Introduction

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Didymus Chalcenterus ('Bronze-Gut', Χαλκέντερος) is one of the most important figures in the study of Greek literature in antiquity. He stands at the intersection of what for us are the Hellenistic and the Imperial period, a crucial node in the history of classical scholarship. His output was vast, and the evidence for it is substantial. The current resurgence of interest towards ancient scholarship has seen a renewed interest in aspects of his work, too: beside several articles, the first two decades of this century have seen a monograph (and most of another) on his Demosthenes, and one on his Pindar.[1] Bruce Karl Braswell's book, first published in 2013, includes a *catalogue raisonné* of all of Didymus' known works, programmatically intended as the starting point for a re-evaluation of his achievements as a scholar.[2]

The present volume pursues that same aim by bringing together the various components of his production and assessing his interests and methods, his place in the development of Greek and Roman learning, and his legacy in later scholarship. After this brief Introduction, the chapters investigate broad areas of his work (Ch. 1–5) and its reception (Ch. 6). We have chosen not to devote a chapter to oratory given the large body of existing scholarship on that part of Didymus' *œuvre*. The volume ends with a Checklist comprising the *testimonia* for his life and work and all his known fragments, with the aim of replacing the numbering of Moritz Schmidt's outdated and unwieldy edition of 1854 while adding the several fragments which he did not know or which were revealed by papyri long after his time. Throughout the volume we refer to the Checklist by using bold figures for both fragments (**1**, **2**, etc.) and *testimonia* (**T1**, **T2**, etc.). A Concordance enables reference to be made to the editions of Schmidt, Pearson–Stephens, and Braswell.

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What little we know of Didymus' life comes mostly from one entry in the *Suda* (δ 872 Adler, **T1**):

> Δίδυμος, Διδύμου ταριχοπώλου, γραμματικὸς Ἀριστάρχειος, Ἀλεξανδρεύς, γεγονὼς ἐπὶ Ἀντωνίου καὶ Κικέρωνος καὶ ἕως Αὐγούστου· Χαλκέντερος κληθεὶς διὰ τὴν περὶ τὰ βιβλία ἐπιμονήν· φασὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν συγγεγραφέναι ὑπὲρ τὰ τρισχίλια πεντακόσια βιβλία.
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> Didymus. Son of Didymus, a fishmonger. A grammarian of Aristarchus' school, of Alexandria. He was active in the time of Antony and Cicero and until that of Augustus. He was called 'bronze-gut' on account of his dedication to books: they say that he authored over 3,500 books.

[1] Gibson 2002; Harding 2006; Braswell 2017. Other essential recent bibliography includes Luzzatto 2011; Braswell 2011; Montana 2015: 172–78.

[2] Braswell 2017: 40–103, cf. 14.

He was from Alexandria and, as far as anybody knows, he spent the rest of his life there.[3] His career spanned the time from about Caesar's death in 44 BC to sometime during the long reign of Augustus (died AD 14).[4] Another entry in the *Suda* asserts that he was a contemporary and frequent critic of Juba, the scholar-king of Mauretania (ι 399 Adler, **T2**), who died in AD 23 or 24;[5] a third (α 3215 Adler, **T3**) says that the notorious Apion, whose dazzling career spanned Augustus' immediate successors, was his θρεπτός (perhaps 'pupil' rather than 'stepson').[6] Another pupil of his in Alexandria was one Heraclides son of Heraclides of Pontus (neither being the fourth-century philosopher, obviously), who went to Rome to denounce Didymus' critics and remained there under Claudius and Nero (*Suda* η 463 Adler, **T4**); he may have been so devoted to his master as to call his own son after him (*Suda* δ 875 Adler).[7] So our man must have lived into the first century AD—a long career to accommodate an enormous output (**T1**, **T5**, **T6**, **T8**–**10**, **T14**).

Didymus' unnamed near-contemporary critics in Rome (**T4**) are a testament to the swift spread of his works beyond Alexandria; unless he visited Rome in person, there must have been networks which he (or interested readers) could tap into for the dissemination of his scholarship. Already in the mid-Republican period, Livius Andronicus, Ennius, and Naevius drew on Hellenistic scholarship and aesthetics in their works, indicating some access to these scholarly works, whether in excerpted or completed forms.[8] Cicero's translations of Homer, the Greek tragedians, and his partial translation of the *Timaeus* show a familiary with the Greek commentary tradition of these respective authors; the same is true of Virgil.[9] The late Republican era provides evidence of long-distance dissemination of new works along élite contact networks. For instance, in 60 BC Cicero had sent copies of his Greek *commentarii* on his consulship to Atticus in Greece and to Posidonius on Rhodes, and Atticus had sent him his own *commentarius*, which was later published;[10] later, in 44 BC, Cicero asked for a copy of Posidonius' treatise *On Duty* for research purposes in his own *De officiis* to be sent to him, and he had also asked Athenodorus Calvus, his friend and fellow student of Posidonius, for a *précis* of the work.[11] These pieces of evidence testify to the almost real-time

[3] Some earlier scholars suggested that he moved to Rome (e.g. Sandys 1903: 139). While this remains a possibility, there is no evidence for it other than the (probably misattributed) Roman works referenced by Ammianus and Priscian (**406**, **410**–**414**).

[4] Braswell 2017: 28 must be right that γεγονώς refers to Didymus' activity as a scholar rather than to his birth; ἕως is nonsensical otherwise.

[5] A reasonable inference from Str. 17.3.5: see Coward, this volume, 000 n. 000.

[6] On Apion see now Benaissa 2015: 125–27, 129–30.

[7] Schmidt 1854: 3.

[8] See Bishop 2019: 27 n. 86 for bibliography.

[9] Cicero: Atzert 1907, Soubiran 1972. Virgil: Schlunk 1974 (*Aeneid*), Farrell 2016 (*Eclogues*).

[10] Cic. *Att.* 2.1 [21] = Posid. T34 Edelstein–Kidd; Nep. *Att.* 10.6. See Dix 2013: 220 with n. 48 for the works that Cicero borrowed from Atticus.

[11] Cic. *Att.* 16.11.4 [420] = Posid. fr. 41a Edelstein-Kidd with Edelstein 1989–1999: II.i 185–89. Dix 2013: 220 n. 50 suggests that Cicero was asking for the copy from the library of the recently deceased Cato, of which Athenodorus was a member of the household. On Athenodorus Calvus see *PA* I A497; on him and Posidonius see Cic. *Fam.* 3.7.5, cf. also Posid. T44, F7, 41ab Edelstein–Kidd and Cic. *Att.* 16.14.4. Strabo himself may have met him in Rome (*ca.* 44 BC the same year as Cic. *Att.* 16.11.4 [420] was written), which led to Strabo turning to Stoic philosophy, see *BNJ* 746 T4 = F5 with Dueck 2000: 10–13 and 65–69. Interestingly Strabo complains that book dealers in both Rome and Alexandria employed bad scribes and did not check the newly produced copies against the reliable exemplars (13.1.54), cf. also Cic. *QFr.* 3.4.5, 3.5.6 with White 2009: 133, 135 and Galen *Ind.* 13, *Lib. Prop. praef.* 1–2.

dissemination that written works, including scholarly ones in Greek, could have across the Roman-dominated Mediterranean.

The details of Didymus' relationship with the two other illustrious Greek literary scholars of his time, Aristonicus and Theon, remain unclear. The *Suda* entry just quoted (**T3**) synchronizes Didymus and Theon indirectly by claiming that Apion, θρεπτός of the former, was διάδοχος 'successor' of the latter. Views differ on the relative chronology of the Pindaric commentaries that both scholars are known to have composed; the lack of references to Theon in the doxographies that can be attributed to Didymus makes one suspect that Didymus' work is earlier, but conclusive evidence is lacking.[12] The same is true of Aristonicus, at least as far as Pindar is concerned.[13] With regard to Homer, scholarly opinion has long maintained that Didymus made use of Aristonicus' work, despite (uncharacteristically) never citing him. In her contribution to this volume, however, Lara Pagani argues for greater caution: while it seems certain that Aristonicus was not aware of Didymus' Homeric writings, it may be that neither of the two scholars—working one in Rome, the other in Alexandria—made use of the other's work.

Demarcating what he did and did not write is sometimes arduous. Δίδυμος was not an uncommon name: the *Suda* alone lists four grammarians, a philosopher, and an author of a *Georgics* in four books (δ 871–876 Adler); there were others, too. Confusion, accordingly, is easy. Ammianus (22.16.16, **T7**) ascribes to *Chalcenterus … Didymus* six books of shrill and often inaccurate criticisms of Cicero, probably the same work to which Suetonius composed a response (*Suda* τ 895 Adler Περὶ τῆς Κικέρωνος πολιτείας α΄, ἀντιλέγει δὲ τῶι Διδύμωι). These are unlikely to be by our man, who does not seem to have busied himself with anything not written in Greek. Perhaps Ammianus is conflating the Chalcenterus with Didymus Claudius, who wrote on Roman matters (*Suda* δ 874 Adler),[14] or perhaps with the obscure 'Didymus the younger', an Alexandrian grammarian who went on to practise in Rome (*Suda* δ 873 Adler), or with another, unknown character. Conversely, the works ascribed by the *Suda* to 'Didymus the younger' have sometimes been reassigned to his better-known namesake, though on no good evidence.[15]

He certainly wrote a great deal, on a great deal of subjects.[16] He compiled a Λέξις κωμική in fifty books and a Λέξις τραγική in at least twenty-eight, which were among the sources used by Hesychius for his own *Lexicon*; the former was also epitomated by Galen, though the epitome is also lost.[17] He wrote monographs on semantic differences, incorrect usage, figurative language, 'puzzling words' (Περὶ ἀπορουμένης λέξεως), and morphological change (Περὶ παθῶν); Herodian later furnished this last work with a *hypomnema*. Didymus was also responsible for an important work *On Proverbs* in thirteen books which stands at the basis of the later paroemiographical tradition, and a treatise *On Lyric Poets* which dealt extensively with the division of lyric genres. As a scholar of ancient Attica he authored a monograph *On Solon's Axones* in response to one

[12] So Deas 1931: 34–35, 38–39, who even posits that Didymus' commentary was the basis of Theon's. For a different view see McNamee 2007: 95–96; Meliadò 2015.

[13] Deas 1931: 29–30 argues that none of the (very few) citations of Aristonicus in the Pindar scholia is mediated by Didymus.

[14] So Cohn 1903: 471–72; Montana 2015b: 177.

[15] *E.g.* Schmidt 1854: 335 (Περὶ ὀρθογραφίας).

[16] For a critical catalogue of Didymus' writings see Cohn 1903; Braswell 2017: 40–103.

[17] See Coker 2019.

Asclepiades, and probably a *Register of Attic Demes*. He is also ascribed miscellaneous works entitled Ξένη ἱστορία, Σύμμικτα, and Συμποσιακά, the last two of which may have been one and the same. But it was as a commentator that he was most renowned. He worked on archaic and classical poets, illustrious and obscure: Homer, both *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, plus a treatise on Aristarchus' *diorthosis* of those two poems; Hesiod, at least *Theogony* and *Works and Days*; Pindar, at least *Epinicians* and *Paeans*, perhaps the *Hymns*, but more probably the entire corpus; Bacchylides, at least the *Epinicians*, quite possibly the *Dithyrambs* too; Alcaeus; Anacreon; perhaps Sappho, if the discussion cited by Seneca (test. **T14**) comes from a commentary on her; Sophocles, Euripides, Ion of Chios (Athenaeus attests a commentary on the *Agamemnon* and a further book of ἀντεξηγήσεις to that poet, whatever they were), seemingly even the more obscure Achaeus' *Games*; Aristophanes, Phrynichus' *Kronos*, Menander (the existence of commentaries to Cratinus and Eupolis is hypothetical). Compared to many of his predecessors he is remarkable for the attention he devoted to prose writers, especially the orators: he wrote commentaries on Demosthenes (this is probably the same as the Περὶ Δημοσθένους attested by *P.Berol.* inv. 9780, °**281**),[18] Aeschines, Hyperides, Isaeus, and possibly Isocrates, Dinarchus, Lysias, and Lycurgus, all of which were among the chief sources for Harpocration's *Lexicon of the Ten Orators*. He seems to have written on Herodotus and Thucydides, too.

The figures we are given for the size of Didymus' œuvre are quite extraordinary: 3,500 books according to Athenaeus and the *Suda* (**T5**, **T1**, **T10**), 4,000 according to Seneca (**T12**). They need not be an accurate estimate, but they do indicate a reputation as a vastly prolific scholar. According to Quintilian, nobody wrote more than him (**T6**); comparing him to that pinnacle of Roman scholarship, Varro, Jerome remarks that he wrote more books than an ordinary person can even copy out (*tantos libros composuerit quantos quiuis nostrum alienos sua manu describere non potest*, **T8**, cf. **T9**). He had both admirers and detractors already in antiquity, as Scott DiGiulio's chapter shows. Seneca chose him as the byword for pointless erudition in a tirade against the meticulous study of literature (*Ep.* 88.37–40, **T14**).[19] He acquired the nickname 'Bronze-Gut' (**T1**, **T2**, **T7**–**T10**, **T12**, **T13**) from the vast number of books which he could metaphorically digest, or perhaps (so the late **T12**) from the lengths of time he could spend immersed in his studies without even rising to eat. His other nickname 'Book-Forgetter' (Βιβλιολάθας), which Athenaeus found in a poem by Demetrius of Troezen (*SH* 376, **T5**), is more openly satirical with its implication that Didymus' output was so large that he used to forget what he had written. But Jerome reports that *Graeci Chalcenterum miris efferunt laudibus* (*Epist.* 33.1, **T8**), the *Suda* calls him 'Didymus the great' (α 3215 Adler, **T3**), and still in twelfth-century Constantinople he could be used alongside Demosthenes as a paragon of dedication to learning (**T12**). On the Roman side, Macrobius spared no superlatives to describe him: *omnium grammaticorum facile eruditissimus* (*Sat.* 5.18.9, °**39**), *grammaticorum omnium quique sunt quique fuerunt instructissimus* (5.22.10, **336**).

[18] This is not the place to re-litigate the long-standing questions of whether the Περὶ Δημοσθένους is really a commentary and whether *P.Berol.* inv. 9780 *recto* represents excerpts from Didymus' work rather than the original; for what it is worth, our answers are 'yes' and 'no' respectively. See West 1970: 289–91, Arrighetti 1987: 195–204, Harding 2006: 13–20, and (conclusively) Luzzatto 2011.

[19] On the interpretation of this passage see the crucial remarks by Luzzatto 2011: 8: Seneca derides Didymus not as a bad scholar, but as an excellent one; literary scholarship is intrinsically futile, and the better you are at it, the more worthy you are of the philosopher's condemnation.

It is his extraordinary learning that Macrobius emphasizes, and Didymus' reputation for cramming in and churning out was destined to haunt him for millennia. Up until the 1960s, especially after the publication of *P.Berol.* inv. 9780 *recto* (*On Demosthenes*, °**281**) in 1904, historians of classical scholarship regarded him as an unoriginal if ultimately competent compiler; Rudolf Pfeiffer condescended that 'he was not totally devoid of critical judgement' while admitting that in spite of his 'amazing feats of learning'—'or perhaps because of them—his reputation has never been very high'.[20] Then half a century ago Stephanie West took an axe to that meagre consensus and used the Berlin papyrus to denounce Didymus's work as 'slapdash and ill-digested', at times 'extraordinarily confused and incoherent', consisting of 'hurried compilation rather than intelligent re-interpretation'.[21] Not just a mere compiler, then, but a dim one too. More recent scholarship has been somewhat more nuanced, but damning judgements still abound.[22] Not that this is altogether unfair: Didymus' writings do sometimes include things that are irrelevant, wrong, or downright silly. The aim of this collection, however, is not to damn him on the standards of (idealized) twenty-first century academia, but rather to examine his scholarship on its own terms and, insofar as possible, in the context of ancient scholarly practices.[23]

Building on earlier sources was indeed a staple of Didymus' method. The most extensive continuous fragment of his work—the Berlin papyrus of the Περὶ Δημοσθένους—consists for almost one half of verbatim quotations. Perhaps even more than Aristonicus' Περὶ σημείων Ἰλιάδος καὶ Ὀδυσσείας, Didymus' monograph Περὶ τῆς Ἀριστάρχου διορθώσεως is as close as antiquity gets to a history of Homeric textual criticism, with pre-Didymean material far outnumbering (and, some might say, outweighing) Didymus' original contributions.[24] In the Pindar scholia, we find time and again Didymus appending his own interpretation of a passage to a discussion of earlier scholars' attempts. Quintilian's much-quoted anecdote about him (*Inst.* 1.8.20, **T6**) is also relevant. In prescribing that the elucidation of historical references must be undertaken with judicious moderation, rather than by hoarding stories from sources of all sorts, Quintilian tells of how Didymus once argued against a certain *historia* only to have it cited back at him from one of his own books. Despite the consonance with the nickname Βιβλιολάθας (**T5**), the point being made is not primarily about Didymus' absent-mindedness, but about his unthinking accumulation of material for accumulation's sake: his books (Quintilian intimates) were stuffed with tralaticious information which he himself barely knew and, it turns out, did not believe to be true.

There are two sides to this 'compilatory' practice. One we may term doxography. Didymus' approach is often to list everyone else's answer to a given problem before providing his own (or expressing agreement with one of the others). Beside his work on the Aristarchan recension of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, which put earlier scholarship front and centre, the doxographic tendency is in evidence more than once in his commentaries to Pindar (**140**, **158**)—so much so that Henry Deas

[20] Pfeiffer 1968: 279, 274. Note how he dispatches Didymus in six pages, compared to Aristophanes of Byzantium's thirty-eight (171–209) and Aristarchus' twenty-four (210–33). An exceptional admirer is Turner 1968: 120, in whose opinion 'Didymus' work shines like gold' in comparison to scholarship on Thucydides found in the papyri.

[21] West 1970: 288, 292, 296.

[22] See *e.g.* Braswell 2017: 124–26 ('Didymos' performance as an interpreter of poetic texts is dismal', p. 124). Harding 2006: 2 is more sympathetic without being exculpatory.

[23] Cf. Harding 2006: 32, Braswell 2017: 125.

[24] See Schironi 2018: 23–25; Pagani, this volume, 000–000.

called him 'the first great variorum editor'.[25] The first of the *quaestiones* he is notoriously ascribed by Seneca, on 'Homer's fatherland' (*Ep*. 88.37, **394**), is just the sort of topic which must have warranted an extensive literature review.[26] This approach was to prove popular: in Jerome's later telling (*Adv. Rufin.* 1.16), the purpose of a commentary is to provide the reader with the opinions of other interpreters and the evidence they rest on, so that he can make up his own mind which of them is truer.[27] But Didymus' doxographic inclinations should not be pressed too hard: the assumption that his work on Demosthenes, for instance, must have been based on earlier commentaries of which not a trace survives, is just that—an assumption, founded on the prejudice that Didymus cannot possibly have thought anything much for himself.[28]

The other side—explored in depth in Fausto Montana's chapter—is Didymus' systematic use of sources to elucidate *Realien*: history, geography, society, mythology, local customs, antiquarian details. In the early nineteenth-century *querelle* between *Wortphilologie* and *Sachphilologie*—philology of text and philology of context, to paraphrase freely—he would have firmly advocated for the importance of the latter alongside the former.[29] His wide reading and industrious note-taking came in very handy when discussing authors like Aristophanes or Demosthenes, whose works are replete with specific references which often defy understanding if approached on the basis of the text alone. The surviving columns of the Demosthenes commentary (°**281**) contain excerpts from Philochorus, Aristotle, Theopompus, Callisthenes, Bryon, Hermippus, Dinarchus, Philemon, Timocles, Homer, Aristophanes, Timosthenes, Demon, Sophocles, Aeschylus, Callimachus, Androtion, and the letters attributed to Philip of Macedon; add those authors whom he merely references without a verbatim quotation and a few opinions attributed to ἔνιοι, 'some'. His scholarship on poetry made ample use of historical material, both for the sake of positive interpretation (*e.g.* °**39**, **105**) and also negatively, when an earlier commentator had invented a factual-sounding explanation that did not actually correspond to attested fact (*e.g.* **84**, **111**). Not that knowing lots of facts means always using them sensibly. Critics have latched on several such inanities in the Demosthenes commentary,[30] and in at least one case Didymus' discomfort with an otherwise unattested family name led him to amend a perfectly good Pindaric passage (**157**). As Federica Benuzzi illustrates in her chapter, Didymus' anxiety to use his extensive knowledge of Old Comedy to trace *kōmōidoumenoi* across different plays sometimes blinds him to the obvious implications of the individual context (**256**, **259**).

Excerption and compilation is a well-known practice of scholarly composition in the period of the late Republic and early Empire.[31] Cicero admits to a version of it (*Inv.* 2.4), and we have a detailed description of Pliny the Elder's methodical excerpting in one of his nephew's letters (*Epist.* 3.5). Pliny too has been disparaged as a mere compiler, yet his *Natural History* does more than

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[25] Deas 1931: 19, cf. 22.

[26] Cf. [Plut.] *De Hom.* I 1–3 (citing Ephor. *BNJ* 70 F 1 and Arist. fr. 76 Rose = *On Poets* fr. 65a–e Janko), II 2 (citing Pi. fr. 264 Snell–Maehler, Simon. fr. 19.1 West, Antim. fr. 130 Wyss, Nic. fr. 14 Schneider, beside the two above); multiple claims are also referenced *e.g.* in *Cert. Hom. Hes.* 2, Procl. *Vit. Hom.* 2 West, *AG* 16.16.294, Gell. 3.11.6.

[27] On the passage see La Bua 2019: 168–71.

[28] Refuted by Harding 2006: 31–39. For an unprejudiced suggestion of earlier precedents—arising from a very different perspective—see now Montana 2015b: 95.

[29] Cf. Luzzatto 2011: 7.

[30] West 1970 to name but the most conspicuous example.

[31] See the discussion in Dorandi 2007: 29–46, from which the following examples are drawn.

summarize contemporary knowledge or points of view; it aims to make a vast range of information, ideas and techniques accessible, retrievable and usable by readers, bringing together Greek and Roman ideas, along with those of the Babylonians and Egyptians.[32] At the beginning of Book 1, Pliny lists the contents of the other thirty-six books and the sources he has consulted, in which he claims (*Praef.* 17) to have included more than 20,000 facts culled from over 2,000 works. Pliny's role was to bring together, order, and make available what had already been collectively accomplished in several disciplines, without refraining from comments and additions of his own.

Closer to home, large parts of Philodemus' *Index academicorum* consist of excerpts from earlier sources (mostly named, but there are some ἔνιοι). Its main witness *P.Herc.* 1021 is in fact a first draft of the work with extensive additions and corrections.[33] Like the 160 volumes of *electorum commentarios … opistographos* which the younger Pliny reports having inherited from his uncle, the papyrus is written on both sides, though not from its inception: Philodemus kept having more materials added on the back of the roll as his research progressed after the writing of the front. Aside from its status as a working document, is the closest known papyrological equivalent to *P.Berol.* inv. 9780 *recto* (°**281**),[34] just as Philodemus is arguably the closest figure to Didymus among his near-contemporaries about which we know a sufficient amount. Philodemus' *On Poems, On Music* (Bk. 4), and *On Rhetoric* are also forms of ὑπόμνημα. His critical methodology, following his tutor Zeno of Sidon, is usually in two parts. First he outlines and compiles his adversary's views and arguments with quotations or paraphrases; then rebuts his opponent's views, sometimes offering his own opposing theory.[35] Sometimes there is a third section which contains a summary of the opponent's claims and his own criticisms, followed by a pithy conclusion. In other words, the same structure as we find in the Pindaric doxographies (e.g. **140**).

In other words, Didymus' practice was far from unique if we look at the broader picture. After all, one of the most common meanings of the word ὑπόμνημα—and of its Latin equivalent *commentarius*—is a set of notes.[36] Relatedly, the adjective ὑπομνηματικός was sometimes used to denote an unpolished first draft that was not meant for wide circulation.[37] A commentary proper—a set of materials provided as an aid for understanding a work of literature—intrinsically has an aspect of that, too; papyrologists have a point when they sometimes label commentaries as 'paraliterary'. That a commentary should consist of excerpts collected from various places is thus in the nature of things. We may imagine Didymus working in a similar way to Pliny, reading extensively and excerpting material to be reused in his publications. In fact this process does leave a trace when it goes wrong. At one point in the Περὶ Δημοσθένους Didymus says that he omits an extract from Anaximenes' *Histories*, 'because it is useless'; the explicit reference to τὴν ἐκλογ(ήν) is telling, as is his portrayal of his own action as an omission (παρίημι).[38] Shortly afterward he

[32] Taub 2017: 72–85; see Murphy 2004 and Doody 2010 for further analysis.

[33] See Cavallo 1984: 13–17, Dorandi 2007: 40–42, and Essler 2019. Text: Dorandi 1991 (pp. 109–13 on the textual transmission). Del Mastro 2012 recognized another fragment of the same roll in *P.Herc.* 1691 pz. 2.

[34] The comparison is already in Harding 2006: 39.

[35] See Delattre 2007: I xxvi–xxx. Cf. e.g. Sextus Empiricus (*Adv. math.* 7.1–262), who summarizes the views of philosophers by time and school, and then refutes them in the same order (7.263–68).

[36] On the meanings and development of *commentarius* and ὑπόμνημα see Bömer 1953.

[37] Dorandi 2007: 65–81.

[38] *P.Berol.* inv. 9780 *recto* col. vi.62.

introduced an extract to prove a point and then forgot to copy it in (or failed to find it in his notes?), and the omission remained uncorrected—a case of 'I'm sure I've read this somewhere, I'll look it up later' gone awry which some of us no doubt will sympathize with.[39]

It has been common in modern scholarship to regard Didymus as a turning point between two different ways of studying literature: the end of 'philology', perhaps, and the beginning of 'erudition'. There may be a grain of truth in this. Didymus is nothing if not erudite, and his relative lack of interest in text-critical matters—and his underwhelming record when he did deal with them—sets him apart from the great editors of previous generations. With the benefit of hindsight, there is a sense of 'coming after' in his meticulous compilations of earlier scholars' opinions, but his inscribing of himself into those very compilations speaks against a conscious perception of a break. Ancient readers, at any rate, do not seem to have felt one. The *Suda* calls him a γραμματικὸς Ἀριστάρχειος (**T1**); Seneca pairs him with Aristarchus and Apion (first century AD) in his broadside against *studia liberalia* (**T14**); Ammianus has him as the most eminent of a series of literary scholars comprising Aristarchus, Herodian (second century AD), and Ammonius Saccas (third century AD) (**T7**).[40] His works combine continuity and innovation; the broader record, especially for what concerns 'minor' grammarians, is too patchy to assess the exact proportion of the two in comparison to others. Scholars had been debating each other's opinions since the study of literature first began, but Didymus is the first known practitioner of systematic or almost-systematic doxography in this realm. The use of historical and antiquarian sources as an aid for interpretation certainly did not begin with him, but one would struggle to identify an earlier commentator who practiced it so thoroughly and widely. The cross-fertilisation of specialized lexicography and running commentary to individual works is attested before the time of Didymus and Theon, but it seems to have been mostly restricted to technical genres.[41] The mention of Theon—the great commentator of the Hellenistic poets—highlights by contrast one aspect in which Didymus was decidedly on the conservative side: namely, an apparent lack of interest for elucidating post-classical literature. The latest author that we knew he commented is the last of the classics, Menander. But this appearance is deceptive: he had clearly read Callimachus and Lycophron (to name but two) with great attention, and quoted them repeatedly in his exegesis of older authors.

With his gaze firmly fixed on the existing bibliography and (apparently) not much time to spare even for the scholarship of his contemporaries, Didymus may be thought an unlikely innovator, yet on the whole his profile is quite unlike any earlier scholar that we know of. Martin West spoke of his own career as going 'forward into the past';[42] Didymus may rather give the impression of going backward into the future. Interested in prose as well as poetry and well aware that any nook and cranny of the ancient record could be called upon to elucidate another, he was a devoted practitioner of what in a later age would be labelled *Altertumswissenschaft*—perhaps more

[39] Col. viii.54; after that half–sentence (the name of the author is also missing) the scribe left a blank, as his exemplar must have done, too. It is certainly an authorial mistake, see West 1970: 293.

[40] On Didymus' dependence on Aristarchus see e.g. the contributions of Pagani and Prodi in this volume.

[41] *E.g.* Bacchius of Tanagra, see Montana 2015b: 117 with refs. Aristocles of Rhodes, a contemporary of Varro and Strabo and slightly earlier than Didymus, may have written a lexicographical work on Hippocrates, an *On Poetry*, an *On Dialects*, and some sort of work on the dialogues of Plato, see Corradi 2015.

[42] West 2007.

so than any other ancient scholar of Greek literature. As Fausto Montana remarks in a recent reassessment, he is the culmination of Alexandria's tradition of literary scholarship.[43] We hope that the present volume will inspire further work on this very interesting predecessor of our discipline.

[43] Montana 2015b: 172.