

343 BCE

Prosecution of Philocrates

Philocrates was the Athenian orator who put forwards the proposal to open peace negotiations with Philip II (Buckler 2003:440). He also moved to send ten envoys to Philip and, along with Aeschines and Demosthenes, was among that delegation (Buckler 2003:441). The treaty, voted on by the assembly in 346 BCE, was eponymous to Philocrates (Buckler 2003:444).

Peace of Philocrates was thought of as imperfect but satisfactory until 343 BCE when Philip's intervention in Euboea alarmed certain Athenians (Buckler 2003:454-6). Demosthenes accused Philip of installing tyrants in Euboean poleis and that Euboea was being turned into a fortress against Athens (Buckler 2003:456-7). Buckler (2003:458), correctly, suggests that the Athenian displeasure stemmed from how Philip had turned the Peace to his own ends, based on evidence from Demosthenes (19.328).

In 343 BCE, Philip addressed the baseless complaints by sending an embassy with a famous orator, Python of Byzantion (Buckler 2003:459). This address highlighted a political division within Athens between politicians who were against the Peace, led by Demosthenes and now proclaiming to be defending Athenian liberty, and those they saw as tools of Philip (Buckler 2003:460).

In 345 BCE, Aeschines won a lawsuit that made Timarchos, a supporter of Demosthenes, retire from public life (Buckler 2003:460). Due to prosecutions being heavily influenced by public opinions (Osborne 2010:174), it took over two years for a counter to be made (Buckler 2003:460).

In 343 BCE, Hypereides indicted Philocrates for taking Philip's bribes to betray Athens (Dem.19.116). There were numerous specialised procedures in Athenian law (Osbourne 2010:171). In this case, the law used is 'eisangelia' or the law of impeachment which was specific to crimes regarding the state (Aristot.Pol.8.4).

Philocrates fled instead of facing trial, which Aeschines claimed was proof of his guilt (Aeschin.2.6). Aeschines used Philocrates' escape as an example to highlight his own innocence, called into question after Philocrates' trial, so it may have been that Philocrates thought he could not defend himself satisfactorily when general opinion was already against him (Buckler 2003:461).

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