

FINAL WORDS

Professor van Effenterre has suggested to me that there remains another *politeia* to be discussed, namely the one we all have participated in during the last few days - was it an *asty* or was it perhaps a *polis*? What I have to say ties in very nicely with Tom Palaima's lost Linear B-tablet, but since I am Middle Helladic I am illiterate, so I am not going to take that evidence into account.

As all *politeiai* our has had a socio-political organisation with its own, largely unwritten, law-system. It is perhaps best described as a hierarchical organisation or an enlightened kingdom - or should we say dictatorship? Our opportunities to study this society has, as in the case of the Linear B officials, been limited to just a few days of the year. This means of course that the nature of our society is difficult to fully understand. But some interesting observations can be made.

We seem to be dealing with a kingdom with two kings - could they be related to Dorians? - and perhaps of a sacral character, as is suggested by, for example, various reoccurring rituals. I here want to mention only two.

Firstly, at more or less regular intervals a sacred shrill signal seem to indicate that some kind of activity will take place. However, no notice is ever taken of this signal in our society. This is strange, but perhaps we are dealing here with a survival or atrophied ceremony, which has largely lost its ritual significance.

Secondly, another ritual suggests that the kings may have to undergo tests in order to prove their ability, strength and prowess. At certain points in the proceedings they have to run round their kingdom, carrying a sacred object, similar in shape to a staff, or perhaps better a sceptre, with which they seem to exercise control as well as keep in contact with their subjects, that is us.

In other words, the evidence clearly indicates that we here are dealing with a sacral kingdom, perhaps even cosmological in character, in which absolute order and control is kept through the kingly power. And I have to admit that not even a woman could have organised things better!

Other signs of this sacred power and authority of our kings are their "golden tongues" (*chrysostomai*), which have enabled them to get in contact with the higher divinities, also called sponsors, and thereby persuaded these to hand out rich gifts. These the kings in their turn have shared out, in a redistributive system, to their subjects and dependants (*i.e.* us). We hope that the mighty divinities/sponsors have seen to what good purposes their gifts has been put; among other things used to put up an ostentatious display in the form of eating and drinking. We all bear due homage to these powerful gods.

There is also a *potnia* in our kingdom, whether a queen or a goddess remains to be decided. The splendid and sumptuous ritual of feasting last night seem appropriate to both interpretations. I have not yet understood whether this was an example of a specialist household production or some other mode of production.

If this is the structure emanating from the top of our society, there is also another group in it, similar in character to *basileis*, or *koreteres*, that is officials responsible for craft

production of various types. These officials seem to be everywhere, manning slide-projectors, tape recorders, xerox machines and coffee tables with equal skill. They have by now learnt at least one thing of Aegean scholars: they rarely remember their names. It is also worth to remember that these *basileis*, according to our models, will be the ones that eventually take over as the rulers in new and even better *politeia*.

Our *politeia* has been placed, not in an Aegean palace, but in the beautiful town of Heidelberg, its revered University and famous Archaeological Institute. Now we will dissolve our state and travel, each to our own site (if I counted right in the textual remains there are 44 sites) to spread the light all over the world, in the so-called Heidelberg effect.

We ought at this point of course have formed a procession carrying tributes, preferably with an enormous bull or at least a bull's head rhyton, but I am afraid the stormy and rainy weather forbids a dress consisting of codpieces and open bodices. But I am sure that everyone of their loyal subjects will join me, and say to Wolf and Robert, Barbara, our kind sponsors, and all students, assistants and microphone-menders, as well as the organising departments of the Universities of Heidelberg and Liège, from the bottom of our hearts: *sas eucharistome parapoli* and *Auf Wiedersehen!*

Gullög NORDQUIST