

A SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF AN EGYPTIAN ASSOCIATION AND ITS ENSLAVED MEMBERS (SB 3.7182)*

ABSTRACT

In recent years there has been a marked escalation in the study of Graeco-Roman associations. Useable data for recreating associational groups usually derive from the inscriptions embedded in stone monuments that have survived in the material record. Because data of this kind usually originate from groups with middling economic resources, it is imperative to focus particular attention on any data emerging from groups lower on the socio-economic scale. The second-century B.C.E. papyrus fragments of SB 3.7182 from Philadelphia in Egypt are a prime resource in this regard, surfacing from what must have been one of the most inconspicuous of associations. This article offers a detailed investigation of the general prosopography of the low-level association comprising a few enslaved men. It proposes that ten meetings are evident in the heavily damaged associational ledgers; that the association consisted of enslaved members of three distinct households; that a subscription or epidosis was collected at one meeting; and that we get a rare glimpse of low-level generosity enacted within the association in relation to the payment of membership fees, as well as an extremely rare glimpse of the agency of the enslaved.

Keywords: SB 3.7182; association; Egypt; membership fees; subscriptions; generosity; slaves; enslaved agency

In the Graeco-Roman world, social collectives frequently formed, offering people venues to reinforce their sense of belonging within their social world, their connectivity with others and their own self-worth and significance. Those groups called themselves by different descriptors (for example, θίασοι, ἐκκλησίαι, κοινά, σύνοδοι, *collegia*, *corpora*, *hetaeriae*). Because of the considerable resemblances of those groups (and the relatively inconsequential differences of their self-identifying terms), they are frequently grouped in scholarly parlance under the terms ‘associations’ (in English and French) and ‘Vereine’ (in German). Such groups often played a significant role in the civic life of the Graeco-Roman world. For historians, they offer glimpses of ancient corporate life and how it was organized. In the absence of other robust data, and in order to avoid the imposition of anachronistic views about corporate life in the ancient world, the study of Graeco-Roman associations offers a control on the imaginary of what ancient groups might have looked like, associational or otherwise.

The twenty-first century has seen a flurry of interest in Graeco-Roman associations, with scholarly publications gaining momentum in recent years.¹ These have been

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¹ See R.S. Ascoug, P.A. Harland and J.S. Kloppenborg (edd.), *Associations in the Greco-Roman World* (Waco, TX, 2012, revised 2024); J.S. Kloppenborg and R.S. Ascoug (edd.), *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations and Commentary. Volume 1: Attica, Central Greece, Macedonia, Thrace* (Berlin, 2011); P.A. Harland (ed.), *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations and Commentary. Volume 2: North Coast of the Black Sea, Asia Minor* (Berlin, 2014); J.S. Kloppenborg

supported by various online websites that make associational inscriptions readily available to anyone interested in studying them.² The data afforded by those studies derive most frequently from associations that inscribed their identities on monumental inscriptions, not least honorary or funerary inscriptions. Almost by default, however, those inscribed monuments offer glimpses of associational life at a particular socio-economic status—what we might call ‘middling level’.³ Associational inscriptions in marble and stone testify to a membership that had economic resources sufficient to undertake those monumentalizing initiatives. What has been largely lost to history are data pertaining to associational groups that did not benefit from such economic resources, groups comprising members at the lower end of the socio-economic scale. Consequently, there is a danger that our appreciation of associational group life in the Graeco-Roman world will tend to skew upward, losing a sense of lower-level forms of associational and sub-associational life. This is why it is critical for data from lower-level forms of associational life to be probed for relevance whenever such data can be found. If we can locate data about such groups, it will likely come to us from papyri that have survived the passage of time, often in the sands of Egypt.

This is precisely what is on offer with a selection of papyrus fragments from Philadelphia in the Fayûm region of Egypt. These fragments testify to the existence of a small village club whose members were (predominantly?) enslaved. Not much has been written about this group.⁴ The goal of this article is to catch glimpses of ancient group life

(ed.), *Greco-Roman Associations: Texts, Translations and Commentary. Volume 3: Egypt and North Africa* (Berlin, 2020). A good deal of interest has been generated by scholars finding associations to provide *comparanda* for the study of Jewish groups and early Christ groups in the Roman world. Most recently, see B. Eckhardt and C. Leonhard, *Juden, Christen und Vereine im Römischen Reich* (Berlin, 2018); B. Eckhardt (ed.), *Private Associations and Jewish Communities in the Hellenistic and Roman Cities* (Leiden, 2019); J.S. Kloppenborg, *Christ's Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City* (New Haven, CT, 2019); R. Last and P.A. Harland, *Group Survival in the Ancient Mediterranean: Rethinking Material Conditions in the Landscape of Jews and Christians* (London and New York, 2020); R.S. Ascough, *Early Christ Groups and Greco-Roman Associations: Organizational Models and Social Practices* (Eugene, OR, 2022); R.S. Ascough (ed.), *Christ Groups and Associations: Foundational Essays* (Waco, TX, 2022); B.W. Longenecker (ed.), *Greco-Roman Associations, Deities and Early Christianity* (Waco, TX, 2022).

² See Harland's website of Associations of the Greco-Roman World, at <http://philipharland.com/greco-roman-associations/>; The Copenhagen Associations Project, at <https://ancientassociations.ku.dk/assoc/index.php>; and The Ghent Database of Roman Guilds and Occupation-Based Communities (GDRG), directed by K. Verboven, at <https://gdrug.ugent.be/>.

³ Associations of this kind seem not to have been much of a feature of elite life, except for those elite who acted as patrons of middling groups, where their presence was probably not often required. On ‘the economic middle’ in the Roman world, see W. Scheidel, ‘Stratification, deprivation and quality of life’, in M. Atkins and R. Osborne (edd.), *Poverty in the Roman World* (Cambridge, 2006), 40–59. Scheidel notes (54): ‘[T]here is sufficient evidence in support of the notion of an economic continuum from a narrow elite to a steadily broadening middling group as we move down the resource ladder. Sources ranging from Republican Italy to imperial Egypt and Syria all point in the same direction. It is perfectly possible to reconcile the dominance of a disproportionately affluent elite with the presence of a substantial “middle”.’ See also W. Scheidel and S.J. Friesen, ‘The size of the economy and the distribution of income in the Roman empire’, *JRS* 99 (2009), 61–91; S.J. Friesen, ‘Poverty in Pauline studies: beyond the so-called new consensus’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 26 (2004), 323–61; B.W. Longenecker, ‘Exposing the economic middle: a revised economy scale for the study of early urban Christianity’, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31 (2009), 243–78; further nuanced in B.W. Longenecker, *Remember the Poor: Paul, Poverty and the Greco-Roman World* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2010), 36–59.

⁴ Standard works in the study of these fragments are: C.C. Edgar, ‘Records of a village club’, in *Raccolta di scritti in onore di Giacomo Lumbroso (1844–1925)* (Milan, 1925), 369–76; R. Scholl, *Corpus der ptolemäischen Sklaventexte, Forschungen zur antiken Sklaverei* (Stuttgart, 1990), 1.333–42 (no. 91); Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 155–63. See also R. Last, *The Pauline Church and the Corinthian*

at the low levels of the socio-economic scale. Toward that goal, in what follows I analyse the ledgers of this most inconspicuous of Graeco-Roman associations. Despite the damage to those ledgers, some semblance of the group's socio-economic profile and corporate relationality comes into view, offering us at the same time a glimpse into the world of the enslaved and their agency.

THE GENERAL PROSOPOGRAPHY OF A VILLAGE CLUB IN PHILADELPHIA

Five damaged papyrus fragments (*SB* 3.7182) allow us to catch sight of a village club based in Philadelphia in the Fayûm region of Egypt in the second to first century B.C.E. (probably the late second century B.C.E.).⁵ Despite the significant damage to the papyrus fragments, the ledgers (written in Greek) frequently indicate a conformity of structure in recording the data, starting with the date and location of the meeting, then listing the members in attendance, the guests, the various costs involved and the total expenditure of the meeting. Whereas Kloppenborg proposes that six or seven meetings are evident in the ledgers, I think the number is ten.⁶ In the final section of this article, I provide an English translation of the extant portions of the papyrus fragments, allocating the various lines of the fragments to their respective meetings.

The fragments reveal a group whose meetings were attended by six to eight members, depending on which meeting is in view. Taken together, the ledgers mention the names of ten members (all of them adult males), although no ledger includes them all in a single meeting. The ledgers show the group to have met in various locations: in the local temple of Isis (presumably its dining hall), in the property of a member (that is, Thôrax, perhaps in his workshop or house), in a harness room (σκυεοθήκη [corrected], lines 46 and 79) and in a storehouse (θησαυρός, lines 12 and 62). The group had designated internal officers: Dikaios was appointed as ἱεροποιός (lines 47 and 80; see below for consideration of this term) and Hermias was currently serving as president (ἐπιμελητής, line 15).⁷ Fees were collected from most members to pay for associational meetings, although on two occasions (and presumably all others as well) Hermias the president is explicitly listed as being exempt from membership fees (ἀσύμβολος, lines 58 and 90), probably on the basis of other services he supplied to the group.⁸ On at least two occasions, the ledgers reveal that guests joined the meeting (lines 24–6, 39). The fragments list some costs of some meetings, including a payment for a flute player (αὐλητής, lines 37, 95) at Meetings Four and Nine, as well as a payment for a performer of effeminate schtick (κίναϊδος, line 96) at Meeting Nine.⁹ One of their members was educated enough to write accountancy ledgers for their meetings on papyrus that the

Ekklesiá: *Graeco-Roman Associations in Comparative Context* (Cambridge, 2016), 96–113; Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 78–80.

⁵ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 160 notes the likelihood that it dates to 'after 128 BCE'. The designation 'SB' derives from F.F. Preisigke, F. Bilabel et al. (edd.), *Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Ägypten* (Strasbourg, 1915–).

⁶ On Kloppenborg's proposals for six or seven meetings, see nn. 55–6 below.

⁷ On ἐπιμελητής as the leader of an association, see M. San Nicolò, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen zur Zeit der Ptolemäer und Römer* (Munich, 1972²), 61.

⁸ The ledgers do not mention what foodstuffs were eaten or their costs. Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 214 notes that '[t]he meals of most associations were not especially sumptuous' and consisted generally of 'bread worth 2 asses, four sardines, and wine'. On wine in this association, see below.

⁹ On the κίναϊδος in Egyptian Greek documents, see especially T. Sapsford, 'The wages of effeminacy? *Kinaidoi* in Greek documents from Egypt', *Eugesta* 5 (2015), 103–23. In particular, Sapsford observes: 'κίναϊδος in Greek documents from Egypt refers on the whole to a category of

group had probably purchased for precisely that purpose. It is unclear who the keeper of the ledgers or accountant was (or perhaps who they were).¹⁰ We also have no indication of how the association's common fund was kept and secured.¹¹

Most interpreters think the association was more of a 'festive club' (in C.C. Edgar's words) than a cultic association. But the fact that one of their members is identified as ἱεροποιός caused Westermann to conclude: '[t]he presence of a sacrificing priest in the club indicates a cult club'.¹² Kloppenborg interprets the term as an instance of 'title borrowing' from Athenian cultic associations without the sacrificial content of the term following in tow. For Kloppenborg the term simply means 'manager' in this instance, paralleling its use in other associations where the sacrificial content of the term is evacuated.¹³ While there may well have been a cultic aspect to the gatherings in terms of a shared devotion to a deity (perhaps Isis), most interpreters are probably right to see this group as gathering primarily for purposes of conviviality among friends.¹⁴ The fact that food provisions are not mentioned in the extant ledgers might have resulted from damage to the papyrus fragments.¹⁵ Or perhaps it was the responsibility of the dues-exempt president, Hermias, to provide a few basic foodstuffs for the association meetings of this small group—a few loaves of bread and some sardines. Or perhaps this group went without meals on occasion, a fiscally conservative practice evident in some other modest associations.¹⁶

In 1925, Edgar (the first scholar to interpret the newly-discovered fragments) proposed that the members of this association were probably all enslaved. He noted that three of the names look suspiciously like slave names: Bakchos (named after the deity Dionysus or Bacchus), Karpos ('The Fruitful One') and Kamax ('Bean Pole', which may be a commentary on his skinny physique).¹⁷ These are, he noted, 'fanciful names of the sort that people bestowed on their slaves'.¹⁸ It is true, he continued,

professionals who, from their close association with flute players in the papyri, can be understood as performers of some description . . . They appear to be in a more advantageous position than the flautists who accompany them . . . and may be part of a wider tradition of effeminate performers' (120). According to Sapsford, 'for mixed audiences of villagers in the chora, including slaves, it was a special event to see a *kinaidos* perform' (111). He also points out that the word κιναιδός connotes sexual acts only in literary sources beyond Egypt; within Egypt itself, there is no indication that the word carried connotations of that kind. See his broader study, *Performing the Kinaidos: Unmanly Men in Ancient Mediterranean Cultures* (Oxford, 2022). See also J.N. Adams, 'The semantics of *kinaidos/cinaedus*: from Egyptian papyri to Firmicus Maternus', *MD* 87 (2021), 131–239. Analysing Greek documents from Egypt, Adams observes (page 142): 'while *kinaidoi* in these documents were paid performers, the nature of their performing remains uncertain'.

¹⁰ The best guess regarding the identity of the accountant (judging from the meeting ledgers) are Karpos, Psammētichos or even Hermias (see also n. 27 below). For a close comparison, see *P.Tebt.* 3.894. As R. Last and S. Rollens note with regard to those papyrus fragments ('Accounting practices in *P.Tebt.* III/2 894 and Pauline groups', *EC* 5 [2014], 441–74, at 450): 'it seems as though individuals from within the group (not hired scribes) were responsible for this account'.

¹¹ Perhaps one member was in charge of a small treasury box. Last (n. 4), 144 suggests that this may have been the case for the association of *P.Tebt.* 3.894.

¹² W.L. Westermann, 'Entertainment in the villages of Graeco-Roman Egypt', *JEA* 18 (1932), 16–27, at 21. Last (n. 4), 102 also takes ἱεροποιός as referring to a member who makes sacrifices on behalf of the association.

¹³ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 79; Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 162.

¹⁴ Schöll (n. 4), 340 lists three others who hold this view.

¹⁵ Contrast *P.Tebt.* 3.894, which includes mention of a midday meal (ἄριστον; fr. 4, recto, col. i, line 4) and, elsewhere, an evening supper (δείπνον; fr. 4, recto, col. i, line 6; fr. 6, recto, col. ii, line 8).

¹⁶ See Last and Harland (n. 1), 96. If this association did not prioritize meals, it might be because their meals were provided within their respective households instead; see discussion of their households below.

¹⁷ As suggested by Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 159.

¹⁸ Edgar (n. 4), 369.

that any one of them, taken separately, would not necessarily stamp a man; no doubt a *Kάρπος* might occasionally be met with in the higher ranks of society, at least in Roman times. But when we find a whole group of men with such names, the chances are that they belonged to the menial class.

There is more to support Edgar's view on this. Kloppenborg adds another name to the list of servile names: Thibrôn, which means 'The Delicate One', possibly referencing his physique or perceived character.¹⁹ Alternatively Thibrôn may have been named after the Spartan general under Alexander the Great in the fourth century B.C.E., again suggesting the possibility that we have an enslaved member of the group, since slaves were sometimes named after historical persons and heroes. (As we will see below, this interpretation of Thibrôn's name is supported by other indications within the ledgers.) Other names are also likely to be servile: 'Dikaios' ('The Just One') and 'Thôrax' ('Chesty'). Slaves were often given names (often humorous or ironic) reflecting certain qualities or physical appearances, as in the case of these names. And not only Bakchos but also Hermias is named in honour of a deity, a common trait of slave naming. The same may be true for Dêmêtrios/Dêmas, whose name derives from the deity Demeter. Consequently, an overwhelming majority of the members' names are likely to indicate servile status; only a few are ambiguous.²⁰

With members being enslaved, each must have offered financial contributions to the association from his own *peculium*—financial resources that the enslaved were often allowed to accumulate for purposes of payment (including the prospect of eventually purchasing their freedom).²¹ There is no indication that the members of this association consisted of slaves from within the same household, however. If it is right to interpret line 31 (ἐν Θώρακι αὐ[τ...]) as referring to the location that Thôrax offered the group for their meeting (that is, his residence or workshop), this might suggest that the main location for Thôrax's activity was different than for some other members, with others arriving at meetings from different locations.²² Meanwhile, two ledgers use the phrase διὰ ἱεροποιοῦ Δικαίου, 'through Dikaios the manager' (lines 47, 79–80), which R. Scholl interprets to mean that Dikaios made the arrangements for the group to meet in the location mentioned in the previous phrase,

¹⁹ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 159.

²⁰ One of the group's guests was free born—a certain 'Hôriôn son of Hôriôn' whom we see in Meeting Two (line 26). If Hôriôn was brought to a gathering of the association for recruitment purposes, the group may not have imagined itself as necessarily a collective solely of enslaved people. His fellow guest was Thibrôn, who later went on to become a fee-paying member of the group, so Hôriôn may also have been seen as a potential member. The fact that he was placed below another guest (and one probably enslaved) suggests that he was neither the patron nor a potential patron of the group. In any case, if the association was attempting to recruit Hôriôn as a member, the effort seems to have been unsuccessful, since Hôriôn does not appear in the ledgers of any of the subsequent meetings. Alternatively, perhaps Hôriôn was not being recruited but was simply invited to attend as a way to bring in an extra payment (without increasing the amount of wine purchased). For other interpretations of Hôriôn's presence at this meeting, see n. 32 below.

²¹ See R. Gamauf, 'Peculium: paradoxes of slaves with property', in M. Schermaier (ed.), *The Position of Roman Slaves: Social Realities and Legal Differences* (Berlin, 2023), 87–124; E.E. Cohen, *Roman Inequality: Affluent Slaves, Businesswomen, Legal Fictions* (Oxford, 2023), 49–82. S.R. Joshel, *Slavery in the Roman World* (Cambridge, 2010), 128 lists some (but not all) of the initiatives a slave with a *peculium* could undertake: 'buying their freedom, purchasing a tombstone, acquiring food or clothes, or paying for visits to prostitutes'.

²² For the interpretation of line 31 as Thôrax's residence or workshop, see Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 158 and 161. Compare a similar construction in *P.Tebt.* 3.894, where we find the houses or workshops of associational members referenced four times as the locations of meetings: fr. 2 lines 7, 45; fr. 9 line 15.

the harness room.²³ If this is right, it might suggest that Dikaios arranged for the space to be available to the association because the harness room was included within the orbit of his responsibilities as a slave within a household. I propose below that the association seems to assemble enslaved members from three subgroups (and in fact, three different households), and Thôrax and Dikaios are embedded in two different subgroups within the association. All this suggests that the members of this association were not all enslaved to a common enslaver.

Since the ledgers reference 270 copper drachmas three times (lines 2, 38, 39), and one of those occurrences references payment for a guest to attend a meeting (line 39), the group had probably determined that fee-paying members needed to contribute 270 copper drachmas per meeting, a rather insignificant amount (less than half of one silver drachma in the late second century B.C.E.). None the less, the ledgers depict a group in a state of some economic flux. For instance, although the group met at times in a harness room and a storeroom (Meetings Two, Six, Seven and Nine, lines 12, 45–6, 62, 79), it also met in the temple of Isis on one occasion (Meeting Five, line 43)—presumably in the dining room attached to the temple, which would have involved a rental expenditure.²⁴ Moreover, there were occasions when the group had enough resources to pay for entertainment (that is, a flute player for Meetings Four and Nine, and an effeminate performer also for Meeting Nine). Similarly, at two meetings (Meetings Four and Eight) the association could afford to drink only *τρούξι*, a kind of unfermented grape juice (lines 40, 77), while at three meetings (Meetings Seven, Nine and Ten) they purchased wine for amounts that are no longer extant in the ledgers (lines 70, 94, 112). A *keramion* (or ‘pottery jar’) of wine would have cost an average of around 2,450 copper drachmas in the Fayûm at this time.²⁵ Another association from around this same time (known from *P.Tebt.* 3.894, dated to 114 or 113 B.C.E.) lists various purchases of a *keramion* of wine, costing various amounts: 3,000, 3,400 and 4,000 [twice] copper drachmas. Even on a conservative estimate, the Philadelphia association of enslaved men spent over 2,000 copper drachmas for wine on each of the three occasions where wine is mentioned on the ledgers. For the purchase of a *keramion* of unfermented grape juice, however, the association paid only 50 copper drachmas on one occasion (line 77) and 100 copper drachmas on another (line 40).²⁶ These mixed signals within the data (that is, differing locations, entertainments and provisions) suggest a group whose economic profile had some fluidity.

²³ See Scholl (n. 4), 342.

²⁴ Edgar (n. 4) makes nothing of this venue in his consideration of the prosopography of the group.

²⁵ K. Maresch, *Bronze und Silber. Papyrologische Beiträge zur Geschichte der Währung im ptolemäischen und römischen Ägypten bis zum 2. Jahrhundert n. Chr.* (Opladen, 1996), 189. The Egyptian bronze or copper drachma devalued significantly in relation to the silver drachma over the span of 200 years. According to T. Reekmans (‘Monetary history and the dating of Ptolemaic papyri’, in L. Cerfaux and W. Peremans (edd.), *Studia Hellenistica* 5 [Leuven, 1948], 15–43), from 220–210 B.C.E., one silver drachma was equivalent to 2 copper drachmas; from 210–183 B.C.E., it rose to 60 copper drachmas; from 183–173 B.C.E., 120 copper drachmas; from 173–130 B.C.E., 240 copper drachmas; and from 130–30 B.C.E. (the most likely time for the date of this papyrus), 480 copper drachmas. The value of copper drachmas recovered, to rough parity with the silver drachma, in C.E. 30. For a similar reconstruction with slight differences, see S. von Reden, *Money in Classical Antiquity* (Cambridge, 2010), 151.

²⁶ If a *keramion* could hold roughly ten litres, the purchase of a single *keramion* of wine would have provided generous amounts of alcohol for the eight members of Meeting Nine or the six members of Meeting Ten (although it should be noted that ancient wines would have had a considerably lower alcohol content than modern fermentation processes achieve). By comparison, *P.Tebt.* 3.894 shows one *keramion* supplying wine for twenty-two members on one occasion (fr. 2, recto, col. i, line 6) and twenty members on another occasion (fr. 2, verso, col. ii, line 44). For the estimate that one *keramion* was roughly 7 litres, see D. Rathbone, *Economic Rationalism and Rural Society in Third-Century A.D.*

Being a low-grade dining club comprising enslaved members, it is unlikely that this group carried out any of the public-facing activities that characterized many associations with better financial reserves. They probably did not process throughout the city as a collective, for instance, or function as a funerary insurance club (since any funerary provision for slaves would have been handled by the householders of their respective households). They probably did not own a rental property and extract an income from that investment, as some of the better-off associations did. This club was probably predominately inward facing and insignificant within its larger cultural setting.

RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN THE LEDGERS

What do the ledgers indicate regarding relationality within this association of enslaved men? Some aspects of the ledgers are inconsequential with regard to this question. For instance, the ledgers reveal nothing about rules determining the members' behaviours and practices, or about fines for contravening those rules. These data might have originally appeared in the ledgers and been lost to us through damage to the papyrus. Or perhaps those matters were discussed but not written. But as things stand, the ledgers offer no evidence of behavioural expectations or penalties for compliance failure.

Several other aspects are of interest. First, there is no evidence of an external patron. This lacuna might also be an instance of data not surviving over the millennia. It would be unsurprising, however, if this low-level association of enslaved members had failed to attract patronal interest. Perhaps this association did not benefit from any economic and reputational advantages that came from being associated with a person of some civic reputation.

Second, the ledgers show a remarkable stability in prioritizing the association leader. Hermias the president always appears first in the lists that are well preserved (lists for Meetings One, Two, Six, Seven [damaged after the first four entries], Nine and Ten). Although he is not listed as an associational leader, Bakchos is always placed second in the lists that he appears in (Meetings Two, Six, Seven, Nine and Ten). Perhaps he is a previous president or the president elect.²⁷

Third, apart from prioritizing the leader, those lists generally do not show an overt concern to rank the ordinary members in a list of incremental status. There are some indicators of subtle ranking, for reasons that will be explained below. None the less, position switching is frequent in the ledgers. For instance, in Meetings One and Six, Psammētichos is listed above Karpos by two or more places (lines 5 and 7, 52 and 56), but in Meetings Two, Nine and Ten he is listed after Karpos by two places (lines 19 and 21, 85 and 87, 106 and 108). In ledgers across the board, Kamax is listed second, fourth, fifth and sixth; Dikaïos is listed fourth, sixth, seventh and eighth; Karpos is listed fourth, fifth,

Egypt: The Heroninos Archive and the Appianus Estate (Cambridge, 1991), 479. For the estimate that one *keramion* was either 9.72 litres (in one size) or 12.96 litres (in another size), see R.S. Bagnall, 'Practical help: chronology, geography, measures, currency, names, prosopography, and technical vocabulary', in R.S. Bagnall (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology* (Oxford, 2009), 179–93, at 188.

²⁷ He might even be the accountant, the 'treasurer' (ταμίως, as in *IG* II² 1368 and elsewhere) or the 'administrator' (ἀρτυτήρ, as in *IG* XII³ 330) who receives the contributions, makes distributions and keeps the ledgers (as pointed out to me by Zen Hess). Bakchos is not included in the list of contributors to the special collection of the first extant meeting, however. Since it is unlikely that he was present at that meeting but failed to contribute to the collection, someone other than Bakchos must have acted as the accountant at that meeting, and perhaps (all?) others as well. See also n. 10 above.

seventh and eighth. Even the ledger that seems to record the contributions of the members (lines 1–8) does not rank the members by the size of their contribution. Status differentials pertaining to the individual members is not a matter of concern within the ledgers.

Fourth, there is some indication that subgroups existed within the larger association. Furthermore, as we will see, there is a consistent placement of one of those subgroups at the top of the membership lists. Three such subgroup relationships are likely.

- The ledgers indicate two meetings when both Karpos and Thôrax were present (Meetings One and Ten), and each ledger for those meetings lists their names ‘alongside’ each other (lines 6–7, 106–7). Although this might simply be random coincidence, there are other instances of the same sort of thing in the ledgers, enough to suggest that they cannot all simply be random.
- Dikaïos and Psammêtichos are listed in the extant ledgers of four meetings (Meetings One, Two, Six and Nine) and they appear alongside each other on each of those four ledgers (with Psammêtichos listed first in three of those instances, lines 21–2, 52–3, 87–8; contrast lines 4–5). In fact, the ledgers for three meetings (Meetings Two, Six and Nine) also list Kamax as a participant, and he consistently appears just above Psammêtichos and Dikaïos in those lists (lines 20–2, 51–3, 86–8). This is possibly a three-person subgroup within the association. But if Kamax is included in this subgroup, Kaiês should also be understood as part of it. His name appears between Kamax and the pairing of Dikaïos and Psammêtichos in the ledger for Meeting One (lines 2–5), allowing us to imagine this subgroup to have comprised four people in that meeting. But Kaiês drops out of the extant ledgers after that meeting. From this we can deduce that a subgroup of four members in the first extant meeting (Kamax, Kaiês, Psammêtichos and Dikaïos) became a subgroup of three members in subsequent meetings, with Kaiês apparently dropping out of the association for some reason.²⁸
- Bakchos and Dêmas (or Dêmêtrios) appear next to each other in the ledgers of three meetings (Two, Six and Ten; lines 17–18, 49–50, 104–5). In two other meetings (Seven and Nine), their names are separated by that of Thibrôn (lines 64–6, 82–4), who was a guest in Meeting Two (line 25; he does not appear in the ledgers of Meetings Six and Ten). It is possible that Bakchos and Dêmas/Dêmêtrios were a subgroup of this association, bringing Thibrôn as their guest to Meeting Two, with Thibrôn later joining the association, resulting in a three-person subgroup within the association subsequently.

The only member whom I have not yet placed in a relational subgroup is Hermias, but it is not hard to see where he belongs in this regard. Unless he is the only one who is not part of a subgroup, it would seem that Hermias belongs to the third subgroup listed above (comprising Bakchos, Dêmas/Dêmêtrios and Thibrôn). There are two reasons to think this. First, five of the ledgers consistently position members of that group directly after Hermias’ name. Second, Hermias and the other three from that subgroup are the only members of the group whose enslaved names derive from the names of Greek deities or

²⁸ The possible reasons are not hard to imagine: financial restrictions, death, or being sold to another enslaver (assuming he too had been enslaved). It is tempting to think that Kaiês’ extraordinarily large contribution in the first recorded meeting (2,045 drachmas) may have something to do with his knowledge that he was being sold in the near future. In that situation, with a slave unable to use his *peculium* to purchase his freedom from his current enslaver, he might have decided to rid himself of the *peculium* altogether, lest his next enslaver should simply acquire it for himself/herself, to recoup some of the cost of the purchase.

historical persons.²⁹ This suggests that we are not simply dealing with friendship groups of some kind but, instead, with household groups. These four members, and only these four members within a single subgroup, have slave names that exhibit the naming preference of their common enslaver.

These data suggest that the association had combined sub-centres of relationality within its larger umbrella, with slaves from three different households coming together in an association created for purposes of networked conviviality.³⁰ Each meeting with extant lists of attendees had enslaved representatives from all three households. To see this most easily, it will be helpful to name the three households, identify their members and list the number of participants from each household for the five meetings for which we have reliable listings of members in attendance. These are the households, differentiated and with members listed.

- Household 1, four members: Hermias, Bakchos, Dêmas/Dêmêtrios and Thibrôn
- Household 2, four members: Dikaïos, Psammêtichos, Kamax, Kaiês
- Household 3, two members: Karpos, Thôrax

The number of attendees per household at the five meetings are as follows:³¹

- Meeting One: one from household 1; four from household 2; two from household 3
- Meeting Two: three from household 1 (plus one guest); three from household 2; one from household 3
- Meeting Six: three from household 1; three from household 2; one (or two, if the name in the lacuna belongs to this household, as is likely; see below) from household 3
- Meeting Nine: four from household 1; three from household 2; one from household 3
- Meeting Ten: three from household 1; one from household 2; two from household 3

This consistency of representation suggests that the association sought to ensure that enslaved members of each of the three households were present at each of the meetings.

Although the ledgers do not rank individual members from high status to low status, and often switch the positions of individual members in relation to each other, each ledger with reliable listings places members from household 1 at the top of the lists. After that, there is no consistency in household ranking. Here is the ordering of the households in the same ledgers listed above:

- Meeting One: household 1; household 2; household 3
- Meeting Two: household 1; household 3; household 2
- Meeting Six: household 1; household 2; household 3
- Meeting Nine: household 1; household 3; household 2
- Meeting Ten: household 1; household 3; household 2

²⁹ H. Solin, *Die stadtrömischen Sklavennamen: ein Namenbuch*, 3 vols. (Stuttgart, 1996), 1.21–30, 2.239–312.

³⁰ For an imaginative reconstruction of this sort of thing, see S.R. Joshel and L. Hackworth Petersen, *The Material Life of Roman Slaves* (Cambridge, 2014). They repeatedly identify temporary places in ancient urban sites (especially in Pompeii) where slaves might have been able to '[connect] with slaves from other households' (150), illustrating networks of interconnectivity between slaves of different households and commercial enterprises, as well as offering the occasional glimpse of enslaved agency beyond the boundaries of the household.

³¹ The ledgers of Meeting Seven lists four members from household 1, but the membership list is damaged after that.

Household 1 takes precedent in all the ledgers. Perhaps this reflects the prioritizing of the household in which Hermias was enslaved, since he was serving as the current president of the association.³²

ECONOMIC SUBSCRIPTIONS

The ledgers of the first meeting are the only place in the fragments where we have a full list of members' contributions. At that meeting, the six listed members contributed varying amounts (lines 1–10):

Member	Payment (in copper drachmas)
Kamax	270
Karpos	365
Psammêtichos	385
Dikaïos	680
Thôrax	800
Kaiês	2045

It is hard to see any arithmetic rhyme or reason in these numbers. The disparity of contributions requires consideration.

Perhaps the disparity is explained if we imagine the contributions to include payments for amounts unpaid on previous meetings, with past shortfalls being offset by increased contribution on this occasion. While there are instances of this sort of thing in the associational database, this option is unlikely in this instance. It would mean that all fee-paying members in attendance had been in arrears prior to this meeting.³³ Having a few members in arrears might be conceivable; having all members in arrears is less than likely, especially for an association with such inauspicious resources to begin with.³⁴ Moreover, we would expect the ledgers to be more explicit in this regard, making it clear how much of each contribution pertained to an outstanding balance or referencing earlier debts specifically. We see specifics of that kind in the ledgers of a late-second century B.C.E. association in Tebtynis (known to us from *P.Tebt.* 3.894), with one member having an outstanding balance of 640 drachmas, a fine of 130 drachmas, which 'brings his debt to 770' drachmas.³⁵ The accountant of *SB* 3.7182 does this sort of itemization elsewhere

³² It is tempting in this regard to imagine Hôriôn son of Hôriôn as being a freeborn member within that same household, since his appearance within the ledgers is so anomalous. Was he a one-off visitor from the leading household of the association? The placement of his name beneath that of Thibrôn (himself probably enslaved) problematizes this possibility. On the other hand, since Hôriôn was a freeman, his presence in an associational meeting looks completely out of keeping with the character of the association. Each interpretative possibility is vulnerable. Perhaps he was simply a guest, for purposes of adding an extra payment to offset the meeting's expenses (as suggested in note 20 above).

³³ The possible exception is Kamax, whose payment was the lowest and therefore may not have included a payment top-up. But as noted below, the ledgers do not seem to list the payments of ordinary membership fees, even where there was space to do so; consequently, if Kamax had paid only an ordinary membership fee of 270 drachmas with no top-up amount, that would not have been listed here. This point requires the argumentation of the next few paragraphs.

³⁴ We would also expect to see some arithmetic proportionality in the contributions, but we do not. (The closest we get to that is multiplying the 680 drachmas of Dikaïos by three, which is 2040, five fewer drachmas than the contribution of Kaiês.)

³⁵ *P.Tebt.* 3.894, fr. 12, recto, col. ii, line 10; translation from Last and Rollens (n. 10), 473. See also fr. 3, verso, col. i, lines 12–13; fr. 3, verso, col. i, lines 12–13; and fr. 4, verso, col. ii, line 19. According

in the ledgers, noting the specifics of Psammêtichos' payment for a particular expense of a meeting. In this light, we would also expect the accountant to have taken note that these varied payments in Meeting One included extra amounts to cover previous deficits. No such notes are entered. For these reasons, these varied contributions listed in the ledgers of Meeting One probably do not reflect previously unpaid membership fees.

These variegated payments are unlikely to reflect a stratified membership fee structure.³⁶ Dikaios is paying almost twice as much as Karpos; Thôrax is paying almost twice as much as Psammêtichos; Kaiês is paying roughly two and a half times as much as Thôrax, three times more than Dikaios, five times more than Psammêtichos and six times more than Karpos. Such vast disparities in contribution would probably not be sustainable as fixed amounts for a group expecting to exist over the long term. Moreover, as Last notes, these are not membership fees 'since these payments amount to much more than the club's typical banquet expenditures'.³⁷ It is unlikely, then, that these payments reflect a viable payment structure for participation in the association's regular meetings.

More likely, this ledger indicates voluntary contributions paid by different members to the association, according to their economic means, on one occasion. This suggests that these payments comprised an *epidosis* or 'subscription'—a collection for some specific purpose beyond the ordinary membership dues.³⁸

In associations, subscriptions of this kind were usually initiated to repair or purchase associational building, to buy corporate burial plots (see below), or to resource wine for associational meetings (see below). If the ledgers of the first meeting of the Philadelphian association pertain to a specific subscription, that would explain a curious feature of the fragments: that is, there are no other full lists of members' contributions—even in the relatively full ledgers for Meetings Two, Six, Seven, Nine and Ten, where there is space on the papyrus for detailing contribution amounts. Evidently the accountant(s) of these ledgers did not record the ordinary payments for meetings, presumably because all the fee-paying members paid the same amounts on those occasions (probably 270 drachmas).³⁹ But on one occasion (the first extant meeting), we glimpse a range of contributions listed that are best understood as voluntary contributions to a particular subscription.⁴⁰ Although the enslaved members of this association could not pool their social reputations to much effect, they could at least pool some small amounts from their personal resources, to shore up the social capital of the association in which they were embedded.

Other associational records indicate similar subscription initiatives. A first-century association in Egypt (precise location unknown) kept a papyrus ledger of payments made by its members (all male donkey-drivers) whose donations were not monthly membership fees *per se* but were given specifically for the purchase of wine used in

to Last and Rollens (n. 10), 448, these ledgers demonstrate 'that debts [and fines] were meticulously recorded and paid back'.

³⁶ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 236 takes *SB* 3.7182 to indicate 'a sliding scale of contributions' per meeting, which seems unlikely.

³⁷ Last (n. 4), 101 n. 80.

³⁸ On associational subscriptions, see Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 48, 245–64; Last and Harland (n. 1), 119–34.

³⁹ Last and Rollens (n. 10), 449 n. 28 note that in *P.Tebt.* 3.894 the leaders of the association 'were responsible, collectively, for funding a meeting "budget" in addition to regular member contributions', with 'each officer [paying] what he could on a given occasion, so long as they achieved the total budget as a group'.

⁴⁰ Kamax decided to contribute the amount linked to the cost of an ordinary meeting. Other members went above that amount.

the associational meals (*P.Athen.* 41). Those contributions were of differing amounts. Similarly, an association on the island of Rhodes erected a limestone monument listing the various contributions of over 30 members, sometimes also on behalf of family members (*SEG* 39.737; from 185 B.C.E.). The fund (ἔρανος) had been established to purchase a plot of land for the corporate burial of associational members. Twenty-five members contributed five drachmas, but others contributed more (20, 30, 50, 150, 250, 280 drachmas).⁴¹ In these examples, associational members gave a basic amount to cover the costs involved in meeting together but also contributed an additional amount to improve the prospects of the association.⁴² Those amounts given for those extra subscriptions varied significantly.

This is precisely the situation reflected in the ledgers of the first meeting of the Philadelphian association of *SB* 3.7182. Unlike the Rhodesian association, the association of enslaved men from Philadelphia did not have the resources to list their contributions in monumental form. Nor were their contributions given to purchase a plot for purposes of common burial. We should imagine that the additional contributions listed on the ledger of the first meeting of *SB* 3.7182 were subscriptions to enhance the group's future meetings, perhaps with the provision of wine instead of unfermented grape juice, or to provide additional forms of entertainment (a flute player and a performer), or to meet in the Temple of Isis rather than in a harness room or storehouse, or perhaps to fund the participation of guests.⁴³ Perhaps the association considered 270 drachmas to be the minimum payment required to sustain the association at the level it deemed most appropriate to its purposes. But beyond those membership fees, the association benefitted from this fund-raising subscription (and others like it?), provided by members offering extra amounts to the common fund, according to their economic means. This allowed the association to go beyond the basics in one way or another (e.g. quality of entertainment, location and provisions, and perhaps paying for invited guests).

Unlike the Rhodesian association noted above, the differences in members' contributions were not externalized to the public on a monument, explicitly honouring those who gave more. If the Philadelphian association engaged in some ceremony of recognition linked to the level of contribution (perhaps offering honorific praise and applause when the various amounts were donated to the common fund), it was an internal matter, shared among them alone.⁴⁴

⁴¹ The amounts offered by this group and by the association evident in *SB* 3.7182 are both listed in drachmae, but they derive from somewhat different time periods (early vs late second century B.C.E.), may be different coinage (copper vs silver drachmae) and derive from different locations. We cannot, then, compare the amounts donated without complex analysis of these variables.

⁴² Last and Harland (n. 1), 125: special collections 'were sometimes done in addition to and apart from regular membership payments'. The same estimate is reflected in Kloppenborg's assessment of *P.Teht.* 3.894 (n. 1 [2020]), 183: 'There appear to be two different classes of contributions: one to support the monthly (?) dinner . . . and a second form of contribution [i.e. an *epidosis*] . . . to the club's treasury.'

⁴³ We do not have much data to interpret possible correlations between the drink supplied and the meeting locations. Neither of the ledgers for meetings when unfermented grape juice was supplied (Meetings Four and Eight) indicate a location. And the ledgers of the meeting held in the temple of Isis (Meeting Five) do not offer evidence of the drink enjoyed on that occasion. We know, however, that at times the association enjoyed wine in undistinguished locations (i.e. the storeroom of Meeting Seven and the harness room of Meeting Nine).

⁴⁴ A fresco from the tomb of Gaius Vestorius Priscus in Pompeii shows him being lauded by a group of those assembled around him. The scene could well be depicting associational members honouring one of their internal benefactors. See B.W. Longenecker, *In Stone and Story: Early Christianity in the Roman World* (Grand Rapids, MI, 2020), 247, fig. 19.8.

INTRA-ASSOCIATIONAL GENEROSITY

Within this kind of corporate ethos, it is important to consider Karpos' payment at the sixth recorded meeting. He is listed as having paid twice (δὶς τα]γέντες, reconstructed; lines 55–6).⁴⁵ This is probably not to be interpreted as the sole instance of a member paying for the arrears of a previous meeting (something that we expect would have been specifically noted by the accountant, to ensure that the ledgers were in order). Instead, Karpos paid the costs for someone else to attend that meeting—either a guest (as Edgar and Kloppenborg believe) or another member who presumably had temporarily fallen on hard times.⁴⁶

The second of these is the most likely scenario. The mention of Karpos' second payment appears in the section where members are listed, toward the start of the sixth meeting's ledger. Contrast this with the placement of Psammêtichos' payment of 270 drachmas in the ledgers of the fourth meeting. That payment was not the dues covering his own participation in the meeting. Instead, it appears in the part of the ledger that details the meeting's expenses; specifically, Psammêtichos seems to have paid for the flute player to attend the meeting (a payment that did not come out of the common fund of the association).⁴⁷ We can speculate, then, that Psammêtichos' name would have appeared twice on the original ledgers of this meeting. He was first listed toward the beginning of the ledger, in the list of members who attended the meeting, a list no longer extant; his name appears again toward the end of the ledger in the extant list of expenses and payments for that meeting.

This helps us to interpret Karpos' double payment. The fact that Karpos' second payment is mentioned toward the start of the sixth meeting's ledger suggests that he paid for another member (not a guest) to attend—presumably a member who could not afford the payment for that meeting. Payments for guests appear at the bottom of the ledgers (as in Meetings Two and Four). Had Karpos paid for a guest, that payment would have been registered at the end of the meeting's ledger, like Psammêtichos' second payment of Meeting Four. It seems, then, that Karpos paid the membership fee for one of the regular members of this association.⁴⁸

We can make an educated guess as to the identity of the person who benefitted from Karpos' generosity. The list of members who attended that sixth meeting is fairly full. We are told that eight members were in attendance, but only seven names are extant, with a vacant line (line 54) just above the two lines that refer to Karpos as paying twice

⁴⁵ Here I follow Edgar (n. 4), 375 and Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 158, 160–1, who think that Karpos is the one who paid twice. The member whose name is missing on line 54 could be the one who paid twice, rather than Karpos, but that is a relatively insignificant matter.

⁴⁶ For the interpretation that the additional payment was for a guest, see Edgar (n. 4), 375 and Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 161.

⁴⁷ These expenses included the cost of the flute player (for which Psammêtichos paid 270 drachmas, lines 37–8) and guests (line 39, with one mentioned and the other implied), the cost of unfermented grape juice (line 40) and other costs now lost to us (in material lost between lines 34 and 35, as well as lost in the missing details of lines 35–36), just prior to the calculation of the total expenses for the meeting (line 41).

⁴⁸ It is possible that Karpos made the extra payment to prevent a fine from being incurred against the other member. In some associations, the non-payment of meeting dues resulted in a fine of twice the original amount (*SEG* 31 (1981), §122; *SB* 1.4549, pointed out to me by Z. Hess). In those associations, the non-paying member would need to make a triple payment at the subsequent meeting—the dues for the previous meeting, the fine for non-payment and the dues for the current meeting. Perhaps Karpos' extra payment prevented the non-paying member from being subjected to a fine of 270 drachmas at the subsequent meeting.

(lines 55–6). Other members who attended were Hermias, Bakchos, Dêmétrios, Kamax, Psammêtichos and Dikaïos. There are only three members who are listed elsewhere who might be candidates for the vacant line: Kaiês, Thibrôn and Thôrax. Of these, Thôrax is the most likely option. Kaiês disappears from the extant ledgers beyond the first extant meeting, so of the three people, he is the least likely. The other two options each seem to be aligned with a household subgroup, as noted above—Thibrôn forming a subgroup with (and initially the guest of) Bakchos and Dêmas and Thôrax forming a subgroup with Karpos. In this light, it seems most likely that Karpos paid the fee for Thôrax, presumably because Thôrax himself was unable to pay on that occasion.⁴⁹

In his recent work on associations in the Graeco-Roman world, Kloppenborg highlights two aspects of the social function of associational fees. First, associational fees were part of a membership system intended to inspire trust within associations. Associational members needed to know that they could rely on other members not to be freeloaders depleting the common fund.⁵⁰ Second, making payments to an association in which one was a member would generally have heightened a member's commitment to that association. The more people commit resources to something, the more attached to it they become.⁵¹ These are important components to include in any calculus of the social functions of associational fees.

We have seen no reason to think that any members of this low-level association were freeloaders. Their membership dues bonded them in corporate commitments. But the ledgers of this village club highlight another aspect of ancient associational life. They suggest that generosity toward other members in times of need could also be part of the metrics for belonging, connectivity and significance within the social dynamics of associational commitments. Karpos' simple gesture reveals a corporate ethos in which initiatives were taken by individual members to ensure that those for whom the membership fee was beyond reach (even temporarily) were provided for. It would have taken discernment to differentiate the case of a freeloader from an associate in need, but these ledgers suggest that such differentiations could be discerned, allowing associational members to enact generosity toward others to allow them to participate. Some associational inscriptions indicate a similar posture toward members who temporarily fall upon hard times.⁵² Those glimpses of generosity are not usually articulated in terms of paying for the membership fees of fellow associates, however, even if that might be an obvious extension of the principle. Among the scant data indicating such situations, the papyrus fragments of a village club from Philadelphia help to fill that gap, demonstrating that this posture of intra-group generosity could be applied to the covering of the associational costs of a member who, at least for the time being, cannot pay the expected fee.⁵³ Presumably there was an unwritten understanding that what Karpos did for his fellow associate (probably Thôrax) could operate in the reverse direction, should the occasion arise. These were probably not contractual

⁴⁹ If 'paid twice' refers to the person whose name should appear before Karpos' name (see n. 45 above), we get the same result: Thôrax paid for Karpos, because of their pairing as a subgroup within the association.

⁵⁰ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 237–8.

⁵¹ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 160–1.

⁵² See especially Last and Harland (n. 1), 151–73.

⁵³ See also *P.Tebt.* 3.894, which provides other examples of payments made by one person for another member in attendance: fr. 5, verso, col. ii, lines 12, 14 (where Pomous even pays the expenses of a founding member of the association); fr. 12, recto, col. 2, lines 8, 13–14 ('through my brother Mestasytmis', 'through Marôn', 'through Harmiusis'). Compare also Theôn's fine that was paid by Hareôs (fr. 5, recto, col. ii, line 10).

aspects of associational membership; they were fostered by informal relational networks within the association.⁵⁴

CONCLUSIONS

The data from *SB* 3.7182 provide only incomplete glimpses of the internal workings of a small association, but even glimpses can be valuable for historical reconstruction. Overall, the papyrus fragments reveal an association that was fairly well organized but whose common fund was inconsequential. The fragments give us a rare glimpse of enslaved people with nominal financial resources that they commanded and used for purposes of their own agency. They had internal leadership but probably no external patron. There is no indication that an overarching status hierarchy was applied to all individuals within the group. None the less, members seem to have belonged to one of three different households, and members of one household took top position in the ledgers. At times they enjoyed good wine and a desirable location for their meetings. At other times, their meetings were notably modest, without the resources to afford wine or meet in any other than the most inconspicuous of places. Those financial hindrances did not prevent the members from gathering, however, but simply caused them to adjust their expectations to match the requirements of their reality. The group fostered a corporate environment in which individuals contributed varying amounts in a special subscription to support the goals of the group.

In that context, generosity among members transpired in the context of one meeting, ensuring that the minimal financial requirements of membership could be met even when those requirements were out of a member's financial reach. It is not hard to imagine economic generosity being encouraged in associations higher on the scale of associational perfection, and in fact we do have some data of precisely that in the database from associations that inscribed their identities in stone monuments. Recorded instances in which members paid the dues for other members to attend an associational meeting are, however, few and far between. Of course, that is not the sort of thing we would expect to find on monumental inscriptions. That, instead, is the stuff of meeting ledgers written on papyrus—as in the case of the papyrus fragments of *SB* 3.7182. Our options are either to say that the ethos evident in the slave association of *SB* 3.7182 must have been comparable to associations across the board, or to say that low-level associations were especially prone to situations in which one member paid for another's meeting expenses, with members of better placed associations not requiring such initiatives because, presumably, their members had better economic resources in hand. It is not necessary for our purposes to adjudicate this question. It is enough simply to note that, precisely in the context of this low-level association of enslaved members, it is not at all surprising to see a corporate ethos in which this specific form of generosity is on display.

The meetings of this association might have fostered moments that reinforced the parts of members' identity that were otherwise constrained by the contexts in which they found themselves (that is, enslaved within households). In their associational meetings,

⁵⁴ We have no record showing that Thôrax, who seems to have returned to fee-paying status in later meetings (i.e. Eight and Ten), was required to return the favour. Perhaps Karpos allowed Thôrax a pass, rather than hitting him with a double payment so soon after his financial difficulties.

they could enjoy each other's company, contribute to occasions of corporate conviviality and (presumably) reinforce their sense of self-worth.

A TRANSLATION OF *SB* 3.7182, DELINEATED IN TEN MEETINGS

Here I offer an English translation of the five papyrus fragments of *SB* 3.7182, with headings indicating where separate meetings are best delineated in the extant fragments. In my estimation, the ledgers convey data pertaining to ten associational meetings. Here I follow Kloppenborg's lead in trying to determine how many meetings are evident in the fragments. In one publication, Kloppenborg suggests that there are six meetings contained in the ledgers; in another, he proposes seven.⁵⁵ In neither instance does he offer a complete registry of where the various meetings begin and end in the ledgers.⁵⁶

My delineation of ten meetings is informed by certain features of the ledgers' contents. For instance, the name *Dêmas* is entered on line 18, whereas the same person is referenced on line 27 with the name *Dêmêtrios*.⁵⁷ This probably indicates that we have ledgers from two different meetings (Meeting Two and Three, by my count), with the accountant (or accountants?) flipping between the two versions of the member's name on separate occasions. Similarly, there is the mention of 'wine' (*οἶνος*) on line 70 and the mention of 'unfermented grape juice' (*τρούξι*) on line 77, suggesting the drinks of two different meetings (Meetings Seven and Eight, by my count). Along other lines, the beginning of a date appears on line 33, causing Edgar to suggest (rightly in my view) that line 33 starts a new ledger (Meeting Four, by my count).⁵⁸ Other meetings fall into place around these delineated meetings, giving us a total of ten altogether.

The five papyrus fragments of *SB* 3.7182 vary in size: fragment 1 is 12x12 cm, damaged at its upper and lower portions; fragment 2 is 5.5x6.6 cm; fragment 3 is 1.5x2.8 cm; fragment 4 is 13x16 cm, with the left column lost and lower portion lost; fragment 5 is 12.5x7.5 cm, with damage at its upper portion. Because of the damage to the fragments, large gaps in the proceedings of meetings are lost, affecting the ledger of any given meeting at any point in its structure (its beginning, middle or end). For instance, the beginning and the end of the ledger for Meeting One are both lost, whereas the beginning and end of the ledger for Meeting Four seem to be intact but the intervening data is missing. Much the same is true for Meetings Six and Seven, although very little of the end of the ledger for

⁵⁵ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2019]), 80; Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 161.

⁵⁶ For the place where he comes closest to delineating the separate meetings, see Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 161. There he identifies various meetings in relation to particular fragments. But even there, he does not enumerate those meetings sequentially or offer a complete list of the meetings. On page 162, the meetings are identified primarily by the membership lists that appear throughout the ledgers. In that regard, what Kloppenborg identifies as the first meeting centres around the membership list found in fr. 1 col. ii. But what about the earlier membership list in fr. 1 col. i? Does Kloppenborg see that as part of the ledger for the 'first' meeting of fr. 1 col. ii? That does not work since it means that two people in the first list (*Kaiês* and *Thôrax*) contributed at the meeting (in fr. 1 col. i) but were not included in the membership list of the meeting (in fr. 1 col. ii). Consequently, there must be more than seven meetings in the ledgers. Moreover, Kloppenborg seems to assume in his discussion that references to 'wine' in line 70 and to 'unfermented grape juice' on line 77 indicate the drinks of two different meetings, but this detail is not accounted for in Kloppenborg's seven-meeting interpretation as outlined on page 162.

⁵⁷ The same person is *Dêmêtrios* in Meetings Six and Seven but *Dêmas* in Meetings Nine and Ten.

⁵⁸ Edgar (n. 4), 373.

Meeting Six is still intact. The ledger for Meeting Nine is extant to a significant extent, although the final lines are indecipherable. The same is largely true for Meeting Ten, except that the indecipherable lines begin earlier in the ledger. The ledger for Meeting Two begins well but does not get to the point of listing expenses toward the end of the original ledger. There is very little extant from the ledgers of Meetings Three, Five and Eight.

The translation below does not attempt to flow smoothly in English. Following the lead of *SB*, the enumeration of lines is sequential throughout all five fragments (rather than delineating lines according to independent fragments), even though there may at times be large gaps in the flow of the data.⁵⁹ Small spaces appear at four points to indicate that a significant amount of data has been lost due to papyrus damage within the ledgers of particular meetings (Meetings Four, Six, Seven and Nine).

Meeting One, lines 1–10 (found on fr. 1, col. i)

(1) Hermias [undecipherable]⁶⁰ (2) Kamax 270 (3) Kaiês 2045 (4) Dikaios 680 (5) Psammêtichos 385 (6) Thôrax 800 (7) Karpos 365 (8) equaling 4545⁶¹ (9) [undecipherable] (10) [undecipherable]

Meeting Two, lines 11–26 (found on fr. 1, col. ii)

(11) [undecipherable] (12) in the storeroom during (13) the time when (14) Hermias (15) is the president (16) Hermias (17) Bakchos (18) Dêmas (19) Karpos (20) Kamax (21) Psammêtichos (22) Dikaios (23) totaling seven members (24) guests [were] (25) Thibrôn (26) and Hôriôn son of Hôriôn⁶²

Meeting Three, lines 27–32 (found on fr. 1, col. iii)

(27) Dêmêtrios (28) from the city of Krokodilopolis⁶³ (29) the aforementioned [undecipherable] (30) remaining⁶⁴ [undecipherable] (31) in Thôrax's [undecipherable]⁶⁵ (32) [undecipherable]

Meeting Four, lines 33–41 (continuing on from fr. 1, col. iii and continuing onto fr. 2, which begins at line 35; seven or so undecipherable lines appear after line 34, and the damage to the fragment suggests that even more has been lost between lines 34 and 35)

(33) On the fifteenth (?) [undecipherable] (34) in [undecipherable] (35) [undecipherable] 90 (36) [undecipherable] 450 (37) [undecipherable] for the fluteplayer (38) the contribution

⁵⁹ For transcriptions of the fragments, see Edgar (n. 4), 373–6; Scholl (n. 4), 333–5; and Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 156–8. The line enumeration used here follows that of *SB* (found at <https://papyri.info/ddbdp/sb;3;7182>), which differs slightly from the enumeration of Edgar (n. 4), who is followed by Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]).

⁶⁰ Presumably Hermias is listed as exempt, as in other instances within the ledgers (line 90; cf. lines 58, 68, 93, 111).

⁶¹ The amount listed is not obvious from the papyrus. It is often interpreted as Δ•μ€ or 4,045; see, for instance, Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 156, 158–9. Edgar (n. 4), 373 suggests the amount was entered as Δ•μ€, rightly totaling 4,545. Scholl (n. 4), 336 follows this view.

⁶² [. . .]ρίων Ὠρίωνος. Since the two people share a name, the genitive form of the name does not indicate a master–slave relationship but biological parentage.

⁶³ This is a reconstruction of an incomplete line, ἐκκρο[—], as first proposed by Edgar (n. 4), 373. It is followed by Scholl (n. 4), 332, 335, and Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 156, 158. Edgar and Scholl also propose that Dêmêtrios may have been identified on line 27 as a flute player (i.e. Δημη[τρίω ἀύλητή]). Kloppenborg does not follow them (n. 1 [2020]), 159, nor do I.

⁶⁴ καταλείπονται, corrected from καταλίπον[ται]. The rest of line 30 might have been ἐν κοινῶ, ‘in the common fund’.

⁶⁵ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 158, 161 suggests that ‘house’ or ‘workshop’ should be supplied here.

of Psammêtichos was 270 (39) for the other guest it was 270⁶⁶ (40) [undecipherable] for unfermented grape juice, 100 (41) totaling expenses of 1,590

Meeting Five, lines 42–3 (found on fr. 3 and continuing onto fr. 4, recto, col. i, which begins after line 43 and which no longer offers data)

(42) [undecipherable] the fifteenth of the month of Hathor⁶⁷ [undecipherable] (43) [undecipherable] in the Isieion⁶⁸ [undecipherable]

Meeting Six, lines 44–60 (found on fr. 4, recto, col. ii and continuing onto fr. 4, recto, col. iii, which begins after line 58 and has an eleven-line gap prior to line 59)

(44) [undecipherable] on the 10th, they were assembled (45) in the stable (46) in the harness room⁶⁹ (47) arranged by Dikaios the manager (48) Hermias (49) Bakchos (50) Dêmêtrios (51) Kamax (52) Psammêtichos (53) Dikaios (54) (55) paying twice⁷⁰ (56) Karpos (57) totaling eight members, of these (58) [undecipherable]⁷¹ was exempt from making a contribution (59) in the common fund [undecipherable] (60) [undecipherable]

Meeting Seven, lines 61–74 (found on fr. 4, recto, col. iii and continuing onto fr. 4, recto, col. iv, which begins after line 66 and has a thirteen-line gap before line 67)

(61) on the 15th, they were assembled (62) in the storeroom⁷² (63) Hermias (64) Bakchos (65) Thibrôn (66) Dêmêtrios (67) for whom the association has spent (68) apart from the person exempted⁷³ (69) [undecipherable] (70) wine [undecipherable] (71) [undecipherable] (72) [undecipherable] (73) [undecipherable] (74) [undecipherable]

Meeting Eight, lines 75–7 (found on fr. 4, verso)

(75) [undecipherable] Thôrax (76) [undecipherable] and [undecipherable] 50 (77) [undecipherable] unfermented grape juice, 50

Meeting Nine, lines 78–101 (found on fr. 5, recto; continuing onto fr. 5, verso, col. i, which begins after line 96)

(78) on the [undecipherable] of the month of Choiak⁷⁴ (79) in the harness room⁷⁵ arranged by⁷⁶ (80) Dikaios the manager (81) Hermias (82) Bakchos (83) Thibrôn (84) Dêmas [or Dêmêtrios] (85) Karpos (86) Kamax (87) Psammêtichos (88) Dikaios (89) totalling eight members, of these (90) Hermias was exempt from making a contribution (91) the rest being

⁶⁶ A first guest must have been mentioned earlier. Scholl (n. 4), 341 incorrectly speaks of ‘die 280 Drachmen in Fragment 3, Z. 4’, which should read ‘die 270 Drachmen in Fragment 2, Z. 4’ (or line 38, with the fluteplayer appearing on line 37).

⁶⁷ Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 158 suggests ‘year 1, the 15th’. Edgar (n. 4), 374 proposes ‘the fifteenth of Hathor’, which seems sensible, with υπε reconstructed as Ἀθύρ ιε.

⁶⁸ ἐν τῷ Ἰσειῷ, corrected from ἐν τῷ Ἰσιήῳ.

⁶⁹ σκυεοθηκη, corrected from σχεοθηκη.

⁷⁰ δις τα]γένετες. For this reconstruction, see Edgar (n. 4), 375; Scholl (n. 4), 336; Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 157.

⁷¹ This is almost certainly Hermias, who is listed as ‘exempt from fees’ on line 90.

⁷² ἐν θησαυρῷ, corrected from ἐν θησαγρῷ.

⁷³ This translation derives from a reconstruction of line 93, where the same wording would seem to be found in a slightly more intact form.

⁷⁴ The undecipherable part of this line is toward the end, where the day of the month would have appeared (explaining the placement of ‘undecipherable’ in the translation).

⁷⁵ σκυεοθήκη is reconstructed from the sigma, which is all that is extant.

⁷⁶ The preposition διὰ is not evident in this undecipherable space but must have been here originally, just as it is on line 47 where the phrase διὰ ἱεροποιοῦ Δικαίου is complete.

seven members [who contributed] (92) for whom the association has spent (93) apart from the person exempted⁷⁷ (94) Memphitic wine [undecipherable] (95) Hellanikos the flute player⁷⁸ [undecipherable] (96) and the effeminate performer [undecipherable] (97) [undecipherable] (98) [undecipherable] 100 (99) [undecipherable] 60 (100) [undecipherable] 60 (101) [undecipherable]⁷⁹

Meeting Ten, lines 102–14 (found on fr. 5, verso, col. ii)

(102) On the 18th, they were assembled (103) Hermias (104) Bakchos (105) Dêmas [Dêmêtrios] (106) Karpos (107) Thôrax (108) Psammêtichos (109) totalling six members (110) for whom the association has spent (111) apart from the person exempted⁸⁰ (112) wine [undecipherable] (113) [undecipherable] (114) [undecipherable]

Baylor University

BRUCE W. LONGENECKER 
bruce_longenecker@baylor.edu

⁷⁷ παρὰ τὸν ἀφιη[...]. See also lines 68 and 111, neither of which is complete. Edgar (n. 4), 372 and 376 makes the plausible suggestion that this unclear phrase should be reconstructed as παρὰ τὸν ἀφιήμενον and ‘refers to his [Hermias’] permanent exemption’ from paying fees. See also *P.Tebt.* 1.224.

⁷⁸ Ἑλληνικός is understood as a proper name by Edgar (n. 4), 372; Scholl (n. 4), 338–9; and Sapsford (n. 8), 111. Kloppenborg (n. 1 [2020]), 159 takes it as an adjective: ‘the Greek flute player’.

⁷⁹ The end of the line reads φ ν; perhaps ἐν κοινῷ ν, ‘in the common fund, 50’. So Edgar (n. 4), 376; Scholl (n. 4), 336.

⁸⁰ This translation derives from a reconstruction of line 93, where the same wording would seem to be found in a slightly more intact form.