THE GREEK STATE

Victor Ehrenberg

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By

VICTOR EHRENBERG

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VICTOR EHRENBERG

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Preface to the First Edition

This book was first published in German. In producing an English version I was able to make a fair number of additions and corrections. I also hope that the book has generally gained in clarity. I have been frequently told by friends and reviewers that an English version would fill a serious gap, felt by scholars and students alike, both in Britain and in the United States. I shall be delighted if it will serve this purpose.

The English text is the result of the collaboration between my old friend Harold Mattingly and myself. I am very grateful to Mattingly for having done the initial spade work, and for discussing a number of passages with me. I also owe sincere thanks to Mr A. L. Irvine, who read the text in typescript and in proofs and did a good deal to improve its style. The final version remains my responsibility.

The problems of the Greek city-state have recently been discussed even in the Third Programme of the B.B.C. The debate among some distinguished scholars showed that agreement was out of reach. To some extent, this was so because the speakers differed widely even in their presuppositions. While nobody can hope to provide a clear-cut solution which might satisfy everybody, it may be useful to deal with the questions concerned in a wider context. That is, at least in part, what I have tried to do in this book.

In dedicating the book to my wife, I wish to thank her for forty years of married life, during which she has been my stand-by and my inspiration.

V. E.

London, May 1959

Preface to the Second Edition

This edition is based on the Second German edition (Zürich, 1965), though on account of more recent work in the field or more rethinking of my own, the book has been considerably extended and altered. I have also corrected some minor mistakes.

The book is again dedicated to my wife; it will be published some time after our Golden Wedding, and I can only repeat how much I have owed to her during these fifty years for guiding our and our sons' lives.

I am grateful to Messrs Methuen for their offer to publish the new edition, and especially to Mr Anthony Forster for the interest he took in the matter. I owe special thanks to my friend Professor Martin Ostwald and the Oxford University Press for letting me see the proofs of his important book *Nomos*.

V. E.

London, January 1969

Introduction

When we speak of the Hellenic State we are thinking of the political forms that grew out of the age of Greek immigration into the Aegean. I shall try to depict the development and character of these political units, and to establish the forms that in the course of history were decisive. Without anticipating too much, it may be worth while at this point – briefly and within the requirements of our theme – to distinguish what was essentially Greek from an earlier age and a surrounding world that were not. That the Greeks learnt and borrowed much from the East is an admitted fact; but there is no direct road leading from the territorial state of the East under its kings to the Greek community of citizens, even should it be established that the Mycenaean Greeks were under a priestly kingship, such as can hardly be imagined without Eastern influence. Another matter of special importance for the later Greek development, a matter, say, of social geography, is the extent to which the country was urbanized. The cities of the East, and indeed of the Minoans and Mycenaeans, found their centre in the royal palace; such a centre is not to be found among the later Greeks, even where there were kings. Nevertheless, it is possible that the typical city civilization of the East may have undergone changes in the Aegean before the Greeks came, and that it may have facilitated the transition to Greek forms of life. The influence of land and sea in the Aegean world had also shaped the predecessors of the Greeks. Out of this twofold inheritance – the preponderance of urban settlement and the geographical conditions – the new immigrants, hitherto bound to one another by the personal and social relationships of the tribe, created those new political forms of which the Polis, the Greek city-state, was the crown.

The question now arises: how far are we justified in speaking of 'the' Polis in general? We have to draw our picture of it from a number of states, and, to do so, we must recognize the unity that underlies the plurality. 'Polis' is to some extent an abstraction; it will be our task to describe what is typical, or what Max Weber calls the 'ideal type' (*Idealtypus*), without forgetting the differences that exist beside the common elements. Research in the last decades has vastly enriched our knowledge of the many Greek states and their constitutions in their almost countless varieties. It cannot be my task here to present the ever-growing material (especially of inscriptions), though I shall point out some references of particular importance; the main theme must not be forgotten or submerged under the mass of variations. I spoke of 'abstraction' as necessary; it is essentially a task set for all historical writing that is not purely chronological; and even chronological history, if it is to deserve its name of history, cannot be content to describe only what happened. The moment the historian begins to speak not of events but of conditions, he is forced to make abstractions and generalizations. In what follows we shall speak of 'the Polis' as we speak of 'absolute monarchy', of 'modern democracy' or of 'the society of the early or late Middle Ages'. In the same way, in the second part of this work, we shall deal with the 'Hellenistic State'. The emphasis must inevitably fall on what is common rather than on what is distinctive. Call it a compromise, if you will; but it is a compromise that is not only justified but absolutely necessary, if we are to win from the mass of detail a picture of the whole.

There is, however, another aspect not to be neglected when we try to regard the Polis as the historically decisive form of state. To the Greeks themselves the word 'Polis' was almost as general and vague as the word 'state' is to us. Greek political thought and public law, in fact, knew of very few, if any, unambiguous concepts. A word could have several different meanings (as, e.g., *perioeci*, *koinon*, *agora*), and several words could have identical or very similar meanings (e.g., *boule*, *synkletos*, *gerousia*). Difficulties will therefore occur, in particular when we wish to translate the Greek words. We shall try not to overlook these difficulties. They must, on the other hand, not prevent us from realizing the essential matters. It remains to be seen to what extent we shall succeed. After all, if the word Polis is often used in a vague and generalizing sense, it did represent to the Greeks a unique and largely uniform type of state, and it remained an essential factor within the Hellenistic state as well. In the following chapters we shall discuss what this type actually was like.

What we have said about the ambiguity of the concepts of public law in the Polis is to some extent true of the Hellenistic state as well. But the science and in particular the practice of law had meanwhile made considerable progress, partly as a purely Greek development and partly under the impact of various Oriental laws. The present book is not a work of legal science and the author is not a jurist. All that should be kept in mind by a generous reader.

PART I

The Hellenic State

CHAPTER ONE

The Origins of the Greek States

In this first chapter I shall try to sketch the conditions, geographical, ethnic, religious, social, and political, that led to the rise of the Greek states. There is much that is still unexplained, and the views represented here often remain mere assumptions, probable or perhaps only possible.

I. LAND AND SEA

I base the remarks that follow on the recognized fact that geography and history stand to one another in a relation of mutual influence, equally important whether we are thinking in terms of geography or of history. Of these two related elements one is essentially constant, the other essentially changing; the facts of space and nature remain constant through all the changes of time and history, yet vary in their significance and their effects. The history of the area first occupied by the Greeks, from the Helladic period down through Hellenic, Hellenistic, and Roman times into the Turkish period and the development of modern Greece, supplies unmistakable evidence both of changelessness and of change.

The region in which the Greek state had its original home embraces not only the peninsula that we call Greece, but also the islands and coasts of the Aegean Sea – the Aegean, as we call it for short. Sharply separated from the outside world by the open sea south of Crete and in the west, by the Balkan mountains in the north, and by the western edge of the plateau of Asia Minor in the east, this region may be regarded as a true geographical unit, with its base in its geological prehistory, when the land-bridge still existed between Europe and Asia. In the course of history, the Ionic migration (late in the second millennium or even later) and the ensuing movements from west to east over the Aegean Sea made this geographical unit a Greek unit, and thus formed, beyond all inner political frontiers, an area entirely Greek, the motherland of the multitude of Greek states. Its centre is the sea, but this sea is so thickly sown with islands, and the shores of Greece and the western coasts of Asia Minor are so broken up by the sea, that land and sea appear to be indissolubly connected; thus, the whole region is closely bound together by nature. Though it belongs to two continents, the Aegean is still a unit, for it is 'thalassocentric', centred on the sea and situated around the sea and its parts. A people that had no name for the sea when they first entered the Aegean area, learnt there to think of the sea as central, and never quite lost the habit.

The same geographical factors worked together to create a multitude of units and a great variety of forms. The fact that land and sea were so broken up led also to the erection of innumerable barriers. The land was torn in pieces by the bays, gulfs, and arms of the sea, and not less by the mountains which belong to a number of systems, created by mighty geological convulsions. Thus the Greek area displays an interlocked pattern of land and sea, mountains and mountainous districts, plains and valleys, islands and peninsulas, and the result is a wealth of small, sharply separated regions: nature sets an example of fragmentation that was followed and even surpassed by the political world. It was hard to find a place that offered any possibility for larger developments of power; even where (as, for example, in Asia Minor) extensive river plains might have served as a basis for it, the political and historical requirements were lacking.

We have indicated in the last paragraph the small extent of the natural and, even more, of the political districts. The whole area of the Aegean is very narrow in its scope; but the full meaning of this narrowness was only felt and realized when it was broken up internally into small and ever smaller divisions. For the sailor the sea never vanishes into infinity and, even where islands are scarce, some high peak like that of Athos or the Cretan Ida is always there as a landmark; so too on land there is never a plain that is not soon bounded by a mountain or an inlet of the sea. This among other things forced the political units to renounce expansion and led to a swift and complete seizure of the space available and to the early development of numerous political bodies. Painfully recoiling from its narrow boundaries and concentrated on itself, the state preserved a unity which displayed the features of a human community rather than of a political organization. The narrow space, admitting of little variation, produced a marked unification of the civic type and a very distinct political consciousness, limited though it was by its small scale. Neither power nor expansion could be the true aim of the growing state, but from the narrowness of space sprang high tensions that stimulated the creativeness of the community.

The limited space of the single political unit was again the main cause of Greek colonization and was responsible for the wide extent of the area of Greek settlements and the great number of their cities. The reason for the foundation of most colonies was the insufficiency of the homeland for housing and feeding a growing population. Political strife, either among rival groups of the ruling aristocracy or between nobles and non-nobles, could also be a cause of emigration. Even where trade and warlike energy led states to colonize, it was, in the last instance, the lack of a territory that could be exploited economically that drove men to the sea and created markets abroad. The age of colonization meant the spread of the Greeks of the Aegean over the whole of the Mediterranean and the Black Sea as well. A map, containing not only the Aegean, but the sea to the south of Crete, south Italy, east Sicily, the interior of the Balkans, and the coasts of Asia Minor, or, better still, a map stretching from Massilia to Sinope and from Cyrene to Olbia, will help us to realize that the Aegean is in the centre of an area, knit into one by the bonds of the sea and both limited and defended by the surrounding mountains, steppes, and deserts.

The sea, then, served as a safety valve for tensions within the narrow space, and so the exact position in relation to the sea was of decisive importance for political development. In the Aegean, in particular, the shores with their wealth of harbours called for trade and commercial intercourse and created economic prosperity and intellectual vitality, with a city-state as their living centre. Lands as close to one another as Argolis and Laconia, or Attica and Boeotia, illustrate the difference between regions that turn their faces or their backs to the sea. As the city developed, there emerged two characteristic forms of settlement – the settlement round a citadel, which was based on Mycenaean traditions, and the 'Phoenician' pattern, especially popular with the colonies, on a jutting peninsula or an island lying off the coast. A city's situation within the Aegean was no less important. The Aegean was a much frequented market between two continents; it was therefore of the highest importance for the individual state to be near the routes of traffic and points of intersection. A map will show that favourable position usually coincided with a favourable configuration of the coast. In general, it is the coasts that face the Aegean which are moulded into peninsulas and bays. It was here, then – in a historical movement from east to west – that those Greeks lived who held the political and cultural leadership; the western countries of the homeland were far behind and had hardly woken out of their sleep outside history when a new Greece, intensely alive, had arisen still farther in the west. The slowing down of the pace of historical development in the Aegean world from Asia Minor to the islands, then to the east coast of Greece, and finally to her central and western districts played an important part in the manifold variety of the Greek world of states.

If we disregard some fertile plains, mostly small, Greece was always a poor country, poor in water – springs were especially important in determining settlement –, poor in arable land, poor in mineral wealth. The land trained the Greek peasant not so much to hard work and intensified methods as to frugality. The limitation and poor quality of the soil meant an early decline of grain crops in many districts and their replacement by vines and olive trees. The import of corn became necessary, while of wine and oil there usually was more than enough for the producer; the basic conditions of agriculture, remaining everywhere more or less the same, drove the peasant to the city market and, in time, increasingly to trade and seafaring.

The economic and political effects of the conditions innate in the soil were reinforced by the influence of the climate, the mild heat, the low rainfall, and the short winter. The climate took life out into the open. House and family were far less important for daily life and social meetings than the market and the wrestling-school. A man's profession too came to matter less. Public life was almost the sole environment of the citizen. Man proved himself to be indeed a *ζῶον πολιτικόν*, a creature bound to the Polis, the community both urban and political.

Natural conditions in the Aegean thus led to the creation of numerous self-contained communities, characterized as much by their rich variety and mutual rivalries as by narrow space and inner coherence. In the colonies, too, the type of state, developed in the Aegean, was in all essentials retained. Colonization depended entirely on the sea – in contrast to Rome which colonized by land – and was almost exclusively confined to settlements on the shore. Difficulties of navigation, lack of harbours, or of suitable land along the coast, occasionally discouraged the colonists. In other cases there were historical difficulties that made Greek colonization impossible, as, for example, in the south-east and on the north-west coast of Africa, where Phoenicians, the Assyrian power, or Carthage stood in the way. Conditions varied widely in the different areas of colonization. What the colonists sought chiefly were good harbours, fertile soil, and protection against pirates and hostile natives. Here, too, the life of the state was strongly directed inwards rather than outwards. The natural requirements were in all important points the same, and that despite the larger territories of the Greek cities in Italy and Sicily. Out of the character of the Mediterranean world, both in east and west, grew the Greek state that at once shaped and revealed the Greek character. The close packing of states inside the Greek world, and of men inside the states, was the essential cause of the universal urge towards the *agon*, the passion to compete with your neighbour.

2. TRIBE AND TOWN

Some of the Greeks, the Athenians for example, believed that they were autochthonous. In point of fact, it hardly admits of doubt that all the Greeks were forced south from their earlier positions north of the Balkans through movements of various peoples. More recently different views have been expressed, chiefly based on linguistic arguments. One is that the Greeks entered Greece and the Aegean from Asia Minor by way of the sea; another that the Greek language took shape in Greece after the invasion. In the latter case, the invaders would be pre-Greek Indo-Europeans; they might have entered Greece in several waves or in one only, since the dialects which might prove several waves of immigration would not yet have existed at that early stage. This kind of hypothetical construction is supported by uncertain evidence (archaeological or otherwise), and it is not yet the time for the historian to take a definite stand. There were, at any rate, Greeks in Greece from about the turn of the third to the second millennium. There they probably found an earlier Indo-European stratum, and above all 'Mediterranean' tribes which almost certainly had come from Asia Minor. The Greeks everywhere either absorbed or expelled the earlier population. Nothing is known of the political organization of these pre-Greek peoples except in Crete, where a mighty kingship existed. The Greeks themselves came into the land as 'tribes'. To what extent during the immigration and settlement large tribes divided or small tribes united lies outside our knowledge; the result certainly was that the tribe already in existence, or fragments that subsequently broke off, shaped themselves independently into a large number of political units. In this, the differences between the later main tribes (Dorians, Ionians, Aeolians) or any special characteristic of any one of them played a very small part.

The first immigrants, the Ionians and Achaeans, did not come in one wave, still less as one compact body. Freely mixing, it seems, with the original pre-Greek population, they became as rulers the exponents of the Mycenaean civilization which was spread most intensely over the eastern lands of Greece and was very much under the cultural influence of Crete. In the political life of the Mycenaean Greeks, as in their culture generally, we can establish a connection of Greek elements from the north with non-Greek elements from the east. Thanks to the decipherment of the documents written in the Linear script B, the political, social, and economic conditions of the Mycenaean age are becoming a little clearer, as the reading of the inscriptions proceeds; it is probable that these conditions were subject to non-Greek influence, perhaps not only Cretan but also Asiatic. The centre of the Mycenaean state was the royal citadel, and as the earliest Greek name for it was πόλις (πτόλις), it is very probable that the Polis as city and as state is derived from it. To the strong and walled citadel, of which the royal palace was the centre, was often attached a settlement which, though not fortified, usually gained much of the character of a town. Citadel and settlement (ἄστυ) formed a centre of courtly, political, and economic life, whereas mere citadels of refuge (*Fluchtburgen*) hardly existed; they only survived in north-western Greece. There was almost certainly beside the king a class of noble lords whose dwellings and graves lay near the royal citadel or in citadels of their own. Of the people we know little, but the gigantic buildings prove that a very numerous section of them – the subject pre-Greek population, of course, in the first place – were bound to forced labour. Kingship, the power of which is at once proved by its cultural achievements, had grown beyond tribal chieftainship into a strong monarchy, and often, as it seems, into supremacy over numerous vassal kings. The position of Agamemnon in the *Iliad* certainly shows traces of a kingship by the grace of God, but, in his relation to the other kings, he is only the commander-in-chief of the army. It is unlikely that there ever was a large Achaean empire on Greek soil. In spite of the unity of the Achaean civilization and language and the wide diffusion of the Achaean name, it is in no way certain that the Greeks of that age felt themselves to be a single people, still less a 'nation'.

From the fifteenth century B.C. onwards the Mycenaean Greeks pushed out in various directions, in a movement which led to struggles with Crete and Asia Minor, to the occupation of Crete, and the gradual settlement on the Aegean islands, on the south-west and south coasts of Asia Minor, and in Cyprus. The earlier period of this movement has been established by the tablets in Linear script B found in Cnossus and its dependencies. It received a new and stronger stimulus from the second large wave of immigration: that of the Dorians and the north-western Greeks (probably during the twelfth to eleventh century B.C.). This was the first attempt at colonization made by the Greeks and, by it, the Mycenaean Greeks to some extent freed themselves from their soil and their traditions. This process determined the form given to the cities that gradually rose on colonial ground. In Asia Minor in particular, where the Greeks settled among an alien population, on the fringe of a large non-Greek hinterland, usually attaching themselves to earlier places of habitation on peninsulas and isthmuses, everything tended towards urban settlement. Here, the Mycenaean Polis became a city in its narrow and most precise sense, with walls and, as seems evident at least from the example of Smyrna, with a planned layout based on axial streets from north to south. This takes us back as far as the eighth century B.C., and it would be proof of a forerunner, earlier than those in the west, of the later rectangular scheme of town planning connected with the name of Hippodamus. A city is not yet a state, but exercising its sway over barbarians, it must have become a state. It is likely, though by no means certain, that the type of political community, which we call the Polis, entered history in Ionia.

In the homeland, the collapse of Mycenaean Greece due to fresh immigration, together with the renewed tendency to split up larger units, brought with it a general revival of primitive conditions, with political forms to correspond; such conditions had already prevailed when the earlier immigrants arrived (as can still be shown in Arcadia), but had, in the main, been ousted by the Mycenaeans. Whether we can only now begin to speak of the genuine growth of a people is questionable; what is quite certain is that the motley world of Greek states only developed in the centuries following the Dorian invasion. The type of the Polis was in existence in the early eighth century; by then the Greeks physically and spiritually had become a Mediterranean people. After the internal and external decay of the Mycenaean age and its kingship, the tribal order came again into its own. Even where the tribes were not loosely settled in villages (κατὰ κώμας), as they often were, where they now dwelt in cities, usually walled, mostly in connection with a Mycenaean settlement, above all in eastern Greece, the tribal order gained a decisive importance; finally the colonial cities too adopted it, though more or less as a fiction. In Sparta (and similarly in Elis) the new settlement was deliberately founded away from the Mycenaean town; but even the unfortified settlement here, consisting of a number of neighbouring villages, can at least be described as half-urban. Under the general scheme of the structure of a tribal state new and clearly distinct types of states were concealed (see p. 22). But every settlement, whether in village or town, stood in virtue of its regional character in contrast to the 'personal' order of the tribe. This contrast became the more pronounced, as the ties that bound the tribe together were loosened by the establishment of a settled community.

The tribal order was based on the family as its smallest social unit. After settlement was complete, it formed the household (οἶκος), composed of free men and bondsmen. The household included possessions on a considerable scale (herds, valued metals, and land – in that order of importance) together with dependants of various kinds. The whole stood under the master of the house, whose power was very great, though never equal to the *patria potestas* of Rome. Beside him stood his wife – for Greek marriage rested on the principle of monogamy. The father had wide powers over his children, even more so, of course, over the slaves, known as ἀνδράποδα, who had no more rights than cattle, but at the same time were members of the household (οἰκέται). Only in Sparta did the state claim for itself the essential rights of the householder over his children and slaves. Everywhere it was the rule that property, mainly land, belonged to the family. As settlement took place the land was divided into 'lots' (κλῆροι), after special pieces had been separated off for the gods and the king (τεμένη); only hunting-land and pasturage remained common property. Private property, then, in the form of the lot was the economic basis of the household, which at first enjoyed a very high degree of self-sufficiency – it had hardly begun to give way in the Homeric age – but long remained bound to tribe and community; the master could not as a rule give away or sell its land at pleasure. The strict limitation of succession by inheritance was only decisively broken when division of the property among one's children, and also adoption, became possible – for instance, as provided for in the laws of Gortyn.

The independence of the family in law and economics was limited and restricted by certain social institutions, belonging to the primitive order of the tribe and persisting, above all in Sparta and Crete, into later centuries. Such were the communal life of the men, their common meals, and the age groups of the youths. But there were also, in ever-growing importance, other social units, built upon the family but set above it. It is possible that the clan (γένος, πάτρα) belonged to very early times, and that the individual family, the *oikos*, only gradually grew into a separate unit. The chronological order remains doubtful, but it is certain that later the clan was of far greater importance. It was generally tied to a narrow district – in Attica some demes bore clan names – and it was usually under the leadership of a single family, which supplied priests for the cults of the clan and occasionally a kind of official leader (ἄρχων). The clan was the chief means by which the nobles expressed and asserted themselves politically. At a later date, religious groups without bonds of kinship (such as the Salaminioi in Athens) might figure as 'clans' and enjoy their privileges. There had also always existed certain loose groups of kinsmen, but the oldest union of a number of families was the phratry; it was also the most important historically. In essence, though not in the underlying conception, there was no difference between phratry and clan, between a community of brothers and the group based on a common father; in all Greek dialects the Indo-European word for brother (*frater*) is only used for the member of a brotherhood (phratry), and not for a natural brother (*adelphos*); the fact is confirmed by the patronymic clan names of many phratries. There was also, for example in Caria, a group similar to the phratry, called *syngeneia*. The phratries went beyond simple connection by blood; the *patrai* are often found as their subordinate parts. It was probably at this point that there intruded upon the kinship organization of the tribe an association based on different foundations. This was the *Hetairia*, an association of men derived from the companionship of soldiers in the same tent and bound together by homoerotic relations; its place in the laws of Gortyn more or less corresponds to that of the phratry in other places. It was perhaps under the influence of the Hetaeria that the phratry became a 'band of brothers by blood', which again developed into a hereditary membership. Common possession of pasturage might also determine the character of a group that corresponded to the phratry, such as the συννομά in Rhodes, where the name indicated the fact of 'common pasture'. This implies another important element in early developments, namely neighbourhood. In a village the obvious duty of neighbours to assist each other would possibly prevail over blood relationship.

The phratries were as a rule included in the phylae (cf. *Il.* 2, 362) and, being thus given a place in the whole of the tribe, gained a political importance that went beyond the 'brotherhood'. Where a link between phratry and tribe did not exist, the tribe was the phyle; for that is really the name for the tribe (φυλή, φῦλον), and it seems that independent settlements occasionally coincided with a phyle. However, at an early time, the purely ethnical element ceased to be of real importance, though it never quite disappeared. The phyle was a personal association of kinsfolk, though one which only appeared when the tribe had consolidated itself in an urban settlement. The west of central Greece seems to have known no phylae. Sometimes in later periods, the phylae played a surprisingly great constitutional part; according to an inscription from Mylasa in Asia Minor (*Syll.* 167, fourth century B.C.) the decision of the Ecclesia had to be sanctioned by the phylae, though it remains doubtful whether this was – in Asia Minor of all places – a genuine survival of tribal organization.

Even where certain phylae were confined to a single district they should not be regarded as local bodies – except for certain later foundations, especially colonial cities. This becomes quite obvious when the same phylae appear in most states of one of the great tribal groups, the Dorian phylae of the Hylleis, Dymanes, and Pamphyloi, for example. These had once probably been independent tribes, the Hylleis perhaps Illyrian; the third, as its name implies, was already composed of a number of small tribal particles. In every state founded by the Dorians all three phylae seem to have had their place, a proof of the strong cohesion of the Dorians before the immigration. In some Dorian states other phylae appeared beside the three, presumably mainly representing the non-Doric part of the population; it might also happen that one or other of the Dorian tribes disappeared, and a conflict between the phylae might reflect a conflict between earlier and later groups of the population, as, for example, in Sicyon in the sixth century under the older Cleisthenes. Much the same is generally true of the four Attic or Ionian phylae, whose curious, half-significant names (Geleontes, Argadeis, Aigikoreis, Hopletes) perhaps originally denoted social groups of the Mycenaean age, though this cannot yet be proved. In Athens they were the only phylae; though the view is held by some that Athens only introduced them in artificial imitation of the Ionian model; in Miletus, and similarly in her colonies, there were two additional phylae, the Boreis and Oinopes (perhaps Aeolian). In Ephesus, on the other hand, we find only the Argadeis – not as one of the (five) tribes, but as a subdivision (a 'thousand'). In Erythrae there seem to have been only three phylae, and other pieces of evidence complete a picture that is anything but uniform. Still, if we think of the way in which the Ionian immigration took place, close agreement between the Ionian cities is by no means to be expected; there is no need to think of a late and artificial creation of the Ionian tribes. Such an explanation, however, does apply to the institution of a fifth tribe in Hellenistic Athens and to many of the other later phylae of which we know, whether they had an ethnical character as in Thurii or, as most frequently, were named after gods, heroes, or kings.

On colonial soil the political groupings of the homeland as a rule lived on, though subject to many changes largely due to the composition of the population, which often was rather mixed. Here, however, we are exclusively concerned with states with an urban centre, having little or no connection with an old tribal organization. Yet, through their youthful energy they might react on the homeland. In the colonies too, at an early date, probably earlier than at home, we find before the classification in kinship groups one into numerical groups of mainly military character. In many places a system arose, in which phyle and phratry were combined with 'thousands', 'hundreds', or 'fifties' (*χιλιαστύς, ἑκατοστύς, πεντηκοστύς*). A Hellenistic inscription from Delos, deriving probably from Dorian Asia Minor, shows the allocation of new citizens, not only to phyle and phratry but also to a group of 'thirty' (*τριακάς*) or a 'platoon' (*ἡμιόγδοον*). In Cos we find phyle, 'thirty', 'fifty', and 'a ninth' (*ἐνάτα*, perhaps a 'thousand', a ninth of the number of citizens). But in general the principle of kinship did not entirely disappear even under changed conditions.

Apart from these groupings by kinship and military units, which were soon taken over into the structure of the state, the tribe as early as the age of immigration had also its special political order, its 'constitution'. It rested essentially on three factors that may be regarded as common Indo-European. At the head of the tribe stood the chieftain or warlord (*ἀρχός, ἀρχηγός*); he was the military leader and was also priest and judge. It is noteworthy that the Greeks lost the Indo-European root word for king (*reg-*) and, to describe the ruler used various words, often of non-Greek origin (*βασιλεύς, ἄναξ, κοίρανος*). It is probable that the original Greek leader, whose title still survived in Sparta (*ἀρχαγέτας*), was something very different from the Mycenaean king. In the 'Homeric' kingdom can more of the former be found than of the latter; only Agamemnon's position seems to reflect the 'lord' (*Ϝάναξ*) of Mycenaean times. Immediately after the Dorian migration, the Greek kings were hardly different from tribal chieftains. Prince and people might often be bound to one another by an exchange of oaths of loyalty. The tribe itself was composed of its warriors, free men capable of bearing arms, who met in the assembly (*ἀγορά*) of army or people, and by acclamation chose the warlord, and whose agreement must at least have been needed for all peaceful transactions of importance.

Between these two the Council of the Elders (γέροντες) intervened at an early date – so early that they must always be taken into account in Greek history. The Council, which at this early stage can reasonably be compared with the Roman *patres*, was at first probably summoned by the king from the heads of the great families to advise him on important matters. It grew independent and embodied some limitation of the power of the king, and at the same time represented the class of nobles that rose above the ordinary free men. These three political factors in the constitution had not yet reached their final shape and importance, but for all time to come they determined the structure of the Greek state.

3. THE GODS

To the Greeks nature in all its manifestations was divine, and so all human life depended on its connection with the gods. There was no real community among the Greeks that was not also a religious community. All the groups in the social order of which we have spoken – family and clan, phratry and phyle, tribe and state, were also religious unions; each had one or more cults in which every member of the group took part, and whose direction and management fell to the householder (and his wife, for there were cults confined to women), to the eldest of the clan, the head of the phratry, the tribal king, or the state official. If we exclude an earlier age that can hardly be distinguished, in particular a priestly kingship that is likely to have existed in the second millennium, and also a few special places of cult such as Delphi or Eleusis, we find that the priests were always subordinates, engaged in technical functions only.

One most essential element in Greek religious life was its connection with the soil. The cults of the kinship groups, however, which often originated in the age of immigration, were in their very nature not tied to special places; they gained such a bond, if at all, as a secondary matter, possibly soon after the settlement. Only when an ancestor was worshipped as a hero (that is to say, at his grave) was any connection with the soil implied; this is true of the clan, which further gained a local centre in the residence of its head. Significant, too, is the question in the official Athenian test of new officials, the *dokimasia*: 'Have you a cult of Apollon Patroos and Zeus Herkeios, and where are these shrines?' (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 55, 3). The double cult of the gods of the forefathers and of the hearth, which was valid for all Attic phratries and clans, lacked any fixed centre, but still could not exist without its holy place. Only the hearth (ἑστία) formed a real centre, originally for family and clan, and later for deme and state as well.

Locality became important in yet another way when the community was identified with a definite area: that is to say when the tribe had settled and become independent, and the state had come into existence. In whatever way the settlement had taken place in any particular case, the human group was of necessity bound within its territorial frontiers. Thus, the new local society like the old society of the tribe was a unit of cult. It is very remarkable that, whereas in the kinship groups within tribe and state the cult of the common ancestor was central, the special cults of tribe and state were not based on kinship. The worship of an eponymous hero of the tribe was probably always a late and artificial development; new creations of phylae and clans likewise had their adopted ancestor. The true cult of tribe and state belonged to the leading local god. To what extent gods, once identical, grew apart in this process, cannot now be determined; but it might happen that the local god was of foreign origin and character, for example the Artemis of Ephesus or the Apollo of Didymae. Excavations have shown that many shrines were placed on the top of older settlements, and that especially on sites within the Mycenaean tradition, as in Athens, Mycenae, and Tiryns, the temple of the god of the state was built where once stood the palace of the Mycenaean king. From this it has been correctly inferred that there was a continuity of cult – the palace god of the Mycenaeans becoming the city and state god of the Greeks. Down to the latest times an Athenian official still bore the royal title (ἄρχων βασιλεύς); he was avaliable for purposes of cult and competent to perform 'all ancestral sacrifices', being the immediate successor of the ruling priest-king of the Mycenaean age, of the type found also in Minoan Crete. The local tradition further involved not only the survival of altar and cult, but the turning of the house of the king into the house of the god; it is no accident that the architectural form of the *megaron*, which in Greece is first met in the chief rooms of the Mycenaean palaces, became compulsory for the Greek temple. The god himself took the place of the king; he became the monarch of a state that had ceased to be monarchical. In Athens there was a strange and striking ceremony, by which the peasant god Dionysus, much altered under foreign influences, was given his place among the gods of the state by his union with the wife of the 'king', the ἄρχων βασιλεύς; but this was probably a quite exceptional ritual. It was, on the other hand, a very general practice to ascribe the permanent leadership of a state to a god as 'leader' (ἀρχηγέτης or ἀρχηγέτις), sometimes, but by no means always, on account of a foundation legend.

The fact that an unusually large number of female deities appear as state deities has been explained as an outcome of the Mycenaean tradition; for in the cults of Crete and Mycenae the goddesses were preponderant. That is certainly not untrue; but such a succession could only occur because the fruitful earth was conceived of as a mother, and for the state god a close connection with the soil was essential. Gaia herself, however, never appears as state goddess – probably because she had early come to be thought of in a universal sense. That may have also been the reason, at a later date, why the supreme Greek god, Zeus, was nowhere the special god of a state and, even as πολιεύς, was only a general protector of cities. Originally, Zeus could not be considered as a state god because most likely he was a god of heaven and storms, dwelling on mountain-tops, and nowhere really bound to the soil. He could only become so by being linked to some local god or by being 'divided up', as in Sparta, into a lord of heaven and a lord of the land (Ζεὺς Οὐράνιος and Ζεὺς Λακεδαίμων). Probably this fact has been rightly interpreted, as indicating the change from the age of immigration to that of the new state, but it was the union of the two cults in one state that was historically the most important fact.

This leads us on to a more general religious development, which was of decisive importance for the state cult too. In the centuries after the migrations, there arose not only the world of the Greek states but also that world of gods at home on an Olympus, whether real or imaginary, which from its appearance in poetry is called 'Homeric'. This divine family represents a pantheon completely divorced not only from soil and nature but also from all local human groups; it is most intimately connected with the social sphere of the epic, and thus is part of the concept of the world held by the Ionian nobility. As epic poetry spread and exercised its influence also on the way of life of the nobility in the homeland, the Homeric world of gods, which once had entered on the rich inheritance of the divine world of the Minoans and Mycenaeans, now encountered many deities deeply rooted in life and belief, gods of nature and special places, gods of earth and soil, of hearth and clan. Their worship, indeed, during the archaic age often grew in strength and effect. Herein was mirrored at the same time the social process by which the non-noble sections of society rose in status and importance and the new form of state took firm root, bound to the soil and isolating itself from the Greek world at large. The extension and adoption of cults was a necessary concomitant of the formation and extension of political units; religious festivals formed a firm bond not only between citizens but also between mother-city and colony, or between states linked by a common origin of their peoples. Thus, in a variety of ways local cults became parts of wider contexts.

That spheres of religion, so distinct in their natures as the Olympian, the chthonic, and that of kinship groups, should have united without ousting one another is a fact of fundamental importance. It was from that process that the gods of the Polis arose; their new and peculiar form is also expressed in the emphasis on the divine image, renewed for the first time since the Mycenaean age had come to an end. It was only so that the god of a single Polis could bear the name and nature of an Olympian who had gained Panhellenic status; only so, on the other hand, that many a god, tied to some state or community, but to no Polis, could become a god common to all Greece. We think of gods such as Apollo in Delphi, Zeus in Olympia, or Demeter in Eleusis. It was Delphi that took an important part in spreading the worship of the Olympians and assimilating them to local deities. The heroes had their special importance. With the one exception of Heracles, who was a Panhellenic figure, they were by their graves and by the character of their cult more closely bound to the soil than most of the gods; they represented a strong element of intense religious life, and their cult formed the centre of many small associations, like most of the Attic groups of *orgeones*, but like Theseus could also grow into a kind of representative of the state. The majority of the heroes had once been great men of the epic stories and thus were intimately associated with the form of life which belonged to the times of the clans and their contests. They did their part in breaking Greece up into its many political units; in the mythical contests between heroes the actual fights between states found both model and expression. Thus, myth and cult, gods and heroes, helped to shape the new world of politics, in which the plurality of states yet never impaired the unity of the Greek character.

4. NOBLES AND NON-NOBLES

The contrasts in the religious world which, as we have seen, by a general process of transitions and unions formed the basis of the state cults, rested on a contrast both regional and social. We should have to assume this parallelism between the religious and the political and social spheres, even if we could not prove it. The 'popular' religion, bound up with local cults, was predominantly the belief of peasants and shepherds of the homeland; the Olympian religion, on the other hand, is best understood as a product of a noble society, chiefly in Ionia, that had largely freed itself from all tribal bonds. In detail, we cannot see how this nobility arose; but we can say with some certainty that it arose out of the conditions of the Mycenaean age. We are not yet sure how far the documents in Linear script B open the possibility that the developments that I have now to describe had already started in the Mycenaean age. The Greeks of the eleventh to ninth centuries B.C. in their primitive conditions of culture and economy are clearly distinct from the Greeks of Mycenae; the epoch marks an entirely new beginning. On the economic side, the nobility rose by land possession on the grand scale. In politics, its rise was signalized by the decline of the army assembly, which grew entirely dependent on the nobles and – as still later in Sparta – had only the passive right of saying 'yes' or 'no'; but also by the decline of the monarchy which, as Alcinous in the *Odyssey* shows, lost its exclusive position. The distinction of title between the overlord or warlord and the vassal kings or noble chieftains (cf. I 2) disappeared and, instead of one king, we find a number of them (*οἱ βασιλῆες*). Only in a few states did kingship last into later times, in Cyrene for example, or in the special form of the double kingship in Sparta – the latter perhaps due to an original union of three tribal kings, one of whom later disappeared. We can certainly point in all quarters to a gradual limitation of the royal power; that it was gradual, that monarchy, unlike tyranny, never came, as in Rome, to be the object of hate and outlawry, is characteristic for the development of the Polis. It is also very doubtful whether the transition from monarchy to aristocracy had anything to do with the beginnings of the colonization; this view has recently been expressed, but it is refuted simply by chronology. The new ruling class of the 'kings' was a society distinguished by birth and wealth (*ἀγαθοί*, *ἄριστοι* or *ἀριστῆες*, *εὐπατρίδαι*), owning most of the land (*γεωμόροι*) or breeding horses (*ἱπποβόται*). In the thoughts and actions of these nobles, the state was for long almost forgotten behind the class. It was, above all, in the Council that the nobility found its unity and its active expression in the state; but in reality they had no close relation to the state that they dominated, and hardly any to the kinship groups within the state. It is only thus that we can understand the religious world of these men; at the same time, as always, the political and military spheres were closely allied. Single combat which – almost exclusively – ruled the tactics of the age and which survived in the name of the 'knights', the *hippeis*, reflected the loose relations between the 'kings', who might prefer not to fight in the retinue of the king but go out for booty on their own account. So far as these 'heroic' individuals recognized any community at all, they found it in the framework of the social life of the nobility; in this the companionship, the *hetairia*, had a large place beside the clan. The standards of this common life were set by noble custom, which was called *themis* because it grew out of the commands of the 'charisma' of the king, of his '*themistes*'.

In many districts, as for example in Thessaly, the rule of the nobility stood in contrast to the rising cities; Thessaly remained the country of cavalry (ἱππεῖς), and that meant predominance of the nobles. Generally, however, it was the nobles who concentrated in the cities. Settlement in towns grew continually in political as in economic importance; the increasing urban concentration was one of the main reasons for the decline of the monarchy and, after it, for the slow break-up of the rule of the nobles. The power to rule was still bound to military valour and landed possessions; but the city (πόλις) – within the area of the state (δῆμος) – was now a living centre, where government was carried on and justice administered, where the 'Agora' developed from an occasional assembly into a permanent market, where the economic isolation of the household and the class isolation of the individual noblemen were slowly but steadily undermined. The word 'polis' had not yet got the meaning of 'state'; so we cannot describe this rule of the nobles in a class society as a Polis, only as a first step towards one; the ever-growing importance of the urban element implies this too. The part of the population that was not noble, the ordinary free men, were partly settled as farmers or tenants on the land, but they too became increasingly town-dwellers. In the town settled also the artisans and pedlars who had hitherto been without a fixed home, and in the town everything went to undermine the pure class structure. A rule of the nobles over the non-nobles might develop into a rule of town over country; in Asia Minor, in the midst of a non-Greek population, that came as a matter of course. It was in the town that the class state changed into the community of citizens.

The whole of this development, which included the passing of the tribal organization into the Polis, was most decisively realized in the eastern parts of the homeland – the main area also (and this is significant) of the geometric style; at the same time, as was only natural, the influence of the advanced urban forms on colonial soil was very marked.

There the tendency to think things out rationally had set in strongly at an early date and enabled men to emancipate themselves more decisively from the social and political traditions of the tribe. A similar development was expressed by the changes in the methods and conditions of military, economic, and political life, changes which may not always have happened at the same time or in the same order, but as a whole they formed parts of a single process, closely linked to one another, and all belonging to the second half of the eighth and the seventh centuries. In place of single combat came the tactics of the closed phalanx of hoplites. That was only possible when the knights with their bearing of proud independence disappeared, when the military order based upon equality found its counterpart in a political order as a community of free men. Actually, in those states in which the nobility had not freed itself so completely as in Ionia from the bonds of clan and state, the contrast with the non-noble population heightened the family pride of the nobles and led to a very strong emphasis on the quality of belonging to the Eupatridae, the descent from noble fathers. The clan came more and more to form the fundamental community of the nobility; it determined their conceptions of law (inheritance, blood-vengeance, etc.) and taught its members a strong sense of solidarity. It meant a great step forward, therefore, when the nobles found themselves compelled so far to broaden the clan organization of the state as to admit non-nobles to its ranks. In Athens, probably in consequence of a law of Solon, the members of private cult associations (*θιασῶται*) or other non-noble persons (*ὀργεῶνες*) were enabled to take part in the cults of the clans, taking their place with equal rights beside the sons of the noble families; these were called clan members (*γεννῆται*) or, at an earlier stage, milk-brothers (*ὁμογάλακτες*). Later it might happen that they were members of a religious association which claimed or pretended to be a clan, such as the Salaminioi. The most important duty of the phratries was, by the religious sanction they provided, to watch over the admittance to citizenship.

The rule of the nobility, so often arbitrary, contributed a good deal, especially in the matter of jurisdiction, to awaken and strengthen the urge of the non-noble classes to have a share in the state. Hesiod is our earliest witness, and a very impressive one at that, who reveals a society in the process of transition from a stateless existence to that of the representative of Polis unity. Outside and beyond their social cohesion the nobles discovered the fact, more and more decidedly emerging, of a wider political community. It must not be overlooked that the nobles themselves, by limiting or abolishing blood-vengeance, clan feuds, and the right of taking the law into their own hands, had entered the path that led to their incorporation in the state even before the non-noble elements broke through. We do not know to what extent the nobles were acting upon their own free decision, to what extent they were under compulsion by the rise of other groups of the people. Anyway, when they renounced blood-vengeance and self-help, the road was opened which led to the legal supremacy of the state. Without that, there would have been no criminal jurisdiction by the state nor even a simple administrative organization. Naturally, it was the free peasants who first announced their political aspirations. They shared with the nobility the principle that citizenship rested upon the possession of landed property – a principle that still retained its importance in the Polis, when the social and economic development had gone much further and the folk without any land of their own had their share in the state. The community itself now owned land which was no longer an object of dispute among the noble families. To the mutually related changes in politics and the army corresponded the economic development which led to two results: the nobles appropriated to themselves small private properties, thus robbing the peasants of their economic and political basis ('*Bauernlegen*'), and trade and handicraft rose to be factors of increasing importance. The issue of these two tendencies was that a steadily growing class of men without landed property worked its way into the state – a shift of emphasis in politics and social life that began in the age of colonization and found vigorous and direct expression in the sixth century.

With this, the forms of noble life passed beyond their original sphere. Released from their class restriction, they became of decisive importance for the rising mass of citizens and with that for the life of the state in general. On the other hand, as the civic community grew, a new sense of justice made itself felt. The unquestioned validity of the noble code was replaced by the will to a justice that extended to all (δίκη). The Greeks had taken the road by which the state, as a community at once political and religious, became the one and only power to form rules of life, to create a tradition of jurisdiction, and to establish a system of legislation with written codes of law. All that made 'Nomos' the expression and the master of the state. In general, however, the nobles were able to adapt themselves to the political development – though less, and hardly ever of their own will, to the social and economic one – and so to retain the leadership in the changed state.