natural sciences by the Greek thinkers of the fourth and third centuries B.C. Our philosophy and morals are still founded on the scientific methods of abstract thought first hammered out by the ancient philosophers, and especially by Plato and Aristotle. In literature and the plastic arts we merely build on foundations laid by the genius of the ancient writers and artists; we re-fashion the same literary ideas and the same artistic themes which they originally created. Finally, in the sphere of religion, a great part, if not the whole, of modern mankind lives by virtue of beliefs which were first made their own by men of the East and of the West in the age of classical antiquity. We must not forget that Christ lived in the time of Augustus and Tiberius; that the Jewish religion is one of the religions of the Semitic East; and that the Mussulman creed grew up among the Arabian Semites who were strongly influenced by Greek civilization. These few indications are sufficient to prove that the study of antiquity is of immense importance to ourselves; for no one can understand the present, unless he has a clear conception of the evolution of government and civilization in the ancient world.
III

Greece and the Aegean Kingdoms

The beginnings of civilization, that is, of settled life, are as early in Greek lands as in Egypt and Mesopotamia. The villagers, who mostly settled in Thessaly, Cyprus, and other places where the alluvial soil was easy to cultivate with the most primitive tools, grew cereals and bred livestock. Men of this prehistoric (neolithic) period used tools and weapons of stone, and although they still did not know how to make pottery, the statuette of a woman (pl. I) from Lerna to our eyes foreshadows Greek art. The Acropolis of Athens, the future site of Corinth, and the hill of Troy were already occupied in the third millennium B.C.

We do not know what race it was or even whether it was a single people who originally inhabited the western coasts of Asia Minor, the Aegean islands, and the southern part of the Balkan peninsula that was one day to be Greece. For simplicity, we shall speak of them as Aegeans. The Greeks preserved no memory of the migration of their ancestors from a distant land, although they remembered that peoples who spoke no Greek (Pelagians and Leleges) had once inhabited their country. We do not know how or when men speaking Indo-European tongues entered Greece and imposed what, in the course of time, evolved into the Greek language with all its dialects. An earlier dialectal form of Greek is now known from the tablets written in the fifteenth century B.C.

Thanks to the excavations of Schliemann and his successors
in Asia Minor and Greece, of Sir Arthur Evans and others in Crete, and of a succession of archaeologists in Cyprus, we now know something of the political and social activity of the Aegeans in the second millennium B.C. By that time, with the use of the metals copper and bronze, the Aegeans had developed a more complex, urban civilization.

For this later period we have, for the first time, written sources to supplement archaeological evidence. Some documents found in the archives of the Hittite kings, which date from about the middle of the fourteenth century to the end of the twelfth century, occasionally refer to the kings and the land of Ahhiyawa; that is, in all probability, to the Achaeans. They appear to have been a great seapower and their kings maintained relations with the Hittite Empire. In addition, more than four thousand inscribed clay tablets have been discovered at Cnossus, in Crete, and at Pylos and Mycenae in the Peloponnesus. Michael Ventris (1922–56) succeeded in deciphering the script ('The Linear B') in 1952. The language of these tablets is an earlier form of Greek grammatically akin to the later Attic dialect and written in about ninety syllabic signs. As far as deciphered, the tablets record business transactions (accounts, payments, inventories). When thoroughly studied, they should throw a new light on the social and economic life of the pre-Homeric Greeks.

The most important centre in the earlier times was the island of Crete—that barrier between the Aegean and the part of the Mediterranean connected with Egypt and Syria, that great island, one of whose sides faces towards Egypt and Asia, whilst another looks northward to the Archipelago, Greece, and Asia Minor. Early relations with Egypt and proximity to Cyprus, whose mineral wealth (copper) was coveted in early times by Egypt and Babylonia, enabled Crete to develop an extensive culture in the late Neolithic Age. Later, when she had learned to work metal and invented a system of writing, she went rapidly ahead, organizing a civilization of her own and adapting what she could borrow from the East. One after another, great cities
Plate I  AEGEAN ART OF THE NEOLITHIC PERIOD

1. Clay model of a sacred enclosure. Found in a grave in Cyprus. Participants of a sacred ceremony are standing or seated on benches in the attitude of prayer (hands at the chest). A figure larger than the rest is sitting on a throne. At the left of the entrance a figure carries an infant. Bulls in pens may be seen along the enclosure wall. (A bull’s skeleton was found in the same tomb.) A figure (the dead man?) is climbing over the wall. End of the 3rd century B.C. Nicosia Museum.

2. TERRACOTTA STATUE

grew up in the bays of the island—Cnossus, Phaestus, Mallia, Tylissus, and others (the ancient Aegean names of these cities, except Cnossus, are unknown). They were not fortified, as there was apparently no danger of attack on land; their life was connected mainly with the sea, from which the rulers and their subjects drew their chief revenue. The cities lived at peace with one another, having probably quickly contrived a kind of federal government for the whole island. United Crete acquired by degrees great authority with the inhabitants of the neighbouring islands, who were, like the Cretans, traders, pirates, and colonizers; and some sort of alliance, under the leadership of Crete, may have been formed. About 1600 B.C. some great catastrophe occurred, possibly an earthquake, a foreign invasion, or internal revolution; we know at least that the palaces of Cnossus and Phaestus were destroyed at this period; but recovery soon followed, and her most palmy days were in the sixteenth century B.C.

It is difficult to say how far this culture owed its brilliant development in the age of metals to the influence of Egypt and Babylonia. Knowledge of the metals and greater use of the sea lie at the root of Aegean civilization. We do not yet know how or whence the metals first appeared in that region. As regards seafaring, from very ancient times Aegean ships differed in ap-
fig. 2. Warrior-vase from Mycenae, showing fore-and-aft helmet, small shield, and thrusting spear. (From Hammond, A History of Greece to 322 B.C.)

pearance from both Egyptian and Phoenician craft. Perhaps the Aegeans borrowed writing, or the rudiments of writing, from the East; but they developed it independently; and possibly they owed the potter's wheel to the same quarter. The influence of Egypt asserts itself later also; but it is a mutual influence, as Egypt helps herself in turn from the treasures of Aegean genius. Though the connexion with Babylonia was looser and more fitful, the system of weights and measures may have been taken from there.

A similar type of civilization was simultaneously developed on the eastern coasts of the Aegean sea, in Asia Minor, Syria, and Phoenicia. But, for want of investigation of the sites, the exact estimate of progress, which is now possible in the case of Crete, is beyond our reach here. Only one site on the western coast of Asia Minor is well known to us—that of Troy. Troy, like Cnossus in Crete, was the head of an alliance between towns and tribes in the north-west of Asia Minor; but her position was more difficult, as she was liable to be attacked on land by powerful
neighbours. She was therefore always a strong fortress, protected by formidable walls. I do not doubt that excavation will reveal to us in the near future similar political centres of the Aegean type, on the coast (the future Ionia) and in the centre of Asia Minor, and also on the coast of Lycia and Cilicia to the southwest.

In Greece we find just the same phenomena. In the second millennium B.C. fortified towns spring up everywhere near the sea-coast; each has stone walls, with a royal palace, temples, warehouses, storehouses, and barracks inside the walls, and dwellings for the subjects outside. All these towns grow larger and richer; and their culture gradually assumes the same Aegean type as in Crete. Our knowledge of these towns is confined chiefly to Tiryns, Mycenae, and Argos in eastern Peloponnesus, Pylus on the west coast, Orchomenus, Thebes, and Thisbe in Boeotia, and Athens in Attica; and the first two of these are the best known.

As far as we can judge from the excavations carried out of late years in the chief centres of this culture, and from the evidence preserved in the ancient Greek epics—the Iliad and Odyssey cannot, indeed, be placed earlier than the close of the second millennium B.C., but they abound in recollections of the glorious past of the Aegean kingdoms—the Aegean world consisted, as we have said already, of a number of city-states, ruled by kings and the royal troops. Both kings and soldiers led an active and eventful life. They were chiefly employed in marine trading, which was in that unruly age hardly distinguishable from piracy. The king and his retainers lived in a great palace containing hundreds of rooms; in Crete the palace was unfortified, on the mainland it was protected by strong walls. The subject population, who tilled the land and bred cattle, were scattered over the king’s territory. Traders, artisans, and sailors settled close to the palace or fortified citadel of the king, inside or outside its walls. Close ties of friendship and kinship united the king and fighting men of one city with those of another in the neighbourhood, and they
formed, as it were, one large family. They exchange frequent
visits, feast and make merry together, and unite to take a share
in the sacrifice of victims and in religious games. They make
rich presents to one another and exchange compliments. But
quarrels also are frequent, over spoil or beautiful women, or
arising out of the mysterious and tragic crimes of a palace.

It is a striking feature of this culture that, though profoundly
different from others, it was never self-centred or exclusive. It
was active, enterprising, and various, as one might expect from
traders, warriors, and pirates. It was probably not associated with
any definite nationality. To me it presents itself as not national
at all: it seems to have been created by the conditions of life
on the shores of the Aegean and in the narrow valleys of the
islands and the mainland. A land that was comparatively poor
and cramped forced the population to sail away to the nearest
islands or even to the world of the Eastern monarchies, in search
of what was denied them by their own somewhat grudging soil.
Hence it is highly probable that the representatives of Aegean
civilization on the islands differed in race from the representa-
tives on the mainland of Greece; but their civilization was es-
sentially the same with important local modifications.

In general, two varieties of it may be distinguished. The first
and more ancient belongs to the south and is called Cretan; the
second belongs to the north and is called Mycenae, from My-
cenae in the Peloponnese, which has been investigated more
thoroughly than other Aegean sites. The difference between the
two is revealed most clearly by the plan followed in the con-
struction of their houses and settlements. The Cretan house
consists of a number of rooms grouped round a courtyard; the
Mycenaeum house consists of walls erected round a hearth which
forms the centre of the dwelling; the house has a roof and a door
but only one room, and its object is to make full use of the
warmth diffused by the central hearth. There is an equal unlike-
ness in their settlements. The Cretans, being islanders and sail-
ors, were content with the protection of their fleet and hardly
fortified their cities at all; but the dwellers on the mainland stood always in fear of their neighbours, and therefore built strong thick walls round the palace of the king and his retainers, and sometimes round the whole city. The general trend of life is equally different in Crete and in Greece. The Cretans are mostly sailors and traders. They neglect war and indulge in more pacific arts. Life in Greece is centred round war, sieges and battles.

But both types of settlements have this feature in common, that the settlement grows into a town which quickly assumes an orderly and civilized appearance. It has paved streets, houses of several storeys, drains and other sanitary contrivances, which were unknown to the East, with its huge village-like settlements grouped round a palace and temple. The Aegean way of life was more compact and thus created that kind of settlement which we call 'urban'. Such compactness was natural to men who from early times were chiefly engaged in trade and industry, and natural in a country where there were no fertile alluvial valleys for the population to spread in, and where the comparative poverty of the soil made concentration impossible except in towns not dependent entirely upon agriculture. Another peculiarity of Aegean towns is that they have no temples like those of the East, none of those huge palaces built for the gods. It appears that they worshipped mainly the powers of nature, personified in the Great Goddess, mother of gods and men. Her shrines were generally caves, or groves of consecrated trees, or small chapels forming part of palaces. Another form of worship was paid to dead heroes. The Aegeans did not build pyramids in their honour; yet their beehive tombs with a cupola roof and a long passage for entrance, hidden under mounds of earth, are not inferior to the Pyramids and the rock-cut tombs of Egypt in originality of artistic conception.

Lastly, it was a peculiarity of the Aegeans that they never sought to create anything imposing by mere size; the buildings they preferred were of moderate proportions, adorned with colour, and pleasing to the eye. Their sculptors carved no colossal
shapes of gods or men; their architects did not task themselves to build a pyramid, or a row of columns in a temple—columns of such a size that a hundred men could find standing-room on the capital of each. The palaces of Cnossus, Phaestus, Mycenae, and Tiryns do indeed cover a large space: they are extensive and contain a number of small rooms and a number of courts. But the reason for this is that a number of people lived there together—the king, his court, and his retainers. The palace courts are extensive, because they were always filled by a crowd of men seeking air and light, and served as a public resort for the inhabitants of the palace, for divine worship or games or military reviews. In fact the palace is large because it is a whole town
Plate II  THE PALACE OF CNOSSUS

1. The store-rooms of the Palace of Cnossus with the big oil-jars.

2. One of the state rooms of the palace as restored by Sir Arthur Evans on the spot. Note the peculiar columns growing wider above, and the capitals, prototypes of the later Doric capitals of Greece.
3. THE THRONE ROOM

3. The so-called throne room in the palace. The central place is occupied by a monumental stone chair, and around the walls are stone benches. The walls are covered with stucco and the stucco painted. Part of this decoration has been restored from fragments by Sir Arthur Evans. It shows an eagle-griffin lying in a flower garden. There must have been a similar figure on the other side of the throne. (The throne in the palace at Pylus, which dates to the thirteenth century, is flanked by pairs of lions and griffins.) Here and elsewhere (see Lion Gate, Pl. VI) beasts are guardians of a divine symbol. The incised decorations on the sides of the throne are also probably symbolic. Whether the throne was used by the king when presiding at the state council or acting as the supreme judge while the other members sat on the benches, or the throne was supposed to be occupied by the invisible Great Goddess, is uncertain. Religious and state life were closely connected in the Minoan Age. Late Minoan. About 1450 B.C.
with a large and motley population, but it is not colossal. The only part of it that strikes one by its dimensions is the courtyard intended for religious ceremonies and shows connected with them—the earliest attempt to create a theatre.

All these peculiarities go to prove that the manner of life among the Aegeans was unlike that of the East—it was more akin to the type subsequently created by Greece, more democratic. Men lived in a swarm, with one of themselves for chief, like the queen-bee in a hive, but their life was identical with his. In the East the king was divine and lived in magnificent isolation, an object of reverence and worship. The life of the Aegean king was more human. He had neither the will nor the power to separate himself from his comrades in war and partners in trading ventures; to them and their wives he was not, and could not be, a deity. But after death, as the best and strongest and bravest, he became a hero and his tomb became a temple.

Aegean art, so live and sparkling, is all full of humanity and individuality; it is free from the oppressive magnificence and majesty of the god-king, before whom his subjects are pitiable grains of desert sand before the sun; it bubbles like a fountain with vivacity and merriment; it thirsts for life and delights in life; it is intoxicated with sea and sun, trees and flowers, sport and war. These men reproduce life on their household utensils, on the walls of their houses, and in works of art; their fancy is not for separate figures or portraits—no portraits have been bequeathed to us by them—but for groups; and these groups are not rows of identical figures but related to one another and full of movement. The ornament is lively, impersonal, capricious, and infinitely various, finding models everywhere, both in the elegance of the geometric spiral and in natural objects, such as flowers and marine animals, and the odder these are, the better—cuttle-fish, flying fish, sea-shells.

This is why the productions of Aegean art, sometimes sketchy and impressionistic, often childish in their simplicity, impress us so strongly after the splendid monuments of the East—the re-
finement of Egypt and the dramatic power of Babylon. On palace walls, utensils, and ornaments these artists represent by preference scenes from the life of the spacious palace courts: young men running and jumping in honour of the god; athletes leaping over the back of maddened oxen and clutching them by the horns; women dancing with wild ecstasy in honour of the Great Goddess; peasants returning home in procession and singing hymns to the great earth-goddess; the hero-king reviewing his soldiers. But Aegean art carries us beyond the limits of the palace, and shows us other lively pictures: bulls caught with nets in the forest; the attack on a fortress by enemies who come from the sea; the ship carrying a statue of a horse (it recalls the horse of Troy); a funeral procession and rites performed at the grave. There is not a trace of conventionality or tradition throughout, and there is hardly any repetition. The brightness and variety of the colours is surprising; they are laid, one on another or one beside another, in the most unexpected combinations, with a constant endeavour to get novel tints.

The Aegeans, particularly the Cretans, gradually extended their political and commercial influence. In the sixteenth century they exported their wares to Syria and Egypt, and settled at Miletus about 1600 B.C. In the fourteenth century B.C. the hegemony of Crete suffered a crushing blow: at the highest point of its development Cnossus was destroyed, probably by an alliance of Aegean city-states in Europe. This event is probably connected with the natural development of the European kingdoms of Aegean civilization which from the very beginning were Greek, that is Achaean. It is certain that these kingdoms with their centres at Mycenae in the Argolis, at Thebes and Orchomenus in Boeotia, and at Athens in Attica, not to speak of minor states with the same civilization, were rich and powerful as early as in the seventeenth century B.C. and developed their own version of the Aegean civilization. By the fourteenth century a large Mycenaean Empire had been formed. The kings of Mycenae appeared in this empire as suzerains of a host of minor feudal lords.
Plate III Minoan Pottery

1. Stone vessel from Isopata near Cnossus. The upper part has rows of symmetrically placed circular holes, inlaid with shell. Late Middle Minoan. About 1700 B.C. Museum of Candia (Crete).

2. Beautiful pot of the so-called Kamares style, with white, orange, and pink floral ornaments on a black ground. Middle Minoan. 1800-1700 B.C. Museum of Candia (Crete).

3. Minoan jug with figures painted dark on a light ground, found at Pseira. It shows dolphins swimming—one straight up, the next straight down, amid honeycombed rocks and seaweed. Early Late Minoan. About 1650 B.C. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.


5. Minoan jug with dark figures painted on a light ground: from Hagia Triada. Octopuses are shown amid stylized rocks. Late Minoan. About 1500 B.C. Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.

The figures show the condition of the potter's art in Crete at its highest development when the Cretan Empire was in its prime. Note the skilful use of polychromy and the beautiful stylization of plants and animals for decorative purposes without any rigidity but with full understanding of the principles of decorative art.
Plate IV  LIFE IN THE MINOAN WORLD

1. Steatite vase, found at Hagia Triada. A religious procession of agriculturalists is represented (each man carries an agricultural implement, decorated with reeds). The men are moving in the rhythmic step of a sacred dance. They sing a hymn in honour of the Great Goddess. A priest, very like an Egyptian priest, with three attendants, is shaking an Egyptian musical instrument, the 'sistrum', sacred to Isis. The leader (a priestess) wears a peculiar dress like scale armour. Early Late Minoan (about 1600 B.C.). Museum of Candia (Crete).

2. Steatite vase. Found at Hagia Triada near Phaestus. An officer at the head of three soldiers is reporting to the king or the royal prince. Late Middle Minoan or Early Late Minoan. 1700-1550 B.C. Museum of Candia (Crete).

3. Gold ring-bezel. Found at Mycenae in one of the graves of the early Mycenaean kings on the Acropolis. Two groups of two warriors each are engaged in fierce battle. One of the warriors is wounded. Another has sunk on his right knee and is lifting his long sword while the hero of the scene is aiming at him with his short dagger.
A fourth man tries to reach the hero with his long spear from behind his large shield. Note the pathos and the ruthless realism of the scene. The hero and his rival with the shield and spear wear scale-helmets, and are probably two kings or princes. The scene on the ring excellently illustrates many descriptions of battles in the *Iliad*. Late Minoan. 1550–1400 B.C. National Museum, Athens.

4. Gold and enameled sceptre. Found at Curium (Cyprus). A tube which was originally mounted on a staff. On the top is a sphere on which stand two hawks. Cf. Agamemnon’s ancestral sceptre ‘forever imperishable’ (Hom. II. II. 46). 11th century (P. Dikaios). Nicosia Museum.
Many wars were waged by the Mycenaean kings. Greek tradition preserved the record of two of them: a war of Mycenae against Thebes and the war of the Mycenaean coalition of Achaeans against Troy, celebrated by Homer in his Iliad. The cultural influence of the Mycenaean Empire was also spread far and wide by means of an extensive commerce. It reached the route of the amber trade in the North, Sicily and Italy in the West, the northern shore of the Black Sea and the Caucasus in the East, and Asia Minor, Cyprus, and Syria in the South. The art of Phoenicia for instance shows very strong Mycenaean influences.

In the thirteenth century B.C., the Mycenaean world was in a state of confusion, caused no doubt by an important movement of peoples in the northern part of the Balkan peninsula. Our historical tradition speaks of attacks of ‘sea-peoples’ on Egypt first under Merenptah and later under Ramses III. In the later attack Philistines took an active part, and settled down a little later on the Palestinian shore. All these events must be connected with the dismemberment of the Mycenaean Empire under the pressure of conquerors from the North.

What exactly happened in Greece at the end of the second millennium B.C. and the beginning of the first we do not know. There are many questions to which science so far can give no positive answer. The key to their solution lies in exploration by archaeologists in Greece and Asia Minor. At present we must be content with surmises. It seems that folk-movements in the north of the Balkan peninsula drove the stocks belonging to Northern Greece southward towards the centres of Aegean-Greek civilization. The division of that quarter into a number of independent kingdoms perpetually at war with one another made it impossible for any of them to resist the invaders, who were not inferior to the Aegaeans in military equipment and used the same bronze weapons of highly developed forms. The appearance in Greece of these Greek conquerors drove out many inhabitants, especially the ruling classes, of the Aegean-Greek kingdoms from their old abodes towards the east and south.
Plate V A CITY ON THE MAINLAND ATTACKED
BY ENEMIES WHO COME FROM THE SEA

Fragments of a silver drinking horn from the fourth shaft-grave on
the Acropolis of Mycenae. The bas-relief shows a fortified city. The
inhabitants come out to meet the enemies who have just landed and
are moving towards the city. The upper part of one of the attacking
warriors with a helmet adorned with a crest is seen in our figure on
the right, below; some others are seen on some fragments not re-
produced in our figure. We may recognize equally some ships which
brought the besiegers to the land. The men from the city are armed
with bows and slings. The women, greatly excited, are watching the
battle from the walls of the city and exhorting the men to courage.
The city is situated on a hill and surrounded by trees (olive-trees?).
The scene is a beautiful illustration of the well-known description of
the battle between Hector and Achilles in the Iliad. It must be
noticed that such a vivid scene of battle was a novelty at that time.
There conditions were in their favour. In Asia Minor the Hit-
tite empire had been destroyed by the invasion of 'sea-people'.
Hence, the exiles, Aegeans and Graeco-Aegeans, seized the oppor-
tunity to establish themselves on the rich coast of Asia Minor,
driving out the old inhabitants, who had their own comparati-
tively high culture, akin to that of the Aegeans. These in their
turn sought new abodes in Syria, Phoenicia, Palestine, Egypt,
Sicily, Italy, by routes which had long before been opened up
by Aegean trade. It is therefore quite probable that the Philis-
tines were a part of the Graeco-Aegean population expelled from
Crete, or inhabitants of the south coast of Asia Minor who were
forced to migrate. The Etruscans also, who appeared in Italy not
earlier than the end of the second millennium B.C. or the begin-
ing of the first, probably came from Asia Minor.

In Greece these new Greek stocks, moving forward to the
coast and finding their way from there as far as Asia Minor,
herited from their predecessors their cities, the boundaries of
their kingdoms, and a part of their technical skill. How many
waves of population succeeded one another on these coasts we
do not know; but there was certainly more than one. By degrees,
however, when the Dorians had appeared in southern Greece
and large numbers of them had settled in the Peloponnese, the
troubled sea began to calm down, more permanent national
kingdoms began to take shape, and once more the beginnings
were developed of a peculiar culture—like that of the East, and
therefore of higher quality, in Asia Minor, and more primitive in
Greece itself.

The political organization of Greece was dictated by the geo-
ographical and economic conditions. Nature had divided her into
small economic units, and she was incapable of creating large
political systems. So it had been during the prevalence of the
Aegean culture, and so it still remained. Each valley was self-
centred, and its inhabitants jealously guarded their pasture and
arable land. The best parts of the country, especially its rich
valleys, are open to the sea and shut in by land—separated from
Fig. 4. Reconstruction of the north-western angle of the courtyard of the palace of Mycenae. The architecture and the decoration (ornamental friezes) were very like those of the later parts of the palace of Cnossus in Crete. After A. J. B. Wace and W. Lamb.

the central high valleys and plateaux by formidable barriers. They are more in touch with those neighbours from whom the sea divides them than with those whom the land brings near them. It is easier for them to exchange goods and ideas by sea than by land. Hence civilization develops quickly on the coast but slowly in the centre of the country.

The type of life, however, is the same in all parts. Stocks, and portions of stocks, form petty political units which keep jealous guard of their independence. To protect themselves and their property against attack, they build fortified refuges on the hilltops, and these by degrees are converted into cities, which offer a market for their produce, a centre of religious life, and a residence for their kings, leaders in war, and priests. The city becomes the focus of a larger or smaller territory, inhabited by farmers and shepherds who live either in detached houses and
1. LATE MYCENEAN VASE

2. GOLDEN MASK FROM MYCENAE
Plate VI  LIFE IN MYCENAEAN GREECE

1. Late Mycenaean vase showing two sphinxes facing a geometrized tree in an heraldic position. About 1500 B.C. British Museum.

2. Golden mask from Mycenae. Some men, probably kings or princes, whose graves were discovered at Mycenae, wore golden masks over their faces. These gold masks have hooks which were used to fasten the mask behind the ears. Such death masks perpetuated the person of the deceased. Their use is attested from Siberia to Rome. At Mycenae, each mask is individual, but all have distinguishing features in common, such as a straight nose, small lips, and a beard. The Mycenaean masks help us to visualize the Homeric heroes. National Museum, Athens.

3. Lion Gate of Mycenae. The Lion Gate was the entrance to the citadel of Mycenae. A door, probably made of wood, closed the gate. Sockets in the side posts served to hold a beam which closed and opened the door. Over the lintel two lions guard a column which may symbolize the royal palace. Mycenae. 13th century B.C.
Fig. 5. Plan of the fortified palace of Tiryns. The palace is surrounded by powerful 'cyclopean' walls (see pl. VII, 2). The centre of the palace consists of a large northern house (megaron) with a spacious forecourt and a tower gate which led to the court. This central building is surrounded, in the Minoan fashion, by an irregular complex of halls, chambers, and passages.

cottages scattered over the country, or together in villages (demes). Such city-states steadily increase in number. Among them there always existed groups united by the tie of a common language, or, more strictly speaking, a common dialect of the one Greek language. The distribution of these dialects in Greece, the islands, and Asia Minor, throws light on the process by which the resettlement of Greece by Greek stocks took place. Three dialects are sharply distinguished. The oldest of these is the Achaean group (Aeolic and Arcadian) already attested in the fifteenth century (fig. 1); the Ionian comes next; and the Dorian is probably the third and last. The three groups divided the whole Greek world between them. Thessaly in northern Greece was Achaean-Aeolic from time immemorial; and also central Greece, except Attica, became so, and all the north-west of Peloponnese. The Arcadian dialect belonged to central Pelo-
ponnese and the island of Cyprus. Ionic dialects prevailed in Attica, Euboea, and most of the Aegean islands, especially the largest of them—Imbros, Lemnos, Chios, Samos, and Naxos. The Dorians were firmly established in the south and east of Peloponnese, Aetolia, and the southern islands of the Aegean, Crete and Rhodes being the largest and richest of these; they left a permanent impression also upon Boeotia and Thessaly. There was a similar distribution of these groups in Asia Minor. The northern coast of the Aegean and that of the Black Sea were Aeolic; the central coast, closely connected with the islands, was Ionian; and a small district to the south, connected with Rhodes and Crete, was Dorian. Thus the Ionians cut in like a wedge between the other two groups, and their chief centre was not in Greece but in the islands and Asia Minor.

Some of the districts which were independent and wealthy kingdoms in the Aegean and Mycenaean ages still remained the centres where civilization and political life were most vigorous. Such were Sparta in the south of Peloponnese, Argos in the north-east, perhaps Olympia in the north-west; Corinth and Megara on the Isthmus; while in central Greece there were Delphi in Phocis, Thebes in Boeotia, and Athens in Attica; in northern Greece there was Larissa in Thessaly. The same rule applies, even more generally, to Asia Minor. The most ancient and important cities were all older than the Greeks: Miletus, Ephesus, Smyrna were centres of economic, political, and religious life long before the appearance of Greeks in the country. And the same thing is observable in Crete and in Rhodes.

The system, economic, social, and political, of these ancient Greek communities is described in the Homeric poems—the Iliad and the Odyssey, which probably were put together and assumed the form in which the Greeks knew them and in which they have come down to us, not earlier than the ninth or eighth century B.C. These poems describe the past, not the present: they refer to the time when the redistribution of Greek stocks was everywhere going on, and when not a few features of the Aegean
Plate VII  LIFE IN MYCENAEAN GREECE

1. General view of the ruins of the fortified Palace of Tiryns in the northeastern part of the Peloponnese in Greece. Tiryns was first excavated by Schliemann. A typical example of the Mycenaean fortresses which were scattered all over the southern and central part of Greece, and which reached the highest point of their development after 1400 B.C.
2. The vaulted corridor (which probably served as a store-house) inside the fortification walls of Tiryns. Huge blocks of stone were used for building the walls. The later Greeks ascribed this type of building to the mythical Cyclopes. It is probable that the wall existed on the hill of Tiryns before the palace of the Minoan type (see fig. 5) was built on the top of the hill.

3. The Treasury of Atreus. The so-called Treasury of Atreus (also called the Tomb of Agamemnon) is the greatest of the tholoi, that is, of the vaulted tombs discovered at Mycenae. It is a vaulted chamber of beehive shape built of large hammer-dressed blocks. The chamber is over 43 feet high and over 46 feet wide. It is hewn in the hill and is approached by a long passage. Mycenae. 14th century B.C.
past were noticeable in the life of the aristocracy. It is likely that separate legends concerning the heroes of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* who took part in the conquest of Troy—legends which served as material for Homer—appeared in Aeolian Thessaly as early as the Graeco-Aegean period. They were worked over later in Aeolian Asia Minor and assumed their final form in one of the Ionian cities there. But in spite of the complicated origin of the poems, it is possible for us to pick out what is characteristic of the life of these Greek stocks in the earliest period of their existence.

We observe in them all nearly identical institutions, economic, social, and political—insti.tutions connected in one way or another with the Aegean stage which the different parts of Greece passed through. The ruling element in all Greek cities of the Homeric Age is the aristocracy, embodied in certain families which play the leading part in the life of each clan. Each of these families traces its descent to a single founder—a god or hero; and to one of them belongs the king who directs the clan in war and peace. Each family is subdivided into groups—*phratries* or brotherhoods—mainly of a military and religious nature. Next to these families comes the general population, divided from one another by occupation, place of residence, and social position. Some members of this plebeian class or *demos* own land, others, as tenants or serfs, till the land of their masters, others hire out their labour to employers, and others live in the city as artisans. There are also slaves, as is natural in a society where war is constant and clans are for ever shifting from place to place.

How this social system grew up we do not know. Greek tradition regards these ruling families as descended from heroes who came to Greece, some from the north and some from the east, and were closely connected with the most ancient myths about the gods and heroes. A considerable part of these myths was inherited by the Greeks from the Aegeans and Graeco-Aegeans who preceded them. This suggests that the aristocracy
of Homeric Greece was composite—consisting partly of the military chiefs who led their clans to conquer Greece, and partly of the ruling families in the conquered kingdoms. So the lower classes also belonged partly to the conquering stock, and partly to the original population of the conquered country.

The system of land-ownership in ancient Greece corresponded with this division in the origin of the population. In some districts the conquerors probably found a large number of cultivators who had long been in serfdom to a group of the directing and ruling families; and this system they maintained. The origin of the system is unknown; but to the inhabitants of some districts, e.g. the Thessalians, Cretans, and Spartans, it seemed immemorial and was long kept among them. Elsewhere, as in Attica and Boeotia, there were probably no serfs at the time of the conquest; and there the land was divided between the conquerors and the conquered, though no doubt the former, and especially the leading families, claimed the lion's share. The conditions on which the conquerors owned the land are not quite clear. In the Homeric poems we find joint ownership by a whole family existing side by side with individual ownership. Perhaps the former system is older, and the division of the clan into families was universal among the conquerors and only by degrees became a privilege of the aristocracy, to the exclusion of the population generally. In that case private ownership was probably a development of the earlier system. Persons expelled from the family for delinquencies and crimes, younger sons in a large family, or free men working for wages, could retire to the edge of the cultivated territory, and there clear away forest and drain marshes, till they made farms which belonged to them personally and to their families.

The farming of the Homeric Greeks consists mainly of agriculture and stock-raising; but horticulture, especially the growing of vines and olive-trees, is also developed by degrees. The last industry, however, is only in its early stages; Greece is still a land of cornfields and flocks. Cattle, swine, sheep, and goats are the
common animals; to own horses is a privilege of rich and noble families. The stock owned by such families is sometimes very numerous, and a man's wealth is measured by his head of cattle. Little buying is done, and that unwillingly: most necessaries are produced at home. Domestic manufacture supplies not only food but also clothes, furniture, agricultural implements, and foot-gear. The whole family works: the men plough, sow, plant trees, reap, mow, look after the cattle, milk the cows and goats, make butter and cheese, go out hunting; the women spin, weave, embroider, wash linen and clothes, cook the food. Hard work is no humiliation and is not considered burdensome or oppressive. Odysseus boasts that he had no superior in reaping and mowing, that he could build a ship and his own bed and adorn it with cunning patterns. His old father Laertes enjoys working in the garden. Penelope, a queen, weaves every day in the palace with her maidens. Nausicaa, a king's daughter, washes the linen and clothes of her brothers. Work is done in the house by all the members of the household. The slaves and houseless hired servants form a part of the household as a social and productive unit. Though the hardiest and most repulsive labour falls to their lot, yet they are neither machines nor animals. Like the other members of the family they come under the patronage and protection of the household gods, and humane treatment is secured to them by religion and custom.

Only the more difficult work is done by professional craftsmen who are paid for their labour. To build a ship or a good house or strong walls for a town is not a job that any one can do; and therefore the specialist is called in. Ther merchants play a conspicuous part. The mysterious knowledge of prophets, priests, and physicians is highly prized; so is the loud voice of the herald and the skill of the singer and musician.

Commerce, so brilliantly developed in the Aegean age, was not brought to a standstill even by political anarchy and the constant shifting of population. The Greeks were helpless without metals and could not get on without them; and they prized-
the fine productions of Eastern industry and art, so strikingly superior to the primitive objects that issued from their own workshops. The old routes to the sources of this wealth were never forgotten: the Greeks inherited this knowledge from the Aegeans. From the same source they learned the art of navigation, the tradition of which had never died out in that sea. But their way of life was primitive, and what they could offer by way of exchange was not specially attractive. Their wealth was confined to slaves and a certain amount of raw produce. Hence their expeditions in search of what they needed were more like piratical inroads than commercial ventures. Plunder, not purchase, was the purpose that carried them to Asia Minor, Egypt, the coasts of the Black Sea and of Italy. But these descents were dangerous and not always profitable, while their need of metals was urgent. Thus trade was not entirely squeezed out by piracy, and the Phoenician merchants were welcome guests in Greece.

Articles of Eastern production, whether stolen or received in the way of trade, were imitated locally; thus local industries were improved, and a profitable trade in such goods, either imported or produced locally, sprang up between the inhabitants of the coast and their neighbours who had no access to the sea.

The political system of Greece probably remained much the same as it had been in the Aegean age. The separate kingdoms were still ruled by a king, who relied upon the armed force of the clan and especially upon the richest and strongest of his companions in arms. The royal power was exercised by the man who was stronger, more ready-witted and intelligent, richer and better armed, than the rest. Wealth, knowledge, and the power to rule he inherited from his ancestors, as they had from the god; for all royal families, and noble families in general, traced their descent from heaven. But, for all his divine origin, the king was no eastern despot: not a god himself nor the master of his subjects, he was the head and leader of his clan and the chief of his heaven-descended family.

Round him are ranged other similar heads of old and distin-
guished families, who are his regular advisers and his brothers-in-arms. This small group has considerable wealth, and owes that wealth to their enterprise, activity, and excellent bodily training for warfare on land or sea. All the members of such families are well armed: each has a breastplate, a helmet and greaves, a good sword and spear, and a bow that carries to a distance. They drive into battle in chariots. They are perfectly skilled in all the niceties of single combat, by which battles are often decided. Hence the aristocracy are indispensable to the clan and kingdom, and their high position is secure. But the members of this group are all equals; they are all descended from Zeus just as the kings are; they are necessary to the king, as he is to them, and therefore are not merely his obedient servants.

So the plebian members of the clan are not the slaves of the king and aristocracy. They acknowledge the superiority of their leaders; but their leader and king is not their owner, and they are not his slaves. An unsuccessful or degenerate king cannot reckon upon the support of the clan; and it is easy for some one else, richer and stronger, more intelligent and successful, to take his place. The life of a king is by no means a bed of roses, but full of danger. He reigns while he fights, and he fights with his own hands. If he is rich, it is because he knows where and how to direct the arms of the clan, and how to organize its economic and military life. He is surrounded by envy and hostility. Greek tragedy tells us of more than one sinister episode from the lives of these primitive kings. Horrible crimes and bloody revenges, murders and revolutions, were common in the kingdoms of the Homeric Age.