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Edward Anson ✦ Michael Fronda ✦ David Hollander
Timothy Howe ✦ Joseph Roisman ✦ John Vanderspoel
Pat Wheatley ✦ Sabine Müller ✦ Alex McAuley
Catalina Balmaceda ✦ Charlotte Dunn



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Cimon's Eurymedon Campaign Reconsidered*

Eyal Meyer

Abstract

In the present study I argue against the hypothesis that the impetus for Cimon's Eurymedon campaign in the early-460s BC was a Persian design to launch an offensive against the Greeks. The Athenians, I maintain, sent Cimon to south-western Anatolia in order to justify the existence of the Delian League and by extension Athens' demand for ships, men, and tribute. Furthermore, all indications point out that the Persian forces Cimon engaged at the Eurymedon did not constitute an invasion force but local contingents gathered by the satraps of Anatolia in order to ward off the Greek invaders.

Introduction

The battle of the Eurymedon River was a pivotal event in the history of the Delian League.¹ In the early 460s BC² a confederate fleet of about 200³ ships under the command of Cimon was campaigning in Caria and Lycia, subjugating several cities, some by persuasion and others by

* I would like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their insightful suggestions and comments, which greatly contributed to improving the final version of the present study. Of course, any errors which this article may contain are mine and mine alone.

¹ The primary sources for Cimon's Eurymedon campaign are: Thuc. 1.100.1; Diod. 11.60.4-62.3; Plut. *Cim.* 12.4-13.4. See also: Plato, *Menex.* 242a; Nep. *Cim.* 2.2; Lycurg. *In Leocr.* 73; Paus. 1.29.14; OP. Oxy. 1610, fr. 9-10 col. 1 [=Ephor. *FGrH* 70 F191]. Thucydides' account is characteristically terse, and therefore we derive the majority of information from Diodorus and Plutarch, whose accounts reflect the writing of fourth century authors such as Ephorus, Callisthenes, and others. Although the information provided by the later sources should not be taken at face value, there is no reason to assume that the details which are not found in Thucydides' succinct account are unreliable.

² The exact date of the battle is contested, as arguments have been made mainly in favor of 469 and 466. The proponents of 469 BC as the date of the Eurymedon battle: Busolt 1897, 143-45 n. 2; Beloch 1921, 185; Meritt et al. 1950, 160; Accame 1968, 165; French 1971, 37 n. 40; Meiggs 1972, 80-82; Fine 1983, 345; Unz 1986, 69-73; McGregor 1987, 40; Blamire 1989, 138; Carena et al. 1990, 243; Hornblower 1991, 153; Keen 1997, 57 n. 3; Briant 2002, 555; Green 2006, 20; Rhodes 2006, 20. The proponents of 466 BC: Bayer and Heideking 1975, 118-19; Sealey 1976, 250; Milton 1979, 267; Walsh 1981, 62-63; Meister 1982, 30; Steinbrecher 1985, 43-46; Develin 1989, 70-71; Badian 1993, 5-10; Cawkwell 2005, 225. It should be added that some have even argued in favor of 465 (e.g. Deane 1972, 12-13; Schreiner 1976; Sordi 1994) while others (e.g. Will 1972, 137; Bengtson 1960, 188) simply date the battle to the first half of the 460s BC. A much later date, i.e. 462 BC, is favored by Schreiner (1997, 38-49).

³ Thucydides does not specify the size of Cimon's fleet, but Plutarch (*Cim.* 12.2) reports that Cimon had 200 ships at his disposal. Diodorus (11.60.3, 5) claims that additional vessels joined the confederate fleet during Cimon's advance and by the time of the clash with the Persians the confederate navy consisted of 300 ships. Meiggs (1972, 76-6) observes that the confederate fleets which were sent to Egypt in the late 460s (Thuc. 1.104.2) and to Cyprus in 450 BC (Thuc. 1.112.2) consisted of 200 ships and concludes that a fleet of 200 ships constituted the full force of the Delian League. Thus, he posits that this was the size of the Greek fleet which was deployed at the Eurymedon battle.

force.⁴ At some point, Cimon learned that Persian land and sea forces were being mustered nearby at the mouth of the Eurymedon River. The Athenian general decided to strike and a double engagement ensued. After defeating the enemy fleet Cimon and his men disembarked and routed the Persian land forces that were encamped on the river bank.⁵ The purpose of Cimon's Eurymedon campaign has been contested. Several scholars have argued that the Athenians and their allies were the aggressors, and that the Persian forces at the Eurymedon were mustered in order to stop Cimon's advance and to ward off the Greek invaders from south-western Anatolia.⁶ But the current prevailing interpretation asserts that the Persian forces mobilized at the Eurymedon were to take part in a large-scale offensive that was intended to reassert Persian supremacy in the Aegean.⁷ In what follows I highlight the shortcomings of the Persian offensive hypothesis and demonstrate that the Eurymedon battle was nothing more than an engagement between a confederate fleet sent to ravage the King's land and augmented satrapal forces which were mobilized to contain and repel the Greek invaders. This reconstruction is predicated on (1) an analysis of the Persian stance in the west at the eve of the Eurymedon battle, (2) a reassessment of the maneuvers of Cimon before, during, and after the battle, (3) and the Athenian motive to operate in south-western Anatolia at this period.

The Persian Offensive Hypothesis and Its Shortcomings

The proponents of the hypothesis that Cimon's Eurymedon campaign thwarted preparations for a Persian offensive make several seemingly compelling arguments. It has been argued that Xerxes, determined to avenge his past defeats, mobilized land and sea forces with the intention of reviving Persian preeminence in the west,⁸ and that the Great Persian King was aware of the Naxian revolt and the increasing dissent among Athens' allies and therefore

⁴ Diod. 11.60.4; Plut. *Cim.* 12.1-4; Frontin. *Strat.* 3.2.5. The reliability of the evidence for Cimon's campaign in Caria and Lycia has been challenged, but now the historicity of the events which preceded the Eurymedon battle are widely accepted. Cf. Keen 1997, 60 with notes 16-18 with reference to earlier scholarship.

⁵ Thucydides and Plutarch place the sea battle at the Eurymedon River. In contrast, Diodorus claims that the naval clash took place near Cyprus. Since the distance between Cyprus and the Eurymedon is about 200 km, it was impossible for Cimon to have been able to cover such a distance in order to fight two engagements on the same day. Accordingly, it is widely accepted that Diodorus confuses the Eurymedon battle with Cimon's Cypriot campaign in 450 BC. Cf. Gomme 1945, 286; French 1971, 38 n. 40; Schreiner 1976, 20-25; Haillet 2001, 162-63 n. 5; Green 2006, 120 n. 230. Conversely, Parmeggiani (2011, 406 n. 57) points out that Diodorus reports that Cyprus was the locus of mustering of Persian ships rather than the location of the naval battle itself. He concludes, therefore, that Diodorus meant that Cimon knew about the mustering of Persian ships off Cyprus and moved to intercept them somewhere off Pamphylia, while the Persian armada was on its way to the join the land forces.

⁶ Grote 1849, 413; Busolt 1897, 143-46; Grote 1907, 361-62; Meyer 1915, 527; Walker 1927, 55; Steinbrecher 1985, 105; Fuscagni et al. 1989, 226; Keen 1998, 99-100.

⁷ Curtius 1879, 140; Beloch 1921, 159-62; Lombardo 1934, 79-80; Bengtson 1960, 187-88; Meiggs 1972, 78; Bayer and Heideking 1975, 119; Bury and Meiggs 1975, 208; Sealey 1976, 251; Robertson 1980, 67; Fine 1983, 344; Blamire 1989, 138; Davies 1993, 45; Briant 2002, 183; Cawkwell 2005, 132-33; Zaccarini 2013, 99; Rhodes 2014, 248; Biondi 2016, 120.

⁸ Curtius 1879, 140; Meiggs 1972, 78; Bury and Meiggs 1975, 208; Davies 1993, 45.

decided to seize the moment and strike.⁹ In addition, the mobilization of land and especially sea forces is seen as another indication for an ambitious Persian offensive in the making.¹⁰ Furthermore, the size of the Greek fleet, namely 200 vessels, had been deemed too large for a raiding party, which led to the conclusion that Cimon was in fact leading a preemptive strike.¹¹ All of these arguments may seem convincing, but none of them is without flaws.

There are several considerations which refute the notion that the Persians were the aggressors. First, there is no substantive evidence which supports the notion that the Persians were preparing or even had the intention to mount an assault on the Aegean. There are four traditions according to which Xerxes contemplated another attack on the Greek world. The first is concerned with the Spartan Pausanias, who allegedly promised Xerxes the hand of his daughter in exchange for facilitating the Persian subjugation of Greece.¹² Then there is Plato, who mentions in passing that after the failure of his invasion Xerxes wished to launch another attack against the Greek homeland.¹³ Next we have the account of Diodorus, who reports that Xerxes expected Themistocles to facilitate the reassertion of Persian power in the Aegean but that the death of the exiled Athenian general forced the Great King to abort his plans.¹⁴ Lastly, Justin asserts that Xerxes began preparations for another campaign against the Greeks following the death of Pausanias.¹⁵

These traditions, however, can hardly serve as proof for a Persian plan to invade the Aegean in the early 460s BC. The authenticity of the purported collaboration between Pausanias and Xerxes is dubious, while the enterprise itself, according to our sources, never came to fruition.¹⁶ Plato mentions Xerxes' alleged intention to attack the Greeks in the context of the victories of Salamis and Plataea. Therefore, he is likely to refer to the Greek state of mind in the immediate aftermath of the Persian invasion, in which the Greeks believed that the Persian invasion was far from over.¹⁷ As for Diodorus' claim that Themistocles was set to

⁹ Bayer and Heideking 1975, 119; Briant 2002, 557.

¹⁰ Sealey 1976, 251; Briant 2002, 557.

¹¹ Lombardo 1934, 79–80; Bengtson 1960, 188; Cawkwell 2005, 132–33; Zaccarini 2013, 99.

¹² Thuc. 1.128.4–7; Diod. 11.44.3. Cf. Plut. *Cim.* 6.2, *Them.* 23.3–4.

¹³ Plato, *Menex.* 241d.

¹⁴ Diod. 11.58.2.

¹⁵ Justin 12.15.17–20.

¹⁶ Several scholars (e.g. Meiggs 1972, 466; Gomme et. al 1981, 381–82; Evans 1988, 3) have pointed out the implausibility of Thucydides' chronology. Others reject Thucydides' account due to an apparent bias against Pausanias, whether that of Thucydides (Konishi 1970; Rhodes 1970; Evans 1988) or his sources (Podlecki 1976; Westlake 1977). Similarly, it has been argued that Thucydides' overarching didactic program caused him to neglect his integrity as a historian in this particular episode (Ellis 1994). Meiggs (1972, 466) summarizes the problem by stating that “had Thucydides' account been written by any other Greek historian, it would not have been taken seriously.” The only uncontested historical fact in this episode is the appointment of Artabazus as the new satrap of Hellenistic Phrygia, which signaled the establishment of the Pharnacid satrapal dynasty. I have argued elsewhere (Meyer 2017, 104–106) that Artabazus was appointed as the new satrap of Hellenistic Phrygia due to his military experience and his possible connections in the northern Aegean, which were to facilitate his success in securing the western borders of the Persian Empire.

¹⁷ For instance, Herodotus (9.106.2–4) and Diodorus (11.37.1–3) report that shortly after the battle of Mycale the Greek allies assembled at Samos, where the Spartans proposed to transport the Asiatic Greeks to Europe since the Greek allies could not guarantee their safety if the Persians attacked. Similarly, Thucydides

lead the Persian forces against his countrymen, there is no corroboration for such a design and more importantly it is utterly rejected by Thucydides.¹⁸ Similarly, no other source confirms Justin's assertion.

Moreover, it is hard to believe that the Persians were in a state of paralysis for at least a decade before they resolved to reassert authority in the Aegean, or that Xerxes was motivated by a thirst for vengeance so long after his failure to conquer Greece. It is true that the Naxian rebellion rendered the Delian League more vulnerable, but the assumption that the Great Persian Kings were aware of the political squabbles in mainland Greece is unrealistic. According to our sources, the Persians in general and Xerxes in particular have shown limited interest in the Greek world in the wake of Xerxes' retreat. All we know is that Persian military presence was augmented in strategic locations,¹⁹ while Greek notables who proved their loyalty to the Persian crown during Xerxes' invasion were installed as the rulers of numerous cities in the Troad and Aeolis, doubtlessly to enhance loyalty to Persian rule in these regions.²⁰ These actions should be envisioned as measures applied to safeguard Persian rule in western Anatolia, perhaps in anticipation of a Greek counterattack, rather than signs of ongoing Persian interest in Greek affairs.²¹ Furthermore, the portrayal of Xerxes in the ancient sources as preoccupied almost exclusively with court intrigue in the later part of his reign cannot be accepted as historical.²² It is far more likely that Xerxes had to attend to the needs of his vast empire, of which western Anatolia was only a small part.²³ Accordingly, it is highly unlikely that Xerxes was paying close attention to the changing dynamics between Athens and its allies from the moment he returned home and, when he learned about the Naxian revolt, he sprang

(1.90.2) states that the Spartans, when they sought to persuade the Athenians to refrain from rebuilding their walls, argued that should the Persians invade once more, they would have a fortified place to use as a base of operations, as in the case of Thebes, which was used by Mardonius as his headquarters. It should be noted that according to Plutarch (*Arist.* 25.2; *Per.* 12.1-2) fear of Persian aggression was apparently renewed in 454 BC in the wake of Athens' abortive Egyptian campaign, as the treasury of the Delian League was transplanted to Athens, allegedly due to fear of Persian retaliation.

¹⁸ Thuc. 1.138.4.

¹⁹ For example, Diodorus (9.36.7) notes that Xerxes reinforced the garrison at Sardis, probably to ensure that the satrapal capital would not be captured by the Greeks as it had been during the Ionian revolt. It is also possible that Xerxes enhanced the fortifications of the satrapal capital, see: Dusiñberre 2003, 47–56; Dusiñberre 2013, 44. Similarly, Xenophon (*An.* 1.2.7-9) reports that Xerxes ordered the construction of a fortified palace and a citadel at Celaenae, a Phrygian city adjacent to Pisidia which was located on the route that linked Ephesus to northern Syria. For the strategic importance of Celaenae see: Briant 2002, 559; Tuplin 2011, 74-75, 86; Summerer 2011, 35-48; Dusiñberre 2013, 53-54.

²⁰ See: Hdt. 8.85, 9.107.3; Xen. *Hell.* 3.1.6. Cf. Whitby 1998, 219–21; Briant 2002, 562.

²¹ According to Herodotus (7.151), sometime after the death of Xerxes, c. 465 BC, the Argives sent a delegation to Susa to enquire whether Artaxerxes I intended to maintain the friendship they had established with his father. Such an appeal could be taken as an indication, as suggested by Waters (2014, 336), that there had been no formal diplomatic exchange between Argos and Persia since Xerxes' departure. Either way, there is no indication in the sources for any collaboration between Argos and Persia during the reigns of Xerxes and Artaxerxes I.

²² E.g. Hdt. 9.108-13, Ctes. *FGrH* 688 F13 §32-33; Diod. 11.69.1-2; Justin 3.1.1-2.

²³ It should be noted that there are several indications that Xerxes saw that his Greek campaign was presented as a triumph rather than a defeat in Achaemenid royal centers. See: Meyer 2017, 107-110.

into action seeking revenge. All in all, the traditions concerned with a third Persian invasion should be seen at best as manifestations of Greek paranoia rather than actual Persian design.²⁴

Second, any argument that is predicated on the size of Persian land and sea forces cannot be accepted. Thucydides and Cornelius Nepos mention 200 Persian ships,²⁵ while Diodorus claims that the Persians had 340 ships deployed.²⁶ Plutarch includes two different figures: 600 ships, as reported by Phanodemus, an atthidographer who flourished in c. 330 BC, and 350 ships, as reported by Ephorus.²⁷ The ancient sources are notorious for providing questionable if not dubious figures whenever Persian armies and navies are involved.²⁸ Moreover, in respect to the number of Persian ships deployed at the Eurymedon, there are several indications which suggest that the size of the Persian fleet was grossly inflated. Steinbrecher, for instance, deems Thucydides' report reliable and argues that the figures provided by Diodorus and Plutarch are clear exaggerations.²⁹ Similarly, Keen notes that Phanodemus' claim that the Persians deployed 600 ships is dubious since it constitutes the sum of both Greek and Persian fleets as reported by Ephorus.³⁰ More importantly, we are told that Cimon had to force the Persians to engage as the latter tried to refrain from battle by sailing up river until the arrival of eighty Phoenician ships which were en route from Cyprus.³¹ In previous naval engagements in which the Persians had a numerical advantage there was no hesitation on the Persian side. For example, in the battle of Artemision the Persians, who had a numerical advantage, charged the Greek fleet headlong.³² Similarly, in the battle of Salamis the Persians attacked without hesitation³³ while the Greek counter-maneuvers were aimed at cancelling the Persian superiority in numbers by luring the Persian ships into a narrow strait.³⁴ Furthermore, Herodotus recounts how shortly before the battle of Mycale the Persian admirals preferred to beach their ships and fight the Greeks on land because they had fewer ships.³⁵ Thus, the Persian decision to sail up river at the Eurymedon may have been a maneuver set to neutralize the Greek numerical advantage in a

²⁴ Cf. Fornara 1966, 271; Meiggs 1972, 467; Badian 1993, 87–88; Keen 1997, 58–59.

²⁵ Thuc. 1.100.1; Nep. *Cim.* 2.2.

²⁶ Diod. 11.60.6.

²⁷ Plut. *Cim.* 12.6. Cf. Ephor. *FGrH* 70 F192; Phanodemus *FGrH* 325 F22.

²⁸ Herodotus, for example, claims that Datis had no less than 600 triremes under his command (Hdt. 6.95.2), that the Persian fleet which crushed the Ionian rebels near Lade consisted of 600 ships (Hdt. 6.9.1, 95.2), that Xerxes' fleet consisted of 3,000 various types of vessels (Hdt. 7.97), 1207 of which were triremes (Hdt. 7.89), a figure which is also mentioned by Aeschylus (*Pers.* 341), and lastly that Xerxes' invasion force consisted of 5,283,220 men (Hdt. 7.184–6). Similarly, the accounts regarding the Persian efforts to suppress an Egyptian uprising in the early 450s BC serve as another compelling example. Ctesias (*FGrH* 608 F13 §36–37) recounts two Persian attempts to recapture Egypt: the first expedition consisted of 400,000 infantry and eighty ships, while the second 200,000 and 300 ships. The figures reported by Diodorus (11.74.1, 75.1–2, 77.1) are equally unbelievable: 300,000 infantry and cavalry for the first expedition and 300,000 coupled with 300 ships for the second.

²⁹ Steinbrecher 1985, 105 n. 221.

³⁰ Keen 1997, 59–60.

³¹ Plut. *Cim.* 12.4.

³² Hdt. 8.4–11.

³³ Hdt. 8.84.

³⁴ Hdt. 8.60a–b; Diod. 11.15.4; Plut. *Them.* 12.3.

³⁵ Hdt. 9.96–7.

similar fashion to the Greek maneuver in the battle of Salamis, which implies that the Persian fleet was smaller than reported. Therefore, the caution of the Persian admirals suggests that the Persian fleet may have been much smaller than reported³⁶ and perhaps even smaller than Cimon's armada.³⁷ If that was the case, the Persian fleet was not large enough to mount an effective attack against the Greeks.³⁸

In regard to the Persian land forces deployed at the Eurymedon, a close reading of the sources reveals that the Greeks were probably far from outnumbered on land as well. Plutarch notes that Cimon's fleet consisted of newly designed triremes, which were broader and were furnished with bridges between the decks. The new design meant that each trireme was capable of carrying a greater number of hoplites. In other words, Cimon's fleet was capable of carrying a large infantry force, and the magnitude of Cimon's land contingents is demonstrated by the subjugation of the city of Phaselis shortly before the Eurymedon battle.³⁹ Cimon had sufficient forces to mount a frontal assault against a fortified city, an operation which must have required the deployment of considerable land units.⁴⁰ In addition, though the reports on the land battle are succinct, all agree that the Persian land army was easily routed, a consensus which renders the notion that the Persians outnumbered the Greeks even less plausible.

Third, the considerable size of the Greek fleet does not necessarily mean that the Greeks launched a preemptive strike against a forming Persian invasion force. To our best knowledge, no Greek operations had taken place beyond the Aegean since Pausanias' attack on Cyprus in 478 BC. The proximity to Persian naval bases in Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Cilicia meant that the chances of stumbling upon a formidable Persian fleet were considerable. Moreover, despite the sketchy information we can derive from the Athenian Tribute Lists,⁴¹ the fact that Cimon was not received as a liberator by the people of Phaselis indicates that Athens' influence in this region, upon Cimon's arrival, was fairly limited.⁴² It seems reasonable to assume, therefore, that the people of Phaselis were reluctant to join forces with Cimon because they feared that they would be punished by the Persians for their collaboration with the Greeks.⁴³ Accordingly,

³⁶ Blamire 1989, 141.

³⁷ Meiggs (1972, 76) suggests that the Persians retreated because they feared a battle in open sea, but Steinbrecher (1985, 105 n. 221) rightly points out that after the defeat at Salamis the Persians learned that they did not do better in a narrow battleground.

³⁸ According to the calculation of Hignett (1963, 345–50), Xerxes deployed a fleet of about 600 ships in his invasion to Greece. Steinbrecher (1985, 105 n. 221) accepts this figure and concludes that since the Persian fleet at the Eurymedon was smaller it refutes the argument that it was meant to take part in a grand operation in the Aegean. Furthermore, Keen (1997, 60) argues that even if we accept the possibility that the Persians assembled a fleet of 600 ships, it was still insufficient for a large-scale attack.

³⁹ The effort Cimon invested in capturing Phaselis was probably due to its strategic importance, since, according to Strabo (14.3.9), the city possessed three harbors. Cf. Lombardo 1934, 81–82; Blamire 1989, 140; Biondi 2016, 122 ns. 64, 66.

⁴⁰ Plut. *Cim.* 12.2.

⁴¹ Meritt et al. 1950, 9–10, 21.

⁴² Diodorus (11.60.4) reports that Cimon had to reduce a number of unspecified Carian cities by siege, while Frontinus (*Strat.* 3.2.5) mentions an unnamed city that Cimon captured through a clever stratagem.

⁴³ Lombardo 1934, 81–82; Biondi 2016, 122 n. 63.

the Athenians and their allies must have been aware of the potential threats that Cimon would have faced during his campaign and therefore mobilized a force that was suitable for siege works, land skirmishes, and naval engagements. In addition, a large fleet constituted an effective demonstration of the Delian League's might, which must have improved Cimon's chances of success in persuading Carian and Lycian cities to revolt from the Persians and join the Delian League. In sum, the size of Cimon's fleet had nothing to do with an imminent clash with a considerable Persian force but was a necessary precaution in light of the dangers the confederate fleet could have encountered in south-western Anatolia.

Fourth, if Cimon was instructed to attack the Persian forces at the Eurymedon, one wonders what drove him to disregard his orders and waste valuable time in assaulting several cities in Caria and Lycia. A prudent and seasoned general like Cimon must have known that it was best to attack before the enemy was in full strength. Furthermore, the accounts of Diodorus and Plutarch imply that Cimon learned about the Persian military presence at the Eurymedon in the midst of his campaign in Caria and Lycia and not before.⁴⁴ If the mobilization of Persian forces at the Eurymedon were news to Cimon, the claim that he was leading a preemptive strike becomes unfeasible.

Fifth, the sequence of events demonstrates that the Persian mobilization at the Eurymedon was a response to Cimon's advance. While it is unclear whether Cimon's campaign in Lycia and Caria spanned one or several seasons,⁴⁵ our sources agree that the mustering of Persian forces at the Eurymedon took place while Cimon was already operating in Caria and Lycia. Therefore, it seems unfathomable that the Persians continued to assemble a vast host set to embark on another ambitious conquest expedition instead of moving against the Greek invaders who were roaming in Caria and Lycia.⁴⁶ A more reasonable explanation for the presence of the Persian forces at the Eurymedon is that the Persian mobilization began as a response to Cimon's exploits. In other words, only when the Persian authorities received reports about the presence of a sizable Greek fleet that was operating in Caria and Lycia they began mustering land and sea forces with the intention of preventing the Greeks from advancing further to the east.⁴⁷ Time was pressing and, when Cimon attacked, his Persian rivals were still building up their strength, which explains the hesitation of the Persian fleet and perhaps Cimon's decisive victory.

Sixth, the usage of the Eurymedon as the mustering site for the Persian forces validates the notion that the Persian mobilization was defensive and reactionary in nature. The traditional staging point for Persian land forces in Asia Minor was not the banks of the

⁴⁴ Diod. 11.60. 4-6; Plut. *Cim.* 12.2.

⁴⁵ Diodorus dates all of Cimon's achievements in Caria and Lycia to 470/69 BC, while Plutarch gives the impression that Cimon's assault on the region occurred in a single and continuous campaign. This timeline is accepted by Keen (1997, 61-62), but Meiggs (1972, 74) and Blamire (1989, 138) have argued that the many achievements of Cimon were more likely to have been accomplished over several seasons.

⁴⁶ Steinbrecher 1985, 105; Keen 1997, 62-63; Keen 1998, 99-100.

⁴⁷ Steinbrecher 1985, 105-6; Keen 1998, 101. Cawkwell (1970, 47-48) points out that assembling a fleet was a prolonged endeavor and argues that the forces at the Eurymedon began mustering two years prior to the battle. Conversely, Keen (1997, 63) notes that while there are several instances of long preparations which preceded a Persian campaign (Hdt. 7.20; Xen. *Hell.* 3.4.1; Diod. 15.14.2, 38.1), if the Persians began their preparations two years before Cimon's arrival, they would have had a much larger fleet and army at their disposal.

Eurymedon River but Sardis,⁴⁸ while the naval bases in Cilicia and Phoenicia were the conventional mustering places for Persian navies.⁴⁹ Furthermore, the Eurymedon was not a suitable starting point for a westward campaign since there was no good coastal road for quick transportation of troops in the area and it had no easy access to the Anatolian hinterland.⁵⁰ Meiggs suggests that the land route was not critical since the Persians intended the ships to carry the land forces.⁵¹ However, as noted by Keen, since the Athenians dominated all that was west of the Eurymedon River, the Persian fleet needed to advance in parallel with the land forces in order to ensure control of the coastline, a basic and necessary tactic in ancient maritime warfare.⁵² Cawkwell argues that the Persians planned to march along the coast with the army and navy moving along each other, thus capturing city after city just like Alexander did in 333 BC, albeit in the opposite direction.⁵³ Such a plan, however, does not necessarily mean that the Persian design was to launch a large scale offensive, and it could also be argued that they simply intended to reclaim all the cities that were lost to the Greeks in Caria and Lycia. The only seemingly tactical importance of the Eurymedon was that it was in the path of Cimon's fleet, which again indicates that the Persians were aiming at blocking the advancing Greek fleet.⁵⁴

Seventh, that the Persian presence at the Eurymedon was defensive can be deduced from a comparison to the Persian response to Alexander the Great's invasion to Asia Minor. As long as the Macedonian presence in the Troad and Aeolis was limited, the Persians refrained from taking drastic measures. However, when the Greco-Macedonian forces poured into Asia Minor the local satraps gathered their forces and met the Macedonians at the Granicus River. The sources provide us a detailed account of the satraps who participated in this battle, their position in the Persian battle array, and the forces under their command.⁵⁵ It is clear,

⁴⁸ For instance, Sardis served as winter quarters for Xerxes' army prior to the crossing of the Hellespont (Hdt. 7.37.1). Similarly, when Cyrus the Younger was gathering an army before he tried to usurp the throne, the Greek officers were instructed to assemble at Sardis with the men under their command (Xen. *An.* 2.2-5). Sardis was also the site in which reinforcements from the east joined Tissaphernes' satrapal contingents in 396 BC (Xen. *Hell.* 3.4.5-11).

⁴⁹ For examples, in 492 BC Mardonius marched with his army to Cilicia, where a fleet was waiting for him. From there he sailed along the Anatolian coastline to Ionia (Hdt. 6.43.2-3). Two years later Datis assembled his navy in the Aleian plain in Cilicia in preparation for the expedition against Athens and Eretria (Hdt. 6.95). Similarly, when Egypt rebelled in the late 460s, Artabazus and Megabyzus, the generals who were ordered to retake Egypt, marched with their land army to Cilicia and Phoenicia, where they rested their forces and commanded the Cyprians and Cilicians to supply provisions and ships (Diod. 11.75.2-3).

⁵⁰ Walker 1927, 55; Fuscagni et al. 1989, 226.

⁵¹ Meiggs 1972, 78.

⁵² Keen 1997, 61.

⁵³ Cawkwell 2005, 133-34.

⁵⁴ It should be noted that Thucydides (8.87) reports that in 411 BC a Persian fleet sailed as far as the city of Aspendus, which was situated on the Eurymedon River, in readiness to sail westward. At no point, however, does Thucydides explicitly claim that the Persian fleet that was present at Aspendus was mustered at that specific location. The only fact that Thucydides provides is that 147 Phoenician ships came as far as Aspendus, which implies that the armada was mobilized elsewhere and sailed to Aspendus.

⁵⁵ Diod. 17.18.2-4; Ar. *An.* 1.12.8-10, 2.4.5-6; Curtius 3.4.4. There are several discrepancies, but the satraps who participated in the battle were Spithridates, the satrap of Lydia and Ionia, Arsties, the satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia, and Arsamenes/Arsames, the satrap of Cilicia. According to Arrian (*An.* 1.12.18) Arsames, along with

therefore, that the local satraps and the forces under their command played an instrumental role in the defense of Anatolia when Alexander invaded Asia.

Regarding the Eurymedon battle, according to our sources the Persian generals at the Eurymedon were Tithraustes, who was the commander of the fleet, Pherendates, who commanded the land forces, and Ariomandes who was the commander-in-chief of both land and sea forces.⁵⁶ All three were members of the Achaemenid royal household,⁵⁷ and their presence at the Eurymedon could be explained by the likelihood that they were stationed in Anatolia, perhaps presiding as satraps of the adjacent regions, and consequently were expected to muster the local contingents and to lead the response to Cimon's assault. Thus, just like in the spring of 334 BC, the Persian contingents, which were ordered to ward off Cimon's invasion force, were probably scrambled quickly by the satraps of Anatolia along with additional forces that were able to make it in time to provide assistance. We should not forget that one of the most important duties of the satrap was to protect his domain from local and foreign threats—Cimon and his men were clearly of the latter sort.⁵⁸ Thus, the battle of the Eurymedon was a clash between a confederate fleet and Persian forces that were hurriedly gathered to protect the King's land from the Greek aggressors.

The notion that the Persian forces at the Eurymedon were satrapal in origin is expressed by Grote,⁵⁹ though he left this important observation underdeveloped. I should point out that Diodorus provides a hint that these forces were of local origin when he reports that when the

Rheomithres, Petenes, and Niphates, was not a satrap but a general. Diodorus notes that Hyrcanian, Median, and Bactrian contingents participated in the battle, which may indicate that the local forces in western Anatolia were augmented by royal reinforcements.

⁵⁶ Plutarch (*Cim* 12.4), citing Ephorus, reports that Tithraustes was the commander of the fleet and that Pherendates commanded the land forces. According to Callisthenes (*FGrH* 124 F15), who is also cited by Plutarch, Ariomandes son of Gobryas was the commander-in-chief of the entire force. Diodorus (11.60.5, 61.3) mentions only Ephorus' account. Busolt (1897, 146) and Meiggs (1972, 72) have pointed out that these accounts are not necessarily mutually exclusive since it is reasonable to assume that Tithraustes and Pherendates were in charge of the sea and land forces respectively, but that both were subordinate to Ariomandes.

⁵⁷ Not much is known about the career of Tithraustes, but Diodorus (11.60.5) says that he was Xerxes' bastard son. For the possible linkage between Tithraustes to a family dynasty based in Phrygia, see: Sekunda 2011, 53–55. As to Pherendates, he may have been the son of Megabazus, an honorable member in the royal court of Darius I who was tasked to lead the Persian attack in Thrace after the Scythian campaign (*Hdt.* 4.143–144; 5.1.1–2, 10, 14–15; *Justin* 7.3). Pherendates himself was one of Xerxes' generals (*Hdt.* 7.67.1) and we know that he presided as the satrap of Egypt in the late-490s BC, as attested by a Demotic letter dated to 492 BC which was sent to the Wab priests of Khanum at Elephantine by Pherendates, who is identified as the satrap of Egypt. See: PBerlin 13540. The letter was published by Spiegelberg (1928, 605–6). For an English translation, see: Porten et al. 1996, C1; Kuhrt 2007, no. 17.30.ii. As to Ariomandes, Balcer (1993, no. 47) identifies him as the son of Gobryas (see: Balcer 1993 no. 41), the brother of the renowned Mardonius, the nephew of Darius I and by extension the cousin of Xerxes. However, Ariomandes might also be the son of another Gobryas, the son of Darius I and Artystone, who served as a general in Xerxes's invasion force (*Hdt.* 7.72). Cf. Schmitt 2012.

⁵⁸ The term *xšaçaṣpāva* in the Old-Persian record is used to designate the Persian provincial governors, whom the Greek authors call satraps. This designation is generally translated as “protector of the realm” (e.g. Olmstead 1948, 59; Kent 1950, 53, 64; Schmitt 1976; Herrenschildt 1976, 44–45; Petit 1990, 16). The Satrap's duty to protect the Great King's domain was known to the Greeks, see: *Xen. Cyr.* 8.6.3, 11; *Oec.* 4.5. Further on the satraps as protectors of royal domain, see: Meyer 2017, 56–59.

⁵⁹ Grote 1847, 395.

Greek surprise attack against the Persian land army began, the Persian troops thought that they were being attacked by the Pisidians, who dwelt in the neighboring territory and were hostile to the Persians. The failure of the Persian troops to identify their attackers along with their familiarity with the region and the Pisidian threat suggests that they served in the nearby satrapal garrisons.⁶⁰

The Athenian Interest

One question remains: if Cimon was not sent to hinder a Persian invasion, why was he instructed to operate in Caria and Lycia? The answer can be found in the contemporary state of affairs of the Delian League. After the capture of Eion in 476 BC the war against Persia came to a standstill. The Athenians preferred to cement their position as the leaders of the Delian League,⁶¹ while the passivity of the Persians suggests that the Great King and his satraps in the west were content with the emergence of an unofficial armistice. But the diminishing Persian threat and the failure of the Athenian leadership to follow the Delian League's official objectives, namely to liberate the Greek cities which were still under the yoke of Persian rule and to ravage the Great King's land, were not without consequences. The Athenians witnessed the rising dissent among the members of the Delian League due to (following Thucydides) Athens' coercive treatment of its allies.⁶² Plutarch, however, notes that the cause for the discontent among the members of the Delian League was the impression that the war against Persia had come to an end.⁶³ Both explanations are not mutually exclusive. The fact that the Persian threat became less and less tangible, in addition to Athens' severity and policy of targeting Greek cities, probably corroded the legitimacy of Athens' demand for tribute, ships, and men.

These developments probably led to the abortive attempt of the Naxians to secede from the Delian League, the earliest known instance in the history of the Delian League in which the Athenians used force to coerce a former member to rejoin the alliance.⁶⁴ Thus, from an Athenian point of view, the Naxian secession attempt was a warning sign, a clear indication that the legitimacy of the Delian League was in decline. Albeit the chronological uncertainty of the Eurymedon campaign, this was the political climate in Greece which constituted the background for Cimon's campaign in Caria and Lycia. Hence, it seems reasonable to assume that the Athenians dispatched a fleet to south-western Anatolia in order to demonstrate to their allies and perhaps to the rest of the Greek world that the war against Persia was far from over.⁶⁵ Furthermore, the Athenians probably came to the conclusion that a campaign against a

⁶⁰ Diod. 11.61.4.

⁶¹ After the capture of Eion, Athens subjugated Scyros and Carystus. See: Thuc. 1.98.1-3; Diod. 11.60.2; Plut. *Cim.* 8.3-6.

⁶² Thuc. 1.99.

⁶³ Plut. *Cim.* 11.1.

⁶⁴ Thuc. 1.98.4.

⁶⁵ Cf. Meyer 1915, 527; Hornblower 2011, 21.

common enemy would obscure their violent acts against the Naxians.⁶⁶ Since Diodorus frames Cimon's exploits in southeastern Anatolia as a continuation of the overarching effort of the Delian League to liberate Greek cities garrisoned by the Persians,⁶⁷ I agree with French, who maintains that "there seems no reason why we should not interpret the campaign as one of the more successful examples of the League's original policy, i.e. as a punitive plundering raid upon the Persian domains."⁶⁸

That the Athenians were eager to reassert their position as the leaders of the war against Persia is reflected in the propagandistic frenzy that followed Cimon's victory at the Eurymedon. Stelai in honor of the Athenians who fell at the Eurymedon were set up in Athens,⁶⁹ celebratory epigrams commemorating the Greek triumph were inscribed on monuments set up by Cimon,⁷⁰ and the spoils from the battle were used to beautify Athens.⁷¹ In addition, the victory was commemorated at Delphi⁷² and depicted on vase paintings,⁷³ while Athenians boys were named Eurymedon.⁷⁴ It has been suggested that the depiction of the battle of Marathon in the Stoa Poikile wall-painting,⁷⁵ which was a part of Cimon's propaganda program,⁷⁶ was meant to resonate Cimon's triumph at the Eurymedon.⁷⁷ Interestingly, Cimon's naval victory played well into his effort to present himself as Theseus reborn, the mythological

⁶⁶ Grote 1849, 412–13; Grote 1907, 361–62.

⁶⁷ Diod. 11.60.

⁶⁸ French 1971, 38 n. 40. For a similar interpretation of the origin of Cimon's campaign, see: Grote 1847, 395; Walker 1927, 55; Steinbrecher 1985, 104–6; McGregor 1987, 40; Fuscagni et al. 1989, 225.

⁶⁹ Paus. 1.29.14.

⁷⁰ There are three epigrams, each a four-line stanza, which were inscribed on monuments set up by Cimon in celebration of his victories. See: Aeschin. 3.183–5; Diod. 11.62.3; Plut. *Cim.* 7.3–8.1. Wade-Gery (1933) provides a comprehensive survey of all the extant traditions and versions of Cimon's celebratory epigrams. Further on Cimon's epigrams, see: Peek 1940; de Sanctis 1966, 99–112; Accame 1968, 168–78; Sordi 1971, 34–40.

⁷¹ Plut. *Cim.* 13.6–8.

⁷² Paus. 10.15.4–5. Moreover, Kebric (1983) has argued that the Lesche of the Cnicians at Delphi, a club-room for communal gathering, was constructed and adorned in response to the Athenian victory at the Eurymedon. Cf. Francis 1990, 120; Castriota 1992, 76–95. In addition, Pausanias (10.15.4–6 = Klei[to]demos of Athens *FGrH* 323 F1) reports that the Athenians dedicated a bronze date-palm tree in Delphi in order to commemorate their victory at the Eurymedon.

⁷³ It is generally agreed that the famous Eurymedon Vase, a red-figure oinochoe dated to c. 460 BC, celebrates Cimon's victory at the Eurymedon. On side A there is a depiction of a mature bearded Persian, wearing a decorated jumpsuit, a soft cap, and a dangling empty quiver. The Persian is bending over with his hands held to the side of his head in a gesture of panic. On side B we find a naked Greek youth who seems to be chasing the Persian while brandishing not a spear but his penis. Between the two there is an inscription which says: "I'm Eurymedon, I stand bent-over." The restoration suggested by Schauenburg (1975, 104 n. 38a) is as follows: εὐρυμέδον εἶμ[ι] κυβά[δε] ἔσσεα. On the connection between the Eurymedon Vase and the Eurymedon battle, see: Dover 1989, 105; Pinney 1984; Miller 1997, 13; Castriota 2005, 99; Miller 2010; Cohen 2011, 474–77.

⁷⁴ The best example for this phenomenon is the Athenian general Eurymedon (e.g. Thuc. 3.80.2), who, as pointed out by Hornblower (1991, 154, 475), was almost certainly named after this battle.

⁷⁵ The above mentioned wall-painting is described in detail by Pausanias (1.15.1–3, 5.11.6). It contains four scenes: (1) the battle of Oenoe; (2) the Athenians with Theseus fighting the Amazons; (3) the taking of Troy; (4) the battle of Marathon.

⁷⁶ Stansbury-O'Donnell 2005, 81.

⁷⁷ Francis 1990, 92; Castriota 2005, 100.

Athenian hero and son of the sea god Poseidon.⁷⁸ As noted above,⁷⁹ the Athenians dedicated a bronze date-palm tree in Delphi in order to commemorate the victory at the Eurymedon. Carena points out that, on the one hand, the palm tree was an oriental emblem, thus symbolizing the Athenian victory over the peoples of Asia.⁸⁰ On the other, the palm tree is closely linked to Delos in Homeric traditions,⁸¹ in which Theseus is credited with the establishment of an athletic contest on Delos in which a palm crown was given to the victors.⁸² Either way, the victory at the Eurymedon became a key component in Cimon's propagandistic program as it placed an emphasis on Athenian naval dominance as an outcome of Cimon's achievements.⁸³ It is not surprising, therefore, that Diodorus considers the battle of the Eurymedon as a key event in the conflict with Persia and a continuation of the great battles of the previous decade.⁸⁴ Moreover, by the time of Plutarch, the battle at the Eurymedon River was remembered as a pivotal moment in the war against Persia, a glorious achievement that overshadowed the triumphs at Salamis and Plataea.⁸⁵

But when the actual consequences of the battle are taken into consideration, the claim that the battle was a watershed moment seems like a wild exaggeration.⁸⁶ To begin with, to our best knowledge cities from Caria and Lycia did not join the Delian League in the wake of Cimon's Eurymedon campaign. It is quite possible that several cities within the confederate fleet's range might have joined the Delian League due to awe or fear, but the scarcity of evidence, mainly the information that can be derived from the Athenian tribute lists, suggests that the Delian League did not expand eastward.⁸⁷ Moreover, it is difficult to believe that Cimon, having utterly defeated the Persian forces, decided to return home instead of capitalizing on his victory. Several scholars have wondered why Cimon refrained from making

⁷⁸ Francis 1990, 3; Stansbury-O'Donnell 2005, 84. On Cimon's efforts to associate himself with Theseus: Podlecki 1971; Shapiro 1992; Mills 1997, 35–36; Smith 1999, 131.

⁷⁹ See n. 72 above.

⁸⁰ Carena et al. 1990, 244.

⁸¹ Hom. *Od.* 6.162–3; Hom. *Hymn to Apollo* 15–18, 115–117; Callim. *Hymn to Apollo* 4; Callim. *Hymn to Delos* 210; Eur. *Hec.* 455–464.

⁸² Carena et al. 245. On the institution of an athletics festival on Delos by Theseus: Plut. *Thes.* 21.2; Plut. *Mor.* 724a; Paus. 8.48.3.

⁸³ On the Cimonean propaganda program: Castriota 1992, 33–133.

⁸⁴ Vattuone 2011, 21; Biondi 2016, 120 n. 54.

⁸⁵ Plut. *Cim.* 13.4. Compare: Paus. 1.29.14. Plutarch (*Cim.* 12.1, 13.4) even claims that nobody humbled the Great Persian King like Cimon. Similarly, Aelius Aristides (3.142) states that while Cimon was in command the barbarians did not debate which people to subjugate but only sought to defend themselves from the Greeks.

⁸⁶ Plutarch (*Them.* 31.3) maintains that prior to the Egyptian uprising in the late-460s BC, Cimon successfully established Athens' mastery over the sea, which forced the King to mount a counterattack. While Keen (1997, 63–4) deems this achievement an outcome of Cimon's victory at the Eurymedon, I argue that such a statement reflects Athenian propaganda rather than historical reality.

⁸⁷ Gomme 1945, 290–95. Thucydides (2.9.4) reports that the allies of Athens in 431 BC included the coastal cities of Caria with its Dorian neighbors, but a thorough examination of the Athenian tribute lists (see: Keen 1993a) demonstrates that while Lycian and Carian settlements appeared inconsistently in the mid-450s BC, they are conspicuously absent after 440 BC. Therefore, it is clear that the Carian and Lycian cities were in a position to depart from the Delian League with impunity and it is not out of the question that they acknowledged Persian authority.

an attempt to recover Cyprus, as he did in 450 BC under less favorable circumstances.⁸⁸ Similarly, Keen observes that there was no effort to cement Athenian control over southwestern Anatolia, which entailed numerous strategic advantages.⁸⁹ Therefore, one can hypothesize that the Athenians were more interested in reminding their allies that the war against Persia was still ongoing and that the existence of Delian League was imperative.⁹⁰ Accordingly, it is not out of the question that the somewhat exaggerated reputation of the battle at the Eurymedon River was probably the outcome of Athenian propaganda rather than historical reality.

Conclusion

The Persian offensive hypothesis cannot be accepted. Such a conclusion becomes evident when considering Cimon's exploits prior to the battle, the unusual usage of the Eurymedon as a site for mobilization of Persian land and sea forces, the maneuvers of the Persian fleet during the naval engagement, and the Athenian impetus to rekindle the war against Persia.

On the one hand, the Persian actions were reactionary in nature. The absence of any hint that the Persians were planning to reassert their dominance in the Aegean since Xerxes' retreat suggests that the Great King was content with the status quo which emerged in the mid-470s BC. The assumption that a sudden and dramatic shift in Persian policy in the west occurred due to a personal grudge is highly improbable. To our best knowledge, there was no Persian retaliation following the battle of the Eurymedon, which seems reasonable when considering the limited effect of Cimon's achievements in Caria and Lycia. Consequently, the forces which Cimon encountered at the Eurymedon were probably satrapal forces scrambled from Caria, Lycia, and the neighboring satrapies along with available ships that were harboring nearby.

On the other hand, the available evidence suggests that Cimon's main objective was to reignite the war against Persia in order to legitimize Athens' demand for tribute, ships, and men, and by extension to discredit potential secession attempts from the Delian League. It is not out of the question, therefore, that the battle at the Eurymedon River was an unexpected development, an opportunity which Cimon was prudent enough to exploit. The Athenians, I

⁸⁸ McGregor 1987, 42; Rhodes 1992, 43.

⁸⁹ Keen 1993b; Keen 1997, 65–66.

⁹⁰ Several explanations have been suggested for the seemingly abrupt ending of the Greek offensive. Plutarch (*Cim.* 13.4) implies that the Persians sued for peace after the defeat at the Eurymedon, but it is rather clear that the biographer is referring to the so-called Peace of Callias, which Diodorus (12.2.4–5) dates to 450/449 BC. Some scholars (e.g. Walsh 1981; Badian 1987) have argued that a peace treaty was concluded after the Eurymedon. Nevertheless, there are several problems with such a claim. First, Blamire (1989, 144) notes that the conclusion of a truce after the battle at the Eurymedon River is utterly absent from fourth century BC traditions. Second, if the Athenians and Persians came to terms, how could we explain the Athenian involvement in the Egyptian uprising in first half of the 450s BC and the Athenian attack on Cyprus in 450 BC? A more plausible explanation have been suggested by Meiggs (1972, 79), who maintains that Cimon decided to refrain from pushing forward because he had no reconnaissance on the potential threats that were awaiting ahead and because the sailing season was close to its end.

argue, neither planned nor were able to extend their authority further to the east and in any case they were probably more interested in reminding their fellow countrymen that the Delian League was a Panhellenic coalition that spearheaded the war against Persia rather than an instrument of power abused by Athens.

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