

The West, and the rest! Be smart!

By: [Blog - Parrhesia](#)

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The fundamental difference between East and West became sharpened when the Persians sought to increase their influence over the Greek cities in Ionia in the years before 500 BCE, in what is today western Turkey. Athenians and Euboeans burned [Sardis](#) in 498 BCE, marking the beginning of the clash between east and west. The subsequent revenge by the Persian king was to annihilate the Athenians and the defenders of Greece. The Battle of Marathon in 490 BCE is the most famous of the battles that saved the development of our cultural cradle. The gap between East and West, even after 2500 years, remains mainly the same —culturally and geographically.



The development of ancient Greek culture continued for the next 200 years or so, and is still exemplary in many respects. Scholars today are continually astonished by the wisdom and achievements of that era, as texts and history are read in a new light. The Renaissance—also sparked by material from antiquity—set the cultural engine of development in motion: freedom and reason. Through the centuries, away from religious foolishness, tyrannies, and misery for the many, toward a society—today—built on freedom, self-criticism, technology, science, and progress, a society that can still develop, and must to survive.

Compared to the West —the rest of the world is, to varying degrees, worse off in terms of freedom and developmental power. Iran, the heir of the old Persian Empire, still harbors a desire to wipe out the free world, though for different reasons. Even if religious blindness has completely replaced the king's and tyranny's contempt for freedom, incompetence (by their standards), and democracy, the underlying justification for the contempt is the same. Athens and Greece have been replaced by the USA and the West.

The Iranian clerical regime has been skillful in buying time to get well underway with producing nuclear weapons, and a large number of missiles to strike and annihilate Israel—and whatever else they can reach. Why negotiate with someone who aims to achieve something and then annihilate you? A waste of time. Destroy your enemy instead.

To build a solid military counterweight, one must agree on some fundamental values. These values seem increasingly difficult to agree upon in our time. This may have serious consequences, primarily for the entire union of Western countries, increasing the risk of losing what we have.

A small light in the empty hole of idea-lessness: the Finnish president, Alexander Stubb, has understood something important. In global politics, it is not only about principles, agreements, morality, or who is the best “peace nation,” and so on. It is also about being smart, showing that you stand up for your friends—even when you may be fiercely disagreeing. But most important of all is having something to trade with in the form of goods, weapons, and not least intelligence and courage. It is about significance, and above all about survival.

President Donald Trump asked for support to protect ships in the Strait of Hormuz. From Europe, Australia, and Japan, he received a no, in short. Prime Minister Keir Starmer—a type with a strange mix of wokism, panic, weakness, and a lack of democratic identity—refused, ahead of the Iranian attacks, to allow the USA to use British bases, including shared ones such as Diego Garcia NSF in the Indian Ocean. Now Britain has said that they *will* support, together with some other European countries.

Our own prime minister (Norway) Jonas Gahr Støre could well have followed up with the courage and leadership he has shown in Norway supporting Ukraine. Instead, Støre and Foreign minister Espen Barth Eide displayed a naïve willingness to negotiate to avoid attacks on Iran, oppose the attack on Iran because it violates international law, are praised by the leadership, and express «great concern». It again shows a belief in radical Islamists, almost unbelievable, but something one simply has to take note of—something the USA likely does as well. The belief in the Taliban and Hamas maybe also still holds. And, it seems as if international law is mostly there for tyrants who wish to execute their own pro-democracy citizens.

The Finnish president's creativity—compared to the rest—is that he said several days ago: “Yes, we can discuss showing up, if you help more in Ukraine.” This “little” statement

contains a negotiating power that could save the Western project for the future as well. Power must have counter-power; development must have counter-power; respect must have counter-power. The entire universe consists of harmonious counter-forces. Failing to achieve this means destruction.

With Europe's now dissolved categorical "no," relationships can be saved—especially where one side sees the other as timid and cowardly, and the other sees the first as "tyrannical" and not following international law. Jonas Gahr Støre and Espen Barth Eide are playing a high-stakes game with our national security. We can well pay more for gasoline, as long as we continue to have control and safety against nuclear attacks from Iran in the future.

European thinking has contributed to our current inability to protect ourselves: poor energy policy, poor economic policy, and a Trump-aversion in the dominant left-leaning media and politicians, which again orients "the rest of the West" toward China. Our open European borders in recent decades, meant to show the world our strength in goodness, and because of low birthrates, have not helped many citizens in Europe, Australia, or the USA—rather the opposite. Islam is coming. If our alliance with the USA cracks, it is not difficult to see where the road leads. «Tolerance» is not the way to the future. The election of Donald Trump, also the second time, is a reaction within the democracy/the people — also against this!

The various cities of Sparta and Athens—located at opposite ends of the cultural scale—eventually agreed to face the Persians together, granting each other the right to use their particular strengths, show honor, and mutual respect. But they first had to go through hard discussions (discussion; Greek *polemos* also meant war), where they barely succeeded, but reason prevailed. When this worked, they became strong. Without it, there would never have been a West.

An example where the Greeks failed to unite was against King Philip II, father of Alexander the Great. Greece had slept in class, and the Macedonians had become superior in technology, strategy, and fighting skills. Athens and Thebes was defeated in 338 BCE, at the Battle of Chaeronea, not free again until 1830–32, and democracy in 1974.



Photo by me, of the battlefield at Chaeronea, taken from the fortress of ancient Chaeronea.