting. There are several other instances of persons of a common occupation (sometimes, though not always, involving membership in a guild) referring to one another (in Greek) as "brother," including a rhetor at Baeterrae in Gaul who called another "the brother rhetor" (*IG* XIV 2516), athletes at Rome (*IGUR* 246), and several

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[29] Fraser, *Rhodian Funerary Monuments*, 74.

[30] Van Nijf, *Civic World*, 46 (with trans).

[31] Bömer attributes this case to "Roman influence" without explanation (*Untersuchungen*, 172). Minor civic officials and scribes who address one another as "brother" in papyri from Tebtunis may represent another case of fictive kinship language among colleagues, but they may also involve those who share the same parents. See *PTebt* I 12 (118 B.C.E.), 19 (114 B.C.E.), and 55 (late second century B.C.E.); see MM, 9; Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers,'" 188 n. 13. Two of these three Tebtunis papyri are translated by John L. White, *Light from Ancient Letters* (FF; Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986), 81–82 (no. 45), 84–85 (no. 49).

different professionals in Egypt (discussed further below), including undertakers and athletes.[32] Arzt-Grabner also discusses a number of cases in papyri involving fellow officials or business partners who address one another as brother.[33]

Turning north of Greece and Asia Minor, fictive sibling language occurs in the associations of the Bosporus on the Black (Euxine) Sea.[34] Greek inscriptions from Tanais attest to numerous associations devoted to "god most high" (Theos Hypsistos) in the first three centuries (*CIRB* 1260–1288). Membership consisted of men only who were drawn from the mixed Greek and Iranian (Sarmatian) populations of this city. The groups used several self-designations, some calling themselves "the synod which is gathered around Theos Hypsistos," or "the synod which is gathered around the priest."[35] These particular inscriptions happen not to make any reference to any informal, fraternal language of belonging that was used among members. But several inscriptions do indicate that an important leader within many of these groups held the title of "father of the synod" (*CIRB* 1263, 1277, 1282, 1288).

Particularly significant here are four inscriptions from Tanais (dating to the first decades of the third century) that pertain to an association that took on fictive sibling language as an official title for the group over several decades, calling themselves "the adopted brothers worshiping Theos Hypsistos" (ἰσοποιητοὶ ἀδελφοὶ σεβόμενοι θεὸν ὕψιστον; *CIRB* 1281, 1283, 1285, 1286; ca. 212–240 C.E.). In a fifth inscription, the editors have restored the title of another association as the "*thiasos* of brothers" (θίησ[ος τῶν ἀ]δελ[φῶν] [*sic*]; *CIRB* 1284). The idea that we are here witnessing the development of fraternal language from informal usage among members of associations into a title, and that brother language was likely common in these and other groups from the region at earlier points, is further suggested by epitaphs from Iluraton (mid-second century) and Panticapaion (early-third century). Members in these two associations, at least, had been using the informal address of "brother" but had not come to take on this fraternal language as a group title. In each case, the membership of an association honors a deceased fellow with a memorial and happens to express in stone its positive feelings for the lost member by calling him "its own brother" (τὸν ἴδιον ἀδελφόν; *CIRB* 104, 967).[36] In the latter group at Panticapaion, familial language was used also of a leader, who was known as "father of the synod."

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[32] See Fraser, *Rhodian Funerary Monuments*, 164 n. 433.

[33] Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers,'" 189–92, 195–99.

[34] See Ustinova, *Supreme Gods*, 183–96.

[35] *CIRB* 1278, 1279, 1280, 1282, for the former; *CIRB* 1260, 1262, 1263, 1264, 1277, 1287, 1288, for the latter.

[36] See Ustinova, *Supreme Gods*, 188, 200.

Since Emil Schürer's study of the Bosporan Hypsistos inscriptions in 1897, it has been common for scholars to suggest the influence of Judaism here (especially at Tanais), but this is highly problematic.[37] Many follow Schürer in holding the view that these were associations of Gentiles or "God-fearers" honoring the Jewish God as Theos Hypsistos, partly owing to the coincidence of Acts-like language for Gentile sympathizers here and because of evidence from elsewhere for the description of the Jewish God as "God most high," following language in the Septuagint. However, Yulia Ustinova's exhaustive study of the Bosporan evidence for associations and for the worship of gods with the epithet Hypsistos convincingly demonstrates the weaknesses of Schürer's proposal and shows that these groups at Tanais, in particular, are best understood as associations devoted to a hellenized, Iranian deity, with no Jewish connection involved.[38]

The case of associations in the Bosporus draws attention to another facet of familial expressions of identity in the Greek East that should be noticed before going on to brother language within associations in Egypt and in the mysteries. There are numerous examples of the designation "father of the synod" in associations of the Bosporus region, for instance, and we have seen that, in at least one case from Panticapaion, "father" is used within a group that also (informally) employs the term "brothers" for members (*CIRB* 104).[39] Similarly, as I discuss below, a group of initiates in the mysteries in Egypt referred to its leader as "father," and fellow initiates also called one another "brothers"; and a guild of athletes in Rome likewise used both "father" for a

[37] Emil Schürer, "Die Juden im bosporanischen Reiche und die Genossenschaften der σεβόμενοι θεὸν ὕψιστον ebendaselbst," *Sitzungsberichte der königlich preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften zu Berlin* (1897): 200–225. For recent versions of Schürer's theory see Irina Levinskaya, *The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting* (Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting 5; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 111, 244–45; Stephen Mitchell, "The Cult of Theos Hypsistos between Pagans, Jews, and Christians," in *Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity* (ed. Polymnia Athanassiadi and Michael Frede; Oxford: Clarendon, 1999), 116–17. Not so long ago I had accepted that interpretation, but have been convinced otherwise after studying Ustinova's recent book (*Supreme Gods*). Cf. Ustinova, "The *Thiasoi* of Theos Hypsistos in Tanais," *HR* 31 (1991–92): 150–80, where the argument is less developed.

[38] See Ustinova, *Supreme Gods*, 203–39. Cf. D. Noy, A. Panayotov, and H. Bloedhorn, *Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis*, vol. 1, *Eastern Europe* (TSAJ 101; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004), 323, who exclude this Tanais evidence from their collection of Jewish inscriptions. While there were small Jewish communities at Panticapaion, Gorgippia, and Phanagoria in the Bosporus region, there is no evidence for Jews several hundred kilometers away at Tanais. Beyond the ambiguous references to "god most high" and the title "gathering-leader" (*synagogos*) within these groups, which can both readily be understood in *non*-Jewish terms, there are no indications that the Jewish God was involved in these inscriptions.

[39] Out of thirty attested associations at Panticapaion (*CIRB* 75–108), eight use the title: *CIRB* 77 (second–third centuries C.E.), 96 (second century C.E.), 98 (214 C.E.), 99 (221 C.E.), 100, 103 (third century C.E.), 104 (third century C.E.), 105 (third century C.E.).

leader and "brother" among members. There are many other times when, although we do not necessarily witness sibling terminology specifically, we do clearly encounter other familial or parental language to express membership in associations.[40] There is, in fact, strong evidence pointing to the importance of such metaphorical parental and parent-child language in Greek cities generally[41] and within local associations in these cities of Asia Minor, Greece, Thracia, and other regions in the first three centuries.[42] In associations, such parental language is used of benefactors in some cases and of leaders within the group in others. The membership list of a cult association devoted to Dionysos at Thessalonica (second or third century), for instance, includes several male and female functionaries, including the chief initiate (ἀρχιμύστης), alongside the "mother of the company" (σπείρας) (*SEG* 49 [1999]: 814). Similarly, the Jewish titles "mother of the synagogue" and "father of the synagogue" (or related terms) are attested in Greek inscriptions from Rome, Stobi (in Macedonia), Mantineia (in Greece), and Smyrna (in Asia Minor).[43] There are even a

[40] On the titles "father" and "mother" in *collegia* in the West, mostly dating to the mid-second century and later, see Waltzing, *Étude*, 1:446–49. Poland (*Geschichte*, 372) and those who depend on him seem to be unaware of the strong tradition of parental language in cities of the Greek East and wrongly dismiss cases involving associations in the eastern Mediterranean as under western influence.

[41] Civic bodies and other organizations commonly honored a benefactor or functionary by referring to him or her as "father (πατήρ) of the πόλις," "mother" (μήτηρ), "son" (υἱός), "daughter" (θυγάτηρ), "foster-father" (τροφεύς), or "foster-child" (τρόφιμος). See, e.g.: *Mother*: C. Naour, "Inscriptions de Lycie," *ZPE* 24 (1977): 265–71, no. 1 (Tlos); *TAM* III 57, 58 (Termessos); *SEG* 43 (1993): 954 (Sagalassos; ca. 120 C.E.); *IG* XII.8 388, 389 (Thasos). *Father*: *SEG* 49 (1999): 1536 (Teos; 170–166 B.C.E.); *TAM* III 83 (Termessos; first century C.E.); *IThasosDunant* 192 (first century B.C.E.–first century C.E.). *Foster-father*: see Louis Robert, "Sur une monnaie de Synnada ," *Hellenica 13* (Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1949), 74–81. *Daughter/son*: *IPerge* 117–18, 120–21, 122–25 ("daughter"; early second century C.E.); *TAM* III 14, 16, 21, 87, 98, 105, 122, 123 ("son" at Termessos; second–third centuries C.E.); *SEG* 45 (1995): 738 ("son" at Beroia, Macedonia; second–third centuries C.E.).

[42] Asia Minor: *IPerge* 121; *IGLAM* 53; *IG* XII.8 388–89, 525 (γερουσίαι at Perge, Erythrai, and Thasos); H. Hepding, "Die Arbeiten zu Pergamon 1904–1905: II, Die Inschriften," *MDAI(A)* 32 (1907): 327–29, nos. 59–60 (νέοι at Pergamon); H. W. Pleket, *The Greek Inscriptions in the 'Rijksmuseum Van Oudheden' at Leyden* (Leiden: Brill, 1958), 7–8 ("υὸς [*sic*] τῶν φι[λοσ]ε[βάστω]ν" at Magnesia; second–third centuries C.E.). Greece: SIG³ 1111 ("father of the orgeonic synod" devoted to Syrian deities at Piraeus; ca. 200–211 C.E.). Thracia: T. Sauciuc-Sâveanu, "Callatis: rapport préliminaire," *Dacia* 1 (1924): 139–44, no. 2 ("father" of Dionysiac θιασῖται at Callatis; ca. 30–60 C.E.); *CCCA* VI 342 ("mother of the tree-bearers" at Serdica; ca. 200 C.E.); E. Kalinka, *Schriften der Balkankommission Antiquarische Abteilung IV: Antike Denkmäler in Bulgarien* (Vienna: Alfred Hölder, 1906), 157–58, no. 177 ("father" of the νεοκοροι of Saviour Asklepios at Pautalia); *IGLSkythia* I 99, *IGLSkythia* I 100, and *IGLSkythia* II 83 (Achilleus as "father" of two Dionysiac groups at Histria and a group of tree-bearers at Tomis; ca. 200–222 C.E.). Syria: *IGR* III 1080 ("father of the κοινόν" near Berytos). Rome: *IGUR* 77 (prophet and "father" of an association of immigrants from Alexandria, devoted to Sarapis; 146 C.E.).

[43] Rome: *IEurJud* II 209 (= *CIJ* 93), 288 (= 88), 540 (= 494), 544 (= 508), 560 (= 319), 576

number of cases where the more colloquial and affectionate term "papa" or "daddy" (πάππας or ἄππας in Greek and variants) is used of religious leaders in associations devoted to the mysteries and in other groups.[44] In some cases when members of an association regularly referred to their leader as "mother," "father," or even "papa," I suggest that they were alluding to the same sort of family atmosphere within the group that the term "brothers" or "sisters" would evoke.

III. Egypt and Initiates in the Mysteries

Evidence from Hellenistic and Roman Egypt also strongly suggests that it would be problematic to argue that fictive familial language was insignificant within associations or that it was merely a late development (from Roman, western influence) within association life in the East. As with epigraphic evidence from other parts of the eastern Mediterranean, inscriptions from Egypt provide only momentary glimpses of the use of sibling language within associations and other cultic settings. For this region, however, the shortcomings of epigraphic evidence are somewhat counterbalanced by the survival of letters and other documents on papyri. Not surprisingly, as with our evidence for Pauline and other Christian groups, it is within the context of personal address in letters that the use of fictive kinship language becomes more visible to us.

Papyri reveal that kinship terminology was used in a variety of ways within letters in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, including the use of the terms "brother" or "sister" as titles among royalty, as a designation of a spouse (see *NewDocs* I 17), and as a term of affection among close friends (see *NewDocs* IV 15; *BGU* IV 1209). Arzt-Grabner's study collects a number of clear cases from papyri (dating from the second century B.C.E. to the third century C.E.) in

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(= 509), 578 (= 510), 584 (= 537) ("father of the synagogue"); *IEurJud* II 251 (= *CIJ* 166), 542 (= 496); 577 (= 523) ("mother of the synagogue"). Stobi: *IJO* I Mac1 (= *CIJ* 694). Mantineia and Smyrna: *IJO* I Ach 54 (= 720); *IJO* II 41 (= 739), both fourth century C.E.

[44] See K. Buresch, *Aus Lydien: Epigraphisch-geographische Reisefrüchte* (ed. O. Ribbeck; Leipzig: Teubner, 1898), 130–31; Robert in *BE* (1978): 492–94, no. 510. *IMagnMai* 117 ("papa of Dionysos" as a position in a cult association at Magnesia; early second century C.E.); Ramsay, "Antiquities of Southern Phrygia," *AJA* 4 (1888): 278–79 ("papa" of a Phrygian cult association [φράτρα] at Thiunta, near Hierapolis; second century C.E.); *TAM* V 432, line 19 (near Saittai; 214/5 C.E.); *IGR* III 883 ("papa" as a priest at Tarsus; second–third centuries C.E.). Also see G. Laminger-Pascher, *Die kaiserzeitlichen Inschriften Lykaoniens,* Faszikel I, *Der Süden* (Ergänzungsbände zu den Tituli Asiae Minoris 15; Vienna: Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1992), 229–30, no. 408 ("Philtatos, the most blessed papa" at Dorla; first century C.E.). On the likely pagan context of the Dorla inscription, see Feissel in *BE* (1993): 771. For Christian use outside of Rome, see *PAmherst* 13 ("papa" as leader of the Christian congregation at Alexandria; late third century C.E.).

which those who are not literally related address officials, friends, or business partners as "brothers."[45] Yet there are also other cases of this practice involving co-workers or co-religionists who were active within the same sanctuaries or who belonged to associations or other organizations.[46]

As early as the second century of the Hellenistic era, we have instances in which persons belonging to a common profession, organization, and/or religious circle express close connections with their fellows by using fictive kinship terminology. Though it is possible that two papyri regarding associations of embalmers (χοαχύται) at Thebes (late second century) involve actual family members addressed as "siblings," several scholars following Amedeo Peyron have argued that in some of these cases ἀδελφοί is more likely used of members in a guild that included non–family members.[47] More certain is the case in

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[45] Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers.'" Officials: *BGU* VIII 1755, 1770, 1788 (60s B.C.E.); *SB* XVI 12835 (10 C.E.). Friends: *BGU* VIII 1874 (first century B.C.E.); *POxy* XVII 2148; *SB* V 7661; *POxy* XLII 3057 (first–second centuries C.E.); *SB* XIV 11644 (first–second centuries C.E.). Business partners: *BGU* I 248–49, II 531, 594–95, 597 (70s C.E.); *BGU* XVI 2607 (15 B.C.E.); *POxy* LV 3808 (first–second centuries C.E.); *OClaud* I 158 (110 C.E.) and II 226 (mid-second century C.E.). Arzt-Grabner, who does not fully address epigraphic evidence, nonetheless accepts Poland's overall evaluation in claiming that there is "no clear evidence for a metaphorical use of 'brother' or 'sister' within Roman guilds or mystery cults," particularly before the late second century ("'Brothers,'" 199). See also his pp. 199–200 nn. 68–69, where he cites the standard list of scholars (discussed earlier) who deny this usage within associations. I suppose the issue relates to the definition of "clear evidence" to some extent, but even some of the papyri that Arzt-Grabner discusses involve members of a common profession who were likely members of an association (cf. *POxy* XLII 3057; *PPetaus* 28) and, in at least one case, the papyrus almost certainly involves a military association, as discussed below (*BGU* VIII 1770; 64/63 B.C.E.).

[46] For Christian papyri using "beloved brother" (ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφός) as an address, see the list in *NewDocs* IV 124. Plutarch shows an awareness of the common fictive use of sibling language within the context of friendships when he speaks against a man "who addresses his comrade as 'brother' in salutations and letters, but does not care even to walk with his own brother" (*On Brotherly Love* 479D [LCL]).

[47] See *UPZ* II 162 = *PTor* 1, col. 1, lines 11 and 19–20, and col. 6, lines 33–34 (116 B.C.E.); *UPZ* II 180a = *PPar* 5 col. 2, line 5 (114 B.C.E.). Early on, Peyron, who was aware of the family trees of embalmers, argued that the reference (in *PTor* 1, col. 1, lines 19–20) to "these ἀδελφοί who offer services in the cemeteries" (τῶν τουτῶν ἀδελφῶν τῶν τὰς λειτουργίας ἐν ταῖς νεκρίαις παρεχομένων), as well as the ἀδελφοί mentioned in col. 1, line 11, and col. 6, lines 33–34, involve men who were not all related as brothers, and that the term is here used of fellow members of a guild. See Amedeo Peyron, "Papyri graeci regii musie Aegyptii Taurinensis," *Memorie della reale accademia delle scienze di Torino: Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche* 31 (1827): 68–69; for the family trees, see P. W. Pestman, *The Archive of the Theban Choachytes (Second Century B.C.): A Survey of the Demotic and Greek Papyri Contained in the Archive* (Studia Demotica 2; Leuven: Peeters, 1993), 14–27. L. Mitteis simply assumes that this is another case of a family who engaged in the same occupation as χοαχύται (Choachytenfamilie), and that this refers to real siblings (*Reichsrecht und Volksrecht in den östlichen Provinzen des römischen Kaiserreichs* [1900; reprint, Hildesheim: George Olms, 1963], 48). Ziebarth, Walter Otto, and San Nicolo agree with Peyron's evaluation that in this case at least, and perhaps in *UPZ* II 180a = *PPar* 5 col. 2, line 5, we are likely

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which the head of a military association, the high priest (ἀρχιερεύς), is addressed as "brother" in a first-century B.C.E. letter (*BGU* VIII 1770; 64/63 B.C.E.).[48]

The so-called Sarapeum correspondence from Memphis provides glimpses into relations among those active within the sanctuaries of Sarapis and of Anubis in the second century B.C.E. (see *UPZ* vol. 1 for the papyri). Many letters on papyri have survived concerning these closely associated sanctuaries on the edge of town, letters that shed light on functionaries and administration, as well as the importance of the unofficial religious devotees, κάτοχοι, who were (voluntarily) being "held fast" or "detained" (κατέχω; cf. παρακατέχω) in the service of Sarapis.[49] Most of the correspondence came into the possession of one Ptolemaios, from Macedonia, who was a κάτοχος in the Sarapeum for at least twenty years (from 172 to 152 B.C.E. or beyond). Several of the letters pertain to Ptolemaios's friends, co-religionists, and family, including his actual brothers, Sarapion, Hippalos, and Apollonios (the younger).

Long ago, both Brunet de Presle and Walter Otto pointed to the frequency of "brother" as a title of address in the Sarapeum papyri and suggested that brother terminology was used among those who were "held fast" by Sarapis (the κάτοχοι), who formed a cult association within the Sarapeum at Memphis.[50] Several others have likewise suggested that the κάτοχοι, in particular, formed a closely connected "brotherhood," and some of these scholars suggest a parallelism with the Christian brotherhood.[51] However, Ulrich Wilcken chal-

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witnessing "brothers" as a designation of embalmers who are not all related by blood. See Ziebarth, *Das griechische Vereinswesen*, 100–101; Walter Otto, *Priester und Tempel im hellenistischen Ägypten* (Ancient Religion and Mythology; 1905, 1908; reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1975), 1:104 n. 2; San Nicolo, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 1:33–34 n. 4; cf. MM, 9). Poland (*Geschichte*, 55) instead accepts Mitteis's assumption, and Wilcken (notes to *UPZ* II 162, p. 72) likewise argues that these are simply references to an actual family of embalmers. The controversy will likely continue with these rather unclear references in the two papyri, but it remains possible that, in at least *PTor* 1 (more so than *PPar* 5), fictive brother language is used among members of a guild who are not all actually related.

[48] Cf. Arzt-Grabner, "'Brothers,'" 190, although he misses the "guild" connection here despite appropriately citing San Nicolo's discussion of military associations in Egypt (*Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 1:198–200).

[49] *UPZ* I 8 = *PLond* I 44, lines 18–19, speaks of a κάτοχος as "one of the θεραπευταί who are held fast by Sarapis" (τινα τῶν παρακατεχομένων ὑπὸ τοῦ Σαράπιος θεραπευτῶν). Also see *IPriene* 195 (line 28) and *ISmyrna* 725 (= *CIG* 3163) for a similar use of being "held fast" by Sarapis. For groups of θεραπευταί devoted to Serapis and/or Isis see *IDelos* 2077, 2080–81(second–first centuries B.C.E.); *SIRIS* 318–19 (Kyzikos; first century C.E.); *IMagnSip* 15 (= *SIRIS* 307; second century B.C.E. and second century C.E.); *IPergamon* 338 (= *SIRIS* 314). The term could also be used in reference to devotees of other deities, such as Zeus (cf. *CCCA* I 456, from Sardis).

[50] See Brunet de Presle's notes to *PParis* 42 (= *UPZ* I 64), on p. 308; Otto, *Priester*, 1:124 n. 3 (cf. 1:119 n. 1).

[51] See Adolf Deissmann, *Bible Studies: Contributions, Chiefly from Papyri and Inscriptions,*

lenges the suggestion of widespread sibling language among the κάτοχοι.[52] Wilcken points out that many of the fictive instances of "brother" in the Sarapeum papyri do not certainly involve members of the κάτοχοι addressing one another as "brother," and he goes so far as to state that the titles ἀδελφός and πατήρ have "no religious meaning" in this papyri collection.[53]

Although Wilcken is right that the term "brother" in the Sarapeum papyri is not limited to members of a cult association, he goes too far in dismissing the potential religious and social meanings of this term as an expression of attachment among those who were active or served within the sanctuaries of Anubis and Sarapis: that is, co-religionists or fellow functionaries, though not necessarily members of an unofficial association. Clearly, there is a relatively high occurrence of ἀδελφός as a fictive form of address in the Serapeum papyri as compared to papyri generally. In several cases, there are indications that the terminology is used among those who feel a sense of solidarity within a circle of friends or an organization that served the gods within the sanctuaries (*UPZ* I 61, 62, 64, 69, 71, 72, 109). Thus, for instance, Barkaios, an overseer of the guards at the Anubieum, addresses the younger Apollonios, a guard, as "brother" (*UPZ* I 64 = *PParis* 42; 156 B.C.E.).[54] Barkaios writes to his subordinate, though fellow, functionary in the service of Anubis in order to thank him for his service in reporting prison escapes. Similarly, in another letter the younger Apollonios addresses as "brother" the elder Apollonios, who was then "leader and superintendent of the Anubieum" (ἡγεμών καὶ ἐπιστάτης Ανουβιείου; *UPZ* I 69 = *PParis* 45; 152 B.C.E.). The younger Apollonios's close ties with this leader in the sanctuary of Anubis are further confirmed by the younger Apollonios's letter to Ptolemaios, at about this time, in which the younger Apollonios expresses concern about the well-being of both his actual brother and this elder Apollonios (*UPZ* I 68; 152 B.C.E.). Finally, in the same year, the elder Apollonios addresses as "brother" Ptolemaios, writing to this κάτοχος of Sarapis concerning the younger Apollonios (*UPZ* I 71 = *PParis* 46; 152 B.C.E.).

It is worth mentioning the possibility that some of these correspondents of the younger Apollonios and Ptolemaios were themselves *previously* among the κάτοχοι in the Sarapeum, as was Apollonios in the summer of 158 B.C.E. alongside his actual brother Ptolemaios, who was held fast for over twenty years. Yet

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to the History of the Language, the Literature, and the Religion of Hellenistic Judaism and Primitive Christianity (changes incorporated by A. Grieve; Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1901), 87–88; George Milligan, *Selections from the Greek Papyri, Edited, with Translations and Notes* (1910; reprint, Freeport, NY: Books for Libraries Press, 1969), 22; MM, 9; LSJ, 20.

[52] Wilcken in the notes to *UPZ* I 64, p. 319.

[53] Apollonios on several occasions addresses his brother, Ptolemaios, as "father" in a show of respect (cf. *UPZ* I 65, 68, 70, 93). Apollonios was not a κάτοχος at the time, however, as was Ptolemaios.

[54] For a translation of this letter, see White, *Light from Ancient Letters*, 72–73, no. 39.

even without this scenario, these letters clearly suggest that we should not so quickly disregard the possible social and religious meaning of "brother" to express close ties among these men who were consistently involved in the sanctuaries in a functional role and, likely, as devotees of the gods (Sarapis, Anubis, and others) whom they served together.

Other evidence suggests that fictive sibling terminology was also used among initiates in mysteries (μυστήρια), who sometimes formed associations in Egypt and elsewhere in the Mediterranean—this despite the fact that initiations and the shared experiences among initiates were highly secretive, and our sources tend to respect this secrecy. I have already noted that parental language ("mother" or "father") was used of leaders within associations devoted to the mysteries of Dionysos, the Great Mother, Sarapis, and others, and that the term "papa" was used of functionaries within a group of initiates of Dionysos. Furthermore, a partially damaged third-century C.E. papyrus from Oxyrhynchos contains an oath pertaining to initiation into mysteries. The man pronouncing the oath happens to mention both the leader of the group, "father Sarapion," and his fellow initiates, the "brothers," perhaps "mystical brothers" (μυστικο]ὺς ἀδελφούς) according to Wilcken's reconstruction.[55] In this connection, it is worth mentioning Apuleius's novel, in which the character Lucius, upon initiation into the mysteries of Isis (set at Cenchreae, near Corinth), refers to the priest as his "parent" (*parens*).[56] Similarly, in the second and third centuries, those who were initiated into associations in Italy and the West devoted to Jupiter Dolichenus (Syrian Baʿal), Mithras, and others used both fraternal and paternal language (*fratres*, *pater* in Latin) within the group, but in these particular cases we are witnessing primarily Roman phenomena.[57]

[55] *PSI* X 1162 as read by Ulrich Wilcken, "Urkunden-Referat," *APF* 10 (1932): 257–59. In light of other evidence for sibling and parental terminology in the Greek mysteries, Wilcken too readily takes on Poland's assumption of "Roman influence" here.

[56] Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* 11.25; cf. 11.21. Also see J. Gwyn Griffiths, *Apuleius of Madauros: The Isis-Book (Metamorphoses, Book XI)* (EPRO 39; Leiden: Brill, 1975), 278, 292.

[57] Worshipers of Dolichenus in Rome called their priest "father of the candidates" (*pater candidatorum*) and fellow initiates "brothers" (*fratres*; see *CCID* 274, 373, 375, 376, 381 [second–third centuries C.E.]; Eva Ebel, *Die Attraktivität früher christlicher Gemeinden: Die Gemeinde von Korinth im Spiegel griechisch-römischer Vereine* [WUNT 178; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2004], 205–7). Associations of soldiers devoted to Mithras are quite well known for their use of "father" (*pater*) or "father of the mysteries" (*pater sacrorum*) for their seventh stage of initiation (see *CIL* III 3384, 3415, 3959, 4041; *CIMRM* 623–24; Tertullian, *Apol.* 8). Also see Bömer for further examples from the Latin West, including "brothers" (*fratres*) used among worshipers of Dionysos-Liber (*CIL* VI 467) and Bellona (*CIL* VI 2233; *Untersuchungen*, 176–78; Schelkle, "Bruder," 633; Waltzing, *Étude,* 1:329–30 n. 3). Waltzing mentions one example of *fabri fratres* in connection with a guild in the West (*CIL* V 7487). Also quite well known is the priestly organization of "Arval brothers" (*fratres arvales*) centered in Rome, which was revived by Augustus and drew its membership from the senatorial elites. See Mary Beard, John North, and Simon Price, *Religions of Rome,* vol. 1, *History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 194–96.

Other incidental references to fictive sibling language used among initiates in the Greek mysteries can be cited, some from an earlier era. Although Burkert downplays the notion of community feelings among initiates, he nonetheless acknowledges the use of "brother" among those initiated into the mysteries of Demeter and Kore at Eleusis, near Athens.[58] Thus, for instance, Plato speaks of two men as "brothers" because of their strong friendship arising from their shared participation in both stages ("initiation" and "viewing") of initiation at Eleusis (ξενίξειν τε καὶ μυεῖν καὶ ἐποπτεύειν πραγματεύονται).[59] Several centuries later, Sopatros (Sopater) the rhetor reflects continued use of the term "brother" specifically among those being initiated at Eleusis.[60]

Analogous expressions drawing on the model of the mysteries further confirm this picture. In his second-century treatise on astrology, Vetius Valens addresses the "initiate" in the secrets of astrology as follows: "I entreat you, most honorable brother of mine, along with the others who are initiated . . ." (ὀρκίζω σε, ἀδελφή μου τιμιώτατε, καὶ τοὺς μυσταγωγουμένους; *Anthology* 4.11.11; ca. 170 C.E.). The magical papyri also happen to reflect this practice when, in a prayer, the speaker is directed to refer to fellow devotees in the following manner: "Hail to those to whom the greeting is given with blessing, to brothers and sisters, to holy men and holy women" (*PGM* IV 1135; ca. 300 C.E.).[61]

Turning from initiates to other associations in Roman Egypt, Robert W. Daniel devotes some attention to the practice of familial address within occupational associations, discussing several papyri from the second and third centuries C.E.[62] In one third-century letter from Antinoopolis, the leader (ξυστάρχης) of an athletic association writes to one Andronikos, who is addressed as "brother" both in the external address (verso) and in the text of the letter (*PRyl* IV 604, lines 32–33, as reedited by Daniel).[63] More importantly, all

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[58] Burkert, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, 45, 149 n. 77.

[59] Plato, *Epistles* 333d–e; cf. Plutarch, *Dion* 54.1; Andocides 1.132.

[60] Sopatros, *Division of Questions* 339 (fourth century C.E.), in C. Walz, *Rhetores Graeci* (Stuttgart: J. G. Cottae, 1843), 123.

[61] Trans. W. C. Grese in *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation Including the Demotic Spells* (ed. Hans Dieter Betz; 2nd ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 60. Similarly, a member of a pagan circle worshiping Hermes Trismegistus in the fourth century C.E. (named Theophanes) uses the term "beloved brother" (ἀγαπητὸς ἀδελφός) of his fellows (see S. R. Llewelyn's comments in *NewDocs* VI 25, p. 175; cf. *Corpus Hermetica* 1.32).

[62] Robert W. Daniel, "Notes on the Guilds and Army in Roman Egypt," *BASP* 16 (1979): 37–46.

[63] The first ten lines of the letter are missing. Daniel convincingly shows that the original editors of *PRyl* (C. H. Roberts and E. G. Turner), who suggested the possibility of a Christian (owing to the dominating brother language) or military context (owing to the mention of a ἡγεμών) for the papyrus, were mistaken in reading the verso ("Notes," 39–40). In examining a photograph of the papyrus, Daniel was able to discern clearly what was missed by the original editors, reading

of the names mentioned, no fewer than four other men (some of whom are also termed "friend" [φίλος]), are likewise designated "brother" in the body of the letter: brother Eutolmios (line 13), brother Heraiskos (15), brother Apynchis (28), and brother Theodosios (34). Daniel convincingly shows that we are here witnessing fellow members of an athletic association, not real siblings, being addressed as brothers.[64] Further strengthening this interpretation is another parallel case from Oxyrhynchus. This letter was written from one leader of an athletic guild (ξυστάρχης) to another, who is addressed as a "brother." Two others are likewise called "brother" in the body of the letter, which concerns the affairs of a guild of athletes (*PSI* III 236; third century C.E.).

There is another important, though late, example of such use of familial language within a well-established professional guild of athletes in Rome, which is not discussed by Daniel but is worth mentioning here. The "sacred, athletic, wandering, world-wide association" (ἡ ἱερά ξυστικὴ περιπολιστικὴ οἰκουμένη σύνοδος), which was devoted to the god Herakles, had a significantly long history. Originally based in Asia Minor (probably at Ephesos), the headquarters of this guild (which also had local branches in various locations in the East) was moved to Rome sometime in the second century, probably around 143 C.E.[65] A Greek inscription from the time of Constantine reveals that, at least by this time and likely earlier as well, the members of this "world-wide" organization expressed positive connections with fellow members using familial metaphors. Well-respected members are repeatedly called "our brother" (τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ ἡμῶν) in the inscription and the high priest of the guild is called "our father" (τοῦ πατρὸς ἡμῶν) (*IGUR* 246 = *IG* XIV 956B, lines 11, 12, 14). Such evidence from both Egypt and Rome suggests that the practice of using fictive kinship language within groups of athletes and other guilds may have been more widespread than our limited sources would initially suggest.

Finally, Daniel discusses a second-century papyrus from Egypt that almost

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ξυστάρχης (the *alpha* and *rho* were readily visible and the *eta* and *sigma*, though faint, were also visible), not ξυστοφό[ρος. The former term clearly points to the context of athletic associations, as Daniel shows (cf. San Nicolo, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 2.80). The reference to "my lord the ἡγεμών" in line 12 likely pertains either to the prefect of Egypt or to another leadership position within the athletic guild; this term is commonly attested in associations and organizations elsewhere (cf. *IG* II.2 1993–1995 [Athens; ca. 80 C.E.]; *IGR* I 787 [within a Baccheion of Asians in Thracia]).

[64] Compare another, less-certain case of the use of both "friend" and "brother" within a gymnastic organization at Philai, dating to the Hellenistic era. This inscription mentions a gymnastic association of "fellow ephebes" alongside those who are called "friends" and "brothers" (*OGIS* 189; 89 or 57 B.C.E.). As San Nicolo points out, it is uncertain whether the "brothers" are to be taken literally here, or whether ἀδελφοί is used as a synonym for φίλοι and συνέφηβοι, fellow members of the guild (*Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 1:33–34 n. 4).

[65] See H. W. Pleket, "Some Aspects of the History of Athletic Guilds," *ZPE* 10 (1973): 197–227 on *IGUR* 235–248. Cf. *IEph* 1084, 1089, 1098.

certainly involves undertakers (νεκροτάφοι), the successors of our embalmers (χοαχύται) of the Ptolemaic period.[66] These undertakers of the Roman period were formed into guilds, and this occupation, which involved the transportation, embalming, and burial of the dead, was taken on by both men and women.[67] The letter in question is written from Papsaus to Asklas, who is addressed both as "friend" (φίλος) on the outside address and as "brother" in the letter opening (*PPetaus* 28). In light of the evidence discussed thus far, Daniel seems right in arguing that these are not merely "conventional, meaningless terms of address," but rather reflections of the everyday terminology used among members of these (and other) guilds.[68] According to the body of the letter, Papsaus was in trouble and seeking the help of his fellow undertaker. Papsaus had sent to Asklas the body of a Roman legionary to be sent on to its final destination, but for some reason the body had not reached its final destination. As a result Papsaus was faced with possible disciplinary action by the ἡγεμών, which, as Daniel shows, was most likely the guild president (not a Roman military officer or the provincial prefect in this case). Although partly to blame, here a fellow guild member, as "brother" and "friend," was sought for help.

V. Conclusion

Owing to the nature of our sources, we cannot be sure that fictive sibling language was widespread within associations or that it had the same meaning that "brothers" developed within some Christian circles. Yet what is clear is that many scholars have underestimated the evidence and significance of fictive kinship language within associations and organizations of various kinds (ethnic, cultic, occupational, gymnastic, civic, and other groups) in the Greco-Roman world. Inscriptions from Greece, Asia Minor, and Greek cities of the Danube and Bosporus, as well as papyri from Egypt, suggest that familial language was used in a variety of small-group settings in reference to fellow members as "brothers" or (less often) "sisters," as well as to leaders as "mothers," "fathers," or "papas." The happenstance nature of evidence from epigraphy would suggest that we are catching only momentary glimpses of what was most likely common usage within some other associations about which we happen to know less. In paying more attention to the materials we do have, we begin to see common ground among some associations, synagogues, and Christian congregations in the expression of identity and belonging—this notwithstanding the fact

[66] Cf. Otto, *Priester*, 1:108–10, 2.180 n. 1.
[67] See San Nicolo, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 1:97–100.
[68] Daniel, "Notes," 41.

that it is extremely difficult to measure the relative importance or depth of meaning attached to such familial language in specific instances.

What sorts of social relations and obligations accompanied the metaphorical use of familial language within associations? Although there is little direct information about the meanings that members of associations attached to calling a fellow member "brother," we can nonetheless make some inferences from literary discussions of familial relations, which help to clarify the real-life experiences and expectations that would give meaning to the metaphor or analogy.

Although presenting ideals of family relations from a philosophical perspective, Plutarch's discussion *On Brotherly Love* nonetheless reflects commonly held views that would inform fictive uses of these terms of relation in the Greek world.[69] For Plutarch and others, the ideal sibling relation is marked by "goodwill" (*eunoia*; 481C), and brothers are "united in their emotions and actions" (480C). Foremost is the ideal of solidarity and identification. "Friendship" (φιλία) is one of the strongest analogies that Plutarch can evoke in explaining (in a Platonic manner) the nature of relations among brothers and between parents and children: "For most friendships are in reality shadows, imitations, and images of that first friendship which nature implanted in children toward parents and in brothers toward brothers" (479C–D [LCL]; cf. 491B). Conversely, we have seen that the term "brothers" was a natural way of expressing close social relations among friends in an association.

For Plutarch and others in antiquity, there is a hierarchy of honor (τιμή, δόξα) that should be the basis of familial and other relations. Brothers come before friends: "even if we feel an equal affection for a friend, we should always be careful to reserve for a brother the first place . . . whenever we deal with occasions which in the eyes of the public give distinction and tend to confer honor (δόξαν)" (491B [LCL]). Beyond this, nature and law "have assigned to parents, after gods, first and greatest honor (τιμήν)" and "there is nothing which men do that is more acceptable to gods than with goodwill and zeal to repay favors to those who bore them up" (479F [LCL with adaptations]).

These Greco-Roman family ideals of solidarity, goodwill, affection, friendship, protection, glory, and honor would be the sorts of values that would come to the minds of those who drew on the analogy of family relationships within group settings. When a member of a guild called a fellow "brother," that member was (at times) expressing in down-to-earth terms relations of solidarity, affection, or friendship, indicating that the association was a second home.

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[69] Cf. Aasgaard, *My Beloved Brothers*, ch. 6.