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## **HISTORY AND THEORY OF GEOPOLITICAL DOMINANCE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

My first systematic attempt at philosophical history (something quite different from, but continuous to, the philosophy of history) was occasioned by the well-known problems in SouthEastern Europe that erupted upon the conclusion of the Cold War with the victory of the U.S. and the (partial) dissolution of the Soviet Empire. Once again our region proved its high potential in an acute way, by releasing tremendous amounts of negative energy, just as for remarkably protracted periods of time it is on the contrary seething with positive activity in World-History.

“SouthEastern Europe” is a politically correct description for the multidimensional Balkan-Asia Minor geopolitical field (to name it in a scientifically correct way, i.e. geographically) whose significance in Universal History is enormous over time. It is defined by a semi-closed sea (the Aegean Archipelago or White Pontos) as a core, which (a) opens into two further highly important seas, one closed, the Black Pontos, the other again semi-closed, the Eastern Mediterranean with its Ionian and Adriatic adjuncts and (b) connects (and does not divide) two mighty peninsulas, the Balkan in Europe and the Asia Minor in Asia. In fact, Europe and Asia can be usefully seen as extended projections from their original core values, Continental Greece (Stereia Hellas) and Western Anatolia. Initially, these Europe and Asia concepts were understood on a par with Peloponnesus and the Aegean Islands (esp. the Cyclades). Such are the spatially restricted, indeed minute, beginnings of our common history.

In this little core region, the Aegean White Sea, tectonic plates meet – geological, cultural, political, strategic, military. Hence its heightened potential and significance. For us harmony was always a question of subtle but powerful balance and adjustment of opposites, never the infertile uniformity of the homogeneous. The narrow yet acute resonances in the harmonic tuning of our geopolitical area produced diverse integrals of transcendent influence in history, but also destructive chords of disproportionate menace for the world stability, if one considers solely the narrow extent or parochial condition of the geopolitical area at some intervals of time. At one end of the spectrum we may cite the revolution in human history that introduced philosophy, full money, the morality of individual excellence, the politics of freedom, and the aesthetics of the rationally organized form – all within a minimal interval of time and space. At the other, we face situations like the one that has reached its climax during the last fifteen years (and I include Greece in this conundrum). Other examples abound. Think on the positive side the stabilizing effects of the Ottoman Empire between the Christian West, the Christian East and the Islamic East. Or, on the negative perspective, the turbulences *in situ* of the first two centuries before Christ; or those that accompanied the failure and dissolution of the Byzantine Empire from the 11<sup>th</sup>

to the 15<sup>th</sup>

century of the Middle Era. Such violently wide oscillations in the pendulum of the actualization of the inherent high potential in our geopolitical field explain both the mental alertness that is a prerequisite for Thucydidean and Polybian philosophical history and the strategic sloth that

characterizes contemporary Greek foreign policy – an abnegation of the incumbent responsibility in front of, and amidst, geopolitical realities and “manifest destinies” implicated therein. And this indolence can afflict great and small nations, to a greater or lesser degree. Such Periclean sloth cut short the Athenian \*manifest destiny\* in the Golden Age, and with it destroyed for the time the hopes of humanity for a new and better era. Rome, at great pains and extreme exertion, avoided the pitfall of premature contentment. America has I believe passed the point of no return, but great perils and heavy struggles and much pain lay nonetheless ahead.

## II. LAWS OF GEOPOLITICAL DOMINANCE

And first, why “Laws”? Because Laws express Order, and Order is the foundation of Intelligibility. Natural Order bears the mark of intelligent design, a design, that is, which is meaningful and has an end. There is no intelligence of the haphazard, the arbitrary and the unpredictable as such. Lawfulness does not mean determinism, just as freedom does not require chaos. These clarifications are not a minor sign of how useful ancient ways of thinking are to disentangle us from modern intellectual snares.

There is a secular trend in macrohistory towards increased integration of human presence (and globalization is the present stage of this unifying trajectory). Organization in smaller units indicates inability to evolve systems of sufficient complexity to encompass wider variation without counterproductive unnecessary violence. Such immaturity is temporary at each stage. For every given degree of variation, there is a corresponding degree of complexity that can accommodate effectively the given variation within a unified field of integration and with only a

reasonable amount of (initial) friction and corresponding necessary differential violence. When the degree of complexity is realized in a unificational system, the system extends to cover all the corresponding variation. The integrational field is thereby enlarged (with minimal exercise of force). Such natural augmentations improve the *quality* and microadjustment of the distributional pattern of roles and resources to the individual members of the extended “society”, while also the *quantity* of human interaction is increased. This qualificational improvement and quantificational increase result in a heightened *efficiency* and increased productivity in human (coexistence and) individual and collective activity. Since (according to the classical analysis) the *raison d’être* of societal (co)existence is the enhanced possibilities offered in the right context for maximal individual self-realization, the push for broader and broader integrations is grounded in human nature. This explains the existence of the secular trend and constitutes the First Law of Geopolitical Dominance, inherent tendency to integrational maximization, working alike in regional fields and universal domains.

All processes in this World are subject to periodicity, for reasons having ultimately to do with an intrinsic dualism in the cosmic constitution. Cyclicity is what sustains stable order in a reality of indefinite change and multiplicity. This pertains equally to nature and humanity, to the physical world, to history and to culture alike. In the case of human integrals, periodicity optimises results. For the integrational tendency may (and, in the nature of this-worldly things will) overstep the limits ensuring the attainment of its purpose, in a number of ways. First, in the constructive phase it may employ unsustainably forced developments, for want of an adequate unifying complexity in the evolving structures. And, secondly, once a stable (i.e. natural) integral has been achieved, it may allow its institutional framework to fossilise, thus curtailing the full play of individual creativity, on which the life and potency of all collective arrangement essentially depend. We thus have both abortive integrations in history, and premature disintegrations. Even in optimal cases, where a unificatory entity is able to run its course to its manifest destiny, fulfilment generates satiety and natural senilization will eventually close the particular chapter in human development. A new and better integral will in time be called upon to feed on the dissolution of the old ones. There is thus a pulsating rhythm in history, with alternate periods of ascending and descending unification, of integration and disintegration, again in regional domains and the universal system. And this, in its general formulation, constitutes the substance and detail of the Second Law of Geopolitical Dominance.

Abstract theoretical laws are usually not in favour with practical policy makers. They are often suspected of being good-for-nothing intellectual (“philosophical”) games of no pragmatic worth. But this attitude rests on a misunderstanding of the nature of scientific laws. True laws must indeed contain implicitly the workings of their application. Putative laws that cannot correlate (in a comprehensible, if long, chain of consequences) in practical terms with hard facts and risky decisions, are no principles of reality, but only rules in mental plays. Even scholarly value means utility.

Let us observe some macrohistoric homological patterns in chronological terms, patterns relating to the combined action of the two basic laws of geopolitical dominance, those expressing the secular trend and the cyclical process of integration.

The fundamental homological boundaries in integrational developments are as follows:

1) The beginning of a consolidated multi-focal power-field. (Balance of Graduated Power System or Great Powers system).

2) The effective bid for hegemony in the system on the part of a promising outsider. This is usually expressed as first large-scale engagement of the eventual explicit bidder in major oecumenical affairs (symploke).

3) The transformation of the system into a bipolar one, typically as a result of a major war. Bipolarity is eminently unstable, and thus the new struggle for mastery starts immediately between the two poles. (This step may synchronize with No. 2 [Athens] or not occur at all [Rome]).

4) The establishment of a unipolar, unifocal, hegemonic, oecumenical field.

5) Consolidation of an Empire, i.e. the successful transformation of a unipolar system into a system with a common, structured administration.

Remarkable chronological identities appear in these homologues. From (1) to (2) c. 300 years. From (2) to (4) c. 70 years. [From (4) to (5) – one tested case – c. 140 years).

And here are the corresponding dates and periods for the three relevant major stages in our world-trajectory:

Athens

Rome

U.S.A.

1

2

3

4

5

776 B.C.	1
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480 B.C.	2
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480 B.C.
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Failure (404 B.C.)	3
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Failure
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509 B.C.	4
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229/219 B.C.	5
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168 B.C.	6
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29 B.C.	7
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1648	A.D.	8
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1905/1914 A.D.	9
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1945 A.D.	10
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1991	A.D.	11
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? (c. 2100 A.D.?)
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1.

Beginning of the Olympian victor lists. Greek scientific chronology. 754 B.C.: beginning of the Spartan ephorate lists.

2.

Greek victory in the Persian Wars (490-479 B.C.). Athenian crucial contribution at the decisive naval battle of Salamis.

3.

Capitulation of Athens to Sparta. End of the Great Peloponnesian War.

4.

Establishment of Republic in Rome. First Consuls. First Treaty with Carthago (Polybius III, 22).

5.

First and Second Illyrian Wars of Rome. Polybius reckons the beginning of the meteoric ascent of Rome to World Oecumenical dominion from 220 B.C. (III, 4; I, 1; 3; III, 1).

6.

Roman victory in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Macedonian War.

7.

Octavian's permanent imperium (Dio Cassius LII, 41) after the victory at Actium (31 B.C.) and the conquest of Egypt (30 B.C.).

8.

Peace of Westphalia. (Treaty of the Pyrenees, 1659 A.D.).

9.

Theodore Roosevelt Corollary / Outbreak of the First World War. America's decisive sympleke in major global affairs.

10.

American victory in the Second World War. United States of America versus Soviet Union.

11.

American victory in the bipolar Cold War. Dissolution of the Soviet Union. Reemergence of Russia.

(The (failed) Persian and Macedonian Empires can be incorporated into this scheme. As can the Ottoman Empire and the Spanish-Austrian one).

At the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. a general upheaval resulted in the collapse of mighty political integrals and of the then prevailing Balance of Power system of international relations. In the Balkan-Asia Minor field, the almost synchronic dissolution of the Mycenaean system and of the Hittite Empire set the scene free for the laborious processes associated with a new beginning in human history. What humbly started then was destined to bear fully fruition in the Greek Revolution of Reason and the Roman Empire, a twin integral cultural and political.

Let us have an overview of the essentials of the political developments (leaving aside here the cultural side). Greece was positioned on the geographical periphery of the Ecumenical system – moreover a small mountainous country with no resources, out of significant trade routes and culturally backward. Comparison with the wide fertile plains, the brisk commercial activity, the economic and military might, the degree of interrelationship, administrative sophistication, organizational expertise and political advancement of the Middle Eastern region was, and must have appeared, devastating. The times however belonged to the ups of history, and while Greek mind was making rapid progress towards creating out of superior knowledge a new comparative advantage for that outpost that it physically inhabited, the push towards oecumenical integration had its first full-blown, tangible offspring in the Great Persian Empire. Cultural and political integrals were moving chronologically and homologically in tandem but around two different foci, both lying at the opposite extremes of the then Oecumene. The clash of the two centres came with the Persian Wars at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The Persian bid at oecumenical integration failed, the cultural edge won the battle with the political edge, and an absolute outsider entered the lists – Athens, an outsider not only of the global power structure, but even in the Hellenic power-field. Following the Themistoclean strategy of empowerment for primacy, Athens chartered a quick road to hegemonic position, utilizing the new “knowledge” Greek weapon, the instrument of the new science and the Logos way of thinking that gave to her decisive comparative advantage – even against the might of an Oriental all-but-universal empire. Consider the Greek victory in the Persian Wars and the Greek military strategy of the hoplite battles and trireme naval engagements. Or how Athens managed to reach commercial pre-eminence and to become a financial center and (through the system of metoics) a basis for a wide variety of many and high-grade economic enterprises. Her money became the universal medium of exchange. Athens in a short-while, and as a result of definite policies aiming at geopolitical dominance, was transformed into the world’s first naval power, a center that could use her military might to effect and sustain the economic integration of a vast space through her formidable hegemony, formally an alliance of all trading states of the Aegean from Bosphorus to Southwestern Anatolia

. The Athenian strategy was thoroughly offensive. Athens, as the leader of New Greece, led a two-pronged simultaneous attack both on Sparta, as the head of Old Greece, and on the Persian Empire. She attempted aggressively to destabilize the Empire of the East while at the same time waging the First Peloponnesian War against the Spartan Alliance. And although her Egyptian adventure did not end well, that failure acted more as a challenge rousing her to novel

levels of exertion – as is wont to happen with world powers in an ascending trajectory of success when faced with particular reverses however heavy. In a few years, new decisive victories were won against the Persians in Cyprus and Cilicia, successes were cascading in the other war against Sparta, and Athens was also building a land hegemony in continental Greece.

All this changed in mid-century. The drive for imperium and the strategy of overwhelming power (Themistocle's policy) were abandoned for a doctrine of absolute bipolarity in the Greek area and tripolarity in the Oecumene, founded on the idea of a direct understanding with Sparta and a tacit, mutual acquiescence with Persia. We happen to know in some detail the terms of these understandings (Peace of Kallias with Persia, 449 B.C. Thirty Years Peace with Sparta, 446 B.C.). The fact that Persia acceded to condition detrimental to her imperial status goes a long way to showing that the days of that colossus were measured with a measure as short as the determination was strong of a Greek factor to consolidate around itself the Hellenic system and thus empowered to employ a fully offensive strategy against the sometime mighty Empire. Proof of this was offered by Agesilaus' operations in Asia Minor, by the Persian foreign policy from mid-fifth to mid-fourth century, and, conclusively, by Alexander's the Great conquest of the East a century later. But whereas the Peace with Persia could perhaps be honourably defended in popular discourse by a "shrewd parliamentarian" (Beloch's denigratory but apt description of Pericles), the terms of the Peace with Sparta were not only strategically disastrous but even popularly unpalatable. Athens abandoned in effect all her strongholds, alliances and places of influence in continental Greece, in pursuance of an abstract, strict bipolarism between a land hegemony and a maritime one. I say abstract, because in the theoretically land-alliance, and second only to Sparta, a major commercial and industrial power was working all along, for her own interests – Corinth, possessing an extended network of colonies and trading ports, of alliances and concerns, chiefly in the West. So Pericles' notion of relying on economic automatism in winning a "cold peace-war" with the power of the "ancienne regime", was vitiated right from the beginning and in its very core. The defeat in the Great Peloponnesian War was in fact prefigured in the mid-century treaties, and above all, in the radical change of strategy that made them possible.

It makes an instructive reading to learn how Pericles effected the new strategy and how he was able to carry through the policies that implemented it in the Athenian Assembly. The not so very edifying story proves him, undoubtedly, master of party politics. To put a short twist to it, what

he deftly did was to erect a new middle ground platform on which he substituted some of the characteristically rigorous principles and policies of the Democratic Party and of its Reformist agenda, with pacifist and populist ones, while he simultaneously incorporated crucial elements of the Oligarchic Party platform. Thus:

1) In place of the radical liberalization programme of the Democratic Party that transformed within half a century a closed-circuit society into a unique in history field of freedom, antagonism and individual achievement in economy, culture and politics, he on the contrary exploited the appeal of the State as income-provider to its citizens, creating thus state-dependencies instead of the older clan ones. The effect of this was heightened by his multiplication of the payroll for attendance in public political functions. Thus the composition of the decision-taking bodies was intentionally altered in favour of a certain class membership, the proletarian city dwellers.

2) Embarking on a vast programme of public utility works he rechanneled state-revenues away from the power-building policies to which they were earmarked according to the Themistoclean Strategy Doctrine. (Cf. the Papyrus Decree).

3) By de facto concentrating all political influence in himself, he was able to employ in important state policies people of his choice that he could trust to deliver what he wanted (in essence or appearance). While this diverged from the Democratic Party principle of an open market in office-holding as in all else, Pericles was able to indicate to the “aristoi” (kaloi kagathoi) of the Oligarchic Party, that the Democratic system was not necessarily repugnant to their claims, if well founded. (Cf. the Funerary Oration).

4) He adopted the basic Oligarchic Party foreign policy principle of the necessity of an equitable and sincere understanding with Sparta. In fact he overshot that Party's concerns by opting for a general Pacifist policy even versus Persia, against which the Oligarchic Party was normally espousing a policy of rigorous confrontation.

5) He took the ground from under the feet of the Oligarchic Party also in that he could boast that Sparta accepted the Athenian Hegemony over her allies in the Maritime Alliance, even without war with Persia, the presumed very purpose of the Alliance.

6) Finally, instead of the Open Gates policy of the Democratic Party in immigration and (relatively speaking) naturalization, Pericles seems to have aligned himself with the anti-immigration standpoint of the Oligarchic Party, having at least enacted restrictions on citizenship and a purging of the Civil Rolls in accordance with the traditional rules of the clan-system.

After all this (and revealing details that go with it) the question is imperatively posed, whether Pericles was after all a mere populist politician, worse than a "shrewd parliamentarian" and very far from a far-sighted statesman. And the answer is probably in the negative. For it appears that Pericles was indeed (*wrongly*) convinced of the validity of Economic Automatism, namely that the increasing pace of economic growth (and development respectively), and the benefits accruing from it to all involved in the integrational system that made it possible, would by themselves create the strongest interest in maintaining and expanding that system, and thus necessarily a deep interest in supporting and deepening the Athenian hegemony as the focal point of the entire potential field. The firm belief in this principle seems to explain the otherwise underhand and almost treacherous behaviour of Pericles during the five crucial years 450-445 B.C., as well as his Thirty Years Peace. And the same belief seems also to explain his famous

Defensive Strategy during the bipolar war, when the war became inescapable indeed, even to him. He in effect then urged for strict adherence to formal Bipolarity as the strategic purpose of the war. Athens were to unyieldingly keep all that was agreed upon fifteen years ago in the Peace Treaty: her maritime empire, her sphere of absolute influence, her economic and political integrals – without any hint of encroachment upon the other party's jurisdiction. And so was that all Athenian actions prior to the outbreak of the Great War, were probably aimed and anyway meant to be understood as aimed against Corinth specifically, and not Sparta and her Alliance. A naval and commercial power was targeted that happened to belong to the Sparta's land Empire. Did Pericles wanted to intimate to Sparta, that Corinth should either be kept under strict Spartan control or theoretically reallocated to the other side, that of the maritime imperium? And was perhaps this the true intent of the famous Megarian Decree, and this the true cause of Athenian intransigence in the question of repealing that decree as a single way to save (for how long?) the peace? And similarly for Aegina? But if so, how could one expect Sparta to be persuaded that it did no harm to her land alliance to be virtually severed from states like Corinth, Megara, Aegina – which would be next?

### **A bipolarity of principles, instead of a bipolarity of power equipoise?**

An unheard of ideological concoction. It does not stand to reason, esp. since (as Thucydides neatly puts it) it was precisely fear of the (increasing) Athenian power that made Sparta opt, against the grain, for a general war, as Corinth was pressing.

The Periclean strategy is not only counterintuitive and argumentatively defective. It is also self-contradictory, if indeed Pericles believed in Economic Automatism. For if his Defensive Strategy was in effect means to allow the objective workings of Economic Automatism to propel Athens to overall hegemonic position without risky choices, undue financial and human strains and indeed without war, then why Sparta would not start the war as soon as she were to understand the true nature of the developments? And unless one is able to suppose that the other side in a superior bipolar system could possibly be indeterminately deceived (or want to be so deceived) in the crucial question of its own defining interests as a pole of the system, then what kind of efficient strategy is to grant to your opponent the choice of the moment of starting the determinative war of the system? And what logic would then be to still stick to a Defensive Strategy, once war has started on these premises, namely with the other pole having seen through the realities of the case? Are we to suppose that Pericles meant to tell to his Spartan friends that he was to be trusted, and that whatever the growth of Athenian power (esp. relative to the Spartan), they had nothing to be afraid of, since Athens would honour her commitment to preserve a Spartan continental system, however truncated, even in a nominally bipolar world of unbalanced poles?! Wouldn't that mean that Sparta could keep her obsolete ways with some agrarian backyard states, so long as she would acquiesce in her irrelevance? Could Pericles bound Athenian policy, even when directed by a Cleon or Alcibiades, the new Themistocles? Would Sparta simply resign to the inevitable? Well, it proved far from inevitable in the real world.

I spent time in demolishing the Periclean strategy for the reason that historians seem so reluctant to condemn it for what it is: a failure, whether judged by the outcome <sup>1</sup>, by its conceptual adequacy or by the tactics employed in its pursuance. The tactics are gradualistic (in the Corcyra affair, in the Poteidaea case), something that costed enormously in time, money, prestige, tactical efficiency and concomitant strategic validation.

Pericles' new doctrine faced tremendous opposition both from politicians of the Democratic party and generals sharing the Themistoclean strategic outlook and from the Oligarchic party and its leader Thucydides. But the Democratic politicians were outwitted by Pericles' populist platform. The General-Statesman Tolmides, a staunch upholder of the imperialist principle, died under suspicious circumstances in the strangely ill-fated expedition to Boeotia of 448-7 B.C. (he was elected member of the Board of Generals perhaps every year since at least 457/6 to his death in battle, 447 B.C.). And Thucydides with the Oligarchic Party were enervated by the frustration of having their own core policies appropriated in the New Democratic platform. They could only have reacted realistically by turning aggressive *New-conservatives*. They failed to do so, and became more and more marginal, isolated in esoteric political clubs instead of fighting through in the arena of the Boule and the Assembly, retreating into irrelevance, till when two decades later they managed to reappear in central scene by overthrowing the constitution.

Despite of all this, it must have took all of Pericle's famed persuasiveness, all of his populist rhetoric and policy-making, to persuade the Athenians to accede to his idea. In 444 B.C., when the matter came to effective trial, he narrowly missed defeat: instead Thucydides was ostracised. From then to the outbreak of the Great War, Pericles reigned supreme ("one man's authority") in the Athenian Democracy.



We can discard wholesale then the Periclean Defensive Strategy and the principle of Economic Automatism and instead formulate the 3<sup>rd</sup> Law of Geopolitical Dominance as follows:

In the upsurge phase of the cycle of integration, unifying centers are to apply a fully offensive strategy supported by an overwhelming power differential. Multiple confrontation, involving synchronic conduct of a number of wars, is to be envisaged.

Athens failed to realize her manifest destiny by adopting at the critical stage (roughly half-way through) the Periclean Defensive Strategy, thus undercutting the cyclical dynamics at a particularly opportune phase of the secular trend to Greek and Oecumenical integration in that era. This also shows that geopolitical laws do not safeguard by themselves results even at the right objectively time – that historic order does not entail historic determinism.

What is the specifying law under conditions of a successful bid for hegemony? We can draw on the Roman example for this, which also fully complies to my analysis of the preceding stage, from the effective expression of a bid to its successful consummation. Compliance is fully evidenced for instance by Rome's strategy with Hannibal ante portas, roaming up and down Italy and destroying the Roman system of coalitions – a situation immeasurably more seriously dangerous than the relatively innocuous reversal in the case of Athens with her Egyptian disaster. Rome in that precarious condition raised the stakes by opening a new theatre of war against Carthago in Spain and by simultaneously proclaiming and actively waging war upon Macedonia.

However, once hegemonial position has been established, consolidation of unipolarity and the transformation of the system into a highly complex but unified integral (with common administrative authority), require further exertions and a clear strategy of the maintenance of overwhelming superiority to any state or possible combination of states. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Law of Geopolitical Dominance applies in this phase as well with specifications appropriate to the nature of the new strategic environment. Recalcitrance or resistance to the hegemonic system may come:

a) From states which although have in effect, purposefully or unintentionally worked for the new system, find, or are led by reason of internal disappointment and disillusionment to experience, the new system as more interfering in the pursuance of their traditional arrangements, habits, agendas and policies than was the case with the former network of external relationships. (The Achaian League in Rome's case).

b) From second-order states in the new system – previously Great Powers in the Balance of Power system that preceded the hegemonial one. (The Seleucid Empire).

c) From marginal states which, (1) exploiting widespread psychological or material disaffection with the hegemonic power, (2) can act or support acts of wholesale terrorism, (3) absorb the dynamics of malcontent among all those whose vested interests laid with the former system or who are likely to react to any superior concentration of power in another center not their own or who can be tricked into believing that a lesser degree of freedom or defining character and identity is bound to characterise a unipolar system – (4) create new if temporary alignments of forces, and because of all this can pose for a certain period of time a considerable threat to the stability of the unipolar system. (The Pontic Kingdom).

d) Troubles in the unipolar system from any cause provide fertile ground for the emergence of non-state disorderly activity of a terrorist kind (The Pirates). The phenomenon is magnified by the very fact of the concentration of all safety and security concerns into the hands of a single competency, the dominant power of the system. Engagement of that hegemonic power in (esp. multiple and acute) order-imposing functions, gives room and opportunity to determined marginalized elements to create systematic anomalies in the system.

e) From internal developments in the dominant state itself. The huge responsibility imposed on its shoulders and the consequent permanent strain, spiritual, psychological and material, put on it, tend to exacerbate differences of opinion in the body-political, esp. those relating to the national interest, the prerogatives and obligations of the hegemonic state itself, and to how they ought to be exercised in the most beneficial way. Such differences, under pressure of very strong interests involved, can cause civil strife – vicious examples are best observed in the history of Rome from the time of Gracchi to the final establishment by Augustus of the Global Peace and the Oecumenical Empire.

The Law of Offensive Overwhelming Superiority of Power is accordingly articulated in the following specifics when applied to already established unipolar systems:

1) The Dominant Power must preserve and indeed enhance its overwhelming superiority of power against every single state or possible combination of states in the system, esp. against the Second-Order Powers of the System. The distance of the first from any seconds must be widening and become enormous.

2) The Dominant Power must selectively strike proleptically against states of category (a) and (c) that are going, or are likely to pose, potential threats to the unipolar system.

3) The Dominant Power must eradicate non-statal disturbances of category (d), by necessarily eliminating their statal supports or refuges.

4) The Dominant Power must intervene directly in selective focuses of anomaly and infuse the new order by fiat locally, as an agent capable of eventual, self-activated propagation in the entire area. Appropriate cases of such differential interference should be coordinated for quicker results and more efficient influence.

5) The Dominant Power must employ a rigorous strategy of containment with regard to the second-order powers of category (b). Proleptic war with them is not likely to materialize, since they usually only fight for an improved position within the hegemonic alliance – more often by overestimating their actual value (i.e. usefulness) according to their sometime historical heights. But it must be clear to them, first that they are not to negotiate their positions with the hegemon, and second that any overstepping on their part will meet with exemplary punishment, both for the (future) stability of the system, but also as a lesson to the third and lower order powers of the system that the unipolar system is juster in itself and fairer to them than the Balance of (Great) Powers system.

Notice that the existence, stability and well-being of a unipolar system depends absolutely on its Hegemonic Focus, its (single) pole of the dynamic field. It is therefore in the most vital interest of the system collectively and of all successful members of it separately to ensure the good condition, unsurpassable capacity and best functioning of the Dominant Power. It follows that the Hegemon need not fear effective coordination of a significant number of important states against its prerogatives. Under the obvious proviso of course (and this is critical), that the Hegemon is in fact delivering what is expected from it in its hegemonial position as the sustaining center of the system. If so, for every obnoxious state, there will always be found many others which will really want to be associated in various collaborative patterns with the Hegemon. The key to strategic success in this phase of the integrational period is absolute, unyielding determination. The rest follows suit by nature.

The Law of Offensive Overwhelming Superiority of Power on the part of the Dominant Power in a unipolar system (esp. in the *global* unipolar system that has been established in this era of World-history since 1991), as described above in its fundamentals, has been reflected in the *Bush National Strategic Doctrine*

. This Doctrine follows the path chartered by the

*Monroe Doctrine*

and the

*Theodore Roosevelt Corollary*

. It expands the domain of application of the same principle and focuses it to the specifics of a unipolar system. The Monroe Doctrine proclaim the geopolitical independence of the New World from the European Balance of Power System then recently instituted by the Vienna Concord, and sets a sphere of influence for the new power of the New World. The Theodore Roosevelt Corollary in effect affirms global interests for the U.S.A., proclaims her

*symploke*

with the rest of the world and announces selective and discretionary projection of power to any suitable place. The Bush doctrine confirms a Strategy for Unipolarity. It has to be sharpened (in its interpretation and application more than in its formulation) according to the preceding analysis, whose first clear adumbration happened back in 1996, long before the Doctrine's institution.

Speaking of the Overwhelming Superiority of Power as a strategic doctrine, one should also analyse the parameters of Power. Suffice to be said here that the fundamentals of power are:

1.

Military might.

2.

Edge of scientific and technological knowledge.

3.

Thorough knowledge of human systems in space and time; science of culture.

4.

Capacity to correlate knowledge from different fields and dimensions of reality into integrals that can be pragmatically checked by way of predictability and applicational success. (Classical wisdom, "sophia").

5.

An ideology of active values that can heighten human activity by *freeing* it from traditional constraints without destabilizing its cohesiveness as a result of the lighter institutional framework required for the productive intensification of individual creativity.

### III. IMPERIUM AND DEMOCRACY

The so-called “Greek Miracle” is not only a marvel of transcendent cultural perfection – “classical” in the core meaning of the word – but also a stupendous over-all achievement (economic, military and political no less than cultural) relative to its material basis. I have touched above on the exceedingly poor physical capital (geography, resources, raw materials), if rich in aesthetic quality and climatic temperance, that the Hellenic

man had to start and cope with. His miraculous performance is to be accounted for primarily by two factors.

### *First*

, he discovered and “cultured” a unique way of thinking, that proved to be thereafter a master-key for getting at the essence of things, an instrument of immense and universal pragmatic value, which inspired him with a comprehensive “Gnosticism”, the view that all is a question of (thorough) knowledge, the good and the beautiful included, as reducible to the true (The Logos Principle).

### *Second*

, he operated in systems of the highest degree of freedom, pushing this preoccupation to levels unequalled in history, when in golden age Athens he successively de-institutionalized (without destabilizing) the societal framework, thereby releasing enormous amounts of productive, positive energy for expansion within and abroad. (The Principle of Freedom).

*This energy informed by integral knowledge (i.e. wisdom, sophia) generated from meagre materials superlative power*

. It is an organizational feat of extreme efficiency.

Contemporary Athens was aware of the importance and significance of these Principles. Both principal factors are emphasised in Thucydides' philosophical history (of his times), explicitly at the very official pronouncement on the State of the Nation in Pericles' Funereal Oration. There Athenian Might (Dynamis) is intrinsically associated with the “Athenian Way”, being politically defined as a democratic system based on three pillars: equality before the law in private matters (isonomia), meritocracy in public affairs (kat' axian), and individual freedom (eleutheria). Emphasis on intellectual attainments and on the consequent practical wisdom in thorough deliberations which instead of hampering decisive action ensure in fact its successful operation, is ever-present in that momentous speech.

Far from perceiving an incongruity between Democracy and Empire, the Athenians were aware of the indissoluble connection mind – might – money – freedom. It was a culture of excellence and success in conditions of maximal liberty. And they were aware of it because they have themselves observed the results of the successive waves of social, political, economic and cultural liberalization that started in earnest systematically with Cleisthenes in 508/7 B.C. and were consummated with Ephialtes in 462 B.C. There is an exact correspondence between this series of progressive liberalizations and the rise of Athens to military, economic, cultural and political supremacy in the Greek world and beyond. The phase difference between the two series as a whole is of the order of a decade. So ready was the society for the removal of its constraints, the shackles of the past.

The failure of Athens in the bipolar War with Sparta (the Great Peloponnesian War) proved to be such a painful, soul-searching experience for

the 4<sup>th</sup> century Athenians just because it was unthinkable that high-classical, golden age Athens, the Athens of wisdom and freedom – and, *hence*, of knowledgeable power and mind-informed irresistible might – could loose in her hegemonial bid. However, 4<sup>th</sup> century intellectuals seem to have drawn the wrong lesson from the debacle. For it was *not more imperialism* than really required that eventually destroyed Athens but *less of it*, as I have argued above.

Perhaps the best way to start understanding the intrinsic connectedness between empire and democracy would be to redefine more accurately democracy itself. The Periclean-Thucydidean formulation of its nature is revealing (as I have indicated above). It points unmistakably to what will in the sequel be developed as the theory of the Mixed Constitution, the best constitution being conceived as containing in balanced equilibrium the defining principal characters of all (three or four) main pure constitutional types. The following was the basic conceptual scheme of the pure types:

Constitution pure type defining principle

monarchy      concentration of authority

oligarchy

as plutocracy    wealth

as aristocracy    excellence



democracy    freedom

5<sup>th</sup> century Athenian Democracy was (and was perceived to be) a mixed constitution. The principle of freedom and excellence are explicitly acknowledged and invoked in the Periclean-Thucydidean definition; the second includes implicitly (as a particular kind of professional excellence) the principle of wealth. In point of practice the role of economic muscle was very influential in the Athenian Democracy, even the role of old noble families of the previous family-clan system. But active values and functional structures were of the new order all the same. As to the concentration of authority, Thucydides again describes the Athenian Democracy at the peace period between the two Peloponnesian wars (446-431 B.C.) as one man's principatum (*enos andros arche*). And the ostracism procedure as was operated in 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens acting in effect as a negative election, the remaining party head, after an effective ostracism, wielded immense influence, albeit a non-institutional one, in the decision making body and in popular opinion generally for the period (typically 10 years) during which the leader of the opposition was removed from the political scene of the country.

That the mixed-constitution theory was not only a theoretical construal (originating in all probability from some "sophistical", and ultimately Pythagorean, analyses of political realities), but also an ideological platform, which aimed at providing a more solid basis for democracy by appropriating criticisms and positions of the oligarchical movement, is shown by its explicit occurrence (as a pragmatic description by a practical politician) in the context of the second great democracy in 5<sup>th</sup> century, that of Syracuse. In a speech of the leader of the Democratic Party there (Thucydides VI 39), on the occasion of the Athenian naval expedition to Sicily, the theory is formulated of an

*equipoise*

(*isomoiria*) in true democracy among three factors: 1) that the best financial administrators are men successful in economic enterprise

(*the wealthy*)

; 2) that able to deliberate best are those who possess integrated knowledge, i.e. pragmatic wisdom

(*the synetoi*)

; and 3) that the collective judgement of congregated people in assembly

(*the polloi*)

is best, when they have become acquainted with the analyses articulated and proposals formulated by the knowledgeable and wise. The many are the best judges between different options and thus the best decision making body.

The Mixed Constitution is one decisively involving “checks and balances”. (Isomoiria among the different factors). The ultimate origin of the idea probably went back to Pythagorean analyses of harmonic systems. In any case, the constitutional theories, ideologies and practices in 5<sup>th</sup> century democracies come closest to the American Democracy as a system of maximal freedom, minimal centralized regulationism, of natural meritocracy and pressure blocks of lobbying interests. You have the same elements, and their spontaneous equilibration in the system through self-adjustment.

A locus classicus for the theory of Mixed Constitution as the best and *stablest* societal organization exactly by reason of the checks and balances inherent in its make-up, is provided by the other great Greek philosophical historian, Polybius. His analysis is the more valuable especially as he correlates constitutional systems with statal integral empowerment.

Polybius considers his main task in his “pragmatic”, universal history to relate and explain Rome’s meteoric rise from a marginal, lower-order power in the international system to the oecumenical imperium within 53 years (220-167 B.C.). The “most beautiful and useful” aspect of his undertaking for the readers of his historical treatise is to understand “how and *by what kind of constitutional arrangements (what kind of societal order)* almost the entire Oecumene fell under the authority and rule (arche) of Rome” (VI, 1, 3). He claims that the most important and potent cause for the success or failure of any statal action (from its conception, through its enterprise, to its consummation) is the composition of the state’s societal, political structure, the constitutional order of its society (VI, 1, 9-10).

Polybius ascribes the main cause for Rome’s spectacular success in geopolitical dominance, precisely to its ideally mixed constitution, which he goes on to describe and analyse in the renowned 6<sup>th</sup> Book of his History. By contrast, he also explains the failure of Greek city-states to complete their ascending dynamics by reaching the end of oecumenical domination, as chiefly constitutional failures from the point of view of the ideally mixed constitution. The short-lived Theban pre-eminence was due to the capacity of her leaders at the time, as was the hegemonic rise of Athens in 5<sup>th</sup> century. Polybius associates the latter with one man, Themistocles, thus in effect accepting the view of Pericles’ responsibility for the final debacle. It is true that the unique *deinstitutionalization*

in history represented by the 5

th

century Athenian democracy, made state affairs depend essentially, and in a special way, on the leading individuals. But this precisely condition

worked wonders in the cultural domain, and in the political field it enabled a city-state to accumulate and command enormous potential, unexhausted even in the midst of grave reverses. Nonetheless, a leader's policy (Pericles 450-435 B.C.) is causally associated with the fall – indeed, as the main reason for it.

Polybius examines also a widespread thesis to the effect that the Cretan, Lacedaemonian and Carthaginian systems provided examples of successful mixed constitutions. He peremptorily dismisses the Cretan case (VI, 45-47, 6) and does not find much commendable in Carthago's state at the time of the Hannibalic Wars (VI, 51 sqq.). He offers a penetrating analysis of the Spartan system, arguing that although well-fitted to sustain an isolated society in stable, functional-order for long periods of time, it is ill-adapted to the demands of active participation in the international field. And he correctly invokes history in support of his analysis (VI, 48-50).

Polybius bases the stability of the (harmoniously) mixed constitution on the equipoise and *equivalence* in it of all the essential constitutional elements and factors. The pure types in their best acceptation (kingdom, aristocracy, democracy) tend inherently in the course of time to degenerate into their corresponding perversions (tyranny, oligarchy, "manualism"-cheirokratia, called also ochlocracy). To avoid this, the constitutive principle of each pure type must be prevented from exercising sole and unopposed influence in society, but should rather be balanced by the principles of the other pure types. Thus in the equilibrated mixed constitution, the best of each pure type is actively preserved in functional order (VI, 10). Checks and balances among differing factors prevent them from their natural deterioration, if left in themselves and isolation.

Thus, the American system and constitutional order (politeia) comes closest in the contemporary scene to the ancient mixed constitution theory, and democracy should be redefined as harmonious mixture of all constitutional principles, and consequently as the balanced interplay of all societal factors. The complexity of the system is increased to cover the extent and depth of a modern, huge, "national" state, although American nationality is closer to ancient empire than any other modern corresponding situation.

\* By outcome I do not mean primarily the final defeat of Athens, but in this context the very fact of a generalized bipolar war – inasmuch as the main object of the strategy must have been to provide incentives to contain the war. Besides and furthermore, even the final defeat does count decisively against the soundness of the Strategy. For it is very wrong to associate the defeat with the *non-following* of Pericles' defensive strategy on the part of his successors – Cleon and, above all, Alcibiades. Thucydides rightly considers the defeat to be the direct result of the civil confusion and strife that erupted in Athens in the second half of the war, and which blinded her as to the right leaders able to conduct it successfully. In particular Thucydides ascribes the proximate cause of the defeat to the fact that the Athenians failed to entrust the war to the hands of Alcibiades, an arch upholder of full-blown imperial strategy, for fear of his presumed dictatorial inclinations.