While the Sacred War ground to its end, Philip concentrated his attention on the north, which was of the closest concern to him. His victory in Thessaly gave him the opportunity to deal again and this time much more forcibly with the Illyrians and Paionians. While his previous campaign had intimidated them, he had not yet subjugated them. He did so now with such success that they troubled Macedonia little until Alexander’s succession to the throne. In the process he nullified the influence on them that the Athenians had established in 356, when they had all concluded a mutual alliance. They now learned that Philip’s power carried more weight than Athenian promises. Philip also dealt with Arybbas, king of the Molossians, again so effectively that he remained loyal until 341. The Greeks sometimes noted these and other such activities in the farther north, but modern scholars have often not fully appreciated them. Nonetheless, Macedonian relations with these neighbors usually carried far weightier significance than those with the more removed southern Greeks. Even Athenian ambitions on the fringes of the northern Aegean posed hardly more than a local nuisance. The northern barbarians, however, embodied a potentially lethal threat that accounts for Philip’s numerous campaigns on this vulnerable frontier. The recent campaign against the Illyrians and Paionians constituted just another episode in Philip’s attempt to extend Macedonian influence in the north as much for defensive as for imperial reasons.¹

¹ Illyrians and Paionians: IG II² 127 (= Rhodes-Osborne, GHI 53); Dem. 1.13, 23; 4.48; Diod. 16.22.3; 17.8.1. Arybbas: IG II² 226 = Rhodes-Osborne; GHI 70; Dem. 1.13; Justin 8.6.3–4. Ellis, Philip II, 90–91; Griffith, HM II.304–308; Wirth, Philipp II., 55.
Having stabilized his western and northern borders, Philip next turned eastwards to deal with the Athenians and Thracians, his two principal enemies there. By thwarting him at Thermopylae, the Athenians had publicly demonstrated their hostility, after which the two sides considered themselves at war. In 352 during the late summer and winter, a time when the Etesian winds made sailing northwards dangerous and ineffectual, Philip struck at the main Athenian bases of Lemnos and Imbros, where he captured some Athenian citizens. He seized shipping at Geraistos, crowning his exploits by landing at Marathon, whence he took the sacred trireme Paralos as a prize. Although he ventured into Euboia, presumably from the newly-won Pagasai, the Athenians easily repulsed him. These forays, while inflicting little damage, nonetheless displayed Philip’s new determination, and served as a warning that the Athenians now confronted a serious foe. He next made a much more daring and ambitious strike into Thrace, where the situation approached chaos. The Byzantines harbored designs on neighboring Kalchedon, a Persian possession, while Athenian generals waged supposedly unauthorized little wars against Lampsakos and Sigeion, both in the King’s domain and both vitally important to the Athenian grain route. Chares further strengthened the Athenian grip on this sensitive region by seizing Sestos. Thence the Athenians could threaten Abydos on the opposite side of the Hellespont. These events in turn awakened Kersebleptes, king of eastern Thrace, to the extent of his danger. He had long played a dangerous and duplicitous game in Thrace, having at one time attacked his brother Amadokos and his cousin Ketriporis in the course of which he violated his treaty with Athens. Now isolated and distrusted by all, he extricated himself from peril by renewing his alliance with Athens. He did not, however, become a member of the Athenian League. In these efforts he enjoyed the help of Charidemos, an Athenian citizen who had endeared himself to his countrymen by promising to restore Amphipolis to them. Upon Chares’ appearance in the area, Kersebleptes ceded all of the Chersonesos except Kardia to the Athenians. Accepting the gift with alacrity, they immediately sent klerouchoi to occupy the land that they had long desired. By siding with the Athenians against his local enemies, Kersebleptes further antagonized the Byzantines, Perinthians, and the Thracian king Amadokos, none of whom had any reason to welcome an increased Athenian presence in the area. Artaxeres III had in the meantime launched a major campaign against Egypt in which