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# Property Rights and Democratic Values in Bronze Age and Archaic Greece

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## ABSTRACT

In the present essay we introduce the concept of macroculture as a complex of mutually supporting values, norms and beliefs in various areas of human activity, like war, religion, politics, athletics, etc. in a model. Then, by applying the concept of bounded rationality, we analyse how some macrocultures that are favorable or the 'precondition' for the emergence of democracy and institutions develop, in particular property rights, that foster economic development. We analyze this for Bronze Age and Archaic Greece, as being the historical case where such a macroculture favorable to democracy and stable property rights first emerged. Our main findings indicate that during Mycenaean and Archaic age period, the emergence of various elements of macroculture, in warfare, religion, city-state environment and athletic games evolved into similar proto-democratic values leading to the establishment of democracy as a political phenomenon in Classical Greece.

*JEL classification:* N40, P41, P48, Z12

*Keywords:* Macroculture, Democracy, Property rights, Ancient Greece.

## 1. Introduction

In the present essay we introduce the concept of macroculture in order to analyse the conditions that shape long run economic structural and political change. We examine as our case study Bronze Age and Archaic Greek religion in relation to property rights, democratic elements and a general set of values that favors economic change and growth and, related to it, the emergence of democracy.

The emergence of direct democracy in 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C. Archaic Greece has been of continuing interest to philosophers, sociologists, historians and economists since at least the fourth century B.C. with Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Politics*. It had a negative connotation through much of history linked to the negative view cast on it by Plato and to a lesser extent by Aristotle till the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Interest in democracy, seen in a favorable light this time, revived with the reemergence of some democratic forms of government throughout Europe as if the cases of thirteen century Swiss Confederation (after 1291), some medieval cities in northern Italy like Florence

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(Greif, 2005: 771-775), were a series of statutory laws known as ‘the Ordinances of Justice’ was enacted between the years 1293 and 1295, and in southern Germany Augsburg.

Further introduction of proto-democracy was introduced during the 17<sup>th</sup> century in England (after the ‘Glorious Revolution’ of December 1688 established continuous Parliaments) and the United Provinces (Dutch Republic).<sup>1</sup> This interest gained strength during the so called ‘Enlightenment’ of the 18<sup>th</sup> century through the writings of Montesquieu, Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, Hume, and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with James and John Stuart Mill etc, who were among the first prominent members of the classical economic thought.

During recent decades analysis has focused also on the causal links between democracy (both representative and direct) and the economy, economic institutions and economic performance. In the present paper we will discuss the concept of macroculture, as an environment of religion, politics, war, economics etc. that shapes particular norms, rules, values and beliefs. Then, using the concept of bounded rationality, we will discuss how this set of values etc. that has emerged in one of the mutually interdependent and reinforcing elements of a macroculture is diffused into others, for example from the religious domain and war into the fields of politics and economics.

Analysing as a case study Bronze Age and Archaic Greece, we argue that a set of values and norms developed within the religious domain and in warfare that was favorable as a precondition both for the emergence of a democratic form of government, and for institutions guaranteeing stable property rights that again favoured and were a precondition for economic development.

## 2. Religion and Politics

After the collapse of the bipolar international system in 1989-1990, there has been an upsurge in looking towards religious factors as relevant to international politics, as for example (Huntington, 1997). He, along with numerous other authors, e.g. Harrison and Huntington (2001), found that religion is a defining force in shaping the institutions, moral laws and identities of a society, a discussion which has been continuous since Weber’s *Protestant Ethic* thesis. In our essay, we do not intend to take a stand on the ongoing controversy, but to pose a related question about whether and how religion influences politics and the economy, in particular property rights, which according to a long line of scholars (e.g. Anderson, 2009; North, 1990, 1981, 1978) are basic for the institutional framework that fosters or inhibits economic growth.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The United Provinces (UP) were not a true democracy in today’s sense where universal voting rights for all citizens exist, nor was 17<sup>th</sup> (and later) England and the United Kingdom after England’s union with Scotland in 1707. But the UP had established some proto-democratic institutions, in the ‘federal level’ of the union, e.g. the election of the Estates General (the union’s ‘Parliament’) where each province had one vote and where unanimity was required for taking a decision on behalf of the Union as a whole. It has been aptly called a ‘democratic head on an oligarchic body’. For details of the politics and economics of the UP, see Kyriazis (2006) and references there in.

<sup>2</sup> For over a century since its first series of essays in 1905, Weber’s *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905, 1930) has led to discussion and controversy among sociologists, historians, and economists. Weber’s book appeared first in English translated by Parsons, and followed by numerous other editions, e.g. Charles Scribner and Sons (1958) and George Allen and Unwin (1976). For recent reviews, see among others Hamilton (1995), Davids (2008) and Schaltegger and Torgler (2009). For institutional settings that inhibit growth, North (1981) analyses the 16<sup>th</sup> century Spanish Mesta (guild of

Taking as our historic case study Mycenaean and Archaic ancient Greece we ask whether religion influenced the development of democracy and property rights. We analyse the ancient sources in order to trace the existence of elements that point out to a democratic framework or state of mind among ancient Greeks. Then, again the question of causality arises: If such a mindset exists, did it influence politics, or was religion, as illustrated accordingly to the extant sources, a mirror-image of the real world? Did the ancient Greeks attribute to their gods their actual practices, or did the practices they attributed to their gods influence later on their political life? This is a difficult question, and the answer depends on the interpretation of the evidence, but also on establishing the chronology of sources and events. For the earliest periods, eg. the Early Bronze Age in Crete and the Cyclades about 2800-1600 B.C., and down to the beginning of the Archaic period (beginning during the late 9<sup>th</sup>, early 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.), we do not have extant written sources (apart from bookkeeping tablets recovered from Cretan and Mycenaean palaces, such as those of Pylos and Knossos) and thus, we have to rely on archaeological finds and on later sources.

For the Archaic period (9<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.) we have written sources (beginning at the late-8<sup>th</sup> century with Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days* that permit us inferences on Greek religious beliefs. In these, as we analyse in the third part of our essay, we can trace both proto-democratic elements and thoughts concerning the working of the economy and the influence from religion to politics. Democratic elements in religion pre-existed the actual introduction of direct democracy, which emerged in various parts of Greece during the sixth century and in the city-state of Athens definitely through Cleisthenes with his institutional reforms in 510-507 B.C. (Ober, 2008; Raauflaub *et. al.*, 2007; Tridimas, 2011).

At least since Jacobsen (1943) authors have investigated ancient religions in order to discover (or dismiss) elements of democracy.<sup>3</sup> Before analyzing further the Greek case we summarize the arguments on the actual discussion: First, it seems that some forms of public assemblies existed in many ancient societies, linked also to the city-states cultures. But although many city-state cultures existed in many parts of the world, for example, the Sumerian cities of Uruk, Ur and Lagash of ancient Mesopotamia (in 3500-2200 B.C.), the Phoenician city-states of Arados, Byblos, Sidon and Tyre (Hansen, 1999), or Jewish cities such as Jerusalem (Wolf, 1947), or finally, the Warring State period China (in 475-221 B.C.) and much later (Yates, 1999), they did not necessarily lead to a democratic form of government.

Walton (1995) contests the view that this system of government was even a primitive form of democracy, seeing it as being more a 'public sounding board' or a consultive body. Such assemblies in all other cases except for Greece were introduced inside absolutist-centralist types of governments, kingships and empires. Democratic elements in all these primitive societies and states did not survive. Only in the Greek city-states (and, somewhat attenuated in the forms of republic instead of democracy,

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wool producers), while other authors Kennedy (1988), and Kyriazis (2008) analyse the Mogul empire of India, where nobles, provincial governors etc. did not have the right of inheritance. At their death, their personal fortune passed not to their heirs but to the emperor's treasury. This system led to exorbitant consumption and inhibited investment.

<sup>3</sup> In this context authors such as Isakhan (2006) and Isakhan and Stockwell (2011) make a curious and we believe spurious argument. Seeing the difficulty that modern Islamic states such as Iraq and Afghanistan have in accepting democracy as a form of government, we should try to convince them that democratic forms of government are not a Western imposition on their societies, but a political and cultural innovation of their own past. Thus, by adopting democracy they would simply go back to their roots.

in Rome) emerges a democratic structure with democratic institutions and laws establishing the framework for the working of the state. Direct democracy was practiced in many Greek city-states for about three centuries, (Athens from 510-322 B.C., Rhodes from 4<sup>th</sup> to mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century, the Aetolian and Achaean Leagues with interruption down to their conquest by Rome, in 146 B.C. (Cartledge, 2009).

In the next section, for analytical purposes we intend to introduce the concepts of macroculture (taken over from organization theory and adapted to a new model) and bounded rationality, which as far as we know, is a new methodological approach in this debate, in order to explain the emergence of democratic forms of government.

### **3. Macroculture and Bounded Rationality**

In this section we introduce, for the first time as far as we know, the concept of macroculture (taken over and adapted from organization theory) into institutional economics in order to analyse structural change. A ‘macroculture’ encompasses the common values, norms and beliefs shared among members of a society or state. In our adaptation of the term in economics and politics, macroculture has also a dynamic time characteristic, that of long term periods. As we will show in our case study, Bronze and Archaic Age period in Greece, the elements of macroculture take shape over time periods of decades to centuries.

Through these values, norms and beliefs, a macroculture guides actions and creates typical behaviour among independent entities, so that it coordinates their activities so that complex tasks may be completed (Abrahamson and Fombrun, 1992, 1994; Jones et. al., 1997). This happens in three ways: 1) By creating ‘convergence of expectations’. 2) By allowing for idiosyncratic language to summarize complex routines and information and 3) By specifying broad tacitly understood rules for appropriate actions under unspecified contingencies (Camerer and Vepsalainen, 1988; Williamson, 1991, 1975). The establishment of ‘communication protocols’ follows.

Jones *et. al.* (1997) have applied this concept to firms, while Almond and Verba (1963) have written on ‘civic culture’ as a shared set of beliefs among citizens. Putnam (1993) argues that democratic stability depends on specific forms of social organization and citizen values which he calls ‘civic traditions’. A similar line of argumentation (Granovetter, 1992:35) maintains that a structural embeddedness is developed: e.g., firms develop connected mutual contacts to one another. This corresponds to the establishment of mutual links or networks. These interactions define values and norms and thus strengthen this interdependence, the macroculture. This is consistent with Lazaric (2011: 148), who claims that ‘every recurrent interaction pattern in an organization may be hiding a potential routine’ as well as with Vromen (2011), who labels these mutual values, norms and patterns of behavior as ‘routines’ by depicting them as ‘multilevel mechanisms’ that generate firm behavior.

Solow (1985) argues that economic activity is embedded in social institutions, customs and attitudes, while embeddedness of institutions in a historic and social context is a main idea of North’s work (Daunton, 2010; North 1990, 1981, 1978). In fact, this discussion of embeddedness is much older in the historical than in the organizational and economics context. It goes back to the ‘Bücher-Meyer controversy’ (the modernists versus the primitivists) concerning the ancient economy. (Amemiya, 2007: 57-61; Morris, 1994; Schefold, 2010). It was taken up again by scholars such as

Polanyi (1957), Humphreys (1978) and Finley (1982)<sup>4</sup> who argued that the ancient economy was embedded in the social, political and cultural context and so was primitive, a thesis that has been refuted by more recent studies concerning the economy, (Amemiya, 2007; Bitros and Karayannis, 2008; Cohen, 1997; Engen, 2005; Halkos and Kyriazis, 2010; Kyriazis, 2009; Lyttkens, 1997 and Ober, 2008, 2010 among many others) who argue that the ancient Greek economy, and particularly that of Athens, functioned much like the market economies of today.<sup>5</sup>

Two particular questions on this issue are, first, how does such a macroculture develop and, second, do macrocultures proceed along different paths, evolving different characteristics? Related to this is the issue of 'cause' and effect. Do values and norms preexist (and if so, why and how did they come about) and do they shape a particular macroculture, or is it the other way round, that is, does a macroculture give rise to specific values and norms? Thus, an actual answer can be given only if we manage to establish chronological sequences of events.<sup>6</sup>

Kyriazis and Metaxas (2010) and Kyriazis and Paparrigopoulos (2011) have analyzed one aspect of macroculture and norms and values, the emergence of a new type of warrior in Archaic Greece, the *hoplite* (named from his big round shield, the 'hoplon') and the new tactical formation, the *phalanx*, as coordination and cooperation mechanisms which give rise to specific mental attitudes, values and norms, even a specific language (e.g. clear commands for battle) and learning and knowledge. Even more, the new warship adopted during the early 5<sup>th</sup> century by the Greeks, the *trireme* and the naval fleets, developed and fine-tuned the cooperation and coordination mechanism in the phalanx's 'customs' values and norms. The next issue is why and how these norms and values are diffused from one sector of the macroculture into another, making it a coherent whole.

We believe that the answer can be found in the theory of bounded rationality. Simon (1991, 1982) developed the theory of bounded rationality, which states that the mind has limitations, for example in its capacity to absorb and use new information. We are not totally 'rational' in the sense of seeking to maximize utility or any other 'ideal'. What we actually do in real life is try to reach a solution that satisfies us even if it is not the best possible one. We may even ignore the best possible one that would maximize utility. Simon calls this behavior 'satisficing'. Satisficing enables us to find acceptable solutions with minimal expenditure of time and effort, thus reducing transaction costs (as eg. information costs). Such a behaviour has further consequences: once we have found solutions to a particular problem that are perceived as adequate, when facing a new problem we try to use the established and known rules of the thumb, the known knowledge we possess, in order to solve the new problem.

This again reduces our effort and time consumed, which is important due to our brain's limited capacity. Only if we do not find an adequate solution using the

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<sup>4</sup> Actually Finley did not use that label but argued a 'substantivist' (contextualized, embedded) position, so that the criticism of 'modernists' does not apply directly to him. We owe this remark to P. Cartledge in a personal communication to us.

<sup>5</sup> To be more precise, there was no single ancient Greek economy in the sense of one integrated economy like today's, but regional economies, some with strong links to one another and some weaker ones. Athens, Corinth, Rhodes and a few other mainly maritime states come closer to the characteristics of modern economies (having also developed important financial 'instruments' like banks (but not yet investment instruments like today's) come close to 'modern' economies, while others, like Epirus and 5<sup>th</sup> century Macedon much less so. We again owe this qualification to P. Cartledge in a personal communication.

<sup>6</sup> This point has been raised as a criticism against North by Daunton (2010).

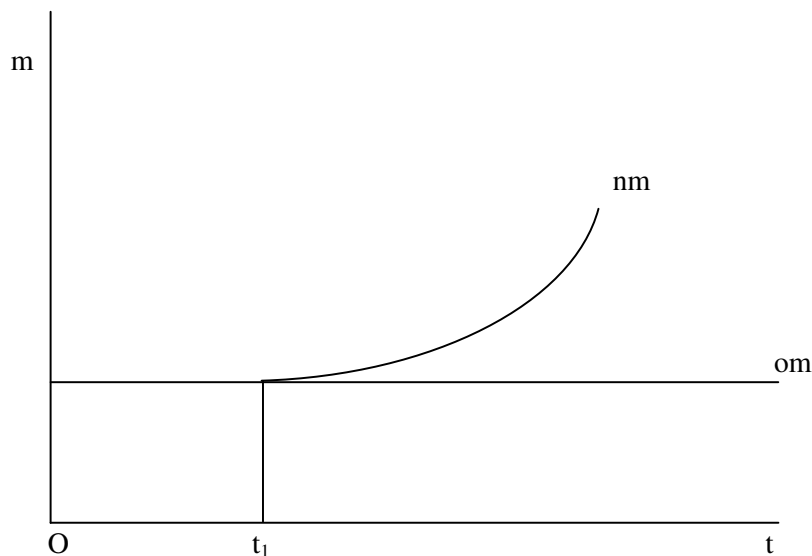
existing knowledge and if the problem we face is serious enough, do we devote effort and time to find new solutions. Once we have found some solution, we have increased our total learning and knowledge. Satisficing behavior thus diffuses known solutions and problem solving rules to new problems. But it does so also for a set of values and norms evolved in one area which are diffused and taken over in other contexts.

This is exactly how ‘macrocultures’ develop and are strengthened and this is what happened in ancient Greek city-states. The values and norms evolved in warfare through coordination and cooperation mechanisms, equality, cohesion, self-discipline and above all trust, representing a specific set of mind and morals, learning and knowledge were transferred from the military into the political field, where they became ‘isegoria’ (equality of speech), ‘isonomia’ (equality in front of the law) and ‘omonoia’ (unanimity).<sup>7</sup> Thus, to paraphrase the 4<sup>th</sup> century Athenian orator Demades, bounded rationality became the ‘cognitive glue’ that held the various elements of a macroculture together into a coherent whole.<sup>8</sup>

#### 4. A model of Path Dependence and Change

Let us now formalize the emergence of new macrocultures that lead to economic and political change in the long-run. In figure 1 the path dependence and change of macrocultures is shown. Figure 1 illustrates the dynamic-structural change from one (old) macroculture to a different (new) one.<sup>9</sup>

**Figure 1.** Transition from the old to the new macroculture



<sup>7</sup> Kyriazis and Metaxas (2010) present a formal model using bounded rationality in order to explain path dependence and change. As far as we know Kyriazis and Metaxas, (2010) and Kyriazis and Paparrigopoulos (2011) address for the first time the issues of the emergence of macroculture, values and norms in a historical context, that of Ancient Greece and their influence on the emergence of democracy.

<sup>8</sup> Demades actually called ‘theorika’ (money paid to poorer Athenian citizens to enable them to watch the four days long theatrical contents, a form of public education) and ‘ekkleisiastika’ (money paid to enable them to participate in the Assembly, about 40 days per year during the 4<sup>th</sup> century. See Hansen (1999), the ‘glue of democracy’ (Plut. Mor. 1070B).

<sup>9</sup> The following model is a development of (Kyriazis, 2006; Kyriazis and Metaxas, 2010).

where:

om: (old macroculture): signifies the old macroculture, a system of norms, values and customs etc. that characterize the economic, social and political field of a state and associated institutions and organizations.

nm: (new macroculture): signifies the emerging new macroculture, where new norms, values, customs etc. are being created, developed and diffused, so that over time a break with the old path-macroculture is accomplished, and the state follows a new path. We consider curve nm following an exponential shape because when during each period the state follows the new path (nm), the probability of staying on the new path increases, and the probability of returning to the old path decreases, because during each subsequent step along the new path, the various elements of the new macroculture are being mutually reinforced and integrated into a whole.

The model in Figure 1 can be described by two simple equations:

$$m=om+nm \cdot e^{(g(t) \cdot t)} \quad (1)$$

where:

m: macroculture

om: the old macroculture: the constant term

nm: the new macroculture which predominates over time if  $g_t > 0$

$$g(t)=f(k, d) \quad (2)$$

where:

$g_t$ : the rate of change depending on the creation of new elements of macroculture and their speed of diffusion (adaptation by other sectors).

k: knowledge

d: rate of diffusion (of the macroculture effect)

A further elaboration could be made for (2) equation. We analyse in the text how the new values are diffused, through the working of bounded rationality, from one area of a macroculture, to the others to form an interdependent and integrated whole. Having in mind that a process of a gradual structural socioeconomic conversion of a state can become feasible through the macroculture effect, we can move from an old regime to one that creates new organizations and institutions. For instance, the conversion of the Mycenaean warlord's assemblies we describe next via the Homeric Epics and the existing scholarship, lead to fully developed democratic participation assemblies, like that of ancient Athens. We can describe this rate of change of 'learning' as depending on the rate of creation of new knowledge  $k_t$ , and the rate of its diffusion  $d$ .

So, the ultimate format of the macroculture equation might be:

$$m=om+nm \cdot e^{f(k, d) \cdot t} \quad (3)$$

The conceptual framework presented in figure 1 can also be described by Table 1, which shows the conditional probabilities  $p_{n1}, p_{n2}, \dots, p_{nt}$ , that



characterize each step along the new macroculture regime depending on the result of the previous period, and  $1-p_{n1}, 1-p_{n2}, \dots, 1-p_{nt}$  the probabilities of a return to the old macroculture regime. Based on the previous analysis we have:

$$p_{n1} < p_{n2} < \dots < p_{nt-1} < p_{nt} \quad (4)$$

$$1-p_{n1} > 1-p_{n2} > \dots > 1-p_{nt-1} > 1-p_{nt} \quad (5)$$

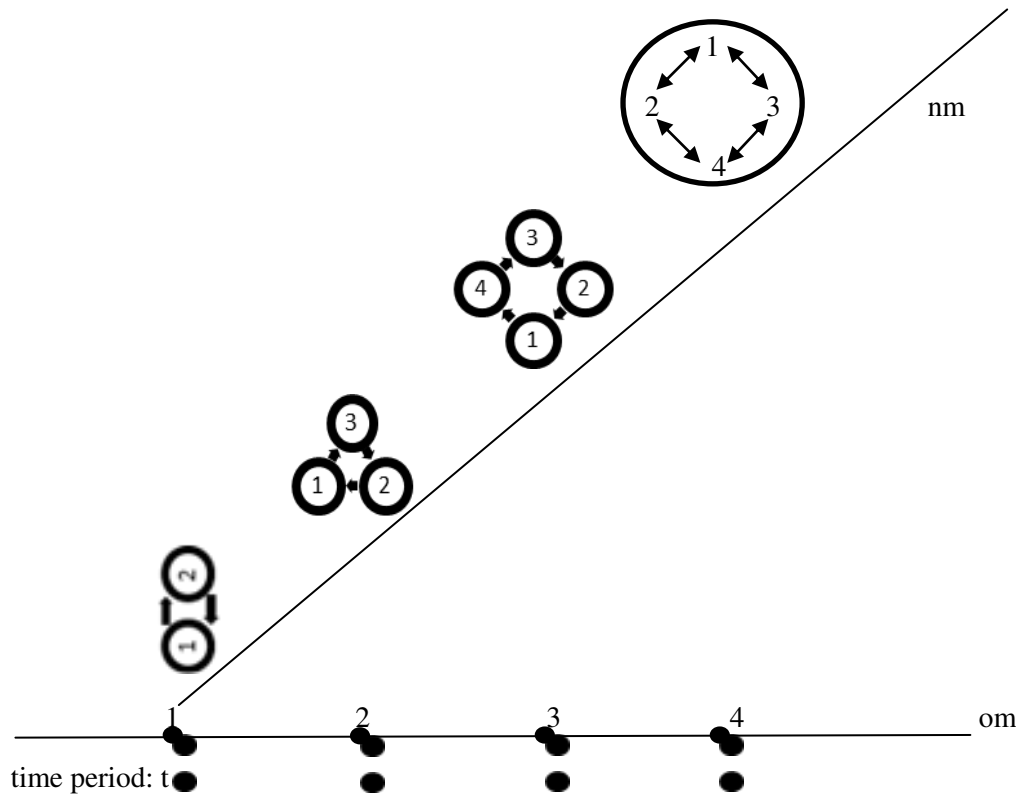
**Table 1:** Decision Tree Probabilities

Time Period:	1	2	t
nm: new macroculture	$p_{n1}$	$P_{n2}=(p_{n2})/p_{n1}$	$P_{nt}=(p_{nt})/p_{nt-1}$
om: old macroculture	$1-p_{n1}$	$1-p_{n2}$	$1-p_{nt}$

(4) and (5) have a logical explanation. For instance,  $p_{n1} < p_{n2}$ . This is valid because, as we have shown in Figure 1, when during each period the state follows the new path (nm), the probability of staying into the new path (e.g.  $p_{n2}$ ) increases and is higher than the previous probability (e.g.  $p_{n1}$ ). So, it is clear that over time the probability of going back to the old macroculture ( $1-p_{nt}$ ) converges towards zero.

In figure 2, we represent a decision tree, where the different elements of a macroculture (eg. religion, warfare, economy, politics etc.) are gradually being integrated into a new whole:

**Figure 2.** Decision Tree and Integration of Various Elements of Macroculture



The cycles represent the various elements of a new macroculture that emerge in one sector at time period 1, thus representing new potential democratic knowledge in ‘politics’ and the emergence and gradual enforcement of individual property rights (taken together, the  $k_t$  of equation 2). These cycles are reinforced through diffusion to other sectors at periods 2 and 3, and have been integrated into a new mutually supporting macroculture at period 4 through diffusion  $d$  of equation 2. According to our analysis in the next section, the various elements of a new macroculture appeared during the Archaic period in religion, warfare, the athletic games and the city-state environment, mutually reinforced each other, were integrated at the end of the period (towards the end of the 6th century) into a new macroculture that made the emergence of direct democracy in some cases a possibility (eighteen democratic states are attested for the end of the 6th century, and most notably Athens of Kleisthenes, 510-507 B.C.) (Raaflaub *et. al.* 2007).

The move from the old to the new macroculture in figure 2 represents political (towards democracy) and economic (towards property rights) structural change. In the following section, we will focus on one aspect of macroculture, religion and its values and norms in relation to politics and the economy in Bronze Age and Archaic Greece.

## 5. The Bronze and Archaic Age Macroculture in Greece

We turn now to the examination of two main issues of the Bronze Age (about 3000, but mainly after 2000 B.C. to 1200 B.C) and the Archaic Age (about 800 to 500 B.C.), property rights and democratic elements. The intermediate so called ‘Dark Age’ of Greece (about 1200 to 800 B.C.) is poor in material, both archaeological and written due to the Dorian invasion that caused the decline of the Mycenaean civilization. However, in contrast to scholars like Finley (1957), who believed that the Dorian invasion caused the dissolution of the socioeconomic and political status quo in the Mycenaean Greece, more recent scholars like Foxhall (1995) have shown that Dark age period was not so ‘dark’ as it was thought to be, especially for those mycenaean city-states that they were not fully dependent on palatial economic organization. In accordance to Foxhall, van Effenderre (1985) found that the major political and economic relationships that dated back to Mycenaean period, like household organization and economic elite (aristocrats) behavior and practices, they did not abandoned, but took a different shape during the later archaic and classical period.<sup>10</sup>

As we will further show in this part of the article by analyzing the Homeric epics and Hesiodic poems we can find many indications for the protection of property rights and for the implementation in practice of a set of democratic values and equal political rights during Bronze Age and Archaic periods in Greece as a whole. We do this because we think that ancient texts, as for example, the Greek Homeric epics and the Hesiod poems, though not always unquestionable, still provide us with invaluable information about the socioeconomic structure and the historical background of the states or nations we intend to focus on and thus can become useful tools for supporting our further research.

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<sup>10</sup> In accordance to the findings of van Efferende (1985) and Foxhall (1995), P. Cartledge, in a personal communication to us argued that the older belief that the Dorian invasion caused the destruction of the Mycenaean civilization is not now generally accepted.

## 5.1 Property Rights

Homer's *Iliad* (mid-8<sup>th</sup> century B.C.) begins with, in today's terminology, a dispute about property rights cloaked in terms of 'personal honour'. Agamemnon, king of Mycenae (Il. 1, 161-171) and war leader of the invading Greeks at Troy, has been obliged to relinquish a slavegirl which has been allotted to him after the sack of a city, because of Apollo's wrath. Being the supreme commander of the army, he feels that he is entitled to receive as part of his war loot, in compensation for his loss, another slave girl, Briseis, who had been attributed to Achilles, king of Pthia and mightiest champion of the Greeks. Achilles does give his slave girl to Agamemnon, neither in good grace nor in fear of him, but because he does not want to split the unity of the Greeks. But, aggrieved feeling dishonoured, he withdraws from the fight, which brings the Greeks great difficulties.

From the above, it is clear that individuals (kings, aristocrats, and simple warriors) had property rights to the spoils of war (both humans and objects). These property rights served as incentives to motivate men to fight effectively (Frey and Buhofer, 1988). During the Trojan period (if we accept that Homer described the customs of war of about 1250 B.C., and not of those of his own age) these rights were clearly ascertained and denominated. Prisoners and objects were collected, and then distributed according to rules: First choice to the commander in chief (Agamemnon) and then in decreasing order according to merit and contribution to battle, thus second choice going to Achilles, the best warrior of all. Agamemnon then infringes on Achilles rights (an uncommon occurrence, hence the importance given to this event by Homer), but as a negative compensation, Achilles withdraws from battle and nobody can oblige him to participate in the war. The other kings try to persuade him, but cannot compel him. This is an example of proto-democratic procedures of consent building, of which the *Iliad* has many examples.

Proto-democratic in the sense that decisions, in this case to participate in battle, are not being taken by the 'supreme commander' giving orders to his subordinates, but each subordinate choosing on his own free will to participate or not in battle. Agamemnon is thus a 'first among equals', a position similar to that portrayed by Homer for Zeus among the gods. This again is a very different situation from those in Asian empires or Pharaonic Egypt, where the emperor (Sumerian, Babylonian, Assyrian, Hittite, Mede, Persian or Pharaoh) just commands.<sup>11</sup>

A very important point concerning the emerging property rights and justice macroculture is that a simple warrior, something of a popular speaker, Thersites, steps forward and takes part in the king's dispute, becoming the champion of the person whose property rights have been abused (Achilles) and the challenger of the party who has abused unjustly the established property rights, mainly Agamemnon but also other kings who support him, such as Odysseus (Il. 2. 210-241). Thus we think that Thersites can be seen as a member of a proto-jury made of persons of non-noble origin. The culmination of this proto-jury is the Athenian popular courts of the classical period, mainly after the reforms of Ephialtes, (that took place between 462-461 B.C.) to 322 B.C., where the jurors were selected by lot among all Athenian citizens.

This thesis is consistent with Stuurman (2004: 173) who asserts that the Thersites episode indicates that ordinary warriors did not just obey blindly the orders of their commanders or kings but 'warriors count for something'. Thus the Thersites

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<sup>11</sup> Raauflaub (1997) also underlines the egalitarian distribution of booty during Homeric times.

incident could be seen as a form of a proto-egalitarian behavior. Thersites is then punished for his impudent words by a hit from Odysseus, who considers him as guilty of calumny (Il. 2. 246-265). Still, what makes this episode remarkable and different from other contemporary cultures is that such a stand by a simple soldier, would be unthinkable in front of a Middle Eastern emperor or a Pharaoh, and that his punishment is extremely light, just a single hit.<sup>12</sup>

The issue of property rights and justice (to safeguard them) continues. Odysseus counsels Agamemnon (Il. 19. 181-183) to be a just King and to give justice to those he has wronged, meaning Achilles. Agamemnon (Il. 19. 185-189, 247-248.) accepts his earlier mistake and makes amends to Achilles: He gives him, among others, as a compensation, gold of ten talents.<sup>13</sup> Later, (Il. 21. 101-102) we come back to the attribution of property rights: Achilles by responding to a Trojan noble named Lykaon says that he has spared the lives of many Trojan captives whom he did not kill, but sold as slaves in foreign lands. From this, we can make two deductions:

First, here there is a direct granting of the spoils of war to the individual who secures them (Frey and Buhofer, 1988), a procedure different from that followed in the case of the two slavegirls (Agamemnon has not captured them personally but receives the first as a reward in his capacity as 'supreme commander'). Second, selling them in foreign lands seems to be an indication of the functioning of markets. Has Homer portrayed a 13th century practice, or one of his own 8th century? Further, the existence of property rights in plots of land is attested. The word 'kleros' means a plot of land that belongs to the chief of a family. Hector says to the Trojans that, even if they are killed, their sacrifice will not have been in vain, because they will safeguarded their homes and 'kleros'. It seems that even foreigners had the right to own land, while fallow land that a person cultivated became his property (Finley, 1982).<sup>14</sup>

Homer's *Odyssey* also gives some information on property rights. Here again, there is an ambiguity as to whether the period concerned is the Mycenaean (during which Odysseus lived, about 1280-1260 B.C. or his own mid-8th century Archaic period. In Book 1 (Od. 1. 160) Telemachus speaking to a foreign guest castigates the suitors of his mother Penelope, 'who waste foreign goods'. This makes clear the existence of established property rights, which should not be violated by third parties like the suitors. Further, in Od. 1. 402-404 one of the suitors, Eurymachus, answers to Telemachus arguing that Telemachus has undeniable property rights to his house and farm lands. In Od. 2. 333-336 the suitors discuss what to do with Odysseus's house and the movables agreeing that they should take and distribute them among themselves, but the house itself should remain the property of Penelope.

This indicates that the property rights to houses could not be violated, and very importantly, women such as Penelope could own houses as their own property, something that was possible in some classical Greek city-states later on, for example Sparta and Gortyn on Crete (Fleck and Hansen, 2009) but not, at least *de jure* (but

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<sup>12</sup> For an analysis of the various interpretations of the Thersites incident see Stuurman (2004).

<sup>13</sup> It is not exactly clear what kind of talent Homer has in mind here. It could be either a measure of weight, or simply of value. During 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., when *Iliad* was written, no coins were yet in circulation in Greece. Thus, a silver talent would not yet have a monetary value as it did later, as in classical Athens, when a talent was the equivalent of 6000 drachmae, the cost of building a trireme warship was one talent (Lytkens, 2008: 10; Ober, 2008) and the daily wage of a worker in 480's was less than a drachma (Kyriazis and Zouboulakis, 2004). Still, the talents offered to Achilles must have represented an enormous value.

<sup>14</sup> According to Foxhall (1997: 128) 'some notion of private property was at the heart of Greek concepts of land tenure well back into the dim and distant past'.

probably yes de facto, in Athens) (Cohen, 1997). Odyssey gives some additional information on trade and the exchange of goods, which again presupposes the existence of clearly attributable property rights, because without them, trade and exchange are impossible: In Od. 1. 430-432 we are informed that Odysseus father, Laertes, had bought a girl as his faithful housekeeper, Eurikleia in exchange for 20 cows. In Od. 14. 100-105 we are informed of the existence of salaried shepherds under the supervision of the chief-shepherd Eumaios. This is an indication of the existence of property rights in labour of free persons, as against slaves or medieval serfs. In Book 17 (Od. 17. 415-427) indicates the existence of household servants (not slaves) who again receive presumably payment in wages or salaries for their labour. In Od. 18. 356-364 the possibility of employment as a free labourer in agriculture is again attested, when a suitor asked the disguised Odysseus if he would like to work in his fields for a large wage.

The above indications illuminate the issue of labour provision already in Mycenaean and Archaic Greece. Slaves and free remunerated labourers work side by side, as was the case also in classical Greece. This thesis is also supported by Forrest (1994). Slave labour was not sufficient to cover all needs, so that free men were not only working as farmers on their own plots of land, but would find employment as salaried persons for various other activities, mainly in agriculture. Hesiod, a contemporary of Homer, writing during the second half of the 8th century B.C. (about 750-720 B.C.) in his *Works and Days* which can be seen as a farmer's handbook, gives information about his own times, that is Archaic Greece, for the region of Boeotia (to the north of Attica). It is clear, that it addresses itself to free farmers, who own their own lands and are masters of their produce. Property rights to land and its produce are undeniable. Further, the free farmers do not pay any taxes to kings and their bureaucracy, as was the case in the Eastern Empires.

Hesiod's work contains a lot of 'moral' counsels addressed to his brother, Perses, but for the benefit of a wide audience, from which we can infer the values, norms and customs valid in the emerging macroculture of the Archaic period: Justice is paramount. (WD. 210-218, 219-224, 225-228, 248-255). The message here is that one should be just and those unjust will receive divine retribution, even if they are kings or aristocrats. In WD. 263-269 the task of divine justice is attributed to the father of the gods himself, Zeus. This task is so important, that Zeus has a daughter, Dike (Justice) who is entrusted with supervising justice. Her task is to plead to Zeus cases of injustice among men and ask him to punish them. Dike thus is a forerunner of modern 'attorneys'. As far as we know, only in the Greek religion of the period do we find a 'specialized' goddess of justice, which shows the importance that the Greeks attributed to justice. Hesiod goes so far as to write (WD. 274-281) that justice is the supreme good that Zeus gave to men.

Here we can thus establish even a ranking of values during the Archaic Period in Greece: Justice is the supreme value. And, of course, justice to safeguard inviolable property rights. Zeus will punish (WD. 282-285) unjust acts.<sup>15</sup> While *Days and Works* does not give us an idea of a clearly established law system, it gives an overall impression of an emerging macroculture of customs, norms and values regarding justice and property rights. During the next two centuries, linked to the emerging

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15 This value system continued and was further deepened during classical times: the playwright Menander for example (342-292 B.C.) wrote the famous: ' Ἔστιν Δίκης ὀφθαλμός, ὃς τὰ πάνθ' ὀρᾷ ' (*Gnomai Monostichoi*, 179) which means that the eye of justice sees everything and nothing –bad or illegal- remains unpunished (See Liapis, 2002). Before him, Plato in many of his *Dialogues* ("Euthyphro") discusses the ideal of justice and the law. (see Allen, 1970).

strength of the hoplite warrior-free farmer (Kyriazis and Papparigopoulos, 2011) the principle of ‘isonomia’ (equality in front of the law of all free citizens, and in parallel, written law and institutionalized courts of justice) will emerge and be supreme. Finally, Hesiod informs us that the observance of justice brings prosperity to the city-state (WD. 213-247).

In his second (but probably earlier work) *Theogony* Hesiod gives additional support to the value of justice. In Th. 881-884 Zeus, when he vanquishes the Titans, attributes offices to the gods with justice. Further (Th. 901-904) he marries as his second wife Themis (Judgment) who bears three daughters, Eunomia (lawfulness), Dike (Justice) and Eirene (Peace).<sup>16</sup> The importance of justice and here also for the first time, of the law becomes clear: Not just one, but three goddesses, Themis, Dike and Eunomia, are entrusted with the safeguarding of justice and law. We indicated above that in *Works and Days* no indications of the actual laws are to be found. But in *Theogony* the name of the goddess Eunomia (lawfulness) is a clear indication that laws (even if as yet unwritten) must have existed and that the principal ‘value’ of the law was strong. If not, why should a goddess Eunomia have to exist?

But apart from these classical texts of Homer and Hesiod, we also have indications of an emerging system of property rights from the written Linear B tablets that archaeological research revealed in the remains of the Mycenaean palaces. For instance, in one of these tablets (*Documents, no. 183 Nn 831*) found in in the Mycenaean palace of Pylos we have a description of an economic activity that more or less seems to be a trade guild organization (Kirk, 1965:49). These tablets describe a case which resembles a company association where seven people from different fields and with different skills collaborate and act like partners in a company that produces linen for the making of clothes. Among them there are a cowherd, some shepherds, a smith and a person who probably was a member of the supreme authority and administration of the Kingdom of Pylos (Powell, 1995). Similar organizations were also found in the ancient Syrian city of Ugarit (in today’s northwestern Syria).

Linear A tablets of Minoan Crete are dated back to 1825 B.C. and Linear B tablets at about 1500 B.C. (Chandwick, 1958; Davis, 2010). Having in mind the view of (North, 2005, 1981) that economic growth is based on established property rights, we believe that this primitive kind of company should have flourished during the Mycenaean period (1600-1100 B.C.) only in the case of an established system of property rights that enables private property in land and capital and secures the existence of commercial earnings. This necessary precondition seems to have been validated, as modern research proves that during the Mycenaean period private and public (state) property co-existed as a forerunner of the forthcoming period of classical Athens.

During the Mycenaean period there had been a system of private land that belonged to simple villagers or peasants and separately a ‘Temenos’ (Greek: τέμενος) that belonged to the kings, chiefs or nobles and were used as sanctuaries (Antonaccio, 1995; D’ Amato and Salimbetti, 2011; Kirk, 1965). Private property in land was protected by law, while a regime of leasing of land existed too (Promponas, 2006). Moreover, individuals who were occupied with land economic activities, such as shepherds, had the right to own their own personal flocks, except those that belonged to the palace (Halstead, 2007) as well as the autonomy to deal with the central administration palace bureaucracy on beneficial terms in order to sell their production to the palace (Bendall, 2007; Shelmerdine, 2011).

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16 Themis is a word used for the actual practice of justice in law courts.

Women too had the right to hold land property, but only those who were holding ritual offices. From the Pylos Linear B tablets we also learn that land owners had the right to protect their property legally even against public authority. These tablets mention the case of a woman priestess and (legal) land owner named Eritha who was engaged in a judicial dispute about the status of her property (Shelmerdine, 2011).<sup>17</sup> But the element that fully confirms our conclusion that an established system of property rights did exist in Mycenaean Greece is the fact that the Palace of Pylos had a system somehow like a 'national cadaster' already at least from 1200 B.C. (Promponas, 2006: 291-292).

As a final remark we think that it is necessary to mention the fact that Mycenaean society did not have a fully institutionalized regime for safeguarding property rights with specific written rules, as was the case for ancient Athens during classical period (see Bitros and Karayannis, 2009; Halkos and Kyriazis, 2010), does not mean that property rights were not protected in a modern sense. Forrest (1994:67) informs us that during the Mycenaean period, property in land was passing from generation to generation without a 'contract' or any other type of legal title because trespassing private land was a very rare phenomenon. Forrest describes this proto-regime of private property securitization as 'an undisputable property and not undisputable right'.

## 5.2 Democratic Elements

Jacobsen (1943) has coined, as mentioned above, the contested concept of proto-democracies for the Sumerian city-states. Such a situation existed also in the Cyclades Islands and on Crete in Greece. The small separate dwellings on the Cyclades Islands and on Crete seem to have developed some kind of self-organization, where some leaders (but not Kings) took over the function of manager or coordinator for the provision of public goods like defense in the form of protective walls (Doumas and Theoharis, 1970:102-124). It seems that some forms of collective decision making took place, and that councils of 'elders', as in the Sumerian city states, existed, also here (Iakovides, 1970: 266).

Starting again from evidence in the Iliad, Homer informs us of the existence of a council of the Kings (Il. 1. 304-305, Il. 2. 51-56). More important as an indication of an emerging proto-democratic spirit, in Il. 2. 85-115, we have an assembly of all warriors. Agamemnon wants to have the assembly's approval about the war's continuation and puts forward arguments in favour. In Il. 2. 142-165 the assembly decides to continue the war, accepting Agamemnon's arguments and proposal. And the above is not as isolated example. In Il. 2, 278-304 Odysseus steps forward in front of the warriors assembly, asking for patience followed by Nestor. The Trojans also have a similar assembly, as made clear in Il.2. 773-778 when the goddess Iris finds them assembled. The practice of the gods mirrors the practice of men (or is it the other way round?). In Il. 1. 4. 1-19 the gods hold an assembly in order to decide what to do concerning the war. Zeus speaks and proposes, subject to the agreement of the other gods, that they should intermeditate in order to bring peace, by giving back to Menelaus his stolen wife, Helen.

The above is very important first because it shows that the supreme god, Zeus does not just decide and impose his decision, but proposes. The 12 gods, in an

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17 The dispute had to do with the legal status of her land. Were the lands given to Eritha under a leasing status or did they actually confer on her through a privileged judicial procedure?

assembly, discuss and decide democratically. This god's assembly predates and finds a parallel in the famous assembly of the Athenian generals a few hours before the battle of Marathon: The ten democratically elected by the citizens assembly generals vote democratically in favour or against the battle (Green, 1998). Second, female goddesses (6 as against 6 male) participate fully and equally in the assembly, with full 'voting rights', a situation that human women would not achieve and only in a few countries till the beginning of the twentieth century. This equality is so strong, that Hera does not hesitate to publicly castigate her husband Zeus accusing him of hiding some of his talks (with Achilles mother Thetis.) She calls him (Il. 1. 539-544) 'treacherous one, what god has been plotting counsels with you?'

Third, the gods are not far-away beings, unconcerned by human affairs. On the contrary, they care for them, mix with humans (in battle and sexually) and try to help them but never impose their will as autocrats. In all Greek religion, gods can be friends, counselors, lovers or enemies of humans, but never blind natural forces or autocrats, who do not care about men (De Romilly, 1999: 38-39, 49-56). Even victory is celebrated in an equalitarian way: In (Il. 7. 312-320) the Greeks celebrate Ajax's victory over Hector, by eating a five-year old male ox. Everybody gets an equal share of the meat, with the exception of Ajax, who is the honored person and gets the choice morsel.

In Il. 8. 489-497 it is Hector who calls the Trojan assembly to discuss next day's and plans, and in Il. 9. 9-18 Agamemnon calls the Greek assembly where plans and proposals are discussed. The chief's assembly is repeated in Books 10 and 14 (Il. 10. 196-253, Il. 14. 61-75), while in (Il. 19. 34-35, 42-45 and 45-153) Achilles mother proposes to him to convene the assembly in order to try to find a solution to his quarrel with Agamemnon. Homer mentions explicitly that in this assembly participate also the 'oikonomoi' (those in charge with logistics, in other words, the stewards in modern terminology), those who distribute wheat (again from the administration branch of the army), the steersmen and those in charge of the ships safety. And in Il. 20. 4-25, Zeus calls again a gods assembly. The description of all these democratic-style procedures resemble those of the classical Athenian assembly, where an orator-politician, proposes and the citizen's assembly approves or rejects by majority vote which may be counted.

However, some scholars believe that these war assemblies that included both a king and a council were primarily consultative to the Achaean Kings (Congleton, 2011; Pitsoulis, 2011) while others argue that this presence of a council that consisted of land-holding nobles provided to the Mycenaean Kings some kind of feudal service (D' Amato and Salimbetti, 2011). However, the variety of the examples of 'democratic' procedures we have already described here make us believe that, although Mycenaean war assemblies were not structurally similar in nature to the Greek democratic assemblies from the 6<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>th</sup> B.C. classical period and predominantly that of Athens, they can certainly be described as 'precursors' of the Athenian classical assembly.

Traces of 'democratic' values during the Mycenaean period continue in the *Odyssey*, (Od. 1. 80-95, 272-275, 371-372). Goddess Athena goes to Ithaca and proposes to Telemachus that he calls an assembly of his fellow citizens to ask for their protection against the predations of the suitors of his fortune). In Od 2. 6-21, an old man, Aegyptius, speaks first. This is a clear parallel to the importance of the elders as counselors in the assembly, as suggested by Jacobsen (1943) for the Sumerian city-states and Wolf (1947) for the Jewish city-states. The assembly is described in detail by Homer, and it is clear that all interested members are entitled to speak: the accuser,



Telemachus, Eurymachus as the spokesman of the defendants, Aegyptius and Alitherses as representatives of the elders and mediators. All of them try to swing the popular assembly in their favour, which is an indication of its emerging strength.

Were we not to know its actual context, the description could very well apply to a classical period Athenian popular court, as described in many speeches of the Attic orators, Demosthenes, Lysias, Aischines etc.<sup>18</sup> In this Book Homer really anticipates history by two and half centuries. And, fittingly, Odyssey closes as it begins, with an assembly after the killing of the suitors which has to attribute the rights and wrongs and try to avoid a civil war. Another proto-democratic element, present also in the Odyssey, is that of simple men speaking on equal terms and even being uncivil in criticizing aristocrats and Kings. The swineherd Eumaeus and the disguised as a beggar Odysseus do not hesitate to criticize and even verbally abuse one of the suitors, Antinous (Od. 17. 307-487), who may have been the son of one of Ithaca's neighbour kingdoms. Such a situation is unthinkable between a simple man and a contemporary Eastern Emperor.<sup>19</sup>

Lastly, Thersites again. The case we have analyzed above (proponent of justice and protection of property rights) is an example relatively similar to the process of free speech in front of an assembly, what would become in the classical period, the principle of 'isegoria' (equality of speech), one of the founding values of direct democracy. Thersites speaks freely, in front of the army and the Kings. This again is the first step that culminates in the famous dictum of the Athenian classical period assembly: *τις ἀγορεύειν βούλεται*; 'who wants to speak'? Traces of democratic values by trying to interpret the Thersites episode have also been detected by Ferguson (1973:11), who believes that 'Thersites, cruelly caricatured and ruthlessly manhandled, is the beginning of a democratic opposition to aristocratic misuse of power' and by Johnston (1988) who regards Thersites behavior as a 'logical, humanitarian and democratic objection'.

Balot (2001: 66-67) also considers Thersites as a 'remote glimmer of proper egalitarianism' while Stuurman (2004:173) asserts that the Thersites incident indicates that Achaean Greek warriors were not obliged to obey blindly the orders of their war and political leaders, but 'soldiers worth for something'. He also considers the incident as one of the first public expressions of political equality.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusions

By analyzing the main literary texts of the 8<sup>th</sup> century we have traced two elements of the emerging democratic macroculture, in religion, war and the economy: the principles of 'isonomia' (equality in front of the law) mainly in safeguarding property rights, and also as justice, and 'isegoria' (freedom and equality of speech) in front of the assembly, either of warriors (Iliad) or citizens (the people) in the Odyssey.

Greek religion shows a marked difference from Eastern ones: From the examples we have analyzed it becomes clear that it is a 'democratic' religion based on the principle of equality of the gods (men and women) with Zeus as 'primus inter

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<sup>18</sup> In classical Athenian courts jurors were selected randomly by lot and they decide by secret ballot.

<sup>19</sup> In contrast with the Greek case, eastern civilizations of the Mycenaean era and afterwards were characterized by the belief that king's orders had a divine origin and legalization and thus should have been accepted by people with absolute respect (Puett, 2008). Babylonian and Persian Kings, though did not deify themselves, demanded that their orders to be regarded as 'decisions of the gods' Ehrenberg (2008) and Puett (2008:13) also inform us that Egyptian and Japanese emperors were regarded as 'sons of the heavens', meaning that they had a divine origin.

pires' and coordinator, but certainly not an autocrat. The values of 'isegoria', justice and law are paramount, so much that three goddesses (Dike, Eunomia and Thetis) are entrusted with the various aspects of implementing and safeguarding them. Further, men are portrayed as having free will (Romilly, 1999: 38-39). In Greek religion no official priesthood existed, as in Egypt or the temple rule of ancient Sumneria 'a totalitarian religious belief' (Kriwaczek, 2010: 53).<sup>20</sup> In Greek religion there is not one supreme absolute god, like the Persian Ahura-Mazda, so that emperors could claim to be their representatives on earth (as the Babylonian, Assyrian, Persian emperors and the Egyptian Pharaohs did).<sup>21</sup>

Thus, Greek religion, with free will, democratic elements and no established priesthood shows some similarities with protestant religions in the value system it promotes. Table 2 summarizes the political situation in various periods and states during antiquity. It shows that only in the case of classical Greece the traces of democratic participation that had also appeared during the Bronze Age and later periods among many other Eastern nations were finally transformed into a real democratic political regime, such as that of classical Athens. Religious beliefs and actual practices of Mycenaean and Archaic periods are one element in forming values, norms and customs of a macroculture favorable to the emergence of democracy. In Kyriazis and Metaxas (2010) and Kyriazis and Paparrigopoulos (2011) a different element of macroculture was analyzed, that of the emerging (again during the Archaic period) heavy infantryman hoplite and the phalanx formation. There too, the egalitarian element was predominant.

Our argument thus is that probably even during the Mycenaean period, but more certainly during the Archaic, there were different elements, in religion, warfare but also in the Athletic Games, that all evolved similar values and norms, of equality, justice, freedom of speech, safeguarding of property rights and individualism. The reason we refer to the athletic games aspect, like the Olympiads is because we believe that they represent another element of macroculture that promoted equality, and thus also democracy. It is an area which we intend to analyze in a forthcoming paper. These values in religion, warfare but also in the Athletic Games are being continuously developed during the Archaic Age in Greece, as can be glimpsed also in the poets of the period (Schefold, 1992; Pitsoulis, 2011). According to bounded rationality, values, norms and customs emerging and developed into one or more fields, involving cognitive learning, are taken over in other fields. As presented in our model, in our case, the values of 'isonomia' and 'isegoria' present in religion, in warfare, in athletic contests, are integrated into a new macroculture, that makes the emergence of democracy a possibility.

We have tried to show that these elements probably existed already in the Mycenaean period, but certainly and in strength during the Archaic period. Table 3 summarizes this argument. What was different in Greece from the the other contemporary Middle Eastern states were 1) In Middle Eastern countries these elements did not exist 2) If they existed, as per Jacobsen (1943) in the ancient Sumerian city-states, they were not strong, or numerous enough to mutually support each other and be integrated into a macroculture conducive to democracy. So, in all

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<sup>20</sup> We thank professor P. Cartledge for this remark in a personal communication to us.

<sup>21</sup> At this point we have to mention that it would be fruitful to contrast ancient Greek religion with Christianity and Islam. We owe this comment to professors Bertram Schefold and George Tridimas. However, we believe that this kind of further research would make us diverge from the main focus of our current research, because comparing ancient greek religious doctrines with those of Christianity and Islam is too far away from the period we are analyzing and not our main focus.

other known cases, the historic development was towards authoritarian empires and not towards democracy.

**Table 2.** The Development of Government Types

Country	Periods and Government type			
Country	Bronze Age (3000-1200 B.C)	Early Iron Age 1200-800 B.C.	Geometric Age (Greece) 800-500 B.C.	Classical Age (Greece) 500-300 B.C.
Egypt	k and c.a. Old Kingdom (3000-1674) k and c.a. Middle Kingdom (1674-1565) k and c.a. New Kingdom (1565-1085)	k and c.a. (New Kingdom to 1085 B.C.)	k and c.a. (following dynasties)	k and c.a.
Sumer city states	k and p.e. (3000-2300) k and c.a. (2300-2100)	-	-	-
Babylon	k and c.a. (1900-1600)	k and c.a.	k and c.a. (700-539)	-
Assur	k and c.a (1813-1076)→	k. and c.a. (1076-911)→	k and c.a. (911-612)→	-
Israel	k and p.e	K and p.e	-	-
Hittites	k and c.a. (1350-1190)	-	-	-
<b>Ancient Hellas (Greek city-states)</b>	<b>k and p.e. (3000-1280)</b>	<b>k and p.e. (1280-800)</b>	<b>k and p.e. (800-500)</b>	<b>k, o, and d.d. (macroculture effect in war, religion and sports)</b>
Troy	k and p.e. (3000-1900) k and p.e (1900-1250)	-	-	-
Persia	-	-	-	k and c.a. (546-331)

Explanations:  
c.a. : centralist-autocracy regime  
p.e. : some elements of democratic participation, like council of elders, army assemblies, etc.  
d.d. : direct democracy  
k : kingships  
o : oligarchs


Sources: Wolf (1947) for Israel, Healy (1991) for Assyria, Healy (1992) for New Kingdom Egypt, Fileds (2004) for Troy, , D' Amato and Salimbetti (2011) for Mycenaean Greece, Kriwaczek, (2010) for Middle East chronology, Puett (2008) for Persia and De Romilly (1999) and Cartledge (2009) for classical Greece.

Table 3 summarizes the argument. We show here that what was different in Greece was the emergence of various elements of a macroculture, warfare, religion, city-state environment and athletic games that evolved similar proto-democratic values. Two of them were missing entirely from other contemporary cultures: the heavily armed self-financed (for his arms) infantryman (hoplite) and the athletic games, while the other two, religion and city-states existed in some other cultures, but in different and weaker forms. Eastern religion either pluralistic (as in Egypt and Mesopotamia) or monotheistic (as in Persia and Israel) had established priesthoods and were in most aspects authoritarian.

The four elements of the macroculture coalesced into a coherent whole by the end of the Archaic period, as illustrated in phase 4 in our model (figure 2), forming

the basis for the emergence of democracy. Very important from the economic point of view, the ancient Greek democracies protected strongly property rights, especially land ownership, but in more developed economies, like that of classical Athens, also others, like trading, inheritance and financial-monetary rights. (protection against monetary fraud by Nicophon’s law and through the establishment of ‘independent’ law courts for trade, inheritance disputes etc.<sup>22</sup> Protection of property rights had a strong contribution to the economic development and flourishing of the classical Athenian economy (Cohen, 1997; Halkos and Kyriazis, 2010; Ober, 2008).

**Table 3:** The emergence of a democratic macroculture

Emerging macroculture elements	‘Cognitive glue’	Democratic macroculture
<b>Mycenaean and Archaic Greece</b>		
Warfare: (hoplites and phalanx) Equality, trust, self-confidence, isegoria	➔	
Religion: equality, justice, isonomia and isegoria ‘laws’	➔	
Athletic games: equality, ‘rules’, justice	➔	
City-state environment: low transaction cost for coordination and cooperation mechanisms, trust, self-confidence	➔	
	<i>Via Bounded rationality</i>	Integration of previous elements into political fields: isonomia, isegoria, isopoliteia (political equality), justice, laws and rules, ‘omonoia’ (unanimity) trust-self confidence

In the case of Ancient Athens, we have a parallel development of political values and economic ‘rights’ (especially property rights). The flourishing of democracy was based on sound economic institutions and economic strength. Taken

<sup>22</sup> It must be pointed out that the principle of ‘isonomia’ concerning property rights was respected in most cases also in oligarchic (like pre-democratic 6<sup>th</sup> century Athens and Aegina), mixed (like Sparta) city-states, and Kingdoms (like Macedon). For the peculiar structure of the Spartan city-state political institutions see Cartledge (1978: 34) and Rhodes (2007: 58-61).

together, the elements summarized in Table 3, brought about political and economic structural change, leading to the emergence of direct democracy and market economies in some city-states, a unique phenomenon up to that time.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Herodotus seems to have sensed intuitively this structural change, since according to him, one of the main differences between Greeks and non-Greeks have no market-places. If taken literally, this is an exaggeration but we believe that Herodotus had something more general and inclusive in his mind, akin to our macroculture concept: Democratic assemblies as market places for the exchange of ideas and the formation of values, norms and institutions.

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