### Contents

PREFACE

page X

3

I٢

32

5 I

# BOOK ONE The Political Thought of Antiquity

#### I THE PRIMITIVE BACKGROUND

Aristotle's definition of the aim of the State – Light thrown by the study of prehistory and anthropology on the objective of society; subconscious basis of political thought; stability of early communities – Initiative centres on rites concerned with food, fertility and magic; stability thus combined with enterprise. This harmony later found in successful phases of civilization – Variety and flexibility of institutions; society a continuous evolution – The reality of progress, material and intellectual – Aristotle's view reinforced by the conclusions of modern research

# II THE TEMPLE STATE AND SACRED CITY: MIDDLE EASTERN EMPIRE

The neolithic revolution. The river valley cultures; common characteristics and political development – Mesopotamia: the Code of Hammurabi – Egypt: the Admonitions of Ptahopt; Ipuwer; the 'Eloquent Peasant' – The rise of military empires: large-scale kingship, the Assyrian war machine – The Near East creates urban civilization and the idea of empire

#### III THE GREEK CITY STATE: PLATO

The geography of Greece – Crete: Hellenic culture the result of the impact of a steppe people on the Levantine world – The Ionian Greeks; scientific and moral speculation: Socrates; Plato – The Republic; the Statesman; the Laws – The first attempt to plan society in accordance with an abstract idea of the State

#### IV THE GREEK CITY STATE: ARISTOTLE

Aristotle: The development of Political Science by empirical method – The *Politics*; outstanding importance of the book, its wisdom and influence – The Greek achievement and decline

#### V ALEXANDER AND THE HELLENISTIC WORLD: STOICS AND EPICUREANS

Alexander, the first European to wield imperial power, brings the Oriental idea of empire into Europe – Rise of the Stoic and Epicurean philosophies; individualism and salvation – The mystery cults, Orphic and Eleusinian – Hellenistic culture, the medium in which Roman and Christian ideas expand

67

Ят

97

117

139

#### VI ROME: THE RULE OF LAW

Vast extent of the Empire, its scale and efficiency – The Pax Romana; Cicero and Natural Law; the *De Re Publica*, the *De Legibus*–The Romans legalize the vocabulary of political thought – The Principate; Augustus; the organization of the empire – Decadence of Imperial Rome – The pessimism of Seneca; of Marcus Aurelius; political and economic decline – Justinian; the codification of Roman Law – The solid achievement of Rome, the tradition of European order

#### VII CHRISTIANITY AND THE JEWISH TRADITION

Christianity transforms and dominates European thought – It contains three main elements; the Caritas of the Gospel, St Paul's teaching to Jew and Gentile, and the Jewish tradition, prophetic and priestly – These elements examined; their effect on political thought

#### VIII THE TRIUMPH OF CHRISTIANITY: ST AUGUSTINE

The Christian Church takes over the spiritually bankrupt society of antiquity – Constantine: the mixed motives which inspired his conversion – Christianity becomes the official religion of the empire – The definition of Doctrine; patristic thought; Tertullian; St Ambrose – St Augustine; the *De Civitate Dei*; its profound implications and subsequent influence

#### BOOK TWO

## The Political Thought of the Middle Ages

#### I THE DARK AGES

Causes of the decline of the civilization of antiquity; elementary mentality of the age — Limitations of the monastic outlook; Cassiodorus; Isidore of Seville — Crudity of social conditions; the Merovingian court as described by Gregory of Tours — The Papacy; Gregory the Great and the missions to the North — The barbarian converts; Celtic influence; Bede — The North shows a new political initiative, having assimilated the missionary influence, and the tide runs again towards revival, backed by barbarian vitality

#### II THE RISE OF MEDIEVAL CIVILIZATION: THE BAR-BARIAN CONTRIBUTION

Localized and semi-feudal basis of society; Teutonic, Frankish and Scandinavian contributions – Anglo-Saxon laws; Law territorialized; the King's Peace – Charlemagne; the Frankish Holy Roman Empire, the pattern of subsequent royalty – Scandinavian legal ability, independence and sense of character; the Icelandic Sagas

#### III FEUDALISM AND KINGSHIP

Cosmopolitan nature of medieval society – The 'realm' a part of Christendom held in trust under Law – In England feudal and folk custom combine with the tradition of Law inherited by the new bureaucracy to limit the ruler's power – This limitation expressed in the *Policraticus* of John of Salisbury

#### IV PAPACY AND EMPIRE: ST THOMAS AQUINAS

Development of the papal power; medieval Rome; Gregory VII and the Investiture contest – Innocent III, the climax of the medieval Papacy; Innocent IV and the claim to temporal supremacy – The scholastic Renaissance; the political thought of St Thomas Aquinas

#### V THE MEDIEVAL REALM

Parliamentary institutions an original legacy of the Middle Ages, reflecting a European movement reaching its most lasting expression in England – Bracton: Law based on custom and consent; the De Legibus Angliae – Fortescue: De Laudibus Legum Angliae; The Governaunce of England; 'regal' and 'political' power contrasted; a new economic sense, an anticipation of Locke

#### VI THE DISRUPTION OF CHRISTENDOM

The alternatives to papal leadership – Dante, seeking 'the realization of human potentialities in peace', regards the Empire as the best means to secure that end; the *Monarchia* – Marsilio of Padua: the *Defensor Pacis* – Cusanus and the Conciliar movement – The legacy of the Middle Ages and the emergence of the Nation State

#### BOOK THREE

The Political Thought of the Renaissance and the Age of Rationalism

#### I THE RENAISSANCE

Political thought secularized – Machiavelli: the *Principe*; the *Discorsi* – Both manuals of political craftsmanship, applied common sense to meet Italian political conditions – Sir Thomas More

157

174

190

211

220

229

247

- The *Utopia* he faces the urgent problems of poverty and war
   Both books, representing two facets of the Renaissance mind, mark a new departure in political thought
- II THE REFORMATION AND THE WARS OF RELIGION Within the intellectual framework of the Renaissance and the political framework of the nation state, religious controversialists transmit medieval traditions of Law and popular rights Luther Calvin: The *Institutes* Languet, Buchanan The assertion of freedom of conscience diminishes the power of the State The Jesuits: Mariana, Suarez, also assert a moral sanction against the great state
- III SOVEREIGN POWER AND THE GREAT STATE Bodin - The new sovereign power; Maiestas - The State explained by itself - Grotius: De Jure Belli ac Pacis: the definition of International Law - Richelieu; The Political Testament; power politics in practice

290

313

337

382

IV THE NEW RATIONALISM: DESCARTES: HOBBES

The modern scientific outlook first fully articulate in Descartes:
The Discours sur la Méthode - Cartesian rationalism politically 'atomistic' though practically successful - Hobbes: The Leviathan; government justified by utility and the political ineptitude of men; a turning point in political thought

V ENGLISH PURITANISM

- The English development of democratic thought The rift in the ranks of the propertied classes allows a brief period of radical influence, foreshadowing nineteenth-century ideas The Levellers; the Diggers Milton: the Areopagitica, a famous vindication of intellectual freedom Milton's views on Government; Of The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates; the Ready and Easy way to Establish a Free Commonwealth
- VI THE WHIG TRADITION: HOOKER: LOCKE: HALIFAX Hooker: Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, a restatement of the medieval doctrine of Divine and Natural Law Whig political theory Locke: Of Civil Government; Letters Concerning Toleration Halifax, his wise maxims of state
- VII SCIENTIFIC HUMANISM: SPINOZA: VICO
  Spinoza: scientific impartiality applied to politics; the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* and the *Tractatus Politicus* The aim of Government security and freedom; authority only justified if it serves these ends; a contrasting conclusion drawn from Cartesian

method to that of Hobbes - Vico: the Scienza Nuova - The beginnings of sociology; a new philosophy of history, a new historical sense

#### VIII THE AGE OF REASON

406

French society of the Enlightenment intellectually brilliant but politically backward, hence their slashing attack on their institutions – Montesquieu: Esprit des Lois – Diderot; The Encyclopedists, the rationalist attack – Hume; his destructive criticism of 'Natural Reason' undermines a time-honoured sanction, but strengthens the tradition of empirical method within its limitations

#### IX THE ROMANTIC REACTION: ROUSSEAU AND BURKE

42

Rousseau – The *Du Contrat Social*: the 'general will' as realized in small communities applied to the great state: this interpreted as a sanction for popular sovereignty – The 'general will', not natural reason, the basis for the State – Burke: The English conservative tradition; his profound historic sense and new vision of Empire

# X THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION: RETROSPECT: CONCLUSION

449

The Industrial Revolution transforms the scale and tempo of Western Society: the most radical material change since the Neolithic Age, marking the close of the first great phase of civilization and of political thought – Adam Smith: The new Economic Science – The European political inheritance in the light of this crisis – Main themes of that tradition, Greek, Roman, and Christian, as interpreted by the medieval mind, by the Renaissance, and by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – Relevance of this tradition to the modern world, its strength and greatness – Conclusion

#### SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

464

INDEX

471