Conceptualizing and Theorizing Peace in Ancient Greece[*]

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PROLOGUE

IN JANUARY 2008, RUTH SCODEL GAVE HER PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS ON "STUPID, Pointless Wars" (2008). As it happens, my address focuses on a different dimension of the same problem. Although I will explore mostly Greek ideas, I could easily have chosen Roman ones too. In the late republic, after centuries of almost incessant warfare and the conquest of a huge empire, both Cicero and Sallust tried hard to demonstrate that intellectual achievements (in rhetoric, law, and history) had as much merit as those of the statesman and general. As Sallust puts it, "It is beautiful to do good for the *res publica,* but neither does it lack distinction to speak well: it is possible to gain renown in peace as well as in war (*vel pace vel bello clarum fieri licet*); both those who were doers (*qui fecere*) and those who wrote about the deeds of others are praised

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in great numbers" (*Cat.* 3.1). Even so, Sallust knew that in the quest for glory in his society the doer and warrior prevailed over those who were committed to peaceful works, the thinkers, speakers, and writers. So did Cicero (e.g., *Pro Mur.* 22–24; cf. *De or.* 3.33.133–34; *De off.* 2.19.65). It was only during and after the civil wars of the 40s and 30s B.C.E. that Roman authors raised their voices to express wide-spread hopes for peace, especially when, rarely enough, events seemed to justify such hope. It is no accident, of course, that the literature surviving from Augustus's life-time yields much richer material for the exploration of thoughts about peace than any other period of Roman history, and that peace and pacification played a central role in Augustus's own self-presentation.[1] Moreover, one of the early Augustan authors offers a good entry into our topic.

A LATE REFLECTION: VARRO'S *PIUS AUT DE PACE*

In Book 19 of *De civitate Dei*, before embarking on a discussion of heavenly peace, Augustine offers a general and broad survey of the many ways in which peace, delightful and dear to all humankind, is in fact the ultimate desire of every being on earth. I quote only a few sentences from the beginning:

> Anyone who joins me in an examination . . . of human affairs, and the human nature we all share, recognizes that just as there is no man who does not wish for joy, so there is no man who does not wish for peace. Indeed, even when men choose war, their only wish is for victory; which shows that their desire in fighting is for peace with glory . . . It is an established fact that peace is the desired end of war. For every man is in quest of peace, even in waging war, whereas no one is in quest of war when making peace (19.12. Trans. Bettenson).

Augustine's argument covers many aspects of human (and even animal) life and strikes us, at least in part, as quite bizarre and truly "sophistic"—as we shall see, with good reason.

Long ago, Harald Fuchs (1926) argued in a detailed examination that Augustine took the essence of this digression from an essay by the first-century B.C.E. polymath Marcus Terentius Varro. Even if this view has been contested (Laufs 1973), the reference to Varro proves useful. His *Pius aut de pace* (*Pius or On Peace*) was one of 76 *logistorici,* prose works, probably in dialogue form, in which Varro discussed important philosophical and political issues (Zucchelli 1981; Sallmann 2002: 1140). Cicero's *Laelius de amicitia* is an extant example

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[1] On Roman concepts of peace, see, e.g., Momigliano 1996 (1940); Woolf 1993; relevant chs. in Sordi 1985; Binder and Effe 1989, and Raaflaub 2007. On Augustus and peace, see Kienast 1992: index *s.v.* Pax Augusta; Galinsky 1996: index *s.v.* pax; and, from a different perspective, Gruen 1990.

of this genre. The person named in the title, usually the main interlocutor in the dialogue, had some relationship to the topic indicated in the title as well. In this case, the Pius in question probably is Sextus Pompeius, the son of Pompeius Magnus. If so, the occasion prompting Varro to write an essay on peace was the Peace of Misenum, concluded in 39 between Octavian and Sextus Pompeius (Katz 1985: 144–58; Zecchini 1985)—only one year after the Peace of Brundisium between Antonius and Octavian that prompted Vergil to write the famous *Fourth Eclogue* with its vision, shining brightly in a dark age of civil wars, of the return of peace and a new Golden Age.

Fuchs showed, furthermore, that Varro must have taken many of his arguments from an unknown Hellenistic work which, in turn, clearly had antecedants in the thoughts not only of Aristotle but of some sophists, especially Gorgias, in the fifth century B.C.E. This brings us right into the period that will prove most fertile for our topic. I begin with a few general remarks.

THE PERVASIVENESS AND PUBLIC NATURE OF GREEK THINKING ABOUT WAR AND PEACE

Scholars have rightly emphasized that comments about the suffering caused by war and, correspondingly, a strong desire for peace pervades Greek literature. The evidence has been collected by others and is mostly well familiar.[2] Hence I can be brief.

Strong awareness of these issues is visible already in epic and, to a lesser degree, in lyric poetry. We need think only, in the *Iliad,* of the hatred the Trojans feel for Paris who caused the war (3.451–54, cf. 38–57; 6.523–25; 7.390), of the farewell between Hector and Andromache that describes starkly the fate awaiting her after his death and the fall of Troy (6.394–481), or of the remarkably negative characterization of the war god Ares (5.761, 831, 890–91; Schachter 2002: 1048; Burkert 1985: 169–70). Scodel points out that the anti-Trojan War tradition that characterizes this war as frivolous, unnecessary, and stupid (best known perhaps from Herodotus's detailed argument, 2.115–16; cf. 1.4) is already implied in the *Iliad* and elaborated in the *Cypria.* From this decidedly unheroic perspective, wars "are fought for trivial or fictional reasons, caused and continued by fools, liars, incompetents, and crooks" (2008: 234).

Especially in the second half of the fifth century, concerns about war and peace are ever-present, emphasized especially by Herodotus and Thucydides, Euripides and Aristophanes, and, we shall see, the sophists and philosophers.

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[2] Zampaglione 1973: pt. 1; Arnould 1981; Spiegel 1990; see also Graeber 1992; relevant chs. in Sordi 1985; Binder and Effe 1989, and Raaflaub 2007.

Narrative and didactic epic, lyric poetry, tragedy, and comedy were performed in public, at various occasions but always in front of audiences that represented important segments of the citizen body. Such performative art at least in part reacted to concerns that were important to the audiences, whose interest in the performance depended largely on their ability to identify with the issues and dilemmas presented to them (Boedeker and Raaflaub 2005; Raaflaub 2000). Sophists, physicians, historians of Herodotus's type, geographers, and other specialists performed their wisdom in public presentations as well, competing with each other and depending for their success on the audience's positive reaction (Thomas 2000). Here too the subject matter's relevance and attractiveness to the audience were crucial, even if rhetorical skills and special effects sometimes overshadowed substance. What we read about war and peace in late-fifth-century authors thus expresses not only ideas of these authors but corresponds to concerns of larger parts of the population. It is this pervasiveness and public nature of the discourse on war and peace that seems to me to distinguish the Greeks from other ancient societies and perhaps even from early China—the only other ancient civilization of which we know that thought intensely and even theoretically about peace (Yates 2007; in preparation; see further below). Other late fifth- and fourth-century intellectuals (such as Thucydides) primarily addressed readers or taught small groups of pupils (thus Plato, Aristotle, and other philosophers). Even so, they interacted intensely with other intellectuals of all types. All this explains why echoes not only of political, geographical, or medical theories but also of an intense discourse on peace pervade virtually all extant literature of the period.

For my present purposes, I take the existence of this widespread Greek discourse on peace for granted. I want to get beyond its basic manifestations (laments about war and desire for peace) and explore its conceptual, theoretical, and systematic aspects. What forms did these aspects take, what did they focus on, how do we explain their emergence, and what impact did they have? I begin with a brief survey.

EARLY CONCEPTUALIZATIONS: WAR AND PEACE AS CONTRASTING PRINCIPLES

On Achilles' shield (*Il.* 18.478–607), Homer juxtaposes a city at peace (490–508) and one at war (509–40). The text leaves no doubt that the poet sees here a decisive organizing principle of human life: peace and war. War is prompted by greed and hate, and causes confusion and destructive death; peace permits happiness, prosperity, procreation, and justice.

In *Works and Days,* Hesiod too juxtaposes two cities. The decisive factor determining the human condition here is justice. Favored by Zeus and Dike,

justice is rewarded, among other blessings, by peace, while injustice is punished by war and destruction (225–47; cf. *Il.* 16.384–92; *Od.* 19.109–14). In the grand genealogical design of the Hesiodic *Theogony,* war figures prominently among the offspring of Night (223–30). Conversely, and remarkably, Eirene is one of the three Horai, goddesses of growth and prosperity, and the daughter of Zeus himself and Themis (901–3). Themis stands for an old, Zeus for a new order. Their marriage connects the old with the new order, and their daughters represent the prime values of this new order: justice, peace, and good order. Hesiod thus recognizes the fundamental importance of peace for the well-being of human society and community, and conceptualizes it accordingly within the hierarchy of social and political values. This suggests not only a moral but also a normative perspective. Finally, in the Myth of the Ages, reflecting the emergence of a theory of cultural evolution that has antecedents in the Ancient Near East (*Works and Days* 110–201; West 1997: 312–19), the Golden Age is blessed by peace and abundance. Only in the Bronze Age people "were dreadful and mighty and bent on the harsh deeds of war and violence" (145–46. Trans. Athanassakis 1983), leaving this legacy to the subsequent ages. In an ideal world, then, there are no wars, only peace and abundance.

Solon identifies both external and internal war as symptoms of a state of disorder (*dysnomia*); a community characterized by *eunomia* is blessed by peace and prosperity (fr. 4 West; Raaflaub 2001b: 89–99; on *eunomia,* Ostwald 1969: 62–95). Even the scarce fragments surviving from early philosophy (especially Heraclitus) and Orphic religious speculation make it clear that the contrast of war and peace continued to serve as a fundamental structuring principle. Moreover, in practice too, the Orphics and Pythagoreans opposed violence, bloodshed, and sacrifice, and may have opposed war as well. Empedocles' ideas on these matters influenced later philosophers.[3]

THE SOPHISTS

With the sophists, the discourse on peace reached a new level. Several of them dealt intensively with the concept of concord (*homonoia*). This concept

[3] Heraclitus, DK (Diels and Kranz 1961–1964) no. 22 fr. B 67 (see Kirk, Raven, and Schofield 1983: ch. 6): "God is day-night, winter-summer, war-peace, satiety-famine." B 80: "One should know that war is universal (common) and jurisdiction is strife, and everything comes about by way of strife and necessity." B 53: "War is both king of all and father of all, and it has revealed some as gods, others as men; some it has made slaves, others free" (Trans. Freeman 1948). On the Orphics and Pythagoreans: Ellinger 1992; Kirk, et al. 1983: chs. 1.4 and 7. Empedocles, DK 31 B 16ff.; 112ff., esp. 128, 130, 135–139. See Kirk, et al. 1983: ch. 10. See, generally, Nestle 1938: 9–10.

emerged toward the end of the fifth century when many poleis were shaken by violent internal strife (*stasis*; de Romilly 1972; Funke 1980; Gehrke 1985), as documented and analyzed powerfully in Thucydides' "pathology of civil war" in Corcyra (3.69–85, esp. 82–84; Price 2001) and description of the oligarchic coup in Athens in 411 (8.45–98). Democritus condemned *stasis* that has no real victor, and emphasized the necessity of civic concord for successful communal undertakings and for a happy communal life (DK 68 B 249, 250, 255). In one of his model speeches, Thrasymachus (DK 85 B 1) suggested that *stasis* could be overcome and concord restored if one returned to the "ancestral constitution" (*patrios politeia*), an ideal that both democrats and oligarchs could embrace (Fuks 1953; Finley 1975; Ostwald 1986: ch. 7). Remarkably, Antiphon, leader of the oligarchic coup of 411 (Thuc. 8.68), wrote a piece *On Concord* (DK 87 B 44a, 60, 61; Gagarin 2002: 93–99). Apparently, it was Antiphon's "most brilliant piece, full of apophthegms, dignified in style, adorned with poetical terms, and smoothly-flowing" (Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* 1.15. Trans. Freeman 1948: 149). He declared anarchy the greatest evil and education a crucial need, and he used fantasy peoples, supposedly living near the edges of the world, to illustrate the realization of some of his ideas (Nestle 1938: 14–15)— a method familiar from Herodotus (e.g., 4.23).

The type of speech or pamphlet Antiphon and Thrasymachus wrote survives in the *Anonymus Iamblichi,* preserving pieces from a treatise written by an unknown sophist in the late fifth or early fourth century B.C.E. (DK 89. Trans. Gagarin and Woodruff 1995: 290–95). It ends with an encomium of *eunomia* that highlights, among other blessings, lack of "the thing that brings people the greatest harm: war, which causes defeat and slavery," and with a condemnation of *anomia* that causes, among other disasters, frequent foreign war, internal strife, and tyranny. True, the author does not focus here explicitly on concord but the emphasis he places on justice, good order, and obedience to the law clearly reflects an effort to conceptualize the conditions for communal stability and peace.

External peace features here too, as a consequence of internal stability. Thucydides especially was painfully aware of the close link between external war and domestic strife (3.82.1–2). Gorgias reportedly focused explicitly on external war and the desirability of external peace. In his *Funeral Oration* he heaped extravagant praise on the Athenian war-dead, emphasizing qualities that remind us of Protagoras's myth,[4] but he also said: "Trophies against bar-

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[4] DK 82 B 6: those who fell in the war were "well versed in the inborn spirit of the warrior, lawful love, rivalry under arms (*enoplios eris*), and peace that fosters the beautiful (*philokalos eirēnē*); men showing reverence towards the gods by their justice, piety

barians demand hymns of praise, but those against Greeks lamentations" (DK 82 B 5b; cf. Philostratus, *Lives of the Sophists* 1.9). The idea that wars among Greeks should be condemned and avoided apparently was developed even more strongly in his *Olympian Oration* and pursued vigorously especially by Isocrates to whom I will return. The idea recurs in Plato and, to a lesser and more differentiated extent, in Aristotle (Ostwald 1996: 111–16).

In addition, it is quite possible that two later sources preserve sophistic arguments praising peace, whether or not they go back to Gorgias himself. One of these I mentioned at the beginning: sophistic ideas ending up via a Hellenistic treatise and Varro's *Pius on Peace* in Augustine's *City of God*. The other is Polybius who criticizes his predecessor, Timaeus, for attributing "most foolish and childish" words concerning peace and its advantages to the Syracusan general Hermocrates during the first Athenian invasion of Sicily in the 420s B.C.E. (12.25k–26). Thucydides too gives Hermocrates a big speech at the Peace Congress in Gela in 424 (4.59–64; cf. Hammond 1973); typically, his Hermocrates focuses on the main political problems and avoids rhetoric and banalities, but even he acknowledges that there was a large set of arguments one would normally expect to hear at such occasions.[5] Thucydides does not allow his Hermocrates to elaborate on any of them but Timaeus apparently did — thereby attracting the wrath of the purist Polybius who in fact mentions some of the objectionable arguments.

In the first place he (Timaeus) thinks it proper to remind the council that men are aroused in the morning in war time by the trumpet and in peace by the crowing of cocks. After this he tells them that Heracles founded the Olympic games and truce as a proof of his real preference, and that he had injured all those he fought with under compulsion and by order, but that he had done no evil to any man of his own free will. Next he says that Homer represents Zeus as displeased with Ares [(quoting *Iliad* 5.890–91), that Homer too lets

towards their parents by their care, justice towards their fellow-citizens by their fair dealing, respect towards their friends by keeping faith with them." Cf. Plato, *Protagoras* 322c-d: justice and respect for others (*dikē, aidōs*) as indispensable conditions for successful communal life.

[5] Allusions to commonplaces on peace in Hermocrates' speech: "That war is an evil is something which we all know, and it would be pointless to go on cataloguing all the disadvantages involved in it" (Thuc. 4.59.2. Trans. Warner 1972). "Since it is admitted by everyone that peace is the greatest of blessings, ought we not therefore to make peace among ourselves? . . . Has not peace its honours and its glories, less attended by danger than those to be won in war? And are there not all those other advantages in peace, to describe which countless words would be required—as would be required also to enumerate the miseries of war?" (62.2). See also 61.1–2.

Nestor condemn internal war (*epidēmios polemos,* reciting *Iliad* 9.63–64), and that Euripides as well praises peace (quoting *Cresphontes*, fr. 453 Kannicht)]. In addition to this Hermocrates is made to say that war very much resembles sickness and peace is very like health, for peace restores even the sick and in war even the healthy perish. *In peace again we are told that the old are buried by the young as is natural, while in war it is the reverse*, and that above all in war there is no safety even up to the walls, but in peace there is safety as far as the boundaries of the land, and a number of similar things (12.26.1–8. Trans. Paton 1976).[6]

In Polybius's view these kinds of arguments were appropriate only for rhetorical school exercises, and Hermocrates, the destroyer of the Athenians in Sicily, was the wrong person to use them. Whether Timaeus took this piece from Gorgias's *Olympian Oration*, as Wilhelm Nestle suggested, is beyond proof but the sophistic origin of Timaeus's composition remains plausible (Nestle 1938: 17–18; Walbank 1967: 400–1).

If so, we regain a selection of late-fifth or early-fourth-century arguments proclaiming the blessings of peace and the evils of war, using rhetorical embellishment (especially contrast and analogy) and references to well-known literary works. That such ideas "were in the air" at the time in turn explains their insertion in works of contemporaries (such as tragedians and historians) who interacted and competed with other intellectuals (such as sophists, philosophers, and medical writers) and drew on a pool of common ideas and theories (Thomas 2000; Marincola 2003). For example, Herodotus attributes to the Lydian king Croesus one of the arguments mentioned by Timaeus's Hermocrates: "No one is fool enough to choose war instead of peace—in peace sons bury fathers, but in war fathers bury sons" (1.87. Trans. de Sélincourt and Marincola). Herodotus also puts in the mouth of the Persian general Mardonius words that criticize not only the principles of Greek hoplite warfare but also, and in this context unnecessarily, the Greeks' propensity to fight wars among each other: "Surely, as they all talk the same language, they ought to be able to find a better way of settling their differences: by negotiation, for instance, or an interchange of views—indeed by anything rather than fighting" (7.9b.2).

It is certain, therefore, that in the last third of the fifth century Greek intellectuals not only, as pointed out earlier, produced a wide range of works that illuminated the blessings of peace and lamented the miseries of war, but also made serious efforts to deal with the issue of peace in a more systematic and theoretical way (see also below). That some of these pieces were embellished

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[6] The highlighted sentence has a parallel in Hdt. 1.87 (below).

by rhetorical effects and saturated with commonplaces may have displeased Polybius and appear superficial to us but it corresponded to the tastes and preferences of the time and helped impress the audiences.

PLATO AND ARISTOTLE

Unfortunately, Plato and Aristotle did not have very much to say on our subject.[7] As Martin Ostwald points out, "Neither of these philosophers ever articulated a coherent doctrine on war and peace, so that their views must be patched together from isolated statements, usually made incidentally and in contexts primarily concerned with other matters" (1996: 103). Both considered war deeply ingrained in human society. The main problem they considered was how to control this element and assign it a responsible and meaningful function. Hence both paid considerable attention to limiting the use of war and especially to securing the city's internal peace through legislation and moral and intellectual education. Their vision of peace was not utopian but informed by "the idea that peace exists in a society which, guided by law and trained by education, pursues excellence in the use of the goods it has, a society which knows that leisure is needed for the good life but also that this leisure is imperiled if men are not prepared at all times to defend it by military means" (Ostwald 1996: 118).

THEORY INTO PRACTICE

What possibilities did people see, what efforts did Greeks make in practice to realize the ideas of peace that were given voice by poets and intellectuals? To begin with, careful reading of Homer's epics shows that already by the poet's time Greek society had developed various instruments to avoid war, reduce its impact, or restore peace once war broke out: religious protection of heralds and envoys, negotiations, truces and treaties (Adcock and Mosley 1975; Piccirilli 2002; specifically on Homer, Wéry 1979; Raaflaub 1997), and duels between one or a few fighters on each side to obviate a mass battle (Giovannini 2007: 175–77).

   In the archaic period the Greeks developed sophisticated tools in international relations: diplomacy and treaties, bilateral or multilateral alliances, and amphictyonic organizations in which several neighboring communities collaborated for a specific shared purpose (Tausend 1992; Baltrusch 1994; Giovannini 2007). Before the "Hellenic League" against Persia (Hdt. 7.145; Brunt 1993), these organizations did not exclude wars among members but

   [7] Nestle 1938: 28–31; Zampaglione 1973: 54–64; Spiegel 1990: 190–210, and esp. Ostwald 1996.

overall they reduced the likelihood of war or excessive abuses in war (Kiechle 1958) and increased the possibility of widely accepted agreements (such as the "Olympic Truce": Finley and Pleket 1976: 98–100; Decker 1995: 116–18). Moreover, archaic Greeks made frequent use of arbitration to settle conflicts both within poleis and among poleis (Tod 1913; Piccirilli 1973; Giovannini 2007: 177–84). This was possible in part because the sanctuary of Apollo in Delphi exerted a moderating influence, because, for its own reasons, the leading power, Sparta, was interested in maintaining the status quo, and because there emerged a group of leading personalities, often grouped together, variously, as the "Seven Sages" (Martin 1993), who shared a highly developed political culture, stood above partisan conflicts, and enjoyed great authority (Meier 1990: 28–52). As a result, the Greeks developed a culture of resolving even severe internal conflicts through legislation and reform (Hölkeskamp 1999; Wallace 2009).

In the fifth century, when conflicts became much larger and the stakes much higher, arbitration became much more difficult (Low 2007: 105–8; Ager 1996). At least when the "superpowers" Athens and Sparta were the opponents, no agency was available that enjoyed enough trust and authority. Hence the possibility of arbitration, although still written into treaties, was often ignored by the power that hoped to gain more from war. Other initiatives remained unsuccessful as well. One of these was an Athenian proposal in the mid-fifth century (of much debated authenticity) to convene a pan-Hellenic Congress to discuss, among other issues, the security of the seas and "the peace" (Plut. *Per.* 17; Stadter 1989: 201–9; Podlecki 1998: 70). Was this an effort to establish a system of intercity collaboration that would guarantee peace in Greece and maintain the status quo? We do not know, and nothing came of it because Sparta balked, suspecting (perhaps rightly) an Athenian attempt to expand her hegemony over all of Greece.

Only in the fourth century, after the terribly destructive Peloponnesian War, two new instruments were devised to interrupt the incessant cycle of wars among Greek poleis. One was a series of multilateral peace treaties that guaranteed the autonomy of all Greek states and declared general peace (*koinē eirēnē*) in a system that was intended to be stabilized under Spartan supervision (Ryder 1965; Jehne 1994; Alonso 2007). None of them lasted long because they were blatantly exploited by Sparta for its own purposes and served the interest of Persia that backed Sparta's hegemony. The other instrument, mentioned before, was an agreement among Greeks to resume a common, pan-Hellenic war against the Persians in order to terminate wars among themselves. This idea was vigorously and variously promoted

especially by Isocrates.[8] It was realized by Philip II and Alexander the Great of Macedon who imposed unity and peace upon the defeated Greeks in the "Corinthian League" and led them in a crusade against the Persians. Peace among the Greek states thus finally prevailed, with few interruptions, but it was imposed by superior outside force.

It is worth pointing out that in ancient China and India, too, leading thinkers came to the conclusion that peace could only be achieved if the prevailing destructive power struggles among multiple states (whether city states or kingdoms) were squashed by a superior ruler and all rivalling states were united in an empire (Raaflaub 2007: 21–23 with bibliography).

In Greece, even more thought was spent on overcoming *stasis* within poleis. In some of his tragedies Euripides urged his audiences to strengthen the citizens' sense of communal responsibility and to train the young carefully for their citizen duties. In others, he presented figures who sacrificed themselves for the common good, thus offering a model of civic selflessness that contrasted starkly with examples of civic selfishness and self-centered ambition that populated the contemporaneous tragic and historical stages. All this aimed primarily at improving the moral qualities of the citizens. Another approach, also reflected in Euripides, emphasized equality and the middle element in the polis, at the expense of both social and political extremes, such as rich and poor, extreme democracy and narrow oligarchy or tyranny (Gregory 1991; Raaflaub 2001b: 99–117; also Mendelsohn 2002: 123–26). Although some of these ideas may seem naïve to us, they were discussed intensively and developed further by Plato and Aristotle.

In all this it became increasingly clear that democracy and oligarchy, each understood as the self-serving rule of one part of the citizen body over another (Ps. Xen. *Ath. Pol.* 1.1–9), were the cause of, not the solution to the problem. Hence the question was how to overcome this polarization. One answer, propagated by Thrasymachus (above) and seriously considered in Athens in 411/10 (Arist. *Ath. Pol.* 29.3), postulated the return to an "ancestral constitution" that supposedly existed before democracy turned "radical" in the mid-fifth century: a moderate form, situated in the middle, and thus acceptable to both democrats and oligarchs (above). Constitutional theory offered an even more promising approach. Thucydides (8.97.2) praised the moderate "Oligarchy of the Five Thousand," realized for a short time in 411/10, as "a reasonable and moderate blending of the few and the many," that is, a constitution that combined in a moderate balance democratic and oligarchic

[8] Isoc. 4 (*Paneg.*). 3, 115–16, 172–77; 5 (*To Philip*). 7–9, 15–16; see Bringmann 1965; Dobesch 1968; Gray 2000.

elements. Here lie the beginnings of the theory of the mixed constitution, developed further by Plato and Aristotle, and highlighted by Polybius who describes it (somewhat anachronistically) as realized ideally in the Roman republic of the Punic War period.[9] Various evidence (Hdt. 3.80–82; Eur. *Supp.* 419–55; cf. Thuc. 6.38–39) suggests an intensive discussion about *the* best constitution and the strengths and weaknesses of democracy in the late fifth century (Raaflaub 1989). Hippodamus devised an ideal constitution from scratch (Arist. *Pol.* 2.8.1267b30–37). Various constitutional models were considered in 411/10 (*Ath. Pol.* 30). The Athenian restored democracy of 410 and that of 403 established committees to examine all existing laws and to write a revised law code that, for the first time in Greek history, approximated the concept of a "constitution" (Hansen 1999: 162–65). Further reforms, especially in the legislative process, did much to control the power of the assembly and to stabilize democracy in a more moderate form—so much so that it lasted without interruption until it was overthrown by outside intervention in the late fourth century.[10]

Overall, then, there was no lack of practical suggestions and, although late, efforts to translate theory into practice had some positive effect, at least in Athens and in the domestic sphere. Before I end with two spectacular examples of such "applied theory" two tasks remain, one of comparison, the other of explanation.

IDEAS OF PEACE IN OTHER MEDITERRANEAN SOCIETIES

A brief comparison with ideas about peace common in other Mediterranean societies will illustrate just how remarkable and exceptional the phenomena are that we observe in Greece. In Israel, visions of peace broke through only rarely, perhaps most famously in Micah's and Isaiah's often-cited prophecy that even recently provided the logo for the peaceful revolt of East German citizens against the communist regime: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:1–5; cf. Isaiah 2:2–5).[11] Otherwise such visions remained obscured by the need of

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[9] On Thucydides and constitutional thought: Leppin 1999; Raaflaub 2006. Mixed constitution: von Fritz 1954; Aalders 1968; Nippel 1980. Pol. 6.11–18 with Cornell 1991; Walbank 2002: ch. 18; see also Lintott 1997.

[10] Reforms: Ostwald 1986: chs. 9–10; Ober 1989: 95–100; Eder 1998; Hansen 1999: 165–77. On the nature of fourth-century democracy: e.g., Rhodes 1980; Bleicken 1987; Eder 1995.

[11] Dating probably to the period of Persian domination. See T. Krüger, in Raaflaub 2007: 161–71; Cohen and Westbrook 2008. On ideas of peace in ancient Israel: e.g., chs. by H.

a small people, embattled in an area much contested by great powers, to fight for survival and rely on an ideology that supported this fight. Hence the god of the Old Testament is not least a warrior god who fights with and for his people as long as they keep their faith and obey his laws.

Mesopotamians did not have a god of peace. They concluded peace treaties, some of them very elaborate, and developed an ideology of just war as a result of the violation of such treaties. To maintain order, justice, and prosperity, and to prevent conflicts within his realm was the duty of the king, who often depicted himself as a good shepherd. But peace was rarely defined as such or explicitly mentioned as a goal; rather, it was seen (but not mentioned) as the result of good government and perfect social harmony. The conclusion of Assurbanipal's coronation prayer is a rare exception: "May the great listen when the lesser speak, may the lesser listen when the great speak, may harmony and peace be established in Assur" (Foster 2005: 815–16).[12]

The peace treaty between the Egyptian and Hittite kings after the Battle of Kadesh in 1274 B.C.E., well preserved together with the preceding negotiations and subsequent correspondence, is justly famous (Klengel 2002; L. Bell, in Raaflaub 2007: 98–120). Yet the Egyptians too, as Susanne Bickel explains (in preparation), developed neither a concept of peace nor an explicit peace discourse because they lacked stimulation or necessity to engage in such reflection, and their general worldview, cosmology, or theology did not predispose them to think about peace. Externally, from early on Egyptian royal ideology concentrated entirely on the repression of opposition from outside its territorial borders. Egypt was defined by this opposition that set the positive interior against a totally negative exterior (Moers 2010). When Egypt was challenged in the later second millennium, it carried war abroad and created its empire as a buffer zone. Hence the inhabitants of Egypt proper were not confronted with the torments of war. The loss of soldiers abroad was marginal enough not to have any social or conceptual impact. There was thus little need to think about peace as a moral or political value. By contrast, it was impossible to fit the so-called intermediate periods, when Egypt was ravaged by civil wars and outside occupation, into the concept of world order. The ideal was a unified state kept in balance by *ma'at* thanks to the

Graf Reventlow in Binder and Effe 1989: 110–22; A. Ravitzky, M. Walzer in Nardin 1996: 115–27, 95–114; S. Niditch in Raaflaub 2007: 141–60. See also Niditch 1993; von Rad 1991 with an annotated bibliography on "War, Peace, and Justice in the Hebrew Bible."

[12] Neither the authoritative *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* nor Black and Green 1992 or Bottéro 2001 mention "peace." On Mesopotamian concerns with peace, see Foster 2007.

joined efforts of the king, humankind, and the gods; a different reality could thus only be explained as a form of chaos characterized by the withdrawal of the gods. Peace here offered no positive alternative. The same is true for the period when Egypt was conquered by Assyrians, Persians, and Macedonians. Egyptian terminology therefore entirely lacks a word for peace, and concepts that come close focus on quietness, satisfaction, or mercy. Internally, as in Mesopotamia, the ideal condition was not formulated as peace but as justice, order, and harmony among all people, high and low, guaranteed by the king's good government, the gods, and the people's obedience to rules and norms: *ma'at* (Assmann 1990; Morschauser 1995).

Overall, then, Egypt illustrates precisely the conditions under which a concept of peace could *not* be developed. Hence Near Eastern influence on the emergence of a Greek concept of peace can essentially be ruled out. This makes it all the more urgent to ask why the Greeks developed not only an intense, pervasive, and public discourse on peace but also concepts and theories of peace, and why they did so mostly on the domestic but much less on the inter-city or international levels.

EXPLANATIONS

To begin with, we observed that already the earliest texts preserved from archaic Greece (the epics of Homer and Hesiod) reflect a strong interest in problems of war and peace and make interesting conceptual use of the contrast between them. This is in itself a remarkable phenomenon. Since these epics do not offer explanations for what they describe and do, we have to find our own. Diplomatic and peace making procedures featured in the *Iliad* show remarkable parallels with Near Eastern ones (Karavites 1992; Knippschild 2002). It is possible, therefore, that in such rituals and procedures the Greeks were either directly influenced by Near Eastern models or drew on a "cultural *koinē*" in the Eastern Mediterranean. Mesopotamian evidence also comprises "city laments" deploring the ravages of war and expressing a yearning for peace (Foster 2007). Considering similar phenomena in Greece, we might think either again of direct or indirect outside influence or of the possibility that such basic feelings could be expressed independently in many societies. Alternatively, or in addition, conditions in Greece in the period before the extant epics emerged—small-scale, primarily focusing on local and regional relations among competitive but closely related groups that engaged in herding and limited agriculture, lived in villages and little towns rather than cities, and raided each other and their neighbors across the bay rather than fighting large-scale inter-city wars (e.g., Starr 1986; Snodgrass 1987: ch. 6; Morris 1997)—such conditions perhaps facilitated the development of mechanisms

to balance competition and collaboration (Adkins 1960), violence and peace. Diplomacy, negotiations, alliances, and corresponding treaties were further facilitated by the fact that Greek poleis developed in clusters (Raaflaub 1990; van Wees 2001: 34–35); although intensely competitive, they shared basic structures and values, their elites maintained close relationships across borders, and the threat posed by a rival polis nearby or a polis growing too powerful could be balanced by alliances with others. Once these attitudes, values, institutions, and procedures were in place, they continued to develop and be influential, and they were reinforced by the great authority of Apollo's oracle at Delphi.

It is important as well, as Christian Meier keeps reminding us (e.g., 2001), that early Greek communities evolved outside of the sphere of influence or rule of the powerful Near Eastern empires with their specific ideologies. Hence Greek leaders had to prove their bravery and leadership qualities in war but were under no pressure to legitimize their position through conquests that even surpassed those of their ancestors. There were no sharp boundaries between inside and out, self and other; the Trojans and their allies in Homer speak many languages and are different in some not insignificant ways (Mackie 1996), but essentially they still are represented as non-Greek Greeks. Before the Lydians and then the Persians expanded their control to the Aegean, the Greeks lived in a world of free citizen communities and, despite ever increasing contacts with a much wider and varied world, mostly communicated with similar communities. They were thus free to develop their own behavior patterns and rules, both within and among their communities.

In early Greece, statements about war and peace are sometimes linked with criticism of elite leaders: this was possible in societies, like those forming early Greek poleis, that contained a strong egalitarian element (Morris 2000: pt. 3; Raaflaub and Wallace 2007), more difficult in those that were more hierarchical. Moreover, in city-states with a rich public culture and participation of large segments of the citizen population in public affairs, issues of communal concern, including war and peace, were widely shared. Hence from early on they became part of political reflection (Raaflaub 2000; Hammer 2002) and were embedded in the poetry performed at public festivals, in halls of leaders entertaining their guests, or at elite symposia. One of the functions of the poets was to serve as a voice of communal conscience and concern. This function was inherited by the dramatic poets and, to some extent, the prose authors of the fifth century.

Yet this same period also witnessed dramatic changes in the nature of warfare. Whatever the conditions in the period that Homer and Hesiod reflect, in the archaic period war was not endemic; it was a reality, of course,

but intermittent, motivated by intercity rivalries and fought for booty and contested lands rather than subjection of others, imperial control, or survival; losses were surprisingly limited, and the destruction of cities was rare. All this changed radically when the Greeks were confronted with a new form of imperialism in the Persian Wars and when, in their aftermath, forms of imperial control and rivalry emerged among the Greeks themselves. Power formations increased exponentially, and the stakes in wars became huge. Especially in the second half of the fifth century and in the Peloponnesian War, the face of war changed radically: it became permanent, ubiquitous, brutal and increasingly total.[13] Against this new reality traditional attitudes and institutions proved ineffective; it transformed the way people, and especially intellectuals, were thinking about war, and it forced them to think in new ways about peace too. I just note in passing that similar conditions—incessant and increasingly oppressive warfare culminating in the "Warring State Period" (453–221 B.C.E.)—prompted the emergence of an intense discourse on peace, including theoretical and philosophical debates, in early China as well (Lun 1998; Yates 2007, in preparation).

Political reflection, visible already in the earliest manifestations of Greek thought, was enhanced from the late sixth century by the emergence of specialized philosophers and especially, in the second half of the fifth century, the sophists who focused on political and social issues and developed what we might properly call "political theories." Fragments quoted by later authors, and the application of their theories in extant literature, demonstrate that they dealt systematically and even theoretically with war and peace as well. As we saw, such theoretical analysis concerned, for example, the causes and nature of *stasis* (as reflected in Thucydides' "pathology of civil war" on Corcyra), the connection between external and internal war, and possibilities to overcome the rift between democracy and oligarchy and to secure internal peace (through a return to an "ancestral constitution," the introduction of a "mixed constitution," focus on "the middle," education in civic virtue, and other means).

No parallel theories, it seems, were developed to improve the chances for external peace. Attempts to propagate large-scale systems of inter-city collaboration and peace (such as the "Common Peace" treaties) failed because their purpose was hegemony through peace rather than peace *per se*. While the internal sphere of the polis could be controlled and regulated by the citizens themselves and they eventually improved their abilities and instruments to

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[13] Archaic Greek warfare and fifth-century changes in warfare: Ducrey 1999; Karavites 1982; Raaflaub 1999, 2001a; Hanson 2001; van Wees 2004.

do so, the sphere between poleis or between the Greek world of poleis and that of imperial powers emerging on all sides was much more difficult to control. Competitiveness and a fierce spirit of independence on the one side, imperial ambitions to be realized by war on the other, made every agreement and treaty temporary. Peace was observed until one power believed it could gain more by going to war. War between communities, the Greeks believed, was an unalterable condition of human society. No theory could change that. Only pragmatic solutions seemed available, including the desperate effort to secure peace among the Greeks by uniting them against non-Greek enemies. This kind of peace was eventually achieved—but only at the expense of the liberty of the Greek states. After Alexander's death, it yielded again to rivalries and wars, but now on a higher level, among kingdoms and empires.

CONCLUSION

I conclude with two impressive examples of the application of political thinking to political practice in achieving peace, one hugely successful, the other a blueprint never realized. Undoubtedly influenced by all the debates I mentioned earlier, the Athenians made an extraordinary decision in 403 B.C.E. to eradicate *stasis* from their community and to restore internal peace. The democracies and oligarchies that succeeded each other from 411 to 404 had become ever more radical and oppressive (Ostwald 1986: pt. 3; Bleckmann 1998; Munn 2000: pt. 2). When the "Thirty Tyrants," imposed on defeated Athens by Sparta in 404 (Krentz 1982), were overthrown by exiled democrats in 403, the Spartan king Pausanias and ten Spartan mediators negotiated a settlement—and democracy was restored once more. The reconciliation decree the assembly passed was most remarkable (*Ath. Pol.* 39; Xen. *Hell.* 2.4.24–43; Loening 1987). It assigned to the oligarchs and their supporters one township (Eleusis) that they would govern with complete autonomy, retaining their full Athenian citizenship and property rights in Attica. Such separation of oligarchs and democrats was to take place under the protection of oaths and within a certain number of days, and changes were permitted thereafter. Most importantly, "they swore not to remember wrongs (*mnēsikakein*)," except of those who had held office under the Thirty, "and not even these if they successfully submitted to an examination" (*Ath. Pol.* 39.7 Trans. Rhodes 1984). Those unwilling to do so were allowed to emigrate. Some forty years later, Xenophon wrote: "and still today they live together as a community and the people abide by their oaths" (*Hell.* 2.4.43. Trans. Krentz 1995). The decision "not to remember wrongs" is perhaps most amazing. It made it difficult, though perhaps not impossible, later on to prosecute an opponent for wrongs

committed earlier, and thus truly built a foundation for lasting civic peace.[14] I am reminded of the "Truth Commission" that was established in South Africa to deal with the aftermath of Apartheid. Comparable reconciliation decrees are attested for Cyrene in 401 B.C.E. (also mentioning *mē mnēsikakein*; Diod. 14.34.6), and, through a recently published inscription, for Dikaia, a colony of Eretria in the Chalcidice, in the first half of the fourth century (Voutiras and Sismanidis 2007).[15]

Isocrates, often maligned, ignored, or underestimated, presents in one of his model speeches an extraordinary idea.[16] He observed that in the past, before and during the Persian Wars, the Athenians had enjoyed a highly positive reputation as supporters of the oppressed and saviors of Greek liberty. Later, however, when they built their empire and fought incessant wars to enlarge it, they were hated by most Greeks and paid an exorbitant price in resources, lives, and misery for a dream (supremacy in Greece) that they were never able to realize. Even in his own time, they were still chasing this dream. Would it not make much more sense, he asked, to give up this futile pursuit of illusions and return to the ancestors' good policies?

> Now it is the war [against the allies] which has robbed us of all the good things … for it has made us poorer; it has compelled many of us to endure perils; it has given us a bad name among the Hellenes; and it has in every way overwhelmed us with misfortune. But if we make peace and present ourselves as our common covenants command us to do, then we shall dwell in our city in great security, delivered from wars and perils and the turmoil in which we are now involved amongst ourselves, and we shall advance day by day in prosperity, relieved of paying war-taxes, of fitting out triremes, and of discharging the other burdens which are imposed by war, without fear cultivating our lands and sailing the seas and engaging in those other occupations which now, because of the war, have entirely come to an end (*Or.* 8, *On the Peace* 19–20. Trans. Norlin 1968, altered).

Isocrates realized that the issue was not just to terminate one war by concluding a peace agreement, but to terminate all wars and the misery they cause by changing common attitudes:

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[14] Even if tensions and conflicts continued: Strauss 1986: 86–120. The best example of how the decree could be circumvented is the trial of Socrates that was almost certainly politically motivated: Hansen 1995; Scholz 2000.

[15] For the question of how successful the amnesty was, see Rhodes 1981: 471–82; Krentz 1995: 155–56. The word *mnēsikakein* is attested slightly earlier in literature (LSJ *s.v.*). David Elmer alerts me to an occurrence in *IG* I³ 76, lines 15 and 21, an alliance between Athens and the Bottiaioi, dated to 422. The issue seems worth pursuing.

[16] Isocr. *Or.* 8, *On the Peace* 3–7, 12, 16, 18–20. See further 29–32, 63–65, 95, 133–44.

> But no such thing can come to pass until you are persuaded that tranquility is more advantageous and more profitable than meddlesomeness (*polypragmosynē*), justice than injustice, and attention to one's own affairs than covetousness of the possessions of others (8.26).

In short, only the voluntary abolition of imperialism and the return to earlier policies of generosity towards others could secure for the Athenians lasting peace, happiness, and the general admiration of all other Greeks.

We find here echoes of ideas we know well from the funeral orations and suppliant plays and that were rooted deeply in Athenian ideologies of power and freedom (Raaflaub 2004: chs. 5.1–2). On the other hand, we need to remember the extent to which Thucydides emphasizes *polypragmosynē* (aggressive activism) as the Athenians' dominant collective character trait that drove them ever further and finally, in Sicily, over the edge (1.70; Raaflaub 1994). In the debate preceding this fateful expedition, Thucydides lets Nicias warn his fellow citizens that, despite their well-known inclination, it was too dangerous this time to give in to it, while Alcibiades encourages them to act according to their nature: it had led them to the peak of success and they would not be able to change their policies suddenly without at the same time changing their entire character and way of life (6.9.3, 18.3). This is precisely what Isocrates recommended in his speech. He understood that lasting peace could be achieved only if one was able to change radically even the most deep-seated and long-standing patterns of thinking and behaving. Naïve? Perhaps. Simplistic? Probably. But, I suggest, profoundly correct! Rarely does an ancient author speak so directly to our own time.

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