CHAPTER 11

THE CITIES

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When at the end of the archaic period the veil of obscurity is lifted for the first time, the Argead kingdom of Macedonia appears as an already partly urbanized society. *Poleis* ("cities"), as in Thessaly, and not *ethnē* ("peoples"), as in Epirus or Aetolia, constitute the basic units of the realm.[1] In late sixth-century Hecataeus and, a few decades later, Herodotos using him, refer to Therme, Sindos, Chalastra, Ichnai, and Pella explicitly as *poleis*.[2] One might object that these were not genuine Macedonian cities, but either Greek colonial foundations—which they definitely were not—or Paeonian urban centres. Be that as it may, such an objection would in any case be unsustainable against Beroia or Pydna, which, although they are not explicitly qualified as such, emerge from Thucydides' narrative as cities no less genuine than Therma.[3] Similarly Eidomene, Gortynia, Atalante Europus or Cyrrhus, also mentioned by the Athenian historian, appear in the same context as being indistinguishable from Pella, which was explicitly qualified as a *polis* by Herodotus.[4] Moreover, the fact that Pydna, Beroia and Europus without doubt, and also probably Therme, Eidomene, Gortynia and Atalante, were besieged and either successfully resisted or captured (taken by force or through capitulation) seems to imply that they were fortified, albeit in a rudimentary way.[5]

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[1] M. B. Hatzopoulos, "*Polis, Ethnos* and Kingship in Northern Greece," in K. Buraselis and K. Zoumboulakis, eds., *The Idea of European Community in History*, 2 (Athens, 2003), pp. 51–64; cf. id., "State and Government in Classical and Hellenistic Greece," in K. Buraselis, ed., *Unity and Units in Antiquity* (Athens, 1994), pp. 161–8.

[2] N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia I* (Oxford, 1972), pp. 145–7, with references.

[3] Thuc. 1.61.2. It is clear from the historian's narrative that Pydna and Beroia, no less than Therma, were fortified settlements which could withstand an Athenian attack.

[4] Hdt. 7.123.3.

[5] Cf. M. B. Hatzopoulos, "Cités en Macédoine," in M. Reddé et al., eds., *La naissance de la ville dans l'Antiquité* (Paris, 2003), pp. 128–9. On the question of cities in Macedonia, see U. Kahrstedt, "Städte in Makedonien," *Hermes* 81 (1953), 85–111; J. N. Kalléris, *Les anciens Macédoniens*, 2 (Athens, 1976), pp. 589–623; Fanoula Papazoglou, *Villes de Macédoine à l'époque romaine* (Bulletin de Correspondance Hellénique) Supplément XVI (Athens – Paris,

In fact the urban, not to say civic, traditions in Macedonia may have begun even earlier. It is significant that the Macedonians themselves imagined their past since the foundation of the Argead kingdom in urban and not in "ethnic" terms. In the oldest version of the foundation story, which goes back at least to the beginning of the fifth century BC, the legendary founder Perdiccas, who is supposed to have lived six generations or 200 years earlier, was given the advice to found "the capital of his state" (ἄστυ κτίζε πόληος)[6] on the site of Aegae. In a later version of the same legend, Caranus, Perdiccas' double, is presented as conquering the city (πόλιν, *urbem*)[7] of Edessa and changing its name to Aegae, and that of his fellow citizens to *Argeadae* (Ἀργεάδαι), the ethnic used for the citizens of the Lower Macedonia kingdom since at least the time of Hecataeus.[8]

It is particularly interesting that the Macedonians perceived the state founded by the Argeads as a city (πόλις) according to the classical Greek model of an urban centre (ἄστυ, πόλις). They saw Aegae, surrounded by its territory (χώρα), and its subsequent expansion as a process which was not basically different from that of a city-state of ancient Greece such as Sparta or Athens. It is naturally impossible to determine to what degree such a retrospective vision corresponded to an historical reality. Nor is it possible to determine whether the Macedonians, originally transhumant shepherds, had become city dwellers already in the seventh century BC, either by founding their capital on virgin soil or by conquering Phrygian or Thracian urban settlements on the foothills of the Pierian mountains or of Mt. Bermion. It is equally otiose to speculate on the nature of the relations or on the degree of autonomy of pre-urban or urban "perioikic" communities, such as Pydna, Alorus, Beroia, Edessa, etc. in respect to the "central" authorities at Aegae during the obscure centuries before the Persian wars. It is nevertheless certain that, whether these communities did enjoy a form of participation in "national" political life (popular participation in the spring and autumn gatherings of the *ethnos* or presence of "provincial" notables at the court of Aegae) or not, the question of some form of elementary political activities at the local level has to be taken into account already in the archaic period. This question must have

1988), pp. 37–71; M. B. Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*, 1 (ΜΕΛΕΤΗΜΑΤΑ) 22 (Athens, 1996), pp. 51–123.

[6] Diod. 7.16.

[7] Euphorion fr 30 (Schweidweiler) and Just. 7.1.7–10.

[8] Strab. 7, fr. 11, with N. G. L. Hammond in N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *A History of Macedonia II* (Oxford, 1979), pp. 27–8.

become more urgent after the conquest of southern Paeonia (Pella, Ichnai) and of Mygdonia (Chalastra, Sindus, Therme, Lete) in the wake of the Persian wars. The conquered cities, whether southern Greek colonies, or "native" centres, or mixed settlements, as seems to be the case for some of them (Therme, Chalastra, Pella), had their own traditions of autonomy, and indeed of independence. It is true that these cities were probably not simply annexed but became "allied" cities under the supervision of Macedonian governors.[9] However, whether there was annexation or not, the "osmosis" between these recent acquisitions and the urban centres of the "Old Kingdom"—particularly under the additional impact of the opening of the country to southern Greek influence and to massive colonisation from southern Greece[10]—became unavoidable. In fact, in the second half of the fifth century the Athenians made no difference between Strepsa and Therme in the "New Territories" and Herakleion and Pydna in the Old Kingdom, which they managed—or at least tried—to "liberate" from the rule of the Macedonian king in order to integrate them as allies into the Athenian League.[11] Therefore, it is not surprising that no distinction is made between the various sorts of cities under Macedonian rule and that in the treaty between Athens and Perdiccas II they are collectively qualified as "cities that Perdiccas rules,"[12] because in practice there was no essential difference between cities such as Pydna and Therme. Thus, the fact that the first known case of autonomist revolt did not break out in a city of the New Territories but at Pydna,[13] a city of the Old Kingdom, which had always been Macedonian,[14] should not be considered as a paradox. The decision of Archelaus to remove Pydna from the seaside and to relocate it twenty stadia inland proved patently insufficient to protect it against the corrosive influences that mercantile interests and intellectual fascination spread inland from the Thermaic Gulf across the entire kingdom. In less than three decades the revolt spread as far as Pella,[15]

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[9] Hatzopoulos, *Institutions*, 1, pp. 171–79.

[10] Cf. Paus. 7.26.5; Theopompos, in F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker*, no. 115, F 387.

[11] For the first three, see Ch. Edson, "Notes on the Thracian Phoros," *CP* 42 (1947), 96–98, 100–104 and 105, n. 125. For the Athenian attempt to capture Pydna, see Thuc. 1.61.2–3.

[12] *IG* I³ 89, L. 40.

[13] Diod. 13.49.1–2.

[14] Cf. Diod. 11.12.3. This information is amply corroborated by recent archaeological finds, including six curse tablets published by J. Curbera and D. R. Jordan, "Curse Tablets from Pydna," *GRBS* 43 (2000), 109–27, the *onomasticon* of which is typically Macedonian. Cf. M. B. Hatzopoulos in *Bulletin Epigraphique* (2005), 315.

[15] Xen., *Hell.*, 5.2.13.

while Pydna was moving again towards independence after the assassination of king Alexander II, perhaps by a local patriot.[16]

The exact scope of Archelaus' reforms has been much discussed. One thing is certain. He resumed and intensified the "modernisation" policy, and consequently the urbanisation policy, of his predecessors. The construction of fortifications, obviously designed to protect urban centres which were not yet thus equipped, the creation of a hoplitic infantry, and of a naval force, inescapably dependent on the development of an urban middle class, are unerring indications of this policy.[17] Is it a mere coincidence that very soon after his reign Macedonians begin to identify themselves by their city ethnics? It has been argued that the use of city ethnics implies that by then both the Old Kingdom and the New Territories had been subdivided in civic territories.[18] If such a reform should be assigned to Archelaus, is it conceivable that it was just an administrative measure without any meaning in the internal life of the urban centres? It is indeed difficult to imagine that Herakleion, Pydna and other cities of Macedonia, which had—some of them repeatedly—been in and out of the kingdom for half a century, could be transformed overnight from autonomous civic communities into amorphous, inorganized masses of town-dwellers. Therefore, it would not be unreasonable to suppose that during the whole fifth century Macedonia experienced an irresistible trend towards the entrenchment and diffusion of civic values and institutions. The reaction of Archelaus to this challenge seems to have been to accept and at the same time to attempt to control rather than to suppress the urban and civic movement.[19]

Parallel to the exploitation of literary sources, the unprejudiced study of epigraphic documents discovered in several Greek locations since the nineteenth century ought to have revealed long ago the existence of civic institutions in pre-Roman Macedonia. They included third-century BC decrees of Thessaloniki, Pella, Amphipolis, Cassandrea, and Philippi from Delos and Cos, mentioning magistrates, city councils, and popular

[16] Dem. 19.194–95. Cf. M. B. Hatzopoulos, "La Béotie et la Macédoine à l'époque de l'hégémonie thébaine: le point de vue macédonien," in P. Roesch, ed., *La Béotie antique* (Paris, 1985), p. 253.

[17] Thuc. 2.100.2; Solinus 14.

[18] F. Geyer, *Makedonien bis zur Thronbesteigung Philipps II* (Munich – Berlin, 1930), pp. 101–3; cf. N. G. L. Hammond, *The Macedonian State. Origins, Institutions, and History* (Oxford, 1989), pp. 9–10; Hatzopoulos, *Institutions*, 1, pp. 470–1.

[19] Hatzopoulos, *Institutions*, 1, pp. 467–71.

assemblies.[20] Also important are the lists of *theorodokoi*, that is to say persons entrusted with the reception of the sacred envoys (*theoroi*) of Panhellenic sanctuaries visiting their city in order to announce the sacred truce and the impending celebration of sacrifices and competitions. The evidence of these documents taken together is of capital importance, for they show that between the end of the reign of Perdiccas III (360) and the end of the reign of Alexander III (323) the cities of Macedonia had officially acquired an international legal personality as autonomous political units within the kingdom. Indeed, whereas the Epidaurus list dating from 360 mentions under the heading "Macedonia" only one *therodokos* for the whole country, namely king Perdiccas himself,[21] the catalogue from Nemea dating from soon after 323 lists several cities, each with its own *theorodokos* or *theorodokoi*,[22] and that of Delphi (*ca.* 215) more than twenty-five cities with their respective *theorodokoi*.[23] Given that the sacred envoys of the principal sanctuaries visited only cities, that is to say urban centres which were the seat of an autonomous political unit, in order to present themselves before the magistrates, the council and the people and to ask them to send a delegation to the festival, the inescapable conclusion is that a major reform had taken place between 360 and 323, that is to say during the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III. However, which king was responsible seems reasonably clear. Not only does the literary tradition attribute such a reform to Philip II,[24] but also the fact that Alexander spent only a few months in Macedonia during his reign leaves no doubt that the great reformer was his father Philip, who systematically distributed the territory of Macedonia proper into civic territories and formally acknowledged the legal personality of the civic political units.

The extensive archaeological exploration of Macedonia in the last three decades has provided a resounding confirmation of the above conclusions. Some thirty civic laws and decrees and twenty other official or semi-official documents coming from famous (Amphipolis, Cassandrea, Thessaloniki, Beroia, Pella, Pydna etc.) or obscure (Gazoros, Berge, Morrylos, Tyrissa etc.) cities from all over the country, dating from the fourth

[20] F. Dürbach, "Décrets trouvés à Délos," *BCH* 10 (1886), 124–33; R. Herzog and G. Klaffenbach, *Asylieurkunden aus Kos* (Berlin, 1952), pp. 15–19, nos. 6 and 7.

[21] *IG* V 1, 94.

[22] S. G. Miller, "The Theorodokoi of the Nemean Games," *Hesperia* 57 (1988), 147–63.

[23] A. Plassart, "Inscriptions de Delphes," *BCH* 45 (1921), 41.

[24] Arr., *Anab.*, 7.9.2.

to the second century and dealing with a variety of subjects, have revealed a rich and intense civic life in the cities of Macedonia.[25]

No civic life is, however, conceivable without civic institutions. The documents discovered in Macedonia itself and in the rest of Greece inform us about the internal organisation of Macedonian cities. The citizen body, called πολίτευμα[26] in our sources, was subdivided into "tribes" (φυλαί)[27] and met as a popular assembly (ἐκκλησία). The council (βουλή), whose members bore the traditional name of πελειγᾶνες in the "Old Kingdom," constituted, as everywhere in the Greek world, its permanent committee and seems to have had a wide field of action. The eponymous magistrate, by whose name official documents in each city of Macedonia proper were dated, was the priest of Asclepius. In the originally "allied" cities, such as Philippi and Cassandrea, this function was assumed by the priest of their historical or legendary founders, who received a heroic cult. The head of the executive in Macedonia proper was the ἐπιστάτης surrounded by a board of assessors, called ταγοί in several cities of the Old Kingdom, δικασταί in Thessaloniki, ἄρχοντες or πολέμαρχοι in Amphipolis and simply ἄρχοντες in most of the cities of the New Territories. In the originally "allied" cities the head of the executive bore the title of ἄρχων and was surrounded by two boards of magistrates: the νομοφύλακες and the στρατηγοί. These senior magistrates had several junior colleagues, such as treasurers (ταμίαι), market supervisors (ἀγορανόμοι), gymnasiarchs (γυμνασίαρχοι), etc. It seems that under the last Antigonid kings an important reform took place with the aim of making the system simpler and more homogeneous, but also of granting more autonomy to the cities. The various boards presided by the *epistatai* were everywhere replaced by a pair of politarchs (πολιτάρχαι).[28]

The chief magistrates presided over the Council and the Assembly and usually proposed the decrees. They had a one year mandate and were elected by the Assembly. However, the political system may have been less democratic than it seems, for the King had the means to influence an election by a citizen body in which the franchise was restricted by a high property requirement.

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[25] Hatzopoulos, *Institutions*, 2, pp. 54–98, nos. 36–82.

[26] M. B. Hatzopoulos, *L'armée macédonienne sous les Antigonides: problèmes anciens et documents nouveaux*, (ΜΕΛΕΤΗΜΑΤΑ) 30 (Athens, 2001), pp. 96–7.

[27] Hatzopoulos, *Institutions*, 1, pp. 121–2.

[28] Hatzopoulos, *Institutions*, 1, pp. 129–65.

Even the earliest of Macedonian civic documents do not predate the reign of Philip II. Does that entail that there were no civic institutions before this king's reforms? Not necessarily. We know that one of Philip's reforms was the introduction of Attic *koine* as the official administrative idiom. However, ancient lexicographers and particularly Hesychius have preserved, in more or less garbled glosses, terms of the Macedonian institutional vocabulary, such as πελειγᾶνες ("the grey ones," i.e. "the old ones"), ταγοί ("ordinators") or σκοῖδος, which are in the local dialect.[29] This literary evidence can no longer be dismissed as unreliable, for it has been confirmed by epigraphic discoveries both in Macedonia, and in the Seleucid kingdom which was her offshoot. It is now abundantly clear that ταγοί is the Macedonian equivalent of Attic ἄρχοντες and πελειγᾶνες that of Attic βουλευταί. Finally it is difficult to dissociate the Macedonian autumn month Apellaios from the old Dorian institutional term ἀπέλλα corresponding to Attic ἐκκλησία. In conclusion there should be no doubt that at least some Macedonian urban centres possessed the complete set of political organs of the Greek *polis* well before the middle of the fourth century BC. The date of their introduction and their origin are lost in the mists of time and cannot be recovered.

[29] For what follows, see M. B. Hatzopoulos, "Épigraphie et philologie: récentes découvertes épigraphiques et gloses macédoniennes d'Hésychius," *CRAI* (1998), 1189–1218.