

[The following is a translation of the paper by Juan Signes Codoñer entitled 'El Panatenaico de Isócrates: 3-las cartas a los Macedonios', which appeared in the journal *Emerita* v.69 (1) 2001, pp.7-53. *Note* that some additions and corrections to the text and footnotes of the original publication have been made by the author in this 2005 translation. The translators are Tony Natoli and Thomas Pill.]

### **The Panathenaicus of Isocrates: 3: The Letters to the Macedonians.**

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[p.7] The epistolary corpus which has come down to our time under the name of Isocrates contains a total of nine letters of which four (*Letters 2, 3, 4 and 5*) are addressed to Macedonian rulers, all of them written after the publication of the *Philippus* of 346. Taking into consideration that after this date the only discourse that has been preserved for us is the *Panathenaicus*, these four letters offer us a crucial testimony to confirm the validity of the interpretation that I made of this discourse in [p. 8] the previous installments of this study.<sup>1</sup> For this reason it is necessary to dedicate a detailed and individualized study to these letters, which takes account of the problems of authenticity and dating, about which there was an intense debate at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century but which has scarcely received much attention since.

#### **1. The First letter to Philip (2)**

We have here the longest letter of our orator. In it Isocrates addresses the king begging pardon for addressing him again, although it is not to give him counsel as on previous occasions, but to show his concern for what has happened to him, seeing that he has put his life at risk (§1-2). As he tells us, the king, to demonstrate his valour, had run a risk which is unnecessary and unsuitable to his position, for if he had died in combat not only would he have lost his life but he would have prejudiced his plans (§3-4). In other states such as Athens, Sparta and Persia the rulers have always been protected from the perils that lie in wait in combat, for their death would endanger the state (§5-8). For this reason Philip should have kept these examples in mind and keep himself alive in order to achieve a glory that is uniquely reserved for him (§9-10). Philip's aim, continues our orator, should not be difficult wars without prestige against the barbarians, except in so far as they are sufficient to control his frontiers, but the war against the Persian King (§11). Isocrates regrets not having sent the letter before he set out on the campaign for then the king would have been cautious and avoided the wound (§12). Though he wants to conclude the letter at this point so as not to convert a simple letter into a discourse (§13), he nevertheless extends it a bit further in order to alert Philip not to pay attention to the criticisms which certain orators who manipulate the people direct against him (§14-15) and to continue to maintain the alliance with Athens, for although this state has committed errors, it continues to be the most useful to Philip in his struggle against the barbarians (§16-18), much more useful of course than recourse to mercenaries (§19). He stresses to Philip the necessity of maintaining with Athens the same prudent behaviour he showed with the Thessalians and to avoid the use of force (§20-21) and he finishes the letter complaining of the bad reputation which he himself has [p.9] amongst specific Athenian circles (§22-23) and urges Philip again to act with good will toward the Greeks (§24).

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<sup>1</sup> 'El *Panathenaico* de Isócrates: 1 *excursus* de Agamenón' *Emerita* 64, 1996, pp. 137-156 and 'El *Panathenaico* de Isócrates: 2 Tema y finalidad del discurso', *Emerita* 66, 1998, pp. 67-94.

The letter, whose authenticity has never been questioned, is later than the publication of the *Philippus* of 346, seeing that at its beginning Isocrates recalls that he has previously counselled the king regarding what it behoves him to do (πρότερον ἐτύγγανόν σοι παρηνεκῶς). A chronological basis for determining more precisely its date is given by the very motive of the letter, which Isocrates declares he wrote out of concern for the health of Philip and because he takes unnecessary risks which could cause his death. In §11 Isocrates even urges the king not to engage excessively in the wars that he now wages against the barbarians but confine himself simply to securing his territory against them, for his principal objective ought to be the war against Persia. From the tenor of what was written in §12 it is clear that in the course of this campaign Philip has taken a risk that could have cost him his life. Evidently here he is referring to the grave wounds which Philip received throughout his life and without doubt, as all scholars concede, to that which Philip received in his right leg in the bloody campaign against Pleuratus, king of the Ardiaei, an Illyrian people on the Dalmatian coast. Of that wound and other wounds which the King received Didymus informs us in his commentary on Demosthenes XI.22.<sup>2</sup> Other wounds which Philip received in the years 354 and 339 do not enter into consideration here as they fall outside the chronological period indicated by the contents of the letter, as we shall see. The dating of the letter depends thus on the dating of the campaign against the Ardiaei, which happened immediately after the campaign against the Dardanians. However we are ill-informed about both campaigns, seeing that Diodorus (16.69) and Justin (8.6) are confused about the time they took place.

Benno von Hagen and almost simultaneously Eduard Meyer had no doubt that the campaigns against the Illyrians took place in 344, in view of the fact that they preceded that completed by Philip in Thessaly in the autumn of this very year.<sup>3</sup> The letter of Isocrates had to be for that reason later than that date [p.10] for it had to be written towards the end of 344 or even, as von Hagen thought, at the beginning of 343. This opinion from the time it was accepted by Georges Mathieu in his edition became the *communis opinio* virtually up to our day amongst philologists<sup>4</sup> and is accepted without discussion in recent editions of Isocrates.<sup>5</sup> Notwithstanding, amongst historians 345 has for years been proposed as the alternative date for the Illyrian campaigns of Philip. The proposition which was first advanced around the beginning of the twentieth century<sup>6</sup>, was defended afresh by Cawkwell in 1963 in an article dedicated to the reconstruction of the Athenian political scene after the Peace of Philocrates of 346.<sup>7</sup> Cawkwell discussed the dating of the embassy of Python of Byzantium, sent by Philip to Athens to defend the king against the accusation of breaking the Peace and damaging the interests of Athens. According to the proposal of this author the embassy of Python would not have taken place in 343, as was thought unanimously up to then, but one year earlier in 344. One proof of this was the *Second Philippic* of Demosthenes which would have been written precisely to answer the accusation of the Macedonian legation of Python. For Cawkwell it was necessary in consequence to pull back the date of Isocrates' *Letter 2* to 345, as the observations made by the orator in *Letter 2.14-15*, downplaying the Athenian criticisms of Philip as slander, are absolutely 'inapposite' in the heated atmosphere in which Athens lived one year later as a result of the embassy. Cawkwell found support for his dating

<sup>2</sup> The commentary is preserved in a papyrus found in Egypt: H. Diels – W. Schubart (eds.), *Dydimi de Demosthene commenta*. Leipzig, 1904, cols. 12.40–13.12.

<sup>3</sup> B.von Hagen, 'Isokrates und Alexander', *Philologus* 67, 1908, 113-133, in particular 121-124 and E. Meyer, 'Isokrates zweiter Brief an Philipp und Demosthenes zweite Philippika', in *Sitzungsberichte der preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 1909, 758-779 (reprinted in *Kleine Schriften* II, Halle, 1924, 101-129).

<sup>4</sup> G. Mathieu, 'Lettres', in G. Mathieu, E. Brémond, *Isocrate. Discours* v. IV, Paris, 1962, 174-176 and G. Mathieu, *Philippe et lettres a Philippe, à Alexandre et à Antipatros, texte et traduction avec une intr. et des notes*, Paris, 1924, 37-41.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. J.M.Guzmán Hermida (trans.), *Isócrates. Discursos*, Madrid, 1980, v.II, 273. I myself accepted it as valid in *Emerita* 1998, p. 80, n. 32, before submitting it to a close examination.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Mathieu, *Philippe*..., 37 n.256.

<sup>7</sup> G.L.Cawkwell, 'Demosthenes' policy after the peace of Philocrates. I', *CQ* 13, 1963, 120-138.

in the fact that the campaign against the Ardiaei in which Philip was wounded could very well have taken place in 345 seeing that: 1) all scholars agree that the mention of the two Illyrian campaigns in Diodorus 16.69.7 under the Attic year 344/3 is very late and the result of an error of sequencing in his narration of the facts for these years; 2) it seems impossible that Philip could have developed in the first half [p.11] of 344 two so complex campaigns such as those mounted against the Dardanians and Ardiaei before marching on Thessaly<sup>8</sup>; 3) it is not expressly stated in either source that Philip carried out any campaign in 345 seeing that the foundation of colonies which the sources attribute to him 'would not have required Philip's presence or the use of his whole military power'.

The arguments of Cawkwell in which he looks at the dating of the embassy of Python have not always been accepted by some of the major specialists of the period,<sup>9</sup> but his idea that the Illyrian campaigns ought to be dated to 345 was taken up by Griffith who defended it convincingly with various arguments.<sup>10</sup> The proposal of Griffith, with minor variations, seems to have become a *communis opinio* amongst historians.<sup>11</sup> This suggests that the letter of Isocrates for these historians could have been written in 345 or, at the latest, at the beginning of 344 as, although Isocrates writes to the king on account of the wound he had just received, a certain lapse of time was necessary before the news reached Athens from the region of the Ardiaei where the king was campaigning. In either case, Isocrates writes a long time before the publication of the *Second Philippic* in the autumn of 344, which marks the first turning point on the road to war between Athens and Macedon after the conclusion of the Peace of Philocrates in 346. This dating fits perfectly with the harsh tone employed in this open letter criticising the Athenian enemies of Philip, which is perhaps difficult to explain in the political climate at the end of 344.

Another aspect which helps to fix the dating of the letter is the mention in §20-21 of the fact that Philip has treated the Thessalians with justice (δικαίως) and in a suitable manner (συμπερόντως). Meyer thought that this referred to the intervention in Thessaly carried out by Philip in [p.12] 344, which he rightly dated after the Illyrian campaigns of that year. Regarding the dealings of Philip in Thessaly in 344 we are informed by diverse sources<sup>12</sup> which speak of the removal of tyrants from some Thessalian cities and the imposition of a new, more centralized order controlled by Macedonian garrisons. One might think that the words of Isocrates could be applied to the changes that took place in 344, but already Meyer himself noticed that at *Philippus* 20, written in 346, Isocrates was speaking in similar terms of Philip's treatment of the Thessalians, thanks to which the king had achieved their loyalty. Philip, as Isocrates wrote in 346, had achieved due to his acts of generosity (ταῖς εὐεργεσίαις) the voluntary alliance of some cities in that area (πρὸς τὴν αὐτοῦ συμμαχίαν), whilst he conquered by force those who resisted.<sup>13</sup> In reality Philip was intervening in the affairs of Thessaly from 353. The events of 344 were motivated precisely by a rebellion of cities like Pherae and Larissa against the *status quo* established by the Macedonians in the previous years, and imply only the end of a process of growing interventionism by the Macedonian king in the region. It is therefore evident that the allusions to Thessaly in *Letter 3* do not necessarily refer to the events of 344 and could have been written years before, like the passage in the *Philippus*.<sup>14</sup> If Isocrates had referred in his *Letter 3* to the intervention in

<sup>8</sup> Isocrates himself describes these wars as χαλεπούς in *Letter 3*.11

<sup>9</sup> J.R. Ellis accepts 344 as the date of the embassy (*CAH VI: The fourth century B.C.*, Cambridge 1994, 766) whereas N.G.L.Hammond follows a date of 343 (*Philip of Macedon*, London 1994, 106) and G.T.Griffiths thinks that it could have taken place in the winter of 344/343 (*A history of Macedonia II*, Oxford 1979, 724).

<sup>10</sup> G.T.Griffiths, 'Illyrian war (?) 345', in Hammond-Griffith, *Hist. of Macedonia*, *op. cit.*, 469-474.

<sup>11</sup> J.R. Ellis *op.cit.* 762-763 opts for 345 for the Illyrian campaigns, but Hammond *op. cit.* 115-117 although he inclines to 345 for its commencement does not rule out its continuing into 344.

<sup>12</sup> Diod. 16.69.7-8, Polyaeus 4.2.19, Dem. 6.22; 8.62 and 19.259-260 etc.

<sup>13</sup> Meyer, *op.cit.* (n. 3) 109.

<sup>14</sup> Hammond, *Philip...*, *op.cit.* p. 118 appears to ignore this passage in the *Philippus* and considers that *Letter 3* refers to events in Thessaly in 344, something that he confirms on p. 117, where he indicates

Thessaly in 344 we perhaps would have expected on his part less enthusiastic support for the policy of Philip, considering his contemporary Demosthenes was writing, precisely in the year 344, in harsh terms of the ultimate subjugation of Thessaly by the Macedonians [*Second Philippic* 22], who we know billeted garrisons there [*Third Philippic* 12].<sup>15</sup> If we consider, furthermore, that Isocrates in his *Letter 2.20* writes that the prudent policy that Philip has followed with the Thessalians is the same he ought to adopt with the Athenians (χρὴ τοῖνυν καὶ περὶ ἡμᾶς πειρᾶσθαι γίγνεσθαι σε τοιοῦτον), it seems hard to think that Isocrates has in mind the events [p.13] of 344.<sup>16</sup> These considerations serve to support a date for the letter of 345 or at the latest the beginning of 344 when Isocrates did not know anything of Philip's plans for intervention in Thessaly.<sup>17</sup>

The allusions to Athenians who criticise the policy of Philip perhaps fit better, as already suggested by Cawkwell, in a context before the spring of 344 than after that date, when the progressive hostility of the Athenians towards Macedonian power may have induced Isocrates to formulate the letter in a different manner. Thus the already mentioned reference at §15 to those who slandered Philip, a direct criticism of the work which Demosthenes was carrying out at that time, would perhaps have been expressed in a more prudent form. On the other hand, we have already indicated in the second part of this study that the progressive hostility of Athens towards Philip in the end prejudiced Isocrates himself and was one of the causes that compelled him to write the *Panathenaicus* to vindicate his patriotism. The claims of the orator in §22 that his prestige is not high amongst the people and those whose who consider things at random (οὐτ' εὖ παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς καὶ τοῖς εἰκῆ δοκιμάζουσι φερόμενος), that they do not even understand his opinion and that he suffers envy (ἀγνοούμενος ὑπ' αὐτῶν καὶ φθονούμενος) are precisely those we encounter at the beginning of the *Panathenaicus*, where Isocrates bitterly complains about the incomprehension of many of his fellow citizens. That the coincidence is not fortuitous is proved by another detail. In §16 Isocrates affirms that even Athens in spite of being the state that has procured the most benefits for all the Greeks, [p.14] has committed errors; but then not even the gods are free from error. At *Panathenaicus* 64 Isocrates repeats the same observation and adds 'I have already mentioned this' (ὅπερ εἶπον ἤδη καὶ πρότερον), in what is a clear cross-reference to our passage. These considerations permit us to suspect that the reflections that Isocrates makes in the letter coincide completely with the anxieties which induced him through the years 344-342 to write the *Panathenaicus*. The detailed allusions, the references to the political climate in which Athens at that time was living, the very style of the letter as well as the reference from the *Panathenaicus* to it demonstrate that we are faced with a genuine letter of Isocrates.

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that Isocrates wrote it in 344. However, on p. 105 he says (without taking into account the contradiction that he falls into) that Isocrates wrote his *Letter 3* 'in late 345 or early 344', just as I maintain.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond – Griffith, *Hist. Maced.... op.cit.*, 528-534.

<sup>16</sup> Pace M.M.Markle, 'Support of Athenian intellectuals for Philip: a study of Isocrates' Philippus and Speusippus' Letter to Philip', *JHS* 96, 1976, 80-99, who, starting from the assumption that the letter is dated to 344, considers it reasonable that in this passage Isocrates was counselling Philip to 'attempt to gain the support of Athens by promoting by all means his friends in the city and by crushing all factions which were opposing him' (p. 88). It seems unlikely that Isocrates could have expressed himself publicly in these terms before his city without running the risk of being considered a traitor, a circumstance that Markle raises in the first part of his study when pointing out that the *Philippus* was essentially directed to his fellow citizens (pp. 81-85).

<sup>17</sup> The fact that in §18 Isocrates indicates that if Philip should take Athens as an ally those who are today subject to him would not find in Athens any refuge (ἀποστροφὴν), could refer to the Phocian refugees who had fled to Athens at the end of the Third Sacred War in the spring of 346 (Dem. 5.19). If this inference is correct, I believe that there could be another motive for dating the letter closer to 346 than to 344. More difficult to interpret is the fact that *Letter 2.11* should contain reflections on the barbarians and Persians very similar to those of *Letter 3.5*, for one cannot say which of the two passages could have been written first.

## 2. The Letter to Antipater (4).

More problems of authenticity have been raised by *Letter 4*, addressed by Isocrates to Antipater, the Macedonian ambassador to Athens on two occasions: in 346 in relation to the Peace of Philocrates and in 338 to negotiate the peace following Chaeronea. In the letter our orator recommends to Antipater a person called Diodotus and his son, of whom we know nothing, and the only allusion to the historical circumstances is that which Isocrates makes at the beginning when he intimates that it is dangerous for him to send a letter to Macedonia now that it is at war with Athens. The letter had to be written therefore after the war had broken out between Athens and Philip in 340. Moreover, Isocrates does not direct to Antipater any remark different to what is addressed to the recipients of *Letters 7 and 8*, which also contain recommendations, from which we may suppose that he had previously had dealings with him, probably in 346.

Many are the writers who have questioned the authenticity of the letter. The first was Bruno Keil, fundamentally on stylistic considerations, which no one to date has been able to refute.<sup>18</sup> As this scholar concluded, there are in the letter many expressions which do not appear in the rest of Isocrates' work, such as the strange ἄταρ σίγη 'some defects' in §11 (instead of the expected κακά τινα<sup>19</sup>), the lyric λιγυρώτατον of §4, or words such as διαγωγαί (§2), συνημερεύειν (§4), ἐφέλκεσθαι (§6), ὀκνηῶς (§8), εὐκρινής (§11), σωματίον (§11), πρεσβυτικός (§13), προσφιλής (§13). There are as well expressions or turns of phrase that are really a little unfortunate and uncharacteristic of Isocrates [p.15] such as ἀξιόχρεων τὸν ὄγκον τὸν τῆς ψυχῆς ἔχοντες (§5) or τοῦμπροσθε πειραθῆναι προελθεῖν (§10). Keil indicates as well that the profusion of similes we encounter in the letter is plainly alien to Isocrates, as when in §8 it is said that the difficulties which Diodotus had with his previous patrons [some Asian δυνασται] dissuaded him from approaching Antipater, in the same way as a man who has suffered a painful experience at sea does not dare to sail any more; or also when in §10-11 he indicates that Diodotus considers that to enter the service of Antipater is similar to participating in an athletic contest, although he realizes he lacks the strength to gain the crown.<sup>20</sup> Finally, among other observations, Keil indicates that it is inappropriate to enumerate all the problems Diodotus had in Asia with his previous masters διὰ τὸ παρρησιάζεσθαι. The combined weight of all these considerations were decisive for Keil in denying Isocrates' authorship.

Keil also discounted the hypothesis of Blass that the stylistic peculiarities of the letter which he had already observed explained themselves through their private and confidential (vertraulich)<sup>21</sup> nature. According to Blass, Isocrates had not pretended to compose a 'Schaustück', but a private letter of recommendation and for that reason he was careless with his style, something that makes the letter more interesting for its uniqueness. For Keil this is inconceivable, because the style is at times more poetic than simple, and in addition, as he said, 'I don't believe that expressions of this type are so appropriate to familiar discourse (because we consider they are not found in familiar letters) as to an orator who seeks to display his abilities to no real point.'

The polemic continued in the following years without (except for nuances and details) the addition of new arguments. Wilamowitz supported the conclusions of Keil in 1892 and

<sup>18</sup> B. Keil, *Analecta Isocratea*, Praha-Leipzig, 1884, 143-145.

<sup>19</sup> ἄττα only appears rarely in Isocrates before a vowel in order to avoid hiatus.

<sup>20</sup> A like simile at *Antidosis* 301, but in this case pertinent, seeing that Isocrates criticises as excessive the eulogies accorded to athletes.

<sup>21</sup> F. Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit*, v.2: *Isokrates und Isaios*, Leipzig, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1892 (reprinted 1962), p.329 – Keil used the first edition of Blass, which appeared in 1874 and gathers together some of his observations on the style of the letter.

thought that Diodotus and his son could have composed the letter long after the death of Isocrates.<sup>22</sup> But Blass in his *Nachträge* to vol. 3.2 of *Attische Beredsamkeit* insisted, in replying [p.16] to Wilamowitz, on the idea that *Letter 4* was special for the fact that it had not been published, in contrast to the other eight extant letters that were indeed published, so making the analysis of Keil useless. Wilamowitz replied to Blass in an article in 1898,<sup>23</sup> in which he insisted on the arguments of Keil.<sup>24</sup> Wilamowitz concentrated on the inappropriate character of the words λυγυρός, which he considered vulgar regardless of the fact that it appeared in the *Cynegeticus* of Xenophon<sup>25</sup> and ἄττα, an Attic form but avoided by Isocrates, Thucydides and the tragedians. Wilamowitz was surprised furthermore that Isocrates did not utilize the same style in other extant confidential letters (probably referring to letters 7 and 8) and finally he considered that a letter with careful rhythmic composition such as *Letter 4* could not possibly have been private or confidential. Blass replied in another article of the following year<sup>26</sup> in which he considered λυγυρός could have been used in Attic prose since it appeared in Xenophon and the use of ἄττα and other words considered inappropriate were introduced by Isocrates picking up the very words of Diodotus. Blass again defended the possibility that many other private letters of Isocrates that had a simple style similar to that of *Letter 4* had perished, but he did not consider the question of the confidentiality of letters 7 and 8, which are also letters of recommendation. The discussion, concentrated around the value which one ought to give to the terms ἄττα and λυγυρός, was settled by Mathieu in his *Belles Lettres* edition, for whom the letter was authentic, as Blass had argued, and could not be compared with other letters of our author on account of its private character. Mathieu removed the importance attached to the use of ἄττα and σίνη as something significant for denying the authorship of the discourse to Isocrates. At the same time he discarded the hypothesis of Wilamowitz that the letter had been forged by Diodotus after Isocrates' death, for he rightly asked himself 'What use could a letter of recommendation attributed to him have had several years after Isocrates' death?'<sup>27</sup> The ideas of Mathieu [p.17] were subsequently accepted by La Rue van Hook, the Loeb editor.<sup>28</sup>

From that time onwards no one has doubted the authenticity of the letter in spite of there remaining certain 'embarrassing questions', as Mathieu himself conceded. In reality few seem to have read in detail the arguments of Keil which did not limit themselves simply to the value of the words ἄττα, σίνη and λυγυρός, but extended to many other terms in the discourse. Furthermore, as we have seen, Keil considered the inappropriateness of certain artificial comparisons in the body of the letter as well as the sloppiness of some constructions. All this makes it impossible to think that we are dealing with a private or confidential letter because, as Keil himself underlined, this type of letter is usually much more brief and lacking in all literary adornment. As we know through the corpus of letters of recommendation compiled by Chan-Hie Kim<sup>29</sup>, these are customarily short missives that go directly to the point of the matter. Their brevity is perhaps explained simply because it is the person who writes the letter who is himself meant to be the main recommendation. A prolix and literary elaboration such as we find in the letter of Isocrates is understandable only because the letter is addressed to the general public and not to the recipient.

This alone suffices to invalidate the thesis of Blass and Mathieu, furthermore neither has taken account of *Letters 7* and *8* which are also letters of recommendation and which lack all

<sup>22</sup> U. von Wilamowitz-Mollendorf, *Aristoteles und Athen*, Berlin, 1893, v. 2 pp. 393-394.

<sup>23</sup> Blass, *Die attische Beredsamkeit* v.3.2, pp. 382-383.

<sup>24</sup> U. von Wilamowitz-Mollendorf, 'Unechte Briefe', *Hermes* 33, 1898, pp. 492-498.

<sup>25</sup> Xenophon, *On Hunting* 4.1.

<sup>26</sup> Blass, 'Unechte Briefe', *RhM* 54, 1899, pp. 33-39, here pp. 34-35.

<sup>27</sup> *Philippe...., op.cit.*, (n. 4), pp.43-46. The arguments are repeated in part in Mathieu, *Isocrate, op.cit.* v.4, pp. 178-179.

<sup>28</sup> Isocrates 3, ed. L.van Hook, Cambridge [Mass.], 1945, p. 411.

<sup>29</sup> C.-H. Kim, *Form and Structure of the familiar Greek letter of recommendation*, Missoula [Montana], 1972.

the stylistic problems associated with *Letter 4*. That the three letters pertain to the genus of letters of recommendation can be demonstrated through the presence in them of similar formulas. Thus in *Letter 4* Isocrates says to his interlocutor at section §13 that he should not be surprised because the letter he has written is so lengthy (μὴ θαυμάσης, μήτ' εἰ μακροτέραν γέγραφα τὴν ἐπιστολήν), nor because he has written in it things that are excessive or are characteristic of old men (μητ' εἴ τι περιεργότερον καὶ πρεσβυτικώτερον εἰρήκαμεν ἐν αὐτῇ), seeing that on writing it he neglected everything else and considered only one thing (πάντων τῶν ἄλλων ἀμελήσας ἐνὸς μόνον ἐφρόντισα), that he should display his concern (τοῦ φανῆναι σπουδάζων) for his friends who have become very dear to him.

We find also in *Letter 7* a preoccupation with making public his concern for his friends, where in §10-11 Isocrates asks Timotheus to employ in his service Autocrator, the bearer of the letter, who is an intimate [p.18] of his.<sup>30</sup> In effect, Isocrates says there that he wanted Autocrator to be well received by Timotheus and in a manner satisfactory for both so that it was evident that Autocrator obtained what he needed thanks to his intercession (καὶ γενέσθαι φανερόν ὅτι μέρος τι καὶ δι' ἐμὲ γίγνεται τι τῶν δεόντων αὐτῷ). Isocrates continues saying to his addressee that he ought not be surprised that he has written to him with such interest (καὶ μὴ θαυμάσης, εἰ σοὶ μὲν οὕτως ἐπιστέλλω προθύμως), although he never made any request of his father Clearchus; the reason for the letter is that Timotheus is reputed to be among his best students (τοῖς βελτίστοις τῶν ἐμοὶ πεπλησιακότων). This same expression appears in *Letter 8*, a letter of recommendation for the sons of Aphareus to the rulers of Mytilene. In the conclusion to the letter Isocrates writes that his recipients ought not to be surprised that he has written the letter with greater interest and at greater length than usual (μὴ θαυμάζετε δ' εἰ προθυμότερον καὶ διὰ μακροτέρων γέγραφα τὴν ἐπιστολήν), because he wants it to be of assistance to Aphareus' children and make clear to them (ποιῆσαι φανερόν αὐτοῖς) that, even if they do not become orators or generals, by imitating the manner of his school they should not pass unnoticed amongst the Greeks.

The formula is so identical in the three letters<sup>31</sup> and the emphasis on his divulgation so clear in all of them that the sole interpretation possible is that these letters of recommendation in addition to serving to recommend a particular person served equally to publish abroad the loyalty and support which Isocrates gave to his disciples. This not only benefited Isocrates as an individual but (and in this I believe lies the key to this insistence on divulgation) his own school of which he was the head. These letters show that the master never ceased to assist his disciples and those close to him, something that gave prestige to his own activity. Hence the insistence on divulgation and the reason why these letters have been preserved amongst the letters attributed to Isocrates. It is not a question here of simple letters of recommendation but of letters of recommendation elaborated in a literary fashion to generate publicity for the school of Isocrates. Proof that they constituted a unity could [p.19] be found in the fact that the letters, in spite of being written on diverse dates, are found copied jointly at the end of the collection in no less than five manuscripts.<sup>32</sup>

Having demonstrated that *Letter 4* can not be differentiated from *Letters 7* and *8* in its character as a letter of recommendation, it remains nevertheless to explain why the style of *Letter 4* addressed to Antipater is so different to that of Isocrates. In regard to the supposition of Wilamowitz, I think that one is not to think of a forgery perpetrated by Diodotus or his son after Isocrates' death: as many later scholars have pointed out, one sees no reason for such a forgery. But that does not necessarily make Isocrates himself the author of the letter. The formal structure of these letters permits us to think that Isocrates could have occasionally

<sup>30</sup> The expression ὁ τὰ γράμματα φέρων οἰκείως ἡμῖν ἔχει, with which the section of *Letter 7* which deals strictly with the recommendation is introduced, is, as we see through the work of Kim, *op. cit.* pp. 37-53, the typical formula in letters of recommendation for introducing the bearer of the letter.

<sup>31</sup> See in the three the phrase μὴ θαυμάσης, the suggestion of its public nature through the forms φανερόν or the infinitive φανῆναι, the reference to the excessive length of the letter or perhaps to its too vehement tone etc.

<sup>32</sup> Vat. gr. 64, Vat. gr. 1461, Palatinus 134, Helmst. 806 and Laur. LXX.19.

entrusted their writing to some of the recommendees themselves, seeing that they are in the final analysis members of his school and therefore familiar with the mechanisms and resources pertaining to this type of composition. This is what could have occurred with *Letter 4* to Antipater. I base my argument also on the precise date when the letter is supposed to have been written, probably in 340, if we notice that Athens was then at war with Macedon. As we have seen in the *Panathenaicus*, Isocrates was sick between the years 342-339 so that he had to interrupt the writing of the discourse precisely during these three years. Is it not possible to think that precisely during this period when Isocrates was incapacitated he should at times delegate to his disciples the writing of letters such as the present one to Antipater? This would explain not only the awkward style of the letter and the inappropriateness of some of its assertions but also the surprising fact that the letter lacks an allusion to the person or figure of Antipater, compared to what occurs in the other letters, in which the recommendation occupies even less space than the ample *captatio benevolentiae* directed to the addressee. If Diodotus wrote the letter, how could he bring himself to say something regarding Antipater, whom he himself had not had dealings with? For this reason Diodotus did not include any reference to the person of the Macedonian but elaborated on the circumstances of his life and those of his son, which he refers to in an indirect way putting them in the mouth of Isocrates.<sup>33</sup>

**[p.20]** One should likewise not dismiss the possibility that the letter was written by a close collaborator of Isocrates such as his own son Aphareus (whom we know of through Pseudo-Plutarch's *Life of Isocrates* 839) who wrote tragic works and was without doubt very close to his father to whom he erected statues and, as we shall see in section 4.2, was furthermore a close collaborator of his. Obviously Isocrates had to look over the letter which Diodotus, Aphareus or another person had written ἐκ προσώπου, but perhaps his intervention was limited to the introduction and conclusion and to polishing some of its most evident imperfections.

It remains, therefore, only to explain how it is possible that Isocrates could have permitted a letter of his to Antipater to be made public at a time of war between Athens and Macedonia. The question compelled ever Müncher to consider the letter inauthentic for it was not possible to expect such a correspondence during wartime.<sup>34</sup> Notwithstanding, there is nothing in the letter that alludes to the political situation. Although the fact that Isocrates should recommend a pupil of his to Antipater could have made it suspicious in some radical circles, one has to keep in mind that these letters had no other objective than to demonstrate the fidelity of master to pupil. The insistence on this particular is much greater in *Letter 4* than in the other two, seeing that in §13 Isocrates indicates that this is the sole consideration which moved him to the exclusion of all the rest (πάντων τῶν ἄλλων ἀμελήσας ἐνὸς μόνον ἐφρόντισα). The public character which the letter ought necessarily to have through its literary pretensions makes us suppose that Isocrates ran obvious risks in allowing a recommendation of a disciple to a Macedonian potentate to be written. These are the risks to which he precisely alludes at the start of the letter. But the old orator, true to his convictions, did not at the same time cease favouring his friends in time of war, when the opportunity presented itself. Perhaps this circumstance explains also why there is no reference to the person of the recipient.

### **[p.21] 3. Letter to Alexander (5)**

*Letter 5* addressed to Alexander the Great is the shortest of all those attributed to Isocrates. Isocrates sent it to Alexander together with another which he addressed to his father in order that, as he declares at its beginning, his readers should not consider him out of his mind owing to his great age and that they should take note that something of the reasoning power which he had in his youth still remains with him (§1). Isocrates continues with how he has heard that everybody describes Alexander as φιλόανθρωπος, φιλαθήναιος and φιλόσοφος because he has

<sup>33</sup> Cf. the νομίζων of §8, which picks up the opinion of Diodotus or the ἔφασκε of §10 which governs a whole string of infinitives.

<sup>34</sup> *RE* s.v. 'Isokrates', col. 2217.

gathered about him Athenian citizens whose association could be very profitable for him (§2). Isocrates knows that Alexander, amongst the diverse philosophical systems (τῶν φιλοσοφιῶν), does not reject the study of eristics (§3: τὴν <διατριβήν> περὶ τὰς ἔριδας), though he considers it perhaps useful in private matters but inappropriate for rulers and monarchs, who ought not to fall into this type of debate. Thus Alexander has given himself to the study of rhetoric (§4: τὴν παιδείαν τὴν περὶ τοὺς λόγους), which is useful for everyday matters and public problems. Thanks to that Alexander will be able to make reasonable predictions over what could occur, give adequate orders to his subjects (τοῖς ἀρχομένοις), form a correct judgment over what is good, what is just and its contraries, as well as be able to judge and castigate each person as is befitting (§4). It follows that thus he could surpass the rest in the same manner as his father Philip has surpassed everyone (§5).

For all the scholars who have analysed the letter, Isocrates' interest in the education of Alexander could only be understood in the context of Aristotle's arrival at the Macedonian court as his tutor: philosophic instruction of an eristic nature, which the letter disapproves of, would be exactly that imposed by Aristotle on the young prince. Given that the arrival of the Stagirite in Macedonia took place in the archonship of *Pythodotos*, that is to say between July 343 and July 342,<sup>35</sup> the letter ought to be later than that date. What's more, the letter had to have been sent when Alexander and Philip happened to be together, as the initial paragraph says, which according to Wilamowitz could only have occurred in winter.<sup>36</sup> The author thus proposed as the date the initial months of the years 341 or 340, as the war between Athens and Macedonia broke out in October 340. Next we shall consider in greater detail [p.22] the implications of these dates. It suffices for the moment to indicate that during the years 342-341 Alexander was 14–15 years old, having been born in the spring of 356.

But it is not the date of the letter that has most preoccupied scholars but the fact that Isocrates indicates in it that Alexander should share with him his scant interest in eristics and his fondness for rhetoric. Already Wilamowitz called attention to the unlikelihood that Alexander, as Isocrates indicates in the letter, should feel himself attracted by rhetoric:

Von der Rhetorik hat der große König nachmals wenig genug gehalten, weder selbst die isokrateische Kunst geübt, noch neben Hofpoeten, Hofphilosophen und Hofkünstlern aller Art Hofrhetoren angestellt, es sei denn man rechne die historiographen Anaximenes und Kallisthenes mit, die Isokrates nicht anerkannt haben würde. Die einfachen Glockentöne Homers, nicht die künstlichen Fugen und Passagen des Panegyrikos haben seine Heldenseele zum Zuge gegen die Barbaren begeistert. Also muß Isokrates schlecht berichtet gewesen sein, oder vielmehr, er war es wohl gut, und gerade deshalb schrieb er so wie er es getan hat, und weil er sich so anstellt, waren die Leser in der Lage, die Feinheit des Alten zu bewundern. Das ist weniger auf den Prinzen als auf den Hofmeister Aristoteles berechnet.

For Wilamowitz it was evident that Alexander did not have the slightest interest in the rhetorical education of Isocrates, though this conclusion was not for him proof of the falsity of the letter, but precisely the most clear indication of its authenticity. In effect, according to him, Isocrates converts into reality his desire that Alexander should study rhetoric and, basing himself on what he supposedly has heard, he praises the prince for that which he should wish him to do. As Isocrates, continues Wilamowitz, was not able to directly criticise the Aristotelian education, he had recourse to this indirect criticism. In this form the letter could not be other than authentic seeing that it is deeper or more profound than it pretends to be and alludes in a dissimulated manner to facts that are true.

This interpretation of Wilamowitz subsequently became the *communis opinio* regarding the letter.<sup>37</sup> Basing himself on Wilamowitz' thesis, Philip Merlan in 1955 produced the most

<sup>35</sup> Our sources are Diogenes Laertius 5.10 and Dion. Halicarnassus, *Letter to Ammaeus* 1, 5.3.

<sup>36</sup> Wilamowitz, *Arist. und Athen...* *op.cit.* p.398.

<sup>37</sup> Münscher, *RE* s.v. 'Isokrates', col. 2216; Mathieu, *Philippe...*, *op.cit.* pp. 41-43; Mathieu, 'Lettres', *op.cit.* pp. 176-177.

detailed study of the letter to that time.<sup>38</sup> Merlan also started from the idea that in *Letter 5* Isocrates announced above all his own [p.23] educational program and not the real inclinations of Alexander regarding the education imparted to him: owing to the obligatory courtesy present in the composition addressed to the hereditary prince of Macedon, our orator could not directly criticise the eristic system of education that Aristotle was dishing out to Alexander and he saw himself obliged to disapprove of it, pretending to echo the supposed preferences of the young prince. In his study Merlan compared furthermore the letter with parallel passages from other works of Isocrates in which there are also criticisms of eristic education and where a practical education based on rhetoric is defended (the 'philosophy' of Isocrates): all of which reveal the same preoccupations and ideas on the part of our orator. In this way, the authenticity of the letter is confirmed, the sole trustworthy document through which we can appreciate the basis of Alexander's education. Only Jaeger<sup>39</sup>, who is refuted by Merlan<sup>40</sup>, questioned this interpretation of Wilamowitz and defended the position that the letter was spurious. But his arguments were based solely in the unlikelihood that Isocrates could have dared to refute the tutor of Alexander.

Wilamowitz' thesis, amplified by Merlan, necessitated, as we see, the dating of the letter after 342 and before 340. This implies in the first place that the letter to Philip, which supposedly accompanied our short letter to Alexander, has perished, seeing that none of the two extant letters were written in that year or at a nearby date, something that Meyer<sup>41</sup> had already pointed out, and something that invalidated what Wilamowitz himself and others thought.<sup>42</sup> In fact it is not possible to significantly bring forward or push backwards the date of the letter in order to make it coincide with one of the two letters to Philip, and this for various reasons. In the first place, if we think that *Letter 5* could have been written at the beginning of 344 and was sent jointly with *Letter 2*<sup>43</sup> we are faced with the problem [p.24] that its recipient Alexander was then only 12 years old, having been born in the summer of 356. Although there should be no problem in thinking that a precocious Alexander could have made a start in rhetoric at that age,<sup>44</sup> it does seem excessive to attribute to him opinions and judgments such as Isocrates places in his mouth in this letter.<sup>45</sup> Furthermore, although we know that Alexander had various tutors before the arrival of Aristotle in 343/2, as the biography of Plutarch tells us<sup>46</sup>, it is probably from that moment that the debate of eristics as opposed to rhetoric, in terms of how Isocrates presents it, became pertinent. On the other hand, if we want to lower the date of the letter we shall encounter the problem of describing Alexander as 'friend of Athens' in 341 or 340, when the climate of confrontation between Athens and Macedon is overwhelming. Furthermore, Isocrates was not only sick from 341 but before that date when he had begun to write the *Panathenaicus* to defend himself from the attacks of the anti-Macedonian party. For that reason, I think, the dates of 341 or 340, which are customarily given for *Letter 5*,<sup>47</sup> are too late or even that of Mathieu<sup>48</sup> and van Hook<sup>49</sup> who

<sup>38</sup> Ph. Merlan, 'Isocrates, Aristotle and Alexander the Great', *Historia* 3, 1954-5, pp. 60-81.

<sup>39</sup> W. Jaeger, *Demosthenes*, Cambridge, 1938, pp. 253-254.

<sup>40</sup> Merlan, 'Isocrates...' *op. cit.*, p. 60 n.3.

<sup>41</sup> Meyer, *op. cit.* (n.2), p.109, n.4.

<sup>42</sup> Many scholars starting from a false dating of *Letter 2*, which refers to Philip's wound, thought that *Letter 5* could have been sent together with it. Thus Wilamowitz *Arist. u. Athen*, *op. cit.* p.398, who dated letters 2 and 5 to 341 or 340; E. Drerup, *Isocratis opera omnia*, Leipzig, 1906, p. CLXI, in the winter of 342/1; Hagen, *op. cit.* (n. 2), p. 124, to the beginning of 343.

<sup>43</sup> Only the Matr. 7210 and Vat. gr. 1353, the two manuscripts belonging to Lascaris, present *Letter 5* right after *Letter 2*, thus approaching the correct order in which they ought to have been copied. On them see n.100 below.

<sup>44</sup> In the year 340 at the age of sixteen Alexander familiarised himself with the responsibilities of government, as we know from Plutarch, *Alexander* 9.1-2.

<sup>45</sup> Mathieu, *Philippe ...op. cit.* pp. 41-42.

<sup>46</sup> Plutarch, *Alexander*, 5.7-8.

<sup>47</sup> Mathieu, *Philippe...*, *op. cit.* pp.42-43.

<sup>48</sup> Mathieu, 'Lettres', *op. cit.*, p. 177 is inclined to date the letter to the winter of 342/341 for this date is closer to the beginning of the date of Aristotle's, for this was the cause of the letter.

suggest the end of 342. I'm inclined to think that the letter was already sent between the years 343 and 342, coinciding, therefore, with the arrival of Aristotle. There are various arguments that lead me to propose that date.

In the first place, that Isocrates could have sent to Alexander a letter at the end of 342 or beginning of 341 seems to be ruled out for the simple reason that his father was on campaign in Thrace. This was an exceptionally long campaign which took him more than ten months, including winter, far from his country, as we know from the discourse of Demosthenes *On the Chersonese*, written in the first half of [p.25] 341,<sup>50</sup> as today the majority of historians agree.<sup>51</sup> It must therefore be excluded that Philip could have been with his son Alexander during those dates and that Isocrates could have addressed both. Notwithstanding, between his intervention in Thessaly in 344 and his intervention in Epirus in spring 342 in order to place his brother-in-law Alexander on the throne of the Molossi,<sup>52</sup> there is no evidence of any campaign of Philip that could have kept him away from Macedonia. At any moment between the two dates the king could have been with his son Alexander although, as we have said, the letter should coincide with the arrival of Aristotle in July 343.

Another consideration which leads me to prefer this early date is based on an indication in the *Letter of Speusippus*, the nephew of Plato, sent to Philip in 343-342, in which he criticises the *Philippus* quite harshly. For everything relating to the *Letter of Speusippus* see now the full study by A.F. Natoli, *The Letter of Speusippus to Philip II. Introduction, Text, Translation and Commentary*, Stuttgart 2004. Natoli resolves in his book all doubts expressed to date concerning the authenticity of the letter and convincingly places its composition in the years 343-342. In this letter Speusippus declares that he is sending to Philip his pupil Antipater of Magnesia together with a discourse on the history of Greece that is much more favourable to the territorial claims of Philip than the thesis offered by Isocrates in the *Philippus*. The letter, which should be considered in the context of the polemic between the Academy and the school of Isocrates for Macedonian patronage,<sup>53</sup> speaks of the presence at Pella of Theopompus, the famous historian and perhaps the most knowledgeable student of Isocrates.<sup>54</sup> As Speusippus indicates in his letter (§12), [p.26] Theopompus did not stop slandering Plato before the Macedonian, something that agrees with information that presents Theopompus as the author of anti-Platonic writings.<sup>55</sup> For that reason Speusippus insists that Philip require Antipater to read his historical work in the presence of Theopompus so that Theopompus will stop behaving rudely (ἵνα οὖν Θεόπομπος παύσῃται τραχὺς ὄν) and realise that all have reason to despise him whereas Philip has allowed him to enjoy benefits without deserving them (καὶ γινώσεται Θεόπομπος δικαίως μὲν ὑπὸ πάντων ἐξαλειφόμενος, ἀδίκως δὲ τῆς παρὰ σοῦ χορηγίας τυγχάνων). This evidence is important as it shows that Theopompus was already established at the Macedonian court in 343, for we are very ill-informed about his movements and his life in general. It is evident that this suggests a certain pre-eminence of Theopompus at Philip's court, which at these dates is owing not so much as

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<sup>49</sup> Van Hook, *Isocrates 3...*, *op. cit.* p.425.

<sup>50</sup> Dem. 8.2 (Philip spends eleven months in Thrace) and 35 (Philip spends ten months abroad and owing to the winter, the war, and his sickness he has not been able to return home: ὥστε μὴ ἂν δύνασθαι ἐπανελθεῖν οἴκαδε).

<sup>51</sup> Hammond, *Philip ...*, *op. cit.*, p. 122; Philip was absent from Macedonia between July 342 and April 341.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Hammond, *Philip ...*, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

<sup>53</sup> Markle, *op. cit.* (n.16), pp. 92-99 and Natoli, *op. cit.* pp. 32-66.

<sup>54</sup> Against those who deny the master-pupil relationship between Isocrates and Theopompus one can simply adduce the unanimous testimony of the ancient sources, which confirm this relationship. (cf. R. Laquer in *RE* s.v. 'Theopompus 9', cols. 2186-2192). Even M.A. Flower (*Theopompus of Chios*, Oxford 1994) who claims to demonstrate that the historian was not the pupil of the orator, does not deny the 'tremendous influence' of Isocrates over him. (p.62), which points to a relation between the two. Cf. Natoli, *op. cit.* pp. 56-49.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. J. Geffcken, 'Anti-platonika', *Hermes* 64, 1928-9, pp. 87-109, especially pp. 90-91.

his status as the future historian of the *Philippica*, which took the reign of Philip as its focus,<sup>56</sup> but to the influence of his master Isocrates at the Macedonian court as a result of the publication of the *Philippus* in 346. It is of no consequence to us to know whether Theopompus could have been called to Macedonia simply as a court intellectual or with a view to the future education of Alexander, in which the king could have begun to take an interest in the long period between autumn 344 and spring 342.<sup>57</sup> The only thing that interests us is that Speusippus' criticisms of Isocrates and his pupil Theopompus reveal without doubt the influence of these two men at the court of Macedon, an influence which the Academicians were disposed to replace by means of the work of Antipater. In this context, both *Letter 5* and the arrival of Aristotle at the same date assumes a new relevance.

Aristotle's arrival in Macedonia has been understood as a victory [p.27] for the Academy over the school of Isocrates seeing that, although the motives for the arrival of Aristotle are not to be seen directly with Philip's ties to the Academy,<sup>58</sup> Aristotle's method was derived from Plato and, as Merlan argued, there are no cogent reasons to suppose that he had at that time bad relations with Speusippus.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, according to Natoli, his appointment had nothing to do with the Academy and though it was obviously "a disappointment to Isocrates" it had no effect on the relations of Philip with our orator, since, as he rightly observes, "Philip's friends and associates did not have to be of one mind". The same scholar provides convincing arguments in his study that show that after the death of Plato, Aristotle distanced himself once and for all from the Academy, which in no way can be seen to be represented at the Macedonian court by Aristotle. On the other hand, Merlan himself already made it clear that the eristic education which Isocrates attacks in *Letter 5* and in the rest of his writings was not so much that practiced by Aristotle as by the remaining members of the Academy, the true rivals of the school of Isocrates.<sup>60</sup> Might it be the case, therefore, that the criticism of the Platonic methods of education which Isocrates makes in *Letter 5* could have been motivated not so much by the naming of Aristotle as tutor of Alexander as by the rivalry between Isocrates and the Academy in general? Many are the studies dedicated to the rivalry between the Academy and Isocrates, which constitutes a key element for understanding a large part of the work of our orator.<sup>61</sup> Although the appointment of Aristotle could have been the reason for the writing of *Letter 5*, there is nothing strange in supposing that Isocrates wrote it even a little before Aristotle's arrival in the midst of the existing dispute of Academics and Isocratics over the supervision of the education of Alexander. In this sense one would not suppose the

<sup>56</sup> Testimonies and fragments of his work in *Fgr H* 115.

<sup>57</sup> The life of Theopompus does not provide us any proof of a relationship with the young Alexander, as the sources speak only of contacts between them after he became king (*RE* s.v. 'Theopompos 9', cols. 2219 ff.). Interestingly, it is only the evidence of Cicero that Aristotle and Theopompus wrote 'quae ipsis honesta essent et grata Alexandro' (*Letters to Atticus* 12, 40.2), which could point to the common role of both as educators of the prince.

<sup>58</sup> W. Jaeger, *Aristoteles*, Berlin, 1923, pp.120-122 postulated for the first time that Aristotle was called by Philip because Hermias (the tyrant philosopher of Atarneus and disciple of Plato in whose court Aristotle had been a guest) had struck an alliance against Persia with Philip (cf. W.K.C. Guthrie, *Historia de la filosofía griega*, v. 6: *Introducción a Aristóteles*, Madrid, 1993 [trans. of the Cambridge edition, 1981], pp.48-50 and S. Hornblower in *CAH*, *op. cit.* pp. 94-95). Other authors consider that Aristotle was summoned because his father Nicomachus was the physician of Philip II (for the sources for family and biography of Aristotle cf. I. Düring, *Aristotle in the ancient biographical tradition*, Göteborg, 1957). Finally, Natoli *op. cit.* pp. 46-50 shows convincingly that Philip appointed Aristotle tutor to his son Alexander "motivated by the philosopher's personal relationship with the Macedonian royal family together with his standing as teacher and scholar".

<sup>59</sup> Ph. Merlan, 'Zur Biographie des Speusippos', *Philologus* 103, 1959 pp. 189-214, especially pp. 206-210.

<sup>60</sup> Merlan, 'Isocrates...' *op. cit.*

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Ch. Eucken, 'Leitende Gedanke im isokratischen Panathenaikos', *MH* 39, 1982, pp. 43-70 for the constant references to the Platonists in the last discourse of Isocrates, contemporary with the presence of Aristotle in Macedonia. A pioneer in this field was the scholar H. Gomperz, 'Isokrates und die Sokratic', *WS* 27, 1905, pp. 163-207 and 1906 pp. 1-42.

letter to have been a direct discrediting of Aristotle after he had been confirmed as tutor, precisely the aspect which was for Jaeger the most unlikely and which influenced [p.28] him to consider the letter a forgery. The letter could have been written precisely to prevent the possible influence of the Academy at court and could have been written at the end of 343 at the same date Speusippus was sending his letter to Philip. The fact that Isocrates in *Letter 5* does not mention the arguments of Speusippus against him nor Speusippus refer at any time to Alexander in his letter, permits us to think that there were more letters from both men to the Macedonian court. In the case of Isocrates we have the reference in *Letter 5* to the lost letter to Philip which accompanied it. In the case of Speusippus the immediate and direct tone of the missive seems to imply a previous correspondence.<sup>62</sup>

Furthermore I think it was not only *Letter 5* but also the *Panathenaicus* itself, which Isocrates began to write in 342, that could be included within the terms of this polemic with the Academics, for in this discourse Isocrates seems to reply to certain arguments proposed by the Platonists. In effect, in his missive Speusippus not only harshly criticises Theopompus but also accuses Isocrates of selling the same discourse to all sorts of rulers (§13) and, above all, says that Isocrates had not been capable of legitimising certain territorial ambitions of Philip over Athens with arguments from history. This is the principal motive for the letter of Speusippus, seeing that the letter which Antipater takes to the king treats of precisely the same questions and justifies with frequent appeals to the actions of Heracles, the supposed ancestor of Philip, the legitimate aspirations of the king to certain territories contrary to the interests of Athens.<sup>63</sup> Isocrates could not have left unanswered such grave accusations, by means of which the Academy demonstrated furthermore his lack of patriotism in selling arguments to Philip against Athens. If *Letter 5* doesn't mention those criticisms perhaps they are in the *Panathenaicus*, where Isocrates begins precisely by making a defence of his patriotism as an Athenian and rejecting mythical stories.<sup>64</sup> His revindication of ancient Athens was, as we have seen, the principal object of the discourse and was motivated by the attacks of the anti-Macedonian faction, discontented with his *Philippus*. Nevertheless, in the work Isocrates not only criticises the demagogues but puts an end to the slanders that 'perverse and indignant sophists' have made against him (*Panathenaicus* 5-6). Many scholars have rightly seen [p.29] in the allusion at *Panathenaicus* 33 to the sophists of the Lyceum a reference to the members of the Academy.<sup>65</sup> It is evident that Isocrates, criticised for his pro-Macedonian posture by the political factions close to Demosthenes and discredited as well before Philip by members of the rival schools, had reason to believe his prestige threatened among his fellow citizens (*Panathenaicus* 5-6). His reply consisted in refuting all his adversaries, reclaiming the Athenian past by means of a discourse which, in the first place, would preserve his patriotism in the face of the attacks of the Demosthenics, but which furthermore would serve to refute the Academics by his interpretation of the same past history of the city. In consequence, the *Panathenaicus*, begun exactly in the year 342, could have served likewise as a reply to the letter of Speusippus. But if this does not suffice for thinking that *Letter 5* and the *Panathenaicus* were written at a time very close to one another, it could be shown in fact that at the beginning of *Letter 5* Isocrates says that he writes this letter so that his enemies will not think that he is 'out of his senses owing to his age and could can only speak absolute nonsense' (μη ... με παραφρονεῖν διὰ τὸ γῆρας μηδὲ παντάπασι ληρεῖν), a statement which is very similar to that he makes in *Panathenaicus* 23 where he states that his enemies will not cease to accuse him of prattling-on due to his old age (μηδὲ νῦν πω τηλικούτος ὧν πεπαυμένος παραληρῶν). Even though the allusions to his age are frequent in the last works

<sup>62</sup> Cf. however Natoli *op. cit.* p. 49: "Apart from his [i.e. Speusippus'] letter, there is no good evidence that Speusippus had any contact with Philip".

<sup>63</sup> For the arguments from mythical history adduced by Speusippus to defend the territorial ambition of the Macedonian cf. Markle, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-96.

<sup>64</sup> Speusippus characterises precisely as μῦθοι his arguments drawn from history.

<sup>65</sup> For some years sophists who were closest to the Academy perhaps met together in the Lyceum: Merlan, 'Isocrates...' *op.cit.*, p.69 n. 2 suggests that it was in these environs that Aristotle later found support for establishing the Peripatos.

of Isocrates one cannot deny that these acquire a special dimension at the beginning of the *Panathenaicus* compared with other works of our author.

Finally one should keep in mind that *Letter 5*, as all public letters, was not addressed to the King alone but to the Athenian public in general and his Academic rivals in particular. In fact Isocrates refers to his readers as one of the motives which led him to write it: Isocrates believes that it is unbecoming to write only to Philip without sending some letters to his son so as to make those who read it (§1: τοὺς ἀναγνόντας) not think that old age makes him talk nonsense. That is to say, it seems to be that his readers, knowing his letters and his *Philippus*, are those who demand a letter to Alexander and this work responds basically to their demand. The letter could have arisen from the necessity to defend his school and his [p.30] principles against the Academics and fits perfectly within the context of the final months of 343 or beginning of 342, in which Speusippus wrote his letter. We do not know what the real influence of Theopompus and the school of Isocrates was after this date and upon the arrival of Aristotle, but I think it an exaggeration to claim, as does Wilamowitz, that this influence never existed. It is thus possible that the ideas and teachings of Isocrates had a certain reverberation at the Macedonian court<sup>66</sup>, although the influence they supposedly had over Alexander may have been at times exaggerated.<sup>67</sup>

#### 4. The Second letter to Philip (3)

##### 4.1: Contents of the letter and state of the question.

Isocrates begins *Letter 3* addressed to Philip by saying that he has discussed in detail with Antipater measures that he believes will benefit Athens as much as the king. He has now decided to write to the king in order to inform him of what he believes should be done after the peace (μετὰ τὴν εἰρήνην), although he will do so in a much briefer manner than he did in his discourse (by which he means the *Philippus* of 346). At the time the discourse was published, Isocrates continues in §2, it was necessary to convince the Athenians to be reconciled with Sparta, Thebes and Argos, but now, due to the recent conflict (διὰ τὸν ἀγῶνα τὸν γεγενημένον) all have been forced to act sensibly. The conflicts between the Greeks having been brought to an end it is to be hoped that they will now undertake the war against Asia. Many people ask Isocrates if the idea for this war came from him or from Philip, but the orator is not able to give a clear answer because he has only recently established relations with Philip (§3). Isocrates apologises for addressing Philip by letter, since his age does not allow him to be present in person (§4) and he exhorts him to undertake the noble enterprise of making war against the barbarians, which will furnish him with glory such as no other action could effect (§§4-5). Isocrates ends the letter by giving thanks that his age has allowed him to see come to completion the enterprise he had dreamed of in his youth and which he defended in his *Panegyricus* and in the discourse he sent to the king (§6).

The dating of the letter to 338 has been defended almost unanimously by all [p.31] scholars<sup>68</sup> because it is believed that the conflict (ἀγῶνα) which Isocrates refers to in §2 can be none other than the Battle of Chaeronea of that year in which Philip defeated the Thebans and the Athenians. Only this situation, it was believed, could explain that Isocrates was able to think that there was no longer any obstacle to the project of the Macedonian king of undertaking a campaign against Persia, a campaign that until that time was not possible due to the confrontation with Athens. Nevertheless, this dating of the letter created two serious problems: 1) How can one reconcile Isocrates congratulating Philip in 338 with the fact that the later biographical tradition says that Isocrates, shocked by the news of the Battle of Chaeronea, allowed himself to die of starvation; 2) is it possible that Isocrates could

<sup>66</sup> Markle, *op. cit.* pp. 89-92

<sup>67</sup> Hagen, *op. cit.*

<sup>68</sup> Except for Ph. Wagner, *Annotationes criticae in Isocratis epistolas*, in *Programm des Marien-Gymnasiums zu Jever*, 1875, and for Koepp, 'Isokrates als Politiker', *Preussische Jahrbücher* 70, 1892, pp. 486-487. I address their arguments below in 4.4.

congratulate Philip so enthusiastically when his own city, Athens, had been defeated in battle by his troops?

The answers to these two questions are resolved by later investigators in two clearly opposite ways. Some authors defended the authenticity of the letter over and above any other considerations and, starting from its date of 338, tried to discredit the evidence of the Greek biographical tradition about the suicide of Isocrates after Chaeronea. For these authors the details regarding the ‘patriotic’ suicide of Isocrates would have been put about by people closest to the orator in order to defend his reputation and his memory against those Athenians who could not view his promacedonian position favourably. Small contradictions in the biographical tradition provide them with a departure point for their hypothesis.<sup>69</sup> Other authors, on the other hand, consider it inconceivable that Isocrates would have written *Letter 3* to Philip in 338 after the defeat of his city at Chaeronea, as they considered it to be a forgery issuing from the Macedonian government and found the main proof of their hypothesis in the unanimity [p.32] of the ancient biographical tradition attesting to the suicide of Isocrates after the battle.<sup>70</sup> Between these mutually exclusive positions the majority of critical opinion today inclines in favour of the authenticity of the letter. As a result, the account of the biographical tradition on the suicide of Isocrates after Chaeronea has been given no credit.

New studies have merely repeated the arguments of the older bibliography. In reality, I believe, the question has been settled wrongly. Accordingly, it is not possible: 1) either to discount without further ado the information of the ancient biographical tradition, or 2) to postulate as well the inauthenticity of the letter. To demonstrate both points we are going to submit them firstly to a separate analysis in which we shall in principle put aside the considerations that determine the interpretation of *Letter 3* based on the biographical tradition or vice versa. Having demonstrated that the letter is authentic and also that the tradition that postulates that Isocrates allowed himself to die of hunger in 338 after the Battle of Chaeronea is also authentic, we shall advance an hypothesis (already proposed in 1875!) that fits perfectly both facts and conforms furthermore with the interpretation we made of the *Panathenaicus* in the second part of this study.

#### 4.2. The Death of Isocrates in 338.

Various are the Greek sources which transmit accounts regarding the death of Isocrates. The oldest of all is probably the *Life of Isocrates* by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, written at the end of the first century AD.<sup>71</sup> Dionysius describes the death of Isocrates in these terms:

- A. He died in the archonship of Chaerondas, a few days after the Battle of Chaeronea, having lived two years short of a century, because he decided to end his life together with the city’s notables (ἄμα τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τῆς πόλεως)<sup>72</sup> when it was still uncertain [p.33] how Philip would use his good fortune now that he was master of Greece.

<sup>69</sup> F.Blass, 'Isokrates' dritter Brief und die gewöhnliche Erzählung von seinem Tode'. *RhM* 20, 1865, pp.109-116, *Die attische Beredsamkeit...*, *op.cit.* vol.II, pp. 96-100 and 328 and 'Unechte Briefe', *op.cit.* (n.26), pp. 33-39; Hagen, *op.cit.* (n. 2); P. Wendland, 'Beiträge zu athenischer Politik und Publicistik des vierten Jahrhunderts. I. König Philippos und Isokrates', in *Nachrichten von der Königlichen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften zu Göttingen. Philol.-hist. Klasse*, Berlin 1910, pp. 123-182, here 177-182; J.Mesk, 'Der dritte Brief des Isokrates'. *WS* 38, 1916, pp. 20-34; Mathieu, *Philippe...*, pp.46-50 and 'Lettres', *op.cit.*, pp. 180-183.

<sup>70</sup> Wilamowitz, *Aris. und Athen*, *op.cit.* vol.II, pp. 395-397 and 'Unechte Briefe', *op.cit.* (n. 24), pp. 494-496; K.Müncher, review of P.Wendland, *Beiträge...*, in *Berliner Philologische Wochenschrift* 28 Oct. 1911, cols. 1343-1352 and *RE* s.v. 'Isokrates', cols.2219-2220; P.Treves, 'Tre interpretazione Isocrates', *Reale Istituto lombardo di scienze e lettere Rendiconti*, 66, 1933, pp. 303-319, here 308-313 ('La terza lettera').

<sup>71</sup> Dionysius of Halicarnassus *Attic Orators* 3.2.

<sup>72</sup> In the edition of G. Aujac (Paris 1978) this authoress translates the expression as 'l'effondrement de la cité', as she understands that the author refers to τὰ ἀγαθὰ τῆς πόλεως (identical with Müncher in his review of Wendland 1911, p.1349); however, I think that ἀγαθοῖς should rather refer (in the masculine

According to this account Isocrates would have died in the moments following Chaeronea when in the city, as we know from Lycurgus' speech *Against Leocrates*, panic broke out and it was thought the Macedonian troops were coming to take the city by storm. The ninety-eight years and the archonship of Chaerondas fit well with 338.

In Pausanias 1.18.8, who writes in the second half of the second century, we encounter as well a small note on Isocrates' death motivated by a statue of the orator:

- B.** There is a statue of Isocrates on top of a column which has three reasons to be remembered: his great devotion to work, for he never stopped teaching students although he reached ninety-eight years of age, his great self-restraint for he lived on the margins of political life and without intervening in public affairs; his sense of liberty, because, wracked with pain at the news of the Battle of Chaeronea, he voluntarily allowed himself to die (ἀλγήσας ἐτελεύτησεν ἐθελοντής).

The following account we find in the *Macrobioi* 23. In that work dedicated to long-lived personages in antiquity and transmitted in the corpus of Lucian of Samosata we read regarding Isocrates:

- C.** Isocrates wrote the *Panegyricus* when he had completed ninety-six years; when he was only one year short of one hundred, on learning that the Athenians had been defeated by Philip in the Battle of Chaeronea, lamenting greatly, he recited this verse of Euripides applying it to himself: 'Cadmus, who in time past left the town of Sidon' and, adding that he would enslave Greece, left this life.

There is no more variation in respect of the previous accounts than the indication of ninety-nine years, whose divergence from the figure of ninety-eight is easily explainable by an inclusive calculation. But indeed new is the indication that Isocrates recited a verse of Euripides before dying which alluded to the enslavement of Greece at the hands of a new barbarian like the Phoenician Cadmus.

Of a near date could be two accounts which appear in the life of Isocrates included in the *Lives of Ten Orators*, preserved among Plutarch's writings, which contain numerous accounts of the orator and his family:

- D1.** He died in the archonship of Chaerondas when, on learning the news that reached him regarding Chaeronea while he was in the wrestling school of Hippocrates, he took his life by depriving himself of food for four days after pronouncing the beginnings of three plays[p.34] of Euripides: 'Danaus, the father of fifty daughters', 'Pelops, son of Tantalos, on reaching Pisa', 'Cadmus, who in time past left the city of Sidon'. He lived ninety-eight years, or according to others a hundred, not being able to bear seeing Greece enslaved a fourth time. [...]

- D2.** He ceased to live, according to some, on the ninth day after depriving himself of food. According to others on the fourth day, at the time of the funeral of those fallen at Chaeronea (ἄμα ταῖς ταφαῖς τῶν ἐν Χαιρωνείᾳ πεσόντων). His son Aphareus wrote discourses about him.

Contrary to previous versions, the first citation (D.1) from pseudo-Plutarch indicates that Isocrates used to give his class in the wrestling school of Hippocrates and cites two more verses Euripides which Isocrates uttered in dying. The divergence between the claims that the orator died at the age of ninety-eight or at a hundred years is easy to understand if one takes into account that many authors round-off at a hundred the age of our orator (see below citation E), and that, furthermore, other authors such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus indicate his age with expressions such as 'a hundred years less two'. In any case D.1 indicates that the

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and not in the neuter) to the Athenian 'notables' who died in the Battle of Chaeronea. This aspect will be relevant, as we shall see.

author of this quotation handled more than one source. The second citation (D2) indicates Isocrates died of lack of food after nine or four days at the moment when the funerals for the victims of Chaeronea were celebrated.<sup>73</sup> We know that these funeral celebrations took place months after the battle, possibly in winter at the ἐπιτάφια, at which Athens honoured its heroes.<sup>74</sup> The quotation, interpreted literally, makes us think that Isocrates could have died several months after the battle.

Flavius Philostratus (c. 200 A.D.) two centuries after Dionysius tells us in *Lives of the Sophists* 17 the following information:

- E. He died in Athens at the age of approximately 100 years and we must consider him to have been a casualty of the battle because he died after Chaeronea not being able to bear the news of the Athenian defeat.

The last significant source is perhaps the latest, as it has to do with the anonymous life of Isocrates which appears in the manuscripts at the beginning of his writings and which some attribute to Zosimus of Ascalon, a grammarian from the fifth cent A.D. In it we read the following regarding the death of Isocrates:

- F. Isocrates lived, according to some, for one hundred years, according to others ninety-eight years. He died in the archonship of Chaerondas after the Battle of Chaeronea grieving on account of the [p.35] defeat and the misfortune suffered by the Athenians at the hands of Philip. He allowed himself to die of hunger after nine days, according to Demetrius, according to Aphareus after fourteen. He died after reading these three verses of Euripides: ‘Danaus the father of fifty daughters’, ‘Cadmus in the past left the town of Sidon’, ‘Pelops the son of Tantalus, having gone to Pisa’. He intended to show by this that they being barbarians took over Greece upon their arrival there just as Philip became the fourth master of Greece...[then after a comparison with the mythological personages mentioned the text of the life ends as follows:] After uttering these words and dying, the Athenians, full of admiration for the patriotism of Isocrates [πρὸς τὴν πόλιν εὖνοιαν] buried him with honours at public expense, and sculpting a siren in stone they placed it on top of his tomb to demonstrate the harmony of his writing [εὐμουσίαν]. This is all concerning this divine orator.

The novelty of this notice, chronologically the latest of all, is its prolixity with respect to the previous ones. It is not surprising seeing that the intention of the author is to write a life of Isocrates and for that reason cannot be compared with the previous incidental accounts except perhaps with the life of pseudo-Plutarch, which contains many important details regarding the life of our orator, but in respect of his death is much less precise than F. Important above all is that this last testimony should indicate the ultimate sources from which our information regarding the death of Isocrates derives: his son Aphareus and Demetrius of Phaleron, two sources strictly contemporaneous with Isocrates. This piece of information does not have to be equally late as the prolix explanation over the significance of the three verses of Euripides: our anonymous author simply gives more details from his sources, which the other authors are silent about as they did not consider it essential to elaborate them, even though they probably knew them.

The defenders of the authenticity of *Letter 3* and its dating to 338 after Chaeronea can not admit as valid the report that Isocrates allowed himself to die of grief for the defeat a few days after the battle as reports A, B, C, D.1, E and F. clearly indicate. As it is evident that a death of this sort would have prevented him writing *Letter 3* congratulating Philip, these

<sup>73</sup> The number of four days should perhaps be corrected to fourteen in agreement with citation F (cf. below), although authors have supposed rather the contrary, for they consider that fourteen days cannot be considered as ‘a few’.

<sup>74</sup> Thucydides 2.34.

scholars believe that the truth regarding the death of Isocrates is initially to be found in D.2. In that report it is effectively said that Isocrates died at the moment they celebrated the funeral for the dead at Chaeronea, therefore at the end of 338, months after the Athenian defeat. As all the authors who have analysed the problem have noticed, Isocrates would not have been able to write to Philip immediately after the battle because Athens was [p.36] in a state of panic and emergency, expecting that the Macedonians would attack the city.<sup>75</sup> The discourse *Against Leocrates* of Lycurgus reflects this situation perfectly and documents even the adoption of drastic measures such as the prohibition on abandoning Athens (which Leocrates contravened), or liberating slaves and giving citizenship to foreigners in order to avoid internal disagreement (*Against Leocrates* 41). These worst fears conceived after the battle disappeared in Athens only months later. As we know from the epitome of Troguus made by Justin (9.4) and from Polybius (5.10.1-6), Philip showed himself generous towards the defeated Athenians and signed with them an advantageous peace. Even before Philip returned to Athens the bones of the fallen, the climate was different between the two states such that it is possible to conceive that Isocrates could have then written a letter to Philip with the optimism which our *Letter 3* exudes.<sup>76</sup>

In order to explain, then, what the remainder of the reports say about the death of Isocrates right after Chaeronea, scholars resort to different explanations. Thus, they consider that Aphareus invented this story of the death of his father to characterise him as a patriot and clean his memory stained as a result of his pro-Macedonian posture<sup>77</sup>; or they emphasize that the report in D2 that Isocrates died after four or nine days of fasting is the original one and that afterwards these days were placed erroneously in relation to the date of the battle of Chaeronea<sup>78</sup>; or furthermore they point out that there is no mention whatever of a voluntary suicide in D2 and that death could have come to him simply due to his inability to ingest nutrients owing to an intestinal disease.<sup>79</sup> Finally [p.37] the fact that none of the ancients saw a problem in attributing *Letter 3* to Isocrates and at the same time transmitting the ‘patriotic’ version of the death of the orator after Chaeronea, was solved by these authors with the rationale that the ancients perhaps were unable to see the contradiction because they were unaware of the date of *Letter 3*.<sup>80</sup> The legendary character of the death of Isocrates furthermore is proved by the unlikely story of the recitation of the verses of Euripides, all of which has the appearance of a later development designed to ennoble Isocrates.<sup>81</sup>

As one sees, the arguments which discredit the validity of the whole biographical tradition and only admit as valid D.2 are mostly pretty forced. Admitting that the report of the patriotic death of Isocrates in 338 could have been ‘adorned’ and amplified in the later tradition (and therefore the story of the reciting of Euripides could be false), it seems excessive to discount it totally in favour of a brief notice like D.2, which furthermore one encounters a few lines after D.1, which confirms the report of the patriotic suicide of Isocrates: both spring from the

<sup>75</sup> This observation was already in Wilamowitz, *Aris. und Athen*, *op.cit.* vol.II, pp. 22-23.

<sup>76</sup> Wendland *op. cit.* pp. 179-180; Mesk, *op. cit.*, pp. 22-23.

<sup>77</sup> The idea was mooted for the first time by Blass, ‘Isocrates’ dritter Brief...’, *op.cit.* pp. 112-113, who thought that Aphareus could have written this false version on the death of his father in a judicial discourse, seeing that in this type of work, as he considers, the truth was not of primary importance.

<sup>78</sup> An idea suggested by Wilamowitz ‘Unechte Briefe’, *op. cit.* p. 495 and accepted by Blass ‘Unechte Briefe’, *op. cit.* p. 35. Cf. also Wendland, *op. cit.* p. 178; Mesk, *op. cit.* p. 25 and Mathieu, *Philippe ...*, *op. cit.* p. 47.

<sup>79</sup> Hagen *op. cit.*, (note 2) p. 119 thinks that the disease to which Isocrates alludes at *Panathenaicus* 267 is a gastro-intestinal malady such as that which had prostrated him for three years without allowing him to complete the discourse: this same infirmity would have caused his death in 338 due to the inability to digest food. Cf. also Mathieu, *Philippe... op.cit.*, pp. 47-48,

<sup>80</sup> Wendland *op. cit.* p. 178.

<sup>81</sup> Blass, ‘Isocrates’ dritter Brief...’ *op.cit.* p. 112 and Mesk *op. cit.* pp. 29-30 think that the anecdote could have originated through the reading of *Panathenaicus* 80, where Isocrates cites the domination of Greece by Pelops, Danaus and Cadmus.

pen of the same author and it is difficult to think that this person was unable to appreciate the contradiction between the two versions, when the rest of his story is coherent and homogenous. On the other hand, even admitting that Aphareus could have invented a 'patriotic' death for his father<sup>82</sup>, what are we to say of the Aristotelian Demetrius of Phaleron, in no way suspect of being a supporter of our orator? Already Wilamowitz pointed out the value of these two independent sources<sup>83</sup> and it seems excessive to discredit his testimony by suggesting that text **F** alone presents Demetrius and Aphareus as sources for the days during which the death of Isocrates took place, but not of the time or causes which motivated it. This is an explanation *in extremis*, as it is more than unlikely that the writer of **F** should have drawn from two sources as valuable as Aphareus and Demetrius only [p.38] the banal indication of the days that it took for Isocrates to die: it is probable that the whole of his account is based on both authors (seeing that he doesn't cite other sources) and that only the (minor) discrepancy in the number of days the agony of the orator lasted should motivate his express mention. One forgets as well that there are other ancient sources such as Hermippus who wrote a biography of Isocrates in the third century B.C., from which proceeds doubtlessly much of the information found in later authors such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus.<sup>84</sup> On the other hand, how is it possible to think that the death of Isocrates could be falsified in so flagrant a manner making the author of a letter of encouragement to Philip after Chaeronea pass away by 'patriotic suicide'? The importance of the figure of Isocrates makes it unlikely that this gross manipulation could have passed without a response in the later tradition, as report D.2 is not a reply, and as I shall pass on to consider, its origin is easy to explain from the following considerations.

The report D.2 does not in reality contain any new element with respect to the other sources, but results from a simple error: it makes the date of the death of Isocrates coincide with the date of the funeral consecrated to his memory. As all the collected reports testify, Isocrates could not bear the news that Athens was defeated by Philip and he let himself die of hunger days after Chaeronea. This patriotic suicide of the orator led to the consideration that his death had taken place, as Dionysius in A indicates, together with the Athenian nobles (ἄμα τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τῆς πόλεως), that is to say, together with those Athenians who died on the field of battle. Isocrates was thus in a way one more casualty of the combat and for that reason it is logical that when the Athenians celebrated the official funeral rites for the fallen at the end of that year, they included Isocrates among them. That this idea is not pure speculation testimony E demonstrates, which declares expressly that one ought to 'consider Isocrates as one fallen in battle, because he died after Chaeronea not being able to bear the news of the Athenian defeat'. Testimony F insists as well on this particular and says that 'the Athenians full of admiration for the patriotism of Isocrates buried him with honours at state expense and, sculpting a siren of stone, they placed it on top of his tomb to demonstrate the harmony of his writing'. The existence of the tomb with an effigy of the siren was known to innumerable authors of antiquity (even to the extent [p.39] that allusion to the 'Isocratic siren' became proverbial) and remains a simple proof of the veracity of this version.

If with this interpretation in mind we turn to D.2, we shall see in reality that the way that it is formulated presents a problem. In the passage two unrelated matters are juxtaposed without any transition: one which indicates the number of days that his death-throes lasted and the other which refers to the funerals of the fallen at Chaeronea. It is not clear how the first point leads to the second one. One does not furthermore understand the subsequent isolated statement that Aphareus wrote a discourse (or several: the word λόγους is ambiguous) about

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<sup>82</sup> Notwithstanding, if we admit that the patriotic version of the death of Isocrates was contained in a judicial speech (?) written by Aphareus (such as Blass has suggested) it is hard to understand that from there on it should become the only authorised version of the death of our orator.

<sup>83</sup> Wilamowitz, *Aris. Und Athen...*, pp. 395-396.

<sup>84</sup> Mathieu, *Philippe...*, pp. 48-49 goes much further than reasonable when he thinks that the report of Hermippus about Isocrates writing the *Philippus* shortly before his and Philip's death, in fact refers to *Letter 3*.

Isocrates, as it does not have any relation to what comes before and after regarding the death of the orator. As, furthermore, the whole text of the *Vita* is very corrupt (there are two *crucis* in the edition of J. Mau in the second and fifth lines of our passage) it is possible to suppose that the phrase which indicates that Aphareus ‘wrote discourses about Isocrates’ (συνέγραψε δ’ αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ παῖς Ἀφαρεὺς λόγους) has been displaced, seeing that it is repeated in 839c (ὁ δ’ Ἀφαρεὺς συνέγραψε μὲν λόγους). If we omit this phrase in the same way that the editor proceeds with the other referring to Aphareus some lines further on, the allusion to the funeral orations for Chaeronea could then be applied to the following phrase which begins with ἐτάφη and mentions the burial of our orator. It is also possible that some words have disappeared at the place where the reference to Aphareus was inserted in error. Another option would be to change the position of one δέ and to read Ἄμα δὲ ταῖς ταφαῖς τῶν ἐν Χαιρωνείᾳ πεσότων συνέγραψε αὐτοῦ καὶ ὁ παῖς Ἀφαρεὺς λόγους, understanding ‘the speeches about Isocrates’ as speeches in his honour composed by Aphareus at the time of his official funeral. Whatever the case, it is clear that the mention of the funerals for Chaeronea does not refer to the day of his death but to the expression ἐτάφη, something which eliminates all suspicion that D.2 contains a version of the death of Isocrates different from the rest of the ancient biographical tradition.

For all that, I believe that one can affirm without the slightest doubt that Isocrates allowed himself to die a few days after Chaeronea.<sup>85</sup> The tomb which the Athenians erected for him for the ἐπιτάφια at the end of the year demonstrates clearly that in the final moments of his life our orator clearly placed his patriotic convictions ahead of his pro-Macedonian sentiments: [40] a path which he had already taken in the *Panathenaicus*. A letter encouraging the policy of Philip after 338 contradicts all that the ancient tradition unanimously says regarding our orator, which completely ignores the existence of such a text.

#### 4.3. Authenticity of the letter.<sup>86</sup>

Few are the authors who have doubted the authenticity of the letter and the majority of them have done so not because of the style of the letter itself (as was the case with *Letter 4* to Antipater), but due to the likelihood or not of the fact that Isocrates should turn to Philip in a laudatory fashion after the defeat at Chaeronea. To them it seems impossible that Isocrates, when Philip had just defeated Athens, could have approved his policy at that point in time without damaging his reputation as a patriot (which, as we have seen, he took pains to vindicate with the publication of the *Panathenaicus*). Nevertheless, this form of argument does not have to necessarily bear on the authenticity of the letter, in that, as my analysis in this section will show, from the viewpoint of its formulation and of the ideas in it, there is nothing to suggest that the letter is inauthentic.

The only study that has tried to deny the authenticity of *Letter 3* on stylistic grounds, that of Woyte,<sup>87</sup> was even considered unconvincing by Münscher<sup>88</sup> and ignored by Wilamowitz, despite the fact that both authors also consider the letter a forgery. More forceful still is the judgment of an author such as Wendland, who regards Woyte’s procedure as untrustworthy because he points out supposedly non-Isocratean turns of phrase as proof of the falsity of the letter while describing as imitation those which coincide with our orator.<sup>89</sup>

<sup>85</sup> It is also possible that Lycurgus, witness to the anxious moments which he experienced in Athens when the news of the rout reached the city, has in mind our orator when he wrote that one could see wandering about Athens old men exempt from military service, old men exhausted with one foot in the grave, wrapped in double cloaks (*Against Leocrates* 40).

<sup>86</sup> Concerning the authenticity of the letter see L.F. Smith, *The genuineness of the ninth and third letters of Isocrates*, Lancaster Pa., 1940, which I have not been able to consult.

<sup>87</sup> C. Woyte, *De Isocratis quae feruntur epistulis quaestiones selectae*, Leipzig, 1907: it has not been possible for me to consult this work, a doctoral thesis cited by various scholars of the epoch.

<sup>88</sup> Münscher, review of Wendland, *op. cit.* (n. 70), col.1348 rates it as ‘nicht allzu überzeugend’.

<sup>89</sup> Wendland, *op.cit.*, p. 178 n. 3.

In reality there is nothing in the style of the letter dissonant with that of Isocrates. Furthermore there are so many parallels that can be established between the ideas formulated in *Letter 3* and other writings of Isocrates that the defenders of its falsity like Treves feel obliged to describe it as a ‘cento’ [41] of other writings of the orator.<sup>90</sup> Nevertheless, a simple consideration of the passages which most echo the style and ideas of Isocrates seems rather to convince one to the contrary, that is to say, that the letter came from the pen of our orator, seeing that so close an interpenetration with his work does not seem within the reach of an imitator, as we saw when analysing *Letter 4*. But let us look at some examples of Isocratean characteristics of this *Letter 3*.

Some allusions to the work of Isocrates were perhaps within reach of someone who had a simple familiarity with the work of Isocrates and in particular the *Philippus*, which was an object of harsh criticisms in Platonic circles such as we saw from Speusippus’ Letter. The references to the war against Persia, which appear in §2 are in fact the central motive of that discourse. When a little before in the same paragraph of the letter it is stated that in the *Philippus* the intention was that the king reconcile Athens with the Lacedaemonians, Thebans and Argives, one recalls a passage in this discourse [*Philippus* 32-38], where Isocrates reminded the king of the historic ties that united him to these four states and that made him the right person to undertake their reconciliation. Isocrates insists at *Philippus* 36 that the king has an opportunity to be useful to these states (ἔχεις δὲ καιρόν) and at *Philippus* 38 it is pointed out that if the hatred grows he will not be able to reconcile the Greeks (διαλλάξειεν): both terms καιρός and διαλλάσσω appear again in the second paragraph of the letter reminding us of the *Philippus*. As well, the allusion to old age in §4 is characteristic of the final discourses of Isocrates, and we encounter it at *Panathenaicus* 268, *Letter 1.1* and *Letter 9.16* expressed in similar terms and with the verb ἀπειρηκα. Finally, the mention of his associates in §3 is a frequent recourse of the orator such as we saw in the *Panathenaicus* itself: Isocrates was accustomed to respond in his discourses to opinions or doubts which his disciples presented to him as a means of breaking the monologue of the written discourse.<sup>91</sup> Although these characteristics do not suffice to prove the authenticity of the letter, they clearly indicate that its author was intimately acquainted with the works of Isocrates.

There are nevertheless two subtle references to the *Philippus* which to my mind are not comprehensible from a forger's viewpoint, seeing that they concern general reflections regarding behaviour and not specific characteristics of the *Philippus*, which could easily [42] have been identified. In the first place, one refers to §4, which repeats in almost identical terms an affirmation contained at *Philippus* 135. It suffices to compare both passages:

#### Letter 3.4

ἔστι δὲ πρὸς μὲν ἄλλο τι τῶν ὄντων ἀπλήστως ἔχειν οὐ καλὸν, αἱ γὰρ μετριότητες παρὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς εὐδοκιμοῦσι, δόξης δὲ μεγάλης καὶ καλῆς ἐπιθυμεῖν καὶ μηδέ ποτ’ ἐπιπίπασθαι προσήκει τοῖς πολὺ τῶν ἄλλων διενεγκοῦσιν·

#### *Philippus* 135

ὄλως δὲ τοὺς μὲν τιμῆς ἐπιθυμοῦντας αἰεὶ μείζονος ἢς ἔχουσιν ὑπὸ πάντων ἐπαινουμένους, τοὺς δὲ πρὸς ἄλλο τι τῶν ὄντων ἀπλήστως διακειμένους ἀκρατεστέρους καὶ φαυλοτέρους εἶναι δοκοῦντας.

An identical parallel is observed between two other passages of the letter and the discourse:

<sup>90</sup> Treves, *op.cit.* (n. 70), pp. 311-312.

<sup>91</sup> On these problems cf. S. Usener, *Isokrates, Platon und ihr Publikum. Hörer und Leser von Literatur im 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, Tübingen, 1994.

### Letter3.5

ταῦτα δὲ κατεργάσασθαι πολὺ ῥᾶόν ἐστιν ἐκ τῶν παρόντων ἢ προελθεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν δύναμιν καὶ τὴν δόξαν ἣν νῦν ἔχεις ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας τῆς ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὑμῖν ὑπαρξάσης.

### *Philippus 115*

ῥάδιον γάρ ἐστιν ἐκ τῶν παρόντων κτήσασθαι τὴν καλλίστην [i.e. δόξαν], ἢ ἕξ ὧν παρέλαβες ἐπὶ τὴν νῦν ὑπαρχούσαν προελθεῖν.

The parallels between these two passages nevertheless ought not to lead us to the erroneous conclusion that a forger inspired by the *Philippus* to write the letter is at work here: it is customary for Isocrates to repeat constantly certain ideas in his works. The words he uses are, furthermore, though very close, not identical, which indicates that it is the idea itself that the author repeats and not its form, although the first leads inevitably to the second. The one thing that could perhaps seem a little surprising is the reason for recording with such insistence in this *Letter3* ideas or expressions present in the *Philippus*. One reason for that could be precisely the fact that both writings were written at a little distance from one another, as I shall argue in the following segment.

The sole idea that seems to be out of tune with the views of our orator is encountered in §5 where Isocrates writes addressing Philip that if he fulfils his objectives by defeating the Persian ‘nothing will remain than for you to become a god’ (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔσται λοιπὸν ἔτι πλὴν θεὸν γενέσθαι). This suggestion, taken literally, conflicts with Isocrates’ affirmation at *Philippus* 113-115 and 151, as Larue van Hook points in a note to the Loeb edition. There our author denies to kings the possibility of attaining the status of gods. But in addition to this internal contradiction, [p.43] the ‘deification’ of Philip would be scandalous in the mouth of an Athenian at this instant, however close might be the road leading to the deification of rulers with Alexander, and however significant it might be that in Athens in 307 divine honours were first bestowed on Demetrios Poliorcetes and his father Antigonos.<sup>92</sup> Wilamowitz already saw in this deification of Philip one of the principal obstacles to considering the letter authentic and thought it was written in the time of Alexander.<sup>93</sup> This difficulty can be removed if we consider that what Isocrates is affirming here is that the greatest glory that Philip could obtain will come from his Persian campaigns, seeing that to be a god is something that falls outside his reach. This interpretation is endorsed by the analysis of Fritz Taeger<sup>94</sup> who considers that Isocrates’ affirmation has a clear gnomic significance precisely in this sense. Furthermore, the phrase in question appears in manuscripts not where the editors print it (and this still presents problems), but in a place where it lacks sense, right at the end of the first paragraph after the word ὑπαρξάσης, which makes one think that it could have slipped into the text as a gloss.<sup>95</sup>

But if there is therefore nothing in the way of ideas to reject the authorship of our author, from the viewpoint of style as a whole it seems to fit with the language of Isocrates. All the words used are normal in his prose and some such as καιρός, δόξα, or πείθω are as well key concepts of his work. If we compare the use of specific terms that appear in this letter with the rest of his work and that of Plato (to choose a contemporary with an ample *corpus* of texts) we shall see that the adjective ἀνυπέβλητος appears six times in Isocrates and not at all in Plato; that one encounters the verb παροξύνω seven times in Isocrates and only once in a letter of Plato; that εἰλωτεύω and ἐμπιπλάνω are unknown in Plato, whilst they each appear in the writings of Isocrates; and that ἐξαρκούντως occurs twice in Isocrates and only once in

<sup>92</sup> Plutarch, *Demetrius* 10-12 and Diodorus Siculus 20.46.1-3.

<sup>93</sup> Wilamowitz, *Aris. und Athen, op.cit.* p. 397, n. 7.

<sup>94</sup> F. Taeger, 'Isokrates und die Anfänge des hellenistischen Herrscherkultes', *Hermes* 72, 1937, pp. 355-360.

<sup>95</sup> Wagner, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

Plato.... From the point of view of language, if we were to talk of [44] forgery one could only say that it is so close to the original that it is only conceivable within the circle of his most intimate disciples.

But even conceding that the letter could possibly have been forged and that the style and ideas of Isocrates could have been imitated in so exact a manner by some intimate of his, it would defy imagination what the motive for such a forgery could have been. The only one possible (I am not aware that others have been suggested) was pointed out by Wilamowitz.<sup>96</sup> who thought that the letter could only have been conceived among the pro-Macedonian faction after Chaeronea to demonstrate that the sympathies of Isocrates towards Philip had been maintained after the Athenian defeat. According to Wilamowitz, the supporters of Philip would have wished to confront with this letter the story invented by the enemies of Macedonia, that Isocrates at the time of his death 'stigmatised' Philip' through the citation of three verses of Euripides that identified the king with a barbarian conqueror similar to Pelops, Cadmus and Danaus. The German scholar, though he believed in the suicide of the orator after Chaeronea, did not in effect credit the last words of Isocrates at the moment of his death. I agree with Wilamowitz in that the only possible moment at which it made sense to forge a pro-Macedonian letter of Isocrates was immediately after Chaeronea, but in reality it is very strange that the supposed forger did not make any mention of the concern of Isocrates for his defeated city and that he made him speak in terms so distant and vague about recent events; something that does not square with the procedure of a forger, who always seeks to authenticate his letter with concrete references. On the other hand, if a forgery like this had been published would it not have been detected immediately? Would there not have been a reply on the part of those close to the orator? And yet there is not a single word of polemic on this matter in all the ancient tradition, so rich in details in regard to the death and family of the orator such as the text of pseudo-Plutarch demonstrates. In view of this, it is logical to think that *Letter 3* is authentic.

#### 4.4. The proposal of Philipp Wagner

An analysis of the biographical tradition has demonstrated that Isocrates allowed himself to die in 338 within a few days of Chaeronea, while [45] the tenor of *Letter 3* to Philip confirms clearly that it was written by Isocrates. Having arrived at this point we seem to find ourselves in the selfsame dead end in which criticism finds itself. Indeed, we are closer than ever to the solution, which can be no other than to admit the authenticity of the letter and the biographical tradition and from here proceed to a redating of *Letter 3*. The hypothesis which I now propose is nevertheless not new, for it was put forward in 1875 by Philipp Wagner. Unfortunately it found no echo among his contemporaries, because it was published in a *Programm* of the gymnasium of Jever, a small town in German Frisia and no scholar dealing with this question appears to have read his argument. The proposal of Wagner is nevertheless telling, as it proposes to date the letter to the end of 346. His succinct arguments, already inaccessible for his contemporaries, are based on an analysis of the historical context of the letter. I shall incorporate them into the thread of my exposition and to them I shall add new arguments in eight points in favour of a date of 346.

1. *The silence concerning Athens.* It falls within the realm of the possible that Isocrates should have written to Philip after Chaeronea when the latter demonstrated a generous policy towards Athens. It is less probable that after the defeat of his fatherland by Philip in an armed confrontation Isocrates should hold on to the conviction that Philip was the one best capable of uniting the Greeks when the battle itself was the palpable proof of their disunity. It is furthermore Isocrates himself who in *Letter 6.3*, when faced with the simple *possibility* of a conflict of interest between his state and another state, finds himself obliged to take sides beforehand on behalf of his city, seeing that otherwise he would have been seen as failing in his obligations. But even supposing that Isocrates would have preferred his loyalty to Philip over his status as an Athenian, it is absolutely inconceivable that he would have written after

<sup>96</sup> Wilamowitz, *Aris. und Athen, op.cit.* p. 397.

Chaeronea without mentioning his city or indicating to Philip how he should behave towards the vanquished Athenians, how he should use the victory and how he should overcome the distrust towards him. In other words, what is really surprising in the letter is not so much the praise of Philip but the absolute silence of Isocrates regarding his city, defeated and humiliated at Chaeronea. This silence is not only absolutely unthinkable in a letter supposedly written in such critical circumstances, but spoils the work that Isocrates tried to do in the *Panathenaicus*, which, as we demonstrated in the second part of this study, was a defence on the part of Isocrates of his patriotism with the aim of freeing himself from accusations which had befallen him with the publication of the *Philippus*. How is it possible that Isocrates after vindicating his patriotism in the *Panathenaicus* could compose an enthusiastic letter to Philip without so much as alluding to the Athenian defeat? The δόξα of Isocrates, his very [46] prestige as a patriot, which we saw was one of the things that mattered most to him, would have been definitely ruined by the writing of a letter such as that in 338<sup>97</sup>, in which all the words are in praise of Philip and there is no mention of his fatherland. For that reason it seems hard to believe that Isocrates could have written this letter in 338, although there is no obstacle to supposing that he could have written it at another moment closer in time to the publication of the *Philippus*.

2. *The ancient tradition regarding the Letter.* The ancient tradition, probably from the time of Dionysius of Halicarnassus knew *Letter 3* to Philip and the version of the suicide of Isocrates after Chaeronea<sup>98</sup>, and yet no ancient author appreciated the contradiction between the two. It is an easy recourse to say, as does Wendland<sup>99</sup>, that the tradition on which Dionysius based himself did not know the date the letter was written and could therefore not appreciate the contradiction between it and the suicide of Isocrates. In reality it is suspicious enough that *not one* amongst all the ancient authors ever questioned the date at which the letter could have been written. It is more reasonable to think, on the contrary, that they had indeed done so but that their conclusion was different from the conclusion of the majority of modern researchers, that is to say, no ancient author ever thought that the letter was written in 338, amongst other reasons because this contradicted the story of Isocrates' suicide after Chaeronea. What's more, in two of the manuscripts of the fifteenth century in which the letters of Isocrates are transmitted<sup>100</sup>, *Letter 3* appears not after *Letter 2*, also addressed to Philip in 344/3, but before it. The fact that the owner of these codices could have been a philologist of the first rank like Constantine Lascaris to whom Teresa Martins Mansion has recently dedicated two magnificent monographs<sup>101</sup>, makes one think that the change is not fortuitous but the fruit of reflection upon the chronology of the letter which led the copyist to place *Letter 3* at a point in time before that of *Letter 2*. If this inference is right, then the letter was written before 345/344.

3. *Isocrates and Antipater* (§1). If Isocrates died a few days after Chaeronea, as the ancient biographical tradition unanimously accepts it is obvious that he had neither time nor opportunity to write a letter in which, as he says in §1, he has spoken with Antipater concerning the peace before writing to Philip. Leaving aside that his illness hampered him, Antipater had arrived in Athens to negotiate the peace two months after Chaeronea, when Isocrates was already dead. However, if we date the letter to 346 we will understand that the conversations of Isocrates with Antipater took place in that year for the ambassador of Philip

<sup>97</sup> If Isocrates feared to write to Antipater when Athens and Macedonia were at war and even in the years preceding how is it possible to think that he would write such an enthusiastic letter to Philip after Chaeronea?

<sup>98</sup> Only Photios expressly mentions the existence of two letters to Philip, however his indications are supported by Dionysius of Halicarnassus and Caecilius of Caleacte.

<sup>99</sup> Wendland. *op.cit.* p. 178.

<sup>100</sup> Vat. gr. 1353 and Matr. 7210.

<sup>101</sup> T. Martinez Manzano, *Konstantinos Laskaris, humanist, philologe, Lehrer, Kopist*, Hamburg, 1994 and *Constantino Láscaris, semblanza de un humanista bizantino*, Madrid, 1998,

was then in Athens to [47] negotiate the Peace of Philocrates. It is to these conversations with Antipater that Isocrates is probably referring. It does not seem likely that after Chaeronea Isocrates would participate in conversations with Antipater, when the Macedonian had defeated Athens and was already set in his policy, while it is more probable that these conversations took place in 346 when Philip still tried to avoid confrontation with Athens through peace and needed support and advice from the pro-Macedonian groups among the Athenians.

4. *The idea of a campaign against the Persian* (§3)<sup>102</sup>. In the third paragraph of the letter Isocrates indicates that his contemporaries were asking him who had conceived the campaign against Persia, Philip or him, to which Isocrates replies that no one knows exactly because he has not previously had dealings with the Macedonian king. This information is incomprehensible in 338 for two reasons. In the first place, Isocrates had a relationship with Philip dating from eight years earlier, as he wrote the *Philippus* already in 346. In the second place, in 338 Philip's intention to carry out a campaign against the Persians had already been well known for years, and for this reason it is strange that now the Athenians should be asking Isocrates which of the two, the orator or the king, first had the idea for the campaign. Moreover, such concerns are inexplicable coming from Athenians immersed in the aftermath of Chaeronea. On the contrary, these statements fit much better with 346, seeing that it is precisely at the end of that year that Philip divulged for the first time his intentions regarding Persia.<sup>103</sup> The source of this is Diodorus 16.60.4-5, who tells us that when the Third Sacred War ended in 346 Philip returned to Macedonia not only with great prestige for his piety and for his strategic skills (οὐ μόνον δόξαν εὐσεβείας καὶ ἀρετῆς στρατηγικῆς περιπεποιημένος) but also with great plans for his future glory (ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς τὴν μέλλουσαν αὐξήσιν αὐτῷ γίνεσθαι μέγαρα προκατεσκευασμένος) and deciding to become commander-in-chief of Greece (ἐπεθύμει γὰρ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀποδειχθῆναι στρατηγὸς αὐτοκράτωρ καὶ τὸν πρὸς Πέρσας ἐξενεγκεῖν πόλεμον). The time was ripe for Isocrates to write to the King reminding him that the plans he recommended a few months earlier in the *Philippus* were more achievable than ever.

5. *The absence of any mention of the Panathenaicus* (§6) Those who maintain that the letter was written in 338 have necessarily to admit that the *Panathenaicus* is not a covert defence of Philip's policy, for in that case Isocrates would have mentioned it in this letter, where he makes mention in §6 of the *Panegyricus* and the *Philippus* as two discourses which support the policy that Philip now pursues. Well now, if the [48] *Panathenaicus* is a simple discourse on the subject of patriotic vindication, such as I have argued, and therefore it is not appropriate to cite it in the present context, we find ourselves confronting the problem I made at point 1 above: How is it possible that Isocrates should spoils the defence of his patriotism which he undertook in the *Panathenaicus* with a letter that ignores completely the difficult situation of his polis?

6. *The references to the Philippus* (§§1,6)<sup>104</sup>. There are two occasions in the letter where the orator refers to his *Philippus* of 346: one at the beginning, the other at the end. On the first

<sup>102</sup> Wagner, *op. cit.* p. 12: 'Hoc postremo dicatur ad sententiam fulciendam, jam anno 346 epistolam scriptam esse: verba paragraphi tertiae, ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ εἰδέναι μέ φημι τὸ σαφές, οὐ γὰρ συγγενῆσθαί σοι πρότερον e.q.s. aptius videntur ineunte consuetudine, qua intercederet inter Philippum atque Isocratem, dicta esse quam exeunte'.

<sup>103</sup> J.R.Ellis in the *Cambridge Ancient History*, *op.cit.* p.761.

<sup>104</sup> Blass 'Isokrates' dritter Brief...', *op.cit.*, p.110 thought that *Letter 3* could not have been written after the peace of 346 as, according to him, Isocrates indicates in §6 of the letter that he wrote the *Philippus* of 346 when he was much younger. To this Wager replies *op. cit.* pp.11-12: 'Neque intelligendum, quid Blassius paragrapho extrema censeat exprimi. Legimus enim haec: ὅσθ' ἂ νέος ὢν διενούμην καὶ γράφειν ἐπεχείρουν ἔν τε τῷ Παναθηναϊκῷ λόγῳ καὶ τῷ πρὸς σὲ πεμφθέντι, ταῦτα νῦν τὰ μὲν ἤδη γινόμενα διὰ τῶν σῶν ἐφορῶ πράξεων, τὰ δ' ἐλπίζω γενήσεσθαι. Sed verba νέος ὢν neque in annum 346 neque in eum, quo Panathenaicus [a *lapsus calami* of Wagner: the *Panegyricus* is here intended]

occasion in §1 Isocrates says to Philip that after speaking to Antipater about what should be done he wished as well to write to the King regarding certain matters 'similar to those in the discourse, but much more brief than them' (παραπλήσια μὲν τοῖς ἐν λόγῳ γεγραμμένοις, πολὺ δ' ἐκείνων συντομώτερα). It is remarkable that the reference to the *Philippus* should be so imprecise. If Isocrates had written these words in 338 would it perhaps have been necessary to clarify that the discourse he was referring to was the *Philippus*, written no less than eight years earlier? In fact between 346 and 338 Isocrates wrote other works, like the *Panathenaicus* itself. Besides, the political situation had changed considerably during these eight years. On the other hand, a discourse like the *Panegyricus*, though much earlier than the *Philippus* (it was written in 380), contained panhellenic ideas such as those treated in *Letter 3*, and on account of this a reader of the letter, in the absence of better indications, could think Isocrates was referring to it, seeing that in the final analysis it is the most important work of the orator.

This idea is confirmed by the fact that Isocrates himself makes reference to the *Panegyricus* in §6 at the end of this letter when he points out that all those ideas that 'I conceived in my youth and I set out to write in the *Panegyricus* are today being realized as I sent them to you'. As Wagner has already pointed out, Isocrates could not have said he was young when he wrote the *Philippus*, as he was then more than 90 years of age, and likewise he was in his sixties when he published the *Panegyricus*, by reason of which one understands that by that phrase Isocrates distinguishes between the ideas he held as a youth and the discourses which he wrote to defend them in mature age (*Panegyricus*) and in old age (*Philippus*). In either case, the precision with which he refers to the *Panegyricus* by name (ὁ Πανηγυρικός λόγος) contrasts vividly with the expression by which Isocrates characterises the *Philippus* simply as τῷ πρὸς σὲ πεμφθέντι. This expression [49] to my mind should not be understood as the 'title' of the discourse seeing that the verb πέμπω does not acknowledge the 'dedication' to Philip, but simply indicates that the discourse was 'sent' to Philip. The spontaneity of both expressions suggests that the letter was sent at a time sufficiently close to the time of publication and despatch of the *Philippus* that greater precision in identifying it was not necessary. Therefore, I think that for this reason alone 346 is more likely than 338 as the date for the publication of the letter.

7. *The conflict to which mention is made* (§2)<sup>105</sup>. In §2 Isocrates mentions that 'owing to the conflict that has taken place' (διὰ γὰρ τὸν ἀγῶνα γεγενημένον) all the Greeks feel obliged to act in a sensible manner and in accord with Philip's plans, leaving aside their ambitions and madness, to concentrate on the war against Asia. All scholars have thought this a clear allusion to Chaeronea, but this hypothesis poses serious problems in the interpretation of the passage. Firstly the word ἀγών does not seem appropriate to refer to a war that has set Athenians and Thebans against Philip. For wars Isocrates employs the word πόλεμος which

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compositus est (annum 380 dico) quadrant. Cuius enunciati imo haec est sententia: ea, quae iuvenis animo mecum reputabam, quae oratione cum media aetate eram et altera oratione senex exprimebam, haec nunc spe celerius in eo sunt, ut perficiantur'.

<sup>105</sup> Wagner *op.cit.* p.11: 'Nihil igitur restat, nisi ut anno 346 scriptam eam [*Letter 3*] esse putemus, cum foedere cum Palaeco facto, Phocensibus deuictis, Philippo in societatem Amphictyonum assumpto, pax cum Atheniensibus mense martio constituta et iunio iureiurando firmata erat, quo tempore optima quaeque sperabat Isocrates, ciuitates Graecas discordia diutina fessas beneuolentissimo ac potentissimo Macedonum rege adiuuante denuo corroboratum iri ratus. Cumque orationem suam eo tempore ad Philippum daret, quo Phocenses nondum pacati erant, eius quasi appendiculam misit epistolam. Quam nimum sperare Isocratem non est mirandum, utpote qui reipublicae regendae haud ita gnarus esset'; p.12: 'Vnum argumentum plus auctoritatis habere uidetur: cum Phocenses deuincerentur, omnino proelia non esse commissa. Attamen licet illas intellegere pugnas, quibus ante bellum a Philippo ad finem perductum conflictum erat. Atque ista uerba (διὰ γὰρ τὸν ἀγῶνα e.q.s.) hoc fere sibi uelle puto: postquam per decem annos Graeci aequo Marte inter se pugnauerunt, nunc uidentes a rege bellum sine uulnere esse confectum, resipiscere coguntur, cum intellegant infirmos se ipsos esse atque inualidos. Melius mihi placeret enunciatum illud, si articulo non repetito participium praedicatiue ut dicitur esse positum. Verba igitur, διὰ γὰρ τὸν ἀγῶνα γεγενημένον in nostram linguam uerteremus: in Folge der Beendigung des Kampfes; sed ne illa quidem explicandi ratio absona uidetur'.

he uses in this passage to designate the war against the Persian. In three out of four instances the word ἀγών in Isocrates is used in a judicial sense and in order to refer to civic competitions, and when it is applied to confrontations between states (in a sense which includes and goes beyond mere combat by arms) appears always joined to πόλεμος or to other similar words in order to make clear that the conflict is armed.<sup>106</sup> In the second place, it makes no sense that in the year 338 Isocrates should refer to 'all' the Greeks (πάντες applies to Greeks but does not include the Macedonians, according to the general interpretation) as already convinced that they ought to abandon their mutual confrontations. In fact, [50] if in the year 338 the Greeks, Thebans and Athenians had put aside their mutual confrontations, this was *before* the battle and precisely to ally themselves against Philip. But although the 'all' to which the text refers would include Philip and the Greeks together, it seems surprising that this confrontation is qualified as a μανία and above all as πλεονεξία when the armies of Philip were fighting in Boeotia, at the very gateway of Athens. I think, therefore, that the allusion fits much better in 346 when all the Greeks were divided on the attitude they ought to take regarding Macedon, and the question of the Third Sacred War was occupying their minds. Isocrates uses the word ἀγών and not πόλεμος to refer to the tense negotiations between Athens and Philip throughout 346 (there were as many as four embassies between both these powers) which they conducted in April until the signing of the Peace of Philocrates with Macedon; in June the terms of the peace were ratified by Philip and only in August a consensus was reached in order to put an end to the Third Sacred War. This last conflict actually concerned the majority of the Greek states in regard to the solution which had to be reached on the Phocian occupation of Delphi, which had erupted into conflict in 355 and had forced practically all the Greek states to align themselves either with Thebes or (as in the case of Athens) with the Phocians. The accord which the members of the Amphictyony made at the beginning of August 346 concerned how to punish the 'sacrilege' of the Phocians (even though it did not satisfy Athens, there being tensions in the following months) and closed the prolonged period of conflict. Demosthenes himself defended the accord in his discourse *On the Peace* with the aim of preventing a new war against Philip. For Isocrates the accords reached at that time reflect the sensibleness of the Greeks who have been wise enough to react to the gravity of the conflict ('obliged' in a certain way by the situation) and subsequently to place themselves in accord abandoning their confrontations. To describe the confrontations of the Third Sacred War as μανία and πλεονεξία is more than apposite. The 'madness' of the conflicting parties which the word μανία characterises very well is a failing in logic which led to confrontation over the control of Delphi, while the hunger for power and money which the word πλεονεξία designates makes reference to the unjustified ambitions of all the states and the clear economic motives which determined the conflict, in that the Phocians had utilised the treasures of Delphi in order to pay mercenaries.

8. *The circumstances in which Letter 3 and the Philippus were composed.* If in the light of all the previous considerations we now begin with the idea that the letter was written at the end of 346, then it is necessary to explain why in regard to the *Philippus* (likewise published in the same year) the differences that existed at the time of its composition are emphasised in so marked a manner in this letter. Indeed Isocrates indicates at §2 that 'at that time' (κατ' ἐκεῖνον τὸν χρόνον), when he wrote the *Philippus*, he thought it necessary that Philip should provide the basis of concord among the Greeks after he had reconciled Athens with Sparta, Thebes and Argos, but at that time the circumstances were different (τότε μὲν οὖν ἄλλος ἦν καιρός), whilst today 'it is no longer necessary to convince' (νῦν δὲ συμβέβηκε μηκέτι δεῖν πείθειν) seeing that all have felt obliged by the past conflict to put an end to their disagreements. As we already saw in the previous point, this present moment refers to a time after the end of the Third Sacred War, that is to [51] say August 346. For the reasons already given in point 4, I think Isocrates wrote this letter only after the divulgation of the proposals of Philip to march against the Persians, perhaps in the final months of 346 or even at the

<sup>106</sup> Cf. *To Nicocles* 49, *Helen* 17, *Panegyricus* 99, 165, *Panathenaicus* 155. Compare also *Archidamus* 92, where Isocrates speaks of ἀγώνων ἐν τοῖς ὄπλοις.

beginning of 345. The *Philippus* was, on the other hand, composed at the time of the peace between Philip and Athens ratified in April 346, but in any case before July of the same year, seeing that *Philippus* 55-56 speaks of the confrontation which the Phocians and the Thebans still continued on account of the Third Sacred War and that at *Philippus* 74 it is indicated that the war had not yet been resolved. Supposing therefore that the *Philippus* was sent around about May 346<sup>107</sup> and *Letter 3* six or seven months later, one can say that the circumstances had changed sufficiently between the two dates for Isocrates in *Letter 3* to be able to see with more optimism the peace which in May was still up in the air pending the final ratification by Philip, whereas at the end of the year no one opposed it, not even Demosthenes. I have no doubt, in fact, that it is the faction of Demosthenes that we have to see behind the allusions at *Philippus* 73-80 to demagogue enemies of the peace.

## 6. Conclusions.

As a consequence of the previous analysis we can establish the following chronological order of the works published by Isocrates from the publication of the *Philippus* in 346 until his death in 338:

Discourse 5 ( <i>Philippus</i> )	circa May 346
<i>Letter 3</i> (to Philip)	end of 346
<i>Letter 2</i> (to Philip)	end of 345/beginning of 344
lost letter to Philip	end of 343/beginning of 342
<i>Letter 5</i> (to Alexander)	end of 343/beginning of 342
beginning of <i>Panathenaicus</i>	342
<i>Letter 4</i> (to Archidamus)	end of 340
conclusion of <i>Panathenaicus</i>	339

This ordering of his works has important repercussions for the present in evaluating the ideas of Isocrates. We can thus conclude that after the publication of the *Philippus* in spring 346 Isocrates sent in the following years at least three letters to the king of which two are preserved. The first of these (*Letter 3*) is from the end of 346 and very optimistic, and urges the Macedonian to undertake war against Persia now that the circumstances are more favourable than in the previous month when the Third Sacred War [52] was still in progress. The Second Letter written before the Thessalian campaign of summer 344 is longer and motivated by the anxiety which Philip's serious wounds caused Isocrates, wounds that Philip received in combat with the Dalmatian Ardiaei. Its tone is more pessimistic and Isocrates does not omit to refer in it to criticisms which certain Athenian factions (bound without doubt to Demosthenes) directed against him as well as against the King. The letter reflects the growing disenchantment during 345 with the Peace of Philocrates. The third letter to Philip has not been preserved but it ought to have been written at the end of 343 or beginning of 342, seeing it accompanied *Letter 5* which Isocrates wrote at around these dates. We don't know what Isocrates could have written to the king at that time, although given the anti-Macedonian climate in Athens (Philocrates had been exiled in 343) one may suppose that its contents would be very different from the two previous letters. In any case, in the letter to Alexander Isocrates interests himself in questions of education rather than politics, which can be understood in the light of his confrontation with the Academy of Speusippus. This confrontation with rivals from other schools ought to be taken together at that time with the rejection of the policy of Isocrates led by the anti-Macedonian faction of Demosthenes. In the

<sup>107</sup> Blass, *Attische Beredsamkeit, op.cit.* v.2 p. 314, thinks that Isocrates had already begun to write the *Philippus* in April 346, the peace with Macedonia having been rejected by the Assembly: this is today the *communis opinio* on the matter.

face of criticisms which were directed to him from diverse sectors Isocrates began to write a discourse of personal vindication perhaps with the intention of completing it for the Panathenaic festival of 342. In it, omitting all reference to his ties with Philip so inconvenient at that time, the orator was exalting the virtues of the Athens of his ancestors, which permits him on the one hand to demonstrate his patriotism and his love of his city (something which the members of the Academy could not exploit), and on the other to criticise the policy of contemporary Athens (directed by Demosthenes and with which he is in profound disagreement).<sup>108</sup> A grave illness lasting three years incapacitated our orator taking him [53] close to death, and due to this he was unable to work and conclude the *Panathenaicus* for some time. To this period of sickness, when war with Athens had already begun, belongs *Letter 4* to Antipater, the lieutenant of Philip II. It is a letter of recommendation with no reference to the political situation save for one brief indication at the beginning where Isocrates declares that it is dangerous to write to Macedonia in time of war. The style of the letter does not fit well with the style of our orator, and for this reason and in view of the theme of the letter and his illness, it cannot be ruled out that another person contributed to its composition. Having overcome his illness in 339, when Athens was at war with Macedon, Isocrates publishes the *Panathenaicus*. In the following year, in 338, the catastrophe of Chaeronea takes place. Alarming news of the rout arrived quickly in the city, where it was thought that the troops of Philip were approaching. Seeing how his projects for unity among Greeks had come to nothing and how his hopes for Philip had vanished, Isocrates can not bear to see the sad destiny of his city and kills himself by starvation.<sup>109</sup> He dies in a few days, and months afterwards his funeral eulogy is pronounced in the *epitaphia* for those who fell at Chaeronea. Our author will not live to realize that it was precisely the defeat of Chaeronea that made it possible for Alexander to carry out the campaign against Persia which he had always advocated.

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<sup>108</sup> The criticism of Sparta, which occupies an ample space in the *Panathenaicus*, is instrumental in the discourse as scholars who have analysed it have noted. (Cf. E.N.Tigerstedt, *The legend of Sparta in classical antiquity*, Stockholm, 1965, v.1, pp. 179-206 for the opinions of Isocrates on Sparta). The object of this criticism was not, however, to bring out by way of contrast the virtues of Athens, seeing that, as we have seen in the earlier part of this study (cf. n.1), Isocrates clearly criticises the policy of his city. V. Gray, 'Images of Sparta: writer and audience in Isocrates' *Panathenaicus*', in A. Powell & S. Hodgkinson (eds.), *The shadow of Sparta*, London 1994, pp. 223-271, considers that Isocrates conceived the discourse as a rhetorical essay by means of which, starting from the praise of Athens, he seeks to raise the problem of the bad reception which his critical discourses had from amongst the contemporary audience. This perspective, although correct, is partial because it ignores the fact that the criticisms of contemporary Athens are central to the discourse and are not motivated by his comparison with Sparta.

<sup>109</sup> Th. S. Tzannetatos, 'Τὸ περὶ τὸν θάνατον τοῦ Ἰσοκράτους πρόβλημα', *Athena* 61, 1957, pp.289-322 contains interesting reflections regarding the way in which Isocrates exhausted by age and sickness committed suicide. And yet Tzannetatos tries to make the optimism of *Letter 3* (which he assumes was written a few days after Chaeronea) compatible with the suicide of the orator, despite the testimony of the letter itself, written only 'after the peace'.