

MORE CHALCENTERIC NEGLIGENCE

One of the most difficult tasks facing the modern student of Greek history is that of evaluating the statements of ancient scholars such as Didymus.¹ There can be no denying the general worth of their treatises, for they often provide us with information culled from earlier works that have not come down to us. By preserving fragments of these lost works or providing summaries of their contents, they supplement our meager stock of evidence for Greek history. Yet though these scholars certainly had many more texts at their disposal than we have today, it would be naive to assume that they always interpreted them correctly. Like all scholars, the learned men of antiquity were far from infallible. So although we ought to be thankful for the fragmentary gifts they have bestowed upon us, our gratitude should not exempt their statements from critical scrutiny. Even in the case of the industrious Didymus, we must always be on our guard. Impressed though we may be by his enormous *oeuvre* (over 3,500 volumes, according to the *Suda* and Athenaeus), we should always be mindful of Heraclitus' dictum: πολυμοθήν νόον ἔχειν οὐ διδάσκει.²

Modern scholars have not been unaware of Didymus' shortcomings.³ In fact, West has gone so far as to describe his commentary on Demosthenes as "potted scholarship, hurried compilation rather than intelligent re-interpretation."⁴ But although many errors have been detected in his work, one of the more serious mistakes has hitherto gone unnoticed. This mistake occurs in his commentary on a passage from Demosthenes' *Fourth Philippic* (Dem. 10. 34). Though Didymus' explication of the passage contains valuable information, he fails to use it properly. As a result, he has misled modern scholars about Athenian policy toward the Great King of Persia in the archonship of Lyciscus (344/43); and this misunderstanding in turn has produced a mistaken theory about Athenian attitudes toward the plans of King Philip II of Macedon. A reexamination of Didymus' comments on this passage will, therefore, shed light not only on his methods but also on Athenian relations with Persia and Macedon during a crucial period of Greek history.

It is best to start with the passage from Demosthenes' *Fourth Philippic*. Once we have studied the passage in its context, we will be in a better position to evaluate Didymus' comments on it. In the section of the speech in which the passage is found (10. 33–34), Demosthenes is encouraging the Assembly to send envoys to the Great King with a request for funds to finance their efforts against Philip. He urges them to reject the foolish view of the Great King that has so often in the past put them at a disadvantage and to stop calling him "the barbarian" and "the common enemy of mankind." We now come to the sentence that pricked Didymus' scholarly curiosity:

1. All citations of Didymus are from the new text of L. Pearson and S. Stephens, *Didymi in Demosthenem Commenta* (Stuttgart, 1983).

2. *Suda* Δ 872; Ath. 139C. Seneca (*Epist.* 88. 37) placed the figure at 4,000. For an attempt to explain Didymus' productivity, see P. Foucart, "Étude sur Didymos d'après un papyrus de Berlin," *MAI* 38 (1909): 31–36.

3. See, e.g., L. Cohn, "Didymos," *RE* 5 (1903): 445–46; Foucart, "Étude," pp. 48–52; L. Bliquez, "A Note on the Didymus Papyrus, XII 35," *CJ* 67 (1972): 356–57; S. West, "Chalcenteric Negligence," *CQ* 20 (1970): 288–96.

4. "Negligence," p. 296.

ἔγώ γὰρ ὅταν τιν' ἵδω τὸν μὲν ἐν Σούσοις καὶ Ἐγβατάνοις δεδοικότα καὶ κακόνουν είναι τῇ πόλει φάσκοντα, ὃς καὶ πρότερον συνεπηνώρθωσε τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα καὶ νῦν ἐπηγγέλλετο (εἰ δὲ μὴ ἐδέχεσθ' ὑμεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀπεψηφίζεσθε, οὐ τάκείνου αἴτια), ὑπέρ δὲ τοῦ ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις ἐγγὺς οὐτωσὶ ἐν μέσῃ τῇ Ἐλλάδι αὐξανομένου ληστοῦ τῶν Ἐλλήνων ἀλλοὶ τι λέγοντα, θαυμάζω, καὶ δέδοικα τοῦτον, δστις ἀνὴρ ποτ', ἔγωγε, ἐπειδὴ οὐχ οὐτος Φίλιππον.

Demosthenes is bewildered by the man who asserts that the Great King is ill-disposed toward Athens, but who does not fear Philip for the brigand that he is. To demonstrate how senseless it is to claim that the Great King is hostile to Athens, Demosthenes reminds the Assembly that he “previously put the city back on her feet” (πρότερον συνεπηνώρθωσε τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα) and “was just now promising” to help again (νῦν ἐπηγγέλλετο). Balancing the relative clause in which this information is supplied, the participial phrase ἐπὶ ταῖς θύραις ἐγγὺς οὐτωσὶ ἐν μέσῃ τῇ Ἐλλάδι αὐξανομένου is added to show how irrational it is not to fear Philip.

In commenting on this lengthy sentence, Didymus first had to identify the previous assistance lent by the Great King that restored the city’s fortunes. As Didymus correctly recognized (VII. 28–34), Demosthenes is alluding to the help Pharnabazus furnished to Conon that enabled the Athenians to win their naval victory over Sparta at Cnidus in 394. But like many scholars, Didymus was not content merely to supply the right answer; unable to resist the temptation to indulge in some learned polemic, he refuted in detail certain other scholars who held that Demosthenes is alluding to the Peace of Antalcidas (VII. 11–28). Didymus was obviously right to criticize this alternative proposal, but the argument he employed against it reveals less about the weaknesses of his rivals’ opinion than it does about his own carelessness. Didymus mistakenly thought that the Peace of Antalcidas to which these scholars referred was the abortive proposal that Antalcidas negotiated in 392/91. Citing a passage from Philochorus (*FGrH* 328 F 149a), Didymus pointed out that this proposal was never accepted by the Athenians. Though an impressive display of erudition, the citation is not relevant to the argument of these scholars, who more likely had in mind the successful diplomacy that led to the conclusion of the treaty of 387/86.⁵ About that treaty Didymus had nothing at all to say. Didymus’ error here does not invalidate his own interpretation of Demosthenes’ allusion, but it does demonstrate that he could misinterpret another author’s remarks. This is not the only place in his commentary on the *Fourth Philippic* where he made such an error.

Having pinpointed the earlier occasion on which the Great King helped Athens, Didymus (VIII. 5–32) proceeded to identify the offer that was rejected by the Athenians. In his opinion, Demosthenes is alluding to an embassy sent by the Great King in the archonship of Lyciscus (344/43). This Persian embassy arrived in Athens at the same time as a Macedonian embassy that had been sent by Philip to discuss peace.⁶ The Athenians invited both embassies to address the Assembly at the same meeting, but they gave a response to the Persians that was more haughty than was necessary (ὑπεροπτικάτερον οὐχ ξρην), saying that they

5. Cf. West, “Negligence,” pp. 294–95.

6. The debate over the identity of this Macedonian embassy is summarized by F. Jacoby, *FGrH* iii.B Suppl. ii [notes], p. 427.

would remain at peace with the Great King if he did not attack the Greek cities. Although very lacunose, the text that follows seems to identify Anaximenes and Androtion as Didymus' sources for this information.⁷

Didymus, however, did not think it sufficient merely to list these two sources, so he appended the words of Philochorus (*FGrH* 328 F 157) about the matter. The passage is taken from the Atticographer's account of events during the archonship of Lyciscus: ἐπὶ τούτου βασιλέως πέμψαντος Ἀθήναζε πρέσβεις κακούοντος [φιλίαν διαμένειν] ἔσυντο τὴν πατρώιαν, ἀπεκρίνατο τοῖς πρέσβεσιν Ἀθήνησι διαμενεῖν βασιλεὺς τὴν φιλίαν, ἐὰν μὴ βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τὰς Ἐλληνίδας ἦη πόλεις. On the basis of this passage Didymus inferred that the message sent by the Great King was generous and full of peaceful intentions (εἰρηναῖα καὶ φιλάνθρωπα), whereas the response of the Athenian people was quite the opposite, being rather harsh and offensive (πᾶν τούναντίον βαρύτερα καὶ ἀπηνῆ). He attributed the Great King's generosity to his suspicions about Philip, against whom he was about to wage war. In Didymus' estimation the Great King's decision to attack Philip had been prompted by information obtained from Hermias of Atarneus about Macedonian preparations for war against Persia.

Didymus' explanation of the Great King's motivation and friendly message does not stand up under scrutiny. Hermias had only recently been arrested when Demosthenes delivered the *Fourth Philippic* in 341/40, and the news of what had been discovered from his interrogation had not yet reached Athens.⁸ But the Persian envoys who carried the Great King's friendly message were received in Athens in 344/43. Chronology aside, it is also odd that Didymus inferred that the Great King embarked on this campaign to win Athenian hearts and minds as a result of what he had learned from Hermias about Philip's plans. According to Didymus' own comments on this very section of the speech (V. 64–VI. 18, VI. 51–62), the Great King was unable to extract any information at all from Hermias. The Great King may well have had his suspicions about Philip, but they could not have been aroused by anything Hermias had said, for Hermias had maintained his silence to the very end.

7. Didymus means only that he found his information in Anaximenes' *Philippica* and Androtion's *Atthis*; Diels, however, restored the phrase that follows Androtion's name as δὲ καὶ τότε εἴπε... on the assumption that it was Androtion who moved the reply to the Persian embassy. Diels' assumption and restoration have been almost universally accepted, but, as G. L. Cawkwell, "Demosthenes' Policy after the Peace of Philocrates. I," *CQ* 13 (1963): 131, n. 1, has rightly observed, other restorations are possible. P. Harding, "Androtion's Political Career," *Historia* 25 (1976): 197–98, has also questioned Diels' restoration. Pearson and Stephens print Diels' restoration, noting neither Cawkwell's alternative suggestions nor Harding's objections.

8. Dion. Hal. *Amm.* 1. 10 and Did. 1. 29–30 place the speech in the archonship of Nicomachus (341/40), but Didymus also reports that some scholars put it in the archonship of Sosigenes (342/41); unfortunately, his summary and refutation of their arguments have been lost. For the earlier dating, see A. Körte, "Zu Didymos' Demosthenes-Commentar," *RhM* 60 (1905): 388–90, who argues that since Demosthenes fails to mention the Athenian expedition to liberate Oreus in Skiphorion of 342/41 (Did. I. 13–14), the speech must have been delivered before that date; but as Cawkwell, "Demosthenes' Policy," pp. 134–35, points out, the omission is inconsequential. M. M. Markle's defense of Körte ("Demosthenes' Second Philippic: A Valid Policy for the Athenians against Philip," *Antichthon* 15 [1981]: 82–83) is unconvincing, since it assumes that Demosthenes intended to propose specific actions in specific places; rather, he wished (10. 7–10) to demonstrate in general terms that carelessness and laziness had gradually undermined Athens' position and that Philip would not cease from his aggression unless checked by Athens. Note too that in the *Third Philippic* Demosthenes alludes (9. 17) to Philip's attempt to gain control of Megara but neglects to mention that the attempt was successfully resisted.

Despite these blunders in Didymus' analysis of the Persian motives for sending the embassy of 344/43, modern scholars have accepted his view that Demosthenes' words *νῦν ἐπηγγέλλετο* allude to this embassy. They have also accepted his characterization of the Athenian reply as *ὑπεροπτικώτερον* ἢ *ἔχοτην* and *βαρύτερα καὶ ἀπηνῆ*.⁹ Several scholars have gone a step further and interpreted this allegedly hostile response as an endorsement of Philip's policy of uniting all the Greeks against Persia.¹⁰

But do the words *νῦν ἐπηγγέλλετο* really refer to the message carried by the Persian embassy of 344/43? To answer this question we need to look first at the historical circumstances surrounding the Persian embassy. We know that in 344/43 the Great King was preparing for a campaign against Egyptian rebels led by King Nectanebo, who had so far resisted several Persian attempts to recover the lost province.¹¹ One of the Great King's most serious concerns was that the Greeks would support his disloyal subjects as they had done so many times before.¹² To assure himself of Greek cooperation, therefore, he sent out embassies to the Greek cities in 344/43. Diodorus (16. 44. 1) gives the impression that these embassies conveyed only a request for troops, but the fragment of Philochorus preserved by Didymus (*FGrH* 328 F 157) reveals that in the case of Athens, at least, the embassy was mainly concerned to ensure their continuing *φιλία*.¹³ The Athenians did not disappoint the Great King and declared that they would remain at peace with him as long as he did not attack the Greek cities. The Spartans gave a similar reply.¹⁴ But both the Athenians and the Spartans declined to join in the Persian expedition against Egypt. Although their response was not all he might have wished, the Great King did gain a pledge that both cities would maintain their friendship, a declaration tantamount to a guarantee not to intervene on the side of the rebels. As far as we can tell, the Athenians and the Spartans honored their pledges and sent neither money nor troops to the Egyptians under Nectanebo.¹⁵ Thanks in large part to their benevolent neutrality,

9. See, e.g., C. F. Lehmann-Haupt, "Didymos zum Jahre 344–3," *Klio* 10 (1910): 391–93; G. Glotz and R. Cohen, *Histoire grecque*, vol. 3: *La grèce au IV^e siècle: La lutte pour l'hégémonie (404–336)* (Paris, 1936), p. 319; Foucart, "Étude," p. 72; H. Berve, *Griechische Geschichte* (Freiburg, 1952), p. 152; F. Jacoby, *FGrH* iii.B Suppl. ii [text], pp. 531–32; G. T. Griffith in N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *A History of Macedonia*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1978), p. 488; G. Wirth, *Philip II* (Stuttgart, 1985), p. 115.

10. See F. Wüst, *Philip II von Makedonien und Griechenland in den Jahren 346 bis 338* (Munich, 1938), p. 66; Cawkwell, "Demosthenes' Policy," pp. 121, 128–31; J. R. Ellis, *Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism* (London, 1976), pp. 146–47; M. M. Markle, "Support of Athenian Intellectuals for Philip: A Study of Isocrates' *Philippus* and Speusippus' *Letter to Philip*," *JHS* 96 (1976): 90–91.

11. For a refutation of earlier attempts to place the Persian embassy after the reconquest of Egypt, see U. Kahrstedt, "Zu Didymos VIII 7ff.," *Klio* 10 (1910): 508. For the date of the reconquest of Egypt, see Cawkwell, "Demosthenes' Policy," pp. 136–38. For previous Persian attempts to retake Egypt, see A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire* (Chicago, 1948), pp. 406–8, 432–33, with the references there.

12. For Greek aid to rebels in the Persian Empire, see Olmstead, *History*, pp. 413, 427–29, with the references there.

13. Diodorus (16. 44. 1) places the Persian appeal in 351/50, but K. J. Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*², vol. 3.2 (Berlin and Leipzig, 1922), pp. 285–87, showed that the appeal must belong to 344/43.

14. Diodorus (16. 44. 1) reports that the Spartans pledged to maintain peace but does not say whether or not their promise was unconditional.

15. Diodorus (16. 47. 6) says only that Nectanebo had 20,000 Greek mercenaries under his command. Although the Athenians did not send troops to the Great King, they may have lent him the services of

the Great King was able in the following years to defeat Nectanebo and reconquer Egypt.¹⁶

In the light of this information I think it is clear that Didymus' identification is mistaken; the words *vūv ἐπηγγέλλετο* cannot refer to the Persian embassy of 344/43. Three points tell against Didymus' identification. First, Demosthenes states that the offer made by the Great King was rejected by the Athenians (*μὴ ἐδέχεσθ' ὑμεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀπεψηφίζεσθε*). That statement cannot apply to the Persian embassy of 344/43. According to Philochorus, that embassy presented a request that the Athenians remain at peace with the Great King, a request that was granted by the Athenians. True, the Athenians did qualify their pledge with the condition *ἐὰν μὴ βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τὰς Ἑλληνίδας ἦη πόλεις*, but that was no stumbling block for the Great King, who at that time had no plans for attacking the Greek cities. The Athenians gave the Great King exactly what he was looking for, a pledge to remain friendly, which was equivalent to an assurance that they would not support the Egyptian rebels.

Of course, we must always consider the possibility that Demosthenes was not telling the complete truth, that he was omitting or distorting facts for his own rhetorical purposes. But that possibility need not be seriously entertained here. Demosthenes was trying to convince the Athenians that their suspicions of the Great King were unfounded: why would he misrepresent what had been a positive Athenian response to a Persian request and say that it was a rejection when it was not? Such a distortion would serve no purpose. The Athenian response to the Persian embassy of 344/43 was essentially positive, and Demosthenes had no motive for representing it otherwise. We can therefore rule out the possibility that Demosthenes was referring to the embassy of 344/43 but was twisting the truth. It is far more likely that Didymus is mistaken in his belief that the words *vūv ἐπηγγέλλετο* allude to the Persian request of 344/43.

Second, Demosthenes' words *vūv ἐπηγγέλλετο* must refer to an offer of assistance made by the Great King. The context indicates that the verb is being used in the sense "to promise, offer." In the middle voice the verb is used with the infinitive with the meaning "to promise or offer to do something" (see LSJ, s.v. 4). What was the Great King offering to do? Since Demosthenes is trying to demonstrate that the Great King is friendly toward Athens and has just alluded to an earlier example of his generosity, both the argumentative logic and the parallel structure of the passage, with *καὶ . . . καὶ* coordinating the verbs *συνεπηγόρθωσε* and *ἐπηγγέλλετο*, show that the latter verb refers to another offer made by the Great King to help Athens, an offer that was similar to the one made before the battle of Cnidus: *καὶ πρότερον συνεπηγόρθωσε τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα καὶ vūv ἐπηγγέλλετο* (sc. *τὰ τοιαῦτα ποιεῖν = ἐπανορθοῦν τὰ τῆς πόλεως πράγματα*). Furthermore, the verb *ἐδέχεσθε* in the following parenthesis shows that the Great King was offering to do something *for* Athens, not asking them to grant his request.¹⁷ But in 344/43 he made a request (*ἀξιοῦντος*) through his embassy that the Athenians continue their friendship with him;¹⁸ on

their general Phocion, who helped to recapture Cyprus for Evagoras (Diod. 16. 42. 7); for the date of this campaign (344), see Beloch, *Griechische Geschichte*, 3.2:285–87.

16. See Diod. 16. 46. 4–51. 3.

17. As Didymus recognized: VII. 10–11 *ἀποψηφίσασθαι δ(ὲ) τὴν πόλιν τὰ διδόμ(εν)α*.

18. Cf. Diod. 16. 44. 1 (*ἀξιῶν*).

that occasion the Great King was asking for something *from* the Athenians. Here too it is unlikely that Demosthenes is distorting the truth. The Persian embassy of 344/43 was not ancient history when Demosthenes delivered the *Fourth Philippic* in 341/40: his audience would have remembered what the Persian ambassadors had said when they spoke to the Assembly three years before. Moreover, as I have already noted, Demosthenes had no motive for misrepresenting the Great King's request of 344/43. He was attempting in the speech to persuade his fellow citizens to lay aside their fears about the Great King. Surely the Persian request of 344/43 for continued peace could have been taken as a sign of good will toward Athens. Why, then, should he distort the facts when the undistorted truth would have provided strong support for his argument?

Third, it is clear the Demosthenes is alluding to a message that had just recently arrived; in Demosthenes, *vūv* with the imperfect customarily refers to an event in the very recent past.¹⁹ Yet the Persian embassy to which Philochorus referred arrived in 344/43, whereas Demosthenes delivered the *Fourth Philippic* three years later, in 341/40. Admittedly, temporal adverbs such as *vūv* are notoriously elastic, and it is conceivable that in 341/40 the Persian embassy of 344/43 seemed to be relatively recent when compared with the Persian assistance lent before the battle of Cnidus over fifty years before. But in view of the arguments advanced above, we ought to conclude that the verb *ἐπηγγέλλετο* refers to a Persian offer to assist Athens made in, or shortly before, 341/40, an offer that is unattested apart from this passage.

We are not finished yet: there is still Didymus' characterization of the Athenian reply to the Persian embassy in 344/43, a characterization based on Philochorus' report. Was it really all that hostile? To understand how the Great King might have reacted to it, we need to recall once more his predicament and aims at the time. As we observed above, the Great King was then gathering his forces for a campaign to recapture Egypt and feared that the Greeks might support the rebels under King Nectanebo. His aim in sending embassies to Greece was therefore two-fold: first, to gain assurances from the Greeks that they would not intervene on the side of the rebels; second, to solicit aid for his expedition. Viewed in relation to Persian aims in 344/43, the response of the Athenians was not hostile at all. Far from it; the Athenians gave the Great King one of the very things he was seeking, a pledge to remain at peace with him, a pledge that was equivalent to a promise not to assist the Egyptian rebels. If anything, the Athenian response was quite reassuring.²⁰

Of course, the Athenians did not go as far as the Thebans and Argives, who sent several thousand hoplites to help the Persians (Diod. 16. 44. 2; Isoc. 12. 159). But then again, they could not have been expected to. The Athenians had a long tradition of posing as the defenders of Greek freedom against the threat of Persian tyranny. Unlike Argos and Thebes, which had an equally long history of

19. For *vūv* with the imperfect referring to the immediate past, see, e.g., Dem. 18. 28, 111, 218.

20. See also R. Laqueur, "Philocoros," *RE* 19 (1938): 2440–41, and esp. P. Cloché, *La politique étrangère d'Athènes* (Paris, 1934), p. 252. Cf. *SIG* 182, a similar response, also favorable to the interests of the Great King, given to the satraps, probably during their revolt in 362/61. For discussion of this inscription, see M. N. Tod, *Greek Historical Inscriptions*, vol. 2: *From 404 to 323 B.C.* (Oxford, 1948), pp. 139–41.

collaboration with Persia, the Athenians could not afford to appear too friendly toward the Great King lest they be accused of betraying their past.²¹ It was probably for this reason that they appended the condition, ἐὰν μὴ βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τὰς Ἑλληνίδας ἦηι πόλεις, to their reply to the Persian embassy. The clause is probably best interpreted as a signal to their fellow Greeks that their cooperation with Persia had its limits and that their acquiescence in the reconquest of Egypt should not be taken to mean that they would idly stand by if the Great King were to attack a Greek city. It certainly makes better sense as a reassurance intended for the other Greeks than as a warning to the Persians, for in 344/43 the latter displayed no intention of attacking the former.

It is conceivable, no doubt, that the Great King was annoyed by the wording of the reply and found it arrogant. Yet had he felt insulted by it, he would hardly have made the generous offer of assistance around 341/40 to which Demosthenes alludes in the *Fourth Phillipic*. Indeed, his willingness to help in 341/40 is surely convincing evidence that he did not feel insulted by the reply he received in 344/43. On these grounds we ought to reject Didymus' assessment of that reply. The Athenians' response to the Great King's request did not fulfill all his expectations, but it did allay one of his worst fears, and for that favor he appears afterward to have been grateful. Plainly, Didymus misinterpreted Philochorus' report of the Athenian reply because he mistakenly believed that Demosthenes' words μὴ ἐδέχεσθ' ὑμεῖς, ἀλλ' ἀπεψηφίζεσθε referred to the same reply. Since these words show that the Athenians unfavorably responded to the Great King, Didymus concluded that the Athenians' reply to the Persian embassy in 344/43 must also have been unfavorable.²² His reasoning is impeccable; the fault lies with the premise on which it is based..

Those who have accepted Didymus' interpretation of the Athenian response of 344/43 have found support in a passage from the *Letter of Philip* found in the Demosthenic corpus ([Dem.] 12. 6–7). The authenticity of this letter has been much debated, but for the sake of argument I will assume that it reproduces (either verbatim or as rephrased by Anaximenes) actual arguments put forward by Philip in 340/39.²³ The letter contains a catalog of complaints about Athenian actions in the years leading up to the outbreak of war between Athens and Macedon. In the section that concerns us, Philip notes that the Athenians have sent an embassy to persuade the Great King to make war on him, and he finds this inconsistent with their previous hostility toward Persia. To illustrate their former hostility, he recounts that before the Persian reconquest of Egypt and

21. As they apparently were by Philip in 341/40: see [Dem.] 12. 6.

22. Although Jacoby expressed uncertainty in the text of his commentary (*FGrH* iii.B Suppl. ii [text], p. 532), he stated in the notes that the description of the Athenian reply as "more haughty than was necessary" was the opinion of Anaximenes, not of Didymus, "who does not pronounce historical or political judgments" (*FGrH* iii.B Suppl. ii [notes], p. 427). But that the description represents Didymus' own judgment is clear both from the quotation of Philochorus, who apparently did not evaluate the tone of the reply (had he done so, Didymus would surely have quoted it), and from Didymus' own words (VIII. 23 σαφῶς ἐν τούτοις), which indicate that his opinion was reached by his own inference; cf. Didymus' judgments, based on his own inferences, in his remarks on the Great King's motive for sending the embassy of 344/43 (VIII. 28 στοχάσατο δ' ἀν τις). If Didymus judged the tone of the Athenian reply reported by Philochorus, he certainly could have done the same with the information he found in Anaximenes' *Philippica*.

23. For a summary of the debate, see Wüst, *Philip II*, pp. 133–36.

Phoenicia, the Athenians voted to call upon him and all the other Greeks if the Great King tried to meddle in their affairs (ἀν ἐκεῖνός τι νεωτερίζῃ). Philip is undoubtedly referring to the Athenian response to the Persian embassy of 344/43, but it is also clear that he is twisting the sense of the response to fit the point he is trying to make. In the official wording of the response given by Philochorus (*FGrH* 328 F 157) and confirmed by Diodorus (16. 44. 1), the Athenians pledged to remain at peace with Persia provided one condition was met.²⁴ But in Philip's version the pledge to maintain peace is transformed into a threat to go to war. True, the Athenian response did contain an implicit threat to go to war in the event that the Persians attacked the Greek cities, but it was only implicit. The main emphasis in the official reply is on the promise to keep the peace. By omitting the peaceful declaration and making explicit what was only implicit, Philip completely transforms the tone of the Athenian response, making it sound more aggressive than it actually was. In addition, Philip claims that the Athenians threatened to call on him and the rest of the Greeks if the Persians attempted to interfere in their affairs. This claim, too, stresses Athenian hostility, but it corresponds to nothing in the official response. Philip's version is obviously distorted and cannot be used to support Didymus' assessment of the Athenian response. It is an excellent specimen of Philip's astute propaganda, not a reliable piece of historical evidence.

Since the response given to the Persian embassy of 344/43 was not intended to offend and was not perceived as insulting by the Great King, it cannot be taken to endorse Philip's plans to lead a panhellenic crusade against Persia. I doubt that Philip harbored such a plan at this point;²⁵ but even if he did, he would not have found the Athenian response encouraging. It was, after all, a promise to refrain from attacking Persia as long as the Great King respected the freedom of the Greeks. If the Great King abided by that condition—and none of our sources indicates that he did not intend to abide by it—the Athenian declaration would be an obstacle to Philip's plans. Philip needed from the Athenians not a conditional promise to keep peace with Persia, but an unconditional declaration of hostility, and that was not the message they communicated. It is therefore unlikely that Philip's alleged plans had any influence on Athenian policy toward Persia in 344/43.²⁶

Our study of Didymus' commentary on Demosthenes 10. 34 has not revealed anything we did not already know about his methods: it has only corroborated West's judgment that his work is hasty and slipshod and has reminded us once more that we should always scrutinize his statements before placing our trust in them. Yet though we have not learned anything new about Didymus, we have gained some fresh insights into Athenian relations with Persia and Macedon in 344/43. It is now clear that the Athenian response to the Persian embassy in that

24. For the wording of the response in Philochorus as "the official formulation" and the description of it in the *Letter of Philip* as "a somewhat coloured version," see Jacoby, *FGrH* iii.B Suppl. ii [notes], p. 426.

25. Against the view that Philip's plan went back to at least 346, see R. M. Errington, "Review-Discussion: Four Interpretations of Philip II," *AJAH* 6 (1981): 77–83.

26. Note that the Athenian attitude expressed in the reply of 344/43 was much less hostile than their stance in 354/53, when Demosthenes (14. 3–13) spoke against a proposal to go to war with Persia.

year was not "more haughty than was necessary." On the contrary, the Great King was not offended by it and three years later was even willing to come to the aid of the Athenians. Their refusal of his offer in 341/40 was, however, regarded as insulting by the Great King and was probably responsible for his harsh rejection, in a letter described by Aeschines (3. 238) as "insolent and barbarous," of later Athenian pleas for assistance. We can also see that the reply delivered to the Persian embassy of 344/43 should not be interpreted as an endorsement of Philip's plans for uniting all the Greeks in a crusade against Persia. There is much to be learned from the fragments of earlier authors preserved by Didymus in his commentary on Demosthenes—provided, of course, that we do not allow his misuse of them to lead us astray.²⁷

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THE PERSIAN FLEET IN 334

To modern historians one of the curiosities of Alexander's conquest of the Persian Empire is the failure of the superior Persian fleet even to attempt to prevent his passage to Asia. Ulrich Wilcken remarks: "it was lucky for him . . . that the Persians had not thought of preventing his crossing with their vastly superior fleet." J. R. Hamilton expresses "surprise" at the lack of interference by the Persians. According to A. R. Burn, P. A. Brunt, and A. B. Bosworth the fleet simply did not arrive in time; Bosworth states that because of the Persians' Egyptian campaign of 336 the fleet was unavailable until 334. D. W. Engels believes that the fleet timed its arrival in the Aegean to correspond with the harvest; it could not be adequately provisioned before June.¹

None of these explanations is adequate. It is very unlikely that the Persians would not have thought of using the fleet; nor is it credible that Alexander would have staked his entire expedition on the chance that the Persian fleet would be late. Engels' contention that the fleet could not have been adequately supplied prior to the harvest also fails to convince. The fleet would have been traveling as far as the Hellespont along friendly and often prosperous shores. Cilicia in particular was a grain-exporting region, and the alluvial plains of western Asia were likewise very productive.² It is, therefore, likely that large quantities of grain would have been available along the route. Moreover, the

1. Wilcken, *Alexander the Great*, trans. G. C. Richards (New York, 1967), p. 83; Hamilton, *Alexander the Great* (Pittsburgh, 1979), p. 53; Burn, *Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic World* (New York, 1962), p. 70; Brunt, *Arrian: "Anabasis Alexandri,"* vol. I (Cambridge, Mass., 1976), pp. lxiv-lxv, 453; Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's "History of Alexander,"* vol. I (Oxford, 1980), p. 137; Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1978), p. 33.

2. See E. C. Semple, *The Geography of the Mediterranean Region: Its Relation to Ancient History* (New York, 1971), pp. 344, 346.