Abstracts zu den Vorträgen

Aeschylus and Internal Strife

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As Hans van Wees (2008: 4) recently remarked, archaic and classical Greek literature was obsessed with internal conflict. Beginning with Homer (Ulf 1990) and Hesiod, continuing with lyric poets (Alcaeus, Solon, Theognis) and historiography (Herodotus, Thucydides), and ending with philosophers (Plato and Aristotle), στάσις ranks among the prominent literary topics. Nowadays scholars in the field of ancient historiography do not usually analyse tragic poetry as a source of evidence when they discuss the problem of internal strife, except for some incidental remarks (e.g. van Wees 2008: 8, Lintott 1982: 15, 19). To some extent their hesitation is understandable. The stories of the distant past are modelled by the playwright for the sake of satisfying dramatic illusion. But from another perspective the normative universe and concepts (often in the form of anachronisms) are involved in order to make the characters and their action intelligible to the audience. Therefore it might be rewarding to pay attention to drama as a source of evidence. In my paper I will focus on Aeschylus and his mentions of the issue of internal conflict. I will scrutinise in what context the references to internal turmoil and strife occur, and further if internal strife is analysed and from what perspective. Finally, if internal strife was examined by Aeschylus I would like to inquire about its causes and the motivation of the agents taking part in it. Simplistically speaking, as far as I know, approximately three explanatory models of internal strife in ancient Greece have evolved in recent scholarship: a) the class struggle model (de ste. Croix 1981), b) the by-product of international relations model, and c) the power struggle of the elite model (Gehrke 1985). If there are some deeper reflections of Aeschylus regarding the issue of causes and motivation I would like to know which of these headings they fit under.

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Zur Vorgeschichte und Bedeutungsvielfalt des Ausdrucks ‚stasis' bei Platon

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Dieser Beitrag wird der vielfältigen Bedeutung des Wortes stasis in Platons Dialogen nachgehen: Es bezeichnet nicht nur so etwas wie „Aufstand" (in der Psyche oder einem Gemeinwesen), es steht beispielsweise auch für eine zentrale ontologische Gattung – das „Stehen" bzw. Die „Stellung" ist zentral für die Erkenntnis (Sophistes 249c). Daneben soll der Geschichte dieses Ausdrucks in früheren Texten nachgespürt werden, die für Platon von großer Bedeutung waren, namentlich in Solons Elegien und Euripides' Tragödien.

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The Constitutions in the Aristotelian Athenian Constitution, Or the Limits of Compromise in a στάσις

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In my paper, I would like to discuss the "obscure swamp" (A. Andrewes, *Androtion and the Four Hundred*, PCPhS 202, 1976, pp. 14-25, on p. 20) of the two constitutional proposals preserved in the Aristotelian *Athenian Constitution* ([Arist.] *Ath*. 30,2–31,3). The author of the *Athenian Constitution* took them for constitutions actually followed by the government of the Four Hundred and prepared for it for the would-be government of the Five Thousand. Since the discovery of the *Athenian Constitution*, numerous scholars, esp. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (*Aristoteles und Athen*, II, Berlin 1893, pp. 113–125), A. Andrewes (*A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, V, Oxford 1981, pp. 212–251, *passim*), P. J. Rhodes (*A Commentary on the Aristotelian Athenian Constitution*, Oxford 1981, pp. 362–407, *passim*), M. Chambers (*Aristoteles: Staat der Athener*, Berlin 1990, pp. 280–292), or H. Heftner (*Der oligarchische Umsturz des Jahres 411 v.Chr. und die Herrschaft der Vierhundert in Athen*, Frankfurt am Main 2001, pp. 177–210), have spent a tremendous amount of energy in explaining the obscure texts, trying to extract from them a meaningful set of rules for governing the πόλις. I suggest that the obscurities are inherent in the Greek itself, because the texts were written by a group of men including both radical and moderate democrats. The "constitutionalists" managed, after long discussions, to agree upon a text acceptable to everyone, but it was a text capable of very different interpretations. Soon, it became clear that the interpretations of radicals and moderates were not compatible and that the text itself could not form a viable basis of future government. The disillusionment was among the reasons of the fast collapse of the Four Hundred. Thus, the documents are a valuable testimony to how diverse groups of Athenian oligarchs tried, and ultimately failed, to find a common ground in midst of a στάσις.

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L'après-guerre civile ou l'oubli infini

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La figure tragique d'Œdipe, recréée par Sophocle dans *Œdipe Roi* (420 av. J.-C.) et dans *Œdipe à Colone* (401 av. J.-C.), nous place devant la représentation d'un conflit socio-politique qui s'est révélé parfaitement moderne en Espagne à la transition entre le 20e siècle et le 21e siècle. Conflit qui s'est rendu manifeste autour du mausolée titanesque d'un tyran que la communauté tend à expulser de sa mémoire.

The tragic figure of Oedipus, recreated by Sophocles in *Oedipus the King* (420 BC) and in *Oedipus at Colonus* (401 BC), places us in front of a conflict which proved perfectly modern in Spain in the transition between the 20th century and the 21st century. This conflict became manifest around the titanic mausoleum of a tyrant that the community tends to expel from its memory.

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The Golden Age of Athenian Democracy and the Origins of the Antidemocratic Thinking

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For a long time, the prevailing position among scholars was that antidemocratic thought emerged due to aristocratic resentment toward the rule of the people. Walter Eder has demonstrated the necessity for a more nuanced approach. He has convincingly argued that the aristocrats, in their rivalry for influence and power, unintentionally assisted the rise of democracy. Thus, the concept of class conflict is now more or less a thing of the past. Yet, the view that the Athenian demos' failures during the Peloponnesian War turned an innate sense of superiority of many members of the Athenian elite into outright enmity is still prevalent. The principal argument of this paper is that the foundations for this development were laid much earlier and that other factors were equally or even more significant. The Age of Pericles intensely influenced the evolution of democratic ideology, and many of its elements either emerged or completed their development in these decades. The separation of the political from the social sphere (political equality – social inequality), the public-private dichotomy (*koinon – idion*), the principle of inclusiveness (whole – part) and the majority rule (majority-minority, ruling–being ruled) exerted a profound impact on several levels: the political realm with its values became more important than the social realm; a rift between the general and particular (individual) interest was established; and a binarisation of political relations occurred. The conjunction of these developments, in turn, affected the rise of antidemocratic thinking by facilitating the view that democracy is, in truth, an oppressive form of rule since it is a government by the masses in the best interest of the masses.

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Dissolving the Demos. The Destruction of Democracy as Destruction of the Political Community

Katarina Nebelin, Universität Klagenfurt, Institut für Geschichte

In his History of the Peloponnesian War, Thucydides describes the effects of the anti-democratic revolution of 411 BC on the Athenian people in detail. According to him, the well-targeted terrorism orchestrated by the oligarchic conspirators led to a complete disintegration of the political community: the Athenians lost all sense of security and trust in each other and were unable to act together. Therefore, it seems significant that Thucydides repeatedly characterises the coup of the Four Hundred as a 'dissolution' (katalysis) of the demos rather than of democracy.

In my talk I will examine the implications of this peculiar wording which is used not only by Thucydides but also by other authors such as Lysias, Xenophon, or Aristotle. Instead of being a mere idiosyncratic formulation, the idea of a 'dissolution of the demos' refers to a specific concept of democracy that can be found not only in Thucydides' description of the oligarchic coup of 411 BC, but also in Xenophon's account of the seizure of power by the so-called 'Thirty Tyrants' in 404 BC. Both authors emphasise that these transformations of the political order did not take place on an abstract constitutional level. For the Athenians, the change of their political order meant the very concrete disintegration of their civic community as a politically organised group capable of acting together. They did not only lose their democracy, but also themselves. Consequently, the overthrow of the oligarchic rule was accompanied by a return to free speech in public.

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Das Problem der Parteinahme im Bürgerkrieg: Cicero und das solonische Stasisgesetz
The problem of taking sides in a civil war: Cicero and the Solonian Law on Stasis

Marian Nebelin, Technische Universität Chemnitz, Institut für Europäische Studien und Geschichtswissenschaften

This lecture is not about the Solonian Law on Stasis itself. Rather, it will show how Cicero interpreted the Solonian Law on Stasis in the light of the conflicts and civil wars of the late Roman Republic. This provides an insight into the history of Cicero's radicalisation as well as into the violent politics in the late Roman Republic. Cicero argued for always taking the side of the „good" (boni) in a conflict. The main problem was to determine clearly and as generally bindingly as possible who the „good guys" were. Moreover, Cicero did not always see himself in a position to act in accordance with his own maxim of morally correct behaviour.

The lecture will consider Cicero's direct mentions of the Solonian Law on Stasis as well as his indirect references. Cicero interpreted it as a Law against Neutrality. It will be shown that since Cicero's defence of C. Rabirius in the year of his consulship in 63 BC, the Law on Stasis has been an important figure of argument to justify political action. The fact that Cicero himself had the impression that he failed to implement this norm during the civil war only illustrates the great normative relevance that he himself ascribed to it. By combining the idea of taking sides with the exclusion of an attitude of neutrality, Cicero gave the Solonian Law of Stasis an argumentative form that did not de-escalate conflicts, but enforced them.

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Dealing with the problem of stasis in democratic Athens

Claudia Tiersch, Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Geschichtswissenschaften

Thucydides makes ambivalent statements about the dangers of stasis in Athenian democracy. On the one hand, he praises the high domestic integration potential of democracy, which promoted the solidarity of the citizens and thus strengthened their ability to act in foreign policy. On the other hand, he links this domestic political stability to the ability of political leaders to act: While he sees this in Pericles, he describes the subsequent political phase of Athens as an intensifying stasis, which he decisively links to the discord among Athenian political leaders. The lecture aims to move away from this personal perspective. It will examine the question of how the sources of the democratic phase of Athens (including tragedy and Athenian orators) identified the dangers of stasis, which stasis developments can be determined and how they were counteracted. The particular focus here is on the development of rules and procedures to enable political and social responsiveness. What was the concept of stasis in democratic Athens? How was it seen in relation to the often-mentioned danger of tyranny? What dynamics could actually lead to a split in the citizenry? How was it signaled to citizens that the balance between justice and concord, to which Benjamin Gray refers, was possible in the face of strong conflicts of interest? The talk will address the question of what specific contribution the political culture of democratic Athens made to overcoming the dangers of stasis.