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THE CRITICAL NOTE ABOVE COL. 12 OF THE DIDYMUS PAPYRUS
(P.BEROL. INV. 9780)

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P.Berol. inv. 9780 is a second-century C.E. copy of a commentary on select passages from Demosthenes' orations 9-11 and 13, composed by the Alexandrian scholar Didymus in the first-century B.C.¹ Columns 11.52-12.33 of the papyrus contain a discussion of the word σκορακίζειν in Dem. 11.11. Didymus derives the verb from the expression "to the crows" (ἐς κόρακας), quoting from Aristophanes' *Birds* and from the collection of proverbial expressions made by the fourth-century B.C. author Demon (*FGrH* 327) to illustrate his view.

The scribe, perhaps with the help of a second hand,² notes a textual problem in the Demon passage. In col. 12.3, the scribe seems first to have written νεομένους, and then to have corrected it to ναιωμένους by writing αι above the first ε, and ω above the first ο.³ To the left of this line someone placed an antisigma.⁴ This antisigma is keyed to another antisigma written in the margin above col. 12, followed in all editions by the words ἰδέ μὴ νεομένους. All editions thus take the word ἰδέ as an aorist imperative of ὀράω (see *indices verborum*). However, the subsequent word μὴ does not readily construe, and the phrase as a whole has never been satisfactorily explained.⁵

Editors have followed the apparent correction in the upper margin and print νεομένους in line 3. I would not dispute that decision. However, I would suggest that the ἰδεμη of the papyrus is not ἰδέ μή, but rather (ε)ἰ δὲ μή. If ἰδεμη is correctly read here, the spelling of εἰ as ι could be due to iotacism.⁶ This regularly occurs in documentary papyri: In *P.Lond.* III 988.9 (third century C.E.), εἰ δ' οὐ(ν) is written as ἰδου. Iotacism of the word εἰ in the phrase εἰ δὲ μή occurs in four documentary papyri: *P.Graux* II 27.15 (third century C.E.); *P.Muench* III 58.3 (second century B.C.) and 120.12 (second century C.E.); and *P.Oxy.* LIX 4000.22 (fourth century C.E.).

The Greek in the margin above col. 12 should, I propose, be rendered as follows: εἰ δὲ μή, νεομένους. Observing the difficulty with νεομένους and ναιωμένους in col. 12.3, someone (perhaps not the original hand) proposes the following: "but if not (νεομένους/ναιωμένους, then) νεομένους".⁷

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¹ Edited most recently by L. Pearson and S. Stephens, *Didymi in Demosthenem Commenta* (Stuttgart, 1983). Two earlier editions by H. Diels and W. Schubart, *Didymos Kommentar zu Demosthenes*, Berliner Klassikertexte I (Berlin, 1904); and later in that year, *Volumina Aegyptiaca Ordinis IV, Grammaticorum Pars I: Didymi de Demosthene Commenta cum Anonymi in Aristocratem Lexico* (Leipzig, 1904).

² Diels-Schubart (first edition), x-xi, suggest that the comments above some of the columns in the papyrus may have been written by a different hand from that of the main text.

³ According to Pearson-Stephens, *ad loc.*, who follow Diels-Schubart. A correction of some kind is visible in Diels-Schubart (first edition), Tafel I, following pg. 95, but it is difficult to discern the proposed αι from the plate (I have not had the opportunity to examine the papyrus first-hand). Diels-Schubart note an additional problem in lines 3 and 12 of col. 12. They suggest that in both lines the scribe mistakenly wrote τὴν γῆν for Ἄρην. Stephanus of Byzantium (ed. A. Meineke) knows of four cities by this name. The relevant one is the "city of Thessaly, a colony of Boeotia, concerning which is the oracular response: 'Widowed Arne awaits a Boeotian man'" (πόλις Θεσσαλίας, ἄποικος τῆς Βοιωτίας, περὶ ἧς ὁ χρησμός: Ἄρνη χηρεύουσα μένει Βοιωτίων ἄνδρα).

⁴ On this symbol, see K. McNamee, *Sigla and Select Marginalia in Greek Literary Papyri*, Pap.Brux. 26 (Bruxelles, 1992), 14-15.

⁵ Diels-Schubart do not offer an explanation. Pearson-Stephens comment: "*Quaerit librarius de l. 3,*" which may indicate that they interpret the note to mean something like, "See if νεομένους (is) not (better)."

⁶ For εἰ written as ι, see E. Maysers, *Grammatik der griechischen Papyri aus der Ptolemaerzeit*, vol. 1, pt. 1 (Berlin, 1970) 60-65, and F.T. Gignac, *A Grammar of the Greek Papyri of the Roman and Byzantine Periods*, vol. 1 (Milan, 1976) 189-90.

⁷ For the independent or elliptical use of εἰ δὲ μή, see H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar* (Cambridge, Mass., 1920) 2346d. D. Hagedorn has kindly suggested another possibility to me: If the ι of ἰδεμη is in error for η (for which see Maysers, vol. 1, pt. 1, 51-52, and Gignac, vol. 1, 236-37), then the scribe's note could read: ἡ δ' ἐμή νεομένους, "But my (copy? has) νεομένους." If this suggestion is correct, the scribe's proposal of νεομένους would be the result of collation with a better text of Demon or Didymus, rather than simply the result of educated guesswork, as I have suggested here.