

Text 1: Aristotle on polis Formation

On the other hand the primary partnership made up of several households for the satisfaction of not mere daily needs is the village. The village according to the most natural account seems to be a colony from a household, formed of those whom some people speak of as 'fellow-sucklings,' sons and sons' sons. It is owing to this that our cities were at first under royal sway and that foreign races are so still, [20] because they were made up of parts that were under royal rule; for every household is under the royal rule of its eldest member, so that the colonies from the household were so too, because of the kinship of their members. And this is what Homer means: " And each one giveth law

To sons and eke to spouses—" for his Cyclopes live in scattered families; and that is the way in which people used to live in early times. Also this explains why all races speak of the gods as ruled by a king, because they themselves too are some of them actually now so ruled and in other cases used to be of old; and as men imagine the gods in human form, so also they suppose their manner of life to be like their own. The partnership finally composed of several villages is the city-state; it has at last attained the limit of virtually complete self-sufficiency, and thus, while it comes into existence for the sake of life, it exists for the good life. Hence every city-state exists by nature, inasmuch as the first partnerships so exist; for the city-state is the end of the other partnerships, and nature is an end, since that which each thing is when its growth is completed we speak of as being the nature of each thing, for instance of a man, a horse, a household. Aristotle *Politics* 1252b

Text 2: The polis of Mantinea

The Lacedaemonians, however, said that they would not make peace with the Mantineians except on condition that the Mantineians should also dwell apart in villages. And the Mantineians for their part, coming to the conclusion that it was necessary, agreed that they would do this also.

Text 3: The synoikismos at Athens

From very early times this had been more the case with the Athenians than with others. Under Cecrops and the first kings, down to the reign of Theseus, Attica had always consisted of a number of independent townships, each with its own town-hall and magistrates. Except in times of danger the king at Athens was not consulted; in ordinary seasons they carried on their government and settled their affairs without his interference; sometimes even they waged war against him, as in the case of the Eleusinians with Eumolpus against Erechtheus. [2] In Theseus, however, they had a king of equal intelligence and power; and one of the chief features in his organization of the country was to abolish the council chambers and magistrates of the petty cities, and to merge them in the single council-chamber and town-hall of the present capital. Individuals might still enjoy their private property just as before, but they were henceforth compelled to have only one political center, viz. Athens; which thus counted all the inhabitants of Attica among her citizens, so that when Theseus died he left a great state behind him. Indeed, from him dates the Synoecia, or Feast of Union; which

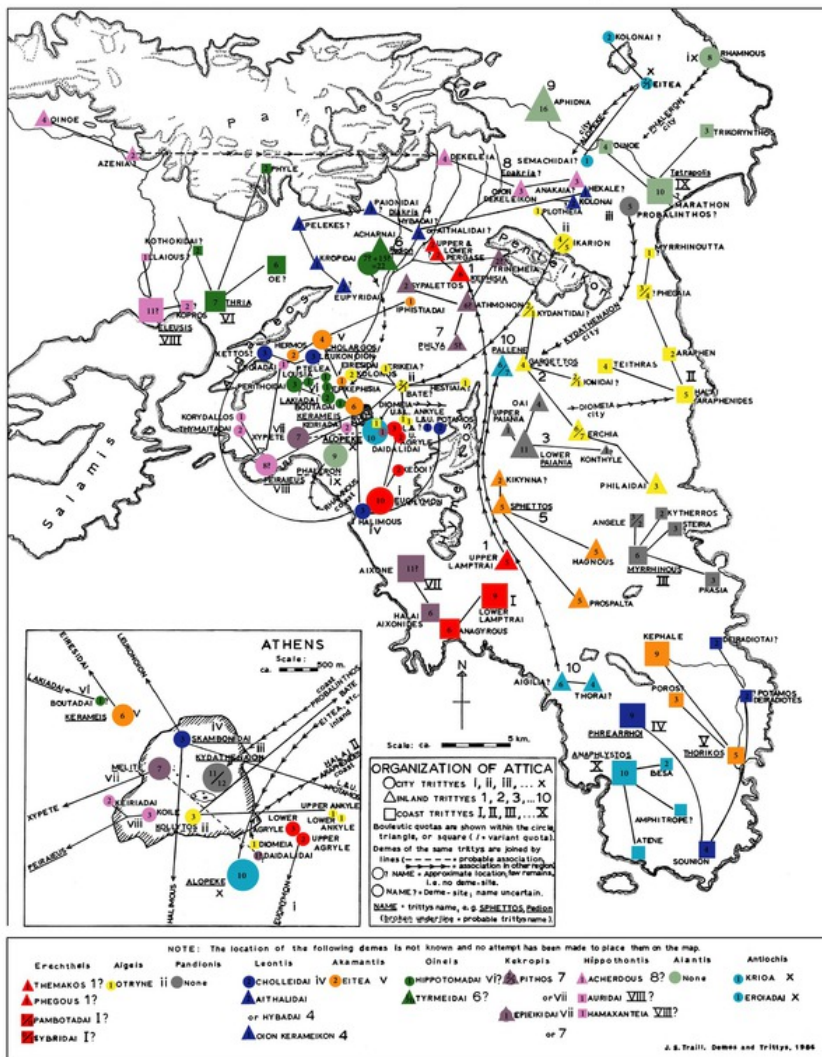
is paid for by the state, and which the Athenians still keep in honor of the goddess.
Thucydides 2.15

Text 4: The Periklean Strategy

While the Peloponnesians were still mustering at the Isthmus, or on the march before they invaded Attica, Pericles, son of Xanthippus, one of the ten generals of the Athenians, finding that the invasion was to take place, conceived the idea that ... He also gave the citizens some advice on their present affairs in the same strain as before. They were to prepare for the war, and to carry in their property from the country. They were not to go out to battle, but to come into the city and guard it, and get ready their fleet, in which their real strength lay. They were also to keep a tight rein on their allies--the strength of Athens being derived from the money brought in by their payments, and success in war depending principally upon conduct and capital. Thucydides 2.13

Text 5: One polis or many?

The Athenians listened to his advice, and began to carry in their wives and children from the country, and all their household furniture, even to the woodwork of their houses which they took down. Their sheep and cattle they sent over to Euboea and the adjacent islands. [2] But they found it hard to move, as most of them had been always used to live in the country. ... XVI. The Athenians thus long lived scattered over Attica in independent townships. ...[2] Deep was their trouble and discontent at abandoning their houses and the hereditary temples of the ancient constitution, and at having to change their habits of life and to bid farewell to what each regarded as his native city. Thucydides 2.14&2.16



Text 6: Sparta's posterity

Now Mycenae may have been a small place, and many of the towns of that age may appear comparatively insignificant, but no exact observer would therefore feel justified in rejecting the estimate given by the poets and by tradition of the magnitude of the armament. [2] For I suppose if Lacedaemon were to become desolate, and the temples and the foundations of the public buildings were left, that as time went on there would be a strong disposition with posterity to refuse to accept her fame as a true exponent of her power. And yet they occupy two-fifths of Peloponnese and lead the whole, not to speak of their numerous allies without. Still, as the city is neither built in a compact form nor adorned with magnificent temples and public edifices, but composed of villages after the old fashion of Hellas, there would be an impression of inadequacy. Whereas, if Athens were to suffer the same misfortune, I suppose that any inference from the appearance presented to the eye would make her power to have been twice as great as it is. Thucydides 1.10

