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only three more cases are known, the West Indian Islands, Brazil and the southern states of the USA.[3] These five societies in which slaves played a considerable role in production (and in ostentatious consumption) form a distinct category of 'slave society'.

This definition of slave society is admittedly arbitrary, but it may be useful, because it underlines how rare such 'slave societies' have been, and the marked discontinuity between them and the numerous tribal and pre-industrial slave-owning societies, in which a small proportion of men and women were kept as slaves. The *Human Relations Area Files* record the presence of some slaves in nearly half out of 800 societies studied.[4] But sacrificial slavery among the Kwakiutl, for example, or domestic 'slavery' in traditional China, or the presence of several thousand black slaves in England in the eighteenth century was on a completely different scale from slavery in slave societies as defined above. Among the Kwakiutl, in traditional China and in England, slaves were a negligible factor in production. In Roman Italy, the southern states of the USA and Brazil, slavery was a very large factor in production (see Table II.1).

R VI (2)

The similar importance of slavery in the five slave societies makes comparisons between them seem attractive. Obviously, comparison of slavery within the Americas is easier. Whatever the differences in culture, all American slave societies were the product of similar conditions: European expansion into spacious and uncultivated territories, the absence of an easily available and effective labour force, the mass import of black Africans to provide labour, and finally the close links between production by slaves and the economically developed non-slave societies, which provided both tools of production and markets in which the slaves' surplus produce was sold.

In this chapter, few explicit comparisons are to be made between

[3] For present purposes it seems reasonable to treat the West Indies as a single case. The West African kingdoms at the other end of the slave trade present a difficult case; there seems to be evidence of significant levels of slavery; in some kingdoms slaves probably accounted for fifty per cent of the total population according to nineteenth-century travellers' reports; but the functions of slavery and the treatment of slaves seem remarkably different from those we find in other slave societies. I have therefore, tentatively, not included them as slave societies. This may be wrong. See further the essays in C. Meillassoux, *L'esclavage en Afrique précoloniale* (Paris, 1975) and A. G. B. Fisher and H. J. Fisher, *Slavery and Muslim Society in Africa* (London, 1970).

[4] Evidence of the presence or absence of slavery was available from 808 societies. Of 387 societies with some slavery, hereditary slavery was certainly attested in only 165 societies. But the quality of such data is inevitably uneven. See G. P. Murdock, 'Ethnographic atlas: a summary', *Ethnology* 6 (1967) 109ff. The distinction between a slave-owning society and what I call here a 'slave society' is adapted from M. I. Finley, *sv* Slavery in *The International Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences* (New York, 1968).

Table II.1. *The population of five slave societies*

	Estimated total population ('000,000)	Estimated number of slaves ('000,000)	Slaves as a proportion of the population (about)
Athens[a]			
c. 400 BC	(0.2)*	(0.06)	30%
Roman Italy			
225 BC[b]	(4)	(0.6)	15%
31 BC[c]	(5–6)	(2)	35%
Brazil[d]			
1800	3	1	33%
1850	8	2.5	30%
USA, southern states			
1820[e]	4.5	1.5	33%
1860[f]	12	4	33%
Cuba			
1804	0.5	0.18	28%
1861	1.4	0.4	30%

* Figures in parentheses indicates a considerable degree of doubt.

Sources to Table II.1

(*a*) R. L. Sargent, *The Size of the Slave Population at Athens* (Urbana, Ill., 1924) 63, 127; (*b*) derived from P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower* (Oxford, 1971) 60 (excluding northern Italy) – a rough guess; (*c*) K. J. Beloch, *Die Bevölkerung der gr.-röm. Welt* (Leipzig, 1886) 418, 435–6; (*d*) C. Prado, *História Econômica do Brasil* (São Paolo[8], 1963), appendix; (*e*) S. E. Morrison et al., *The Growth of the American Republic* (New York, sixth edition 1969) 262, 499, 861; (*f*) K. M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution* (London, 1964) 39; (*g*) H. S. Klein, *Slavery in the Americas* (London, 1967) 202. The slave population of other islands in the West Indies was smaller.

Roman slavery and slavery in the other 'slave societies'.[5] But comparisons is implicit, in that the argument concentrates on four important aspects of Roman slavery, which seem exceptional by comparison with the southern states of the USA. Three of these factors hang together: the high status of an important body of professional and skilled slaves in Rome, the high rate of slave manu-

[5] Explicit comparisons have been rare, but see particularly J. Vogt, *Sklaverei und Humanität, Historia Einzelschrift* 8 (Wiesbaden[2], 1972), esp. 97ff. (now translated as *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man* (Oxford, 1974) 170ff.); D. B. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1966); Finley (1968); C. A. Yeo, 'The economics of Roman and American slavery', *Finanzarchiv* 13 (1952) 445–83 is now somewhat dated.

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R VI (2)

HOW TO LIVE A LIFE OF LEISURE

ATHENIAN: Now that our citizens are assured of a moderate supply of necessities, and other people have taken over the skilled work, what will be their way of life? Suppose that their farms have been entrusted to slaves, who provide them with sufficient produce of the land to keep them in modest comfort; suppose they take their meals in separate messes, one for themselves, another nearby for their families, including their daughters and their daughters' mothers; assume the messes, are presided over by officials, male and female as the case may be, who have the duty of dismissing their respective assemblies after the day's review and scrutiny of the diners' habits; and 807 that when the official and his company have poured libations to whatever gods that day and night happen to be dedicated, they all duly go home. Now, do such leisured circumstances leave them no pressing work to do, no genuinely appropriate occupation? Must each of them get plumper and plumper every day of his life, like a fatted beast? No: we maintain that's *not* the right and proper thing to do. A man who lives like that won't be able to escape the fate he deserves; and the fate of an idle fattened beast that takes life easy is usually to be torn to pieces by some other animal – one of the skinny kind, who've been emaciated by a life of daring and endurance. (Our ideal, of course, is unlikely to be realized *fully* so long as we persist in our policy of allowing individuals to have their own private establishments, consisting of house, wife, children and so on. But if we could ever put into practice the second-best scheme we're now describing,[36] we'd have every reason to be satisfied.) So we must insist that there is something left to do in a life of leisure, and it's only fair that the task imposed, far from being a light or trivial one, should be the most demanding of all. As it is, to dedicate your life to winning a victory at Delphi or Olympia keeps you far too busy to attend to other tasks; but a life devoted to the cultivation of every physical

36. That is, where a man's household, though his 'own', shares the common meals (cf. pp. 262–3.)

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perfection *and* every moral virtue (the only life worth the name) will keep you at least twice as busy. Inessential business must never stop you taking proper food and exercise, or hinder your mental and moral training. To follow this regimen and to get the maximum benefit from it, the whole day and the whole night is scarcely time enough.

In view of this, every gentleman must have a timetable prescribing what he is to do every minute of his life, which he should follow at all times from the dawn of one day until the sun comes up at the dawn of the next. However, a lawgiver would lack dignity if he produced a mass of details about running a house, especially when he came to the regulations for curtailing sleep at night, which will be necessary if the citizens are going to protect the entire state systematically and uninterruptedly. Everyone should think it a disgrace and unworthy of a gentleman, if any citizen devotes the whole of any night to sleep; no, he should always be the first to wake and get up, and let himself be seen by all the servants. (It 808 doesn't matter what we ought to call this kind of thing – either 'law' or 'custom' will do.) In particular, the mistress of the house should be the first to wake up the other women; if she herself is woken by some of the maids, then all the slaves – men, women and children – should say 'How shocking!' to one another, and so too, supposing they could, should the very walls of the house. While awake at night, all citizens should transact a good proportion of their political and domestic business, the officials up and down the town, masters and mistresses in their private households. By nature, prolonged sleep does not suit either body or soul, nor does it help us to be active in all this kind of work. Asleep, a man is useless; he may as well be dead. But a man who is particularly keen to be physically active and mentally alert stays awake as long as possible, and sets aside for sleep only as much time as is necessary for his health – and that is only a little, once that little has become a regular habit. Officials who are wide awake at night in cities inspire fear in the wicked, whether citizens or enemies, but by the just and the virtuous they are honoured and admired; they benefit themselves and are a blessing to the

CLEINIAS: How do you mean?

ATHENIAN: The bride and groom should resolve to present the state with the best and finest children they can produce. Now, when human beings co-operate in any project, and give due attention to its planning and execution, the results they achieve are always of the best and finest quality; but if they act carelessly, or are incapable of intelligent action in the first place, the results are deplorable. So the bridegroom had better deal with his wife and approach the task of begetting children with a sense of responsibility, and the bride should do the same, especially during the period when no children have yet been born to them. They should be supervised by women whom we have chosen[27] (several or only a few – the officials should appoint the number they think right, at times within their discretion). These women must assemble daily at the temple of Eileithuia[28] for not more than a third of the day, and when they have convened each must report to her colleagues any wife or husband of childbearing age she has seen who is concerned with anything but the duties imposed on him or her at the time of the sacrifices and rites of their marriage. If children come in suitable numbers, the period of supervised procreation should be ten years and no longer. But if a couple remain childless throughout this period, they should part, and call in their relatives and the female officials to help them decide terms of divorce that will safeguard the interests of them both. If some dispute arises about the duties and interests of the parties, they must choose ten of the Guardians of the Laws as arbitrators, and abide by their decisions on the points referred to them. The female officials must enter the homes of the young people and by a combination of admonition and threats try to make them give up their ignorant and sinful ways. If this has no effect, they must go and report the case to the Guardians of the Laws, who must resort to sterner methods. If even the Guardians prove ineffective, they should make the case public and post

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27. No such women have been mentioned. (In other ways too the state of the text hereabouts suggests a lack of revision.)
28. Goddess of childbirth.

CORRECT PROCREATION (2)

The topic which should come after marriage, and before training and education, is the birth of children. Perhaps, as we take these topics in order, we shall be able to complete each individual law as we did before, when we approached the question of communal meals – I mean that when we've become intimate with our citizens, perhaps we shall be able to see more clearly whether such gatherings should consist of men only or whether, after all, they should include women. Similarly, when we've won control of certain institutions that have never yet been controlled by law, we'll use them as 'cover', just as other people do, with the result I indicated just now: thanks to a more detailed inspection of these institutions, we may be able to lay down laws that take account of them better.[26]

CLEINIAS: Quite right.

ATHENIAN: So let's bear in mind the points we've just made, in case we find we need to refer to them later on.

CLEINIAS: What points in particular are you telling us to remember?

ATHENIAN: The three impulses we distinguished by our three terms: the desire for 'food' (I think we said) and 'drink', and thirdly 'sexual stimulation'.

CLEINIAS: Yes, sir, we'll certainly remember, just as you tell us.

ATHENIAN: Splendid. Let's turn our attention to the bridal pair, and instruct them in the manner and method by which they should produce children. (And if we fail to persuade them, we'll threaten them with a law or two.)

26. If the English is obscure, the Greek is even worse. I understand Plato to say that family life must not afford 'cover' to undesirable habits, but be subject to control by legislation (cf. p. 270 ff.); but just as legislation on common meals had to wait on a fuller knowledge of the future citizens, so legislation about education etc. must wait until such officials as the 'marriage inspectors' of pp. 267–8 have penetrated family life 'under cover' of assisting it, and reported on the habits and customs that need legislation. I have built this interpretation into the translation.

way in which any master or dictator or person in any position of authority deals with someone weaker than himself. Even so, we should certainly punish slaves if they deserve it, and not spoil them by simply giving them a warning, as we would free men. Virtually everything you say to a slave should be an order, and you should never become at all familiar with them – neither the women nor the men. 778 (Though this is how a lot of silly folk do treat their slaves, and usually only succeed in spoiling them and in making life more difficult – more difficult, I mean, for the slaves to take orders and for themselves to maintain their authority.)

CLEINIAS: You're quite right.

THE BUILDINGS OF THE STATE

ATHENIAN: So now that the citizen has been supplied with a sufficient number of suitable slaves to help him in his various tasks, the next thing will be to outline a housing-plan, won't it?

CLEINIAS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: Our state is new, and has no buildings already existing, so it rather looks as if it will have to work out the details of its entire architectural scheme for itself, particularly those of the temples and city walls. Ideally, Cleinias, this subject would have been dealt with before we discussed marriage, but as the whole picture is theoretical anyway, it's perfectly possible to turn to it now, as we are doing. Still, when we put the scheme into practice, we'll see to the buildings, God willing, *before* we regulate marriage, and marriage will then crown our labours in this field. But here and now, let's just give a swift sketch of the building programme.

CLEINIAS: By all means.

ATHENIAN: Temples should be built all round the market-place and on high ground round the perimeter of the city, for purposes of protection and sanitation. Next to them should be administrative offices and courts of law. This is holy ground, and here – partly because the legal cases involve solemn religious issues, partly because of the august divinities

the other. Some people don't trust slaves as a class in anything: they treat them like animals, and whip and goad them so that they make the souls of their slaves three times – no, a thousand times – more slavish than they were. Others follow precisely the opposite policy.

MEGILLUS: True.

CLEINIAS: Well then, sir, in view of this conflict of opinion, what should we do about our own country? What's our line on the possession of slaves, and the way to punish them?

ATHENIAN: Look here, Cleinias: the animal 'man' quite obviously has a touchy temper, and it looks as if it won't be easy, now or in the future, to persuade him to fall neatly into the two categories (slave and freeman master) which are necessary for practical purposes. Your slave, therefore, will be a difficult beast to handle. The frequent and repeated revolts in Messenia, and in the states where people possess a lot of slaves who all speak the same language, have shown the evils of the system often enough; and we can also point to the various crimes and adventures of the robbers who plague Italy, the 'Rangers', as they're called. In view of all this you may well be puzzled to know what your general policy ought to be. In fact, there are just two ways of dealing with the problem open to us: first, if the slaves are to submit to their condition without giving trouble, they should not all come from the same country or speak the same tongue, as far as it can be arranged; secondly, we ought to train them properly, not only for their sakes but above all for our own. The best way to train slaves is to refrain from arrogantly ill-treating them, and to harm them even less (assuming that's possible)[18] than you would your equals. You see, when a man can hurt someone as often as he likes, he'll soon show whether or not his respect for justice is natural and unfeigned and springs from a genuine hatred of injustice. If his attitude to his slaves and his conduct towards them are free of any taint of impiety and injustice, he'll be splendidly effective at sowing the seeds of virtue. Just the same can be said of the

18. I.e. if 'less' than 'not at all' is possible.

about slaves is partly a reflection and partly a contradiction of our practical experience of them.

MEGILLUS: Oh? What do you mean? We don't yet see your point, sir.

ATHENIAN: No wonder, Megillus. The Spartan helot-system is probably just about the most difficult and contentious institution in the entire Greek world; some people think it's a good idea, others are against it (though less feeling is aroused by the slavery to which the Mariandynoi have been reduced at Heraclea, and by the race of serfs to be found in Thessaly).[16] Faced with these and similar cases, what should our policy be on the ownership of slaves? The point I happened to bring up in my discussion of the subject, and which naturally made you ask what I meant, was this: we know we'd all agree that a man should own the best and most docile slaves he can get – after all, many a paragon of a slave has done much more for a man than his own brother or son, and they have often been the salvation of their masters' persons and property and entire homes. We know quite well, don't we, that some people do tell such stories about slaves?

MEGILLUS: Certainly.

ATHENIAN: And don't others take the opposite line, and say that a slave's soul is rotten through and through, and that if we have any sense we won't trust such a pack at all? The most profound of our poets actually says (speaking of Zeus) that 777

If you make a man a slave, that very day
Far-sounding Zeus takes half his wits away.[17]

Everyone sees the problem differently, and takes one side or

16. The Spartan helots were a numerous class of state serfs, in part the descendants of the original non-Doric population conquered by the Dorian invaders (*c.* 1000 B.C.); they differed in status from ordinary slaves in various respects, and were kept under control by a 'secret police' of young Spartans. For further details, see W. G. Forrest, *A History of Sparta, 950–192* B.C. (London, 1968), especially pp. 30 ff., 101 ff., 113 ff. The helots' counterparts in Heraclea were the Mariandynoi and in Thessaly the Penestai. These and other Greek serf systems are similar in kind rather than identical in all details.

17. Homer, *Odyssey* XVII, 322–3.

bodies too. That's why all the year round, throughout his life (but particularly during the age of procreation), a man must take great care to do nothing to injure his health, if he can help it, and nothing with any hint of insolence or injustice, which will inevitably rub off on to the souls and bodies of his children, and produce absolutely degenerate creatures who have been stamped with the likeness of their father. At the very least, he must shun such vices on the day of his wedding and the following night, because if a human institution gets off to a good and careful start, there is a sort of divine guarantee that it will prosper.

THE LIFE OF THE NEWLY-WEDS

The bridegroom must regard one of the two homes included 776 in the lot as the nest in which he will bring up his brood of young; here he must be married, after leaving his father and mother, and here he must make his home and become the breadwinner for himself and his children. You see, when people feel the need of absent friends, the ties that bind them are strengthened, but when they overdo it and are too much together so that they're not apart long enough to miss each other, they drift apart. That's why the newly-weds must leave their father and mother and the wife's relatives in the old home and live somewhere else, rather as if they had gone off to a colony; and each side should visit, and be visited by, the other. The young couple should produce children and bring them up, handing on the torch of life from generation to generation, and always worshipping the gods in the manner prescribed by law.

THE PROBLEM OF SLAVERY

Now for the question of property: what will it be reasonable for a man to possess? Mostly, it's not difficult to see what it would be, and acquire it; but slaves offer difficulties at every turn. The reason is this. The terms we employ are partly correct and partly not, in that the actual language we use

painful business: it involves chastisement by a combination of 'judgement' and 'punishment',[2] and takes the latter, ultimately, to the point of death or exile. That usually gets rid of the major criminals who are incurable and do the state enormous harm. The milder purge we could adopt is this. When there is a shortage of food, and the underprivileged show themselves ready to follow their leaders in an attack on the property of the privileged, they are to be regarded as a disease that has developed in the body politic, and in the friendliest possible way they should be (as it will tactfully be put) 'transferred to a colony'. Somehow or other everyone who legislates must do this in good time; but our position at the moment is even more unusual. There's no need for us here and now to have resort to a colony or arrange to make a selection of people by a purge. No: it's as though we have a number of streams from several sources, some from springs, some from mountain torrents, all flowing down to unite in one lake. We have to apply ourselves to seeing that the water, as it mingles, is as pure as possible, partly by draining some of it off, partly by diverting it into different channels. Even so, however you organize a society, it looks as if there will always be trouble and risk. True enough: but seeing that we are operating at the moment on a theoretical rather than a practical level, let's suppose we've recruited our citizens and their purity meets with our approval. After all, when we have screened the bad candidates over a suitable period and given them every chance to be converted, we can refuse their application to enter and become citizens of the state; but we should greet the good ones with all possible courtesy and kindness.

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DISTRIBUTING THE LAND (I)

We should not forget that we are in the same fortunate position as the Heraclids when they founded their colony: we noticed[3] how they avoided vicious and dangerous disputes

2. See p. 191 and note there. 'Judgement' can evidently involve the use of mere 'punishment': see p. 368.
3. See p. 130.

dealing with a web or any piece of weaving, to construct the warp and the woof from the same stuff: the warp must be of 735 a superior type of material (strong and firm in character, while the woof is softer and suitably workable). In a rather similar way it will be reasonable to distinguish between the authorities who are going to rule in a city and the citizens whose education has been slighter and less testing. You may assume, you see, that there are two elements in a political system: the installation of individuals in office, and equipping those officials with a code of laws.

THE SELECTION OF THE CITIZENS

But before all that, here are some further points to notice. Anyone who takes charge of a herd of animals – a shepherd or cattle-man or breeder of horses or what have you – will never get down to looking after them without first performing the purge appropriate to his particular animal-community: that is, he will weed out the unhealthy and inferior stock and send it off to other herds, and keep only the thoroughbreds and the healthy animals to look after. He knows that otherwise he would have to waste endless effort on sickly and refractory beasts, degenerate by nature and ruined by incompetent breeding, and that unless he purges the existing stock these faults will spread in any herd to the animals that are still physically and temperamentally healthy and unspoilt. This is not too serious in the case of the lower animals, and we need mention it only by way of illustration, but with human beings it is vitally important for the legislator to ascertain and explain the appropriate measures in each case, not only as regards a purge, but in general. To purge a whole state, for instance, several methods may be employed, some mild, some drastic; and if a legislator were a dictator too he'd be able to purge the state drastically, which is the best way. But if he has to establish a new society and new laws without dictatorial powers, and succeeds in administering no more than the mildest purge, he'll be well content even with this limited achievement. Like drastic medicines, the best purge is a

But in the nature of the case, water is exposed to all these hazards. That is why it needs the protection of a law, which should run as follows.

If anyone deliberately spoils someone else's water supply, whether spring or reservoir, by poisons or excavations or theft, the injured party should take his case to the City-Wardens and submit his estimate of the damage in writing.

37. Anyone convicted of fouling water by magic poisons *should*, in addition to his fine, purify the spring or reservoir, using whatever method of purification the regulations of the Expounders[6] prescribe as appropriate to the circumstances and the individuals involved.

BRINGING IN CROPS

A man may bring home any crop of his own by any route he 846 pleases, provided he does no one any damage, or, failing that, benefits to at least three times the value of the damage he does his neighbour. The authorities must act as inspectors in this business, as well as in all other cases when someone uses his own property deliberately to inflict violent or surreptitious damage on another man or some piece of his property without his permission. When the damage does not exceed three minas, the injured party must report it to the magistrates and obtain redress; but if he has a larger claim to bring against someone, he must get his redress from the culprit by taking the case to the public courts.

38. If one of the officials is judged to have settled the penalties in a biassed fashion,
he must be liable to the injured person for double the damages.

Offences committed by the authorities in handling any claim should be taken to the public courts by anyone who may wish to do so. (There are thousands of procedural details like this that must be observed before a penalty can be imposed: the complaint has to be lodged, the summonses issued and

6. For these officials, see pp. 232–3.

served in the presence of two witnesses – or whatever the proper number is. All this sort of detail must not be left to look after itself, but it is not important enough for a legislator who is getting on in years. Our younger colleagues must settle these points, using the broad principles laid down by their predecessors as a guide for their own detailed regulations, which they must apply as need arises. They must thus proceed by trial and error until they think they have got a satisfactory set of formalities, and once the process of modification is over, they should finalize their rules of procedure and render them lifelong obedience.)

ARTISANS

As for craftsmen in general, our policy should be this. First, no citizen of our land nor any of his servants should enter the ranks of the workers whose vocation lies in the arts and crafts. A citizen's vocation, which demands a great deal of practice and study, is to establish and maintain good order in the community, and this is not a job for part-timers. Following two trades or two callings efficiently – or even following one and supervising a worker in another – is almost always too difficult for human nature. So in our state this must be a cardinal rule: no metal worker must turn to carpentry and no carpenter must supervise workers in metal instead of practising his own craft. We may, of course, be met with the excuse that supervising large numbers of employees is more sensible – because more profitable – than just 847 following one's own trade. But no! In our state each individual must have one occupation only, and that's how he must earn his bread. The City-Wardens must have the job of enforcing this rule.

39. If a citizen born and bred turns his attention to some craft instead of to the cultivation of virtue,
the City-Wardens must punish him with marks of disgrace and dishonour until they've got him back on the right lines.

40. If a foreigner follows two trades,
the Wardens must punish him by prison or fines or expulsion

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During the time that has elapsed these twelve should have made a still more exact investigation into what the exiles did,[1] so as to decide whether to grant pardon and permission to return; and the exiles are bound to acquiesce in the judgement of these authorities.

868 C. (a) If a returned exile of either category is ever again overcome by anger and commits the same offence,
he must go into exile and never come back.
(b) If he does come back,
his penalty will be the same as that imposed on the foreigner who returns [46H].

D. (a) If a man kills his own slave,[2]
he must purify himself.
(b) If he kills another's slave, in anger,
he must pay double damages to the owner.

E. If a killer in any category flouts the law and in his unpurified state pollutes the market-place, the sports stadium, and other holy places,
anyone who wishes should prosecute both the killer and the relative[3] of the dead man who allows the killer to do this, and compel the relative to exact payment of twice the fine and the other expenses;[4] and the prosecutor shall be legally entitled to take for himself the money so paid.

F. (a) If a slave kills his own master, in anger,
the relatives of the deceased shall treat the killer in whatever way they like (except that under no circumstances whatever may they let him go on living), and be free of pollution.
(b) If a slave murders a free man who is not his master, in anger,
his master shall deliver him up to the relatives of the deceased, who will be obliged to kill him, the manner of the execution being within their discretion.

1. I.e. the circumstances of the murder.
2. Doubtless, in view of 47D(b) and 46B(b) we may add 'in anger'.
3. That is, the relative who has the duty of prosecuting the killer and warning him to keep away from public places.
4. The expenses of the purification rituals, presumably.

G. (This is a rare occurrence, but not unknown.)
(a) If a father or mother kills a son or daughter in anger by beating them or by using some other form of violence,
the murderers must undergo the same purifications as apply in the other cases, and go into exile for three years.
(b) When they come back, the female killer must be separated from her husband and the male from his wife, and they must have no more children; and they must never again share hearth and home with those whom they have robbed of a son or brother, or join in religious ceremonies with them.

H. If someone is impious enough to disobey these regulations,
he shall be liable to a charge of impiety at the hands of anyone who wishes.

I. (a) If a man kills his wedded wife in a fit of anger, or a wife her husband,
they must undergo the same purifications and spend three years in exile.
(b) On his return, a person who has done such a deed must never join his children in religious ceremonies nor eat at the same table with them.

J. If the parent or the child disobeys,
he shall equally be liable to a charge of impiety at the hands of anyone who wishes.

K. If in anger
(a) a brother kills a brother or a sister, or
(b) a sister kills a brother or a sister,
the same purifications and periods of exile as applied to parents and children should be specified as applying in these cases too. (That is, they should never share hearth and home with the brothers whom they have deprived of their fellow-brothers nor with parents whom they have deprived of children, nor join in religious ceremonies with them.)

18 subjects, who were their natural friends, and tough in fighting battles against external enemies.

TIMAEUS: Certainly.

SOCRATES: And to ensure the appropriate gentleness and toughness in their behaviour to each, we said that the character of the guardians must combine the spirited and the philosophic to a rare degree.

TIMAEUS: Yes.

SOCRATES: As for their education, they were to be trained physically and mentally in all studies suitable for the purpose.

TIMAEUS: Of course.

SOCRATES: Having been so educated they must never, we said, regard gold or silver or anything else as their own private property, but earn as a garrison a modest wage, sufficient for their simple needs, in return for the safeguard they afforded to those under their protection. They were to share all expenditure and live a common life together, devoting their whole attention to the maintenance of moral standards, freed from all other preoccupations.

TIMAEUS: That was what we said.

SOCRATES: And we had something to say about the women, too. Their characters were to be set in a similar mould to the men's, and they were to share the same occupations both in war and in the rest of life.

TIMAEUS: We said that too.

SOCRATES: I expect you remember what was said about the production of children, because it was unusual. We laid it down that marriages and children should be shared in common by all, and arranged that no one should recognize any child born as their own, but that all should regard themselves as related to everyone else. So all those born within an appropriate period would regard each other as brothers and sisters, anyone born earlier than themselves as parents and grandparents and anyone born later than themselves as children and grandchildren.

TIMAEUS: Yes; the provisions you describe are easy to remember.

SOCRATES: And to ensure that their natural endowment 19 should from the start be the best possible, you will remember that we said that the men and women in authority should secretly arrange the lots so that bad and good men would be allocated for mating at marriage festivals to women like themselves, and prevent any possible consequent ill-feeling by letting it be supposed that the allocation was due to chance.

TIMAEUS: I remember.

SOCRATES: You will remember too that we said that the children of the good were to be educated, and those of the bad distributed secretly among the rest of the community; and the rulers were to keep an eye on the children as they grew up and promote again any who deserved it, and degrade into the places of the promoted any in their own ranks who seemed unworthy of their position.

TIMAEUS: So we said.

SOCRATES: Is that an adequate summary of yesterday's discussion, Timaeus, or is there anything that we have omitted?

TIMAEUS: There is nothing, Socrates; you have covered the ground completely.

SOCRATES: Let me now go on to tell you how I feel about the society we have described. My feelings are rather like those of a man who has seen some splendid animals, either in a picture or really alive but motionless, and wants to see them moving and engaging in some of the activities for which they appear to be formed. That's exactly what I feel about the society we have described. I would be glad to hear some account of it engaging in transactions with other states, waging war successfully and showing in the process all the qualities one would expect from its system of education and training, both in action and negotiation with its rivals.

Now, my dear Critias and Hermocrates, I know that I am myself incapable of giving any adequate account of this kind of our city and its citizens. This, as far as I am concerned, is not surprising; but in my opinion the same is true of the poets, past

K-V Greek Authority

A N Whitehead: An Anthology ed F.S.C. Northrop (and others)

Part II Discussions and Applications

R VI (3)

CHAPTER I *FACT AND FORM*

SECTION I

All human discourse which bases its claim to consideration on the truth of its statements must appeal to the facts. In none of its branches can philosophy claim immunity to this rule. But in the case of philosophy the difficulty arises that the record of the facts is in part dispersed vaguely through the various linguistic expressions of civilized language and of literature, and is in part expressed more precisely under the influence of schemes of thought prevalent in the traditions of science and philosophy.

In this second part of these lectures, the scheme of thought which is the basis of the philosophy of organism is confronted with various interpretations of the facts widely accepted in European tradition, literary, philosophic, and scientific. So far as concerns philosophy only a selected group can be explicitly mentioned. There is no point in endeavouring to force the interpretations of divergent philosophers into a vague agreement. What is important is that the scheme of interpretation here adopted can claim for each of its main positions the express authority of one, or the other, of some supreme master of thought—Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Locke, Hume, Kant. But ultimately nothing rests on authority; the final court of appeal is intrinsic reasonableness.

The safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato. I do not mean the systematic scheme of thought which scholars have doubtfully extracted from his writings. I allude to the wealth of general ideas scattered through them. His personal endowments, his wide opportunities for experience at a great period of civilization, his inheritance of an intellectual tradition not yet stiffened by excessive systematization, have made his writing an inexhaustible mine of suggestion. Thus in one sense by stating my belief that the train of thought in these lectures is Platonic, I am doing no more than expressing the hope that it falls within the European tradition. But I do mean

more: I mean that if we had to render Plato's general point of view with the least changes made necessary by the intervening two thousand years of human experience in social organization, in æsthetic attainments, in science, and in religion, we should have to set about the construction of a philosophy of organism. In such a philosophy the actualities constituting the process of the world are conceived as exemplifying the ingression (or 'participation') of other things which constitute the potentialities of definiteness for any actual existence. The things which are temporal arise by their participation in the things which are eternal. The two sets are mediated by a thing which combines the actuality of what is temporal with the timelessness of what is potential. This final entity is the divine element in the world, by which the barren inefficient disjunction of abstract potentialities obtains primordially the efficient conjunction of ideal realization. This ideal realization of potentialities in a primordial actual entity constitutes the metaphysical stability whereby the actual process exemplifies general principles of metaphysics, and attains the ends proper to specific types of emergent order. By reason of the actuality of this primordial valuation of pure potentials, each eternal object has a definite, effective relevance to each concrescent process. Apart from such orderings, there would be a complete disjunction of eternal objects unrealized in the temporal world. Novelty would be meaningless, and inconceivable. We are here extending and rigidly applying Hume's principle, that ideas of reflection are derived from actual facts.

By this recognition of the divine element the general Aristotelian principle is maintained that, apart from things that are actual, there is nothing—nothing either in fact or in efficacy. This is the true general principle which also underlies Descartes' dictum: 'For this reason, when we perceive any attribute, we therefore conclude that some existing thing or substance to which it may be attributed, is necessarily present.' * And again: 'For every clear and distinct conception (*perceptio*) is without doubt something and hence cannot derive its origin from what is nought. . . .' † This general principle will be termed the 'ontological principle.' It is the principle that everything is positively somewhere in actuality, and in potency everywhere.

* *Principles of Philosophy*, Part I, 52; transl. by Haldane and Ross. All quotations from Descartes are from this translation.

† Cf. *Meditation IV*, towards the end.

In one of its applications this principle issues in the doctrine of 'conceptualism.' Thus the search for a reason is always the search for an actual fact which is the vehicle of the reason. The ontological principle, as here defined, constitutes the first step in the description of the universe as a solidarity * of many actual entities. Each actual entity is conceived as an act of experience arising out of data. It is a process of 'feeling' the many data, so as to absorb them into the unity of one individual 'satisfaction.' Here 'feeling' is the term used for the basic generic operation of passing from the objectivity of the data to the subjectivity of the actual entity in question. Feelings are variously specialized operations, effecting a transition into subjectivity. They replace the 'neutral stuff' of certain realistic philosophers. An actual entity is a process, and is not describable in terms of the morphology of a 'stuff.' This use of the term 'feeling' has a close analogy to Alexander's † use of the term 'enjoyment'; and has also some kinship with Bergson's use of the term 'intuition.' A near analogy is Locke's use of the term 'idea,' including 'ideas of particular things' (cf. his *Essay*, III, III, 2, 6, and 7). But the word 'feeling,' as used in these lectures, is even more reminiscent of Descartes. For example: 'Let it be so; still it is at least quite certain that it seems to me that I see light, that I hear noise and that I feel heat. That cannot be false; properly speaking it is what is in me called feeling (*sentire*); and used in this precise sense that is no other thing than thinking.' ††

In Cartesian language, the essence of an actual entity consists solely in the fact that it is a prehending thing (i.e., a substance whose whole essence or nature is to prehend). § A 'feeling' belongs to the positive species of 'prehensions.' There are two species of prehensions, the 'positive species' and the 'negative species.' An actual entity has a perfectly definite bond with each item in the universe. This determinate bond is its prehension of that item. A negative prehension is the definite exclusion of that item from positive contribution to the subject's own real internal constitution. This doctrine involves the position that a negative prehension expresses a bond. A positive pre-

* The word 'solidarity' has been borrowed from Professor Wildon Carr's *Presidential Address* to the Aristotelian Society, Session 1917–1918. The address—'The Interaction of Body and Mind'—develops the fundamental principle suggested by this word.

† Cf. his *Space, Time and Deity, passim.*

†† Cf. *Meditation II*, Haldane and Ross translation.

§ For the analogue to this sentence cf. *Meditation VI*; substitute '*Ens prehendens*' for '*Ens cogitnas*.'

L. Price: Dialogues of A N Whitehead

thunders reverberate under the barrel vault of a Norman church. The whole scene is picturesque—Ramsgate, fronting the Narrow Seas between England and the Continent, those narrow seas which "are the parents of all free governments in the world—Holland, England, the United States. The Pilgrim Fathers were their offspring." Not far away are the grim walls of Richborough Castle, built by the Romans; a mile inland from Ebbes Fleet beach, where the Saxons had landed, is the spot where Augustine preached his first sermon; and only sixteen miles away is Canterbury Cathedral, where ninety years ago, as still today, a little boy could look on the very spot where Thomas à Becket was murdered, and see the armour worn by the Black Prince. History for this lad was not something learned out of a book; he rubbed elbows with it every day and took it in at eyes and nostrils.

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Although Whitehead always regarded himself as the East Anglian that he so typically looked and was—fair, ruddy, blue-eyed—there was one of those slight mixtures in the stock which, as he had observed time and again in history, provide a variant. One of his grandmothers was Welsh, her maiden name had been Williams, and he was so different from his brothers that it was attributed to the Celtic strain.

He was born on February 15, 1861. A frail child, he was taught at home by his father and spent much of his time out of doors with an old gardener to whom he retained a lifelong gratitude for having first let him see the light that can shine in obscurity. Winters he would visit his grandmother in London. She was the widow of a military tailor and lived in a town house, 81 Piccadilly, from whose windows overlooking the Green Park he used to see Queen Victoria, then a middle-aged widow and not too well liked, go by in her carriage. His grandmother was a wealthy woman, but, said he, "She made the mistake of having thirteen children," which somewhat reduced their several inheritances. She also must have been a redoubtable character, for the linch-pin who held the family

together was the housekeeper, Jane Whychelow, and she it was who read aloud the novels of Dickens to the little boy as he sat on a hassock hugging his knees beside her grate fire.

His schooling is not less picturesque. He was sent to Sherborne as an adolescent lacking four months of his fifteenth birthday. In 1941 that school celebrated its twelve-hundredth anniversary. It dates from Saint Aldhelm and claims Alfred the Great as a pupil. The monastery buildings are still used and its abbey is one of the most magnificent in existence, with tombs of Saxon princes extant. During his last two years here young Whitehead's private study was a room reputed to have been the abbot's cell and he worked under the sound of the abbey bells—"the living voices of past centuries"—brought from the Field of the Cloth of Gold by Henry VIII and given by him to the abbey.

The curriculum, he remarked in after years, struck him as having been about right for that period and place. "We read Latin and Greek as the historical records of governing peoples who had lived close to the sea and exerted maritime power. They were not foreign languages; they were just Latin and Greek; nothing of importance in the way of ideas could be presented in any other way. Thus we read the New Testament in Greek. At school—except in chapel, which did not count—I never heard of anyone reading it in English. It would suggest an uncultivated religious state of mind. We were religious, but with that moderation natural to people who take their religion in Greek." English grammar he never studied; that was learned out of the grammars of Greek and Latin.

These boys were not overworked. There was time for athletic sports and private reading, which with him meant poetry, in especial Wordsworth and Shelley, but also much history. He was a good athlete and finally a prefect. As Head of the School, he was called upon to cane a boy who had stolen money. "Either he had to be caned before the school or expelled. I don't say that I did right, but I caned him."

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"I have lived three distinct lives in this single span," said Whitehead; "one from childhood to the first world war; one from 1914 to my residence in America in 1924; and a third here since 1924. The first seems the most fantastic; in those years from the 1880's to the first war, who ever *dreamed* that the ideas and institutions which then looked so stable would be impermanent?"

"Although I was a little boy when you were already a man grown, that world of the 1890's seems to swim in a golden haze of mythological idyl."

"Fifty-seven years ago it was," said he, "when I was a young man in the University of Cambridge. I was taught science and mathematics by brilliant men and I did well in them; since the turn of the century I have lived to see every one of the basic assumptions of both set aside; not, indeed, discarded, but of use as qualifying clauses, instead of as major propositions; and all this in one life-span—the most fundamental assumptions of supposedly exact sciences set aside. And yet, in the face of that, the discoverers of the new hypotheses in science are declaring, '*Now at last, we have certitude*'—when some of the assumptions which we have seen upset had endured for more than twenty centuries."

"Is that a reason why you are at pains to use a new terminology for your own concepts?"

"You have noticed that, then?"

"I have noticed that I can understand the first third and the last third of your *Adventures of Ideas* and of your essay on the Harvard Tercentenary, but that in the middle third I bog down. Is the middle third over the head of a layman who is willing to keep rereading it?"

"No. I don't think so. I write for the layman, and in so doing I avoid the technical language usual among philosophers."

"The philosophers don't like him for it," said his wife, "though they have been very sweet about it."

"But I am convinced," said he, resuming, "that what

philosophers should do is relate their thoughts to the needs of common life. And there is another thing they need to do. When you consider how at pains men of science are to base their hypotheses on carefully criticized assumptions—how they set up tests to control experiments—then consider how the fundamental concepts of even the greatest philosophers in the past must have been largely conditioned by the necessarily ephemeral environmental relationships in which they lived. The scandal is how unhesitatingly later thinkers have accepted their conclusions without pausing to re-examine them in terms of changed social conditions."

"A striking example of it," said I, "is Aristotle's *Politics*. They must have been based on the fundamental assumption that the city-state is the regnant political form, and that, too, in an age when it was already being outmoded and about to be supplanted by military monarchies on a model derived from the conquests of Alexander the Great, his own pupil."

"That is an excellent example of what I mean. There is an enormous need for philosophies to be rethought in the light of the changing conditions of mankind."

"How much of this can be done by intellect alone?"

"I doubt if we get very far by the intellect alone. I doubt if intellect carries us very far. I have spoken of direct insights. The longer I live the more I am impressed by the *enormous*"—he urged his voice into emphasis, and narrowed his eyelids—"the unparalleled genius of one philosopher, and that is Plato. There seems hardly an insight that he has not had or anticipated; and even after you have allowed, as I was saying a moment ago, for the modifications introduced by changed social conditions since he thought and wrote, and the consequent variations which must be made, still in essence the most of it stands. He came face to face with these realities, truths not directly apprehensible by the average man, then by a marvel of subtlety and dialectic, whittled them down to a form in which they could be grasped by the educated Athenian of his day."

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better life for the masses, a new burst of liberated creative energy, a new form of society; or mankind may all but exterminate itself and desolate this planet."

"Suppose," said Livingstone, "some of the greatest Greeks were to come back and see us as we are now . . . Thucydides, Plato, Pericles, Aristotle?"

"Aristotle would be inexpressibly shocked at the way his generalizations have gone overboard. Mind you, I don't say his ideas—species, genera, and all that sort of thing—haven't proved vastly useful. Aristotle discovered all the half-truths which were necessary to the creation of science."

"Aristotle's *Ethics*, on the other hand," rejoined Livingstone, "seem to me to stand up better."

Whitehead looked dissent. "I grant you, they are admirably definite," said he. "Plato's ideas on that subject tend, in comparison, to be vague. But I prefer the vagueness."

"The Greeks didn't like vagueness," remarked Livingstone. "In that sense Plato may almost be said to be atypical. They liked outline to be distinct and subject matter to be clearly organized within definite form."

"I prefer Plato," Whitehead resumed. "He seems to me to have been the one man in the ancient world who would not have been surprised at what has happened, because his thought constantly took into account the unpredictable, the limitless possibilities of things. There is always more chance of hitting on something valuable when you aren't too sure what you want to hit upon."

He turned again to Livingstone, and continued, "There's something I want to ask you: am I right in thinking that German scholarship is quite wrong in trying to identify Plato with some explicit conclusion in his *Dialogues*, with some single speaker and a final point of view? It seems to me that was just what he was trying to avoid. Take his letters: assuming that he wrote them, and even if he didn't, they would state a prevailing frame of mind in ancient times about his work: namely, that

there *is* no Platonic system of philosophy. What he did was explore various aspects of a problem and then leave us with them. . . . He seems to me to have had, more than anyone else, a supreme sense of the limitless possibilities of the universe."

"About German scholarship, I'm not at the moment prepared to say," replied Livingstone, "but all through Aristotle one can see his resistance to the influence of Plato, and all through him the influence of Plato's thought is inescapable."

"Let me speak personally for a moment," said Whitehead. "I had a good classical education, and when I went up to Cambridge early in the 1880's my mathematical training was continued under good teachers. Now nearly everything was supposed to be known about physics that could be known—except a few spots, such as electro-magnetic phenomena, which remained (or so it was thought) to be co-ordinated with the Newtonian principles. But, for the rest, physics was supposed to be nearly a closed subject. Those investigations to co-ordinate went on through the next dozen years. By the middle of the 1890's there were a few tremors, a slight shiver as of all not being quite secure, but no one sensed what was coming. By 1900 the Newtonian physics were demolished, done for! Still speaking personally, it had a profound effect on me: I have been fooled once, and I'll be damned if I'll be fooled again! Einstein is supposed to have made an epochal discovery. I am respectful and interested, but also sceptical. There is no more reason to suppose that Einstein's relativity is anything final, than Newton's *Principia*. The danger is dogmatic thought; it plays the devil with religion, and science is not immune from it. I am, as you see, a thorough-going evolutionist. Millions of years ago our earth began to cool off and forms of life began in their simplest aspects. *Where did they come from?* They must have been inherent in the total scheme of things; must have existed in potentiality in the most minute particles, first of this fiery, and later of this watery and earthy planet. Does it not strike you how absurd it is to start from the five and one-half

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Karl Popper: The Open Society and its Enemies
I. The Spell of Plato.

> In my course I have known and, according to my measure, have co-operated with great men ; and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business.
>
> EDMUND BURKE.

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

If in this book harsh words are spoken about some of the greatest among the intellectual leaders of mankind, my motive is not, I hope, the wish to belittle them. It springs rather from my conviction that, if our civilization is to survive, we must break with the habit of deference to great men. Great men may make great mistakes ; and as the book tries to show, some of the greatest leaders of the past supported the perennial attack on freedom and reason. Their influence, too rarely challenged, continues to mislead those on whose defence civilization depends, and to divide them. The responsibility for this tragic and possibly fatal division becomes ours if we hesitate to be outspoken in our criticism of what admittedly is a part of our intellectual heritage. By our reluctance to criticize some of it, we may help to destroy it all.

The book is a critical introduction to the philosophy of politics and of history, and an examination of some of the principles of social reconstruction. Its aim and the line of approach are indicated in the *Introduction*. Even where it looks back into the past, its problems are the problems of our own time ; and I have tried hard to state them as simply as I could, in the hope of clarifying matters which concern us all.

Although the book presupposes nothing but open-mindedness in the reader, its object is not so much to popularize the questions treated as to solve them. In an attempt, however, to serve both of these purposes, I have confined all matters of more specialized interest to *Notes* which have been collected at the end of the book.

1943

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PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

Although much of what is contained in this book took shape at an earlier date, the final decision to write it was made in March 1938, on the day I received the news of the invasion of Austria. The writing extended into 1943; and the fact that most of the book was written during the grave years when the outcome of the war was uncertain may help to explain why some of its criticism strikes me to-day as more emotional and harsher in tone than I could wish. But it was not the time to mince words—or at least, this was what I then felt. Neither the war nor any other contemporary event was explicitly mentioned in the book; but it was an attempt to understand those events and their background, and some of the issues which were likely to arise after the war was won. The expectation that Marxism would become a major problem was the reason for treating it at some length.

Seen in the darkness of the present world situation, the criticism of Marxism which it attempts is liable to stand out as the main point of the book. This view of it is not wholly wrong and perhaps unavoidable, although the aims of the book are much wider. Marxism is only an episode—one of the many mistakes we have made in the perennial and dangerous struggle for building a better and freer world.

Not unexpectedly, I have been blamed by some for being too severe in my treatment of Marx, while others contrasted my leniency towards him with the violence of my attack upon Plato. But I still feel the need for looking at Plato with highly critical eyes, just because the general adoration of the 'divine philosopher' has a real foundation in his overwhelming intellectual achievement. Marx, on the other hand, has too often been attacked on personal and moral grounds, so that here the need is, rather, for a severe rational criticism of his theories combined with a sympathetic understanding of their astonishing moral and intellectual appeal. Rightly or wrongly, I felt that my criticism was devastating, and that I could therefore afford to search for Marx's real contributions, and to give his motives the benefit of the doubt. In any case, it is obvious that we must try to appre-

ciate the strength of an opponent if we wish to fight him successfully.

No book can ever be finished. While working on it we learn just enough to find it immature the moment we turn away from it. As to my criticism of Plato and Marx, this inevitable experience was not more disturbing than usual. But most of my positive suggestions and, above all, the strong feeling of optimism which pervades the whole book struck me more and more as naïve, as the years after the war went by. My own voice began to sound to me as if it came from the distant past—like the voice of one of the hopeful social reformers of the eighteenth or even the seventeenth century.

But my mood of depression has passed, largely as the result of a visit to the United States; and I am now glad that, in revising the book, I confined myself to the addition of new material and to the correction of mistakes of matter and style, and that I resisted the temptation to subdue its tenor. For in spite of the present world situation I feel as hopeful as I ever did.

I see now more clearly than ever before that even our greatest troubles spring from something that is as admirable and sound as it is dangerous—from our impatience to better the lot of our fellows. For these troubles are the by-products of what is perhaps the greatest of all moral and spiritual revolutions of history, a movement which began three centuries ago. It is the longing of uncounted unknown men to free themselves and their minds from the tutelage of authority and prejudice. It is their attempt to build up an open society which rejects the absolute authority of the merely established and the merely traditional while trying to preserve, to develop, and to establish traditions, old or new, that measure up to their standards of freedom, of humaneness, and of rational criticism. It is their unwillingness to sit back and leave the entire responsibility for ruling the world to human or superhuman authority, and their readiness to share the burden of responsibility for avoidable suffering, and to work for its avoidance. This revolution has created powers of appalling destructiveness; but they may yet be conquered.

1950

M. I. Finley: Economy and society in Ancient Greece (ed. by B. Shaw & R P Saller)
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WAS GREEK CIVILIZATION BASED ON SLAVE LABOUR?

RVI (4)

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empire and its benefits did not seem worth that dubious gain. Athenian morale remained buoyant to the bitter end, reflecting their calculus of the profits and the losses.

VI

No doubt the subject states would have preferred freedom from Athens to subjection, other things being equal. But the desire for freedom is often a weak weapon, and other things are rarely equal in real life. I am referring not merely to the staggering difficulties of staging a successful revolt – Naxos tried and was crushed, Thasos tried and was crushed, later Mytilene tried and was crushed – but to the more complex relationships inherent in all situations of subjection and domination. 'The allies (or subjects)' are as much an abstraction as 'Athens'. Athens had friends in every subject city.[55] In 413, before the final battle at Syracuse, when the position of the Athenian army had become hopeless, the Syracusans offered the allied contingents their freedom and a safe-conduct if they deserted. They refused and accepted the Athenian fate. Two years later, the people of Samos reaffirmed their loyalty to Athens and remained faithful to the bitter end.

We do not know why the Samians reacted in this way in 411, the Mytileneans in the opposite direction in 428. We lack the necessary information. The history of empire reveals a similarly divergent pattern everywhere: the view from the imperial state is more or less unitary, whereas the view from the receiving end varies from community to community, and within each community from group to group. Among some of Athens' subjects, the common people preferred democracy backed by Athenian power to oligarchy in an autonomous state. That would be one explanation of a particular reaction (though Athens did not always oppose oligarchies). In this connection, it is worth remembering that we are never told how the tribute was collected *within the tributary state*. If the normal Greek system of taxation prevailed – and there is no reason to believe that it did not – then the tribute for Athens was paid by the rich, not by the common people. That burden would therefore not have caused the latter any concern. In sum, the material costs borne by the subjects were uneven, and by and large their weight and impact elude us.

In Thucydides' account of the debates at Sparta that ended with a declaration of war against Athens, the historian attributes the following words to an Athenian spokesman (1.76.2):

We have done nothing extraordinary, nothing contrary to human practice, in accepting an empire when it was offered to us and then in refusing to give it up. Three very powerful motives prevent us from doing so – honour, fear and self-interest. And we were not the first to act in this way. It has always been a rule that the weak should be subject to the strong; besides we consider that we are worthy of our power.

There is no programme of imperialism there, no theory, merely a reassertion of the universal ancient belief in the naturalness of domination. Looking back, the historian is free to make his own moral judgments; he is not free to confuse them with practical judgments. Too much of the modern literature is concerned, even obsessed, with trying to determine whether Athens 'exploited her allies in any extensive way' or 'how much exploitation and oppression took place'. Such questions are unanswerable, when they are not meaningless. Athenian imperialism employed all the forms of material exploitation that were available and possible in that society. The choices and the limits were determined by experience and by practical judgments, sometimes by miscalculations.

WAS GREEK CIVILISATION BASED ON SLAVE LABOUR?

I

Two generalisations may be made at the outset. First at all times and in all places the Greek world relied on some form (or forms) of dependent labour to meet its needs, both public and private. By this I mean that dependent labour was essential, in a significant measure, if the requirements of agriculture, trade, manufacture, public works, and war production were to be fulfilled. And by dependent labour I mean work performed under compulsions other than those of kinship or communal obligations.[1] Second: with the rarest of exceptions, there were always substantial numbers of free men engaged in productive labour. By this I mean primarily not free hired labour but free men working on their own (or leased) land or in their shops or homes as craftsmen and shopkeepers. It is within the framework created by these two generalisations that the questions must be asked which seek to locate slavery in the society. And by slavery, finally, I mean the status in which a man is, in the eyes of the law and of public opinion and with respect to all parties, a possession, a chattel, of another man.[2]

How completely the Greeks always took slavery for granted as one of the facts of human existence is abundantly evident to anyone who has read their literature. In the Homeric poems it is assumed (correctly) that captive women will be taken home as slaves, and that occasional male slaves – the victims of Phoenician merchant-pirates – will also be on hand. In the early seventh century BC, when Hesiod, the Boeotian 'peasant' poet, gets down to practical advice in his *Works and Days*, he tells his brother how to use slaves properly; that they will be available is simply assumed. The same is true of Xenophon's manual for the gentleman farmer, the *Oeconomicus*, written about 375 BC. A few years earlier, an Athenian cripple who was appealing a decision dropping him from the dole, said to the Council: 'I have a trade which brings me in a little,

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but I can hardly work at it myself and I cannot afford to buy someone to replace myself in it' (Lysias 24.6). In the first book of the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica*, a Peripatetic work probably of the late fourth or early third century BC, we find the following proposition about the organisation of the household, stated as baldly and flatly as it could possibly be done: 'Of property, the first and most necessary kind, the best and most manageable, is man. Therefore the first step is to procure good slaves. Of slaves there are two kinds, the overseer and the worker' (1344a22). Polybius, discussing the strategic situation of Byzantium (4.38.4), speaks quite casually of 'the necessities of life – cattle and slaves' which come from the Black Sea region. And so on.

The Greek language had an astonishing range of vocabulary for slaves, unparalleled in my knowledge.[3] In the earliest texts, Homer and Hesiod, there were two basic words for slave, *dmos* and *doulos*, used without any discoverable distinction between them, and both with uncertain etymologies. *Dmos* died out quickly, surviving only in poetry, whereas *doulos* remained the basic word, so to speak, all through Greek history, and the root on which there were built such words as *douleia*, 'slavery'. But Homer already has, in one possibly interpolated passage (*Iliad* 7.475), the word (in the plural form) *andrapoda* ('man-footed' = human being) which became very common, having been constructed on the model of *tetrapoda* ('four-footed' = animal). These words were strictly servile, except in such metaphors as 'the Athenians enslaved the allies'. But there was still another group which could be used for both slaves and free men, depending on the context. Three of them are built on the household root, *oikos* – *oikeus*, *oiketes*, and *oikiatas* – and the pattern of usage is variegated and complicated. For example, these *oikos*-words sometimes meant merely 'servant' or 'slave' generally, and sometimes, though less often, they indicated narrower distinctions, such as house-born slave (as against purchased) or privately owned (as against royal in the Hellenistic context).[4]

If we think of ancient society as made up of a spectrum of statuses, with the free citizen at one end and the slave at the other, and with a considerable number of shades of dependence in between, we shall quickly discover different 'lines' on the spectrum: the Spartan helot (with such parallels as the *penestes* of Thessaly); the debt-bondsman, who was not a slave although under some conditions he could eventually be sold into slavery abroad, the conditionally manumitted slave; and, finally, the freedman. These categories rarely, if ever, appeared concurrently within the same community, nor were they equal in importance or equally

significant in all periods of Greek history. By and large, the slave proper was the decisive figure (to the virtual exclusion of the others) in the economically and politically advanced communities; whereas helotage and debt-bondage were to be found in the more archaic communities, whether in Crete or Sparta or Thessaly at an even late date, or in Athens in its pre-Solonian period. There is also some correlation, though by no means a perfect one, between the various categories of dependent labour and their function. Slavery was the most flexible of the forms, adaptable to all kinds and levels of activity, whereas helotage and the rest were best suited to agriculture, pasturage, and household service, much less so to manufacture and trade.

II

With little exception, there was no activity, productive or unproductive, public or private, pleasant or unpleasant, which was not performed by slaves at some times and in some places in the Greek world. The major exception was, of course, political: no slave held public office or sat on the deliberative and judicial bodies (though slaves were commonly employed in the 'civil service', as secretaries and clerks, and as policemen and prison attendants). Slaves did not fight as a rule, either, unless freed (although helots apparently did), and they were very rare in the liberal professions, including medicine. On the other side, there was no activity which was not performed by free men at some times and in some places. That is sometimes denied, but the denial rests on a gross error, namely, the failure to differentiate between a free man working for himself and one working for another, for hire. In the Greek scale of values, the crucial test was not so much the nature of the work (within limits, of course) as the condition or status under which it was carried on.[5] 'The condition of the free man', said Aristotle (*Rhetoric* 1367a32) 'is that he does not live under the constraint of another.' On this point, Aristotle was expressing a nearly universal Greek notion. Although we find free Greeks doing every kind of work, the free wage-earner, the free man who regularly works for another and therefore 'lives under the constraint of another' is a rare figure in the sources, and he surely was a minor factor in the picture.[6]

The basic economic activity was, of course, agriculture. Throughout Greek history, the overwhelming majority of the population had its main wealth in the land. And the majority were smallholders, depending on their own labour, the labour of other members of the family, and the

occasional assistance (as in time of harvest) of neighbours and casual hired hands. Some proportion of these smallholders owned a slave, or even two, but we cannot possibly determine what the proportion was, and in this sector the whole issue is clearly not of the greatest importance. But the large landholders, a minority though they were, constituted the political (and often the intellectual) elite of the Greek world; our evidence reveals remarkably few names of any consequence whose economic base was outside the land. This landholding elite tended to become more and more of an absentee group in the course of Greek history; but early or late, whether they sat on their estates or in the cities, dependent labour worked their land as a basic rule (even when allowance is made for tenancy). In some areas it took the form of helotage, and in the archaic period, of debt-bondage, but generally the form was outright slavery.

I am aware, of course, that this view of slavery in Greek agriculture is contested. Nevertheless, I accept the evidence of the line of authors whom I have already cited, from Hesiod to the pseudo-Aristotelian *Oeconomica*. These are all matter-of-fact writings, not utopias or speculative statements of what ought to be. If slavery was not the customary labour form on the larger holdings, then I cannot imagine what Hesiod or Xenophon or the Peripatetic were doing, or why any Greek bothered to read their works.[7] One similar piece of evidence is worth adding. There was a Greek harvest festival called the Kronia, which was celebrated in Athens and other places (especially among the Ionians). One feature, says the Athenian chronicler Philochorus, was that 'the heads of families ate the crops and fruits at the same table with their slaves, with whom they had shared the labours of cultivation. For the god is pleased with this honour from the slaves in contemplation of their labours.'[8] Neither the practice nor Philochorus' explanation of it makes any sense whatever if slavery was as unimportant in agriculture as some modern writers pretend.

I had better be perfectly clear here. I am not saying that slaves outnumbered free men in agriculture, or that the bulk of farming was done by slaves, but that slavery dominated agriculture in so far as it was on a scale that transcended the labour of the householder and his sons. Nor am I suggesting that there was no hired free labour; rather that there was little of any significance. Among the slaves, furthermore, were the overseers, invariably so if the property was large enough or if the owner was an absentee. 'Of slaves,' said the author of the *Oeconomica*, 'there are two kinds, the overseer and the worker.'

In mining and quarrying the situation was decisively one-sided. There were free men, in Athens for example, who leased such small mining concessions that they were able to work them alone. The moment, however, additional labour was introduced (and that was by far the more common case), it seems always to have been slave. The largest individual holdings of slaves in Athens were workers in the mines, topped by the one thousand reported to have been leased out for this purpose by the fifth-century general Nicias.[9] It has been suggested, indeed, that at one point there may have been as many as thirty thousand slaves at work in the Athenian silver mines and processing mills.[10]

Manufacture was like agriculture in that the choice was (even more exclusively) between the independent craftsman working alone or with members of his family and the owner of slaves. The link with slavery was so close (and the absence of free hired labour so complete), that Demosthenes, for example, could say 'they caused the *ergasterion* (workshop) to disappear' and then he could follow, as an exact synonym and with no possible misunderstanding, by saying that 'they caused the slaves to disappear'.[11] On the other hand, the proportion of operations employing slaves, as against the independent self-employed craftsmen, was probably greater than in agriculture, and in this respect more like mining. In commerce and banking, subordinates were invariably slaves, even in such posts as 'bank manager'. However the numbers were small.

In the domestic field, finally, we can take it as a rule that any free man who possibly could afford one, owned a slave attendant who accompanied him when he walked abroad in the town or when he travelled (including his military service), and also a slave woman for the household chores. There is no conceivable way of estimating how many such free men there were, or how many owned numbers of domestics, but the fact is taken for granted so completely and so often in the literature that I strongly believe that many owned slaves even when they could not afford them. (Modern parallels will come to mind readily.) I stress this for two reasons. First, the need for domestic slaves, often an unproductive element, should serve as a cautionary sign when one examines such questions as efficiency and cost of slave labour. Secondly, domestic slavery was by no means entirely unproductive. In the countryside in particular, but also in the towns, two important industries would often be in their hands in the larger households, on a straight production for household consumption basis. I refer to baking and textile making, and every medievalist, at least, will at once grasp the

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significance of the withdrawal of the latter from market production, even if the withdrawal was far from complete.[11]

It would be very helpful if we had some idea how many slaves there were in any given Greek community to carry on all this work, and how they were divided among the branches of the economy. Unfortunately we have no reliable figures, and none at all for most of the *poleis*. What I consider to be the best computations for Athens suggest that the total of slaves reached 60–80,000 in peak periods in the fifth and fourth centuries BC.[12] Athens had the largest population in the classical Greek world and the largest number of slaves. Thucydides (8.40.2) said that there were more slaves in his day on the island of Chios than in any other Greek community except Sparta, but I suggest that he was thinking of the density of the slave population measured against the free, not of absolute totals (and in Sparta he meant the helots, not chattel slaves). Other places, such as Aegina or Corinth, may at one time or another also have had a higher ratio of slaves than Athens. And there were surely communities in which the slaves were less dense.

More than that we can scarcely say about the numbers, but I think that is really enough. There is too much tendentious discussion of numbers in the literature already, as if a mere count of heads is the answer to all the complicated questions which flow from the existence of slavery. The Athenian figures I mentioned amount to an average of no less than three or four slaves to each free household (including all free men in the calculation, whether citizen or not). But even the smallest figure anyone has suggested, 20,000 slaves in Demosthenes' time[13] – altogether too low in my opinion – would be roughly equivalent to one slave for each adult citizen, no negligible ratio. Within very broad limits, the numbers are irrelevant to the question of significance. When Starr, for example, objects to 'exaggerated guesses' and replies that 'the most careful estimates . . . reduce the proportion of slaves to far less than half the population, probably one third or one quarter at most',[14] he is proving far less than he thinks. No one seriously believes that slaves did all the work in Athens (or anywhere else in Greece except for Sparta with its helots), and one merely confuses the issues when one pretends that somehow a reduction of the estimates to only a third or a quarter of the population is crucial. In 1860, according to official census figures, slightly less than one-third of the total population of the American slave states were slaves. Furthermore, 'nearly three-fourths of all free Southerners had no connection with slavery through either family ties or direct ownership. The "typical" Southerner was not only a small farmer but also a non-

slaveholder.'[15] Yet no one would think of denying that slavery was a decisive element in southern society. The analogy seems obvious for ancient Greece, where, it can be shown, ownership of slaves was even more widely spread among the free men and the use of slaves much more diversified, and where the estimates do not give a ratio significantly below the American one. Simply stated, there can be no denial that there were enough slaves about for them to be, of necessity, an integral factor in the society.

There were two main sources of supply. One was captives, the victims of war and sometimes piracy. One of the few generalisations about the ancient world to which there is no exception is this, that the victorious power had absolute right over the persons and the property of the vanquished.[16] This right was not exercised to its full extent every time, but it was exercised often enough, and on a large enough scale, to throw a continuous and numerous supply of men, women, and children on to the slave market. Alongside the captives we must place the so-called barbarians who came into the Greek world in a steady stream – Thracians, Scythians, Cappadocians, etc. – through the activity of full-time traders, much like the process by which African slaves reached the new world in more modern times. Many were victims of wars among the barbarians themselves. Others came peacefully, so to speak: Herodotus (5.6) says that the Thracians sold their children for export. The first steps all took place outside the Greek orbit, and our sources tell us virtually nothing about them, but there can be no doubt that large numbers and a steady supply were involved, for there is no other way to explain such facts as the high proportion of Paphlagonians and Thracians among the slaves in the Attic silver mines, many of them specialists, or the corps of Scythian archers (slaves owned by the state) who constituted the Athenian police force.

Merely to complete the picture, we must list penal servitude and the exposure of unwanted children. Beyond mere mention, however, they can be ignored because they were negligible in their importance. There then remains one more source, breeding, and that is a puzzle. One reads in the modern literature that there was very little breeding of slaves (as distinct from helots and the like) among the Greeks because, under their conditions, it was cheaper to buy slaves than to raise them. I am not altogether satisfied with the evidence for this view, and I am altogether dissatisfied with the economics which is supposed to justify it. There were conditions under which breeding was certainly rare, but for reasons which have nothing to do with economics. In the mines, for

example, nearly all the slaves were men, and that is the explanation, simply enough. But what about domestics, among whom the proportion of women was surely high? I must leave the question unanswered, except to remove one fallacy. It is sometimes said that there is a demographic law that no slave population ever reproduces itself, that they must always be replenished from outside. Such a law is a myth: that can be said categorically on the evidence of the southern states, evidence which is statistical and reliable.

III

The impression one gets is clearly that the majority of the slaves were foreigners. That is to say, it was the rule (apart from debt-bondage) that Athenians were never kept as slaves in Athens, or Corinthians in Corinth. However, I am referring to the more basic sense, that the majority were not Greeks at all, but men and women from the races living outside the Greek world. It is idle to speculate about the proportions here, but there cannot be any reasonable doubt about the majority. In some places, such as the Laurium silver mines in Attica, this meant relatively large concentrations in a small area. The number of Thracian slaves in Laurium in Xenophon's time, for example, was greater than the total population of some of the smaller Greek city-states.

No wonder some Greeks came to identify slaves and barbarians (a synonym for all non-Greeks). The most serious effort, so far as we know, to justify this view as part of the natural arrangement of things, will be found in the first book of Aristotle's *Politics*. It was not a successful effort for several reasons, of which the most obvious is the fact, as Aristotle himself conceded, that too many were slaves 'by accident', by the chance of warfare or shipwreck or kidnapping. In the end, natural slavery was abandoned as a formal concept, defeated by the pragmatic view that slavery was a fact of life, a conventional institution universally practised. As the Roman jurist Florentinus phrased it, 'Slavery is an institution of the *ius gentium* (law of all nations) whereby someone is subject to the *dominium* of another, contrary to nature.'[17] That view (and even sharper formulations) can be traced back to the sophistic literature of the fifth century BC, and, in a less formal way, to Greek tragedy. I chose Florentinus to quote instead because his definition appears in the *Digest*, in which slavery is so prominent that the Roman law of slavery has been called 'the most characteristic part of the most characteristic intellectual product of Rome'.[18] Nothing illustrates more perfectly the inability of the

ancient world to imagine that there could be a civilised society without slaves.

The Greek world was one of endless debate and challenge. Among the intellectuals, no belief or idea was self-evident: every conception and every institution sooner or later came under attack – religious beliefs, ethical values, political systems, aspects of the economy, even such bedrock institutions as the family and private property. Slavery, too, up to a point, but that point was invariably a good distance short of abolitionist proposals. Plato, who criticised society more radically than any other thinker, did not concern himself much with the question in the *Republic*, but even there he assumed the continuance of slavery. And in the *Laws*, 'the number of passages . . . that deal with slavery is surprisingly large' and the tenor of the legislation is generally more severe than the actual law of Athens at that time. 'Their effect, on the one hand, is to give greater authority to masters in the exercise of rule over slaves, and on the other hand to accentuate the distinction between slave and free man.' Paradoxically, neither were the believers in the brotherhood of man (whether Cynic, Stoic, or early Christian) opponents of slavery. In their eyes, all material concerns, including status, were a matter of essential indifference. Diogenes, it is said, was once seized by pirates and taken to Crete to be sold. At the auction, he pointed to a certain Corinthian among the buyers and said: 'Sell me to him; he needs a master.'[20]

The question must then be faced, how much relevance has all this for the majority of Greeks, for those who were neither philosophers nor wealthy men of leisure? What did the little man think about slavery? It is no answer to argue that we must not take 'the political theorists of the philosophical schools too seriously as having established "the main line of Greek thought concerning slavery"'.[21] No one pretends that Plato and Aristotle speak for all Greeks. But, equally, no one should pretend that lower-class Greeks necessarily rejected everything which we read in Greek literature and philosophy, simply because, with virtually no exceptions, the poets and philosophers were men of the leisure class. The history of ideology and belief is not so simple. It is a commonplace that the little man shares the ideals and aspirations of his betters – in his dreams if not in the hard reality of his daily life. By and large, the vast majority in all periods of history have always taken the basic institutions of society for granted. Men do not, as a rule, ask themselves whether monogamous marriage or a police force or machine production is necessary to their way of life. They accept them as facts, as self-evident. Only

when there is a challenge from one source or another – from outside or from catastrophic famine or plague – do such facts become questions.

A large section of the Greek population was always on the edge of marginal subsistence. They worked hard for their livelihood and could not look forward to economic advancement as a reward for their labours; on the contrary, if they moved at all, it was likely to be downward. Famines, plagues, wars, political struggles, all were a threat, and social crisis was a common enough phenomenon in Greek history. Yet through the centuries no ideology of labour appeared, nothing that can in any sense be counterpoised to the negative judgments with which the writings of the leisure class are filled. There was neither a word in the Greek language with which to express the general notion of labour, nor the concept of labour 'as a general social function'.[22] There was plenty of grumbling, of course, and there was pride of craftsmanship. Men could not survive psychologically without them. But neither developed into a belief: grumbling was not turned into a punishment for sin – 'In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread' – nor pride of craftsmanship into the virtue of labour, into the doctrine of the calling or anything comparable. The nearest to either will be found in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, and in this context the decisive fact about Hesiod is his unquestioning assumption that the farmer will have proper slave labour.

That was all there was to the poor man's counter-ideology: we live in the iron age when 'men never rest from toil and sorrow by day, and from perishing by night'; therefore it is better to toil than to idle and perish – but if we can we too will turn to the labour of slaves. Hesiod may not have been able, even in his imagination, to think beyond slavery as *supplementary* to his own labour, but that was the seventh century, still the early days of slavery. About 400 BC, however, Lysias' crippled client could make the serious argument (24.6) in the Athenian Council that he required a dole because he could not afford a slave as a *replacement*. And half a century later Xenophon put forth a scheme whereby every citizen could be maintained by the state, chiefly from revenues to be derived from publicly owned slaves working in the mines.[23]

When talk turned to action, even when crisis turned into civil war and revolution, slavery remained unchallenged. With absolute regularity, all through Greek history, the demand was 'Cancel debts and redistribute the land.' Never, to my knowledge, do we hear a protest from the free poor, not even in the deepest crises, against slave competition. There are no complaints – as there might well have been – that slaves deprive free man of a livelihood, or compel free men to work for lower wages and

longer hours.[24] There is nothing remotely resembling a workers' programme, no wage demands, no talk of working conditions or government employment measures or the like. In a city like Athens there was ample opportunity. The *demos* had power, enough of them were poor, and they had leaders. But economic assistance took the form of pay for public office and for rowing in the fleet, free admission to the theatre (the so-called theoric fund), and various minor doles; while economic legislation was restricted to imports and exports, weights and measures, price controls. Not even the wildest of the accusations against the demagogues – and they were wholly unrestrained as every reader of Aristophanes or Plato knows – ever suggested anything which would hint at a working-class interest, or an anti-slavery bias.

Nor did the free poor take the other possible tack of joining with the slaves in a common struggle on a principled basis. The Solonic revolution in Athens at the beginning of the sixth century BC, for example, brought an end to debt-bondage and the return of Athenians who had been sold into slavery abroad, but not the emancipation of others, non-Athenians, who were in slavery in Athens. Centuries later, when the great wave of slave revolts came after 140 BC, starting in the Roman west and spreading to the Greek east, the free poor on the whole simply stood apart. It was no issue of theirs, they seem to have thought; correctly so, for the outcome of the revolts promised them nothing one way or the other. Numbers of free men may have taken advantage of the chaos to enrich themselves personally, by looting or otherwise. Essentially that is what they did, when the opportunity arose, in a military campaign, nothing more. The slaves were, in a basic sense, irrelevant to their behaviour at that moment.[25]

In 464 BC a great helot revolt broke out, and in 462 Athens dispatched a hoplite force under Cimon to help the Spartans suppress it. When the revolt ended, after nearly five years, a group of the rebels were permitted to escape, and it was Athens which provided them refuge, settling them in Naupactus. A comparable shift took place in the first phase of the Peloponnesian War. In 425 the Athenians seized Pylos, a harbour on the west coast of the Peloponnese. The garrison was a small one and Pylos was by no means an important port. Nevertheless, Sparta was so frightened that she soon sued for peace, because the Athenian foothold was a dangerous centre of infection, inviting desertion and eventual revolt among the Messenian helots. Athens finally agreed to peace in 421, and immediately afterwards concluded an alliance with Sparta, one of the terms of which was: 'Should the slave-class rise in rebellion, the

Athenians will assist the Spartans with all their might, according to their power.'[26]

Obviously the attitude of one city to the slaves of another lies largely outside our problem. Athens agreed to help suppress helots when she and Sparta were allies; she encouraged helot revolts when they were at war. That reflects elementary tactics, not a judgment about slavery. Much the same kind of distinction must be made in the instances, recurring in Spartan history, when helots were freed as pawns in an internal power struggle. So, too, of the instances which were apparently not uncommon in fourth-century Greece, but about which nothing concrete is known other than the clause in the agreement between Alexander and the Hellenic League, binding the members to guarantee that 'there shall be no killing or banishment contrary to the laws of each city, no confiscation of property, no redistribution of land, no cancellation of debts, no freeing of slaves for purposes of revolution'.[27] These were mere tactics again. Slaves were resources, and they could be useful in a particular situation. But only a number of specific slaves, those who were available at the precise moment; not slaves in general, or all slaves, and surely not slaves in the future. Some slaves were freed, but slavery remained untouched. Exactly the same behaviour can be found in the reverse case, when a state (or ruling class) called upon its slaves to help protect it. Often enough in a military crisis, slaves were freed, conscripted into the army or navy, and called upon to fight.[28] And again the result was that some slaves were freed while the institution continued exactly as before.

In sum under certain conditions of crisis and tension the society (or a sector of it) was faced with a conflict within its system of values and beliefs. It was sometimes necessary, in the interest of national safety or of a political programme, to surrender the normal use of, and approach to, slaves. When this happened, the institution itself survived without any noticeable weakening. The fact that it happened is not without significance; it suggests that among the Greeks, even in Sparta, there was not that deep-rooted and often neurotic horror of the slaves known in other societies, which would have made the freeing and arming of slaves *en masse*, for whatever purpose, a virtual impossibility. It suggests, further, something about the slaves themselves. Some did fight for their masters, and that is not unimportant.

Nothing is more elusive than the psychology of the slave. Even when, as in the American South, there seems to be a lot of material – autobiographies of ex-slaves, impressions of travellers from non-slaveholding

societies, and the like – no unambiguous picture emerges. For antiquity there is scarcely any evidence at all, and the bits are indirect and tangential, and far from easy to interpret. Thus, a favourite apology is to invoke the fact that, apart from very special instances as in Sparta, the record shows neither revolts of slaves nor a fear of uprisings. Even if the facts are granted, the rosy conclusion does not follow. Slaves have scarcely ever revolted, even in the southern states.[29] A large-scale rebellion is impossible to organise and carry through except under very unusual circumstances. The right combination appeared but once in ancient history, during two generations of the late Roman Republic, when there were great concentrations of slaves in Italy and Sicily, many of them almost completely unattended and unguarded, many others professional fighters (gladiators), and when the whole society was in turmoil, with a very marked breakdown of social and moral values.[30]

At this point it is necessary to recall that helots differed in certain key respects from chattel slaves. First, they had the necessary ties of solidarity that come from kinship and nationhood, intensified by the fact, not to be underestimated, that they were not foreigners but a subject people working their own lands in a state of servitude. This complex was lacking among the slaves of the Greek world. The Peripatetic author of the *Oeconomica* made the sensible recommendation that neither an individual nor a city should have many slaves of the same nationality.[31] Secondly, the helots had property rights of a kind: the law, at least, permitted them to retain everything they produced beyond the fixed deliveries to their masters. Third, they outnumbered the free population on a scale without parallel in other Greek communities. These are the peculiar factors, in my opinion, which explain the revolts of the helots and the persistent Spartan concern with the question, more than Spartan cruelty.[32] It is a fallacy to think that the threat of rebellion increases automatically with an increase in misery and oppression. Hunger and torture destroy the spirit; at most they stimulate efforts at flight or other forms of purely individual behaviour (including betrayal of fellow-victims), whereas revolt requires organisation and courage and persistence. Frederick Douglass, who in 1855 wrote the most penetrating analysis to come from an ex-slave, summed up the psychology in these words: 'Beat and cuff your slave, keep him hungry and spiritless, and he will follow the chain of his master like a dog; but feed and clothe him with physical comfort, – and dreams of freedom intrude. Give him a *bad* master, and he aspires to a *good* master; give him a good master, and he wishes to become his *own* master.'[33]

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There are many ways, other than revolt, in which slaves can protest.[34] In particular they can flee, and though we have no figures whatsoever, it seems safe to say that the fugitive slave was a chronic and sufficiently numerous phenomenon in the Greek cities. Thucydides estimated that more than 20,000 Athenian slaves fled in the final decade of the Peloponnesian War. In this they were openly encouraged by the Spartan garrison established in Decelea, and Thucydides makes quite a point of the operation. Obviously he thought the harm to Athens was serious, intensified by the fact that many were skilled workers.[35] My immediate concern is with the slaves themselves, not with Athens, and I should stress very heavily that so many skilled slaves (who must be presumed to have been, on the average, among the best treated) took the risk and tried to flee. The risk was no light one, at least for the barbarians among them: no Thracian or Carian wandering about the Greek countryside without credentials could be sure of what lay ahead in Boeotia or Thessaly. Indeed, there is a hint that these particular 20,000 and more may have been very badly treated after escaping under Spartan promise. A reliable fourth-century BC historian attributed the great Theban prosperity at the end of the fifth century to their having purchased very cheaply the slaves and other booty seized from the Athenians during the Spartan occupation of Decelea.[36] Although there is no way to determine whether this is a reference to the 20,000, the suspicion is obvious. Ethics aside, there was no power, within or without the law, which could have prevented the re-enslavement of fugitive slaves even if they had been promised their freedom.

The *Oeconomica* (1344a35) sums up the life of the slave as consisting of three elements: work, punishment, and food. And there are more than enough floggings, and even tortures, in Greek literature, from one end to the other. Apart from psychological quirks (sadism and the like), flogging means simply that the slave, as slave, must be goaded into performing the function assigned to him. So, too, do the various incentive plans which were frequently adopted. The efficient, skilled, reliable slave could look forward to managerial status. In the cities, in particular, he could often achieve a curious sort of quasi-independence, living and working on his own, paying a kind of rental to his owner, and accumulating earnings with which, ultimately, to purchase his freedom. Manumission was, of course, the greatest incentive of all. Again we are baffled by the absence of numbers, but it is undisputed that manumission was a common phenomenon in most of the Greek world. This is an important difference between the Greek slave on the one hand, and the helot or

American slave on the other. It is also important evidence about the degree of the slave's alleged 'acceptance' of his status.[37]

IV

It is now time to try to add all this up and form some judgment about the institution. This would be difficult enough to do under ordinary circumstances; it has become almost impossible because of two extraneous factors imposed by modern society. The first is the confusion of the historical study with moral judgments about slavery. We condemn slavery, and we are embarrassed for the Greeks, whom we admire so much; therefore we tend either to underestimate its role in their life, or we ignore it altogether, hoping that somehow it will quietly go away. The second factor is more political, and it goes back at least to 1848, when the *Communist Manifesto* declared that 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles. Free man and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guild-master and journeyman, in a word, oppressor and oppressed, stood in constant opposition to one another. . . .' Ever since, ancient slavery has been a battleground between Marxists and non-Marxists, a political issue rather than a historical phenomenon.

Now we observe that a sizable fraction of the population of the Greek world consisted of slaves, or other kinds of dependent labour, many of them barbarians; that by and large the elite in each city-state were men of leisure, completely free from any preoccupation with economic matters, thanks to a labour force which they bought and sold, over whom they had extensive property rights, and, equally important, what we may call physical rights; that the condition of servitude was one which no man, woman, or child, regardless of status or wealth, could be sure to escape in case of war or some other unpredictable and uncontrollable emergency. It seems to me that, seeing all this, if we could emancipate ourselves from the despotism of extraneous moral, intellectual, and political pressures, we would conclude, without hesitation, that slavery was a basic element in Greek civilisation.

Such a conclusion, however, should be the starting point of analysis, not the end of an argument, as it is so often at present. Perhaps it would be best to avoid the word 'basic' altogether, because it has been preempted as a technical term by the Marxist theory of history. Anyone else who used it in such a question as the one which is the title of this chapter, is compelled, by the intellectual (and political) situation in which we work,

to qualify the term at once, to distinguish between *a* basic institution and *the* basic institution. In effect what has happened is that, in the guise of a discussion of ancient slavery, there has been a desultory discussion of Marxist theory, none of it, on either side, particularly illuminating about either Marxism or slavery.[38] Neither our understanding of the historical process nor our knowledge of ancient society is significantly advanced by these repeated statements and counter-statements, affirmations and denials of the proposition, 'Ancient society was based on slave labour.' Nor have we gained much from the persistent debate about causes. Was slavery the cause of the decline of Greek science? or of loose sexual morality? or of the widespread contempt for gainful employment? These are essentially false questions, imposed by a naive kind of pseudo-scientific thinking.

The most fruitful approach, I suggest, is to think in terms of purpose, in Immanuel Kant's sense, or of function, as the social anthropologists use that concept. The question which is most promising for systematic investigation is not whether slavery was the basic element, or whether it caused this or that, but how it functioned. This eliminates the sterile attempts to decide which was historically prior, slavery or something else; it avoids imposing moral judgments on, and prior to, the historical analysis; and it should avoid the trap which I shall call the free-will error. There is a maxim of Emile Durkheim's that 'The voluntary character of a practice or an institution should never be assumed beforehand.'[39] Given the existence of slavery – and it is given, for our sources do not permit us to go back to a stage in Greek history when it did not exist – the choice facing individual Greeks was socially and psychologically imposed. In the *Memorabilia* Xenophon says that 'those who can do so buy slaves so that they may have fellow workers'. That sentence is often quoted to prove that some Greeks owned no slaves, which needs no proof. It is much better cited to prove that *those who can*, buy slaves – Xenophon clearly places this whole phenomenon squarely in the realm of necessity.

The question of function permits no single answer. There are as many answers as there are contexts: function in relation to what? And when? And where? Buckland begins his work on the Roman law of slavery by noting that there 'is scarcely a problem which can present itself, in any branch of law, the solution of which may not be affected by the fact that one of the parties to the transaction is a slave'.[40] That sums up the situation in its simplest, most naked form, and it is as correct a statement for Greek law as for Roman. Beyond that, I would argue, there is no

problem or practice in any branch of Greek life which was not affected, in some fashion, by the fact that many people in that society, even if not in the specific situation under consideration, were (or had been or might be) slaves. The connection was not always simple or direct, nor was the impact necessarily 'bad' (or 'good'). The historian's problem is precisely to uncover what the connections were, in all their concreteness and complexity, their goodness or badness or moral neutrality.

I think we will find that, more often than not, the institution of slavery turned out to be ambiguous in its function. Certainly the Greek attitudes to it were shot through with ambiguity, and not rarely with tension. To the Greeks, Nietzsche said, both labour and slavery were 'a necessary disgrace, of which one feels *ashamed*, as a disgrace and as a necessity at the same time'.[41] There was a lot of discussion: that is clear from the literature which has survived, and it was neither easy nor unequivocally one-sided, even though it did not end in abolitionism. In Roman law 'slavery is the only case in which, in the extant sources . . . , a conflict is declared to exist between the *Ius Gentium* and the *Ius Naturale*'.[42] In a sense, that was an academic conflict, since slavery went right on; but no society can carry such a conflict within it, around so important a set of beliefs and institutions, without the stresses erupting in some fashion no matter how remote and extended the lines and connections may be from the original stimulus. Perhaps the most interesting sign among the Greeks can be found in the proposals, and to an extent the practice in the fourth century BC, to give up the enslavement of Greeks.[43] They all came to nought in the Hellenistic world, and I suggest that this one fact reveals much about Greek civilisation after Alexander.[44]

It is worth calling attention to two examples pregnant with ambiguity, neither of which has received the attention it deserves. The first comes from Locris, the Greek colony in southern Italy, where descent was said to be matrilineal, an anomaly which Aristotle explained historically. The reason, he said, was that the colony was originally founded by slaves and their children by free women. Timaeus wrote a violent protest against this insulting account, and Polybius, in turn, defended Aristotle in a long digression (12.6a), of which unfortunately only fragments survive. One of his remarks is particularly worth quoting: 'To suppose, with Timaeus, that it was unlikely that men, who had been the slaves of the allies of the Spartans, would continue the kindly feelings and adopt the friendships of their late masters is foolish. For when they have had the good fortune to recover their freedom, and a certain time has elapsed, men, who had been slaves, not only endeavour to adopt the

friendships of their late masters, but also their ties of hospitality and blood; in fact, their aim is to keep them up even more than the ties of nature, for the express purpose of thereby wiping out the remembrance of their former degradation and humble position, because they wish to pose as the descendants of their masters rather than as their freedmen.'

In the course of his polemic Timaeus had said that 'it was not customary for the Greeks of early times to be served by bought slaves'.[45] This distinction, between slaves who were bought and slaves who were captured (or bred from captives), had severe moral overtones. Inevitably, as was their habit, the Greeks found a historical origin for the practice of buying slaves – in the island of Chios. The historian Theopompus, a native of the island, phrased it this way: 'The Chians were the first of the Greeks, after the Thessalians and Lacedaemonians, who used slaves. But they did not acquire them in the same manner as the latter; for the Lacedaemonians and Thessalians will be found to have derived their slaves from the Greeks who formerly inhabited the territory which they now possess, . . . calling them helots and *penestae*, respectively. But the Chians possessed barbarian slaves, for whom they paid a price.'[46] This quotation is preserved by Athenaeus, who was writing about 200 AD and who went on to comment that the Chians ultimately received divine punishment for their innovation. The stories he then tells, as evidence, are curious and interesting, but I cannot take time for them.

This is not very good history, but that does not make it any less important. By a remarkable coincidence Chios provides us with the earliest contemporary evidence of democratic institutions in the Greek world. In a Chian inscription dated, most probably, to the years 575–550 BC, there is unmistakable reference to a popular council and to the 'laws (or ordinances) of the *demos*'.[47] I do not wish to assign any significance other than symbolic to this coincidence, but it is a symbol with enormous implications. I have already made the point that, the more advanced the Greek city-state, the more it will be found to have had true slavery rather than the 'hybrid' types like helotage. More bluntly put, the cities in which individual freedom reached its highest expression – most obviously Athens – were cities in which chattel slavery flourished. The Greeks, it is well known, discovered both the idea of individual freedom and the institutional framework in which it could be realised.[48] The pre-Greek world – the world of the Sumerians, Babylonians, Egyptians, and Assyrians; and I cannot refrain from adding the Mycenaeans – was, in a very profound sense, a world without free men, in the sense in

which the west has come to understand that concept. It was equally a world in which chattel slavery played no role of any consequence. That, too, was a Greek discovery. One aspect of Greek history, in short, is the advance, hand in hand, of freedom *and* slavery.

Simon Hornblower: The Greek World 479-323 BC
Methuen, 1983.

hostilities between Athens and Sparta. This argument is ingenious,[14] but does not work. The main difficulty with it can be seen only by looking at the context, which concentration on the two words 'Greek War' may obscure. There is surely a contrast between Pausanias' *avowed* aim (to fight Persia) and his *real* aim (to do a deal with her).

But the 'Hetoimaridas debate', supported as it is by other evidence, shows that some Spartans were prepared to go to war with Athens, rather than see her take over the leadership of Greece. What then did Hetoimaridas mean when he said that a 'struggle for the sea' was not in Sparta's interests?

The answer lies partly in the steps Sparta would need to take to assemble a permanent navy: she could no doubt get timber by buying or bullying, she had a harbour at Gytheum where traces of docks have been found,[15] but she could not provide the hundreds of rowers required except by finding some equivalent of Athens' 'naval mob' of poor citizens who served as rowers, and *that* meant using helots — always a politically sensitive proposal (p. 21). But perhaps the older, warier, Spartans were thinking less of the future than of the present and the past. Here there was plenty to alarm them: the suggestion of a speaker in Plato's *Laws* (698) of a Messenian War (that is, helot trouble) at the time of the battle of Marathon is not supported by much other evidence — though see ML 22 = *JHS*, lxix, 1949, pp. 26ff. and commentary. But Sparta certainly had other problems. Her league, the 'Peloponnesian', had started when she allied herself in the mid-sixth century with Tegea, in Arkadia, to the north of her. But Tegea was now restless, as a macabre incident shows. The state diviner Hegesistratos of Elis, in trouble at Sparta after the Persian Wars, escaped from confinement in the stocks by slicing his foot off at the ankle, and somehow hobbled over the border to Tegea, which, Herodotus says, *was on bad terms with Sparta at the time*. And Leotychidas, whose Thessalian expedition collapsed, also fled to Tegea (ix.37; vi.72 with p. 81). The coinage confirms that some Arkadian cities were, about now, beginning to regret having submerged their identity in the Peloponnesian League: a federal Arkadian coinage, bearing the word ARKADIKON or an abbrevia- tion, was struck in the decades immediately after the Persian Wars, and should therefore be connected, not with the earlier intrigues (p. 26) of King Kleomenes — the older view — but with secessionism in the 470s BC.[16]

Two individuals loom, from the fog that is Peloponnesian history in this period, as specially responsible for compounding Spartan difficulties. One is Pausanias the Regent, whose second and final disgrace was due to the suspicion that he was tampering with the loyalty of the helots (p. 21): 'and it was true', Thucydides adds. The reason is presumably that Pausanias, enterprising rather than (as in the official version) treacherous, planned to supplement Sparta's supplies of manpower by drafting helots into the army. That showed foresight: there had been 5000 citizen hoplites at the battle of Plataia in 479, a decent total, but even if the precise proportion of helots to Spartiates given by Herodotus, namely 7:1 (ix.28), is exaggerated, the imbalance was probably already big enough to cause unease.

The other individual is Themistokles of Athens, who had gone to the Peloponnese after his ostracism (a kind of 'banishment by plebiscite' for ten years, without forfeiture of property or taint of criminality). He stayed at Argos, and visited other places in the Peloponnese. (Themistokles was the hero of the Persian Wars, but seems to have realized sooner than most Athenians that the enemy had changed and was now not Persia but Sparta: see p. 21 on the 'walls' episode). His stay in the late 470s falls at a suspiciously active period in Peloponnesian politics. Elis in the west, perhaps already democratic even before the Persian Wars,[17] moved further away from Sparta in 471/0, when she synoikised (that is, her village-communities formed themselves into a single *polis*: Diod. xi.54). Though synoikism is not, by itself, either 'democratic' or 'oligarchic',[18] such a concentration of resources meant that for the future Sparta would find Elis harder to coerce. Themistokles could have been behind this. And since his base was Argos, it is natural to look for signs of the revival of an aggressive Argos. The signs are there by the end of the 460s, when Argos allied with Athens; but even earlier, perhaps in 469, Argos had fought against Sparta at Tegea (Hdt. ix.35) and took advantage of Sparta's helot problems in 465 to destroy Mycenae. Moreover, the undated synoikism of the Arkadian city of Mantinea was the work of Argos (Strabo 337) — or perhaps should we say Argos and her energetic guest Themistokles, and put this event in 470 alongside Elis?[19]

It is an interesting question why Spartan leadership inside the Peloponnese went sour at just this period. Motives in the dissident cities were no doubt mixed. First, Spartan leadership may not, in 470, have seemed the inevitability it had been in 550, since Athens had now

Victor Ehrenberg: The Greek State
Methuen, 1969 (1974)

the contrary, the citizens of the urban trittyes were the most active and politically influential section of every phyle. Even so, Cleisthenes' final aim – never achieved, but decisively approached – was the political unity of the Athenian people within the whole of Attica.

It was probably under Athenian influence that the old local units, the κτοῖναι, in Rhodes, which perhaps were kinship units at the same time, were changed into demes. As in Athens, but usually in a less complicated and consistent form, the phyle everywhere came to contradict the very meaning of its name and became a purely local district. Even in Sparta, it seems, the local principle found an early expression in the division of the settlement of Sparta into five villages or 'obae' (ὠβαί). A curious further development, probably quite artificial, must have occurred in Alexandria, where there were 5 phylae, 60 demes, and 720 phratries. The fact that phylae, phratries, and demes might have their separate local self-administration and their own possession of land, must not be taken as evidence that they had once been independent settlements. The principle of divided territory rather than divided population generally asserted itself and confirmed the close relation of the Polis to the soil.

(b) *Population*. The population of the territory of the Polis consisted of free and non-free. Among the free, there were citizens and non-citizens, among the non-free there were serfs and slaves. The origin of these distinct classes of the population goes back partly to the fact that all Greek states (even Athens, which had forgotten the fact) were conqueror states, and that accordingly there was a contrast between old and new inhabitants; on the other hand, the later economic and social developments also played their part.

To form any opinion of the divisions of the people, we need some knowledge of the numbers, absolute and relative. All our estimates, being based on very inadequate and chancy material, will give us at the best approximate figures; we can only try to determine something quite general and typical. In most cases, our sources mention numbers not of citizens but of soldiers only, sometimes of colonists. The amount of possible error when we use those incidental and occasional figures is almost unlimited. In the following tables, I do not try to compete with any attempts at reaching exact figures. All I wish to show are typical figures and the approximate course of the general development. As examples, I will give estimates for Athens as a Polis highly developed and economically flourishing, for Boeotia as a purely agrarian district, corresponding in area to Attica, but in the fifth century B.C. containing

ATHENS

	c. 480 B.C.	*c. 432* B.C.	*425* B.C.	*c. 400* B.C.	*c. 360* B.C.	*323* B.C.	*313* B.C.
Citizens	25–30 [35]	35–45 [43]	[29]	20–5 [22]	28–30	[28]	21 [21]
Citizens with families	80–120 [140]	110–80 [172]	[116]	60–100 [90]	85–120	[112]	60–85 [84]
Metics	4–5 [?]	10–15 [9·5]	[7]	6–8 [?]	10–15	[12]	10 [10]
Metics with families	9–12 [?]	25–40 [28·5]	[21]	15–25 [?]	25–50	[42]	25–35 [35]
Slaves	30–40 [?]	80–110 [115]	[81]	40–60 [?]	60–100	[104]	30–60 [?]
Total population	120–50 [?]	215–300 [317]	[218]	115–75 [?]	170–255	[258]	140–90 [?]

BOEOTIA

	5th cent. B.C.	*4th cent.* B.C.
Citizens	28–30	35–40
Citizens with families	85–95	110–25
Metics with families	5–10	5–10
Slaves	20	30
Total population	110–25	145–65

SPARTA

	480–460 B.C.	*371* B.C.	*3rd cent.* B.C.
Spartiates	4–5	2·5–3	2–2·5 (?)
Spartiates with inferior rights	0·5 (?)	1·5–2	1·5–2 (?)
Spartiates with families	12–15	7–9	6–8
Perioeci		40–60 (?)	
Helots		140–200 (?)	
Total population		190–270 (?)	

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ten, and later even more, independent states, and finally for Sparta as a peculiar type of an extreme oligarchy. All the figures that I give are uncertain, those of the slaves hardly more than guesses. To make plain how uncertain these figures are (but also to show that they have some relation to reality) I add (in square brackets) to my figures for Athens those adopted by A. W. Gomme; his arrangement differs from mine, but I have fitted it to my tables, without, I trust, making any serious alterations. All numbers are in thousands.

The figures for each country reflect in their variations the course of historical events. At the same time, the comparison between different types of state is very significant for each form, especially for its economic and social life. One of the most remarkable facts is the comparative thinness of population in Boeotia as compared with Attica, above all, of course, in metics and slaves. That was so although in Boeotia a number of different states are included, among them the powerful city of Thebes. We should be also interested to know the distinct figures for town and country population, but they are far too uncertain even for Athens. Practically all we can say is that before the Peloponnesian War barely two-fifths of the population lived in the city and the Peiraeus; at an earlier date the number was considerably smaller, while in the later fourth century B.C. it rose to over a half. The number of the Athenian metics outside city and harbour must always have been very small. We sometimes hear of a Polis of the Ten Thousand (πόλις μυρίανδρος); that was an ideal form of state, but as a limit not to be exceeded by an important, if average Polis, the number of ten thousand can be regarded as realistic. In a similar way, the political theorists, dealing with the needs of their ideal cities, were thinking of numbers that were within the limits of reality; Plato, *Laws* 771A, speaks of 5,040, Aristotle, *Nic. Eth.* 1170b, 31, of neither ten nor a hundred thousand citizens. They confirm the principle that too large a population would endanger the unity of the Polis. It is quite possible that Pericles' law of 451 B.C., by which only those retained the citizenship whose parents were both citizens (ἐξ ἀμφοῖν ἀστοῖν) was designed, in part at least, to check the dangerously rapid increase of the citizen body. The experience of the Polis taught the Greeks the need for restriction, in numbers no less than in territory. 'Who could be general of such an unwieldy mass or who could be a herald, unless he had a voice like Stentor?' (Arist. *Pol.* 1326b, 5; cf. also Xen. *Hell.* 2, 4, 20). Moreover, direct democracy, as the Greeks knew it, was impossible without restricted numbers of citizens. In the course of time the oppo-

site, that is to say, the decline of the number of citizens, became a more serious danger. We know of that particularly in Sparta, but it was a phenomenon that at different periods occurred at other places as well. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1272a, 22, could even believe that the small numbers in some Cretan states were caused by the practice of paederasty.

The division of the non-free population, as stated above, into serfs and slaves has recently been attacked because there was no strict demarcation line between the two groups. This is true, but it can be maintained that there were different degrees of non-free status, for example slaves without any rights and slaves with certain privileges; above all, there were intermediate positions 'between free men and slaves' (Poll. 3, 83). The situation, complicated in itself, has become more so by frequent contradictions in our sources; Aristotle's systematic scheme, for example, is more than once refuted by our primary evidence. Crete provides equally rich and contradictory evidence. Athenaeus' sources (VI 263 e–f) distinguished, on the one hand, between public and private slaves, on the other between domestic slaves and prisoners of war. This means that two different categories, the nature of slavery and its origin, are mixed up. In the Law of Gortyn the words for domestic slaves (οἰκεύς) and slaves in general (δοῦλος) are used indiscriminately; there too some legal rights of slaves are mentioned which did not exist in other states. It is uncertain to what extent the law code of Gortyn was valid even only among other Cretan states, and as there is no definite divergent evidence it seems better not to generalize from that one codification.

We therefore follow the division otherwise recorded for Crete into slaves and clarotae. It is probably significant that in the passage from Pollux quoted above, which may go back to Aristophanes of Byzantium, several different groups are all included under the common heading of μεταξὺ ἐλευέρων καὶ δούλων, that is to say, the Spartan helots, the Thessalian penestae, the Cretan clarotae (who were settled on the *klaros*, their master's inherited property), and the *mnoïtai*, the public slaves. It seems impossible to define, and to distinguish clearly between, the many Greek words for the non-free; but the view ought to be upheld that, apart from slaves who were simply owned by their masters, there were others, peasants who only paid regular duties and were bound to the land. We are inclined to call the latter 'serfs', but must admit that the expression is taken from the conditions of medieval feudalism and therefore not completely appropriate; but a better name

has still to be found. Moreover, as antiquity knew something very similar to medieval enclosure (*Bauernlegen*), the word serfs (= *Hörige*) is not too misleading. We thus accept the traditional names for the various groups of non-free people.

Slavery first gained in the Polis, and through the economic development of the sixth century B.C., that great importance which is suggested by the numbers given above. Before that, as Homer shows, we find domestic slavery on a modest scale in which women were more numerous; it rested on exposure of children, kidnapping, and prisoners of war. Its form and spirit were essentially patriarchal, and its economic significance was almost negligible. Later on, owing to the changes in economic conditions and methods, the slaves as a cheap form of labour became a very important part of property. The main contingent was now supplied by foreign slaves who were bought from slave traders; but there were, of course, Greeks too, among them in earlier times free citizens who had fallen into slavery through debt. Slave revolts hardly ever occurred in Greece before Roman times. It seems that in the third century and even earlier there were revolts in Chios which was notorious for her masses of slaves, and in the Decelean War more than twenty thousand slaves ran away from Attica (Thuc. VII 27, 5); most of them will have been workers in the mines. The lack of revolts was due, not so much to the very motley composition of the whole body of slaves as to their treatment which in general was good, and also because slaves had a chance of gaining economic independence and enjoyed certain rights at law. We have many pieces of evidence about the position of Athenian slaves and their chances of rising economically; but they were by no means the best off; in Crete, for example, slaves were admitted to take the oath, while in Athens they could only testify, if at all, under torture. Beside private slaves, there were almost everywhere public slaves (δημόσιοι), who frequently were important assistants of the officials. It comes out clearly that the slaves were an indispensable element in the structure of the state and, as such, dependent on the state as well as on the individual master. Slavery, on the whole, increased with the progress of Polis development. Slaves were needed through the growth of trade and manufacture as well as by the increasing share of all citizens in political life. Must we therefore speak of a 'slave-holders' society'? Certainly not in the sense frequently used. If the Greeks could not do without slaves, these were never the only workers, or even the most important. The poor among the citizens had always to work for a living; they normally regarded the slaves as fellow-workers (cf. Xen.

Mem. 2, 3, 3) rather than as competitors; naturally, whoever could afford it held slaves. All comparisons with the slavery of the American South are out of place, except perhaps as far as the large estates in Sicily and Italy are concerned. Slaves, if not under that name, have in fact existed at all times and in all forms of society.

Remarkable again for the Greek conditions is the small number and slight importance of the freedmen (ἀπελεύθεροι). Manumission might come by the private decision of the master, but sometimes also as an official reward for some useful service, in war or by the denunciation of a criminal offence; it was usually done under the form either of a dedication or of a sham sale to a god (Olympia, Delphi, Poseidon at Taenarum), and was often burdened with restrictions or conditions. The position of the freedmen at law was, in contrast to Rome, at best equal to that of the foreigner. In this we perceive the unbridgeable gulf that separated citizen and slave; it also explains why there was in general no great urge on the part of the slaves to be freed.

Slavery was the most common, but not the only negation of freedom in the Polis. In many places, through the subjection of an earlier population by conquest, a class of serfs arose, peasants, as they have been described before, who had to pay with part of their harvest. To this class belonged the Thessalian penestae and the Cretan clarotae. The Attic hectemorii, who – according to the predominant modern view – were required to pay a sixth of their crops, though in a similar position, were free men who had sunk through debt and loans on their property into serfdom. To what extent the laws of Gortyn referred to slaves or serfs remains disputed; but certain is that the class mentioned there had almost complete independence in matters of family law, might even marry free women and have free children; they also had some legal rights in public life.

Among the same group of serfs we must reckon the Spartan Helots (εἵλωτες), though in the peculiar structure of the Lacedaemonian state they held a position of their own. In Laconia they were mostly the conquered pre-Dorian population, in Messenia the Dorian Messenians, conquered in the eighth and seventh centuries B.C. They were all settled on the land of the Spartiates, allotted to some individual Spartiate to cultivate his estate and to render personal service; they were bound to the soil, but allowed to use the surplus of the crop for themselves. The individual master could neither liberate nor sell them; they were exclusive property of the state, which had the most extensive rights over them: think of the Crypteia. They, and they alone, bore the

whole burden of agriculture; only their existence made it possible for the Spartiates to be nothing but a military class. Economically, the Helots may have been no worse off than the serfs in other states, but they not only lacked any power to act at law, they were completely without its protection. It can easily be understood that in our sources they frequently are simply called slaves. The arbitrary treatment by the Spartiates kept them in constant fear, but that worked either way. Every year there was an official proclamation of a state of war between Spartiates and Helots, which made the murder of a Helot a permissible act of war; this situation led to frequent dangerous revolts, and Sparta's policy was largely determined by fear of them.

For a looser kind of dependence we may refer to certain border districts, mostly mountainous country, surrounding the more level territory of the interior and, therefore, appearing necessary for the defence of the state. Here we find Perioeci, 'dwellers round', usually independent peoples or communities, required to serve in war and render various other services. Perioeci are found, for example, in Thessaly, Crete, Argos, and Elis, probably also in some of the colonies. Their position varied from place to place; some of them can be described as 'dependent' Poleis or tribes (like those mentioned above, p. 26); others were simply neighbours or allies. In Thessaly they were subject allies; in Crete, where they were called ὑπόβοικοι or ὑποῖκοι, we hear nothing of service in war. It also seems certain that the expression Perioeci was often used in a rather vague and unprecise way (cf. e.g., Arist. *Pol.* 1303a, 8; *FGrH.* 310 F 6). In Sparta alone were the Perioeci inseparably bound up with the body of the state; though it is improbable that they were ruled by Spartan harmosts. In lasting struggles during the eighth to sixth centuries B.C., occasionally also by voluntary union or by colonization, a ring of dependent territory was drawn round the land of the Spartiates. The Perioeci who dwelt in these regions were for the most part Dorians themselves, were settled in independent communities called Poleis, were owners of their own land, which, however, was usually not very fertile, and had their own dependants and slaves. They were called 'Lacedaemonians' and owed service in war to the state, though they enjoyed no active political rights, since they were not citizens of Sparta, but of their own towns; in view of the numerical decline of the Spartiates they were more and more called on to serve as officers and officials abroad. Their further importance to the state lay in the fact that they shut off the Helots from the outside world. It appears from Thuc. V 54 that it was a right of the

kings, not of the ephors, to call the Perioeci out on military service; this is perhaps a surviving trace of an old royal prerogative. A state hostile to Sparta, such as Argos in the fifth century B.C., could give the privilege of 'proxenia' to a Perioecus, and in doing so, call him 'Oenuntian' as a citizen of his home town Oenous, not a Lacedaemonian, let alone a Perioecus; but that has little relevance to the actual constitutional position inside the Spartan state, except for confirming the fact that the towns of the Perioeci were regarded as Poleis. The common view that the Perioeci carried the burden of trade and crafts must, to a large extent, be modified. Sparta's foreign trade was small, crafts were mainly domestic and depended on Helot labour. The Perioeci were 'yeomen', who naturally went in for some local crafts and petty business. In matters of taxation they seem to have been put on the same plane as the Spartiates.

Sparta was to an unusual degree self-sufficient. This made it possible to exclude on principle the activities of foreign elements, and on occasion to banish by arbitrary decision all foreigners present in the state. In all the other Greek states, though more particularly where trade and crafts played a larger part than in purely agrarian communities, strangers (ξένοι) were a section of the population that counted for much economically. The Polis so far took account of this as to modify the original lack of legal rights, in a varying degree; in particular, to allow the freeborn foreigner who had settled permanently, to form a closer connection with the state, and thus at the same time make better use of him for state purposes. This practice was consistently followed through in fifth- and fourth-century Athens, after Solon and Cleisthenes had already given citizen rights to many foreigners – slaves and freedmen, it is said, among them (Arist. *Pol.* 1275b, 36). Foreigners became *metoikoi*, metics, 'co-dwellers' (also σύνοικοι, or later πάροικοι) by an act of admission, to which they were often compelled after a period of residence which probably varied from state to state. Originally, all these settlers were Greeks; but from the fourth century B.C. there was a certain percentage of non-Greeks among them. By their acceptance as metics they gained the right of residence, the protection of the law for their persons, a share in cults and festivals as well as freedom to practise their professions; on the other hand, they were required to pay a low poll tax (μετοίκιον) and to take their share of public burdens – sometimes, to serve in the army. At Athens a list of all metics was kept in the office of the Polemarch (*SEG.* XVIII 153, 30 f.). They remained non-citizens, they had to be represented in court by a citizen as 'prostates',

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with the Aristotelian ideal of a city-state (and with the actual functioning of city-state institutions).[45] Freed slaves had only restricted rights in the first generation; of the others, an increasingly large proportion resided at distances from Rome that severely impeded direct political participation for all but the rich and their retainers. At the same time, a substantial sector of the peasantry were compelled to abandon their holdings by a process more complex than is often appreciated. There was a steady migration to the cities, above all to the city of Rome. Calculations of the population of Rome are not much better than guesses, but there is one indicator that has the appearance of accuracy: the list of the citizens in the city of Rome (and only in the city of Rome) eligible to receive free grain numbered 320,000 when Caesar became dictator (Suetonius, *Caesar* 41.5).

All this military activity represented power, in its narrow sense of force, exercised abroad. Our concern, however, is primarily with the internal functioning of the state. What power did it have to enforce its decisions in the many fields of behaviour for which it laid down rules? The ancient city-state had no police other than a relatively small number of publicly owned slaves at the disposal of the different magistrates, from archons and consuls down to market inspectors,[46] and in Rome the lictors, normally lower-class citizens, in attendance on the higher magistrates. That is hardly surprising: the organized police force is a nineteenth-century creation. But – and this is crucial and exceptional – the army was not available for large-scale police duties until the city-state was replaced by a monarchy. The contrast on this score with the Italian city-states of the late Middle Ages is noteworthy.[47] The ancient city-state army

[45] I oversimplify; see Gauthier (1974), with bibliography, and the discussion of citizenship below in ch. 4.

[46] The evidence for public slaves is sporadic; for Athens, see O. Jacob, *Les esclaves publics à Athènes* (Bibl. de la Fac. de Philos. et Lettres de l'Univ. de Liège 35, 1928; repr., New York 1979); for Rome, W. Eder, *Servitus publica* (Wiesbaden 1980), Mommsen (1899) bk II ch. 12.

[47] In this context the familiar ideological discussion by humanists, notably Machiavelli, of the relative merits or demerits of mercenaries and citizen militia is irrelevant. See C. C. Bayley, *War and Society in Renaissance Florence* (Toronto 1961), who, on the rare occasions when he remembers that there were problems of internal order, takes it for granted that both mercenaries and militia were always available to suppress civic unrest; cf. W. M. Bowsky, 'The Medieval Commune and Internal Violence: Police Power and Public Safety in Siena, 1287–1355', *American Historical Review* 73 (1967) 2–17.

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was a citizen militia, in existence as an army only when called up for action against the external world. What Nicolet has said of Rome was equally true of the Greek *polis*: 'At any given time when the state was at peace with its neighbours Rome had no army at all.'[48] It was, furthermore, a socially select militia: in principle, both cavalry and infantry were required to equip themselves, and that automatically reduced the poorer 'half' of the citizenry to marginal service, in the fleet or the light-armed auxiliaries, or to complete exemption save in emergencies.

One can easily list exceptions to the ideal type of the ancient citizen army just presented. Sparta was always an exception. Some states had small, élite standing armies, such as the 'Sacred Band' of 300 in Thebes. The Athenian navy (and perhaps a few others) offered poor citizens an opportunity to serve as paid rowers. In the fourth century B.C., the Greek cities increasingly employed mercenary soldiers in their wars; that was an important symptom of a changing social and political situation, but neither the mercenaries nor their professional commanders played a role in internal politics (unless tyrants were in control).[49] The scale of the Roman effort forced repeated reductions in the minimum financial qualification for service and the payment of a subsistence allowance to soldiers on duty. By the end of the second century B.C., indeed, the very notion of a self-equipped militia was abandoned; that is one reason, as we shall see, why the final century of the Roman Republic presents at best a distorted version of city-state politics.

None of this falsifies the general formulation about the city-state and its armies,[50] but one important distinction between Greece and Rome imposes a qualification. The strictness of Roman military discipline is a commonplace (notably Polybius 6.37–8); on-the-spot penalties included the death sentence by order of a commander (and even decimation, the execution of every tenth soldier in a detachment). Greek army discipline seems to have been much more lax, cases of serious punishment without court proceedings rare.[51]

[48] Nicolet (1976) 134.

[49] On the relations between the Greek cities and the mercenary commanders and armies they employed, see now Pritchett (1971–9) II ch. 2–4.

[50] See Nicolet (1976) 125–6. His chapters 3–4 present the best balanced account (with bibliography) of those aspects of Roman army history that are relevant to the present discussion.

[51] On Rome, see, e.g., G. R. Watson, *The Roman Soldier* (London 1969), pp. 117–26; on Greece, Pritchett (1971–9) II ch. 12.

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Our best guess is that the total population of the Roman empire at its peak, at the beginning of the Christian era, was equal to, or a bit greater than, that of the United Kingdom today. That was also the time of maximum urbanization in antiquity, yet there were not half a dozen cities larger than Belfast or Miami, not one (other than Rome) as populous as Leeds or Milwaukee. However, it is not the totals or modern comparisons that matter in the present context but the relative capacities to fulfil ancient expectations. In a world of low technology, predominantly small landholdings, a stratified social structure and an indefatigable appetite for local wars, independent communities with a citizen-population under ten thousand were chronically unstable; they lacked the resources and the manpower to protect themselves from the social and political consequences of natural disasters, such as a succession of famine years, and of persistent armed conflict. Hence – though this is admittedly only an impression, given our inadequate evidence – the frequency of a breakdown in politics in favour of open civil war, often enough accompanied by betrayal of the city to one or another more powerful state.[17] That was a price paid for the incorporation of the lower classes into the political community. Only the larger states were able to escape, not only by the use of force externally but also by the ability to exercise their greater resources 'peacefully', for example by control of maritime routes. There can be no better illustration of the close interrelationship between domestic and foreign affairs in shaping the politics within any state.[18]

It would be difficult to overestimate the impact of war on ancient politics. The unparalleled Roman record of war and conquest should not blind us to the fact that there were also few years in the history of most Greek city-states (of Sparta and Athens in particular), and hardly any years in succession, without some military engagements. We must also bear constantly in mind that the brunt of the fighting was borne by citizen militias; furthermore, that in many Greek states (including Athens and Sparta) and in early Rome, the men who made the decisions to fight were largely those

[17] On the inevitable political 'oscillation' in small city-states, see Heuss (1973), 19–24.

[18] Acknowledgement should be made of the contribution by Otto Hintze towards a proper appreciation by modern historians of this dialectical relationship; see especially Hintze (1962) 34–40, 53–6. This dialectic is a central theme of Heuss (1973); cf. Schuller (1979).

who went straight into battle themselves, from the commanders down the social and economic scale to the men of fairly modest property who constituted the heavy infantry, and sometimes even down to the poor who manned the warships.

The variables immediately begin to proliferate. The first distinction is between conquest-states, those which subjected relatively extensive territory or a relatively large number of previously independent communities to their authority, and the others, which did not. An immediate consequence was change, distortion and sometimes destruction of the governmental system and the politics of the subject-communities. Schematically stated, imperial states favoured, and often imposed, preferred constitutional systems on their subjects and intervened politically or militarily in order to achieve the desired result: tyranny where tyrants were the conquerors, as in Sicily; democracy in the Athenian power-sphere; oligarchy where Sparta or Rome was the controlling power.[19] At the receiving end, in the subject-cities, there was a readiness on the part of the different factions to summon external military support, not only in conflicts over the form of government (oligarchy or democracy) but also in power struggles within oligarchies.[20] As usual, the sources let us down; primarily concerned with the imperial states, they provide no more than an occasional hint about the politics in the subordinate communities as these gravitated about the pressures and demands exerted upon them from outside.[21] More precisely, ancient authors restrict their information to the constitutional issues and to the bare bones of assassination, exile and confiscation. The model statement is that of Thucydides (3.82.1) in his great set-piece on the civil war in Corcyra in 427 B.C.: 'in wartime, when each side could always count on alliances that would harm the other and benefit itself, it was easy for those wishing a revolution to call in help'.

Thucydides' generalization can be illustrated many times over

[19] In the case of Sparta I refer here only to the 'allied' states in the Peloponnesian League, not to the Messenians who were reduced to helotage, with decisive effects on the Spartan system briefly noted in ch. 1. See Finley (1975) ch. 10; on the Peloponnesian League, de Ste Croix (1972) ch. 4.

[20] That intra-oligarchic struggles were often the occasion for external interference is brought out by I. A. F. Bruce, 'The Democratic Revolution at Rhodes', *Classical Quarterly*, n.s. 11 (1961) 166–70, and 'Internal Politics and the Outbreak of the Corinthian War', *Emerita* 28 (1960) 75–86.

[21] See generally Finley (1978*a*) 11–14, (1978*b*) 124–6.

of charge I am sceptical. I cannot envisage how one proceeded, or could afford, to bribe jurors whose numbers could run to 1,000 and who were chosen by lot from a panel of 6,000 just as a trial was to begin, or citizens who attended the Assembly by the thousands.

Before turning from Athens to Rome I should say explicitly that I have been trying to describe Athenian political behaviour, not to judge it, whether from an absolute moral standpoint or from a contemporary view of social justice. I have in the past been found 'guilty of a certain romanticizing of Athenian government' and of misusing the term 'democracy' because the *demos* was a narrow minority that excluded women, slaves and members of the subject-states in the fifth-century empire.[38] It does not seem to me that a structural historical analysis of Greek (or any other) politics *in their own terms* either warrants such criticism or requires a litany of explicit moral condemnation. It is easy to score points over a dead society, more difficult and more rewarding to examine what they were trying to do, how they went about it, the extent to which they succeeded or failed, and why. The two kinds of consideration cannot be conflated without the risk, indeed the probability, of getting them both wrong. In both Athens and Rome the citizen-bodies were minorities exploiting large numbers of men, free and slave. It still remains to explain why both were pragmatically successful and politically stable for long periods, why in both there was a constant tension between élite leaders and the populace, including the peasantry; yet why one retained and even enlarged popular participation, while the other persistently contained it within narrow limits. One may disapprove of either or both societies heartily: the problem of explanation does not disappear because of that.

Rome can now be examined more briefly by highlighting the most important differences from Athens. There is no need to repeat

[38] J. R. Fears, in a review of Finley (1973*b*) in *Annals of the Amer. Academy of Political and Social Science* 410 (1973) 197–8, and B. Hindess, reviewing both Finley (1973*a*) and (1973*b*) in *The Sociological Review* 23 (1975) 678–97, respectively. Hindess' notion that the Athenian empire was 'a larger political unit – a state' in which Athens was only one of many members (p. 681) simply baffles me by its incomprehension of ancient Greek institutions. So does the argument of R. A. Dahl that Athens was not an example of a participatory democracy because 'the demos consisted of all those who *were* qualified to govern': 'Procedural Democracy', in *Philosophy, Politics and Society*, 5th ser., ed. P. Laslett and J. Fishkin (Oxford 1974), p. 119.

what I have already said about a face-to-face Mediterranean society, an oral culture, the difficulties of obtaining and diffusing essential information, the interrelationship between domestic and foreign/military affairs, the lack of separation between civilian and military leaders, the role of military glory, public munificence and patronage in obtaining and holding political leadership. Several important differences in these respects have already been noticed. Here I single out differences in scale, which in the course of time became so great as to heighten significantly the existing structural differences in political life. Thus, by the middle of the third century B.C. there were formal divisions ('tribes') of the rural population situated as far south as Capua in the south and the Adriatic to the east.[39] Eventually they extended to Lake Como and Venetia. The implication of such distances for anyone wishing to vote or otherwise participate politically in the city of Rome requires no elaboration.

Structurally, or constitutionally if one prefers, there were fundamental differences at every key point. There was not one assembly but three, which every citizen was free to attend when he wished (barring the unimportant exclusion of the tiny minority of patricians from the *concilium plebis*). However, the formal devices designed to ensure tight élite control accumulated until they amounted to a veritable straitjacket. The details are bewildering and often uncertain for several reasons – the patchy source-material, the frequent modifications in the practice by enactment or custom, the exceptional instances (especially in the last century of the Republic). Nevertheless, an 'ideal-type' summary is sufficient for the present discussion.[40] To begin with, there were no fixed meeting-dates, not even for the annual consular elections: an assembly met only when convened for a specific purpose, whether an election or a 'legislative' proposal, by a higher magistrate within whose power it lay to do so. Such a summons could be invalidated in various ways, by unfavourable auspices (to be considered later in this chapter), for

[39] See Taylor (1960) ch. 5. It also appears that Italian peasants often lived in more dispersed and isolated habitations than their Athenian counterparts: P. D. A. Garnsey, 'Where Did Italian Peasants Live?', *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, n.s. 25 (1979) 1–25. This is a subject requiring further investigation with particular concern for regional differences, rooted in the pre-Roman history of the various areas: see briefly E. Gabba and M. Pasquinucci, *Strutture agrarie e allevamento transumante nell' Italia romana (III–I sec. a.C.)* (Pisa 1979), pp. 21–6.

[40] Taylor (1966) is fundamental; see also Nicolet (1976) ch. 7; Staveley (1972) pt II.

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In the realm of politics only Plato and Aristotle (and possibly as a transitional figure, the Sophist Protagoras) may properly be labelled systematic thinkers. They were the first genuine political theorists of antiquity, and the last; the first and last to attempt a complete and coherent account of the ideal organization of society grounded in systematic metaphysics, epistemology, psychology and ethics.[3] And both failed and admitted failure, Plato by writing the *Laws*,[4] Aristotle by the state in which he left the papers that were published more than three centuries later as the *Politics*, disorganized, digressive, incomplete, at times incoherent and inconsistent.[5] In the attempt, both Plato and Aristotle worked and wrote on a level of philosophical abstraction, sophistication and generalization that was not only beyond the reach of their fellow-men but was also unsuitable for the purposes of the present discussion. They do not and cannot tell us what Greeks generally understood by legitimacy, political obligation or proper political behaviour; they only tell us why the Greeks were held to have persistently and unavoidably misunderstood what they were doing and why they were doing it.

This is not to agree with two still persistently held notions, either that historians, pamphleteers and particularly playwrights (and their audiences) are not to be studied as thinkers at all; or that there was no bridge of any kind between them and the handful of

[3] 'No tutor would accept from a pupil the reasons given by Plato for the following quite important doctrines: that the Soul is tripartite; that if the Soul is tripartite, the ideal society would be a three-class state; that whatever exists, exists in order to perform one and only one function; that reason is one such function; that one and only one of the classes should be taught to reason; that membership of a class should normally be determined by pedigree; that empirical science can never be "real" science; that there are Forms; that only knowledge of Forms is "real" science; that only those who have this knowledge can have good political judgment; that political institutions must degenerate unless there are rulers who have had the sort of higher education that Plato describes; that "justice" consists in doing one's own job; and so on. Yet if any one of these propositions is dubitable, the positive recommendations of the "Republic" are unestablished': Gilbert Ryle, in a review of Karl Popper, *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, in *Mind* 56 (1947) 167–72, at pp. 169–70; reprinted in *Plato, Popper and Politics*, ed. R. Bambrough (Cambridge and New York, 1967), pp. 85–90.

[4] 'No serious reader of the *Laws* could reasonably doubt that Plato wrote into it, without the slightest hedging, propositions which contradict the very tenets I have presented . . . as indispensable supports of his meta-normative theory of justice . . . Though he does not discuss the earlier theory, does not allude to it in any way, we can be certain he has abandoned it': Vlastos (1977) 35–7.

[5] For an introduction to the complex story of the publication of Aristotle's works, see I. Düring, *Aristoteles* (Heidelberg 1966), pp. 32–52.

'rational' theorists and philosophers.[6] As MacIntyre has phrased it strikingly,

> The Athenians had not insulated, as we have by a set of institutional devices, the pursuit of political ends from dramatic representation or the asking of philosophical questions from either. Hence we lack, as they did not, *any* public, generally shared communal mode either for representing political conflict or for putting our politics to the philosophical question.[7]

Can one imagine that of the ten or twelve or fourteen thousand who were present at the performance of Sophocles' *Antigone* in about 442 B.C., only a few philosophers understood that, among other things, the play raised the question of legitimacy and political obligation? Or that the audience were so busy laughing all through the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes, produced when the war against Sparta was already in its sixth year, that no one noticed that the resolution was a private peace made with Sparta by an old Athenian farmer, or that his name was Dicaeopolis, which means just (or righteous) *polis*? Or that only modern scholars have caught the intended answer to Socrates' doctrine – no one does evil knowingly – in the soliloquy of Euripides' Medea before she kills her children (lines 1078–80), 'I know what evil I am about to do; but the *thymos* is stronger than my resolution, *thymos*, the root of man's most evil acts' (where *thymos* is her irrational self)?

Not all Athenians held the same views and not all Greeks were Athenians, but the evidence is decisive that nearly all of them would have accepted as premises, one might say as axioms, that the good life was possible only in a *polis*, that the good man was more or less synonymous with the good citizen, that slaves, women and barbarians were inferior by nature and so excluded from all discussion; that therefore correct political judgments, the choice between *polis* regimes or between conflicting policies within a particular *polis*, should be determined by which alternative helped advance the good life. The main divergences were in practical judgments, not in the

[6] As a corrective, see the review-article by A. W. H. Adkins, 'Problems in Greek Popular Morality', *Classical Philology* 73 (1978) 143–58.

[7] MacIntyre (1981) 129–30. However, such public discussion did not lead to the formulation of a democratic *political theory* beyond that of Protagoras. It is a fallacy to think that there had to be one; or that its absence is seriously puzzling (so N. Loraux, *L'invention d'Athènes* (Paris 1981), pp. 176–85); or that it is possible to reconstruct one, as A. H. M. Jones tried to do in *Athenian Democracy* (Oxford 1957), ch. 3.

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said to underestimate Greek craftsmanship, whether in fine painted pottery or in stone temples or in sculpture; aesthetically satisfying though they may be, they did not increase the productivity of the society. Until the invention of machines that could be powered by energy-sources other than human or animal, what scope was there for technological growth, after all, given the inherited level the Greeks started with? Significantly, they never thought of the windmill; and the water-mill—an invention probably of the first century B.C.—received little application.

One social (and political) consequence was the permanent threat of insufficiencies, above all in food supplies. Aristotle, as we have seen, and other social theorists laid great stress on the virtue of self-sufficiency (*autarkeia*), a norm that was for all practical purposes unattainable, in particular by the larger urban *poleis*. Before the beginning of the classical period, the latter had outgrown the productive possibilities of their hinterlands and were compelled to import foodstuffs year in and year out.[10] Even the Peloponnese, self-sufficient in this respect in peacetime, had to seek grain abroad during major wars. Grain was the staple of the diet. Hence genuine famines were not infrequent, because of crop failures in any given year or disruption of imports, compounded by the limited technical possibilities of food preservation. And no *polis* could treat famine as a matter of indifference. 'The many' would not tolerate that; the idea of community was felt to be compatible with inequality, but not with starvation. Stated differently, 'the many' felt themselves entitled to direct benefits, not merely abstract rights, by virtue of their membership in a community. That entitlement was a privileged one, without any element of broad humanitarianism. Thus, a public distribution of grain in Athens in 445 B.C., the gift of an African prince, led to a purge of the citizen roster following an outcry that some non-citizens were sharing in the windfall of free corn by having been falsely inscribed as citizens.[11]

The frequency of civil strife, *stasis*, within the *poleis* is expressly attributed by Aristotle (*Politics*, 1302a32) to the desire for *kerdos*, profit, gain, material advantage, and for

[10] Even the theorists of course acknowledged that self-sufficiency was absolutely impossible for certain necessities, metals above all, but also leather and slaves.

[11] The sources are inconsistent in the details; see A. W. Gomme, *The Population of Athens in the Fifth and Fourth Centuries B.C.* (Oxford, 1933), pp. 16-17.

more *time*, honour. Obviously 'the many' sought the former, 'the few' the two together, and both sides were quick to turn to violence in order to achieve their aims. *Stasis* is a very broad word, ranging over the gamut from 'normal' political methods to open civil war—always within the limited enclave of the citizen-body (who did not hesitate to seek other allies, even slaves, when *stasis* reached its extreme form). The relative freedom of classical Athens and Sparta from civil war, each for its own peculiar reasons, should not blind us to its frequency throughout the rest of Hellas. War was a regular feature of Greek life, not only in the perspective of centuries or half-centuries but every few years in many, perhaps most *poleis*, and, though people were less quick to go to war internally, the barriers proved weak and ineffectual over and over again. The paradox of the strong community sense was that, in a world with a weak and inflexible economy and with substantial inequality, it was precisely the community-notion that led to the kind of demand which at times brought about the breakdown of the community, at least temporarily.

3.

In this society of unequals, the élite who dominated all activities, political, military, athletic, and cultural, constituted a single group. That is not to say that the same individuals played leading roles in several fields, though a few did, but to stress that they all came from the same minority of wealthier families, barring the inevitable exceptions. The acceptance by 'the many' of this perpetual domination by 'the few' is a significant fact in classical Greek history, even in Athens during its most democratic period, from the time of Pericles to the time of Alexander the Great. Whatever the political implications of that fact, the more opaque (and often neglected) cultural implications are no less important, and they are our present concern, not politics. Legacy is essentially a matter of high culture, the impact and manipulation of ideas and values in philosophy and science, social and political theory, literature and art, all of them propounded and developed within the élite circle. The survival of rituals and ceremonies, of rustic dances, costumes, language and vocabulary, is an interesting subject in its own right, when it

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can be traced, but it is something different from the legacy of high culture.

'High culture' is perhaps an unfortunate phrase, and it can be misleading because of the tendency to project contemporary judgements and values back in time. The opposition between high culture and popular (or mass) culture is rarely a neat and simple one, and it is never identical in different historical eras. A sufficient warning-signal is raised by Greek tragedy, uniformly solemn in theme, tone, and language, difficult even for contemporary audiences to follow very closely. Today it is impossible to think of anything comparable that would draw into the theatre up to 14,000 spectators, for whom only the most primitive facilities were available, and many of whom attended on several successive days. Plutarch reports (*Life of Nicias*, 29.2)—and the story is no less revealing if it is *ben trovato* rather than true—that of the thousands of Athenian soldiers taken prisoner after the defeat at Syracuse in 413 B.C., a few were set free because they could recite some of the choruses of Euripides. 'The Sicilian Greeks', Plutarch explains, 'had a passion for his poetry greater than that of any others. They were constantly learning by heart the little examples and morsels that visitors brought them from time to time.'

Plays were of course available in writing, and by the time of the Sicilian disaster there was something of a book market. The scattered evidence also suggests that a considerable (though unquantifiable) proportion of the free population could read and write, especially in the urban sector. The professional scribe, a feature of all ancient Near Eastern societies and also of the eastern Hellenistic monarchies, was missing from the Greek *poleis*. Athens from about the mid-fifth century adopted the practice of inscribing on stone and publicly displaying a considerable variety and a large number of official texts—treaties, laws and decrees, lists of tribute payments and of men fallen in battle, and so on. A few other cities did likewise, though it is necessary to stress Athenian exceptionalism in this respect.

All this, coupled with the unavoidable fact that our knowledge of Greek culture depends on the written word and the material object, creates an illusion. The reality, as Plutarch's Syracusan tale implies, is that classical Greek culture was essentially an oral one, in which ideas as well as

their literary expression were transmitted and debated primarily by word of mouth, publicly and privately. Plato was not being merely eccentric when he expressed distrust of books (*Phaedrus*, 274–8) or when he cast his philosophical treatises in the form of dialogues. His reasons were his own, the logical consequence of his conception of the nature of philosophical inquiry, but he would have met little disagreement among his contemporaries. In his own day, oratory was a fully developed literary genre, the most important form of literary prose, and rhetoric became, under the influence of Isocrates, the centre of higher education. Historians rarely cited documents, preferring eye-witness accounts; Thucydides notoriously failed even to mention documents in his statement (1.21–2) of his research methods. Perhaps more surprisingly (to us), the verbal testimony of witnesses was also preferred in business arrangements and in the law-courts; so simple a piece of paper as the receipt was uncommon until the bureaucratic demands of the Hellenistic monarchies intervened.

In part, there is a simple technical explanation, at least with respect to literature. Then, as at any time before the invention of printing, the number of copies of a work available for circulation was severely limited, each being written out by hand. The likelihood of the permanent disappearance of a work was greatly increased for the same reason: in the library established by the Ptolemies in Alexandria, the greatest in the ancient world, more than a dozen of the plays of Euripides were already missing, less than two centuries after his death. Reading aloud was therefore common, both in small private circles and on public occasions, and no doubt memories were sharpened. It is demonstrable that quotation from memory was frequent among writers, with a corresponding loss of textual accuracy. The literary field apart, the very nature of this society, with its stress on face-to-face relationships, encouraged verbal communication in its varied forms. In politics, the importance of ostracism and exile is then easily intelligible: the physical removal of an individual from the community effectively prevented him from communicating his ideas to his fellow-citizens.

All this presents difficulties of appreciation and comprehension for the modern student. How can one assess the response of 14,000 people to the plays of Aeschylus and Aristophanes,

WORKS OF PLATO

	Stephanus	Jowett (1937)	Period
Euthyphro	i 2- 16	I 383-398	Early
Apology	i 17- 42	I 401-423	Early
Crito	i 43-54	I 427-438	Early
Phaedo	i 57-118	I 441-501	Middle
Theaetetus	i 142-210	II 143-217	Late
Sophist	i 216-268	II 221-280	Late
Euthydemus	i 271-307	I 133-170	Middle
Protagoras	i 309-361	I 81-130	Early
Lesser Hippias	i 363-376	II 715-729(App I)	Early
Cratylus	i 383-440	I 173-229	Middle
Gorgias	i 447-527	I 505-587	Early
Ion	i 530-542	I 285-297	Early
Philebus	ii 11- 67	II 343-403	Late
Meno	ii 70-100	I 349-380	Middle
Alcibiades I	ii 103-135	II 733-772(App I)	-
Alcibiades II	ii 138-151	II 793-806(App II)	-
Charmides	ii 153-176	I 3- 27	Early
Laches	ii 178-201	I 55- 77	Early
Lysis	ii 203-223	I 31- 52	Early
Menexenus	ii 234-249	II 775-788(App II)	Middle
= Statesman	ii 257-311	II 283-340	Late
Republic (Cornford)	ii 327-621	I 591-879	Middle
Laws (TJ Saunders)	ii 624-969	II 407-703	Late
Timaeus (D Lee)	iii 17-92	II 3- 68	Late
Critias (D Lee)	iii 106-121	II 71-84	Late
Parmenides	iii 126-166	II 87-140	Late
Symposium	iii 172-223	I 301-345	Middle
Phaedrus	iii 227-279	I 233-282	Middle
Eryxias	iii 392-406	II 807-821(App II)	-
Hippias Major			Early
Epistles (Morrow)			

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1. Stephanus edition is of AD 1578: provides page reference for Plato's Works
2. B. Jowett (Master, Balliol, Oxford) 12.2.1892...12.21920, Random House 1937
3. Period: as indicated by George Klosko: The Development of Plato's Political Theory, Methuen, 1986, p.16.

PLATO: Laws (TJ Saunders, Penguin, 1970)(STEPHANUS, Vol II 624-969)
(TJS:Intro:41: The traditional mode of detailed reference to Plato is by the numbers of the pages in the edition of Stephanus(1578))

Intro: Plato was born in 427 BC ...died in 347 BC (p.18)
24: A society governed by philosophers is described in the Republic (written probably in the 380s and/or 370s. The population is divided into three classes: the Perfect Guardians, the Auxiliary Guardians, and(for the want of a better term) the 'Third Class'(Rep 412ff,440-41). The Perfect Guardians undergo a long and rigorous training in philosophy; they if anyone, really know the moral norms that society must obey (Rep:especially 473ff). They have absolute and untrammelled power over the rest of the state; in their hands lies the making of such rules and regulations as are necessary(Rep:484,519-20,540). The Auxiliary Guardians assist their superior colleagues in administration and keeping order, and undertake the defence of the state. (Rep:414ff,440-41) Their education is more limited than that of the Perfect Guardians; they have only a partial understanding of the reasons for the laws they administer, and do not appreciate their metaphysical basis.(Rep;428,439,537ff) The Third Class consists of the rest of the state — farmers, traders, artisans and so forth; their education is confined to the instruction they need in order to perform their own individual tasks efficiently. The essential features of such a state are that the few who really know the absolute moral standards rule the many who do not, and that such control is willingly exercised and willingly accepted. (Rep: 431-2,442)

In the Republic Plato is hardly concerned with the detailed structure of society or with the minutiae of laws and regulations: he assumes that such details can be formulated easily enough by any one with knowledge of the eternal moral verities.(Rep:425,484ff) In fact, he gives us not so much the description of a particular utopia as an analysis of those general features of society that will ensure its moral salvation. The Republic is thus the extreme statement of Plato's central ideas about moral and political problems. THE STATEMAN (POLITICUS'): The Statesman, which probably belongs to the middle or late 360s, forms a bridge between the Republic and the Laws. Although Plato reaffirms the ideal of the absolute ruler entitled to govern unhampered by law, he expresses strong doubts about the possibility of such a person ever appearing. ...However, Plato's lack of confidence in the possibility of an ideal ruler was not accompanied by any great trust in the political abilities of the man in the street.

Republic

(p.422) True enough. But I should like to know, Socrates, how our state will be able to go to war, if it has no money, especially if it is forced to fight a rich and powerful enemy.

Obviously it would be hard to fight one such enemy, but easier to deal with two.

What do you mean by that?

In the first place, if they have to fight, they will be highly trained soldiers matched against rich men.

True, so far as that goes.

Well then, Adeimantus, would not a single boxer with perfect training easily be a match for two wealthy and corpulent antagonists who could not box?

Not for both at once perhaps.

(p.429) ...Dyed in that way, wool gets a fast colour, which no washing, even with soap, will rob of its brilliance; whereas if they choose wool of any colour but white, or if they neglect to prepare it, you know what happens.

Yes, it looks washed-out and ridiculous.

That illustrates the results that we were doing our best to achieve when we were choosing our fighting men and training their minds and bodies. Our only purpose was to contrive influences whereby they might take the colour of our institutions like a dye, so that, in virtue of having both the right temperament and the right education, their convictions about what ought to be feared and on all other subjects might be indelibly fixed, never to be washed out by pleasure and pain, desire and fear, solvents more terribly effective than all the soap and fuller's earth in the world. Such a power of constantly preserving, in accordance with our institutions, the right conviction about the things which ought, or ought not, to be feared, is what I call courage. That is my position, unless you have some objection to make.

(p.430) Temperance surely means a kind of orderliness, a control of certain pleasures and appetites. People use the expression, 'master of oneself', whatever that means, and various other phrases that point the same way.

(p.453) The first thing to be settled, then, is whether these proposals are feasible; ..whether, in the case of mankind, the feminine nature is capable of taking part with the other sex in all occupations, or in none at all, or in some only; and in particular under which of these heads this business of military service falls. Well begun is half done, and would not this be the best way to begin?

THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO

(trans: by F.M. Cornford, Oxford, 1941,..1975)

Some extracts

(p.349) ..Perhaps you think I was talking of pickpockets. There is profit even in that trade, if you can escape detection;..

(p.374) Ed footnote: "All wars are made for the sake of getting money", Phaedo 66c.

(p.404-5) In a community where licentiousness and disease are rife, law courts and dispensaries have their doors constantly open. Law and medicine begin to give themselves airs, when, even among free men, large numbers take too keen an interest in them.

That is inevitable.

Is it not the surest sign of a disgracefully low state of education that highly skilled physicians and judges should be in request, not merely among the lower classes who work with their hands, but among those who lay claim to a liberal upbringing? Could anything show a more shameful lack of culture than to have so little justice in oneself that one must get it from others, who thus become masters and judges over one? .....

Is it not also disgraceful to need doctoring, not merely for a wound or an attack of some seasonal disorder, but because, through living in idleness and luxury, our bodies are infested with winds and humours, like marsh gas in a stagnant pool, so that the sons of Asclepius /the mythical patron of physicians/ are put to inventing for diseases such ingenious names as flatulence and catarrh?

(p.422) I wonder whether you will agree on another point closely connected with that and concerned with the craftsmen. Is it not true they also are spoilt and turned into bad workmen by wealth and by poverty alike?

How so?

In this way. When a potter grows rich, will he go on with his trade? Does he not become idle and careless, and consequently a worse potter? And equally, if he is too poor to provide himself with tools and other things he needs for his craft, his work will be worse, and he will not make such good craftsmen of his sons and apprentices. So work and workmen suffer from both causes, poverty and riches as well.

Evidently.

Here, then, are some more evils which must not elude the vigilance of our guardians and find their way into the commonwealth: riches and poverty. The one produces luxury and idleness, the other low standards of conduct and workmanship; and both have a subversive tendency.

DEVELOPMENT OF PLATONIC APPROACH

(from PLATO AND PLATONISM:AN INTRODUCTION by JN FINDLAY, NY TIMES BOOKS 1976)

Some of the exponents of Platonism (in chronological order)

Head Academy 1. Speusippus (nephew of Plato), early evolutionist, anticipator of Hegel

Head Academy 2. Xenocrates (distinguished and voluminous philosophical author)

3. Aristotle (4th c BC)

4. Plotinus (3rd c AD), new platonism@

8. Proclus (5th c AD), new Platonist "who worked out Platonism, as opposed to Socraticism, into a system, without departing a hairsbreadth from its essential foundations".(These remarks would of course be contested) It then had a period of immense influence in Christian, Jewish, and Islamic theology and philosophy."

5. Clement and Origen of Alexandria (christian philosophers, 3rd c AD)

6. Gregory of Nyssa (AD 331-394)

7. Augustine (AD 354-430)

8. Proclus

9. Irish John the Scot (division of Nature, 9th c AD)

10. Anselm (11th AD)

11. Aquinas

12. William of Ockham

Timaeus: Latin version:c 350 AD; references in Cicero, Seneca; Petrarch(14th c AD):"Plato as the first of philosophers". Arabic version: AD 813-833 (according to R. Klibansky: The Contumuity of the Platonic Tradition during the Middle Ages together with Plato's Parmenides in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Kraus international Publications, 1939 (1982),pp 81,5 plates.

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5. J.Burnet (editor): Platonis Opera, 5 vols, Oxford, 1907 (Greek texts)
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7. Field, GC: Plato and His Contemporaries, London ...(3rd:1967)
8. Morrow, G(Ed & Trans): Plato's Epistles, Indianapolis, 1962
9. Popper, K: The Open Society and Its Enemies, Vol.I: The Spell of Plato (5th ed, Princeton, 1966)

WORKS OF PLATO

(listed in The Development of Plato's Political Theory)
by George Klosko, Metuen, 1986, p.16)

Early Works

1. Apology (c 399 BC, Socrates) in Dialogues of Plato by JD Kaplan
2. Crito (c 399 BC, Socrates) " " "
3. Laches
4. Lysis
5. Charmides
6. Euthyphro
7. Hippias Minor
8. Hippias Major
9. Protagoras
10. Gorgias
11. Ion

Middle Works

1. Meno
2. Phadeo (c 399 BC, Socrates drinks poison) Dialogues by Kaplan
3. Republic in F.M.Cornford, Oxford (1941,..1975); Arabic version c 850 AD; Greek Text paging 327-620
4. Symposium (On love, Socrates and others) in Dialogues by Kaplan
5. Phaedrus
6. Euthydemus
7. Menexenus
8. Cratylus

Late Works

1. Parmenides
2. Theaetetus
3. Sophist
4. Statesman
5. Timaeus) trans by Desmond Lee, Penguin(1965,1976) from BURNET
(account of world, p.22-3:Egyptians say Greece older than Egypt; Socrates and Timaeus) Greek Text paging 17-92
6. Critias) " " " " " 106-121
7. Philebus
8. Laws trans: TJ Saunders, Penguin (1970,1975) (Greek T p. 624-969 (from text in Budé series (Paris 1951-6)) (editing of STEPHANUS) (AD 1578)

NOT LISTED

1. Epistles
2.

THE LAWS : Plato's last and longest sermon to the world. It was written in the 350s and early 340s, though some passages may conceivably be earlier. Here the importance of law overshadows all, and the ideal ruler with his expert knowledge of moral values is barely mentioned. Plato now sees law as the supreme, though essentially imperfect, instrument for moral salvation of society: he calls it the 'dispensation of reason'(714), and the entire life of the community must accordingly be governed by a detailed code of laws which will express as far as possible the Philosopher's vision of the true good. But in so far as the true good never changes, and the code's expression of the Philosopher's vision will be the best attainable, any change in the laws can only be for the worse. (Laws:797: If you control the way children play, and the same children always play the same games under the same rules and in the same conditions, and get pleasure from the same toys, you will find that the conventions of adult life too are left in peace without alteration. ...Change, we shall find, except in something evil, is extremely dangerous.) ..the impassioned advice never to change the laws of the state in the minutest particular, even as regards something so apparently trivial as children's games. Change the games and you change the children; they will grow up with a taste for novelty, and will then wish to change the laws and customs of th e state. That is the way to moral relativism and the abandonment of the absolute standards to which Socrates' questioning had, for Plato (Rep:424-5), pointed the way. ...It makes much better sense to think of the Republic as an extreme statement, designed to shock, of the consequences of an uncompromising application of certain political principles — in fact, as an unattainable ideal— and to suppose that even when Plato wrote the Republic, he had some realistic political programme, which may well have been more or less what we find in the Laws.

BoseNK 923.254 (G151bo) Gandhian Political (1967)
CWMG 923.254 G151C.

Plato

✓ Crombie: P's Theory of Knowledge 888 P69 C (72635) 336p
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321.07 P697L2m
Morrow
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