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# The *Polis* Falling Apart: Aineias Tacticus and *Stasis*

Maria Pretzler

“*Stasis* – civil strife – is worse than war to the same degree as war is worse than peace.”<sup>1</sup> Aineias may have agreed with Herodotos’ general sentiment about the terrifying nature of conflict within a community, particularly because it had such a potential to increase the risks of war, but in the *Poliorketika*, there are no neat distinctions between conflict inside the *polis* and outside aggression. In fact, the term *stasis* is never used in the work, but it will be used in this chapter as a shorthand for various symptoms of internal disunity which Aineias clearly identifies as a serious threat to his city under siege. Traitors inside the city can inspire or invite outside attack, sabotage defence efforts, and finally open the gates to bring about utter defeat; at the same time, the pressures of war are also likely to cause new tensions among the besieged, compromising loyalty to the community. *Stasis* and war fuel each other, make each other worse, and any competent commander in charge of a besieged city keeps the attackers in check while also watching his own back: Aineias knows that the most devastating blow may well come from the enemy within, not from the army outside: it is necessary to watch out for traitors, plotters, collaborators and people simply losing the trust and hope necessary for an effective defence. The *Poliorketika* therefore covers situations where it is wise to have the watchmen on the wall face outside as well as inside.<sup>2</sup>

The Greek term *stasis* is often translated as ‘civil war’ or ‘civil strife’, modern terms which capture many of the more extreme phenomena which characterised *stasis* in the Greek city. The term ‘revolution’ is also commonly used, but is also more problematic, because its history, especially since the late eighteenth century, places it firmly within a concept of statehood and governance which is very different from an ancient *polis* community, and its applicability is in question.<sup>3</sup> Losada employed the term ‘Fifth Column’ for cases of collaboration between inside plotters and an enemy outside, drawing on terminology which developed in the context of the Spanish Civil War.<sup>4</sup> The collaboration between an outside aggressor and part of the besieged population, or perhaps just a few determined plotters, is only part of the ancient *stasis* phenomenon, but this aspect is particularly relevant to Aineias’ concerns. Ancient and modern commentators have also analysed these civic conflicts in terms of social class, as a contest between the interests of the wealthy few and the poor masses, a concern which is to an extent reflected in the *Poliorketika*.<sup>5</sup>

Gehrke, in his comprehensive monograph on *Stasis*, prefers to adopt Eckstein’s term ‘Internal War’ (‘Innerer Krieg’). This, too, conjures up ideas of physical fighting, and for my purposes in this chapter, I would like to draw the net a lot wider: *stasis* at its worst did indeed involve horrific violence, but that is just the most excessive expression of a wider phenomenon where community cohesion and basic solidarity with the *polis* disintegrate. Eckstein focuses on the deviation from generally agreed social norms; Gehrke develops this further, emphasising specifically the suspension of normally accepted rules of political disagreement, stepping outside the framework of constraints imposed by laws, social norms and customs.<sup>6</sup> In the end, *stasis* primarily requires a number of people to decide that their own individual interests, or those of a specific interest group, are more important than – and

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<sup>1</sup> Hdt 8.31.

<sup>2</sup> Ain. Tac. 9.12-13,

<sup>3</sup> Eckstein 1965.

<sup>4</sup> Losada 1972, 4-14.

<sup>5</sup> Aristotle *Politics*, e.g. 1307a20-33, 1308b25-1309a33, cf. 1279b18-27, with Winterling 1993, Weed 2007, 118-23, cf. Fuks 1979-80, 53-6; for more general discussion see Fuks 1874, esp. 59-61, Lehmann 1989; cf. Ste Croix 1981, 285-9.

<sup>6</sup> Gehrke 1985, 6; cf. Eckstein 1964, 8-12, Eckstein 1965.

no longer coincide with – those of their *polis* and its community as a whole. In the ancient Greek world, this step constitutes a monumental transgression, the ultimate desperate and bold act, because one's *polis* is not just the prime source of individual rights and status, but also the focus of a free man's identity, based on history, relationship with the divine and a general sense of belonging. For the purpose of this chapter, I use the term *stasis* in this deliberately vague fashion, as a catch-all term for any action by citizens or inhabitants of Aineias' besieged *polis* which suggest that they no longer see the defence of the city as the ultimate priority.

Aineias is often mentioned in passing as an important source for tensions inside Greek cities in the fourth century, but there has in fact been little detailed analysis of his attitude to *stasis* as part of special studies of the phenomenon.<sup>7</sup> The earliest scholar to discover Aineias as a source for conflict within ancient societies was Pöhlmann, who researched ancient 'communism' and 'socialism' mainly to present an argument against such movements in his own time.<sup>8</sup> Few ancient historians showed interest in tackling the question of *stasis* in a less politicised manner until Lehmann took up the question, culminating in a 1989 article specifically dealing with Aineias and the socio-political crisis of the *polis*.<sup>9</sup> A year later, Whitehead's introduction to his translation of the *Poliorketika* emphasised the importance of the topic, provided an overview of Aineias' approach, and tried to defuse the question about Aineias' own political leanings.<sup>10</sup> For the purpose of this volume, it was thought that the topic warrants another detailed examination.<sup>11</sup>

The two most comprehensive discussions of *stasis* dating from the Classical period are Thucydides' account of the events in Korkyra in 427BC, and Aristotle's treatise on the subject in book V of the *Politics*. Both accounts deserve attention in their own right, but here they are introduced briefly to provide some context for Aineias' approach. Thucydides' account of *stasis* in Korkyra<sup>12</sup> remains the ultimate model of the disintegration of a Greek *polis* into horrific carnage: it describes a slippery slope from robust disputes between politicians of different factions through the law courts to the point where random killing and sacrilege is the order of the day, and part of the city centre is burned down. While this is going on, ships of interested outside powers are circling the island like vultures, occasionally prodding the two parties into further action, even when their action is ostensibly designed to calm things down. Later chapters demonstrate that this conflict dragged on for years and caused further trouble for the beleaguered Korkyraians. This is an extreme case, yet Thucydides deliberately sets it up as an exemplar for developments in his own time,<sup>13</sup> evoking images of extreme destruction in the reader's mind each time the narrative reaches another case of *stasis*. Thucydides' account is a classic in historical analysis as well as dramatic historiography, carried out with the diagnostic eye of a medic analysing the symptoms of a deadly disease.<sup>14</sup> By comparison, Aineias is much more focused on the root causes of the phenomenon and on early prevention wherever possible: he tries to get to potential plotters before their actions become material for a dramatic historical account. Small, often mundane grievances, a wounded sense of pride, and quiet (but sometimes justified) desperation set off the disease even before its more dangerous symptoms develop; in a way, Aineias illustrates the beginnings of *stasis* before Thucydides' dramatic events begin, even though he offers some warning examples of devastating consequences, too.

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<sup>7</sup> Gehrke 1985, 2, Lonis 1996; see also van Wees 2008 on *Stasis* in Archaic Greece; Losada 1972 focuses on the Peloponnesian War and Thucydides; Lintott 1982 does not discuss Aineias at all.

<sup>8</sup> Pöhlmann 1893-1901, at 1901, 346-8 (and later editions).

<sup>9</sup> Lehmann 1989; cf. Lehmann 1970, esp. 401-5, Lehmann 1980.

<sup>10</sup> Whitehead 2003, 25-33.

<sup>11</sup> The editors would like to thank the anonymous referee for the suggestion to include this topic.

<sup>12</sup> Thuc. 3.70-83, 3.85; 4.2; 4.46-8, with Hornblower 1991, 466-91.

<sup>13</sup> Thuc. 3.82-3, with McLeod 1979.

<sup>14</sup> Gehrke 1985, 88-93, Lintott 1982, 106-9, Fuks 1971.

Where both authors agree is that disloyalty to the community and war are connected: they fuel each other, through desperation of those suffering aggression and defeat, through opportunism inside the city by the discontented, and through attempts of enemies on the outside to gain advantage by fomenting disputes among the besieged. While it is likely that Aineias knew Thucydides' account,<sup>15</sup> there is no evidence that the *Poliorketika* specifically aims to react to Thucydides' Korkyra episode; but it responds to similar concerns which can only have grown in the decades which had passed since the Athenian historian had written his account.

Aristotle's *Politics* was probably written another two or three decades after Aineias' work. Book V of the *Politics*<sup>16</sup> is the longest ancient work dealing with *stasis*, but its main concern is not the exact process of internal conflict within a *polis*, but the more general mechanisms which cause constitutions to be challenged and overthrown.<sup>17</sup> Aristotle hardly pays any attention to the role of external threats in destabilising *polis* societies, because he is interested in the inherent flaws of those systems. Aristotle and Aineias share the habit of illustrating general points with historical examples,<sup>18</sup> and in both cases, the historical episodes used for this purpose also demonstrate aspects of the phenomenon which are not the main focus of the discussion. Their priorities, however, are almost opposites of each other: in the *Politics*, Aristotle tries to develop a general theory of how *stasis* arises on the basis of inherent flaws within a *polis*'s society and how it might be prevented;<sup>19</sup> he investigates how different forms of government hold up to historical trends and flaws inherent in those systems, and how citizens' desire for equality or personal power shapes states' constitutions.<sup>20</sup> While Aristotle acknowledges the complex multiplicity of causes for *stasis*, his main interest is constitutional theory; the historical examples do offer glimpses of specific grievances or events which trigger *stasis*,<sup>21</sup> but even in that context, we rarely hear about the specific actions taken to overthrow a regime.<sup>22</sup> Aineias' focus seems almost the exact opposite of Aristotle's: he emphasises the processes of civic disintegration and illustrates them with stories where occasionally ideological struggles, usually between oligarchs and democrats, become visible.<sup>23</sup> It is important to appreciate that in both cases, the main line of discussion in the text represents the author's priorities and ideas, while the examples demonstrate that both were perfectly aware of other factors, but did not deem them central to their main argument.

The contrast between the discussion of *stasis* in the *Politics* and in the *Poliorketika* illustrates all too clearly how little interest Aineias has in constitutional details. He is wary of people who are unhappy with the political status quo, and it seems that the exact nature of the current government is a lot less important to him than doing everything in his power to avoid constitutional change at a time of external threat. Oligarchic and democratic states could have followed his advice equally, even though they might have found different aspects difficult to put into practice.<sup>24</sup> Lehmann thinks that Aineias assumes a democratic structure which

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<sup>15</sup> See my discussion in this volume, 000.

<sup>16</sup> Aristotle *Pol.* 1301a19-1316b30.

<sup>17</sup> Aristotle *Pol.* 1301a19-25; Mulgan 1991, esp. 307-9.

<sup>18</sup> Book V of Aristotle's *Politics* contains 67 historical examples (Winterling 1993, 198); for Aineias see this volume, p. 000.

<sup>19</sup> Kalimtzis 2000, 103-6, 179-90.

<sup>20</sup> Aristot. *Pol.* 1301b5-13, 1301b29-39. Note, however, his discussion of the human factor in triggering factional strife – desire for honour and wealth (1302a32-4) but also envy, ambition (*hubris*), fear, a reaction to various kinds of injustice or perceived unfairness (1302a35-1303a4). Cf. Polansky 1991, esp. 332-8.

<sup>21</sup> Aristot. *Pol.* 1303b18-1304a18 offers a collection of episodes where *stasis* arises from 'small matters'; see also 1311a37-1312a6 (personal causes that brought down tyrants). External factors play a role in 1302b29-31, 1303a3-11, cf. a general statement on the role of Athens and Sparta in changing constitutions in 1307b20-24.

<sup>22</sup> E.g. Aristot. *Pol.* 1307a27-33

<sup>23</sup> *Ain. Tac.* 11.7-10, 11.10a-12, 11.13-5.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Shipley in this volume, 000.

ensures the loyalty of the poor:<sup>25</sup> indeed, there is one passage which suggests to assign the *ochlos*, the masses, to guard certain public spaces,<sup>26</sup> but otherwise the focus is on armed men, presumably hoplites, who would have had political rights in most oligarchic states as well.<sup>27</sup> In fact, some of the measures which curtail citizens' freedoms may have been harder to reconcile with the ideals of democratic states.<sup>28</sup>

Aineias' generic city may be thought to have one of those moderate regimes somewhere close to the blurred boundary between oligarchy and democracy which were probably most common in the classical Greek world, but it does not matter much. The most generic government set-up which almost all *poleis* would have shared is apparently assumed: there are clearly multiple magistrates, *archontes* (ἄρχοντες, also a very generic term), some of whom seem to take on specific, even partly military functions, such as closing gates and commanding troops within the city.<sup>29</sup> They also supervise or authorise various activities which need special attention during a crisis, such as family gatherings, imports and mercenaries.<sup>30</sup> Aineias recommends that these leaders should have a bodyguard and avoid dangerous situations; indeed he offers examples where the assassination or capture of magistrates marked the beginning of a coup.<sup>31</sup> Nevertheless, magistrates also need to be watched carefully, since there are other historical episodes where individuals holding high office use their position to overthrow the government or hand over the city to an enemy.<sup>32</sup> Aineias also refers to generals, *stratēgoi* (στρατηγοί); there are several, as one would expect, and they are clearly taking on the main military tasks, such as commanding and organising troops or supervising guard duties. It is possible that these generals are sometimes included when Aineias uses the more generic term *archontes*, since his instructions on securing the gates, where he particularly stresses the importance of clearly defined competences, refer to both *archontes* and *stratēgoi* fulfilling this duty, as if the terms could be used interchangeably.<sup>33</sup> We can say for certain, however, that Aineias is describing a command structure and government setup which is heavily adapted to the crisis, so that the difference between the duties of civil and military officials seems to be blurred.<sup>34</sup>

Apart from the military headquarters, the *stratēgion*, Aineias' generic city is also expected to have a council building (*bouleuterion*) and a *prytaneion*.<sup>35</sup> Most cities with democratic or oligarchic governments would have had a council (*boulē*), and an appropriate space for their meetings: a *bouleuterion* usually has seating for a few dozen up to a group in the low hundreds and space for somebody to address them. *Prytaneia*, usually mainly recorded as venues for public dining, were common even in cities which did not have magistrates of that name:<sup>36</sup> the existence of such a building then tells us even less about a specific government set-up, but for Aineias, it is clearly a valuable venue to hold and monitor public gatherings. Aineias makes no reference to the activities of specific government bodies in these buildings: the council itself, as one of the central political institutions, is not mentioned at all; its role in decision making is either taken for granted or perhaps assumed to be suspended. Assemblies do not fare any better in the *Poliorketika*. Two historical examples feature a popular assembly, in one case as a means to mobilise people against an oligarchic

<sup>25</sup> Lehmann 1989, 107; 109-10.

<sup>26</sup> Ain. Tac. 1.9.

<sup>27</sup> Ain. Tac. 1.5-6, 9.1, 38.1-2 (Lehman's examples, alongside a historical episode 11.10-11); cf. Ain.Tac. 9.1. which talks about an assembly 'of soldiers (*stratiōtai*) or citizens'.

<sup>28</sup> E.g. Ain. Tac. 10.4-7.

<sup>29</sup> Ain. Tac. 3.6, 18.1-2, 18.21; see Whitehead 1990, 100, on 1.4.

<sup>30</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.2, 10.4, 10.5, 10.7, 10.9-10, 13.3.

<sup>31</sup> Ain. Tac. 1.4, 17.6 (bodyguards), 11.15, 17.3-4 (examples).

<sup>32</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.3-6, 23.7-11.

<sup>33</sup> Ain. Tac. 18.3, 18.15, 18.16, 20.1, 20.2 (*stratēgoi*), 18.1-2, 18.21 (*archontes*).

<sup>34</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.4-7, 10.9-11.

<sup>35</sup> Ain. Tac. 22.3 (*stratēgion*), 10.4. (*bouleuterion*, *prytaneion*).

<sup>36</sup> Miller 1978, 4-24; note 9-10 on *prytaneia* in cities without magistrates called *prytaneis*.

plot,<sup>37</sup> but in the other the oligarchs call an assembly to gather the people in one place where they and their leaders can easily be brought under control:<sup>38</sup> as a verdict on the usefulness of assemblies in preserving a democratic status quo these examples produce a score draw. In Aineias' generic city, we do not see the *ekklēsia* as a decision making body, either: in just one instance he advises to call an assembly, tellingly 'an assembly of soldiers or citizens',<sup>39</sup> which may suggest openness to oligarchic or democratic traditions in the community. This assembly is merely there to receive orders and information with the explicit expectation that the information will immediately be leaked to the enemy. We have to conclude, therefore, that Aineias would not have trusted an assembly with really important confidential information. Any assemblies of larger groups not sanctioned or ordered by the authorities are definitely considered a threat.<sup>40</sup> In fact, some of the emergency measures put in place to keep the population in check resemble Aristotle's methods of securing a tyranny.<sup>41</sup> Aineias may be worried about people trying to upset the status quo, but in fact, the emergency itself makes standard government procedures almost entirely obsolete and gives all power to the commanding general and a group of officials.<sup>42</sup> No wonder, perhaps, that the exact form of government in this besieged city matters little.

Unlike Thucydides and Aristotle, Aineias never focuses on a theoretical assessment of *stasis*, but his worries about dissenters and what they might do in specific situations are a significant theme in the *Poliorketika*. We can discern from those many references what kind of processes the author had in mind, and what he considered to be their main causes. The term *stasis* (στάσις) never appears in the work, but a simulated internal conflict is described using the term *stasiasmos* (στασιασμός);<sup>43</sup> a successful revolt of the oligarchs in Korkyra against the democracy is called *epanastasis* (ἐπανάστασις), and later in the chapter the leaders of the people are accused of the same act.<sup>44</sup> More frequently, Aineias talks about plots, *epiboulai* (ἐπιβουλαί);<sup>45</sup> one chapter (11) is in fact titled *Epiboulai*, although the chapter titles may not be Aineias' own. Aineias usually thinks of such activities not in the abstract, but in terms of the people involved, for example those 'standing up against' the regime, *antistasiōtai* (ἀντιστασιώται), who appear twice, in examples from Argos and Herakleia,<sup>46</sup> and, more frequently, plotters, *epibouleuontes* (ἐπιβουλεύοντες).<sup>47</sup> We also encounter traitors, *prodotai* (προδόται), planning treason, *prodosia* (προδοσία), which specifically refers to handing over their city to the enemy.<sup>48</sup> Sometimes these people are described more closely: Aineias is specifically worried about those who are unhappy with the status quo, and people who want change, 'those who want the opposite of what is currently in place'.<sup>49</sup> Another term commonly used in the *Poliorketika* is *neōterizein* (νεωτερίζειν),<sup>50</sup> literally 'to make things new' and 'those who want to make things new' (οἱ νεωτερίζειν βουλόμενοι).<sup>51</sup> The term *neōterizein* and its cognates are generally used in classical Greek to describe the activities of people plotting to overthrow their state or constitution, but they also

<sup>37</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.8.

<sup>38</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.15.

<sup>39</sup> Ain. Tac. 9.1-2 ('ἐκκλησιάσαντα τοὺς αὐτοῦ στρατιώτας ἢ πολίτας').

<sup>40</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.4-5.

<sup>41</sup> Aristotle *Politics* 1313a41-1313b9, cf. Ain. Tac. 10.5.

<sup>42</sup> Esp. Ain. Tac. 10.1-11.1. Cf. Shipley in this volume, 000.

<sup>43</sup> Ain. Tac. 23.3.

<sup>44</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.13, 11.15.

<sup>45</sup> Ain. Tac. 1.6, 11.2, 11.12, 22.20, 23.7, 29.7, 31.24, 31.33; cf. Losada 1972, 11.

<sup>46</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.7, 12.5.

<sup>47</sup> Ain. Tac. 2.7, 10.3, 10.15, 11.9, 11.10a, 11.14, 17.2, 17.3, 17.4, 22.20, 23.6; cf. 31.9b.

<sup>48</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.3-5, 11.9, 22.7, 31.8, 31.9, 31.25-27; cf. Losada 1972, 6-10.

<sup>49</sup> Ain. Tac. 14.1., cf. 10.20. 'τῶν τὰ ἐναντία φρονούντων τοῖς παροῦσι πράγμασι', 'τοῖς μὲν οὖν ἐν τῇ πόλει ὑπεναντία θέλουσιν τοῖς καθεστηκόσι'.

<sup>50</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.25, 22.5, 22.6.

<sup>51</sup> Ain. Tac. 2.1., 17.5., 22.17, 30.1.

imply a very specific motivation which, in this case, coincides with other passages where Aineias explains more clearly what motives he has in mind.

What drives Aineias' plotters to want a change of the status quo? We are used to thinking of *stasis* in political terms, efforts to change the political system, as discussed by Aristotle, or perhaps in Thucydides' terms, where changes between oligarchy and democracy may also signify a shift in the alignment with one of the two great powers, Sparta or Athens. Aineias' historical examples expose such motivations, but the *Poliorketika* is no theoretical treatise on *stasis*, and there is no aim to give a clear definition of the wider underlying reasons which drive citizens to do damage to their own community. Aineias leaves the background vague and focuses on the characters who might cause trouble, and with this more practical perspective, he may be providing a much better insight into general perceptions of *stasis* at the time. Much is merely implied or taken for granted: the author assumes that the contemporary reader will recognise some of the characters, mindsets and motivations he is describing.

As we have seen, Aineias' plotters are people who are not satisfied with the status quo, even if it is less clear what exactly this means: he may be talking about the government, but if the siege and the state of martial law he seems to be prescribing went on for some time, we have to assume that dissatisfaction would also increase because of those emergency measures. He is, in fact, expecting that some people will try to leave the city: men intending to become mercenaries and those wanting to sail out with a ship have to ask for permission from a magistrate, but there is no advice to deny all such requests on principle.<sup>52</sup> Few cities would have been able to afford the loss of many men of fighting age, and Aineias is not just keen to prevent desertion during military engagements outside the walls, but he is also concerned with the general morale of his troops, most of whom, we should not forget, were essentially desperate amateurs.<sup>53</sup> Anybody leaving the city was also a potential informer for the enemy, or might tell exiles that an opportunity for a return by force might arise.<sup>54</sup>

Who are the people who might desert and or betray their native city in a crisis? Aineias suspects primarily those who have nothing to lose – men who do not have families or considerable property: for young men particularly, the outlook during a siege on their city would have been very bleak, and the incentives to leave would become greater as the threat of defeat grew. After all, it was not uncommon that after a city was taken, the victorious forces would kill all the men and sell all the women and children into slavery. Consequently, Aineias has most confidence in those who have something at stake in the community. He recommends that those parts of the city most at risk from attack should be guarded by the wealthiest and those with most prestige in the city because, as he says explicitly, remembering what they had to lose would make them most effective.<sup>55</sup> This is spelled out even more clearly where Aineias describes his ideal gate keeper: in this position, where one man can do fatal damage to the whole community,<sup>56</sup> he wants to see intelligent people capable of healthy suspicion, but first and foremost, he wants men who have families and property to protect.<sup>57</sup> The emphasis on property and prestige comes across as a certain disdain for the poor, but these were indeed advantages which were most dependent on citizenship and therefore on the wellbeing of the community. A traitor might perhaps be lured with financial rewards or at least freedom and safety for himself and his family, but if his city was taken over by the enemy, or if he had to leave the city, it was highly unlikely that he would ever get

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<sup>52</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.7-8.

<sup>53</sup> Ain. Tac. 23.1, 28.2 (deserters); e.g. 22.24, 22.26, 26.7-10 (morale).

<sup>54</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.6. suggests a proclamation which deals with people who leave the city to make contact with exiles.

<sup>55</sup> Ain. Tac. 12.15.

<sup>56</sup> See Ain. Tac. 18-20 for numerous examples.

<sup>57</sup> Ain. Tac. 5.1.

the chance to be a property owner or an eminent citizen again, even if he was still wealthy, since citizenship and the right to own property were closely guarded privileges and, in most *poleis*, almost impossible for outsiders to obtain.

The worst candidates for gate keeping are, according to Aineias, men ‘who because of poverty or the pressure of obligations, or some other difficulties, may be persuaded to join an uprising (*neōterismos*) or instigate a plot themselves.’<sup>58</sup> Debtors in particular represent a danger to community cohesion: in another passage, Aineias refers to the menace of men in dire straits sitting by and waiting for an opportunity.<sup>59</sup> If the debt got out of hand, a debtor might indeed assume that upheaval in the city or even an invasion by an enemy could be a chance for a fresh start, provided they themselves managed to stay alive.<sup>60</sup> To avoid some of these risks, Aineias recommends a reduction or abolition of debt interest, and, in extreme cases, he suggests to cancel debts altogether. Such a measure would of course cause damage to the creditors, and therefore might create even more discontent within the community. Aineias apparently had a solution to this problem, but unfortunately, he had already explained it in his lost work *Poristikē*.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps his suggestion was similar to that for financing mercenaries, where the wealthy are required to provide money and upkeep at the moment, with a promise to get reimbursed with a tax reduction in the future.<sup>62</sup> Food shortages are also a concern, which means that the community has to try its best to maintain supplies: Aineias suggests incentives for anybody managing to import food, and also recommends to provide the basic necessities for those who cannot afford them.<sup>63</sup>

The first impression is almost inevitably that Aineias rates the rich as dependable and honourable and the poor as untrustworthy, an attitude that would not have been particularly unusual among Greek elites of the period.<sup>64</sup> But in fact, the situation is more complex, because he also identifies the wealthy and influential as most likely to cause trouble within the city. We should not forget that people from a wealthier background might also find themselves in some of the desperate situations Aineias is so worried about, particularly debt. At the same time, if the most prominent people felt that their status or material interests were at stake, they were also the most likely to have the relevant means to trigger a coup, particularly clout, connections and executive experience within the city, as well as acquaintances abroad, which may include friends in the enemy camp.<sup>65</sup> When Aineias suggests to get rid of some of those who ‘desire something different from the present situation’ he therefore singles out those with a history of leadership and political initiative.<sup>66</sup> Removing fairly prominent people could cause further trouble, so the advice is to find a pretext, for example an embassy or similar public mission abroad, which would get potential plotters out of town with their honour intact. Aineias includes three historical examples where the wealthy (or ‘the wealthy and oligarchic’, in one case) are staging a coup against a democratic regime;<sup>67</sup> and we have already seen examples which showed magistrates involved in overthrowing a city’s government.<sup>68</sup> Stories of democratic coups are more difficult to find,

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<sup>58</sup> Ain. Tac. 5.1. ‘... οἵτινες δι’ ἔνδειαν ἢ συναλλαγμάτων ἀνάγκην ἢ δι’ ἄλλην τινὰ ἀπορίαν πεισθεῖεν ὑπὸ τινῶν ἢ αὐτοὶ παρακελεύσασθαι ἄν τινος ἐπὶ νεωτερισμῶ.’

<sup>59</sup> Ain. Tac. 14.1. ‘ὡς πολὺ γε φοβερῶτατοι ἔφεδροί εἰσιν οἱ τοιοῦδε ἄνθρωποι, τοὺς τε ἐν ἀπορίᾳ ὄντας τῶν ἀναγκαίων εἰς εὐπορίαν καθιστάναι.’

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Thuc. 3.81.4.

<sup>61</sup> Ain. Tac. 14.1-2.

<sup>62</sup> Ain. Tac. 13.4.

<sup>63</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.12 (food imports), 14.1. (supplies for the most needy).

<sup>64</sup> Winterling 1993, 190-5, see also Todd 1990, 159-60, 164-7; but note Aristotle *Pol.* 1301b40-1302a2, arguing that there are few well born (εὐγενεῖς) and virtuous (ἀγαθοὶ) people in a city, but many with wealth.

<sup>65</sup> Winterling 1993, 198-199.

<sup>66</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.20 ‘τῶν τὰ ἐναντία φρονούντων τοῖς παροῦσι πράγμασι ... καὶ μάλιστα ἂν ἡγεμόνας τε καὶ αἰτίους γενομένους ἐν τῇ πόλει’.

<sup>67</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.7-10, 11.10a-12, 11.13-5 - πλούσιοι (καὶ ὀλιγαρχικοὶ, in 11.13).

<sup>68</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.3-6, 23.7-11, see above 000.



except, perhaps, when Aeneias talks about smuggling in weapons to arm those citizens who do not have their own, and there is a story of another group of conspirators who resorted to making shields and armour from wickerwork.<sup>69</sup> But even there, we have to assume that the leaders and instigators of those plots are better situated, prominent men, and in one case, the leader of a coup is even smuggled into the city, together with the necessary weapons and armour.<sup>70</sup> Thus, watching the activities of prominent citizens is a crucial aspect of avoiding *stasis* in Aeneias' city.

While some plots can be carried out alone, for example by opening the gates or signalling to the enemy from the walls, an actual uprising in the city will need more support, which is why Aeneias is so concerned with morale among his men and the desperation of the poor. Everybody in this besieged city is putting up with serious restrictions on their daily lives, and Aeneias displays valuable insights into the psychology of his little community and some individuals within it. In particular, he describes personal motivations which seem petty in the grander scheme of things, but which represent desperate decisions of individuals trying to ensure their own survival or that of their family, even if it is against the interest of the whole community. What we get here are insights into activities which are never important enough for final historical narratives of great events, but which give us a better idea of the complexity of *polis* societies: the many viewpoints and interests hidden behind a *polis* label in a historical narrative, such as '*stasis* in Korkyra' or 'the Mitylenaians revolted'.

In Aeneias' *polis* wounded pride is clearly a factor: we are a long way away from the great heroes of the *Iliad*, but here, too, anger about losing face is a crucial factor in sapping loyalty. Where historiography occasionally shows us prominent statesmen motivated by concerns about their personal honour, Aeneias takes into account that such values and emotions might motivate every and any man in a *polis*, and potentially with devastating consequences. Thus, when morale is low, Aeneias recommends to approach loudly when checking the watches, in order to spare the watchmen the embarrassment of being caught sleeping: there are situations when exacerbating disaffection and despondency is more dangerous than a few men napping on guard duty.<sup>71</sup> Men who cannot be trusted are best not publicly confronted, but quietly removed from positions where they could do damage, and if possible in ways that could be considered a special honour: men who are under suspicion are therefore kept away from festivals by giving them the 'privilege' to celebrate the holiday at home.<sup>72</sup> Fairness is also an issue: for example, the recommendation to make sure that watches are distributed fairly includes advice to reset the water clock at regular intervals to match the seasonal length of days and nights, and if we assume that Aeneias is talking about a clock in a public place, he might also be thinking of a recurring public display of ensuring fairness.<sup>73</sup>

Another dangerous example of putting personal interest first was people's desperation to rescue personal belongings and particularly food supplies from outside the walls, even when the situation was already getting dangerous.<sup>74</sup> Aeneias makes allowances for evacuating slaves and animals in advance<sup>75</sup>, and for people engaging in last-moment harvesting while the enemy is approaching.<sup>76</sup> The whole city's food supply may depend on it, but this was also a matter of families worried about their own economic survival. The inhabitants of a Greek *polis* under attack could apparently be expected to respond by rushing out to the fields, on their own or in small groups, to rescue or defend their property. Aeneias is worried that

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<sup>69</sup> Ain. Tac. 29.4, 29.11-12.

<sup>70</sup> Ain. Tac. 29.7-8, cf. Winterling 1993, 198.

<sup>71</sup> Ain. Tac. 26.7-10.

<sup>72</sup> Ain. Tac. 16-17; cf. 10.20.

<sup>73</sup> Ain. Tac. 22.24-5; for problems of interpretation see Whitehead 1990, 158-60; on public water clocks see Armstrong and Camp 1977.

<sup>74</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.1-3, 15.2, 16.2-3.

<sup>75</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.1-2.

<sup>76</sup> Ain. Tac. 7.1-2; cf. Xen. *Hell.* 7.5.14-17.

people might get killed or perhaps captured, but he is also ready to respond to the people's desire to confront the enemy by suggesting properly organised sorties.<sup>77</sup> Nevertheless, all that is left outside, crops, stored supplies and installations which could be of use to the enemy, might have to be destroyed; as he suggests this, Aeneias leaves it to the reader's imagination how such measures might be received by the owners of those assets: perhaps he has already discussed these matters elsewhere.<sup>78</sup> There is also a special concern for people whose family members were held as hostages in the enemy camp,<sup>79</sup> accompanied by a hint that the enemy might well kill the hostages in view of the city.<sup>80</sup> Rather than contemplating how to prevent such an atrocity, probably because at times it was unavoidable without surrender, Aeneias goes about insulating relatives from the whole conflict, preferably by removing them from the city altogether while there is still a chance to do so. He seems resigned to the idea that hostages' relatives might try something desperate to rescue their family members: the advice here shows a certain understanding for the terrible predicament such people would be in. It also explains more clearly why it was so important to prevent rash actions outside the walls which might allow the enemy to capture more prisoners. Yet again, other ancient sources talk about hostage-taking, but in Aeneias, we see the effects on individuals and, through them, on the whole *polis*.

This is where Aeneias' image of dissent within a *polis* differs most from both Thucydides and Aristotle's ideas of *stasis*: in this generic city under siege, personal motivations matter, and these are often not (or certainly not predominantly) guided by considerations linked to greater political aims. Aeneias is willing to accept some of these personal concerns as normal human behaviour rather than malicious intent, even if actions which can arise from such motives are presented as treacherous activities which need to be stopped or prevented. When the odds of survival become less favourable, individuals will reassess the balance between loyalty to their *polis* and their own personal interests. Aeneias talks about *homonoia*, unity of purpose, in the community as the most important antidote to *stasis*. In our terms, what he describes is predominantly about confidence, namely the confidence of every member of the community that collaborating with the *polis*'s defence activities is a better bet to preserve the lives and livelihood of themselves and their families than any action they could take on their own, or with a group of dissenters.

Aeneias never provides us with a grand theory or narrative of how *stasis* happens: instead his work gathers many different scenarios and insights into the many forms destructive disloyalty might take in a *polis* under pressure, from small acts of sabotage to spectacular attacks which end in bloodshed and destruction. Not all of these could easily be defined as *stasis*, but what we see is a sliding scale of community cohesion failing under pressure, either when individuals lose the will to support their city's defence or, more dangerously, when dissent or discontent fosters groups with common causes or grievances.

Through his advice and some of the examples we get to see a few common scenarios Aeneias has in mind at the more dangerous end of this scale, his idea of how a larger plot might turn into outright *stasis*. The most dangerous moments in a city's life, apart from a direct attack by an enemy, are probably mass gatherings, particularly festivals. Such occasions may offer an excuse to bear arms, for example in a procession, or allow plotters to take control of arms which have to be left behind, insufficiently guarded, by some of the participants.<sup>81</sup> At the same time, *stasis* by a large group of conspirators might best be prevented by mass gatherings, too, if those are made up of vigilant citizens and organised

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<sup>77</sup> Ain. Tac. 15.3-4, 16.2-3.

<sup>78</sup> Ain. Tac. 8.3-5, with a cross-reference to another lost work.

<sup>79</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.23-4.

<sup>80</sup> This is usually not made explicit in historical accounts, but Diod. 20.54.2-7. offers a particularly gruesome example.

<sup>81</sup> Ain. Tac. 17.1-6.

properly to disperse the plotters and to deny them an opportunity to overpower the rest of the population.<sup>82</sup> In any case, controlling any kind of gathering is a crucial task of the city officials,<sup>83</sup> and open spaces within the city have to be secured to prevent large groups of people to come together on their own initiative.<sup>84</sup>

Like most Greek *poleis*, Aineias' generic city is probably not very big: the city's force may number in the hundreds rather than in the thousands, so that Aineias has concerns about inviting mercenary forces which outnumber the local army.<sup>85</sup> If mercenaries need to be hired, he suggests a highly decentralised system which will put no single citizen in control of more than two or three mercenaries at a time.<sup>86</sup> But in a fairly small community, the balance of power between different interest groups might be shifted even just by arming locals who do not have armour themselves.<sup>87</sup> All foreign visitors are automatically under suspicion, to the point where they are disarmed on entry and locked inside their inns during night time; even embassies are kept at arm's length from all but carefully selected citizens.<sup>88</sup> Aineias is probably mainly worried about communication with the enemy, which is to be restricted in various ways,<sup>89</sup> but visitors might just add extra support to an internal plot, and at times, perhaps just an appropriate leader was needed, as in the example where a commander gets smuggled into a city together with additional weapons.<sup>90</sup>

The most common form of disloyalty in the *Poliorketika* is collaborating with an enemy outside. Conflict within the community, a proper *stasis*, might lead one side to draw on the support of an enemy outside the walls, but the major concern for Aineias is that a single individual with grievances and an opportunity can do immense damage to the whole *polis*. People who plot in groups can be detected and obstructed in various ways, but one desperate man hoping to improve his fortunes when the city is taken is a lot more difficult to detect. Here is yet another issue where where Aineias' attention to individuals and their grievances and selfish calculations plays a crucial role. Every man in the city, including the slaves,<sup>91</sup> could be instrumental in a plot with the enemy. It is worth adding that Aineias perhaps misses a trick when he never even contemplates the idea that women, too, might be potential traitors who collaborate with the enemy. Women do turn up as potential messengers,<sup>92</sup> as part of the cast of various stratagems<sup>93</sup> and, of course, as potential victims who defend their houses by throwing roof tiles;<sup>94</sup> nevertheless, in the *Poliorketika*, they are part of men's plots, but not suspected of being plotters themselves. The sheer size of the main chapters dealing with individual traitors, especially 18-20 and 31, the large number of examples dealing especially with treacherous gate keepers and attempts to communicate with the enemy, shows the importance of the dangers of individual men's disloyalty; cautious tales about such behaviour are presented across the whole work, and include all sorts of offenders and opportunities. The main message is that it takes one man who is desperate, angry or frightened enough to take an opportunity as it arises to take down the whole city. With an enemy waiting outside the walls, an individual's disloyalty might be just as dangerous as a

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<sup>82</sup> Ain. Tac. 11.7-12.

<sup>83</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.4-5.

<sup>84</sup> Ain. Tac. 1.9-2.1; 2.7-8.

<sup>85</sup> Ain. Tac. 12.1.

<sup>86</sup> Ain. Tac. 13.1-4.

<sup>87</sup> Ain. Tac. 29.1-12 (two examples); precautions against: e.g. 10.7, 30.1-2.

<sup>88</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.9-11, 10.13.

<sup>89</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.6.

<sup>90</sup> Ain. Tac. 29.7. more support is then let in once the plotters on the inside are ready, 29.10.

<sup>91</sup> Ain. Tac. 24.3-9 (a slave who collaborates with the enemy).

<sup>92</sup> Ain. Tac. 31.7.

<sup>93</sup> Ain. Tac. 4.10-11, 24.7, 40.4-5.

<sup>94</sup> Ain. Tac. 2.6, 4.8; cf. 3.6. where Aineias recommends how to organise local watches so that the men can stay close to their houses and keep their children and wives under control.

full *stasis* trying to overthrow the status quo. Aineias' attention to the concerns of individuals is therefore crucial to his project.

*Homonoia* – a common purpose – and the ability to keep calm and organised under pressure are Aineias' best defence against defeat. This kind of community cohesion might still save the city even when the enemy is already within the walls. The best example for this is an episode from Plataia, where the Thebans are already in control of the city, but the locals work together, breaking through walls of houses and using local resources and superior knowledge of the urban topography to overcome the intruders.<sup>95</sup> In such a situation, panic and confusion are especially dangerous, particularly if the defenders cannot tell friend from foe. Plotters might actually try to bring about a panic, pretending that an attack has already happened, in order to help the enemy take the city.<sup>96</sup> Good preparation, sufficient motivation and, most of all, a well-ordered community are key to overcome the most perilous stage of an invasion, when the fight comes down to defending the city itself, street by street.<sup>97</sup> These are also the situations where traitors can do the most damage, if they have already made common cause with the enemy.

In summary, a whole range of human behaviour is on display in the *Poliorketika*. Aineias covers deliberate acts of sedition as well as stupidity or selfishness with unintended disastrous consequences, and he takes the potential dangers of both seriously. Planned treachery requires some kind of motivation, from discontent and anger to desperation or self-interest. Combined with the means to carry out a plan, disloyal sentiments can become dangerous as supporters are identified, communications opened, and manpower or equipment secured. Finally, the pivotal point is reached when an opportunity arises: a chance might be easily available as part of the daily routine of the city, but, with a vigilant commander in charge, those dangers might be reduced to a minimum. Aineias offers examples where specific motivations are mentioned, but the actual reason for sedition matters less to him than efforts to restrict access to means and opportunities which could facilitate a plot. At the same time, he emphasises the importance of keeping any kind of discontent among the population to a minimum, as far as that is even possible in a community under severe stress.

Aineias' main weapon against *stasis* and treason is *homonoia*,<sup>98</sup> community cohesion, particularly, if it is founded on a confidence in the ability of the *polis* to guarantee the safety its residents. Many problems do not even arise if the people are willing to follow the leadership, and agree on what needs to be done and what sacrifices might be necessary to ensure the community's wellbeing. But this ultimate community asset cannot be taken for granted. At times, securing *homonoia* might entail a balancing act, catering to the needs of interest groups whose concerns might be contradictory, e.g. debtors and lenders, or more generally the wealthy and the poor.<sup>99</sup>

For Aineias' purposes, the most important resource are all inhabitants who agree that security lies in the preservation of the status quo, those who are willing to work together to defend the city, and he assumes that the mass of people can be relied upon to stop a coup.<sup>100</sup> He counts on decent, experienced men with families to defend, people respected by their neighbours and ready to comply with requests from magistrates and commanders.<sup>101</sup> In addition, the community needs order, and in a crisis this can include special measures citizens

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<sup>95</sup> Ain. Tac. 2.3-6.

<sup>96</sup> Ain. Tac. 23.6.

<sup>97</sup> Ain. Tac. 4.1-5, 39.5, see also 24.6, where a password prevents some confusion.

<sup>98</sup> Ain. Tac. 10.20: "first it should be ascertained whether the citizens are of one mind (in a state of *homonoia*), since this would be of particular benefit during a siege." – "καὶ πρῶτον ἐπισκεπτέον εἰ ὁμονοοῦσιν οἱ πολῖται, ὡς ἂν ὄντος μεγίστου τούτου ἀγαθοῦ ἐν πολιορκίᾳ", cf. 14.1.

<sup>99</sup> Ain. Tac. 14.1-2.

<sup>100</sup> Ain. Tac. 1.9, 11.10a-12.

<sup>101</sup> Ain. Tac. 3.4-6; cf. 5.1.

might not tolerate in peace time.<sup>102</sup> Finally, morale is essential: if too many citizens lose hope or assume that the current regime will not be able to save their lives or livelihoods, *homonoia* is unlikely to survive, and neither is the city.

What makes Aineias' work so valuable is that he analyses important aspects of Greek politics and conflict in the context of community life, where individuals and their concerns matter: surviving under siege depends on getting the best out of people. A whole range of damaging behaviours, from individual acts of disloyalty to violent factional strife, are linked to a complex set of human calculations and emotions which do matter especially in smaller *poleis* where the actions and personal networks of almost any individual can make a difference. In this context, *stasis* begins to look like a fact of *polis* life – something that can grow, under pressure, out of the perfectly normal attempts of human beings to look after their personal advantage. Under normal circumstances, it might be expected that most people's interests coincide with the wellbeing of the community, but Aineias demonstrates how this situation can shift for some, and he grapples with ways in which loyalty can be maintained, restored or, if necessary, enforced with increased vigilance. In Aineias' small city under siege, it is not philosophical differences about constitutions or the strategic interests of the great power blocks which are the main triggers of *stasis*. In this respect, Aineias' view of *stasis*, even if we have to piece it together from different passages in his work, is a very valuable addition to those other discussions of internal strife which survive from the Classical period, particularly Thucydides and Aristotle. In the *Poliorketika*, we get a chance to look at the failing of *homonoia* from the ground up, encountering a level of *polis* life where the political is intensely personal.

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<sup>102</sup> Chapter 10 in particular lists a whole range of security measures which look like measures to introduce a kind of martial law to the city, disrupting normal life in a number of ways.

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