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ON THE DESTRUCTIVE ROLE OF *MNEME* IN *ANONYMUS IAMBlichI*¹

The article focuses on a passage from the so-called *Anonymus IamblichI* (Diels, Kranz 1956: 404) in which the noun μνήμη (“memory”) appears. Contextual philological analysis allows the Author to establish the full semantic scope of *mneme* and to determine the role it plays in the passage (fragment 7, 25–40) which concerns the lack of respect for the law (lawlessness) and its consequences. *Mneme* – “the power of remembering” – contributes significantly to the moral downfall of man, which results from the submission to evil. It evokes mental images (as forms of expression of *mneme*, most often representing misfortunes), which effectively destroy the psyche and *arete* – citizen’s virtue; thus leading one to abandoning ethical norms and, consequently, to moral self-destruction. Therefore, *mneme* has a very negative impact. Although it is undoubtedly an efficient “memory”, it is used for the mental degeneration of an individual, which consequently leads to the destruction of the civic community (*polis*).

SUR LE RÔLE DESTRUCTEUR DE *MNEME* DANS L’*ANONYME DE JAMBLIQUE*

L’article se concentre sur un passage de l’*Anonymus IamblichI* (Diels, Kranz 1956: 404) dans lequel apparaît le nom μνήμη («mémoire»). L’analyse philologique contextuelle permet à l’auteur d’établir toute la portée sémantique de *mneme* et de déterminer le rôle qu’il joue dans le passage (fig. 7, 25–40). Le passage concerne le manque de respect de la loi (l’anarchie) et ses conséquences. *Mneme* – «le pouvoir de se souvenir» – contribue de manière significative à la chute morale de l’homme, qui résulte de la soumission au mal. Il évoque des images mentales (en tant que formes

¹ The article is a revised and extended version of the text, including an updated bibliography, which is a small part of the author’s monograph entitled *Mneme w epoce przedsokratyków*, published by Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL, Lublin, 2020.



d'expression de *mneme*), le plus souvent de malheurs, qui détruisent effectivement la psyché et l'*arete* – la vertu d'un humain/citoyen, conduisant ainsi à l'abandon des normes éthiques et, par conséquent, à l'autodestruction morale. Il s'agit donc d'un impact très négatif de *mneme*. Bien qu'il s'agisse sans aucun doute d'une «mémoire» efficace, elle est utilisée pour la dégénérescence mentale d'un individu, ce qui conduit par conséquent à la destruction de la communauté civique (*polis*).

Mots-clés: *mneme* – «mémoire», *Anonyme de Iamblique*, vertu civique (*arete*)

Keywords: *mneme* – memory, *Anonymus Iamblichi*, civic virtue (*arete*)

Slowa klucze: *mneme* – pamięć, *Anonim Iamblicha*, odwaga cywilna (*arete*)

The so-called *Anonymus Iamblichi* is a treatise discovered at the end of the 19th century, and preserved in the text by Neoplatonist Iamblichus (born ca. 242 in Chalkis, died in 326 AD) titled *Exhortation to Philosophy (Protrepticus)*, of which it is an integral part. The underlying theme of *Anonymus Iamblichi* is the problem of virtue (courage)² (Horky 2020: 268; Horky 2021: 403), which is important for the development of man and the community of citizens. It also unites all the threads in the treatise. Although Iamblichus does not mention his name, the content and the style of the work reveal its author. *Anonymus* focuses on the distinction between νόμος and φύσις, and shows interest in the figure of the “tyrant”, which is why it is very likely that the author of the text was perfectly familiar with the sophist movement (Anderson 2019: 101). Researchers working on *Anonymus* perceive its author differently: from a staunch supporter of Athenian democracy (the “die-hard supporter of democracy”, Sørensen 2021: 96), through a conservative, “moderate” representative of the traditional aristocracy, to an anti-democratic supporter of the oligarchic faction (a “full-blown oligarch”, Sørensen 2021: 96). Nevertheless, in the era marked by political unrest and intrigue, the author of the treatise stands out as a firm advocate of solidarity, justice and law (*cf.* Balot 2001). The work consisting of seven fragments was written around the end of the fifth or the beginning of the fourth century BC (Cole 1961: 127; Guthrie 1971: 314 n.; Kerferd 1981: 54; Hoffmann 1999: 279; *Sophists* 2016: 140)³. Researchers in

² It seems that for this reason Horky (2020: 262) titled his study “Anonymus Iamblichi, *On Excellence (Peri Aretēs)*”. It is worth noting that the word *arete* (ἀρετή, together with the related superlative form ἄριστος) is one of the terms most often used by Iamblichus: it appears 10 times in the short work. Other frequently used terms include ἀγαθός, νόμος, εὐνομία and ἀνομία.

³ Musti and Mari (2003) are of a different opinion, advocating the middle of the fourth century BC. In my opinion, however, the issues regarding the time of the creation, authorship and reception of *Anonymus Iamblichi* are best presented by A. Ciriaci in the latest monograph on the treatise (2011: 196): “I risultati emersi nel corso della trattazione consentono di affermare che i frammenti dell’Anonimo di Giamblico risalgono cronologicamente al tardo V secolo a.C., in ogni caso a un periodo precedente il decennio compreso tra il 395–385 a.C., entro cui si situa la pubblicazione del Gorgia platonico, opera che, per le ragioni precedentemente mostrate, può essere considerato il *terminus ante quem* per la redazione dello scritto”. What is more, the reader will find there (pages 28–

the field of Greek sophistry agree that *Anonymus Iamblichus* considers how man can acquire – thanks to innate abilities, learning and individual exercises – skills and knowledge necessary to achieve *arete*, i.e. moral perfection, without which the state – an institution born of human nature – cannot do. *Arete* is necessary for justice and the rule of law to be observed in a community of people unable to live in dispersion (Wróblewski 2005: 517 AD)⁴. The second part of *Anonymus* is dedicated to the opposite of the rule of law (εὐνομία), i.e. lawlessness (ἀνομία). The two concepts are defined and both the benefits of preserving the rule of law and the damages resulting from lawlessness are listed.

The concept of *mneme* appears in connection with lawlessness. It is used only once throughout the treatise. Therefore, in order to fully demonstrate its semantic field and function in a broad context, the longer passage from the seventh fragment of *Anonymus* will be quoted *in extenso* and the classical method of philological analysis will be subsequently used. The passage (fragment 7, 25–40, Diels, Kranz 1956: 404) is all the more important because it is probably the first use of the word *mneme* in Greek literature in the plural form:

- (7) καὶ ἄλλα δὲ πολλὰ ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ εὐνομίᾳ ἀγαθὰ, ἅπερ ἐπικουρήματα τῇ ζωῇ καὶ παραψυχῇ τῶν χαλεπῶν ἐξ αὐτῆς γίγνεται· τὰ δ' ἐκ τῆς ἀνομίας κακὰ ἀποβαίνοντα τάδε ἐστίν.⁵
 (8) ἄσχολοι μὲν πρῶτον οἱ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς τὰ ἔργα γίνονται καὶ ἐπιμελοῦνται τοῦ ἀηδεστάτου, πραγμάτων ἄλλ' οὐκ ἔργων, τὰ τε χρήματα δι' ἀπιστίαν καὶ ἀμειξίαν ἀποθησαυρίζουσιν ἄλλ' οὐ κοινοῦνται, καὶ οὕτως σπάνια γίγνεται, ἐὰν καὶ πολλὰ ᾖ. (9) αἱ τε τύχαι αἱ φλαῦραι καὶ αἱ ἀγαθαὶ εἰς τάναντία ὑπηρετοῦσιν· ἡ τε γὰρ εὐτυχία οὐκ ἀσφαλὴς ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ἀνομίᾳ ἄλλ' ἐπιβουλεύεται, ἡ τε δυστυχία οὐκ ἀπωθεῖται ἀλλὰ κρατύνεται διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν καὶ ἀμειξίαν.
 (10) ὁ τε πόλεμος ἐξῶθεν μᾶλλον ἐπάγεται καὶ ἡ οἰκεία στάσις ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς αἰτίας, καὶ ἐὰν μὴ πρόσθεν γίγηται, τότε συμβαίνει· ἔν τε πράγμασι συμβαίνει καθεστάναι αἰεὶ διὰ ἐπιβουλὰς τὰς ἐξ ἀλλήλων, δι' ἅσπερ εὐλαβομένους τε διατελεῖν καὶ ἀντεπιβουλεύοντας ἀλλήλοις.
 (11) καὶ οὕτε ἐρηγοροσὶν ἡδεῖας τὰς φροντίδας εἶναι οὔτε ἐς τὸν ὕπνον ἀπερχομένοις ἡδεῖαν

51) a thorough discussion of *status quaestionis*, i.e. the history of research on *Anonymus Iamblichus*: starting from the publication of 1889, in which Blass identified large fragments of Iamblichus's *Protrepticus* as a work by Antiphon, the sophist; through the studies of a dozen scholars, each of whom attributed *Anonymus* to a different author, including Democritus (Cataudella 1932: 5–22, cf. Cataudella 1950: 74–106), Protagoras (Levi 1941: 235–246) or Hippias (Untersteiner 1943–1944: 442–458; a thorough review of the alleged authors is made by Hoffmann (1997: 321–333) and Horky (2020: 262–263), until the aforementioned monograph, in which A. Ciriacci states: “È mancata del tutto un'analisi complessiva dei frammenti, che tenesse conto di tutti gli aspetti dello scritto (filosofici, filologici, linguistici e stilistici) e che lo considerasse nel suo insieme e come documento d'importanza teorica determinata e definita” (2011: 58). Hoffmann (1997: 332), however, concluded the issue of authorship in the most reasonable way: „Diese zahlreichen Bezüge erweise den A. als selbständigen Sophisten, dessen genaue Identität ohne weitere Funde im Dunkeln bleiben muß”.

⁴ Cf. Gajda 1989: 190; Kornatowski 1968: 137. An excellent concise description of *Anonymus* is provided by Grady 2008: 138–147; while an in-depth discussion of all fragments of *Anonymus*, taking into account the broad historical and literary context, is undertaken by Horky (2020: 262–292, in particular 270–289).

⁵ Laks and Most (*Sophists* 2016: 158) deleted the last sentence (τὰ ... ἐστίν) from Diels and Kranz's text; cf. Horky 2020: 286.

τὴν ὑποδοχὴν ἀλλὰ ἐνδείματον, τὴν τε ἀνέγερσιν ἔμφοβον καὶ πτοοῦσαν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ **μνήμας** κακῶν ἐξαπινάϊους ἄγειν· ἅπερ ἐκ τῆς ἀνομίας ταῦτά τε καὶ τὰ ἄλλα κακὰ τὰ προειρημένα ἅπαντα ἀποβαίνει.

Many other benefits [goods] result from the rule of law, [benefits] which become helpful in life and are consolation in troubles that arise in it [= in life]. From lawlessness, in turn, the following bad things stem: above all, people have no time for their own activities, but attend to what is most unpleasant, namely public [political] affairs rather than their own; then, due to the lack of trust and the disappearance of trade relations, [people] hoard money [property, assets] and do not share it at all. Thus, money becomes a scarce good, even if there is a lot of it. Subsequently, changes in fortune, for better or worse, bring the opposite consequences [than when respecting the law], for good fortune [prosperity] is not secure when lawlessness reigns; on the contrary, it is constantly threatened, whereas misfortune [unhappiness] is not counteracted, but grows stronger due to the lack of trust and the disappearance of human relations [social contacts]. For the same reason [the lack of respect for law] external wars and internal political upheaval – even if they have not occurred before – occur now. [Lawlessness] also triggers the need for constant involvement in public affairs due to scheming intrigues, because of which people are not only constantly on guard, but also plot against one another. Moreover, those who keep vigil [do not sleep] do not have pleasant thoughts, and those who retire for the night [fall asleep] experience not solace but trepidation, and waking up, which evokes fear and terror, provokes in man sudden [unexpected] **thoughts [memories]** of [experienced] misfortunes. These, as well as other misfortunes mentioned above, are the results of lawlessness.⁶

In this longer passage framed by two almost identical sentences, the main concept is lawlessness from which “bad things stem” (ἐκ τῆς ἀνομίας τὰ κακὰ ἀποβαίνοντα / ἀποβαίνει). Lawlessness – as an antithesis of “the rule of law”⁷ – is the subject of the author’s reflection in the final part of the treatise dedicated to the disastrous consequences for ordinary citizens and for the state as a whole⁸. The list of bad fruits of lawlessness begins with (1) the lack of time to engage in one’s own work (ἄσχολοι οἱ ἄνθρωποι πρὸς τὰ ἔργα γίγνονται – literally: “people have no time for their own activities”), since the activity that completely consumes their energy is political activity (ἐπιμελοῦνται τοῦ ἀηδεστάτου, πραγμάτων – literally: “they attend to what is most unpleasant, namely public [political] affairs”)⁹.

⁶ The long passage as well as other Greek sentences and phrases quoted in the article have been translated into English by the Author of this paper.

⁷ Fragment 7, 2-3 states: καὶ ὅτι <ἡ> μὲν εὐνομία ἄριστον εἴη καὶ κοινῇ καὶ ἰδίᾳ, ἡ ἀνομία δὲ κακίστον – “[one should also know] that the rule of law is the greatest good in both private and social life, while lawlessness is the greatest evil.”

⁸ As A. Ciriaci (2011: 192) observes, the situation described by the author of *Anonymus* (i.e. the consequences of lawlessness) may refer to any city where the rule of law prevails. In particular, it perfectly reflects the real events that took place at the end of the fifth century BC in Athens battered by hostile political factions.

⁹ As scholars (among others, Faraguna 2012 and Sørensen 2020: 98–100) point out, the two terms present here, ἔργα and πράγματα, which in a neutral sense can be used as synonyms, take on the exact opposite meaning. Therefore, ἔργα refers specifically to private activity aimed at the preservation and well-being of *oikos*, while πράγματα means “public” or “political” activities, i.e. those carried out in the broad (social and institutional) context of the *polis*.

Focus on politics, in turn, causes (2) serious economic perturbations, because distrustful business people (merchants) stop trading and thus, accumulate goods and monetary resources, which leads to the stratification and the impoverishment of a significant part of society¹⁰ (τά τε χρήματα δι' ἀπιστίαν καὶ ἀμειξίαν ἀποθησαυρίζουσιν ἀλλ' οὐ κοινοῦνται, καὶ οὕτως σπάνια γίγνεται, ἐὰν καὶ πολλὰ ἦι – “due to the lack of trust and the disappearance of trade relations¹¹, [people] hoard money [property, assets] and do not share it at all. Thus, money becomes a scarce good, even if there is a lot of it”¹²).

Another unpleasant consequence of the state of lawlessness are (3) vicissitudes (twists of fate), as happiness and misfortune can easily turn into their opposites. This consequence becomes visible in a situation of anarchy, when the law does not apply, and the only norm of conduct (based on the law stipulating that justice is the rule of the stronger) is violence and lawlessness which, after all, lead to chaos and disintegration of every organized social group. The author of *Anonymus* expresses the idea in a short sentence: αἱ τε τύχαι αἱ φλαῦραι καὶ αἱ ἀγαθαὶ εἰς τἀναντία ὑπηρετοῦσιν – literally: “both bad and good fortune turns into [their] opposites.” It is easy to fall from happiness into the opposite state. It is even easier when there are no legal barriers or preventive measures. After all, good fortune is neither guaranteed nor safe. Moreover, it is exposed to the evil intentions of those who, driven by jealousy, are hostile towards the happiness of others (ἥ τε γὰρ εὐτυχία οὐκ ἀσφαλὴς ἐστὶν ἐν τῇ ἀνομίᾳ ἀλλ' ἐπιβουλεύεται – literally: “for happiness [good fortune] is not safe when lawlessness reigns, but is [constantly]

¹⁰ One of the most original and intriguing views presented by the author of *Anonymus* is definitely the economic approach to social welfare; cf. Sørensen 2021: 99.

¹¹ M. Lombardi defines the concept of ἀμειξία in the following way: “una sorta di mutuo scambio di risorse economiche ed energie lavorative mirato alla tutela dello stato sociale” (1997: 263). In another article (Lombardi 2011: 129–151), extended research on *Anonymus* is continued, in particular regarding the relationships between three spheres of social life: ethics, politics and economy. Lombardi (2011: 130) rightly notes that “nell’Anonimo si evidenzia il primato dell’etica e della politica sull’economia...”, which is also confirmed by my analysis of paragraph 7. She further explains why social trust is so important in the process of getting rich: “Nella riflessione sulla connessione tra etica, politica ed economia spicca l’analisi nel capitolo 7 dei benefici e dei danni che l’individuo può trarre da una condizione di ordine ben regolato dalle leggi (εὐνομία) e di disordine (ἀνομία) di cui si evidenziano gli aspetti economici: dall’εὐνομία deriva un clima di fiducia che, arrecando grande vantaggio a tutti gli uomini, fa sì che le ricchezze divengano comuni...” (Lombardi 2011: 131). A similar connotation, closely connected with πίστις, is given to ἀμειξία by Faraguna (2012: 363): “«commerce», «exchange», «circulation of money or goods» and «mutual trust» with reference [...] to the easy availability of money and credit in the eunomic and democratic polis”.

¹² It seems that Gajda’s translation (1989: 295) deviates slightly from the original, especially in the case of (1) the expression δι’ ἀμειξίαν (“due to the withdrawal of it [money] from circulation”, while in my translation: “due to the lack of [trade] relations”, cf. Hdt. II, 136, 7: ἀμειξίης ἐούσης πολλῆς χρημάτων) and (2) the sentence: ἀλλ’ οὐ κοινοῦνται (“so it [money] is not a common good”), in which the author seems to emphasize more the idea of ‘sharing’ (exchanging) money in commercial transactions (trade).

exposed to scheming”). The author of *Anonymus*, as an attentive observer who particularly understands the behaviour of people subjected to enormous pressure and stress, further emphasizes that no one is able to effectively oppose slackness and disorder. It is all the more so since in interpersonal relationships, including business, there is a lack of mutual trust. And if that was not enough, the state of universal misfortune is intensified to the extent that results in global annihilation (ἢ τε δυστυχία οὐκ ἀπωθεῖται ἀλλὰ κρατύνεται διὰ τὴν ἀπιστίαν καὶ ἀμειξίαν – “whereas misfortune [unhappiness] is not counteracted, but grows stronger due to the lack of trust and the disappearance of human relations [social contacts]”).

Therefore, it is not surprising that the self-propelling spiral of destruction is “crowned” by (4) wars, be that external (πόλεμος ἔξωθεν) or internal, i.e. civil wars (οἰκεία στάσις) caused by the increasing injustice in the state and the tragic consequences thereof¹³. Undoubtedly, it is the most tragic consequence of lawlessness and, in Iamblichus’s opinion, one that is unavoidable: ὁ τε πόλεμος ἔξωθεν μᾶλλον ἐπάγεται καὶ ἡ οἰκεία στάσις ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς αἰτίας, καὶ ἐὰν μὴ πρόσθεν γίγνηται, τότε συμβαίνει – literally: “For the same reason [the lack of respect for law] external wars and internal political upheaval [civil war] – even if they have not occurred before – occur now”. Any war with an external enemy or among citizens themselves inevitably leads to pathological behavior, namely constant participation in the worst kind of politics focused only on destroying the opponent by means of conspiracies, intrigues, and violence: ἐν τε πράγμασι συμβαίνει καθεστάναι αἰεὶ διὰ ἐπιβουλὰς τὰς ἐξ ἀλλήλων, δι’ ὅσπερ εὐλαβουμένους τε διατελεῖν καὶ ἀντεπιβουλεύοντας ἀλλήλοις – “[Lawlessness] also triggers the need for constant involvement in public affairs due to scheming intrigues, because of which people are not only constantly on guard, but also plot against one another”.

War resulting from lawlessness is certainly the culmination of all misfortunes, crowning their catalogue. However, the author of *Anonymus* is aware that global tragedies also painfully affect an ordinary person who, like it or not, experiences such events on a daily basis. Therefore, in the final and the most interesting paragraph 11, the mental condition of people who become victims of disastrous events is discussed. A single sentence contains the truth about those people’s experiences during the day and at night: καὶ οὐτε ἐργηγορόσιν ἡδεΐας τὰς φροντίδας εἶναι οὐτε ἐς τὸν ὕπνον ἀπερχομένοις ἡδεΐαν τὴν ὑποδοχὴν ἀλλὰ

¹³ A. Ciriaci (2011: 190) suggests that the author of *Anonymus* refers here to the 2nd and the 3rd phase of the Peloponnesian War, which ultimately ended in the defeat of the Athenians: “Il riferimento potrebbe essere alla conduzione della seconda e della terza fase della guerra del Peloponneso, che portò, dopo alterne vicende, alla disfatta degli Ateniesi, della quale erano ritenuti responsabili i vari protagonisti della vita politica dell’Atene post-periclea”; and later (2011: 192): “Ancora una volta, sembra di poter cogliere nelle parole dell’Anonimo di Giamblico un riferimento al continuo clima di tensione vissuto ad Atene verso la fine del V secolo. In quel periodo, le lotte interne tra le fazioni politiche sfociarono in due colpi di Stato per mano oligarchica: il primo nel 411 a.C.; il secondo, dopo la vittoria spartana della guerra del Peloponneso, nel 404”.

ἐνδείματον, τὴν τε ἀνέγερσιν ἔμφοβον καὶ πτοοῦσαν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπὶ **μνήμας** κακῶν ἐξαπιναίους ἄγειν – “Moreover, those who keep vigil [do not sleep] do not have pleasant thoughts, and those who retire for the night [fall asleep] experience not solace but trepidation, and waking up, which evokes fear and terror, provokes in man sudden [unexpected] **thoughts [memories]**¹⁴ of [experienced] misfortunes.” The poignant metaphor reveals the actual state of the soul of an individual person – a citizen (e.g. of Athens). During the day when he is awake (ἐγρηγορόσιν) and could indulge, even for a brief moment, in pleasant thoughts and great desires (ἡδεΐας φροντίδας) in order to escape brutal reality, he is not able to do so. His mind is tormented by worries and fears, including those caused by his personal experience as well as the events in the entire state (city). The situation is even worse when a person retires for the night (ἐς τὸν ὕπνον ἀπερχομένοις), hoping that sleep would become a “safe haven” (ἡδεΐαν τὴν ὑποδοχὴν) in which he would find peace and relief, not fear that haunts him (ἀλλὰ ἐνδείματον). Meanwhile, an unpleasant surprise awaits him: a sudden awakening (τὴν ἀνέγερσιν) with which fear and dread (ἔμφοβον καὶ πτοοῦσαν) come to life anew, so abruptly and unexpectedly (ἐξαπιναίους ἄγειν) that all the bad memories, or rather the depressing thoughts of misfortunes (μνήμας κακῶν) that have befallen him, return.

Therefore one might ask if the term *mneme*, used here in the plural form, means individual “memories”, i.e. images related to specific events, or “thoughts” by means of which a person recalls these events and thus brings them to back life. I believe there would be no “memories” without the “power” which extracts them from memory, using “thought” as a tool (carrier) of a given information. Therefore, the expression μνήμας κακῶν clearly suggests many individual “reminiscences” (thoughts) concerning specific (unfavorable) events and situations in which a particular person participated. This is all the more probable because, in my opinion, μνήμας are a kind of equivalent for “sweet (pleasant) thoughts” (ἡδεΐας τὰς φροντίδας), which are, unfortunately, searched for in vain during the day by a man who is lost in many misfortunes born of lawlessness that cruelly affects all citizens. Similarly to looking for pleasant “thoughts” (φροντίδας) in the daytime, man wishes for equally good “reminiscences” (μνήμας) after waking up. Unfortunately, reality is determined by “unhappiness” (κακά) when one is both awake and asleep. Therefore, no “thoughts” can be “sweet, pleasant, soothing” (ἡδεΐας), even more so the “memories” which during restless sleep take the form of almost real, equally painful (as during the day) “sleep thoughts”, i.e. images that return with redoubled strength after a sudden awakening. In this way, the unfortunate circle of “thoughts – dreams – reminiscences” closes, dressed in vivid images. Within the circle, as if in a prison, an individual is punished and condemned to repeatedly experiencing the frightening states of reality and sleep. Therefore, it is not surprising that the psyche (personality) of a person subjected to such a long-term harmful

¹⁴ Horky (2020: 287) similarly translates μνήμας as “sudden recollection”.

effect undergoes slow self-destruction, in which memory (intellectual power) and its instruments – thoughts, images recorded in dreams and memories – play an important role. Therefore, *mneme* as an important ability for a man, with the precise help of *mneme* understood as “thoughts”, has a paradoxically destructive function in paragraph 11. It slowly, but effectively, destroys the human psyche, accustoms it with evil and ultimately leads to moral degeneration, which often ends in physical devastation or even death.

Therefore, the above-mentioned “bad fruits” of lawlessness include (listed as 5) the psychological destruction of man, to which his “memory”, i.e. the intellectual power of remembering and the forms of its mental expression: images that are the product of thought contribute substantially. The images become so effective that a man who has been a good citizen so far, when subjected to their overwhelming influence, succumbs to lawlessness and voluntarily abandons the ethical principles of social interaction, gradually losing his *arete*, i.e. moral “perfection”. The absence of *arete*, in turn, paves the way for the greatest evil, namely tyranny (7, 40-41: ἡ τυραννίς, κακὸν τοσοῦτόν τε καὶ τοιοῦτον – “tyranny, so great and equally terrible an evil”)¹⁵, because “whenever these two [pillars], law and justice, are abandoned by people, then one man immediately takes over power and control [over people]” (7, 47-49)¹⁶. Fortunately, according to the author of *Anonymus*, such a situation cannot happen because even if (theoretically) this man became as hard as steel (7, 52: ἀδαμάντινον γενέσθαι)¹⁷, he would not be able to do it (i.e. become a tyrant) alone and he would not be able to deprive the citizens of the useful law against their will, removing the foundation of the rule of law and the mainstay of democracy (frg. 7, 53: εἰς ὃν παρὰ πολλῶν).

In conclusion, the passage from *Anonymus Iamblichi* (fr. 7, 38) in which μνήμη appears, deals with the consequences of lawlessness. *Mneme*, “the power of remembering”, enormously contributes to the moral fall of man which ori-

¹⁵ D.W. Graham concludes (*The Texts of Early Greek Philosophy*, 2010: 875): “and worst of all, the conditions are ripe to bring about tyranny, as order must be imposed from outside rather than arising from the society itself. [...] Tyranny and injustice result from an unnatural hostility between citizens”.

¹⁶ Diels, Kranz (1956: 282): ὅταν οὖν ταῦτα τὰ δύο ἐκ τοῦ πλήθους ἐκλίπηι, ὃ τε νόμος καὶ ἡ δίκη, τότε ἤδη εἰς ἓνα ἀποχωρεῖν τὴν ἐπιτροπείαν τούτων καὶ φυλακὴν.

¹⁷ Cf. 6, 11-12: ἀδαμάντινος τό τε σῶμα καὶ τὴν ψυχὴν – literally: “hard as steel both in the body and in the soul”. J. de Romilly refers to such a man as “a superman” (1992: 170; in the original French version “surhomme”). The same term is used by P.O. Grady (2008: 140). M. Lacore (1997: 399–419) writes extensively about the adamant man metaphor (“the man made of steel” – “l’homme d’acier”), especially in a comparative context (due to the presence of the same metaphor in Plato’s dialogues).

ginates from submission to evil. *Mneme*'s role is to evoke mental images, most often of misfortunes (as forms of *mneme*'s expression), which effectively destroy the psyche and *arete* – the virtue of the man-citizen, thus leading him to abandoning ethical norms and consequently, to moral self-destruction. Therefore, a very negative impact of *mneme* is in question. Despite being an efficient “memory”, it is used for the mental degeneration of an individual, which also leads to the destruction of the community of citizens (the state – *polis*).

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