

Charalampos I. Chrysafis, Andreas Hartmann, Christopher Schliephake, Georg Weber (eds.), *Basileus eirenophylax. Friedenskultur(en) und monarchische Repräsentation in der Antike*, (*Studies in Ancient Monarchies* – 9), Franz Steiner Verlag, Stuttgart 2023, 550 pp. + b/w ill.; ISBN 978-3-515-13477-4

Debates about models of Hellenistic monarchies frequently focus on how rulers broadcast their military successes as part of their propaganda. Although the projected image of a triumphant military leader was often inextricably intertwined with their role as peace-makers and peacekeepers, the latter role has not been exhaustively discussed by scholars. This gap was filled by the online conference *Basileus eirenophylax. Friedenskultur(en) und monarchische Repräsentation in der Alten Welt*, held at the University of Augsburg during the COVID pandemic (23–25 March 2021). A monograph of almost exactly the same title has recently been published in the *Studies in Ancient Monarchies* series, encompassing texts by both conference participants and other scholars. All chapters in the monograph consider how peace was conceptualized and presented in antiquity, shifting in line with local socio-historical contexts and the personal policies of rulers.

The first part (*Voraussetzungen und Kontexte*, pp. 39–125) collects chapters that explore how peace was respectively imagined in Persia under the Achaemenids, in Pharaonic Egypt, and in Jewish and Greek texts of the Hellenistic era, while also considering the circumstances in which the Greek world reconceptualized its rulers as guardians and bringers of peace.<sup>1</sup>

Chapters in the second part (*Hellenistische Monarchien*, pp. 127–255) present and discuss how Hellenistic rulers worked to secure peace for their subjects and propagandized their actions through epigraphic documents, coinage, literature, the arts, and public displays of military might.<sup>2</sup> Particularly significant is the chapter by H.-J. Gehrke,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. Wiesehöfer, *Frieden und Friedensvorstellungen im achaimenidischen Iran*, pp. 41–51; A. I. Blöbaum, *Der König als Garant für Frieden in den monumentalen Herrscherrepräsentation im spätzeitlichen Ägypten*, pp. 53–71; A. Hartmann, *Kriegstüchtig, aber den Krieg nicht liebend. Der ideale Herrscher im griechischen und jüdischen Denken der hellenistischen Zeit*, pp. 73–97; Ch. I. Chrysafis, *Griechische Voraussetzungen und Kontexte. Die Suche nach Frieden in der griechischen Poliswelt und die Entstehung des Basileus Eirenophylax-Konzept*, pp. 99–125.

<sup>2</sup> K. Buraselis, *The Hellenistic King as Virtuoso of the Peace Violin: Epigraphic Evidence Testifying ad Advertising Royal “Peaceful Policy/Policy of Peace” in the Hellenistic World*, pp. 143–160; P. F. Mittag, *Sieghaftigkeit und Frieden auf hellenistischen Münzen*, pp. 161–180; G. Weber, *Die königliche Selbstdarstellung von Krieg, Sieghaftigkeit und Frieden in der hellenistischen Dichtung*, pp. 181–206; R. Strootman, *Die große Prozession von Ptolemaios II. Philadelphos. Wie das Ptolemäische Reich als Zeitalter von ewigem, weltweitem Frieden präsentiert wird*, pp. 207–229; E. Galbois, *Die Darstellung der Lagiden als siegreiche Könige, Friedensstifter und Wohltäter. Untersuchungen anhand der Groß- und Kleinplastik aus ptolemäischer Zeit*, pp. 231–255.

<sup>3</sup> *Der siegreiche König – Revisited*, pp. 129–142.


whose title alludes to the author's previous article that delineated the defining characteristics of a charismatic and victorious Hellenistic monarch.<sup>4</sup> This chapter supplements Gehrke's previous findings with new comments and reflections.

The authors of chapters in part three (*Römisches Kaisertum von Augustus bis Diokletian*, pp. 257–376) study diverse aspects of propagandizing the idea of peace in the Roman world. Although the idea itself certainly existed in the Roman collective consciousness, victories by Roman military leaders did not always bring about peace, with senatorial elites under the Republic primarily exploiting military successes to gain personal fame. In the Roman Empire, however, all victories added to the emperor's glory, and he himself became the sole guardian and enforcer of imperial peace. The successes of particular emperors were proclaimed through their titulature and in inscriptions. Imperial military activities became inseparably associated with the ideology of peace, expressed through abstract concepts such as *Pax Augusta* or *Pax aeterna*. *Pax* itself, as part and parcel of imperial propaganda, became an object of religious worship.<sup>5</sup>

Chapters in the final part (*Spätantike und frühes Mittelalter, Fortleben und Rezeption*, pp. 377–510) enable one to trace how the idea of peace *sensu lato* transformed under the Late Roman Empire and Early Middle Ages. The shift was primarily brought about by the increasingly domestic focus of rulers and, more importantly, by Christian influence upon them. Military victories gained a religious dimension, with rulers becoming God's stewards on earth and executors of divine will. The Christian character of late imperial monarchy was also expressed through struck coinage.<sup>6</sup>

The reviewed monograph demonstrates that many rulers of the ancient world were preoccupied with the idea of peace, which motivated their activities and propaganda according to the spirit of the famous Roman saying, *si vis pacem, para bellum*. The discussed examples illustrate how the idea of peace functioned across the ages and how it was implemented.

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<sup>4</sup> Cf. *Die siegreiche König. Überlegungen zur hellenistischen Monarchie*, *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 64, 1982, 247–277.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. U. Gotter, *Siegreiche Kaiser? Zur Genese einer prekären Konstellation*, pp. 259–275; W. Eck, *Der Kaiser, der Sieg und der Frieden: die epigraphischen Zeugnisse*, pp. 277–302; C. Norena, *Coinage in the Early and High Roman Empire: Pax, Victory, and Monarchic Ideology* [this title is listed in content, but inside of the book paper has a bit different title: *Pax and Pacification in the Roman Rome*], pp. 303–317; D. Nelis, *Peace in the Latin Poetry of the Late Republic and Early Empire*, pp. 319–347; St. Faust, *Das Templum Pacis. Bedeutungsebenen des Friedens im kaiserzeitlichen Rom*, pp. 349–376.

<sup>6</sup> S. Rebenich, *Kriegsherr oder Friedensstifter? Der römische Kaiser in der Spätantike*, pp. 379–400; F. K. Maier, „Das Wort anstelle der Waffen“ – *Die Auseinandersetzung um den besten Kaiser in der Panegyrik des 4. Jahrhunderts n. Chr.*, pp. 401–424; F. L. Sanchez, *Heroische und goldenen Zeiten in der Münzprägung der Spätantike*, pp. 425–456; M. Meier, *Krieg und Frieden in der Repräsentation der oströmisch-byzantinischen Kaiser (6–7. Jahrhundert n. Chr.)*, pp. 457–487; W. Drews, *Krieg, Frieden und Sieg im mittelalterlichen Spanien*, pp. 489–510.