

PHILIP'S THRACIAN CAMPAIGN OF 352-351

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You remember, Athenians, when it was reported three or four years ago that Philip was in Thrace besieging Heraion Teichos. That was in Maimakterion [approx. November]. There was an uproarious debate among you and you voted to launch forty triremes, to embark in them those up to forty-five years of age and to raise sixty talents by *eisphora*. When that year had gone by, Hekatombaion arrived, then Metageitnion and Boedromion [approx. September]; in this month after the Mysteries it was all you could do to dispatch Charidemus with ten empty ships and five silver talents. For when it was reported that Philip was ill or dead (for both versions were heard) you thought there was no longer any object for your aid and you abandoned the expedition. [Demosthenes *Olynthiac* 3. 4-5]

THE chronology of Philip's campaign in Thrace beginning in late 352 depends largely on the construction put upon the above passage of Demosthenes' Third *Olynthiac*, delivered in about September 349.¹ It is a passage whose meaning is not immediately clear and it has so far received less attention than it deserves. Before looking at the problems it poses, we should find it helpful to extract the two chronological points about which—assuming that we are to trust the orator's word for the most basic of information—there is no dispute. It was reported in Athens that Philip was in Thrace besieging Heraion and this news arrived in about November 352.² Then in about September of the following year Charidemus was actually dispatched from Athens in command of ten "empty" ships and furnished with a mere five silver talents. (His destination, so the orator implies, was Thrace—and I shall find no reason to dispute this.)

I argued several years ago³ that the abandoned expedition (§ 5) was the second, smaller force of Charidemus and that the larger fleet, commissioned on paper at the end of 352, was never prepared or launched. Professor D. M. MacDowell has disputed this interpretation on the ground that the word "for" (at the start of the sentence "For when it was reported that Philip was ill or dead . . .") "must mean that the report of Philip's illness was the reason why the Athenians *sent* ten ships (instead of forty), because that is the event mentioned immediately [beforehand]."⁴ I am no longer prepared to press the original argument I offered but find myself at the

1. For the date, see G. L. Cawkwell, "The Defence of Olynthus," *CQ* 12 (1962): 133 f.

2. For Demosthenes in September 349, "three or four years ago" would refer (since Maimakterion is specified) to late 352 or late 353. 352 is, to my knowledge, now universally accepted, not because there is firm, independent testimony for it (we have only Dion. Hal. *Dem.* 13. 655, who puts it under 353/352), but because it is consistent with a whole range of related dates for Philip's campaigns in Thessaly and for the Sacred War; see N. G. L. Hammond, "Diodorus' Narrative of the Sacred War and the Chronological Problems of 357-352 B.C.," *JHS* 57 (1937): 44 ff.

3. "The Date of Demosthenes' First Philippic," *REG* 79 (1966): 636 ff.

4. D. M. MacDowell, rev. J. R. Ellis-R. D. Milns, *The Spectre of Philip*, *CR* 22 (1972): 425. I am aware from conversation and correspondence with colleagues that he is not alone in his disagreement.

same time unable to accept MacDowell's interpretation. My previous note was concerned primarily with the date of Demosthenes' First Philippic, but in the present article I am more interested in the chronology of Philip's campaign and in Athenian reactions to it. However, the two issues are inextricably entangled, since Demosthenes in his First Philippic appears to be aware not only of this campaign but also of the excursion Philip made to the neighborhood of Olynthos, apparently on his way home from Thrace.⁵

The first task confronting us is to understand what Demosthenes intended to say—and I must admit that, the more I look at it, the less confident I feel that it can be taken at face value. The orator's general point in the surrounding context is that his fellow citizens have so far been unsuccessful in their war with Philip, not because no opportunities for action have arisen, nor because the Athenians have failed to appreciate them when they have, but rather because they have been disinclined to act when they knew very well they ought.⁶ In the passage under discussion (3. 4-5) he illustrates this diagnosis with an example of an opportunity missed, concluding (with the sentence following what is translated above): "but that *was* the right occasion; for if we had sent ready assistance there at that time, as we voted, Philip would not be plaguing us now fully recovered" (§ 5 *fin.*). But what precisely was the occasion? The crucial sentence here is the one to which MacDowell calls attention: *ὥς γὰρ ἡγγέλθη Φίλιππος ἀσθενῶν ἢ τεθνεῶς . . . οὐκέτι καιρὸν οὐδένα τοῦ βοηθεῖν νομίσαντες ἀφέϊτε . . . τὸν ἀπὸστολον*. The γὰρ, as MacDowell points out, refers back to something already said; the sentence it introduces is intended to explain what precedes it. But there are *two* possible antecedents, either one or both of which may prompt the explanation: the implicit information that the first, larger expedition was not sent and the explicit claim that the second, smaller force was. MacDowell, as we have seen, finds the antecedent of the γὰρ in the dispatch of Charidemos' ten ships. But this seems to me incorrect, for he overlooks the force of the initial ὥς, a conjunction akin in meaning to *ὅτι* or *ἐπεὶ* or more likely to *ὅτε*. I should translate the sentence: "For when (or 'since') it was reported that Philip was ill or dead . . . you abandoned the expedition." That is, Philip's illness, so the orator is asserting, provoked, not the dispatch of the second expedition, but the abandonment of the first. The whole sentence refers back (through the γὰρ) not to the end of the preceding sentence but to its first part; it is intended to explain why, with the expedition actually approved, the rest of that year (352/351) was to pass in inactivity, as were the first three months of the next (351/350). (MacDowell's claim is not only, in my view, mistaken; indeed, it would refute the standard case, which he accepts, for the dating of Philip's malady, because he connects the report of

5. Noted by R. Sealey, "Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Some Demosthenic Dates," *REG* 88 (1955): 81-83; see Dem. 4. 17. Dionysios of Halikarnassos (*Amm.* 4, 10) dates this speech to 352/351, and Sealey supports him, arguing for the now generally accepted point of spring 351. It is however worth noting that Dionysios also claims that this speech was originally not one, but two (§§ 1-29 and 30-51): he dates only the former to 352/351; the second he places after the three *Olynthiacs*. Since such a division is universally rejected, the credibility of Dionysios on this speech is at least suspect.

6. §§ 3, 5 *fin.*, 7.

this illness to the dispatch of Charidemos, which is unequivocally dated to September 351.)

However, having gone so far, we find that difficulties still remain in the way of a proper understanding of Demosthenes' intent. He has alluded to the approval of a larger force and then has indirectly indicated that nothing further happened for ten months. During that time, at a point unspecified, Philip fell ill and, as a result, so Demosthenes says, the expedition was abandoned. (The possibility, which the verb ἀφίημι allows, that the expedition had already in fact lapsed and that the orator should here be more properly chiding the Athenians with failing to revive it, I should prefer to leave open for the moment.) In other words, his point—that they had missed the perfect opportunity—is made, and clearly made, without any need for the reference to the small force under Charidemos. The small force, of course, does provide the whole analysis with a stronger dramatic impact through antithesis, but is the reference to it logically gratuitous? I find it incomprehensible that Demosthenes meant to say (as MacDowell appears to take it) that, because Philip fell ill in late 352, therefore Charidemos was dispatched in late 351. But it is impossible to make sense of the passage unless we first reconstruct the likely set of circumstances in the north that gave rise to this succession of events.

But to begin with, we have from the Athenian—or, at any rate, Demosthenic—end the following sequence: (1) circa November 352 the news came from Heraion and the Athenians voted a relief expedition to sail there; and (2) circa September 351 Charidemos' unmanned fleet was actually dispatched. Somewhere between these two points three related events took place: (a) news of Philip's illness reached Athens; (b) the proposed expedition was abandoned; and (c) Charidemos' force was proposed and approved. Two caveats need stating. First, the relative sequence of (a) and (b) may, as I shall suggest, need re-examining; but for the moment it must stand, since it follows unavoidably from Demosthenes' words. Second, the sequence of (2) after (c) need not be immediate; there may have been a delay between the approval of the force and its dispatch.⁷

Next we need to ascertain the reason for the abandonment of the larger

7. Cawkwell, "The Defence of Olynthus," pp. 126 f., notes that Demosthenes does not date the voting of the smaller force, only its dispatch. He suggests that it may have been given its orders in, say, Skirophorion (ca. June) 351 but have been delayed by the Etesian winds from sailing until September. (The delay was first posited by Friedrich Focke, *Demosthenesstudien* [Stuttgart, 1929], p. 10.) As Cawkwell makes clear, he proposes such a delay only to show that the force may have been voted during 352/351. His purpose is to allow for the argument (again, by Focke, *Demosthenesstudien*, p. 25) that the First Philippic was delivered in the debate that commissioned Charidemos' force and in the archon year 352/351, in which Dionysios places it—or rather its first 29 sections (see n. 5). We must be skeptical of the common assumption, refuted in my own experience, that the Etesian winds blow strongly for a constant period in every year. As Cawkwell concedes, the longest period given by an ancient source is sixty days, the commonest forty, and the shortest twenty-three. We should need to believe, to accept his suggestion, that the Etesian winds blew for more than sixty days, even to fit the dispatch of Charidemos into the first day of Boedromion and the First Philippic into the last day of 352/351. We should also have to assume that they blew so constantly and strongly during the entire period that there was no point in Charidemos' so much as leaving the Peiraeus. Cawkwell, to be fair, is uncommitted on this point; he seeks only to show that Focke's arguments might be accommodated.

expedition and the purpose for which Charidemos was dispatched. In midsummer 352 Philip had been at Thermopylai in pursuit of the Phokian survivors of the battle at Crocus Field, who now held the pass with the assistance of some of their allies, Athens, Sparta, and the Achaians, as well as the exiled Pheraean tyrants with their adherents and mercenaries.⁸ Retiring without forcing an issue, Philip returned to the north, perhaps devoting some further time en route to his Thessalian arrangements. He is next heard of, to our knowledge, in November at Heraion; and (again, so far as we can tell) the news that reached Athens was that the Macedonians alone were besieging this fortress in the territory of Kersebleptes, king of eastern Thrace and ally of Athens. The riotous reaction in the assembly is easily comprehended. The Athenians saw Philip operating far from his own country against their ally. But we know more than this of his Thracian campaign; for, according to a scholiast on Aischines 2. 81,⁹ when Philip moved into Thrace he found three willing allies who wished to oppose the encroachment of Kersebleptes on their territories. The Byzantians, the Perinthians, and the central Thracians under Amadokos were already carrying out a war with Kersebleptes over a disputed area. Philip joined them and in concert they attacked Kersebleptes,¹⁰ eventually forcing him to hand over to his accusers¹¹ the land under dispute and to surrender his son as hostage to Philip.¹²

There is, of course, a difficulty for us in explaining why the Athenians should have abandoned their more ambitious plans because Philip fell ill. As Demosthenes says, that was the perfect opportunity. In logical terms the Athenians' actions are incomprehensible if, when they knew Philip was alive and well at Heraion, they approved a large force; and, when they knew he was ill, they canceled it. It is far more plausible to me that the reason for the lapse of this force was not Philip's illness but the intelligence that it would not be Macedonians alone that the fleet would have to oppose. Instead the combined armies and fleets of the Byzantians, the Perinthians, and Amadokos—as well as those of Philip—were arrayed in the north. Alternatively, we might suppose simply that reason prevailed over the Athenians' initial enthusiasm; for—to ignore the ships, which in the end would be useless except as ferries and escorts—what could even, say, twelve thousand hoplites (the most Demosthenes in his finest flights of fancy ever actually asked for and considerably more than the assembly ever committed at this period, before Chaironeia, at any rate)¹³ achieve against the forces Philip might deploy once news of their decision reached him?

8. Diod. Sic. 16. 36–37; Just. *Epit.* 8. 2. 8; Dem. 19. 84. On the date, see Hammond, "Diodorus' Narrative," p. 57.

9. W. Dindorf (ed.), *Scholia graeca in Aeschinē et Isocratē* (Oxford, 1852), p. 57. 12. For the date of the events in this reference, see n. 14.

10. οἱς [sc. the Byzantians et al.] Φίλιππος συλλαμβανόμενος ἐπολέμησε Κερσοβλέπτην (Dindorf, p. 57. 17–18).

11. τοῖς ἐγκαλοῦσι (Dindorf, p. 57. 18–19).

12. The son was still at Pella in 346: Aischin. 2. 81.

13. Dem. 4. 16–22. The number of hoplites to sail in the transports with the large fleet is not given; but, on the analogy of the small fleet, with its ten triremes, it would presumably be in the region

Similarly, it makes no sense to say that because Philip fell ill, therefore Charidemos' fleet was sent—and, as I have argued, the orator does not do so. Then why was it sent? In what way indeed is this force related at all to Philip's Thracian campaign or to Demosthenes' diagnosis of Athenian failure? Obviously, a tiny fleet of "empty" ships (which I take to mean that Charidemos had to recruit what hoplites he might wish to take, if not rowers as well) is not intended to fight a battle. Granted, the Athenians were not nearly so eager to commit forces to the distant north as Demosthenes would have wished, but neither were they utter fools. It seems to me inescapable that Charidemos was dispatched because the fighting was all over, because neither the Byzantian fleet nor the allied forces remained there to wipe him off the sea on his approach or to destroy him at a blow should he land. He must have been sent (as someone would need to be) to assess the damage to Kersebleptes and the effects on the latter's attitude toward Athens and the Chersonese, and perhaps to report on the nature and strength of Philip's relations with his new allies. If Demosthenes intended people to think (as I suspect he did not) that this force was sent because Philip was ill, then he was probably lying; it was sent because, having been ill, but having recovered and triumphed, Philip and his allies had gone home, so that it was possible for a little group of Athenians, unequipped for war and not intended to fight, to sail and inspect the debris. I suggest then that neither the lapse of the first expedition nor the dispatch of the second had anything to do with Philip's health. Demosthenes connects them because he wishes to convict his audience of failing to act when the perfect opportunity arose. To do so, he is obliged to engage in a fairly minimal distortion—of a sort which would raise no eyebrows in any political assembly past, present, or future, but against which the historian must be constantly on guard.

If these arguments are acceptable, then their effect is to break the Demosthenic nexus in the sequence of events enumerated above and to strengthen the suggestion presaged there that (a) and (b) might be presented in the wrong order. I suggest that in fact the abandonment of the larger expedition may have followed quite shortly upon its initial approval (as soon as word came that Philip was not alone in his war with Kersebleptes) and that the illness of Philip fell at some later time. A later date for this malady is indeed the natural implication of Demosthenes' words in *Olynthiac* 1. 13: ". . . when [Philip] recovered he did not lapse into inactivity but *immediately* (*εὐθύς*) made an attempt on Olynthos." The illness, that is, should fall very near the end of Philip's successful Thracian campaign.

How long did this campaign last? It is impossible to answer the question from independent evidence, but there are some indications that the campaign must have lasted some months. We have in the first place the testimony of

of ten thousand, making a total of twelve thousand. The unreality of the proposals is not that Athens was incapable of raising such a figure, but that the people were patently not convinced that such risks should be run so far from home in support of dubious allies: see Cawkwell, "The Defence of Olynthus," pp. 134 ff., on Olynthos. Probably five thousand served at Thermopylai in 352 (Diod. Sic. 16. 37. 3 with Dem. 19. 84). On the few thousand, mainly peltast mercenaries, who served at Olynthos in 349/348, see Philochoros *FGrHist* 328 F 49–51.

the scholiast on Aischines 2. 81 that it involved the concerted action of Philip and the three allies¹⁴ and that it was fought to a successful conclusion. Then there is Demosthenes' notice (*Olynthiac* 1. 13) that Philip expelled some Thracian leaders and installed others in their places. But such information does not help much. I suggest that the key to the length of the campaign is to be found in the dispatch of Charidemus' fleet. Now it may be, as Cawkwell suggests,¹⁵ that the dispatch of the expedition did not follow immediately upon its proposal and approval; it is even possible that the Etesian winds accounted for some delay (though Occam may twitch uneasily in his grave). But if we must have a delay—and the only compulsion to such an indulgence would be a wish to support an already dubious Dionysian dating for the First Philippic¹⁶—then I think there is a more likely explanation. Once the Athenians had discovered that their initial plans would send their soldiers and crews to certain death, there was little they could do but sit and wait out the war. In practice, probably no formal rescission of the original *psephisma* was required; it simply lapsed. But at some point, as it became clear that the campaign was nearing resolution, the assembly will have realized that a thorough reconnaissance of an area so vital to them was desirable and should be carried out as soon as it was safe to do so. At that time a decree establishing a small fleet to effect the task might well have been passed, but the mission would not have been executed until it was known that the war was finished.¹⁷ Although it does little to salvage Demosthenes' credibility, we might argue on his behalf that the decision to approve the preparation of Charidemus' fleet was prompted by the news that Philip was ill or dead, since that might well herald the end of the campaign. But, in any case, if we accept that the mission was to reconnoiter in the aftermath of the war, then we must also accept that it was desirable to carry it out as soon after the war as possible. In other words, we should place the end of the Thracian campaign as near as possible to September 351, with only the hypothetical delay caused by the Etesian winds remaining to confuse the point.

To conclude, I propose the following reconstruction of the circumstances and chronology of Philip's activities in the north in 352 and 351. Late in

14. The reliability of the scholiast is supported by other indications that at least the Byzantians and Amadokos turned to Philip for alliance at this time. Theopompus *FGH Hist* 115 F 62 and Dem. 15. 26 describe the deteriorating relations between Byzantion and Athens in 353/352—perhaps the very situation out of which our campaign arose—and Theopompus F 101 has Amadokos as the ally of Philip in “the war against Kersebleptes.” This latter fragment is from Book 11 of the *Philippika*, datable from its context to ca. 352/351; but in any case Amadokos was by now a very old man and he appears to have died before 347/346 (A. Höck, “Das Odrysenreich in Thrakien,” *Hermes* 26 [1891]: 109 f.), which means that this “war against Kersebleptes” was that of 352-351 and not that of 347/346, as Beloch thought (*Gr. Gesch.*², 3.1:500, n. 3; he accordingly applied the scholion on Aischin. 2. 81 to the latter campaign).

15. See n. 7.

16. See n. 5.

17. It might plausibly be argued that the expedition could have left Athens before the campaign was finished, with instructions to wait, say, at Lemnos until the word came through. The effect of such an argument would be to lengthen the campaign beyond September 351. If the purpose I suggest for Charidemus' mission is accepted, it must be agreed that its latest possible departure would have been as soon as the Thracian campaign was known to be over.

352 Philip, fresh from his spectacular success in Thessaly, turned to Thrace, where the picture confronting him was a good deal less bright as a result of the losses he had suffered there during the past fifteen to eighteen months. In the spring of 353, he had sailed home from Thrace, with Abdera and Maroneia taken and with some sort of arrangement concluded with Kersebleptes.¹⁸ Although any plans Philip may have entertained for advancing farther to the east had not materialized,¹⁹ and although he had had a close escape at Neapolis from an Athenian fleet under Chares,²⁰ it had nevertheless been a successful campaign, or so he thought; and he had been prepared to turn his back on Thracian affairs to answer the Thessalian appeal.²¹ But in his absence, and probably in particular because of his defeat at the hands of Onomarchos in his first summer or autumn in Thessaly,²² his settlements in Thrace and elsewhere had been thrown into jeopardy. In late spring or summer of 353, Chares had descended on Sestos and wiped out its male citizens, enslaving the rest.²³ Kersebleptes, under pressure and with his new ally far away (and possibly, by this time, defeated by Onomarchos), had accepted the Athenians' terms, undertaking to support their claims on Amphipolis and renouncing all rights over Chersonesan towns except Kardia and over Chersonesan revenues.²⁴ Philip's powerful ally, the Chalkidian League, had informed his enemy, the Athenians, of a wish for alliance and declared itself a friend of Athens.²⁵ The Macedonian power had appeared to be crumbling, so that, as soon as Philip had finished his triumphant second season in Thessaly, he wasted no time in marching his army back to the east. Here, in Thrace, the situation was naturally regarded as favorable from the Athenian point of view, so that, when news arrived in November of the Macedonian siege of Heraion, the Athenians were hopeful that the opportunity had arrived for defeating Philip without any great risk to themselves. He appeared to be involved far from home with, so the Athenians may well have assumed,²⁶ only enemies around him and behind him. Accordingly, they voted to support Kersebleptes and the inhabitants of Heraion with forty triremes, a large citizen levy, and sixty talents for expenses.

But reason soon prevailed. The expedition would need to be very strong on land to inflict serious damage on the Macedonian forces and, more important, the attitude of Kersebleptes over the past few years hardly permit-

18. Dem. 23. 183; Polyainos *Strat.* 4. 2. 22. On the dating, P. Collart, *Philippe, ville de Macédoine* (Paris, 1937), p. 166, n. 3; Hammond, "Diodorus' Narrative," pp. 59 f.

19. Dem. 23. 183.

20. Polyainos *Strat.* 4. 2. 22.

21. Diod. Sic. 16. 35. 1; Polyainos *Strat.* 4. 2. 19.

22. Diod. Sic. 16. 35; Polyainos *Strat.* 2. 38. 2.

23. Diod. Sic. 16. 34. 3; on the dating, see Hammond, "Diodorus' Narrative," pp. 65, 69 f.

24. Diod. Sic. 16. 34. 3; Dem. 23. 14 (Amphipolis), 110, 177 (revenues), 181 (Kardia). To support the Athenian claim to Amphipolis was to declare himself against Philip.

25. Dem. 23. 108 f.

26. Amadokos, only eighteen months before, had barred Philip's way eastward from Maroneia: Dem. 23. 183. Byzantion and Perinthos, though among those who had revolted recently and successfully from the Athenian alliance, might reasonably be expected to combine with their erstwhile ally to put a stop to the eastward movement of the Macedonian upstart.

ted confidence that he was an ally on whose trustworthiness one would wish to stake the lives of Athens' sons and brothers. The level of enthusiasm subsided; and, when further intelligence arrived that Byzantion, Perinthos, and Amadokos were serving as Philip's allies, it faded away altogether. Plans for the expedition lapsed. There was nothing to do but wait. The (Attic) year passed, while in Thrace the siege of Heraion was accompanied or followed by some rearrangement of local Thracian leadership.²⁷

Early in the new year (perhaps in July or August 351) rumors reached Athens concerning Philip's health: according to some he was ill, according to others dead. Hopes may have risen, not that the Athenians might now take action, but that the Macedonians might withdraw and the alliance break down. As soon as that should happen, but in any event as soon as the war was finished, the Athenians would need to ascertain the damage done to their interests. A small force was proposed and approved for that purpose; it was to embark as soon as the all clear was sounded. In August or September, accordingly, Charidemos sailed north.

Philip, however, having successfully completed his campaign (as the scholiast on Aischines says) and having recovered his health, marched back to Pella, detouring en route to the Chalkidian peninsula, where he brought the recalcitrant Olynthians to heel either by a show of force or by a stern warning.²⁸

I conceded near the outset of the article that I have abandoned the argument I used to redate the First Philippic of Demosthenes to early 350. But, since this speech shows an awareness, not only of Philip's Thracian campaign, but also of the foray into Chalkidike that ensued,²⁹ it follows that the Dionysian dating of it to 352/351 must be rejected.³⁰ The First Philippic covers events that were not finished until late summer or autumn 351 and must therefore be dated to late 351 at the earliest.

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27. Dem. 1. 13.

28. Demosthenes implies that force was used (1. 13: 'Ολυνθίοις ἐπεχείρησεν) but no doubt that would suit his purposes; the more likely story is that of Theopompos (*FGrHist* 115 F 127), who has Philip delivering an uplifting moral homily to the Chalkidian leaders, and reading the Olynthians the riot act. Philip's successes of the past two years should have convinced the Olynthians of their folly.

29. 4. 17: . . . τὰς ἐξαίφνης . . . στρατείας εἰς Πύλας [midsummer 352] καὶ Χερρόνησον [Nov. 352-Aug./Sept. 351] καὶ Ὀλυνθον [ca. Sept. 351].

30. So also, I think, must Focke's argument that the First Philippic was delivered in the debate that approved Charidemos' fleet (see n. 7); for that would mean that the Athenians did not set about establishing (let alone launching) this reconnaissance party until some time after the Thracian campaign and its Chalkidian sequel were over.