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# Images and Ideologies

Self-definition in the Hellenistic World

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# Greek Cities and Greek Commonwealth

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People who live together for a long time develop common ways of communicating with each other, a common language and common rules of behavior, common values, and common beliefs that together go to make up their culture. As long as these people remain an isolated group, they have no awareness of the specificity of their culture; they just live it. But if they come into contact with people who are different, they analyze their values and rules of behavior by comparing them with the values and rules of the others. If they are strong and self-confident, they will gain from this confrontation a sentiment of superiority; they will feel themselves confirmed in their identity. But if they are weak and insecure, their identity will soon be lost.

Through colonization and commerce, the Greeks came into contact with other people and civilizations, in particular with the East and with Egypt, very early. And although the Eastern civilizations were far more advanced than their own, the Greeks soon developed an astonishingly strong feeling of self-confidence and even superiority. They borrowed from their neighbors their knowledge and their technology and created out of it a culture of their own that rapidly surpassed that of their teachers in almost every field. This feeling of superiority was reinforced in the Classical period as a result of the victories of the Persian Wars: cultural superiority and political strength went together. The confrontation between Greeks and barbarians was in every respect to the advantage of the Greeks.

All this was to change in the fourth century with the decline of the Greek city-states and the rise of Macedonia that resulted in the Battle of Chaeronea, the foundation of the Corinthian League, and the conquests of Alexander the Great. From the point of view of the Greeks, or at least

the majority of them, the rise of Macedonia and the conquest of the East was not a victory of Hellenism over the barbarians; they could not identify themselves with the Macedonians and their kings. These were enemies of the freedom of Greece; they were tyrants, and they were responsible for the decline of the Greek world. The vain efforts of the Greek states to get rid of the Macedonian hegemony after the death of Alexander the Great and the repeated comparison of Macedonia with the Medes allow no doubts about these feelings.<sup>1</sup>

It is a fact that the conquest of Asia and the creation of the Hellenistic kingdoms only accelerated the decline of Greece. Its fate no longer depended on the deliberations of the assemblies at Athens, Sparta, or Thebes; the real decisions were now taken at the courts of Pella, of Antioch, or of Alexandria. Many of the ablest men left their country to take up rewarding positions in Asia or in Egypt. The poor left, too, in order to find a living as mercenaries or a piece of land as colonists. The proud cities of Greece became beggars who asked for material help from the kings, for corn, for schoolmasters, or for the building of porticoes. They flattered them, they voted them divine honors, and they tried to play one power off the other in order to preserve a minimum of independence.

The fate of those who went away as mercenaries or as colonists was not much better. They were uprooted and demoralized; they were deprived of their usual way of life and were threatened in their identity. After the death of Alexander, the Greeks he had settled in his eastern foundations revolted because they longed for Greek customs and way of life (Diod. 18.7.1: *ποθοῦντες μὲν τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἀγωγὴν καὶ διαίταν*). According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (1.89.4), many Greeks

living among barbarians had in a short time forgotten all their Greek heritage, so that they neither spoke the Greek language nor observed the customs of the Greeks nor acknowledged the same gods nor had the same equitable laws by which most of all the spirit of the Greeks differed from that of the barbarians.

Polybius is not much more optimistic about the Greeks of Alexandria, who were just a little better than the barbarian mercenaries who lived there, because they came from Greek stock and had not forgotten Greek customs (34.14.5). The corollary of the geographical expansion of Hellenism in the East was the risk of dilution and dissolution.

Still worse was to come with the Roman conquest. In a few decades,

1. See the Athenian decree calling the Greeks to rebellion against Macedonia after the death of Alexander (Diodorus Siculus 18.10.3) and the decree of Chremonides (*Syll*<sup>3</sup> 434/5.1of.).

the Roman Senate became the only arbiter of Greek affairs. There was no longer the possibility of playing one power off against the other; the Greek states now enjoyed just so much freedom as was acceptable to Rome. Greece suffered from the exactions of the Roman governors and generals, it was stripped of its works of art without the compensation of material help in case of distress. For, if the Romans claimed to be philhellenes, if they respected the "liberty" of the Greek cities under certain conditions, they gave no money for corn or for teachers. The Greeks were humiliated, they were compelled to flatter the Roman governors and generals even when they hated them, they had to hear themselves despised as unworthy of their ancestors, as effeminate and degenerate. It is no wonder that people despaired of the future and, as Polybius says (36.17), no longer wished to marry and to rear children, so that many parts of Greece became deserted and fallow.

And yet, despite these vicissitudes and misfortunes, the Greeks were able to preserve their identity remarkably well. Even in the worst conditions, even as exiles or as slaves, they preserved the awareness that they were the heirs to a great culture that was different from all others. They were proud of their way of living and thinking. The humiliation of economic and political decline was to a certain degree compensated for by the admiration for Greek civilization. Hellenism was extraordinarily attractive, and the Greeks were conscious of this attractiveness. It was attractive for the Jews, who had the greatest difficulties in reconciling their love for Greek culture with their religious beliefs. It was attractive also for the Romans: at the time of Strabo, for instance, Neapolis was an important center of Hellenic culture; many Romans who took delight in this way of living fell in love with the place and settled there (Strab. 5.4.7, C 246).

"Culture," "civilization," "habits," and "values" are very vague notions. People belonging to a common culture can feel and live it in quite different ways. For educated people it is literacy, poetry, music, and works of art that are important. The common past, too, may play this role. Strabo insists at the beginning of his *Geography* (1.2.3, C 16) on poetry, music, and mythology as the essential elements of education in Greek cities. Ephorus laments that the Thebans neglected the value of learning and of intercourse with mankind and cared only for the military virtues; and Strabo, who quotes the statement of Ephorus (9.2.2, C 401), adds that in dealing with the barbarians force is stronger than reason. For others, it is the behavior toward foreigners that characterizes the civilized man. For Eratosthenes, the expulsion of foreigners was a practice common to all barbarians as opposed to the traditional hospitality of the Greeks (Strab. 17.1.19, C 802). Dionysius of Halicarnassus saw a proof of the Greek origin of the Romans in the fact that Rome was

the most hospitable and friendly of all cities (1.89.1). Diodorus blames the Phoenician city of Aradus for not respecting the sacred rights of ambassadors and suppliants, for breaching the ties of kinship (33.5.2). The Gauls of Narbonensis admired the Greek rhetors and physicians (Strab. 4.1.5, C 181). For many Romans, Greek culture was synonymous with fine cooking and good wines, with Corinthian vases and beautiful jewels.

But I am not competent to expound on the nature of Greek civilization. The purpose of my contribution is more limited and less ambitious: I shall try to describe how the Greeks lived their culture in their everyday life. The necessary condition for the development and survival of a civilization is communication, regular intercourse, and social life. There can be no civilization if people live like the Cyclopes of the *Odyssey*, dwelling by themselves in their own caves, without assemblies and laws, caring nothing for one another (*Od.* 9.112f.; it is worth noting that Aristotle quotes these verses at the beginning of the *Politics*). Every organized society has its own ways of bringing people together, officially or otherwise: meeting places, religious or profane ceremonies, feasts and festivals, rituals for rejoicing or mourning, and so on. And the specific form of Greek social life was, of course, the polis.

### THE HELLENISTIC POLIS

The ancient authors, the historians, the orators, and above all the philosophers, have taught us to regard the Greek polis as a political entity, in the sense that the polis is, or ought to be, a free and sovereign city-state. As Aristotle says (*Pol.* 1280b30f.): "A polis is not merely the sharing of a common locality for the purpose of preventing mutual injury and exchanging goods. . . . It is a partnership of families and of clans in living well and its object is a full and independent life." For modern historians the last words are the most important: they see in the political sovereignty (*ἀὐτονομία* and *ἐλευθερία*) and, if possible, the economic self-sufficiency (*αὐτάρκεια*) the essential features of the true polis, and they translate the word *polis* as "city-state" or simply "state." In their view, a Greek city that is not wholly autonomous is not really a polis; a real polis must, therefore, constantly fight for its autonomy and independence, it is necessarily individualistic and egoistic;<sup>2</sup> and the logical

2. See G. Glotz, *La cité grecque* (Paris, 1928), 1, 35-38; W. W. Tarn and G. T. Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 3d ed. (London, 1952), 79ff.; V. Ehrenberg, *The Greek State* (Oxford, 1960), 92ff.; H. Kreissig, "Die Polis in Griechenland und im Orient in der hellenistischen Epoche," in *Hellenische Poleis*, ed. E. C. Welskopf (Berlin, 1974), 2: 1074-1084; K.-W. Welwei, *Die griechische Polis* (Stuttgart, 1983), 9ff.; R. Duthoy, "Qu'est-ce qu'une polis?" *LEC* 54

conclusion of this conception is that the Hellenistic period is the end of the Greek polis.<sup>3</sup>

This definition is correct insofar as the majority of the poleis actually were or had been, at some time in their history, independent city-states. It is also a fact that, since the times of the Persian Wars, "autonomy and freedom of the Greeks" was a much-used slogan against hegemonic powers whether Greek or barbarian.<sup>4</sup> But it is not true that sovereignty was the essential feature of the polis. The cities founded by Alexander the Great and his successors in Asia and Egypt were not sovereign, their status was fundamentally different from that of the old cities of Asia Minor, they enjoyed only a precarious and revocable autonomy, but they were nonetheless poleis.<sup>5</sup> The cities of the Macedonian kingdom<sup>6</sup> and, in my opinion, also the members of the so-called federal states<sup>7</sup> had the same kind of precarious autonomy: they had no sovereignty of their own, they enjoyed only a limited autonomy depending totally on the will of the central government, but they were called poleis all the same. I believe that the definition of the polis as a city-state is misleading and does not denote its specific nature, its difference from all other communities in other civilizations.

A Greek polis was first of all a community of people living together, "a partnership of families and of clans in living well," to use the words

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(1986): 3–20. Critical, but without alternative, W. Gawantka, *Die sogenannte Polis* (Stuttgart, 1985).

3. Most explicit in defense of this conception is the great French scholar G. Glotz, *Cité grecque*, 448: "Elles (the battle of Chaeronea and the foundation of the League of Corinth) donnent une date précise à ce grand événement, la fin de la cité grecque." See also Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 79: "Man as a political animal, a fraction of the polis or self-governing city state, had ended with Aristotle."

4. For the period after Alexander, see now E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* (Berkeley, 1984) 1: 133ff. It is interesting to note that the argument was already used by Dionysius I against Carthage (Diod. 14.47.2).

5. For the fundamental difference between the status of the old Greek cities of Asia Minor and that of the foundations of Alexander and his successors, a difference that was not recognized by A. Heuss and E. Bickerman in their well-known controversy, see D. Magie, *Roman Rule in Asia Minor* (Princeton, 1950) 1: 56, 2: 827.

6. See A. Giovannini, "Le statut des cités de Macédoine sous les Antigonides," in *Ancient Macedonia: Papers Read at the Second International Symposium Held in Thessaloniki, 19–24 August, 1973* (Thessaloniki, 1977), 465–472.

7. See A. Giovannini, *Untersuchungen über die Natur und die Anfänge der bundestaatlichen Sympolitie in Griechenland* (Göttingen, 1971), 71ff. My conclusions have been almost unanimously rejected, in particular by F. W. Walbank, "Were There Greek Federal States?" *SCI* 3 (1976/77): 27–51. But this disagreement is based precisely on the traditional view that a polis is necessarily a "state." There is also in the literature on Greek "federal states" a failure to distinguish between local autonomy and sovereignty: Swiss communes enjoy a large amount of autonomy, they even grant their citizenship, but they are not states.

of Aristotle. Like all communities that enjoy some autonomy, the poleis had decision-making assemblies and common authorities. Like most communities of the world, they had civic cults and temples to express their unity. Meeting places, popular assemblies, temples, and cults are not particular to the Greek poleis, they are universal features of communities in general. But the poleis had forms of social life of their own that were the expression of Greek culture and that fundamentally differentiated a Greek polis from all other communities in the world. These specific forms of social life were concretized in buildings that were exclusively Greek, that is, the gymnasium and the theater: every polis had or was supposed to have a gymnasium and a theater;<sup>8</sup> barbarian cities did not.<sup>9</sup> Everybody knows of course that athletic training and music were the basis of Greek education and culture; but, surprisingly enough, the standard works on the Greek polis practically neglect the gymnasium and the theater as constitutive elements of the community.<sup>10</sup>

First, the gymnasium.<sup>11</sup> Originally, the gymnasium had been the citizens' training place for war. They had to acquire there the physical strength and collective discipline necessary for hoplite tactics.<sup>12</sup> For Aristophanes, the gymnasium was the essential element of the good old education of the winners of Marathon and he blames the young men who frequent the warm baths and chat instead of training in the palaestra (*Clouds* 1043–54). In the *Phoinissae* of Euripides (366–68), the exiled Polynikes is full of tears as he sees again the altars of the gods and the gymnasium where he had been trained. And it was said of the Boeotians that they owed their military superiority to their intense training in the gymnasium (Diod. 15.50.5 and 17.11.4).

In the Hellenistic period, the gymnasium still kept its function as a training place for future soldiers. The physical preparation of boys that ended with the epheby was everywhere the basis of the education of citizens. There they practiced fighting with arms, throwing the javelin,

8. For Pausanias (10.4.1) a town that possessed “no government offices, no gymnasium, no theater, no marketplace, no water descending to a fountain” hardly deserved to be called a polis.

9. Diod. 1.81.7, for instance, points out that the Egyptians did not practice the physical training of the gymnasium.

10. Kreissig, “Polis,” and the authors he quotes (1077), simply “forget” the theater and the gymnasium. Ehrenberg, *Greek State*, 150, 155, mentions the gymnasium as the local cultural center of the polis, but only by the way. Duthoy, “Qu’est-ce qu’une polis?” 15, enumerates, among other buildings of the city, the theater and the gymnasium.

11. See J. Delorme, *Gymnasion. Étude sur les monuments consacrés à l’éducation en Grèce* (Paris, 1960), esp. 421ff.

12. See Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 24ff.; R. T. Ridley, “The Hoplite as Citizen,” *AC* 48 (1979): 508–548, convincingly connects the origin of the gymnasium with the introduction of hoplite tactics in the seventh and sixth centuries.

and archery.<sup>13</sup> But the gymnasium also became more and more a place of intellectual and political education where philosophers and rhetors dispensed their teaching; it was, at the same time, a place of pleasure and entertainment, where physical training was now an aim in itself, a way of relaxing body and mind.<sup>14</sup> A Hellenistic gymnasium was a complex building with porticoes and baths, with rooms and exedrae for discussions and teaching.<sup>15</sup> It is significant that Pyrrhus, who had been called to help by the Tarentinians but did not want to fight for them "while they remained at home in the enjoyment of their baths and social festivities, closed down the gymnasia and the public walks, where, as they strolled about, they fought out their country's battles in talk" (Plut. *Pyrr.* 16, 2). The gymnasium had by now become what was, in Aristophanes' eyes, a degenerate and corrupting environment.

But if it had partly lost its original purpose, the gymnasium was now an attractive and pleasing place to spend one's time. It was now the locus of an intense social life. Quite significantly, the gymnasia of the Hellenistic period were no longer situated outside the walls of the city, as in the Classical period, but in its center, near the agora and the other public buildings.<sup>16</sup> The gymnasiarchy became one of the most prestigious magistracies, if not the most, but at the same time the most expensive. This is abundantly attested by the honorary decrees for gymnasiarchs who generously spent their money for the oil, the salary of the trainers, and sometimes for the adornment of the gymnasium itself.<sup>17</sup> To spend money on the building or the decoration of a gymnasium was the best demonstration of philhellenism a king could give: King Herod the Great provided gymnasia for several Greek cities and also offered the city of Cos a fund for the maintenance of its gymnasium.<sup>18</sup>

13. On the training of ephebes in the Hellenistic period see O. W. Reinmuth, "A New Ephebic Inscription from the Athenian Agora," *Hesperia* 43 (1974): 246–259. M. Launey, *Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques* (Paris, 1950) 2: 813–874, defends the theory that the training at the gymnasium was primarily devised as a preparation for service in the Hellenistic armies (this view has been rejected by Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 469ff.).

14. See M. Rostovtzeff, *Social and Economic History of the Hellenistic World* (Oxford, 1941) 2: 1058–1060; C. A. Forbes, "Expanded Uses of the Greek Gymnasium," *CPh* 40 (1945): 32–42; Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 95ff.; Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 374ff.

15. See the description of the gymnasium by Vitruvius *De architectura* 5.11. As Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 489ff., points out, the gymnasium described by Vitruvius, with its warm baths, is an Italian adaptation of the original Greek gymnasium, which had only cold baths (but see the complaints of Poseidonius about the *βαλανεῖα* of the Syrian gymnasia, *FGrH* 87 F 10).

16. See Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 441ff.

17. See, e.g., *OGI* 764 (Pergamon); *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 577 (Miletus); *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 578 (Teos); *Bull. ép.* (1966): 273 (Istros); *BCH* 109 (1985): 597ff. (Messene).

18. Josephus *Bellum Judaicum* 1.21.421–423. Several examples of donations of kings,

In fact, the attractiveness of Greek culture for the Jews, the Romans, and other people was largely due to the gymnasium and the way of life it symbolized.<sup>19</sup> At the time of the Maccabees, the Hellenized High Priest Jason undertook to mold his fellow citizens into the Greek character (*πρὸς τὸν Ἑλληνικὸν χαρακτήρα τοὺς ὁμοφύλους μετέστησε*) and asked King Antiochos Epiphanes for permission to rename the citizens of Jerusalem Antiocheis and to build in the Holy City a gymnasium and an ephebeion (2 Macc. 4.9–10; Jos. *Ant.* 12.5.241). The revolt of the Maccabees put an end to this attempt and Jerusalem remained Jerusalem, but the Jews of the diaspora tried to be admitted to the gymnasium and to participate in the ephebeia, in particular in Alexandria.<sup>20</sup> The Jews of the Seleucid kingdom obtained the privilege of getting money for oil from the gymnasiarchs, so that they might use their own oil (Jos. *Ant.* 12.3.119). Of the Romans we know of, Scipio Africanus was the first to exchange his Roman toga for a Greek himation and to stroll about in the gymnasia and read Greek books while staying in Sicily at the end of the Hannibalic War (Liv. 29.19.12; Plut. *C. Mai.* 3.7). Athletic games were first performed in Rome in the year 186 (Liv. 39.22) and became more and more frequent in the last century of the Republic.<sup>21</sup> Antony held the gymnasiarchy at Athens (Plut. *Ant.* 33.4) and at Tarsus (Strab. 14.5.14, C 674). At Neapolis, where many Romans came to enjoy the Greek way of life, there were gymnasia and ephebeia (Strab. 5.4.7, C 246). And finally, Roman baths, those monumental symbols of ancient culture which even Christians were eager to attend,<sup>22</sup> are nothing other than the last stage of the transformation of the gymnasium into a place of leisure and entertainment.

Pleasant for body and mind, the gymnasium was felt to be less a civic duty than a social privilege, just as it had been a privilege of the aristocracy at the time of Homer (see especially *Od.* 8.158ff.). Only free-born citizens had access to it. In Egypt, those who had been at the gymnasium, *οἱ ἐκ τοῦ γυμνασίου*, constituted a kind of local aristocracy.<sup>23</sup> The splendid law of Beroia, published by the late J. M. R. McCormack, stipulates

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especially of the Attalids, have been collected by L. Robert, *Études anatoliennes* (Paris, 1937), 85 nn. 2, 3; 201; 451f. See also *Bull. ép.* (1939): 400; Pol. 5, 88; Paus. 1.17.2.

19. See Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 424ff.

20. See V. Tcherikover, *Corp. Pap. Jud.* (Cambridge, Mass., 1957) 1:55ff. I am not convinced by the opposite view of A. Kasher, "The Jewish Attitude to the Alexandrian Gymnasium in the First Century AD," *AJAH* 1 (1976): 148–161. I have not seen the dissertation of R. R. Chambers, "Greek Athletics and the Jews" (University of Miami, 1980).

21. See N. B. Crowther, "Greek Games in Republican Rome," *AC* 52 (1983): 268–273, who argues that athletic games were performed in Rome before the second century.

22. See, e.g., Tertullian *Apologeticus* 42.4; Cypr. *Epp.* 76.2.4 and *De hab. virg.* 19; Eusebius *Historia ecclesiastica* 5.1.5.

23. See Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 424ff.

that slaves, freedmen, prostitutes, and tradesmen were to be excluded.<sup>24</sup> Access for foreigners seems to have been very restricted, in particular in the case of Jews, and reserved for the Hellenized elites.<sup>25</sup> The gymnasium was really felt by the Greeks to be a symbol of their cultural superiority, a symbol they were not ready to share.

And now the theater, where the musical festivals, usually called the Dionysia, took place. The increasing success of musical games is no less impressive than the development of the gymnasium: both, in fact, go together. As we know from numerous inscriptions, every Greek city had its annual music festival. Inscriptions show also that flautists, citharists, actors, and dancers were no less famous, that they enjoyed the same privileges as boxers or runners. Their growing importance is attested by the creation of guilds, the *technitai* of Dionysus. The most renowned were the *technitai* of Teos, those of Athens, and those of the Isthmus; but there were also guilds of *technitai* in Cyprus, in Egypt, and in Sicily.<sup>26</sup>

But the inscriptions attesting the existence of the Dionysia or of other music festivals are not, for the most part, concerned with the festivals themselves. They are decrees for friends and benefactors of the city, they express the city's recognition or goodwill in the form of grants of honors and privileges. These honors were to be solemnly proclaimed at the musical or sometimes at the gymnastic festivals the city organized every year.<sup>27</sup> The proclamation was to be made by the herald at the beginning of the festival, immediately after—or sometimes even before—the religious offerings. They were of the kind: "The demos crowns and honors X or Y for his goodwill and merits." It was also a rule to invite to the festivals, and to seat in the front rows, friends and benefactors of the city by granting them the *proedria*. Thus, the annual festivals in the theater were not only an artistic performance; they were also a social and civic event, the public recognition, in the presence of all citizens and of invited friends, of the gratitude and goodwill of the city to her friends and benefactors.

These benefactors and friends could be individuals, citizens, or for-

24. J. M. R. McCormack, "The Gymnasiarchal Law of Beroea," in *Ancient Macedonia* (Thessaloniki, 1977) 2: 139ff., B 27ff. = *SEG* 27.261.

25. See Delorme, *Gymnasion*, 1.1. The fact that the emperor Claudius strictly prohibited the Jews of Alexandria from taking part in the gymnasiarchic and cosmetic games leads us to suspect that this was a main cause of the conflicts with the Greeks (*Select Papyri* no. 212.92f.). In Antioch, the privilege of the Jews of getting money for oil (*Jos. Antiquitates Judaicae* 12.3.120ff.) aroused serious discontent among the Greeks.

26. See F. Poland, *RE* 5 A (1934), col. 2474ff., s.v. "Technitai"; A. Pickard-Cambridge, *The Dramatic Festivals of Athens* (Oxford, 1953), 286ff.

27. Usually the honors were proclaimed at the Dionysia: see L. Robert, *Op. min. sel.* (Paris, 1969) 1: 73. But proclamations at the gymnastic festivals are also attested (see, e.g., *IvMagnesia* 101.18f. and *IG* 2/3<sup>2</sup> 456b, 4f.

eigners. They could be kings and dynasts. They were often other poleis. For there were ties of friendship and recognition not only between cities and individual citizens or foreigners, between cities and kings or dynasts, but also between cities and cities. And this leads me to a most fundamental but almost ignored function of the Greek polis: the polis as the subject of social relations with other poleis.

#### RELATIONS BETWEEN POLEIS AND POLEIS

Works dealing with the relations of the Greek cities with each other are mainly interested in the conflicts between hegemonic powers and cities striving to preserve their autonomy, or between hegemonic powers, or between cities and their neighbors. There is an immense literature on the great hegemonies of the Classical and the Hellenistic periods. Much has been written on war, on treaties and conventions, on symmachies. The overall impression is that war was the "normal" relation among Greek cities and that peace was only a temporary interruption of this "normal" state of war.

But a careful and unprejudiced examination of the evidence, especially of the inscriptions, reveals a rather different picture. We discover that the Greek cities assiduously cultivated relations with each other and that these relations were essentially friendly and pacific. Their distinguishing mark is that they did not belong, for the most part, to the field of international relations that states maintain with other states as such, but were the kind of relations people living together in a community practice with friends, relatives, and neighbors. That is, relations such as those involved in paying visits, in helping or asking for help, in giving and receiving presents, in participating together in common ceremonies and festivals. These relations were not really "interstatal" but "interhellenic." The subjects of these relations were not the Greek states as states, but the poleis in their quality as specifically Greek communities, quite independently of their juridical status.<sup>28</sup> These "social" relations were a particularity of the Greek commonwealth just as the relations of clientship were a particularity of Roman society. The Greek world was in fact a community of communities bound together by an intense network of ties of friendship and kinship and other moral obligations.

There is no comprehensive study of these social relations between polis and polis. They are briefly evoked in the classic handbooks, mainly as a symptom of the decline of the polis in the Hellenistic period.<sup>29</sup> Louis

28. See Giovannini, *Untersuchungen*, 84–86.

29. See, e.g., Glotz, *Cité grecque*, 412ff.; Rostovtzeff, *SEHHW* 2:1109; Tarn and Griffiths, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 79ff.; Ehrenberg, *Greek State*, 103ff.

Robert, who was the first fully to realize their importance, unfortunately never wrote the monographs he projected on this topic. But he showed the way. It remains to gather, to complete, and to exploit systematically the material scattered in his immense production. It is a considerable enterprise, of which I can here only sketch out the main lines.

The dominant feature of these relations is the solidarity of the Greek communities, their readiness to help each other in different ways. The best-documented example, one that is typical of the Hellenistic period and more particularly of the second century, is the sending of judges to help cities unable by themselves to settle pending law cases.<sup>30</sup> The remarkable feature revealed by the decrees for foreign judges (we have more than two hundred) is that the cities that were in such an embarrassing position never resorted to individual specialists but always asked another polis to send them some able men of its choice. The decrees not only express the gratitude of the city for the judges; they not only underline their zeal and their incorruptibility; they also thank the city that sent them, praising its good choice and insisting on the ties of friendship and goodwill that bind both communities. It is equally significant that at the proclamation of the honors at the Dionysia, the proclamation for a city always precedes the proclamation for the judges it had sent.

Another much-practiced form of solidarity was mediation or intercession, that is, the intervention in a conflict to convince the parties of the need to come to an agreement or to plead with the stronger in favor of the weaker. It seems that arbitrations of conflicts, which were more and more frequent in the Hellenistic period,<sup>31</sup> were often the result of mediation or intercession. At the great siege of Rhodes by Demetrius Poliorcetes in 305/4, more than fifty envoys from Athens and other cities asked the king to come to terms with the Rhodians (Diod. 20.98.2). The Rhodians themselves were assiduous ambassadors for peace: they were particularly active during the Social War of 220–217 (Pol. 5.24.11 and 28.1; 5.100.9) and, at the same time, in the war between Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV (Pol. 5.63.46). Magnesia on the Maeander offered her

30. See Magie, *Roman Rule* 2:963 n. 81; L. Robert, "L'histoire et ses méthodes," *Encyclopédie de la Pléiade* (Paris, 1967), 467–469 = Robert, *Die Epigraphik der klassischen Welt* (Bonn, 1970), 26–28; idem, "Les juges étrangers dans la cité grecque," in *Xenion: Festschrift für P. J. Zepos*, ed. E. von Caemmerer (Athens, 1973) 1:765–782; A. J. Marshall, "The Survival and Development of International Jurisdiction in the Greek World under Roman Rule," *ANRW* 2.13 (1980): 636–640.

31. On arbitration in Greece, the standard works remain the old dissertation of E. Stone, "De arbitris externis quos Graeci adhibuerunt ad lites et internas et peregrinas componendas quaestiones epigraphicae" (Göttingen, 1888), and the collection of A. Raeder, *L'arbitrage international chez les Hellènes* (Paris and Munich, 1912). The second volume of L. Picirilli, *Gli arbitrati interstatali greci*, is not yet published.

mediation to the quarreling cities of Cnossus and Gortyn (*IvMagnesia* 65 = Raeder 44); the Aetolians did the same for Messene and Phigalia (*Syll*<sup>3</sup> 472), Pergamon for Mytilene and Pitana (*IvPergamon* I 245 = Raeder 46), Cnossus for Lato and Olus (*Syll*<sup>3</sup> 712 = Raeder 77). After the Roman intervention, appeals to a Roman general or to the Senate for a befriended city became quite common: thus the Rhodians and the Athenians appealed to L. Cornelius Scipio for the Aetolians in 189 (Liv. 37.6.4–6 and 38.3.7); in the same year, Stymphalos and the Achaeans appealed to M'. Aquilius for Elatea (*SEG* 25, 445) and the Rhodians pleaded before the Senate in favor of the city of Soloi (Pol. 21.24.10–12).<sup>32</sup>

In this period of insecurity, due to wars and raids by pirates, many cities tried to ensure the consecration and the inviolability of their sanctuaries or of their whole territory (*ἀσυλία*).<sup>33</sup> We have in inscriptions a large number of decrees granting *asylia* to a city or a sanctuary: decrees for Cos,<sup>34</sup> for Magnesia on the Maeander,<sup>35</sup> for Teos;<sup>36</sup> decrees of the Aetolian League for different cities.<sup>37</sup> These documents confirm that the Greek cities really wanted peace and did what they could to prevent war for themselves and for other cities.

We also have many cases of material help in different circumstances. The lavish contributions of kings overshadow the more modest gifts of the cities, but these should not be ignored. In the year 315, when Cassander decided to rebuild the city of Thebes, many Greek cities not only from Greece but also from Sicily and Italy contributed to the undertaking because they took pity on the unfortunate and because of the glory of the city.<sup>38</sup> At the time of the First Punic War, several cities contributed with money and food to the foundation or refoundation of Entella.<sup>39</sup> By the middle of the third century, a small city of the Aetolian League, Kytinion, sent envoys to cities and kings to collect money for the reconstruction of their walls. The people of Xanthus, in their answer, regret-

32. See also *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 591 (Massilia for Lampsacus) and *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 656 (Teos for Abdera).

33. On territorial *asylia* see E. Schlesinger, "Die griechische Asylie" (Diss. Giessen, 1933); and P. Herrmann, "Antiochos der Grosse und Teos," *Anadolu* 9 (1965 [1967]): 121–128.

34. R. Herzog and G. Klaffenbach, *Asylieurkunden aus Kos*, Abh. Dtsch. Ak. Berlin (Berlin, 1952).

35. *IvMagnesia* 16–64.

36. *CIG* 3045–3058 = Le Bas–Waddington 3:60–85; *SEG* 4 (1929): 599f.; Herrmann, "Antiochos der Grosse," 121f.

37. *IG* 9.1<sup>2</sup> 135 (for Lysioi), 169 (for Cos), 189 (for Mytilene), 191 (for Tenos), 195 (for Chios).

38. Diod. 19.54. Ten years later, cities were still contributing to this reconstruction (*Syll*<sup>3</sup> 337).

39. *ASNP* 12 (1982): 778ff., especially no. 5 (= *SEG* 30.1121).

ted being unable to give substantial help because of their own difficulties, but nonetheless gave the envoys from Kytinion a modest contribution of 580 drachmae.<sup>40</sup> A few years later, the Rhodians did the same after the great earthquake that destroyed their city: Polybius, who reports the fact, says that it would be difficult to enumerate all the cities that contributed money according to their means (5.90.2). The Rhodians lent money without interest to the Argives;<sup>41</sup> the Thessalians gave money to the Ambraciots;<sup>42</sup> Cnidus allowed Miletus to borrow money from her citizens and guaranteed the debt.<sup>43</sup> After Aegina fell to the Romans in 209, the captured Aeginetans obtained from the Roman generals permission to beg their kindred cities for ransom (Pol. 9.42.5–8). Populations expelled from their own country were generously received in befriended cities—for instance, the Elateans in Stymphalus (*SEG* 25.445) and the Entellians in two unknown cities.<sup>44</sup> Also worth mentioning is the habit of sending colonists to depopulated cities.<sup>45</sup>

And finally, there is the phenomenon of the collective grant of citizenship (*ισοπολιτεία*).<sup>46</sup> It appears that the poleis of the Hellenistic period were much more generous in granting their citizenship, both to individuals and to whole communities, than either Athens or Sparta in the Classical period. Sometimes the already mentioned privilege of *proedria*—that is, the right to sit in the front rows at the festivals of the city—was added to *isopoliteia*.<sup>47</sup> We also have several examples of reciprocal *isopoliteia*, either by convention or by exchange of grant.<sup>48</sup>

All these acts of friendship and solidarity, all these grants of money, of citizenship, or of inviolability, have this in common: they are not based

40. The decree for Xanthus, known for more than twenty years (see H. Metzger, *RA* [1966]: 108), has now been published by J. Bousquet, *REG* 101 (1988): 12–53.

41. L. Moretti, *Inscr. stor. ell.* I, no. 40 = L. Migeotte, *L'emprunt public dans les cités grecques* (Québec and Paris, 1984), no. 19.

42. C. Habicht, "Ambrakia und der thessalische Bund zur Zeit des Perseuskrieges," in *Demetrias*, ed. V. Milošić and D. Theocharis (Bonn, 1976): 1:175–180.

43. *Delphinion*, no. 138 = Migeotte, *Emprunt public*, no. 96.

44. *ASNP* 12 (1982): 780, nos. VII, VIII.

45. After the campaign of Timoleon in Sicily, the Corinthians sent envoys all over the Greek world to ask for colonists to resettle the devastated cities of Sicily, with the result that more than sixty thousand people answered the invitation (Diod. 16.82 and Plutarch *Timoleon* 22–23). Magnesia on the Maeander sent colonists to Antiocheia Persis (*Iu-Magnesia* 61).

46. See W. Gawantka, "Isopolitie," *Vestigia* 22 (Munich, 1975).

47. See *IuPriene* 5 (Priene for Athens); *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 443 (the Aetolians for Chios); *ASNP* 12 (1982): 778ff. (Entella for various cities); R. Stroud, *Hesperia* 53 (1984): 193ff. (Argos for Apendus).

48. See the list by Gawantka, *Sogenannte Polis*, 206ff. The best example of exchange of citizenship without formal convention is the decree *Delphinion* 143 (Miletus and Seleuceia Tralleis), erroneously entitled a "Vertrag" by the editor.

on formal obligations resulting from treaties, conventions, or contracts, nor are they imposed by force. Their only justification is the moral ties binding together the communities concerned; their result is a strengthening of these ties for the future. They all begin by recalling the friendship (*φιλία, οἰκειότης*) and the goodwill (*εὐνοία*) existing between the two communities.<sup>49</sup>

Most significant is the frequent evocation of the ties of kinship (*συγγένεια*) as a reason for the grant or gift.<sup>50</sup> This *syngeneia* was often historical, a result of common origin or colonization: for instance, the *syngeneia* between Magnesia and Teos (*IuMagnesia* 97), between Magnesia and Larbenus (*IuMagnesia* 101), or the kinship binding Priene and Colophon to Athens (*IuPriene* 5 and *IG* 2/3<sup>2</sup> 456).<sup>51</sup> It was often mythical<sup>52</sup> and sometimes even fictitious, as was the Cretan origin of Magnesia on the Maeander, “authenticated” by a forced decree of the Cretans.<sup>53</sup> But it does not matter whether the kinship was historical, pseudohistorical, or mythical. The important fact is that the cities, especially the small and weak ones, felt the need to renew and to intensify these ties by sharing with their kin their cults and festivals, by sharing with them their citizenship. The nicest example is the decree of Apollonia on the Rhyndacus for Miletus, which describes how the Milesians, after hearing the envoys from Apollonia, carefully examined the historians and various documents and came to the conclusion that Apollonia had actually been founded by their ancestors (*Delphinion* 155).<sup>54</sup> And these renewals were not merely meaningless exchanges of courtesies: they worked. As Diodorus says (10.34.3): “Children, when they are being ill-treated, turn for aid to their parents, but cities turn to the peoples who once founded them” (*πρὸς τοὺς ἀποικίσαντας δήμους*). Many of the acts of solidarity enumerated above illustrate this principle; they show that cities in diffi-

49. See P. Herrmann, “Die Selbstdarstellung der hellenistischen Stadt,” in *Acts of the Eighth Epigraphical Congress* (Athens, 1984): 108–119.

50. See L. Robert, *BCH* 59 (1935): 498ff.; D. Musti, “Sull’ idea di *συγγένεια* in iscrizioni greche,” *ASNP* 32 (1963): 225–239; Herrmann, “Selbstdarstellung,” 114ff.

51. On the relationship between metropolis and colony see J. Seibert, *Metropolis und Apoikie* (Würzburg, 1963) and A. J. Graham, *Colony and Mother City in Ancient Greece* (Manchester, 1964).

52. L. Robert gives two good examples in *BCH* 101 (1977): 120ff. (Argos and Aigai) and in *BCH* 102 (1978): 477ff. (Heracleia and the Aetolians). See also *SEG* 25.445, with the commentary of Habicht, *Pausanias’ Guide to Ancient Greece* (Berkeley, 1985), 67–69 (Stymphalus and Elatea), and the recently published decree of Xanthus for Kytinion, *REG* 101 (1988): 19ff. (the Aetolians and the descendants of Heracles).

53. *IuMagnesia* 20. This decree of the Cretans, supposed to have been issued at the time of the foundation of Magnesia, was evidently recognized as a forgery by the editor.

54. See also *SEG* 12.511 (Antiocheia on the Pyramus “invites” Antiocheia on the Cydnus) and *IuPergamon* 1.156 (Tegea and Pergamon on the initiative of Tegea).

culty resorted by preference to kindred cities. This is true of the Aeginetans, when they wanted to obtain their ransom (Pol. 9.42.5: *πρὸς τὰς συγγενεῖς πόλεις*); and of Heracleia on Mount Latmus, which successfully asked the Aetolians to intercede for them with King Ptolemy, although their kinship was purely mythical.<sup>55</sup> The Magnesians offered their mediation to Cnossus and Gortyn by invoking their—fictitious—kinship with the Cretans (*IuMagnaesia* 65). Acraiphia chose the city of Larissa as arbitrator for the settlement of conflicts with her neighbors because of the *syngeneia* that bound the Larissaeans with her and with all Boeotians (*IG* 7.4130 = Raeder 70). It was normal for a city that needed foreign judges for the settlement of its law cases to ask first a kindred city,<sup>56</sup> as it was natural for a colony in distress to ask its metropolis for aid or advice.<sup>57</sup> The Greeks took *syngeneia* more seriously than some modern historians are inclined to believe.<sup>58</sup>

As I stated above, the cities proclaimed their gratitude and goodwill to other cities at their annual festivals, in the presence of all the citizens and of the invited foreigners who had been honored with the *proedria*.<sup>59</sup> The decrees sometimes specify that the proclamation was to be made at all festivals of the city<sup>60</sup> or that it was to be renewed every year.<sup>61</sup> It was also a rule that the beneficiary of a grant or benefit asked her benefactors to proclaim her gratitude at their own festivals.<sup>62</sup> Thus, the citizens of the poleis were reminded every year at the beginning of their festivals of the ties that bound them to other poleis. The proclamations made by the heralds constantly revived in them the awareness that they were not an isolated community in a hostile world, but that they belonged to a commonwealth of communities where friendship, kinship, and solidarity between community and community were not empty words.

55. *FD* 3.3.144 with the commentary of Robert, *BCH* 102 (1978): 477ff.

56. See, e.g., *IuMagnaesia* 15 (Cnidus and Magnesia), *IuMagnaesia* 97 (Magnesia and Teos), *IuMagnaesia* 101 (Magnesia and Larbenus), *IuPriene* 50 (Erythrai and Priene), *Hellenica* 11/12, 204ff. (Samos and Lebedus), *IuMagnaesia* 65 (the fictitious *syngeneia* between Magnesia and the Cretans).

57. See *CIG* 2.1837b with the commentary of Robert, *BCH* 59 (1935): 489–507 (Pharos and Paros), and *SEG* 19.468 (Histros and Apollonia).

58. Musti, "Sull' idea di *συγγένεια*," 238f. mentions some of them.

59. See, e.g., *IuPriene* 54.31ff.: *ἐν[α] πάσῃ φανερόν ἦι, ὅτι ὁ δῆμος] ὁ Ἰασέων καὶ πόλ[ε]ις καὶ τοὺς ἀνδρας τοὺς ἀγα[θοὺς τιμᾶι].*

60. *IuMagnaesia* 101, 1.76–78.

61. *IuMagnaesia* 15b.4 and 97.48f.

62. The copy of the decree of Apollonia for Miletus found in the latter city (*Delphinion* 155) is an interesting illustration of this practice: it is headed by a crown surrounding the words *Ὁ δῆμος ὁ Ἀπολλωνιατῶν τῶν πρὸς τῶι Ρυνδάκωι τὸν δῆμον τὸν Μιλησίων*, which are exactly the terms of the proclamations made at the festivals.

## THE PANHELLENIC FESTIVALS

This commonwealth of Greek poleis had its regular meetings at the panhellenic festivals. It is again important to emphasize that these festivals were not gatherings of individuals; the competitions were not the confrontations of athletes fighting exclusively for their own glory. The panhellenic games were the festivals of the Greek poleis, which sent official delegations (*θεωρίαι*) to bring their offerings to the gods, to represent the community at the games, and to applaud their champions.<sup>63</sup> The victorious athletes brought glory and fame to their mother city, they consecrated to her the crown they had won and were rewarded by her with honors, privileges, and material advantages.<sup>64</sup>

We all know the famous statement of Isocrates in the *Panegyricus* (43):

Now the founders of our great festivals are justly praised for handing down to us a custom by which, having proclaimed a truce and resolved our pending quarrels, we come together in one place where, as we make our prayers and sacrifices in common, we are reminded of the kinship which exists among us and are made to feel more kindly toward each other for the future, reviving our old friendships and establishing new ties.

The epigraphical material gives us an impressive image of the popularity of the panhellenic games, athletic or musical or both, in the Hellenistic period. The presence of twenty thousand exiles at Olympia in the year 324 to hear the proclamation of Alexander the Great ordering the return of all exiles (Diod. 18.8 and Dein. 1.82), the crowd assembled at the Isthmia in 196 to listen to the decision of the Senate after the Second Macedonian War (Pol. 18.46), are due to exceptional circumstances. But the great list of the *thearodokoi* of Delphi from the end of the third century, which bore the names of more than five hundred cities, is unquestionably testimony for this popularity.<sup>65</sup> Moreover, we observe the creation of a series of new panhellenic festivals, both gymnastic and musical.<sup>66</sup> About 280 BC, Ptolemy II instituted the Ptolemaia in honor of his father. We have decrees of acceptance from the Delphic Amphictyony and from the League of the Nesiotai, and we hear of delegations from Kalynda, Samos, Cos, and Argos.<sup>67</sup> The Aetolians celebrated their vic-

63. P. Boesch, *Theoros* (Berlin, 1908); L. Ziehen, *RE* 15 A (1934), col. 2228ff., s.v. "theoria," and col. 2244ff., s.v. "theoros."

64. See L. Robert, *RPh* 41 (1967): 14ff. (not in the *Op. min. sel.*).

65. Published by A. Plassart, *BCH* 45 (1921): 1-85.

66. See Tarn and Griffith, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 113f.

67. See H. Volkman, *RE* 23 (1959), col. 1578ff., s.v. "Ptolemaia."

tory over the Celts by inviting the Greek world to their Soteria.<sup>68</sup> In 243/2 the city of Cos dispatched embassies in all directions, even to Macedonia, Sicily, and Italy, to invite kings and cities to their penteteric Asclepieia, a musical and gymnastic festival.<sup>69</sup> Some time later, Aratus of Sicyon flattered his ally King Antigonos Doson by inventing the Antigoneia (Plut. *Ar.* 45.2). At the end of the century, Magnesia on the Maeander organized a spectacular and successful campaign for her penteteric games for Artemis Leucophryene. In the unique collection of decrees of acceptance found in that city,<sup>70</sup> we have answers from the kings, from the Cretan cities, and from most of the cities of the continent as far away as Ithaca, Corcyra, and Epidamnus; from Syracuse only a few years after her destruction by the Romans; and also answers from the other end of the Greek world, from Antiocheia in Persis, from Seleuceia on the Tigris, and from Seleuceia on the Red Sea.

The archives of Cos and Magnesia reveal the spirit of the institution of these new festivals and of the panhellenic games in general. Their ambition is to bring about the participation of all Greek poleis.<sup>71</sup> The envoys of Magnesia recall the good deeds of their ancestors in favor of many other Greek poleis as documented by the oracles of Apollo, the poets, and the honorary decrees of the poleis.<sup>72</sup> The decrees of acceptance praise the Magnesians for their piety toward the gods and for their philhellenism, they promise to send a delegation, and they appoint a citizen to give hospitality to the envoys who will come in the future to announce the festival every four years. Some decrees are of a more personal character. The people of Ithaca are thankful to the envoys for taking pains to visit them so far away (*IuMagnesia* 36.25–26). Antiocheia of Persis reminds us that at the time of Antiochus I the city of Magnesia had sent her a good number of colonists, thus establishing an authentic tie of kinship (*IuMagnesia* 61.14–20). We learn from the decrees of Ca-

68. See F. Pfister, *RE* 3 A (1927), col. 1223ff., s.v. "Soteria," and the decree of Abdera in *BCH* 64/5 (1940/41): 100ff.

69. Herzog and Klaffenbach, *Asylieurkunden aus Kos*. The festival is defined as penteteric, gymnastic, and musical in the decree of Camarina (no. 12), 15–16.

70. O. Kern, *Die Inschriften von Magnesia am Maeander* (Berlin, 1900), nos. 16, 18–64.

71. *IuMagnesia* 44.16ff.: παρεκάλουν τε καὶ ὤωντο δεῖν παραδεξαμένους, καθὼς καὶ αἱ λοιπαὶ πόλεις αἱ Ἑλλανίδες, μετέχειν τὰς τε θυσίας καὶ τοῦ ἀγώνος. *IuMagnesia* 61.25f.: κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν Ἑλλάδα.

72. *IuMagnesia* 61.36ff.: τὰς χρείας ἃς παρέσχηται Μάγνητες πολλαῖς τῶν Ἑλληνίδων πόλεων. *IuMagnesia* 36.6ff.: ἀπελογίζαντο τὰς γεγενημένας ὑπὸ τῶν προγόνων αὐτῶν ἐν τοῖς Ἑλλανασ εὐεργεσίας . . . διὰ τε τῶν χρησμών καὶ διὰ τῶν ποιητῶν καὶ διὰ τῶν ψαφισμάτων τῶν ὑπαρχόντων αὐτοῖς παρὰ ταῖς πολίους καλῶν τε καὶ ἐνδόξων. See also *Syll*<sup>3</sup> 630.14ff.; [ἡ εὐνοια] πρὸς ἅπαντας τοὺς Ἑλλήνας καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν πρὸς τὰς πόλεις.

marina and Gela for the Asclepieia of Cos that these cities had answered the appeal of Timoleon and the Corinthians favorably and had sent colonists to Sicily.<sup>73</sup> As Isocrates states, the panhellenic festivals really were an opportunity to revive old feelings and to create new ties.

They also gave the Greeks a chance to express spontaneously their sentiments for leading statesmen and leading powers. The unpopularity of Dionysius I of Syracuse, stirred up by the orator Lysias, provoked serious incidents at the Olympic Games of 388 (Diod. 14.109). Philip II was hissed at but did not care (Plut. *Mor.* 179a and 457–458). Antigonos Doston was praised by the Spartans as a savior and a benefactor in the presence of all Greeks (Pol. 9.36.5). Philopoemen was applauded at the Nemean Games as a champion of Greek freedom against Philip V (Paus. 8.50.3), while the pro-Roman Callicrates and his party were so hated, if we are to believe Polybius, that at the Antigoneia people refused to bathe with them and booed and hissed when one of them was proclaimed victor (Pol. 30.29). The panhellenic festivals were the agora of the Greek world, the place for the exchange of information, for political discussions, for comment and gossip. The talks and rumors that preceded and followed the proclamation of Flamininus at the Isthmus in 196 give us a good idea of the atmosphere.

Finally, these festivals provided the Greeks with a means of expressing their identity. I shall illustrate this by relating two incidents that seem to me particularly revealing. The first, narrated by Diodorus (17.100–101), occurred during the expedition of Alexander in India. At a banquet and after much drinking, a famous Athenian boxer, Dioxippus, was challenged by a Macedonian soldier named Coragus. The contest took place a few days later in the presence of the whole army. The Macedonians and their king favored Coragus because he was “one of them,” while the Greeks encouraged the Athenian. To the great disappointment and anger of Alexander, Dioxippus was victorious and “left the field winner of a resounding victory and bedecked with ribbons by his compatriots, as having brought a common glory to all Greeks.” The other incident, which we know from Polybius, is in the same vein. Polybius, who tries to explain, or more exactly to minimize, the popularity of King Perseus among the Greeks at the beginning of the Third Macedonian War, compares the feelings of the Greeks with the reactions of the public at athletic games. They are inclined to support the weaker against the stronger even if the latter is their champion. The historian proves his point by telling the story of the Theban boxer Cleitomachus, whose invincibility had made him the most famous fighter of his time. King

73. Herzog and Klaffenbach, *Asylierkunden aus Kos*, nos. 12.9f., 13.6ff., where the people of Cos are called *συνοικιστάι*.

Ptolemy was eager to have him beaten and trained a challenger. As the two athletes fought against each other at the Olympic Games, the crowd first took the part of the challenger, delighted as they were to see a fighter courageous enough to brave the invincible Cleitomachus. Cleitomachus was irritated by this attitude of the public, withdrew for a while from the fight to recover his breath, turned to the crowd, and asked them what they meant by cheering on Aristonicus; whether they did not understand that he, Cleitomachus, was now fighting for the glory of Greece and Aristonicus for that of King Ptolemy; whether they would prefer to see an Egyptian conquer the Greeks and win the Olympic crown, or to hear a Theban and Boeotian proclaimed by the herald as victor. The sentiments of the spectators changed at once and, concluded Polybius, Aristonicus was beaten by the crowd rather than by Cleitomachus.

As we see, the unity of the Greek commonwealth was not an idealistic abstraction. Despite geographical dispersion and different conditions of life, the Greeks remained a remarkably homogeneous society throughout the Hellenistic period. This homogeneity expressed itself at the numerous panhellenic festivals, old and new, which were more than ever meetings of the Greeks as Greeks. If we remember that there were several such festivals every year, to which hundreds of cities sent delegations to represent them and to offer sacrifices to the gods, if we imagine all these people spending several days together, attending the games, exchanging information, and discussing political or other events, then we understand better how the Greeks were able, in a changing world, to preserve their identity.

### CONCLUSION

The traditional view that the Greek polis was, "by definition," an independent and individualistic city-state has distorted our understanding of the function of the polis in the Hellenistic world. It has been widely admitted that Philip II and Alexander the Great were responsible for the decline and fall of the polis, that the polis ceased to be the frame in which Greek civilization achieved its perfection. It has even been said that after Chaeronea the Greek polis no longer existed and that the Greek ceased to be a citizen of his city and became a citizen of the world.

The available material, especially the inscriptions, reveals that the polis was, first of all, a "partnership in living well," a community of a particular kind involving a specifically Greek way of living together. And it appears that in the Hellenistic period the polis preserved its identity better than ever. The gymnasium and the theater, which concretized this identity, became more and more the symbols of the Greek education of

body and mind, of the superiority of Greek culture and the Greek way of life. They differentiated the Greeks from other people, from the Jews, the Egyptians, or the Syrians.

But the polis had another, no less important function: it was the link between individual citizens and the Greek commonwealth as a whole. For the Greeks were not members of the Greek commonwealth as individuals, they belonged to it as members of a Greek polis. It was the function of the polis to create and entertain relations of friendship and solidarity with other poleis, it was its function to send official delegations to the great panhellenic festivals. The poleis were the subjects of what I called interhellenic relations. And this network of interhellenic relations between cities made of the Greek world a community of communities, a homogeneous society of poleis.

The scholars who have shown some interest in this network of relationships between cities and cities in the Hellenistic period consider this "overture" of the polis to the outside world to be the result of the political decline of Greece after Chaeronea. They think that the Greek cities discovered, at last, "the consciousness of their unity and solidarity, of the existence of vital common interests among them," that "Greek 'political' exclusiveness gradually gave way to a broader conception, of a kind of brotherhood among all who were entitled to call themselves 'Hellenes.'" <sup>74</sup>

This belief results from the evidence we have. Our knowledge of the ties of friendship and solidarity among cities depends mainly, and for some aspects almost exclusively, on the inscriptions. The literary sources, historians, orators, and philosophers, are not particularly concerned with the everyday life of the average polis and mention only incidentally these kinds of peaceful and—in a certain sense—banal relations. Since the epigraphical material is rather scanty for the Classical period and totally nonexistent for the Archaic, it is finally the lack of information that explains the common view that there was no or only very little solidarity among the Greek communities before Alexander.

But, despite the limitations of our evidence, we have in the literary sources some indications that this solidarity already existed in the Classical period and even before. We find in Herodotus several examples of solidarity which are quite similar to those attested by the inscriptions for the Hellenistic period. It was in recognition of old benefits that Sparta and Corinth came to the aid of the Samians against Polycrates (Her. 3.47–48). The Eretrians sent assistance to the Milesians for similar reasons (5.99). The Spartans had granted the Attic deme of Deceleia *ateleia*

74. Rostovtzeff, *SEHWW* 2:1109.

and *proedria* in acknowledgment of a—mythical—benefit of the Deceleans at the time of the Trojan War (9.73.3). The Milesians were bound together by a tie of reciprocal hospitality with Sybaris and decreed a public mourning at the fall of this city (6.21). The Milesians asked the Parians to send them their best citizens to settle their internal conflicts, an interesting precedent for the practice of calling foreign judges (5.28). The kinship of all Greeks in blood and speech and the likeness of their way of life asserted by Herodotus in a famous statement (8.144.2) was not an idealistic proclamation of faith, it expressed the fact that, despite their quarrels and disputes, the Greek poleis already in early times constituted a commonwealth of communities bound together by an intense system of relationships.

In fact, the homogeneity of the Greek world with its network of friendships goes back to the times of Homer, with the essential difference, however, that the world of Homer is a world of individuals, not a world of cities.<sup>75</sup> The Homeric heroes are bound together by the consciousness of a common origin (they are all offspring of Zeus), by ties of hospitality and intermarriage. They pay visits to each other. They exchange gifts and counter-gifts. They help each other in cases of necessity for common undertakings. They practice athletics in common and listen to the rhapsodes who sing about the heroes of the past. The unity of the Greek world is a creation of the Dark Ages.

The rise of the polis in the seventh and sixth centuries did not destroy this system of personal relationships, which survived through the Archaic and the Classical periods.<sup>76</sup> But the polis, the community, progressively superseded the individual as the subject of these relations. The poleis established with each other relationships that were of the same kind and were based on the same principles as the personal ties of Homeric society. Thus, we find in Herodotus cities bound to other cities or to kings by ties of hospitality (*ξενία*), which, in a typically Homeric way, are concretized by exchanges of gifts and counter-gifts: for instance, Sparta with Croesus, with Amasis, and with the Samians (Her. 1.69–70 and 3.47). The privileges granted by the Spartans to the Deceleans, because these had revealed to the Dioscuri the place where their sister

75. See M. I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus*, 2d ed. (London, 1977). I share the opinion of A. Lesky, *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur*, 3d ed. (Bern and Munich, 1971), 73ff., that Homer essentially reflects the society and values of his own time (the problem of the “historicity” of the Trojan War is, of course, quite another question).

76. See the interesting book by G. Herman, *Ritualised Friendship and the Greek City* (Cambridge, 1987), and the remarkable, but unfortunately little known, article of A. Heuss, “Die archaische Zeit Griechenlands als geschichtliche Epoche,” *A&A* 2 (1946): 26–62 (reprinted in *Zur griechischen Staatskunde*, ed. F. Gschnitzer, WdF 96 (Darmstadt, 1969), 36–96, at 68ff. (the best pages I know on Archaic tyranny).

Helen was hidden, are another nice illustration of this evolution. The consciousness of unity and solidarity among all Greeks is not a late discovery of the Hellenistic period: it is a direct inheritance from Homeric society; it is the result of the progressive transformation of a society of individual aristocrats into a society of poleis.

The rise of the polis is the victory of the community over the individual, the family, and the clan.<sup>77</sup> The life of most Greek cities was a constant fight for survival and independence, a fight against neighbors for land or for cattle, a fight against ambitious powers or against rivals; but it was not a fight against the unity of the Greek commonwealth as such. There was no incompatibility between political independence from neighbors and from hegemonic powers on the one hand, and solidarity with the Greek world on the other. The cities inherited from Homeric society the consciousness that all together, whether large or small, were related to each other by a common origin, a common way of life, and a common destiny. And despite their conflicts and wars, they were able to keep the unity of the Greek commonwealth throughout their history. The totally individualistic poleis, living in splendid isolation and caring nothing for one another, like the Cyclopes in their caves, never did exist.

77. See Glotz, *Cité grecque*, 5: "En réalité, la cité grecque, tout en conservant l'institution familiale, n'a pu grandir qu'à ses dépens. . . . La cité a dû longtemps lutter contre le génos, et chacune de ses victoires a été obtenue par la suppression d'une servitude patriarcale." See also Heuss, "Archaische Zeit Griechenlands," 57ff.