

CHAOS: PANHELLENISM

Panhellenism

- Panhellenism is the idea that what the Greeks have in common as Greeks, and what distinguishes them from barbarians, is more important than what divides them.
- It was originally advanced by the sophist Gorgias and its most important proponent in the classical period was Isokrates.
- The practical consequence of the ideal of Panhellenism was that the Greeks should unite against the barbarians, essentially the Persians.

Isokrates

- Isokrates was the most important rhetorical figure in Athens in the fourth century.
- He did not practice oratory as Demosthenes but rather was a teacher of rhetoric and a political philosopher.
- His main ideal was Panhellenism.

Sparta and the Greeks of Asia Minor

- At this time the kings of the Lacedaemonians were at variance with each other on matters of policy. Agesipolis, who was a peaceful and just man and, furthermore, excelled in wisdom, declared that they should abide by their oaths and not enslave the Greeks contrary to the common agreements. **He pointed out that Sparta was in ill repute for having surrendered the Greeks of Asia to the Persians** and for organizing the cities of Greece in her own interest, although she had sworn in the common agreement that she would preserve their autonomy. **But Agesilaus, who was by nature a man of action, was fond of war and yearned for dominance over the Greeks.**
Diodoros 15.19

A “cry”(?) for help

- Now when Tissaphernes, who was thought to have proved himself very valuable to the King in the war against his brother, was sent down as satrap both of the provinces which he himself had previously ruled and of those which Cyrus had ruled, he straightway demanded that all the Ionian cities should be subject to him. **But they, both because they wanted to be free and because they feared Tissaphernes**, inasmuch as they had chosen Cyrus, while he was living, instead of him, refused to admit him into their cities and sent **ambassadors to Lacedaemon asking that the Lacedaemonians, since they were the leaders of all Hellas, should undertake to protect them also, the Greeks in Asia, in order that their land might not be laid waste and that they themselves might be free.**
Xenophon Hellenika 3.1.3

The Rhetoric of Panhellenism

- But as to our public interests, the speakers who no sooner come before us than they inform us that we must compose our enmities against each other **and turn against the barbarian**, rehearsing the misfortunes which have come upon us from our **mutual warfare** and the advantages which will result from a campaign against our **natural enemy** —these men do speak the truth, but they do not start at the point from which they could best bring these things to pass. Isocrates 4.15

Athens and Panhellenism

- As I kept going over these questions in my own thoughts, I found that on no other condition could **Athens remain at peace**, unless the greatest states of Hellas should resolve to **put an end to their mutual quarrels** and carry the war beyond our borders into Asia, and should determine to **wrest from the barbarians the advantages** which they now think it proper to get for themselves at the expense of the Hellenes. This was, in fact, the course which I had already advocated in the Panegyric discourse. Isocrates 5.9