

**Peter Hunt, *War, Peace, and Alliance in Demosthenes' Athens*.** Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 2010. ISBN 978-0-521-83551-0. Pp. xiii + 317.

In this volume Peter Hunt examines the ways in which Athenians of the mid-fourth century BC thought about their city's relations with other states, and the bases on which they took foreign policy decisions. His method is to concentrate on the surviving deliberative speeches of the period, all of which are concerned with issues of foreign policy, and to look at the kinds of arguments by which their speakers tried to persuade the Athenian assembly. These speeches are in his view the best evidence we have for the sorts of arguments that assembly-goers were likely to find convincing: "My basic methodological assumption has been that skilled and successful orators whose works we possess did not waste their time with arguments or emotional appeals that were not likely to be persuasive." (p. 265). By contrast the opinions of Plato and Aristotle are rejected as being too theoretical, whilst the 'realist' arguments advanced in the speeches of Thucydides reflect the historian's own opinions, or perhaps the style of political oratory of his time, and cannot safely be used as evidence for the later period. In rejecting the Thucydidean model of interstate relations in classical Greece, Hunt takes a similar approach to that of Polly Low in her recent *Interstate Relations in Classical Greece* (2007), a work which addresses many of the same issues.

The corpus of texts with which Hunt is primarily concerned are fourteen deliberative speeches by or attributed to Demosthenes (Dem. 1–10, 14–17), together with Andocides' *On the Peace* (which hardly belongs to the age of Demosthenes) and the four long judicial speeches Aesch. 2 and 3 and Dem. 18 and 19. These are supplemented by other contemporary texts—speeches, pamphlets, histories and rhetorical handbooks (pp. 15–25).

The volume consists of an introductory chapter on methodology and evidence, nine thematic chapters each dealing with a different factor that may have influenced the making of foreign-policy decisions, and a conclusion. In chapter 2 ('Economics') Hunt assesses the importance of economic considerations in Athenian decision-making. He argues that war in the fourth century was a financial drain rather than a likely source of profit, denies that the need to import large quantities of grain required Athens to pursue a policy of naval imperialism, and partially agrees with the claim made in several ancient sources that the rich tended to favor peace and the poor war. In chapter 3 ('Militarism') he argues that the Athenians valued military success and prowess, but were not particularly militaristic by the standards of the time. Their history of military success may have led them to anticipate further victories, but leaders such as Eubulus and Phocion were often successful in counseling caution, and Demosthenes frequently criticizes his fellow-citizens not for their militarism but for their reluctance to go to war.

In chapter 4 ('The unequal treatment of cities') Hunt explores the extent to which the status of other cities (i.e. their ethnicity, religion, political system, or relative size) influenced Athens' dealings with them, and concludes that these factors were of limited importance: 'the Athenians tended to place more weight on actions than on status' (p.

73). Chapter 5 ('Household metaphors') argues that one of the ways in which the Athenians thought about war was by analogy with the domestic sphere: thus they sought to avoid behaving like slaves or women, and aimed to live up to the achievements of their fathers. Chapter 6 ('Defense and attack') argues that unprovoked war was regarded as unjust, and that states always had the right to defend themselves. This latter principle could be used to justify pre-emptive action against an anticipated threat (as Demosthenes does in the late 340s, at a time when Athens and Macedon were still at peace).

Chapter 7 ('Calculations of interest') shows that orators regularly claimed that their policy was both just and in Athens' interest; but there was often disagreement about where Athens' interest lay. In chapter 8 ('Reciprocity') Hunt argues for the importance of both positive reciprocity (often embodied in friendship and alliances between states) and negative reciprocity (paying one's enemies back). Behind reciprocity lay the demands of honour and reputation: the Athenians would lose face if they failed to help their friends and retaliate against their enemies. Chapter 9 ('Legalism') argues that relations between states were often thought of in legal terms, and that there were certain 'unwritten laws' that were generally regarded as applicable to relations between states. Oaths and treaties should be kept, but when they were broken it was often disputed which party was responsible. In chapter 10 ('Peace') Hunt concludes that peace was thought to be desirable, but not at any cost: there were no pacifists in ancient Athens. He does however believe that the Athenians' enthusiasm for war declined in the fourth century.

Hunt's discussions of the individual elements of Athenian thinking about war and peace are clear and judicious, and his conclusions are as persuasive as the limited evidence allows. Some of these conclusions—for example that that self-defense was always justified, or that peace was regarded as preferable to war—are not in themselves at all surprising. What is more significant is the overall picture that emerges. Here Hunt succeeds in showing that the Athenians' thinking about their city's relations with other states was complex and sophisticated: there was a wide range of arguments available to those who sought to persuade the assembly, and no single factor that trumped all others. Hunt is also right to conclude that there was nothing primitive about Athenian policy-making; as he observes, most of the arguments used by Demosthenes and his contemporaries can easily be paralleled from present-day international relations.

I am very sympathetic to Hunt's championing of the surviving deliberative speeches, but at the same time (as he is of course aware) they are very far from a random or representative sample of the numerous speeches that must have been delivered to the Athenian assembly on matters of foreign policy. Although there is more variety in the deliberative speeches of Demosthenes than is sometimes supposed, it remains the case that Hunt's core evidence consists almost entirely of one man's work. Our picture of Athenian deliberative oratory might look quite different if we had a single speech of Eubulus, say, arguing the opposite case.

In view of the small number of deliberative speeches that have survived, I find it surprising that three potentially important works, two of them deliberative speeches, have been omitted from the core group of texts with little or no explanation. The first, Dem. 13 *On Organization*, is excluded on the ground of uncertainty about its authenticity—wrongly in my opinion—without any discussion of the issues. The other two are Dem. 11 *Response to the Letter of Philip* and Dem. 12 *The Letter of Philip*, neither of which is discussed at all. The latter is certainly cited, which suggests that Hunt regards it as genuine. But in that case, I think that more use could have been made of it: although not a speech, it is a contemporary text which engages closely with several of the arguments made by Demosthenes and his supporters. Also, although I agree with Hunt that Dem. 17 *On the Treaty with Alexander* is probably a contemporary speech, it should be noted that the fullest treatment of it—E. Culasso Gastaldi's *Sul trattato con Alessandro (polis, monarchia macedone e memoria demostenica* [1984])—came to the conclusion that it is an early Hellenistic composition.

An odd omission from the bibliography is Hugo Montgomery's *The Way to Chaeronea: Foreign Policy, Decision-making and Political Influence in Demosthenes' Speeches* (1983), which as its subtitle indicates is substantially concerned with the making of Athenian foreign policy in this period.

In conclusion, this is a solidly researched and thoughtfully argued volume, which provides a useful survey of the range of arguments used in debates about Athenian foreign policy.

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