

POLYMNIA ATHANASSIADI-FOWDEN, Ἀθηναί

THE IDEA OF HELLENISM

«Hellenism is one of the forces which are continually being buried and refound, and which, like talismans, have a disturbing power when they fall afresh into human hands»¹.

This definition of Hellenism, as a cultural and spiritual rather than as a national and political force, is historically valid, as I hope to show in the following pages, only for that Hellenism which started to evolve from the moment when the Macedonian phalanx humbled Greece and conquered the East. Before that date, Hellenism was a primarily national phenomenon; after it, it became an exclusively cultural concept either with or without religious significance. To that Hellenism which flourished after Alexander and, ceasing to be the monopoly of those who were Greek by birth, became either a subject of study for the Hellenist or the conscious cultural and religious choice of the «Hellene», applies the definition quoted above.

It is significant that the very word «Ἑλληνισμός» first acquires currency in Hellenistic times; it denotes the imitation or study of things Greek. Its creation presupposed the existence of a fully articulate culture which was regarded as worthy of imitation and explanation. It also presupposed the awareness of alienation. People imitated something which was not theirs or, recognising that they were not capable of grasping effortlessly what was their birthright, started analysing it and commenting on it.

The second category of people is particularly interesting. These were the first Hellenists; their attitude towards Greek culture was largely that of modern scholars, except in one respect: they thought of themselves as members fully incorporated in that tradition on which they were commenting. In other words, Hellenic culture became in them a commentator on its own spirit. Historically speaking, this is the first definition that we can give to the word «Hellenism»: scholasticism². It would not, however, be wrong to identify it also with its object of research, that is with all that per-

1. R.W. Livingstone, *Literature*, in *The Legacy of Greece* (ed. R.W. Livingstone), Oxford 1921, p. 285.

2. See Seneca's complaint, *ep.* 103.23: «quae philosophia fuit facta philologia est». Cf. Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 14, where Plotinus is reported as saying: «φιλόλογος μὲν... ὁ Λογγῖνος, φιλόσοφος δὲ οὐδαμῶς».



tained to Greece and which, from the point of view of the Alexandrian and Pergamene doctors, was the cultural force that had grown within Greece to become, just as Alexander had dreamed, largely dissociated from her soil. Such was their «Hellenism», and it would be interesting to try and discover to what extent the Hellenistic view of pre-Hellenistic culture would have been recognised by those who created the latter. Albeit anachronistically, the word «Hellenism» will henceforth be used to refer to that set of distinctive values which flourished in Greece before the battle of Chaeronea. This will be called the First Hellenism. The aim of the first section of this paper will be to establish which are the main themes which endowed the First Hellenism with its unity, the time of their appearance, the manner in which they interrelated, and, finally, what happened to the Greek way of feeling and thinking once it was extensively transplanted outside Greece. The second section will be devoted to a description of the Second Hellenism (that is, Hellenism as it developed after the battle of Chaeronea) and the attitudes of the Christian Fathers to it.

It is a classical author, Thucydides, who provides the key to the question of the origins of Hellenism (I, 3) :

Πρὸ γὰρ τῶν Τρωϊκῶν οὐδὲν φαίνεται πρότερον κοινῇ ἐργασαμένη ἡ Ἑλλάς· δοκεῖ δέ μοι, οὐδὲ τοῦτομα τοῦτο ξύμπασά πω εἶχεν (. . .) Τεκμηριοῖ δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος. Πολλῶν γὰρ ὕστερον ἔτι καὶ τῶν Τρωϊκῶν γενόμενος οὐδαμοῦ τοὺς ξύμπαντας ὠνόμασεν οὐδ' ἄλλους ἢ τοὺς μετὰ Ἀχιλλέως ἐκ τῆς Φθιώτιδος, οἵπερ καὶ πρῶτοι Ἕλληνας ἦσαν, Δαναοὺς δὲ ἐν τοῖς ἔπεσι καὶ Ἀργεῖους καὶ Ἀχαιοὺς ἀνακαλεῖ. Οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ βαρβάρους εἶρηκε διὰ τὸ μηδὲ Ἑλληνάς πω, ὥς ἐμοὶ δοκεῖ, ἀντίπαλον ἐς ἐν ὄνομα ἀποκεκρίσθαι.

In fact in Homer we find the name Ἕλληνας applied to the followers of Achilles (B 687) and the toponym Ἑλλάς normally denoting part of the realm of Peleus, namely the valley of Spercheios³. There is also, however, the stereotyped hemistich:

(ἀν') Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἀργος
(καθ')

in which Ἑλλάς seems to stand for something more, for northern in contrast to southern Greece. Moreover, as Thucydides remarks, Homer uses the words Danaans, Argives, and Achaeans, all referring to the united forces which marched against Troy.

These people have one important common characteristic, which makes them think of themselves as participants in a distinct culture: in spite of differences of dialect, they all speak the same language, and this constitutes

3. B. 683, I 395, 447, 478, II 595; cf. λ 498.

the criterion on the basis of which all others are declared to be «barbarians»⁴. Yet, if the language can be considered as the very symbol of national identity, it is only because, even in Homer's day, it is the carrier of quite definite and unique religious, moral and cultural values, which sound meaningless outside the bounds of Hellenic civilisation. The notions of ὕβρις, ἄτη and νέμεσις, the crucial notion of θέμις-δίκη-μέτρον and the concept of φιλοξενία are the touchstones of Hellenism in this early stage of its existence⁵. Above all, it is the ideal of ἀρετή, one aspect of which is the common standard of honour which led all the chieftains of Greece to the walls of Troy (B 459-68):

Τῶν δ', ὥς τ' ὀρνίθων πετεηνῶν ἔθνεα πολλά,
Χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἢ κύκνων δουλιχοδείρων,
Ἀσίῳ ἐν λειμῶνι, Καῦστρίου ἀμφὶ ῥέεθρα,
Ἐνθα καὶ ἔνθα ποτῶνται ἀγαλλόμεναι πτερόγεσσιν,
Κλαγγηδὸν προκαθιζόντων, σμαραγεῖ δέ τε λειμῶν·
Ὡς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων
Ἐς πεδίον προχέοντο Σκαμάνδριον· αὐτὰρ ὑπὸ χθών
Σμερδαλέον κονάβιζε ποδῶν αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἵππων·
Ἔσταν δ' ἐν λειμῶνι Σκαμανδρίῳ ἀνθεμόεντι
Μυρτοί, ὅσσα τε φύλλα καὶ ἄνθεα γίγνεται ὄρη.

Here we are first presented with Hellenism as an historical reality; in this passage we have an extremely vivid image of an adolescent and self-conscious civilisation at the moment when it forces its way into history. In order to convey as direct as possible an image of a culture ὥρη ἐν εἰαρινῇ, the poet repeatedly draws a parallel between Spring and Hellenism (B 471).

Hellenism in its prime has strong roots in a particular soil — the land of Greece. So powerful are the links that unite these primitive men with their native land that no temptation or emotion can be strong enough to make

4. The Carians are 'βαρβαρόφωνοι', B 867; the Sinties of Lemnos 'ἀγριόφωνοι', θ 294; the Italians 'ἀλλόθροοι', α 183.

5. On ὕβρις, see λ 307-19, ψ 63-4, Α 203, 213-4, α 227, δ 321, γ 205-7, ο 328-9 etc. For ἄτη, see T 86-9, 136, Ω 480, Θ 236-7, B 111, 355-8, I 18, 115-6, and especially the descriptive passage T 125-31. On the sacred notion of φιλοξενία, see Books ρ and ζ *passim*. On Θέμις-Δίκη as bestower of order and harmony, see Y 4-12. ὕβρις, ἄτη and Νέμεσις were to be the notions on which the whole edifice of Attic tragedy rested. Without the concept of Δίκη, moreover, Greek philosophy would have been so different as to have been unrecognisable, just as Greek art would have been non-existent had it not chosen as its norm the principle of μέτρον. On τιμή, see P 91-2, E 550-3. For a good analysis of the Homeric notion of τιμή, see W. Jaeger, *Paideia: the Ideals of Greek Culture* (trans. G. Highet), I, Oxford 1947², pp. 3-34. For the importance of these notions in classical antiquity, see Plato, *Rep.* 606e; *Soph.* 216ab, who says that the Greeks of all periods turned to Homer in order to find the norms of Hellenism.

them forget it. Instead, it is the great theme of νόστος — longing for home — that will dominate one of the very first products of their awakening artistic consciousness. When the ὕβρις of which Odysseus's companions are found guilty has to be punished, it is to a terrible and inhuman chastisement that Apollo has recourse: he deprives them of νόστιμον ἡμᾶρ⁶. As for those who simply lose the desire to go back home, it is to a drug that the god turns; the exotic lotus-plant makes literal déracinés of those for whom love for their native soil is stronger than the fear of death (ι 94-95) Odysseus himself is obsessed by the desire to return and die in his homeland⁷.

This is a theme which runs right through the First Hellenism. Its extreme expression is found in the desire to return home even after death; νόστος persists even when life itself has ceased. It is possible, in this connection, to regard as trivial Theognis's unending complaints about the bitterness of exile, and to dismiss them as weak evidence for the theme of νόστος, on the ground that self-interest may have played a considerable part in his desire to return to Megara⁸. It is not possible, however, to ignore the official decision of the city of Athens to collect those of her citizens who fell abroad while defending her, to bring their remains home for burial at public expense in the cemetery of Kerameikos, and to elect a public orator to commemorate their merits and those of the city⁹. In this law, which probably dates from before the Persian Wars, we can trace the close interrelation of the themes of ἀρετή and νόστος: the posthumous satisfaction of their νόστος was the highest reward that the State could give to the patriots who had fought on its behalf. The condemnation of the eight Athenian generals, who won the naval battle of Arginusae at a very critical moment of Athenian history, is an extreme example of this attitude; a storm had prevented them from collecting the bodies of the fallen, and they paid for this negligence with their lives¹⁰. It is well known that this charge was a mere pretext¹¹,

6. μ 419: Θεὸς δ' ἀποαίνυτο νόστον.

7. Cf. the famous lines α 57-9 : αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεύς,
ἰέμενος καὶ καπνὸν ἀποθρώσκοντα νοῆσαι
ῆς γαίης, θανέειν ἱμείρεται.

8. On the evils of exile, see Theognis, 209-10, 1123 and the beautiful passage 1211-16 with the commentary of J. Carrière in *Theognis, Poèmes Élégiaques* (ed. transl. Carrière), Paris 1948, pp. 133-4. On Theognis's life, career and poetry, see the same author's, *Theognis de Mégare: Étude sur le recueil élégiaque attribué à ce poète*, Paris 1948.

9. Thuc. II.34. For the importance of burial in one's homeland cf. the official decision of the city of Athens, according to which traitors and those guilty of sacrilege were forbidden burial in Attica, Xen. *Hell.* I. 7.22.

10. Xen. *Hell.* I.6.35 - 7.34.

11. See the details of the trials and the motives of the persecutors as analysed by Xenophon, *op. cit.* I.7.

but what remains important for our purposes is the fact that the Athenian crowd felt that the dead men must under all circumstances return home.

In the cases mentioned so far attachment to the native soil is closely connected with ἀρετή: Odysseus, as well as the soldiers who fell for Athens and the legislator who passed the law on their behalf, were imbued, in addition to the ideal of patriotism, with an exceptional sense of honour, as both Homer and the surviving panegyrics testify¹². Was then νόστος felt only by good and law-abiding citizens? The *Anabasis* of Xenophon contradicts any such idea. Of the Ten Thousand, all but a handful had been born Greeks; some of them, like Xenophon himself, had been banished by their home-city¹³. They were mostly men of obscure origin, opportunists and mercenaries, who preferred a rough and adventurous existence, exposed to the dangers of continual battle, to the peaceful and uneventful life of their home town. The famous cry, θάλαττα θάλαττα, at the approach to Trebizond, (IV 7.24), when they beheld at last the sea they knew so well, was only a prelude to the adventures which still lay in wait for them as they sought to satisfy their νόστος. When after a long march along the coast, they arrived in Bithynian Thrace at the pleasant port of Calpe, which could easily contain ten thousand people (VI 4.1-6) Xenophon, whose ambitious character and hostility to Athens are sufficiently well attested, wanted to create a colony there and tried to infect his followers with enthusiasm for the idea, presenting his ambitious plan as the will of the gods (VI. 4.14-22). But the Greeks, who felt themselves at last to be near home, did not want to hear anything of such a project, and preferred to continue on their way, though it was not without obstacles.

Throughout classical antiquity, the city state inspired in its citizens a deep sense of attachment to its soil¹⁴. Even those who reacted against patriotism and came to loathe the sheltered atmosphere of their home town did not succeed in utterly sundering their heart from it. Men like Alcibiades felt at times a deep hatred for their country, but this was still the product of

12. A relatively large number of funeral orations survives from classical antiquity: that of Pericles (431/0), which Thucydides renders with much liberty (II.35-46); the one pronounced by Gorgias (c. 421); the *Epitaphios* of Lysias (c. 392); the Platonic *Menexenos* (c. 386); Demosthenes's oration on those who fell at Chaeronea (338/7) and, finally, that pronounced by Hyperides in 323, the only one whose authenticity has not been questioned. On the genre of the funeral oration and the theme of a *re te* in it, see G. Colin, *L'oraison funèbre d'Hypéride: ses rapports avec les autres oraisons funèbres athéniennes*, REG 51 (1938), esp. pp. 211-45.

13. *Anabasis* VII.7.57; V. 3.7.

14. See Plutarch, *Alcibiades* 31.6; cf. V. Ehrenberg, *The Greek State*, Oxford 1960, pp. 91 ff.

passion easily reversed¹⁵. For those who lived before the battle of Chaeronea the city state was the only real world and it could not easily be ignored. Xenophon alone in this period displays an attitude of utter indifference towards the notion of home-land: he was, as we shall see, a precocious specimen of the Greek *déraciné* who flourished in Hellenistic and Roman times, and for whom Hellenism effortlessly became a wholly cultural concept, irrelevant to patriotism and detached from the land of Greece. For him, friendship and personal ambition always came before his sense of national ties. So long as Hellenism lived, however, the great themes of patriotism and *νόστος* did not become utterly dissociated from it; they were simply transferred from the physical to the intellectual or even spiritual level: at a later date a Hellene continued to feel at home wherever the atmosphere of his culture was present. Thus in the sixth century A.D., the seven professors who left Athens after the closing of its Neoplatonic Academy and were kindly received in Persia, soon found the cultural atmosphere there so uncongenial that they returned home; it was not in Athens, however, but in Alexandria and Constantinople that they felt that they could best continue their work¹⁶.

In the First Hellenism patriotism and *νόστος*, more often fused than not, derived their force from the factor of blood; in the Second Hellenism they were felt as the product of an intellectual choice.

It is to this circumstance that should be ascribed the reason for the neglect in classical antiquity of such masterpieces as the lyrical products of Ionian and Aeolian poetry, from whose stock of themes the ideal of concern for the state is scornfully banished. The *ρίψασπις* Archilochus was not a laudable example to set before the eyes of Greek youth, and the deed about which he boasted so much¹⁷, was severely criticised by posterity¹⁸. Indeed in Athens the *ρίψασπις* was punished by law and lost his civil rights¹⁹. It was not until Horace's day that the deed became a literary fashion, but in the fifth century Hellenism was not yet so developed and refined a culture as to be in a position to afford the subtlety of opting for literary posing instead of actual life, and for undisciplined individualism instead of the state cult.

This blooming of individualism, which had its roots in the islands of the Aegean in the seventh and sixth centuries, and which was sanctioned in the eyes of posterity by great art in the realm of literature, was not recog-

15. See Thuc. VI.89-92; Xen. *Hell.* 1.4.15; Plutarch, *op. cit.* 24.2 - 25.2, 32.1.

16. Agathias, *History* II.30 ff. cf. Philostratus, *Tà εἰς τὸν Τυανέα Ἀπολλώνιον* III. 44.

17. Fr. 13 (Lasserre).

18. See the judgement of Critias, fr. 44 in VS II.1; cf. Aristophanes's sarcastic remarks on Archilochus, fr. 13, in *Peace* 1298 ff.

19. W. Jaeger, *Paideia* I, p. 445, n. 11.

nised as an expression of Greekness until the Alexandrian era. Archilochus was violently criticised by Pindar (*Pyth.* II. 55), and the hedonism of Mimnermus and Simonides of Amorgos, as well as the tender lyricism of Sappho and Alcaeus remained unappreciated until the time of the Alexandrians and the Romans who imitated them²⁰.

So far we have seen that the distinguishing features of Hellenism in Homer's day were the community of language, religion, blood and custom, and that culture, in the sense of intellectual and aesthetic refinement was far from forming a criterion of participation in the community of the Hellenes. This situation did not change significantly until the rise of Athens to power, and this is well illustrated by the fact that until the fifth century, the most backward states culturally were the most powerful ones in the Amphictionic Council, which was a league of Greek states whose character was predominantly religious, and for whose verdicts all Greeks professed an unquestioning respect²¹.

It is through the Olympic Idea that new standards were introduced into the Greek world. Its spokesman, Pindar, insists on three elements which harmoniously combine with the racial, religious and linguistic essence of Hellenism²². His lofty hymns have deep roots in the past. Despite all appearances, however, this is not «traditional poetry», since for Pindar, tradition is but a base on which one may build a greater edifice. In fact his poetry looks wholly ahead, thus inaugurating a new era in the history of Hellenism during which the twofold theme of culture and might will increasingly dominate the civilisation of the Greeks²³. A special tribute of honour is paid

20. See the literary tradition of each of these poets in K. Βουρβέρης, *Εἰσαγωγή εἰς τὴν ἀρχαιογνωσίαν καὶ τὴν κλασσικὴν φιλολογίαν*, Athens 1967, pp. 158 ff., 338 ff.

21. See Cauer, *Amphiktionia*, RE 1.2, 1904-35. As a measure of the power of the Amphictionic Council cf. the circumstances which led to the First Sacred War (c. 590).

22. If we recall that in Pindar's day the Olympic festival lasted seven days, the first and last being entirely devoted to sacrifices and ritual ceremonies, it becomes clear that its religious character still predominated, and why Pindar, in tune with the spirit of the age, devotes so much attention to it. Moreover, the common origin of the Greeks who take part in the games constitutes one of the poet's favourite themes; he often has recourse to the most obscure, and otherwise unattested legends, in order to prove how old are the ties that link Greeks together, and he frequently alludes to the triumphant wars against the barbarians, which preserved the integrity of Greek territory. He even allows himself the exaggeration of saying that a local Syracusan war

Ἑλλάδ' ἐξέλκυσε βαρείας δουλείας (*Pyth.* I.75).

23. On Pindar, see C. M. Bowra, *Pindar*, Oxford 1964.

to Athene, Apollo and Prometheus as patrons of the arts²⁴, and Hiero of Syracuse is praised as (*Olymp.* I. 103 ff.):

καλῶν τε / ἰδρὺς ἅμᾃ καὶ δύναμιν / κυριώτερος.

In Ionian and Aeolian poetry, culture and the aesthetic and hedonistic approach to life are treated as ideals to be cultivated for their own sake, whereas in Pindar, culture is at the service of religion and of patriotism. In this, as in other respects, the Theban poet is a counterpart of Aeschylus, who wished to be remembered simply as an Athenian who fought bravely at Marathon²⁵.

It is power in all its manifestations —political, physical, intellectual—that now fascinates Hellenism just as much as excellence. From the fusion of these two somewhat contradictory ideals there will, in the mid-fifth century, spring the extremely complicated *typos* of the καλὸς κἀγαθός, whose perfect representative is to be found in Sophocles, the man in whom ideal perfection reaches the dimensions of boredom.

In Pindar's day, though, these two new ideals still conserve all their distinctive sharpness, and as such are embodied by Prometheus, the intellectual and spiritual hero of Hellenism. In his Promethean symbolism, Pindar appears once again as the counterpart of Aeschylus. Indeed it is not a matter of sheer coincidence if both poets raise the rebellious demi-god to the level of the *typos* of Hellenism²⁶. The bringer of light (a crucial notion, which should be regarded as a criterion of Greekness from Homer down to Plotinus and Julian) stands also for Hellenism, conscious of its power even to the extent of challenging the gods. Prometheus does not stand for an expansion of the ideal of individualism, as has often been suggested²⁷. On the contrary, in him we have an eternal symbol of sacrifice for humankind, but of sacrifice in a Hellenic and not a Christian spirit. Prometheus accepts martyrdom so that Man may attain full consciousness of his intellectual and spirit-

24. *Olymp.* VII. 36 ff.; *Pyth.* I. 1 ff.; *Pyth.* X where there is to be found a definition of «the delightful things of Greece»; *Paeon* V. 43 ff. In Pindar's contemporary, Xenophanes, we find a very similar conception of culture à propos of the Olympic Idea:

Ρώμης γὰρ ἀμείνων
ἀνδρῶν ἢ δ' ἱππῶν ἡμετέρα σοφίη.
... οὐ [δὲ] δίκαιον
προκρίνειν ρώμην τῆς ἀγαθῆς σοφίης (Diels, fr. 2).

This fragment marks a turning point in Greek history, which coincides with the common acceptance of a new ideal, the ideal of ἀγαθὴ σοφίη.

25. Cf. the epitaph attributed to Aeschylus himself, Diehl, *Anthologia Lyrica Graeca*, Leipzig 1954³, I, p. 78 (Aeschylus, fr. 3).

26. Cf. Pindar, *Olymp.* VII. 43 ff., with the famous monologue of Prometheus in Aeschylus's *Prometheus*, 88-127.

27. See the discussion of this point in W. Jaeger, *op. cit.* I, pp. 262 ff. and notes.

ual potentialities and of all his inherent dignity, and derive pride rather than humility from his awareness of the talents with which he is endowed.

As suggested, culture and might are the new ideals symbolised by the figure of Prometheus. Pindar, however, is careful to link them with the state as a religious and national entity. The panegyrist of the Olympic Idea was always careful to praise local patriotism²⁸, but this, together with his cult of aristocracy, was nothing new. The hymns that he dedicated to the rising star of Athens, on the other hand, should retain our attention as something innovatory²⁹.

Our evidence suggests that soon after the Persian Wars, Athens moved steadily towards becoming the unchallenged symbol of all that Hellenism stood for. To understand the way in which this came about we should turn to another «foreigner», Herodotus (VIII. 144), Pindar's younger contemporary:

Πολλά τε γὰρ καὶ μεγάλα ἐστὶ τὰ διακωλύοντα ταῦτα μὴ ποιεῖν (i.e. μηδίσαντας καταδουλώσαι τὴν Ἑλλάδα) μὴδ' ἦν ἐθέλωμεν· πρῶτα μὲν καὶ μέγιστα τῶν θεῶν τὰ ἀγάλματα καὶ τὰ οἰκήματα ἐμπεπρησμένα τε καὶ συγκεχωσμένα, τοῖσι ἡμέας ἀναγκαίως ἔχει τιμωρῆσαι ἐς τὰ μέγιστα μᾶλλον ἢ περ ὁμολογέειν τῷ ταῦτα ἐργασαμένῳ· αὐτὶς δὲ τὸ Ἑλληνικόν, ἐὼν ὁμαίμον τε καὶ ὁμόγλωσσον, καὶ θεῶν ἰδρύματα τε κοινὰ καὶ θυσίαι ἢ θεὰ τε ὁμότροπα, τῶν προδότας γενέσθαι Ἀθηναίους οὐκ ἂν εὖ ἔχοι.

Such was the answer of the Athenians to the Lacedaemonian embassy which came to ask them for their support against the Persians.

Τὸ ὁμαίμον, τὸ ὁμόγλωσσον and the community of religion, custom and history still form the main criteria by which Hellenism distinguishes itself from barbarism, a fact of which the Athenians of Aeschylus's generation were acutely conscious³⁰. Yet now, at the dawn of the fifth century, a further notion, presupposing all these others, and springing out of a struggle not for life—not for τὸ ἀναγκαῖον, but for τὸ καλόν—becomes predominant in the Greek consciousness. This new force, a blend of culture and education, is the ideal of καλοκαγαθία.

28. E.g. *Paeon* IV. 15-6.

29. Cf. the famous lines: ὦ ται λιπαραὶ καὶ ἰοστέφανοι καὶ ἀοίδιμοι,
Ἑλλάδος ἔρεισμα, κλειναὶ Ἀθῆναι,
δαιμόνιον πτολίεθρον (*Dithyr.* fr. 64 [Oxford]).

See also *Pyth.* VII. 1-6.

30. This attitude is well represented in Aeschylus's *Persians*, and summed up in the famous passage:

ὦ παῖδες Ἑλλήνων, ἴτε,
ἐλευθεροῦτε πατρίδα, ἐλευθεροῦτε δὲ
παῖδας, γυναῖκας, θεῶν τε πατρώων ἔδη,
θήκας τε προγόνων· νῦν ὑπὲρ πάντων ἀγῶν (402-5),

which soon came to be regarded by the Greeks as a sort of national anthem.

To explain how Athens in the course of the fifth century became the champion of Greek *paideia*³¹ (a fact of prime importance, without an understanding of which we can never claim to grasp the essence of fifth and fourth century Hellenism) it is not enough merely to talk of the rôle that she played in the Persian Wars, or to relate how natural it was that the only great economic and commercial centre of the Delian Confederation—the Greek city par excellence—should attract within its walls the greatest thinkers and artists from all over the Greek world. Far more important in this connection, were the «liberal arts», that is the intellectual and artistic currents which came to full flood in fifth century Athens, benefiting from the spirit of *παρρησία* that she championed. It is true that this atmosphere of liberty and tolerance was a privilege reserved for gifted men only, yet Periclean and post-Periclean Athens succeeded in associating herself to so exclusive a degree with this democratic ideal as to occlude many other important aspects of her character at that time from the view of posterity³².

Of Athens as a civilising power Thucydides has left an admirable picture in Pericles's funeral oration, which might also be described as the first full manifesto of Hellenism: its ethics and principles, its methods and goals, its norms of behaviour are formulated there with the greatest possible accuracy; but at the same time there is to be found in this masterly piece of propaganda³³ the proclamation of an exclusively Athenian cultural and political credo. There we find the Athens that the Alexandrians and Romans adored, the very symbol of a Hellenism which, for all its refinement, was still too conscious of its roots.

If, however, we are equally interested in the real and tangible Athens of the Periclean era, in how an individual city in a community of πόλεις acquired political and spiritual leadership over the rest of them. and in how it managed for two whole centuries to be in a very real sense Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλάς³⁴, and to preserve the title thereafter as a living symbol to posterity, we should turn to another crucial passage in Thucydides, the dialogue of the Athenians and the Melians. Next to the Athens of right of Pericles's oration, we find there the Athens of might, the power which knows in what politics consists (in the literal sense of the word, that is whatever concerns the strict interest

31. Thuc. II.41.: Ἑλλάδος παιδευσίς.

32. See Thuc. II.37. On the awareness of the Athenians that *παρρησία* was what had enabled them to create their culture, see Demosthenes, *Epitaphios* 26: αἱ δὲ δημοκρατίαι πολλὰ τ' ἄλλα καὶ καλὰ καὶ δίκαι' ἔχουσιν ὧν τὸν εὖ φρονοῦντα ἀντέχεσθαι δεῖ, καὶ τὴν παρρησίαν τὴν ἐκ τῆς ἀληθείας ἡρτημένην οὐκ ἔστι τάληθές δηλοῦν ἀποτρέψαι.

33. Thucydides was aware of the fact that he was writing a manifesto, cf. II.41.4.

34. *Anth. Gr.* VII. 45.

of the polis). In this cruel dialogue, in which τὸ ἀπειρόκακον of the Melians is only met by sarcasm, and cynicism, we have the only direct piece of evidence about the Athens of speculation and of brutal force —another aspect of Hellenism that anyone who ventures to approach either Thucydides or Plato should constantly bear in mind³⁵.

Through his picture of Athens, Thucydides conveyed in a masterly fashion this twofold character of Hellenism; he depicted a civilisation that was truly subtle, both in its humanism and in its inhumanity; a way of living and a way of surviving, partly through art, religion and philosophy, and partly through politics. What Pindar and Aeschylus had anticipated and Pericles realised forms the great underlying theme of Thucydides's *Histories* and of Plato's *Dialogues*.

Neither of these thinkers would have been Greek through and through, had he not been an Athenian, first actively engaged in polis politics, then sharply frustrated by them, and finally led to the sphere of free speculation through an experience which was rendered only the more bitter by an undiminished love for the city whose symbolic aura could still exert a strange fascination even on those whom it had badly wronged³⁶. Both Thucydides and Plato have in common three important attitudes which illustrate their fundamental Hellenism. The first consists in their constantly recurrent complaint about the deplorable state of Greek affairs, both writers explaining this phenomenon by having recourse to causes of a moral order. On the basis of such evidence, one would be entitled to perceive a first stage of

35. In his book *The Athenian Empire*, Oxford 1972, Russell Meiggs deals with this aspect of Hellenism and draws the conclusion, firstly that «the surviving literature of the fifth century provides no clear corrective to Thucydides's powerful picture of the Athenian empire as an unpopular tyranny» (p. 404); and secondly, that «the conviction that Athens thought almost exclusively in terms of her own interest does not necessarily imply the belief that her rule was universally unpopular» (p. 406). On the dialogue of the Athenians and the Melians, see J. de Romilly, *Thucydide et l'impérialisme athénien*, Paris 1947, pp. 230-59.

36. See Plato's confession in *ep. VII*, 324d-325e. From the combined evidence of the *Vitae* of Thucydides and of his *Histories*, there emerges the clear impression that the historian was very happy to devote his services to his native city and to be distinguished as a public man (*Vita Anonymi* 6-7, Oxford 1963). His frustration at the unjust decision of the Athenian people by which he was exiled (*Vita Marcellini* 23) is conveyed in IV. 106.3-4, the only Thucydidean passage in which personal emotion can be detected. The tradition according to which Thucydides returned to Athens in order to die (*Vita Anon.* 9), or that his bones at least were translated by his kinsmen to Attica (*op. cit.* 10) bears witness of his attachment to his homeland. Undoubtedly, the greatest proof of the fascination that Athens exercised over his spirit is the Funeral Oration, which he wrote in exile.

decadence in Greek civilisation, but on reflection one is reminded that the Greek spirit was obsessed by the notion of *φθορά* as early as Hesiod's time³⁷, that the essential pessimism of the Greek, his strong feeling of tragedy and his pronounced otherworldliness would never allow him to be content with relative perfection³⁸. And although one has to admit that after 404 «something was extinguished for ever»³⁹, one can yet by no means speak of an evaporation or even of a diminishing of the Greek spirit, which in the fourth century only deepened and became more tragic outside tragedy, that is, more like itself. It is true that poetry sank—and sank for ever; never again would the Greeks create great poetry—but philosophy and rhetoric took its place. It would not be a bad point to see in Plato burning the poems of his youth in order to dedicate himself to philosophy, the symbol of Hellenism at the moment it reaches full maturity⁴⁰. In these two new achievements the Greek spirit degree of consciousness attains a supreme which is reflected both in its mode of expression and in the full awareness of how perfect is the linguistic tool it possesses.

Language reappears in fourth century Greece as the most vital criterion of Hellenism⁴¹. It is language, and not culture, that becomes once again the Lydian stone on which Greekness is tested or, rather, it is language that converts culture into the Greek ideal *par excellence*, and this is even truer of Thucydides and Plato, whose personal and fluid Greek seems to despise rules, than of the Ten Attic orators, who are so obsessed and so consciously proud of all the subtleties of their linguistic instrument, that they end up, fatally, by deifying it. The difference between them on the one hand and Plato and Thucydides on the other is that between the artisan and the artist. In fact, linguistic Alexandrianism begins in fourth century Athens when the Attic dialect, reaching a high degree of fragility and perfection, is classified by its very creators as *une valeur rangée*, or a precious a museum piece⁴².

37. See the myth of the five ages in Hesiod's *Works and Days*, 109-201.

38. For a characteristic example of this attitude, see *Antigone* 332-72. It is significant that L. Edelstein has found very little evidence, and that ambiguous, to support the thesis that the idea of progress was of importance in classical antiquity; see *The Idea of Progress in Classical Antiquity*, Baltimore, Maryland 1967. Cf. E. R. Dodds' balanced interpretation of his evidence in *The ancient concept of progress and other essays on Greek literature and belief*, Oxford 1973, pp. 1-15.

39. C. M. Bowra, *The Greek Experience*, London 1957, p. 18.

40. Diogenes Laertius III.5; cf. Homer Σ 392.

41. The Greek always owed much of his self-confidence and national pride to his language; cf. Aeschylus, *Agam.* 1050-2; Herod. II.57. It was only in the fourth century, however, that language became an object of cult.

42. It is characteristic of this way of thinking that the word *Ἑλληνισμός* now ap-

In a world where too much of what had been previously taken for granted begins to be questioned, where both political and religious principles undergo considerable changes, language is unconsciously converted into a national ideal while raised at the same time to the level of a sacred object.

This, then, is the second respect in which Thucydides and Plato share common ground, and it is not irrelevant to their obsession with φθορά: they seem fully aware of this new attitude to language, which, moreover, appears as the thread that links together the other two essential points of their political thinking as Greeks. It is obvious that neither can conceive the notion of a political unit otherwise than in the form of the polis⁴³, and both insist on the principle of the αὐτονομία of the polis; yet they seem obsessed to an equal degree by the idea of the essential kinship that links all Greeks together, and they both seem anxious to draw the distinction between πόλεμος and στάσις—their third significant point in common. It is true that Thucydides calls the Pelopponesian War πόλεμος, reserving the word στάσις for the discord that arises within one and the same city between different factions (e.g. the στάσις at Corcyra), but he is always very careful to distinguish between πόλεμος among Greeks and πόλεμος against the barbarians⁴⁴. As for Plato, he makes a sharp distinction between πόλεμος and στάσις when stating that Greeks and barbarians are φύσει πολέμιοι, though Greeks are φύσει φίλοι with each other, and therefore any enmity between them should be regarded as a malady of Greece and called στάσις⁴⁵.

One is astonished to trace the obsessive dimensions assumed by the theme of the barbarian in the mind of fourth century Greece. In that century the term acquires for the first time the negative meaning in which it was transmitted to other languages⁴⁶. Behind this fact one cannot help detecting a form of self-defence in a people whose self-confidence is strangely uneven; for in the fourth century the Greeks have a Promethean confidence in their genius as a race and at the same time they are haunted by the constant fear that politically they are threatened with extinction. This feeling is not so much the natural outcome of the Pelopponesian War; rather it is fed by everyday experience, since never again after the end of this inter-state

pears for the first time (cf. J. Stroux, *De Theophrasti virtutibus dicendi*, Pars I, Leipzig 1912, p. 13), and means a Greek free of barbarisms and solecisms.

43. Plato's ideal state is a polis, and it is quite amusing to recall in this context that his favourite pupil, who was also Alexander's teacher, Aristotle, never ceased to think of politics in terms of the polis, cf. *Nic. Eth.* IX. 10. 3.

44. One of the most characteristic passages in this respect is I. 23.

45. *Rep.* V. 470a-471c; cf. *Menex.* 243e-244a.

46. See *Menex.* 245c: the Athenians are praised as φύσει μισοβάρβαροι.



war did the Greek cities cease to be subject to internal factional conflicts in the Thucydidean sense of *στάσις*⁴⁷. Indeed for the first time in Greek history we can perceive very clearly that links between individuals belonging to the same political party may be stronger than their sense of loyalty to their city.

This attitude, at its most extreme, is summed up in the personality of an Athenian like Xenophon, the type of the absolute *déraciné*, who can not only feel perfectly at home at the court of a barbarian king, but can also, on his return to Greece, fight against his native city for the sake of friendship, and even despise and ignore her when she forgives him. In spite of the references in his *Hellenica* to barbarians, (I. 6. 7; 14) and his belief that Greeks, in contrast to other races, are naturally free, one can easily trace in Xenophon the marks of a cosmopolitanism not only incompatible with the city-state reality, but also contradictory of the idea of the nation. His is the cosmopolitanism of a man brought up in the peculiar climate of a world-state; he is the fore-runner of Aelius Aristides and not the contemporary of Isocrates, despite all the illusory similarities which are to be found in the principles these two men preach. Xenophon is a quite isolated figure in the fourth century, while Isocrates is only the expected product of his age.

In Isocrates even those ideals which we would classify as being of a cultural order are judged by national criteria, and it would be a great mistake to assume that to Isocrates Hellenism was a cultural notion detached from the particular soil of Greece. Even when he says that «Greeks are those who participate in our culture rather than those who share our origin», (*Paneg.* 50), he still, and perhaps then more than ever, thinks in terms of the traditional dichotomy between Greek and barbarian. He was so obsessed by this distinction—which appears as a category of the Greek mind down to the time of Alexander—that he went to considerable ends to oppose the common belief that the Macedonians were not Greeks. Aware of what Herodotus, and especially Thucydides, had said on this subject, he has recourse to an innocent distortion of facts in order to reassure those of his compatriots who were excessively conscious and proud of being Greeks.

Herodotus had held the view that the Macedonians were barbarians, but that the dynasty reigning over them was of Greek blood. Alexander I of Macedonia—who acted as a link between the Persians and the Greeks—was, according to Herodotus, the seventh Greek king in direct line of descent

47. Already Aeschylus had been concerned with this kind of *στάσις*, and, in an attempt to exorcise this demon of Greek public life, had depicted it in the darkest possible colours, *Eum.* 976-87.

from Perdiccas, who emigrated to Macedonia from Argos⁴⁸. This version is faithfully reproduced by Thucydides, yet in the very way the story is told there is something that prevents us from considering it as an argument in favour of the essential Greekness of the Macedonian kings. The phrase «τὸ ἀρχαῖον ὄντες ἐξ Ἀργεῶν»⁴⁹ helps to convey Thucydides's feeling that after such a long time in Macedonia they must have been sufficiently barbarised, a point which is driven home by the constant references to the Macedonians as barbarians throughout his history⁵⁰.

The fact that all Greeks (whose thought by the mid-fourth century was more or less reconciled with the daring idea of Panhellenism)⁵¹ envisaged the Macedonians somehow in Thucydides's manner obliged Isocrates to tell Herodotus's story once more, stressing the fact that Philip should turn to his father and to the founder of the dynasty in order to find the norms of true Hellenism (*Philip* 105). There was still, however, one problem: why should a Greek assume the kingship of a foreign race? (107-8). Isocrates is Greek enough and astute enough to provide a very plausible explanation for this fact: no Greeks would ever accept a monarch! Demosthenes found a way of turning this ingenious argument of Isocrates against both the spokesman of the Macedonian cause and Philip himself: at the root of the king's love for δεσποτεία he detected the greatest sin a Greek could conceive of, ὕβρις. To Demosthenes the really shocking thing about this «second-rate barbarian» (*Philippic* III-2), as he calls Philip, is his being an ἀνὴρ ὕβριστης.

It is very important that Demosthenes (the last Greek in whose personality the idea of classical Hellenism is reflected in all its wholeness and complexity)⁵² should denounce in Philip such a characteristic. Demosthenes was quite capable of seeing behind variegated phenomena the pattern of things, and had an unmistakably Greek criterion for judging situations. In this rising flood of imperialism which was carrying away the Greek spirit, he discerned increasing ὕβρις which would inevitably end up in doom. It is curious to

48. Herod. IX.45

49. Thuc. II.99.3.

50. *Ibid.* 80.5-7; IV.124.1. 126.3 etc.

51. Gorgias had pronounced a panegyric oration in Olympia (Diels II, B, p. 287, fr. *Olymp.* 8a). Lysias had also done the same (Dionysius of Halycarnasus, *Περὶ τῶν ἀρχαίων ρητόρων*: *Λυσίας* 29: «ἔστι δὴ τις αὐτῷ πανηγυρικός λόγος, ἐν ᾧ πείθει τοὺς Ἕλληνας ἀγομένης Ὀλυμπιάδι τῆς πανηγύρεως ἐκβάλλειν Διονύσιον τὸν τύραννον ἐκ τῆς ἀρχῆς καὶ Σικελίαν ἐλευθερῶσαι.»).

52. On Demosthenes as the last classical Greek, see W. Jaeger's classic study, *Demosthenes: The origin and growth of his policy*, California 1938.



notice that so far his way of thinking is analogous with that of his opponent: since imperialism seems inevitable, Isocrates was thinking, then let it be turned against the barbarian and let culture be used as a pretext to cover political ambitions. Once the Macedonians, a vigorous new race, were recognised as members of the Greek family, the moment seemed ripe for the realisation of the Panhellenic vision which, for over four centuries, had been the great latent force that kept Hellenism going. The establishment of a nation in the modern sense of the word was the only way in which this vision could be realised. For it was only in the concrete form of a nation that the fourth century tendency towards imperialism could find its justification and right historical expression. To Gorgias, Lysias, Isocrates and Aeschines this seemed the only choice, if Hellenism was to survive at all. And although things developed in a manner which they could never have foreseen and, in many respects, would have regretted, still the way they pointed out was the only one which might have afforded Hellenism the means of survival, in however fragmented a form.

What escaped them all (and did not escape Demosthenes) is the fact that Hellenism, right from its beginning, was incompatible with the reality of a nation. The idea of a nation was present in the Greek mind as early as Homer's day, but, like any other essentially Greek *Erlebnis*, it owed its overwhelming reality and strong hold over the Greek spirit to its being an intangible, abstract notion destined to dissolve as soon as the attempt was made to bind it down and give it concrete expression. Here we find the explanation for the great paradox of the historical development of Hellenism, which, unlike Romanitas, passed from the *polis* directly into the *oikoumene* without ever going through the transitional phase of nationhood, which forms the natural link between the city state and the universal state. But the Greek nation, already present in the second Book of the Iliad, is not different from the one which faces the Macedonian phalanx at Chaeronea.

What happened at Chaeronea is the exact opposite of what history textbooks record. Greece was extinguished as a nation and Hellenism, uprooted from her soil, retaining its cultural essence only, became «civilised» at last and for ever⁵³. It was turned into a concept in whose defence people were never to stop shedding ink, but no longer their blood; similarly, the idea of freedom ceased to be conceived of in political terms and was transposed onto

53. Cf. Demosthenes's funeral speech on the Athenians who fell at Chaeronea: «Ἡ πάσης Ἑλλάδος ἐλευθερία ἐν ταῖς τῶνδε τῶν ἀνδρῶν ψυχαῖς διεσφάζετο (23). Ἡ τῶνδε τῶν ἀνδρῶν ἀρετὴ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἦν ψυχὴ... ἅμα γὰρ τὰ τε τούτων πνεύματ' ἀπηλλάγη τῶν οἰκείων σωμάτων, καὶ τὸ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀξίωμα ἀνήρηται (24).

a more abstract, and perhaps more real, level. This development is most faithfully reflected in the fate of Athens; vanquished at Chaeronea, yet up to that moment, through her real though often brutal power, the very soul of Hellenism, she continued, now that she was deprived of her might and even liberty, to be regarded as its symbol⁵⁴.

Here we should distinguish between two major currents which after 338 B.C. developed in parallel and up to the fifth century A.D. never ceased to interact intimately: firstly, Alexandrianism, and secondly, Hellenism as both culture and religion.

The First Hellenism became the totally cultural concept with which we are familiar, detached from the soil of Greece and never to be associated again with any other land; towards its own spirit it became either the over-awed admirer or the dry commentator. By a cunning subtlety of history, this erudite culture was linked from the very beginning with the city which bears the name of the demolisher of Greek liberty. Nothing symbolises more vividly and more significantly the fate of the scholarly Hellenism, estranged from life, that flourished in Alexandria, than the curious and abrupt semantic change that the word «Museum» underwent. The temple of the Muses, the shrine of poetic inspiration, became, shortly after its foundation, the morgue where unrespectful doctors were busy anatomising the corpse of Hellenism. Then, at a final stage, when the fashion for «criticism» passed away, the «Museum» was converted into the funeral monument where the legacy of Hellas, wrapped in the awesome admiration of scholars, reposes for all eternity. From our point of view the real history of Hellenism begins only with Alexander and, though we would not admit it readily, this is the only Hellenism accessible to us. Between Homer and ourselves there will always stand Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus of Samos, and our best possible approach to classical texts will never be able to do more than aim at being nearly as good as theirs. There will be something which will be for ever escaping us in Aeschylus's tragedies and Demosthenes's public speeches—their very *raison d'être*—that any Greek of their times would immediately and effortlessly grasp.

If Aristotle's pupils, who have rightly been described as the first systematic scholars and scientists, together with the erudite poets of their time,

54. See Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic* 228; cf. J. H. Oliver, *The civilizing power. A study of the Panathenaic discourse of Aelius Aristides*, Philadelphia 1968, pp. 17-8; C. P. Jones, *Plutarch and Rome*, Oxford 1971, p. 109, and E. L. Bowie, *Greeks and their past in the Second Sophistic*, «Past and Present» 46 (1970) p.p. 4-7. Moreover, the popularity that Demosthenes enjoyed in the Second Sophistic is not unconnected with this attitude towards Athens as the holy place of Hellenism, cf. E. L. Bowie, *art. cit.*, p. 28.

such as Callimachus, Apollonius of Rhodes, and Theocritus, had been the last representatives of Hellenism, one would have been entitled to locate the extinction of Hellenism as a vital historical force in the last years of the pagan era. But Hellenism had not yet exhausted its creative resources. When the polis, with its politics, ethics and metaphysics, passed into a suprahistorical mode of existence through the medium of Plato's *Republic*, and all that pertained to the polis, its cosy Olympians and its sense of patriotism, became but culture and history, a new Hellenism, in the form of an uprooted but still vital culture, sought a reality to express.

This new Hellenism, whose spirit was largely, if not utterly, lost to posterity, and whose puzzling achievements were first disdainfully rejected and then, through a scholarly compromise, attached as a sort of appendix to the body of classical Hellenism, formed the culture, religion and politics of the world-state founded by Alexander. Its links and affinities with the classical civilisation of Greece are incontestable, and again, as in Homer's day, what is at the same time its chief characteristic and its greatest asset is the language in which it is expressed. While the Alexandrian doctors were busy turning Attic Greek into a dead language through the compilation of grammars and the formulation of rules concerning τὸ ἀττικίζειν, this same language (which, nonetheless, was to have quite a few millennia of life before it) was adapting itself to new conditions despite their efforts. It was gradually converted into a *lingua franca*, a κοινή, and became the only instrument which gave full expression to the new world, though to what extent Hellenistic and Roman society was actually moulded by the language it spoke, or *vice versa*, is another problem⁵⁵.

When the walls of the polis collapsed, and the traditional gods lost their absolute command over the human imagination, the individual suddenly found himself dangerously exposed, faced on the one hand with all the strange wonders of the *oikoumene*, and on the other with the vast world which, when the human spirit attempted to grasp it in its entirety, could only fill it with awe and fear. The ambivalent power of *Tyche* (illustrated in so masterly a fashion both through the New Comedy and through the plays of Terence and Plautus) appeared as the new ruling principle of the universe⁵⁶.

55. On Koine, see A. Meillet, *Aperçu d'une histoire de la langue grecque*, Paris 1930³, pp. 241 - 306. It is well-known that the koine was a development of the Attic dialect. For this and for its universality, see Aelius Aristides, *Panathenaic* 226-7: «δι' ὑμῶν (sc. Ἀθηναίων) ὁμόφωνος μὲν πᾶσα γέγονεν ἡ οἰκουμένη, πάντες δὲ ἐπὶ τήνδε ἐληλύθασιν (sc. ἀττικὴν διάλεκτον) ὥσπερ ὅρον τινὰ παιδείας νομίζοντες. Ταύτην ἐγὼ τὴν μεγάλην καλῶ ἀρχὴν τῶν Ἀθηναίων.

56. The patron goddess of as important an Hellenistic city as Antioch was Tyche

The concern of the Second Hellenism was both to absorb and reconcile with its spirit as many as necessary of the elements of the old Oriental cultures with which it came in contact⁵⁷, and, on the other hand, to bridge the psychological gap which had now opened between the individual and the *oikoumene*.

The three philosophies of non-attachment—Cynicism, Epicureanism and Stoicism—which flourished from the fourth century onwards, were successful attempts to supply the individual with a new code of ethics which would be valid throughout the universal state⁵⁸. While the gradual introduction of Oriental religious concepts was a natural part of their development, the notions of αὐτάρκεια and ἀταραξία (which are the key words of all three philosophies, and of Epicureanism in particular), however shocking they might have sounded in the context of the Greek polis, were in fact a genuinely Greek reaction to the new situation, for both these notions have strong roots in Plato⁵⁹. Thus religion, becoming increasingly fused with philosophy, moved towards universality and abstraction. The process of syncretism began to make itself evident throughout the Hellenistic world on the level of everyday religious experience, while philosophy preached more clearly than ever before the principle of τὸ ὄσιον. This development had been anticipated by Plato: Socrates had already denounced the inanity of the fossilised public cults as the city state knew them, and had attacked its priests for their ignorance and stupidity. The pompous Euthyphro had been unable to answer his straightforward question; what is τὸ ὄσιον? This was happening right at the moment when Plato was introducing into world-thought the most powerful category ever invented by the Greek spirit: the Idea. That was a message which was welcomed and could be understood by a boundless world.

In this new era, two men are worthy of our attention in this context: Plutarch and Posidonius. The first, a man of great culture and even greater talent, who, in the midst of the *oikoumene* which admired and honoured him, never ceased to think in terms of his native polis (which tragically enough

(cf. the famous statue by Eutychides). Libanius's words are characteristic in this respect: «Τύχαι δὲ ἄρα πάντα μὲν τὰ ἀνθρώπινα ὅπη βούλονται φέρουσιν, ἐγκαθίδρυνται δὲ δικαίως ταῖς πόλεσιν, ἐξ ὧν ἅπαντα δικαίως κατορθοῦσι τιμώμενα». *Progymnasmata* XXV. 1 (Foerster 8, 529). For Tychoaea founded by Roman emperors, see M. Grant, *The Climax of Rome: the final achievement of the ancient world A.D. 161-337*, London 1968, pp. 164-6.

57. For the Hellenisation of the oriental cults, see F. Cumont, *Lux Perpetua*, Paris 1949, p. 260.

58. Cf. Iamblichus, *Protrepticus* VI.

59. On αὐτάρκεια in Plato, see *Tim.* 68e; *Phil.* 67a. On ἀπάθεια, *Phil.* 21e; 33e; *Phaedr.* 250c etc.

happened to be Chaeronea), is remarkable for his tenacious devotion to an old ideal that, as an historian and a moralist, he regarded as the very *raison d'être* of Hellenism⁶⁰. Posidonius, on the other hand, a native of Apameia and a *homo universalis*, is the most typical example of that rootless, intellectually promiscuous Hellenism, which travelled as far away as India and Britain and endeavoured to embrace all fields of human knowledge and to explore and explain the physical and the metaphysical universe and Man's place in it, by using quite un-Greek disciplines, such as astrology, though in the traditional Greek manner⁶¹.

This new Hellenism, as exemplified by Posidonius, exaggerated nearly all the traditional features of Greek culture. It would be a mistake to speak of a diminishing of subtlety, for subtlety should be considered as its very hallmark. What it lacked was that particular passion and zest for life, which had been the major characteristic of Hellenism from Homer to Demosthenes, and which cannot better be summarised than by the one word νόστος⁶². The notion of νόστος had now lost its physical object, to acquire an intellectual significance. This attitude, already obvious in Posidonius, was not clearly articulated until the second century A.D. For those men for whom their fatherland was the entire world⁶³, often envisaged as a cold or even hostile abstraction, or as a land of exile⁶⁴, the only choice was to turn inwards to find a «home» at the very core of themselves. The entire polis, as a national and religious reality, was transferred into the soul⁶⁵, and what had been once a whole real world, an object of comfort, confidence and pride for the individual, became now a pejorative diminutive, a γωνίδιον⁶⁶.

When «capta Graecia ferum victorem cepit», Rome came in contact with both kinds of Hellenism: with the heritage of classical Greece as

60. C. P. Jones brings out this point very well in his book *Plutarch and Rome*, Oxford 1971, see esp. pp. 3 ff. Plutarch's combined realism and sense of patriotism is illustrated in his *Life of Cicero*.

61. On Posidonius, see L. Edelstein and I. G. Kidd, *Posidonius I. The Fragments*, Cambridge 1972 (containing also testimonia from Greek and Latin authors).

62. It is very indicative of this development of Hellenism that the very word πάθος passed into Latin (perhaps through the influence of Stoic philosophy) with a slightly pejorative connotation, and that it came down to modern languages with a nuance which is the exact opposite of its two basic meanings in Greek of suffering and passion.

63. M. Aurelius, VI. 44: «Πόλις καὶ πατρίς ὡς μὲν Ἀντωνίνῳ μοι ἡ Ῥώμη, ὡς δ' ἀνθρώπῳ ὁ κόσμος».

64. *Ibid.* II.17: ὁ δὲ βίος πόλεμος καὶ ξένου ἐπιδημία.

65. *Ibid.* IV. 3; VII. 59; 28.

66. *Ibid.* IV. 3.8.; XII.32.2

preserved by the Alexandrians on the one hand, and with the new vital Hellenism which had flourished during the Hellenistic era on the other. Rome felt the difference, and reacted to and absorbed the two Hellenisms in a quite distinct manner.

The type of the Alexandrian scholar was succeeded by the philhellene antiquarian, whose approach to classical culture was more personal, subjective, complete and direct, perhaps even more human. It was indeed motivated by love and enthusiasm, by a slight nuance of nostalgia, by a melancholy affection for an exquisite but lost civilisation, even by an imperceptible sense of guilt. The Emperor Hadrian is typical of such an approach. The man who was simply described as «*omnium curiositatum explorator*»⁶⁷, indeed felt Hellenism to be a *talisman*, and faced Athens as the site under which the talisman was hidden.

At times, however, this attitude to Hellenism became too flamboyant and too detached from its object; far from being controlled by strong and genuine feelings, it arose out of a misunderstanding, and was determined by a shallow dilettantism. Instead of the Hellenist attracted to things Greek by a sort of intellectual patriotism, we find the *Graeculus*—the real *déraciné* who cannot belong anywhere—whom a superficial interest, a kind of journalistic curiosity pushes towards all that glitters in Hellenism, be it its obvious aesthetic aspect or the limbo of its spiritual core⁶⁸. This futile «Hellenism», which flourished on a large scale in Rome from the second century A.D. onwards, wronged Hellenism badly. It is illustrated by Julia Domna's «*salon littéraire*» and represented quite characteristically in Caracalla's tastes and ways⁶⁹. This attitude, compounded of much that was eastern and very little that was Hellenic, not only appealed to the masses, because of its elasticity and lack of subtlety, but also, because of its wide diffusion, came to be regarded by laymen as the Greek way par excellence as opposed to the Christian one.

This «Hellenism»—equally remote from Hadrian's refined and pragmatic attitude and from Plotinus's sober *Weltanschauung*—was immortalised in the person of Apollonius of Tyana, whose *Life* by Philostratus is a precious document on the psychology of the Severan age, but has little or, perhaps, no connection at all with the historical figure who flourished in the first century A.D. «A skilled stylist and a practised man of letters, an art

67. Tertullian, *Apologeticum* V.7. On Hadrian, see Dio Cassius LXIX.16.

68. On the *Graeculus*, see N. Petrocheilos, *Roman Attitudes to the Greeks* (diss.) Athens 1974, pp. 48-53, where passages from Latin literature are discussed.

69. Dio Cassius LXXVIII.

critic and an ardent antiquarian, he was a sophist rather than a philosopher and though an enthusiastic admirer of Pythagoras and his school, he was so from a distance, regarding it rather through a wonder-loving atmosphere of curiosity and the embellishments of a lively imagination than from a personal acquaintance with its discipline, or a practical knowledge of those hidden forces of the soul with which its adepts live»⁷⁰. This is a good description of Philostratus, the most brilliant sophist of Julia Domna's circle, whose biography of Apollonius—«a sketch of the appearance of a thing by the outside, rather than an exposition of the thing itself from one within»⁷¹—was soon to be converted into a sort of pagan Gospel⁷². The very fact though that Apollonius's name does not appear in the list of famous Pythagoreans drawn up by Iamblichus proves that he was not even regarded as a minor figure by the pagan Fathers—he was simply ignored.

It is clear from what precedes that community of blood, τὸ ὁμαίμον, ceased to be a criterion of participation in Hellenism after Alexander's conquests. Τὸ ὁμόγλωσσον, on the other hand, remained an important factor, but not for long after the appearance of Christianity. We should try to understand why this was so.

In the beginning, Christianity was a religion which lacked a distinct cultural background of its own. It was a spiritual and social message, capable of being preached in any language and within any cultural or historical context. Its apostles, wishing to appeal to the entire Roman world, had to make use of the lingua franca of the Empire. Thus the Bible was translated into Greek several times, and all four Gospels were written in it⁷³. Most of the

70. G.R.S. Mead, *Apollonios of Tyana: The philosopher-reformer of the first century A.D.*, London 1901, pp. 55-6.

71. *Ibid.*

72. We have enough evidence for this. In the early fourth century, a governor of Bithynia, Hierocles, composed a work in two Books, now lost, to prove that Apollonius was the counterpart of Christ (cf. Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* V.2.12; V.3.7 and 14; Photius, *Bibliotheca* (Budé 214 = 171b - 173b). Apollonius's biography was so much enriched with extraordinary details during the Byzantine period that Photius, commenting on Philostratus's *Life of Apollonius*, where already τὸ μυθώδες plays a considerable part, writes the following: τῷ μέντοι Ἀπολλωνίῳ οὐδὲν ὅλως φησὶ τελεσθῆναι οἷα ὁ μυθώδης αὐτῷ χαρίζεται λόγος· φιλόσοφον δὲ τινα καὶ ἐγκρατῆ βίον ἀποσεμνύνει αὐτῷ βιοῦντα ἅτε καὶ πυθαγορικὴν ἐπιδεικνύμενον φιλοσοφίαν ἐν τε ἡθεσι καὶ ἐν δόγμασι (*Biblioth.* Budé 44=9b).

73. See F. G. Kenyon, *The text of the Greek Bible*, London 1975³ (revised by A. W. Adams), pp. 13-9. On the uniformity of culture and language in the Roman Empire until the beginning of the third century, see Peter Brown, *The world of late antiquity*, London 1971, p. 14.

key-words of the new faith were Greek⁷⁴, and even when there appeared a Latin Christianity, still the subtle dogmatic controversies were conducted only in Greek, the language in which, symbolically enough, the very Creed—the Σύμβολον Πίστεως—was formulated. This important service which the Greek language performed for Christianity allowed Gregory of Nazianzos to define Hellenism bluntly as Atticism, ignoring all the cultural and religious connotations of the term. That such a distinction was still premature in the fourth century is proved by the example of Gregory of Nazianzos himself, who created a terrible dilemma for himself by behaving like the sorcerer's apprentice: having once entered the magic world of Hellenism and having unleashed forces too powerful for him to control, he soon found himself the prisoner of their charm. Thus at the cost of losing his peace of mind, Gregory realised that what one is moved by in classical texts is not mere beauty, but an absolute category which, transcending aesthetic form, can be grasped to the full only if one is willing to concede all its metaphysical dimensions. And, like his contemporary Augustine in the West, he was faced with a very real torment:

Vae tibi, flumen moris humani! quis resistet tibi? quamdiu non siccaberis? quousque volves Evae filios in mare magnum et formidulosum, quod vix transeunt qui lignum concenderint? nonne ego in te legi et tonantem Jovem et adulterantem? (...) non accuso verba quasi vasa lecta atque pretiosa, sed vinum erroris, quod in eis nobis propinabatur a ebriis doctoribus (...) et tamen ego, deus meus, in cuius conspectu iam segura est recordatio mea, libenter haec didici et eis delectabar miser et ob hoc bonae spei puer appellabar. (Conf. I. 16)

Augustine, like Jerome, could perceive very clearly what Gregory of Nazianzos was struggling to ignore: that no compromise was possible, that Hellenism was still a vital force, whose cultural and religious aspects were inseparable, to be either embraced fervently or rejected totally: no chemical analysis could possibly work, at least for the time being.

The only Christian who ever succeeded in defying this principle was Origen. In the words of Porphyry, this «apostate», who had been brought up on Greek letters, at some point let his mind be ship-wrecked (ἐξώκειλε)

74. See the opening chapters of Book X of *De Civitate Dei* for the word λατρεία, which Augustine declares to be untranslatable. Other catch-words of Christianity for which an appropriate translation was never found, are ἀγάπη, both as a notion and a practice, ἐκκλησία, which was only transliterated, etc. On ἀγάπη, see the interesting study of R. Joly, *Le vocabulaire chrétien de l'amour est-il original? Φιλεῖν et ἀγαπᾶν dans le grec antique*, Bruxelles 1968, who claims that the term in its Christian usage already appears in classical and Hellenistic texts. He also argues, by providing extensive textual evidence, that for the pagan writers of the second to the fourth century A. D. the concept ἀγάπη is as fundamentally important as for the Christians.

by Christianity : then, sacrilegiously, he put at the service of this «barbarous superstition» the methods that he had been taught in the school of Hellenism⁷⁵. Origen did not question his rivals' claim that Hellenism was as much a religion as a culture, but simply rejected its religious aspect out of hand⁷⁶, while retaining the culture on which it was founded and presenting that culture as the lesser of Christianity's two foundation-stones. But this was an attitude personal to him dependent on his own intuition and immune to imitation by posterity. Origen's distinction was itself called in doubt later by the sharp debates on his orthodoxy that divided theologians for centuries after his death.

Origen enjoyed a philosophical culture whose backbone was indisputably Plato. Amidst the decay of the other traditional Schools, the Platonists alone continued throughout the second century to inject new life into the system they had inherited from their forbears, until, in the third century there occurred the most important event in the history of the Second Hellenism : the appearance of Plotinus. The founder of Neoplatonism based all his teaching on the Greek concept of λόγος, but at the same time he revolutionised the history of Platonism by contributing to it his notion of the mystical experience. This concept remained essential to Neoplatonism, which, by associating itself with the theology of the Chaldaean Oracles, moved gradually away from λόγος. At the same time, the evolution of Neoplatonism from the third to the sixth century can be likened to a snow-ball rolling downwards into the Hellenic past; Homer and Orpheus become all-important figures through this process, while the whole of Greek philosophy, with the single exception of Scepticism and Epicureanism, finds a place within this last creative construction of Hellenism.

With Plotinus and his successors of the Syrian, Pergamene and Athenian Schools, this redefined Platonism became an essentially otherworldly religion which preached detachment from everything mortal and terrestrial⁷⁷. It provided the later Roman world with a transcendental theology, thus becoming a spiritual counterpart to the Oriental cults and a very real rival to Christianity. This situation was soon to be acknowledged by both pagans and Christians : while Gregory of Nazianzos, commenting on Julian's Hellenism, recognised that «πολλὰς ...καὶ παραδόξους ὁδοὺς σωτηρίας οἶδε τὸ θεῖον καινοτομεῖν»⁷⁸, Symmachus expressed the same idea in more po-

75. Porphyry, *Contra Christianos* (Harnack) fr. 39.

76. *Contra Celsum* IV. 48 ff.

77. See the characteristic passage *Enn.* III.2.15.

78. PG 35, col. 576

sitive terms, when he wrote: «uno itinere non potest perveniri ad tam grande secretum»⁷⁹.

Yet, in order to become capable of standing against Christianity, Neoplatonism had, conforming with the spirit of the age, to become a creed, centred around a dogmatic core. That was the work of one man, «the divine» Iamblichus, the pagan prophet and Father, who was regarded by his devotees as the «σωτήρ τοῦ Ἑλληνικοῦ»⁸⁰, «τὸ κοινὸν τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀγαθὸν» or even «τὸ μέγα τῆς οἰκουμένης ἄγαλμα»⁸¹. In order to become the state religion, nevertheless, Hellenism needed the ardent zeal of one who was both a visionary and a statesman.

In Julian's personality the idea of Hellenism, as an indivisible whole, found its finest expression; he did not regard it merely as a culture and a religion, but in him the notion became the overwhelming reality that had haunted the Greeks centuries ago. Hellas became his spiritual fatherland, arousing in him that patriotic passion that can be inspired only by a living and complex thing. All the key-notions of Hellenism and all its significant symbols were grasped by him not in terms of a disciplined hierarchy (as we tend to classify values that belong to a foreign culture), not through any conscious process, but quite effortlessly. To the Emperor Julian Hellenism was the only conceivable way of εὖ ζῆν, and the fact that many of his contemporaries did not agree was not a sign of «progress» (as the Christians believed) or of a change in the collective spirit of the age, but a mark of apparent decadence and momentary weariness, a transient πικρία, even though πανταχοῦ τῆς γῆς γυμναζομένη, which he was called to remedy⁸².

It is ourselves—aware as we are of the historical development that the Roman world underwent—who whenever faced with the paradox of a Julian classified among the Byzantine emperors, are anxious to trace in him an element of continuity with the Hellenic past, while placing him in his century; it is ourselves, incapable of freeing our mind from the frame of Byzantine schemes when looking at the fourth century and, therefore, inevitably adopting a retrospective attitude towards Julian, who feel the need of talking of a contradiction about him, using the terms «break» and «partial continuity», «survival» and «reaction», so that finally, through preconceived ideas, it becomes utterly impossible for us to have any direct contact with Julian and his thought-world.

Embracing Hellenism as a whole himself, he could not even conceive

79. *Relatio* III.9.

80. Ps.-Julian *ep.* 184, 419a.

81. Ps.-Julian *ep.* 181, 449b.

82. Julian 286d.

of the possibility of a different approach, and eloquently expressed all the offence that he felt at the Christians' lack of reverence towards his thought-world : by promulgating his Edict on Education, by which he forbade the Christians to teach the classics :

*Ἄλλ' εἰ μὲν οἴονται σοφοὺς ὧν εἰσιν ἐξηγηταὶ καὶ ὧν ὥσπερ προφηταὶ κάθονται, ζηλούτως αὐτῶν πρῶτον τὴν εἰς τοὺς θεοὺς εὐσέβειαν· εἰ δὲ εἰς τοὺς τιμωτάτους ὑπολαμβάνουσι πεπλανῆσθαι, βαδιζόντων εἰς τὰς τῶν Γαλιλαίων ἐκκλησίας, ἐξηγησόμενοι Ματθαῖον καὶ Λουκᾶν...*⁸³.

No better illustration can be found than this edict of the thoroughness with which Julian had imbibed the idea of Hellenism. Few people can have felt and expressed more clearly and consistently their horror at the profanation of what to them is their very *raison d'être*. This law should be regarded as the ultimate manifesto of Hellenism, its very last official profession of faith. At the same time Julian here put his finger on the great conflict that the contemporary Christian conscience was facing, as can be seen from the strong and varied reactions that this law evoked in the opposite camp.

To Julian—who was participating in both Hellenisms—Athens, as one would have expected, was the very incarnation of his ideal. He was entranced by her double charm : she was both the focus of Greek culture, and the holy city of Hellenism. When, five months after his arrival there, he was summoned by imperial order to leave her, Julian felt that to die would have been preferable :

*Πηγὰς μὲν οὖν ὁπόσας ἀφῆκα δακρύων καὶ θρήνους οἴους, ἀνατείνων εἰς τὴν ἀκρόπολιν τὴν παρ' ὑμῖν τὰς χεῖρας, ὅτε ἐκαλούμην καὶ τὴν Ἀθηναίων ἱκέτευον σῶζειν τὸν ἱκέτην καὶ μὴ ἐκδιδόναι, πολλοὶ τῶν παρ' ὑμῖν ἐωρακότες εἰσί μοι μάρτυρες, αὐτὴ δὲ ἡ θεὸς πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων, ὅτι καὶ θάνατον ᾔτησάμην παρ' αὐτῆς Ἀθήνησι πρὸ τῆς τότε ὁδοῦ*⁸⁴.

It is clear from this passage that Julian's exalted feelings for Athens did not decrease on closer acquaintance, as is usually the case when one approaches reality through the medium of legend. Julian was too full of the myth of Athens to be in a position to discern the partial collapse that she was undergoing⁸⁵. In the next generation Synesius, a man whose spirit was full of the myth of Alexandria, was to describe Athens in the following terms :

Ὡς οὐδὲν ἔχουσιν αἱ νῦν Ἀθηναὶ σεμνόν, ἀλλ' ἢ τὰ κλεινὰ τῶν χωρίων ὀνόματα. Καὶ

83. Julian *ep.* 61, 423cd.

84. Julian 275ab.

85. On the deplorable state of Athens at this period, see H. Thompson, *Athenian Twilight*, JRS 49 (1959). See also A. Frantz, *From paganism to Christianity in the temples of Athens*, «Dumbarton Oaks Papers» 19 (1965), p. 190.

καθάπερ ἱερείου διαπεπραγμένου τὸ δέσμα λείπεται, γνώρισμα τοῦ πάλαι ποτὲ ζῶον· οὕτως ἐνθένδε φιλοσοφίας ἐξωκισμένης, λείπεται περινοστοῦντα θαυμάζειν τὴν Ἀκαδημίαν τε καὶ τὸ Λύκειον καὶ νῆ Δία τὴν Ποικίλην Στοάν (...) νῦν οὐκέτ' οὔσαν ποικίλην⁸⁶.

Had Julian been able to contemplate Athens in such a light even for a moment, he would have lost faith in his aspirations. To this new Hippolytus of Hellenism, who in his lucid moments could perceive what overwhelming obstacles his enthusiasm would have to overcome⁸⁷, a few symbols were necessary so that he could survive and carry on his struggle.

This contemporary of St Antony had at least one thing in common with the legendary figure of the desert: he did not like the world as it was. But this was something that he had in common with all his outstanding contemporaries, who were withdrawing out of reality into spiritual communities or study chambers, or some waste land. The later Roman world—if any—was the world of ἀναχωρηταὶ in the term's literal meaning. Rejecting an actuality felt as decadent or illusory, people retired into some other sphere—the desert or the past or the *Civitas Dei*. It was the world of utopia/οὐ τόπος; the world of the anti-present. In its crudest form this denial of the present is expressed in terms of the desert (which stands for an equal denial of History and Culture), and in its most refined and fragile form this same tendency takes the form of Hellenism. The Hellene's ἀναχώρησις is not a topographical practice, but an inner migration, an internal process taking place in the midst of society and consisting in the silent and gradual liberation of the soul and mind through philosophy from all the passions which keep a human being chained on earth. In both cases, nevertheless, the motive is the same: a longing for purity, to be refound in the desert or recovered through a direct contact with the healthy ancestral traditions; the only difference consists in the way of expression. The Christian hermit's is a passive way in so far as humanity is concerned, Julian's is an active one, for he does not simply strive to become a Saint for himself, but yearns to see all his fellow-humans adopting his own path to salvation.

Half way between these two consistent attitudes are the Greek Fathers, book-men for whom Hellenism is a birthright and Christianity an option to which they wish to adhere without resigning anything of «the delightful things of Greece». This compromise—which Julian denounced as immoral—engendered in the Fathers' hearts too sharp a conflict; those among them who did not succeed in drowning their sensitivity completely have left touching accounts of the tension they felt between the love of a culture, which

86. Synesius, *ep.* 135, PG 66, col. 1524.

87. Cf. *ep.* 84a.



they could not help facing as something more than a mere culture, and a religion which, for all its nobility, still shocked them as something 'alien'. «Si quando (...) prophetam legere coepissem, sermo horrebat incultus»⁸⁸ will confess the «Ciceronian» Jerome, and Gregory of Nazianzos will say much the same thing in a far more dramatic way:

Ἑλλὰς ἐμή, νεότης τε φίλη, καὶ ὅσσα πέπασμαι
καὶ δέμας, ὡς Χριστῷ εἷξατε προφρονέως⁸⁹.

Nothing could in fact be more Greek than this distich, in which Gregory vainly tries to exorcise the charms of Hellenism. The enumeration of all the things that make up the beauty and glamour of this world—Hellas, youth, affectionate memories of childhood, worldly pleasures, all laid down προφρονέως at the altar of Jesus—conveys the magnitude of his sacrifice in the Greek tragic manner. The sense of sacrifice (a constantly recurrent theme in Gregory's poems, occasionally to be found in his speeches too) becomes all the more intense as Hellenism is inevitably associated with the lost paradise of youth. Both in his long autobiographical poem and his *Lamentation on the sufferings of his soul* Athens appears as the symbol of lost youth. Ἀθῆναι καὶ λόγοι stand for his buried life, representing the world of 'il gran rifiuto', yet not an entirely extinct world but rather one, which at times may become painfully real and tantalise the striver after sanctity. Sacrifice is the key-word of the educated Christians. What really frightened them in Julian's law on education was the confirmation from the other side of what they had dimly grasped themselves.

When discussing this law, Gregory feels the need to say that, having given up all the pleasures that this world can afford, he still clings to a last one, Greek culture, which he describes as his most valuable possession after knowledge of the divine⁹⁰. This knowledge is the fruit of philosophical speculation, yet the philosophy of which Gregory speaks is none other than Christianity⁹¹; it is the true paideia, as opposed to the mere cultural refinement which is the work of Hellenism⁹². Yet it is not often that Gregory can speak in a cool and unsentimental way about Hellenism and it is exactly when he wants to sound most detached that he betrays his nostalgic affection for «golden Athens, source of all good»⁹³. A good example of this confused

88. Jerome, *ep.* 22.30.

89. PG 37, col. 1449.

90. PG 35, col. 636.

91. Or. XXVII.6, cf. 3, PG 36.

92. Or. XI. 1, PG 35, col. 832.

93. PG 36, col. 513. Cf. other affectionate expressions about Athens in the funeral

state of mind with regard to Hellenism is provided by the two invectives against Julian, in which he sought to refute the assumptions lying behind the law on education. There Gregory has one objective—in which he does not believe firmly—namely to prove that Hellenism is as much a religion as a culture, and that the latter can, and should be held in conjunction with Christianity⁹⁴. However, being on the one hand of such stuff as fanatics are made on (and in this respect a counterpart of Julian), and caught by the aesthetic charm of Hellenism on the other, in a way incomprehensible to people like Basil, Socrates or Theodoret, he did not succeed in answering Julian's law systematically or in refuting it convincingly. A man who stood unconsciously for the same ideal of culture for which Libanius stood consciously—a man who was an aesthete and a poet—was certainly not the sort of person that the Christians of the fourth century needed as a spokesman and a worldly leader. Having a rather confused idea of what Hellenism meant both to his rivals and to himself, he left an oration in defence of the right of the Christians to participate in a non-Christian culture, in which disjointed and illogical arguments take the form of witticisms, sarcasms and embittered attacks of the sort that can only be engendered by strong emotions blinding one's reason.

Basil of Caesarea never knew the conflicts to which Gregory was subject. He was a much less sensitive and passionate man, and his realism enabled him both to grasp the main problem of Christianity and to propose a solution for it. What the new religion needed so badly was a culture. For the great majority of the Christians in the Eastern part of the empire, Greek was their native tongue and Hellenic culture their birthright. That culture could be used, if only a way could be found of annexing it to Christianity. Basil's use of the terms *θύραθεν* and *ἐξωθεν παιδεία* to denote Hellenism is very characteristic of this way of thinking.

Unlike Gregory, Basil, although educated in Greek letters from an early age, succeeded in dissociating himself from that culture and came to look at Hellenism afresh from the Christian point of view. In order to shake off from his coreligionists the accusation of *ἀπαιδευσία*, he set out to supply the Christians with non-Hellenic criteria which could be applied to Hellenic things. He expounded his theory in a short work which constitutes the manifesto of Byzantine humanism: *Πρὸς τοὺς Νέους, ὅπως ἂν ἐξ ἐλληνικῶν ὠφελοῖντο λόγων*.

oration on St Basil (*ibid* 529), to be contrasted with Gregory's cry of alarm at the realisation of how fatal to the soul is the charm of this city (*ibid.*, 524).

94. PG 35, col. 640.

This brief treatise, written in as pure and sophisticated a Greek as that of Libanius, ignores the problem set by Julian and faced by Gregory. The reader seeks in vain to find in its pages even the slightest indication of Basil's ever having experienced a psychological conflict. Hellenism is unable to inspire in his heart either regret or hatred; it becomes in relation to Christianity ἡ θύραθεν σοφία, τὰ ἔξωθεν παιδεύματα which contain fractions of truth. Not only the study of texts, but the thorough study of Greek history is highly recommended by Basil, for Hellenism forms a culture preparatory to Christianity, and many of the moral precepts taught by the Greeks ought to be treasured in the minds of the Christians; it is also a beautiful culture to which all native Greek speakers have a birthright.

If we compare this treatise with the works of Justin, Clement and Origen, it becomes evident that Basil lacks the self-confident attitude of the early apologists with regard to pagan culture. Unlike them, Basil recognises that Hellenism is a religion which fights Christianity⁹⁵, a dangerous opponent, and this is why he has to exclude large parts of its philosophical heritage from the Christian education, as becomes obvious from the carefully chosen examples that his treatise contains. The authors of whom he approves are those who by the fourth century had already become the 'classics'; these are the authors who survived into Byzantine school programmes and thus influenced the official intellectual life of Byzantium and of modern Greece⁹⁶.

Socrates Scholasticus and Theodoret of Cyrrhus are precursors of Byzantine Hellenism set in the same mould as Basil. Unlike Gregory, these are men who produced a consistent answer to Julian's challenge and who, together with Basil, fixed the norms of Byzantine humanism. Greek culture, said Socrates, was neither recommended nor rejected by Christ and his disciples. Besides, an old habit, that no one thought of opposing, ensures that the leading figures of the Church are always versed in Greek paideia, the reason for this being that the study of the divine Scriptures, unlike that of classical authors, is not apt to render one keen in the art of logic and it is only with their own arms that the Hellenes can be combatted⁹⁷.

Theodoret is more interesting than Socrates, as he does not approach Greek culture from a totally utilitarian point of view. He criticises Hellenism and, like Origen or Eusebius of Caesarea, he is not afraid to recognise the purely religious aspect of its thought-world. The main accusation that he

95. Basil, *Hom.* XXIV, 1, PG 31, 600.

96. This was well understood by J. Campbell and P. Sherrard, *Modern Greece*, London 1968, pp. 20 ff.

97. Socr. III. 16, PG 67, 420, 421.

makes against the classical culture of Greece is οἷσις, to which he opposes the true humility of the martyrs and hermits. Realising that Hellenism could neither be ignored nor combatted, he claims for Christianity all that is brilliant in the rival thought-world. According to Basil, Hellenism was but a σκιαγραφία of the Christian ἀρετή⁹⁸. Following up the lines of this argument, Theodoret states that all that was dreamed or aimed at by the Greeks is realised in the bosom of the Church: «Plato painted the Republic of our philosophers» he says, and subsequently he expands on the analogy between the philosopher's ideal of the *vita contemplativa* as described by Plato, and the Christian notion of sanctity⁹⁹.

The attempt to rob the Hellenes of their culture had at last been crowned with success. But only apparently, for in the compromise something inevitably had to be sacrificed. And the Christian Fathers' choice was the exact opposite of what the Second Hellenism's choice had been. The Byzantine world opted for the letter, without of course realising it, believing in all sincerity that theirs was a direct contact with the spirit of the texts which they could read only after having fitted them into the Church's Procrustean bed.

And yet, this was not the only possible way. Hellenism could indeed have survived as a culture in the Byzantine world, if only the compromise had been made on different grounds, the letter of Christianity giving way to the spirit of Hellenism. Indeed such an attitude was to survive occasionally into Byzantium. A short digression at this point will serve to illustrate the extent of popularity of Basil's and Julian's attitudes in the Byzantine world.

Julian's Hellenism did not die with the cessation of philosophical teaching in Athens. It lived through Byzantium as a hidden, underground current to find dynamic expression at the moment when the Byzantine empire was disintegrating politically. Pletho's reaction to this disintegration, and his dreams of a revival of Hellenism, as expressed in his book of *Laws*, offer many striking parallels with Julian's programme¹⁰⁰. Indeed, it would

98. Basil, *Πρὸς τοὺς νέους* X.

99. PG 83, 1124 ff.

100. On Mistra as an important intellectual centre in the Palaeologan period, see D. Zakythenos, *Le despotat grec de Morée* II, Athens 1953 (repr. London 1975), pp. 310 ff. On the Hellenic reaction, whose soul was Pletho, see F. Masai, *Pléthon et le Platonisme de Mistra*, Paris 1956, pp. 48 ff. The parallel between Pletho's and Julian's ideals is made explicitly by George Gennadius Scholarius, *Oeuvres Complètes* (ed. L. Petit, X. -A. Sideridès, M. Jugie), Paris 1928-36, IV, p. 152. Besides the work of Masai on Pletho, another study throwing light on the survival of the Neoplatonic tradition in Byzantium is S. N. Sathas, *Documents inédits relatifs à l'histoire de la Grèce au Moyen-Age*, VII, Paris 1888. In this volume Sathas gathered texts in support of his thesis that Neoplatonic Hellenism



be an exaggeration to say that the Byzantines saw the problem of what attitude to take towards Platonism in exactly the same light as the Fathers¹⁰¹, but what remains certain is that, although the overwhelming majority of educated Byzantine people had the same attitude towards classical texts as Photius and Anna Comnena—an attitude which stemmed directly from Basil's teaching—there always existed the possibility for a lay élite to opt for Hellenism against the Christian dogmas¹⁰². Nonetheless, this phenomenon was of a very limited importance in the public life of Byzantium and its official educational policy, and did not reach the extent of a wide-spread reaction before the fifteenth century, when Pletho and his followers openly professed their creed and were persecuted for it¹⁰³. Basil's way of facing Hellenism remained by far the predominant Byzantine attitude, while Julian's Hellenism survived into Byzantium as a condemned and secret current.

Yet these two attitudes were not the only ones that the Christian Empire adopted towards Hellenism. The armies of «imbecile monks», the *σαλοὶ καλόγηροι* of Psellus¹⁰⁴, who still in the eleventh century were running throughout Greece destroying whatever remained of the ancient temples, were people who truly detested Hellenism¹⁰⁵. Their attitude of aggressive hatred had its roots in the deep contempt that the anchorites of the fourth century felt towards any cultural and aesthetic achievement of Man.

Lastly, one may talk of a fourth approach to Hellenism in late antiquity, which did not survive into the Byzantine world and which can be described as the deification of Greek culture or the secularisation of the Hellenic religion. Unlike Julian, who had a very definite goal of spiritual salvation

as the rival of Christianity remained alive in Byzantium and was secretly transmitted from generation to generation.

101. See P. E. Stéphanou. *Jean Italos, philosophe et humaniste*, Rome 1949, p. 19.

102. F. Masai, *op. cit.*, p. 297. See also the heading of the Synodicon for the First Sunday in Lent, quoted by J. M. Hussay, *Church and Learning in the Byzantine Empire 867-1185*, Oxford 1937, p. 94: «Anathema to those who devote themselves to Greek studies, and, instead of merely making this a part of their education, adopt the foolish doctrines of the ancients and accept them for the truth; anathema to those who so firmly believe such doctrines that they unhesitatingly teach them and commend them to others, both secretly and openly».

103. On persecutions, see F. Masai, *op. cit.*, pp. 300 ff.

104. See Michael Psellus, *ep.* 166 in C. N. Sathas, *Μεσαιωνική Βιβλιοθήκη* 5, Venice 1876, p. 424.

105. On the armies of monks who were running about Greece destroying temples in the name of an *ἱερὸς πόλεμος*, see Eustathius of Thessalonica, *Ἐπίσκεψις βίου μοναχικοῦ ἐπὶ διορθώσει τῶν περὶ αὐτόν*, PG 135, 729-909, esp. 868 ff., where these monks are presented as a well organised army, and characterised by the bishop as *λοιμῶδες κακόν*.

—union with God—many other contemporary Hellenes, who lacked the mystical streak, faced *Culture* as an end in itself and the only road to sanctification¹⁰⁶. Cultivating the Muses was to them a religious practice in the literal sense. As H.-I. Marrou has proved by collecting funeral inscriptions from that period, this phenomenon was widespread in late antiquity. Both the scenes and the inscriptions on many funeral monuments proclaim that men lived with the Muses, for the Muses, and passed away in the serene conviction that after death they would for ever join their patrons in the Elysian Fields¹⁰⁷. More explicitly, this attitude is exemplified by Libanius who, through his career as a writer and a teacher, sufficiently proved that culture —*παιδεία*— was his highest ideal in life.

The most typical representative of this approach to Hellenism was the Christian Synesius, Bishop of Cyrene. Ἦν δ' οὗτος ἐξ Ἑλλήνων φιλοσοφίᾳ σχολάζων, is Photius's epigrammatic introduction to him¹⁰⁸. Synesius stood in the no-man's-land between Christianity and the Hellenic religion. His own religion was Culture. Due to his «Julianic» horror of any sort of profanation that things Greek might suffer, he worshipped the ideal of Greek *paideia* far more fervently than did Libanius and Themistius, his pagan half-agnostic counterparts. He was «a man of letters of the ancient world, with his prejudices, his intellectual pride, his contempt for simple souls, 'the populace', 'the vulgar'»¹⁰⁹. If he chose as his own mode of expression the Pindaric language and style—a form of speech which must have sounded as distant and artificial to fourth century ears as it sounds to ours—and if both in his hymns and letters there is so much about the 'volgus profanum', this is not a mere coincidence; the δῆμοι ἀνοργίαστοι¹¹⁰ is not an innocent figure of speech. At the very root of Synesius's way of thinking, one cannot help detecting the antithesis of Greek and barbarian, as classical Greece had conceived it. This antithesis is forthrightly expressed in his oration *On Kingship*, while it runs—often in a metaphorical form—through all his religious hymns. Α μουσικὸς ἀνὴρ through his adoration of a culture that he internalised to the extent of coming to think and feel, act and create according

106. *CIL* XI, 2839, 5-6: sublimes animas nullus putet ire sub [umbras]. / occubat in terris sapiens, sed vivit in a[lt]o]. Cf. even Iamblichus, *De vita Pyth.* 42.

107. H.-I. Marrou, *Μουσικὸς ἀνὴρ. Étude sur les scènes de la vie intellectuelle figurant sur les monuments funéraires romains*, Grenoble 1937, esp. pp. 231-57.

108. Photius, *Biblioth.* 26=5a.

109. H.-I. Marrou, 'Synesius of Cyrene and Alexandrian Neoplatonism', *The conflict between paganism and Christianity in the fourth century* (ed. A. Momigliano), Oxford 1963, p. 149.

110. Hymn IX, 72-3.

to its norms, Synesius too was an ἀναχωρητής, withdrawing into what he took to be classical antiquity, and thus in his personal life denying the actual world.

This scorn for the world and all its vanities, calls to mind another contemporary of his —Palladas— with whom, at first sight, Synesius has absolutely nothing in common, except for the fact that they are both classified by posterity as quite paradoxical figures.

«His (Palladas's) deep moral nature turned with scorn from the pretences of the society in which he lived, and, like many moralists, he denounced his contemporaries in the bitterest obscenities. (...) For all his hatred of Christianity, his spirit was deeply invaded by it. From it he had his horror of the flesh, his contempt for the displays of wealth and power, his blistering condemnation of ordinary pretences and compromises. When we read him, we feel that he is a father of the Church, who has all the proper characteristics except faith, hope and charity. Even his verse lacks the elegance of the usual writers of epigrams and recalls Latin in its hard outlines and emphatic resonance. His claim is his sincerity, and, because of this, he is the last Greek poet who deals honestly and eloquently with the fundamental matters of great poetry. And yet it is easy to see, when we read him, why Greek poetry perished. His message was of dust and ashes, of universal wickedness and sorrow. He had no metaphysics and he offered no consolation. His world was dying, and with a last desperate gesture, he tried to stand like a hero on its ruins and proclaim that all is vanity»¹¹¹.

What makes one think of Synesius and Palladas as complementary figures, who, seen together, seem to explain the fate of Hellenism in the late Roman world, is the community of the problems they faced and the radically different answers they gave to them. By temperament and personal predilection, they both belonged to the thought-world diametrically opposed to the one they had publicly embraced; but as actual historical figures, they meet at the border-land, not between paganism and Christianity, but between Hellenism and Byzantinism, Synesius standing for an attitude which in a monkish world degenerated fatally into scholarship, Palladas denouncing culture and life as evils in a spirit anticipating that of Byzantine monasticism¹¹².

111. *The Oxford Book of Greek Verse* (Introduction by C. M. Bowra), Oxford 1930, p. XLV. For Palladas's awareness of what was happening to Hellenism, see *Anth. Gr.* X. 82:

Ἄρα μὴ θανόντες τῷ δοκεῖν ζῶμεν μόνον,
Ἑλληνες ἄνδρες συμφορᾷ πεπτωκότες,
ὄνειρον εἰκάζοντες εἶναι τὸν βίον,
ἢ ζῶμεν ἡμεῖς τοῦ βίου τεθνηκότος;

112. It is ironical that Palladas should have denounced monasticism in as vehement a tone as he did culture and life:

Εἰ μοναχοί, τί τοσοῖδε; τοσοῖδε δέ, πῶς πάλι μούνοι;
ὦ πληθὺς μοναχῶν ψευσαμένη μονάδα (*Anth. Gr.* XI. 387).

Η ΙΔΕΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΛΛΗΝΙΣΜΟΥ

Περίληψη.

Στο άρθρο αυτό εξετάζεται η έννοια του Έλληνισμού κατά το ιστορικό της γένεσθαι. Σύμφωνα με την μαρτυρία του Θουκυδίδη, πρωτοεμφανίζεται ο Έλληνισμός ως χειροπιαστή πραγματικότητα την εποχή των Τρωικών. Πράγματι από τα όμηρικά έπη αναδύεται η εικόνα ενός ολοκληρωμένου και καθ' όλα ξεχωριστού πολιτισμού: το *δμαιομον*, το *δμόγλωσσον*, το *δμόθρησκον* και η κοινότητα ήθων και εθίμων αποτελούν τα κριτήρια συμμετοχής στον κόσμο αυτό. Σε τουτο το πρώτο στάδιο της ύπαρξής του η κινητήρια δύναμη του Έλληνισμού είναι ο πατριωτισμός που εκδηλώνεται με δυο τρόπους: ως *ἀρετή* και ως *νόστος*. Η ἀρετή ώθει τον Έλληνα στον πόλεμο για την διατήρηση της εθνικής του ανεξαρτησίας, ενώ ο νόστος, που εκφράζει το δέσιμο του ανθρώπου με τη γη όπου πρωτόδε το φῶς, του γεννά τον πόθο της επιστροφής στο πατρικό έδαφος έστω και για ταφή.

Αυτά τα δυο βασικά θέματα, που είναι παρόντα στον Έλληνισμό ως τους Άλεξανδρινούς χρόνους, εμπλουτίζονται, καθώς περνούν οι αιώνες, με νέα στοιχεία. Μια πρώτη στροφή παρατηρείται με τον Πίνδαρο, που συνεισφέρει στον κύκλο των έλληνικών χαρακτηριστικών την λατρεία της δύναμης είτε με την μορφή της πολιτικής ισχύος είτε μ' αυτήν της πνευματικής υπεροχής. Το διπλό αυτό θέμα (που ήδη στην άπαρχή του βρίσκεται στενά ύφασμένο με την έννοια του πατριωτισμού) συμβολίζεται στον ιδεατό χώρο από την μορφή του Προμηθέα και στον ιστορικό χώρο από την πόλη των Αθηνών. Παιδεία και βία —όπως ένσαρκώνονται από το ανατέλλον άστρο των Αθηνών— είναι οί δυο αντίρροπες δυνάμεις που συγκροτούν τον Έλληνισμό στην κλασσική του ώρα.

Άπό τα τέλη του Ε' αιώνα, η τάση της βίας εκδηλώνεται μέσα στον έλλαδικό χώρο με την μορφή ακατάσχετων εμφύλιων πολέμων. Σάν αντίβαρο στην κατάσταση αυτή του άλληλοσπαραγμού γεννιέται η πανελλήνια ιδέα. Οί υποστηρικτές της βλέπουν στην τυπική συνένωση των πόλεων σε έναίο κράτος υπό την άρχηγία του Μακεδόνα την μόνη δυνατότητα επιβίωσης του Έλληνισμού, ενώ η αντιμαχόμενη μερίδα καταγγέλλει την *ύβριν* του Φιλίππου και προειδοποιεί για όσα δεινά πρόκειται να έπακολουθήσουν. Για να πιστέψη πώς ο Έλληνισμός είναι ακόμα ζωντανός, ο ύστατος φορέας του κλασσικού πνεύματος Δημοσθένης, δέν έχει ανάγκη να δῇ το έθνος να παίρνη την συγκεκριμένη μορφή κράτους. Αντιλαμβάνεται τον Έλληνισμό ως κάποια λανθάνουσα συνεκτική δύναμη που από τα Τρωικά και δῶθε εξασφάλισε στο έθνος την συνείδηση της ενότητας. Για τον Δημοσθένη, το ίδιο έθνος που περιγράφει ο Όμηρος στον *Νεῶν κατάλογον*, ένωμένο για μια τελευταία φορά αντιμετώπιζει την μακεδονική φά-

λαγγα στην Χαιρώνεια, όπου και καταλύεται ο Έλληνισμός ως εθνική οντότητα, κρατώντας μόνο την πολιτιστική υπόστασή του.

Ἡ Χαιρώνεια συμβολίζει την στιγμή του απόλυτου «ἐκπολιτισμοῦ» τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ. Ἀπὸ κεῖ καὶ πέρα, ὅπως ἀκριβῶς εἶχε ὀνειρευθῇ ὁ Ἰσοκράτης, κατ' ἐξοχήν Ἑλληνας δὲν εἶναι ἐκεῖνος ποὺ χύνει αἷμα γιὰ τὴν ἐλληνικὴ ὑπόθεση ἀλλὰ μελάνι. Μὲ τὴν ἀνατολὴ τῶν ἐλληνιστικῶν χρόνων καὶ τὴν ἀπ' εὐθείας διέλευση τοῦ ἐλληνισμοῦ ἀπὸ τὴν π ὁ λ η σ τὴν ο ἰ κ ο υ μ ἔ ν η, τὸ ζωτικὸ θέμα τοῦ νόστου χάνει τὸ συγκεκριμένο ἀντικείμενό του, ποὺ τώρα τοποθετεῖται σὲ ἐσωτερικὸ ἐπίπεδο, ἐνῶ οἱ ἔννοιες τοῦ πατριωτισμοῦ καὶ τῆς ἐλευθερίας μετατίθενται στὴν πνευματικὴ σφαῖρα. Τὴν ἴδια στιγμή γεννιέται τὸ σύμβολο Ἀθήνα: ἡ ἡττημένη τῆς Χαιρώνειας περνάει στὴν αἰωνιότητα μὲ τὴν μορφή ποὺ τῆς σμίλεψε ὁ Θουκυδίδης στὸν *Ἐπιτάφιό* του καὶ γίνεται ἡ ψυχὴ τοῦ ξερριζωμένου Ἑλληνισμοῦ.

Δυὸ ἐλληνισμοὶ —παράλληλοι καὶ ἀντίθετοι— γεννιῶνται. Οἱ δυὸ ὄψεις ποὺ παρουσιάζει ὁ ἀνανεωμένος αὐτὸς ἀπολιτικός Ἑλληνισμός τοποθετοῦνται στὴν φιλοσοφικὴ σφαῖρα: ὡς πρακτικὴ ἠθικὴ φιλοσοφία, μὲ τὸ ἔνδυμα τοῦ Στωικισμοῦ, τοῦ Κυνισμοῦ καὶ τοῦ Ἐπικουρισμοῦ, ὁ Ἑλληνισμός δίνει στὴν οἰκουμένη ἓνα κώδικα συμπεριφορᾶς ποὺ ἰσχύει σὲ κάθε γωνιὰ τῆς ρωμαϊκῆς κοινοπολιτείας, ἐνῶ ὡς θρησκευτικὸ ρεῦμα —κράμα πυθαγορισμοῦ καὶ πλατωνισμοῦ— ὀρθώνεται, παράλληλα μὲ τὶς ὁλοένα ἐξελληνιζόμενες ἀνατολικὲς μυστηριακὲς θρησκείες, ὡς ὁ μεγάλος ἀντίπαλος τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ. Μὲ τὴ σταδιακὴ ὁμως διάδοση τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ, ἀπὸ τὸν Γ' αἰῶνα παύει ὁ Ἑλληνισμός ὄχι μόνο νὰ μονοπωλῇ τὸ *ὁμόγλωσσον* ὡς διακριτικὸ στοιχεῖο, ἀλλὰ καὶ νὰ ἀποτελῇ μιὰ ξεχωριστὴ πνευματικὴ κληρονομιά στὰ χέρια τῶν πιστῶν τῆς πλατωνικῆς θρησκείας.

Τὴν ἐξέλιξη αὐτὴ, γιὰ τὴν ὁποία κύριοι ὑπεύθυνοι εἶναι οἱ Χριστιανοὶ Ἀπολογητές, γύρεψε νὰ ἀνακόψῃ ὁ Αὐτοκράτωρ Ἰουλιανὸς πού, μὲ τὴν ἐκδοση τοῦ Διατάγματος περὶ Παιδείας, πρόβαλε τὴν ἀξίωση ὅτι διαχωριστικὴ γραμμὴ δὲν μπορεῖ νὰ περάσῃ ἀνάμεσα στὴν μεταφυσικὴ καὶ τὴν αἰσθητικὴ στὸν Ἑλληνισμό καί, κατὰ λογικὴ συνέπεια, ἀπαγόρευσε στοὺς Χριστιανοὺς τὴν ἐνασχόληση μὲ τὰ κλασσικὰ γράμματα, ποὺ τὴν εἶδε σὰν βεβήλωση. Μὲ τὴν ἐπίσημη διακήρυξη τῆς ἐνότητος τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ ὡς πολιτιστικοῦ καὶ θρησκευτικοῦ φαινομένου, ὁ Ἰουλιανὸς ἄγγιξε τὴν πληγὴ τῶν πεπαιδευμένων χριστιανῶν, ὅπως μαρτυροῦν οἱ ποικιλόμορφες ἀντιδράσεις, ποὺ ὁ νόμος του προκάλεσε στὸ ἀντίπαλο στρατόπεδο. Παρ' ὅλους τοὺς συμβιβασμούς, ὁμως, ποὺ οἱ ἐκκλησιαστικοὶ πατέρες τοῦ Δ' καὶ τοῦ Ε' αἰῶνα —ὅπως ὁ Βασίλειος, ὁ Σωκράτης ἢ ὁ Θεοδώρητος— πρότειναν, καὶ χάρις στοὺς ὁποίους τὸ γράμμα τοῦ Ἑλληνισμοῦ ἐπιβίωσε στὴν Βυζαντινὴ Αὐτοκρατορία θεραπεύοντας τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ Χριστιανισμοῦ, τὸ πρόβλημα τοῦ ἀσυμβίβαστου τῶν δύο κοσμοθεωριῶν παραμένει μέχρι σήμερα.