

Crete in Aristotle's *Politics*

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CRETE exercised an enduring attraction upon philosophical advocates of the closed society.¹ Plato's Magnesia was to be founded well inland on the Mesará plain, and the Academy's concern with the potent myth of Cretan law and order is again manifest in the Platonic *Minos*. But interest in Cretan *ἐννομία* did not begin in the mid-fourth century. Long before Plato wrote the *Laws* the Spartans had told Herodotos (1.65.4) that they believed their constitution to have been brought from Crete by Lykourgos; Charon of Lampsakos, towards the end of the fifth century, had in his *Kretika* (*FGrHist* 262 τ 1) expounded the laws of Minos; and later still Ephoros (*FGrHist* 70 F 145–49) had compiled an extensive and admiring ethnography.

But it is to the second book of Aristotle's *Politics* that we turn for a critical examination of the Cretan polity. The philosopher compares Crete with Carthage and with Sparta, but his study is not solely of value as a comparison of states alleged to be well-ordered. In 2.10 he treats of several topics peculiar to Crete, and they deserve to be considered alongside the epigraphic and archaeological evidence.

It is remarkable that Aristotle is able to generalise at all about the Cretan city states. The island is over one hundred and fifty miles long and many of the cities were hard of access. Yet Aristotle, who mentions only Lyttos from amongst the traditional hundred, writes as though they all had *κόσμοι*, a *βουλή*, and an assembly. The inscriptions show that his generalisation was sound, but how is the uniformity to be explained? A persisting Minoan and Achaean heritage after the fall of the palaces cannot be the whole explanation, because, even if survivors held on at Praisos in the Eteocretan east, in the Lassithi

¹ Versions of this paper were read to the Hibernian Hellenists at Ballymascanlon on 6 March 1971 and at the Triennial Meeting of the Hellenic and Roman Societies in Cambridge, England, on 30 July 1971. I am grateful to those who contributed to the discussions on both occasions. A few changes have been made in the text and I have added some notes, but the essay remains substantially as it was delivered in Cambridge.

mountains at Karphi and in the western redoubts of the Kydonians, there was a severe rupture at the end of the Bronze Age.² Part of the explanation of constitutional uniformity would seem to be that the Achaean and Dorian incomers responded in a concerted manner to the problem of absorbing the indigenous population into the society wherein they were to form the new ascendancy. Aristotle's comments on Lyttos help to explain what happened.

Here the newcomers did not simply drive the natives out. There was a compromise between the immigrants, who came from Lakonia, and the Minoan remnant. "When the colonists settled," he said, "they found the inhabitants at that time living under a constitution which they then adopted and still retain. And to this day the dwellers in the countryside"—that is to say the subordinate, non-citizen *περίοικοι*—"use these laws unchanged, believing Minos to have framed them in the first place." So, according to Aristotle, the newcomers took over much of the indigenous social and political system, and conquest entailed adaptation.

In Lyttos itself, as in many other Cretan cities, signs of compromise are to be seen in the non-Doric aspect of some of the tribe-names. Of the three Dorian tribes only the Dymanes are attested in the city; but we find *Δίφυλοι* and perhaps also Hyakinthioi—the last, if correctly identified, would however be descendants of Amyklans and so of non-Dorian immigrants from Lakonia.³ A more striking instance of survival from an older order is to be seen at Dreros, not far from Lyttos, at the western limit of the Eteocretan country. Here the inscribed legal codes dating from the seventh century remind us of the tradition of Crete's pioneering rôle in establishing systems of law. Dr Jeffery suggests that the practice of codification may have been inherited by the Dorians from the Eteocretans.⁴ This notion looks especially attractive when we recall that the inscribed blocks from the temple of Apollo Delphinios at Dreros included both Greek and Eteocretan texts. The combination vividly symbolises Aristotle's thesis

² S. Alexiou, *Minoan Civilization* (Heraklion 1969) 67–69, and for disturbance and continuity in the latest Minoan period see V. R. d'A. Desborough, *The Last Mycenaeans and their Successors* (Oxford 1964) 166–95.

³ *Inscriptiones Creticae* I 182. See also E. Kirsten, "Vordorische Griechen in den Dorier-Poleis Kretas?" *Πεπραγμένα* of the Second International Cretological Congress, II (Athens 1968) 61–72; F. Kiechle, *Lakonien und Sparta* (Munich 1963) 81 (on Hyakinthioi); and cf. S. Spyridakis, *La Parola del Passato* 24 (1969) 265–68 (on 'Zusatzphylen' in Crete).

⁴ L. H. Jeffery, *The Local Scripts of Archaic Greece* (Oxford 1961) 310.

that the immigrants adopted laws inherited from the indigenous Cretans. In the Dark Age these νόμοι were part of the oral tradition, but the Cretans early took the opportunity to exhibit some of them in writing, as the Drierian inscriptions show. Thereafter oral and inscribed νόμοι coexisted. Ephoros (*FGrHist* 70 F 149.20) tells how boys were taught to chant odes ἐκ τῶν νόμων, and the task of remembering the laws fell to the Μνηστον. One such μνάμων Spensithios also had the duty to ensure that the laws of his state were correctly inscribed. In this rôle he was called ποινικαστάς, as we learn from a recently published inscription.⁵

About the mechanics of the compromise the *Politics* says nothing. But certainly some residual rights of the indigenous, and now dependent, stock were recognised. The colonisation of the Pontic Herakleia provides an analogy. The first colonists—Milesians, according to Strabo's account (542)—compelled the native Mariandynians to serve as their helots. The natives could be sold, but not beyond the city's territory; so they retained some stake in the land. Strabo compares the Mariandynians with the Thessalian Penestai and with the Cretan Mnoia. The latter he calls a national gathering—a κύνοδος. It appears, then, that the Mnoia, like the Mariandynians, could not be sold abroad as though they were chattel slaves. Aristotle does not refer by name to the Mnoia, who properly are the state serfs as distinct from the private serfs. He refers to the serfs, both public and private, by the generic term περίοικοι. Because they retained their ancestral customs the περίοικοι were less ready to revolt than the Spartiates' helots, and besides, as Aristotle points out, Crete's remoteness had the effect of ξενηλασία. There was no one to prompt the serfs to rise against their overlords, as the Argives and Arkadians encouraged the Messenians. But that was not the whole story: the Cretans of the Dorian plantation wisely treated their subordinates less brutally than did the Spartiates their helotry. They did not try—indeed they could not afford—to wreck the continuity of rural life or to interfere with the 'customs of Minos.' Α κρυπτεία is not so obviously a part of the Cretan way of life as of the Spartan.

The political compromise and the tenacity of the natives are also illustrated by the persistence in Crete of non-Hellenic names of barbarous aspect. Consider the month Komnokarios at Deros, or Kyrbe,

⁵ L. H. Jeffery and A. Morpurgo-Davies, *Kadmos* 9 (1970) 118–54.

the old name of Hierapytna. The latter recalls the *κύρβαντες*, the Cretan armed dancers, and perhaps also *κύρβεις*, the old Aegean word for inscribed lawcodes.⁶ *πρύλις*, a Homeric and a Gortynian word meaning 'footsoldier,'⁷ and *πρύτανις* 'king' may well belong to the same pre-Greek stratum. The feminine tribe-name Pharkaris at Praisos cannot be explained as Greek, nor can Kamiris at Hierapytna, and Professor Willetts is surely correct to suggest that these singulars used instead of the usual masculine plurals as tribe names are evidence of non-Dorian elements in the citizenry, especially since they occur in eastern Crete.⁸ Kamiris is a tribe defined not by kinship, but by a locality, Kamiros; it would include persons of Eteocretan stock dwelling in ancestral territory there.

In Hellenistic times the Cretans' sense of interstate community found expression in the loose ties of the *κοινόν*, and this despite the traditional, almost ritualised warfare between member states. (In the wars the longstanding gentlemen's agreement was that neither side should encourage the other's *περίοικοι* to revolt.) The origins of the *κοινόν* lie much earlier than the Hellenistic age, however, and there is a hint even in the brief excursus of the *Politics* that Aristotle knew of a tendency to federalism in Crete. In saying that distance has the effect of *ξηνηλασία* he writes of the island as though it were a single *polis*, and he refers to *οἱ Κρήτες* as though they were capable of acting in concert, even if they no longer "participate in dominion oversea" as they did in the time of Minos.⁹ The question therefore arises—and it has already been asked by Professor van Effenterre¹⁰—"How real was the sense of community amongst the Cretans in Hellenic times?" There are two pieces of evidence pointing to the existence of something resembling a *κοινόν* in Crete early in the fifth century B.C. First, when Xerxes was about to invade Greece, the Cretans asked Delphi whether they should take part in the defence of Hellas. Herodotos, who states (7.169.1) that the enquiry to Apollo was sent *κοινῆ*, reports

⁶ Cf. Phot. s.v. *κύρβεις*: . . . Θεόφραστος δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν Κρητικῶν Κορυβάντων· τῶν γὰρ Κορυβαντικῶν ἱερῶν οἶον ἀντίγραφα αὐτοὺς εἶναι; and see Jeffery, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.4) 53 n.2.

⁷ Schol. V *ad Il.* 12.77.

⁸ R. F. Willetts, *Aristocratic Society in Ancient Crete* (London 1955) 254–55 n.1.

⁹ 1272b15–22. Compare W. L. Newman's comment in *The Politics of Aristotle II* (Oxford 1887) 359: ". . . Aristotle seems to forget that he is speaking not of one State, but of the many States of Crete."

¹⁰ H. van Effenterre, *La Crète et le monde grec de Platon à Polybe* (Paris 1948, repr. 1968) 27–28.

that the god, having reminded them of Minos' anger because they took part in the Trojan war, advised them not to fight. The advice was heeded, and it is clear that the Cretans were capable of taking joint action when confronted by a threat from outside. The consultation *κοινῆ* does not presuppose an elaborate federal structure, however; only a formal recognition of a common interest in foreign affairs. But as Van Effenterre maintains, the unitary tendency is already there.

The second piece of evidence is linked to the first: it is the story of Minos' bones. These purported relics of the great king's death in Sicily at Kamikos were sent to the Cretans by Theron of Akragas. Diodoros says (4.79.4) that the bones were sent to the Cretans, *τοῖς Κρησί*, not simply to the Knossians. Orestes' bones symbolised Spartan claims to hegemony in the Peloponnese, but Minos' bones are not a sign of a bid by Knossos to dominate Crete. Theron gave to the Cretans a sentimental reminder of their ancient Minoan unity, and the Delphic priesthood exploited the antiquarian sense of community. Herein lay the idea of *συγκρητισμός*, which Plutarch helpfully explains in these words: "The Cretans often quarrelled amongst themselves and fought wars, but when enemies came from abroad they sank their differences and stood together, and that is what they called *συγκρητισμός*."¹¹

But Aristotle recognised that in the remote past Cretan unity meant more than solidarity against an external threat and a temporary stop to squabbles. Crete, he believed, was naturally suited to dominate the Hellenic world. "It lies," he says, "right across our sea, on whose coasts all around dwell mostly Greeks. At one end the Peloponnese is not far away and at the Asiatic end lie the Triopion and Rhodes. This enabled Minos to build up a maritime empire; he made some of the islands subject to himself. To others he sent settlers; and in the end he even attacked Sicily, where he met his death near Kamikos." The last point recurs in the Aristotelian Constitution of Minoa in Sicily; in the treatise Minos was said to have imposed Cretan customs in that part of the island.¹² Aristotle's interest in this Cretan legend is not purely antiquarian. For the discussion of the Minoan empire shows him to

¹¹ Plut. *De frat.amor.* 490b. See also A. Brelich, *Guerre, agoni e culti nella Grecia arcaica* (Bonn 1961) 71.

¹² Herakleides Lembos, *Excerpta Politiarum* 59 (ed. M. Dilts, *GRBM* 5 [Durham (N.C.) 1971]).

have been ready to consider political arrangements other than those of the city-state to be suited to the Hellenic world.¹³ What Minos had done in the past, another heroic figure, if not a Philip or an Alexander, could aim to do now—he could be leader of a commonwealth in Greece and extend its power beyond the Aegean. The date of the excursus in *Politics* Book II is not clear—it was certainly written after the invasion of Crete by Phalaikos and his *ξενικός πόλεμος* there. But Aristotle writes with the idea of a new Hellenic *ἡγεμών* in mind, and, as Dr Stern has recently emphasised, his interest in the city-state system did not cause him to ignore the advantages of larger political groupings.¹⁴ “The Greek stock . . .” says Aristotle, “shows a capacity for governing every other people—if only it could once achieve political unity.”¹⁵ In short, Aristotle could not ignore the problems created by factionalism within and between so many Greek cities.

The problems are aptly illustrated by Aristotle's own account of the perpetual squabbles in the Cretan cities. In his opinion Crete's reputation for law and order simply did not fit the facts, for, he says, the state-systems frequently broke down because of the rivalry between competing groups of nobles and their adherents. The retainers, we may add, remained loyal to their leaders because the ordinary citizenry were sure that they would stay a cut above the *περίοικοι* in status. The factionalism extended even to the offspring of the ascendancy: the boys of the leading families, Ephoros noted (*FGrHist* 70 F 149.20), tried to recruit the largest herds or *ἀγέλαι* and it was generally the father of the head boy who became *ἄρχων* of the herd. Thus in the ritual battles of the herds the dignity of a leading family would be at stake.

The political competition was made worse by the practice of selecting *κόσμοι* from certain *γένη* only, as Aristotle insists. This last point has been taken up recently by Dr S. Spyridakis, in a stimulating article; he maintains that Aristotle was mistaken in thinking that the *κόσμοι* were selected *ἐκ τινῶν γενῶν*.¹⁶ Hellenistic inscriptions, he points out, show the *κόσμοι* holding office according to their tribes. Thus from Hierapytna a second-century inscription lists ten names *ἐπὶ τῶν Δυμάγων κοσμόντω[ν]*.¹⁷ Spyridakis therefore argues that *κόσμοι* were ap-

¹³ R. Weil, *Aristote et l'histoire* (Paris 1960) 408.

¹⁴ Samuel M. Stern, *Aristotle and the World State* (Columbia [S.C.]/Oxford 1970) 48–49.

¹⁵ *Politics* 7.7, esp. 1327b30–32.

¹⁶ “Aristotle on the Election of *κόσμοι*,” *ParPass* 24 (1969) 265–68.

¹⁷ *Inscr.Cret.* III, p.57 no.9.

pointed according to *φυλαί*, not according to *γένη*. His inference is not obligatory, however. The fourth-century evidence is not adequate to show that appointment by tribes obtained then, and even if nominally the *κόσμοι* were appointed from all the tribes in turn, they may well have been selected in practice only from certain *γένη* within each tribe. Aristotle says that there were ten *κόσμοι* holding office at one time; inscriptions usually show fewer than ten, the reason being that the leading families preferred to exclude inferiors from office if there were not enough candidates out of the top drawer.

The result of continuous *ἀκοσμία*, the very reverse of *εὐνομία*, was not a polity at all; it was a blatant *δυναστεία*, Aristotle says. Nor was the endemic trouble something new, as Pindar's poignant address to Ergoteles reminds us: "Son of Philanor, in truth like a cock in the yard, | The fame of your running would have shed its leaves | Ingloriously by your kinsmen's hearth, | Had not the quarrel of men with men | Robbed you of your Knossian fatherland."¹⁸ For all the tradition of lawgiving and all the laconising philosophers' talk about *εὐνομία*, the classical Cretan city, too, could be no better than a farmyard cockpit.¹⁹ Yet there were compensations, especially for the subordinate citizens not immediately involved in the feuds of the oligarchic dynasties. The chief blessing lay in the *ἀνδρεία* or messes.

Aristotle emphasises the superiority of the Cretan mess economy to Sparta's. In Sparta failure to pay the full standard mess-due, *τὸ τεταγμένον*, could lead to pauperisation and loss of status. But the Cretan citizens benefited from the principle 'from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs', because each citizen paid a fixed proportion of his income in kind, not a fixed amount, to his mess *κοινοτέρως*. The contributions were then shared in the messes. The citizen-landowners were thus protected from impoverishment if their crops failed when their neighbours' did not. Aristotle makes plain that the citizenry as a whole also benefited from the produce of state lands—this much is clear in spite of the uncertainty of the text here: "Out of the entire revenue, both agricultural produce, whether of crop or livestock, yielded by public land and the dues paid by the

¹⁸ Pind. *Ol.* 12.13–15, transl. C. M. Bowra.

¹⁹ With the *scholia vetera* and against Farnell, *The Works of Pindar* II (London 1932) 87, I take *ἐνδομάχας ἄτ' ἀλέκτωρ* to refer to Ergoteles' involvement in civil strife at Knossos before his exile, not to his athletic reputation outside Crete. But adoption of Farnell's interpretation would not diminish the value of Pindar's testimony concerning *στάσις* in Knossos.

serfs, one sum is set aside for the gods and for public services generally and another for the common meals. In this way all, men, women and children, are maintained at the public expense."²⁰ More detail is added by local Cretan writers—Dosiadas, Sosikrates, Pyrgion—but Aristotle writes with the essential facts about the welfare economy in mind: shared dues and benefits; payment of a proportion of the individual's income, not of a fixed amount; a distinction between public and private land (and by implication between the *μνοῖα* and the *ἀφαμιῶται* who worked the two types of land);²¹ and lastly, the consequent specialised division of the population into an agricultural class and a warrior citizenry. The existence of communal land in Crete has been doubted—most recently by Dr Jeffery and Professor Morpurgo-Davies in their admirable publication of the late archaic Cretan inscription recording the duties and privileges of the *Mnamon Spensithios*.²² But, in spite of the uncertain evidence of the inscriptions it is, I think, fairly clear from the distinction between types of serf that a

²⁰ Pol. 1272a17–21 ed. W. D. Ross (OCT): ἀπό πάντων γὰρ τῶν γινομένων καρπῶν τε καὶ βοσκημάτων δημοσίων, καὶ ἐκ τῶν φόρων οὐς φέρουσιν οἱ περίοικοι, τέτακται μέρος τὸ μὲν πρὸς τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ τὰς κοινὰς λειτουργίας, τὸ δὲ τοῖς συσσιτίοις, ὥστ' ἐκ κοινοῦ τρέφεσθαι πάντας, καὶ γυναῖκας καὶ παῖδας καὶ ἄνδρας. The manuscripts have ἀπό πάντων γὰρ τῶν γινομένων καρπῶν τε καὶ βοσκημάτων ἐκ τῶν δημοσίων καὶ φόρων κτλ, *vel sim.*, and they are followed by Jean Aubonnet, *Aristote, Politique, Livres I et II* (Paris 1960) 87. Aristotle's concern here is with state revenues and their redistribution. He says nothing here about payments by individuals to their *ἀνδρεία*, but he does not explicitly deny that such payments were made in Crete in his day. Dosiadas, *FGrHist* 458 F 2, is good evidence that individual tithes were paid directly to the *ἀνδρεία* ca. 300 B.C. in Lyttos: οἱ δὲ Λύττιοι συνάγουσι μὲν τὰ κοινὰ συσσίτια οὕτως· ἕκαστος τῶν γινομένων καρπῶν ἀναφέρει τὴν δεκάτην εἰς τὴν ἑταιρίαν καὶ τὰς τῆς πόλεως προσόδους, ἃς διανέμουσιν οἱ προεστηκότες τῆς πόλεως εἰς τοὺς ἐκάστων οἴκους· τῶν δὲ δούλων ἕκαστος Αἰγυναῖον φέρει στατήρα κατὰ κεφάλην... The text is awkward as it stands. If, with Haase, we delete ἃς, individuals are said to pay directly to their *ἀνδρεία*, and the state distributes to citizens' families (out of income from state lands gathered in the state store, I suggest). The serfs, presumably, pay their staters (at what intervals?) directly to the state. Their contribution corresponds to the *φόροι* of the *περίοικοι* in Pol. 1272a18, but is here not made in kind. On the textual problem see D. Lotze, *METAΞΥ ΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΔΟΥΛΩΝ* (Berlin 1959) 10 n.1, and Jacoby on *FGrHist* 458 F 2.

²¹ For the distinction see Sosikrates 461 F 4 (Athenaios 263F): “τὴν μὲν κοινήν” φησί “δουλείαν οἱ Κρήτες καλοῦσι μνοῖαν, τὴν δ' ἰδίαν ἀφαμιώτας, τοὺς δὲ ὑπηκόους περιόικους” [ὑπηκόους περιόικους Dobree, π.ύ. A]. Sosikrates means that *περίοικοι* is a general term embracing both private and public serfs. There was also a special class of persons in Crete known simply as *περίοικοι*; they were members of subject communities possessing a measure of local self-government. See J. A. O. Larsen, *CP* 31 (1936) 11–22. In Pol. 1271b30 Aristotle seems to refer to *περίοικοι* of this type in the territory of Lyttos: Willetts, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.8) 38.

²² *op.cit.* (*supra* n.5) 151–52. They suggest that ἐκ τῶν δημοσίων in Pol. 1272a18, if that is what Aristotle wrote (see *supra* n.20), refers simply to the public ‘pool,’ and they doubt

distinction between state land and individual holdings did exist in Crete. The state land would in part have consisted of territory once held by the kings.

Aristotle believed that the mess-system and the closely related arrangements in land tenure had a Minoan origin. He returns to the subject at 7.10 where the separation of warriors from farmers, who ensure that the mess-economy works, is said to be the invention of Sesostris in Egypt and of Minos in Crete. That agriculturalists in Crete did not normally bear, or dare to bear, arms is clear from the vigorous rhythms of Hybrias the Cretan who exults over the *Μηνοια, τοὶ δὲ μὴ πολμῶντ' ἔχειν δόρυ καὶ ξίφος*.²³ But is the mess-system really of Minoan origin? Could it not be another consequence of the compromise between native and immigrant in Dark Age Crete? I do not know the answers to these questions, but certainly Aristotle's belief in the high antiquity of the mess-system ought not to be rejected outright. The Hellenes of Crete had an elaborate system for redistributing income in kind. At Gortyn, for example, the *κόσμος ξένιος* looked after the interests of non-citizens and *περίοικοι*, and the *καρποδαισταί* attended to the dispensing of produce from the state store. Analogously, the Minoans from early in the second millennium B.C. onwards were much occupied, though in very different political circumstances, with the collection, recording and distribution of animals and produce, as is clear from the Linear records of the palace economies. The Minoan bureaucracy collapsed, but the tradition of sharing could well have continued amongst the Eteocretans in their upland redoubts, the *κρησφύγετα*, and it is not wild to suggest that the practice may have been borrowed from them by the Dorian newcomers, who when they arrived in Crete were compelled to exchange a settled for a nomadic way of life and in so doing took over many of the indigenous cults. This leads to the further hypothesis that the Cretan system of messes was in turn borrowed by the Spartans, as

that there is any allusion to public land in the context. In B11-12 of the agreement between Spensithios and the Dataleis it is ordained that "as lawful dues to the *andreion* he shall give ten axes' (weight) of dressed meat" (pp.124-25). Thus he pays a fixed amount, not a tithe, but the arrangement may be exceptional because he is a prosperous person who can be expected to pay a regular amount; he is not an ordinary citizen facing the possibility of lean years. The fifty jugs of must due annually to Spensithios (A11-12) may come from the state store or directly from state land; there is no sign that it was paid directly to him by another citizen (but contrast Jeffery and Morpurgo-Davies, p.152).

²³ D. L. Page, *Poetae Melici Graeci* fr.909.6.

Aristotle believed; Lykourgos, he thought, had imitated Crete when reforming the Spartan state.

To discuss the problem of Sparta's alleged indebtedness to Crete would require another essay, and I shall content myself with remarking that some historians seem to me too confident in rejecting Aristotle's opinion that Sparta was reasonably declared to have imitated the Cretan polity. Some of the earliest Greek inscribed codes come from Crete and some of the earliest Cretan letter-forms have close correspondence with their Phoenician equivalents. Tradition asserted that Crete pioneered in the making of lawcodes and that Thaletas the Cretan, whom some associated with Lykourgos, visited Sparta. These details point to a priority of Crete over Sparta in city-state organisation. They do not prove Spartan borrowing from Crete, but they at least make the Spartans' belief in their indebtedness plausible. Aristotle's view of the problem therefore deserves respect, such as I am glad to see it given by Dr Arnold Toynbee.²⁴

Just how impressed by the Cretan ἀνδρεία Aristotle was can be seen in his prescription for his ideal state in *Politics* Book 7, chapter 10. The land, he recommends, should be both public and private. Thus he does not adopt a tripartite system of land tenure—sacred, public and private—in the form proposed by Hippodamos of Miletos for his ideal state (*Pol.* 1267b 33–34). Some of the public land is to supply the needs of the gods, the rest of it to support the *εὐκείτια*. Warriors and other citizens shall own private land. There should be friendly arrangements for sharing the produce, so that none of the citizens shall be without means of support. All citizens should take part in the messes. Those who till the land should be serfs. They should be of mixed stock, and not eager to revolt. Or they will be *περίοικοι* and non-Greeks.²⁵ Some of the serfs will work private land and be privately owned; others will be publicly employed on common land and will belong to the state.

But this is where we came in with Book II. Aristotle's prescription is obviously indebted to his knowledge of Crete, in spite of his misgivings about the *δυναστεῖαι*. The empirical historian, who directed the studies for the 158 *Politeiai*, takes advantage of his practical knowledge when outlining his ideal. It had not always been so. In the *Protrepticus*

²⁴ A. J. Toynbee, *Some Problems of Greek History* (Oxford 1969) 333.

²⁵ This provision may also be made with the Mariandynians of Pontic Herakleia in mind: see U. von Wilamowitz, *Aristoteles und Athen* I (Berlin 1893) 357–58 n.53.

(B 49 Düring), with all the ardour of youth, he had declared: “Consequently, as he is not a good builder who does not use the rule or any other such instrument but takes his measure from other buildings, so, presumably, if one either lays down laws for cities or administers the affairs of the state with a view to, and in imitation of, administration as conducted by other men or actual existing constitutions, whether of Sparta or of Crete or of any other state, he is not a good lawgiver or a serious statesman;²⁶ for an imitation of what is not good cannot be good, nor can an imitation of what is not divine and stable in its nature be imperishable and stable.” Here, as Düring states, Aristotle proclaims an idealism which, if taken literally, goes beyond anything that Plato has said.²⁷ It goes far, indeed, beyond the practical Plato of the *Laws*. The contrast between the idealism of the *Protrepticus* and the empirical study of Cretan constitutional practice in the *Politics* vividly exemplifies the diversity of Aristotle’s intellectual development.²⁸

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²⁶ M. Plezia supplements *οὐκ ἀγαθὸς νομοθέτης οὐδὲ <πολιτικός> ἐπουδαῖος* (*Eranos* 68 [1970] 231), but the addition does not affect Düring’s translation.

²⁷ I. Düring, *Aristotle’s Protrepticus, An Attempt at Reconstruction* (Göteborg 1961) 221.

²⁸ Aristotle does not mention by name his sources of Cretan information. Ephoros may well have been one of them, both in the *Politics* and in the Cretan *Politeia* (Heraclid.Lemb. *Exc.Polit.* 15 [Dilts]). See Jacoby on *FGrHist* 70 F 149. Crete was much discussed in the early Academy, a member of which, Isos, may have been a Cretan (see R. Walzer, *JRAS* 1939, pp.416–17, and Glenn R. Morrow, *Plato’s Cretan City* [Princeton 1960] 26–27 n.44). But great as Aristotle’s debt to other students of the Cretan polity may have been, much of the evidence he presents is due to his own researches for the *Politeiai*. For the possibility that there is even some Aristotelian influence in parts of Plato’s *Laws*, see F. Jacoby, *Atthis* (Oxford 1949) 385–86.