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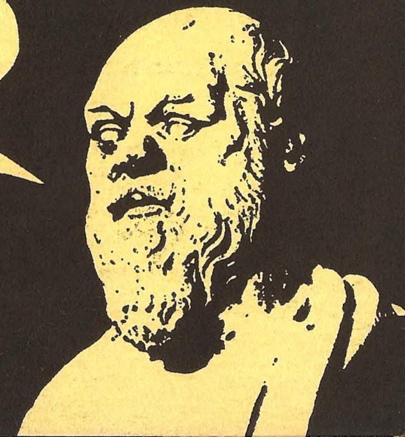

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Anarchism in Greek philosophy

D. FERRARO

AT FIRST SIGHT THE TITLE "Anarchism in Greek Philosophy" may seem somewhat of a contradiction. Our attitudes towards Hellenism, conditioned as they are by nineteenth century romanticism, have accustomed us to regard Greek thought as the complete antithesis of anarchism. This is the result of close study of Plato and Aristotle at the expense of other philosophers; such study leads to the impression that the beliefs of either of these two thinkers were typical of Greek speculation. If we remember that over one thousand years separates the Ionian physicists from the closing of the schools by Justinian and if we do not lose sight of the fact that during that period philosophy ran the gamut from scientific or quasi-scientific speculation to the esoteric ritualism of the Hermetic Brotherhood, then we shall not find it so surprising that some Greek thinkers evolved theories which led them to adopt an anarchistic position.

Before proceeding to an account of these thinkers I should like to make some preliminary points. Firstly, the purpose of this article is historical, not critical. It is not my aim to give an analytical discussion of anarchistic theories in Greek philosophy but rather to give an account of one of the doctrines, chiefly that held by the Cynics, which might be termed anarchistic. Secondly I am not in any way concerned to give a comprehensive view of the growth of Greek philosophy during the 4th and 3rd centuries B.C. Those who wish to pursue this field of study may refer to the standard works of reference. My intention is solely to bring to notice some aspects of this branch of Greek philosophy which seems to have been overlooked by most modern writers.

In order to gain an overall perspective of the period it will be necessary to give a brief sketch of the course of Greek history up to the 3rd century B.C. Prior to the conquests of Phillip of Macedon, the Greeks were city-state dwellers, owing allegiance to one or other of the *polis* each of which was a political and social entity, autonomous and economically self-sufficient. No matter how complex the superstructure of government became, the basic nature of the polis remained and when Athens, by her imperial ambitions, trespassed upon the

D. FERRARO's article appears in No. 1 of The Pluralist *(Box 3015 G.P.O. Sydney, Australia) and is reprinted by kind permission of the author and editors.*

privileges of the polis, Greek sentiment was outraged to the extent of declaring war. This is not, of course, the only reason for the Peloponnesian War. It would be foolish to put forward such a simplification. Nevertheless Athens, by annexing the members of the Delian League placed upon them a restraint which the military power of Sparta hesitated to place on the members of her own federation: it was this restraint and its implications for the autonomy of the polis which may be said to be at the root of the ill-feeling among the non-Athenian states. Ironically the subsequent conflict and the rise of Macedon led to the destruction of the city-state as a political reality to a philosophical ideal. The trend was to a world-state and Greek philosophy, which had previously been conditioned to situations which might arise in a city-state, was forced to adjust to meet the new demands. As a result, world-systems such as Stoicism and Epicureanism were evolved, systems which attempted to discover philosophical positions which might explain or rationalise the new political and social situations which the Alexandrian empire had created. The chief characteristic of these two world systems was in their recognition of one universal end for all men and in their acceptance of all men as brothers within the bonds of the system. Unlike the theories of Plato and Aristotle which were designed for the improvement of the few, Stoic and Epicurean beliefs made no barrier to any man's acceptance provided that he followed the tenets of the faith.

A third system, Cynicism, suggested a position very similar to that which we regard as classical anarchism in the form enunciated by Bakunin and Kropotkin. It is, however, not possible to speak of a Cynic school as we can speak of Stoics or Epicureans. There was never a connected corpus of theoretical writings which might be described as Cynic nor was there ever agreement among the Cynics themselves as to the correct methods of interpreting their founders' doctrines in practice. In this refusal to elevate one particular formulation of belief into a Cynic canon, the Cynics were quite atypical of 3rd century philosophical systems.

In order to understand the Cynic position it is essential to understand the connotations of two Greek words *Physis* and *Nomos*. These may best be translated as Nature and Custom, but their semantic developments are most involved. Physis can means the natural form an object takes as a result of normal growth, it can refer to a person's nature or character, it can be used of animals' instinct and it can mean the natural order of things, the regular order of nature. Nomos on the other hand means usage, or law, or the established authority or body of ordinances which govern a set of circumstances. It can be seen that some of the meanings of these two words are widely contradictory while others reconcile these two concepts. Ionian physics was concerned to perceive the order in nature, the Sophists were concerned to unite Nature and Law in the ideal man. Plato preached a life "according to Nature" a cry which was adopted by the Cynics themselves, and Aristotle devoted a lifetime to the imposing of order upon the natural occurrence of things. The important thing for us to realise is that

Greek philosophical systems except that of the Cynics, attempted to reconcile the two concepts. The Cynics alone rejected Nomos and sought a life which might be lived purely by the dictates of Nature. It is illuminating to read such a work as Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid* in the light of Cynic doctrine. It is even more instructive for our immediate purpose to examine the implications for the Greeks of a rejection of Nomos.

One of the results of a political system which is based on a small unit such as the city-state, is that appeals to a common interest are less likely to deceive the people than they would in a large system such as our own. In the polis the citizens would be acquainted with each other's prejudices and aspirations, and opportunities for the destruction of one's enemies or the elevation of one's friends would be more readily available. One result of this was that the Greeks never sought to bolstr their legal penalties by appeals to divine inspiration or motivation; the notion of custom or usage was never quite submerged in the notion of law. By rejecting the validity of Nomos, the Cynics were not rejecting any theological system, but rather the rule of custom or convention. However, because the Greek saw through appeals to common interest, once a particular nomos had become accepted as forming part of the general body of Nomos, it was almost impossible to reject this without undermining the whole basis of organised society. The strongest appeal a Greek lawyer can make is to what is customary. Therefore in rejecting Nomos the Cynics were rejecting organised society and denying the right of established authority to prescribe the limits of their actions. When Diogenes slept with prostitutes in the street he was offending far more than the sensibilities of squeamish bystanders. His action struck at the foundations of ordered social existence as Greeks knew it.

This is not easy for twentieth-century man to understand. We are used to the idea that laws are formulated in order to preserve a *status quo* which is divinely commanded. The Greek might have said that the order of the world pleased the Gods, but he would not have been likely to claim that the order of the world was established and maintained by the Gods. Disorder, chaos or anarchy was an offence against man's reason and this was a much more serious affair than irreligion. Of course religion was supported by the state, but it is significant that while Socrates is charged with atheism and impiety, the real sting of the accusation is that he teaches the worse to appear the better case, that is, he perverts what is the "natural order of things".

We have seen therefore, that Greek philosophy as a whole was concerned with uniting the forces of Nature and Custom, while Cynicism rejected the latter out of hand and preached the life according to Nature. It is now time to examine some of the individual doctrines which the Cynics professed, and to discover what qualities in them may be termed anarchistic.

D. R. Dudley points out that, despite the claims of antiquity that Antithesis was the founder of Cynicism, Diogenes of Sinope must be regarded as the true formulator of the Cynic way of life. I have no time to discuss the numerous stories which connected themselves with Diogenes' eccentric way of practicing his doctrines. These stories come

mostly from later writers whose main aim is to denigrate Cynicism, and may thus be discounted. Perhaps the most important gift which Diogenes bequeathed to the Cynic brotherhood was his insistence on the practical application of his beliefs. He was no armchair philosopher, no academic theorist divorced from the exigencies of real life situations. The very fact that so many stories grew up around his personality indicates the degree to which he carried his preaching into practice. For the later Cynics, Diogenes became a heroic figure only second in importance to Hercules, their divine patron. In view of his importance it will be of value to examine those opinions which can reasonably be assigned to him from the mass of conflicting evidence.

One of the most famous paradoxes of Diogenes is his command "Deface the Currency". In order to understand fully the implications of this phrase it is necessary to realise that the word for "currency" is *nomisma*, a word derived from Nomos. The Greek system of currency was not standardised and coins minted according to various standards were in general circulation: Attic, Aeginitian and Euboic coin-standards were all accepted as valid currency. However, this flux of currency standard meant that counterfeitery or defacing the coinage was a much more serious offence than it is today since its consequences were more far-reaching. Therefore in commanding his followers to deface the coinage, Diogenes was enjoining a wholesale attack on prevailing conventions in all spheres of human activity. "The standard of value of society is wrong", proclaims Diogenes, and his solution is the complete rejection of such a standard. Such a policy demands complete freedom of speech and action, and these became the two qualities most associated with the Cynics. Stories illustrating Diogenes' possession of both these qualities abound in the literature of antiquity, but the burden of all of them is the same; without fear of any consequence Diogenes pursued his policy of attacking conventional mores, no matter into what apparently gross position this might lead him.

Moreover this freedom was didactic in purpose. The aim of Diogenes and his fellow Cynic was to change the situation which seemed to them so full of evil. They were, in other words, moralistic in their intent, and they preached that if their precepts were to be followed, social happiness would result.

This seems very close to the ideas of nineteenth-century anarchism as practised by Kropotkin and is in sharp contrast to professed Libertarian* principles, although Libertarian practice often comes very close to proselytising and evangelising. The Cynics, in setting out a programme for happy existence were following the tendency of the other world systems. Greek philosophy was always concerned to find for mankind a way in which the demands of society could be satisfactorily met. The Cynics rejected these demands out of hand; they denied the competence of courts to judge their actions and they propagated the doctrine that all social laws, hierarchies and standards were invalid. If we read the works of Malatesta or Bakunin, or examine the motives of the Anarcho-syndicalist movements in the Spanish anti-fascist conflict, a great many parallels will become apparent.

* Int he sense in which the word is used by the Libertarian Society of Sydney University—*Ed.*

We have seen that in their insistence on absolute freedom of speech and action, the Cynics formulated an idea which is characteristic of anarchist thought. Another parallel idea was the relative concept of law. As Sayne says, "Since laws were made by men and might have been other than what they were, and since customs varied in different countries, the Cynics held that laws and customs had no validity. They did not consider that the mere fact that observances were required by law and custom gave them a moral validity."

Sayne's book on Diogenes, written as it is from a condemnatory point of view, is most instructive, for it shows up the parallels between Cynicism and anarchism. Julian says in one place, speaking of the Cynic Oenomaus, "This then is his aim, to do away with all reverence to the gods, to bring dishonour on all human wisdom, to trample on all law that can be identified with honour and justice, and more than this, to trample on those laws which have been, as it were, engraved on our souls by the gods . . . Robbers take cover in desert places, whereas the Cynics go up and down in our midst subverting the institutions of society." It is clear that much of the Cynics' purpose finds its counterpart in anarchist theory.

In the course of what has been a most sketchy account of some aspects of the subject, I have been concerned merely to show some similarities between Cynic thought and anarchist theory. I have not assayed completeness nor have I attempted criticism. Those who are interested to pursue Cynicism further may find D. R. Dudley's book *A History of Cynicism* of value.

The anarchist play

HENRY NEVINSON

IT WAS A STRANGE CONTRAST THAT WAS PRESENTED in the chalk-pit of the Bradfield College Theatre one Saturday. The temperate English sun shone his best, and a sweet-smelling wind just rustled the woods of June. Thrushes sang in the thickets round the topmost seats, house-martins flitted over the orchestra, and under the heavy oaks of the park the tame deer stood browsing like cattle in the chequered shade. Smooth cricket-fields and close-clipped lawns; and old buildings of red brick told of fatted peace and immemorial comfort. Clean and well-fed boys were there, instructed in unhesitating obedience as the primary rule of life. Men and women sat in the audience who had never transgressed a human law, nor qustioned the ordinances either of rulers or of society,

but were taught to regard rebellion as a capital crime. Few of them had ever been called upon to risk as much as a hat for a principle. Fewer still had ever dreamed of missing a meal for the possession of justice or of love.

But before their complacent eyes was enacted the sternest tragedy of rebellion and justice and love, and upon how different a scene! It is war-time at its most loathsome moment—two days after battle. The plain of Boeotia is scorched with heat. Dust storms go sweeping in darkening clouds over the gravelly hills round Thebes. The dead of the defeated Argives, who had tried to carry the city by assault, are being hastily buried in the sand and rocks outside her seven gates, and already those that remain exposed are blackened by death and the sun. The smell of their putrefaction poisons the air. The street dogs and vultures of Cithaeron are at work on them, and fragments of their flesh and bones are strewn through the town, even upon the altars of the gods. Among them lies Polyneices, slain by his brother, who himself was slain by him—ill-fated offspring of hideous relationships. Let others be buried as time may allow; such was the sacred custom among all Greeks, for death brings forgiveness to mankind. But for Polyneices no burial shall be permitted. His body shall never rest in the purifying earth, but, torn by beasts and birds, shall rot in sun and wind and rain, unwept, uncomforted and unhallowed. Such was the decree of Creon, who had claimed the kinship of Thebes upon his other nephew's death. The law was confirmed by a proclamation ordaining in legal jargon that any person or persons found attempting the burial of the aforesaid corpse by digging, covering, sprinkling, or any other form of interment whatsoever, should be liable to the penalty of being stoned to death in any such public place as the law directed. A guard is set to watch the body. Loyal citizens tremble and obey.

On such a scene the great drama of rebellion opens, and Antigone enters, resolved upon her holy transgression—Antigone, the same high-hearted girl who had once guided her blind father to the olive woods of white Colonus, whence Athens can be seen. At her side the poet places her sister, the pretty, comfortable Ismene, just as in another drama he places a gentle sister at Electra's side for the type of an average easy-going mind that acquiesces in authority and carefully keeps within the law. Ismene pleads all the common arguments for doing nothing; the thing is impossible, she says; "it is no good starting a wild-goose chase"; it is always a pity to make a fuss; works of supererogation are uncalled for; besides, the sisters are poor, weak women, both too weak to strive with men; and then, surely it is the duty of every citizen to obey the State, and no one can be reproached for submitting to superior force. But, come what may, she will at least keep her sister's secret—oh, she may be trusted to do that!—and, with a final touch of human nature, she insists that it is for her dear, dear sister, not for herself, that she fears.

It is the same with the Chorus. Kindly and well-meaning gentlemen, they are blinded by the dull caution of age and custom. They are abundantly sympathetic; they feel keenly for everyone; tears stream from their eyes when Antigone is led to death; they do their utmost to console her on the ground that it is a fine thing to die young and healthy; and we can imagine their well-bred start of shocked surprise when the ungrateful girl rejects their consolations as a mockery, and asks them at least to have the decency to hold their tongues till she is gone. Why, it is decency they live by—decency and the law! They have been nurtured on their favourite saying, "Nothing out of the ordinary comes into a man's life without bringing a curse." And so, although they admire man's cleverness very much, and wonder at his skill in sailing the sea, and ploughing the earth, and taming the horse, and protecting himself against rain and frost and disease, they are terrified out of their wits at the thought of a man's or woman's daring, and only pray that no one who disobeys the law may ever sit beside their hearth. So with love; they say many beautiful things about it—things that have flown round the world—but they are mortally afraid of it. There is something in love that makes light of laws, something excessive and immeasurable, and the heart possessed by love is no better than insane.

It is the custom to hold up Creon as the type of the blood-thirsty tyrant, the embodiment of capricious despotism. But that is unjust. He is only the average official, the common slave of law, order, and routine. In usual times he would have been regarded as a model ruler, always setting public interests above his own or his family's. There is no nasty nepotism about him, at all events. He is continually talking about duty and the State. He knows that the State expects every man to do his duty, and through all his words we feel what stirring speeches he must have made on Empire Day in Thebes. To the State he is devoted heart and soul, and in its service he will sacrifice all his natural affections. Though on these grounds he esteems himself a first-rate administrator, he palliates possible mistakes by the weary old saying that any government is better than none. He is not an exceptionally evil nature; it is only the official nature hardened by a crisis. His mistakes are the official's mistakes. If anyone opposes him, he at once suspects "sedition" or "corruption". He cannot imagine a man differing from him except for treachery or bribes. Rather than depart from law, he will welcome the desecration of altars by foul impiety; and, as the surest mark of the official mind, he is perpetually haunted by a peculiar abhorrence of anything so subversive of official routine as the interference of women in politics. "No woman shall constrain a ruler's laws!" "Females shall have no vote while I'm alive!" Again and again he blurts it out with a persistency that shows how keenly the whole question was occupying the mind of Athens, as is also seen in the three woman plays of Aristophanes.

In the midst of all these worthy supporters of the law stands the

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HENRY NEVINSON was a celebrated journalist of the early decades of this century, famous for his exposure of slavery in Angola and the Cocoa Islands. He was a subscriber to FREEDOM *and a friend of Kropotkin and Malatesta. This article was reprinted in his book* Essays in Freedom (1909).

rebel girl Antigone, the most heroic figure in Greek tragedy, or second only to the rebel Prometheus, who defied the decrees of Zeus himself. There are many underlying motives in the play—the position of women, the position of kings, and the "romantic" love between unmarried lovers, a motive almost unknown in Greek literature. But the great and central theme of the play is Antigone's appeal from the laws of State to the primal laws of righteousness which lie deep in the heart of mankind, unaffected and unrestrained by the panoply of ordinances that hedge rulers and their citizens round. The poet's art has diffused that irresistible appeal through the whole play, but for one moment it is concentrated in Antigone's celebrated lines:

> "*It was not God who bade that edict pass,*
> *Nor were such laws decreed for mortal men*
> *By Justice dwelling deep among the dead;*
> *And for your ordinance, it had not the sanction*
> *That could compel us to override the laws,*
> *The unwritten laws, divine, immutable,*
> *That are not of today or yesterday,*
> *But abide for ever, none knowing whence they sprang.*"

In these lines is hidden the secret of the strange and incalculable forces which ordinary, law-abiding people like Ismene and Creon and the Chorus find so disturbing and terrific. For these forces are the laws that have no letter, and to speak of keeping within them would be ridiculous, for they have no limits and no pale. Custom, tradition, injunctions, and penalties cannot even enter into the region where they move, and duty has no part in them at all. For they are possessed of a transfiguring power, and under their radiance, duty shrivels to a dingy heap of rags.

These are the great unconscious instincts of the world, the assured impulses that redeem mankind from hesitation and half-hearted compliance. Love is one, as the poet says, courage is another, and a third is that unlawful holiness which drove Antigone to defy the worst that the State and stoning and starvation and suicide could do against her. She is no iron-hearted woman. When she finds her brother's body laid bare of earth again we hear her cry "like a wild bird robbed of its nestlings". She longs for life and love and children, bewailing her virginity, as other Greek girls bewailed it. One line shows a peculiar tenderness for her lover, unusual in Greek. When Creon shouts he will have no evil woman wed a son of his, she only thinks of the slight put upon her lover in supposing his choice could be evil. But she wavers only once for a moment in the confidence of right, and it is significant that not only does she win the Chorus and even Creon to her higher faith, but all along, as her lover says, the common people were violently on her side, counting her worthy of golden praise. For psychologists tell us that women and the poor live always closest to the deep unconscious truths of the world.

Athenian democracy

MARTIN SMALL

1. The anarchist case: the relevance of history.

THE ANARCHIST MAINTAINS THAT ALL MEN HAVE THE POWER to organise their own lives: he maintains that this power does exist and should be used—or at least, using a purely aesthetic and personal rather than ethical form of judgment, that he would find it more pleasing if they did use it. And a situation which would demonstrate conclusively the truth of what he maintains, is conceivable. But since he maintains only that the use of the power which he describes is possible, his case cannot be disproved by any demonstration of how rarely this power has been used, or of how difficult it is to learn to use it. Since what the anarchist desires, either as an absolute good or merely for his own private satisfaction, can be brought about only if people believe what he says, he wishes to be believed. But though the incredulity of others may shake his own conviction, no amount of disbelief, no matter how far and wide the words and deeds in which it is expressed, can refute his case: that there is a power, and that it should be used.

Those who doubt the anarchist case may say that there is little evidence in history that this power exists, none that it exists in all men; the anarchist will reply that there is much evidence of the failure to use the power of which he speaks, none that it does not exist in all men. He will say, do we not, in effect (however many different ways of expressing it there may be), describe and assess ourselves and each other as having been more or less able to use this power of which I speak, as having learnt more or less well how to use it? And when the anarchist appeals to history, he will appeal, not so much to what has happened, as to how men naturally think of what has happened: not in this way to escape from an objective fact to a subjective impression, but rather in this way to emphasise that the deeds of men through time are the different manifestations of an endeavour which is one and the same in all men and that all men in their different ways have been aware of this. And, the anarchist will say, in the societies and civilisations which they have built to contain their common life men have expressed their feelings about this endeavour: it has been glorious,

MARTIN SMALL was born at Oxford in 1941 *and contributed to* ANARCHY 12, 17 *and* 20.

perilous, hopeless, absurd, and every man has found himself encouraged or discouraged in his own individual interpretation of the common endeavour by the expectations of the society in which he lives.

Of every society it must be asked, What encouragement has it given to that power whereby men are able to build and create their own lives, and what provision does it make for men to learn the use of this power—or does it merely make provision for the failure to use this power, does it merely ensure that the failure to use it will cause the least possible damage to the social framework, forgetting that the social framework is not the object of man's common endeavour but merely an interpretation of that object, an interpretation which may be wrong ? Does this society believe in freedom, or not ? From the study of any past or present society the anarchist cannot exactly learn anything new about the ideal society which he has already conceived in accordance with his theory of man. But he may be reminded of what it is that he believes, he may be enabled to clarify his understanding and his knowledge: he will be brought, not to any new conviction, but to a better understanding of what has always been his conviction.

This sketch of the democracy of ancient Athens will be an attempt to understand the theory of man upon which it was built and how it developed: it will also attempt some examination of the theory of man in terms of which that democracy was criticised by contemporaries. How well did the Athenians learn the truth of the remark of their great lawgiver Solon, that the best-policed city is " the city where all citizens, whether they have suffered injury or not, equally pursue and punish injustice "?[1] How justified are the claims that Pericles made in a famous speech at the height of Athens' pride and splendour, at the end of the first year of the war (the Peloponnesian War, 432-404) which put an end to the Athenian empire ? " Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people. When it is a question of settling private disputes, everyone is equal before the law; when it is a question of putting one person before another in positions of public responsibility, what counts is not membership of a particular class, but the actual ability which the man possesses. No one, so long as he has it in him to be of service to the state, is kept in political obscurity because of poverty. And, just as our political life is free and open, so is our day-to-day life in our relations with each other . . . Taking everything together, I declare that our city is an education to Greece, and I declare that in my opinion each single one of our citizens, in all the manifold aspects of life, is able to show himself the rightful lord and owner of his own person, and to do this, moreover, with exceptional grace and exceptional versatility."[2]

2. The foundations of Athenian democracy.

" About 1200 B.C. the secure prosperity of Mycenaean Greece was abruptly terminated."[3] The Mycenaeans had partially replaced and partially taken over the Minoan civilisation of the Aegean: they now in their turn succumbed to invasions from the mountains in the north: the invaders were semi-nomadic tribesmen, among whom the most important were the Dorians. The Dorians were ill-suited to the tedious business of the Mycenaeans' agriculture and industrious palace bureaucracy. They preferred tribal assemblies over which the king was supreme, though ruling by the consent of his soldiery. But in Greece during the age of reconstruction from the twelfth to the eighth centuries the monarchical organisation of society survived only in the north, in Macedonia. In the rest of Greece the city-state (perhaps first brought over from Asia Minor) came into being, a " synoecism " or " bringing together of households " not so much into a single conurbation as under a single judicial and military authority, a form of political organisation which represented the triumph of the interests of the lowland farmers and traders over the highlanders. " Most Hellenic city-states —Athens was a signal exception to the rule—started life handicapped by a division of the people into a body of first-class citizens, living in the city and on the arable land adjoining it, and an outer circle of second-class citizens descended from the subjugated highlanders; and this schism in the community was a fruitful cause of subsequent social conflict."[4]

" 'Demos', the people, can mean the whole community, including everyone within it whether the community is large or small. It can also mean, not everyone, but the mass of the people in contrast to the privileged class—it can have, that is, a party and not a national sense, an ambiguity that has attacked the word for 'people' in many languages. This party sense appears in Solon's poems side by side with the more comprehensive sense, and it was probably in Solon's lifetime, in the early sixth century, that it began to have a party meaning."[5] The political situation with which Solon had to deal was one in which the people (in the party sense of the word) were becoming politically conscious and articulate, at least partly as a result of military and economic developments of the seventh century.

The replacement of expensive bronze by cheap iron " brought within the means of the yeoman farmer an equipment that had previously been the monopoly of a small aristocracy, and the consequent large increase in the number of a city-state's heavy-armed fighting-men made it possible, for the first time in the Hellenic World, to make the weight of metal tell by substituting, for the chariot-borne champion, a phalanx of peasant infantry, whose virtue lay not in individual physical prowess but in drill and discipline and 'esprit de corps'."[6] The military revolution brought into existence a vast new class of " hoplites ", that is, " shield-bearers ", whose effectiveness in battle depended upon their formation, since the shield, borne on the soldier's left arm, protected only his left side and he depended for the protection of his right side on the shield of the soldier at his right just as the soldier on *his* left depended upon *his* shield for the protection of his right side. And if class solidarity was encouraged, so was self-confidence: " When they see each other in moments of danger, the rich man will no longer be able to despise the poor man; the poor man will be lean and sunburnt, and find himself fighting next to some rich man whose sheltered life and superfluous flesh make him puff and blow and quite unable to cope. Won't he conclude that people like this are rich because their subjects are cowards, and won't he say to his fellows, when he meets them in private, ' This lot are no good; they've had it' ?"[7]

The eighth century rise in population had made necessary, first ventures in colonisation, and then commercial expansion. There emerged a class of moderately prosperous merchants, who resented the hereditary privileges of the aristocratic magistrates who in the previous centuries had quietly usurped the functions of the kings. The nine annually elected magistrates of Athens were called "archons": the council of retired magistrates was the "Areopagus": it is not certain that election was ever officially confined to the "Eupatridae" aristocracy, but in practice they controlled the machinery of government: and Solon, who was elected archon in 594, broke their monopoly.

Solon's "Shaking off of Burdens" cancelled all the debts of the entire population: for the future, he prohibited the use of one's own body as security for debt or the sale of oneself or one's children into slavery (except that a father might sell a daughter detected in illegal sexual relations). Having "set free the land from slavery" Solon sought a political arrangement which would combine the virtues of aristocracy with those of democracy. He divided the citizenry into four classes, a citizen's class depending upon the number of bushels of corn or measures of oil his land produced, i.e. upon his income. The wealthy commoners were the most obvious beneficiaries of Solon's reform: they (it is not clear whether it was the top two classes which received this right, or only the top one) became eligible for election to the archonship, though this was not conceded by the old aristocracy without a struggle: in the fifteen years which followed Solon's archonship there were two years which appeared in the records as "anarchiai"—that is, no archon was elected, or no election was recognised as valid. The third class (the "zeugitai", roughly the hoplite class) gained access to minor political office; the fourth class (the "thetes", literally the labourers) were confirmed in their right to attend and vote at the assembly. But the character of this right was much changed by Solon's reforms.

It seems that before 594 the assembly had met but seldom, which rather restricted the practical effectiveness of the ordinary citizen's right to attend and vote. After 594 all legislation and all major questions of policy had to be brought before the assembly, and it was freed from the control of the Areopagus by Solon's institution of a new lower council of 400 members, for election to which the second and third classes, but not the fourth, seem to have been elegible. But Solon's "greatest achievement", says Sir Alfred Zimmern, "was to 'make the people master of the verdict' . . . (The Magistrates remained.) But in exceptional cases, where the law was not clear or the decision hotly disputed. Solon granted an appeal to a large popular court of several thousand citizens—a sort of Grand Assize of the nation sitting under open heaven by the market-place. The exact powers and composition of this body, the Heliaea as it was called, are not known; we only become familiar with popular justice when the Heliaea had been split up into the numerous courts, consisting of several hundreds, instead of thousands, of judges (the people acted as both judge and jury and there were no lawyers), which we find in the time of Pericles. We do not know who decided what cases should be submitted to it. But Solon enacted one provision which made it quite certain that, in the case of friction, the people had the whip-hand of their magistrates. He ordained that every magistrate when he went out of office should give an account before the assembly of the people of his conduct during its tenure."[8]

3. The development of Athenian democracy.

Tyranny, when it came to Athens in the middle of the sixth century, came in a far milder form than that experienced by other cities where the violence of class conflict had not been assigned by the wisdom of a Solon. "Peisistratus' two failures to establish a tyranny and his eventual triumph organised from abroad do not look like the career of a social revolutionary leader."[9] His government, writes the author of the treatise on the Constitution of Athens (probably a pupil of Aristotle rather than Aristotle himself), "was moderate, and more consonant with the character of a constitutional statesman than with that of a tyrant. He was generally humane and mild, and ready to pardon offenders; and, more especially, he pursued a policy of advancing money to the poor to give them employment and to enable them to make a living by farming. There were two reasons for this policy. The first was to stop the poor from spending their time in the central city, and to spread them out over the country-side; the second was to ensure (by giving them a moderate competence and some business to engage their attention) that they should have neither the desire nor the leisure to concern themselves with public affairs."[10] But the effect, according to Professor Andrewes, was rather different: the tyranny destroyed what remained of "feudalism" (using the word in its conventional pejorative sense), it made the mass of the people more independent of the upper class and accustomed them to greater stability: "the strife of upper-class parties was a form of disturbance unfamiliar to most Athenians when it broke out afresh, after the fall of the tyranny, between Isagoras and Cleisthenes."[11] "And Cleisthenes", writes Herodotus, "finding himself the weaker, called to his aid the common people."[12]

The democracy established by Cleisthenes' reforms in 507 was "a regime based on a property-qualification that had been reduced almost to zero."[13] The membership of the council was increased from 400 to 500, to be chosen annually by lot, 50 from each of the ten tribes ("demes") with which Cleisthenes had replaced the older and more decentralised tribal organisation of Athens: no citizen was to sit on the council for two successive years or more than twice altogether. These provisions, "this simple device", as A. W. Gomme calls it, "prevented the growth of anything like that *corporate* feeling which comes when men work side by side for many years together, and which is so powerful a factor in the creation of privilege . . . It prevented also the concentration of political experience in a small body of men, and at the same time spread political experience among as large a number of citizens as possible; and in this way worked both positively and negatively towards the predominance of the assembly." Like the archons councillors had to be over thirty years of age, to take an oath and to submit individually to preliminary scrutiny and final examination:

"It may be conjectured that technically they had, like magistrates, to be of at least zeugite (i.e. third class, vid. p 332) status."[15]

The council sat every day except on festivals, and it had a standing sub-committee which dined every day in the city hall and whose task it was to prepare the order paper ("programma") for the council, which in its turn prepared one for the assembly if it was to meet—as it did on four days in every sub-committee's period of office: no decision might be taken by the assembly except on a motion voted by the council, and placed by the council on the agenda. The fifty members of each tribe on the council served in turn for a tenth of the year as the council's sub-committee, the sub-committee for each period being selected by lot at the end of the preceding period: every day a new president of the committee was chosen by lot from their number, and he also presided over the assembly if it met. (In the fourth century another president of the assembly was chosen by lot from among those councillors who were *not* on the sub-committee.) It cannot be said that the Athenians did not take their democracy seriously.

It may be that Cleisthenes' intention was that the council should be the effective governing body, only referring major and contentious issues to the people. If that was his intention, it was not his achievement. The people had come into their own, or so it would appear from Herodotus' description of the Athenians' successful repulse of an attempt by Cleomenes king of Sparta to restore Isagoras: "And it is plain enough, not from this instance only, but from many everywhere, that freedom is an excellent thing; since even the Athenians, who, while they continued under the rule of tyrants, were not a whit more valiant than ony of their neighbours, no sooner shook off the yoke than they became decidedly the first of all. These things show that, while undergoing oppression, they let themselves be beaten, since they worked for a master; but so soon as they got their freedom, each man was eager to do the best he could for himself."[16]

Ephialtes (who was murdered in 461) and Pericles carried the democracy a few stages further. In 462 or 461, at their instance, the Assembly passed a bill which deprived the Areopagus (which had already lost much of its importance, its members now being chosen by lot from the archons) of all its powers except those of a supreme court for charges of murder: its customary jurisdiction in moral and constitutional questions went, respectively, to the popular jury-courts (vid. p 332) and to the council. A few years later the chief archonships were thrown open to the "zeugitai", and before long even the poorest class (the "thetes") were accepted as candidates if they wished to stand—which in fact they usually didn't, since the office demanded by tradition expenditure in excess of its meagre pay, and had some rather exacting duties, like the choice of dramatists to compete at the Dionysia. Far more significant was the introduction of the system of payment for the members of the juries. For this too Pericles seems to have been responsible.

4. Democracy and empire.

Pericles was born not long before the battle of Marathon (490) at which the Athenians defeated the Persian invading force before the arrival of their (the Athenians') Spartan allies—ten years later the Athenian naval contribution and the cunning of her general Themistocles were the decisive factors in the destruction of Xerxes' great invading fleet at Salamis, though a Spartan commanded the allies on land and a Corinthian commanded their sea forces. If this was an opportunity to achieve that political unity they needed, the ancient Greeks missed it. But the Athenian navy (on which, rather than upon any private—or public—frivolities, Themistocles had persuaded the assembly in 483 to spend the large profit made by the state silver mines) became the instrument of empire. When the Delian League—from which Sparta and the Peloponnesian League were always quite distinct—was formed in 477 against the threat of any future Persian invasion, the allies of Athens contributed men and ships to a common navy. But more and more did it become the system that Athens built the ships* and provided the men for their crews while her allies made monetary contributions; and as the Persian threat receded the navy seemed to become the instrument of purely Athenian interests and policies: the great city's allies began to resent what had ceased to protect and reassure, what was now the sign, not of their safety, but of their subjection.

After the reduction of the archons to election by lot in 487, the ten annually elected generals remained the only chief officers of state elected directly by majority vote. (In general direct election was distrusted as an instrument of aristocratic rule: candidates would be elected for their personality or private influence; but occasionally the need for a certain technical skill reduced or at least modified this danger and at the same time made election by lot impractical.)

"Anything like a continuous government", writes Professor Jones, "was only achieved when one man (or a coherent group of men) succeeded in holding the confidence of the people over a long period, in which case he (or they) was usually in the fifth century regularly re-elected general." But, he warns, "the idea that the board of generals acted as such as a government is manifestly false . . . The generals were primarily executive officers in the military and naval spheres, and their duties were to mobilise armies and fleets on the instructions of the assembly, and to command such armies and fleets with a view to achieving objectives laid down, in more or less detail, by the people."[17]

Pericles was elected general for the first time in 463 or thereabouts. The period of his continual re-election began in 443, after 443 in all the years until and including that of his death (429) only once did the people of Athens fail to elect him general; and that once was in the year of the plague which devastated Athens during the second year of the Peloponnesian War (430: the plague lasted into the summer of 429 and after a pause in 428 flared up for the last time in 427). But even before 443 his influence upon Athenian policy is discernible: the reforms which he and Ephialtes initiated have already been mentioned, so has his introduction of payment for jury-service. In 453 Athens

* These ships were galleys and they were rowed by Athenian citizens—a task which was the occupation of slaves and criminals in other civilisations.

began to plant strategic settlements of her citizens ("cleruchies") in the territories of her allies, allowing a remission of their naval contributions (or tribute) to those whose territories she used: in 447 the Athenian assembly decided that this money could legitimately be used to rebuild those temples and other public buildings which had been destroyed by the Persians in 480-79. For, says Plutarch, Pericles wanted those who stayed at home to enjoy the benefits of empire as much as those who were paid to serve in the navy: but not for doing nothing: and so he instituted the greatest social welfare scheme of public works that there has ever been, and among other things the Parthenon was built. And all the while it was claimed that it was for the Delian League that this was being done: for after all the Parthenon was Athena's temple, and Athena was the patron-goddess of the League. But at the same time the League's treasury was moved from Delos to Athens, and the periodical League conferences lapsed.

In 451 Pericles had proposed to the assembly that Athenian citizenship should be restricted to persons of citizen parentage on both sides: his proposal was accepted: perhaps he made it only because if he did not someone else would—and he would lose influence in the assembly. Six years later an Egyptian prince sent Athens a gift of 30,000 bushels of wheat. There were still people on the registers of the various wards who were no longer citizens by the terms of the act of 451. The assembly ordered a public scrutiny, there followed 19,000 cases of disputed citizenship (a number, it has been estimated, equal to the total number of adult "thetes" claiming citizenship in the urban wards), and 5,000 names, it is said, were struck off the registers. "The Athenian people had become—even the poorest of them—a privileged minority in the Empire. The antithesis of Empire and democracy has never been more brutally and and clearly posed."[18]

How far was Pericles responsible for Athenian policy during the years of his generalship ? Could he have influenced his fellow-citizens in the direction of a different policy even if he had wanted to ? What did Pericles think he was doing ? What did his fellow-citizens think he was doing ? What was he doing ? What did he achieve ? Professor Jones emphasises Pericles' continuous accountability to the people or at least to the assembly*, his absolute dependence upon their approval. "He had to persuade the people to vote for every measure that he wished to have passed, and if they lost confidence in him they could, as they once did, depose (sic) and fine him, and they could flout his advice, as again they did in trying to parley with the Spartans in 430. Athenian policy", he concludes, "was really determined by mass meetings of the citizens on the advice of anyone who could win the people's ear. The success of Athens is a testimony to the basic sense of the ordinary Athenian citizen."[19] Thucydides, who had the advantages of being a contemporary, argues somewhat differently. "Pericles, because of his position, his intelligence, and his known integrity, could respect the liberty of the people and at the same time hold them in check. It was he who led them, rather than they who led him, and, since he never sought power from any wrong motive, he was under no necessity of flattering them; in fact he was so highly respected that he was able to speak angrily to them and to contradict them. Certainly when he saw that they were going too far in a mood of over-confidence, he would bring back to them a sense of their dangers; and when they were discouraged for no good reason he would restore their confidence. So, in what was nominally a democracy, power was really in the hands of the first citizen. But his successors, who were more on a level with each other and each of whom aimed at occupying the first place, adopted methods of demagogy which resulted in their losing control over the actual conduct of affairs. Such a policy, in a great city with an empire to govern, naturally led to a number of mistakes."[21]

* On a good day 6000 might attend out of a citizen population—i.e. excluding women, slaves, children and foreigners—which has been estimated to have been about 30,000 in the last quarter of the fifth century. 20

But another contemporary or near-contemporary judgment was that the mistakes of Pericles' successors were but the natural and inevitable consequence of a completely wrong course taken by Pericles and the other great Athenian statesmen of the fifth century. "They have glutted the state with harbours and dockyards and walls and tribute and rubbish of that sort, regardless of the requirements of moderation and righteousness, and when the inevitable fit of weakness supervenes the citizens will hold their current advisers responsible, and go on extolling Themistocles and Cimon and Pericles, the real authors of their woes."[22]

5. The meaning of democracy.

The counterfeit of the real art of government is pandering: "pandering", Socrates explains to Gorgias, "pays no regard to the welfare of its object, but catches fools with the bait of ephemeral pleasure and tricks them into holding it in the highest esteem." All the great Athenian statesmen have failed, they have not even tried to succeed, in the real art of government, the only object of which is to make men better, that is, to purify their desires and appetities by detaching them from all merely corporeal and transient images and fixing them upon the ultimate and unchanging reality of which these images are but the shadows. Callicles protests that "one of the men of today" (the dramatic date of the dialogue seems to be, accepting some large anachronisms, about 405, the year before the end of the Peloponnesian War) can compare with Themistocles, Miltiades (the general who commanded the Athenians at Marathon), Cimon, or Pericles; and Socrates agrees that "they seem to have been better servants of the state than the present people, and more able to provide the state with what it desired. But when it is a matter of diverting men's desires into a new channel instead of allowing them free course, or of driving one's fellows by persuasion or constraint to the adoption of measures designed for their improvement, which is the sole duty of a good citizen, there is practically nothing to choose between your men and their successors."[23]

The "Gorgias" is the earliest of Plato's political dialogues; and, in its contrasting of the true art of government with what merely imitates it, it outlined what was to be the theme of all the later political dialogues. "Born in 427, nearly two years after Pericles died, Plato

knew only the growing disillusionment with the glories of Periclean democracy."[24] At first he hoped for a regeneration of public life after the coup d'etat of the Thirty Tyrants in 404, but the violence of their government showed him that this was not to be. The democracy was restored in 403 and Plato was impressed by the moderation and clemency of the returning party; but in 399 Socrates was executed, for what at another time and in another place would have been called crimes against the state. " The result was that I, who had at first been full of eagerness for a public career, as I gazed upon the whirlpool of public life and saw the incessant movement of shifting currents, at last felt dizzy . . . and finally saw clearly in regard to all states now existing that without exception their system of government is bad."[25] Plato decided that what was needed was a re-examination of first principles: an inquiry into the function and purpose of government which would show in what way contemporary constitutions were defective instruments of government and how they might be remedied. He founded the Academy (c.388) to promote this inquiry in the minds of others, and as the inquiry proceeded he saw more and more clearly and convincingly the nature of man's common end and the necessity for educating him in order that he may achieve it.

Plato's objection to democracy was much more directly to an attitude of mind than to a form of political organisation which he assumed to be so bound up with it as to be almost identical: the form of political organisation being either the effect of the attitude of mind or the social evidence of its individual existence. This attitude of mind was one of not understanding and of not caring to understand the nature of government: above all, one of not knowing the need for education and the need for a teacher. In " The Republic " democracy appears as the natural consequence of the breakdown of an aristocratic society in which the rulers have turned aside from the common good and pursue merely their own private interest. " Oligarchy changes into democracy because of its lack of restraint in the pursuit of its objective of getting as rich as possible . . . This failure to curb extravagance in an oligarchy often reduces to poverty men born for better things. Some of them are in debt, some disfranchised, some both, and they settle down, armed with their stings, and with hatred in their hearts, to plot against those who have deprived them of their property and against the rest of society, and to long for revolution . . . Democracy originates when the poor win, kill or exile their opponents, and give the rest equal rights and opportunities of office, appointment to office being as a rule by lot . . . In democracy there's no compulsion either to exercise authority if you are capable of it, or to submit to authority if you don't want to . . . We said that no one who had not exceptional gifts could grow into a good man unless he were brought up from childhood in a good environment and given a good training; democracy with a grandiose gesture sweeps all this away and doesn't mind what the habits and background of its politicians are, provided they profess themselves the people's friends. It's an agreeable, anarchic form of society, with plenty of variety, which treats all men as equal, whether they are equal or not."[26] All this adumbrates the famous comparison of the democratic society with the ship whose captain has been locked up in his cabin: the wine-casks have been broached, everything is going merrily and joyfully, but those who can see, see only disaster ahead.

" Politicus " (The Statesman), written between " The Republic " and " The Laws ", clarifies the distinction between true government and its imitation. Rule of the one may be in accordance with the laws (monarchy), or in defiance of them (tyranny): and similarly the rule of the few (aristocracy or oligarchy), and the rule of the many (called democracy in both cases). But true government is characterised, not by any constitutional form, but by the knowledge and understanding of those who rule: the constitutional form of the rule of those who possess the art of government is unimportant. " It makes no difference whether their subjects be willing or unwilling; they may rule with or without a code of laws, they may be poor or wealthy. It is the same with doctors. We do not assess the medical qualifications of a doctor by the degree of willingness on our part to submit to his knife or cautery or other painful treatment. Doctors are still doctors whether they work to fixed prescriptions or without them and whether they be poor or wealthy . . . The one essential condition is that they act for the good of our bodies to make them better instead of worse, and treat men's ailments in every case as healers acting to preserve life. We must insist that in this disinterested scientific ability we see the distinguishing mark of true authority in medicine—and of true authority everywhere else as well." Such authority will be productive of a juster social order than will a system of written law, for " law can never issue an injunction binding on all which really embodies what is best for each: it cannot prescribe with perfect accuracy what is good and right for each member of the community at any one time." But where true authority is lacking, the authority of written law is necessary to ensure the very survival of the state: above all there is then one rule to which there must be strict adherence. What rule is that ? " The rule that none of the citizens may venture to do any act contrary to the laws, and that if any of them ventures to do such act, the penalty is to be death or the utmost rigour of punishment."[27]

Professor G. H. Sabine claims that " The Laws " (Plato's last political dialogue, on which he was still working when he died) " Was written in an attempt to restore law to the place which it occupied in the moral estimation of the Greeks and from which Plato had tried to remove it." But, if this is so, then the dialogue " closes ", in Sabine's words, " on a note which is entirely out of keeping with the purpose which Plato has been following and with the state which he has sketched in accordance with that purpose."[28] What happens is that Plato's attempt to describe " the second-best state " in which the authority of written law rather than of the ruler is supreme, breaks down before his own realisation that it is useless to devise laws and institutions for a society unless there are persons in it capable of understanding the principle behind these laws and thus above the law in the sense that they are its guardians rather than it *their* guardian. It is for this reason that " The Laws " concludes with a description of the " Nocturnal Council ", a council of elders who will see that the laws are properly obeyed. " In order that

the map of the state may be complete, it must provide for the presence of some body which understands, in the first place, the true nature of the mark a statesman must keep before his eyes, and next, the methods by which it may be attained, and the counsels—emanating principally from the laws themselves, secondarily from individual men—which make for or against it."[29]

But if all government requires that there should be some knowledge of its purpose possessed by those who govern, it is also necessary that those who obey should have some sort of knowledge. The need for education, and the kind of education necessary, is made clear by what Socrates says in the "Gorgias": "We can win happiness only by bending all our own efforts and those of the state to the realisation of uprightness and self-discipline, not by allowing our appetites to go unchecked, and, in an attempt to satisfy their endless importunity, living the life of a brigand."[30] "Of all the great offices of state this is the greatest", says Plato in "The Laws": he is speaking of the director of education. ". . . Education is the drawing and leading of children to the rule which has been pronounced right by the voice of the law, and approved as truly right by the concordant experience of the best and oldest men. That the child's soul, then, may not learn the habit of feeling pleasure and pain in ways contrary to the law and those who have listened to its bidding, but keep them company, taking pleasure and pain in the very same things as the aged—that, I hold, proves to be the real purpose of what we call our 'songs'."[31]

Aristotle (born in 385 or 384) agreed with his master Plato that the aim of government is the control of the emotions in order that happiness might be sought, not in transient and inconstant pleasures, but in those which endure and are not subject to fortune. But while both believed in the education of the individual so that his emotions might be controlled by his reason, at the same time the political theory of the one no less than that of the other seems to assume that there are and always will be some people who will need to have their emotions controlled by others. A basis of this assumption is the theory of the "natural slave" as worked out by Aristotle: "A man is by nature a slave if he is capable of becoming the property of another, and if he participates in reason to the extent of apprehending it in another, though destitute of it himself."[32]

Are there any "natural slaves"? asks Professor Charles O'Neil, and answers his own question: "it is simply dishonest not to answer: yes, there are. There simply are some men who are unable 'on their own' to contribute to the common good life, the common life of common political virtue." The principle of the political life, of the life of men living in common, is justice, the idea that each man should have his share of what society produces and possesses. And thus the knowledge which is necessary to the government of a society—the knowledge of which government should be merely the application—is the knowledge of what is due to a man: as Professor O'Neil says, "in its innermost and most exquisite expression, in its being, an Aristotelian 'polis' is a knowing of the right human thing to be done."[33] But there are some men (this seems to be the Platonic as well as the Aristotelian

argument) who will know what is good for a man, what is his due, better than he will know that himself. And this is the explanation of the inadequacy, so Aristotle says, of the democratic principle of equality. "Democracy arose in the strength of an opinion that those who were equal in any one respect were equal absolutely, and in all respects . . . Democrats seek to widen the principle of equality until it is made to include all the masses. What is certainly just—and expedient as well as just—is that the principle should extend to all who are really 'peers'."[34] The principle of equality which underlies the concept of justice, explains Aristotle in the fifth book of "The Nicomachean Ethics", does not require that every man should get an equal share in everything, but that all should receive equally what they need of each thing[35]; similarly, one might add, cosmic justice requires, not that everyone should possess an equal amount of knowledge, but that each man equally should possess that knowledge which is required by his social position: "The soul has naturally two elements, a ruling and a ruled; and each has its different goodness, one belonging to the rational and ruling element, and the other to the irrational and ruled . . . (Similarly, the different elements of society must share in the possession of moral goodness, possessing it not in the same way, but each in the way appropriate to the discharge of its separate function.) The ruler must possess moral goodness in its full and perfect form, because his function demands a master-artificer, and reason is such a master-artificer; but all other persons need only possess moral goodness to the extent required of them . . . (Slaves) need but little goodness; only so much, in fact, as will prevent them from falling short of their duties through intemperance or cowardice."[36]

The nature of political knowledge is also debated in the "Protagoras". Socrates asks why it is that the Athenian Assembly will listen only to the advice of experts when the debate concerns for instance shipbuilding, but when the debate is about questions of public policy will listen to anyone. Protagoras replies by means of a myth. All animals have been given some particular ability—strength, speed, or some other means of self-preservation; but man has been given a general ability to use all things and, since this alone was not enough to ensure his survival, he was also given the ability to live together with his fellows in cities for their mutual protection. "Zeus sent Hermes to impart to men the qualities of respect for others and a sense of justice, so as to bring order into our cities and create a bond of friendship and union. Hermes asked Zeus in what manner he was to bestow these gifts on men. 'Shall I distribute them as the arts were distributed—that is, on the principle that one trained doctor suffices for many laymen, and so with the other experts? Shall I distribute justice and respect for their fellows in this way, or to all alike?' 'To all' said Zeus. 'Let all have their share. There could never be cities if only a few shared in these virtues, as in the arts. Moreover, you must lay it down as my law that if anyone is incapable of acquiring his share of these two virtues he shall be put to death as a plague to the city.'" And so the Athenians listen to experts when the question before the Assembly concerns building or some other craft. "But when the subject of their counsel involves

political wisdom, which must always follow the path of justice and moderation, they listen to every man's opinion, for they think that everyone must share in this kind of virtue; otherwise the state could not exist."[37]

6. Some suggestions.

Perhaps neither the criticisms of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle nor its vindication by Protagoras fully appreciate the principle of democracy. All of them understand that the guiding idea of democracy is the idea of equality, but none of them examines the full implications of the idea, though Aristotle's analysis of justice provides a clue and a starting-point. Justice is the arranging in society that every man shall have his share of what that society has: justice provides that every man shall have, not an equal amount of everything, but equally whatever he needs. In order that the work of justice—distribution and redistribution—may be done, above all else knowledge is necessary: knowledge of what justice requires. Aristotle and Plato think that this knowledge will be possessed by a small class: Aristotle seems to think that it would be better if the circle of knowledge could be extended as far as possible, though he is somewhat vague and self-contradictory on this point[38]; but Plato is certain that this knowledge is attainable only by a few[39]. Protagoras claims that all citizens must possess political skill if the city is to survive; but he speaks only of what is socially convenient and not of what is absolutely desirable and possible for all men—indeed the political skill of which he speaks seems to be something accidental rather than essential to man—and Plato is unconvinced.

But is the Platonic-Aristotelian idea of a ruling class ruling by virtue of its superior insight in fact compatible with that justice in which they themselves believe ? The fact that justice deals in the material world with the distribution of things should not mislead the observer into thinking that it is concerned with nothing more: the real object of justice—the end to which the distribution of material things is but a means—is the creation of a psychological state, is to give the individual a feeling of true contentment, to show him that he is well treated and accepted by the other individuals who make up the society in which he lives. This is why justice must not only be done, but be seen to be done: if it is not seen, it has not achieved the object of justice. And that is why the sort of knowledge Plato and Aristotle describe is not enough, if justice is to be effectively realised in the world of human relationships and not to remain but an ideal with the awareness of which a few may be happy: it is not enough that one or a few men should know and do justice—there is not an extent appropriate to his social function, but know and do justice equally. If justice is a realisable social ideal, then every individual equally must have somewhere, somehow the power of knowing and doing justice to his fellows, and of recognising it when he himself receives it: the realisation of this power will be the realisation of justice.

If this is what justice is, then that slavery which Athens no less than the rest of Greece accepted and which Aristotle sought to justify cannot be just. Indeed, Aristotle's rationalising interpretation will

be turned on its head: while he sought to justify and explain a social and economic situation (i.e. the use of one man by another as a tool) in terms of a psychological condition (i.e. the inability of an individual to do good except by allowing himself to be the instrument of another man's reason), the democrat will follow Marx and will denounce this same socio-economic situation (now described as one of " alienated labour ") as, if not the sole cause of this psychological condition (in which the individual does not make political and moral decisions for himself, but allows his relations with his fellows to be determined by others), at least dependent upon it for its existence and thus encouraging its continuance. Slavery is, then, not a condition which is potentially just—Aristotle admits that not all legal slaves are natural slaves; and vice versa—but rather one which proclaims the non-realisation of justice: both in those who are slaves, and in those who use them.

The importance of slavery in ancient Greece has been much debated: it has been pointed out that to discuss whether Greek civilisation was " based on " slavery is usually to become bogged down in unprofitable arguments concerning just what " to be basic " means.[40] Professor Jones write: " It is unlikely that any slaves were owned by two-thirds to three-quarters of the citizen population (of Athens). The great majority of the citizens earned their living by the work of their hands, as peasant farmers, craftsmen, shopkeepers, seamen and labourers."[41] But it cannot be denied that the Athenian democracy used slavery; and it was silver-mines worked by slaves—" speaking generally, mining was the gravest blot on Hellenism "[42]—that provided the capital which brought the Athenian imperial navy into being.

The Athenian democracy of the fifth century B.C. certainly brought to a high pitch of development the participation of the individual citizen in the political activity of his city: on this all contemporary witnesses, whether hostile or favourable, agree with Pericles: the contrast between the city's splendid public buildings and the miserable private dwellings shows, says Sir Alfred Zimmern, that the fifth-century Athenian " knew very well that a man who practises politics and ignores housekeeping, though he may possibly starve, at least remains sane and companionable."[43] Slavery is one sign that Athens did not fully understand the democracy it professed. Its acceptance of war is another. Wars arise, says Socrates, from the desire for material things: " All wars are undertaken for the acquisition of wealth; and the reason why we have to acquire wealth is the body, because we are slaves in its service."[44] And even if we seek merely to defend ourselves against the unjust demands of an agressor, it may be possible to do this only at the expense of ceasing to be able to defend ourselves against, what is far worse and more harmful than suffering injustice, doing injustice.[45] The first requirement of justice is not that a man should receive his share of those material things which are as it were the instruments of justice (of pp23-4), but that there should be a willingness on the part of his fellows to give him that which is his due. Thus, the most and indeed the only effective way in which a man can defend himself against suffer-

ing injustice is not, as even Socrates thought, by the use of power, but by the building up of the spirit of justice in his fellows.

Neither the policy of the Athenian democracy nor the Socratic-Platonic-Aristotelian criticism of it fully realised the universal nature of the democratic principle of equality. But an understanding of the Athenian experience—of the slow, groping, incoherent and never altogether complete evolution of an idea of citizenship, together with an appreciation of the criticisms of the great Athenian philosophers* (and it is important to remember that these criticisms were in terms of an idea of citizenship fostered to a great extent by the political development of Athens): may nonetheless help us to understand the nature of this equality. We may accept the philosophers' contention that the art of government depends upon education, that in a sense government *is* education, and even (some of us at least) that education is the training of the individual's libidinal capacity so that he seeks after the true happiness and not after epehemeral pleasures. But the anarchist will want to modify—perhaps he will claim, to clarify—the original picture of the ideal.

It is strange that Plato with his strong sense of the common nature and destiny of man—" there is none so worthless whom love cannot impel, as it were by a divine inspiration, towards virtue "[46]—should nonetheless have made so sharp a distinction between those who governs and those who obey: the explanation lies perhaps in a misconceived psychological analogy—Plato compared the rule which rational men ought to exert over irrational men to the rule which the rational part of the soul ought to exert over the irrational part.[47] But the anarchist ideal of the universal rule of reason and justice is of a rule whose instruments are not—cannot be—the understanding of a few or even of a majority: the idea of justice is that all shall be saved. And the object of education is the awakening or the bringing back to life of the power of understanding in every man: education is education in the use of freedom, in the use of the power of every individual man to rise above the fleeting and insatiable pleasures of material things to the contemplation of the divine harmony of which the spirit of justice is the earthly sign or symbol. Justice is the achievement of freedom: where there is understanding of freedom, there is justice, and where freedom is obscure, unrealised, there can be no justice. And even while the universal power of freedom remains slighted and unfulfilled, every just man and every just act is a testimony that it is universal.

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* Both Socrates and Plato were Athenian citizens who lived and died in Athens Socrates' service in the Athenian army and Plato's expeditions to Sicily were the only time they spent away from their native city); Aristotle neither was born or died in Athens, but spent there twenty years in Plato's Academy 367-347) and another thermo (335-323) in his own.

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20 vid. Jones, appendix, pp. 161-80.
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25 Letter 7, 325d, quoted by G. H. Sabine, A History of Political Theory (Harrap 1937, 3rd ed. 1951), p. 45.
26 555, 557, 558 (pp. 327, 328, 329-30).
27 tr. Skemp, op. cit., pp. 194-5, 196, 2 03 (293a-b, 294b, 297e).
28 Sabine, op. cit., pp. 71, 84.
29 The Laws (translated by A. E. Taylor, Dent 1934), p. 357.
30 507 (p. 117).
31 The Laws, Book 2: 659 (op. cit., p. 37).
32 The Politics, Book 1 chapter 5: ¶9 (tr. Barker, p. 13).
33 C. J. O'Neil, Aristotle's Natural Slave Reconsidered (The New Scholasticism, July 1953, pp. 259, 278).
34 The Politics, Book 5 chapter 1: ¶3; Book 5, chapter 8: ¶6 (pp. 204, 225).
35 vid. in particular chapters 3 and 5 (Penguin Classics translation by J. A. K. Thompson 1955, pp. 146-7, 151-4).
36 The Politics, Book 1 chapter 13: ¶¶6 8, 12 (pp. 35-6).
37 Protagoras, 322c-d (Penguin Classics translation by W. K. C. Guthrie 1956, p. 54).
38 The Politics, 6.2 ¶1, 7.14 ¶¶2-3 19, 2.11 ¶14, 3.1 ¶12 (pp. 258, 315, 319, 86, 95); of 5.8 ¶¶17-18, 6.4 ¶¶1-4 (pp. 228, 263).
39 The Statesman 293a (tr. Skemp, p. 194).
40 M. I. Finley, Was Greek Civilisation Based on Slavery? (Historia 8, 1959, p. 161): reprinted in M. I. Finley (ed.), Slavery in Classical Antiquity (Cambridge: Heffer 1960). (This collection of essays contains a very interesting on by R. O. Schlaifer on " Greek Theories of Slavery from Homer to Aristotle ".)
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43 op. cit., p. 212 (cf. pp. 213-4, 293-4, 296).
44 Phaedo, 66 (The Last Days of Socrates: Penguine Classics translation by Hugh Tredennick 1954, p. 111).
45 vid. Gorgias, 509-513, 522 (pp. 119-25, 141-2).
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47 vid. The Laws, Book 3: 689 (p. 70).

Aristophanic pacifism

WILBUR BURTON

THE GREEKS DIDN'T HAVE A WORD FOR PACIFISM. The term, according to Funk & Wagnalls, is of recent coinage, although of obvious derivation, and a " pacifist " is defined as " one who opposes military ideals, war, or military preparedness and proposes that all international disputes be settled by arbitration." Under this definition there may be several varieties of pacifism; ranging from an absolutist conviction that it is better to be killed than to kill, to active acceptance of war under certain circumstances—for example, in genuine self-defence when all efforts for arbitration have failed.

The absolutist conviction that it is better to be killed than to kill is so utterly alien to me that I would not argue about it; I can recognise it only as a unique individual attitude, thoroughly justifiable for those who sincerely feel that way, but as far removed from actual politics as a Hindu mystic on his bed of spikes.

Pacifism as a political proposition—or pretension—is another matter. Although I have never regarded myself as a pacifist, I could—*if* pacifism were viewed as an inevitably limited part of a philosophy of life instead of a whole philosophy, and were activated by anthropocentric actualities instead of mystical romanticism; and this is the burden of my essay.

The Greeks didn't have a word for *pacifism,* but they produced in Aristophanes—best, bawdiest and boldest of their dramatists—the profoundest pacifist, and the only politically sound one, of all time. He was no peacetime pacifist, instead all three of his greatest anti-war plays—*The Acharnians, Peace* and *Lysistrata*—were written and *publicly* produced during the prolonged Peloponnesian War; and the first and greatest of these, *The Acharnians,* was presented in the early part of the war, when " patriotism " was still at fever pitch. Indeed, *The Acharnians* is au outstanding landmark of history, for it was the first time in the annals of mankind that a *pacifistic* protest against a war was made *publicly* during the war. It is as significant as it is astonishing that Aristophanes was able to get away with it, even winning the highest prize of the dramatic festival in which it was entered; but this aspect of the matter has been admirably dealt with by that last great classicist of Western culture, Gilbert Murray, and is no part of my present thesis.

The late WILBUR BURTON's article first appeared in the Autumn 1951 *issue of* Retort, *the anarchist journal which used to be published at Bearsville, New York by Holley Cantine and Dachine Rainer, by whose kind permission it is reprinted.*

Also, for the first time in history, *The Acharnians* contained an implicit call for mass civil disobedience—as the only means of ending the war. The concept of civil disobedience may be found as far back as Aeschylus, and is explicit in the *Antigone* of Sophocles: but here it is only *individual* defiance of authority on moral and idealistic grounds. In *The Acharnians,* it becomes a *political* proposition, which is not philosophised about but simply avowed through the dramatic course of action.

Aristophanes, of course, was no *absolute* pacifist, for the concept that it is better to be killed than to kill, was unknown to all basic Western culture: it is an importation from Asia, where one way of living has immemorially been in negation of life. Absolutism of any kind is in the Asiatic rather than the Western tradition, though this fact may be—as Spengler would see it—merely a matter of phase. In any event, our Western tradition—even up to now—is too empirical and eclectic for real faith in any absolutism, pacifistic or otherwise: and by virtue of this fact, it is to Aristophanic pacifism that pacifists should turn.

It cannot be said, to be sure, that Aristophanes was a successful pacifist. Certainly he did not succeed in halting the Peloponnesian War, and it could hardly have lasted longer than it did. History is silent on public reaction to his plays, beyond the fact that he won first prize with *The Acharnians,* and second prize with *Peace.* But it is a fair surmise that the *attitude* manifested by Aristophanes had a mitigating, salubrious effect on the public attitude: for even in defeat Athens still continued for a long time to be the most civilised ciy in the Western world, and was able to pass on much of the best of her heritage to Rome. We can also assume that the attitude of Aristophanes was not without effect on Euripides, who changed during the war from the patriot of *The Heracleidae* and *The Suppliants*—with their vaunting of Athenian " democracy ", piety and concern for the oppressed—to the anti-war pleader of *The Trojan Women,* which, however, dealt with contemporary events only by covert analogy. An Aristophanic influence is also indicated in Thucydides—albeit *ex post facto.*

All this is something, even much, though far short of absolute success. But only an absolutist would expect absolute success. For a pioneer in the field of pacifism, *Aristophanes* did quite well.

Certainly Aristophanes could not be followed today in slavish discipleship, such as some pacifist accord to Gandhi and others to Christ—although the Peloponnesian War offers in microcosm what World War II has presented and World War III will present, in microcosm. Even so, *The Acharnians* and *Peace* were of their time " fantastic in detail but realistic in essence," as Oates and O'Neill put it. *Lysistrata* is still more fantastic, if taken literally, but—as I will later show—in all its psycho-sociological implications, it is thoroughly down to earth.

It is the attitude of the three plays that is profoundly and soundly meaningful—if pacifism is to be a political proposition instead of a political pretension, or merely an individual way of life. And to be a political proposition, pacifism must appeal to the average man in his tradition: which for us in America is the Western tradition as modified

by American conditions. The pacifism of Christ or Gandhi, on the other hand, can never be more than a political pretension in America (or an individual way of life), for either source makes pacifism more ridiculous—and even more repulsive—to the average man than militarism. It is true that we have a Christian avowal to appeal to, which may be interpreted as pacifistic, but to take this avowal seriously for political purposes is considerably more fantastic than to take *Lysistrata* literally.

Aristophanes was (like all Greeks before the degenerated neo-Platonist) thoroughly anthropocentric—hence fundamental; and his appeal was to the average Athenian, who in the main, was politically quite like the average American of today. Aristophanic pacifism was not pacifism in any absolute sense, but simply as common sense. War may sometimes be necessary and/or inevitable, but common sense will make either its necessity or inevitability very rare, and prevent any war from being prolonged. With common sense, a *crusade* would be regarded as utter madness. Further, but still strictly as common sense, Aristophanic pacifism embraces peace as a beautiful nude goddess—about whom the Laconian envoy in *Lysistrata* says, laconically: "Ah, great gods! What a lovely bottom Peace has!" With the goddess, of course, goes a full wine-skin and provender to match. For peace is both comestible and callipygian.

Those interested in Aristophanic pacifism must, naturally ,read the three plays I have noted—preferably in the Random House two-volume edition of the *Complete Greek Drama*, edited by Whitney J. Oates and Eugene O'Neill Jr., for herein is a complete non-Bowlderised translation (save in one slight instance) and comprehensive notes that explain things which otherwise would be obscure save to a classical scholar. For the whole of the Aristophanic attitude—of which pacifism was only a part—all of his eleven extant plays should be read, even though a few are lousy as drama and *The Clouds* is singularly inept from any viewpoint. His three anti-war plays are his best, but at least *The Wasps, The Frogs* and *The Ecclesiazusae* should also be read for their penetrating commentaries on democratic politics—with much current applicability.

Since there can be no substitute for reading the three anti-war plays—which, incidentally, are second to none in all literature purely as entertainment—I will deal only with some of their highlights that bear on my thesis of their current significance: a significance partly noted by Oates and O'Neill when they say of *The Acharnians* that it lampoons "the proud gullibility of the Athenians, and the careless inhumanity of their foreign policy." Oattes and O'Neill, not being prophets, could not see when they wrote this *circa* 1937 how like Athens modern America would shortly become!

It may be recalled that the Peloponnesian War started by the New Dealer Pericles established a boycott of Megara, and the plot of *The Acharnians* involves its hero, Dicaepolis—Honest Citizen—negotiating his own private truce with Laconia for the noble and sufficient purpose of procuring Copaic eels and other delicacies that came from or through Megara. Dicaeopolis did not seek eternal or international peace, nor world government, nor universal control of the manufacture of swords; instead he was content with a 30 year *truce*—which as things now move would be the equivalent of a century—but enraged patriots start to lynch him for treating "with a people who know neither gods, nor truth, nor faith." (How familiar is that line!) He escapes lynching and eventually faces the mob to defend himself.

"I shall not please, but I will say what is true", he declares, and while he avows that he detests the Lacedamonians with all his heart, he asks why accuse them of all our woes ?—nor does he prate about the superiority of Athenian democracy over Spartan totalitarianism. He lamblasts the alien war-mongers, but puts the bulk of the blame on the New Dealer Pericles—"aflame with ire on his Olympian height,"—depicts the upset of Attica in down-to-earth manner, including "the sound of whistles, of flutes and fifes to encourage the workers," and comes to the "general conclusion" that *"we have no common sense."*

The mob finally won over, the chorus sings: "If you no longer allow yourselves to be too much hoodwinked by strangers or seduced by flattery, if in politics you are no longer the ninnies you once were, it is thanks to him."

In *Peace*, the theme is the same with merely new dramatic variations. Trygaeus wants peace to caress his mistress and poke the fire—to invoke Hermes, the Graces, the Horae, Aphrodite and Eros. By this time the gods are pictured as so disgusted with all the Greeks that they have abandoned Olympus to War and his slave Tumult, who have cast Peace into a deep pit—and the plot involves her rescue and an Aristophanic revel in consequent celebration. *Rescued with Peace are the goddesses of harvests and festivals.*

Lysistrata—Disbander of Armies—and her Feminine International are the sheerest fantasy in plot, but sex appeal for peace is psychologically as sound as in recruiting for war: militarists have merely been more astute than pacifists. Indeed, as both Lucretius and Freud have observed, only the erotic instincts are capable of overcoming, or at least mitigating, the aggressive instincts. Further, Aristophanes in *Lysistrata* is saying for all the ages that the only way women can contribute to peace or other human well-being is by being *feminine* instead of *feminist*. Lystistrata, contrary to some interpretations of her, is no frigid feminist, or sexually unemployed leader of a cause; she shows an excellent appreciation of sex, but also has foresight and a capacity for restraint. When some of her colleagues avow they would rather go through fire than forego sex, she holds them in line by showing them that some immediate sacrifice for peace will bring more sex in the long run.

Lysistrata also seizes the treasury and announces "no more money, no more war." The magistrate asks, "then money is the cause of war?" —and Lysistrata answers: "And of all our troubles. It was to find occasion to steal that Pisander and all the other agitators were forever raising revolutions."

This, of course, is over-simplification—even Marxian! But it is not without validity, although somewhat different in the U.S. of today than in ancient Athens; for at one point comparison between the Athen-

ian role in the Peloponnesian War and the U.S. role in World Wars II and III breaks down completely: Athens received tribute from her allies. However, the essence of Aristophanes here, as in the economic aspect of *The Acharnians,* is the fullest possible politico-economic non-co-operation with the state for a war or *in* a war which we oppose and with the usufructs of this non-co-operation garnered for our own well-being.

If war comes against all the opposition common sense can muster, the pacifist attitude should then be to avoid any suffering insofar as he can instead of courting it: let the warm-minded do the suffering, and the more the better. Away with Quixotic pacifism and all its sophomoric humanitarianism and do-gooding nonsense! Arise Aristophanic pacifism!

In wartime, we Americans have our well rooted tradition of civil disobedience; and obviously, the only rational course for a pacifist during a war is covert or overt non-co-operation with the state to the fullest extent possible within the limits of his capacity; and capacity includes how willing he is to take the consequences of either active or passive opposition to the war. One should decide *now* on one's capacity; and unless we are very sure of ourselves the best decision is that we won't stick our necks out any more than we have to. One can with honour always change that decision in the radically opposed direction, while to avow the utmost in advance and then retract is craven . . .

If one is in opposition to war and then when it comes retreats into complete silence on the thoroughly sound grounds that one does not want to go to prison, there is at least no dishonour. But it is specious and criminally misleading to trim; at the best, only the most superficial good can thereby be accomplished; and in the main you actually play into the hands of the state: for the half truths you can tell with impunity are more pernicious than outright lies, and their very telling is a tragic travesty of civil liberties.

From my individual viewpoint, prison is much more comfortable than an army camp somewhere near the North Pole; but a good pacifist might well prefer the army. And, indeed, an adequate leaven of pacifists in the army would be more effective in ending a war quickly than only a few thousand in prison. Also, ten draft-dodgers in the hills are far better than five in prison.

All of us, I dare say, are now willing to plead *mea culpa* for something we did or didn't do in the last war. I plead *mea culpa* for having been silly enough to co-operate with the authorities by telling them where they could find me to arrest me. Whether I would actively attempt to avoid arrest would depend on circumstances (and perhaps mood), but certainly I would never give the least aid to the authorities in locating me. I don't plead *mea culpa* for accepting parole—when that was the custom of practically all of those with whom I associated; but in principle, if one goes to prison one should refuse any parole in co-operation with the state—and it is co-operating with the state *for the war* to fill posts of whatever nature that are vacant because of the war. Let the state attend to its own dirty work at home and abroad without the aid of publicly avowed pacifists! It would be as effective pacifism to obtain, covertly, draft-proof jobs in munition plants and use the usufructs therefrom to keep the Black Market flourishing! But " no parole " is fatuous for one or just a few.

As to the guinea-pig pacifists, words fail me—I can conclude only that their consciences bothered them for being C.O's.

Of course there is still time enough to prevent the next war—*if* there is enough Aristophanic pacifism. So in ultimate note I will quote again from Aristophanes, in *The Frogs*:

Even now O race demented, there is time to change your ways;
Use once more what's worth the using. If we 'scape, the more the praise
That we fought our fight with wisdom; or if all is lost for good,
Let the tree on which they hang us be, at least, of decent wood!

Anarchism and the Greek temperament

ALAN MORGAN

THE FIRST SYSTEMATIC ANARCHIST PHILOSOPHER was, so we are told, Zeno of Citium (320-250 BC) who, stays the encyclopaedia, " was the author of some eighteen books, including the notorious *Republic,* an early work of cynic and anarchist tendencies." But none of them survive, and all we know of them is from other Greek author's quotations. Nevertheless we may readily assent to the proposition that, of the three ancient peoples who shaped our civilisation, it was the Greeks whose characteristic temperament and attitudes appeal most to anarchists.

You can see this for yourself by playing the parlour game of Jews, Greeks and Romans, the invention of which Colin MacInnes ascribes to David Sylvester. We can all, he claims (regardless of our actual ethnic origins of course) be classified as one of these three. The stereotypes, for purposes of the game, are that the Jews were moralising, prophetic, radical-traditional, the Greeks were life-loving, crafty, hedonistic-spiritual, and the Romans authoritarian, organisational, grandiose, rhetorical.

The game consists simply in classifying your friends, public figures or historical characters, as one or other of the three types. Politicians are almost always Romans, you will find. Occasionally they are Jews, but very seldom Greeks. Anarchists are sometimes Greeks and some-

times Jews. The clash between these two temperaments amoun anarchists is frequently responsible for the divisions between them. Some of us of course, are Greeks masquerading as Jews and some of us are Jews who would dearly love to be Greeks. Some of us conceal a Roman tinge. It certainly helps clear the air if we are able to attribute our differences to temperament rather than to wickedness or bad faith.

The Greek temperament, or our interpretation of it, is capable of arousing a passionate loyalty among its adherents. Henry Miller for example, writes ecstatically, " I love those men, each and every one, for having revealed to me the true proportions of the human being. I love the soil in which they grew, the tree from which they sprang, the light in which they flourished, the goodness, the integrity, the charity which they emanated. They brought me face to face with myself, they cleansed me of hatred and jealousy and envy. And not least of all, they demonstrated by their own example that life could be lived magnificently, on any scale, in any climate, under any conditions."

These are not, of course, the lessons that the classical education of the English aristocracy inculcated, but then, as Simon Raven pointed out in ANARCHY 24, the texts selected by the schoolmasters were hardly representative. He was untypical of their pupils in that he actually succeeded in learning the classical languages and in reading for pleasure. " And some curiousity lead me to look in a lot of places and not just where they told me to look. I found that what it said was richly and ripely subversive of the whole moral doctrines in which I was being so carefully and expensively educated. It either refuted them, mocked at them, or quite simply ignored them."

Elsewhere, paraphrasing Maurice Bowra's *The Greek Experience*, he epitomises the Good News from Greece, in these propositions:

1. This world, peopled by man, is the proper concern of man.
2. Death is a fascinating subject for speculation, but anyone who who claims to know the truth about it is either a fool or a confidence-trickster.
3. The Gods have taken human shape, not out of condescension, but because there is no other shape worth taking.
4. The truth is not determined by Revelation but by logical deduction from self-evident principles or from such natural examples as are available.
5. Laughter, wine and the love of friends are all the sweeter for being merely transient.
6. Physical love is an enjoyable and harmless occupation.

For other cultures, Goethe remarked, one must make allowances; to the Greek alone one is always a debtor.

Is it true that the experience and ideas of the ancient Greeks are still relevant for us today ? This question is answered from an anarchist point of view in this issue with a detailed study of Athenian democracy and of anarchist aspects of Greek philosophy. It also includes reprints of two remarkable and long-unobtainable essays on the social implications of Greek drama: Wilbur Burton on Aristophanes and Henry Nevinson on the Antigone of Sophocles.

As ANARCHY *approaches its fifth birthday, we plan to have issues on the Kibbutz, on " Lord of the Flies " and the attitudes underlying Golding's fable, on Freedom in Work, Latin America, the concept of Law, Malatesta, and the " left " opposition in the communist countries.*

Whatever else next month's ANARCHY *will contain, we plan to squeeze into it criticism of several recent books including James Joll's " The Anarchists ", Edward Thompson's " Making of the English Working Class " and Joy Baker's " Children in Chancery ". We also hope to include Maurice Cranston's reflections on the Marat/Sade play.*

The " one-topic-one-issue " policy of ANARCHY *should make it easy for you to introduce anarchist ideas to your friends by sending them (instead of a Christmas card perhaps) copies of issues on subjects which interest them. See the inside front cover for a list of back issues, most of which are still obtainable.*

FREEDOM PRESS, 17a MAXWELL ROAD,
LONDON, SW6