

Oliver Grote, *Die griechischen Phylen: Funktion — Entstehung — Leistungen*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2016. ISBN 978–3–515–11450–9 hardback, 978–3–515–11452–3 e-book, 284 p., €52.00.

In his Einleitung (ch. 1) Grote first notes the view of the Dorian tribes as originating in the migrations after the Mycenaean period, which began with K. O. Müller's *Die Dorier* of 1824, and the newer approaches inaugurated by D. Roussel's *Tribu et cité* and F. Bourriot's *Recherches sur la nature du génos* in 1976; and next explains his aim of investigating the political function of Greek *phylai* ("tribes") on the basis of a series of case studies. He then provides ten chapters on different cities, followed by a Rückgriff on the origins of the Dorian tribes and a chapter of Schlussbetrachtung. There are lists of ancient sources and modern bibliography, and indexes of sources, persons, places and a general index.

In Cyrene (ch. 2) the sixth-century reforms of Demonax, after the incorporation of many additional settlers, included the creation of three tribes based on the origin of the members assigned to them (Grote defends this against an alternative interpretation). This dispensation was connected with the reduction of the king's privileges, and lasted at least until the fourth century.

In Sicyon (ch. 3) Grote believes the fourth tribe already existed before the time of Cleisthenes. The new names for the tribes were not necessarily intended to insult the Dorian tribes, and Grote explains them as bound up with Cleisthenes' opposition to Argos and helping to stress the particular identity of the Sicyonians; he is not convinced that the tribes were reorganized as well as renamed.

Sparta (ch. 4), after a period when there was a rich upper class and feuding within it, achieved stability at a time when other cities suffered from *stasis*. Grote accepts that the Great Rhetra is an authentic document reflected by Tyrtaeus, and that the "rider" is a later modification. The tribes and local obes already existed before the Rhetra; the Rhetra involved a reorganization of the tribes to serve as regiments in the army; and it required membership of a tribe and of an obe for admission to the assembly, where the citizens would each have two foci of loyalty, one of which might predominate when a particular kind of decision had to be made. This composition of the assembly made it hard to take either good or bad decisions for the community as a whole.

In Gortyn (ch. 5) the functioning of tribes is mentioned only in connection with heiresses, for whom the tribe provides the next circle if a husband is not found among the close relatives. A *startos* Grote takes to be the militarily and politically active members of a tribe (rather than a subdivision of a tribe); the office of *kosmos* rotated among the *startoi*, and, according to Aristotle, was limited to members of upper-class families. The law about heiresses would make it harder for a family to gain influence in a tribe other than its own; the appointment of all the *kosmoi* in one year from the same tribe did not make for a unified citizen body; but the accountability of the *kosmoi* to the

council, in which all the tribes were represented, should have limited the pursuit of sectional interests.

Drerus (ch. 6) is the Cretan city which has given us the oldest inscribed law (ML 2). That was a “resolution of the *polis* after consultation of the tribes,” to limit repeated tenure of the office of *kosmos*, but Grote argues that the assembly of (all the citizens of) the *polis* will simply have accepted what was presented to it from elsewhere. Consultation of the tribes probably happened in a representative body like that mentioned in the decree of the Dataleis about Spensithius (*SEG* xxvii 631), and he identifies that representative body, not under the control of any one tribe, with the council which will have drafted the bill and also with the “twenty of the *polis*” which swore to it.

Corinth (ch. 7) is a city which acquired eight new tribes (but the argument for the three Dorian tribes before that is judged weak). Grote links this change with the eight *probouloi* and council of eighty after the tyranny (Nic. Dam. *FGrH* 90 F 60), but thinks the eight tribes and the eight *mere* of the *Suda* (π 225 Adler πάντα ὀκτώ) should be distinct, as non-territorial tribes and territorial *mere*, so that the tribes, and the *probouloi* and council recruited from the tribes, would not be champions of particular interests. For the subdivisions of the tribes Grote suggests a military purpose.

Argos (ch. 8) by the mid fifth century had the three Dorian tribes and a fourth, the Hyrnathioi, presumably a body of men who earlier had not had full rights but probably were given rights in order to build up the citizen body after the losses at Sepeia in the 490s. The separate tribe Grote sees as guaranteeing that the new citizens would indeed be able to play a part in Argos’ political life; men continued to be identified by tribe when the tribe was the basis for their holding an office, but for other purposes membership of one of the larger number of phratries was found more convenient.

Miletus (ch. 9) in the fifth century until a new organization was imposed by Athens had the four standard Ionian tribes and also Oinopes and Boreis; each year three of the six each provided two of the one *aisymnetes* and five *prosetairoi*, and Grote sees those as forming a prytany-like body, and as being, with the *basileus* (whether he was a seventh man or one of the *prosetairoi*) the *molpoi*. The tribal rotation guaranteed a totally fresh start each year, and the tribes out of office — and in particular the men who had served in the previous year — would be able to check the officials’ conduct dispassionately.

In Chios (ch. 10) the sixth-century *bole demosie* comprised fifty members elected from each of the (otherwise unknown) tribes. Its duties included the disciplining of officials; Grote thinks that that was better entrusted to a body representative of the *demos* than to the assembly of the whole *demos*, and that the tribal election of the council would prevent any family or clique from becoming too powerful within it.

Athens (ch. 11) was given ten new tribes, topographically formed from *trittyes* and demes, by Cleisthenes at the end of the sixth century. Grote sees as the basis of this the

expansion of the citizen body, and stresses the nature of the demes as *poleis* in miniature and the representation of the individual demes and of the different regions of Attica in the council. Local loyalties were not abolished, but the new loyalties of the new system enabled them to be subordinated to the common good; and Grote sees as crucial the council's power to discipline officials [though I doubt whether it had that power at first] and to decide what business should be laid before the assembly, and the structure of the tribes, not tied to a single region.

In ch. 12 Grote considers the origin of the three Dorian tribes. He finds problematic the current view that they are not survivals from an earlier period but originated at the time of the development of *poleis*, since that makes it hard to understand why tribes should have been adopted in various places. In Homer there could be subdivisions of various kinds called *phyla*, including *phyla* which served as military units, and the later *phylai* reused that concept. Those early tribes Grote judges to have been territorial in origin. As in Cyrene, he suggests that division became necessary when a small community received further settlers; in a Dorian state there could be a second tribe of Dorian newcomers and a third (the *Pamphylooi*) of non-Dorians, and development into a standard pattern of Dorian tribes happened gradually during the dark age.

Grote's Conclusion (ch. 13) is that a tribal structure often served, through a rudimentary form of representation, and a genuine sense of belonging to one's tribe, to combine peaceably the differing components of a citizen body. This was helped also by the avoidance of one all-powerful official, and by accounting mechanisms and limits to tenure. Thus Greek officials and tribally-based councils were markedly different from the Roman magistrates and senate; citizens' equality within their tribe counteracted their inequality as individuals and family members; and in Athens Solon failed to achieve harmony but Cleisthenes with his tribes succeeded.

Grote is linguistically confident, and often insists (I suspect not always correctly) that this is the only possible interpretation of a piece of Greek. There are also some larger-scale problems: sometimes a danger of circularity, when an account is preferred which fits Grote's thinking, and the question — inevitable in such a study as this — how far what we can perceive now with hindsight could be perceived at the time by those who created or reformed the tribes and who lived as members of them. But his book is a thorough and a valuable exploration.

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