

aim [*Politics* 8.3]). Ludwig treats civic spectacles as instances of civic pleasures and indeed of civic education (119–20), which fits with the reduced Aristotle. But a more expansive discussion could elaborate how such spectacles form *thumos*, and express and form *homonoia*.

Ludwig's treatment of civic friendship is a formidable and welcome contribution to the conversation. For a work of practical political science that benefits liberal theory, the author deserves honor. But for a work of political theory, such honors are incidental to the conversation itself.

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Paul A. Rahe: *Sparta's First Attic War: The Grand Strategy of Classical Sparta, 478–446 B.C.* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019. Pp. ix, 314.)

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Paul A. Rahe's *Sparta's First Attic War: The Grand Strategy of Classical Sparta, 478–446 B.C.*, has two goals. The first is to reconsider Greek history from the Spartan standpoint. Most of the Greek writers whose works have survived were either Athenians themselves or were pro-Athenian in temperament; as a result, our knowledge of Sparta is at best incomplete and at worst suspiciously slanted. Consider, for example, the title of Rahe's book. If the reader is brought up short by a reference to the "Attic War," he or she should consider that even the name "Peloponnesian War" takes the Athenian frame of reference as foundational. Rahe's second goal in his Sparta series—of which this is the third book, with another on Sparta's Second Attic War (Thucydides's "Peloponnesian War") forthcoming—is also to draw upon the concept of "grand strategy" in his examination of Sparta. In appropriating the concept of grand strategy, Rahe is harking back to Clausewitz and to the British historians Julian Stafford Corbett and J. F. C. Fuller, who brought the term into the English lexicon. Fuller defined grand strategy as embracing both "the movement of armed masses" and "the quality of the moral power of a nation," the material and psychological factors that lead a nation to fight wars (6). Rahe, therefore, sets himself the ambitious task of capturing the wars of the classical period from the holistic viewpoint of a city that produced many more hoplites than historians, poets, or philosophers.

Rahe's book concerns the period between the cessation of the Persians Wars and the beginning of the Peloponnesian War, corresponding roughly to the

period in Thucydides's account of the war that scholars have named the *Pentekontaetia*. "First Attic War" refers to the ongoing conflict between Sparta and Athens before Thucydides's narrative of the "Second Attic War" begins. The fifth century BCE was one of almost uninterrupted warfare in Hellas, with the famous Persian and Peloponnesian Wars merely the largest in a series of conflagrations. Sparta and Athens had previously been at war before the conflict that Thucydides describes, and readers will remember that Sparta's Second Attic War occurred about fourteen years into what was a meant to be a thirty-year truce between the two cities.

Rahe collects an impressive amount of scholarly evidence to create his narrative. In line with his intention to inhabit the mindset of the ancient world as fully as possible, he relegates modern scholarship to the footnotes and draws most heavily for his history on Thucydides, Diodorus Siculus, and Plutarch. Some of what he includes is genuinely surprising, such as the work of an ancient writer five hundred years after the classical era who wrote a series of letters purported to be by Themistocles. This would be a historical curiosity if not for the fact that the author had access to sources that we ourselves lack.

The general movement of *Sparta's First Attic War* is that the conflict between Sparta and Athens waxes as the conflict between Hellas and Persia wanes. Whenever rumor arrives from the east that the Persians are, for example, building a trireme fleet in Phoenicia, Spartan and Athenian relations become noticeably warmer. It was part of Spartan grand strategy not to interrupt Athenian expansion whenever Persia was on the march. During the course of the Persian Wars, the Athenians had effected a miraculous transformation of themselves from landlubbers into the most effective maritime power operating in the region (perhaps the world), and Sparta knew that they could not hope to be half as much of a deterrent to Persian power as a well-trained and provisioned Athenian navy.

Much of the Spartan reticence, furthermore, was not merely due to the cost in both money and manpower that fielding a navy required. The Spartan way of life was dependent on the enslaved Helot population, to a degree that was a scandal even to the other slave-keeping states of ancient Hellas. It was not only the case that the Athenians were better sailors than the Spartans, but also that Sparta had to keep its restive Helot population subjugated. When, for example, the Spartans consider sending a force to aid Thasos (an island city in the northern Aegean besieged by the Athenians), their deliberation is cut short by a disastrous earthquake that kills a large portion of the ruling Spartiate population and occasions a revolt among the Helots. Immediately after the earthquake, the young Archidamus shows his presence of mind by sounding the alarm while his comrades are still reeling and so manages to draw together a force large enough to keep the first wave of the Helot rebellion at bay. War between the two great city-states would need to wait.

But a decade or so later, when the Athenians win a defection from Megara (a city near Corinth whose strategic position would effectively give the

Athenians an easy entry-point into the Peloponnesus), this is simply too much for the Spartans to bear. Under the pretext of settling an ally's affairs in Doris, the Spartans march northward. When the Athenians deny them passage back to the Peloponnesus, the Spartans then march through Boeotia to Tanagra, a city bordering Attica, and draw the Athenians into open conflict (as was probably their goal all along). The Spartans roundly trounce the Athenians and, on their way back, cut down the fruit trees then in full flower in the Megarid, as a message to their erstwhile allies.

The Spartans sit back again and allow the Athenians to continue their skirmishes with the Persians. When that conflict draws to a close and a satisfactory treaty is signed between the Hellenes and the Great King, tensions between Sparta and Athens again begin to rise. When Athens faces near-simultaneous revolts in Boeotia, Euboea, and Megara, the Spartans again move into Attica. Faced with a potential three-front war, the Athenian diplomat Callias and the general Pericles manage to secure a thirty-year truce that would last less than half that time. The combatants themselves seemed to acknowledge that the truce was a mere break in the fighting, rather than the groundwork for a lasting peace, as Rahe remarks in the closing pages of his book. Rahe reminds his readers that the animating presence behind the Hellenic mind was not Christ but Homer, who reminded his readers "to take war for granted, to thrill to prowess in battle, and to admire canniness in council" (230). War is the norm, peace the exception.

Rahe's dual task of rehabilitating the concept of grand strategy and of foregrounding the Spartan perspective is made difficult, by the paucity of primary sources with intimate access to Spartan actions during the time period in question. Despite his stated intention to write a Spartan-centric history, many of the most vivid events he describes are those instigated and led by Athenians. Indeed, large sections of the book concern the actions of Athenian diplomats and generals, with the Spartans relegated to a secondary role of reacting to military and diplomatic campaigns initiated by Athenians—which is entirely appropriate, considering the well-known contrast between Athens and Sparta that is set out by the Corinthians at the First Spartan Congress and Rahe makes the epigraph to his book. The Spartans were known in the ancient world for their slowness, their reactive nature. As his project moves into Sparta's Second Attic War, it will be interesting to see if the greater historical information of the era allows Rahe to place Spartan actions and Spartan leaders front and center.

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