Polybius
The Histories

A new translation by Robin Waterfield

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THE HISTORIES

POLYBIUS, son of Lycortas, was a statesman, soldier, explorer, and historian from the Greek city of Megalopolis in the Peloponnese. He was born in about 200 BC and died probably around 118. His career as a leading politician in the confederation of Peloponnesian states known as the Achaean League was cut short when he found himself among 1,000 Achaean leaders deported to Italy after the Roman victory over Macedon in 168. He spent seventeen years in exile in Rome where he befriended the young Scipio Aemilianus. He was with Scipio at the destruction of Carthage in 146, a year in which the Achaean League also met with destruction at the hands of Rome. Polybius played a major role in the reconstruction of Greece after this disaster. At some stage he retraced Hannibal's march from Spain to Italy, and also sailed into the Atlantic and down the coast of west Africa. He wrote works (no longer extant) on tactics, on Rome's war against Numantia in Spain, on the equatorial region, and on the great Achaean statesman Philopoemen, but his main literary enterprise was the *Histories*, a study in forty books of Rome's rise to world power and her method of rule in the years 220–146 BC. Only the first five books survive in full, but there are extensive excerpts from many of the others, including Book 12, an analysis of how to write history (and how not to write it), and Book 6, a study of the Roman constitution.

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POLYBIUS

The Histories

Translated by
ROBIN WATERFIELD

With an Introduction and Notes by
BRIAN McGING

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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Great Clarendon Street, Oxford OX2 6DP
Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research, scholarship,
and education by publishing worldwide in

Oxford New York

Auckland Cape Town Dar es Salaam Hong Kong Karachi
Kuala Lumpur Madrid Melbourne Mexico City Nairobi
New Delhi Shanghai Taipei Toronto

With offices in

Argentina Austria Brazil Chile Czech Republic France Greece
Guatemala Hungary Italy Japan Poland Portugal Singapore
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Published in the United States
by Oxford University Press Inc., New York

Translation © Robin Waterfield 2010
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First published as an Oxford World's Classics paperback 2010

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
Data available

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Data available

Typeset by Glyph International, Bangalore, India
Printed in Great Britain
on acid-free paper by
Clays Ltd., St Ives plc

ISBN 978-0-19-953470-8

1 3 5 7 9 10 8 6 4 2

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INTRODUCTION

Rome's rise to power

As the third century BC moved into its last quarter, Rome was standing on the threshold of Mediterranean dominion. Both in the period when kings ruled Rome and after the foundation of the Republic (traditionally dated to 509 BC) she had enjoyed a steady, indeed, in spite of setbacks relentless growth in political power. She had gradually absorbed the surrounding towns and areas of central Italy, and in due course brought to heel all challengers on the Italian peninsula. From 280 to 275 she had even seen off the threat of the Greek adventurer, Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who had answered the call for help from the people of the south Italian town of Tarentum, and brought an army to confront Rome. The astute observer will have found it militarily and politically significant that although Pyrrhus actually defeated the Romans in battle on three occasions, his victories were unsustainably expensive ('Pyrrhic'), and he could not match the Italian manpower at Rome's disposal.

Rome's resources were soon tested again, this time by a much mightier opponent, the great maritime and mercantile power of Carthage. It is difficult to say who was responsible for the First Punic War (264–241)—perhaps both sides equally—but Carthage had long controlled western Sicily, and Roman meddling in the east of the island brought them into conflict. What might initially have been a localized firefight in the north-eastern corner soon developed into a struggle for control of all Sicily, a struggle which Rome eventually won.

Immediately after the war, Carthage had to face a revolt of her extensive mercenary forces, and Rome took advantage of the situation to seize Sardinia, another Carthaginian possession. Even without the benefit of hindsight, many contemporaries must have thought that there was unfinished business between the two powers and that it would again lead them into conflict. The causes of the Second Punic War (218–201) are also uncertain, but it was Mediterranean dominion that was at stake. The east coast of Spain was the flashpoint—the capture of Rome's ally, Saguntum (modern Sagunto), by the brilliant

young commander of the Carthaginian forces in Spain, Hannibal, would probably have been enough to precipitate war—but Hannibal's decision to launch an invasion of Italy made it clear that this war was not going to be about bragging rights in Spain: the Carthaginian objective was the conquest of Rome. A series of early victories, culminating in the destruction of the Roman army at the battle of Cannae (216), put Hannibal within touching distance of success. But that was as good as it got for him: with the city of Rome apparently at his mercy he failed to besiege it, and although the war dragged on for another fifteen years in different theatres of war (Italy, Spain, Sicily, and eventually north Africa), Hannibal never again got close to achieving overall victory. In 202, having been recalled to Africa to defend Carthage, he suffered the same sort of defeat at the battle of Zama as he had inflicted on Rome at Cannae. Carthage, unlike Rome, did not have the resources to soak up defeat, and had no option but to surrender.

The Second Punic War undoubtedly inflicted a severe psychological wound on Rome—it had threatened her very existence as an independent political power, and it had been highly disruptive and destructive—but victory left her master of the western Mediterranean, and, it would appear, keen to turn her attention to the east. Here, the major powers were the Hellenistic kingdoms of Macedon, Syria, and Egypt, divisions that emerged from the break-up of Alexander the Great's vast empire. They were run by Macedonian dynasties which had inherited the Macedonian fighting machine from Alexander. Rome might have been impressive in defeating the relatively untried Carthaginians, but in 200 BC few would have backed her against the armies of Alexander's successors. Just over thirty years later, however, there was no one left to challenge her. In a series of stunning victories she established herself as *the* Mediterranean superpower. If the struggle against Hannibal had tired the Romans, it certainly did not show in the speed with which they declared war on Philip V of Macedon in 200, and defeated him in 197. Five years later, they took on the even more powerful Seleucid king Antiochus III, whose empire stretched from the Mediterranean to Iran. He fared no better than Philip, meeting with decisive military defeat in 189. Philip's son Perseus also defied Rome, to his considerable cost: after his defeat in 168, the Senate abolished the Macedonian kingdom. Theoretically, Egypt was still intact, but in practice it was militarily too weak to

offer a real threat: it was not until Cleopatra gambled her kingdom on Marcus Antonius in 31 (and lost it) that Egypt actually came to blows with Rome.

Polybius of Megalopolis

There would be further victories and acquisitions, but in just over half a century Rome had established a position of dominance in the Mediterranean. From now on, states either had to follow Rome's orders or face destruction by her armies. We rely for our knowledge and understanding of this dramatic imperial process very largely on the work of the second-century BC Greek historian, Polybius of Megalopolis. Indeed, the very formulation of Rome's imperial expansion in these terms is his. Right at the beginning of his *Histories*, he states his purpose: 'is there anyone on earth who is so narrow-minded or uninquisitive that he could fail to want to know how and thanks to what kind of political system almost the entire known world was conquered and brought under a single empire, the empire of the Romans, in less than fifty-three years—an unprecedented event?' He sets out, then, to explain how Rome conquered and unified the world in the years 220–167 BC, and, as it offered a crucial part of the explanation, what sort of political system enabled her to do this. In Book 3 he announces a change of plan: he will extend the chronological limit of the work down to 146, in order to study Roman imperial policy and assess the reaction of her subjects. Was Roman rule something to be admired or condemned? The year 146 was perhaps an even more decisive stopping point than 167, for it was in that year that Rome brutally put down Achaean and Carthaginian resistance, and destroyed the cities of Carthage and Corinth. Neither incident would seem to indicate a resounding vote of approval from these particular subjects of Rome.

As we shall see, Polybius believed that one of the vital qualifications for writing history was practical political and military experience. In this respect, he was, by his own standards, exceptionally well qualified to carry out the task that he had set himself. He was born in about 200 BC (probably—we are not sure) in the Peloponnesian city of Megalopolis, into one of the leading political families of the Achaean League, a federal organization of the southern Greeks, with its capital at Megalopolis. In the 180s his father Lycortas had been general (that is, annually elected leader) of the League several times,

and Polybius' early career gave every indication that he would be following in his father's footsteps. He first emerges in a public role in 182, when he was chosen to carry the ashes of the deceased at the funeral of Philopoemen, the main architect of Achaean prominence in Greek politics and one of the great heroes of the League. Two years later we find Polybius among the members of a diplomatic mission to Ptolemy V of Egypt (who died before the mission could set out). And the clearest indicator of his career trajectory was his election as hipparch (deputy-leader) of the League in 170/169. Two years later, however, his career in Achaean politics was abruptly terminated. The cause, ultimately, was Rome.

After the defeat of Philip V and Antiochus III, all the states of the eastern Mediterranean were suddenly forced to consider very carefully the policies they would pursue in relation to Rome. Domestic issues continued to concern the Achaean leaders, but for them too the single most important matter was the stance they should adopt towards Rome. The most advantageous policy was far from obvious and, as was to be expected, different views emerged. Theoretically, you could advocate outright resistance to Rome—and in 147 demagogic hotheads did just that, and led the Achaean League to destruction (that, at least, is Polybius' interpretation of the Achaean War that ended with the sack of Corinth)—but, realistically, the options were limited to different shades of acquiescence. Among previous Achaean leaders, Philopoemen's advice had been to treat the Roman Senate as a rational body that would respond to reasoned, legal arguments, while Aristaenus thought it was necessary to be more actively pro-Roman (24.11–13). The logical extension of Aristaenus' position was unquestioning and obsequious submission in all ways to the will of Rome, and an adherent of this policy came to the fore at the end of the 180s. His name was Callicrates, and he was Polybius' arch-enemy. On a mission to Rome, Callicrates spoke in the Senate and stated what he regarded as some home truths about the situation in Greece (24.8–10). It was simple, he said: there were friends of Rome, and there were others who used every means to oppose Rome's will; it was time the Senate supported its Greek friends and got tough with the others. In Polybius' opinion, Callicrates' intervention had a disastrous effect on the relationship between Achaea and Rome.

Dealing with Rome in a time of peace was hard enough, but when she was at war, her attitude to the states within her orbit was even

more demanding: you were either an outright friend or an outright enemy. There was no room for sitting on the fence. Unfortunately for Polybius, when he became hipparch of the Achaean League, Rome was at war with Perseus of Macedon. Anyone in a position of leadership in the Greek world who did not behave with the pro-Roman zeal of Callicrates—and Polybius was certainly in that number—was very likely to incur suspicion. And indeed Polybius claims that the Roman ambassador, Gaius Popillius Laenas, was intending to accuse him and his father, Lycortas, precisely of fence-sitting (28.3). He did not make the accusation, but Achaea's enthusiasm for the Roman cause could hardly be described as unequivocal. Sensing this, the League decided in 169 to make amends by offering military assistance to the consul, Q. Marcius Philippus (28.12–13). Polybius was commissioned to lead an embassy to convey the offer. This was already the third year of the war, and we may well imagine that there was an element of irony in Philippus' polite refusal. While the other ambassadors returned home, however, Polybius stayed on with Philippus. He does not make clear what his role was, but in view of his expertise as a military tactician (he wrote a work on tactics which he refers to at 9.20), it seems likely that he acted as a military adviser to Philippus. He needed all his diplomatic skills when Philippus asked him privately to sabotage the request for Achaean troops from the legate Appius Claudius Centho. But this gave him a chance to get to know Philippus, which perhaps proved useful a year later when Polybius and Lycortas were all set to lead an Achaean expeditionary force to help Egypt against Antiochus IV of Syria: when Philippus cautioned against this, Polybius immediately complied (29.23–5).

On 22 June 168 the Roman general Lucius Aemilius Paullus defeated Perseus at the battle of Pydna. Rome's revenge was uncompromising. This was now the third time she had been at war with Macedon in a little over thirty years, and the Senate decided to disband the kingdom, replacing it with four independent republics, tributary to Rome. Macedon's allies were brutally treated—seventy towns in Epirus were sacked and 150,000 sold into slavery (according to Polybius)—but even Roman allies, like Rhodes and Pergamum, were punished for not being supportive enough. Rome's paranoia played into the hands of her Greek stooges, who made extensive lists of their (and Rome's) political enemies for deportation to Italy. Along with others from all over Greece, 1,000 Achaeans were deported,

including Polybius, who must have been one of the first pencilled in on Callicrates' list. Presumably Callicrates took the opportunity to get rid of all possible opponents, and it is therefore a little strange to note how the Achaeans sent a number of embassies in subsequent years to ask for the return of their exiles. This would seem to indicate that Callicrates did not have things all his own way. At any rate the Senate refused to listen, until eventually, some seventeen years later in 150, they relented, and those exiles still alive were finally allowed to return home.

If Polybius missed his beloved Achaean League, there is little sign of it in what survives of the text. He does report the general despair at the Achaean failure to get the exiles back (30.32), but he himself seems to have been more annoyed at Callicrates than at Rome, and relishes the opportunity to tell how children in the street insulted Callicrates and his followers to their face; or, how at the time of a festival in Sicyon, people who went to the public baths would not bathe in the same tubs as Callicrates' party until the water had been emptied and fresh water put in (30.29). Although deprived of his political career at home, Polybius actually flourished in Italy. In the first place, he was allowed to stay in Rome, rather than a provincial town. Rome was the most important city in the world, and for someone writing the history of world (that is, Mediterranean) affairs, there could hardly be a better place to gather information and opinions. An educated Greek aristocrat like Polybius would have a great deal in common with his Roman equivalents, and he was fortunate in striking up a friendship with one of the most powerful Romans of his day, Scipio Aemilianus (31.23–5). It had been Scipio and his brother, Quintus Fabius Maximus, sons of the great Aemilius Paullus, who had won for Polybius permission to reside in Rome. He does not describe how he had made contact with them in the first place, but thereafter the relationship grew close, particularly with the young Scipio. No doubt this opened doors for Polybius, and also added to his authority as an analyst of Roman affairs.

It also seems to be the case that Polybius enjoyed considerable freedom of movement. He made a number of visits to the town of Locri in southern Italy in order to help the Locrians win some exemptions from the obligations of their treaty with Rome (12.5): the mere fact that they asked for his help implies that he was seen to have political influence. He befriended the Seleucid prince, Demetrius, who was a

hostage in Rome, and used to go hunting with him. In 162 Demetrius escaped from Rome, and took up the Seleucid throne. Polybius claims that he devised and executed the escape plan (31.11–15), but he can hardly have done so without help from, or the approval of, some leading Romans. And, probably still within the time of exile, he witnessed Scipio on campaign in Spain, and went to Numidia (modern Tunisia) to interview King Masinissa (35.5; 9.25). Polybius tells us that he personally retraced Hannibal's route from Spain to Italy (3.48): we do not know when, but his return journey after this visit to Spain would provide one obvious opportunity.

When the Senate decreed in 150 that the Greek detainees be allowed to return Polybius presumably thought that he would be able to revive his political career. But Roman events again intervened. First, one of the consuls of 149, Manius Manilius, summoned him to Africa as an adviser in what seemed to be the coming conflict with Carthage (36.11). Although Rome declared war in 149, the trouble initially subsided when Carthage yielded to demands, and Polybius thought the war was over. But Rome backed Carthage into a corner and when his great friend Scipio Aemilianus was given command in 147, Polybius joined him at the siege and Ammianus Marcellinus, the Roman historian of the fourth century AD, provides an interesting snippet of information about Polybius' and Scipio's involvement in the fighting: he says that they took part in an attack on a city gate as part of a *testudo*, or 'tortoise' formation (24.2.24–7). This was a minor engagement, and it is difficult to think of a single convincing reason why the commander of Roman forces and a 50-year-old Greek should take part: the story sounds like later myth-making.

Probably after the fall of Carthage, Polybius took the opportunity to journey beyond the straits of Gibraltar and explore the coast of Africa, in a ship given to him by Scipio (Pliny, *Natural History* 5.40). If he had been at home during this time, would he have been able to avert the disaster that overtook Achaea? In 146, for no easily discernible reason, the Achaeans went to war against Rome: they were defeated, the League disbanded and Corinth destroyed. Unfortunately Polybius' own account of the years leading up to 146 does not survive, so we know nothing of the state of Achaean politics he found when he returned in 150 after so long away. Fragments indicate that he blamed the populist politicians, Diaeus and Critolaus, for what happened in 146 (38.10–13), but there is not enough to explain

why or how the situation developed as it did. What we do know is that Polybius played a major role in the reconstruction of Greece after the disaster. He was appointed by the senatorial commission settling Greek affairs to assist the various cities in understanding the legal and constitutional changes they faced, and he was clearly involved in drafting new legislation himself (39.5). Acording to Pausanias, the travel writer of the second century AD (and to the posthumous editor of Polybius, who comments personally right at the end of the work), many cities of the Peloponnese erected statues to Polybius in gratitude for his achievements at this time (8.9, 30, 37, 44, 48), and we have inscriptions attesting to this.

Polybius is usually thought to have lived for another quarter of a century or more after the Achaean War, but we know almost nothing about his life in these years. There are brief glimpses of him in Rome and Alexandria; and, judging from a separate monograph he wrote on Rome's war against Numantia, he may have accompanied Scipio Aemilianus again at the capture of Numantia in Spain in 133, when Scipio commanded the Roman forces. For somebody who had been active all his life as a politician, soldier, explorer, and writer, it is hard to imagine that he settled down to a life of inactivity. He must have continued to research and write. We do not know the schedule of his literary output, but in addition to the *Histories*, there was the work on the Numantine War just referred to, and the study of tactics. There was also a biography, in three books, of Philopoemen, and a treatise on the habitability of the equatorial region. Our only evidence for Polybius' death, an anonymous later work entitled *Macrobioi* ('Long Lives'), certainly implies a vigorous old man: it records that he died when he fell off his horse riding home at the age of 82.

The Histories

Polybius' grand theme was Rome and the unification of Mediterranean history under her aegis. As we have seen, the *Histories* originally set out to describe the process of imperial expansion in the years 220–167, but was then extended to 146. The finished work comprised forty books, 1–30 taking the story to 167, 31–40 completing the revised plan. Of the forty books, only the first five survive fully extant, and of these, Books 1 and 2 form an introduction to the work, outlining events between the first war that Rome fought against Carthage

and the start of the Hannibalic War (264–220). Book 3 takes us to the year 216 and ends with the great victory of Hannibal at the battle of Cannae; Books 4 and 5 then review the main events in Greece and the eastern Mediterranean before 216. Although that is the extent of what we have in full, we do also have substantial excerpts of many, but not all, of the remaining books. These excerpts were made in the tenth century by Byzantine scholars, who are at the same time both heroes and villains of the textual story. Their enthusiasm for making excerpts and anthologies of classical works probably ensured the disappearance of the full text of Polybius. The first five books must have been sufficiently well established by this stage to ensure their survival, but for the rest, it is clear that readers were content with excerpts rather than the complete text, which eventually just disappeared from the record. The reason for this is probably a mixture of the length—in its complete form the work would have taken up something like seven volumes of the present translation—and the fact that Polybius wrote in a stylistically unadorned, at times even awkward, Greek. The first-century BC historian Dionysius of Halicarnassus said that it was one of those works you could not really read cover to cover (*De compositione verborum* 4.110). So perhaps the full text might have disappeared anyway, and we are lucky that the Byzantine scholars preserved such extensive sections of the later books.

The work was not all a straight historical narrative. Book 6, for instance, was a study of the Roman system of government: there are certainly big gaps, but a great deal of the book survives and has become the most famous part of the *Histories*. Similarly, we have large sections of Book 12, a discussion of history writing, much of which is taken up with a sustained assault on the Sicilian historian, Timaeus (*c*.350–260 BC). The only other entirely digressionary book was 34, a study of geography: from this, very little survives beyond occasional quotations and citations by other ancient writers. Book 40 seems to have been a sort of summary of the contents of the whole work.

Book 1

Polybius opens with important and interesting introductory considerations (1–5) in which the theme, plan, and starting point are set out. The work proper will start with the 140th Olympiad and the Second Punic War, Rome's famous struggle with Hannibal (for the Olympiad

dating system see the explanatory note to p. 4). It was not desirable, however, to plunge *in medias res*, since Greek readers were unfamiliar with Roman and Carthaginian history: Polybius, therefore, felt it necessary to start with two introductory books going back to Olympiad 129 (264–261 BC), when the First Punic War started. It makes good sense to introduce the two protagonists who both start and finish the work. After a further introductory section (6–12), which actually starts with the sack of Rome by the Gauls in 387/6, the book finally settles down to its plan and divides into two parts, the first war between Rome and Carthage (13–64), and the war that immediately followed between Carthage and her mercenaries (65–88). The First Punic War obviously provides important background for the Hannibalic war, but although Polybius claims that an account of Carthage's mercenary war was important for understanding the causes of the Second Punic War, it is far from clear why we need such detail. It did, however, explain how Rome was able to grab Sardinia, an act that was itself partly responsible for the Second Punic War, and it also highlighted a fundamental weakness in Carthage's military capacity, her reliance on unreliable mercenaries. And, artistically, the two wars of Book 1 form a stark and handsome contrast with each other. Polybius is at pains to emphasize how the First Punic War was conducted with nobility and courage, both sides striving mightily and with honour, while the mercenary war was marked by extreme savagery.

Book 2

Book 2 has three main sections, covering Rome's war with Illyria, her first military venture in Greece (2–12), her conquest of northern Italy (14–35), and the history of Greece (or, more specifically, of the Achaean League) before Olympiad 140 (37–70). Polybius is also well aware of the extensive expansion of Carthaginian power in Spain in the same period, but only has time to refer to it briefly (1, 13, 36). There is much valuable introductory material in this book. It was important to explain how Rome had become involved in Greek affairs, and how she had secured the north of Italy, where the first campaigns against Hannibal would be fought. Her successful subjugation of the Celts of the region also perhaps serves to emphasize how difficult the Carthaginians had found it (as described in Book 1) to deal with their internal problems, the mercenaries.

The war against Illyria is treated only briefly in three episodes: the siege of the city of Medion by the Aetolians, the situation in the Epirot city of Phoenice, and the actual confrontation with the fiery queen of Illyria, Teuta, who murders a free-speaking Roman ambassador and precipitates the crisis. The subjugation of northern Italy includes a most interesting section on the geography and natural resources of the area (14–16). As we shall see, Polybius regarded geography as one of the crucial elements in good history writing. Although Rome's major opponent in Greece was Macedon, Polybius cannot resist the opportunity of putting the Achaean League centre stage, but his account of its constitution and development is an important source of information for the history of the League. Characteristic of Polybius' method is the fierce assault he launches on the historian Phylarchus (56–63).

Book 3

Book 3 marks the beginning of the work proper, and concentrates solely on the causes (6–33) and first years (33–117) of the Second Punic War. Polybius enunciates for the first time his distinction between the causes, pretexts, and beginnings of wars (6–7), but in spite of a lengthy analysis of the background of the Hannibalic War, he remains uncertain as to whose fault it was. The causes of the war were the Roman treatment of Carthage after the mercenary war, the anger of the Barcid (that is, Hannibal's) family, and the growth of Carthaginian power in Spain, but Polybius is uncharacteristically vague about the beginning and pretext of the war. By ancient standards, however, it is almost certainly the longest analysis of the causes of a conflict that we have, and a very thorough attempt to tease out the possibilities. The narrative of the war itself is an important source for the early years of the war, but also makes for exciting reading: Hannibal's march from Spain to Italy across the Pyrenees, the south of France, and the Alps (33–59), the battle of lake Trasimene (77–94), and the Cannae campaign (106–17) all represent historical narrative of a high quality. Polybius then leaves the reader in a state of suspense, as he does not resume this storyline until Book 7: he must first fill in the history of eastern affairs (Books 4 and 5) and analyse the Roman constitution (Book 6), before he can return in Book 7 to describe how Rome faced the greatest crisis in her history.

Books 4 and 5

The scene now shifts to the east and the events in that region of Olympiad 140. The two books together form a continuous story, in which the Social War (220–217 BC), the conflict between Philip V of Macedon with his allies (the Achaean League particularly) and the Aetolians, provides a sort of structural framework: it begins and ends both books (4.3–37 and 57–87; 5.1–30 and 91–105) which are, additionally, closely linked by the story of the conspiracy of Apelles against Philip V (4.76–5.29). Polybius weaves into the account of the Social War coverage of other events: in Book 4, the war between Byzantium and Rhodes (38–52), which includes a long analysis of the geography, hydrography, and resources of the Black Sea (38–42), and a brief review of the situation in Crete (53–5); in Book 5, the Fourth Syrian War (219–217 BC) fought between the Seleucids and the Ptolemies (34–87), and a description of the international aid sent to Rhodes after it suffered a disastrous earthquake in about 227 (88–90). The reasons for the choice of material are not always clear. Why do we need to hear of the local disputes in Crete, for instance, or of the Rhodian earthquake? The answer may well lie in the later, lost books, but both events, although on one level purely local affairs, do involve the wider Mediterranean world, and perhaps demonstrate the process by which Mediterranean history was beginning to flow into a single story. At the end of Book 5 Polybius ties up loose ends with a rapid summary of the situation in Greece and the east (106–11).

Book 6

It had been Polybius' purpose right from the start of the work to explain how and under what sort of constitution (in the sense of governmental structures and state institutions) Rome had conquered the world. Book 6 provides the answer to that question and is, thus, a crucial part of the *Histories*. It is also the most famous part. Polybius may be seen in the present day as one of the great historians of antiquity, but his reputation from the sixteenth century on rested more on this (incomplete) book of political science than on the historical narrative of the first five books. What caught the attention of Machiavelli and other writers on republican government was Polybius' analysis of the Roman constitution as 'mixed', that is, a mixture of monarchy,

aristocracy, and democracy. Book 6 was heavily influenced by Greek political theory, but it was, as far as we know, the first attempt to apply such theory to the reality of Roman government and history and the first attempt to explain Rome's success in these terms.

Although the book is by no means completely preserved, large parts of it survive and we can be reasonably sure what the rest contained. The first major subject is the cycle of the different types of constitution (3–10). The three simple, and good, forms of constitution (monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy) alternate with their degenerate equivalents (tyranny, oligarchy, and mob-rule) in a naturally occurring cycle. The cycle is started by a primitive monarch who brings order to chaos and who, when he replaces brute force with reason, turns himself into a king. Kingship then degenerates into tyranny, which itself gives way to aristocracy. It soon turns into its corrupt form, oligarchy, from which democracy takes over, before it becomes greedy for wealth and power, and changes into mob-rule. The abuses of mob-rule reduce the state to chaos, out of which a primitive monarch emerges and starts the cycle again. Each of these forms of government is like a living organism that has its own natural birth, rise, fall, and death, and indeed the cycle itself is the product of nature.

Polybius next develops his theory of the 'mixed' Roman constitution (10–18). The Spartan, Lycurgus, had understood that each of the simple and good forms of constitution is precarious, bearing within it the seeds of its own degeneration into its corrupt form. So he decided to try to unite the best features of the simple forms into a mixed variety, in which the balance between monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy would fend off the natural tendency to corruption. This resulted in the retention of liberty at Sparta for a longer time than in any other state. Rome achieved the same mixture as Lycurgus devised, but by means of a natural set of developments rather than as a conscious decision. At this point there is a big gap in the text, and it is a disappointing one, because fragments indicate that it contained an account of early Roman history up to the middle of the fifth century BC. Presumably the purpose was to demonstrate how the events of Roman history had created what, by the middle of the fifth century, had become a mixed constitution. It would be fascinating to know how Polybius viewed this process.

Fortunately, the description of the workings of the Roman system does survive: three chapters outlining the powers of the consuls, Senate, and people (12–14) are balanced by three more which set out

the checks on the power of the consuls, Senate, and people (15–17). This is a controversial section, as it seems to leave out a number of what modern scholars regard as basic elements of the way the Roman system worked. There is, for example, no reference made to the different voting assemblies of Rome, and only the consuls receive attention among the office-holders. It is important, however, to note two points. First, Polybius in this section is presenting a schematic plan of the main power structures of Rome, not a complete inventory of the entire system. Second, the text again fails us at this point, and when it resumes it deals in considerable details with the structures and camp system of the Roman army (19–42). We do not know how long the gap is, or what it contained. It must at least have offered a transitional passage explaining why we are moving on to the Roman army; and some scholars have suggested that there was also a summary of the Roman constitution. The fragmentary nature of the text warns us, or should warn us, to be wary of jumping to conclusions.

The remainder of the book seeks to illuminate better the Roman constitution by comparing it with other 'mixed' examples—Athens, Thebes, Sparta, Crete, Mantinea, and Carthage (43–56), in which Polybius is really only interested in Sparta and Carthage. Roman institutions were better at fostering bravery than Carthaginian ones, and there is an interesting section on the inspiring nature of Roman funerals (53–4). The book ends with a story about the battle of Cannae, which serves to bring us back to the story that we left off at the end of Book 3.

Book 12

The surviving sections of Book 12 are somewhat less coherent than those of Book 6, with the result that it is not really clear how the book works. It appears to be an assault on the Sicilian historian Timaeus, but some argue that it is rather a presentation of historical theory and method that just happens to involve heavy criticism of Timaeus. I believe that its purpose is primarily polemical—Timaeus was in fact the first historian to deal extensively with Roman history, a subject on which Polybius wanted to be regarded as the great expert—but that in attacking Timaeus it deals with issues of central importance to the writing of history.

Any plan of Book 12's structure can only be speculative, but one way of viewing it divides it up into four sections. The first (1–4) deals with errors Timaeus made about Africa and Corsica, and with his ignorance and pedantry. Polybius then defends at some length authors attacked by Timaeus, particularly Aristotle (5–23). The third section highlights Timaeus' lack of qualifications for writing history, in particular his lack of political and military experience (24–26d). This includes a famous comparison between history and medicine (25d–e). The last section examines in more detail the reasons for Timaeus' technical incompetence (27a–end).

Polybius and the writing of history

This is not the place for a detailed analysis of all aspects of Polybius' historical theory and method, but a brief examination of some of the main characteristics will give a flavour of how interesting Polybius was as a historian.

OUTSPOKENNESS

Perhaps the most immediately noticeable feature of Polybius' work is the frequency with which he interrupts his narrative to think out loud about, and comment on, a wide variety of topics. He was a man who spent his entire adult life among the rich and powerful; he travelled the world, he was a leading politician, he commanded armies, he was a writer. Such a varied and exciting career seems to have given him the confidence to pronounce judgement on all sorts of issues, with little evidence of self-doubt or recognition that those with whom he disagrees might know what they were talking about. This readiness to discourse upon what swims into his ken is a great gift to posterity. It leads him into interesting considerations of, for example, the power of music to combat the harsh effects of nature on human character, as evidenced by the Arcadian people of Cynaethae who abandoned their musical traditions with disastrous effects (4.20–1); or, for instance, into a less immediately interesting comparison between Roman and Greek military palisades (18.18). But most valuably for us, he says more about the art of history writing than any other historians of antiquity, most of whom have little, or sometimes nothing, to say about what they were doing or how they thought it should be done.

In this mode of exposition he is closest to his great fifth-century predecessor, Herodotus.

THE HISTORIAN AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE

Timaeus utterly neglected the questioning of informants, which Polybius regards as 'the most important aspect of a historian's work' (12.4c). He continues:

> Events take place simultaneously all over the world, but it is impossible for one person to be in more than one place at the same time, and it is equally impossible for him personally to visit every part of the world and see what is special about them. His only option is to question as many people as possible, to believe those who deserve belief, and to be a good judge of what he hears.

Timaeus' main failing was that he sat in a library for fifty years and conducted no investigations in the field: he was an armchair historian (12.25d). Even if he had undertaken personal enquiry, however, he was, in Polybius' opinion, fatally underqualified for the task. For he lacked the one indispensable qualification needed for the writing of political history: practical experience of politics and war (12.25g):

> just as it is impossible for someone who lacks military experience to write well about warfare, it is impossible for someone who has never acted in the political sphere or faced a political crisis to write good political history. Nothing written by authors who rely on mere book-learning has the clarity that comes from personal experience, and so nothing is gained by reading their work. For without its educational element, history is altogether uninspiring and useless.

In a famous comparison between medicine and history (12.25d–e), Polybius says that, just as medicine has three parts (the theory of disease, dietetics, and surgery/pharmacology), so too has political history: the study of written sources, personal fieldwork, and political experience. He does not say it directly, but without experience the first two elements are useless: you simply cannot know how to make the correct judgements about what you read or hear or see. Polybius' whole methodology is based on this critical assessment of all the evidence, written, oral, and visual, an assessment that only the experienced soldier-politician can make.

GEOGRAPHY

One of the required three elements of history, as we have just seen, is personal investigation in the field, 'the inspection and mapping of inland and coastal features such as cities, battle-sites, rivers, and harbours' (12.25e). The reader will find a great deal of topographical and geographical description in Polybius. The purpose is didactic clarity (to which we shall return below). The campaigns in Sicily of the First Punic War, for example, cannot be understood if you do not know the geography of Sicily (1.41): 'I shall briefly try to describe the natural advantages and the location of the places in question, because I would not want any reader to find my account opaque just because he is unfamiliar with the geography of the island.' This is a simple, practical point, often repeated and to good effect, especially in military narrative (other instances include the description of northern Italy at 2.14–16, or of Sparta at 5.21).

More difficult to understand is the reason why, on certain occasions, Polybius engages with geography at a much more theoretical level. When describing Hannibal's march from Spain to Italy, for example (3.36–7), he sets out to explain its geography. This should make perfectly good sense, but the description immediately takes leave of the details of Hannibal's route in order to discuss the compass points and general layout of the world. Polybius seems to forget the practical purpose with which he started. Similarly, when discussing the war of Bithynia and Rhodes against Byzantium (4.38–52), he begins by explaining the site of Byzantium. This starts out at a practical level, but soon develops into a very detailed and theoretical analysis of the flow of water into and out of the Black Sea (4.38–42).

There are perhaps two aspects to this higher theoretical geography we encounter in the *Histories*. Polybius was a general, and generals have to understand local topographies, roads, distances, the layout of cities, and so on. But he was also a research scholar, and it is possible that these, initially practical, needs, developed into deeper, scholarly interests which led him from the purely practical into the theoretical. It has also been suggested, however, that these theoretical passages may be more closely linked to Polybius' conception of the unity of world history. Various rivers flow into the Sea of Azov, the Sea of Azov into the Black Sea, the Black Sea into the Sea of Marmora, the Aegean, the

Mediterranean, and eventually the Atlantic. The waters of the known world seem to reflect the single flow of history brought about by Rome in the second century BC. This is an attractive explanation of what otherwise seems a slightly odd, or at best digressionary, feature of the work.

THE USEFULNESS OF POLITICAL HISTORY

In his opening statement at the beginning of Book 1, the very first aspect of history that Polybius refers to—and he emphasizes it on numerous occasions in the rest of the work—is its usefulness. History is both a general guide for helping people to improve their lives and to accept the vicissitudes of fortune, and, more specifically, it is a crucial training for politics: 'there is no more authentic way to prepare and train oneself for political life than by studying history' (1.1). Polybius has in mind a specific type of history, which he calls 'pragmatic' history (1.2). Judging from the fact that he does not explain the term 'pragmatic' at this point, we can only conclude that his audience knew what it meant. He is referring to what we would call 'political' history, the study of the high affairs of state, of nations, cities, and monarchs, of war and peace. It is only at the beginning of Book 9 that he justifies his decision to concentrate on politics (he claims to have explained this earlier, but if he did, it is not in the surviving text). He maintains that there is nothing new to say about other types of history, such as 'the study of genealogies, myths, the foundation of cities, their ties of kinship'; politics, on the other hand, always throws up something new that requires a novel type of treatment (9.2).

The subject of usefulness does raise the question, for whom will this work be useful? Who is the intended audience? Since Polybius justifies his inclusion of two introductory books on the grounds that his Greek readers would not be familiar with the history of Rome and Carthage before the 140th Olympiad, and taking into account that the sort of usefulness he is talking about applies to political leadership and the command of armies, he clearly has in mind an elite Greek audience. He is also well aware that Romans would be reading such an account of their own glorious deeds (31.22). Ultimately, then, Polybius was writing for people like himself, the educated, rich and powerful Greek-speaking Mediterranean elite.

THE NEED FOR UNIVERSAL HISTORY

For history to be useful there were other requirements beyond its political subject matter. Above all, it had to be what Polybius calls

'universal', a world history: in our terms, it had to embrace the whole Mediterranean world (1.3–4). Polybius and his contemporaries were well aware that there were places beyond the lands surrounding the Mediterranean, but very little was known about them, and they had no effect on the political life of the Mediterranean. The reason for this insistence on universality was that Fortune had redirected history, so that it was no longer a scattered set of separate stories: the 140th Olympiad marked the beginning of a new era in which the history of the world became a united and organic whole, into which the previously separate stories now all flowed in one stream. What brought it all together into one story was Rome. The only proper way for the historian to reflect this new reality was to weave the affairs of the world into a universal history. None of his contemporaries, Polybius claims, had done this. He does admit that his fourth-century predecessor Ephorus (whose work does not survive) wrote universal history, but, although he does not say it, Ephorus' work can only have been inferior, because Fortune had not yet made the world an organic whole.

If universal history was now the only proper way to study the world, it followed that small-scale works, monographs on individual topics, must be inadequate (even though Polybius wrote one himself, on Rome's Numantine War). And from time to time throughout the *Histories* Polybius launches attacks on the shortcomings of limited monographs, nowhere more famously than in chapter 4 of Book 1. Thinking that you can understand the big picture of world events by reading partial histories is like believing that you can appreciate the energy and beauty of a living body by studying the dissected parts of its corpse:

> So we are bound to conclude that partial histories are more or less useless when it comes to gaining a comprehensive perspective, and are unreliable. On the contrary, it is only by connecting and comparing *all* the parts with one another, by seeing their similarities and differences—it is only such an overview that puts one in a position to derive benefit and pleasure from history.

CLARITY AND TRUTH

Usefulness has yet further requirements. If a work is to have instructional value, it must be clear. Readers must know at all times where they are in the narrative, what to expect and how it all hangs together. Polybius is a master of clarity, a quality that we can easily overlook.

In truth, organizing a massive study of Mediterranean affairs over a fifty-year period was by no means a simple challenge. Polybius met the challenge with a clear overall plan, to which he refers repeatedly, and with a didactic presentation that is characterized by introductions, summaries, recapitulations, cross-references, and explanations of content and method: the reader is constantly reminded what topics have been covered, or are about to be covered, and why. Beginnings and ends of books are an obvious place for this sort of guidance, although it occurs wherever Polybius thinks that clarification is needed. Here, for example, is what he says at the end of Book 2, a type of statement that recurs throughout:

> I have now covered the introductory or prefatory material for my entire history. In this introduction, I have shown when and how and why the Romans, after conquering Italy, first became involved in foreign affairs, initially by disputing control of the sea with the Carthaginians. I have also described the situation in Greece and Macedon, and given an account of what was happening in Carthage at the time. In keeping with my original plan, I have reached the date at which the Greeks were about to be embroiled in the Social War, the Romans in the Hannibalic War, and the kings of Asia in the war for Coele Syria. Following the cue given by the neat conclusion of events prior to this date, and by the deaths of the rulers who had been the power-brokers in that period, it makes sense for me now to bring this book to a close.

And at the beginning of Book 3 we get a summary preview of the main events between 220 and 167 BC, and notification of the plan to extend the work to 146.

Another aspect of clarity aimed at assisting the reader is provided by a standard geographical and chronological order of subject matter. This does not actually come into operation until the end of the 140th Olympiad (when history becomes a single story), and so will not be evident from the material translated in this volume. But from Book 7 on, Polybius' standard procedure was to treat the events of each Olympiad year according to geographical zone, always following the same order: he starts in Italy, then moves to Sicily, Spain, Africa, Greece and Macedon, Asia, and Egypt, before starting back in Italy again at the beginning of the next Olympiad year. This does occasionally have the disadvantage of having to read about the end of a topic before its beginning (if, for instance, a story started in Egypt but ended in Rome), but Polybius thought that its effectiveness in

emphasizing the interconnectedness of events outweighed any disadvantages (5.31). Conversely, in the time before the coming together of world events, it was better not to organize the material by geographical zone and Olympiad year, but just to follow one story down through a number of years, before moving on to the next topic. Thus, in Book 3 he follows the Second Punic War through its first few years, before moving on in Books 4 and 5 to trace events in Greece and the east in the same period. These events were particularly varied and wide-ranging, and in order to help readers locate themselves chronologically, Polybius stops, on eight occasions in Books 4 and 5 (at the beginning and end of the campaigning season in each year), to cross-reference what was happening elsewhere. At the beginning of Book 5, for example, Aratus was finishing his year as general of the Achaean League, to be succeeded by Eperatus: at the same time Hannibal was starting his march from Spain to Italy; in Rome the Senate dispatched Tiberius Sempronius Longus to Africa and Scipio Africanus to Spain; and in the Near East, the dispute between the Ptolemies and Seleucids about control of Coele Syria (roughly modern Israel/southern Syria) was leading Ptolemy IV and Antiochus III to war.

It almost goes without saying that for Polybius there was no point in being clear about anything other than the truth, as anything other than the truth could only be valueless anyway: 'An animal is completely useless if it loses its eyesight, and in the same way history without truth has as little educational value as a yarn' (1.14). This statement comes in a brief analysis of the value of two historians, Philinus of Acragas and Quintus Fabius Pictor, who wrote highly regarded, but, in Polybius' opinion, seriously wayward, accounts of the Hannibalic War (neither survives). Their problem, he argued, was bias, not deliberate lying: they were like people in love, who can see no wrong in the object of their love. Philinus was too well disposed to the Carthaginians, Fabius Pictor to the Romans. History is no place for patriotism and friendship: it demands higher standards. There are times when, in the interests of truth, the historian must be prepared to criticize his friends and praise his enemies. Philinus is not up to the challenge: patriotic fervour has led him, for example, to describe as a Carthaginian victory one of the early battles of the Second Punic War that was manifestly a Roman victory.

Does Polybius always reach the high standards he demands? On the whole the answer is yes. His assessment, for instance, of the Achaean general Aratus—whom he greatly admired—is a very balanced one, with praise of his good qualities, but recognition too of his relative inadequacy as an army commander (4.8). The Achaean League and his home town of Megalopolis, however, do not always bring out the best in Polybius. In a long attack on the third-century historian Phylarchus, which raises various interesting matters to do with the writing of history (2.56–63), it is hard to avoid the feeling that Polybius' hostility towards, and criticism of, Phylarchus stems from the latter's ill will towards the Achaean League and Megalopolis. Polybius criticizes him for sensationalizing what the city of Mantinea suffered at the hands of Philip V and the Achaean League. The only way to arouse such undeserved sympathy for Mantinea was to invent a tissue of lies. In truth, according to Polybius, the Mantineans had abandoned the Achaean League and massacred a garrison of Achaeans which they themselves had invited: the Mantineans thoroughly deserved their fate. Phylarchus had similarly sought to exaggerate the punishment of a certain Aristomachus of Argos. He was not horribly tortured, as Phylarchus claimed, although he deserved to be, as he was a traitor and a tyrant and had betrayed the Achaeans: he was merely quietly drowned by his executioners!

SENSATIONALISM AND SPEECHES

Although other issues come into play, Polybius' attack on Phylarchus begins with a concern about the impropriety of sensationalism in the writing of history. In his account of the sufferings of the Mantineans, Phylarchus introduces scenes of women tearing their hair and baring their breasts, and pathetic images of men and women and their aged parents being led off into captivity. He does this sort of thing, Polybius maintains, throughout his work. But a historian should not try to startle his readers, nor, like a writer of tragic dramas, invent speeches for his characters (2.56):

> A historian should not use his narrative to astound his readers with sensationalism, nor should he make up plausible speeches and list all the possible consequences of events. A historian should leave these things to tragic poets, and should focus exclusively on what was actually done and said,

even if some of these facts are rather unexciting. History and tragedy do not serve the same purposes. On the contrary, it is the job of a tragic poet to astound and entertain his audience for a moment by means of the most convincing words he can find, but it is the job of a historian to instruct and persuade his readers for all time by means of deeds that actually took place and words that were actually spoken. The object in the first case is to create a plausible fiction in order to beguile an audience, in the second case to write what is true in order to educate the reader.

So, sensationalism should not be a part of history. In Phylarchus' case, it is doubly improper because, in addition to being there in the first place, it is also enrolled in an unjust and incorrect cause, the creation of sympathy for the Mantineans.

Although it is an idea not clearly enunciated, almost certainly Polybius saw a difference between sensational and dramatic writing. Indeed, we might define sensationalism as the misapplication of dramatic writing. Drama and emotion were acceptable in the right place. The drama of the final battle of the Second Punic War, for instance, could not, and should not, in Polybius' opinion, fail to elicit an emotional response from the reader (15.9). And he himself could write up scenes in a dramatic way (the battle between the forces of the Seleucid general Xenoetas and the rebel, Molon, in 5.48 is a good example). A historian must be able to identify appropriate circumstances for this sort of treatment: Phylarchus shows his lack of historical judgement by writing this way the whole time.

Phylarchus also made up speeches. On this occasion Polybius simply says that a historian should not do this, but the matter is somewhat more complicated. Unlike most modern historians, the historians of antiquity filled their works with political and battle speeches: the practice made for drama, it helped to characterize the speakers, it offered an opportunity to air opinions, and it showed a writer's skills in rhetorical composition. The big question is, however, how could they know what was said? With an occasional exception, there were no stenographers making exact transcripts in the ancient world. And, as Thucydides famously stated the problem (Thuc. 1.22), even if he, or one of his informants, was present at a speech, it was difficult to remember exactly what was said. Thucydides' solution, the meaning of which has been endlessly discussed, seems to involve an element of what we would call invention: he made his speakers say what was

required by the situation, although he tried to stick to the overall argument.

Thucydides implied that it was a matter of just making up the words of what were real speeches on real occasions, but there can be little doubt that many ancient historians (Thucydides too, perhaps) also made up completely fictional speeches. Polybius seems to exclude this as valid historical procedure (he has much of importance to say at 12.25i–26b in his criticism of Timaeus' practice), but he does allow for what, by modern standards, would be far from a verbatim account. In the first place, his speeches are written in his own style and words, not the speaker's. Hence, in a fragment of one of the later books (29.12) he apologizes for battle scenes or speeches that repeat style, treatment, or even words: you just cannot avoid this in such a long work. Second, he believed that there was no need to record every speech nor everything that was said in a speech: the historian should select the important bits (12.25i; 36.1). This allows for a degree of selectivity and creative imagination that would be quite alien to the modern world, but it still implies that you could not just make up a speech out of nothing. Timaeus did just that, and in effect it was simply an empty rhetorical exercise that had no connection to the course and cause of real events (12.25a).

In spite of his insistence on the need to report, if somewhat imaginatively, on real speeches actually delivered, we can probably convict Polybius (and all other ancient historians) of the outright invention of battle speeches. There is disagreement on the subject, but a strong argument has been made that the logistics of giving a set speech in front of an army of 30,000 (or more) men arrayed in a battle line perhaps a kilometre (or more) long, defy reality. Perhaps conscious of this difficulty, Polybius has Scipio Africanus deliver his speech before the battle of Zama in 202 BC from a horse, while riding along the lines (15.10). This does not make it any more realistic. Initially, on the Carthaginian side, Hannibal orders the individual unit commanders to speak to their own troops (15.11). This is surely a much more convincing picture of how a general would get across to his men the simple messages needed to encourage them before battle. But Polybius cannot resist giving Hannibal a set-piece speech of his own, delivered, as Scipio did, while doing the rounds of his men. As with all foreign commanders speaking in a language not understood by the historian supposedly reporting his speech, how would Polybius

know what Hannibal said? Battle speeches of this sort are simply a literary convention, not a reflection of reality. On the other hand, there is nothing inherently improbable in any of Polybius' political speeches, although we can neither prove nor disprove their delivery or content.

CAUSATION

One of the reasons Polybius is so critical of Timaeus inventing speeches is that the speeches must be part of the process of explaining the chain of events. A historian is required not just to find out what was actually said on a particular occasion, but also to explain how it affected what happened (12.25b.1–2; 12.25i.8): speeches must be integrated into the historical context. Obviously, if you just make a speech up, it lacks this connection to the chain of cause and effect, and can thus only be an empty rhetorical exercise.

One of the most insistent requirements that Polybius has of history is that it cannot just be a narrative: it must explain why and how things happen. Both doctors and politicians have to understand causation if they are to be effective (3.7); historians must do the same. Polybius emphasizes this point on many occasions. His most closely studied statement on this topic is his analysis of the causes of wars (3.6–7). In this passage, he develops the language of Thucydides' famous distinction between the truest explanation for the Peloponnesian War, and the grievances that were used to start it (Thuc. 1.26). Polybius identifies three stages in the process by which a war starts: the causes, the pretexts, and the actual beginning. As an example, he cites Alexander the Great's war against Persia. The causes were the success, in the early years of the fourth century BC, of the Greek generals Xenophon and Agesilaus against Persian armies (thus convincing Philip II of Macedon of the desirability and need for an invasion of the east); the pretext offered was revenge for the Persian invasions of Greece a century earlier; and the beginning was the crossing of Alexander the Great to Asia. Commentators have observed how this scheme often leads Polybius into one-sided explanations: we learn why Alexander, or Hannibal, did what they did, but that is not necessarily the whole story.

This is often seen as a somewhat naive aspect of Polybius' theoretical thinking, but we must be careful not to overlook the fact that it is only one element of causation: it is not just wars that have to be

explained, but all human behaviour. Polybius has no general, overarching theory of causation, but it is important to emphasize his belief, evident throughout the work, that people do the things they do because of their perceptions, whether right or wrong. He conveys this message by the adoption of constantly changing perspectives. In 220 BC, for instance, the Roman general Aemilius Paullus chose to attack the city of Dimale in Illyria precisely because, from the defenders' perspective, the city was impregnable; from his perspective, that is exactly the reason he thought it should be attacked (3.18). Perspective is often visual in Polybius. Aemilius Paullus 'sees' the overconfidence of the people of Dimale. When Philip V of Macedon invades Sparta in 218 BC the speed of his attack is conveyed through the visual perspective of the Spartans (5.18): the reader watches through Spartan eyes the Macedonian army march past the city. The Spartans are astonished because when they last heard of Philip he was attacking the city of Thermum in Aetolia. Instead of just saying they were astonished, Polybius conveys this by adopting their perspective. This is highly characteristic of his narrative method. And time and again, it is not just about artful presentation: it explains why people do what they do.

FATE / CHANCE (*TYCHE*)

For Polybius, things happen in the world because human beings make them happen. The Romans became masters of the Mediterranean because of the excellence of their institutions, political, military, and social, and because of their courage and determination. Polybius' narrative tracks and explains this human process in great detail.

It is surprising, therefore, that the Greek word *tyche*, meaning fate or chance (two slightly different, although related, concepts), occurs so often in the work. Surely events cannot be explained as the result of a predetermined or purely fortuitous process: in that case history could not possibly be useful, nor a historian's political or military experience. The Greek language had long personified fate or chance as a goddess, Tyche, and on many occasions use of the word is only a stylistic trait, meaning no more than when we say things like 'as fate would have it', simply to indicate that this was the way something turned out. Where it might have greater significance, Polybius is, on occasion, at pains to deny that it has any role, specifically in connection with the rise of Rome (1.63):

All this supports my initial suggestion that (despite the views of certain Greeks) powers beyond the Romans' control, such as Fortune [Tyche], had no bearing on the assurance with which they set out to make themselves rulers and masters of the whole world; they had perfectly reasonable grounds for this, because of the training they received in the course of this critical and colossal war, and it was this training that enabled them to attain their objective.

How, then, do we reconcile this perfectly clear statement—and it is reinforced elsewhere (e.g. 18.28)—with the following (8.2):

How, by reading merely a history of Sicily or Spain, can we hope to learn and understand the magnitude of events or, most importantly, what means and what form of government Tyche has employed to accomplish the most astonishing feat of our times, something quite unprecedented, that is, to bring all the known parts of the world under one rule and dominion?

At least these quotations are distant from each other in the text, and we might argue that Polybius does not see the apparent inconsistency. But after presenting Rome's rise and the unification of the world purely in human terms in the first three chapters of Book 1, in chapter 4 he then describes the process as the finest achievement of Tyche. How can we make sense of this?

The solution to the problem may well lie in a statement that survives from near the end of the work, and in understanding exactly what the nature of Polybius' claim is for Tyche's role in Rome's rise. In 36.17 Polybius says that things beyond human understanding, like the weather or disease, may justifiably be attributed to Tyche or the divine, but that it is not proper to do so when causes can be understood (such as reason for the low birth rate in Greece). The reasons for Rome's conquest of the Mediterranean are certainly amenable to human understanding: explaining the human process involved is the whole point of the *Histories*. What is not possible to understand is the larger design of world affairs. We know how Rome established and exerted her dominance, but we do not know why her rule came now in the history of the world. It is in the realm of this larger design, not in the realities of political and military power, that Tyche operates. Polybius starts his story in 220 BC, he tells us at one point (4.2), because that was when Tyche rebuilt the world, new rulers emerging in many places at the same time. There was no rational explanation for why a number of kings all died at the same time: it

was part of the larger design of the world that Tyche established. This is not a developed theory of predetermination, and Tyche has other slightly different roles in the work (as an avenging force, for instance), but it remains, at root, a colourful way of describing the inexplicable.

The fate of Polybius' Histories

References in later classical authors indicate that Polybius' work was appreciated and read, without winning the sort of stellar reputation enjoyed by his major predecessors in the field of history, Herodotus, Thucydides, or Xenophon. Perhaps his most important supporter was the first-century BC Roman historian Livy, who used Polybius extensively in his great work and whose method of adapting the *Histories* as a source we can closely observe.

We have already seen the important role played by Byzantine scholars in the transmission of the text. There is thereafter a gap in our knowledge of Polybius' fate for nearly four centuries, but fortunately he made his way to Italy, where he re-emerges into the light with Leonardo Bruni's history of the First Punic War, which he based on the first two books of Polybius. This was published in 1419 in Florence. A Latin translation of Books 1–5 by Niccolò Perotti in 1454 won a larger European audience for Polybius, but it was Machiavelli's use of Book 6 in his *Discourses on the First Ten Books of Livy* (published posthumously in 1531) that secured Polybius' reputation. From this time on, his fame rested largely, although not exclusively, on what he had written about the Roman constitution, in particular its 'mixed' character. He became one of the standard-bearers of Roman constitutional theory, which itself became a central element in all modern discussion of the nature of republics.

Polybius appears prominently, for example, in Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws* (1748), but perhaps his warmest admirer was the second President of the United States of America, John Adams. Adams believed fervently in mixed government and regarded Polybius as one of its best exponents. He refers to him extensively in his *Defence of the Constitutions of Government of the United States of America* (1787). Adams and his contemporaries were steeped in classical learning, and Polybius was one of the ancient authors whose works formed a

starting point for the momentous discussions that led to the founding of the constitution of the United States.

If this was the high point of the *Histories*' career in active politics, so to speak, Polybius has retained a place of honour in political science circles, and has a reputation as one of the best and most important historians of the ancient world.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

I HAVE translated the Teubner text of T. Büttner-Wobst except at the places indicated in the text by an obelus(†) which refers to the Textual Notes (p. 478 ff.) An asterisk refers to the Explanatory Notes (p. 447 ff.).

It is impossible, in a single volume, to include more than about half of the surviving text of Polybius. Our decision to translate all of the fully preserved books (1 to 5) was not difficult: these books show Polybius in full working mode as a historian, and to excerpt them could easily distort the reader's impression of Polybius' method. Then again, many would regard the two most famous parts of the *Histories* as what he says about the Roman system of government in Book 6 and about the writing of history in Book 12, and so these books were included in their fragmentary totality. It seemed perverse to make them any more fragmentary than they already are by extracting passages.

As usual, my policy has been to try to capture the original (naturally), while at all times writing proper English, rather than being guided by the structures of the original. For Polybius, it would in any case be a hopeless task to try to reproduce much of his writing more exactly: his style is almost a lack of style, above all because of his periodic sentences, with their tendency to run on for many lines. At the same time he had a powerful devotion to the high-literary device of avoiding hiatus—that is, never, or as rarely as possible, having a word that ends with a vowel preceding a word that begins with a vowel, a very natural occurrence in ancient Greek. In order to avoid hiatus, he often adopted a word order that would have seemed curious even to fellow Greeks, who were extremely flexible in such matters. At any rate, his ordering of words is not reproducible in proper English.

To me, just as it is obvious that one should not try to reproduce the original in this respect, it is equally obvious that one should not do so in certain other respects either. I have taken other steps, in addition to breaking up his longer sentences, towards shedding some of his periphrastic long-windedness. On the other hand, I have retained a lot of his pomposity, and have done my best to translate his occasional formulae in recognizably similar ways on each occurrence. But overall I have made him marginally less stiff than he is, sacrificing (translation

always entails sacrifice) some literalness to readability, while at the same time believing that previous translators have often been uncharitable.[1] He may be pompous, but he is usually as clear as he intended to be, and he sometimes achieves a certain elegance. It seems unfair to criticize him for plainness, when many historians of his day were writing a highly artificial Greek, heavily influenced by florid rhetorical techniques. Polybius himself remarked (9.1) that the plain factuality of the kind of history he was writing lent his work a certain austerity, but this seems preferable to the alternatives[2]—not just florid writing, but often propagandist history as well. In any case, Polybius had so much to get through that he did not like to pause just for flourishes.

When they occurred naturally to him, however, he let them in. At 1.57–8, Hamilcar and his Roman counterpart are nicely likened to a pair of boxers, slugging it out; another effective simile occurs at 6.10.3–4, where vicious forms of government are compared to rot and rust. The occasional metaphor creeps in, such as fear 'ambushing' the Romans' spirits at 2.23.7. Speech writing was always an important element of Greek historiography, and Polybius occasionally allows himself to use speeches, especially as opposing pairs, for dramatic contrast (e.g. Hannibal and Aemilius before Cannae: 3.108–11). His descriptions of battles are often thrilling; Cleomenes' end is told particularly well (5.37–9); Hannibal's trek over the Alps is both authoritative and vivid (3.50–5).

One of the best writers on Polybius of an earlier generation started an essay published in 1880 with the sentence: 'No ancient writer of equal interest and importance finds fewer readers than Polybius.'[3] The situation is much the same today. Everyone recognizes Polybius' importance: out of over two hundred, he is the *only* historian from the entire Hellenistic period (323–30 BC) to have survived in any substantial form, and his themes and subjects are critical for western history and historiography. But he has the reputation of being hard to read.

[1] Not just in their occasional heavy-handedness of translation, but in a failure to spot subtleties, such as a vein of dry, ironical humour in Polybius: 'So the pillagers of Epirus entered into a truce with the Epirots', for instance, at 2.6.5; or saying, as a quick aside about vilifying the Aetolians: 'not a difficult task' (4.29.3).

[2] See also Polybius' self-justificatory remarks at 2.56.10–12, with which it is hard to take exception. But he is capable of dramatic flourishes himself: e.g. 3.84.9–10; 12.25.1–2.

[3] J. L. Strachan-Davidson, 'Polybius', in E. Abbott (ed.), *Hellenica* (London, 1880), 387.

Even in antiquity, the critic Dionysius of Halicarnassus counted him as one of those writers that no one could reach the end of (*On literary composition* 4.110).[4] I think Dionysius was being somewhat harsh, but in any case I hope to have gone some way towards remedying this situation. I agree that Polybius is not always an easy read in the original Greek, but he is no more hard than, say, Faulkner or the later Henry James, and for many of the same reasons. In any case, as I have already explained, it is my policy to write good English, in so far as that is compatible with not betraying the original, rather than the awful language of crib-style translations. This is the first new translation of Polybius for many years, and it is time to make him available to new generations; only a few people nowadays will be reading him with the Greek text by their elbows.

A strange feature of his style is that once in a while he just lets sentences fall as they occur to him, even if they interrupt the sequence of the narrative or the argument. To us nowadays, there is nothing difficult about capturing such thoughts: we consign them to a footnote. So, with apologies to Anthony Grafton,[5] I have pushed the invention of the footnote back by eighteen hundred years or so. Of course, Polybius did not write footnotes, but I would maintain that, with these interruptive sentences, he was striving towards the concept of a footnote. Translation, as the root of the word shows, is the transference of the thought of the original into another language, with its different conventions. As a translator, then, I feel no qualms about giving Polybius the occasional footnote, but I have restricted them to places where the thought would otherwise be too intrusive. The dates in the margins have been added by me; they are all, of course, BC.

It was a long and intense process, translating Polybius. I thank Brian McGing for being a congenial co-author, and for his expertise; and I thank William Murray (University of South Florida) and Andrew Gregory (University College London) for advice on technical matters, naval and astronomical. Bill also wrote the naval entries for the glossary. The work would not have been possible without the assistance of two good friends, and of the trustees of the Francis Head Bequest, administered by the Society of Authors, London.

[4] This was less surprising in Dionysius' day, since he had the full forty books.
[5] *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997).

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CHRONOLOGY

All dates are BC.

390	Sack of Rome by Gauls.
371	Battle of Leuctra: Epaminondas of Thebes defeats Sparta.
359–336	Reign of Philip II of Macedon.
336–323	Reign of Alexander the Great.
323–301	Struggles of Alexander's successors in which his empire splits into three major units: Macedon (the Antigonids), Syria (the Seleucids), and Egypt (the Ptolemies).
316–289	Agathocles tyrant and then king of Syracuse.
280–275	Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, invades Italy and Sicily.
264–241	First Punic War: Rome vs. Carthage. Sicily becomes Rome's first overseas province.
241–238	War of Carthage against her mercenaries.
238	Rome seizes Sardinia.
235–222	Reign of Cleomenes III of Sparta.
229–228	First Illyrian War: Rome vs. Illyria.
229–222	The Cleomenean War, ending with Cleomenes' defeat at the battle of Sellasia.
229–221	Reign of Antigonus Doson of Macedon.
225–222	Rome's war against the Celts of northern Italy.
223–187	Reign of Antiochus III of Syria.
221–204	Reign of Ptolemy IV of Egypt.
221–179	Reign of Philip V of Macedon.
220–217	Social War in Greece: Philip V of Macedon and Achaean League vs. Aetolian League.
219	Second Illyrian War: Rome vs. Illyria.
218–202	Second Punic War: Rome vs. Carthage, ending with Hannibal's defeat at the battle of Zama.
217	Battle of Raphia: Ptolemy IV defeats Antiochus III.
216	Battle of Cannae: Hannibal defeats Rome.
214–205	First Macedonian War: Rome vs. Macedon.
204–180	Reign of Ptolemy V of Egypt.
200–197	Second Macedonian War: Rome vs. Macedon, ending with defeat of Philip V at the battle of Cynoscephalae.

192–189 War between Rome and Antiochus III, ending with Antiochus' defeat at the battle of Magnesia.
187–175 Reign of Seleucus IV of Syria.
182 Death of Philopoemen, leader of the Achaean League.
180–145 Reign of Ptolemy VI of Egypt.
175–164 Reign of Antiochus IV of Syria.
171–168 Third Macedonian War: Rome vs. Macedon, ending with defeat of Perseus at the battle of Pydna.
168 Gaius Popillius Laenas orders Antiochus IV out of Egypt.
167 Macedonian kingdom abolished by Rome.
162 Demetrius escapes from Rome and seizes Seleucid throne.
149–146 Third Punic War: Rome vs. Carthage, ending with destruction of Carthage.
149–148 Revolt and defeat of Andriscus, claimant to the Macedonian throne.
146 War between Rome and the Achaean League; destruction of Corinth.

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MAP A. The Italian peninsula

Bastarnae
ILLYRIA
Lissus
Dyrrachium
Lychnidus
MACEDONIA
THRACE
R. Strymon
Amphipolis
Apollonia
Dimale (Dimalion)
Nymphaeum
Pella
Thessalonica
PIERIA
Pydna
R Aöus
Dium
Mt. Olympus
Potidaea
Thermaic Gulf
Mt. Athos
Phoenice
EPIRUS
Dodona
CORCYRA
Larissa
R Enipeus
THESSALY
Pherae
Demetrias
PAXOS
Ambracia

Ambracus
Meliteia
Medion
ACARNANIA
LEUCAS
Phoetiae
Thermopylae
EUBOEA
Thermum
AETOLIA
EAST LOCRIS
Delphi
Ithoria
WEST
LOCRIS
Chalcis
Oeniadae
Naupactus
Eretria
Paeanium
BOEOTIA
Pale
Patrae
Thebes
ACHAEA
CEPHALLENIA
Dyme
Athens
Sicyon
Elis
Corinth
ELIS
ARCADIA
ZACYNTHOS
Olympia
TRIPHYLIA
Orchomenus
AEGINA
Argos
PELOPONNESE
Tegea
Megalopolis
R. Alpheus
Messene
R. Eurotas
Sparta
MESSENIA
LACONIA
Gythium
Boeae
Cape Malea
Cape Taenarum
Cythera
0
50
100
150 km

MAP B. Greece

MAP C. The Mediterranean

Caspian Sea
R. Don
Lake Maeotis
Black Sea
R. Danube
Sinope
Byzantium
Chalcedon
THRACE
BITHYNIA
PONTUS
MACEDONIA
Propontis
Hellespont
Aegean Sea
Pergamum
ASIA MINOR
CAPPADOCIA
Taurus Mts
R. Tigris
MESOPOTAMIA
R. Euphrates
EPIRUS
GREECE
Ephesus
Athens
CARIA
PAMPHYLIA
Megalopolis
Antioch
RHODES
SYRIA
Babylon
CRETE
CYPRUS
Berytus
Sidon
Tyre
COELE SYRIA
Jerusalem
Gaza
Raphia
Alexandria
Pelusium
EGYPT
R. Nile

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THE HISTORIES

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BOOK ONE

[1] If earlier historians had failed to eulogize history itself, it would, I suppose, be up to me to begin by encouraging everyone to occupy himself in an open-minded way with works like this one, on the grounds that there is no better corrective of human behaviour than knowledge of past events. But in fact it is hardly an exaggeration to say that all of my predecessors (not just a few) have made this central to their work (not just a side issue), by claiming not only that there is no more authentic way to prepare and train oneself for political life than by studying history, but also that there is no more comprehensible and comprehensive teacher of the ability to endure with courage the vicissitudes of Fortune than a record of others' catastrophes.

Obviously, then, the general principle that no one should feel obliged to repeat what has often been well said before is particularly pertinent in my case. For the extraordinary nature of the events I decided to write about is in itself enough to interest everyone, young or old, in my work, and make them want to read it. After all, is there anyone on earth who is so narrow-minded or uninquisitive that he could fail to want to know how and thanks to what kind of political system almost the entire known world was conquered and brought under a single empire, the empire of the Romans, in less than fifty-three years*—an unprecedented event? Or again, is there anyone who is so passionately attached to some other marvel or matter that he could consider it more important than knowing about this?

[2] The extraordinary and spectacular nature of the subject I propose to consider would become particularly evident if we were to compare and contrast the most famous empires of the past—the ones that have earned the most attention from writers—with the supremacy of the Romans. The empires that deserve to be compared and contrasted in this way are the following.* The Persians once held sway over a huge realm, but whenever they endeavoured to go beyond the boundaries of Asia, they endangered not just their rule, but their very existence. The Spartans strove for leadership of the Greeks for a long time and achieved it, but maintained a secure grip on it for barely twelve years. Although in Europe Macedonian dominion extended

only from the Adriatic region to the Danube—nothing but a tiny fraction, you might think, of this continent—they later gained control of Asia too, by overthrowing the Persian empire; but despite the view that never had more places, nor greater power, been in the hands of a single state, they still left most of the known world in others' hands. They made not the slightest attempt, for example, to take over Sicily, Sardinia, and Libya, and they were, to put it bluntly, completely unaware of the existence of the extremely warlike peoples of western Europe. The Romans, however, have made themselves masters of almost the entire known world, not just some bits of it, and have left such a colossal empire that no one alive today can resist it and no one in the future will be able to overcome it. My work will make it possible to understand more clearly how the empire was gained, and no reader will be left in doubt about the many important benefits to be gained from reading political history.†

220–217 [3] In terms of time, my work will start with the 140th Olympiad.* In terms of events, it will start with the so-called Social War in Greece,* the first war fought by Philip V, the son of Demetrius II and father of Perseus, in which he fought the Aetolians, with the Achaeans as his allies; and it will start with the war for Coele Syria in Asia, fought between Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV Philopator; and with the clash between the Romans and Carthaginians in Italy and Libya, which is usually called the Hannibalic War. Aratus of Sicyon's book* ended just before these events.

Before this time, things happened in the world pretty much in a sporadic fashion, because every incident was specific, from start to finish, to the part of the world where it happened. But ever since then history has resembled a body, in the sense that incidents in Italy and Libya and Asia and Greece are all interconnected, and everything tends towards a single outcome. That is why I have made this period the starting point of my treatment of world events. For once the Romans had defeated the Carthaginians in the Hannibalic War, they came to think that they had completed the largest and most difficult part of their project of worldwide dominion, and so that was the first time when they ventured to reach out for what was left—to cross over with an army to Greece and Asia.

Now, if we were familiar and acquainted with the states that disputed universal rulership with each other, there would, I suppose, have been no need for me to go back in time and describe what their

goals and resources were when they took on such an immense task. But since most Greeks are unfamiliar with the past history—the resources and achievements—of either Rome or Carthage,* I felt obliged to preface my history with this and the following book, to make sure that no one would have to interrupt his absorption in my account of events to wonder and enquire what the Romans' intentions were, or what forces and resources they had, when they committed themselves to this enterprise, which has given them dominion over all the land and sea in our part of the world. By means of these two books and the introduction they contain, I hope to make it clear to any reader that the whole process, from formulation of plans to their fulfilment in imperial rulership over the whole world, was based on very reasonable grounds.

[4] The point is that the distinctive feature of my work (which is at the same time the remarkable feature of our epoch) is this: Fortune has turned almost all the events of the known world in a single direction and has forced everything to tend towards the same goal. A historian, then, should use his work to bring under a single conspectus for his readers the means by which Fortune has brought everything to this point. In fact, it was this in particular that originally prompted me to set about writing history—and then also the fact that no one else in our times has attempted to write a universal history, because otherwise I would have been far less inclined to do so. But I saw that most historians had concerned themselves with particular wars and with certain of the events that went along with them, while no one, as far as I knew, had even attempted to investigate the general, comprehensive organization of events, in the sense of asking when and why this scheme of things started, and how it was realized. And so I came to believe that it was absolutely essential for me not to overlook or leave in obscurity the finest thing Fortune has ever achieved, and the one from which we can learn most. For although Fortune is a constant presence in people's lives, and though it is often creative, never before has it produced such an accessible piece or put on the kind of performance that it has in our time.

It is impossible to gain this comprehensive perspective from writers of partial histories. That is the same as thinking that all it takes instantly to grasp the form of the whole world, and its order and arrangement in their entirety, is to visit, one by one, each of its outstanding cities—or, indeed, to look at sketches of them! Imagine

people who think that looking at the scattered parts of a once living and beautiful body is all they need to do to witness the energy and beauty of the actual living creature: it seems to me that those who are convinced that they can gain a comprehensive and general perspective with the help of partial histories are in pretty much the same situation. After all, if one could then and there put the living creature back together again and make it whole (in respect not just of its physical appearance, but also of its charm as an animate creature), and show it to these people, I am sure they would all quickly agree that before they had had as tenuous a grasp of reality as dreamers. For while it may be possible to get an *impression* of the whole from a part, it is impossible to gain knowledge and precise understanding. So we are bound to conclude that partial histories are more or less useless when it comes to gaining a comprehensive perspective, and are unreliable. On the contrary, it is only by connecting and comparing *all* the parts with one another, by seeing their similarities and differences—it is only such an overview that puts one in a position to derive benefit and pleasure from history.

[5] I shall make my starting point in this book the Romans' first
264–261 military venture overseas, which took place in the 129th Olympiad, immediately after the point at which Timaeus finished his history.* It follows that I should also show how and when the Romans unified Italy and what prompted them subsequently to set out across the sea for Sicily, which was the first place outside Italy where they set foot. And I should state the reason for this overseas venture bluntly, because otherwise there will be an infinite regress of reasons, and the whole project will lack a sure starting point and scheme. It is import ant for me to find a starting point whose date is uncontroversial and known, and which is capable of being examined on its own thanks to the events involved, even if this means that I have to begin a little further back and provide a brief summary of what happened in between. For if the starting point is not perfectly clear—let alone, of course, if it is contentious—nothing that follows from it can be found worthy of acceptance and credence. But if the starting point is unquestionable, the entire subsequent narrative becomes accessible to readers.

[6] So to begin:* it was the nineteenth year after the sea battle at Aegospotami, and the sixteenth before the battle of Leuctra; it was the
386 year when the Spartans ratified the so-called Peace of Antalcidas with

the Persian king, when at the battle by the Elleporus river Dionysius I defeated the Italian Greeks and began to besiege Rhegium, and when the Gauls took Rome itself and occupied the whole city apart from the Capitol. The Romans negotiated a settlement with the Gauls, on terms that satisfied the invaders, and once they found themselves unexpectedly back in possession of their homeland and with a foundation, so to speak, for enlarging their territory, they made war in the following years on their neighbours. Their courage and military success brought them mastery of all the Latins, and then they fought in succession the Etruscans, the Celts, and the Samnites, whose land borders that of the Latins to the east and north.

Some time later* (the year before the invasion of the Gauls who were 280
wiped out at Delphi or crossed into Asia), the people of Tarentum, frightened of the consequences of the offensive manner in which they had treated Roman envoys, called Pyrrhus in. The Romans, who had subjugated the Etruscans and the Samnites, and had already beaten the Italian Celts in numerous battles, now for the first time set out against the rest of Italy, treating it not as foreign soil, but for the most part as if it were already theirs and belonged to them. Their trials of strength against the Samnites and Celts had already made them true athletes of warfare, and they bravely accepted the challenge of this war. Eventually, they drove Pyrrhus and his army from Italy, and then they fought and overcame those who had joined him. Against the odds, they overcame all opposition, and once they had subjugated the inhabitants of Italy, except for the Celts, they next set about besieging the Romans who were then occupying Rhegium.

[7] For almost the same thing happened to each of the two cities founded on the Strait—Messana and Rhegium. Campanian mercenaries in the service of Agathocles* had for a while been casting covetous eyes on Messana, in admiration of its beauty and general prosperity, and not long before the time I am talking about, as soon as an opportunity came their way, they went ahead and betrayed the trust between themselves and the city. Their presumed friendship gained them entry, and then they seized control and banished or slaughtered the citizens. After this, they took for themselves the wives and children of the men they had dispossessed, with each man keeping those whom Fortune had put in his way at the actual time of the crime. Then they divided up all the rest of the property and the land among themselves.

Given how quickly and easily they had gained control of fine land and a fair city, they soon found imitators. When Pyrrhus invaded Italy, in their terror the people of Rhegium requested a garrison and support from the Romans, as protection simultaneously against Pyrrhus' imminent arrival and against the Carthaginians, who had mastery of the sea. Roman troops—4,000 of them, under the command of a Campanian called Decius Vibellius—duly arrived, and for a while they kept both the city and their pledge intact. In the end, however, out of lust for the wealth of the city and the plentiful private property of its citizens, they copied the Mamertines,* banded together with them, and betrayed their contract with the people of Rhegium. Just as the Campanians had done before them, they banished or slaughtered the citizens and made the city theirs.

The Romans were furious at what had happened, but they were too busy with the wars I have already mentioned to do anything about
270 it. Once they were free, however, they trapped Decius and his men inside Rhegium, besieged the city (as I mentioned above), and took it. Most of their opponents were killed in the course of the capture of the city, for which they put up a spirited defence, since they had no illusions about what the future held for them. More than 300, however, were taken alive. These prisoners were sent to Rome, where the consuls paraded them in the Forum and, following the Roman custom, had them all flogged and beheaded. They wanted to do all they could to restore the allies' trust, and this punishment was their means. They also lost no time in returning the land and the city to the people of Rhegium.

[8] As long as the Mamertines (as the Campanians called themselves after they had gained control of Messana) could rely on their alliance with the Romans who had seized Rhegium, their hold on Messana and its land was secure enough for them systematically to interfere in neighbouring territories held by the Carthaginians and Syracusans, and to exact tribute from many parts of Sicily. But as soon as they lost this source of support—that is, when the Romans in Rhegium were trapped inside the city under siege—it was their turn to be chased back into their city, by the Syracusans.

This came about as follows. A few years earlier, during a dispute between the Syracusan armed forces and the civic authorities, the army, stationed at Mergane, had appointed two leaders from their own ranks—Artemidorus and Hieron, later Hieron II of Syracuse.

Hieron was just a young man at the time, but had a natural talent for some form of rulership and political administration. Once he had taken up his post, he managed, with the help of some members of his family, to get accepted back into the city, where he gained the upper hand over his political opponents. His administration was so moderate and principled that, although the Syracusans were deeply unhappy that the troops had chosen their own leaders, they unanimously consented to Hieron's becoming their general. But anyone with any intelligence could tell from his very first schemes that his ambitions went further than military command.

[9] For example, Hieron noticed that when the army and its leaders were away on campaign, the Syracusans invariably fell out with one another and the result was unrest of some kind. Since Leptines commanded the greatest respect and loyalty from his peers, and was exceptionally popular with the common people as well, Hieron allied himself to Leptines by marriage. He wanted to be able to leave him behind in the city to cover for him, so to speak, when he himself had to be out in the field with the armed forces. At much the same time as his marriage to Leptines' daughter, it came to his attention that the veteran mercenaries had become disaffected and disruptive. He took them out on an expedition, ostensibly against the Campanian foreigners who had seized Messana, made his camp at Centuripae, and deployed his troops along the Cyamosorus river. He kept the Syracusan cavalry and infantry grouped together under his personal command at a distance, as though they were going to engage the enemy from a different angle, but threw the mercenaries forward and let them be annihilated by the enemy. While the mercenaries were being run down, he withdrew safely back to Syracuse with the citizen contingents.

In this efficient fashion he achieved his objective and purged the army of its disruptive and mutinous elements; he then recruited a substantial corps of mercenaries of his own choosing and proceeded to rule in perfect safety. But the Mamertines, thinking they had the upper hand, began to behave defiantly and recklessly, and so he armed the citizen militia and, after drilling them thoroughly, led them out for battle. He met the enemy on the plain of Mylae, at the Longanus river, defeated them soundly, and captured their senior officers. This put an end to the Campanians' aggressiveness, and on his return to Syracuse he was acclaimed king by the entire alliance.

[10] That, then, was how it came about that the Mamertines, after having lost the support of Rhegium (as I mentioned earlier), were decisively defeated, at the time I am talking about, once they were left to their own resources. Some of them made overtures to the Carthaginians with the intention of entrusting the city and the acropolis to them, while others approached the Romans, offering to deliver the city to them and asking for help on the grounds of their kinship.

The Romans remained undecided for a long time, because it was glaringly obvious how unjustifiable it would be for them to send help. After all, only a short while earlier they had executed some of their own fellow citizens for having treacherously turned against the people of Rhegium. It would be inexcusable if the very next thing they did was to try to help the Mamertines, who had behaved in almost exactly the same way in both Messana and Rhegium. Although they were perfectly aware of this, they could also see that the Carthaginians had subjugated not only Libya but much of Iberia too, as well as controlling all the islands in the Sardinian and Tyrrhenian seas, and they were worried that, if the Carthaginians came to dominate Sicily too, they would become too much of a threat and a danger on their borders, since they would surround the Romans and threaten Italy on all sides. If the Mamertines received no help, there could be no doubt that the Carthaginians would rapidly subdue Sicily; once they had taken Messana and made it theirs, they would eliminate Syracuse before long, because they would be the dominant power in almost all the rest of Sicily. Faced with this prospect, the Romans came to the conclusion that they had no choice: they could not afford to abandon Messana and allow the Carthaginians so close that they could almost build a bridge to Italy.

[11] The debate went on for a long time. Even though the senators completely withheld their approval of the proposal, for the reasons I have already given—that is, because they thought that the unjustifiability of helping the Mamertines was just as important a consideration as any advantage they might gain from such support—the people voted to send help. Their resources had been drained by all the recent wars and needed improvement in every respect, and they were won over when the consuls hinted not only at what I have just said about the war being advantageous for Rome as a whole, but also at the certainty of significant profit for each and every one of them.

Once the decree had been ratified by the people, they chose one of the two consuls, Appius Claudius Caudex, to command the expedition and sent him on his way, with orders to cross over to Messana 264
and help the city. A Carthaginian general was already installed on the acropolis, but the Mamertines got rid of him by a combination of intimidation and trickery. Then they invited Claudius over and entrusted the city to Roman protection. The Carthaginians crucified their general on the grounds that he had displayed poor judgement and cowardice in abandoning the acropolis, and then put Messana under a close siege by stationing their fleet at Cape Pelorias and their land army at a place called Suneis. Meanwhile, Hieron had decided that this was a good opportunity to drive the foreigners who had occupied Messana out of Sicily once and for all. He made a treaty with the Carthaginians, and then decamped from Syracuse and marched on Messana. He set up camp south of the city, by Mount Chalcidicus, and so blocked this way out of the city too.

Claudius, the Roman consul, reached Messana by making a hazardous, night-time crossing of the Strait. When he saw how solid the enemy blockade was on all sides, and took into account the disgrace the siege posed for him—and the danger, with the enemy masters of both land and sea—his first move was to approach both the Carthaginians and the Syracusans, with a view to extricating the Mamertines from the war. This elicited no response, however, and in the end he was compelled to risk a battle. He decided to attack the Syracusans first. He led his men out of the city and deployed them, and the Syracusan ruler readily assented to battle. After a long struggle, Claudius won and drove the entire opposing army back to its camp. Pausing only to strip the corpses of their valuables, Claudius then returned to Messana. Filled with foreboding for the final outcome, Hieron beat a rapid retreat back to Syracuse under cover of darkness.

[12] Next day Claudius heard about Hieron's departure and, with rising confidence, he decided to attack the Carthaginians straight away. He ordered his men to be rested and ready in good time, and at first light he made his sortie. In the battle that followed, he inflicted serious losses on the enemy and forced the survivors to flee headlong to the nearby communities. These victories lifted the siege and enabled him freely to scour and raid land belonging to the Syracusans or their allies, without meeting any challengers for the open country. Finally, he encamped right by Syracuse and set about besieging the city.

That was the first time an armed force of Romans left Italy by sea, and I have explained why and when it happened. I began with this event, having decided that it would make the best starting point for my project, but I went back in time a bit† in order to make my causal mode of exposition perfectly clear. I assumed, that is, that in order to gain an adequate understanding of even an abbreviated account of the Romans' present supremacy, one needs to see how and when they recovered from the defeat they suffered in their own homeland* and began to make forward strides, and also when and how, after their conquest of Italy, they set about foreign ventures. And so it should also occasion no surprise if even in what follows I occasionally rehearse some of the relevant past history of the most important states. This will simply be a way of laying a foundation, to facilitate understanding under what conditions and when and how the current status quo came to exist in each of these states. Which is what I have just done for the Roman state.

[13] Now let us turn to the main business, after a brief summary of the events covered in the introduction,* in the order in which they occur. We shall first cover the Sicilian War between the Romans and Carthaginians, then the Libyan War, and then the exploits of the Carthaginians in Iberia, under Hamilcar and then Hasdrubal. These wars coincided in time with the first Roman expedition to Illyria and eastern Europe, and they were all followed by the war on Italian soil against the Celts, which coincided, in Greece, with the so-called Cleomenean War, with which I have ended the introduction and the second book.

A rigorously thorough account of these events is neither necessary for my purpose nor useful for the reader. My aim is not to subject them to historical investigation; what I propose to do is summarize them, as a way of introducing the events that *are* going to make up my history. By briefly covering the main events in their proper order, I hope to link the end of the introduction with the start and opening words of my own narrative in a way that avoids an abrupt transition. The wisdom of my touching on matters that have already been investigated by other historians will become obvious, and this arrangement will also make it simple and straightforward for my readers to approach the matters I shall be covering.

I intend, however, to give a somewhat less cursory account of the first war between the Romans and the Carthaginians, the one they fought for possession of Sicily. It would be hard to think of a war that lasted longer, or for which the contestants were more thoroughly prepared, or in which events followed one another in quicker succession, or which included more battles, or which involved more terrible catastrophes for both sides. Corrupt ways had yet to mar the two states at that time; they were no more than moderately prosperous, and their armies were evenly matched. It follows that this war affords a better point of comparison between the two states than any of those that occurred later, if anyone wants to gain a good understanding of their specific characters and their resources.

[14] Another, equally important factor that moved me to linger over this war was the failure of Philinus and Quintus Fabius Pictor,* who are widely held to be the best authorities on the war, to have provided us with a sufficiently accurate description of it. Their lives and characters give me no reason to think that they deliberately falsified their accounts, but I do think that they behaved rather like people who are in love, in the sense that, because of their biases and their overriding loyalties, Philinus always has the Carthaginians acting sensibly, honourably, and courageously, and the Romans doing the opposite, while Fabius does the same the other way round.

Now, although there is no reason to dispense with such partiality in other areas of life—for instance, loyalty to friends and country are good qualities, as is having the same enemies and friends as one's friends—when a man takes on the role of historian, he must put all such considerations out of his mind: he often has to speak well of his enemies, and even honour them with words of undiluted praise, when their actions demand it; and he often has to challenge and censure his closest friends unforgivingly, when their errors suggest that this is appropriate. An animal is completely useless if it loses its eyesight, and in the same way history without truth has as little educational value as a yarn. That is why a historian should not hesitate either to condemn his friends or praise his enemies, and should not worry about praising and blaming the same people at different times. After all, it is as impossible for men of action to always get things right as it is unlikely that they will constantly go wrong. We have to stand back from their actions and assign the appropriate judgements and

opinions in our works of history. The validity of what I have been saying is evident from the following example.

[15] Philinus starts his second book (which is where he begins his account of events) with an account of how the Carthaginians and Syracusans attacked Messana and besieged it. He says that no sooner had the Romans sailed into the city than they made a sortie against the Syracusans, but returned to Messana after being soundly beaten; and that they next ventured out against the Carthaginians, and again came off worst, with quite a few men taken prisoner. He then goes on to say that immediately after the engagement Hieron, in a fit of madness, ordered the burning of the palisade and tents of his camp, and fled under cover of darkness back to Syracuse, abandoning all the hill-forts he had established to watch over the hinterland of Messana; and likewise that immediately after their battle the Carthaginians left their camp and dispersed among the local communities, and no longer dared to mount any defence of the countryside. This gives him an explanation for why the Carthaginian high command decided not to risk a decisive battle—because they could see that their troops were demoralized. Meanwhile, the Romans followed them and not only plundered Carthaginian and Syracusan territory, but also encamped close to Syracuse itself and put it under siege.

This whole account, in my opinion, hardly makes any sense at all and cannot stand up to close analysis. If he is right, the besiegers of Messana, after winning their battles, turned tail, abandoned the countryside, and ended up demoralized and under siege themselves, and he has the besieged lose the battles, and yet set out after the victors, rapidly gain control of the countryside, and end up blockading Syracuse. As is obvious, this is radically inconsistent. Either his basic assumptions or his account of what happened must be at fault. But his account of what happened is right: it is true that the Carthaginians and Syracusans evacuated the countryside, and that the Romans lost no time in taking the war to Syracuse, as he says, and that they attacked Echetla too, which lay halfway between the Syracusan and Carthaginian domains. The only remaining possibility is to admit that his dominant assumptions are at fault, and that despite the fact that the Romans actually *won* the engagements at Messana, this author has reported that they lost.

The same flaw bedevils Philinus' entire work, and almost the same criticism can be made of Fabius too, as I shall show when the

opportunity arises.* Anyway, this digression has gone on long enough. I return now to historical events; I shall take them in their chronological order and try to lead those who read this account of the war, however brief it may be, to a true understanding of what happened.

[16] When news reached Rome from Sicily of the victories won there by Claudius and his legions, they elected Manius Otacilius 263
Crassus and Manius Valerius Maximus consuls, gave them command of their entire army, and sent them to Sicily. The Romans have a total of four citizen legions (not counting allied contingents), whose duties are assigned at the beginning of each year; each legion consists of 4,000 footsoldiers and 300 cavalrymen. With the arrival of this force, most of the Sicilian communities seceded from the Carthaginians and Syracusans and came over to the Roman side.

Aware of the despair and terror of the Sicilians, and of the size and strength of the Roman army, Hieron came to the conclusion that the Romans' prospects were more promising than those of the Carthaginians. Having committed himself mentally to the Roman cause, he began to send messages to the consuls with a view to entering into a treaty of peace and friendship. His approaches were welcomed by the Romans, not least because they were worried about supplies: with the Carthaginians in control of the sea, they were constantly having to take precautions against being completely cut off from essentials, especially since the first wave of troops had become very short of provisions. And so, since they reckoned that Hieron could be very useful to them in this respect, they responded favourably to his offer of friendship and entered into an agreement whereby Hieron was to return his prisoners to the Romans unransomed and pay a penalty of a hundred talents of silver as well.

From then on the Romans treated the Syracusans as friends and allies. Now that he had gained the protection of the Romans, Hieron became their source of provisions in times of emergency. He ruled Syracuse in safety for the rest of his life, and received many awards and honours from the Greeks. It is impossible, in fact, to think of a more remarkable ruler, or one who benefited for a longer time from his own good policies, both particular and general.

[17] Once the terms had been referred to Rome and the people had validated and ratified the treaty with Hieron, the Romans began to think it unnecessary to keep their entire army abroad, rather than just two legions. With Hieron on their side the war was no longer so

arduous, and reducing the size of the army would make it easier to keep it supplied. Meanwhile the Carthaginians decided, in the light of Hieron's new hostility towards them and increasing Roman involvement in Sicilian affairs, that they needed more strength if they were to confront their enemies and retain their possessions in Sicily. So they hired mercenaries from the opposite coastlines—Ligurians and Celts in large numbers, and even more Iberians—and brought them all to Sicily. Seeing that Acragas was the perfect place for them to prepare and was also the chief city in their domain, they gathered all their provisions and troops there and made it their base for the war.

On the Roman side, the consuls who had drawn up the agreement with Hieron had returned home, and their appointed succes-
262 sors, Lucius Postumius Megellus and Quintus Mamilius Vitulus, had arrived in Sicily with their legions. Once they discovered the Carthaginians' intentions and learnt that they had made Acragas the base for their preparations, they decided that the situation called for an unusually bold stroke, and they gave up all other military activities and brought their entire army to bear in an assault on Acragas itself. They encamped about eight stades from the city and enclosed the Carthaginians within a siege wall.

Faced with the prospect of a protracted siege, the Roman soldiers turned to foraging—the grain was ripe in the fields—but did so rather too incautiously. At the sight of enemy soldiers scattered all over the place, the Carthaginians made a sortie against the foragers and easily put them to flight. One section then set out to plunder the Roman camp, while the other attacked the cover force. But the Romans were saved, then as on many other occasions, by the excellence of their institutions: no one posted in a cover force is allowed to abandon his position or turn to flight, on pain of death. And so on that occasion too they bravely stood their ground against a far superior enemy force; their losses were not slight, but their opponents suffered more. In the end they surrounded the enemy just as they were about to breach the stockade, and those they did not kill there they harassed and slaughtered all the way back to Acragas.

[18] The Carthaginians were now less inclined to take the offensive, and the Roman foragers behaved more cautiously. With the Carthaginians avoiding any sorties beyond skirmishing with javelins, the Roman consuls split their forces into two divisions, with one staying where it was by the sanctuary of Asclepius and the other

encamped on the Heraclea side of the city. Between these two camps, one on either side of the city, they secured the ground with an inner trench in front, to afford them safety against sorties from the city, and an outer trench behind, to protect them from external attacks and to prevent the usual surreptitious introduction of goods and men into a beleaguered city. They posted sentries at intervals between the trenches and the camps, and strengthened the critical positions between the camps. Their food, and their supplies in general, were collected for them by all their allies and brought to Herbessus, a town that was close enough for goods to be driven or carried from there in a constant stream, to ensure that they were never short of necessaries.

This situation remained unchanged for about five months. Neither side was able to establish a decisive advantage over the other, apart from incidental small-scale successes, but starvation was now beginning to oppress the Carthaginians, thanks to the large numbers of people (at least 50,000) shut up inside the city. Hannibal, the commander of the besieged forces, sent message after message to Carthage, keeping them informed about the situation and requesting aid. In response, the authorities in Carthage loaded ships with freshly recruited soldiers and with war elephants and sent them to Hanno, their other general in Sicily.

As soon as he had gathered his equipment and mustered his forces at Heraclea, Hanno took Herbessus by surprise, and deprived the enemy of their goods and essential supplies. The Romans found themselves, then, both besiegers and besieged; in fact, lack of food and shortage of necessaries afflicted them so severely that they often discussed ending the siege. And they would have done just that in the end, if Hieron had not exerted himself and come up with all kinds of ways to keep them supplied with at least a moderate quantity of the most important things they needed.

[19] Next, seeing that the Romans had been weakened by illness as well as by hunger, since there was an epidemic in their army, while his own men were, in his opinion, fit and ready for battle, Hanno mobilized his entire force, including his elephants (of which there were about fifty), and advanced swiftly from Heraclea. His Numidian horsemen had orders to ride ahead and, when they approached the enemy camp, to taunt the Roman cavalry and try to draw them out of the camp, and then to fall back without giving battle until they regained contact with the main army. Everything went according

to plan: as soon as the Numidians approached one of the camps, the Roman cavalry emerged in an all-out attack. The Libyans retreated, as they had been instructed, until they made contact again with Hanno, and then they turned and fell on the enemy. The Romans lost many men as they raced back to the camp with the Numidians in pursuit.

Then Hanno managed to place the Romans under siege by seizing a hill called Torus, about ten stades away. For two months the two sides remained in place, and although there were small-scale encounters every day, nothing decisive happened. But Hannibal was in constant contact with Hanno from the city by beacon and messenger, alerting him to the fact that the general populace was finding it impossible to endure the famine and that shortage of food was making many of his troops desert to the enemy. And so Hanno decided to risk a battle, and the Romans were just as impatient, for the reasons I have already mentioned.

Both sides advanced into the land between their respective camps and battle was joined. After a long struggle, the Romans finally succeeded in turning the Carthaginian mercenaries, who were in the forefront of the fighting. The clashing of these men with the elephants and the remaining ranks behind them threw the Carthaginian army into utter confusion. Most of them died during the ensuing general rout, but some made it back to Heraclea. The Romans took possession of most of the elephants and all of the baggage.

After dark, however, from a combination of triumph and exhaustion, they were rather slipshod in their posting of sentries. Hannibal, who had more or less given up hope, found himself with an excellent opportunity for escape and left the city in the middle of the night with his mercenary forces. By heaping the trenches with baskets packed with chaff, he led his entire force, safe and unnoticed, through the enemy lines. It was only at daybreak that the Romans realized what had happened. There was a brief encounter with Hannibal's tail-enders, and then there was a general rush for the city gates, where they met no resistance. Once they were inside, they plundered the city, seizing large numbers of prisoners and a great deal of assorted booty.

[20] When news of what had happened at Acragas reached the Roman Senate, their original plans were ousted by euphoria and jubilation. It was no longer enough that they had saved the Mamertines

and had already profited from the war. Now they expected to be able to drive the Carthaginians off Sicily altogether, and thereby to advance Roman interests enormously. This hope occupied their minds and their deliberations.

On land, matters were judged to be making reasonable progress—the consuls who replaced those who had besieged Acragas, Lucius Valerius Flaccus and Titus Otacilius Crassus, seemed to be handling 261
things in Sicily competently—but the sea was a different matter. As long as the Carthaginians had undisputed control of the sea, the outcome of the war hung in the balance. For, as time passed and the Romans retained possession of Acragas, many inland towns were alarmed enough about the Romans' land forces to join their side, but more coastal towns were frightened enough of the Carthaginian fleet to secede from them. The scales of war were constantly tipping one way or the other, with increasingly larger fluctuations. Under these circumstances, the Romans committed themselves to taking to the sea along with the Carthaginians. A factor that influenced their thinking even more was how commonly Italy was raided by shipping, while Libya remained completely untouched. Here we have the issue that prompted me to cover this war in greater detail: I did not want anyone to be ignorant of how and when and why the Romans first took to the sea.

The Romans' ship-building initiative, then, was prompted by their realization that the war was getting bogged down. They planned in the first instance to make a hundred quinqueremes and twenty triremes, but at that time quinqueremes were unknown in Italy. This aspect of the programme proved very awkward, then—after all, their shipwrights had no experience at all of their construction—but this is exactly what reveals, more clearly than anything else, the scope and daring inherent in the Romans' decision. It was not a case of their having adequate ways and means, but of their lacking ways and means altogether; they had never before given any thought to taking to the sea, and yet as soon as the idea occurred to them they committed themselves so audaciously to its realization that straight away, before they were even experts in naval matters, they intended to fight the Carthaginians at sea, where the Carthaginians had held uncontested sway for generations.

Evidence of the truth of what I have just been saying, and of their extraordinary audacity, can be found in the fact that when they first

tried to ship an army to Messana they not only had not one decked ship, but no warships at all, nor even a single *lembos*; they relied on the people of Tarentum and Locri, of Velia and Naples, for the quinqueremes and triremes on which they made the risky crossing with their troops. But in the course of the attack on them in the Strait, one of the Carthaginian decked ships, which had got ahead of the rest in its eagerness for the fray, ran aground and fell into Roman hands. This was the ship the Romans used as a prototype at the time I am talking about, and they modelled their entire fleet on its design. Without this accident, the whole enterprise would have been foiled from the start.

[21] In any case, the work of constructing a fleet went ahead in the hands of those entrusted with the job, while others recruited crews and taught them how to row—on land. They seated the men on their benches, on dry land, with the seats arranged just as they would be on ships and the timekeeper centrally positioned among them, and taught them to begin and end their movements—hands into the body while leaning back, hands away while leaning forward—in time with the timekeeper's commands. With the oarsmen trained up, the ships were launched as they became ready. After a short period devoted to practising their skills while actually at sea, they sailed on the consul's orders down the Italian coastline.

260 The Romans had put Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio in charge of the navy. A few days earlier he had given the captains their orders—to sail for the Strait as soon as their ships had been fitted out—and had then set off to Messana himself with seventeen ships, ahead of the rest, to make sure that all the fleet's most important needs were ready to be met. While he was there, the opportunity arose for the town of Lipara to be betrayed to him and, sensing a promising opportunity, he set sail rather too impetuously with his squadron and anchored off the town. When the news reached the Carthaginian general Hannibal in Panormus, he dispatched twenty ships under the command of Boödes, a member of the Council of Elders,* who made his approach under cover of darkness and trapped Scipio in the harbour. The next day the Roman crews fled inland, while Scipio himself finally surrendered in despair to the enemy, since there was nothing else he could do. The Carthaginians sailed straight back to Hannibal with the captured enemy ships and the consul.

A few days later, despite the clear lesson to be learnt from Scipio's recent misfortune, Hannibal himself came close to making almost as

blatant a blunder. He wanted to get some idea of the size of the Roman fleet, and of its general disposition, so when he heard that the ships were sailing down the coast of Italy and were in the vicinity, he sailed off in their direction with fifty ships. As he rounded the tip of Italy, he ran into a disciplined and orderly enemy fleet and lost most of his ships, although he himself effected an extraordinarily lucky escape with the few that survived.

[22] Afterwards, as the Romans approached Sicily, they learnt about Scipio's catastrophe, and immediately sent word to Gaius Duilius,* the commander of the land forces, asking him to link up with them. At the same time, they found out that the enemy fleet was not far away, so they busied themselves with preparations for combat. Their ships were poorly equipped and sluggish, and someone suggested that their chances in battle would be improved by the device that subsequently came to be known as the 'raven'. This was a cylindrical pole, four fathoms long and with a diameter of three palms, fixed upright on the prow of a ship, with a pulley at the top. Its base was surrounded by planks nailed together at right angles to one another, so as to form a gangplank, four feet wide and thirty-six feet long. The pole projected through an oblong hole in the middle of the gangplank, twelve feet in from the end. This structure also had a rail, at about the height of a man's knees, on both of its longer sides. On the end of the structure there was fixed a pestle-like iron spike, with a ring at the top, so that the whole thing looked quite like a device for pounding grain. In a ramming run, a rope that was tied onto the ring and passed through the pulley on top of the pole raised the raven, and then released it onto the deck of the enemy ship; the device was either deployed straight over the prow or it could be swivelled around if the ships collided side to side. Once the raven was stuck in the planking of the enemy ship's deck, it joined the two ships together; if the ships were broadside on men could leap onto the enemy ship from everywhere, while if they had collided prow to prow, men could cross to the other ship over the raven itself, two by two in a constant stream. The leading pair would protect the exposed front by holding their shields out before them, while those behind them would secure the sides by holding the edges of their shields over the rail. The Romans decided to make use of this device, and then waited for an opportunity for battle to be joined.

[23] As soon as Duilius heard about Scipio's defeat, he left his land forces under the command of his tribunes and made his way

to the fleet. But then he learnt that the enemy was raiding the territory around Mylae, so he sailed there with the entire fleet. The Carthaginians were delighted and lost no time in putting to sea with 130 ships; they despised the Romans for their inexperience, and they all sailed straight for the enemy, like predators after easy prey, without even bothering to take the precaution of keeping formation. Their commander was Hannibal—the man who had slipped out of Acragas under cover of darkness with his men—and his flagship was a sevener that had belonged to King Pyrrhus.

As the Romans approached, the Carthaginians could see the ravens nodding aloft on the prows of every ship, but they had never seen anything like these strange devices before and did not know what to make of them. Nevertheless, since they felt nothing but contempt for their opponents, the leading ships sailed fearlessly into the attack. But when battle was joined, their ships were held fast by these devices, and the Romans used them to swarm across and fight the men on the decks. Terrified by the transformation of the conflict into a kind of land battle, the Carthaginians who survived the slaughter surrendered. And so they lost the first thirty ships to engage, along with their crews, and the flagship was among the captured vessels. Against all the odds, however, Hannibal escaped by the skin of his teeth in the tender.

The rest of the Carthaginian ships were bearing down to ram the Romans, but once they were close enough to see what had happened to their first line, they veered aside, away from the reach of the devices. Knowing the speed of their ships, they hoped to avoid the risk of the ravens by sailing around their enemies in order to ram them from either the side or the rear, but the Romans swung and swivelled all the ravens round this way and that so that they could not fail to pin any ship that came near. In the end, after losing fifty ships, the Carthaginians broke off and fled, their morale shattered by these new tactics.

[24] The Romans had unexpectedly converted their naval hopes into reality, and in a burst of confidence they redoubled their war efforts. They landed on Sicily, raised the siege of Segesta, where the inhabitants had reached their limit, and on their way back from Segesta assaulted and captured the town of Macella. But after the battle of Mylae, news reached Hamilcar at Panormus of trouble in the Roman camp: he found out that the Romans had fallen out with their allies over the awarding of battle honours, and that the allies

were in the process of establishing a separate camp for themselves between Paropus and the hot springs of Himera. Hamilcar, who was in charge of the Carthaginian land forces, launched an all-out attack on the allies and took them by surprise as they were moving from one site to the other. The losses numbered about 4,000.

After this action, Hannibal took his remaining ships back to Carthage, but before long he sailed for Sardinia with a fleet captained by some of his most eminent officers. A short while later, the Romans, whose interest in Sardinia dated from the moment they had turned their attention to the sea, trapped him in one of the island's harbours and captured or destroyed most of his fleet. Hannibal was summarily arrested by the surviving Carthaginians and crucified.

The next year passed with the Roman legions in Sicily achieving 259
little or nothing, but then, after the arrival of Aulus Atilius Caiatinus
and Gaius Sulpicius Paterculus, the consuls for the following year, 258
they proceeded against the Carthaginian army in its winter quarters in Panormus. The consuls deployed their entire army close to the city, offering battle, but the enemy refused to come out and fight, so they set out for the town of Hippana instead, which they took straight away. They also captured Myttistratum, which had survived a long siege because of the strength of its location, and Camarina, which had seceded from the Roman alliance a short while earlier; the town fell once siegeworks had breached its defences. Enna and other Carthaginian strongholds also fell to them, and then they set about blockading Lipara.

[25] The following year, while the Roman consul Gaius Atilius 257
Regulus was lying at anchor off Cape Tyndaris, he spotted the Carthaginian fleet sailing past him out of formation. Ordering his crews to follow on, he set out ahead with a squadron of ten ships. But the Carthaginians, seeing that some of the enemy were still embarking or were just setting sail, turned to meet the leading ships, which were far in front of the rest. They surrounded the squadron and sank all the ships except Regulus', which they came close to capturing, crew and all, but its speed (it had a full complement of rowers) enabled it to effect a remarkable escape. The rest of the Roman ships soon sailed up, making sure that they stayed close together, and formed themselves into a line. Battle was joined, and the Romans captured ten ships with their crews and sank a further eight, before the rest of the Carthaginian fleet retreated to the Aeolian Islands.

This engagement led the two sides to believe that they were now evenly matched, and they turned with increased commitment to constructing fleets and focusing on naval affairs. During this period the land-based armies did nothing worth recording, but occupied themselves with minor and incidental engagements. Once the Romans had completed their preparations (as mentioned above) for the following
256 summer, they launched a fleet of 330 decked warships and, after putting in at Messana, they sailed south along the Sicilian coast, around Cape Pachynus, and over to Ecnomus, since their land forces were also there or thereabouts. Meanwhile, the Carthaginian fleet of 350 decked ships put to sea and stopped at Lilybaeum before anchoring off Heraclea Minoa.

[26] The Roman plan was to sail to Libya and make that the main theatre of war instead of Sicily; they wanted the Carthaginians to feel that their very existence and their homeland were at risk. This was the last thing the Carthaginians wanted, because they were aware that Libya was vulnerable to an offensive and that any invader would easily subjugate the entire population there. They were all in favour of risking a battle between the two fleets, to forestall such an invasion. With the Romans committed to overpowering the Carthaginians, and the Carthaginians committed to stopping the Romans from reaching Libya, the ensuing clash was inevitable.

The Romans fitted out a fleet capable of both fighting at sea and disembarking troops in enemy territory. They created an elite corps, drawn from their land army, and divided the expeditionary force into four units. Each unit was called either the First Legion or the First Squadron (and so on, with both 'legion' and 'squadron' being used equally for the other units too), except for the fourth, which also gained a third name: the *triarii* or 'third-rankers', a name familiar from the Roman land army.* The total size of the expeditionary force was about 140,000, with each ship holding 300 oarsmen and 120 marines. The Carthaginians, however, equipped their ships almost exclusively for fighting at sea; to judge by the number of their ships, their troops must have numbered more than 150,000. It must have been amazing to have witnessed it all in person—but it is hardly less astonishing even for someone who only reads about it and judges the magnitude of the risk to either side, and the scale of their armament and resources, just from the number of men and ships.

Bearing in mind that they had to cross the open sea, and that the enemy ships were faster than theirs, the Romans racked their brains to come up with a formation that would be safe and hard to attack. The pole position they gave to their two sixers (with the consuls on board, Marcus Atilius Regulus and Lucius Manlius Vulso); behind one of these two sixers, which sailed abreast of each other, they positioned the First Squadron, and the Second Squadron behind the other, with the ships in single file, in such a way that the gap between the two squadrons increased ship by ship. The ships were positioned astern of one another, but with their prows pointing outwards.* With the First and Second squadrons thus arranged simply as a wedge, they placed the Third Legion behind them, facing forwards, in a single line, so that the overall resulting shape of the formation was a triangle. Next came the horse-transports, which were connected by hawsers to the ships of the Third Squadron. Behind the horse-transports came the Fourth Squadron, the 'third-rankers', in a single long line that extended at either end beyond the line of ships in front. When every ship was in its proper place as I have described, the overall shape was a wedge with a hollow head and a solid base—an efficient and effective formation that was also reasonably impregnable.

[27] Meanwhile, the Carthaginian generals briefly addressed their troops, pointing out that if they won the battle the war would be fought for control of Sicily, whereas, if they lost, their homeland and families would be at stake. They then gave the order to embark—an order the men were quick to obey, now that they knew their options for the future. It was in a mood of combined confidence and dread, then, that the Carthaginians shipped out.

When the Carthaginian senior command became aware of the enemy formation, they adapted their own to it. They deployed three-quarters of their fleet in a line, one ship deep, facing the Romans prow on, with the right wing stretching straight out towards the open sea in order to outflank the enemy, while the last quarter, the left wing of the whole formation, came off the main line at an angle to the coastline. The commander of the Carthaginian right wing was Hanno, the man who had lost the battle of Acragas; he had not only ships of the line, but also the fastest quinqueremes for outflanking purposes. Hamilcar, the man involved in the engagement off Cape Tyndaris, was responsible for the left, and his position in the middle of the line in this battle allowed him to put into effect the following plan.

Seeing that the Carthaginians had sacrificed strength for length, it was the centre of the enemy line that the Romans targeted, as the opening move of the battle, but on Hamilcar's orders the centrally placed Carthaginian ships promptly gave way, the idea being to disrupt the Roman formation. So these ships beat a rapid retreat with the Romans in hot pursuit. As the First and Second squadrons bore down on the fugitives, however, a gap opened up between them and the Third and Fourth legions, since the Third was towing the horse-transports, and it was the third-rankers' job to stay close and protect them. When the Carthaginians thought they had opened up enough of a gap between the First and Second squadrons and the rest, a signal was raised on Hamilcar's ship and the Carthaginians all wheeled around at once and engaged their pursuers.

The fighting was fierce. The speed of their vessels gave the Carthaginians a considerable advantage, in the sense that they found it easy to sail around the enemy, launch an attack, and then quickly disengage, but the Romans' prospects were just as promising, thanks to their aggression at close quarters and their ability to pin any ship that came close with their ravens; also, they were fighting under the watchful eyes of their commanders, since both the consuls were participating. This, then, was how the battle was proceeding in the centre.

[28] The right wing, under Hanno's command, had kept its distance during the Romans' initial assault, but now that there was open sea between it and the third-rankers' squadron, it launched an attack that hit the third-rankers hard and had them in disarray. Meanwhile, the Carthaginians who had been deployed on the landward side changed formation: they joined the line prows forward and attacked the ships that were towing the horse-transports. On board these ships the Romans had released the hawsers and were fighting it out with the enemy.

The engagement as a whole, then, consisted of three parts, with three separate battles going on at some distance from one another. The original disposition of the forces meant that the elements involved in each battle were numerically more or less equal, and so the contest was very closely fought. But the result in each case was much as one might expect when all the contestants are fairly evenly matched in a battle: that is, those who engaged first were the first to obtain a result, when Hamilcar's squadron was finally forced back

into flight. Manlius took the captured ships in tow, while Regulus sped the undamaged ships from the Second Squadron over to help the third-rankers and the horse-transports in their struggles.

The third-rankers had been having a hard time of it, but when Regulus made contact with Hanno's ships and engaged them they took up the fight with renewed energy. The Carthaginians, faced with resistance from those in front of them and an assault in the rear, were hard pressed; finding themselves unexpectedly in the process of being surrounded by the relieving force, they disengaged and withdrew out to sea. Just then, while returning towards the fray, Manlius saw that the Third Squadron had been pinned close to the shore by the Carthaginian left wing, so he joined forces with Regulus, who had left the third-rankers and the horse-transports after ensuring their safety, and together they raced over to help their endangered comrades. And the danger was acute: the situation they were in resembled nothing so much as a siege, and there can be no doubt that this squadron, at any rate, would have been wiped out if fear of the ravens had not stopped the Carthaginians from attacking, and induced them instead to pen the Romans up and contain them close to the shore, while holding back from ramming in case they got entangled. But then the consuls arrived, surrounded the Carthaginians, and captured fifty enemy ships, crews and all, although a few managed to slip away and escape.

So this is how each of the several engagements turned out, with the Romans the eventual winners of the battle as a whole. They lost twenty-four ships, while the Carthaginians lost more than thirty, and whereas not one Roman ship and its crew fell into enemy hands, this fate was suffered by sixty-four Carthaginian ships and their crews.

[29] After the battle, the Romans gathered extra provisions, repaired the ships they had captured, and took care of their crews as they deserved after their success. Then they shipped out for Libya. The advance squadron reached the coast just south of Cape Hermaea, as it is called, which points across the sea towards Sicily and is the most prominent headland on the gulf where Carthage is situated. Once the rest of the fleet had joined them there, they formed up and sailed down the coast until they reached the town of Aspis, where they disembarked, beached their ships, and protected them behind a trench and a stockade. Since the garrison refused to surrender voluntarily, they set about assaulting the town.

By now the surviving Carthaginian troops had got back home from the battle, carrying with them the conviction that the Romans would be so full of confidence after their victory that they would sail straight for Carthage itself. So they deployed land and sea forces to watch all the approaches to the city, but when they found out that the Romans were already safely ashore, besieging Aspis, they no longer saw any reason to guard against an offensive from the sea, and concentrated their resources on protecting the city and its hinterland. Aspis fell to the Romans, and they installed a garrison to guard the city and the farmland. They also sent a message to Rome, with news of what had happened and asking what to do next and how to handle matters. Then with no further delay they set out on a plundering expedition in Carthaginian territory with their entire army, apart from the garrison they left in Aspis, to guard the town and its land.

Since they met no resistance, they managed to destroy a large number of lavishly appointed residences, and took as booty vast quantities of livestock; they also took more than 20,000 captives back to their ships. Meanwhile, messengers arrived from Rome with instructions that one of the consuls was to stay there with a sufficiently large force, while the other was to bring the fleet back to Rome. Regulus stayed behind with forty ships, 15,000 footsoldiers, and 500 cavalrymen, while Manlius took the naval crews and the horde of prisoners, and sailed past Sicily safely back to Rome.

[30] It was clear that the Romans were planning to stay for a long time. The Carthaginians first elected two generals—Hasdrubal, the son of Hanno, and Bostar—and sent orders to Hamilcar in Heraclea to return home at once. He duly arrived in Carthage with 500 horse and 5,000 foot, and was appointed general alongside the other two. After talking the situation over, he and Hasdrubal decided to focus on protecting the land, to stop the Romans plundering it freely.

A few days later, Regulus set out. Unfortified strongholds fell straight away and were sacked, while those with defensive walls suffered a siege first. When he reached the not insignificant town of Adys, he encircled it with his camp and began to put together what he would need for a siege. The Carthaginians were anxious not to leave the town helpless and, in keeping with their decision to try to regain possession of the countryside, they led out their forces. They occupied a ridge which gave them a good view of the enemy, but lacked the resources and advantages their army needed. Nevertheless, they

made it the site of their camp. Their best hopes lay with their cavalry and elephants, but by restricting themselves to steep, rough terrain, they were bound to show the enemy how best to strike at them, and this is exactly what happened. When the Roman commanders, who were not inexperienced, realized that the terrain made the most effective and formidable of the enemy divisions useless, they did not wait for the Carthaginians to come down and offer battle on the plain, but took the initiative and at first light advanced towards the ridge from both sides.

The Carthaginians could make no use at all of their cavalry and elephants, but their mercenaries sallied forth with great bravery and determination, and forced the First Legion back into flight. But they got too far ahead of the rest, and the division of the Roman army that was attacking from the other side of the ridge was able to surround them. The rout that ensued became general, and the Carthaginians were swiftly driven from their encampment. The elephants, along with the cavalry, retreated in safety, once they had reached level ground, while the Romans pursued the infantry for a short distance and plundered the camp. After this victory, the Romans scoured the land wherever they wanted and sacked towns without being molested. One of those that fell to them was Tunis, and since it made a perfect base for the raids they had in mind, and was also well situated for them to take action against Carthage itself and its immediate hinterland, they established their camp there.

[31] The Carthaginians had been defeated twice, at sea a short while earlier and now on land, and on the latter occasion not through lack of courage, but because of poor leadership. They now found themselves in serious difficulties, not only because of the incidents I have been recounting, but also because the Numidians had attacked them at the same time, and had done even more damage to farmland than the Romans had. As a result of these depredations, country folk had fled in fear to the city, where morale plummeted in anticipation of a siege and there were too many mouths to feed.

In the wake of these victories on land and at sea, Regulus felt he was close to capturing the city, but was worried in case his successor should arrive from Rome first and gain the credit, so he invited the Carthaginians to discuss the possibility of a treaty. They welcomed the invitation and sent their most important men, but the terms he proposed at the meeting were so harsh that they could not bring

themselves even to listen to them, let alone assent to them.* Regulus acted as though he were already the outright victor; his attitude was that they should be grateful for any concession he made and treat it as a gift. But since it was plain to the Carthaginians that they would be no worse off if they were defeated than they would be if they agreed to his terms, they left the negotiating table offended at his offer and disgusted by his harshness. When the Carthaginian senate heard Regulus' conditions, they showed considerable bravery and nobility, despite the almost certain prospect of defeat: they decided that, come what may, they would be prepared to do anything rather than submit to a solution that demeaned them and tainted their past achievements.

[32] Earlier, the Carthaginians had dispatched a number of mercenary recruiters to Greece, and it so happened that one of them returned to Carthage at pretty much the same time as these events, bringing with him a sizeable force of men, including a Spartan called Xanthippus, who had been trained in the Spartan manner and had considerable experience of warfare. Xanthippus heard about the defeat, and about how and under what circumstances it had happened, and once he had a clear idea of the resources remaining to the Carthaginians, and of how many horsemen and elephants they had, he rapidly came to the conclusion that the Carthaginians had been defeated not by the Romans but by themselves—specifically, by the inexperience of their generals. He told his friends what he thought, but the situation was so critical that his views soon became widely known and reached the ears of the generals. The authorities decided to send for him and see what he had to say for himself. He appeared before them and made no secret of his thoughts about why they were now losing; he advised them to keep to the plains for marching, making camp, and fighting, and told them that if they did so they would easily be able to keep themselves safe, and even defeat their enemies. The generals thanked him for his recommendations, with which they agreed, and there and then they gave him responsibility for their armed forces.

Now, in the ranks, even the rumours of Xanthippus' views had aroused optimistic talk and rumours, but then he led the army out in front of the city. First he had them form up in battle order, and then he began to drill them, section by section, giving his commands in the prescribed manner—and the contrast with the inexperience of their

former commanders was so striking that the men broke into cheers of approval. They became so convinced that nothing terrible would happen to them under Xanthippus' guidance that they were in favour of engaging the enemy at the earliest possible opportunity. Seeing the extraordinary boost to the army's morale, the generals briefed the men and set out only a few days later. The army they took with them consisted of around 12,000 footsoldiers, 4,000 cavalrymen, and just short of 100 elephants.

[33] The unaccustomed sight of the Carthaginian army keeping 255
to level ground and camping on the plains dismayed the Romans and gave them pause for thought, though on the whole they still inclined towards engaging the enemy. Once they had made contact, they pitched their camp about ten stades from the Carthaginians. Next day, the Carthaginian officers met to decide what and what kind of response they should make to the situation, but the bulk of the army was so fired up and ready for battle that they formed themselves into their units and called on Xanthippus in person to lead them out straight away; that, in their opinion, was the appropriate response. Faced with the enthusiasm and determination of the men, and with Xanthippus begging them not to waste the opportunity, the Carthaginian generals ordered the troops to get ready and let Xanthippus proceed as he thought best.

Now that he had been given the go-ahead, Xanthippus led the army out to give battle. In the forefront, he posted the elephants, in a single line before the entire army, with the Carthaginian phalanx deployed at a reasonable distance behind them, some of the mercenaries taking up the right wing, and the rest, the more mobile troops along with the cavalry, in front of both wings. The Romans were not slow to respond to the enemy offer of battle, and came out to meet them. Dreading the prospect of an attack by the elephants, they posted their *velites* in front, with the heavy infantry behind, many maniples deep,* and divided the cavalry between the two wings. In other words, their overall formation was shorter and deeper than usual, which was good for fighting the elephants, but altogether the wrong way to go about combating the Carthaginian cavalry, which far outnumbered theirs. When both sides were satisfied that their troops were deployed, in general and in detail, in the tactically appropriate positions, they waited, while remaining in formation, for a suitable opportunity to attack.

[34] Xanthippus ordered the elephant-drivers to push forward and smash the enemy lines, and the cavalry on both wings to wheel simultaneously into the attack. At the same moment, the Romans clattered their spears against their shields, as is their custom, and charged forward, whooping their battle-cries. But the Roman horsemen on both wings were so heavily outnumbered by their Carthaginian counterparts that before long they were in full flight. As for the infantry, those assigned to the left wing avoided the elephant charge and attacked the Carthaginian right; they routed the mercenaries (from whom they had not expected any trouble anyway) and harried them all the way back to the camp. Meanwhile, the aggression of the Carthaginian elephants collapsed the first ranks of those deployed against them and they fell back, crushed underfoot and dying in heaps on the battlefield.

Aided by its depth, the bulk of the army managed for a while to maintain formation, but it was broken when the rearmost ranks found themselves everywhere encircled by the Carthaginian cavalry, and had to turn and defend themselves against this threat. Meanwhile, those who had forced a path forward through the line of elephants and were now behind the beasts encountered the Carthaginian citizen contingent, fresh and with their phalanx intact, and were cut down. At this point, there was nowhere on the field where the Romans were not in trouble. A great many men were trampled to death by the terrifyingly aggressive elephants, and the rest were shot down where they stood by the javelins of the massed horsemen. Very few indeed turned to flight, but they had to retreat over level ground, and so some of them too were killed by the elephants and cavalry; only about 500, including Regulus, broke out, but they were soon all taken alive, along with the consul himself.

The Carthaginians lost about 800 of the mercenaries who had faced the Roman left wing, while only about 2,000 Romans were left alive, and they were those who had pursued the mercenaries off the field of battle. All the rest perished, except for Regulus and those who had broken out along with him. The Roman maniples that survived managed to effect a remarkable escape back to Aspis. The Carthaginians stripped the bodies of their valuables and, in high spirits, took Regulus and the rest of the prisoners back to the city.

[35] There are a number of lessons to be learnt here, by any man of discernment, that should help him improve his life. For example, Regulus' ruin brought home to everyone at the time in the most stark

manner the advisability of distrusting Fortune, especially when things are going well. Here was a man who, a little earlier, had refused to pity or pardon people in adversity, and now all of a sudden he was being taken to beg those same people for his life. Then again, the Euripidean tag, long recognized as sound, that 'one wise plan is stronger than many hands',* was confirmed by actual events, in the sense that just one man, one intellect, overcame a host that had seemed invincible and irresistible, revived a state that had plainly hit rock bottom, and alleviated the despair that had gripped its armed forces.

I have recorded these events in the hope that my readers will profit from them. Opportunities for changing one's life for the better are afforded by both one's own setbacks and those of others, and while learning from personal disasters drives the lesson home most forcefully, learning from others' afflictions is less painful. Rather than choose the first way, then, where the lesson entails both distress and risk, we should always seek out the second, as a pain-free method of seeing how to make improvements. And so we see that there is no teacher better at preparing one for real life than the experience of reading political history, because only political history delivers, without pain, the ability to judge the better course of action, whatever the occasion or the situation. But that is enough on this for the time being.

[36] The Carthaginians expressed their unbridled joy at their success in thank-offerings to the gods and celebrations with one another. Xanthippus, the architect of the huge improvement and upturn in the Carthaginians' affairs, soon sailed for home. This was a good and sensible idea, because significant achievements, especially when they happen unexpectedly, breed great envy and bitter slander. A native citizen of a country might be able to put up with such things for a long time, with the help of relatives and networks of friends, but a foreigner cannot resist them for any length of time and becomes vulnerable. There is an alternative account of Xanthippus' departure, which I intend to cover later, but now is not the time for it.*

The Romans had not anticipated such a disaster in Libya, and their immediate concerns were fitting out a fleet and extracting the remnants of their army from Libya. The Carthaginians, meanwhile, took to the field and put Aspis under siege, in an attempt to capture those who remained uncaptured after the battle. They met such brave and spirited resistance, however, that their attempt to take the town ended

in complete failure and the ending of the siege. But when they heard that the Romans were making ready a fleet, with the intention of sailing once more to Libya, they set about building brand-new ships and repairing those that needed it. Before long they had, ready and manned, a fleet of 200 warships, which put to sea and kept watch for the enemy.

Early that summer, the Romans launched a fleet of 350 ships and dispatched it under the command of Marcus Aemilius Paullus and Servius Fulvius Paetinus.* They sailed along the Sicilian coast, and were on their way to Libya when they encountered the Carthaginian fleet off Cape Hermaea. The enemy presented no problem: they repulsed them straight away and captured 114 ships with their crews. Then they recovered from Aspis the men who had been stranded in Libya and sailed back for Sicily.

[37] They made a safe crossing and reached the Sicilian coast not far from Camarina, but there an almost indescribably violent storm fell on them; words can scarcely capture the magnitude of the disaster that befell them. Of the 364 ships they had, only 80 survived; the rest either foundered or were smashed by the breakers against submerged rocks and headlands, until the beaches were covered with corpses and wrecks. No record has survived of a greater single catastrophe at sea, and blame for it must go not, as one might unthinkingly assume, to Fortune, but to the commanders. The pilots had repeatedly warned against sailing along the outer coast of Sicily, the one facing the Libyan Sea, on the grounds that it was too wild for safe anchorage to be assured. They had also pointed out that one dangerous period was not yet past, while another was imminent: they were sailing between the rising of Orion and that of Sirius.* The commanders took not the slightest notice, however, and sailed along the outer coastline, where there was open sea, because they wanted their obvious success to scare some of the towns they would sail past into capitulation. But in fact they met with major disaster, all for the prospect of such minor gains, and only then did they recognize their folly.

Generally speaking, the Romans rely on force for everything. They feel obliged to finish anything they start and regard nothing as impossible once they have made up their minds. The forward impetus generated by this attitude often brings them success, but sometimes they conspicuously fail, and if so it is likely to be at sea. On land, against human beings and their artefacts, they are more usually successful

(though there are a few exceptions), because they are employing force against people with similar capacities and resources to their own, but they come off by far the worst when it is the sea and the weather that they take on and try to subdue by main force. The incident I am talking about is far from being the only time this has happened, and it will not stop happening until they restrain the kind of reckless arrogance that makes them fail to recognize any obstacles to their sailing and travelling whenever they feel like it.

[38] News of the destruction of the Roman fleet made the Carthaginians think that now they were a match for the Romans both on land and at sea—after all, they had recently won a land battle, and now the Romans had suffered this catastrophe—so they increased their efforts to get their naval and land forces ready. The first thing they did was send Hasdrubal to Sicily, and assigned to his command not only the army they already had but also the troops from Heraclea, along with 140 elephants. After his departure, they continued their naval preparations, which included making 200 ships seaworthy. Hasdrubal sailed over to Lilybaeum without incident and set about training his elephants and troops, making no secret of his intention to challenge the Romans for possession of the countryside.

The naval disaster hit the Romans hard—they received a detailed report about it from the survivors—but they were determined not to give an inch and they decided to build an all-new fleet of 220 ships. Hard though it may be to believe, the fleet was ready within three months, and the consuls for the year, Aulus Atilius Caiatinus 254
and Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio, put to sea as soon as it was fitted out. They sailed through the Strait, augmented the fleet at Messana with the ships that had survived the storm, and arrived with 300 ships off Panormus. This was the chief city in Carthaginian Sicily, and they set about besieging it. Once everything was ready, including siegeworks in two places, they brought up the engines. It did not take them long to demolish the seaward tower, and the soldiers forced their way in at that point and captured the so-called New Town. The inhabitants of the threatened Old Town soon surrendered. Panormus was theirs, and the consuls sailed back to Rome after installing a garrison there.

[39] The next thing that happened was that, early in the summer, 253
the consuls for the year, Gnaeus Servilius Caepio and Gaius Sempronius Blaesus, put to sea with the entire Roman fleet, and sailed via Sicily to Libya, where they made their way along the coastline.

They often—very often—landed troops, but achieved nothing worth mentioning. When they came to the Island of the Lotus-eaters, or Meninx, as it is called, which is not far from the Lesser Syrtis,* they did not know the waters and ran aground on some shoals; when the ebb tide left the ships stranded they found themselves in an impossible situation. But some time later the tide suddenly came up again, and they managed to lighten the ships just enough by throwing all their heavy stuff overboard. Then they sailed back home, though 'fled' might be a more accurate description. Back on Sicily, they rounded Cape Lilybaeum and anchored at Panormus, before setting out rashly across the sea for Rome. Once again, they were caught by a violent storm at sea, and this time they lost more than 150 ships. At this even the Romans, for all their constant and exceptional determination, were forced by circumstances—by the sheer scale and number of disasters they had experienced—to abandon their ship-building programme. With all their hopes now riding on their land forces, they
251 sent an army to Sicily under the command of the consuls, Lucius Caecilius Metellus and Gaius Furius Pacilius, but manned only sixty ships, for the purpose of supplying the army.

After these catastrophes, Carthaginian prospects in the war again looked good: they were undisputed masters of the sea, now that the Romans had retired from it, and they had supreme confidence in their land forces. And they had every right to do so: when word passed around Rome of what had happened in the battle in Libya—that the breaking of their formations and most of their losses had been due to the elephants—they became so terrified of these creatures that for the next two years, even though they were often drawn up in battle formation within five or six stades of the enemy (sometimes near Lilybaeum, sometimes near Selinus), they never dared to offer battle, and never once chose level ground, in case that gave the elephants the chance to attack. They kept to the mountains and broken ground, and the upshot was that all they achieved in this period was the reduction of Therma and Lipara by siege. And so, with the army unwilling to commit itself and suffering from low morale, the Romans changed their minds and decided to try once again for control of the sea.
250 During the consulships of Gaius Atilius Regulus and Lucius Manlius Vulso, they built fifty ships and were actively engaged in recruiting crews and putting a fleet together.

[40] The Romans' reluctance to fight even when they had taken up battle formation had not gone unnoticed by Hasdrubal, the senior

Carthaginian commander. When he found out that one of the consuls had returned to Italy with half the army, leaving Caecilius and the rest of the troops stationed in Panormus to guard their allies' crops during the harvest, he collected his forces from Lilybaeum and took to the field, making his camp close to the border of Panormitis.* Caecilius could tell that Hasdrubal was in a confident mood and wanted to lure him into offering battle, so he kept his men confined within the city walls. Hasdrubal took this to mean that Caecilius was too frightened to come out against him, and he confidently and fearlessly led his whole army down through the pass into Panormitis. Caecilius kept to his original plan and let Hasdrubal destroy the crops all the way up to the city, until he had drawn him across the river that runs in front of the city.

Once the Carthaginian army, along with the elephants, was on the city side of the river, Caecilius sent out his light-armed troops, to keep harassing the enemy until the entire army had been compelled to form close ranks. When he saw that the plan was working, he posted some of his mobile troops in front of the city wall and the moat; their orders were to loose as many missiles as they could at the elephants if they came within range, to take refuge in the moat when things got too difficult for them, and to jump out and shoot once again at any of the creatures they could engage. He got casual labourers to carry missiles and lay them against the foot of the wall outside, while he posted himself and the heavy infantry maniples at the gate that faced the enemy's left wing, and kept sending more and more men out to reinforce the skirmishers. Before long, fighting was taking place all over the field, and at this point the elephant-drivers, who were competing with one another to win praise from Hasdrubal and wanted to be the agents of victory, made a concerted charge towards the first line of Roman defenders, who put up no resistance. The elephants followed them to the moat, but as they did so they came under fire from both archers on the city walls and the fresh troops who had been posted in front of the moat, who showered them with effectively thrown javelins and throwing-spears. Under attack from a variety of missiles and badly wounded, the elephants soon became confused and turned on their own men, whom they crushed to death beneath their feet, while destroying every trace of order in their own ranks.

When Caecilius saw this, he led his troops out in a charge and fell on the enemy's flank at an oblique angle. Since his men were fresh and still in formation, while the enemy was in chaos, the result was a

general rout, in which many of the enemy died and the rest fled pell-mell. Ten elephants with their Indians surrendered to the Romans, and after the battle they rounded up the rest of them, which had thrown their Indians,* and captured them all. Caecilius was widely acknowledged to have been responsible, by this victory, for an upturn in Roman affairs, with the land forces regaining their confidence and making themselves masters of the Sicilian countryside.

[41] In Rome, news of the victory was greeted with jubilation, not so much for the negative effect the loss of the elephants had on the enemy's strength, as for the positive effect their capture had on their own troops' morale. This encouraged the Romans, who now thought that with effort they could bring the war to an end, to revert to their original plan of sending the consuls out on campaign with a fleet and crews. When all the preparations for the expedition were
250 complete, the consuls for this year—the fourteenth of the war—set sail for Sicily with a fleet of 200 ships. They moored off Lilybaeum, where they were joined by their land forces, and set about besieging the city, knowing that its capture would facilitate their taking the war to Libya. This was also the view of the authorities in Carthage, and since they were pretty much in agreement with the Romans on *this* matter, at any rate, they shelved all their other projects and focused on coming to the assistance of Lilybaeum. They were ready to take any risks and do whatever was needed to keep the city, which was their last remaining base, apart from Drepana, since the Romans had made themselves masters of all the rest of Sicily.

I shall briefly try to describe the natural advantages and the location of the places in question, because I would not want any reader to find my account opaque just because he is unfamiliar with the geography of the island. [42] The situation of Sicily as a whole in relation to Italy—specifically, in relation to the end of Italy—is almost the same as the situation of the Peloponnese in relation to the end of mainland Greece, with the difference that the Peloponnese is a peninsula, reachable by land, whereas Sicily is an island, reachable only by sea. Sicily is triangular in shape, with capes at each apex of the triangle. The cape that looks south and projects into the Sicilian Sea is called Pachynus; the one that tends north, Pelorias, forms the western limit of the Strait and lies about twelve stades from Italy; and the third cape, which points towards Libya and is favourably situated for reaching the headlands that protect Carthage, about 1,000 stades

distant, faces south-west at the point where the Libyan and Sardinian seas meet, and is called Lilybaeum. This is where the city of the same name is to be found, the one which the Romans were then preparing to besiege. It had an exceptionally strong defensive wall and was surrounded by a deep moat and, on its seaward side, by shallows, so that entering the harbour required considerable skill and experience.

The Romans encamped on both sides of the city and ran a trench, a palisade, and a wall between the two camps. They began by bringing siegeworks to bear against the tower closest to the sea on the side of the city that faces the Libyan Sea. By constantly adding to the structures they had already erected and by increasing the extent of their work, they eventually undermined the six towers next to this one, and then set about all the others simultaneously with battering-rams. The fury of the siege was terrifying, with towers being damaged or demolished every day, and with the siegeworks advancing all the time further and further inside the city. The inhabitants were gripped by despair and terror, despite the presence in the city of about 10,000 mercenaries, even apart from the citizen population. But Himilco, the commander of the mercenaries, was tireless in his efforts. The walls and mines he constructed to counter their works made things extremely difficult for the Romans, and every day he also launched an attack on the siegeworks in an attempt to burn them. At any time of the day or night the siegeworks might become the site of desperate fighting, and sometimes there were more casualties in these encounters than there usually are in pitched battles.

[43] That was how matters stood when some of the highest-ranking officers of the mercenary command agreed among themselves to betray the city to the Romans. Confident in their subordinates' obedience, they ventured forth one night from the city to the Roman camp and discussed the matter with the consul. But Alexon of Achaea, who had earlier been responsible for saving the people of Acragas from a treacherous intrigue by their Syracusan mercenaries, once again told the Carthaginian commander as soon as he found out about it. Himilco immediately convened a meeting of the remaining officers and, sweetening his pleas with the promise of generous rewards and benefits, urged them to stay loyal to their pledge to him and to have nothing to do with the schemes of those who had left the city.

Once he had received their wholehearted assurances of loyalty, he sent them back to their troops. To the Celts he also sent Hannibal (the son of the Hannibal who had died in Sardinia*), who was known to them from earlier in the campaign, and to the other mercenaries he sent Alexon, who was popular with them and had their trust. They convened general assemblies, and in their speeches they guaranteed that each man would receive his share of the bounty promised by Himilco, which made it easy for them to persuade the mercenaries to honour the existing contract. So when, shortly afterwards, the other officers returned openly to the walls from their outing, and said that they wanted to address the troops and tell them something of the Romans' offer, they were ignored; in fact, so far from finding any kind of audience for their news, they were pelted with stones and missiles and chased away from the wall. This, then, is how the Carthaginians narrowly escaped defeat through the treachery of their mercenaries, and how Alexon once again came to the rescue; earlier his loyalty had saved not only the city and hinterland of Acragas, but its very culture and freedom, and on this occasion too it was thanks to him that the Carthaginians escaped outright disaster.

[44] Without knowing precisely the situation in Lilybaeum, the Carthaginian authorities knew what besieged cities usually need, and they put together a task force, enough to fill fifty ships, and sped them on their way with the appropriate instructions. They gave the command to Adherbal's most trusted adviser, his admiral, Hannibal, the son of Hamilcar, and ordered him not to hang back, but fearlessly to seize the first available opportunity to help his beleaguered comrades. He set sail with his force of 10,000 soldiers and anchored among the Aegates Islands, which lie between Lilybaeum and Carthage, where he waited for favourable weather. As soon as he had a brisk following wind, he hoisted all sail and ran for the mouth of the harbour, with his men armed and ready on the decks. Partly because of the suddenness of its appearance and partly because they were afraid of being drawn into the enemy harbour along with Hannibal's ships by the strength of the wind, the Romans chose not to hinder the relieving force, but stayed where they were out at sea, dumbfounded by the enemy's daring.

The entire population of the city crowded onto the city walls, clapping and cheering the relieving force, in a state that combined the agony of uncertainty about what would happen with the elation

of unexpected hope. And so Hannibal's bold and hazardous stroke enabled him to gain the harbour in perfect safety, where he dropped anchor and disembarked his men. Everyone in the city was jubilant, not so much at the arrival of aid, for all that it improved their prospects and their military capacity, as at the Romans' reluctance to obstruct the Carthaginians' entrance.

[45] The men's morale and commitment were riding high—the original garrison's raised by the arrival of the reinforcements and the newcomers' by the fact that they were unaware just how grim the situation was. Himilco saw an opportunity and decided to take advantage of this keen determination in both groups in an attempt to burn the siegeworks. He convened a general meeting of all the troops, at which he briefed them and gave them their orders at some length, and stirred their enthusiasm to a frenzy by offering extravagant prizes for individual bravery and by reminding them of the rewards and benefits that would come their way from the Carthaginians, to be shared among them. When the men unanimously and vociferously expressed their approval and called for him to lead them out without delay, he praised them and thanked them for their eagerness, but dismissed them for the time being, with instructions to rest for a while and wait for orders from their officers.

A short time later, he convened a meeting of the senior officers. He assigned positions for the assault, told them the watchword and the timing of the attack, and ordered them to be in position with all the men under their command at the hour of the morning watch. At first light, once his orders had been carried out, he led the army out and attacked the siegeworks at several points. But the Romans were not caught napping and unprepared; they had known what was coming, and they were not slow to reinforce the threatened points. The fighting grew fierce and before long both sides were fully engaged in a desperate struggle around the walls, with the strike force from the city numbering at least 20,000, but still outnumbered by the besiegers. It was a formationless mêlée, with every man looking out for himself, and this made the battle all the more keenly contested; despite the enormous numbers involved, the struggle pitched individuals or small groups against each other, and it was as though single combat was taking place at the contested positions.[†]

Nevertheless, the raucous concentration of men was particularly intense by the actual siegeworks themselves. Those who had originally

been assigned to clear the works of defenders, or, on the other side, to hold on to them, displayed such staunch determination—in the one case in trying to drive the defenders off the siegeworks and in the other in tenaciously hanging on against the assault—that in the end they died right there, committed to the end to their assigned positions. In the thick of the struggle were those who had brought brands, tow, and fire, who came at the siege engines from so many directions at once, tossing burning brands at them with little thought for their own lives, that the Romans found themselves incapable of containing the enemy assault and came extremely close to defeat. But when the Carthaginian general surveyed the battle and saw that his men were dying in droves without attaining their objective of seizing and holding the siegeworks, he ordered the trumpeters to sound the retreat. And so the Romans came close to losing all their siegeworks, but in the end kept them intact.

[46] In the darkness of the night after this engagement Hannibal slipped out of the harbour with his ships, undetected by the enemy, and made his way to Drepana, to meet up with Adherbal, the Carthaginian general. The natural advantages of the place (which is about 120 stades from Lilybaeum), and not least the excellence of the harbour, meant that the Carthaginians always made its security a top priority. Back in Carthage, however, people wanted to know what was going on in Lilybaeum, but with their men shut up inside the city and the Romans keeping a close watch, information could not get through to them. So an eminent Carthaginian called Hannibal 'the Rhodian' offered to sail into Lilybaeum, see for himself what the situation was, and bring back a full and detailed report. They welcomed his offer, but doubted that he could see it through, since the Roman fleet was anchored at the mouth of the harbour. Nevertheless, he fitted out his own ship, sailed over to one of the islands off Lilybaeum, and at about the fourth hour of the next day found a favourable wind and sailed into the harbour in full sight of the enemy, who were dumbfounded by his daring.

The day after that, his thoughts turned to departure, but the Roman consul had seen the need for keeping a closer watch on the harbour mouth and during the night he had made ten of his fastest ships ready, while positioning himself, along with his entire army, by the harbour to see what would happen. The ten ships were deployed on either side of the harbour mouth, as close as they could manage to

the shallows, where they lay in wait with their oars spread, ready to attack and capture the ship that was going to try to break out. But the Rhodian made no secret of his preparations for departure and, thanks to his daring and his speed, proved more than a match for the enemy: not only did he get out with his ship and crew unscathed, leaving the enemy ships standing, so to speak, but he also stopped, after sailing on a little way, and spread his oars, as if to challenge the enemy. But the speed of his oarsmen deterred anyone from coming out against him, and so he made his way home, having proved himself, with a single ship, more than a match for the whole enemy fleet. And later he often performed the identical feat, supplying the Carthaginians with vital information about what was needed, and at the same time boosting morale in the beleaguered city and dismaying the Romans by his daring.

[47] This exploit of his was enormously aided by the fact that his experience had taught him the perfect way in through the shallows. Once he had crossed the open sea and had the city in sight, he would make his approach from the direction of Italy, with the sea tower over the prow of his ship and hiding from his view all the rest of the towers on the Libyan side of the city. This is the only way in which a ship that is running before the wind can make the harbour mouth. The Rhodian's daring inspired others with confidence too, and quite a few of those who knew the waters proved almost as effective as him. The frustrated Romans decided to try to fill in the harbour mouth, but their efforts were largely useless: the water was too deep there, and they also found it impossible to get the rubble that they threw in to settle or even just to stay together; the waves and the force of the current would sweep it away, even as it was sinking, and scatter it.

Although it cost them a great deal of effort, however, they did manage to create a bank at one spot, where there were shallows, and one night a particularly well-made quadrireme ran aground there as it tried to break out, and fell into their hands. The Romans manned this prize of theirs with a picked crew and continued to watch out for all the blockade-runners, but especially the Rhodian. Coincidentally, he had sailed into the harbour that very night and was in the process of setting out again in broad daylight, when to his alarm he saw the quadrireme, which he recognized, putting to sea again at the same time as him. At first he tried to outstrip it, but when he found himself being overhauled by the sheer power of the crew, he was compelled

to turn and engage it. But he could not repel the marines—there were just too many of them, and they were all picked men—and he was taken prisoner. The Romans found themselves in possession of another fine vessel and, once they had customized it too for the same job, they were able to put an end to the effrontery of the blockade-runners of Lilybaeum.

[48] Even though the beleaguered troops had given up trying to disable or destroy the enemy's siegeworks, they were still countering them effectively with works of their own. Then one day a wind arose and blew with such constant force and strength against the devices used to bring up the siege engines that it shook the sheds and brought the towers in front of them crashing down. It occurred to some of the Greek mercenaries what an excellent opportunity this gave them for destroying the siegeworks, and they went to tell Himilco their idea. He gave them the go-ahead and lost no time in organizing everything they would need for the venture.

The soldiers massed at three points and attacked the works with fire. The age of the devices (which made them highly inflammable) and the strength of the wind (which blew the flames right onto the towers and engines) meant that the fire took hold quickly and effectively, and that the Romans were hampered in their efforts to save the works—efforts that were ultimately ineffective. Fear robbed the defenders of their senses; unable to grasp what was happening, and blinded by dense smoke, and the sparks and cinders that were being blown into their eyes, quite a lot of them fell and died before they could get close enough actually to do something about the flames. But these factors aided the incendiaries' work to precisely the extent that they hampered the defenders: everything that had the potential to rob the defenders of their sight or injure them was being blown straight into their faces, while the attackers had a clear view of what lay before them, and so every missile they aimed at the defenders, and every brand they hurled in an attempt to destroy the works, was easily aimed and was sure to be effective because it had a strong wind behind it, to increase its impact.

In the end the ruin was complete: the bases of the towers and the beams of the battering-rams were too burnt to be of any use. After this, the Romans gave up relying on siegeworks; they surrounded the city with a trench and a palisade, fortified their own camp, and left the matter in the hands of time. Meanwhile, the inhabitants of

Lilybaeum rebuilt their collapsed defences and, more optimistically now, continued to submit to the siege.

[49] News of this reached Rome, and then they heard from various sources that the defence of the siegeworks, and the siege in general, had decimated the ranks of the oarsmen from the fleet. This prompted them to set about urgently recruiting replacements, and when they had about 10,000 of them, they sent them off to Sicily. They crossed 249
the Strait and made their way on foot to the camp. The Roman consul Publius Claudius Pulcher convened a meeting of the tribunes, at which he pointed out the opportunity they had for an all-out offensive against Drepana. The Carthaginian general there, Adherbal, had taken no precautions, Claudius said, because he did not yet know that they now had fresh crews, and also because he was sure that the losses they had sustained during the siege meant that they did not have the resources to put to sea. The tribunes were in complete agreement, and Claudius immediately embarked both the crews he already had and the new arrivals. He had his pick of the best men from the entire army to serve as marines: they volunteered, since they were not going to have to sail far and saw an opportunity for easy booty.

When everything was ready, he took ship in the middle of the night, undetected by the enemy, and set out in close order with the coastline on his right. At dawn the leading ships could be seen bearing down on Drepana. At first, Adherbal did not know what to make of this unexpected sight, but he soon recovered his wits and realized that he was under attack. He decided that any measure, however desperate or difficult, was preferable to the certainty of being trapped in the city and blockaded. He immediately gathered his crews on the shore and had a herald collect the mercenaries from the town. Then he gave a short speech to the assembled troops in which he tried to explain that they had a good chance of victory if they risked a battle, and outlined the hardship of a siege if they failed to react promptly to the danger. It did not take much for them to be persuaded to fight, and they called on him to lead them out immediately. After commending them for their enthusiasm and thanking them for it, he issued his orders: they were to embark as quickly as possible, keep their eyes on his ship, and follow his lead. As soon as he was sure these orders had been understood, they put to sea with him in the lead, and sailed out of the harbour, keeping close to the rocks on the opposite side of the harbour from where the enemy was sailing in.

[50] Claudius, the Roman consul, had expected the enemy either to surrender or at least to be intimidated by his attack, and was surprised to see, on the contrary, that they were prepared to give battle. Some of his ships were by now inside the harbour, with others at the mouth and the rest sailing up to the entrance, but he ordered them all to turn and sail out again. The change of direction caused some of the ships inside the harbour and some of those at the mouth to fall foul of one another, and these collisions not only provoked immense cries of outrage from the men, but also snapped blades off oars. Nevertheless, as each ship sailed back from the harbour, the captains managed to arrange them in a line, with their prows towards the enemy, close to the shore. Claudius himself, who had been bringing up the rear of the entire fleet since they set out, now simply turned to face the open sea and took up a position on the far left of the fleet.

Adherbal, meanwhile, had sailed past the enemy left wing with five ships of the line and had deployed his own ship facing the enemy from the direction of the open sea. Other ships kept sailing up, linking up with him as instructed, and he had his adjutants order them to do the same. When they were all in line, he gave the pre-arranged signal. At first they sailed forward in formation, with the Romans waiting close to the shore, since they were still being joined by ships returning from the harbour—but fighting close to the shore put the Romans at a severe disadvantage.

[51] Signals were hoisted on both flagships as the two fleets drew near to each other, and battle was joined. In its early stages, the contest was evenly balanced, since both sides had picked their best men to act as marines, but gradually the many advantages the Carthaginians had, which stood them in good stead throughout the battle, began to give them the edge. First, their ships were far faster in the water than those of the Romans, because of their superior design and the skill of their crews. Second, their position, with open sea behind them, was a huge advantage, in that, if they were forced back by the enemy, they could use their speed to withdraw safely to clear water. They could then turn around and catch the foremost of their pursuers, either by sailing around behind them or by taking them broadside as they were turning—a manoeuvre which gave the Romans trouble because of the weight of their ships and the inexperience of their crews. And so the Carthaginians were constantly ramming enemy ships, and sank a quite a few of them. Third, they could easily go to help any of their

own ships that were hard pressed by the enemy: all they had to do was sail across open sea, behind the line of their ships, out of harm's way and in perfect safety.

The Romans' situation was completely the opposite. When they were forced back, they could not withdraw to the rear of their line, because they were fighting close to the shore; with the enemy in front, any ship that was in trouble either found itself stuck stern first on shallows, or headed for land and ran aground there. The most effective tactic in naval warfare—sailing through the enemy line and appearing behind a ship that was already occupied with another engagement—was ruled out for them by the clumsiness of their ships and the inexperience of their crews. Nor could they help any of their friends in need from astern, because they were pinned too close to the shore, with nowhere near enough room to translate their desire to help into reality.

The whole battle was fraught with these difficulties for the Romans, and their ships began to either run aground on the shallows or be cast ashore. When the Roman commander saw what was happening, he turned to flight: he slipped away left along the coast, accompanied by the thirty or so ships that happened to be in his vicinity. The remaining ninety-three ships fell into Carthaginian hands along with their crews, except for those who ran their ships ashore and escaped inland.

[52] After this battle, Adherbal was high in the favour of the Carthaginians, who attributed the victory to him personally—to his foresight and daring. Claudius, however, met with disfavour in Rome and there was a lot of talk against him; people said that he had been careless and thoughtless in his handling of affairs and that he and he alone was responsible for the considerable downturn in Rome's fortunes. Before long, in fact, he found himself in court, where he was lucky to escape with no more than a heavy fine. Despite this setback, however, the Romans were still determined to win the war; they continued to do all they could towards that goal, taking it one step at a time.

The annual elections were coming up and as soon as they had appointed the new consuls, one of them, Lucius Junius Pullus,* set 248
off with a convoy of sixty ships, to take supplies and provisions to the army, including the grain allowance for the besiegers of Lilybaeum. At Messana, Junius also took over the command of the ships that were

stationed in Sicily, which joined him there from the army and from elsewhere, and then he sped down to Syracuse with a fleet of 120 ships and almost 800 transport vessels for the supplies. At Syracuse, he entrusted half the transports and some of the warships to the quaestors and sent them on ahead, because he wanted the army to be supplied as soon as possible. He himself stayed in Syracuse, waiting for the ships that had not yet arrived from Messana and for the additional grain that was being gathered by their allies from the interior.

[53] At much the same time, Adherbal dispatched to Carthage the ships he had taken in the battle and their captive crews. His colleague Carthalo had brought seventy ships, and Adherbal now gave him another thirty and sent him on a mission. He was to make a surprise assault on the enemy vessels that were moored off Lilybaeum, capture as many as he could, and set fire to the rest. In keeping with his instructions, Carthalo attacked soon after daybreak. His attempts to burn ships or tow them away stirred the Roman camp into frenzied activity, and the din they made as they went to rescue their fleet alerted Himilco, the commander of the troops in Lilybaeum. In the early morning light he could see what was going on, and he ordered his mercenaries to attack the Romans, who found themselves in an extraordinarily desperate situation, facing danger from all quarters, and Carthalo did manage to tow away or disable a few of their ships.

Then he sailed a short distance from Lilybaeum in the direction of Heraclea, watching out for the ships that were on their way to the Roman camp, which he intended to intercept. When his lookouts reported the approach of a large number of various types of ships, heading in their direction, he weighed anchor and sailed to meet them; the recent victory had left him thinking little of the Romans' abilities, and he was looking forward to the fight. Likewise, on the Roman side, the *lemboi* that usually sailed in the van of a fleet reported the approach of the enemy to the quaestors who had been sent on ahead from Syracuse. The quaestors did not think they would be able to match the enemy at sea, so they anchored off a little town that had accepted Roman domination, where there was no actual harbour, but a roadstead that was well protected by spits of land.

They disembarked there, set up catapults and ballistas supplied by the town, and waited for the enemy attack. The first plan that occurred to the Carthaginians after they had drawn near was to block the mouth of the roadstead, in the expectation that the Romans would

take fright and withdraw to the town, which would make capturing the ships a simple matter. But things did not go as they anticipated at all: the Romans put up a spirited defence, and the situation presented the Carthaginians with all kinds of problems. So they towed away a few of the cargo ships and sailed off to the mouth of a river, where they anchored and waited for the Romans to take ship again.

[54] After finishing the business that had kept him in Syracuse, Junius rounded Cape Pachynus and headed for Lilybaeum, completely unaware of what had happened to the quaestors he had sent on ahead. Once again, Carthalo's lookouts reported the approach of the enemy. Carthalo put to sea and moved fast, since he wanted to attack the Romans when they were as far as possible from the rest of their ships. Junius saw the Carthaginian fleet in the distance ahead and, given its size, decided against risking battle. The enemy was now too close for him simply to escape, so he turned aside and anchored off a rugged and utterly unforgiving stretch of coast, preferring to take his chances there rather than allow his entire force of ships and men to fall into enemy hands.

This did not go undetected by the enemy, but Carthalo chose to play safe. Rather than get close to such a savage shoreline, he found safety by anchoring off a nearby headland, from where he could watch out for and see both fleets. But then the weather deteriorated and severe conditions threatened from the direction of the open sea. Some of the helmsmen of the Carthaginian fleet, who were familiar enough with the region and these conditions to know what was going to happen, warned Carthalo and urged him to round Cape Pachynus. He was sensible enough to listen to them, and though it took a lot of effort they just managed to get around the cape and find safe anchorage. But between the storm and the complete lack of havens on this stretch of coastline, the two Roman fleets were so completely smashed that even the timbers from the wrecks were useless. And so, in this unforeseeable fashion, the Romans lost the use of both of their fleets.

[55] After this, Carthaginian spirits emerged from the depths once more and they faced the future with renewed optimism, while the Romans, who for all their setbacks had never before been so decisively devastated, abandoned the sea. They retained control of the land, but the Carthaginians, with mastery of the sea, did not completely give up on the land either. Everyone in Rome and all the legions at

Lilybaeum were appalled at these disasters, but they were determined to continue the siege and they persevered with it as best they could, aided by an uninterrupted flow of supplies overland.

Junius returned to the army after the destruction of the fleets feeling very strongly that he had to make his mark and do something important to compensate for the catastrophe. And so, when a slight opportunity presented itself, he made a surprise assault on Eryx and occupied it, thereby gaining control of the sanctuary of Aphrodite along with the town. Mount Eryx, a little inland from the coast of Sicily that faces Italy, is situated between Drepana and Panormus, though it is rather closer to Drepana and lies on its borders. It is by far the tallest mountain in Sicily after Etna.* Its summit is flat, and that is where the sanctuary of Aphrodite of Eryx is to be found, which is unquestionably the most remarkable sanctuary in Sicily for its wealth and general grandeur. The town lies beneath the summit, and from whichever direction one comes, it is a very long, steep climb. Junius installed a garrison on the summit and another on the approach road from Drepana, to maintain a close watch on both spots, but especially the ascent from Drepana. He was sure that this would enable him to retain a secure hold on the town and the mountain as a whole.

[56] Soon afterwards, the Carthaginians appointed as their general Hamilcar Barca* and made him responsible for the war at sea. Once he had taken over the fleet, he used it to make raids on
247 Italy—this was in the eighteenth year of the war—in the course of which he devastated Locri and land belonging to the Bruttii. Then he took his whole fleet over to Panormitis and occupied the strongpoint near Heircte, on the coast between Eryx and Panormus, which was obviously a particularly good spot for establishing a long-lasting and defensible camp. It is a steeply sloping mountain which rises to a considerable height from the surrounding land; at the top its circumference is at least a hundred stades and the plateau behind this rim has good pasturage and arable land, since it is well protected against sea winds and no deadly creatures live there at all. On two sides, where it faces the sea and where it faces inland, the plateau is flanked by unclimbable cliffs, and there are only a few places on the rim between these cliffs that need a little fortifying. There is also a knoll on top of the mountain, which can serve as a combined acropolis and natural vantage point for watching the land at the foot of the mountain. The stronghold also commands a deep-water harbour which is perfect for

ships travelling to Italy from Drepana and Lilybaeum. There are only three approaches to the mountain, two from inland and one from the coast, and none of them is easy.

It was risky for Hamilcar to make his camp here: he had put himself squarely in enemy territory, far from any friendly community or any other likely source of support. Nevertheless, he posed a serious threat to the Romans and they found themselves involved in a hard-fought struggle with him, on two fronts: he used the place as a base for sea-borne raids up the Italian coast as far north as Cumaean territory, and on land for almost three years he fought the Romans (who had made their camp not quite five stades away, between his camp and Panormus) in many, varied battles.

[57] I cannot here give a thorough account of these struggles: the opposing generals* were like a pair of exceptionally brave and skilful boxers fighting it out in a contest for first prize, who pummel each other so incessantly with blow after blow that it is impossible for either the contestants or the spectators to note and anticipate every single attack or punch, though the overall vigour and determination displayed by the two men can be used to gain an adequate impression of their skill and strength and courage. The generals repaid ambushes with ambushes, struck at and attacked each other on a daily basis; it would be impossible for a writer to do a satisfactory job of describing the cause and course of each of such a long list of fights, while it would be boring and totally unprofitable for his readers; a general assessment of the commanders and their goals is a better way to gain an accurate impression.

They tried everything—traditional ideas, improvised tactics dictated by particular circumstances, and schemes that involved risk and aggressive daring—but for many reasons decisive success eluded them: their forces were evenly matched, their camps were impregnable, and the two camps were extremely close to each other. Their proximity was the main reason why every day there were incessant minor engagements, but nothing decisive happened. For casualties in these engagements were limited to those who fell on the actual field of battle, while all those who retreated could quickly find safety behind their own defences—before they came out again for the next battle.

[58] But Fortune, like a good umpire, unexpectedly moved the contestants out of this arena and increased the riskiness of the contest by decreasing the size of the ring. As I said, the Romans had garrisons

244 on the summit and at the foot of Mount Eryx, but now Hamilcar seized the town of Eryx, which lay between the two Roman garrisons. And so the Romans who held the summit endured all the hazards and risks of a siege, while the Carthaginians somehow held out, even though the enemy was coming at them from all directions and it was hard for supplies to get through: they had access to the sea at only one point and held only one of the approach roads. Nevertheless, once again, in this new location, there was no tactic relevant to siege warfare and no kind of force that the two sides did not employ against each other, no shortage they did not endure, and no form of aggression or method of fighting they left untried. In the end, it was a draw—not, as Fabius Pictor says, because they were exhausted and desperate, but the kind of draw agreed between men who are unbeaten and unbowed—because before one of the two sides could get the better of the other, even after two years of fierce fighting in this latest location, the war had been decided by other means.

That was how matters stood at Eryx, where the land forces were engaged. The two states were like pedigree fighting cocks. It is not uncommon for these birds to become so weakened that they lose the use of their wings and only their courage keeps them striking out, until at some point they instinctively grip each other in a deadly clinch, and one or the other of them then collapses to the ground. So the Romans and Carthaginians were by now worn out by the effort of constant warfare, and in the end, with their strength waning and their resources drained by protracted war taxes and expenditure, they could see no hope for the future.

[59] The Romans were as spirited as fighting cocks. Even though it had been almost five years since disaster and the conviction that the war would be won or lost on land had led them to renounce naval warfare altogether, the realization now that things were not progressing as they had calculated, and the daring of the Carthaginian general, made them decide for the third time to pin their hopes on naval forces. Only this stratagem, they felt, would enable them to end the war in their favour, provided that they could strike a fatal blow.

And that is exactly what they eventually did. The first time it had been the catastrophic work of Fortune that had forced them to abandon the sea; the second time, it had been the defeat at Drepana.* Now they revived the policy for a third time and it brought them victory: by denying the Carthaginian forces at Eryx access to seaborne

supplies, they were able to bring the war to an end. But the plan was driven largely by their fighting spirit alone: there were no public funds available for the initiative. Nevertheless, thanks to the patriotism and generosity of the leading citizens, enough was raised to see it through. One or two or three men, depending on their means, undertook to build and fit out a quinquereme, on the understanding that they would recover their expenses if things turned out well.

Before long, they had built by these means a fleet of 200 quinqueremes, modelled on the Rhodian's vessel.* They gave the command to Gaius Lutatius Catulus and he set off in the early summer. 242
His unforeseen arrival off Sicily—the entire enemy fleet was back in Carthage—enabled him to gain control of the harbour at Drepana and the roadsteads at Lilybaeum. He enclosed Drepana within siegeworks and got everything ready for an assault, but while resolutely doing everything he could in this respect, he was also aware that the Carthaginian fleet would be coming and never forgot that the original idea had been that the war could be decided only by a battle at sea. He therefore used the time well and productively: every day he had his crews practise and train for precisely this purpose, and he also took particular care over their regimen, until in no time at all he had his men as fit as athletes and ready for what lay ahead.

[60] The Carthaginians responded rapidly to the unexpected news that the Romans had launched a fleet and were again challenging them for mastery of the sea. They fitted out their fleet, put Hanno in command, and sent it on its way. They did not want to see their men at Eryx go short of anything, so the ships were laden with grain and other supplies. Hanno sailed over to the Sacred Isle and moored there; his plan was to cross to Eryx as soon as possible, unobserved by the enemy, and offload the stores; he would then take on the lightened ships the pick of the mercenaries to serve as marines, and Hamilcar Barca himself, and engage the enemy.

Hanno's arrival was reported to Lutatius, who guessed what he was planning to do and sailed to the island of Aegusa, off Lilybaeum, with a select force of the best soldiers from the army on board. There he briefed the men and informed the helmsmen that battle would be joined the next day. But at daybreak the next morning a brisk wind was blowing from a direction that favoured the enemy and would obviously present problems for him, since his ships would have to make their way against it through a heavy swell.

At first, these conditions left him undecided, but he came to see that if he took a risk, despite the bad weather, he would be fighting Hanno and the Carthaginian fleet just as it was, with ships that would still be heavy with cargo, whereas if he waited for conditions to improve and by doing nothing allowed the enemy to sail across to Eryx and join up with their land army, he would be up against not only ships that had recovered their manoeuvrability by shedding their cargo, but also the cream of the enemy army, and most importantly Hamilcar, who was a terrifying byword for daring at that time. He therefore decided not to pass up the present opportunity, and when he saw the enemy ships running under sail, he lost no time in putting to sea. The skill of his crews meant that the surge presented them with no problems, and he soon had his ships formed up in a single line with their prows towards the enemy.

[61] When the Carthaginians saw the Romans in their way, they let down their masts and rowed into battle with the officers on each ship giving the men their orders. This battle and the battle of Drepana were complete opposites, in terms of the measures each side had taken beforehand, and so, of course, the outcome was the opposite as well. The Romans had altered the design of their ships and had offloaded everything heavy apart from what they would actually need for the battle; their crews were well trained and did an outstanding job, and the marines were, out of the entire army, the men least likely ever to give up. The Carthaginians, on the other hand, had ships too heavy with freight to be battleworthy, their crews had been raised at short notice and had received no training at all, and their marines were new conscripts who had never before been under stress or faced danger. Because the Carthaginians had expected the Romans never to challenge them again for mastery of the sea, they had come to dismiss the Romans' naval capabilities as no threat at all.

As soon as battle was joined, therefore, they found themselves getting the worst of it at many points, and before long they were defeated. Fifty of their ships were sunk, and seventy captured with their crews, while the rest raised their masts and made it safely back to the Sacred Isle with a following wind. Luckily for them, the wind unexpectedly changed direction and helped them in their hour of need. After the battle the Roman consul sailed to Lilybaeum and the legions, and began to make arrangements for the ships and men he had captured—no easy matter, since the prisoners numbered almost 10,000.

[62] The Carthaginians' first instinct, on hearing of this unexpected defeat, was to carry on fighting; that was how determined they were. But when they stopped to think about it, they became considerably less certain. With the Romans in control of the sea, they could no longer get supplies to their troops in Sicily, and if they abandoned them—betrayed them, in a sense—they had neither the ordinary soldiers nor the officers to continue the war. Without further delay, they sent a message to Hamilcar Barca, giving him the final decision. Hamilcar acted exactly as a good, prudent commander should: as long as the situation had held reasonable grounds for optimism, he had done everything he could, however apparently risky or daunting; it would be hard to think of another general who so thoroughly followed every scent of victory. But as matters stood, with no reasonable hope left of saving the men under his command, he very sensibly and wisely yielded to circumstances and sent heralds to discuss terms for an end to the war; after all, a general should surely have the ability to recognize defeat as well as victory.

Lutatius, aware of how exhausted and war-weary Rome was by then, welcomed Hamilcar's approach, and succeeded in bringing the hostilities to an end by drafting a treaty that read somewhat as follows: 'Pending the agreement of the Roman people, there shall be friendship between the Carthaginians and the Romans on the following terms: the Carthaginians are entirely to evacuate Sicily, and they are not to make war on Hieron nor bear arms against Syracuse or the allies of Syracuse; the Carthaginians are to return to the Romans all their prisoners without ransom; the Carthaginians are to pay the Romans an indemnity of 2,200 Euboic talents* over a period of twenty years.'

[63] But when this draft was referred to Rome, the people refused to validate it and sent a commission of ten to take charge of negotiations. In fact, when the commission arrived, it left the basic framework in place, but put a bit more pressure on the Carthaginians: the period of payment of the indemnity was halved and the amount increased by 1,000 talents, and a clause was added requiring the Carthaginians to evacuate all the islands between Italy and Sicily as well.

These were the terms of the agreement that ended the Sicilian War between the Romans and Carthaginians after twenty-four years of unbroken hostilities. No other known war went on so long without interruption and none was fought on such a scale. Leaving aside the

equipment involved in other battles, there was (as I have already mentioned) one occasion in this war when between the two sides there were more than 500 ships, and another when the battle involved just short of 700 quinqueremes; and in the course of the war the Romans lost as many as 700 ships, including those that were wrecked in storms, while the Carthaginians lost around 500. So anyone who finds the battles and fleets of Antigonus or Ptolemy or Demetrius* impressive would, I am sure, be astonished to read of the enormous scale of operations in this war. If allowance is made for the superior size of quinqueremes over triremes (the kind of ship used by the Persians in their wars against the Greeks, or by the Athenians and Spartans against one another), it would be quite impossible to find naval battles fought on a comparable scale. All this supports my initial suggestion,* that (despite the views of certain Greeks) powers beyond the Romans' control, such as Fortune, had no bearing on the assurance with which they set out to make themselves rulers and masters of the whole world; they had perfectly reasonable grounds for this, because of the training they received in the course of this critical and colossal war, and it was this training that enabled them to attain their objective.

[64] Someone might wonder, then, why it is that although the whole world is under Roman domination and they are now many times as powerful as they were in the past, they have proved incapable of manning as many ships as they did then or of putting to sea with such large fleets. But all this will be clarified in my account of their system of government,* which will receive from me the prominence it deserves and will repay careful attention from my readers. Even though it makes a glorious spectacle, it has so far remained more or less entirely obscure, thanks to the ignorance of those who have written about it, or to their total inability to compose a clear and useful account. In the war we have been looking at, however, you would find that there was little to tell between the dispositions of the two states, in terms of their intentions, the scope of their ambitions, and above all their determination not to be beaten. The Roman soldiers were, generally speaking, far superior to their counterparts, but the commander who must, for his intelligence and daring, be given pride of place above all the rest was Hamilcar Barca, the father of the Hannibal who was later to make war on the Romans.

[65] After this treaty, it so happened that almost the same thing hap-
241 pened to both sides. The Romans became involved in a civil war with

the Falisci, which they rapidly brought to a favourable conclusion: it took them only a few days to gain control of the rebel city.* But the war the Carthaginians became involved in at the same time was a major, serious conflict, against a joint uprising by their mercenaries, the Numidians, and some Libyans. The danger the Carthaginians faced in the course of the war was often extreme, and in the end they came close to losing not only their territories, but their lives and the soil of their homeland.

There are a number of reasons why it is worth lingering over this war, or at least giving a brief summary of it, in keeping with my original plan.* First, its course makes it particularly easy to recognize the essential characteristics of what is commonly called 'a truceless war'. Second, the danger Carthage faced at that time shows with exceptional clarity what precautions and safeguards should be taken by those who employ mercenary troops. Third, the war reveals the differences—the enormous differences—in temperament between a horde made up of various barbarian tribes, and people who have enjoyed the benefits of education, a code of laws, and the civilized life of a citizen-state. Fourth, and most importantly, what happened then helps to explain the Hannibalic War between Rome and Carthage. When neither historians nor those who took part in the war agree about its causes, there is educational value in presenting readers with the truest explanation.

[66] As soon as the treaty had been drawn up, Hamilcar evacuated Eryx and moved his troops to Lilybaeum. He then immediately resigned his command. Meanwhile, Gisgo, the commander of Lilybaeum, saw to the transport of the troops to Libya. As a precautionary measure, he sensibly split the men up before boarding them, and sent them off at intervals, in order to give the Carthaginians time to pay the men what they were owed once they sailed in, and dismiss them to their homelands, before the next batch of men crossed over and caught up with them. This was the policy Gisgo followed for the transportation of the troops, but the Carthaginians, who were short of money as a result of the indemnity, felt sure that they could get the mercenaries to forgo some of their back pay, if they made them all welcome en masse in Carthage. Since this is what they believed, they kept the men there as they sailed in, and restricted them to the confines of the city.

But more and more crimes began to be committed, in broad daylight as well as at night, until the unruliness of the mob became a

matter of concern. The Carthaginians' first response was to ask the mercenary commanders to withdraw all their troops to a town called Sicca, each man with a gold stater for his immediate expenses, until they were in a position to pay them and until the others had arrived from Sicily. The mercenaries were perfectly prepared to go along with this, but they wanted to leave their baggage and dependants there, as they had when they had first mustered, since they expected to be returning before very long to receive their pay. The Carthaginians, however, were worried that, after their long absence, they would be longing to spend time with their children and their womenfolk, and would either flatly refuse to leave, or even if they did leave, would make this a reason to return—which would do nothing to reduce the crime wave that was plaguing the city. As a precautionary measure, then, they overcame the mercenaries' reluctance and forced them to take their belongings with them, despite the widespread hostility this aroused.

So the mercenaries all left for Sicca, and spent a long time freed from regulations and schedules. But this carefree existence is completely inappropriate for mercenary armies and is, so to speak, the first and only cause of mutiny. Moreover, since they had nothing better to do, some of them worked out what they were still owed, arrived at a total that was many times what was actually due, and made this the sum they should demand from the Carthaginians. Everyone remembered the promises the generals had made to motivate them at times of danger; none of them had the slightest doubt that they would get what they were owed.

[67] Once the entire mercenary army had gathered in Sicca, Hanno, the Carthaginian general responsible at that time for Libya, made an official visit, but so far from satisfying their expectations and paying them what they felt they were owed, he cited the burden of the indemnity and the general poverty of the city in an attempt to get them to forgo even some of what they were contractually owed. The immediate effect of his words was a mutinous rift, and the men held meeting after meeting, some in their separate ethnic units, others that were general assemblies. But all the different peoples and languages created nothing but an incoherent muddle, and the state of the army may truly be described as one of frenzy. Carthaginian armies always relied on foreign troops from various places, and while ethnic pluralism in an army is a good way of reducing the chances of concerted

dissidence or insubordination, it is a very bad idea when the men are resentful or hostile or mutinous, and need to have things explained to them, to be calmed down, and to have their false impressions corrected. These are the kinds of troops that, once infected with anger and hostility towards someone, do not stop at the worst a man can do, but sooner or later behave in a deranged fashion, like the most savage of beasts.

Which is exactly what happened at the time I am talking about. In the army, as well as Libyans (who made up the largest unit), there were Iberians and Celts, a contingent of Ligurians and another from the Balearic Islands, and quite a few Greek half-breeds, most of whom were deserters and slaves. It was impossible, then, to convene a general assembly or to find any other way to communicate with them all at once. However could it have been possible? Their commanding officer could not conceivably know all their languages, and it was, I dare say, even less feasible for him to address the troops via translators, which would mean repeating every point four or five times. The only option was for him to get the officers to pass on his demands and entreaties. This is what Hanno kept trying to do on that occasion, but even so some of the officers did not understand everything he was saying, and occasionally, even when they had indicated agreement, the message they passed on to the troops was, out of ignorance or malice, quite different from what he had asked them to say.

The upshot was a complete jumble of uncertainty, distrust, and failed communication. Apart from anything else, the men assumed that the Carthaginians had deliberately chosen to send to negotiate with them someone who was completely unfamiliar with the services they had rendered in Sicily, rather than any of the generals who knew what they had done and who had promised them rewards. In the end, Hanno lost their respect and the divisional officers lost their trust, and the enraged mercenaries set out against the Carthaginians and marched on the city. More than 20,000 strong, they established their camp at Tunis, about 120 stades from Carthage.

[68] At last—but too late to do them any good—the Carthaginians clearly understood how stupid they had been, and the magnitude of their errors. First, they had gathered together in one place a massive force of mercenaries, when the military capabilities of their citizen army were not such as to inspire confidence. Second, and even worse, they had given up the children, the womenfolk, and the baggage,

when they could have kept them as hostages, to afford themselves greater security as they discussed the crisis and to make the mercenaries more receptive to their orders. Anyway, the Tunis encampment so terrified them that they were ready to do anything to assuage the mercenaries' anger: they sent plenty of supplies for them to buy at whatever price they wanted or negotiated, and they constantly sent out members of the Council of Elders as ambassadors, bearing their assurances that they would do everything they could to satisfy the mercenaries' demands.

The mercenaries, for their part, kept contriving new demands every day, as the Carthaginians' evident terror increased their boldness; besides, they had acquired the arrogant conviction that, after the dangers they had faced in Sicily against the Roman legions, there was no one on earth, not just the Carthaginians, who would be prepared to face them in battle. And so, as soon as the Carthaginians had agreed to their pay-related demands, they went on to demand compensation for the horses they had lost; and once the Carthaginians had conceded this point too, they claimed that they should be given the cash equivalent, at the highest price grain had reached in the course of the war, of the rations that had now been owing to them for quite some time. In short, they constantly came up with outrageous new demands, stretching the terms of the agreement to impossible limits, since many of them were disaffected enough to favour insurrection.

Nevertheless, with the Carthaginians making every concession they could, the mercenaries agreed to submit the disputed issues to arbitration by one of the generals who had served in Sicily. Hamilcar Barca, with whom they had seen action in Sicily, was out of their favour, since they blamed him more than anyone else for the despicable way they were being treated. He never came to negotiate with them, and was believed to have asked to be relieved of his command over them. But they were very favourably disposed towards Gisgo, who had served as a general in Sicily, and had done what he could to take care of them, especially while arranging their transportation to Carthage. So they let him arbitrate the disputed issues.

[69] When Gisgo sailed into Tunis with their money he first listened to what the officers had to say, and then assembled the various ethnic contingents of the army one by one. He spoke to them sternly about their past behaviour, and attempted to clarify the present situation, but most of all he addressed the future, and said that he

expected them to remain loyal to those who had hired them in the first place. He ended up by committing himself to settling their arrears and paying them, contingent by contingent, what they were owed.

However, there was a Campanian among them, a slave who had deserted from the Roman army, a man of great physical strength and remarkable fearlessness in battle. He was called Spendius, and he wanted to find a way to stop his owner coming and collecting him, because by Roman law he would be tortured and killed, so he did everything he could to spoil the prospect of any agreement with the Carthaginians and was extremely outspoken. Spendius was joined by one of his comrades from the campaign, a Libyan called Mathos, who, despite being a free man, had been one of the prime movers of the insurrection. He fell in with Spendius, then, because he was anxious to avoid being singled out for punishment. He met with his fellow Libyans and argued that, once the money had been distributed, all the other contingents would leave for their homes abroad, leaving just the Libyans to bear the brunt of the Carthaginians' anger; in fact, he said, the Carthaginians would want their punishment to be severe enough to intimidate everyone in Libya.

Arguments of this kind soon inflamed the mercenaries. Seizing on the flimsy pretext that, although Gisgo may be paying their wages, he was delaying their compensation for the grain allowance and the horses, they hastily convened a general assembly. The assembled mercenaries listened and paid careful attention as Spendius and Mathos denigrated and denounced Gisgo and the Carthaginians in general, but if anyone else stepped forward to address them, they simply stoned him to death, without even waiting to find out whether he was for or against Spendius. Quite a few men, both officers and ordinary soldiers, lost their lives in this way at the various meetings they held. The practice was so common that the phrase 'Stone him!' became the only words in any language that were universally understood. It was especially common if they held a meeting drunk, after the midday meal: as soon as anyone raised the cry 'Stone him!', stones flew from all directions so thick and fast that escape was impossible for anyone who had already stepped forward to speak. Before long, in fact, no one dared to address them, for fear of being stoned, and then they elected Mathos and Spendius their generals.

[70] Even though Gisgo was aware that the whole army was seething with misrule and unrest, he put his country's interests before

anything else. And it was plain that, with the men in this malignant mood, the entire Carthaginian state was in the greatest danger. So, despite the risk, he persisted in either holding discussions with their leading men or convening meetings of one ethnic contingent or another and appealing to them. But on one occasion he was brusquely approached by the Libyans, who had not yet been paid and thought they should have been; wanting to curb their impetuosity, he told them to go and petition 'General Mathos' for the money. This made the Libyans absolutely furious. Before any noticeable time had passed, they set about looting anything valuable they could lay their hands on, and then they came to get Gisgo and the Carthaginians who had come with him.

Mathos and Spendius believed that the quickest way for war to be kindled was by foul play and treachery, so they went along with the depravity of the mob. They stole the Carthaginians' property and money, manhandled Gisgo and his companions, and had them fettered and confined in prison. And from then on they openly made war on the Carthaginians, and the rebels bound themselves to one another with vile pledges that violated the common customs of humanity. This is how and why the war against the mercenaries—the Libyan War, as it is called—began. Mathos' next move, straight after the events I have just mentioned, was to send messengers to the cities of Libya, requesting support and assistance, in the name of freedom. Nearly all the Libyan cities responded positively to this invitation to join the rebellion against Carthage, and readily sent the mercenaries supplies and other forms of aid. Then Mathos split his troops, with one division detailed to besiege Utica and the other Hippou Acra, cities that had refused to join the uprising.

[71] The Carthaginians had always depended on the produce of their farmland to sustain them in their private lives. Not only that, but they collected military equipment and supplies out of the tribute paid them by their Libyan subjects, and it had also been their practice to have mercenary troops do their fighting for them. But now they had lost all of these resources at once, and as if that were not enough, these resources were being deployed against them. Despondency and deep despair gripped the entire city at this unexpected turn of events. They had been drained by the Sicilian War and had kept hoping that the finalization of the peace treaty would give them time to recover and prosper, but now the opposite was happening and they were faced

with the outbreak of a more serious and more perilous war. Previously, they had been challenging the Romans for possession of Sicily, but now, with a civil war on their hands, their very existence and their homeland were at stake. Moreover, their arsenals were depleted, they had no crews, and as a result of all the sea battles in which they had been involved they had no ships in reserve. They lacked even the infrastructure for supplying themselves, and there was no chance of any support from friends and allies abroad. And so they came to see and understand the vast gulf that separates a war fought overseas against foreigners from civil strife and discord.

They themselves, however, were chiefly responsible for this terrible state of affairs, [72] because during the Sicilian War they had felt themselves justified in treating their Libyan subjects harshly. They had taken for themselves half the agricultural produce of the countryside and had doubled the rate of taxation of the towns and cities; and every tax was exacted in full, without any clemency or concessions for those who were hard up. What they had admired and rewarded in any of their generals—Hanno, for instance—was not merciful and humane treatment of the general populace, but the ability to provide them with plenty of supplies and materials, whatever the cost in terms of their subjects' suffering. It took no persuasion, then, to get the men to revolt; all they needed was to hear the news. And the women, who had for years watched husbands and fathers being arrested for non-payment of taxes, swore now in every town and city to conceal none of their property; they stripped off their jewellery and contributed it unhesitatingly to the war chest. They raised so much money that Mathos and Spendius were not only able to pay the mercenaries their arrears, in fulfilment of the promises they had made in the run-up to the rebellion, but had the resources to keep going. And that is just as it always should be: it is sound policy to think more of the future than the present.

[73] Despite their desperate situation, the Carthaginians gave command of the war to Hanno (who was credited with the suppression of an earlier revolt in Hecatontapylus), and set about recruiting mercenaries and arming those of their citizens who were of military age; they also drilled their citizen cavalrymen and formed them into a unit, and made seaworthy the remnants of their fleet—a few triremes and quinqueremes, and the largest of their *akatia*. Meanwhile, Mathos had acquired an army of around 70,000 Libyans,

whom he variously deployed; the sieges of Utica and Hippou Acra continued unchecked, the encampment at Tunis was secured, and all Outer Libya became a no-go area for the Carthaginians.

The city of Carthage is situated on a gulf. It projects into the sea, forming a peninsula, and most of it is surrounded by either the sea or, to a lesser extent, a lagoon. The isthmus that connects the peninsula to Libya is about twenty-five stades wide. Not far from the side of the isthmus that faces the open sea lies the city of Utica, and not far from the other side, beyond the lagoon, lies Tunis. So the mercenaries, who were now encamped on both sides, denying the Carthaginians access inland, were in a position to threaten the city itself, and from time to time, in broad daylight or at night, they used to approach the city wall, to the absolute terror and turmoil of the inhabitants.

[74] The preparations went well under Hanno's leadership, because that was the aspect of warfare which he was good at, but things were quite different when he took to the field. He tended to miss opportunities and was generally incompetent and negligent. Hence, when he
240 first went to relieve the siege of Utica, his elephants (he had at least a hundred) overwhelmed his opponents, but so far from converting this into a decisive advantage, he came close to losing not only the battle but the city as well. He brought all the siege equipment—the catapults, missiles, and so on—out of the city, made camp in front of the city, and proceeded to attack the enemy camp. Once his elephants had broken through the stockade, the enemy fell back before the sheer weight of their assault and evacuated the camp. Many enemy soldiers were crushed to death by the elephants, and those who managed to save themselves took refuge on a defensible, overgrown hill. And there they stayed, since the place itself seemed to afford them sufficient security.

Now, Hanno was accustomed to fighting Numidians and Libyans, who would vanish over the horizon and flee for two or three days once they had been turned in battle, and so on this occasion too he assumed that the war was over and that victory was his. Consequently, he made no arrangements for quartering his men, but just returned to the city and looked after himself. But the mercenaries who had taken refuge on the hilltop were men who had been schooled by Hamilcar Barca's daring; it was normal for them to withdraw and then make a fresh assault on the enemy, all in a single day, since they had often done just

that in the course of their struggles in Sicily.* So now, when they saw that Hanno had gone back to the city and that the soldiers, made careless by success, were pouring loosely out of the camp, the mercenaries rallied and attacked the camp. They inflicted heavy casualties and forced the rest to seek ignominious refuge under the city walls and gates. And they captured all the baggage and the siege equipment, which Hanno had handed over to them by bringing it out of the city along with everything else.

Nor was this the only occasion when Hanno's conduct was negligent. A few days later, when he was at Gorza and the enemy had come to meet him, he twice had a chance to defeat them in battle, and he had two further opportunities when he attacked their camp (because they had encamped close by), but it appears that every time he carelessly threw away certain victory.

[75] When the Carthaginians realized how badly Hanno was managing things, they reinstated Hamilcar Barca to the generalship and sent him off to deal with the current threat. They assigned him seventy elephants and an army of about 10,000—a combined force of newly recruited mercenaries and deserters from the enemy, and Carthaginian citizens, serving either in the cavalry or the infantry. On his very first campaign, he overwhelmed the enemy by the suddenness of his attack, crushed their spirits, and raised the siege of Utica. In other words, he lived up to his past exploits and fulfilled the expectations of the Carthaginian people.

Hamilcar's campaign went as follows. The isthmus that connects Carthage to Libya runs into a chain of rugged hills, with man-made roads on the passes through to the other side. Mathos had posted troops in these hills to guard all the critical points, and had secured the bridge across the Macaras too, the river that here and there almost blocks the way from the city to the countryside. It is usually too deep to be forded, and Mathos had built a fortified settlement to guard the only bridge. It was not just impossible for the Carthaginian army to get through, but even separate individuals would have found it hard to slip through without being spotted by the enemy.

These were the problems Hamilcar faced, but he was prepared to try anything and he came up with the following plan for breaking out. He noticed that the mouth of the Macaras, where it joined the sea, became silted up when the wind blew steadily from a certain direction, and formed crossable shallows. He had his men stand by, ready

to depart, but kept his plan to himself and waited for the right conditions. When his chance came, he set out under cover of darkness, and by daybreak had got his army across the river at this spot, without being detected, to the astonishment of his fellow citizens as well as of the enemy. And so Hamilcar marched across the plain towards the enemy contingent that was guarding the bridge.

[76] When Spendius heard what had happened, he had his forces meet on the plain and fall in alongside each other, with one division of at least 10,000 coming from the settlement on the bridge, and another, more than 15,000 strong, from Utica. They were sure they had the Carthaginians trapped, so when they caught sight of the enemy, the watchword was quickly circulated, along with the orders of the day, and then they moved into the attack. During the march, Hamilcar had his elephants posted in front, followed by the cavalry and the light-armed troops, and finally the heavy infantry. At the sight of the enemy closing fast, however, he had his entire force turn, and then he ordered the vanguard to withdraw at the double, while those who had originally occupied the rear wheeled around and formed up facing the enemy.

The Libyans and the mercenaries thought that Hamilcar's men had taken to terrified flight, so they broke ranks and charged, and engaged the enemy hard. But Hamilcar's cavalry turned and fought back, once they had drawn close to the serried ranks of the rearguard, and the Libyans, startled by this unexpected move—and then frightened as the rest of Hamilcar's army began to advance—immediately turned and fled, with just as little order and cohesion as when they were charging forward. The outcome was that some of them collided with those who were coming up behind them and in the ensuing chaos both they and their comrades died; but most of the dead were trampled to death when the cavalry and elephants got among them. As many as 6,000 Libyans and mercenaries lost their lives, and about 2,000 were taken prisoner. The rest fled either to the settlement by the bridge or to their encampment at Utica.

After this victory, Hamilcar followed hard on the heels of the enemy and took the settlement by the bridge straight away. The enemy abandoned the town and fled to Tunis. He then proceeded against other rebel towns in the region, which he either persuaded to change sides or, more commonly, stormed and took. So he gave the Carthaginians grounds for confidence and replaced their earlier despair with some measure of courage.

[77] Mathos continued with the siege of Hippou Acra himself, while advising Spendius and Autaritus, the leader of the Gauls, to maintain contact with the enemy, but to stay off level ground because of the size of their opponents' cavalry and elephant units. Instead, he suggested, they should keep to the foothills, and combine their forces for an attack only when the enemy became vulnerable on difficult ground. But at the same time as recommending this strategy, he sent to the Numidians and Libyans for reinforcements, urging them not to waste this opportunity for liberty.

Spendius put together a force totalling about 6,000 men, drawn from all the various contingents at Tunis, and took to the field, shadowing the Carthaginians in the foothills. His ranks were swelled by Autaritus' Gauls, who numbered about 2,000, the rest of the original corps having deserted to the Romans during the Eryx campaign. Then, coincidentally just when Hamilcar had set up camp on a mountain-ringed plain, Spendius was joined by the Numidian and Libyan reinforcements. The Carthaginians unexpectedly had Libyans entrenched in front of them, Numidians to their rear, and Spendius' men on one flank. Their options were few; they were more or less trapped.

[78] Enter, at this juncture, Naravas, a young, warlike man from one of the most eminent Numidian families. He had always felt close to the Carthaginians, with whom he had ancestral ties, and these feelings had been strengthened by his respect for their general, Hamilcar Barca. Thinking, then, that here he had a fine opportunity to meet the man and make his acquaintance, he rode up to the Carthaginian camp with a retinue of about a hundred Numidians. Once he reached the outer palisade, he waited there, showing no sign of fear, but beckoning with his hand. Puzzled, Hamilcar had a man ride out to see what he wanted, and Naravas said that he would like to meet the general. Hamilcar did not know what to make of this request and was not sure whether he should trust the man, but Naravas left his horse and spears with his attendants and boldly walked up to the camp unarmed. The Carthaginians were both impressed and alarmed by his self-assurance, but they let him in and met with him.

At the meeting, he said that he wished all Carthaginians well, but especially wanted Hamilcar's friendship, and that this was why he had come: to make his acquaintance and to join him, without guile or deception, in every enterprise and endeavour. Hamilcar, in response, expressed his delight at the young man's courage in coming to meet

him, and at the sincerity of his demeanour. He was so pleased, in fact, that he not only agreed to let Naravas join him, but even pledged to give him his daughter in marriage, if he remained loyal to Carthage.

Once this bargain had been struck, Naravas brought over all the Numidians, about 2,000 of them, who had been assigned to his command, and Hamilcar felt that with the addition of this contingent he was in a position to confront the enemy, and deployed his troops accordingly. Spendius joined forces with the Libyans and came down to the plain, and battle was joined. It was a hard struggle, but in the end Hamilcar was victorious, with his elephants fighting well and Naravas playing a conspicuous part. Autaritus and Spendius escaped, but about 10,000 of their men died, and about 4,000 were taken prisoner. Afterwards, Hamilcar let any of the prisoners join his army if they wanted to, and he equipped them with arms and armour stripped from the enemy. He assembled the rest, those who chose not to serve under him, and announced that he pardoned their past crimes and that therefore each of them was free to do as he wanted and go where he wanted, but he also added a threat: if in the future any of them bore arms against Carthage, and were taken prisoner, they would not have a second chance to avoid punishment.

[79] Before long, Mathos and Spendius found imitators, when the mercenaries on Sardinia attacked the Carthaginians there. They trapped a number of Carthaginians on the acropolis, including the incumbent garrison commander, a man called Bostar, and killed them. Then the troops the Carthaginians sent to the island under Hanno's command deserted and joined the mercenaries, who promptly captured Hanno and crucified him. After this, they thought up all kinds of perverted forms of torture with which to abuse and kill the island's Carthaginian population. Once they had gained control of the cities and towns, they ruled until the native Sardinians rose up against them and drove them off the island to Italy. So the Carthaginians lost control of the island of Sardinia, which is exceptional for its size, populousness, and fertility. But many writers have described the island at length, and I see no point in repeating what everyone already knows.

Hamilcar's merciful treatment of the prisoners worried Mathos and Spendius. Neither they nor Autaritus the Gaul wanted to see it seduce the Libyans and the bulk of the mercenaries into accepting the offer of immunity, and so they racked their brains for some new atrocity and a way to revive the mercenaries' malignant hatred of

the Carthaginians. Once they had reached a decision, they convened a general assembly, at which they produced a courier, ostensibly sent by their fellow rebels in Sardinia, with a letter advising them to watch out for Gisgo and his companions on the grounds that some people in the army were negotiating with the Carthaginians to secure their release. As I explained earlier, the mercenaries had treacherously turned against Gisgo in Tunis.

Right on cue, Spendius first warned them that Hamilcar's merciful treatment of the prisoners was not all that it seemed. He said that the point of Hamilcar's treatment of the captives was not that he really wanted to spare their lives, but that he hoped to use their release 'to get us into his power, so that, if we trust him, he may punish not just some, but all of us'. He went on to advise them to be sure not to let Gisgo slip out of their hands, not just because it would earn them the contempt of their enemies, but also because by doing so they would seriously harm their own interests: if they let such a competent military commander escape, he would almost certainly become their most dangerous enemy. And then another courier arrived, right in the middle of his speech; this one had ostensibly been sent to them from Tunis, and the gist of his letter was much the same as the information from Sardinia.

[80] Next came Autaritus the Gaul. He said that the only hope for their enterprise was to expect absolutely nothing from the Carthaginians, and that anyone who was tempted by the offer of clemency was thereby no friend to their cause. It followed, he said, that they should trust, obey, and believe only those who denounced the Carthaginians for the foulest and vilest crimes, and should regard anyone who said anything different as a traitor and a foe. And then he advised them to torture and kill not only Gisgo and those who had been imprisoned with him, but every Carthaginian they captured from then on.

Autaritus was the most effective speaker in the mercenaries' assemblies, because more people could understand him than anyone else. He had served under the Carthaginians for so long that he spoke Phoenician and, presumably because of the length of the previous war, this was a language that most of the mercenaries felt comfortable with. Hence the rank and file unanimously gave his speech a warm reception, and he stepped down high in their favour. Then many others came forward at once from every contingent. They wanted to

revoke the torture, at least, on account of the favours Gisgo had done them in the past, but no one understood a word they were saying, because they were all speaking at the same time, each in his own language. But once it was revealed that they were asking for the severity of the punishment to be reduced, someone in the audience called out 'Stone them!', and all those who had stepped up to speak were stoned to death.

The bodies of the dead, who looked as though they had been butchered by wild animals, were carried out for burial by their friends, while Spendius and his men seized Gisgo and the others (there were about 700 of them) and frogmarched them out of the camp, a short distance beyond the palisade. They started by chopping off their hands, Gisgo's first—the very man who, not long before, had been their favourite Carthaginian, the one they had proclaimed as their benefactor and had trusted to arbitrate their disputes. After cutting off the prisoners' hands, they further mutilated them, and then they broke their legs and tossed the poor wretches, maimed but still breathing, into a trench.

[81] When news of the atrocity reached Carthage, they were appalled and incensed at what had happened, but there was nothing they could do about it apart from imploring their two generals, Hamilcar and Hanno, through their envoys, to go and avenge the victims. They also sent heralds to the criminals to see to the collection of the dead, but the mercenaries refused to give the bodies up, and warned those who had come that any future heralds or envoys would meet with the same 'punishment' as Gisgo. They then drew up a regulation, which was proposed in their assembly, that in the future every Carthaginian they captured was to be tortured and killed, and every Carthaginian ally they captured was to be returned to Carthage with his hands cut off. And they assiduously put the proposal into practice.

Reflecting on this episode, no one could fail to conclude that men's souls are even more liable than their bodies to suffer from lesions and malignant tumours, that spread in them and grow in malignancy until they become utterly incurable. In the case of ulcers, even treatment may sometimes inflame them and make them spread more rapidly, while the effect of leaving them untreated, to do what they naturally do, is that they go on eating away at the surrounding flesh until nothing substantial remains. Something similar happens in men's souls

too, where livid and putrid growths often make people more baleful and cruel than any beast. Kind and merciful treatment is taken by such people to amount to fraudulent scheming, and they become increasingly suspicious of and hostile towards their benefactors. But vengeful retaliation arouses in them such a rabid desire to win that there is nothing, however taboo or terrible, that they do not tolerate, and think the better of themselves for behaving with such boldness. In the end, they become so malignant and cruel that they might as well not be human. While this condition must be attributed above all to bad habits, ingrained in childhood by a defective upbringing, there are very many other contibutory causes, the most significant of which are violence and greed in one's leaders—factors that, at the time in question, were present in the mercenary corps and especially in their officers.

[82] Angered by the mercenaries' depravity, Hamilcar summoned Hanno to join him, since he was convinced that they could bring the war to an end more quickly with the two armies combined. Any of the enemy who surrendered on the battlefield he killed there and then, and those who were brought to him alive he threw to the elephants, since the only solution he could see was somehow to completely annihilate the enemy. Although now the war seemed to be heading in a more promising direction for the Carthaginians, the tide suddenly and decisively turned against them. When the two generals met, they disagreed so fundamentally that they not only missed opportunities for harming the enemy, but were so busy trying to get the better of each other that they even presented the enemy with many opportunities for harming *them*. When the Carthaginians found out, they ordered one of the generals to stand down, leaving the other in place, and authorized the army to choose between them. At the same time, supplies they were transporting from the region they call Emporia—a crucial region for them, as far as food and other necessaries were concerned—were completely lost at sea in a storm. And then coincidentally there was the loss of Sardinia, which I have already described—an island which had always served them well in times of crisis.

But the worst setback of all was the defection of Hippou Acra and Utica,* the only cities in Libya with the courage to hold out in the present war and the bravery to have endured Agathocles' regime and the Roman invasion. In fact, they had never previously adopted

a policy that opposed the Carthaginians, but now, as if their unjustifiable defection were not enough, as soon as they had changed sides they displayed nothing but friendship and loyalty towards the Libyans, and embarked on a course of unremitting anger and hatred towards the Carthaginians. For example, the Carthaginians had sent them help in the form of about 500 troops, but they slaughtered them all, along with their commanding officer, and threw the bodies from the wall, before surrendering the city to the Libyans. And then they did not even grant the Carthaginians' request to bury the victims.

Meanwhile, Mathos and Spendius, with their confidence restored by recent events, set about besieging Carthage itself. Hamilcar had gained a new colleague: Hannibal had been sent by the Carthaginians to the army to replace Hanno, who was the one the soldiers had decided to let go, acting on the authority the Carthaginians had given them to decide the matter of the quarrelling generals. So, with Hannibal and Naravas by his side, Hamilcar scoured the countryside, and managed to interrupt the rebels' supply line, with Naravas the Numidian as usual giving him sterling support.

With their forces out in the field involved in these operations, [83] the Carthaginians were compelled, in view of the fact that they were hemmed in on all sides, to pin their hopes on their allies. Hieron had always responded promptly to every request they had made of him in this war, and now he was even more committed to doing so, since he was sure that it was in his own best interests—for the preservation of his rule in Sicily and of good terms with Rome—that Carthage should survive, and because he did not want to see the stronger side in a position to gain its objective without any struggle. This was sound and sensible thinking on his part: such a situation should never be ignored, nor should one help anyone gain so much power that disagreement becomes impossible even when everyone knows where justice lies.

Be that as it may, the Romans too observed the terms of the treaty and were just as wholehearted in their support for Carthage. At first, there was some friction between the two sides, caused by the fact that the Carthaginians had intercepted merchants sailing from Italy to Libya with supplies for their enemies. They had taken them to Carthage and had assembled, so to speak, about 500 of them in their prisons, to the Romans' irritation. A subsequent diplomatic mission to Carthage, however, had successfully negotiated the recovery of all

the prisoners, and the Romans were so pleased at this outcome that in exchange they immediately returned to the Carthaginians the prisoners they still had from the Sicilian War. And from then on they had readily and courteously responded to every Carthaginian appeal. They allowed their merchants to export whatever supplies Carthage needed at any given time, but made it an offence to supply the other side; later, when the rebel Carthaginian mercenaries on Sardinia invited them onto the island, they refused; and they declined an offer from the people of Utica to surrender the city to them, which would have been a violation of the treaty.

The support they received from their friends enabled the Carthaginians to continue to hold out against the siege. [84] But Mathos and Spendius were just as much besieged as besiegers, and in the end a critical shortage of supplies (thanks to Hamilcar) forced them to raise the siege. But a while later they put together an army 238? of some 50,000 men, consisting of the best of the mercenaries and Libyans, and including Zarzas of Libya and his contingent. They decided to revert to their earlier tactics of keeping Hamilcar in sight in the open countryside and shadowing him. They avoided level ground, out of fear of the elephants and Naravas' cavalry, and tried to be the first to hold rising ground and narrow passes.

In this phase of the war, the mercenaries proved themselves the equals of their opponents in terms of tactics and daring, but often found themselves at a disadvantage because of inexperience. In fact, it looks as though it was possible at that time to see at first hand the great difference between generalship, with its scientifically acquired experience, and the mindless knack of soldiering, which lacks such experience. For in small-scale engagements Hamilcar was able to detach groups of the enemy and trap them, like a good backgammon player, so that they could not resist as he slaughtered them, and in full-scale battles he was able either to lure them into unsuspected ambushes and kill them, or panic them by sudden, unexpected appearances, by day or night. Anyone taken alive was thrown to the elephants.

Eventually, Hamilcar managed to confound the enemy's expectations and place the enemy camp under siege in terrain that favoured his army rather than their tactics. He made things so difficult for them, by completely surrounding them with a trench and palisade, that they did not dare to risk battle and could not break out either. In the end, they were reduced by starvation to cannibalism—divine

retribution for their violation of the laws of gods and men in the way they treated others. They did not dare to risk a sortie, because defeat was certain and punishment awaited any who were taken alive, and they saw no point in even mentioning the possibility of negotiation, because they were aware of what they had done. While they waited for a relieving force from Tunis, long promised them by their officers, there was no limit to what they did to others of their number.

[85] By the time they had committed the atrocity of eating their prisoners, and had then got through the slaves, and there was still no sign of help from Tunis, the officers were sure that the men would be driven by the severity of their suffering to make *them* their next victims. And so Autaritus, Zarzas, and Spendius decided to surrender and negotiate with Hamilcar. They sent a herald, received permission to form a delegation, and ten men went to the Carthaginian camp. Hamilcar imposed the following terms on them: the Carthaginians could pick any ten men they wanted from the enemy camp, while the rest were free to disarm and depart. As soon as these terms had been agreed, Hamilcar said that the ten ambassadors were the ones he picked, as he was entitled to by the terms of the agreement. That was how the Carthaginians captured Autaritus, Spendius, and eight senior officers.

The Libyans, of course, knew nothing of the agreement, so when they heard about the arrest of their commanding officers, they assumed that it was an act of treachery and quickly armed themselves for battle. But Hamilcar surrounded them with his entire army, which included elephants, and slaughtered them all—and there were more than 40,000 of them. The place where this massacre took place is known as the Saw, so called because the landscape looks like the tool of that name.

[86] The Carthaginians had thought that all was lost, but Hamilcar's successes raised their confidence. Meanwhile, with the support of Naravas and Hannibal, he scoured the Libyan countryside and proceeded against the towns. The defeat of their forces encouraged a great many Libyans to surrender and come over to his side. Once he had a majority of the towns and cities in his power, he went to Tunis and began to besiege Mathos. Hannibal made his camp on the Carthage side of the city, Hamilcar on the opposite side. After a while, they brought Spendius and their other prisoners up to the city walls and crucified them for all to see.

But Mathos could see that Hannibal was behaving complacently and overconfidently and he launched an attack on his camp. The rebels cut down many of the Carthaginians and drove the survivors out of the camp, leaving all their baggage and equipment in enemy hands. Hannibal too was taken alive, and the mercenaries lost no time in taking him to the cross where Spendius was hanging. They tortured him horribly for a while, but he was still alive when they took Spendius down and put him up there instead; then they slaughtered thirty high-ranking Carthaginians by Spendius' corpse. It was as though Fortune were deliberately comparing the two sides, by giving each of them in turn opportunities for excessive vengeance against the other. Because of the distance between the two Carthaginian camps, news of the attack from the mercenary settlement was slow in reaching Hamilcar, and even when he did hear about it, the difficulty of the intervening terrain meant that his relieving force failed to get there in time. Hamilcar therefore abandoned Tunis and set up camp at the mouth of the Macaras, by the sea.

[87] This unexpected disaster plunged the Carthaginians back into depression and despair. But their pessimism, following hard on the heels of the recent revival of their spirits, did not stop them taking steps to ensure their survival. They sent to Hamilcar thirty picked members of the Council of Elders, accompanied by Hanno (the general who had previously been discharged, but now resumed his post), and for this final lap, so to speak, they also sent their last remaining citizens of military age. They stressed that the councillors were to find some way to settle whatever differences the two generals had had in the past and to get them to work together, as the situation demanded. The councillors sat the two generals down together and deployed a wide variety of arguments, until Hanno and Hamilcar had no choice but to give in and do as they were told. From then on the generals worked harmoniously together and were as successful as the Carthaginians had hoped.

So every time the two sides clashed—and they fought a number of minor engagements near Leptis and elsewhere—Mathos came off worst, and in the end he committed himself to a set battle that would decide the issue, which was exactly what the Carthaginians wanted too. Both sides went about it by requisitioning troops for the battle 237? from all their allies and ordering the city garrisons to join them, since they were going to gamble everything on this one battle. When they

were completely ready for action, they had their troops form up and, at a pre-arranged signal, battle was joined. The Carthaginians emerged victorious, with most of the Libyans dying during the actual battle (some took refuge in a city, but soon surrendered) and with Mathos taken alive.

[88] Immediately after the battle, the whole of Libya submitted to Carthage, except for Hippou Acra and Utica. They had no reason to settle with the Carthaginians because by their earlier actions they had forfeited any right to pity or clemency—which goes to show how much better it is, even in the case of such crimes, to act with moderation and to stop short of purposely and deliberately doing something irremediable. But Hanno invested one city, Hamilcar the other, and before long they forced them to make peace, on terms favourable to the Carthaginians.

So even though the Carthaginians had come critically close to losing the Libyan War, they finished in a position to reassert their mastery over Libya and to punish the leaders of the rebellion as severely as they deserved. For the finale, the troops paraded through the city in triumph, openly inflicting pain on Mathos and his men in all sorts of ways. The war between the mercenaries and the Carthaginians had lasted three years and four months, and was distinguished by far greater savagery and disregard for convention than any other war in human history.

At much the same time, at the invitation of the mercenaries who had gone over to their side after leaving Sardinia, the Romans launched an expedition to the island. The Carthaginians protested that they had a prior claim to Sardinia, and began to prepare a punitive campaign against the rebels on the island, but the Romans seized the opportunity to vote for war against Carthage, claiming that it was they rather than the Sardinians whom the Carthaginians were preparing to attack. Since the Carthaginians had only just managed to survive the Libyan War, there was no way they were going to resume hostilities against the Romans just then. With little choice in the matter, they not only gave up Sardinia, but paid an additional 1,200 talents to the Romans, to avoid facing another war for the time being. These are the facts of what happened.

BOOK TWO

[1] In the previous book, I gave an account of the first phase of Roman involvement in overseas affairs, after their unification of Italy, and the circumstances of their expedition to Sicily. I explained how they came to fight the Carthaginians for possession of the island, and then showed when they first developed a ship-building programme. I further gave an impartial account of the course of the war, right up until the Carthaginians withdrew their forces from Sicily, leaving the entire island in Roman hands, except for the parts within Hieron's domain. The next part of the book was devoted to how a dispute between the mercenaries and the Carthaginians kindled the Libyan War. I showed the severity of the atrocities committed during the war, and the whole remarkable course of events, up to the final victory of the Carthaginians. I will now attempt to clarify what happened afterwards, by giving a survey of events, in keeping with my original plan.*

As soon as they had settled affairs in Libya, the Carthaginians mustered an army and sent Hamilcar to Iberia. Along with his troops, Hamilcar took his son Hannibal, who was nine years old at the time. He crossed at the Pillars of Heracles and set about reviving Carthaginian authority in Iberia.* He kept his post in that part of the world for almost nine years and succeeded, by military means or diplomacy, in getting a great deal of the Iberian population to accept Carthaginian dominion. The manner of his death matched his past achievements, as he died in the thick of battle against a particularly aggressive and powerful tribe, fighting fearlessly throughout, with little thought for his own safety. After his death, the Carthaginians gave the governorship to Hasdrubal, Hamilcar's son-in-law and chief naval officer. 237–229

[2] Hamilcar's death coincided in time with the Romans' first military expedition to Illyria and eastern Europe—an event that demands serious attention from anyone who really wants to understand the project I have undertaken, to see the formation and growth of the Roman empire. They decided on the expedition for the following reasons. Demetrius II,* the father of Philip V, bribed the Illyrian king Agron, the son of Pleuratus, who had at his command a more

substantial army and navy than any previous Illyrian ruler, to go and help the people of Medion, who were being besieged by the Aetolians. The Aetolians had failed to persuade the Medionians to join their League; they decided to make the city theirs by force of arms instead,
231 and committed their entire army to the expedition. They surrounded Medion and subjected it to a systematic and relentlessly aggressive siege, in which they made use of every kind of siege engine.

Now, it was getting close to the time of year when the Aetolians hold their elections, and they had to choose another general. The Medionians were by now having a hard time of it and every day it looked as though they might surrender, so the incumbent Aetolian general argued at one of their assemblies that, since it was he who had taken on the hardships and dangers of the siege, it was only fair that, when the city fell to them, he should be allowed to dispense the booty and it should be his name that was inscribed on the shields.* The idea met some opposition, especially from those who were candidates for the next generalship, who recommended that the assembly should not decide the matter in advance, but should leave it open and let Fortune choose the recipient of the crown. In the end, the Aetolians passed a resolution to the effect that, whoever the next general was, if it was he who took the city, he was to share the distribution of the booty and the inscription on the shields with his predecessor.

[3] The election was due to take place on the very next day after this resolution was passed and, in the Aetolian fashion, the new general would immediately take up office. But during the night a hundred *lemboi*, with 5,000 Illyrians on board, sailed towards Medion and landed as close as they could to the city. They lay at anchor for the rest of the night, and then brought the men to land efficiently and surreptitiously. Once all the men were ashore, they adopted their customary formation and advanced in companies on the Aetolian encampment.

When the Aetolians found out what was happening, they were taken aback by the Illyrians' bold and unexpected move, but not unduly dismayed, because they had long held a high opinion of themselves and felt that they had adequate forces. They deployed most of their hoplites and cavalry on level ground just in front of their camp, and had the rest of the cavalry and their light-armed troops occupy favourable high ground further forward. But the Illyrians drove the light infantry off the hill straight away by the sheer density and weight of their formation, and at the same time turned the cavalry

back towards the hoplites. Then they charged down the slope towards the ranks on the level ground and, with the Medionians from the city also joining in the attack, they soon routed the Aetolians. Many died, even more were taken prisoner, and all the weaponry and baggage fell into Illyrian hands. So, having carried out their king's orders, they took the baggage and the rest of the booty to their *lemboi* and set sail for home.

[4] After their unexpected rescue, the Medionians held an assembly at which they debated, among other things, what to inscribe on the shields. They decided, in a parody of the Aetolian resolution, to inscribe the shields as being from both the Aetolian general and the candidates for his post. It was as though Fortune were deliberately using their situation to demonstrate her power to all of us, by allowing them to do to their enemies exactly what, not long before, they had expected their enemies to very shortly be doing to them. The lesson the Aetolians taught everyone else by their unexpected setback was never to treat a future event as if it were a fait accompli, and never to look forward with any certainty to anything that may yet turn out quite different. Mere mortals should always make allowance for the unexpected, especially in warfare.

So the *lemboi* sailed back home and King Agron received his officers' report of the battle. It afforded him enormous pleasure to think that he had defeated the arrogantly self-assured Aetolians, and he gave himself over to celebration, with so much drinking that he contracted pleurisy and died just a few days later. His wife Teuta* succeeded to the throne, but she left administrative details in the hands of her Friends. Typically, given the way a woman's mind works, she could see nothing apart from the victory they had just won and failed to take account of what what happening elsewhere. So first she allowed privateers to plunder at whim, and then she mustered just as large a fleet and army as the previous one and sent it out on campaign, making it plain to her officers that she regarded the whole coastline as enemy territory.

[5] The original target of the expeditionary force was the coastline of Elis and Messenia. These places, with their long coastline and main cities situated inland, had always been liable to Illyrian raids; it took a long time to respond to their incursions, and the Illyrians had become accustomed to moving about the countryside without meeting any opposition to their depredations. On this occasion, however,

when they had put in at the city of Phoenice in Epirus to stock up on supplies, they met some Gauls who were stationed in the city, mercenaries in the pay of the Epirots. There were about 800 of these Gauls, and the Illyrians sounded them out with a view to getting them to betray the town to them. Once the Gauls had agreed, the Illyrians disembarked and, with the help of the Gauls from inside, the town and all its inhabitants fell into their hands straight away.

The Epirots responded quickly to the news and set out at full strength to relieve Phoenice. When they got there, they made their camp beside the river that flows near the town, and secured their position by ripping up the planks of the bridge over the river. Then they heard that Scerdilaïdas was on his way overland with an army of 5,000 Illyrians, heading for the Antigoneia defile, and they sent a division of the army to protect Antigoneia. Those who remained behind, however, spent their time at ease, gorging themselves on the produce of the fields and taking little thought for sentries and pickets. The division of the Epirot forces and their general carelessness came to the attention of the Illyrians, and one night they made a sortie. They got safely across the river by replacing the planks and waited out the night in an impregnable position. At daybreak, both sides drew up their forces in front of the city. The Epirots lost the battle, with many men killed and even more captured, while the survivors fled for Atintanis.

[6] After this defeat, with their confidence shattered, the Epirots
230 approached the Aetolian and Achaean leagues with a humble petition for help.* The Aetolians and Achaeans commiserated with them in their plight and agreed to help. Later, when the force they sent had reached Helicranum, the Illyrians and Gauls who had occupied Phoenice linked up with Scerdilaïdas and marched on the town. Their initial plan was to force a pitched battle, and so they camped close by the enemy, but the broken terrain foiled the plan, and letters also arrived from Teuta, urgently requesting their presence back home to help combat some rebel Illyrians who had sided with the Dardanians.*

So the pillagers of Epirus entered into a truce with the Epirots, which stipulated that, on receipt of a ransom, the Illyrians were to give up Phoenice and its free citizens, but could take all the chattels, including the slaves, to their *lemboi*. Then the Illyrians left, some by sea and Scerdilaïdas by retracing his overland route through the Antigoneia defile. Their surprising capture of the strongest and most

powerful city in Epirus had given the Greek inhabitants of the coastline a terrifying shock; they no longer felt, as before, that only the countryside was at risk, but that their cities and their very lives were in danger.

So far from making any effort, after their unexpected rescue, to punish the aggressors or acknowledge the help of the saviours, the Epirots sent a diplomatic mission to Teuta and, joined by the Acarnanians, entered into an alliance with the Illyrians that required them to collaborate in the future in resisting the Achaeans and Aetolians. The stupidity of this way of treating benefactors was obvious, but it also showed how fundamentally their policies lacked intelligent guidance.

[7] When disasters are unforeseeable, as happens in the lives of men, we blame not the victims, but Fortune and any human agents who were responsible; but when someone's stupid behaviour brings utter ruin down on himself, when he could have avoided it, everyone recognizes that the victim himself is at fault. This is also why people whose setbacks are Fortune's fault meet with sympathy, forgiveness, and aid, whereas it is only sensible to condemn and criticize anyone whose problems have been created by his own foolishness. And so, at the time in question, the Greeks would have been fully justified in censuring the Epirots.

In the first place, how could anyone who was aware of the Gauls' reputation have thrown caution to the winds and made them responsible for a city whose very prosperity tended to tempt treachery? In the second place, how could anyone have failed to be warned by the way this corps behaved? These were men who had originally been banished abroad when their own people united against them for betraying their own friends and relatives.* Then, when the Carthaginians were compelled by the exigencies of war to take them in, the first thing they did—there were more than 3,000 of them then—was exploit the opportunity of a pay-related dispute between the soldiers and their commanding officers to plunder Acragas, the very city the Carthaginians had installed them in to protect. Then, when the Carthaginians managed to slip them through the Roman siege lines and into Eryx, again to protect the place, they made an attempt to betray the city and all its inhabitants, who were suffering the siege just as much as them; when this scheme came to nothing, they deserted to the enemy. The Romans too treated them as trustworthy, but

they robbed the sanctuary of Aphrodite of Eryx. Aware now of their complete lack of scruple, the first item on the Romans' agenda, once they had brought the war with Carthage to an end, was to disarm them, outlaw them from all Italy, and ship them out. Since these were the men whom the Epirots hired to protect their democracy and their constitution, and to whom they entrusted their most prosperous city, can they plausibly be acquitted of the charge of responsibility for their own misfortunes? So much for the folly of the Epirots; I found it worth mentioning to demonstrate the wisdom of never installing too strong a garrison in a place, especially of foreign troops.

[8] For a long time the Illyrians had made it their constant practice to prey on shipping from Italy, and while they were at Phoenice quite a large number of them, acting independently of the main fleet, had robbed and murdered Italian merchants, and had even taken quite a few of them into captivity. Previously, the Romans had not taken much notice of complaints about the Illyrians, but now, with larger numbers of people reporting their depredations to the Senate, they sent Gaius and Lucius Coruncanius off as their ambassadors to Illyria, to look into the charges. Meanwhile, Teuta was so delighted with the quantity and the quality of the goods the Epirot *lemboi* brought back to her—Phoenice was in those days by far the wealthiest city in Epirus—that she was doubly determined to prey on the Greeks. But for the time being internal discord restrained her: although it had not taken her long to put down the Illyrian rebellion, she still had Issa under siege, as the last hold-out against her authority.

This was the situation when the Roman envoys sailed in. Once they had been granted an audience, they began to speak about the unwarranted aggression with which some of their people had been treated, but throughout the conference Teuta listened with an air of arrogance and disdain. When the Romans had finished, she replied that although she did her best to avoid official Illyrian aggression against the Romans, it had never been the practice for rulers of Illyria to stop their subjects from privately profiting from the sea.

These words of hers made the younger of the two ambassadors angry and he replied with a candour which was wholly justified, but far from diplomatic. 'Queen Teuta,' he said, 'one of the finest Roman customs is that we take official steps to punish crimes committed against private individuals, and there are official channels of support

for victims of crime. With the help of the gods, we shall do our very best, very soon, to get you to change the practice of Illyrian rulers towards their subjects.' She responded to this plain speaking with womanish petulance and without stopping to think; in fact, his words made her so furious that, in defiance of international law, she sent men after the Romans, as they were getting ready to sail back home, to kill the outspoken ambassador.* When news of the murder reached Rome, the woman's crime aroused such anger that military preparations became the first order of priority, and they set about calling up their legions and gathering a fleet.

[9] When the weather was fair, Teuta fitted out a larger fleet of 229
lemboi than ever before and sent them off as usual to the coastlines of Greece. Some set out across the sea for Corcyra, but a squadron put in at the harbour of Epidamnus, ostensibly to take on water and provisions, but in fact to make a stealthy assault on the town. The Epidamnians unsuspectingly let them in, seeing no reason for concern; the Illyrians were dressed just in short tunics, to make it look as though they were merely fetching water, but they had daggers hidden inside their jars. They murdered the sentries at the gate and in short order took over the gatehouse. More men promptly appeared according to plan from the ships and were let in, and then they had no difficulty in seizing most of the city walls. Although the surprise assault found the Epidamnians unprepared, they flew to arms and fought with such fierce determination that in the end, after prolonged resistance, the Illyrians were driven out of the city. This affair almost cost the Epidamnians their homeland, but their courage enabled them to come through it unharmed, with a salutary warning about vigilance in the future.

The Illyrians hastily set sail, linked up with those who had gone on ahead, and landed on Corcyra, where their unexpected arrival allowed them to put the city under siege. The Corcyreans found themselves in trouble. Their prospects looked bleak, so they joined the people of Apollonia and Epidamnus in sending a mission to the Achaeans and the Aetolians, urgently requesting help against their imminent dispossession by the Illyrians. The Achaeans and Aetolians listened favourably to what the envoys had to say. They shared the expense of fitting out the ten decked ships that the Achaeans had and a few days later, when the ships were ready, they set out for Corcyra, with the intention of raising the siege.

[10] The Illyrians had now gained seven more ships from their allies, the Acarnanians, and since these were decked ships, they put to sea and met the Achaean flotilla in battle off Paxoi. The Acarnanians and the Achaean ships detailed to engage them fought on equal terms and survived the encounter unscathed, apart from a few wounded crew members. The Illyrians fought with their *lemboi* lashed together* in fours, and made it easy for the enemy to ram the bunched *lemboi* by turning them broadside on. It did not matter to them what happened to the ships, because a successful, damaging attack left an enemy ship stuck there, temporarily vulnerable. Once the enemy ships had their rams embedded in the sides of the *lemboi*, Illyrian boarders leapt onto the decks of the Achaean ships and overwhelmed them with their superior numbers. These tactics enabled them to capture four quadriremes, and to sink a quinquereme with all hands, one of whom was Margus of Caryneia, a man who had loyally served the Achaean League all his life.

When the Achaeans who were fighting the Acarnanians saw that the Illyrians had won the other engagement, they disengaged, knowing the speed of their ships, and ran safely home on a following wind. The Illyrian forces were elated by this victory and continued the siege with no interference and increased confidence, but the defeat made the Corcyreans give up hope altogether. They endured the siege for only a short while longer before coming to terms with the Illyrians and accepting a garrison, under the command of Demetrius of Pharos. When all this had been taken care of, the Illyrian commanders put to sea and anchored off Epidamnus: it was the turn of this city now to be besieged.

[11] At much the same time the Roman forces took to the field. The fleet of 200 ships was commanded by Gnaeus Fulvius Centumalus, while the other consul, Aulus Postumius Albinus,* set out with the land army. The original plan had been for Fulvius to go to Corcyra, on the assumption that the siege would still be undecided, and he still sailed for the island, even though it was too late. He wanted reliable information about what had happened to the city, and he wanted to test the sincerity of Demetrius' messages. Demetrius had fallen out with Teuta, and was frightened enough of her to be writing to the Romans, offering to give the city over to them and to make available to them all the resources that were his to command. The Corcyreans welcomed the arrival of the Romans, and at Demetrius' prompting

surrendered the Illyrian garrison to them. They also had no hesitation in entrusting the city to Roman protection, when the Romans invited them to do so, because they felt that this was the only way they could guarantee safety for themselves in the future from Illyrian aggression.

With Corcyra under Roman protection, and Demetrius taken on as a staff officer for the remainder of the campaign, the Roman fleet next visited Apollonia, while Postumius was ferrying the land forces of about 20,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry across from Brundisium. The two divisions reached Apollonia at the same time, and found the city just as open to their invitation as Corcyra had been, but as soon as the city had been entrusted to their protection they took ship again, because news had reached them of the siege of Epidamnus. But when the Illyrians heard that the Romans were on their way, they abandoned the siege in disarray and fled. The Romans accepted Epidamnus too into their protectorate and then pushed further into the interior of Illyria, crushing the Ardiaei on the way.

Many envoys came to meet them, including a delegation from the Parthini, seeking Roman protection. Once they had gone through the formalities of acceptance into the protectorate with this delegation, and then almost immediately afterwards with the envoys sent to them by the Atintani, they sailed for Issa, where the city was also under siege by the Illyrians. They raised the siege there and accepted Issa too into the protectorate. They also assaulted and captured several Illyrian towns as they sailed along the coast. At one of these towns, Noutria, they lost a lot of men, including some tribunes and a quaestor, but they captured twenty *lemboi* that were being used to remove spoils taken in the countryside. Some of the Illyrians who had been besieging Issa stayed in Pharos town and came to no harm, thanks to Demetrius, while the rest fled in small groups to Arbo. Teuta took refuge, along with a few supporters, in Rhizon, an almost impregnable town on the Rhizon river, some way from the coast. These successes meant that the Romans could leave the administration of the Illyrians largely in Demetrius' hands, and once the consuls had conferred on him this sizeable realm, they withdrew the fleet and land forces to Epidamnus.

[12] Fulvius sailed back to Rome with most of the fleet and the army, leaving Postumius with forty ships. Postumius recruited a legion from the local towns and wintered in Epidamnus, standing

by in case the Ardiaei and the other tribes which had submitted to
228 Roman protection needed help. But early in the spring Teuta sent envoys to Postumius and concluded a treaty whereby she agreed to pay an indemnity of an amount fixed by the Romans, to retain possession of only a few places in Illyria, and most importantly—the clause that was of most interest to the Greeks—not to sail beyond Lissus with more than two *lemboi*, and even then they had to be unarmed.

With this treaty in place, Postumius next sent embassies to the Aetolians and Achaeans. The first item on the Romans' agenda was defensive—to explain why they had fought a war on foreign soil—but next they described what they had achieved and read out the treaty they had made with the Illyrians. They met with nothing but the appropriate courtesy from both of the leagues, and then they sailed off to Corcyra. This treaty made life considerably more secure for the Greeks, because at that time the Illyrians were not particular about whom they attacked; no one was spared their hostility.

So much for the course of and causes of the Romans' first military expedition to Illyria and eastern Europe. It was their first official contact with Greek lands, but they soon followed it with missions to Corinth and Athens. This was the occasion when the Corinthians first allowed Romans to participate in the Isthmian Games.*

[13] Meanwhile (to return to where I broke off my account of affairs in Iberia), Hasdrubal was proving a sound and effective provincial governor. He made a large number of major improvements, and hugely advanced Carthaginian interests by founding the city known variously as Carthage or New Town, above all because it was perfectly situated for operations in either Iberia or Libya. But I will find a more suitable occasion later for describing its location and explaining its advantages relative to both these places.*

The Romans could see that the Carthaginians were creating a larger and more formidable empire than before, and they committed themselves to a course of interference in Iberian affairs. They realized that they had been caught napping while the Carthaginians assembled a large army, so they wanted to move things along as quickly as possible, but in the short term they did not dare to give the Carthaginians an ultimatum or go on the offensive against them, because of the looming threat of a Celtic invasion, which they expected any day. They decided they had to pacify Hasdrubal and make sure he was no kind of

threat, so that they could then attack the Celts and fight to the finish. They felt sure that they would never be able to retain their Italian possessions, nor even occupy their own homeland in safety, as long as the Celts were lying in wait. So they sent envoys to Hasdrubal and entered into a formal treaty with him, in which no mention was made of the rest of Iberia, but the Carthaginians undertook not to cross the Ebro river for military purposes. And then the Romans immediately embarked upon the war against the Italian Celts.

[14] I think an account of this war will be useful, but it must be a summary account,* in order to preserve the terms of the introduction, as described at the beginning of my project. I also think it will be educational to go back in time to when the Celts first occupied this part of Italy, not just because I believe the historical facts to be worth knowing and recording, but because they are essential for understanding the men and the places that were important later to Hannibal when he set out to destroy the Roman empire. The first thing I need to do, then, is describe the nature of that part of the world and its situation with regard to the rest of Italy, because a sketch of its distinctive features, general and local, will make it easier to grasp the significance of the events I will cover.

Italy as a whole has a triangular shape.* One of the sides of the triangle, the one that faces east, abuts the Ionian Sea and then, without a break, the Adriatic, while the south-western side abuts the Sicilian and Tyrrhenian seas. These two sides meet and form an apex at the southernmost cape of Italy, which is called Cocynthus and separates the Ionian from the Sicilian Sea. The final, northern side of the triangle abuts along its whole inland stretch the slopes of the Alps, which begin at Massalia and the northern coastline of the Sardinian Sea, and stretch in an unbroken chain almost all the way to the head of the Adriatic, running out just before meeting the sea there.

Along the southern side of the Alpine piedmont (think of it as the base of the triangle) lies a plain which is the northernmost region of Italy. This plain, the largest and most fertile in Europe (or at least as much of Europe as I have been able to learn about), is what concerns us at the moment. The general shape of the circumference of this plain is also triangular, with one apex where the Apennines and the Alps meet, not far from the Sardinian Sea, north of Massalia. The northern side of the triangle is formed, as I have already said, by the actual Alps and is 2,200 stades long, and the southern side is

formed by the Apennines and is 3,600 stades long. The base of the triangle is formed by the Adriatic coast, from the city of Sena to the head of the Adriatic, a distance of over 2,500 stades. The whole circumference of the plain, then, comes to not far off 10,000 stades.

[15] It is not easy to describe how fertile this plain is. Grain is so plentiful there that in my time you could often get a Sicilian medimnus of wheat for four obols and barley for two obols, and a measure of wine cost the same as barley.* They also grow an incredible amount of millet and panic. As for the acorns produced by the woods that dot the plain, it may be easiest to get across an idea of their quantity by saying that although huge numbers of pigs are slaughtered in Italy, for both domestic consumption and military provisioning, almost their entire supply of fodder comes from this plain. The cheapness and abundance of everything edible may best be understood by considering that when travellers there stay at an inn, they do not haggle with the landlord for every separate item, but simply ask for the price for a guest. Innkeepers usually charge for full board and lodging half an *as* (that is, a quarter of an obol), rarely more. The number of people the land supports—and their height, physical magnificence, and fearlessness in war—will readily be grasped from the facts and events of the war itself.

One flank of the Alps, then, faces the river Rhône and the other this plain. The cultivable slopes on the northern, Rhône side are inhabited by people called the Transalpine Gauls, while those on the southern side, facing this plain, are inhabited by various barbarian tribes, including the Taurisci and Agones.[1] As for the mountains themselves, their unforgiving nature, and the depth of the snow on them all the year round, make human habitation completely impossible.

[16] The upper stretches of the Apennines, down from where they join the Alps north of Massalia, are inhabited on both flanks (one facing the Tyrrhenian Sea and one facing inland) by the Ligurians; down the coast, their territory extends as far as the city of Pisa, the first city within western Etruria, and on the inland side as far as Arretium. Then come the Etruscans, and after them both flanks of the Apennines are inhabited by the Umbrians. Then, when the

[1] The 'Transalpine' Gauls are so called not as a tribal name, but as a way of designating where they live: 'trans' means 'beyond', so the 'Transalpine Gauls' are simply those who live on the far side of the Alps.

mountains are about 500 stades from the Adriatic Sea, they make a right turn away from the plain, and continue all the way through the middle of the rest of Italy to the Sicilian Sea, while the rest of that side of the triangle continues mountainless to the coast and the city of Sena.

The river Po (frequently mentioned by poets, but as the Eridanus) rises in the Alps not far from the apex of the triangle and flows in a southerly direction down to the plain. When it reaches level ground, it curves east through the plain and issues into the Adriatic by means of two mouths. In so doing, it divides the plain into two unequal-sized sections, with the larger part bounded by itself, the Alps, and the head of the Adriatic. It carries a greater volume of water than any other river in Italy, because all the rivers that flow from here and there in the Alps and the Apennines down to the plain are its tributaries.* It is at its fullest and most beautiful at the time of year when the Dog-star rises, when it is swollen by all the snow-melt from both these mountain ranges. It is navigable for about 2,000 stades upstream from where one of its mouths (the Olana) joins the sea. I should say that although from its source onwards it first occupies a single channel, it bifurcates at a place called Trigaboli; one of its two mouths is called the Padua, and the other the Olana, where there is one of the safest anchorages in the Adriatic. The local name for the river is the Bodincus.

Apart from these facts, various tales about this river are familiar to Greeks, especially the legend of Phaethon and his fall, with its weeping poplars and black-clad river-dwellers (who still today are said to dress like this out of grief for Phaethon); but all such legends, the stuff of drama, I shall omit for now, on the grounds that it would not be particularly appropriate to go into such detail in an introduction. I shall give them as much space as they deserve on a more suitable occasion, especially to remedy Timaeus' ignorance about this region.

[17] Long ago, in fact, the Po plain was home to the Etruscans.[1] The Celts had plenty of dealings with the Etruscans, since they were near neighbours, and they cast covetous eyes on the beauty of the land. On some feeble pretext, they suddenly invaded with a huge

[1] At the same time they also inhabited the Phlegraean Plain near Capua and Nola—the Phlegraea that is familiar to many people and widely known for its fertility. Hence, for the study of the period of Etruscan dominance, the land they currently inhabit is irrelevant, but these two plains and their resources are of primary importance.

army, drove the Etruscans out of the Po plain, and took the land for themselves. The first part of the territory, near the source of the Po, became home to the Laevi and Libicii; after them came the Insubres, the largest of the Celtic tribes; and next to the Insubres along the river were the Cenomani. The land from there to the Adriatic coast remained the domain of another ancient people, the Veneti, who are virtually indistinguishable from Celts in their customs and clothing, but who speak a different language; there are plenty of marvellous fables about them, as found in the works of tragic dramatists. The first stretch of land on the other side of the Po, the Apennine side, became the home of the Anares, the next of the Boii; the region next closest to the Adriatic was occupied by the Lingones, and the coastal area by the Senones.

These were the main tribes that occupied the plain we are talking about. Their villages were unwalled and lacked any other civilized amenities. They lived simple lives, sleeping on straw and eating meat, skilled in nothing apart from warfare and farming, without the slightest inkling of any other science or craft. Their wealth consisted of cattle and gold, because they were easily transportable wherever they went; whatever the circumstances, they could move these possessions from one place to another at whim. The most important thing was for a man to have a following, because whoever was thought to have the largest number of attendants and retainers was held in awe as the most powerful chieftain among them.

390 [18] They focused first on making the land theirs, while also sub-
386 jugating many of their neighbours. A few years later, they defeated the Romans and their allies in battle, followed the retreating troops, and occupied Rome itself (with the exception of the Capitol) just two days after the battle.* But an invasion by the Veneti of their land demanded their attention, so on that occasion they came to an agreement with the Romans, restored the city to them, and went back home. For a while afterwards they were constrained by wars within their own borders, and several Alpine tribes also united against them on more than one occasion, tempted into hostile action by the sight, just across their borders, of the Celts' new-found prosperity. Meanwhile, the Romans built their strength back up again and re-established their control over Latium.

356 Thirty years after their capture of Rome, the Celts launched another massive invasion and reached Alba.* On this occasion, the

Romans shrank from sending their legions out to confront them, because the suddenness of the attack had caught them unprepared, with no time to assemble their allied forces. But when the Celts made another attempt twelve years later, the Romans knew about it well 344
enough ahead to muster their allies. The Celts were advancing with a huge army, but the Romans had no hesitation at all in coming out to meet them; in fact, they were looking forward to fighting a decisive battle. But their approach dismayed and disunited the Gauls so much that they set off for home that very night, though 'fled' might be a more accurate description. This episode gave them such a shock that they kept quiet for thirteen years and then, faced with the growing power of the Romans, they came to terms and made peace 331
with them.

[19] They adhered strictly to the terms of the treaty for thirty years, but then a mass movement of Transalpine Gauls threatened them with 299
the outbreak of a major war. By means of bribery and appeals to their common ethnicity they kept the dispossessed Gauls away from their lands, but they encouraged them to attack the Romans instead and joined in the expedition themselves. They advanced through Etruria (where the Etruscans sided with them), seized a great deal of livestock, and then withdrew from the Roman province. They marched back home in perfect safety, but then fell out among themselves over who should get the lion's share of the spoils, and destroyed almost all the booty and nearly all their forces as well. This is not an uncommon occurrence: the Gauls often behave like this after appropriating something from others, as a result, above all, of immoderate drinking and general over-indulgence.

Four years later, a joint force of Samnites and Gauls confronted 295
the Romans near Camerinum and badly mauled them in the ensuing battle. The Romans, incensed at the defeat, took to the field a few days later with the full complement of legions. They massacred the enemy in a battle fought near Sentinum,* and forced the survivors to flee in disarray to their various homelands. Then, after an interval of ten years, a large army of Gauls came and put Arretium under siege. The Roman relief force was defeated in front of the city, and among the casualties was the consul Lucius Caecilius Metellus, who was replaced by Manius Curius Dentatus.

The heralds Dentatus sent to the Gauls to discuss terms for the prisoners were murdered, in violation of international law, and the

enraged Romans immediately set out against them. The Gauls—the Senones—came out to meet them, but were defeated in a pitched battle, with very heavy losses. The Romans drove the rest of them out of their lands and took over their territory, where they founded the first of their colonies in Gaul, a city called Sena after the former Gallic inhabitants of the region. I have already had occasion to mention this city as situated on the Adriatic coast at the edge of the Po plain.

[20] The expulsion of the Senones made the Boii afraid that the equivalent fate awaited them and their territory, so they called on
283 Etruscan help and took to the field at full strength. Once they had assembled their army, they confronted the Romans at lake Vadimo, but in the ensuing battle most of the Etruscans were cut down and hardly any of the Boii escaped alive either. Nevertheless, the very
282 next year the Boii and Etruscans colluded again and, by arming newly mature teenagers, put together an army with which to confront the Romans. The battle was a decisive victory for the Romans, and at last the enemy gave up. They sent heralds to discuss peace terms and concluded a treaty with the Romans. This happened three years before Pyrrhus' invasion of Italy and five years before the destruction of the Gauls at Delphi.* For this was a time when Fortune afflicted the Gauls with what one might call an epidemic of warfare.

The Romans gained two very significant advantages from all these contests. First, they became so inured to being hacked to pieces by Gauls that nothing that happened to them or might possibly happen to them could be more terrible than what they had already experienced. Second, and consequently, by the time they faced Pyrrhus they had become true athletes of warfare, and with the Gauls cowed by then, they could focus exclusively on fighting Pyrrhus for possession of Italy, and then the Carthaginians for control of Sicily.

[21] After the defeats they had suffered, the Gauls did nothing to disturb the peace with the Romans for forty-five years. But with the passage of time those who had actually witnessed the horrors died and were replaced by a new generation of hot-headed young men who had never experienced crisis and danger. As inevitably happens in such cases, they began to make trouble—to find trivial causes for complaints against Rome—and they started to bring the Alpine-
237 dwelling Gauls in on their side. At first, the leaders kept their plans to themselves and acted in secret, without involving the wider populace,

and so when a force of Transalpine Gauls arrived at Ariminum, they found the Boii far from compliant. In fact the Boii took sides against their leaders and the newly arrived force, and fought a pitched battle, in which they killed their own kings, Atis and Galatus—though losses were heavy on both sides. The Romans had been frightened enough by the prospect of invasion to have sent a legion out into the field, but they brought the troops home again when they heard about the Gauls' self-destruction.

Five years after this scare, during the consulship of Marcus Aemilius 232
Lepidus, the Romans settled colonists on plots of land in Picenum, the part of Gaul which had been held by the Senones before the Romans conquered and expelled them. It was Gaius Flaminius* who introduced this form of government by demagoguery, which almost undeniably led to the corruption of the Roman people. It also led to war with the Gauls: many of the Gauls (especially the Boii, whose land bordered Roman territory) turned to military action because they thought that supremacy and domination were no longer enough for the Romans—that they intended, by means of warfare, to evict them from their lands altogether and to destroy them.

[22] So the largest tribes, the Insubres and the Boii, sent a joint embassy to the Gaesatae, a tribe of Gauls living on the Alpine stretches of the Rhône.[1] The inducements and incentives they offered made it easy to win the Gaesatae over. In the short term, they promised their kings, Concolitanus and Aneroëstes, a great deal of money, and for the longer term they pointed out just how much wealth and how many good things would be theirs for the taking if they conquered Rome. They gave assurances of firm friendship and reminded them of what their own ancestors had achieved in the earlier war—how they had defeated the Romans in battle and then had immediately occupied Rome itself; how they had taken possession of the city and all its property, and had remained in control for seven months, until surrendering the city voluntarily and with good grace, and returning home with their booty safe and sound.* A measure of how committed to the campaign this made the leaders of the Gaesatae was that the force which took to the field was the largest that had ever left that part of Gaul, and consisted of their most distinguished warriors.

[1] The word 'Gaesatae' really means 'professional soldiers',* and they got their name because that is how they work.

Meanwhile, incoming information and conjectures about the future had the Romans in such a state of panic and confusion that they vacillated between recruiting legions and laying in stores of grain and provision, and marching towards the border as if the enemy had already invaded, when in fact the Celts had not yet stirred from their homeland.

This upheaval played a critical role in helping the Carthaginians establish themselves securely in Iberia, in the sense that, as I have already said, the Romans regarded the threat on their flank as more urgent, and their determination to settle the Celtic issue first made it impossible for them to do anything but neglect Iberia. So they insured themselves against the Carthaginians by entering into the treaty with Hasdrubal, as I mentioned a short while ago, and they resolved to use the time they had gained to focus exclusively on their enemies in Italy, on the grounds that it was in their interest to get this matter sorted out once and for all.

[23] Eight years after the land distribution, the Gaesatae assem-
225 bled a richly equipped and formidable force, and marched across the Alps to the Po. While the commitment of the Insubres and Boii to the original project remained solid, the Veneti and the Cenomani, who had received embassies from Rome, chose to ally themselves with the Romans. This forced the Celtic kings to leave a portion of their army to guard their territories against the threat posed by these two tribes, but then, with their confidence running high, the entire army, consisting of about 50,000 footsoldiers and about 20,000 horsemen and chariots, got under way and advanced towards Etruria.

By the time the Romans heard that the Gauls had crossed the Alps, one of the consuls, Gaius Atilius Regulus, was already in Sardinia with his legions. They immediately dispatched the other consul, Lucius Aemilius Papus, to Ariminum, where his troops were to guard against an approach from that direction, while they sent one of the praetors to Etruria. Not unnaturally, since the old fear of the Gauls was waiting to ambush their spirits, everyone in Rome became terrified at the thought of the immensity of the threat bearing down on them, and this old fear was in the forefront of their minds as they called up their legions, recruited fresh ones, and told their allies to make theirs ready. They also issued a general command that all their subjects were to draw up lists of men of military age, since they wanted to know the total number of troops available to them. And they stockpiled for

the war more supplies, such as grain and missiles, than anyone could remember ever having been collected before.

The Romans met with nothing but willing cooperation from all quarters. The people of Italy were so frightened by the approach of the Gauls that they no longer thought of themselves as fighting in support of Rome, nor did it cross their minds that the purpose of the war was Roman supremacy; all the allies took the danger personally and saw it as a direct threat to their own cities and lands, and were happy to do what the Romans wanted.

[24] I want the strength of the state that Hannibal presumed to attack to be perfectly clear, as clear as the actual facts can make it. If the might of the realm that he confronted is to be clear—if it is to be understood how extraordinary it was that he inflicted disastrous defeats on the Romans and came very close to overall success—I must indicate their resources and the number of troops then available to them.

Four legions of Roman troops had accompanied the two consuls out into the field, each consisting of 5,200 infantry and 300 cavalry, and the number of allied troops under the command of both consuls together came to 30,000 foot and 2,000 horse. In response to the crisis, the Sabines and Etruscans came to the support of Rome with about 4,000 cavalry and more than 50,000 infantry, whom the Romans levied and posted in the defence of Etruria under the command of one of the praetors; the Umbrians and Sarsinates, from the Apennines, raised about 20,000 men, who were deployed, along with another 20,000 from the Veneti and Cenomani, on the frontier with Gaul, to execute a diversionary invasion of the territory of the Boii. These were the legions posted in the defence of Italian countryside, while in Rome there were stationed troops whose job was to respond as reserves to any military emergency. The Roman division of these reserves consisted of 20,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry, and the allies supplied another 30,000 infantry and 2,000 cavalry.

The lists showed the availability of 80,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry from the Latins; 70,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry from the Samnites; 50,000 infantry and 16,000 cavalry from the Iapygians and Messapians together; 30,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry from the Lucanians; and 20,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry from the Marsi, Marrucini, Frentani, and Vestini. Then there were also two reserve legions in Sicily and Tarentum, each consisting of about

4,200 infantry and 200 cavalry; and the total number of Romans and Campanians available for conscription came to 250,000 infantry and 23,000 cavalry.

In all, then, the number of Romans and their allies capable of bearing arms was over 700,000 infantry and about 70,000 cavalry, while Hannibal invaded Italy with fewer than 20,000 men. I will return to this point and clarify matters later.

[25] The Celts swooped down on Etruria and scoured the land, plundering and pillaging at will. After a while, since they met with no opposition, they decided to march on Rome itself. When they reached Clusium, three days' journey from Rome,* they found out that the Roman forces stationed in Etruria were not far behind them. They turned to meet them, eager for the fray, and by evening the two armies were in close proximity. Both sides halted at a reasonable distance from each other and settled in for the night. Once it was dark, the Celts lit their campfires, but quit the camp, leaving the cavalry behind with instructions to take the same route as them at daybreak, in plain view of the enemy. The rest of them slipped away in the direction of Faesulae and prepared for battle there. Their plan was to wait for their cavalry and then throw the enemy column into disarray with a surprise attack.

At daybreak, seeing that the cavalry was on its own and assuming that the rest of the Celts had run away, the Romans raced after them. When they were close enough, the Celts emerged and fell on them. At first both sides fought fiercely, but eventually the courage and numbers of the Celts enabled them to overwhelm their opponents. The Romans lost at least 6,000 men, while the rest fled; most of the survivors retreated to a defensible spot and stayed put. At first the Celts intended to assault the Romans, but they were exhausted after the night march and all the stress and hardship, so they decided to get some rest and look after themselves. They left some of their horsemen to watch the hill, and planned to make an assault on the survivors the next day, if they did not surrender of their own accord.

[26] But Aemilius, who had been sent on ahead to watch over the Adriatic region, had heard that the Celts had invaded through Etruria and were approaching Rome. He hurried to help, and luckily arrived just then, in the nick of time, and halted close by the enemy. Those who had taken refuge on the hill saw his fires and understood what

they meant. Their spirits rose, and as soon as night fell they sent some of their men unarmed and silent through the maquis to tell the consul what had happened. It was clear, once he was aware of the situation, that he had no choice, and he ordered his tribunes to lead the infantry out at dawn, with him and the cavalry in the van, and to advance on the hill.

Meanwhile, however, the sight of Aemilius' campfires in the darkness had alerted the Gauls to the presence of the enemy. Their leaders met and discussed what to do, and King Aneroëstes said that, in his opinion, they had taken so much booty—uncountable prisoners and cattle, apparently, had swollen their baggage train—that it no longer made sense to take any risks at all. He suggested that they should go back home without fighting and return to attack Rome, if they wanted, once they had disburdened themselves of the booty. The Gauls decided to take Aneroëstes' advice, so after this night-time council they decamped before dawn and advanced along the coast through Etruria. Aemilius added the survivors from the hill to his own force, but decided that there was nothing to be gained by risking a pitched battle; he chose instead to follow the Gauls and watch for opportunities and terrain that might enable him to injure them or deprive them of some of their booty.

[27] At this point, the consul Gaius Atilius Regulus sailed with his legions from Sardinia, landed at Pisa, and set off for Rome. This meant that his army was marching in the opposite direction to the enemy, and when the Celts were at Telamon in Etruria, some of their foragers encountered Atilius' advance guard and were captured. On interrogation, they told the consul what had happened, including the fact that both the armies were there, with the Celts very near at hand and Aemilius behind them. This was not what Atilius had expected, but it gave him good grounds for hoping that he and Aemilius had caught the Celts on the march between them. He ordered the tribunes to have the infantry form up and advance at a normal pace on as broad a front as the terrain would allow, while he and the cavalry galloped to occupy the crest of a hill he had spotted, which was well placed over the road the Celts were bound to take. He was anxious to initiate the fighting before Aemilius, since he was sure this would guarantee him the major share of the credit for the victory.

The Celts had no idea that Atilius was near by, so at first they assumed that what they were seeing was Aemilius' cavalry, which had

outflanked them during the night and occupied the hill. They immediately sent their own cavalry contingent and some of their light-armed troops to try to take the hill, but they soon learnt from one of the prisoners they took of Atilius' arrival. They quickly had their infantry form up to face in both directions, to the front and to the rear: they knew they were being followed, and now they expected an attack from the front as well, on the evidence of the information they were receiving and the way events were unfolding.

[28] Aemilius had known that Atilius had landed at Pisa, but had assumed that the legions were still far away—until the action on the hill made him realize that fellow Romans were close at hand. He immediately sent his cavalry to help those who were fighting on the hill, and then he drew up the infantry in its customary formation and advanced towards the enemy. Facing the rear, where they anticipated the attack from Aemilius, the Celts had posted the Alpine tribe, the Gaesatae, with the Insubres in support; facing the opposite direction—that is, facing forward, from where Atilius' legions would approach—they posted the Taurisci and the Boii, from the near side of the Po. Their chariots and tumbrels were deployed beyond either wing, and the livestock they had taken was collected on a nearby hill with a protective guard around it. The double-facing arrangement adopted by the Celtic army was both formidable and effective. The Insubres and the Boii deployed wearing trousers and light cloaks, but the swagger and bravado of the Gaesatae was such that they cast their clothes aside and stood in the front ranks naked,* apart from their weaponry—a practical move, they thought, seeing that the area was dotted with thorny shrubs that would snag their clothing and make it more difficult for them to wield their weapons.

At first, the fighting was confined to the hill, where the bewildering clash of massed horsemen from either camp was fought out in plain view of everyone. This was the point at which Atilius the consul fell in the thick of the battle, fighting with reckless disregard for his own life; his head was taken to the Celtic kings, but the Roman cavalry fought bravely on until they finally overpowered the enemy and took possession of the hill. By then the infantry units were close to one another, poised for a battle that struck those who were present at the time as unique and remarkable, and will also leave the same impression on anyone subsequently who is capable of imagining the scene on the basis of a verbal description.

[29] In the first place, and obviously, since there were three armies involved in the battle, the movements of the forces drawn up against one another were bound to be strange and unusual. In the second place, the question inevitably arises, for us now as well as for an eye-witness at the time: was the situation of the Celts highly precarious, since they were being attacked by enemy forces from both directions at once, or was it, on the contrary, very favourable, since in fighting both armies they were simultaneously protecting their rear on both sides and, most importantly (a peculiar advantage of the two-faced formation), there was nowhere for them to fall back and find safety in case of defeat?

As for the Romans, while they were encouraged by the fact that they had the enemy completely trapped between them, they were dismayed by the discipline of the Celtic army, and intimidated by the blare of countless enemy horns and trumpets. With the Celts all chanting battle-hymns at the same time as well, there was so much noise that the sound seemed not just to ring out from the trumpets and the men, but to echo from the very hills around them. Equally terrifying were the appearance and the gestures of the naked men in the front ranks, all in their various ways fine figures of men in their prime. But all the Gauls in the forward companies wore golden torcs and armlets as adornments, and while this too contributed to the Romans' fear, the prospect of profit made them twice as eager for the fray.

[30] Just then, however, the skirmishers advanced as usual from the Roman legions and began to rain a barrage of javelins at the enemy, with telling effect. The Celts further back were well served by their cloaks and trousers, but this was not at all what the naked men in the front ranks had expected and they, on the contrary, found themselves in considerable difficulty and trouble. The Gallic shield cannot protect all of a man's body, and since they were naked and men of an unusually large build, it was easy for the missiles to get through to them. After a while, since they could not retaliate against the skirmishers, who were too far away and were laying down too thick a barrage of missiles, they found themselves in serious danger, and incapable of doing anything about it. Some of them, in a fit of irrational passion, hurled themselves futilely at the enemy and threw away their lives, while others shrank gradually back on their own lines, where their blatant cowardice sowed confusion.

So the proud Gaesatae were humbled by the skirmishers. Once the skirmishers had retired behind the lines, the Roman maniples attacked, but at close quarters the main body of the Gallic army—the Insubres, Boii, and Taurisci—put up a stiff resistance. Despite being hacked to pieces, they stood their ground and matched the Romans for courage; only their weaponry let them down, both individually and collectively. The Romans' shields were as superior in defence as their swords were in offence: their shields, unlike those of their opponents, covered the entire body, and their swords were made for both cutting and thrusting,† while the Gallic sword was good only for cutting. And the Roman cavalry made good use of the advantage of higher ground: they charged off the hill and launched a fierce attack on the Gauls' flank, and then the Celtic infantry were slaughtered where they stood, while their cavalry turned to flight.

[31] About 40,000 Celts lost their lives, and at least another 10,000 were taken prisoner. Among the prisoners was King Concolitanus, but the other king, Aneroëstes, fled with a few followers to a certain spot and took his own life, along with those of his closest companions. Aemilius collected the battlefield spoils and sent them to Rome, but returned all the Gauls' plunder to its rightful owners. Then he marched with his legions through Liguria and invaded the territory of the Boii. A few days later, after he had allowed his men to plunder to their hearts' content, he and his army returned to Rome. He adorned the Capitol with the standards and the torcs (the golden bands Gauls wear around their necks), but kept the rest of the booty and the prisoners of war to enhance the splendour of his entrance into the city and his triumph.*

So ended the most serious offensive the Celts had ever launched, which had threatened all Italy, but especially Rome, with terrible danger. This victory gave the Romans good grounds for hoping that they would be able to expel the Celts altogether from the Po plain, and both the consuls for the next year, Quintus Fulvius Flaccus and
224 Titus Manlius Torquatus, were sent out with a substantial and well-equipped army to campaign against them. They overwhelmed the Boii straight away and compelled them to pledge allegiance to Rome, but extraordinarily heavy rains and the outbreak of an epidemic frustrated any further achievements from the campaign.

223 [32] The consuls for the following year, Publius Furius Philus and Gaius Flaminius, again attacked the Celts. They invaded the

territory of the Anares, who live not far from Massalia, and once they had brought them into the Roman alliance, they carried on into the territory of the Insubres, crossing the Po where it is joined by the Addua. They came under attack while they were crossing the river and setting up camp, and they stayed only long enough to make a truce, which allowed them to retire. A few days later, after taking a roundabout route, they crossed the Clusius river into the territory of the Cenomani, who were their allies. They recruited extra troops and then once again (this time from the direction of the Alpine piedmont) invaded the Insubrian plains, where they ravaged the countryside and pillaged homesteads.

The Insubrian leaders, seeing that the Romans were inexorably committed to invasion, decided to try their luck and risk a decisive battle against them. They gathered all their available forces, took the so-called 'immovable' golden standards down from the temple of Athena,* and did everything else they needed to get ready; then they took up a confrontational and threatening position close to the enemy. There were about 50,000 of them, far more than the Romans—which meant that the Romans wanted to make use of the Celtic forces who were marching with them. But they were aware of Gallic duplicity and, bearing in mind the fact that these auxiliaries of theirs would be fighting against fellow Gauls, they were uncertain whether to have them play a part in such a critical action. In the end, they themselves remained on the near side of the river, while they sent the Celts they had with them back across to the far side to destroy the bridges over the river. While this made them safe from their Celtic auxiliaries, at the same time it meant that their survival depended on victory, since there was now no way they could cross the river that lay behind them. With these measures in place, they were ready for battle.

[33] The Romans are acknowledged to have gone about this battle in an intelligent manner, but this was due to the instructions issued by the tribunes about how the battle as a whole was to be fought and what they expected from each and every individual. The tribunes had noticed in their former encounters with the Gauls that they were particularly formidable while still fresh, in their first charge, and that this was due not just to the fact that they were still fired up, but also to their swords. The way the Gauls' swords were made, as already mentioned, meant that they were potentially lethal only on the first cut. After that, they were bent right out of shape, with their blades so

distorted both lengthwise and sideways that, unless a swordsman had time to rest his sword on the ground and straighten it with his foot, his second blow would be completely ineffective. So the tribunes gave the first ranks the spears of the *triarii*, who occupied the third rank from the front, and told them to turn to their swords only after using their spears. Then they formed up opposite the Celts, and battle was joined.

The Gauls rendered their swords unusable with their first cuts against the spears, and then the Romans came to close quarters. Gauls normally fight with a slashing motion (since their swords lack sharp tips), but the Romans had made this method ineffective. There was nothing the Celts could do, and the Romans, wielding their swords straight on (with a thrusting rather than a cutting motion, since their swords have effective tips), managed to kill most of their adversaries by striking again and again at their chests and faces. They had the foresight of the tribunes to thank for this victory, while Flaminius is thought to have mismanaged the battle. He had the men form up along the very edge of the river bank, and so ruined one of the peculiar features of Roman battle tactics by leaving no space for the maniples to step back. If at any point in the battle the men had been forced back even a little, the thoughtlessness of their commanding officer would inevitably have sent them hurtling into the river. In actual fact, however, as I have shown, their prowess gained them a decisive victory, and they returned to Rome laden with a huge amount of booty and not a few battlefield spoils.

222 [34] The following year the Celts sent envoys to sue unconditionally for peace, but the consuls, Marcus Claudius Marcellus and Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio Calvus, were opposed to any kind of accord with them. The frustrated Celts chose a desperate course of action and again set about hiring Gaesatae, the Gallic tribe from the region of the Rhône. They recruited about 30,000 of them, kept them in readiness, and waited for the enemy to attack.

At the start of the season, the Roman consuls set off with their troops and marched through the territory of the Insubres to Acherrae, which is situated between the Po and the Alps. They encircled the town with their camp and put it under siege. No relief expedition by the Insubres could get through, since the Romans already held all the critical positions, so they attempted to raise the siege by having a division of their army cross the Po into the territory of the Anares

and assault a town called Clastidium. When the consuls found out, Marcellus raced off to the rescue with the cavalry and some of the infantry, and in response to their arrival the Celts ended the siege, came out to meet them, and formed up for battle. The Roman cavalry boldly charged straight into the attack. At first the Celts resisted, but they soon found themselves hard pressed, with the enemy behind them and on their flank, and eventually they were forced back by just the cavalry. A lot of them fell into the river and drowned, but most of the casualties were cut down by the Romans.

The Romans also took Acherrae, with all its grain stocks, and the Gauls fell back on Mediolanum, the capital city of the Insubres. Scipio followed hard on their heels and reached the city not long after them. The Gauls did nothing, however, so after a while Scipio disengaged and set off back to Acherrae—and then the Gauls came out and launched a fierce attack on the rearguard. They inflicted heavy casualties, and even caused a partial rout, until the van came up, summoned by Scipio, with orders to stand their ground and fight. The consul was not disappointed; the Romans fought off their attackers without flinching. Encouraged by their brief success, the Celts persevered for a while, but it was not long before they were routed and found themselves fleeing to high ground, with Scipio in pursuit. After laying waste to the countryside, he assaulted and took Mediolanum, [35] at which point the Insubrian leaders felt that they no longer had any chance of survival, and submitted in all respects to the Romans.

So ended the war against the Celts, a war which, in terms of the depravity and recklessness of the contestants, and also of the numbers of combatants and casualties involved in the battles, was second to none in recorded history. In terms of motivation, however, and lack of sound decision-making at the tactical level, it is best ignored, because absolutely everything the Gauls did was dictated by passion rather than reason. I myself saw them, not many years later, expelled from the Po plain (except for a few places in the Alpine piedmont), and I decided that I could not pass over in silence either their original invasion, or their subsequent military activity, or their final displacement, since I think it is the job of history to preserve the memory of such episodes in the drama produced by Fortune and to hand a record of them down to subsequent generations. If future generations are unaware of these events, they will be utterly distraught at sudden and

unexpected barbarian invasions, when all they need to do is briefly bear in mind that any barbarian threat† is temporary and easily disposed of, and then they can endure the invasion and exhaust every last resource at their command, rather than give up anything important.

And that is why I believe that those who preserved and passed on to us records of the Persian invasion of Greece and the Gauls' assault on Delphi have enormously helped the Greeks in their struggles on one another's behalf for independence, because if someone bears in mind the part played by the extraordinary and the unexpected on those occasions, and remembers how many myriads of men were, for all their fearlessness and their armament, destroyed by the resolve and the resources of those who faced danger intelligently and rationally, he will not be dismayed by immense quantities of supplies and weapons, and hordes of troops, into abandoning all hope and failing to fight for his land and the country of his birth. Fear of the Gauls has often overwhelmed the Greeks, in my own day as well as in the past, and this is what particularly impelled me to describe this war, at least to the extent of giving a summary of its course from beginning to end.

[36] Meanwhile—to return to the narrative that was interrupted
221 by this digression—the Carthaginian general Hasdrubal was murdered one night in his quarters by a Celt with a personal grudge. He had been in charge of Iberia for eight years, and during this time he hugely advanced Carthaginian interests, not so much by military means as by diplomacy with various Iberian rulers. The Carthaginians appointed Hannibal to the command of Iberia, despite his youth,* on the strength of the intelligence and incisiveness his achievements had already indicated. Right from the start of his command, he made no secret of his intention to make war on the Romans—which, of course, is exactly what he ended up doing, only a short while later. From then on, relations between the Carthaginians and Romans were marked by mutual distrust and tension. The Carthaginians were letting their desire to avenge their defeat in Sicily dictate their policies, and the Romans were deeply suspicious of the Carthaginians, whose intentions were transparent. It was clear to anyone with an open mind that before long they would be at war.

[37] At much the same time, the Achaeans and King Philip V,
220 joined by their allies, began to fight the Aetolians in what is called the

Social War. Since I have already described events in Sicily and Libya (and their aftermath), it would preserve the continuity of the introduction if I next covered the Social War and the second war between the Romans and the Carthaginians, commonly known as the Hannibalic War.* But if I am to preserve the plan I declared at the outset, of making this date the starting point of my actual narrative, I should leave these wars aside for the time being and take up events in Greece instead, so that I can begin detailed history once I have rounded off the introduction and preamble and brought everything down to the same date. For my project differs from those of earlier historians, who described just certain incidents—what happened in Greece, perhaps, or in Persia. I have set myself the task of writing the history of all the known parts of the inhabited world* at once, because, as I shall explain more fully on another occasion, the distinctive feature of our times has made this aspect of my project particularly relevant. And so, before coming to the main body of my work, I must briefly touch on all the most notable and famous peoples and places of the known world.

I do not need to mention events in Asia and Egypt until *after* my chosen date, because quite a few published works have covered their past history and made it familiar to everyone; besides, in recent years they have been spared the kind of unusual or extraordinary interventions of Fortune that would require my covering their past history as background. But it is perfectly appropriate for me to give a résumé of the past history of the Achaeans and the royal house of Macedon, because within my own lifetime the Macedonian royal house has become extinct, while the growth of Achaean power and their progress towards unity have been remarkable, as I mentioned before.* There had been many attempts in the past to unify the Peloponnesians, but none of them succeeded because each state was interested only in its own supremacy, not in freedom for all alike. In my time, however, this cause has made considerable progress. It has been so successful, in fact, that not only have they formed the states into a community of allies and friends, but they have also adopted the same laws, weights and measures, and coinage, and they share statesmen, council, and law courts. In short, the only way in which almost the entire Peloponnese fails to be a single state is that its inhabitants are not enclosed within a single wall; in all other respects, the public aspects of their lives are more or less identical from city to city.

[38] Above all, it will help to know how the Achaeans gained such control of the Peloponnese that their name has come to be used of all Peloponnesians. After all, the original Achaeans, the ones entitled by ancestry to the name, were hardly noted for the size of their territory or the number of their communities, or for their wealth or the martial prowess of their men. The Arcadians and Laconians have far larger populations and a great deal more land, nor are either of them ever likely to yield the prize for valour to any other Greeks. So why were they and everyone else in the Peloponnese happy to take on the Achaean system of government and the Achaean name? What induced them to do so? Clearly, this is not a case in which just glibly saying 'Fortune' would be an appropriate response. We need to look deeper for a reason, knowing that even things that seem improbable have causes, just as much as comprehensible events, because otherwise they would not happen.

It seems to me that the reason is that one would be hard put to find equality and the right to speak one's mind in assembly—in short, the system and principles of true democracy*—in a purer form than among the Achaeans. Although democracy found a few Peloponnesians who were prepared to devote themselves to her cause of their own free wills, she won over more of them by the persuasive power of reason, while those who needed the timely application of force from her soon exchanged resistance for contentment. For she reserved no privileges for any of her original devotees and treated all as equals, regardless of when they came over to her side. And so, with the able assistance of her two colleagues, egalitarianism and courtesy, she soon attained her aim. Democracy, then, was the instigator and agent, and we need look no further to explain how the Peloponnesians came to cooperate and forge their current prosperity.

The principles and distinctive features of the constitution I have just mentioned had long existed in Achaea. There is plenty of evidence for this, but for present purposes I need cite only a couple
*c.*450 of cases. [39] For instance, after the Pythagorean council-houses were burnt down in the part of Italy then known as Magna Graecia,* there was widespread political unrest (as you would expect following the sudden death of the leading men from each city) and the Greek cities there were rife with murder, conflict, and mayhem of all kinds. Delegations came from all over Greece on peace-making missions,

but it was the Achaeans whose integrity they trusted and to whom they looked for a solution to their current troubles.

Nor was this the only occasion when the Greeks of Magna Graecia showed their approval of the Achaean system. Some years later, the *c.*420 prevalence of the desire to adopt the Achaean constitutional model led the citizens of Croton, Sybaris, and Caulonia to hold a joint conference and form themselves into a league. The first item on the agenda was to designate the sanctuary of Zeus Homarios as their common place of worship, and the centre where they would meet to exchange views and deliberate, and the second thing they did was take over the laws and customs of the Achaeans, which they had chosen as the model for their own political system. In fact, it was only the supremacy of Dionysius I of Syracuse,* and then their conquest by the neighbouring natives, that forced them, against their wills, to give up this form of government.

Later, after the shock defeat of the Spartans at the battle of Leuctra 371 and the unexpected success of the Theban bid for supremacy in Greece, there was a sense of unfinished business throughout Greece, but especially in these two communities, since the Spartans refused to acknowledge their defeat and the Thebans were not sure that they had finally won. But they turned to arbitration, and the only Greeks they trusted were the Achaeans—not on account of their power (for at that time Achaea was close to being the weakest state in Greece), but because of their probity and integrity, for which in those days they were, by common consent, universally acclaimed.

At that time the principles of democracy were restricted to Achaea, and no event or action took place that significantly increased its power. The reason for this was that it was impossible for a leader to arise to champion democracy, because at his first appearance the Spartans or the Macedonians, whoever was dominant at the time, would overshadow him and nip his growth in the bud. [40] In due season, however, the system found worthy champions, who enabled it to show what it was capable of; and before long it produced the finest of results, concord in the Peloponnese.

Aratus of Sicyon should be given the credit for being the prime mover and instigator of this concord, while Philopoemen of Megalopolis fought for it and saw it through to completion, and Lycortas* and his allies in this cause strengthened its position and enabled it to endure for a while. I shall try to give an account of what

each of them achieved, and how and when they did so, without impeding the flow of the narrative too much. I shall treat Aratus' administration, however, here and in later passages, in a cursory fashion, because he gave an honest and clear account of his achievements in his own *Memoirs*; but I shall cover what the others did in more detail and at greater length. I think that the simplest way for me to write up the account and for my readers to learn from it will be if I start from the period, after the city-by-city dissolution of the Achaean League by the Macedonian kings, when there was a fresh start and the cities again began to beckon to one another. From then on, the growth of the League was uninterrupted until it reached its current state of maturity, a glimpse of which I have just given.

[41] The initiative came with the federation of Patrae and Dyme in
284–281 the 124th Olympiad—around the time, then, of the deaths of Ptolemy I the son of Lagus, Lysimachus, Seleucus I, and Ptolemy Ceraunus, all of whom died during this Olympiad.* Here, in outline, is the earlier history of the League. Their first king was Tisamenus the son of Orestes, who was banished from Sparta at the time of the return of the Heraclids* and took over Achaea. The house of Tisamenus ruled Achaea in an unbroken line until after the reign of Ogygus, when the oppressed Achaeans threw off his sons' unconstitutional and harsh rule in favour of democracy. From then on, up to the reigns of Philip II and Alexander the Great, although they sometimes had to adapt to circumstances, they did their best, as I have already said, to keep their League constitution a democracy.

The original League consisted of twelve communities, all of which still exist, except for Helice (which was engulfed by the sea not long before the battle of Leuctra) and Olenus. The others are Patrae, Dyme, Pharae, Tritaea, Leontium, Aegium, Aegeira, Pellene, Bura, and Ceryneia. Between the time of Alexander and the 124th Olympiad, there was considerable discord and dissension among them, fomented especially by the Macedonian kings.* So far from forming any kind of league, each community pursued its own interests even if that antagonized others. This led to the installation of garrisons in some of them and to tyranny in others. Garrisons were installed by Demetrius and Cassander, and then later by Antigonus Gonatas, who also seems to have grafted more tyrants onto the Greeks than the other two.

But then, as I have already mentioned, in the 124th Olympiad, around the time of Pyrrhus' expedition to Italy, there was a shift of

policy and they began to cooperate again. The first cities to make up the newly reformed League were Dyme, Patrae, Tritaea, and Pharae (which explains why there is not even a stele in existence recording their confederacy*), and then, about five years later, the people of Aegium expelled their garrison and joined the confederacy too. The Burians were next, once their tyrant had been killed, and shortly afterwards Ceryneia also came in: the lesson of the expulsion of the garrison from Aegium, and the killing of the Bourian tyrant by Margus and the Achaeans, was not lost on Iseas, the tyrant of Ceryneia at the time. Besides, there was the threat of imminent war from all quarters. He abdicated, once he had received assurances of his personal safety from the Achaeans, and so made it possible for the city to join the Achaean federation.

[42] Why have I gone back in time like this? First, I want it to be clear under what circumstances the impetus arose for reviving the current system, when that happened, and which of the original Achaean states were involved in the revival from the start. Second, I want the facts themselves to verify what I have been saying about the Achaeans' political principles: that they only ever had just the one system, and that the way they went about accomplishing their goal combined offering others the equality and the right to speak that they themselves enjoyed, along with unremitting warfare against those who, either by themselves or with the help of the Macedonian kings, tried to enslave their homelands. They did this partly by themselves and partly, in later years, with the help of their allies. The contribution made in later years towards this project should also be credited to the Achaeans and their principles, in the sense that, although they took part in many undertakings, most frequently and most gloriously alongside the Romans, they never wanted any gain for themselves from their successes. All they ever asked, in return for the resolve they brought to the allied cause, was freedom and concord for all Peloponnesians. Their actual deeds will confirm this.

[43] For the first twenty-five years, the confederacy of the communities I have mentioned appointed in rotation as their League officers a secretary and two generals. Then they decided instead to appoint a single general and to give him overall responsibility for their affairs. The first man to hold this position was Margus of Ceryneia. Four 255
years after Margus' term of office Aratus of Sicyon, aged only twenty at the time, liberated his city from tyranny through his own valour and 251

courage, and brought Sicyon into the League. He had always been an
243 admirer of the Achaeans' political principles. Eight years later, during his second generalship, he took the Acrocorinth,* which was part of Antigonus' domain. His capture of the citadel lifted a heavy burden of fear from the Peloponnesians, and newly liberated Corinth joined the Achaean League. During this same term of office, he also gained Megara and brought it into the League. This was the year before the defeat of the Carthaginians, when they had to evacuate Sicily and submit for the first time to the imposition of tribute by Rome.*

This was remarkable progress in only a few years, and from then on he was the leader of the League. All his policies and all his actions were directed towards a single goal: expelling the Macedonians from the Peloponnese, banishing the tyrants, and guaranteeing every community its ancestral freedom, as a member of a free League. While Antigonus Gonatas was alive, Aratus spent his time combating his forays into Peloponnesian affairs and resisting the rapaciousness of the Aetolians, and he was very effective, even though in their arrogance and aggression the Macedonians and Aetolians formed an alliance with the express purpose of destroying the Achaean League.
239 [44] After Antigonus' death, however, the Achaeans even formed an alliance with the Aetolians and fought bravely alongside them in their war against Demetrius II. For a while, the antipathy and animosity between them were suspended and replaced by reasonably good and friendly terms.

229 When Demetrius died after only ten years as king (around the time of the Romans' first expedition to Illyria), the Achaeans' original design made good headway. The Peloponnesian tyrants were dismayed by the death of Demetrius, who had been their backer, so to speak, and their paymaster. At the same time Aratus was pressuring them into abdicating. He offered them generous bribes and positions of political power if they agreed to do so, and, if that did not get their attention, he added the threat of increasing the level of the Achaeans' military activity against them. The tyrants soon gave in; they abdicated, restored their cities' independence, and joined the Achaean League. One of the tyrants, Lydiadas of Megalopolis, had seen what was coming and of his own free will, while Demetrius was still alive, had very shrewdly and sensibly abdicated and joined the regional League. After Demetrius' death, Aristomachus of Argos, Xenon of

Hermione, and Cleonymus of Phlius all stepped down from their tyrannies and made way for Achaean democracy.

[45] So the League grew and made extensive progress, while the Aetolians, an innately aggressive and rapacious people, looked on with envy. A more potent factor, however, was that they hoped to break the League up, just as they had earlier divided Acarnania between themselves and Alexander II of Epirus, and had wanted to share Achaea with Antigonus Gonatas. With the same purpose in mind, they now had the gall to enter into a pact with Antigonus III Doson, the ruler of Macedon at the time (he was the guardian of Philip V, who was still just a boy), and with Cleomenes III of Sparta, and to collaborate with them both. They could see that Antigonus' supremacy in Macedon was secure, and the hatred he bore the Achaeans, for seizing and occupying the Acrocorinth, was unequivocal and obvious. Their thinking, then, was that if they could infect the Spartans too with hostility towards the League and gain their support for the project, they would easily crush the Achaeans by launching a coordinated attack on them from all directions at once.

In all probability they would soon have met with success, except that they overlooked a critical flaw in their plans. They failed to take into consideration that this initiative of theirs would bring them up against Aratus, a man who could cope with any crisis. As a result, all their scheming and aggression failed to bring about any of their goals. Quite the contrary, in fact: Aratus, who was general at the time, was so effective at deflecting and frustrating their plans that all they achieved was to strengthen his position and consolidate the League. His handling of the whole business will become clear in what follows.

[46] The Aetolians, as Aratus could see, were held back from declaring war on the Achaeans only by the thought of the help they had so recently received from them in their war against Demetrius. They were, however, in close communication with the Spartans. In fact, the Aetolians were so envious of the Achaeans that so far from protesting when Cleomenes treacherously stole Tegea, Mantinea, and 229
Orchomenus from them, they even recognized his occupation as valid, despite the fact that all these places were Aetolian allies and fellow League members. The rapacious Aetolians, who had formerly seized on the slightest pretext to go on the offensive even against people who had done them no wrong, now watched themselves being deliberately double-crossed, and connived at being robbed of cities that were their

greatest assets, just so long as they could see Cleomenes building up his strength until he was a match for the Achaeans.

Aratus' response was to decide, along with the other leaders of the Achaean League, that they should avoid aggression towards any of their opponents, while discouraging the Spartans. That was their original decision, at any rate, but Cleomenes next took the offensive, showing how bitter he felt towards them, and began to fortify the Athenaeum, as it is called, in Megalopolitis. So they called a general assembly of the Achaeans, and they and the Council decided on open war with the Spartans. This is how the so-called Cleomenean War began at that time.

[47] At first, the Achaeans resolved to rely entirely on their own resources to resist the Spartans. It was not just that they thought it more glorious to see to their own safety, and to protect the cities and land by themselves, without outside help; they also wanted to preserve their friendship with Ptolemy III Euergetes. They had earlier been recipients of his generosity,* and did not want to seem to be
227 reaching out to others. But as time went by, and Cleomenes not only overthrew the traditional Spartan constitution, replacing lawful kingship with tyranny, but was also managing the war in a remarkably efficient manner, Aratus decided to take precautions. He was particularly concerned about the depravity and recklessness of the Aetolians, and he decided that he had to pre-empt them and thwart their plans.

He could see that Antigonus Doson was both practical and intelligent. He was also perfectly well aware that, while Antigonus claimed to be a man of integrity, kings regard no one as a natural ally or foe, but always measure friendship and enmity by the standard of expediency. So he decided to open a channel of communication with Antigonus and to try to establish a cordial relationship with him by pointing out where matters were tending. But for various reasons he thought it inexpedient to do this openly: that would provoke a hostile response to the attempt from Cleomenes and the Aetolians, and at the same time most of his fellow Achaeans would be disturbed by his seeking help from an enemy and seeming to have given up on them. That was the last thing he wanted them to think, and so, for the sake of his project, he inclined towards handling the negotiations in secret. This meant that he was often forced to give the lie to his true intentions when speaking and acting in public—to give the opposite

impression in order to conceal the measures he was taking. There were some matters, therefore, that he did not even include in his *Memoirs*.

[48] Now, Aratus knew that the war was causing particular suffering in Megalopolis. Not only were the Megalopolitans bearing the brunt of the fighting, since the city lay close to the border with Laconia, but they were also not getting the help they should have received from the Achaeans, who were also hard pressed by the crisis and in a bad way. He was also well aware that the people of Megalopolis had been on good terms with the royal house of Macedon ever since Philip II, the son of Amyntas, had proved himself their benefactor.* He was sure, 338
then, that before long Cleomenes would have made life so difficult for them that they would turn to Antigonus and the Macedonians for help, and so he secretly got in touch with Nicophanes and Cercidas of Megalopolis*—their families and his had been guest-friends for generations—and revealed his plan to them.

They were just the right people for the job and, thanks to their efforts, the Megalopolitans readily agreed to approach the Achaeans with a plea for them to look to Antigonus for help. The envoys the people of Megalopolis chose were Nicophanes and Cercidas themselves, and they had instructions to go straight on from Achaea to Antigonus, if the League gave them the go-ahead. The Achaeans gave the Megalopolitans permission to approach Antigonus, and before long Nicophanes and his colleagues had an appointment with the king. At this meeting, they followed Aratus' instructions and suggestions: they gave Antigonus no more than a quick run-through of the bare essentials of their own city's situation, and spent most of the time explaining the larger picture.

[49] Aratus had told them to point out the significance and likely consequences of cooperation between the Aetolians and Cleomenes. They were to make it clear that, while at first it would be an Achaean problem, Antigonus would be next and it would be worse for him; that however obvious it was that the Achaeans could not hold out against both the Aetolians and Cleomenes at once, it was even more obvious, to anyone with any sense, that once these two had defeated the Achaeans, they would not just rest content and leave things as they were; that the whole of Greece, let alone just the Peloponnese, was too small to contain Aetolian greed; and that although Cleomenes' ambitions and objectives were for the time being restricted to the Peloponnese, he

would follow up success there with a bid for supremacy in Greece—a goal that would require him first to put an end to Macedonian rule.

The envoys asked Antigonus to consider the possibilities: would his interests be better served by fighting alongside the Achaeans and Boeotians in the Peloponnese, to stop Cleomenes becoming the dominant power in Greece? Or would he prefer to fight in Thessaly, where the issue would be Macedonian supremacy, against a combined force of Aetolians, Boeotians, Achaeans, and Spartans? Because that is what would happen if he abandoned the largest of the Greek leagues. At the moment, they said, the Aetolians were pretending to be neutral, out of gratitude for the good turn the Achaeans did them during Demetrius' reign; if this carried on, the Achaeans would resist Cleomenes by themselves, and perhaps would need no outside assistance, as long as Fortune was on their side. But what if Fortune opposed them? What if the Aetolians joined the offensive against them? They urged him to see that he had the perfect opportunity to help the Peloponnesians while they could still be saved. They said he had no need to worry about the terms of the contract and how he would be repaid; if he fulfilled their request, they assured him, it would be Aratus himself who would find terms agreeable to both parties. And it would also be Aratus, they said, who would let him know when his assistance was needed.

[50] After listening to the envoys, Antigonus agreed that Aratus had presented a valid and realistic view of the situation. Once he had carefully considered what was to be done next, he wrote a letter to the people of Megalopolis, in which he promised help, provided that the Achaeans too were agreeable. When Nicophanes and Cercidas returned home, they delivered the letter and reported that they had the king's wholehearted support. The Megalopolitans were excited to hear this, and could hardly wait to go to the Achaean assembly and beg them to bring Antigonus in as soon as possible, and put him in charge.

Aratus heard privately from Nicophanes of the king's partiality for the League and himself, and was delighted that his plan had not been futile—that he had not found Antigonus completely alienated from him, as the Aetolians had hoped. He was also pleased that the Megalopolitans were happy to do business with Antigonus through the League. As I have already said, he would have preferred not to have had to ask for help at all, but if he had no choice and nowhere

else to turn, he thought it better that the invitation should come from the League as a whole, not just him. Suppose the king came, defeated Cleomenes and the Spartans, and then endeavoured to harm the League: Aratus was worried that he would reap all the blame for this—that the king would be held to be in the right because Aratus had wronged the Macedonian royal house earlier over the Acrocorinth.

So the Megalopolitans presented themselves at the meeting of 226
the federal Council. They showed Antigonus' letter to the Achaeans, informed them of his wholehearted support, and asked the Council to summon the king's help at the earliest possible opportunity. The general consensus was that they should do just that. Aratus then stepped forward. After first expressing his gratitude to the king for his support and to the meeting for its decision, he spoke at some length. Nothing, he said, could serve their interests more, and nothing could be more glorious, than protecting their cities and land on their own; and he urged them to make that their primary objective. But, he said, if Fortune did not favour them in this regard, and if they had exhausted all their own resources, then they should seek help from their friends.

[51] When the applause died down, the Achaeans resolved to leave things as they were and to finish the war on their own. But Ptolemy, seeing that he could no longer rely on the Achaeans to hinder the designs of the Macedonian kings, thought that the Spartans would serve his purposes better; he abandoned the League, and instead began to fund Cleomenes and to groom him for war against Antigonus. Moreover, the Achaeans were defeated in an engagement at Mount Lycaeum, when Cleomenes caught them while they were on the march; they suffered a second defeat in a pitched battle at a place in Megalopolitis called Ladocea, when Lydiadas fell; and finally the whole federal force was decisively beaten at the Hecatombaeum near Dyme.

Time was no longer on their side, and the situation left them no choice: at this point the Achaeans unanimously agreed to turn to Antigonus. Through his son, whom he sent to negotiate with 225
Antigonus, Aratus now confirmed the conditions of Macedonian aid. The major stumbling block and difficulty for the Achaeans was the Acrocorinth: the king seemed disinclined to help unless the citadel was returned to him and he could make Corinth his headquarters for the war, but they did not dare to cede control of Corinth to the

Macedonians if that was not what the Corinthians wanted. For a while, then, the Council postponed reaching a decision while they considered the terms.

[52] Cleomenes' victories had made things very difficult for the League, and they could do nothing to stop him taking action against their cities. By force of words or force of arms he gained Caphyae, Pellene, Pheneus, Argos, Phlius, Cleonae, Epidaurus, Hermion, Troezen and finally Corinth, before investing Sicyon. But he solved the Achaeans' chief problem for them. When the Corinthians ordered the Achaeans and Aratus, who was general at the time,* out of the city, and wrote to invite Cleomenes in, the Achaeans had the excuse they needed, and Aratus seized the opportunity to offer Antigonus the Acrocorinth, which they still held. This simultaneously cancelled his debt to the royal house of Macedon, and served as a pledge of his future friendship—but, most importantly, it gave Antigonus a base from which to go on the offensive against the Spartans.

When Cleomenes found out about the Achaeans' arrangement with Antigonus, he left Sicyon and set up camp at the Isthmus, where (since he anticipated very soon having the entire Peloponnese firmly under his control) he secured the gap between the Acrocorinth and Mount Oneia with a palisade and a trench. Antigonus had been busy with his preparations, while waiting, as Aratus had recommended, to see what happened. Events now suggested that before very long Cleomenes and his army would be in Thessaly, so after reminding Aratus and the
224 Achaeans of their agreement he marched to the Isthmus. He came via Euboea, because on top of everything else the Aetolians were determined to see that Antigonus' rescue mission failed to take place, and they had refused him and his army access beyond Thermopylae, and threatened to take up arms to contest his passage if he tried. So Antigonus and Cleomenes faced each other with their respective armies, the former intending to enter the Peloponnese and the latter to stop him doing so.

[53] Meanwhile, despite all the serious setbacks they had suffered in the war, the Achaeans had neither given up nor lost their self-confidence. So when Aristotle of Argos rose up against the Cleomenean faction, they sent a force under the command of their general, Timoxenus, gained entrance into the city, and occupied it. This was undoubtedly the main reason for the upturn in the situation; the facts themselves show that it was the taking of Argos that

checked Cleomenes and demoralized his troops. Cleomenes was far better off than Antigonus: the more strategic locations were under his control, he had a better source of supplies, and he was motivated by greater grit and determination. But as soon as he heard that the Achaeans had taken Argos, he was so frightened of finding himself surrounded by his enemies that he broke camp, abandoned all these advantages, and retreated—though 'fled' might be a more accurate description. He attacked Argos and came fairly close to retaking the city, but the Achaeans courageously fought him off, with spirited help from the Argives, now fighting with rather than against them. Having failed at this too, Cleomenes returned to Sparta via Mantinea.

[54] So Antigonus entered the Peloponnese unopposed and took possession of the Acrocorinth, but then carried straight on to Argos, according to plan. He officially thanked the Argives, settled their political affairs, and immediately left for Arcadia. He expelled the garrisons from the fortresses Cleomenes had built in Aegytis and Belminatis, and handed these strongholds over to the Megalopolitans. Then he went to Aegium, where the Achaeans were in assembly, and gave a speech, explaining and justifying what he had done, and drawing up an agenda for the future. The Achaeans appointed him commander-in-chief of all the allied forces.

Antigonus spent the winter season at Sicyon and Corinth, before gathering his forces and setting out in early spring. On the third day *223* out, he reached Tegea, where, joined by the Achaeans, he surrounded the city and put it under siege. The Macedonians were industrious besiegers, their mines especially effective, and before long the Tegeans gave up hope and surrendered. Antigonus made the city secure and went straight on to the next part of his plan—a rapid offensive against Laconia. Cleomenes had taken up a position on the border, and when Antigonus was close enough he began to probe his defences. A few skirmishes took place, but then Antigonus received word from his scouts that Orchomenus had sent its troops to reinforce Cleomenes. Antigonus immediately broke camp and raced off for Orchomenus, which he took straight away. He next surrounded Mantinea and put the city under siege. Before long, the terrified Mantineans submitted, and the Macedonians left for Heraea and Thelpousa. They fell to Antigonus as well—the inhabitants surrendered of their own accord—and then he went to Aegium, since winter was on its way, to attend the Achaean assembly. He sent all his Macedonian troops

home for the winter, while he and the Achaeans talked things over and laid their plans.

[55] Cleomenes, meanwhile, could not help noticing that Antigonus had dismissed his troops and was staying in Aegium with only his mercenaries. Aegium was a three-day journey from Megalopolis, and Cleomenes knew that the size of Megalopolis, as well as its isolation, made it difficult to defend; besides, at the moment little attention was being paid to its protection, because of Antigonus' presence in the Peloponnese. But the most important consideration for Cleomenes was that most Megalopolitans of military age had fallen in the battles at Mount Lycaeum and Ladocea. So he gained the cooperation of some Messenian exiles who were then resident in Megalopolis, and one night, with their help, he stole inside the defensive wall.

The next day the Megalopolitans fought back with such courage that Cleomenes put his entire enterprise in jeopardy, let alone just his possession of Megalopolis. Three months earlier, in fact, that is exactly what had happened to him, when he stealthily gained entrance to the district of the city called Colaeum. On this occasion, however, the size of the force he had with him, and the fact that he had already occupied the most critical positions, eventually brought him success, and he expelled the people of Megalopolis from their city and took it over. Once the city was in his power, he destroyed it with such malignant savagery that it became impossible to conceive of its ever becoming inhabited again. The reason for this, I think, was that the only cities from which, however critical their situation, he had never been able to gain a single convert and ally for his cause, nor find a single traitor, were Megalopolis and Stymphalus. As for Cleitor, one man tarnished its noble love of freedom with his wickedness, and that was Thearces—whom the Cleitorians, not unnaturally, deny was a native of their town. They say that his father was a foreign soldier, and that Thearces was brought from Orchomenus as an infant and raised by a family as if he were their own.

[56] Among Aratus' contemporaries as writers, Phylarchus* has found favour in some quarters for his version of events, even though it often differs from and even contradicts what Aratus himself says. Since I have chosen to follow Aratus on the Cleomenean War, I should not leave the matter unexamined. It is not just that it will be instructive; as far as I am concerned, it is essential. I would not want people to be indifferent to whether they are reading fiction or fact.

Generally speaking, Phylarchus' entire work is littered with careless and irresponsible statements. I take it, however, that there is no need for me to criticize or correct the bulk of these mistakes at the moment; I need examine closely only those that are relevant to the period I am writing about, the Cleomenean War. This will give a perfectly fair impression of the general purpose and character of his work.

Consider the surrender of Mantinea, for example. Because he wants to impress upon us the cruelty of Antigonus and the Macedonians, not forgetting Aratus and the Achaeans, he says that after their subjugation the Mantineans fell on terrible times—that the oldest and greatest city of Arcadia was racked by such appalling calamities that throughout Greece people were shocked and moved to tears. He tries to write in such a way as to arouse his readers' pity and engage their emotions, and so he introduces clinging women, with their hair dishevelled and breasts exposed, and the weeping and wailing of men and women being led off into captivity, along with their children and aged parents. This is just one example of many throughout his work; he never misses an opportunity to emphasize the lurid details.

Leaving aside the fact that this approach makes his work undignified and sentimental, let us consider the proper qualities and functions of history. A historian should not use his narrative to astound† his readers with sensationalism, nor should he make up plausible speeches and list all the possible consequences of events. A historian should leave these things to tragic poets, and should focus exclusively on what was actually done and said, even if some of these facts are rather unexciting. History and tragedy do not serve the same purposes. On the contrary, it is the job of a tragic poet to astound and entertain his audience for a moment by means of the most convincing words he can find, but it is the job of a historian to instruct and persuade his readers for all time by means of deeds that actually took place and words that were actually spoken. The object in the first case is to create a plausible fiction in order to beguile an audience, in the second case to write what is true in order to educate the reader.

Besides, Phylarchus usually just tells the stories, without suggesting why or for what purpose the catastrophes he relates took place—an omission which makes it impossible to feel a suitable or appropriate degree of pity or anger at any incident. I dare say, for example, that everyone would be shocked to hear of a free man being struck; but if the man who was struck was the original aggressor, we reckon that he

got what he deserved, and if the point was to improve the man and teach him a lesson, we even think that his beaters should be rewarded and thanked. Or again, killing a fellow citizen is regarded as the worst crime possible, and as deserving the severest punishment, but obviously there are no consequences if one kills a thief or an adulterer, and those who kill traitors or tyrants are awarded privileges such as hereditary front-row seats in theatres and other honours. In every instance, then, the reasons and intentions of the agents, and the specifics of the case, determine one's verdict.

[57] To return, then, to the Mantineans: after deserting the Achaean League, they first voluntarily delivered themselves and their homeland to the Aetolians, and then to Cleomenes. After they became allies of Cleomenes and members of the Spartan confederacy, the city
227 was betrayed to Aratus and fell to an Achaean assault. This happened over three years before Antigonus' arrival. On this occasion, so far from the Mantineans being punished for their crime, the episode even became famous for the rapidity with which both sides changed. First, as soon as he had taken possession of the city, Aratus ordered the men under his command to keep their hands to themselves. Then, he convened the Mantineans and told them to stand firm without worrying, since membership of the Achaean League would ensure their safety. This sudden ray of hope, when they were least expecting it, brought about a swift and total change of heart among the Mantineans. A short while earlier they had watched family members dying or suffering grievous wounds by the score in the fight against the very people whom they now invited into their own homes to share their tables with themselves and their families. Both sides got to be on very good terms with each other—but then, I have never heard of any people meeting with a more conciliatory attitude from enemies, or suffering less in the course of what is supposedly the greatest of calamities, than the Mantineans did, thanks to the humane way in which Aratus and the Achaeans treated them.

[58] Some time later, as a response to the threat of internal discord and to the intrigues of the Aetolians and Spartans, they sent envoys to the Achaeans to ask for a garrison. The Achaeans agreed and held a lottery to select 300 of their own citizens, who left the lands of their birth and their homes and set out for Mantinea, to protect the freedom of the inhabitants there and keep them secure. The 300 were accompanied by 200 mercenaries, who were to help the Achaeans

preserve the status quo. A short while later, however, when civil strife did break out among them, the Mantineans called in the Spartans, 226
put the city in their hands, and massacred the Achaeans who had been stationed with them. It is hard even to conceive of a greater or more vile act of treachery. Even if they had decided to disavow completely the gratitude and friendship they owed the League, they still should have spared these men and given them a sworn assurance of safe passage home. After all, it is customary, and in keeping with all the norms of human behaviour, to grant this right even to enemies.

Just because they needed to give Cleomenes and the Spartans an adequate pledge of commitment to their current whim, the Mantineans violated international law and, with malice aforethought, carried out the most terrible of crimes. They murdered with their own hands men who had earlier left them unscathed when they took the city, and who at the time were protecting their freedom and keeping them secure. What *is* an appropriate degree of anger at this? How could they have been punished in a way that would seem commensurate with the crime? A possible reply is that they should have been crushed by military means and sold into slavery along with their children and womenfolk—but by the rules of war this is liable to happen even to people who have committed no crime. No, they deserved an even more thorough and extreme form of punishment. In other words, if they had suffered as Phylarchus says they did, the reaction from the Greeks should not have been pity for them, but rather praise and approval for those who acted in this instance as the prosecutors of their crime.

But despite the fact that the Mantineans suffered no consequences more catastrophic than having their homes plundered and their free population sold into slavery, Phylarchus' penchant for melodrama led him to write not just a pack of lies, but a pack of *implausible* lies. His ineptitude is so outrageous that he failed even to note an obvious parallel: that at much the same time the Achaeans also captured Tegea, and treated the inhabitants quite differently. And yet if Achaean 'cruelty' were the determining factor, the Tegeans too would presumably have suffered the same fate as those who fell into Achaean hands at the same time. If the Mantineans were singled out for special treatment, there plainly must have been a special reason for anger in their case.

[59] Or consider what he says about Aristomachus of Argos, whom he describes as a man from the leading family of Argos, descended

from tyrants and himself formerly tyrant there. He says that when
224 Aristomachus fell into the hands of Antigonus and the Achaeans, he was taken off to Cenchreae and tortured to death, completely undeservedly and in absolute agony. His description of this episode too retains the distinctive quality of his work: he imagines the cries of the man on the rack reaching through the darkness to the ears of those living near by, and he has them running to the building, some in horror at the crime, some in disbelief, and some enraged by what was happening. I have already given enough examples of this sensationalism of his, so I will say no more about it. But in my opinion, even if Aristomachus' behaviour towards the Achaeans had been otherwise blameless, he still deserved extreme punishment for the general conduct of his life, and for the way he set himself above the laws of his homeland.

In an attempt to build up Aristomachus' status and stir his readers to further indignation at his suffering, Phylarchus describes him as a tyrant and a descendant of tyrants. But this is just about the worst and most vicious crime anyone could be charged with. The very term 'tyrant' carries with it implications of extreme forms of criminal behaviour; all human wickedness and vice are summed up in this one word. Even if Aristomachus' suffering was as appalling as Phylarchus says, it still failed to compensate for his actions on just one day—the
235 day when Aratus gained entrance into the city, only to be driven out, after prolonged and fierce fighting for the freedom of the Argives, because his partisans inside the city were too cowed by fear of the tyrant to lift a finger. This gave Aristomachus the perfect opportunity, and on the grounds that the Achaeans would never have been able to enter the city without the complicity of people on the inside, he tortured and butchered eighty leading citizens, all innocent, in front of their families. But I refrain from recounting all the atrocities he carried out in his life, or those of his forebears; it would take too long.

[60] In short, if Aristomachus met with a similar end, there is far less reason to be appalled than if he got off scot-free and died a painless death. Nor should Antigonus and Aratus be thought to have behaved viciously if they tortured and killed a tyrant who fell into their hands in wartime; this was a man whose killers would have been praised and rewarded by right-minded men even if he had been taken in a time of peace. Then, on top of all his other crimes,

he also betrayed the Achaeans. What is the appropriate punishment for that? Not long before, when he stepped down from his tyranny (Demetrius' death having left him in straitened circumstances), he 229
had found safety, though he had no right to expect it, behind the shield of Achaean leniency and generosity. It was not just that they gave him immunity from punishment for crimes arising from his tyranny; they also accepted him into the League and appointed him to the generalship, their highest office, making him their leader. But it took no time at all for him to forget all this clemency. When the future looked a little brighter on Cleomenes' side, he withdrew Argos and 225
his personal entourage from the League, and, at a critical juncture, went over to the Achaeans' enemies. When he fell into the Achaeans' hands, he should not have been tortured to death in Cenchreae at night, as Phylarchus reports; he should have been shown all over the Peloponnese and then tortured to death as a deterrent. But in fact, despite the viciousness of his character, he met with nothing worse than being drowned at sea by those in charge at Cenchreae.

[61] Or again, although Phylarchus covers the catastrophes that befell the Mantineans (where it is evident from his exaggerated and embellished version of events that he believes a historian's job is to stress wrongdoing), he fails to make the slightest mention of the bravery of the Megapolitans at much the same time. He seems to have held 223
that it is more suitable for a historian to enumerate people's offences than to stress the good and upright things they do, or that decent and admirable behaviour makes less edifying reading than vicious and repulsive acts. He tells us about the capture of Megalopolis by Cleomenes, and he tells us that he kept the city safe and sent couriers off post-haste to Messene with a letter for the Megalopolitans there, offering to return it to them intact if they came over to his side. These things fit in with his intention of suggesting how generously and fairly Cleomenes dealt with his enemies. His account continues with how the Megalopolitans would not allow the couriers to finish reading the letter and came close to stoning them. But that is where he stops, without drawing any conclusions. He fails to assign praise or to comment favourably on the remarkable principles involved, when that is exactly what history is for and in this case they were plain to see.

When men endure war just because they have delivered speeches or enacted laws that favour friends and allies, they earn our praise; and if they suffer the destruction of their land and a siege, we express

our gratitude not just in words, but with generous aid and grants. So how should we feel about the Megalopolitans? Do they not deserve our deepest respect and admiration? First, they suffered the takeover by Cleomenes of their land; next, their membership of the Achaean League cost them the complete loss of their homeland; and finally, when against all the odds they were unexpectedly offered the opportunity to recover it intact, they preferred to sacrifice it, along with their tombs, sanctuaries, homeland, and possessions—in short, everything men hold most dear—rather than betray the pledge they had given their allies. It is hard to imagine that there ever has been, or could be, a more noble act. It is hard to imagine any act to which a writer could more appropriately draw his readers' attention, or one that would better help him inculcate integrity in his readers and encourage them to join the cause of truth and trustworthiness. But nothing like this plays any part in Phylarchus' account; it seems to me that he was simply incapable of seeing the good side of things, which should be the province of a historian.

[62] Be that as it may, he next says that the Spartans' share of the plunder from Megalopolis was 6,000 talents, with Cleomenes as usual getting 2,000. What is astonishing about this assertion is, above all, the ignorance it reveals: he clearly lacks any general sense of the wealth and resources of Greek states. But this is vital knowledge for a historian to have. I would claim that not just in those days, when the Peloponnesians had been utterly ruined by the Macedonian kings and even more by constant internecine warfare, but still today, when the Peloponnese is unified and everyone seems to enjoy the greatest prosperity, the sale of all the movable property of the whole Peloponnese (I exclude the human population) would not raise that amount of money. This is not a wild guess, but a considered estimate,
378 which I can prove. Everyone has read about the Athenian–Theban war against Sparta, when the Athenians fielded an army of 10,000 men and manned a hundred triremes. They decided to levy money for the war by taxing people according to their worth, so they carried out a valuation of all the fixed and movable property in Attica. Since the total valuation came to 5,750 talents, what I have just said about the Peloponnese seems perfectly reasonable.

At the time in question it would be rash to claim that more than 300 talents, at the very most, was raised from Megalopolis, since it is certain that most of the free and slave population had fled to Messene.

The best evidence for what I have been saying is that after the siege of Mantinea (which, as Phylarchus himself acknowledges, was the leading city of Arcadia in terms of both power and wealth), when the city surrendered and was occupied, and it was very hard for any refugees to steal away, the total amount raised from all the booty taken at the time, including the sale of human beings, was 300 talents.

[63] And then what could be more astonishing than Phylarchus' next passage? He goes on to say that about ten days before the decisive battle Ptolemy's ambassador came to Cleomenes with the information that Ptolemy was withdrawing his financial support and the recommendation that he come to terms with Antigonus. To Cleomenes' mind, according to Phylarchus, this meant that he had to gamble everything before his troops heard the news, because there was no way that he could afford to pay them from his own resources. But if he had just gained 6,000 talents, he had the means to be a more generous paymaster than Ptolemy himself; even if he had only 300 talents available, that was more than enough for him to see out the war against Antigonus with no financial worries. But to claim both that Cleomenes was wholly reliant on Ptolemy for financing and that he had just gained a vast sum of money is surely clear proof of stupidity compounded by carelessness. Phylarchus' entire work, not just his account of this particular period, is riddled with such errors—but I think I have now said enough on this to have achieved what I set out to do.

[64] Following the capture of Megalopolis, Antigonus wintered at Argos. At the beginning of spring, Cleomenes assembled his 222
troops, and after briefing them he took to the field and invaded the Argolid. This was widely held to be a rash and reckless move, because of the impregnability of the mountain passes, but wiser minds saw it as safe and sensible. Since Antigonus had dismissed his troops, Cleomenes knew for a fact, first, that he would gain entrance to the Argolid unopposed and, second, that the Argives were bound to be upset at the sight of their land being devastated right up to the city walls and would blame Antigonus for it. If Antigonus was swayed by the public outcry, and chose to take to the field and fight with the troops currently available to him, Cleomenes felt reasonably certain of an easy victory. Or, if Antigonus stayed level-headed and did nothing, Cleomenes would have intimidated his opponents while putting fresh heart into his own men, and would then withdraw unscathed

back home. And this is exactly what happened. Faced with the devastation of their land, the Argives held mass demonstrations denouncing Antigonus, but he took no military action. As befitted a commander and a king, he felt that it was essential to handle the situation in a rational manner. Meanwhile, Cleomenes carried out his plan: he ruined farmland, intimidated his opponents, inspired his men with confidence for the coming conflict, and withdrew unscathed back to Laconia.

[65] Early in the summer, once the Macedonians and Achaeans had reassembled from their winter quarters, the allied forces advanced under Antigonus' command into Laconia. Antigonus' Macedonian units (10,000 phalangites, 3,000 peltasts, and 300 cavalrymen) were accompanied by 1,000 Agrianians and the same number of Gauls, and he had hired 3,000 infantry and 300 cavalry. The Achaeans provided an elite corps of 3,000 footsoldiers and 300 horsemen, and the Megalopolitans an infantry unit of 1,000 equipped in the Macedonian style and under the command of Cercidas of Megalopolis. As for the allies, the Boeotians supplied 2,000 foot and 200 horse, the Epirots 1,000 foot and 50 horse, the Acarnanians also 1,000 foot and 50 horse, and the Illyrians a contingent of 1,600, led by Demetrius of Pharos. Antigonus' total numbers, then, were 28,000 foot and 1,200 horse.

In anticipation of the offensive, Cleomenes secured all the other passes into Laconia with fortresses, trenches, and barricades of felled trees, and encamped with his army of 20,000 at a place called Sellasia, on the route that he guessed (rightly, as it turned out) the invading force was most likely to take. The pass is overlooked by two hills called Evas and Olympus, between which the Sparta road runs alongside the Oenous river. Cleomenes ran a trench and a palisade in front of these two hills, and posted his Laconian and allied units on Evas, under the command of his brother Eucleidas, while he held Olympus with the Spartans and mercenaries. On the level ground on both sides of the road beside the river, he deployed his cavalry and a mercenary detachment.

When Antigonus arrived, he could see how impregnable the place was. Cleomenes had deployed his army shrewdly, with all the appropriate units picketing the critical positions. In fact, as in the stance of a skilled hoplite, the overall positioning of his forces was perfect for either attack or defence; it was at one and the same time an effective line of battle and a virtually unassailable encampment. So Antigonus

chose to wait before joining battle, rather than put the matter to the test at short notice.

[66] He made camp a short distance away with the Gorgylus river protecting his front, and spent a few days studying the lie of the land and the disposition of the armies, and making feints to test the measures the enemy had taken. But Cleomenes was so well prepared for every eventuality that Antigonus, unable to catch him napping or with his defences down, abandoned this plan, and in the end the two of them decided to settle the matter by formal battle. For Fortune had on this occasion thrown together two commanders who were both almost equally gifted.

For the assault on Evas, Antigonus deployed his Macedonian Bronze Shields and the Illyrians, drawn up in alternate companies, under the command of Alexander the son of Acmetus and Demetrius of Pharos. He reinforced them with the Acarnanian and Cretan† contingents, and posted 2,000 of the Achaeans in the rear as reserves. He gave Alexander, his cavalry commander, the job of tackling the enemy cavalry by the Oenous river, with his horsemen and 2,000 foot-soldiers, half Achaeans and half Megalopolitans. He himself would engage Cleomenes and his men on Olympus with the mercenaries and Macedonians. He posted the mercenaries forward as advance guards, and there was so little space that he had the Macedonians form up behind them in a double-depth phalanx. The agreed signal for starting the assault was a white sheet, waved from near Olympus. The Illyrians had made their way under cover of darkness to the very bottom of Evas and were waiting in the bed of the Gorgylus; they would go first, with the Megalopolitans and the cavalry advancing shortly afterwards, when a red sheet was waved from Antigonus' position.

[67] So the time came for action. The Illyrians received the signal, their officers called on them to do their duty, and the whole division emerged and began the assault on Evas. But in the process their companies became detached from the Achaean reserves in the rear, and when the light-armed troops who had originally been deployed to support Cleomenes' cavalry saw this, they fell on them from behind. The men storming the hill were now in critical danger, since they had Eucleidas in front and above them, and were being hard pressed from behind by the mercenaries' determined assault. But just then Philopoemen of Megalopolis saw what was happening and what

was going to happen. At first he tried to warn the generals, but they ignored him as a junior officer who had never held high command, so he rallied his fellow citizens and launched a daring attack on the enemy. As soon as the mercenaries heard the clamour and saw that their cavalry had been engaged, they broke off their attack on the rear of those who were advancing up the hill and ran back to help, which is what they had originally been assigned to do. This freed up the Illyrians, Macedonians and others who were advancing up the hill, and they hurled themselves fiercely and fearlessly at the enemy.

And so, in the aftermath of the battle, it became clear that the defeat of Eucleidas was due to Philopoemen. [68] Hence there is a story that after the battle Antigonus was quizzing Alexander, his cavalry commander, and asked him why he had engaged the enemy before receiving the signal. Alexander denied responsibility, and pinned the blame on 'a youngster from Megalopolis', who, he said, had charged prematurely into the fray, without having received his permission. Antigonus replied that the youngster had acted like a good commander, because he had spotted an opportunity, and that it was Alexander, the commander, who had behaved like an untried youngster.

Anyway, there were Eucleidas' forces with the enemy companies advancing towards them. Eucleidas failed to take advantage of his superior position. His troops should have engaged the enemy at some distance from the position they had taken up. They should have used the force of their charge to leave the Illyrians in disarray and disorder; then they should have pulled gradually back up the hill, safely taking up fresh positions from time to time on higher ground. In other words, their superior position should have enabled them to thwart and neutralize the distinctive features of the enemy's weaponry and formation, and to put them to flight with little difficulty. But they did nothing of the sort; in fact, as if victory was already theirs for the taking, they did the complete opposite. They stayed where they were on the summit, the idea being to get the enemy as high up the hill as possible, so that they would have a long flight back down a steep slope.

What happened was, of course, exactly the opposite. Eucleidas' forces had denied themselves the possibility of retreat, but when they were engaged by the enemy companies, which were still fresh and intact, they found themselves in trouble along the entire length of

the ridge, in a bitter struggle with their assailants for possession of it. Every bit of ground they yielded from then on to the superior weight of their opponents' weaponry and formation was immediately occupied by the Illyrians, while Eucleidas' men had to step back down below them, because they had left themselves no fall-back position. So before long they turned to flight, which proved lethal, because for a long way their line of retreat was over terrain that was steep and awkward.

[69] Meanwhile, the cavalry were engaged as well. With their freedom depending on the outcome of the entire struggle, all the Achaeans performed outstandingly well, but especially Philopoemen. In this battle he lost his horse to a deadly thrust, but he continued to fight on foot and was seriously wounded through both thighs.

As for the battle for Olympus, in the first phase the kings employed their light-armed mercenaries, whose numbers on both sides were little short of 5,000. In a battle that spread from an engagement between separate divisions to an all-out struggle, both sides gave excellent accounts of themselves, since they were fighting in full view of the kings and their armies. A competition arose among individuals and among units to prove their superior courage. But when Cleomenes saw that his brother's men had turned to flight, and that his cavalry in the river valley were on the point of giving way, he became afraid that the enemy would soon be able to come at him from all sides. In response to the emergency, he had the palisade all along one side of the camp torn down and led his entire phalanx, lined up for battle, through the gap.

Both sides had their trumpeters recall their light-armed troops from the ground between them; then the men chanted their war-cries and lowered their pikes, and the two phalanxes met. A mighty struggle ensued. At one point, the Macedonians found themselves being forced back, slowly but for quite a distance, by the bravery of the Laconians; at another point, it was the Spartans who lost ground to the weight of the Macedonian formation. The end came when Antigonus' men resorted to a close-order phalanx, with its characteristic solid wall of pikes; they closed ranks, charged, and forced the Spartans back and out of their camp. The bulk of the army fled in disorder and was slaughtered, but Cleomenes and a few horsemen from his immediate retinue made their way safely back to Sparta. Then at nightfall he rode down to Gythium, where measures had long been in

place for his departure by sea in an emergency, and took ship with his friends for Alexandria.

[70] Sparta fell to Antigonus straight away. His treatment of the Spartans was nothing but generous and humane, and he re-established their ancestral constitution.* Then, after only a few days in the city, he left with his army, because he had received word that some Illyrians had entered Macedon and were ravaging the countryside. It is typical of Fortune to decide the most important matters by a narrow margin†. On the occasion in question, if Cleomenes had deferred giving battle for just a few days, or if he had held out in Sparta for just a short time after retreating there once the battle was lost, he would have retained his throne.

Be that as it may, when Antigonus reached Tegea he restored the ancestral constitution there as well. Then two days later he arrived at Argos just in time for the Nemean festival, at which he was awarded all the attributes of immortal glory and honour by the Achaean League and all the cities separately. Then he hurried off to Macedon, where he caught up with the Illyrians in the countryside. They fought a pitched battle, and although Antigonus won, his passionate cries of encouragement to his men in the course of the battle caused him to fall ill with a condition that had him bringing up blood, and a short
221 while later the sickness killed him. He had personally made it possible for all the inhabitants of Greece to look forward to a better future, not just as a result of what he had done for them in the field, but even more because he was a man of principle and integrity. His successor on the Macedonian throne was Philip V, the son of Demetrius II.

[71] But why have I covered this war in such detail? Given that this period ends where the one I am about to describe begins†, I thought it useful (though, given my original plan, I should perhaps say 'essential') to leave no one in any doubt or ignorance about the state of affairs that obtained in Macedon and Greece at the time. At much the same time Ptolemy III Euergetes also fell sick and died, and was succeeded by Ptolemy IV Philopator; and Seleucus III, the son of Seleucus II Callinicus (also known as Seleucus Pogon) died as well, and the Syrian throne passed to his brother Antiochus III.* In other words, the same kind of thing happened in their case as happened to the first kings of these nations after the death of Alexander the Great—Seleucus I, Ptolemy I, and Lysimachus. They all died in the

124th Olympiad, as I have already mentioned,* and Antigonus Doson, Ptolemy III, and Seleucus III all died in the 139th Olympiad. 224–221

I have now covered the introductory or prefatory material for my entire history. In this introduction, I have shown when and how and why the Romans, after conquering Italy, first became involved in foreign affairs, initially by disputing control of the sea with the Carthaginians. I have also described the situation in Greece and Macedon, and given an account of what was happening in Carthage at the time. In keeping with my original plan, I have reached the date at which the Greeks were about to be embroiled in the Social War, the Romans in the Hannibalic War, and the kings of Asia in the war for Coele Syria. Following the cue given by the neat conclusion of events prior to this date, and by the deaths of the rulers who had been the power-brokers in that period, it makes sense for me now to bring this book to a close.

BOOK THREE

[1] In the first book of my *Histories*, the book before last, I said that the starting point of my work would be the date at which the Social War, the Hannibalic War, and the war for Coele Syria began, and at the same time I also explained why I felt I should devote the first two books to an account of events before this date.* I shall now give an account of these wars, with an explanation, supported by evidence, of why they happened and how they got to be so prodigious. But first, a few words about my project.

Since my topic—how, when, and why all the known parts of the world fell under Roman dominion—is a whole, in the sense that it consists of a single action and a single spectacle, and since it has a recognized beginning, a fixed duration, and an agreed end, I think it will also be useful for me to give a brief prefatory survey of all the main parts of the whole, from beginning to end. This will, I am sure, hugely help readers gain an adequate conception of the project as a whole. For since someone who already has a grasp of the parts is in a far better position to understand the whole, and vice versa, it seems to me that the best kind of review and survey takes from both, and this is the principle I will follow in the preliminary summary of my work.

I have already given an account of my project as a whole, and its limits; broken down into parts, it begins with the three wars I have just mentioned and concludes with the end of the Macedonian monarchy—a period of fifty-three years, from start to finish, that saw action on a greater scale and events of more significance than any earlier such period. So, as a way of introducing my history, I shall start with the 140th Olympiad. 220–168

[2] Once I have explained how and why the Hannibalic War between the Carthaginians and Romans started, I shall continue with an account of the Carthaginian invasion of Italy. I shall show* how the Carthaginians ended Roman supremacy in Italy and brought the Romans to the point where they fearfully expected to lose their very lives and the soil of their homeland, while, unexpectedly, the Carthaginians found themselves able to entertain excellent hopes of capturing Rome itself in short order. After that, I shall turn to Philip V of Macedon. I intend to show how, at much the same time, once he had finished his war against the Aetolians and had made provisions

for Greece, he planned to ally himself with the Carthaginians and join their venture. Then I shall give an account of how Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV Philopator first fell out and then fought each other for possession of Coele Syria, and how the Rhodians and Prusias I made war on the people of Byzantium and forced them to stop taxing shipping into the Black Sea.

The narrative will be interrupted at that point by an account of the Roman constitution.* This will help me to demonstrate in what follows the vital contribution the peculiar virtues of the constitution made towards their recovering their sway over the Italians and Sicilians, annexing Iberia and the territories held by the Celts, and finally, once they had won the war against the Carthaginians, conceiving the idea of worldwide dominion. I shall also show, by way of a digression, how the reign of Hieron II of Syracuse came to an end, and then I shall go on to give an account of the disturbances in Egypt and how, after Ptolemy IV's death, Antiochus III and Philip V colluded to dismember the kingdom of the boy-king who succeeded him, and began to infringe on his domains: Philip attacked him in Egypt†, Caria, and Samos, while Antiochus went on the offensive in Coele Syria and Phoenicia.

[3] Next, after summing up the action between the Romans and Carthaginians in Iberia, Libya, and Sicily, I shall follow events as they shifted over to Greece and focus my account entirely on that part of the world. I shall describe the sea battle Attalus I and the Rhodians fought against Philip, and then give an account of the war between the Romans and Philip, explaining what happened, and why, and what the outcome was. I shall next recount how in a fit of pique the Aetolians asked Antiochus for help and brought Asia into their war against the Achaean League and Rome. I shall explain how the war started and give a thorough account of Antiochus' invasion of Europe. Then I shall show, first, how he came to flee from Greece; second, how after his defeat he evacuated all Asia Minor; and, third, how the Romans put an end to the Gauls' abuses, gained undisputed dominion over Asia Minor for themselves, and freed all its inhabitants from fear of barbarism and Gallic lawlessness.

Then, after describing the misfortunes of the Aetolians and the Cephallenians, I shall continue with the war fought by Eumenes II against Prusias II and the Gauls, and the one that pitted Ariarathes IV against Pharnaces. Next, after a section on the settlement of the

Peloponnese and restoration of concord there, and on the expansion of Rhodes, I shall end with accounts of the expedition of Antiochus IV Epiphanes against Egypt, the war against Perseus, and the end of the Macedonian monarchy. These will be the last events I cover. Throughout, I shall bring out how the Romans managed everything to ensure the subjection of the entire known world to their rule.

[4] If we could judge which individuals and states were admirable and which were not solely on the basis of their successes and failures, I would have to stop right there, and end the narrative and my book with the events I have just mentioned. That would be in keeping with my original plan, because that is when the fifty-three-year period finishes, and by that date Roman power had finished growing and had made as much progress as it could. Moreover, it appears that from then on everyone assumed and regarded as inevitable the fact that they would have to submit to the Romans and let them dictate their futures. But a final assessment of the winners and losers cannot depend merely on the outcome of their struggles. For apparently overwhelming success often proves utterly disastrous, if people fail to make proper use of it, and it is not uncommon for devastating catastrophes, if accepted with fortitude, to turn out to people's advantage. So my account of events would be incomplete if I failed to go on to describe, first, the attitude of the winners after their victory and how they ruled the world; second, how acceptable others found their rule and what they thought of the rulers; and, third, the aims and ambitions of all concerned, which governed their private lives and guided their policy-making. The point being, obviously, that such an account will enable the present generation to see whether Roman dominion is something they should seek out or shun, and will show future generations whether they should praise and admire the Roman empire, or find it abhorrent.

In fact, educationally speaking, this will prove to be the most important aspect of my work, now and in the future. For neither rulers nor those who express opinions about them should think of victory and overall dominion as the goal of military action. It makes as little sense for a man to fight others just to crush them as it does for a man to take to the open sea just to cross it. No one gains expertise either, or learns a skill, just in order to master it; every action is only ever done for the sake of the future pleasure or good or profit it will bring the agent. So my work will be complete when it has clarified how all the

various peoples felt from the time when the Romans' victories had brought them worldwide dominion, up to the disturbed and troubled period that came afterwards. As far as this period is concerned, the scale and the extraordinariness of the events that took place then, and most importantly the fact that I myself witnessed very many of them, mean that I had no choice but to write about it as if I were making a fresh start.* In fact, I was not only an eyewitness, but a participant in some of these events and responsible for others.

[5] This troubled period* was the one which saw the Romans go to war against the Celtiberians and Vaccaei, and the Carthaginians against King Masinissa of Libya. In Asia, there was war between Attalus II and Prusias II; Attalus also helped Ariarathes V of Cappadocia recover his kingdom, after he had been deposed by Orophernes with the help of Demetrius I; Demetrius, the son of Seleucus IV, ruled Syria for twelve years, but then lost his kingdom and his life to a coalition of the other kings against him. The Romans repatriated the Greeks who had been charged with collusion during the war with Perseus, and so removed the cloud of suspicion that was hanging over them. Not long after this, the Romans attacked the Carthaginians. At first, their intention was to relocate the populace elsewhere, but subsequently they decided, as I shall explain later, to destroy them altogether. Elsewhere in the world, the Macedonians broke off their alliance with the Romans, and the Spartans withdrew from the Achaean League: these events were the be-all and end-all of the catastrophe that afflicted Greece.

That, at any rate, is my plan, but Fortune has to be with me too†, or the vicissitudes of life may stop me seeing it through to completion. But even if the fact that I am human has such a consequence, I am sure that the project will not lie fallow for lack of competent men. There are plenty of others† who will take on the responsibility and commit themselves to finishing it off.

Now that I have summarized the main events, in order to help my readers gain some understanding of both the whole and the particular details, it is time for me to pick up the thread of my plan and return to the beginning, to my starting point.

[6] Some historians of Hannibal, addressing the question why war broke out between the Romans and the Carthaginians, claim that there were two causes: first, the siege of Saguntum by the Carthaginians

and, second, their crossing of the river Ebro (to give it its local name) in contravention of the treaty.* In my opinion, however, the war *started* with these events, but it is quite wrong to call them the *causes* of the war—unless one supposes, in defiance of both plausibility and truth, that Alexander's crossing to Asia was the cause of his war against the Persians, or that Antiochus III's landing at Demetrias was the cause of his war against the Romans. How could these be regarded as causes, when Alexander—and his father Philip, while he was alive—had already done so much to prepare for war with Persia? As had the Aetolian League, before Antiochus arrived, for war with Rome. Anyone who claims that these incidents were the causes of the war has not grasped the distinction, the considerable difference, between a *starting point* and a *cause* or *pretext*. A cause or pretext always comes first and a starting point comes last. I take it that the starting point of anything consists of the first application in the real world of a course of action that has already been decided upon, while the cause is what first influences one's judgements and decisions, or, in other words, what first influences one's ideas, feelings, reasoning about the matter, and all one's decision-making and deliberative faculties.

Some examples will make my meaning clear. It is obvious even to a casual observer which events were the original and real causes of the war with Persia. They were, first, the return of Xenophon's Greeks* from the inland satrapies, during the course of which no barbarian dared to stand up to them, even though they crossed the whole of Asia, all of which was enemy territory. Then, second, there were King Agesilaus of Sparta's campaigns in Asia, during which his efforts met no resistance worth mentioning, and victory eluded him only because he was forced to return to Greece by the disturbances there. The effect on Philip of these events was to make him realize how cowardly and complacent the Persians were, compared with how fit and ready for war he and his Macedonians were, and he evoked in his imagination the size and beauty of the prize to be gained from the war. As soon as the Greeks had agreed to support him, he seized on the pretext that his aim was to punish the Persians for their crimes against the Greeks, and then he set things in motion by gearing himself up for war and making all the preparations he would need to achieve his goal. So we should think of the *causes* as being those original events, which were followed by the *pretext*, and then the *start* of the war was Alexander's crossing to Asia.

[7] It is also obvious that the cause of the war between Antiochus and Rome was the Aetolians' anger. As I said earlier, they asked Antiochus for help because they felt insulted: they thought the Romans were failing in various ways to acknowledge their contribution to the outcome of the war with Philip. In fact, the situation made them so angry that they bent over backwards to bring Antiochus in. So, in this case, the pretext would be the liberation of the Greeks,[1] and the beginning of the war was the landing of Antiochus at Demetrias.

I have drawn these distinctions at some length, not as a way of criticizing other historians, but as a lesson for my readers. After all, how can a doctor help a patient if he is ignorant of the cause of his physical state? What use is a statesman if he is incapable of seeing how and why events begin, where their origins lie? A doctor, of course, will never come up with suitable treatment, and without the kind of knowledge I have just outlined a statesman will be incapable of dealing appropriately with any situation that arises. It follows that there is nothing we should be more aware of, nothing we should try harder to discover, than the causes of every incident. For the most critical matters often have trivial origins, and it is always easiest to correct impulses and remedy beliefs at the beginning.

[8] The Roman historian Fabius says that the war with Hannibal was caused not just by Carthaginian aggression against Saguntum, but also by Hasdrubal's self-seeking ambition and lust for power. He says that some time after Hasdrubal had obtained high command in Iberia, he went to Libya with the intention of abolishing the legal constitution and replacing it with a monarchy. The leading statesmen, however, realized what he was up to, put aside their differences, and formed a caucus against him. Hasdrubal got wind of this and withdrew from Libya, but from then on he governed Iberia as he chose, without listening to the Carthaginian Council. And when Hannibal succeeded Hasdrubal in Iberia, his style of command was the same as Hasdrubal's, because from an early age Hannibal had worked alongside Hasdrubal and had imitated his ways.

And so when he went on the offensive against Rome—when he embarked upon the war we are currently concerned with—this again, according to Fabius, was his own decision, without official

[1] Which the Aetolians went on a tour of the cities of Greece with Antiochus to proclaim, as though it were plausible and true.

Carthaginian backing, since no high-ranking Carthaginian condoned Hannibal's actions at Saguntum. But Fabius goes on to say that, after the fall of Saguntum, a Roman delegation arrived with an ultimatum offering the Carthaginians a choice between war and handing Hannibal over to them. But if so, there are some questions Fabius needs to answer. What better opportunity could the Carthaginians have had? Given that, according to Fabius, they disapproved from the start of what Hannibal was up to, what other course of action offered them the same combination of justice and expediency? If they did as the Romans ordered, they would be handing over the person who was responsible for the infringement of international law. They would be using others to rid themselves of someone who was supposed to be the enemy of their state, they would keep their land safe by eliminating the threat of war, and all it would take to give satisfaction was a decree. How would Fabius respond to these questions? With silence, obviously. So far from doing anything like this, they went along with
219– 'Hannibal's decision' and fought without a break for seventeen years.
202 Nor did they call a halt until they had exhausted every last possibility and had got to the point where their homeland and their existence there were at risk.

[9] Why have I brought up Fabius and this assertion of his? Not because I was worried that it might be plausible enough to meet in some quarters with belief, because even without my remarks the illogicality of his account is self-evident to any reader. No, I did so to remind anyone who picks up his book to focus on the facts, not on the author's reputation. There are people who pay attention to the writer rather than his words; considering that he was a contemporary and a member of the Roman Senate, they have no hesitation in inferring that everything in his book is reliable. In my opinion, however, readers can safely assume that Fabius is reliable more often than not, but they should not regard what he says as gospel; rather, they should base their conclusions on the facts themselves.

Be that as it may, the cause of the war between the Romans and the Carthaginians (to return to where I was before the digression) was surely the anger of Hamilcar Barca, the father of Hannibal. His spirit remained unbowed after the Sicilian War; he felt he had kept his forces at Eryx in a state of unimpaired readiness to achieve his objectives, and that he had come to terms only because the defeat of the Carthaginian navy left him no choice but to give up. So he

remained impassioned and watched out for a chance to attack. If the Carthaginians had not had to deal with the rebellion of their mercenaries, Hamilcar's best efforts would have been directed towards restarting war with Rome and ensuring that it would happen. But he was overtaken by these internal troubles, and preoccupied with the rebellion and the military action it involved.

[10] After the Carthaginians had put down this rebellion, however, the Romans announced their intention of making war on them. At first, the Carthaginians were all for it, on the assumption that they would win, because right was on their side.[1] In fact, however, the Romans thwarted them, and the Carthaginians had no choice but to yield; they resented having to do so, but they were powerless. They evacuated Sardinia, and agreed to pay an extra 1,200 talents in indemnity, on top of the previously agreed amount, in order to avoid war at that time. Here, then, is the second, and the most important, cause of the subsequent war. Hamilcar's personal resentment was fed by the anger all his fellow citizens felt at this, and as soon as he had saved Carthage by defeating the mercenary uprising, he devoted himself to subduing Iberia, with the intention of using it as a springboard for war against Rome. And this—Carthaginian success in Iberia, I mean—was surely the third cause, in the sense that the forces they gained there enabled them to embark on the war with confidence.

It is true that Hamilcar died ten years before the war began, but 229
there is plenty of evidence to support the idea that the outbreak of the Second Punic War was due largely to him. The story I am about to tell will prove to be almost enough on its own to make the point.
[11] After Hannibal had at last been defeated by the Romans, he went
to stay with Antiochus III. While he was there the Romans, who were 193
aware of the Aetolians' plans, sent an embassy to Antiochus, seeking clarification of his intentions. Once the Roman diplomats realized that Antiochus favoured the Aetolians and was committed to making war on Rome, they began to court Hannibal, with a view to driving a wedge between him and Antiochus. And they succeeded: as time passed, the king came to feel nothing but increasing mistrust of Hannibal. When an opportunity arose for them to talk about the undeclared rift between them, Hannibal made a number of points in

[1] No proper sense can be made of what I am saying now, nor of what follows, without the account I gave of this business in the preceding books.*

his defence, but was still coming off worst in the argument, and eventually he fell back on the following story.

237 He said that he was there, by the altar, aged nine, when his father was about to launch his campaign in Iberia with his army and was sacrificing to Zeus. After obtaining a favourable result—and once he had poured a libation to the gods and performed the customary rites—Hamilcar asked everyone else who was present at the sacrifice to stand back a bit, and then he called Hannibal over and asked him kindly if he would like to join him on the expedition. Hannibal eagerly said yes, and was even a bit insistent about it, as boys will be. So his father led him by the right hand up to the altar, and told him to place his hand on the victim and swear unremitting hatred for the Romans. He begged Antiochus to know this for a fact, and not to worry, but to trust him. As long as Antiochus was planning to harm the Romans, Hannibal said, he would have him as his truest ally. But if he ever came to terms with the Romans and became their friend, then, he said, with or without spiteful gossip, Antiochus should distrust him and be on his guard against him, because he would do everything in his power to harm the Romans' interests.

[12] Antiochus thought Hannibal had spoken frankly and truthfully, and he no longer distrusted him as before, but the story is also indisputable evidence of Hamilcar's hostility and general intentions. The facts themselves bear this out, because it was thanks to Hamilcar that both Hasdrubal (who was married to his daughter) and Hannibal (his son) became lifelong, fanatical enemies of Rome. Hasdrubal died too soon for his intentions to be perfectly clear, but circumstances made it all too possible for Hannibal to demonstrate the hostility towards the Romans that he had inherited from his father. Hence, when old enmities are patched up or new friendships formed, statesmen need to make it their primary concern to discover the motives of the people involved. They need to know when people come to terms because circumstances leave them no choice, and when they do so because their spirits have been broken. They should regard the first lot as biding their time and should deal cautiously with them, but they may trust the latter, those who have submitted to them, as true friends, and need not hesitate before summoning their help under any circumstances.

These, then, were the *causes* of the Hannibalic War, while it *started* with the following events. [13] The Carthaginians were

already resentful at their defeat in the Sicilian War and, as I have said, their anger was exacerbated by what happened in Sardinia and by the amount of money they were finally obliged to pay. Hence, once they had subjugated most of Iberia, they were ready to seize any opportunity that presented itself for harming Rome. After the death of Hasdrubal, who had been entrusted with the administra- 221
tion of Iberia after Hamilcar's death, they waited for a while to hear the will of the army. As soon as news reached them from the army that to a man the troops had chosen Hannibal as their general, they convened a general assembly and unanimously validated the army's decision.

The first thing Hannibal did after assuming command was set out to subdue the Olcades. He invested Althaea, their principal city, which soon fell to the rapid series of terrifying assaults he launched against it. At this, the rest of the Olcades surrendered in fear to the Carthaginians. He levied money from the towns and cities, captured a great many valuables, and then went to winter at New Carthage. He was generous with the men under his command, and he paid their wages and promised more later, which went down very well with them and left them raring to go.

[14] The following summer, Hannibal set out again, this time 220
against the Vaccaei. Helmandica fell straight away to his assault, but he had to besiege Arboucale and take it by storm, which proved to be no easy task: it was a large and populous city, and the inhabitants resisted bravely. Later, on his way back, he suddenly found himself in extreme danger, when the Carpetani, virtually the strongest tribe in the region, massed against him, and were joined by the neighbouring tribes. Their hostility had been kindled above all by the Olcadian refugees, and then the survivors from Helmandica had added more fuel to the fire.

If the Carthaginians had been forced to fight them in a pitched battle, they would undoubtedly have lost, but Hannibal efficiently and calmly had his men turn around and retreat, until he had the Tagus river as his forward defence and could contest its crossing. In this way the river worked to his advantage and he also made good use of his elephants, of which he had about forty. And, against the odds, the battle went his way. When the barbarians attacked and tried to force a crossing at several points, they were cut down as they tried to climb out of the river; Hannibal's elephants patrolled the bank and

were always waiting for them as they emerged from the river bed. This was where they sustained their worst losses, but many were also killed by Hannibal's cavalry in the river itself, because the horses were better at coping with the current and the riders could fight with a height advantage over those who were on foot. In the end, Hannibal's men forced their way back across the river, charged the barbarians, and put to flight an army of more than 100,000 men. After this defeat, all the Iberians south of the Ebro, except for the Saguntines, were too cowed to resist Hannibal with any effectiveness. As for Saguntum, Hannibal was doing his best to avoid the city, since he did not want to give the Romans any unequivocal excuse for war until he had subdued all the rest of Iberia. In this, he was following the recommendations and advice of his father, Hamilcar.

[15] The Saguntines, however, sent repeated embassies to Rome, not just because they were concerned for their own safety and could see what was coming, but also because they wanted the Romans to know of Carthaginian successes in Iberia. In the past, the Romans had generally paid little attention to their reports, but this time they sent a delegation to look into the situation. At much the same time, once he had subdued the tribes he had set out to subdue, Hannibal returned with his army to winter in New Carthage, the crowning glory, so to speak, of Carthaginian presence in Iberia. There he found the Roman delegates. He gave them an audience and listened to what they had to say. The Romans warned him to leave Saguntum alone, on the grounds that it was under Roman protection, and reminded him that by the terms of their treaty with Hasdrubal he was not to cross the Ebro.*

Hannibal was a young man, however, filled with martial ardour; he had met with good fortune in his enterprises and had long been committed to a course of hostility with Rome. He responded as if Saguntine welfare were *his* concern, and he accused the Romans of the unjust killing of some of the leading men of the city when, a few years previously, during a period of civil strife there, they had accepted the job of arbitration. He said that the Carthaginians would not overlook this breach of faith, since it had long been the Carthaginian way to come to the aid of victims of injustice. And he also sent back to Carthage, asking how he should respond to the fact that the Saguntines, shielded by their alliance with Rome, were acting aggressively towards people now subject to Carthage.

Hannibal was wholly gripped by irrational and uncontrollable anger, and that is why he ignored the true causes and resorted to implausible pretexts. This is typical of those who let deep-seated emotions override the appropriate response. How much better would it have been to insist on the return of Sardinia and of the extra indemnity which the Romans had opportunistically and unjustly exacted from the Carthaginians earlier! He should have threatened war if the Romans refused to comply with *this* demand. But he made not the slightest mention of any genuine grievance, and invented a non-existent one about Saguntum instead, which was not only implausible, but more importantly meant that he seemed to have no just cause for initiating war. Now that the Roman ambassadors knew for a fact that war was inevitable, they sailed to Carthage to deliver much the same deposition to the authorities there as well. But they expected the war to take place in Iberia, with Saguntum as their headquarters, not in Italy.

[16] Given this assumption of theirs, it was perfectly logical for the Senate to decide to secure Illyria; they foresaw a major, prolonged war with Carthage far from home. Demetrius of Pharos had chosen to ignore all the benefits that had come his way in the past from the Romans, and at the same time had come to consider them no danger, in so far as at first they had been busy responding to the threat of the Gauls, and were now occupied with the Carthaginians. Demetrius had become close to Antigonus Doson during the Cleomenean War, when they had been allies, and now he was completely dependent on the Macedonian dynasty. At the time in question, he was pillaging and destroying the Illyrian communities that had submitted to Rome, and he had also taken fifty *lemboi* past Lissus—which was forbidden by the treaty*—and raided a number of the Cycladic Islands.

Under these circumstances, and in view of the fact that the Macedonian dynasty was flourishing, the Romans wanted to secure the lands east of Italy. They felt sure that they would have time to chastise the Illyrians for their villainy, teach Demetrius a lesson about gratitude, and punish his impetuosity. But this was not the way things turned out: Hannibal pre-empted them by taking Saguntum, and this is why the war took place all over Italy, even close to Rome itself, rather than in Iberia. But since the Romans had good reasons, in the early summer of the first year of the 140th Olympiad, they sent an 219
army commanded by Lucius Aemilius Paullus to deal with matters in Illyria.

[17] Meanwhile, Hannibal took to the field and advanced from New Carthage towards Saguntum. The city lies about seven stades from the coast, on a seaward-tending spur of the mountain range that forms the border between Iberia and Celtiberia. The farmland in its domain is good for every kind of crop and is the most fertile agricultural land in Iberia. Hannibal took up a position by the city and put it under a close siege, since he foresaw a number of advantages if it fell to him. First, he thought he would deny the Romans any prospect of making Iberia the site of the war. Second, he was convinced that he would intimidate all the Iberian tribes, so that those who had already submitted to him would become more tractable and those who were still independent would be more cautious. But the most important consideration was that he could then advance in safety, with no enemy left in his rear. In addition, he expected to gain sufficient funds for his mission, raise the army's morale by making sure that every soldier got his share of the booty, and win the support of the Carthaginians at home by sending spoils back to them.

So there were plenty of reasons for him to prosecute the siege forcefully. Sometimes he set the men a good example, by taking part personally in the dirty work of the siege; at other times he could be found urging them on and hurling himself recklessly into the fray. Eventually, after eight months of nothing but hardship and tension, the city fell to him, and he gained a great deal of booty—money, men, and goods. The money was set aside for his own purposes, as he had intended; the prisoners were distributed among his men according to their deserts; and the goods were immediately shipped to the Carthaginians back home. Things turned out exactly as he had expected; he achieved exactly what he had set out to do. He raised the morale of his men, so that they were more ready to face danger; he made the Carthaginians compliant to his wishes; and the funds he set aside subsequently proved very useful to him personally on a number of occasions.

[18] Demetrius, meanwhile, had heard of the Romans' plans, and responded immediately. He sent a sizeable garrison to Dimale with appropriate supplies and equipment, and posted an elite force of his 6,000 best soldiers in Pharos town, under his command. Elsewhere, he eliminated his political opponents and gave positions of power to his friends. When Aemilius reached Illyria with his forces, he could see how secure his opponents felt in Dimale, with its combination of

natural strength and good fortifications. They thought the city was impregnable, and so he decided to make it his first objective, in order to break the enemy's spirits. He assigned the officers in command of the various units of his army their tasks, brought up engines against several stretches of the wall, and the siege began. Within seven days the city fell. The enemy's morale immediately plummeted and emissaries came from all over to surrender and pledge allegiance to Rome.

Aemilius accepted their petitions on suitable terms and then sailed to Pharos town to attack Demetrius himself. But a siege, he suspected, would be difficult and protracted, because of the city's good natural defences, the excellence of the troops there, and the fact it was well stocked with provisions and equipment. In view of all this, he adopted tactics that suited the situation. He sailed under cover of darkness to the island with his whole army. After disembarking most of his men in some wooded glens, he sailed at daybreak, in plain view, towards the harbour nearest the city, with twenty ships. When Demetrius saw their paltry numbers, he sallied out of the city towards the harbour, to stop the Romans landing.

[19] The fighting quickly became intense, and more and more troops poured out of the city to help, until Demetrius' entire force had committed itself. At this juncture the Romans who had landed the previous night came up. They had made their way along secluded trails, and now occupied a steep hill between the city and the harbour. In view of the fact that his men were cut off from the city, Demetrius gave up trying to stop the Romans landing. He had his troops form up, gave them their orders, and urged them forward; he had decided to risk a phalanx battle against those who were occupying the hill. The Illyrians advanced resolutely and in good order under the gaze of the Roman forces, who then made a terrifying charge down the slope against the enemy companies. The Romans who had just disembarked saw what was happening and launched a simultaneous attack on the Illyrians' rear.

With the Romans coming at them from all directions, the Illyrians were thrown into considerable confusion and disorder. They soon found themselves in trouble front and rear, and the battle ended in a general rout. Some made for the city, but most of them scattered across country over the island. Demetrius had some *lemboi* waiting at anchor in a remote cove in case something like this happened, and that is where he and his entourage retreated. They boarded the *lemboi*

and shipped out after dark. By an extraordinary stroke of luck, he made it safely across to the mainland, and fetched up at the court of King Philip V, where he stayed for the rest of his life. He was a man of courage and daring, but completely lacked the ability to think clearly or to make reasonable assessments of situations. And so his death was in keeping with the general tendency of his life. With Philip's approval, he made an ill-advised and reckless attempt to take Messene and died in the course of the fighting. I shall give a thorough account of this episode when I reach the appropriate date.*

Aemilius, the Roman consul, took Pharos town straight away, with a single assault, and razed it to the ground. By the time he had subdued the rest of Illyria, and had arranged matters there as he saw fit, it was late summer, and he returned to Rome. He entered the city in triumph, acclaimed by the entire population for his competent and courageous handling of the situation.

[20] When the Romans heard of the fall of Saguntum, they most certainly did not hold a war council, as some historians claim, who even go to the absurd length of giving detailed versions of the speeches that were delivered for and against the motion. Why would the Romans assemble to debate whether or not they should go to war after the Carthaginian capture of Saguntum, when a year earlier they had threatened the Carthaginians with war if they merely set foot on Saguntine territory? And how can these writers portray the proceedings of the Senate, making them out to be remarkable for their gloom, and at the same time claim that fathers brought their teenaged sons to the Senate, and that these lads listened to the debate and then divulged not a word of the confidential proceedings to any of their family or friends? All of this is as implausible as it is untrue—unless, of course, one of the gifts with which Fortune has blessed the Romans is that every one of them is born wise. But I need say no more about the work of writers such as Chaereas and Sosylus.* Their work seems to me to have the status and importance of the common gossip of the barber's shop. It is not history.

When news reached Rome of the disaster at Saguntum, the Romans wasted no time, but immediately chose envoys and sent them off to Carthage. The envoys were to offer the Carthaginians two choices, one of which was likely to humiliate them, if they accepted it, and damage their interests, while the other would probably trigger major warfare and conflict. They were to demand that the Carthaginians

surrender their general, Hannibal, along with the members of the Council that were attending him, and if they refused they were to declare war. So the Romans went to Carthage, obtained an audience 218
with the Council, and carried out their mission. The Carthaginians were furious at being offered an ultimatum, but they had their most able speaker step forward to justify their actions.

[21] They refused to discuss the treaty with Hasdrubal, which they regarded either as non-existent, or as existent but irrelevant to them, since it had been entered into without their approval. They cited the Romans themselves as a precedent for this, arguing that the treaty that had been drawn up at the end of the Sicilian War by Lutatius had subsequently been repudiated by the Roman people,* even though it had been confirmed by Lutatius, on the grounds that it had been drafted without their approval. And the main, insistently repeated plank of their defence was the last treaty there had been between them, the one that had been drawn up at the end of the Sicilian War. They argued, first, that this treaty made no reference to Iberia and, second, that while it expressly made each side's allies immune from attacks by the other side, the Saguntines had not been Roman allies at the time of the treaty. They supported their argument by having the agreement read out several times.

The Romans refused to recognize any attempt at justification. They said that, while Saguntum had remained intact, justification had been a theoretical possibility and the dispute might have been settled by words alone, but that the violation of the treaty changed things. Now, they said, the Carthaginians must either surrender those responsible, which would show the world that they were not guilty of the crime and that it had been committed without their approval, or, if they refused (which would be to admit their guilt), they would have to accept war.

Both sides relied on fairly abstract arguments, but I think I should go into the matter in more detail†. There are two groups of people for whom this is important. First, there are professional politicians, who need precise knowledge of these things if they are to avoid making mistakes during critical debates; second, there are students of history, who need accurate information if they are to avoid being misled by the ignorance and bias of the authors they read. There should, then, be some definitive survey of the contractual obligations of Rome and Carthage in relation to each other, from the earliest times up until today.

[22] The first treaty, then, between Rome and Carthage dates from the consulship of Lucius Junius Brutus and Marcus Horatius, the first consuls after the dissolution of the monarchy, and the founders of the
507 sanctuary of Capitoline Jupiter. That is, it dates from twenty-eight years before Xerxes' invasion of Greece. What follows is as accurate a translation as I can manage, but there is such a huge difference between the modern and ancient versions of Latin that even experts can scarcely understand some of the ancient language, however long they spend over it. Anyway, the treaty reads more or less as follows:

There shall be friendship on the following conditions between the Romans and their allies and the Carthaginians and their allies.

1. Neither the Romans nor their allies shall sail beyond Cape Fair, unless compelled by bad weather or hostile action; but even one who is driven beyond it against his will shall neither purchase nor take anything except for the purpose of repairing a vessel or performing a sacrifice.†

2. No Roman coming to sell merchandise shall conclude any transaction unless there is a town-crier or town-clerk present. The price of everything sold in their presence shall be underwritten for the vendor by the state, if the sale takes place in Libya or Sardinia.

3. Within Carthaginian territories in Sicily, any Roman shall enjoy the same rights as anyone else.

4. The Carthaginians shall not harm the communities of Ardea, Antium, Lavinium, Circeii, Tarracina, or any other Latin community subject to Rome.

5. Any Latin communities that are not subject to Rome shall remain inviolate, and any such community taken by the Carthaginians shall be surrendered to the Romans unharmed.

6. The Carthaginians shall build no fortress in Latium.

7. If the Carthaginians come to Latin territory for hostile purposes, they shall not spend the night there.

[23] 'Cape Fair' is the one that lies north of the city of Carthage. The Carthaginians forbade the Romans to sail with warships under any circumstances beyond this headland to the south, the reason being, in my opinion, that they did not want the Romans to become acquainted with the Byssatis region, or the Lesser Syrtis region, which the Carthaginians call Emporia because of the fertility of the soil.* However, if someone was driven beyond the cape against his will, by bad weather or hostile action, he was allowed to take what he needed for a sacrifice or for repairing his ship, but nothing else, and

anyone who landed there had to leave within five days.* But Roman merchants were allowed to visit Carthage, all of Libya up to Cape Fair, Sardinia, and Carthaginian holdings in Sicily; and the Carthaginians ensured fair dealing by means of a state guarantee. The treaty shows that they regarded Sardinia and Libya as belonging to them, but not Sicily, for which they explicitly made quite different provisions, in the sense that the treaty covers only those parts of Sicily that were ruled by Carthage. Likewise, the Romans had the treaty cover only Latium, and made no mention of the rest of Italy because it was not yet part of their domain.

[24] Later, they entered into another treaty, valid for Tyre and Utica as well as Carthage, in which Mastia-in-Tarsis was added to Cape Fair as the limits beyond which the Carthaginians forbade the Romans to pass on raiding or colonizing expeditions. The treaty reads more or less as follows: 348?

There shall be friendship on the following conditions between the Romans and their allies and the people of Carthage, Tyre, and Utica,* and their allies:

1. No Roman shall pass Cape Fair/Mastia-in-Tarsis for the purposes of piracy or trading or colonization.

2. If the Carthaginians capture any city in Latium not subject to Rome they shall surrender it to the Romans, but they may keep the valuables and prisoners.

3. If any Carthaginians capture anyone who is covered by a written peace treaty with Rome but is not a Roman subject, they shall not bring the captives into Roman ports (but if they do and a Roman lays hold of a captive, he is to be freed). The same shall apply to Romans too.

4. If a Roman takes water or provisions from any land governed by Carthage, he shall not make use of these provisions to harm anyone who is covered by either a peace treaty or a treaty of friendship with the Carthaginians. The same shall apply to Carthaginians too. No case of infringement shall be liable to a private prosecution; any case of infringement shall be treated as a crime against the state.

5. In Sardinia and Libya, no Roman shall trade or found a settlement <. . . and shall remain on land>† only for as long as it takes to gather provisions or repair a vessel. If he is driven there by bad weather, he shall leave within five days.

6. Within Carthaginian territories in Sicily, and in Carthage itself, a Roman may do and sell anything that is permitted to a Carthaginian citizen. The same applies to a Carthaginian in Rome.

Again, in this treaty, the Carthaginians stressed their claim to Libya and Sardinia, and denied the Romans any landing-rights there, but made quite different provisions for Sicily, or the bit of it that was subject to them. The Romans too did much the same for Latium: they forbade the Carthaginians to harm Ardea, Antium, Circeii, and Tarracina, the cities that comprise the coastal stretch of Latium, with which the treaty was concerned.

[25] And then there was a final treaty between the Romans and
279 the Carthaginians at the time of Pyrrhus' invasion, before the start of the Sicilian War. In this final treaty, they retained all the terms of the previous treaties, but appended the following:

> If either the Romans or the Carthaginians enter into an alliance against Pyrrhus,* they shall both have it stipulated in writing that it shall be permissible for either of them to help the other in the other's territory at a time of war. Whichever of them requires help, the Carthaginians shall provide ships for transport on the way there and the way back, while both sides shall provide pay for their own forces. The Carthaginians shall, if necessary, help the Romans at sea as well, but no one is to compel the crews to land against their will.

The oaths they were obliged to swear were as follows. For the first treaty, the Carthaginians swore by their ancestral gods, and the Romans swore their traditional oath by the Jupiter stone;* for the later treaties, the Romans swore by Mars and Quirinus. The ceremony of swearing by the Jupiter stone is as follows: whoever is swearing to the treaty takes a stone in his hand and, after confirming the oath with the state seal, he speaks as follows: 'May blessings attend me if I abide by my oath, but if by thought or deed I break it, may all others remain secure in their own homelands, protected by their own customs and laws, and living by their own homes, temples, and tombs, while I alone am cast out as now this stone is cast.' And with these words he throws the stone.

[26] Since these treaties exist, and are preserved even now on bronze tablets beside the temple of Capitoline Jupiter in the treasury of the aediles, there are good grounds for being surprised by Philinus' account. What is astonishing is not his ignorance of these matters; it was still the case in my day that very elderly Romans and Carthaginians, people who had a reputation for an interest in political matters, knew nothing of this. But we can legitimately wonder what

his basis was for boldly asserting something quite different, that there was a treaty between the Romans and the Carthaginians which obliged the Romans to keep away from all Sicily and the Carthaginians from all Italy. How did he come to state—explicitly, in his second book—that the first Roman crossing to Sicily was a breach of this treaty and a violation of their oaths, when there never has been, nor is there now any sign of any such document?

I mentioned this issue in the introduction to my work, but now was the time to elaborate; so many people have been led astray by relying on Philinus' history* that it demanded a more thorough discussion. Now, where the crossing to Sicily is concerned, I think it would be fair to find fault with the Romans and criticize them for having accepted the Mamertines as allies in the first place, and then for having responded to their appeals by sending help: these were people who had dealt treacherously with both Messana and Rhegium.* But it is sheer ignorance to suppose that the crossing violated oaths and treaties.

[27] At the end of the Sicilian War, then, they made a fresh treaty, 241
the main clauses of which were as follows:

1. The Carthaginians are entirely to evacuate Sicily and all the islands that lie between Sicily and Italy.

2. The allies of each party shall be immune from offensives by the other.

3. Neither party shall impose tribute in territory governed by the other party, nor undertake publicly funded construction work, nor hire troops, nor make alliances with the other party's allies.

4. The Carthaginians are to pay 2,200 talents within ten years, and another 1,000 talents immediately.

5. The Carthaginians are to return their prisoners of war to the Romans free of ransom.

Then later, at the end of the Libyan War, the Romans again decided 238
to go to war against Carthage and, as I have already said, added the following supplement to the treaty:

6. The Carthaginians are to evacuate Sardinia and pay an additional 1,200 talents.

Then the last of this sequence of treaties was the one entered into 228
with Hasdrubal in Iberia, with the clause: 'The Carthaginians shall not cross the river Ebro for military purposes.' These were the

contractual obligations of Rome and Carthage in relation to each other, from the earliest times up to the time of Hannibal.

[28] I conclude, then, that in taking an army across to Sicily the Romans did not contravene any treaty. But by the same token there was no reasonable pretext or justification for the second war, the one that led to the treaty about Sardinia. There can be no doubt that it was an act of sheer injustice to take advantage of the Carthaginians' situation and compel them to evacuate Sardinia and pay an additional 1,200 talents. It is true that the Romans had accused the Carthaginians of crimes against merchants sailing from Italian shores during the Libyan War, but this situation was resolved when they recovered all those whose ships had been impounded at Carthage and in exchange gave the Carthaginians, free of ransom, all the prisoners of war they still had. I have given a more thorough account of this in the previous book.* Given all this, my next task is to try to decide, after a thorough exploration and investigation of the issues, which of the two sides should be held responsible for the Hannibalic War.

[29] I have already described what the Carthaginians said at the time, and now I shall give an account of the Romans' response. Not that they gave this response at the time, because they were too angry at the destruction of Saguntum, but one hears it often, from many people in Rome. First, they said, the treaty with Hasdrubal could not just be dismissed, as the Carthaginians high-handedly maintained, because, unlike the treaty drawn up by Lutatius, it included no rider to the effect that 'This treaty shall be valid if it is accepted by the Roman people.' Hasdrubal was acting with full authority when he entered into the agreement, one of the clauses of which was 'The Carthaginians shall not cross the river Ebro for military purposes.'

Second, the Sicilian treaty, as the Carthaginians admit, stipulates that 'The allies of each party shall be immune from offensives by the other.' But it does not say that this applies only to those who were allies at the time, as the Carthaginians take it; if that were so, there would have been a supplementary clause to the effect either that they were not to enter into new alliances beyond those that were already in existence, or that those who subsequently became allies were excluded from the provisions of the treaty. Since neither of these riders exist, the meaning is obviously that on both sides all allies, both those then existing and those who joined later, should be immune from any future offensives. And this seems to be a highly plausible interpretation: it is

hardly likely that they would enter into the kind of treaty in which they denied themselves the right to gain new friends and allies as circumstances threw suitable people in their way, nor is it likely that they would just stand by and watch some third party acting aggressively towards any new allies they gained.

Essentially, the treaty as it applied to both parties meant that each side would not interfere with the other side's existing allies, and under no circumstances would admit any of the other's allies into their own alliance. Those who joined either alliance later were covered by the clauses that neither side was to hire troops or impose tribute in the other's territories and among the other's allies, and that all allies would be immune from offensives by the other side. [30] Now, a point that was not in doubt was that the Saguntines *had* pledged allegiance to Rome some years before Hannibal's time. This was shown above all by the fact, acknowledged even by the Carthaginians, that during their period of civil strife, the Saguntines did not turn to the Carthaginians, even though they were close by and were already involved in Iberian affairs. They turned to the Romans, and sorted out their constitutional issues with Roman help.

From this it follows that anyone who takes the cause of the war to be the destruction of Saguntum must agree that the Carthaginians were wrong to have started the war, because the treaty with Lutatius stipulated that the allies of both sides were to be immune from attack, and because the treaty with Hasdrubal stipulated that the Carthaginians were not to cross the Ebro for military purposes. On the other hand, anyone who takes the appropriation of Sardinia and the money that went along with it to have caused the war is bound to concede that the Carthaginians were justified: though the situation had left them no choice earlier, they took advantage of circumstances that allowed them to fight back against the aggressors.

[31] Uncritical students of history might argue that there was no need for me to go into these matters with such precision and at such length. My position, however, is this. If there is anyone who is sure that he can cope entirely on his own with every eventuality, I might agree that for him knowledge of the past is unnecessary. It would still be a good thing for such a person, but not necessary. But no mortal man is so rash as to make such a claim. Whether he is acting as a private individual or as a public official, even if things are currently going well, no one of any sense takes that as a reliable harbinger of

what will happen in the future. And so knowledge of the past is, in my opinion, necessary as well as good.

Suppose a man or his homeland has been the victim of a crime, and he needs to find people to help him and take his side; or suppose he needs to get people to cooperate with him in a business venture or a pre-emptive strike; or suppose everything is to his satisfaction and he needs to find an honest way to motivate others to support his cause and keep things as they are. How could he do any of these things if he knew nothing of anyone's past history? After all, everyone adapts himself to a certain extent to circumstances and dissembles; everyone speaks and acts in ways that make it hard to discern his principles and that often obscure the truth. But if we let the facts themselves guide our judgement, men's past deeds unerringly reveal their principles and motives, and show where we might go for kindness, generosity, help—or their opposites. On many occasions and in many situations it is facts that enable us to find someone to take pity on us, to share our indignation, and to see that justice is done. And there is nothing more helpful in human life than this, in general and in particular.

It follows that both writers and readers of history should focus not just on the description of events, but also on what occurred before, during, and after the events. For if history fails to address questions such as why and how a given event happened, and for what purpose, and whether there was anything unusual about the outcome, what is left is a prize essay without educational value,* something that affords short-term pleasure, but is no help at all for the future.

[32] I am bound, then, to think it a sign of ignorance when people complain that the number and the length of the books that comprise my work make it difficult to find and hard to read. How much easier is it to acquire and read forty books which have all been woven together, so to speak, into a single fabric, with a clear and continuous account of the history of Italy, Sicily, and Libya from the time of Pyrrhus to the fall of Carthage, and of the rest of the known world from the flight of Cleomenes of Sparta up to the battle between the Achaeans and the Romans at the Isthmus—how much easier is this than reading or purchasing works composed by writers who deal only with particular aspects of the period! It is not just that these partial histories are far longer than this work of mine; they also make it impossible for a reader to gain a clear idea of what is going on. Why? First, because they frequently contradict one another; second, because they fail to

record parallel events, which, as points of reference and comparison, allow us to draw conclusions at a different level from those afforded by a partial account; and third, because it is quite impossible for them to even touch on what is really important. For in my opinion it is absolutely essential that a work of history should cover not only the consequences and corollaries of events, but also and especially their causes.

As I see it, the war with Antiochus arose out of the war with Philip, which in turn arose out of the war with Hannibal, which in turn arose out of the war with Sicily, and all the many events that occurred between these wars, however diverse their particular goals, served the same fundamental purpose. It is possible to recognize and understand all this from reading a universal history, but impossible from reading accounts of just the wars—the war with Perseus, for instance, or the war with Philip. You might as well expect to gain a clear understanding of the course and purpose of a war as a whole from reading accounts just of battles. That is equally impossible. I would say that the difference between partial accounts and my history is as great as the difference between hearing and understanding.

[33] To return to where I was before the digression: the Roman envoys listened to the Carthaginians' speeches in silence. Then the most senior of them pointed to his belly and told the Carthaginian senators that he bore peace or war for them, and that he would leave them with one or the other; it was up to them which he produced. The Carthaginian suffete* told him that, on the contrary, it was up to him, and the Roman ambassador declared for war. On hearing this many members of the Carthaginian senate called out their approval, and the envoys and the senate parted on these terms.

Hannibal, wintering in New Carthage, first let his Iberian troops return to their homes, because he wanted them to be ready and eager for the future. Second, he instructed his brother Hasdrubal in the administration and rulership of Iberia, and told him what measures to take against the Romans while he was away. Third, he made provisions for the security of Libya. After due consideration, he adopted the very clever and sensible policy of sending troops over to Libya from Iberia and vice versa—an arrangement which cemented the loyalty of each army towards the other. He sent over to Libya a force of Iberian tribesmen, numbering 1,200 horse and 13,850 foot, made

up of Thersitae, Mastiani, Ebro Oretes, and Olcades. This force was supplemented by 870 Baleares.[1] Most of these troops were stationed at Metagonia in Libya, with some at Carthage itself, and he also strengthened the garrison at Carthage with 4,000 footsoldiers from the cities of Metagonia, who were simultaneously hostages and auxiliaries.

In Iberia, he left his brother Hasdrubal a fleet of fifty quinqueremes, two quadriremes, and five triremes, of which thirty-two quinqueremes and five triremes came with crews. He also left him a cavalry contingent consisting of 450 Libyphoenicians and Libyans, 300 Lergetes, and 1,800 Numidians, drawn from the Massyli, the Masaesyli, the Maccoei, and the Maurusii, who live by the Ocean; and an infantry contingent consisting of 11,850 Libyans, 300 Ligurians, 500 Baleares, and 21 elephants.

There is no need to be surprised if I have recorded the measures taken by Hannibal in Iberia with an accuracy that would scarcely have been attainable by the person who was originally responsible for all the details. Nor should I be condemned offhand for having behaved rather like those writers who disguise their fabrications with a veneer of plausibility. For on Cape Lacinium I came across an inscribed bronze plate on which these details had been recorded by Hannibal during his time in Italy, and I chose to follow the inscription (for these details, at any rate), on the grounds that there could be no more reliable source.

[34] Hannibal made all these provisions for the security of Libya and Iberia, and then waited for the messengers he was expecting from the Celts. He had made sure that he was fully informed about the fertility of the land below the Alps and in the Po plain, the size of the population there, the fearlessness of the men in battle, and, most importantly, the hatred they bore the Romans because of the recent war.[2] As a result of his enquiries, he pinned his hopes on them, and made extravagant promises in the carefully crafted messages he sent the chieftains of Celtic tribes occupying both the Italian side of the mountains and the actual Alps. His thinking was that he could cross the intervening badlands and take war to the Romans in Italy only if he had the cooperation and assistance of the Celts.

[1] The name really means 'slingers', but is used of the tribe and the island as well, because the inhabitants are employed in this way.

[2] I discussed this war in the previous book, so that my readers could make sense of what follows here.

Once they returned, the messengers reported that the Celts were agreeable and awaited his arrival. They also assured him that the Alps were crossable; it would be troublesome and tough, but not impossible. Early in spring Hannibal gathered his forces from their winter 218
quarters. The news from Carthage had also recently arrived, so he addressed his men with his confidence running high, knowing that he had the support of his fellow citizens. He was now openly inciting his troops to war with Rome; he made much of the Roman attempt to demand the surrender of himself and all his staff officers; and he made sure his men knew how fertile the land was where they were headed, and that the Celts were on their side and would fight alongside them. The men became just as fired up as he was, for which he thanked them. Then he announced the day of departure and dismissed the assembly.

[35] With the security of Libya and Iberia adequately taken care of by the measures he had seen through during the winter, he set out on the appointed day with an army of almost 90,000 foot and 12,000 horse. After crossing the Ebro, his next task was to subdue the tribes whose territories lay between the river and the Pyrenees—the Ilourgetes, Bargusii, Aerenosii, and Andosini. Before long, he had captured a number of cities and subjugated them all. It was all over remarkably fast, but it took a number of major battles, and severe loss of life. He left Hanno in charge of the whole region north of the river, and also made him the absolute ruler of the Bargusii. They were the ones he trusted least, because they were on good terms with the Romans.

He divided his army, leaving Hanno with 10,000 foot and 1,000 horse, and the baggage of the allied troops. He also dismissed the same number of troops and sent them back to their homes, in order to leave a loyal force behind in Iberia. For the rest—the Iberians who were staying behind with Hanno just as much as those who were marching with him—he held out the hope that they too would soon be returning home, because he wanted all of them to set out with their morale high, ready to play their part. With his now-depleted army of 50,000 foot and about 9,000 horse he set out for the Pyrenees and the Rhône crossing. His army now was functional rather than numerically large, consisting of troops that had been trained to an exceptional state of expertise by their continuous struggles in Iberia.

[36] I would not want any reader to find my account completely opaque just because he is unfamiliar with the places in question, so I shall give a description of all the places on Hannibal's route, from where he started to where in Italy he ended up, and all the regions he crossed in between, one by one. I shall not merely record the names of the regions, rivers, and cities, as some historians do, as though knowledge and certainty were, in every case, automatic results of such a record. My view is that a list of names only really works as an aide-memoire for places with which the reader is acquainted, whereas writing down the names of unknown places is, in the final analysis, as little good as transcribing meaningless, incoherent words. The mind has nothing it can relate to; it cannot make any connection between what it is reading and what it already knows, and so the account becomes confusing and meaningless. Hence I must sketch out a method which will enable me, when I mention unknown places, to give my readers as true and meaningful an idea of them as possible.

The primary, fundamental concept, common to everyone, is the division and arrangement of the heavens that enables all of us, whatever our level of ability, to recognize east, west, south, and north. The second most important concept is the one that allows us to organize the regions of the earth under these divisions, because this enables us mentally to relate anything that is being talked about to one of the four directions, and so to make unknown and unseen places known and familiar.

[37] Assuming this approach to the world as a whole, the next thing to do would be to divide the entire known world along the lines I suggested, in order to orientate my readers. The known world is divided into three parts, each with its own name: Asia, Libya, and Europe. The boundaries of these parts are formed by the Don, the Nile, and the strait at the Pillars of Heracles. Asia lies between the Don and the Nile, and is situated under the region of the heavens that reaches from where the sun rises in the east-north-east at the summer solstice to where it stands in the south at midday. Libya lies between the Nile and the Pillars of Heracles, and extends uninterruptedly under the heavens from where the sun stands in the south at midday to where it sets in the west-south-west at the winter solstice, and up to the west, where it sets at the equinox, which is where the Pillars of Heracles are situated. As a generalization, one could say that Asia and Libya occupy the region south of the Mediterranean from

east to west. Europe, then, lies opposite and to the north of both these land-masses, and extends uninterruptedly from east to west.

The most important and populous part of Europe is situated exactly under the northerly region of the heavens, between the Don and the Aude, which lies not far west of Massalia and the Rhône delta, where the river issues into the Sardinian Sea. The land around the Aude and from there to the Pyrenees is inhabited by Celts, and then the Pyrenees stretch in an unbroken chain from the Mediterranean to the Outer Sea. The rest of Europe, the part from the far side of the Pyrenees to its western limits and the Pillars of Heracles, is bounded by the Mediterranean and Outer seas. The region with a Mediterranean coastline, up to the Pillars of Heracles, is called Iberia, but the region that is bounded by the Outer or Great Sea has no universally recognized name, because it has only recently been explored; it is all densely inhabited by barbarian tribes, whom I shall discuss in detail later.*

[38] Libya and Asia meet at Ethiopia, but it has so far proved impossible to determine whether after that the land-mass just goes on and on in a southerly direction, or whether it is surrounded by sea. The same goes for Europe: the northerly extent of the land that lies between the Don and the Aude is still unknown territory, and will remain so unless or until our curiosity leads us at some later date to make fresh discoveries. Anyone who says or writes anything different on these matters should be regarded as a purveyor of myths and legends.

I hope that what I have said is enough to ensure that no reader is left in utter confusion by my account just because he is unacquainted with the places I mention. Now, whenever I mention a place, he will have something in his mind to refer and relate it to—in broad terms, at any rate—simply by using the heavens as his guide. Just as in the case of vision we habitually turn our gaze towards any object that is pointed out to us, so we should incline and bend our minds towards each place that puts in an appearance in my narrative.

[39] But now I shall leave geography aside and continue my narrative. At the time in question, the Carthaginians controlled the entire Mediterranean coastline of Libya from the Altars of Philaenus, on the Greater Syrtis, up to the Pillars of Heracles—a distance of more than 16,000 stades. On the other side of the strait at the Pillars of Heracles, they had also taken control of all Iberia up to the promontory at the

Mediterranean end of the Pyrenees, which forms the border between Iberia and Celtic territories. This place is about 8,000 stades away from the strait at the Pillars of Heracles: 3,000 stades from the Pillars to New Carthage (which is where Hannibal started on his expedition to Italy), then 2,600 stades from New Carthage to the Ebro, and then 1,600 stades from the Ebro to Emporium†. From there to the Rhône crossing is about 1,600 stades; from the Rhône crossing, following the river upstream to the beginning of the pass through the Alps and into Italy is 1,400 stades; and the remaining Alpine trails, by which Hannibal would reach Italy at the Po plain, make about 1,200 stades. So the total distance of Hannibal's route from New Carthage to Italy was about 9,000 stades. He had already covered half this distance, but in terms of difficulty he had hardly started.

[40] So Hannibal was attempting to cross the Pyrenees, with his chief concern, given the severity of the terrain, being the Celts. By now the Romans had heard from the envoys they had sent to Carthage what had been said and decided there, and they had found out that Hannibal had crossed the Ebro with his army sooner than they had anticipated. They decided to send an army to Iberia under Publius Cornelius Scipio, and another army to Libya under Tiberius Sempronius Longus, and they set about recruiting troops and generally getting ready for war.

At the same time, however, they were also anxious to complete the colonies they had earlier decided to found in Gaul. They were assiduously constructing defensive walls, and they gave the settlers, almost 6,000 in number, thirty days to be at their new locations. There were two new colonies: one, called Placentia, was founded on the southern side of the Po, and the other, named Cremona, on the northern side.

The Gallic tribe called the Boii had long been waiting for an opportunity to spring the trap, so to speak, of their friendship with Rome, but had never found one—until now, when the messages they were receiving about the imminent arrival of the Carthaginians excited them and gave them the confidence. And so, just after these colonies had been established, they rebelled against Rome, abandoning the hostages they had given at the end of the recent war, which I described in the previous book.* They called on the Insubres, who were still angry at the way they had been treated, and together they devastated the land that had been allotted to the settlers by the Romans. They pursued the refugees to Mutina, a Roman colony, and put it under

siege. Among those pinned inside the city were three distinguished Romans, who had been sent to oversee the allotment of the land; one, Gaius Lutatius Catulus, was a former consul, while the other two were ex-praetors. These three requested a conference with the Boii, and were accepted—only to be taken prisoner once they were outside the city walls. The Boii hoped to use them to recover their own hostages.

There was a Roman army already stationed near by, under the command of Lucius Manlius Vulso, one of the praetors for the year, and when he heard what had happened, he quickly set out to help. But the Boii learnt of his approach and prepared a trap for him in a forest. As soon as the Romans were among the trees, the Boii fell on them from all sides. Many of the Romans lost their lives, and the rest fled until they were clear of the trees, when they rallied just enough to give their retreat a semblance of order. But the Boii followed them and pinned them too inside an unwalled town called Tannetum. When news reached Rome that the Fourth Legion had been surrounded by the Boii and was under siege, a relieving force was quickly dispatched, under the command of a praetor. The army that was sent was the one that had been raised for Scipio, and he was ordered to recruit and put together another army, of allied troops. [41] In combination with what I have already said in the previous book, this will do to explain the course of affairs in Gaul, up until the time of the coming of Hannibal.

Early in the summer, once the Roman consuls had everything they would need for their respective ventures, they set sail on their assignments—Scipio with a fleet of sixty vessels bound for Iberia, and Sempronius bound for Libya with 160 quinqueremes. Sempronius' intention was to attack Carthage with such overwhelming force that on his first approach by sea he would put the city itself under siege, and in Lilybaeum he set about preparing for this by gathering troops from wherever he could find them.

Scipio sailed along the Ligurian coast and reached Massalia on his fourth day out from Pisa. He anchored off the first mouth of the Rhône delta—the Massaliotic mouth, as it is known—and disembarked his troops. Although he was receiving reports that Hannibal had already crossed the Pyrenees, Scipio could not believe that he was anywhere near the Rhône: first he had difficult terrain to cross, and a large number of Celtic tribes to face. But Hannibal bribed or fought

his way through the Celtic territories and, marching east along the coast of the Sardinian Sea, reached the Rhône crossing with astonishing rapidity.

At first, Scipio was inclined to disbelieve the reports he was receiving that the enemy was near at hand; it seemed too soon. He needed to know for sure, so he sent his 300 bravest cavalrymen to find out, supplementing this squadron with a force of Celtic mercenaries hired by the Massaliots, who would also act as guides. Meanwhile, he let his men recover from their voyage, and met with his tribunes to discuss which sites had the best potential for engaging the enemy.

[42] Hannibal made camp on the river, about four days' journey from the sea, where it still had a single stream. His first priority was to get his forces across the river. He made all kinds of friendly overtures to the local inhabitants, and bought from them all their dug-out canoes and *lemboi*, of which there were plenty, since maritime trade is a common way of life for those who live on the Rhône. He also acquired timber suitable for making dug-outs, and within two days he had an enormous fleet of transports, since every man wanted to be responsible for his own crossing, rather than depending on his companions.

Meanwhile, however, a large number of barbarians had gathered on the opposite bank of the river, with the intention of preventing the Carthaginians from crossing. Hannibal was in a bind: as things were, he knew that he would not be able to force his way across against such a large hostile force; but he was also aware that, if he stayed where he was, he would become vulnerable to enemy attacks from all quarters. So, the third night after his arrival, he sent out a division of his army, with local guides, under the overall command of Hanno, the son of the suffete Bodmilcar.

Hanno and his men made their way upstream along the bank of the river for 200 stades and halted when they came to a certain spot where the river divided and created an islet. There was plenty of timber available, and before long they had built a large number of rafts, enough for their requirements, by fitting and lashing logs together, and they crossed the river on these rafts safely and unopposed. They occupied a defensible position and waited out the remainder of the day, resting from their labours and getting ready, as instructed, for the coming action. Hannibal too was having the forces that had stayed behind with him do much the same, but he was having a great deal

of difficulty solving the problem of how to ferry his thirty-seven elephants across the river.

[43] Shortly before dawn on the fifth night, Hanno's force set out down river towards the barbarians on their side of the river. Hannibal had his troops standing by, ready to cross. He had filled the *lemboi* with his light horse, and the dug-outs with his most mobile infantry. The *lemboi* were posted upstream and directly against the current, with the light transport vessels below them, so that the *lemboi* would receive the main force of the current and protect the dug-outs as they crossed. The plan was to tow the horses astern of the *lemboi*, with the horses swimming and a man on either side of the stern controlling three or four horses at once by their leading-reins. In this way there would be plenty of horses on the far bank straight away, at their first crossing.

When the barbarians realized what the Carthaginians were up to, they poured out of their camp piecemeal, without bothering to form ranks, since they were sure that it would be easy to stop the enemy gaining their side of the river. Once Hannibal had been alerted by pre-arranged smoke signal to the fact that Hanno's men on the other bank were getting close, he ordered all the officers in charge of the transport vessels to embark their troops and force the river. No sooner said than done. The men took to their boats, contending with the force of the current and yelling as they raced one another for the further shore. Soldiers from both camps lined both sides of the river, with the Carthaginians, as wound up as their comrades, following their progress with cries of encouragement, and the barbarians on the opposite bank chanting their battle-songs and calling out challenges. It was an astonishing, breath-taking moment.

Just then the Carthaginians on the far bank suddenly fell on the now-deserted camp. Some set fire to it, while most of them charged off against those who were guarding the crossing-place. The barbarians had not been expecting anything like this; some rushed to save their tents, while others defended themselves and fought back against their assailants. Hannibal's plan was going perfectly, and he formed up on the far bank the first batch of men to disembark, briefed them, and joined battle with the barbarians. The Celts, out of formation and taken by surprise, soon turned and fled.

[44] With the enemy defeated and the crossing-place in his hands, Hannibal's first priority was the transportation of those who had

been left on the other side. Before long, all his men were over on the eastern side of the river. He spent that night close by the river, and the next morning, hearing that the Roman fleet was at anchor off the delta, he sent an elite squadron of 500 Numidian horsemen to find out their exact location, their numbers, and what they were doing. At the same time, he also detailed experienced men to see to the crossing of the elephants.

Hannibal next convened an army assembly and presented Magilus and his fellow chieftains, who had arrived from the Po plain. With the help of a translator, he informed the troops of the chieftains' decisions. The speeches were long, but the men drew encouragement, first and foremost, just from the presence of these men, who were inviting them to come and were promising to fight alongside them against the Romans. The next most important factor was the sincerity of the Celts' promise that they would not lack essentials en route, and that their progress to Italy would be fast and safe. They were also glad to hear about the fertility and size of the land they were headed for, and about the determination of the men with whom they would take on the Roman legions.

The Celtic chieftains withdrew after their speeches, and then Hannibal stepped forward to speak for himself. He began by reminding the assembled troops of what they had already achieved, and specifically that they had never failed, despite all the risky ventures and battles they had undertaken, as long as they had followed his orders and heeded his advice. He went on to tell them to take heart from the fact that they had already done the hardest part, by gaining control of the river crossing, and also from the loyalty and commitment of their allies, which they had now seen for themselves. There was no need, then, he said, for them to concern themselves about the details. That was his concern, while theirs was to obey his commands, demonstrate their bravery, and live up to what they had already achieved. The men applauded his speech, and he commended the enthusiasm and determination they displayed. Then, after praying to the gods on behalf of the entire army, he dismissed them to get themselves and their equipment ready to break camp in the morning.

[45] Just after the assembly had broken up, the Numidian scouts returned—or rather, those few of them who were still alive returned, in headlong flight. They had not gone far from their camp when they had encountered a Roman cavalry squadron which had been sent

out by Scipio on the same mission, and the resulting engagement had been so hard fought by both sides that the Romans and Celts lost about 140 men, and the Numidians more than 200. In the ensuing pursuit, the Romans got close enough to the Carthaginian camp to take a good look at it, before racing back to confirm the enemy's arrival to the consul. When they got back and delivered their report, Scipio immediately put the baggage back on the ships and then took to the field with his whole army. He advanced up river, with the intention of meeting the enemy in battle. At daybreak on the day after the assembly, Hannibal deployed his entire cavalry contingent on his seaward flank as a screen, and had the infantry strike camp and march out, while he himself waited for the elephants and the men who had been left with them.

The method used for transporting the elephants across the river was as follows. [46] They built a lot of sturdy rafts. The first two were joined together and pegged firmly into the ground at the point of entry into the river. The combined width of the two rafts together was about fifty feet. Then another pair was joined and fitted onto the far end of the first pair, and so on, so that the pontoon structure extended out into the river. They tied cables onto the trees that grew on the river's edge and used them to secure the side of the pontoon that was facing the current, to keep it steady and to prevent the whole structure from being pushed downstream. When they had extended the platform to a total length of two hundred feet, they attached two particularly well-made rafts onto the end; these two rafts were lashed firmly together, but were joined to the rest of the pontoon in such a way that they could quickly be cut loose. They attached many tow-ropes to this final pair of rafts, to prevent its being carried downstream as the *lemboi* were towing it, and to enable it to hold steady against the current while the elephants were being carried across the river on it.

Next, they brought plenty of earth, enough for the entire platform, and piled it up smoothly, until they had made it level and continuous with the road that led over dry land to the crossing. Now, elephants obey their mahouts right up to the edge of any expanse of water, but tend to refuse absolutely to step into it. So they brought the elephants over the piled-up earth, with each group obediently following the lead of two females. Once the elephants were on the final pair of rafts, they cut the cables that joined it to the rest of the pontoon.

The *lemboi* tautened the tow-ropes and quickly separated the beasts and the rafts on which they were standing from the heaped-up soil. This filled the creatures with panic, and at first they turned and darted this way and that, but they were completely surrounded by water, which they shrank back from, and so could only stay where they were. The Carthaginians attached successive pairs of rafts to the end of the pontoon, and succeeded in this way in carrying most of the elephants over to the other bank. Some, however, became so frightened that they hurled themselves into the river in mid-journey. None of the Indians survived these episodes, but the elephants did. The strength and length of their trunks meant that they could breathe by keeping them above the surface, and could blow out any water that got inside. Much of their crossing was carried out under water and on foot.

[47] Once the elephants were over on the other side, Hannibal set out alongside the river, with the elephants and the cavalry as his rear-guard, heading away from the sea in an easterly direction, towards the interior of Europe. The Rhône rises inland from the head of the Adriatic, in the northern stretches of the Alps. Its springs are west-facing, but the river flows in a south-westerly direction and issues into the Sardinian Sea. For much of its course it flows through a valley, the northern side of which is inhabited by a Celtic tribe called the Ardyes, while the northern piedmont of the Alps flanks its entire southern side. The Po plain, which I described at length earlier, is separated from the Rhône valley by the Alpine range, which starts at Massalia and extends all the way to the head of the Adriatic. These are the mountains that Hannibal crossed at that time to enter Italy from the Rhône valley.

Some of those who have written about Hannibal's crossing of the Alps want to astound their readers with the extraordinary nature of the mountains, but find themselves unwittingly committing two of the historian's cardinal sins: they are forced to perpetuate falsehoods and to contradict themselves. At the same time as portraying Hannibal as a general of unrivalled daring and foresight, they also leave us in no doubt that he was utterly thoughtless, and since they cannot extricate or disentangle themselves from the falsehoods they have been perpetuating, they introduce the gods and the gods' children into the facts of political history. For in their versions the Alps are so steep and unforgiving that even light-armed troops, let alone horses, infantrymen, and elephants, could hardly cross them; and they sketch for us

a picture of such a desolate region that, if some god or hero had not met Hannibal and shown him the way, his entire army would have got lost and died. There can be no doubt that this is to commit the two cardinal sins I mentioned above.

[48] According to these historians, Hannibal, with all his hopes of victory hanging in the balance, took thousands of men into the Alps without having found out about the roads and the terrain, without the slightest idea where he was going or who he would meet on the way, and without knowing if his plans were at all feasible. But if this were correct, Hannibal would be the most stupid general and incompetent commander imaginable. To let an army march into places without any prior information about them—even generals who have been decisively beaten and have no alternatives do not allow themselves to do what these writers attribute to Hannibal, who still had every reason to anticipate success in his enterprise. And all the stuff about the desolation, steepness, and ruggedness of the terrain is obviously false: despite the fact that it is not ancient history, but a recent event, they fail to mention that Hannibal was not the first—that on several occasions the Celts who live by the Rhône had crossed the Alps with large armies, and, as I described earlier,* had met the Romans in battle alongside the Celts from the Po plain. These writers are also unaware that the Alps are densely populated, and their ignorance in all these respects leads them to claim that some hero appeared and showed them the way. This, of course, makes them resemble tragic dramatists, who always require a deus ex machina to bring their plays to a close, because the initial premisses of their plays are false and absurd. These historians are bound to find themselves in pretty much the same situation: the starting points they assume are implausible and false, and so they have to invent tales of epiphanies of heroes and gods. But then, why would we expect a sensible ending after a nonsensical beginning?

Contrary to what these historians suggest, Hannibal's approach to these aspects of his initiative was highly practical. He had made sure that he was fully informed about the fertility of the land he was headed for, and about the hostility of the general populace towards the Romans; and for the badlands on the way he employed local guides and scouts who were sympathetic to his cause. I say this confidently, because some of my informants were there at the time, and I have visited the places in question and followed Hannibal's route through the Alps on a fact-finding tour.

[49] Anyway, the Roman consul Scipio reached the Rhône crossing three days after the Carthaginians had left. He was absolutely amazed to find that the enemy had gone. He had been sure that the number and the duplicity of the barbarians they would have to face would deter them from entering Italy by that route. Since this was plainly not so, he hurried back to his fleet and began to embark his troops. He dispatched his brother to the Iberian theatre, while he turned around and sailed back to Italy, with the intention of marching through Etruria and reaching the end of the Alpine pass before the enemy got there.

After four days of continuous marching from the Rhône crossing, Hannibal came to a place called 'The Island', an area where rich agricultural land sustained a large population. The name 'The Island' is descriptive: the Rhône and the Isère make up two of its sides and form the apex of a triangle where they meet. In size and shape it closely resembles the Nile delta in Egypt, except that there the final side of the triangle, linking the two rivers, is formed by the sea-coast, and here it is formed by mountains which are so rugged and forbidding that it is hardly an exaggeration to call them impassable.

At the Island, he found two brothers confronting each other with their armies, in dispute over the throne. When the elder brother approached him and asked for his help in securing his supremacy, Hannibal agreed. There could hardly be any doubt that, things being as they were, this would work to his advantage, and indeed he was well repaid for helping to attack and expel the younger brother. Not only did the victor supply the army with plenty of grain and other provisions, but he also renewed their effectiveness, just in time, by replacing all their old and worn-out weaponry. He gave most of the men new clothing and footwear as well, which made a huge difference on the mountain trails. But the Carthaginians were worried about travelling through the territory of a Gallic tribe called the Allobroges, and the most important thing the new king of the Island did for them was protect their rear with his forces and afford them safe passage up to the start of the pass through the Alps.

[50] After a ten-day march of 800 stades along the river,* Hannibal began his ascent of the Alps—and found himself in grave danger. As long as he had been on level ground, fear of his cavalry and the barbarians that rode with them had deterred all the various Allobrogian chieftains. But once the barbarians returned home,

and Hannibal began to draw close to the badlands, the Allobrogian chieftains put together a sizeable army and occupied critical positions along the route that Hannibal and his men were bound to take during their ascent. If they had managed to conceal their plans, they would have utterly destroyed the Carthaginian army, but their purpose was discovered, and although they injured Hannibal a great deal, they sustained just as many losses themselves.

What happened was this. When Hannibal found out that the Allobroges had occupied these strategic positions, he established a camp at the entrance to the pass, and stayed put there, while sending some of his Gallic guides on ahead to find out the enemy's plans and general intentions. What he learnt from this mission, once it had been completed, was that in the daytime the enemy carried out their duties meticulously and kept a close watch on the pass, but at night they left for a nearby town. Hannibal adapted his tactics accordingly and came up with the following plan of action. He took to the field with his army and advanced, without making any attempt at concealment. He halted not far from the enemy positions, close to where the badlands began. At nightfall he ordered the campfires to be lit and, while the bulk of his army remained there, he had a unit of picked men strip down and pass through the defile in the darkness. The barbarians had as usual left for the town, and so Hannibal's men occupied the positions that had been in enemy hands.

[51] The next day, when the barbarians saw what had happened, at first they kept their distance, but later the sight of all the pack animals and horses awkwardly filing in a long train over the badlands tempted them to disrupt the column. They attacked at several points, and—thanks more to the terrain than the men—the Carthaginians sustained heavy losses, especially among the horses and pack animals. The track was not only narrow and rough, but also precipitous, and at the slightest movement or disturbance many of the pack animals fell down the precipice, along with their loads. Wounded horses contributed hugely to this havoc: some of them, driven frantic by their pain, crashed straight into the pack animals, while others caused chaos by galloping forward and forcing their way through every obstacle they met on the broken ground.

When Hannibal saw what was happening, he realized that, if the baggage train were lost, even those who escaped the danger would become vulnerable. He recalled the pickets who had occupied the

trails in the night-time and set out to assist those who had gone on ahead. He fell on the enemy from high ground and inflicted heavy losses, but his own losses were just as heavy, as the shouting and the fighting together increased the disruption of the column. It was only when most of the Allobroges were dead and the rest had been forced to turn and flee for their homes that the surviving pack animals and horses could struggle and inch their way over the difficult terrain. Then Hannibal gathered as many men as he could after the fight and launched an attack on the town which had acted as the enemy's base. He found it almost deserted, because everyone had been drawn out by the prospect of plunder, and he took it over. This brought him a great many immediate and longer-term advantages: in the short term, he recovered a number of horses and pack animals, and the men who had been captured along with them, and for the future he gained enough grain and livestock to supply the army for two or three days. But the most important thing was that he struck such fear into the local tribes that none of those who lived close to the ascent readily dared to take him on.

[52] For the time being he had his men take up quarters in the town, and stayed there all the next day before setting out again. For a while the army advanced in safety, but on the fourth day after setting out from the town Hannibal found himself once more in grave danger, from a coalition of tribesmen living along his route. They came to meet him carrying branches and wearing garlands, but it was a trick.[1] Hannibal was suspicious of this pledge and questioned them closely to try to discover their immediate plan and overall intentions. They said that they had decided to come to him once they found out about his capture of the town and about the slaughter of those who had dared to ambush him. They told him that they wanted to remain neutral, and promised to give him hostages from among their number. Hannibal was not sure of them and hesitated for a long time. In the end, however, he thought that, if he accepted their offer, they would probably be more cautious and less inclined to make trouble, whereas if he refused, they were certain to make war on him. So he agreed to their proposals and went along with their feigned pact of friendship. The barbarians handed over the hostages, gave Hannibal

[1] A branch is an almost universal token of friendship for these barbarians, as a herald's staff is for Greeks.

generous quantities of livestock, and in general behaved as if they had unconditionally submitted to him—and Hannibal trusted them, at least to the extent of using them as guides for the next stretch of badlands. But after two days on the road, the horde of barbarians, who were bringing up the rear, launched an attack on the Carthaginians as they were passing through a forbidding and precipitous gorge.

[53] This could have led† to the complete annihilation of Hannibal's army, if he had not still been somewhat apprehensive. As a precautionary measure, he had kept the baggage train and the horses in the van, and the heavy infantry in the rear. The disaster was less severe than it might have been because the heavy infantry were able to cover the rest and absorb the barbarians' assault. Nevertheless, they still lost a great many men, pack animals, and horses. The enemy shadowed the Carthaginians on the slopes, which gave them the advantage of height. They either rolled rocks down on the Carthaginians or hurled stones at them from close quarters. The Carthaginians became desperate, and their situation was so perilous that Hannibal was forced to spend the night with half his men in the lee of a cliff of white rock, separated from the horses and pack animals and covering their rear. It took them the whole night to extricate themselves from the ravine.

The next morning the enemy were nowhere to be seen, and he was able to link up with the horses and pack animals and proceed towards the highest Alpine trails. From then on he met with nothing remotely resembling coordinated resistance from the barbarians, who restricted themselves to occasional harassment at one point or another. When the opportunity presented itself, they would make off with some of the baggage, from either the van or the rear. The elephants did sterling service, because the enemy never dared to approach wherever in the column they happened to be. The extraordinary appearance of these creatures scared them off.

Eight days later Hannibal reached the pass. He halted there and stayed for two days, so that the survivors could get some rest, and the stragglers could catch up. While they were there, an extraordinary thing happened: many of the horses that had fled in panic, and many of the pack animals that had shed their loads, rejoined them. They had followed the army's trail to the encampment.

[54] Snow had already settled on the peaks, as the setting of the Pleiades was imminent.* Hannibal could see that the hardship they had experienced, and the anticipation of more to come, had sapped

morale throughout the army. He convened an assembly and tried to raise their spirits, though his only asset was the visibility of Italy, which spreads out under the mountains in such a way that, from a panoramic perspective, the Alps form the acropolis of all Italy. So he showed them the Po plain, while reminding them in general terms that the Gauls living there were on their side, and he also pointed to where Rome lay. With their confidence restored to a certain extent, the next morning he broke camp and began his descent.

Apart from the occasional ambuscade, hostile natives no longer bothered him on the way down, but the terrain and the snow were such that his losses were almost as heavy as during the ascent. The descent was narrow and steep, and snow made the footing uncertain, while the inevitable result of missing the trail or stumbling was a plunge down a precipice. The men were by now inured to this kind of misadventure, and they put up with their trials and tribulations, but then they came to a place where an old fall had carried away nearly a stade and a half of the track, and a more recent landslide had only made things worse, so that it was too narrow for either the elephants or the pack animals to get through. Once again, spirits fell and morale plummeted throughout the army. At first, Hannibal tried to find a way around the obstacle, but a fresh fall of snow made this alternative route equally impassable, and he gave up.

[55] It was a unique and extraordinary spectacle. The first snow of the year had recently fallen on top of old snow, left over from the previous winter. The fresh snow offered little resistance, because it had the softness of a recent fall and because it was not yet deep, but they could not penetrate the layer of compacted snow underneath, and when their footsteps broke through the fresh snow, they found both feet slipping and sliding on it, as people do when they tread on a layer of mud spread on the ground. Further irritation was to follow. When the men used their hands and knees to support their attempts to stand up again, they found themselves sliding even more, on all their extremities at once, over the impenetrable layer of ice and down a very steep slope. On the other hand, when the pack animals tried to get to their feet after falling, they did break through the lower layer and so they got stuck there with their loads as if they had become frozen in place, because of their weight and the solidity of the old snow.

Hannibal therefore abandoned this plan, made camp on the ridge (once the snow there had been scraped away), and gave his men the

extremely arduous task of repairing the cliff. After a day's work they had widened the path enough for the pack animals and the horses, and he had them taken through straight away. He set up camp in a place that was still free of snow, and let the animals graze, while the Numidians took on the construction work. It took them three days of hard labour, working in relays, before they were able to lead the elephants along the trail. By then the elephants were badly malnourished. The peaks of the Alps and the parts near the top of the passes are completely treeless and bare, because they are blanketed in snow all the year round; shrubbery and woodland begin about halfway down the flanks of the mountains on both sides, where they are perfectly inhabitable.

[56] With his army reunited, Hannibal continued down the descent, and at the end of the third day after leaving these gorges he reached the plain. Over the course of the whole march, he had lost many soldiers to the enemy and to rivers, and the Alpine crags and badlands had also taken a heavy toll, not just of men, but more especially of horses and pack animals. The whole march from New Carthage took him five months, with the crossing of the Alps occupying fifteen days. When he boldly appeared down in the Po plain and the territory of the Insubres, the surviving remnant of his army numbered 12,000 Libyans, 8,000 Iberians, and a cavalry contingent of not more than 6,000. These are the figures he himself gives in the inscription on the stele at Cape Lacinium.

Meanwhile, as I said earlier,* Scipio left his army with his brother Gnaeus, with instructions to take care of matters in Iberia and to wage a forceful campaign against Hasdrubal. Then he sailed with just a small force to Pisa and marched through Etruria and into the Po plain. He took back from the praetors the legions that were engaged in both defensive and offensive manoeuvres against the Boii and, after making camp, he waited impatiently for the chance to engage the enemy in battle.

[57] My narrative, the generals of both sides, and the war have now reached Italy, but before the action begins I want to say a few words about the governing principles of my history. The point is that, since I very often mention places in Libya and Iberia, some people may wonder why I have not written more about the strait at the Pillars of Heracles, or about the Outer Sea and its distinctive features, or indeed

about the tin-mining industry in the British Isles, or about the mining of silver and gold in Iberia itself. These are all topics to which historians devote long excursuses, in which they take issue with one another.

My reason for avoiding these topics is not because I think such matters are irrelevant to history. But, first, I do not want constantly to interrupt my narrative or distract readers from the underlying political purpose; second, rather than mentioning them in scattered asides, it seemed better to assign each of them its own separate place* and time and to give as true an account of them as I could. So if in what follows as well I omit such matters, when we come across any such places, this should not occasion surprise: I do so for the reasons I have just given. Any readers who absolutely insist on hearing detailed descriptions of each place as it occurs may not appreciate that they are behaving rather like gourmands at a dinner-party, who sample every available dish, without truly enjoying any of the food at the time and without deriving from it any future benefit in terms of assimilation or nourishment. Quite the opposite, in fact. And the same goes for those who approach reading in a similar manner: they fail to gain any genuine pleasure from it at the time, or the appropriate educational benefit in the long term.

[58] Now, it is undeniable—the main reasons will emerge from what follows—that this aspect of history writing is particularly in need of a rational approach, and of correction in the light of improved information. Nearly all historians, certainly the majority, have tried to describe the locations and distinctive features of places at the extremities of the world known to us. Since these historians were often wrong, it would be altogether remiss of me to keep quiet, but any points I make against them are best made in a coherent fashion, not in asides or in scattered passages. Also, my remarks should not just be critical or deprecatory. It would be better to give credit where credit is due, and to correct their mistakes, knowing that, if they had the advantages we have nowadays, they too would have corrected and altered many of their statements.

Long ago, research into the extremities of the world was rarely undertaken by Greeks, because the attempt stood no chance of success. There were countless risks to sea-travel in those days, and overland journeys were many times more dangerous even than travelling by sea. And suppose, by accident or design, someone reached the limits of the known world: even so, he could not see the project

through, because it was usually far from easy to examine things at first hand, due to the fact that those places were either desolate or overrun by barbarians. And reliable information about anything one saw was even harder to come by because of linguistic differences. Finally, even if someone did manage to make himself acquainted with the facts, the hardest thing of all was for any of these eyewitnesses to avoid exaggeration and scorn talk of marvels and monsters; it was almost impossible for them to prefer the truth for its own sake and to give us the facts without embroidering them.

[59] Since in times past it was not just difficult to attain historical truth, but nearly impossible, for the reasons I have given, we should not criticize these writers for their omissions or errors. We should praise and admire them, rather, for the accurate information they *did* manage to obtain, and for advancing our knowledge of such matters at all, given the conditions under which they were working. In our times, however, almost everywhere can be reached by sea or by land: Asia has been opened up by Alexander's empire and everywhere else by Roman supremacy. At the same time, men who are capable of being effective in the world have been freed of the obligation to devote themselves to warfare and statesmanship, and therefore have the perfect opportunity to investigate and study these matters.* Under these circumstances, better and more reliable information about matters that were formerly obscure ought to be available, and that is what I shall attempt to provide, when I find a suitable place in my work for this topic. It will be my intention to give those who are interested in such matters fuller information. That, in fact, is the main reason why I accepted all the hazards of travelling in Libya, Iberia, and Gaul, and sailing the sea that washes the outer coastlines of these places: I wanted to correct the mistaken notions of my predecessors, and give the Greeks reliable information about these parts of the world too.

But for the time being I shall return to the point from which I digressed and try to give an account of the fighting that took place between the Romans and Carthaginians in Italy. [60] I have already given the figures for the size of the army with which Hannibal invaded Italy. Once he had reached Italy, he made camp right at the foot of the Alps, and let his troops recover for a while. His entire force had not only been exhausted by the ascent and descent, and the harsh conditions on the trails, but were also suffering badly from lack of food and neglect of their bodily needs. In fact, many had completely

succumbed to hunger and the constant hardship. The ruggedness of the terrain had made it impossible for them to transport enough food for so many thousands of men, and then most of what they had been carrying had been lost along with the pack animals. So, as I indicated earlier, the force of about 38,000 foot and more than 8,000 horse with which Hannibal set out from the Rhône crossing was almost halved on the Alpine trails. And the constant suffering had reduced all the survivors to a state in which they resembled wild beasts.

Hannibal was meticulous, then, in his concern for his men and the horses, and both their spirits and their health recovered. Then the Taurisci, who live on the Alpine piedmont, fell out with the Insubres and began to have misgivings about the Carthaginians. Hannibal first invited them to enter into a pact of friendship with him and join the alliance, but when they refused, he encamped around their main town and reduced it within three days. The inhabitants were massacred for their resistance, and the neighbouring barbarian tribes were so terrified that they promptly came and pledged their allegiance. From then on the majority of the Celtic inhabitants of the Po plain were committed to supporting the Carthaginians, as they had originally intended. Nevertheless, since the Roman legions had already bypassed most of them and cut them off, there was nothing they could do. Some of them, in fact, were forced to serve on the Roman side. Hannibal therefore decided to wait no longer. It was time to advance and do something to encourage those who wanted to join his expedition.

[61] He was about to put this plan into effect when he heard that Scipio had already crossed the Po with his army and was not far away. At first, he did not believe the report, because only a few days earlier he had left Scipio at the Rhône crossing. He knew that the journey from Massalia to Etruria by sea was time-consuming and troublesome, and he had also found out that the overland route through Italy, from the coast of the Tyrrhenian Sea to the Alps, was long and unsuitable for troop movement. But further reports kept arriving with corroborative information.

Hannibal was impressed by the consul's overall strategy and astounded by what he had achieved—and Scipio felt pretty much the same as well. In the unlikely event that Hannibal and an army of foreigners would even attempt to cross the Alps in the first place, he had supposed they would die in the attempt. Naturally, then, when he found out that Hannibal was not only alive, but was already besieging

towns in Italy, he was astounded by the man's audacity and temerity. In Rome, the reaction to the news was the same. The clamour generated by the last report they had received, of the Carthaginian capture of Saguntum, was only just dying down; they had responded with a plan that had one of the consuls dispatched to Libya, to besiege Carthage itself, and the other to Iberia, to fight Hannibal there. And now they were hearing the unbelievable news that Hannibal and his army had arrived, and that he already had some towns in Italy under siege.

In consternation they wrote to Sempronius in Lilybaeum, informing him of Hannibal's arrival, and ordering him to abandon his present project and come with all speed to help them at home. Sempronius wasted no time. He mustered the crews of his fleet and sent them off with orders to sail for Italy, and had his tribunes get his land forces to commit themselves, on oath, to reaching Ariminum (a city on the Adriatic at the southern edge of the Po plain) in full force by nightfall on the appointed day. Everywhere there was upheaval and disruption of normal life; everywhere there was considerable uncertainty about the future.

[62] At this juncture, with Hannibal and Scipio in close proximity to each other, the two commanders chose to address their men, in terms suitable to the occasion. Hannibal came up with a novel method of encouragement. He assembled his troops and brought forward some young men from among the prisoners he had taken during the ambuscades in the Alpine badlands. They had been treated badly, on his orders, in preparation for what he had in store for them. They wore heavy fetters; they were emaciated from hunger; their bodies were disfigured by blows. He had these men sit in full view of the army, and he displayed before them full sets of Gallic armour, of the kind that their kings wore for single combat, and followed that by having horses brought up and valuable cloaks carried in. Then he asked the young men if any two of them would be willing to fight, with the prizes before them the reward for the winner, and for the loser death and release from his current torment.

But all the prisoners simultaneously cried out their willingness to duel, so he had them draw lots, on the understanding that whichever two were chosen by the lottery were to arm themselves and fight each other. As soon as they heard this, every young man raised his hands and prayed to the gods that he might be one of the chosen two, and

when the result of the lottery was announced, the chosen ones were overjoyed, while the others were downcast. Furthermore, after the duel was over, the rest congratulated the one who had been killed just as much as they did the winner, saying that he had been released from all the trials and tribulations that they still had to bear. Most of the Carthaginians felt pretty much the same as well. They were sorry for the living who were being led back to captivity and evident hardship, and they all felt that, by comparison, the one who had died was the lucky one.

[63] Once Hannibal had contrived in this way to arouse these feelings in his men, he stepped forward in person and explained why he had introduced the prisoners—because he wanted the vivid display of others' circumstances to help them think more clearly about their own immediate prospects. Fortune, he said, had limited their options to a similarly critical battle, and was offering them much the same rewards as she had the prisoners just now. They could either win, or die, or be taken alive by their enemies. The reward for the victors, however, would not be mere horses and cloaks, but the riches of Rome, with which they would make themselves the wealthiest men in the world. The reward for those who succumbed on the field of battle would be to die, fighting to their last breaths in the noblest of causes, without ever having experienced catastrophe. But those who were defeated—who so clung to life that they were prepared to flee or find some other way to avoid death—would know the utmost torment and misery.

None of them, he went on, was so foolish or stupid as to believe that he would make it home if he turned to flight. All of them remembered how far they had travelled from their homelands; all of them remembered how many hostile tribes there were en route; all of them knew the size of the rivers they had crossed. And so, since that hope was altogether denied them, he said that he expected them to respond to their own circumstances in the same way that they had just now to the prisoners' situation. Just as, in the case of the prisoners, they had all congratulated not just the winner, but also the dead man, and had pitied those who remained alive, so he expected them all to feel the same way about themselves, and to go to battle with the intention, above all, of winning, but, if that proved impossible, of dying.

He urged them to banish from their minds all traces of the hope that they might survive defeat; victory and survival were certain only

if they adopted the attitude and point of view he was recommending. For whenever people chose or were compelled to give up hope, they always succeeded in defeating their opponents; and when the enemy could realistically entertain the hope that most of them could survive through flight—as the Romans did then, because their homes were near at hand—the fearlessness of those who had given up hope would plainly be irresistible. Most of the men took the example and Hannibal's words to heart, and were fired up with the kind of fanaticism he had wanted to instil in them. And so for the time being he thanked them and dismissed them, with orders that they were to break camp at dawn the next day.

[64] Meanwhile, Scipio, who had already crossed the Po, decided to carry on and cross the Ticinus. He ordered the engineers to build a bridge, and meanwhile convened the rest of his men and addressed them. He spoke at length about the dignity of Rome and the achievements of their ancestors; as for the current situation, he said that, even if they lacked the up-to-date experience of their opponents, and knew only that they were going to do battle with Carthaginians, they should still confidently expect to win. In fact, he said, they should find it quite curious and extraordinary for Carthaginians to dare to face up to Romans, given how often they had been beaten by them, and how much tribute they had paid. For many years now, they had been close to being Roman slaves.

'But, even apart from all that,' he said, 'we do have at least some experience of the present lot, and we know that they do not have the courage to meet us face to face.† So, if we weigh up all the factors, how should we rate our chances? Their cavalry came off badly when they clashed with ours by the Rhône: they lost a lot of men and fled like cowards all the way back to their camp. And when their general and troops realized that our forces had arrived, they made a tactical withdrawal that was almost a flight. In fact, they were so frightened that they went against their own wishes and resorted to crossing the Alps. True, Hannibal is here now,' he went on, 'but with an army reduced to less than half its size, and the remainder rendered impotent and useless by their suffering. He has lost most of his horses too, and those that remain have been disabled by the length and harshness of the journey.'

The implication of his arguments was that all they had to do was show themselves to the enemy, and he urged them to draw confidence

above all from his presence there. He would never have abandoned his fleet, he said, and the Iberian theatre to which he had been assigned, and rushed to Italy, had it not been perfectly clear to him that this action was of vital importance to Rome, and that victory in it was assured. The integrity of the speaker and the openness of his words made all the men eager for the fray. Scipio thanked them for their enthusiasm and dismissed them, adding only the instruction that they were to await his orders.

[65] Next day, both armies advanced along the Alpine side of the Po, with the Romans keeping the stream to their left and the Carthaginians keeping it to their right. The day after that, their scouts informed them that they were close to each other. For the time being both sides halted and waited, but the next morning both generals advanced over the plain with their full cavalry contingents (Scipio with the skirmishers from his infantry too), with the intention of reconnoitring each other's forces. But as soon as they were close enough to see each other's dust clouds, they formed up for battle. Scipio posted the skirmishers and the Gallic cavalry unit in front, and had the rest form a line and walk slowly forward. Hannibal stationed his bridled cavalry and his entire heavy cavalry unit in front, and advanced to meet the enemy, with his Numidian horsemen on both wings primed to execute an outflanking movement.

The two commanders and the cavalry were so eager for the fray that the initial assault left the skirmishers no time to discharge even one volley of javelins. The onset was so terrifying that they fell back in fear straight away and retired through the gaps to the rear of their own cavalry squadrons, to avoid being trampled underfoot by the cavalry as they charged into the attack. The cavalry contingents clashed head on, and for a long time the battle was evenly balanced, because in the course of the fighting so many men dismounted that it became a combined cavalry and infantry action. But then the Numidians outflanked the Romans and fell on them from behind. The skirmishers, who had successfully escaped the clash of the cavalry earlier, now found themselves trampled by the onslaught of the massed Numidians. The Roman cavalry who had been fighting the Carthaginians head on since the beginning of the battle had suffered many losses, though they had inflicted even more on the Carthaginians, and when the Numidians attacked from the rear, they turned to flight. Most of them scattered, but a few clustered around Scipio.[†]

[66] Scipio broke camp and marched across the plain towards the Po bridge, the idea being to get his legions across as quickly as possible. Under the circumstances—the level terrain, the enemy's cavalry superiority, and his own troublesome wound—he had decided that he had to get his forces back to safety. At first, Hannibal assumed that the Romans would risk an infantry engagement, but then he saw that they had left their camp. He followed them as far as the bridge over the first river, where he found most of the timbers removed, but he managed to capture the 600 or so men who had been left behind at the river to guard the bridge. When he heard that the rest were by now a long way ahead, he wheeled around and marched in the opposite direction beside the river, with the intention of finding a spot where the Po could easily be bridged.

After marching for two days, he halted and built a pontoon out of river boats. He put Hasdrubal in charge of getting the bulk of the army across, while he himself crossed straight away and granted an audience to the emissaries who had come from near by. An immediate result of his victory was that all the local Celts wanted to be on good terms with the Carthaginians, to supply them with provisions, and to serve alongside them. This had always been their intention, and Hannibal received the emissaries graciously. Once his men had crossed from the other side, he advanced downstream beside the river, in the opposite direction to the way he had come, with the intention of engaging the enemy.

As for Scipio, after crossing the Po, he made camp at Placentia, a Roman colony. He and all the other wounded men received treatment, but he took no action, in the belief that his forces had found a safe haven. But two days after crossing the river Hannibal reached the vicinity, and the next day he drew up his army in battle array within sight of the enemy. When this provoked no response, he encamped about fifty stades away from the Roman legions.

[67] In view of the improvement in the Carthaginians' prospects, the Celts who were serving with the Romans formed a conspiracy. They kept to their own separate sections of the camp and waited for an opportunity to attack. Everyone settled down to sleep after the evening meal. The Celts let most of the night go by and then, close to the time of the morning watch, in full armour they attacked the Romans who were quartered next to them. A lot of Romans died and quite a few were wounded. Once the Celts had decapitated the dead,

they made their way to the Carthaginian camp. There were about 2,000 of them, and almost 200 horsemen.

Hannibal received them warmly on their arrival. He made them a speech, in which he promised all of them suitable rewards, and then immediately sent them off to their own cities. He wanted them to tell the members of their communities what they had done and invite them to join his alliance. He was sure that they would all feel compelled to side with him, once they knew how their fellow citizens had betrayed the Romans. Moreover, some Boian emissaries arrived at the same time, with the three men who had been sent from Rome to oversee the partitioning of their land, whose treacherous capture by the Boii at the start of the war I mentioned earlier. They handed these prisoners over to Hannibal, who thanked them for their support, and pledged friendship and alliance with the Boii through their emissaries. But he returned the three men, and told them to stick to their original plan and keep them as leverage for recovering their own hostages from the Romans.

Scipio was shaken by the Celts' treachery. It seemed to him that, given the long history of hostility between the Celts and the Romans, this new incident would make all the local tribes favour the Carthaginians, and he realized that he had to take precautions. That same night, a little before dawn, he broke camp and marched for the river Trebia and its nearby hills. He was pinning his hopes on the forbidding terrain and the fact that the local Celts were Roman allies.

[68] As soon as Hannibal found out that the Romans had left, he sent the Numidian cavalry out, and shortly afterwards the rest of his cavalry. He himself followed close behind with the rest of the army. The Numidians found the Roman camp deserted, and put it to the torch. This was an enormous help to the Romans: if the Numidians had carried on straight away, they would have made contact with the baggage train, and, since they were cavalry and the terrain was level, it would have been a massacre. But instead most of the baggage train had crossed the Trebia by the time the Numidians caught up; the tail-enders who were stranded were either killed or became Carthaginian prisoners.

Scipio encamped on the first hills he came to after crossing the Trebia, and surrounded the camp with a trench and a palisade, while waiting for Sempronius and his forces. He did all he could to recover from his wound, because he wanted to take part, if possible, in the

coming battle. Hannibal kept about forty stades away and pitched his camp there. The plain was home to a great many Celts. Once they had committed themselves to the Carthaginian cause, they supplied his army lavishly with all its needs, and were ready to join him for any action or battle.

When news reached Rome of the cavalry battle, they were surprised that it had gone contrary to their expectations, but there was no shortage of specious reasons for thinking that they had not really suffered a defeat. Some said that Scipio had acted too precipitately, others that the Celts had deliberately held back (a guess based on their subsequent desertion). In general, since the infantry legions were intact, they concluded that their hopes for ultimate success were still intact. So when Sempronius and his legions arrived and paraded through Rome, they thought that all he had to do was show himself and the battle would be over. Once the troops had kept their promise and mustered at Ariminum,* Sempronius took them and marched off to link up with Scipio. The two armies met up and Sempronius's men encamped next to Scipio's troops. Sempronius let his men recover from their unbroken march of forty days from Lilybaeum to Ariminum, but was also concerned to get everything ready for battle. He conferred closely with Scipio, so that he was brought fully up to date and could contribute towards deciding what to do about the situation.

[69] At this juncture, Hannibal gained and occupied the town of Clastidium, which was betrayed to him by the town's commandant, a Brundisian by origin, appointed by the Romans. The garrison and the grain stores fell into Hannibal's hands; the grain he used for his current needs, but he took the captives with him when he left, without harming them. He wanted to make his principles clear, so that people who were caught up in the current crisis would take heart and not expect him to be merciless. He also rewarded the traitor generously, with a view to getting others in positions of authority to favour the Carthaginian cause.

It had come to Hannibal's attention that some of the Celts who lived between the Po and the Trebia were in communication with the Romans, despite having pledged allegiance to him, as a way, they hoped, of avoiding trouble from either side. So, after the business with Clastidium, he sent a force of 2,000 footsoldiers and about 1,000 Celtic and Numidian horsemen to raid their land. The mission was

successful and a great deal of livestock was gained, but the immediate response from the Celts was to go to the Roman camp and ask for help. Sempronius had long been looking for an excuse to take action, and this gave him the pretext he needed. He quickly sent out most of the cavalry, supported by about 1,000 skirmishers on foot. They met the enemy on the other side of the Trebia, fought them for possession of the livestock, and the Celts and Numidians gave way and started to fall back towards their camp. But the outlying pickets guarding the Carthaginian camp soon realized what was happening, and a force of reserves was sent out to help those who were in retreat.

Then it was the Romans' turn to give way. They disengaged and started to retreat back to their camp, but when Sempronius saw what was happening, he sent out all the remaining cavalry and skirmishers. When they joined up with the others, the Celts again gave way and began to retreat to their safety zone. Now, Hannibal believed—and this, it must be said, is the mark of a good general—that decisive battles should never be fought on the spur of the moment, without forward planning, so he was not willing to commit to an all-out engagement. As his men came up to the camp, then, he had them halt, about face, and make a stand—but he had his officers and trumpeters call them back if they set out after the enemy and tried to restart the fighting. After a short while the Romans broke off, with fewer losses sustained than inflicted.

[70] Sempronius was excited and delighted at this victory, and was determined to fight a decisive battle as soon as possible. Although, with Scipio an invalid, there was nothing to stop him from doing as he chose, he wanted to have his colleague's consent as well. But he found, on talking things over with him, that Scipio's view of the situation was diametrically opposed to his. Scipio thought their troops could use a winter of training, and he also held that, if the Carthaginians took no action and remained in enforced idleness, the notoriously duplicitous Celts would break faith and make trouble again, this time for the Carthaginians. He also hoped to recover from his wound and be of genuine service to Rome. And so he argued on these grounds that Sempronius should leave things as they were.

Sempronius could see the validity and cogency of Scipio's position, but he was driven by ambition and by the irrational conviction that things were running his way. He wanted to be the agent of decisive victory; he did not want to see Scipio able to take part in the

battle; and he did not want the consuls designate—it was that time of year—to take up their commands before the issue had been decided. But he was consulting only his own interests, not letting circumstances dictate the moment for action, and this was plainly going to lead him into dereliction of his duty.

Hannibal's view of the situation was pretty much the same as Scipio's, but led him to the opposite conclusion: he was eager to do battle with the enemy. First, he wanted to make use of the Celts' energy while they were fresh; second, he wanted to engage the Roman troops while they were untrained new recruits; third, he wanted the battle to take place while Scipio was still *hors de combat*; above all, he wanted to do something, and not let time pass to no purpose. For when a commander has brought troops into a foreign country and is trying to achieve something remarkable, his survival depends entirely on constantly keeping his allies' hopes alive.

Knowing he could count on Sempronius' impulsiveness, Hannibal proceeded as follows. [71] Some time previously, he had noticed between the two camps a stretch of ground that was level and bare, but was perfect for an ambush, because there was a stream with a steep bank, which was overgrown with prickly shrubs and dense brambles. And so he set about devising a trap for the enemy. It seemed highly unlikely that he would be noticed: the Romans were suspicious of woodland, because that was the kind of terrain where the Celts always laid their ambushes, but they were careless about level, treeless places. It had not occurred to them that such places actually make it easier for ambushers to hide and stay out of trouble than woodland does. They have a clear view of everything in front of them for a considerable distance, and there is usually enough cover in such places. Any stream with a slight brow, and maybe reeds or ferns or prickly shrubs of some kind, is capable of concealing not just infantry, but sometimes even horsemen, provided that a little care is taken to lay emblazoned shields face down on the ground, and to hide helmets under them.

Anyway, Hannibal discussed his plans for the coming battle with his brother Mago and the members of the Council, and they all agreed with him. So, after the troops had taken their evening meal, he summoned Mago,† an energetic young man with a precocious gift for warfare, and assigned him a hundred horsemen and the same number of footsoldiers. During the day, he had instructed these men, who

impressed him as the pick of the entire army for their toughness, to come to his tent after the evening meal. He addressed them and got them fired up and ready, and then told each of them to choose the ten* bravest men from their own companies, and to present themselves at a certain pre-arranged spot in the camp. They carried out their instructions, so that there were now 1,000 horsemen and the same number of men on foot. He supplied them with guides, gave his brother his orders about the timing of the attack, and sent them out under cover of darkness to lay the ambush.

At first light he gathered his Numidian horsemen, men of exceptional stamina, and briefed them, making it clear that bravery would be rewarded. Their job was to find a spot close to the enemy camp where they could gallop across the river and provoke the enemy into action with their javelins. He wanted to catch the Romans with empty stomachs and unprepared. Then he convened a meeting of all the rest of his officers and gave them their battle orders too. Finally, he ordered everyone to prepare their morning meal and tend to their weaponry and their horses.

[72] As soon as Sempronius saw the Numidian cavalry approaching, he sent his cavalry out with orders to close with the enemy and engage them. Next he sent out the skirmishers, about 6,000 in number, and began to move the rest of the army out of the camp. There were so many of them that he confidently believed the mere sight of them would decide the issue, especially given the cavalry's success the day before. It was close to the winter solstice, it was snowing and bitterly cold, and almost all the men and horses were taking to the field on empty stomachs. At first, the men were too fired up and purposeful to care, but the Trebia was swollen by rainfall in the hills beyond the camps during the night, and at the ford those on foot were struggling across with water up to their chests. As a result, the army began to suffer badly from cold and, as time went by, from hunger as well.

The Carthaginians, however, had eaten and drunk in their tents, and had tended to their horses, and now they were all grouped around their fires, anointing and arming themselves. Hannibal waited until the time was right, and when he saw that the Romans had crossed the river, he sent his spearmen and Balearic slingers on ahead as cover (a contingent of approximately 8,000 men) and then took to the field with the rest of the army. About eight stades from the camp, he

had his infantry form a single line, and then he divided his cavalry between the two wings and stationed some of his elephants along the front of each wing. His infantry corps of Iberians, Celts, and Libyans numbered around 20,000, and, including his Celtic allies, there were more than 10,000 horsemen.

The Roman cavalry were plainly finding it impossible to cope with their Numidian opponents, who employed their characteristic battle tactics of coolly retreating in small groups, and then turning and charging fearlessly and recklessly at their pursuers. So Sempronius recalled the cavalry and drew up the infantry in its usual formation. The infantry corps consisted of 16,000 Romans and about 20,000 allies, which are the numbers of the Roman army at full strength, as used for critical operations, when a severe threat has both the consuls join forces. Then he deployed his 4,000 cavalry on either wing, and advanced towards the enemy in formation and at a slow walk. It was clear that he meant business.

[73] The two sides drew close to each other, and then the light-armed troops, who had the forward positions, engaged. In the ensuing battle, the Romans found themselves with a number of disadvantages, so that military superiority lay with the Carthaginians. The Roman skirmishers had been having a hard time of it since dawn, they had exhausted most of their javelins in the engagement with the Numidians, and those they still carried had been spoiled by the continuous damp. The cavalry and the army in general were in much the same state as well, but the Carthaginians were in the opposite situation. They had formed up for battle strong and fresh, and were ready and willing to do whatever was asked of them. The skirmishers pulled back to the rear through the gaps in the line, and the armoured contingents of both sides joined battle. On both wings the Carthaginian cavalry immediately began to force the Romans back. They not only had a considerable numerical advantage, but they also had superior strength because, as I have already said, they came fresh to the field of battle.

So the Roman cavalry gave way, leaving the flanks of the phalanx exposed. Then the Carthaginian spearmen and the main body of the Numidians overtook their own advance guards and fell on the Roman wings. They inflicted heavy losses and made it impossible for them to fight those who were coming at them head on. Meanwhile, on both sides the first lines of the heavy infantry in the centre of the whole

formation were fighting at close quarters, and for quite a while neither side gained the upper hand.

[74] This was the moment when the Numidians emerged from their ambush and fell suddenly on the Roman centre from the rear. The Roman forces were thrown into considerable disarray and found themselves in serious trouble. Eventually, both wings of Sempronius' army fell back under pressure from the elephants in front and from the light-armed troops on every side and especially on their flanks. With the wings being pushed and harried back towards the river behind them, the Roman centre began to suffer. Those in the rear were being cut down by the ambushers, but the front lines, despite being completely hemmed in, managed to defeat the Celts and one of the Libyan units, taking a lot of lives in the process, and to break through the Carthaginian formation. But with the wings driven off the field, they realized they could do nothing to help them. At the same time, they did not think they could get safely to their camp, threatened as they were by large numbers of cavalry, and hampered by the river and by the force of the rain pouring down on them. But by keeping in close formation about 10,000 of them managed to retreat to Placentia. Most of the rest were killed at the river by the elephants and cavalry.

The surviving infantry and the majority of the cavalry withdrew towards the body of soldiers I have just mentioned and made it back to Placentia with them. The Carthaginians gave chase as far as the river, but the weather prevented them from going any further, and they returned to their camp. They were all delighted at their victory—most of their losses had been incurred by the Celts, and few Iberians and Libyans had died—but they suffered terribly from the rain and the snow that started to fall: all but one of the elephants died, and the cold killed many men and horses.

[75] When Sempronius realized what had happened, he wanted to conceal the facts from Rome, if he could. The messengers he sent were to announce that a battle had taken place, and that bad weather had robbed them of victory. At first, the Romans accepted this version of events, but before long they found out that the Carthaginians had not only kept their camp, but had also gained the allegiance of all the Celts, while *their* troops had abandoned their camp after the battle and were huddled in friendly cities, where they were being supplied by vessels travelling up the Po from the sea. Then they knew the truth.

They had not expected this outcome at all, and they got exceptionally busy. There were urgent preparations to be made. They protected their forward positions by sending legions to Sardinia and Sicily and garrisons to Tarentum and other critical locations, and built a fleet of sixty quinqueremes. Gnaeus Servilius Geminus and Gaius Flaminius, the elected consuls, mustered the allies, recruited their legions, and diverted supplies to Ariminum and Etruria, from where they were going to launch their campaign. The Romans also appealed to Hieron for help, and he sent them 500 Cretans and 1,000 light-armed troops. Everywhere, thorough preparations were going on apace. The Romans are at their most formidable, as a state or as individuals, when they are genuinely threatened.

[76] Meanwhile, Gnaeus Cornelius Scipio, to whom, as I said earlier, his brother Publius had delegated command of the naval forces, set sail from the Rhône delta with his entire fleet. He landed in Iberia at a place called Emporium, which he used as his base for a series of seaborne raids. All along the coast down to the Ebro, any city that resisted his overtures was put under siege, and any city that made him welcome was treated fairly and received every consideration. After seeing to the security of those of the coastal communities that had surrendered to him, he took to the field at full strength (by now he had supplemented his forces with a sizeable contingent of Iberian allies) and marched inland, winning over the cities he encountered on his way by either diplomacy or force.

The Carthaginian army that had been left under Hanno's command to guard the region confronted Scipio near a city called Cissa. The ensuing pitched battle was won by Scipio. This victory brought him a number of advantages: first, a great deal of valuable booty, because all the baggage of those who were serving in Italy had been left there with Hanno; second, all the Iberians north of the Ebro entered into treaties of friendship and alliance with him; third, he captured both commanding officers—the Carthaginian Hanno and the Iberian Andobales, who was the ruler of the Iberian interior, and was a constant and exceptionally loyal ally of Carthage.

Hasdrubal crossed the Ebro to help as soon as he heard the news. It came to his attention that the crews from the Roman fleet had responded to the victory of their land forces by becoming complacent and overconfident. With about 8,000 foot and 1,000 horse from his army, Hasdrubal caught the Roman sailors scattered

over the countryside and slaughtered them or forced them to run for their ships. Then he pulled back across the Ebro, wintered at New Carthage, and saw to the armament and defence of positions south of the river. When Scipio rejoined the fleet, he punished in the traditional manner those who were responsible for what had happened, and then united both his land forces and his fleet at Tarraco and set up winter quarters there. He divided the booty equally among his troops, which went down very well with them and left them raring to go.

217 [77] That was how things stood in Iberia. Early in the spring, Gaius Flaminius marched through Etruria with his army and encamped in front of Arretium, while Gnaeus Servilius took his forces to Ariminum, to guard against an enemy invasion from that quarter. Hannibal, who was wintering in Celtic territory, kept the Roman prisoners from the battle in confinement and gave them barely adequate rations. The allied prisoners, however, he treated with consummate kindness right from the start, and then later he convened them and made a speech in which he said that he had come to make war not on them, but on the Romans, on their behalf. If they were sensible, then, they should seek his friendship, because his primary objective was to restore freedom to the peoples of Italy, and to help them regain the cities and land that the Romans had stolen from them. After delivering this speech, he let them all return to their homes unransomed, in the hope that this would help him win the inhabitants of Italy over to his cause, drive a wedge between them and the Romans, and stir the anger of those who thought that the importance of their cities or ports had been undermined at all by Roman rule.

[78] While Hannibal was in winter quarters, he also resorted to a truly Punic trick.* Knowing the duplicity of the Celts, and bearing in mind that his alliance with them was recent, he was worried about an attempt on his life. He had a number of wigs prepared, made to look suitable in all respects for men of different ages, and he wore them one after another, in a random order, while at the same time changing his clothes to match the wigs. Even those who knew him well found it hard to recognize him when he was in disguise, let alone people who just happened to glance at him.

He could see that the Celts would not take kindly to the war continuing in their own territory, and that their anger at the Romans—or rather, the prospect of booty, which weighed more with them—made

them look forward restlessly to fighting on enemy territory. So he decided to take to the field as soon as possible and satisfy his troops' desires. As soon as the weather began to improve, he questioned people who were supposed to be well acquainted with the region, and he found out that, while all other routes into enemy territory were long and would offer no concealment from his opponents, there was a short cut into Etruria through the marshes—not an easy route, but one which Flaminius would not expect him to take. Since he was in a sense always naturally inclined towards surprises, this was the route he decided to take.

When word got around the camp that Hannibal was planning to lead them through marshes, everyone was worried at the prospect of quagmires and bogs. [79] But Hannibal's careful enquiries had shown that the route involved firm ground and little standing water, and so he set out. He had all his best troops, especially the Libyans and Iberians, take up the front of the column, with the baggage interspersed among them. He wanted his men to have access to plenty of supplies for the time being, but in the long term he was completely unconcerned about the baggage train, because, once they reached enemy territory, if they were defeated they would not need supplies, and if they gained control of the countryside they would not run short of provisions. Behind this division of the army came the Celts, and then the cavalry brought up the rear of the column. He left his brother Mago in charge of the rear, for a number of reasons, but chiefly as a safeguard against the Celts' lack of resolve and tendency to give up in the face of trouble: if they turned back when the going got difficult, Mago could use the cavalry against them and stop them.

The Iberians and the Libyans got through the marshes without too much trouble, as the ground was still fresh and to a man they were tough and inured to such hardship. The Celts, however, found progress difficult: the marshes had been disturbed and trampled into deep pools, and the effort exhausted them and dampened their ardour; this was, after all, the first time they had experienced such miserable conditions. But the cavalry posted behind them prevented them from turning back. The entire army suffered above all from lack of sleep, since they marched non-stop through water for four days and three nights, but the Celts became far more exhausted and debilitated than the rest. Most of the pack animals collapsed and died in the mud,

but they did continue to serve human needs in one respect, even in death: by sitting on the animals and the piled-up baggage, men could keep above the water level and sleep for at least a little of each night. Quite a few of the horses also lost their hoofs as a result of constantly walking through mud. Hannibal just made it on the last surviving elephant, but it cost him dearly, since he was suffering from a severe and agonizing eye infection. Later, in fact, he lost the use of one of his eyes, since he had no chance to rest and was in no position to treat the infection.

[80] Against all the odds, Hannibal had crossed the marshes into Etruria, where he found Flaminius encamped in front of Arretium. For the time being, Hannibal stayed where he was, by the marshes, since his troops needed time to recover, and he wanted information about the enemy and about the terrain he would face. He found out that the land before him was rich in booty, and that Flaminius was the kind of man who courted the favour of the mob, an out-and-out demagogue with no talent for the management of warfare in real life, and with excessive self-confidence as well. He came to the conclusion, then, that if he carried straight on and passed close by the Roman camp, Flaminius would be too anxious about the scorn of the rank-and-file troops to be able to stand by and watch the land being plundered, and too worried not to hurry after him wherever he went, in his eagerness to be personally responsible for victory without waiting for the arrival of his consular colleague. In short, it seemed to him that Flaminius would give him plenty of opportunities for attacking him.

This was all sound, practical thinking on Hannibal's part. [81] Anyone who claims that any aspect of generalship is more important than knowing the character and temperament of the enemy commander certainly does not know what he is talking about. In a fight between individual soldiers, or between one rank and another, winning depends on seeing how to get through to the target—on spotting an exposed or undefended part of the opponent's body. The same goes for those who lead whole armies, though they are concerned not with physical vulnerability, but any mental weakness that the opposing leader displays. Many commanding officers have lost their own lives and caused the utter ruin of their states as a result of complacency and general inertia; many others are so fond of wine that they cannot even get to sleep without drugging themselves with drink; others are so addicted to sex and its attendant derangement that they

have been responsible for homes and cities being razed to the ground, and have brought personal disgrace upon themselves by the manner of their deaths.

Cowardice and sluggishness are contemptible enough in private individuals, but they are disastrous for a state as a whole when they are attributes of one of its leaders. A general of this sort makes his troops ineffective, and often exposes his dependants to extreme danger. Then again, impulsiveness, recklessness, irrational ardour, a false conception of one's abilities, and arrogance are characteristics that make a man vulnerable to his enemies and highly dangerous to his friends; such a man reacts too readily to any plot, ambush, or trick. A general is most likely to prevail, then, if he has the ability to understand others' flaws and can get at his enemies by exploiting their commander's particular weakness. Just as a ship that has lost its helmsman will fall into enemy hands, crew and all, so a general who can outwit or out-think the commander of an army will often capture the entire army.

So, on the occasion in question, Hannibal's plan succeeded because he had worked out and foreseen what Flaminius would do. [82] He left the region of Faesulae, passed close by the Roman encampment, and encroached upon the nearby land. Flaminius immediately became beside himself with anger at the thought that the enemy were treating him with disrespect. Then, when the farmland began to be destroyed, with smoke everywhere indicating the extent of the devastation, he was furious. He found what was happening so intolerable that he was deaf to anyone who advised him not to go straight out after the enemy and engage them. He was advised to be cautious, especially in view of the size of the enemy's cavalry contingents; he was advised, above all, to wait until the other consul arrived, and to fight only with an army consisting of all the legions combined. But Flaminius could not even bear to hear any of this, and told his advisers to think about what people at home would most likely say if the land was ravaged almost up to Rome itself, while they stayed behind enemy lines in their camp in Etruria.

True to his word, he eventually broke camp and took to the field. He gave no consideration to timing and terrain, and had no plan except to engage the enemy. He treated victory as a foregone conclusion, and he had raised the hopes of the mob to such a pitch that soldiers under arms were outnumbered by non-combatants bearing

chains and fetters and so on, who accompanied the army in the hope of booty. Meanwhile, Hannibal was advancing through Etruria in the direction of Rome, with the city of Cortona and its hills on his left, and with lake Trasimene on his right. As he advanced, he burnt and destroyed farmland, deliberately to provoke the enemy's anger. By the time Flaminius had made contact, Hannibal had found a location that suited his purpose and was getting ready for battle.

[83] The road ran through a flat-bottomed valley, which was flanked on both sides by unbroken, high hills. Straight ahead, at one end of the valley, lay an inaccessibly steep ridge; behind, at the other end, was the lake, between which and the flanks of the hills there was room for only a narrow corridor into the valley. Hannibal entered the valley from the lake shore. He secured the ridge straight ahead and set up camp on it with the Iberians and the Libyans; he had his Balearic slingers and spearmen peel off from the vanguard and hide in an extended line behind the hills to the right of the valley; and he likewise had the cavalry and the Celts circle round behind the hills to the left and form an unbroken line there, with the last of them stationed right at the opening to the valley, the entrance between the lake and the flanks of the hills.

These dispositions were made during the night, and after that Hannibal took no further action; the valley was encircled by his troops, waiting to spring the trap. Flaminius was right behind him, eager for the fray. He had set up camp late in the previous evening right by the lake, and at dawn the next day he led his vanguard along the lake shore and into the valley, with the intention of engaging the enemy.

[84] There was a particularly thick mist that day. Hannibal waited for the majority of the Roman column to enter the valley, by which point the vanguard had made contact with his men, and then he gave the signal for battle and passed the word to the troops who were lying in ambush. His men attacked from all sides at once.

The sudden appearance of the enemy took Flaminius completely by surprise. With visibility severely reduced by the conditions, and the enemy charging down and attacking them from higher ground in a number of places at once, the Roman centurions and tribunes could hardly even comprehend what was happening, let alone respond to emergencies. They were under attack simultaneously from the front, the rear, and the sides, and very many of them were cut down while they were still in marching order. They were incapable of defending

themselves; it was as if they had been betrayed by their general's poor judgement. Taken by surprise, they were dying while they were still trying to decide what to do.

It was during this phase of the battle that Flaminius too died, in the utmost dejection and despair, in an engagement with some Celts. Close to 15,000 Romans fell in the valley, incapable of either giving in or doing anything, since they were conditioned never to flee or break rank under any circumstances. Others, still on the march, were trapped in the defile between the lake and the flanks of the hills, and died in an appalling and particularly humiliating way. They were forced back into the lake, where some of them desperately tried to swim in their armour and were drowned, while others, the majority, waded as far as they could into the lake and waited there with only their heads above water. At the approach of the cavalry, faced with the certainty of death, they lifted up their hands and begged in the most heart-rending terms to be spared, but in the end they were killed either by the enemy or, in some cases, at their own request by their comrades.

About 6,000 of those in the valley defeated the men they were facing, but failed to help their own men or take the enemy in the rear, because they could not see what was going on, even though they could have made an enormous difference to the outcome. They did nothing but face forward and advance, believing that they were sure to encounter others, until they found themselves off the battlefield and on high ground. From the ridge they could see the extent of the disaster, since the mist had dispersed by then, but it was too late for them to do anything: the battle was already lost and the field was everywhere in enemy hands. So they closed ranks and retreated to a certain Etruscan village. After the battle, Maharbal, dispatched by Hannibal with a force of Iberians and spearmen, surrounded the village. With their problems only compounded, the 6,000 negotiated a truce, laid down their arms, and surrendered, on condition of their lives being spared.

Such was the course and the outcome of the battle between the Romans and Carthaginians in Etruria. [85] Once all the prisoners had been brought back, including those who had surrendered under a guarantee of safety, Hannibal gathered them all together. There were more than 15,000 of them. He first informed them that Maharbal did not have the authority to guarantee the safety of prisoners under a

truce without his permission, and then he launched into an invective against the Romans. Afterwards, he distributed the Roman prisoners among the units of his army, for them to watch over, but he let all the allies return to their homes, free and unransomed. Before letting them go, he repeated his assertion that he had not come to fight the peoples of Italy, but to try to gain them freedom from Rome.

While allowing his men time to rest and recover, he buried the ranking officers among his own dead. There were about thirty of them, out of a total of around 1,500 dead, with the Celts having suffered the worst losses. And then he conferred with his brother and his Friends* about where they should strike next, and how to go about it, since he was now confident of the final result.

When news of the disaster reached Rome, the authorities could not conceal or downplay it: it was just too great a catastrophe. Since they had no choice, they convened a general assembly in order to tell the people what had happened. The praetor started to address the mob from the *rostra* with the words 'We have lost a great battle'—and such a hue and cry immediately broke out that those who had been present on both occasions felt far worse about the defeat then than they had during the actual battle. This was perfectly comprehensible. For many years the Roman people had neither heard about nor experienced the reality of an indisputable defeat,* and so they could not react to the disaster with moderation and restraint. The Senate, however, stayed suitably calm as they debated the future, to try to decide what everyone should do and how they should go about it.

[86] At the time of the battle, Gnaeus Servilius, the consul responsible for the Ariminum region,[1] had heard that Hannibal had entered Etruria and had confronted Flaminius. He wanted to bring his entire army and link up with Flaminius, but the heavy infantry made this impracticable, so he sent Gaius Centenius racing ahead with 4,000 cavalry to get there before him, in case the situation was critical. But the battle was over by the time they arrived. When Hannibal heard of these enemy reinforcements, he sent Maharbal out to meet them, with a force consisting of the spearmen and some of the cavalry. In the very first clash, Centenius lost almost half his men, and the next day all the rest, who had been chased onto a hill, were taken prisoner.

[1] The region on the Adriatic coast where the Gallic plain joins the rest of Italy, not far from where the Po delta meets the sea.

The news of this fresh disaster reached Rome two days after they had heard about the main battle, when the city's fever, so to speak, was at its peak, and this time the Senate was thrown into as much turmoil as the common people. They suspended the constitutional system whereby consuls were elected every year and decided to adopt a more drastic approach to the situation. It seemed to them that events and the current crisis demanded the appointment of a single general with full powers.*

There was no doubt in Hannibal's mind that he would eventually win, and so he decided to stay away from Rome for the time being. Instead, he set out towards the Adriatic coast, destroying farmland as he went, without meeting any opposition. He passed through Umbria and Picenum and reached the coastline ten days after setting out. On the way, he gained so much booty that his men could not carry it or drive it all off. The slaughter also continued, because, motivated by his long-standing, deep-rooted hatred of the Romans, he had given the order that all adult male Romans who fell into their hands were to be killed, as is the practice when cities are sacked.

[87] He encamped by the Adriatic in a district that was exceptionally rich in all kinds of crops, and made every effort to ensure that his men, and his horses too, recovered their health. They had wintered in the open in Gaul, and as a result of the cold and the lack of oil-massage, exacerbated by the hardship of their subsequent march through the marshes, almost all the horses and the men were suffering from scurvy and similar ailments. And so, with good land available to him, he built up the strength of his horses, and improved both the physical and the mental condition of his men. He re-equipped his Libyan troops in the Roman fashion, giving them the pick of the huge amount of arms and armour he had captured, and, since this was the first time since invading Italy that he had access to the sea, he also seized the opportunity to send messengers by boat, carrying news of events to Carthage. The report cheered the Carthaginians immensely, and they made every effort to provide for and support the two campaigns, in Italy and Iberia.

The Romans appointed as their dictator Quintus Fabius, an exceptionally intelligent and gifted man. In fact, even today members of his family are called 'Maximus',* which means 'greatest', because of this man's victories and achievements. The differences between a dictator and a consul are that a dictator is attended by twenty-four

lictors, while each consul has twelve, and a dictator has plenipotentiary powers, while consuls often cannot see their measures through without the Senate. On the appointment of a dictator, however, all other political officers in Rome stand down, except for the tribunes of the people. But I will analyse these matters in more detail elsewhere.* At the same time they appointed Marcus Minucius Rufus as Master of the Horse. The holder of this office is the dictator's second-in-command and is, so to speak, the heir to his command when the dictator is otherwise occupied.

[88] Hannibal gradually moved camp, but stayed by the Adriatic coast. There was plenty of old wine, enough to bathe the horses and cure them of their mange and emaciation, and the wounded also made complete recoveries. As for the rest, he made sure that they were fit and ready for the coming campaign. He invaded successively the territory of the Praetuttii, of Hatria, of the Marrucini, and of the Frentani, and then carried on towards Iapygia, which is divided into three districts, named after the Daunii, Peucetii, and Messapians. He first invaded Daunia, and began by targeting Luceria, a Roman colony there, whose land he destroyed and plundered. Then he made camp near Vibinum, overran the farmland of Argyripa, and plundered all Daunia without meeting any opposition.

Meanwhile, after taking up his appointment, Fabius sacrificed to the gods and then took to the field with his colleague and the four legions that had been raised in response to the crisis. He was reinforced by the army from Ariminum, which he met up with at Narnia. He relieved Servilius of command of the land army and sent him with an escort to Rome, with orders to respond as circumstances demanded to any Carthaginian naval ventures. He and his colleague took over Servilius' forces and encamped at Aecae, about fifty stades away from the Carthaginian position.

[89] When Hannibal heard of Fabius' arrival, he decided to try to overwhelm him straight away. He took to the field and drew his men up in battle order near the Roman camp, but this elicited no response, and after a while he withdrew back to his camp. Fabius had decided to avoid battle and to take no risks, but to make his primary and overriding aim the safety of his men. His adherence to this decision was unwavering. At first, this earned him contempt and made people accuse him of being a battle-shy coward, but as time went by he forced everyone to concede that he had come up

with the most sensible and intelligent way of dealing with the current crisis.

Before long, in fact, events themselves bore witness to the soundness of his thinking. This was hardly surprising. The enemy troops had been trained, ever since they first reached military age, by continuous warfare; they had a commander who had shared this upbringing and had been accustomed since childhood to campaigning in the field; they had won many battles in Iberia, and had defeated the Romans and their allies twice in succession. Above all, they had nothing to lose: in victory lay their only hope of survival. The Roman army, however, was in exactly the opposite situation in all these respects. Fabius was therefore reluctant to assent to a decisive battle, because that would inevitably have led to defeat. To his way of thinking, he should fall back on his strengths, make them his focus, and rely on them for his conduct of the war. And the Romans' strengths were an inexhaustible supply of provisions and plenty of men.

[90] Over the following weeks, then, he shadowed the enemy, and used his knowledge of the terrain to occupy strategic positions before they got there. He had more than enough provisions in his rear, so he never let his men go out foraging or leave the camp at all. He kept them all together in close formations, and waited and watched for suitable terrain and opportunities. This enabled him to capture or kill large numbers of the enemy, who contemptuously strayed from their camp on foraging expeditions. In adopting these tactics, his intention was to whittle away at the enemy's limited numbers, and at the same time gradually, by means of partial successes, to revive and restore his men's confidence, which had been shattered by overwhelming defeats. But he remained reluctant to resolve the situation once and for all by assenting to formal battle. These tactics were not at all to the liking of his colleague Minucius, however, who shared the view of the mob and never missed an opportunity to disparage Fabius. He accused him of conducting the war in an ignoble and indolent manner, and declared himself in favour of risking battle.

After ravaging farmland in Iapygia, Hannibal crossed the Apennines and came down into Samnite territory, fertile land that had long been untroubled by war. The Carthaginians found themselves surrounded by so much bounty that there was plenty left even after they had killed and consumed all the livestock they could. They also overran Beneventum, a Roman colony, and took Venusia, an unwalled town

that was well stocked with all kinds of goods. The Romans were constantly on their tail, one or two days' march away, but were never inclined to close and fight.

It was clear that, although Fabius was refusing to give battle, he was also refusing to give up the countryside altogether, and under these circumstances Hannibal made a bold strike into the Capuan plain, or to be precise the Falernan Fields. He expected one of two outcomes. He would either compel the enemy to fight, or he would make everyone recognize that he had the upper hand and that the Romans were ceding the countryside to him—in which case, he hoped, the terrified cities would rush to rebel from Rome. For up until then, despite two Roman defeats, not a single Italian city had left them and gone over to the Carthaginians; they had all remained loyal, even though some of them had suffered a great deal. This is a good indicator of the fear and respect the allies felt for the Roman state.

[91] Anyway, Hannibal had good reasons for thinking as he did. There is no land in Italy more famous for its fertility and beauty than the plain around Capua. Moreover, it is a coastal region, and the ports it commands are called in at by merchants coming to Italy from pretty much everywhere in the known world. The most famous and beautiful cities in Italy are located there. On the coast, there are Sinuessa, Cumae, Dicaearchia, then Naples, and finally Nuceria. Inland, there are Cales and Teanum to the north, Daunia and Nola to the east and south, and, in the middle, Capua, once the most prosperous city in the world.

The myth* that is told about this plain[1] is perfectly plausible: there is nothing more likely to have caused friction among the gods than its beauty and fertility. In addition to the advantages I have already mentioned, the plain appears to be strongly protected and perfectly inaccessible: some of it is bounded by the sea, and most of it by continuous ranges of unremittingly tall mountains. There are only three passes through these mountains from the interior, and they are narrow and forbidding. One comes from Samnium, the second from Latium, and the third from the territory of the Hirpini. So when the Carthaginians established themselves in this plain, their intention was to make it their stage, from which they would

[1] Like other famous plains, its mythological name is 'Phlegraea'.

intimidate and astonish the world, and on which they would display a battle-shy enemy, while they appeared indisputably in control of the countryside.

[92] With this plan in mind, Hannibal left Samnium via the defile that runs beside the hill called Eribianus, and encamped by the river Athyrnus,* which more or less cuts the plain in two. He built his camp on the northern side of the river, and his marauders overran and plundered the plain without meeting any opposition. Fabius was surprised by the audacity of the enemy's tactics, but this only made him more determined to keep to his chosen course. His colleague Minucius, however, and all the tribunes and centurions in the army, thought they had Hannibal well and truly trapped, and expected Fabius to make his way to the plain as quickly as possible and do something about the devastation of this choice piece of land.

Fabius pretended to go along with the impatience and incautiousness of his colleagues, at least to the extent of making his way with all due speed to the plain, but once he was close to the Falernan Fields he kept to high ground. He did not want Rome's allies to think that he had abandoned the countryside, so he continued to shadow the enemy, making sure they knew he was there, but he did not bring his army down into the plain. For, whatever other reasons he had for avoiding battle, he was especially concerned about the enemy's clear and considerable cavalry superiority.

Hannibal had succeeded in provoking the enemy and in ravaging the entire plain. In the process, he had collected an enormous quantity of livestock. He decided, then, to move camp, because, rather than waste the booty, he wanted to keep it in a place where he could also make his winter quarters, so that his army would not only have plenty of provisions for the present, but would never suffer any shortage. Fabius realized that Hannibal intended to take the same route out that he had taken on the way in. He could see that the pass was narrow and the perfect place for launching an attack. He deployed about 4,000 men at the actual pass, with instructions to rise to any opportunity that presented itself and to make use of the natural advantages of the terrain, while he took the bulk of the army and encamped on a ridge in front of the defile and overlooking it.

[93] When the Carthaginians got there, they encamped on level ground at the foot of the slopes. Fabius felt sure that he could easily make off with the livestock, and he thought it likely that his

advantageous position might even allow him to bring the whole business to an end. So he began to consider how this might be achieved and to lay his plans—to think about where and how he could exploit the terrain, what troops he should use for the attack, and from where they should launch the initial assault. But while the Romans were making these preparations for the next day, Hannibal guessed what they were up to, and pre-empted and spoiled their plans. He summoned Hasdrubal, the commander of the pioneers, and gave him his orders: he was to get his men to make as many brands as they could, out of dry wood of any kind, as quickly as they could, and they were also to herd together in front of the camp about 2,000 of the plough oxen they had captured, selecting only the strongest. Once his orders had been carried out, Hannibal assembled the pioneers and pointed to a trail up the hills between his camp and the defile through which he was intending to march. When the signal was given, they were to drive the oxen forward towards the trail, vigorously and forcefully, and all the way up to the top. Then he issued a general order that everyone was to get to bed early, after eating their evening meal.

At the end of the third watch of the night, he brought the pioneers out of the camp and had them tie the brands onto the horns of the cattle. There were plenty of men, and this did not take long. Then he ordered them to light all the brands, start driving the oxen, and make for the ridge. He posted the spearmen behind the pioneers, and their orders were to help the pioneers for a while, but then, as soon as the animals began to move forward, they were to run alongside them and make sure they stayed bunched together. They were to make for the high ground, and occupy the ridge, so that they could respond to emergencies, and take on any enemy they met anywhere on the hill trails. Meanwhile, Hannibal set out for the pass through the defile, with the heavy infantry in the van, then the cavalry, then the livestock they had taken as booty, and finally the Iberians and Celts.

[94] When the Romans who were guarding the defile saw the lights approaching the trails, they assumed that Hannibal had set out in that direction, so they left the gorge and went to defend the ridge. As they drew near to the cattle, the lights puzzled them and made them imagine they were going to encounter something worse and more terrifying than mere oxen. When the Carthaginian spearmen arrived, the two contingents skirmished for a while, but then the cattle burst in on them and they separated. Both sides stayed on the ridge and kept

themselves in check while waiting for daybreak, because the situation was too confusing.

Fabius decided to play safe. He chose not to take any risks at all, and lay low in his camp, waiting for daylight. He did this partly because the developments were unusual enough for him to 'sense a trap', as Homer put it,* and partly because he was still adhering to his original plan. Meanwhile, Hannibal's plan was going well, and he brought his army and the livestock through the defile in perfect safety, because the Roman unit that was guarding the gorge had left the area. At dawn, he saw that on the heights the Romans were confronting his spearmen and sent an Iberian division to deal with the situation. They engaged the Romans, slew about 1,000 of them, and had no difficulty in bringing their light-armed troops back down from the ridge, protected within their formation.

That was how Hannibal broke out of the Falernan Fields. Afterwards, he kept safe in his camp and began to think about where and how he should pass the winter, and to make his plans accordingly. He had succeeded in arousing great fear and considerable uncertainty in the cities and people of Italy. Fabius became very unpopular with the masses, who held that it must have been an act of cowardice to let the enemy escape from such a situation, but he did not waver. A few days later, however, he had to leave for Rome, to perform some sacrifices. He delegated command of the legions to his colleague and repeatedly told him, as he left, not to be so concerned about harming the enemy; he should focus, instead, on making sure that *they* did not come to harm. Minucius paid not the slightest attention to this; even while Fabius was speaking, he was wholly committed to risking a battle.

[95] So much for the state of affairs in Italy. During this same period Hasdrubal, the general responsible for Iberia, spent the winter servicing the thirty ships he had been left by his brother. He also manned ten more, and at the beginning of the summer he had the full fleet of forty ships sail from New Carthage, under the command of Hamilcar. He had also collected his land army from winter quarters, and he took to the field with them. He wanted both arms to halt and make camp together at the river Ebro, and so the fleet hugged the coastline, while the land forces kept to the shoreline.

Gnaeus Scipio realized what the Carthaginians were going to do, and his initial intention was to meet them on both land and sea at the

end of winter. But when he heard about their numbers and the scale of their armament, he decided against a confrontation on land. He got thirty-five ships ready and withdrew from his land army an elite corps of men to serve as marines. He put to sea, and on the second day out from Tarraco landed close to the Ebro. He anchored about eighty stades away from the enemy, and sent out two swift Massaliot ships to reconnoitre.[1] They returned from their mission with the information that the Carthaginian fleet was lying at anchor off the mouth of the river, and Scipio quickly took ship, since he hoped to surprise the enemy.

[96] Hasdrubal's scouts, however, gave him plenty of warning about the enemy fleet. He drew up his land army on the beach and ordered his crews to begin embarkation. When the Romans were close, he gave the signal for battle and set out, since he had decided to meet the enemy at sea. Battle was joined, but the Carthaginians fought with conviction for only a short time and soon disengaged. The fact that the land army was waiting in reserve on the beach filled them with confidence for the battle, but this good was outweighed by the harm of affording them an easy escape route. Two ships were, however, lost with their entire crews, four more lost their oars and marines, and then the rest broke off and raced for land, with the Romans in hot pursuit. The crews ran their ships aground on the beach, leapt out, and found safety among the troops drawn up there. The Romans boldly came close to the shore, took in tow all the ships that were not stuck, and sailed away in high spirits. At a stroke, they had beaten the enemy, made the sea theirs, and gained twenty-five enemy ships.

This victory improved Roman prospects in Iberia, but the Carthaginian response to the news was immediately to man and send out a fleet of seventy ships. It seemed to them that mastery of the sea was essential for all their enterprises. This fleet first put in at Sardinia, and then approached Pisa, where they expected to link up with Hannibal. But the Roman response to the threat was swift: they dispatched a fleet of 120 quinqueremes from Rome itself, in response to which the Carthaginians returned to Sardinia, from where they later sailed back to Carthage.

[1] The people of Massalia served the Romans with absolute loyalty; apart from anything else, they used to lead the fleet and form the first line of defence in battle. No other people have given Rome such sterling support, especially during the Hannibalic War, but often later too.

Gnaeus Servilius, the commander of this Roman fleet, pursued the Carthaginians for a while. He confidently expected to catch up with them, but he fell too far behind and gave up. He first put in at Lilybaeum in Sicily, and then sailed to the Libyan island of Cercina, which he left only after receiving compensation for not plundering the land. During the return journey, he captured the island of Cossyra and installed a garrison in the town, before returning to Lilybaeum. He left the fleet at anchor there, and before long rejoined the land forces.

[97] As soon as the Roman Senate heard about Gnaeus Scipio's victory at sea, they made twenty ships seaworthy, put Publius Scipio in command (as they had originally intended), and sent him off to his brother.* The two of them were to manage the Iberian campaign together. So far from abandoning Iberia, the Romans regarded it as essential, not just a means to an end, to keep the Carthaginians under pressure and to escalate the war there. The last thing they wanted to see was an enemy victory in Iberia. That would make limitless supplies and countless soldiers available to the Carthaginians, with which they could mount a more decisive challenge for naval supremacy, and send troops and money to Hannibal to support the offensive in Italy.

The decision to send the ships and Publius Scipio to Iberia, then, was an indication of how seriously they were treating this theatre of the war, as well as the one in Italy. And once Publius Scipio had joined his brother in Iberia, it proved immensely useful for them to be able to act in concert. Never before had the Romans dared to cross the Ebro; they had been content with the friendship and alliance of the inhabitants north of the river. But they now crossed it, and for the first time dared to challenge Carthaginian supremacy south of the river. As things turned out, luck was also firmly on their side.

After subduing the Iberians who lived near the Ebro crossing, the Romans advanced towards Saguntum, and established their camp about forty stades away, near the sanctuary of Aphrodite. Since the fleet was sailing down the coast along with them, they chose a site that would allow them to be supplied by sea, as well as protect them from the enemy. While they were based there, an odd thing happened.

[98] Before setting out for Italy, Hannibal had taken hostages from all the Iberian cities of which he was uncertain. These hostages were the sons of the most eminent citizens, and he had chosen Saguntum

as the place to confine them, because of the impregnability of the city and the loyalty of the men he had left in charge of it. Now, there was an Iberian called Abilyx, whose standing and wealth were second to none of his compatriots. Abilyx had the reputation of being by far the Carthaginians' most loyal supporter in Iberia. His assessment of the situation was that the Romans' prospects were looking up, and this thinking led him—typically for a barbarian Iberian—to the idea of subverting the hostage situation. He was convinced that he could become an important man in the Roman world if he did them a timely favour as a demonstration of loyalty, so he set about trying to find a way to betray the Carthaginians and let the Romans get their hands on the hostages.

Bostor, the Carthaginian general detailed by Hasdrubal to stop the Romans crossing the river, had proved too cautious to succeed, and had retreated and encamped on the coast near Saguntum. Abilyx could see that Bostor combined naivety and acquiescence with a self-serving nature, and raised the matter of the hostages with him. With the Romans on this side of the river, he said, the Carthaginians could no longer use fear to keep Iberia under control; the situation required the goodwill of their subjects. What he should do, he said, given that the Romans were now encamped near by and the city was in danger, was free the hostages and restore them to their parents and communities. First, the Romans were absolutely certain to do just that if they got their hands on the hostages, and he would be thwarting them; second, if he took precautions and was the instrument of the hostages' safety, he would earn goodwill for Carthage from Iberians everywhere.

He went on to say that if he, Abilyx, were allowed to manage the business, he would ensure that Iberian gratitude multiplied by a considerable factor. For if he repatriated the children, he would elicit the gratitude not only of the parents, but also of the general populace, by giving them a vivid demonstration of the principled and generous way in which Carthaginians behaved towards their allies. And he told Bostor that he could also expect personally to receive a great many gifts from those to whom the children were restored—that the unexpected safe return of their nearest and dearest would have them all vying with one another in their generosity towards the person who was responsible for the matter.

This was far from all that Abilyx said, but all his arguments had the same purpose, and in the end he persuaded Bostor to fall in with his idea. [99] He returned home for the time being, but made an appointment for another day, when he and some friends of his would come to take the children to their homes. But that night he went to the Roman camp. There he met some Iberians who were serving in the Roman army, and was introduced by them to the generals. He explained in some detail how the Romans could use their possession of the hostages to impel the Iberians to change sides, and he promised to deliver the boys to them. Publius Scipio leapt at the opportunity, and promised Abilyx a generous reward. He had to return to Rome for a while, but first he fixed the details of the rendezvous between his people and Abilyx. Later, then, Abilyx gathered his team of friends and went to Bostor. He was given the children and left Saguntum under cover of darkness, as though he did not want to be seen as he passed the enemy camp. But he went to keep his appointment, and handed all the hostages over to the Roman commanders.

Publius Scipio rewarded Abilyx extravagantly and let him and his friends take responsibility for repatriating the hostages. Abilyx did the round of the communities and used the restoration of the children to demonstrate the decency and generosity of the Romans, compared with the Carthaginians' heavy-handed and distrustful attitude. The precedent of his own defection was also useful in getting many Iberians to become Roman allies. Bostor was widely held to have behaved more like a child than an adult in letting the hostages fall into enemy hands, and came close to losing his life. For the time being, since there was little left of the campaigning season, both sides dismissed their armies to winter quarters. In the affair of the children, Fortune had given the Romans substantial help towards achieving their goals. That was how things stood in Iberia.

[100] We left Hannibal when he was on the point of finding out from his scouts that there was an enormous quantity of grain to be found in the region of Luceria and Gereonium, and that Gereonium was also a very good collection point. As a result of this information, he decided to make his winter quarters in this region, and he marched there past Mount Tiburnus†. When he reached Gereonium, which is

200 stades away from Luceria, at first he tried to negotiate with the townspeople, in an attempt to come to an amicable agreement, and gave pledges to guarantee his promises. But this got him nowhere, so he set about besieging the town. Before long it fell to him, and he slaughtered the inhabitants, but kept the defensive wall intact, and most of the buildings too, which he wanted to convert into storehouses for the winter.

He had the army encamp in front of the town and fortified the camp with a trench and a palisade. After that, he sent two divisions of his army out to collect grain. Each division was to bring back each day a specified amount for the use of its own men, with anything over and above the amount specified handed over to the commissariat. The third division was used to guard the camp and protect the foragers as they moved from place to place. The region consisted largely of accessible, flat land, the number of foragers was almost beyond counting, and the weather was perfect for harvesting: a vast quantity of grain was collected every day.

[101] At first, after taking over command from Fabius, Minucius kept to the hills, since his constant conviction was that he would meet the Carthaginians in the passes. But when he heard that Gereonium had fallen, and that Hannibal was harvesting the farmland and had built a camp in front of the town, he turned and came down to the plain on a lateral spur. He marched to Larinum and established his camp by a hill called Calene. Come what may, he was determined to meet the enemy in battle.

In response to the enemy's approach, Hannibal left a third of his forces to continue foraging, and with the other two divisions advanced sixteen stades from Gereonium towards the enemy. He made camp on a hilltop, since he wanted to intimidate his opponents and look out for the foragers. There was another hill between the two armies, nicely situated close to and overlooking the enemy camp. Hannibal's next move was to send about 2,000 spearmen to occupy this hill during the night. The following day, when Minucius saw what had happened, he led his light-armed troops in an assault on the hill. A short, sharp engagement took place, which was won by the Romans, and afterwards they moved their entire camp to the hill.

The proximity of the enemy meant that Hannibal hardly allowed his men to disperse. But he could keep them all together for only so long; a few days later he was compelled to detail one contingent to

pasture the animals and another to forage for grain. He was determined to stick to his original plan of not using up the livestock and gathering as much grain as possible. Then his men would lack for nothing during the winter, and neither would the pack animals and horses. For of all the units that made up his army, his chances of success depended above all on the cavalry.

[102] When it came to Minucius' attention that large numbers of the enemy were scattered here and there over the countryside on these tasks, at high noon he led his army out and approached the enemy camp. He had the heavy infantry form ranks there, while the cavalry and light infantry were divided into units and sent out after the foragers, with orders to take no prisoners. This made things very difficult for Hannibal, since he did not have enough troops left in the camp to take to the field against the legionary phalanx, nor could he help those who were dispersed over the countryside.

The Romans who had been sent out after the foragers found them in no position to mount any kind of concerted resistance and took many lives. Meanwhile, the heavy infantry ranks expected so little resistance from the enemy that they began to demolish the palisade and came close to taking the Carthaginian camp by assault. Hannibal was in dire straits, but he weathered the storm. He kept the enemy at bay and just managed to save the camp, while waiting for the arrival of Hasdrubal with a relieving force of about 4,000 men who had fled from the countryside to the camp at Gereonium. When Hasdrubal arrived, Hannibal's morale rose a little, and he ventured out and drew up his troops right in front of the camp. He just managed to stave off the threat. But by the time Minucius withdrew, he had killed a lot of Hannibal's men in the engagement by the camp and even more in the countryside.

Minucius now had high hopes for the future, and the next morning, seeing that the Carthaginians had abandoned their camp, he went and took it over. Hannibal had become worried that during the night the Romans would seize the deserted camp at Gereonium and capture the baggage and stores, and he had decided to retreat and establish himself there again. After this, the Carthaginians went about their foraging in a more careful and circumspect fashion, while the Romans went about theirs more confidently and carelessly.

[103] An exaggerated report of this affair reached Rome and met with an ecstatic reception. It seemed, first, to indicate an improvement

in their fortunes, after a long period of pessimism about the possibility of ultimate success; second, it also suggested that the army's earlier inactivity and subdued behaviour were due not to lack of spirit on the part of the troops, but to caution on the part of the commanding officer. So everyone blamed and criticized Fabius for being too hesitant to take advantage of opportunities. At the same time, the affair made them think so highly of Minucius that they did something unique and gave him too plenipotentiary powers. They were convinced that he would then put a rapid end to the war. So there were two dictators to deal with just one situation, which was unprecedented in Roman history.*

When Minucius heard of his popularity with, and appointment as dictator by, the Roman people, he was twice as inclined to take some bold and risky action against the enemy. Fabius could not see that Minucius' success made the slightest difference, and returned to the army even more determined to adhere to his original plan. But Minucius gave himself airs, picked quarrels with Fabius at every opportunity, and in general pushed for action against the enemy, until Fabius offered him a choice: either they could take turns as overall commander, or they could divide their forces and each make use of his own legions as he chose. The second option was very much to Minucius' liking; they divided their forces and made separate camps, about twelve stades away from each other.

[104] It was obvious enough from what was going on, but captured prisoners also brought the rivalry between the Roman commanders to Hannibal's attention. He also learnt of Minucius' impulsiveness and longing for glory. It seemed to him that the situation could only help him, and he focused on undermining Minucius' overconfidence and curbing his impetuosity. There was a hillock between his camp and Minucius', which could be used against either position, and he decided to occupy it. He was sure that, after his earlier success, Minucius would immediately try to thwart this initiative of his, and he laid his plans accordingly. There were no trees on the land around the hill, but it was largely uneven ground, with dips and hollows of varying sizes and depths. Under cover of darkness, he sent out to the best hiding-places, in groups of 200 or 300, a total of 500 horsemen and about 5,000 light infantry. In order to prevent their being spotted by Roman foragers leaving their camp in the morning, at first light he had his mobile troops occupy the hill.

When Minucius saw this, he thought it was his lucky day. He sent his light-armed troops out straight away, with orders to engage the enemy and contest possession of the hill, and then the cavalry, and, bringing up the rear, he next personally led out the heavy infantry in close formation. These had been his tactics on the previous occasion, and he did the same again.

[105] It was not long after dawn, and all minds and eyes had been drawn to the engagement on the hill. No one suspected that there were men in hiding, waiting to spring a trap. Hannibal kept sending out reinforcements to the men on the hill, and then came up himself with the cavalry and the bulk of his army. Before long the cavalry contingents of both sides became engaged, and then the Roman light-armed troops were forced into retreat by the numbers of the Carthaginian cavalry. As they fled, they disrupted the ranks of the heavy infantry, and just then the signal was given to the ambushers. They appeared from all sides and fell on the enemy, and then it was not just the light infantry that was in trouble: the entire Roman army was in grave danger.

Fabius could see what was happening. It looked to his horror as though the Carthaginians might win an outright victory, so at this juncture he took to the field with his forces and sped over to the rescue. His approach inspired the Romans with fresh courage and even though there was nothing left of their original formation, they rallied around the standards and began to retreat and fall back under Fabius' protection. Large numbers of the light-armed troops had been killed, and even more legionaries, including many of their best men. But the freshness and discipline of the Roman reinforcements alarmed Hannibal, and he called off the pursuit and brought the battle to an end.

There was no doubt in the minds of those who were involved in this battle that Minucius' overconfidence had been the cause of the catastrophe, while Fabius' caution had once again saved the day. And in Rome the difference between the brash impetuosity of a soldier and the foresight and calm reasoning of a general at last became unequivocally clear. But the episode taught the Romans in the field a lesson: they again built a single camp in which they all stayed together, and from then on they listened to Fabius and obeyed his orders. The Carthaginians, meanwhile, dug a trench between the hill and their encampment, erected a palisade around the crown of the hill they

had captured, and posted guards there. Then they felt safe enough to concentrate on getting ready for winter.

[106] The time for the general election in Rome drew near, and the
216 consuls chosen for that year were Lucius Aemilius Paullus and Gaius Terentius Varro. Thereupon the dictators resigned, and the consuls for the previous year, Gnaeus Servilius Geminus and Marcus Atilius Regulus (suffect consul after Flaminius' death), were appointed proconsuls by Aemilius and were authorized to direct military operations in the field subject to the consuls' approval. After consulting the Senate, Aemilius quickly enrolled soldiers to make up the shortage and bring the army up to its full quota, and then sent them off to join their legions. His orders to Servilius were that under no circumstances was he to risk a decisive engagement, but he was to seize every opportunity for small-scale skirmishes and prosecute them vigorously, so as to train the new men and make them mentally ready for full-scale battle. He had no doubt that their earlier defeats had happened largely because the legions had consisted of utterly untrained new recruits.

The praetor Lucius Postumius Albinus was given command of an army and sent to Gaul, to give the Celts who were serving with Hannibal something to think about. Arrangements were also made for the return of the fleet that was wintering in Lilybaeum, and for the generals in Iberia to receive all the supplies they had requisitioned. While these and all other measures were assiduously being taken in hand, Servilius received his orders from the Senate and set about only the kind of small-scale operations that had been approved by them. I shall not bother to describe these operations, which achieved nothing decisive or remarkable. His orders and his circumstances combined to ensure that only a great many skirmishes and minor engagements took place. The Roman commanders gave good account of themselves in these fights and seemed to be handling everything in a courageous and sensible fashion.

[107] The two armies stayed encamped opposite each other all winter and spring. Once it was possible to supply his army from that year's crops, Hannibal moved his army from the camp at Gereonium. He had become convinced that it was in his interests to find some way to force the enemy to meet him in battle, and to that end he seized the acropolis of a town called Cannae, where the Romans had stored grain and other provisions harvested from around Canusium.

They had been transporting supplies from there to the army whenever the need arose.

The town itself had already been razed to the ground, but the capture of the acropolis and the stores sent ripples of alarm through the Roman army. The fall of the town was a bad blow for them not just because they lost their stores, but also because the town commanded the surrounding region. The generals sent message after message to Rome, asking for instructions. They argued that it would be impossible for them to avoid battle if they came near the enemy, since the countryside was being stripped and all the allies there were restless.

The Senate's decision was that they should meet the enemy in battle, but they told Servilius to wait and sent the consuls to the front. Everyone looked to Aemilius and thought that their best chances of success lay with him. It was not just that throughout his life he had shown himself to be an exemplary character, but also that in his handling of the Illyrian War* a few years previously he had shown himself to be a man of courage and one with Rome's interests at heart.

The Senate took an unprecedented step and decided to field eight legions for the battle, with each legion consisting of about 5,000 men—Romans, that is, not allies. As I explained earlier,* the Romans usually mobilize four legions, with each legion consisting of about 4,000 foot and 200 horse. But when the stakes are more critical, they raise the number of infantrymen in each legion to 5,000 and the number of cavalrymen to 300. The numbers of allied infantrymen correspond exactly with those of the Roman legions, but as a rule there are three times as many allied cavalrymen as Roman. When they send the consuls out into the field, they give each of them half of the allies and his two legions. Most battles are decided by one consul, with two legions and the usual number of allies, but from time to time they employ all their forces at the same time, for a single battle. On the occasion in question, however, they were so alarmed and terrified that they decided to send not just four, but eight Roman legions into battle at once.

[108] Before sending Aemilius on his way, then, they impressed upon him how critical the battle was in terms of its possible outcomes, one way or the other. He was instructed to decide the issue, when the time came, with courage and as Rome would expect of him. When Aemilius reached the army, he convened a general assembly, at which he informed the men of the will of the Senate, and also, speaking in

his own person, addressed them in suitably encouraging terms. Most of the speech was given over to explaining their recent reverses, since the men had become disheartened as a result of these setbacks and needed reassurance on that score. So he tried to get them to understand that there were several reasons why the outcome of those battles had been defeat, but that, leaving the past aside, under current circumstances there was no reason why they should not be victorious, if they were men of courage.

In the earlier battles, he said, the two generals never combined their forces and fought together, and the men at their disposal were untrained new recruits, unfamiliar with the horrors of war. But the most important factor was that previously the troops had been so ignorant of the enemy that it was almost as if they had never even seen who they were up against before forming ranks and meeting them in decisive battles. 'The men who were defeated at the Trebia river', he said, 'arrived from Sicily, and at dawn of the very next day they formed up for battle. As for those who fought in Etruria, not only had they not seen their foes before, but they were not granted a glimpse of them even during the battle, because of the unfortunate weather conditions.

'But,' he went on, 'things are quite different for us now. [109] First, we consuls are both here, and we are not only going to fight alongside you in the battle ourselves, but we have also got last year's consuls to stay, and they are ready to play their part too. Then again, you yourselves have not only seen the enemy's weaponry, tactics, and numbers, but you have spent the past two years fighting them almost every day. Since in every particular our situation is quite different from that of the earlier battles, it is likely that the outcome of the present battle will be quite different too. It is hard, if not impossible, to imagine that, after meeting the enemy on equal terms in minor skirmishes and usually winning, we shall lose a full-scale battle when we outnumber the enemy by more than two to one.

'In short, men, there is nothing to stop you winning. All that is needed is your grit and determination, and as far as these are concerned further encouragement from me would, I think, be inappropriate. When men have been hired for military service, or are about to face danger on behalf of others in fulfilment of the terms of an alliance, the battle itself is what they fear most and they are more or less indifferent about the consequences. In their case, encouragement

is essential. But when men have become involved in danger for personal reasons, as you have—when they are not fighting for anyone else, but for their own lives, homeland, wives, and children, and the consequences are many times more important than the immediate danger—they do not need to be encouraged to do their duty, but only to be reminded of it. Is there anyone in such circumstances who would not choose, above all, to fight and win? Or if that proved impossible, to die fighting, rather than live to see all that he holds dear violated and destroyed?

'So you have no need of my words, men. Imagine for yourselves the difference between the consequences of winning and the consequences of losing, and present yourselves for battle as though Rome were now risking her very existence, not just her legions. For Rome has exhausted all her resources: if this battle does not turn out well, she has nothing left with which to prevail over her enemies. She has vested in you all her desires and all her power; all her hopes of survival depend on you. Do not cheat her of these hopes. Repay in full the debt of gratitude you owe her. Show the world that the earlier defeats happened not because Romans are less courageous than Carthaginians, but because of the inexperience of the troops on those occasions and because of circumstances beyond their control.' After addressing the troops like this, Aemilius dismissed them.

[110] In the morning, the consuls broke camp and led the army towards where they had heard the enemy encampment was to be found. They made contact with them on the second day and encamped about fifty stades away. Aemilius argued against a battle, since the surrounding area was flat and treeless, and the enemy had cavalry superiority; he preferred to entice them and draw them on to terrain where the infantry legions were more likely to be critical to the battle. Speaking from inexperience, Varro maintained the opposite point of view. The two consuls quarrelled and there was bad feeling between them, which is the most dangerous thing that can happen.

As was customary, the consuls were each in command on alternate days. The next day it was Varro's turn, and he broke camp and set out, with the intention of advancing on the enemy, despite Aemilius' protests and opposition. Hannibal came out to meet them with his light-armed troops and cavalry, and caught them while they were still on the march. The unexpected attack caused considerable disruption in the Roman column, but they absorbed the first assault by having

some of the heavy infantry form a protective screen, and then sent the skirmishers and the cavalry forward. The Romans had the advantage all over the field, because the Carthaginians had no reserves to speak of, and because the Romans had some of their maniples join the skirmishers and fight alongside them.

The two sides separated as night drew in, with the Carthaginians disappointed in the outcome of their attack. The next day Aemilius not only judged it inadvisable to fight, but it was no longer possible for him to withdraw safely, so he halted by the river Aufidus.[1] He himself made camp with two divisions of the army on one bank, while the third division encamped on the other side, to the east of the ford, about ten stades away from his own camp and somewhat further away from the enemy position. The troops in this second camp were to protect foragers from the first camp across the river, and attack foragers from the Carthaginian camp.

[111] Meanwhile, since it was inevitable now that the two sides would clash and a battle would be fought, Hannibal thought he should take the opportunity to address his troops. He was also concerned that the defeat might have demoralized them. He convened a general assembly, and once they had all gathered, he told them to look around at the surrounding countryside. He asked them to imagine that they had the right to ask the gods for anything: given the circumstances, what else would they have asked for than that the decisive battle should be fought on this kind of terrain when they had cavalry superiority over the enemy? Everyone applauded this vivid way of putting it, and then he went on:

'First, then, you should thank the gods for having led the enemy onto this kind of terrain, which has played a part in ensuring your victory. In the second place, however, you have me to thank. I have left the enemy no choice except battle. They cannot possibly continue to avoid it, and the battle will take place in conditions that favour us.

'I don't think I need say much now by way of encouraging you to be confident and resolute in the coming battle. That was needed when you had no experience of fighting the Romans, and so I used

[1] This is the only river that flows from one side of the Apennines to the other—the Apennines being the continuous chain of mountains that acts as the watershed for all Italian rivers, which flow either into the Tyrrhenian Sea or into the Adriatic. The Aufidus, however, flows through the Apennines; it rises in the flanks of the mountains on the Tyrrhenian Sea side of Italy and issues into the Adriatic.

to give you examples of the way they fight in my speeches. But now that you have indisputably defeated them in three successive major battles, what morale-boosting speech could I give that would serve better than the facts themselves? I gave you my word that you would gain control of the countryside and all its blessings, and none of my promises has failed to come true: those three battles have enabled you to do just that. What we are going to fight for now is control of the cities and all *their* blessings. In short order, victory will bring us mastery of all Italy, an end to our current troubles, and possession of Rome's entire fortune. This battle will make you lords and masters of the world. Enough words, then; now is the time for action. If the gods will it, I am as certain as I can be that the promises I have just made to you will come true.'

These words of his—and there were more to the same effect—were greeted with rapturous applause from his troops. He praised them and thanked them for their enthusiasm. After dismissing the assembly, he turned immediately to the task of strengthening his position by making a palisaded camp on the same side of the river as the larger of the two Roman camps.

[112] Next day, he ordered all his men to attend to their equipment and to themselves, and the day after that he formed them up beside the river and let the enemy know that he was ready to give battle. But Aemilius lay low, apart from making sure that the camps were well protected; he was unhappy about the terrain, and he could see that the Carthaginians would soon be compelled to move camp in order to ensure a supply of provisions. Hannibal waited a while, but there was no response to his challenge, so he had most of the men return to camp, except for the Numidians, whom he sent out to interrupt the supply of water to the smaller of the two Roman camps. The Numidians rode right up to the palisade of the camp and stopped anyone coming out to fetch water, which made Varro even more furious. The rank-and-file troops were also eager for battle and impatient with all the delays. After all, there is nothing more difficult to endure than a period of suspense. Once a decision has been taken, however, we are prepared to endure anything, however apparently terrible.

Tension and terror gripped Rome at the news that the two armies were encamped close to each other and that clashes between the outposts were happening on a daily basis. Given that they had so often been defeated before, their prospects seemed grim, and people looked

ahead and imagined what would happen in the event of a decisive defeat. Every oracle they had ever collected became a topic of conversation, every sanctuary and every household received endless omens and portents, and the city was filled with prayers, sacrifices, supplications, and entreaties. For at times of crisis the Romans take extraordinary pains to propitiate both gods and men, and at such times there is no aspect of any relevant rite that they regard as unseemly or demeaning.

[113] The next day it was Varro's turn to hold overall command and he began to move his forces out of both camps just after sunrise. He had the men from the larger camp cross the river and drew them up in battle order straight away, and he had the men from the other camp join them and form up so that they all made a continuous line, facing south. He posted the Roman cavalry on the right wing, directly by the river, next to the infantry and in a straight line. He reduced the gaps between the maniples more than usual, and increased the number of ranks within the maniples until their depth was several times greater than their length. He deployed the allied cavalry on the left wing, and posted the light-armed troops in front of the entire army and some way ahead. Including the allies, there were about 80,000 foot and a little more than 6,000 horse.

Meanwhile, Hannibal sent his Balearic slingers and his spearmen across the river to take up a forward position. Then he led the rest of his men out of the camp and across the river at two places, and had them take up their positions for battle. On the left wing, by the river, he posted the Iberian and Celtic cavalry, facing their Roman counterparts. Next to them he placed half of the Libyan heavy infantry, then the Iberian and Celtic infantry, then the remaining half of the Libyan infantry, and then on his right wing he deployed the Numidian cavalry. So far the entire army formed a single, straight line, but next he led forward the Iberian and Celtic infantry units in the centre, and had the others link up with them in a staggered line, until he had formed a crescent-shaped bulge, which entailed thinning the ranks in the formation. His intention was to keep the Libyans in reserve, with the Iberians and Celts bearing the brunt of the fighting.

[114] The arms and armour of the Libyans were Roman, since Hannibal had equipped the entire contingent with the pick of the battlefield spoils taken in the previous battle. As for the Iberians and Celts, their shields were very similar in design, but their swords were

quite different. The tip of the Iberian sword was just as dangerous as its cutting edge, whereas the Gallic sword was good only for cutting, when standing at some distance from one's opponent. Since they were drawn up in alternate companies, with the Celts naked and the Iberians dressed in their traditional short linen tunics bordered with purple, they presented a weird and terrifying appearance. The Carthaginian horse numbered about 10,000 in all, and there were somewhat more than 40,000 foot, including the Celts. The Roman right wing was under the command of Aemilius, while Varro held the left, and Atilius and Servilius, the previous year's consuls, were in charge of the centre. Hasdrubal and Hanno were in command of the Carthaginian left and right wings respectively, while Hannibal himself was responsible for the centre, along with his brother Mago. Since, as I have already said, the Roman lines were facing south and the Carthaginians faced north, neither side was inconvenienced by the rising sun.

[115] The battle began with a clash between the advance guards. At first, when just the light-armed contingents were fighting, it was an even match, but then the Iberian and Celtic cavalry from the left wing came up to their Roman counterparts, and battle was well and truly joined. But the barbarian contingents dictated the tactics. There was none of the wheeling and turning that cavalry engagements usually involve; as soon as they met, they dismounted and fought man to man. Eventually, the Iberians and Celts won. All the Romans fought with determination and courage, and so most of them died fighting. The survivors were driven back along the river bank, slaughtered and harried mercilessly by their opponents.

At that point, the light-armed divisions withdrew and battle was joined between the heavy infantry contingents from both sides. For a while, the Iberians and Celts held their formation and struggled valiantly against the Romans, but then they gave way under the weight of the legions and began to fall back, destroying the crescent formation in the process and with the Roman maniples in hot pursuit. The Celtic line was thin, and the Romans easily broke through, especially since their line had become thicker in the centre, where the fighting was taking place, than on the wings. This had happened because the wings and the centre did not all become engaged simultaneously; the fighting started in the centre, because the Celts' crescent formation pushed them a long way forward of the wings, since the bulge of the crescent protruded in the direction of the enemy lines.

In pursuing the retreating Celts, however, the Romans converged on the centre, now vacated by the enemy, and they got so far forward that their flanks on both sides became exposed to the heavy Libyan infantry. The situation itself showed the Libyans what they had to do: those on the right wing faced left, dressed ranks from the right, and threatened the Romans' flank, while those on the left wing faced right and dressed ranks from the left. This was exactly the result Hannibal had planned for: in rushing after the Celts, the Romans were caught in the Libyans' trap. The Roman phalanx broke up as men turned and fought singly or in maniples against those who were attacking their flanks.

[116] Aemilius had started on the right wing, and although he had taken part in the cavalry battle, he was still alive at this point. But he wanted to be involved in the action, as he had promised in his address to the troops. It was clear to him that the battle would be decided largely by the infantry legions, so he rode over to the centre of the whole line, where he entered into the mêlée and played his part, while at the same time calling out advice and encouragement to his men. Hannibal did much the same; he had been in command of these divisions of his army from the beginning.

Meanwhile, the Numidian cavalry on Hannibal's right wing attacked the cavalry facing them on the Roman left. Due to the peculiar nature of their tactics, they neither inflicted nor sustained serious losses, but they did distract their opponents and prevent them from playing an effective part by harassing them from all directions. By now Hasdrubal's men had killed all but a very few of the enemy by the river, so they came over from the left wing to support the Numidians. Faced with their imminent assault, the Roman allies turned and fled.

Hasdrubal's response to this seems very practical and intelligent. In view of the fact that there were a great many Numidians, and that they were most effective and dangerous once they had the enemy on the run, he left the retreating Roman allies to them, while he took his men over to where the infantry was engaged, to help the Libyans. Again and again, he attacked the Roman legions in the rear, at many points at once, which served both to boost the spirits of the Libyans and to demoralize and terrify the Romans. This was the point at which Aemilius succumbed to the terrible wounds he had received, and died on the field of battle. The loyal service he gave Rome all

his life was unequalled by any other man, and he did his duty to the very end.

The Roman legions held on as long as they could turn and present a front to the enemy who now surrounded them. But the constant attrition of the outer ranks meant that the survivors gradually closed in on one another, and in the end they all died where they stood. Among the dead were Atilius and Servilius,* the previous year's consuls, men who had demonstrated their courage in the battle and had proved themselves true Romans. While the infantry engagement was turning into a massacre, the Numidians were following the fleeing cavalrymen, most of whom were either killed or unseated. Among the few who escaped to Venusia was the Roman consul Varro, a man of no redeeming qualities, who did his country great disservice as consul.

[117] This was the course and the outcome of the battle of Cannae, fought between the Romans and the Carthaginians. It was a battle in which both the winners and the losers displayed great courage. The facts themselves demonstrate this. Of the 6,000 Roman cavalry, only 70 escaped with Varro to Venusia, and about 300 of the allied cavalry sought refuge in various places here and there. Of the infantry, about 10,000 were captured fighting (off the battlefield, however), and only perhaps 3,000 escaped from the battle and found refuge in nearby towns. All the rest, about 70,000 men, died bravely. Not for the first time, it was the cavalry numbers that contributed most towards the Carthaginian victory. The battle taught later generations that in wartime it is better to have half as many infantry as the enemy, and overwhelming cavalry superiority, than to have exactly the same numbers as the enemy in all respects. The losses on Hannibal's side were, in round numbers, 4,000 Celts, 1,500 Iberians and Libyans, and 200 cavalrymen.

The reason why the Romans who were taken prisoner were off the battlefield was that Aemilius left 10,000 soldiers in his own camp. Their job was to rush over to Hannibal's camp during the battle, if he had fielded all his men and left the camp untended, and capture the enemy's baggage; on the other hand, if he took precautions and left an adequate garrison, the Romans would have fewer men to fight in the decisive battle. Anyway, they came to be captured as follows. As the battle started, the Romans carried out their orders.

They assaulted the enemy camp, in which Hannibal had left an adequate garrison, and attacked those who had been left there. At first, the Carthaginian garrison held out, but soon they found themselves in trouble. By then, however, the battle had been decided in Hannibal's favour in every part of the field. He came to the assistance of the beleaguered garrison, routed the Romans, and pinned them inside their own camp. Two thousand of them were killed, and all the rest were captured alive. Likewise, the Numidians assaulted the strongholds in the countryside where Romans had taken refuge and brought in about 2,000 of the cavalrymen who had turned to flight.

[118] The result of the battle meant that the war reached exactly the critical point that both sides had expected. Their achievement brought the Carthaginians immediate mastery of almost all the rest of the coastline. Tarentum surrendered straight away, Argyripa and some Campanian towns approached Hannibal, and all the other cities inclined from then on towards the Carthaginian side. The Carthaginians even found themselves in a position to anticipate capturing Rome itself in short order. And for the Romans the defeat meant that they immediately gave up any hope of retaining supremacy in Italy, and brought them to the point where they were at serious risk of losing their lives and the very soil of their homeland, and where they fearfully expected to do so, since they anticipated Hannibal's arrival at any moment.

It seemed, in fact, as though Fortune were using events to dole out an extra portion of bad luck and pile on the agony, because a few days later, with the city already gripped by fear, the general they had sent to Gaul* was ambushed by the Celts and he and his army were annihilated. Nevertheless, the Senate continued to do their best: they tried to alleviate the general gloom, they secured the city, and they did not let fear get the better of them as they debated the crisis. And subsequent events showed that they were right. For although at that point the Romans had undoubtedly been defeated, and although their military supremacy had passed into other hands, the peculiar virtues of their constitution and their sound deliberation not only enabled them to regain dominion over Italy and then to beat the Carthaginians, but within a few years they had made themselves masters of the entire known world.

Here I end my third book, having covered the events of the 140th Olympiad in Iberia and Italy. Once I have described what happened in the same Olympiad in Greece, I shall interrupt the narrative with a separate essay on the Roman constitution. I think that such a description is not only formally appropriate for my history, but will also be very instructive for students of history, and very helpful for statesmen wanting to form or reform constitutions.

BOOK FOUR

[1] In the previous book, I explained the causes of the second war between the Romans and the Carthaginians, gave an account of Hannibal's invasion of Italy, and described the battles that took place between them, up to and including the battle by the river Aufidus, near the town of Cannae. I shall now give an account of the events that
220– took place in Greece in the same period, the 140th Olympiad—but
217 first, I shall briefly remind my readers of the outline I gave in the second book of Greek affairs, and especially of the remarkable progress the Achaean League made in my own time and earlier.

I explained that the Achaeans were ruled by the Tisamenid dynasty from the time of Tisamenus, one of the sons of Orestes, until the time of Ogygus, when they adopted the most excellent of political systems, democracy. For a while, however, they were split up again into separate towns and villages by the Macedonian kings. I wrote next about how and when they began to cooperate again, and which were the first communities to confederate. Then I showed what principles they used to attract others to the confederacy and how they set about trying to unite all the cities of the Peloponnese under a single name and a single political system.

After a general account of this initiative, I gave a brief chronological survey of events down to the dethronement of Cleomenes III of Sparta. Then I summarized the course of my introductory books, up to the deaths of Antigonus Doson, Seleucus III, and Ptolemy III Euergetes, all of whom died in the same Olympiad. And finally, I stated that my treatise proper would begin with the events that immediately followed that Olympiad.

[2] There were several reasons why I took this to be the best place to start. First, Aratus' *Memoirs* end there, and I had decided that my account of the Greeks, the account that follows, should carry straight on from there. Second, the subsequent years—the period covered by my history—happen to be those of my own generation and the one before it, and this meant that I either witnessed events myself, or talked to people who witnessed them. For it seemed to me that nothing I might write about earlier years could be reliable or authoritative, since I would be writing hearsay based on hearsay.

But the most important reason for starting at this date was that what Fortune had achieved in the immediately preceding period was in effect the complete renewal of the known world. Philip V, the son of Demetrius II, had just become king of Macedon, though still a boy; Achaeus had both the authority and the resources of a king in Asia Minor; a few years earlier, Antiochus III the Great had inherited the Syrian throne on the death of his brother Seleucus III, even though he was still quite young; at the same time, Ariarathes IV became king of Cappadocia; this was also the period when Ptolemy IV Philopator gained the Egyptian throne; soon after my starting date Lycurgus became king of Sparta; and the Carthaginians had recently put Hannibal in charge of the campaign in Italy. All these changes in rulership heralded the start of a new era. They were bound to—and when things are bound to happen they tend to happen! At any rate, it was exactly what happened then. The Romans and the Carthaginians embarked on the Hannibalic War, the war between Antiochus and Ptolemy for Coele Syria started at the same time, and the Achaeans and Philip V also went to war against the Aetolians and Spartans.

The causes of this latter war were as follows. [3] The Aetolians had for a long time been dissatisfied with peace, which required them to spend their own resources, when they had become accustomed to living on those of their neighbours. Their habitual bluster is expensive to maintain, and because they are completely ruled by it, they always live like rapacious beasts, and view the whole world as a hostile, uncongenial place. In the past, while Antigonus Doson had been alive, fear of the Macedonians had kept them subdued; but when he died, leaving the throne to the boy-king Philip V,* they no longer expected trouble from that quarter and they began to look for pretexts and reasons to interfere in Peloponnesian affairs. Their old propensities tempted them to freebootery there, and they considered themselves to be a match, in military terms, for the Achaean League on its own.

Luck played a slight part in furthering this project of theirs, in the sense that it furnished them with an excuse for acting on it. Dorimachus of Trichonium, the son of the Nicostratus who violated the sanctity of the Pan-Boeotian festival, was a young man with all the aggression and rapaciousness that characterize Aetolians. He was sent as an agent of the Aetolian League to Phigalia, a Peloponnesian town near the border with Messenia, which was at that time a member

of the League. In theory, his job was to protect Phigalian farmland, but in fact he was to keep an eye on Peloponnesian affairs. Some freebooters banded together and joined Dorimachus at Phigalia, but he was not in a position to provide them with legitimate opportunities for plunder, since the general peace that Antigonus had put in place in Greece was still in force. In the end, for lack of any alternative, he let the freebooters steal livestock from the Messenians, despite the fact that the Messenians were friends and allies of the Aetolians.

For a while, the freebooters rustled only flocks near the border, but as time went by and their scruples decreased, they took to launching sudden raids by night on farmhouses and breaking into them. The Messenians took this very seriously, and lodged an official complaint with Dorimachus. At first he simply ignored them, because he wanted his men to continue their profitable business, from which he was doing well too, since he received a share of the stolen goods. But the number of Messenian delegations increased, as the crimes continued unabated, and he told them that he would come to Messene himself to defend the Aetolians against their accusers. When he arrived, the victims came to state their case, but he either mocked and ridiculed them, or made counter-charges against them, or abused them into stunned silence.

[4] While Dorimachus was still in Messene, the freebooters came close to the city one night and used ladders to break into the farmstead known as Chyron's. Anyone who resisted was slaughtered, and the surviving members of the household were tied up and taken away, along with some cattle. This was the final insult for the Messenian ephors, who had long been aggravated by what was happening, and by Dorimachus' visit, and they summoned him to appear before their committee.* During this session of the committee, Scyron, who was one of the ephors of Messene at the time, and had enjoyed the esteem of his fellow citizens all his life, proposed that they should not let Dorimachus leave the city unless or until he made good all losses sustained by Messenians, and handed the criminals over to face trial for murder. All the rest of the members of the committee found Scyron's proposal fair and expressed their approval. At this, Dorimachus became furious and called them complete fools, if they thought that it was just Dorimachus they were insulting, and not the Aetolian League. In short, he professed to find it all an outrage, and warned them that the city as a whole would suffer the consequences—that justice would be done.

There was a disgusting individual living in Messene at the time, called Babyrtas, who was a passionate admirer of everything about Dorimachus. He had copied his voice and other physical characteristics so exactly that, if he had worn Dorimachus' riding hat and cloak, it would have been impossible to tell them apart. Dorimachus was aware of this. On the occasion in question, the threatening and arrogant manner in which he addressed the Messenians infuriated Scyron, and he responded by saying: 'Do you think we care about you and your threats, Babyrtas?' His words made Dorimachus realize that, for the time being, he was not going to get his way, and he agreed to make full restitution for the crimes that had been committed against the Messenians. But he was so angry and resentful at what Scyron had said that, when he returned to Aetolia, for want of any better reason he used this as an excuse to kindle war against the Messenians.

[5] The general of the Aetolians at the time was Ariston, but he 220
suffered from physical disabilities that made it impossible for him to serve in the field, and he had in effect delegated all his duties to Scopas, who was a relative of his (as was Dorimachus too). In public, Dorimachus did not dare to try to incite the Aetolians to war with the Messenians, because there was no sound pretext for war; everyone knew that he was motivated by lawlessness and anger over the jibe. Instead of pushing publicly for war, then, he tried in private to persuade Scopas to support his initiative against the Messenians.

He pointed out that, since the Macedonian king was no more than a child, seventeen years old at most, there was no danger from that quarter; he mentioned the hostility that the Spartans felt for the Messenians; he reminded Scopas that the people of Elis were on good terms with the Aetolians and were their allies; and he concluded from all this that their invasion of Messenia would be unopposed. But from an Aetolian point of view he was at his most persuasive when he got Scopas to imagine all the booty they would gain from Messenia, which was unguarded territory and the only part of the Peloponnese that had remained untouched by the Cleomenean War.* As an additional incentive, he asked him to think about how much gratitude would come their way from the Aetolian populace. As for the Achaeans, they would either try to stop the invasion, in which case they would have no cause for complaint if the Aetolians retaliated, or they would do nothing, in which case the plan would

go ahead unobstructed. He said that it would not be difficult to find a pretext for attacking the Messenians, who had been wronging them for a long time by promising the Achaeans and Macedonians that they would join their alliance.

These arguments of his, and others to the same effect, so thoroughly persuaded Scopas and his friends that without taking any of the appropriate steps—such as waiting for a general assembly of the Aetolians,* or talking things over with the select committee—they came to a decision solely on the basis of their own preferences and views, and made war on the Messenians, Epirots, Achaeans, Acarnanians, and Macedonians, all at once.

[6] On the naval front, their first move was to send their pirate fleet out on patrol. The pirates clashed with one of the Macedonian king's personal ships off Cythera and brought it back intact and with its full complement of crew to Aetolia, where they set about selling the officers and marines, along with the ship. Then they raided the Epirot coastline—an act of aggression in which they were joined by the Cephallenian fleet—and attempted to capture Thyrium in Acarnania.

At the same time the Aetolians had a force steal through the Peloponnese to the heart of Megalopolitan territory, where they occupied a fortress called Clarium, which they used as an emporium for selling booty and as a base for further marauding. But this fortress soon fell after a short siege led by Timoxenus, the general of the Achaean League, with the help of Taurion, who had been appointed by Antigonus as governor of the Peloponnese. For Corinth had been officially ceded to Antigonus by the Achaeans as a result of the business with Cleomenes, and Antigonus had kept Orchomenus for himself as well, without returning it to the Achaeans after capturing it. His intention, I imagine, was not only to control the entrance to the Peloponnese, but also to protect the interior with the garrison and armament he kept at Orchomenus.

Dorimachus and Scopas waited until Timoxenus had only a few days left in office, and Aratus, whom the Achaeans had chosen as their general for the subsequent year, had not yet taken over. They used this opportunity to assemble all Aetolians of military age at Rhium, where they had troop-carriers waiting as well as the Cephallenian fleet, and after transporting the entire army over to the Peloponnese, they advanced towards Messenia. As they marched through territory

belonging to Patrae, Pharae, and Tritaea, the official line was that they meant the Achaeans no harm. But the rank-and-file soldiers succumbed to their weakness for booty and proved incapable of keeping their hands off the land, which was damaged and depleted by their passage. They reached Phigalia and made it their base for a sudden, bold offensive against Messenia. This attack totally ignored the fact that they and the Messenians were and had been for a very long time friends and allies, and was just as contemptuous of international law. But their greed overruled all other considerations. They plundered the countryside without meeting any resistance, since the Messenians were too scared to break cover at all.

[7] It was time for one of the Achaeans' regular meetings, and they assembled at Aegium. A delegation from Patrae and Pharae described to the assembly how their land had been damaged as the Aetolians passed through their territories, and envoys also came from Messene to beg for help, as victims of aggression and treaty-violation. The indignation of the delegates from Patrae and Pharae stirred the same response in the assembled Achaeans, and the Messenians' plight aroused their sympathy. Above all, though, they found it outrageous that the Aetolians had dared to have an army set foot on Achaean soil, contrary to the terms of the treaty between them. No one had formally given them permission to pass through their territory, and the Aetolians themselves had made no attempt to gain such permission. The Achaeans were so incensed at all this that they voted to help the Messenians and ordered their general to muster the Achaean army, on the understanding that whatever decision was reached by the army assembly would be authoritative.

Timoxenus was still general at the time, but he was reluctant to undertake the expedition or even to convene the army assembly. His term of office had almost expired, and he was also concerned about the state of the Achaean armed forces, who had recently been neglecting their training. In fact, after the dethronement of King Cleomenes of Sparta all the Peloponnesians were so war-weary, and so confident that the peace would last, that they did nothing to ready themselves for further conflict.

Aratus, however, was absolutely furious at the Aetolians' audacity, and approached the matter more energetically, especially since there was a history of hostility between him and the Aetolians from before. Hence he was in a hurry to muster the Achaeans under arms and was

looking forward to taking military action against the Aetolians. In the end, Timoxenus handed the public seal over to him five days before the official start of his year of office, and Aratus wrote to the cities of the Achaean League, calling for all men of military age to assemble under arms at Megalopolis.

Aratus was such an extraordinary man that I think that a few prefatory words about him would not be out of place. [8] Generally speaking, he was perfectly suited for a career as a statesman: he was a good speaker and a clear thinker, and had the ability to keep his ideas to himself; his calmness in the face of political disputes, and his ability to retain friends and gain allies, were unrivalled; he was also outstandingly good at devising ways of getting at his enemies by personal action, stealth, or cunning, and he had the patience and boldness to see these plans through to completion. A large number of examples could be found to illustrate these qualities of his,* but they emerge with particular clarity from a detailed consideration of his capture of Sicyon and Mantinea, his expulsion of the Aetolians from Pellene, and above all his achievement at the Acrocorinth. Nevertheless, when it came to contesting the open countryside, he was slow-witted, hesitant, and apparently reluctant to face danger. So he filled the Peloponnese with trophies commemorating victories against him, and in the countryside, at any rate, his enemies always found it easy to get the better of him.

The fact is that people's minds vary as much as their bodies. This not only explains why the same man may be talented at certain activities and backward at others, but also why the same person often exhibits extremes of intelligence and stupidity, or of daring and timidity, in comparable situations. This will not surprise anyone who is prepared to give the matter some attention; a little thought shows that it is a straightforward and familiar fact. There are people, for example, who courageously confront wild beasts when out hunting, but are cowards when faced with an armed and hostile human. Or again, one and the same man might be cool and effective in single combat, but useless when fighting in battle in a phalanx alongside others. At any rate, Thessalian horsemen are irresistible when fighting in squadrons or companies, but when they have lost formation and have to fight in single combat, they are awkward and slow to react to circumstances and terrain; Aetolians, however, are just the opposite. On land and sea, Cretans are unbeatable at ambushes, raids, deceiving the enemy,

night attacks, and every kind of small-scale operation requiring cunning, but in a formal, face-to-face, mass assault they are cowardly and timid; it is the other way round, however, for Achaeans and Macedonians. Anyway, I hope to have said enough to allay doubts in my readers, if I ever make contradictory assertions about the behaviour of one and the same person in comparable situations.

[9] To resume the narrative: once the Achaeans of military age had assembled at Megalopolis under arms, as ordered, the Messenians again came before the assembly and asked the Achaeans not to connive at such a blatant violation of a treaty. They also wanted to join the common alliance and asked to be officially registered along with all the other members, but the senior Achaean officials denied this request, on the grounds that they could not add anyone to the alliance without the agreement of Philip and the allies. For the alliance that Antigonus had put in place during the Cleomenean crisis was still valid for all its members: the Achaean League, Epirus, Phocis, Macedon, Boeotia, Acarnania, and Thessaly.

They did, however, agree to mount an expedition to help the Messenians—provided that the members of the delegation handed over their sons as hostages, to be held in Sparta. This was to prevent their coming to terms with the Aetolians without consulting the Achaeans. The Spartans too had taken to the field, as they were obliged to by the terms of their alliance with the Achaeans, and were encamped on the borders of Megalopolis, acting as reserves and spectators, rather than as full members of the alliance.

With these arrangements in place for Messenia, Aratus wrote to the Aetolians, informing them of the Achaeans' decisions. He demanded that they evacuate Messenia without encroaching on Achaean territory, and warned them that any infringement on Achaean territory would be treated as an act of war. In response to his ultimatum and to the news that the Achaean army had been mustered, Scopas and Dorimachus thought it best to go along with† his demands for the time being. So they wrote to Ariston, the Aetolian general, at Cyllene, asking him to send troop-carriers as quickly as possible to the islet called Pheias, off the coast of Elis. Two days later they broke camp, laden with booty, and made their way towards Elis. The Aetolians always did their best to keep on good terms with the people of Elis, because a relationship with them allowed them to plunder and raid the Peloponnese.

[10] Aratus naively believed all the signs indicating that the Aetolians really were going to leave, and two days later he dismissed the Spartans and the bulk of the Achaeans back to their homes and advanced towards Patrae with a force consisting of 3,000 foot and 300 horse, and Taurion's troops, planning to do no more than shadow the Aetolians. When Dorimachus found out that Aratus had retained some of his troops and was shadowing him, he became worried about becoming vulnerable to an attack as he was busy embarking. Besides, he also wanted to stir up war. So he sent the booty to the ships, along with an adequate force and his transport specialists, and told them also, as he sent them on their way, to meet him at Rhium, where he planned to embark. For a while, he and his men accompanied the booty and guarded it on the road, but then they turned and headed for Olympia.

Dorimachus next heard, however, that Taurion and his contingent were at Cleitor. It seemed to him that under these circumstances it would be impossible for him to cross the gulf safely from Rhium; since he was going to have to fight anyway, he decided that it was in his best interests to meet Aratus as soon as possible, while Aratus was outnumbered and unsuspecting. Dorimachus' idea was that, if he defeated Aratus, that would buy him time, while Aratus was taking steps to reassemble the Achaeans, not just to cross safely from Rhium, but also to plunder the countryside first. On the other hand, if Aratus shrank from meeting him in battle, he could effect a risk-free escape whenever he wanted to. Since this was how he saw the situation, he set out and halted at the Megalopolitan town of Methydrium.

[11] The reaction of the Achaean high command to the news that the Aetolians were in their territory could not have been more stupid or misguided. Aratus turned back from Cleitor and encamped near Caphyae, and when the Aetolians set out from Methydrium past Orchomenus, he took to the field and drew his men up for battle on the plain of Caphyae, with the river that runs through the plain as a barrier in front of his position. The terrain between the two armies was difficult: as well as the river itself, there were several awkward ditches to cross in front of it. In view of this, and because it was obvious that the Achaeans were well prepared for battle, the Aetolians decided against engaging them, as originally planned, and marched instead in good order towards the Olygyrtus pass.

They would have been perfectly content to get away without being attacked and without being forced to fight, but just as the front of the Aetolian column was approaching the heights of Olygyrtus, with the cavalry (who formed the rearguard as they crossed the plain) close to the slopes of the hill called Foreleg, Aratus sent out his cavalry and light-armed troops, under the command of Epistratus of Acarnania, to engage the rearguard and see how the enemy reacted. But if he had to fight, he should not have engaged the rearguard after the enemy had already crossed the level ground; he should have attacked the vanguard as soon as it entered the plain. Then the entire battle would have been fought on the level ground of the plain, where the weaponry and overall formation of the Aetolians would have placed them at a severe disadvantage, and those of the Achaeans would have given them the upper hand and made them particularly effective.* But Aratus gave up terrain and timing that suited his troops, and allowed the enemy the advantage. And so the outcome of the battle was inevitable right from the start.

[12] When the Achaean light-armed troops made contact with the Aetolian cavalry, the Aetolians retreated towards the slopes in good order, with the intention of linking up with their infantry. But Aratus could not clearly see what was happening and misjudged what was going to happen next. When he saw the enemy cavalry retreating, he took this, optimistically, to mean that they were in flight, so he detached his cuirassed troops from the wings and sent them off to join and reinforce the light-armed troops. Then he had the rest of his men form a column, and led them forward at the double.

Once the Aetolian cavalry had reached high ground and made contact with their infantry, they drew back under the slopes, halted, and began to call out to the infantry, telling them to gather on their flanks. The men in the infantry column readily responded to their cries by running up and falling in beside them. When they thought there were enough of them, they closed ranks and attacked the first wave of Achaean cavalry and light-armed troops. Since they outnumbered the enemy and were attacking from higher ground, they eventually succeeded in turning their opponents, though it took quite a time. Just as the Achaeans broke and fled, the cuirassed troops who had been sent to reinforce them arrived, still disordered and in small groups after making their way over there. Partly because the situation was too confusing and partly because they kept colliding with

the fugitives, they too were forced to turn and run. This meant that although those who had been defeated as a result of actual combat numbered 500 at the most, the number of men in retreat was more than 2,000. The situation itself showed the Aetolians what they had to do: they pursued the fugitives, shouting out their triumph at the tops of their voices.

At first, the Achaeans expected to find their heavy infantry, towards whom they were retreating, still in their original formation and their original safe position. As long as they believed this, the flight was tidy and secure. But then they saw that the heavy infantry too had broken cover and was marching in a long, loose column. Some of the fugitives immediately scattered and retreated in disorder to nearby towns, while others collided with the on-coming phalangites and did the enemy's job for them by panicking their own men and leaving them no alternative but headlong flight. And so they ran for refuge to the same nearby towns. Orchomenus and Caphyae were close enough to help many of them; otherwise, though no one could have foreseen it, there would probably have been a total massacre. That was the course of the battle of Caphyae.

[13] In response to the news of the Aetolian camp at Methydrium, the Megalopolitans had their trumpeters sound a general levy. They set out to help, but arrived the day after the battle, and had to bury the bodies, slain by the enemy, of those they had expected to fight alongside against the enemy. They dug a trench in the plain of Caphyae, collected the wretched corpses, and buried them with full honours. The Aetolians had won an unexpected victory, with only their cavalry and light-armed troops, and from then on they marched through the central Peloponnese without meeting any opposition. During this expedition they made an attempt on the town of Pellene and plundered the territory of Sicyon. They finally left by way of the Isthmus.

This was the cause and pretext for the Social War, but its starting point was the unanimous vote of the allies, when King Philip convened them in Corinth and they ratified his proposal for war.

[14] A few days after the battle, the Achaean assembly met for one of its regular sessions. Both inside and outside the formal meeting, people were very angry with Aratus. No one had any doubt that he was responsible for the defeat. Some of his political opponents even made speeches denouncing him and arguing that his guilt was plain to see, which made the assembled people even more resentful and angry.

It was widely held, first, that he had indisputably done wrong in taking over command early, before the official start of his period of office, thereby accepting responsibility for the kind of venture at which he knew he often failed. His second, more serious mistake was to have disbanded the Achaean army while the Aetolians were right in the Peloponnesian heartland, when he already knew that Scopas and Dorimachus were looking for trouble and wanted to stir up war. Third, he had engaged the enemy just as he was, with a small force, when there was no pressing need and he could safely have withdrawn to the nearby towns. Then later he could have raised an army and taken on the enemy, if he was sure that was the best thing to do. Finally, the most serious charge of all was that, having decided to fight, his management of the battle was aimless and ill-judged, as demonstrated by the fact that he failed to make use of the level ground and his hoplites, used only his light-armed troops, and engaged the enemy on hills, in conditions that perfectly suited the Aetolians and gave them the advantage.

But then Aratus stepped forward to address them. He reminded them of all he had done and achieved for them as a statesman in the past, defended himself against the charges by denying responsibility for the defeat, asked to be forgiven for any mistakes he had made during the battle, and suggested that, in any case, their anger was inappropriate and they should be more sympathetic. His words changed the mood of the assembly so rapidly and decisively† that those of his political enemies who had attacked him completely fell from favour and from then on the Achaeans adopted Aratus's policies in everything.†

[15] The Achaean assembly decided to send envoys to the Epirots, Boeotians, Phocians, Acarnanians, and Philip of Macedon. The envoys were to inform the allies that the Aetolians had now twice trespassed on Achaean territory under arms, in violation of the treaty, and to ask for the help they were obliged by the terms of the alliance to give. They were also to ask them to admit the Messenians into the alliance. Meanwhile, the general was to raise an army of 5,000 Achaean footsoldiers and 500 cavalrymen, and was to help the Messenians in the event of Aetolian infringement on their land. He was also to settle with the Spartans and Messenians the size of the cavalry and infantry contingents each of them should provide for League purposes.

These resolutions showed that the Achaeans were putting a brave face on what had happened, and were determined to abandon neither the Messenians nor League business. The envoys carried out their missions to the allies, and the general raised his 5,000 Achaeans, and arranged with the Spartans and Messenians that each of them was to supply 2,500 foot and 250 horse. This meant that the total force available for the coming campaign was 10,000 foot and 1,000 horse.

Some time later the Aetolian assembly met for one of its regular sessions. In a devious ploy, designed to seduce and subvert the Achaeans' allies, they revoked their declaration of war against Sparta, Messene, and the rest. And they voted not to make war on the Achaeans either, if the Achaeans gave up their alliance with the Messenians. This was an absurd decision: the Aetolians, who were themselves allies of both the Achaeans and the Messenians, were threatening an offensive against the Achaeans if these two states remained on good terms and retained their alliance with each other, but were in favour of making a separate peace accord with the Achaeans if the Achaeans opted for enmity with the Messenians. Their projects were so warped that even their malevolence made no sense.

[16] After listening to what the Achaean envoys had to say, the Epirots and King Philip were in favour of letting the Messenians join the alliance. They were briefly indignant at what the Aetolians had done, but not particularly surprised by what was, after all, normal Aetolian behaviour, nothing unusual. Since they were not particularly angry, then, they voted not to disturb the peace accord with the Aetolians. So unremitting wrongdoing is more likely to be pardoned than occasional, abnormal iniquity. At any rate, the Aetolians continued to behave in the same way. They constantly plundered Greece and took military action against people without declaring their intentions first. They no longer felt they needed to defend themselves against those who complained, but just sneered at anyone who asked them to explain either what they had already done or indeed what they were planning to do. As for the Spartans, although their recent liberation was due to Antigonus and to Achaean perseverance, and although they were under an obligation not to do anything that ran contrary to the wishes of Philip and the Macedonians, they surreptitiously sent an embassy to the Aetolians and entered into a secret pact of friendship and alliance with them.

The elite Achaean contingent had been raised, and arrangements were in place with the Spartans and Messenians for their contributions, when Scerdilaïdas and Demetrius of Pharos set sail from Illyria with ninety *lemboi*, and passed Lissus, in contravention of their treaty with Rome.* They landed first at Pylos, which they unsuccessfully assaulted. Then Demetrius took fifty of the boats and set out for the islands. He sailed around the mainland to the Cyclades, where he cowed some islands into giving him money and pillaged others. Scerdilaïdas, meanwhile, was on his way home with the other forty *lemboi*, but at the request of King Amynas of Athamania, who was related to him by marriage, he put in at Naupactus. While he was there, he came to an agreement with the Aetolians, represented by Agelaus, whereby, in return for a portion of the spoils, he would support an Aetolian attack on Achaea. With this pact in place with Scerdilaïdas, and with the city of Cynaethae about to be betrayed to them, Agelaus, Dorimachus, and Scopas mustered the full Aetolian army and invaded Achaea along with Scerdilaïdas' Illyrians.

[17] Ariston, the Aetolian general, turned a blind eye to what was happening and kept quiet in Aetolia, claiming that he was observing the peace and not making war on the Achaeans—a naive and childish pretence. To think that one can cover up plain facts with words is of course a sure sign of naivety and stupidity. Dorimachus marched through Achaea and turned up suddenly at Cynaethae. The Arcadian people of this city had suffered for many years from irresolvable political strife, severe enough to have given rise to murder, banishment, confiscation of property, and redistribution of land. In the end, the pro-Achaean faction gained the upper hand and took control, with the help of a garrison for the walls and a commandant for the city, both supplied by the Achaeans. This was the status quo when, a few years before the arrival of the Aetolians, the exiles began to write to those in the city, asking for reconciliation and restoration. The city authorities agreed in principle, but applied to the Achaean League, because they wanted the pardon to take place with their approval.

The Achaeans readily gave their permission, in the belief that they would gain the gratitude of both sides. Those who were holding the reins of government in Cynaethae were fully committed to the Achaeans anyway, and the returning exiles would owe their lives to the consent of the League. So the Cynaetheans dismissed the garrison and the commandant, pardoned the 300 or so exiles, and allowed

them to return. Before being allowed to return, the exiles had to give the most binding possible pledges of their good intentions, but as soon as they were back they began to intrigue against their city and the men who had saved their lives. They started straight away: there was no reason or excuse for it, in the sense that nothing had happened to make them think that the old rift had opened up again. In fact, it seems highly likely to me that even while they were swearing their oaths over the sacrificial victims and exchanging pledges, they were already contemplating this impious crime against the gods and those who trusted them. At any rate, as soon as they were allowed to play a part in the administration of the city, they entered into negotiations with the Aetolians with a view to betraying the city to them. They gave the lives of those who had saved them and the survival of their native city not a second thought.

[18] The boldly executed coup by which they achieved their aims came about as follows. Some of the returned exiles became polemarchs,* a post that came with responsibility for the security of the city gates. When they were not needed, the keys were kept by the polemarchs in their daytime offices in the gatehouse. The Aetolians were in position, with ladders at the ready, waiting for their chance. Those of the polemarchs who had been among the exiles murdered their colleagues in the gatehouse and opened the gates. At this, some of the Aetolians rushed in through the gateway, while others brought up scaling-ladders, forced their way in over the wall, and seized the city's defences.

Everyone in the city was thrown into a panic and they found it hard to make any effective response. The attack on the wall made it impossible for them to concentrate on warding off those who were pouring in through the gates, and the storming of the gates made it impossible for them to defend the wall. Under these circumstances, it did not take the Aetolians long to gain control of the city, but 'among all their crimes was a single act of perfect justice':* the first people they killed and whose property they stole were those who had betrayed the city to them and let them in. But they treated everyone else in the same way too. They ended up billeting themselves in people's homes, stealing their property, and torturing many Cynaetheans, whom they suspected of having hidden valuables such as cash or works of art.

When they decamped from Cynaethae, after raping the city as I have described, they left a defensive garrison and marched towards Lusi.

They came to the sanctuary of Artemis, on the Cleitor–Cynaethae road, which the Greeks regard as inviolable, and threatened to steal the sacred herd and other temple property. But the people of Lusi wisely bought them off with some works of art from the sanctuary, and saved themselves from ruin at the Aetolians' impious hands. The Aetolians left straight after accepting the bribe and invested Cleitor.

[19] While all this was going on, Aratus, the Achaean general, dispatched his envoys to Philip to ask for help, raised the elite corps of 5,000, and asked the Spartans and Messenians to send their contingents as arranged. The Aetolians first tried to persuade the Cleitorians to leave the Achaean League and join their alliance, but the Cleitorians simply refused to listen. The Aetolians attacked and tried to take the town by escalade, but the inhabitants put up such a courageous and spirited resistance that they gave up. They broke camp, and headed back towards Cynaethae, but this time they stole and drove off the sacred cattle. Their first thought was to entrust Cynaethae to the protection of the Eleans, but the Eleans turned down the offer, so they decided to occupy the place themselves, with Euripidas as garrison commander. Later, however, news of the approach of a Macedonian relief force panicked them into setting fire to the town and leaving. They marched back to Rhium, having decided to cross the gulf from there.

On hearing the news of the Aetolian invasion and the situation at Cynaethae, Taurion contacted Demetrius of Pharos and asked him to help the Achaeans. Demetrius had put in at Cenchreae on his way back from the Cyclades, and Taurion asked him to attack the Aetolians as they were crossing the gulf, once his ships had crossed the Isthmus. Demetrius had had a profitable, but rather ignominious voyage back from the islands, with the Rhodians in pursuit. So he was delighted with Taurion's suggestion, especially since Taurion had offered to defray the cost of hauling his ships across.* But once he had crossed the Isthmus, he found that he had missed the Aetolians by two days, so after raiding along the Aetolian coastline he returned to Corinth.

The treacherous Spartans failed to send the Achaeans the stipulated level of support; all they did was send a very few cavalrymen and footsoldiers, purely to save appearances. Even though Aratus had his corps of Achaeans, his strategy was more statesmanlike than military, and for a while he did nothing. Mindful of his recent defeat, he

kept himself in check until Scopas and Dorimachus had done all they set out to do and had returned home, even though their route made them vulnerable to attack, as they marched through defiles and places needing only a trumpeter.

The Cynaetheans had suffered terribly at the hands of the Aetolians. It had been an utter catastrophe for them—but they were widely held to have fully deserved their downfall. [20] The Arcadian people as a whole have a reputation throughout the Greek world for moral virtue. They are polite and friendly by disposition and upbringing, and above all they revere the gods. The savagery of the Cynaetheans is therefore puzzling, and it is worth pausing briefly to ask why, although they are indisputably Arcadians, they were by far the most brutal and lawless people in Greece at that time. I think the answer lies in the fact that they were the first and only Arcadians to abandon an excellent practice that had been instituted by their forebears, a practice which took into consideration the natural characteristics of people there.

Making music—genuine music, I mean—is beneficial for everyone, but for Arcadians it is a necessity. We should not regard music, as Ephorus* suggests in his preface, in an untypically hasty assertion, as a human invention designed merely to beguile and charm. Nor should we think that there was no thought involved when the ancient Cretans and Spartans replaced the trumpet, as their time-keeping instrument in war, with the pipes. Nor should we suppose that the earliest Arcadians had no good reason for incorporating music into Arcadian life so thoroughly that not only children, but also young men up to the age of thirty, are required to make it their constant companion, even though in all other respects their lives are very harsh.

It is a familiar and well-known fact that, almost uniquely, Arcadian children are taught from their earliest childhood to sing in the prescribed manner the traditional songs and paeans with which each community hymns its local heroes and gods. Later, they learn the measures of Philoxenus and Timotheus,* and every year they put on a keenly contested dance competition in their theatres, accompanied by pipe-players supplied by the Guild of Dionysus. The contest has a junior section for boys, and a senior section for young men. Moreover, throughout their lives their entertainment in private social settings consists not of hired players, but of themselves, with each of them obliged, when his turn comes around, to sing to the others. It is no

disgrace, in Arcadia, to deny knowledge of any other subject, but they cannot deny their musical abilities, since all of them have had to learn it. Nor is it acceptable for someone to give music up, because that is what is considered disgraceful there. The young men also drill to the accompaniment of rhythmically played pipes, and practise their dancing, in the public eye and at public expense, on display to their fellow citizens.

[21] It seems to me that the men of old who introduced these practices had a very good reason for doing so. They did not consider music a superfluous luxury. They bore in mind, first, that people in Arcadia work as peasant farmers, which is to say that life is a hard grind for them, and, second, that their characters tend towards dourness, as a consequence of the cold climate and dank conditions that usually obtain in those parts. For all over the world people inevitably come to resemble the prevailing climatic conditions;* this is the only explanation for the fact that people from different nations or, in general, different parts of the world differ from one another in their characters, physiques, and colouring, and invariably in their ways of life too. It was because they wanted to soften and temper the inflexibility and insensitivity of the Arcadian character that they introduced all these practices, and for the same reason they also instituted the custom, for both men and women, of shared public meetings and sacrificial festivals, of which there are very many in Arcadia, and also festivals at which girls and boys dance together. In short, the sole purpose for which they were striving was to introduce practices that tamed and mitigated Arcadian obduracy.

The Cynaetheans, however, utterly neglected these practices, despite the fact that, because their climate and landscape are by far the most severe in Arcadia, they had more need of this kind of help than anyone else. They put their energy only into mundane pursuits and concerns, until in the end they became so savage that there is no Greek city anywhere in the world where worse and more constant crimes have been committed. There is clear evidence of the disgraceful state of affairs in Cynaethae in this regard, and of the abhorrence felt by all other Arcadians for Cynaethean ways. After the appalling massacre* had taken place there, the Cynaetheans sent envoys to Sparta. Wherever in Arcadia the envoys stopped in the course of their journey, the inhabitants immediately expelled them, and the Mantineans, after getting rid of them, even conducted a ritual of

purification by carrying slaughtered animals round the city and their entire territory.

I hope to have said enough on this to make my points. First, people should not think badly of the Arcadian character as a whole because of just one city; second, no Arcadians should begin to despise this aspect of their society in the belief that musical matters are superfluous and overdone there; third, if, god willing, things ever improve in Cynaethae, people there should tame themselves by acquiring an interest in culture, and especially musical culture. For this is the only way in which they will ever be certain of not repeating the savagery that occurred there then. Anyway, so much by way of a digression about Cynaethae and its circumstances; now I shall resume the narrative.

[22] The Aetolians were already safely home from their Peloponnesian campaign when Philip arrived in Corinth at the head of an army to help the Achaeans. Since he was too late, he sent couriers around to all the members of the alliance, asking each state to send representatives to him at Corinth for an urgent meeting to discuss what plan of action would best serve their common interests. Then he left Corinth for Tegea, because he had heard that civil unrest and bloodshed had broken out in Sparta.

The system to which the Spartans were accustomed was monarchy, with unquestioning obedience to their kings. At the time in question, Antigonus had recently helped them to gain their liberty, and now that they had no kings, no one wanted anyone else to have more political power than himself, and the in-fighting began. At first, three of the ephors inclined towards siding with the Aetolians, since they believed that Philip was too young to be an effective protector of the Peloponnese, while the other two did not commit themselves. But then the Aetolians left the Peloponnese sooner than expected, and Philip made his way there from Macedon even more quickly. Under these circumstances, the three ephors became suspicious of one of the other two, Adeimantus. He knew what they were up to, but withheld full approval, and they were worried that he would divulge everything to the king, now that he was near by.

After secret meetings with some members of the armed forces, then, they made a public announcement that all men of military age were to assemble, under arms, at the precinct of Athena Chalcioecus, in response to the approach of the Macedonians. The order was so

unexpected that it was quickly carried out. Adeimantus was unhappy with these developments and stepped up to address the crowd. 'My view', he wanted to say, 'is that this announcement and the mustering of the army should have happened before, when we heard that the Aetolians were approaching our borders, not now, at news of the approach of the king at the head of an army of Macedonians. The Aetolians are our enemies, while the Macedonians are our benefactors and saviours.' But while he was still warming up, the soldiers who had been primed to do so fell on him and stabbed him to death. They also killed quite a few of their fellow citizens, including Sthenelaus, Alcamenes, Thyestes, and Bionidas. Polyphontas and some others had had the sense to foresee what was going to happen, and had already left and joined Philip.

[23] Immediately after these assassinations, the ephors, by virtue of their office, sent messengers to Philip charging those they had killed with treason, and asking him to delay his arrival until the city had recovered from its current turmoil. They also asked him to rest assured that it was their intention to observe all their obligations and courtesies towards Macedon. The messengers found Philip at Mount Parthenium and delivered their report as ordered. After listening to what they had to say, Philip asked them to hurry back to Sparta. They were to inform the ephors that he would carry on and halt at Tegea, and that he expected them to send to him there, at the earliest possible opportunity, a committee with sufficient authority to discuss the current situation with him. The Spartan agents carried out the king's instructions, and in response the ephors sent a ten-man commission, who made their way to Tegea and were received by Philip. In this meeting, with Omias as their spokesman, they accused Adeimantus of responsibility for the unrest, guaranteed to do all that they were obliged to do by the terms of their alliance with Philip, and assured him that, as he would see, none of those who were taken to be his true friends would outdo them in expressions of gratitude towards him.

After giving Philip these assurances, and others to the same effect, the Spartans withdrew. The members of the king's council were divided. Some felt that the Spartans were being devious, that Adeimantus had been killed for favouring Macedon, and that the Spartans had already decided to form a coalition with the Aetolians. They advised Philip to make an example of the Spartans, and to treat them just as Alexander the Great had treated Thebes right at the

beginning of his reign.* But the more senior members of the council argued that this would be an excessive response to the situation. They suggested that Philip should merely punish the ringleaders and, once they were out of the way, entrust the government of Sparta to his friends.

[24] The king had the final word—if the views he expressed on this occasion can be said to be his. After all, it is unlikely that a seventeen-year-old boy could think clearly about such weighty matters. But we writers are obliged to attribute to the overall leader the views that prevail in councils. Nevertheless, readers may well suspect that his recommendations and decisions stemmed from those who were present at this meeting, and especially from those who were closest to him. In this case, it is probably Aratus to whom the king's views should be attributed.

Anyway, Philip said that, in cases where allies were fighting among themselves, but the violence was not spreading, he should do no more than make his views known, by speech or by letter, and suggest remedies; it was only if the alliance as a whole was affected that the situation should meet with a common response and that the remedy should be applied by the whole alliance. Since it was not clear that the Spartans had done anything to damage the alliance as a whole, and since they were promising to fulfil all their obligations to him, it would be wrong of him to act uncharitably in their case. And he added that it would be odd for him to take harsh measures against the Spartans for such a trivial reason, when his father had treated them with the utmost leniency even after conquering them as enemies.

The king's view met with the council's approval, and they decided to overlook what had happened. Philip immediately had one of his Friends, Petraeus, accompany Omias back to Sparta, to urge the people there to see that they remained on good terms with himself and the Macedonians, and to exchange oaths of alliance. Then he broke camp and returned to Corinth. His decision about the Spartans gave the allies a fine illustration of his principles.

[25] By the time Philip reached Corinth, all the representatives from the members of the alliance had arrived, and he convened the conference to decide, with their help, what was the appropriate response for them to make to the Aetolians. The Boeotians accused the Aetolians of plundering the sanctuary of Athena Itonia during peacetime, the Phocians denounced them for assaulting Ambrysus and Daulis in an

attempt to annex them, and the Epirots charged them with having raided and ravaged their land. Then the Acarnanians explained how the Aetolians had organized and executed an audacious night attack on Thyrium. Finally, the Achaeans gave an account of the Aetolians' occupation of Clarium in Megalopolitis, of the plundering of Patrae and Pharae on their way, of the sack of Cynaethae, of the theft from the sanctuary of Artemis at Lusi, of the siege of Cleitor, of the naval attempt on Pylos, and of the joint Aetolian–Illyrian land assault on newly resettled Megalopolis, with the intention of depopulating it again.*

After listening to these grievances, the assembled representatives voted unanimously to go to war with the Aetolians. They prefaced the decree with a list of these charges, and added a rider to the effect that they had also voted to restore to the appropriate members of the alliance any land or community occupied by the Aetolians since the death of Philip's father Demetrius. By the same token, they also promised, in the case of those who had been forced by circumstances to join the Aetolian League against their will, to restore their ancestral constitutions and allow them to retain their lands and cities ungarrisoned, exempt from tribute, free, and subject to the political and legal systems of their fathers. They also included a clause undertaking to recover for the Amphictionic Council its traditional privileges and authority over the Delphic sanctuary, which was now in the hands of the Aetolians, who had no intention of losing control of the sanctuary.*

[26] This decree came into force in the first year of the 140th 220
Olympiad, and so began the Social War, as it is known. The war was justified, a fitting response to the crimes that had been committed. The first task of the conference was to send League agents to the allies to see that the decree was validated by the popular assemblies of each state, so that they could then present a united front in initiating war against the Aetolians. Philip also wrote to the Aetolians, informing them of the charges against them, and telling them that if they wanted to try to justify their actions, they could still meet for discussion and reach a settlement. But it would be sheer stupidity on the Aetolians' part, he wrote, to suppose that they could get away with pillaging and plundering everyone, with no prior public declaration of intent, without the victims retaliating; and it would be equally stupid of them to think that, if the victims did retaliate, it was the victims who were to be regarded as the instigators of the war.

On receiving this letter, the Aetolian leaders at first made an appointment to meet Philip at Rhium, in the expectation that he would not come. But when they heard that he had gone to Rhium, they sent a courier to inform him that they did not have plenipotentiary powers in matters that affected all their members, and had to wait for the League to hold its general meeting. The Achaean assembly met for one of its regular sessions, at which they unanimously voted in favour of the decree and declared Aetolian property to be legitimate plunder for any privateer. Philip came to Aegium and gave a lengthy speech to the council, which was warmly received, and the Achaeans renewed with Philip himself the privileges that had been extended to his forebears.

[27] Meanwhile, it was time for the Aetolian general election, and they chose as their general Scopas, the man who had been responsible for all the acts of aggression I have been talking about. What can one say about this? Words fail me. Their general assembly had voted against war,* and yet they committed their entire fighting force to plundering their neighbours. They punished none of those who were responsible for these raids, and then rewarded those who had been in charge by making them their military leaders. This seems to me to be the ultimate in hypocrisy. What else could one call such devious behaviour? A couple of examples will help to clarify what I mean.

382 When Phoebidas, in breach of the treaty between Sparta and Thebes, seized the Cadmea, the Spartans punished the guilty party, but did not remove their garrison. They could have done the opposite, which would have actually made a difference to the Thebans, but instead they pretended that the injustice of the act was dissolved by the
386 suffering of the perpetrator. Or again, the Spartans broadcast the fact that they were allowing the Greek cities their freedom and autonomy, in accordance with the terms of the Peace of Antalcidas,* but they did not remove their harmosts from the cities, and they dispossessed the Mantineans, who were their friends and allies, while claiming that they were doing them no wrong—just transferring them from one city to several. This was not just hypocrisy on the part of the Spartans, but plain foolishness besides, equivalent to thinking that if you shut your eyes no one nearby can see either. Anyway, this character trait turned out to be completely ruinous for both the Spartans and the Aetolians, and common sense suggests that it should not be imitated by anyone under any circumstances, in his private life or as a statesman.

After King Philip had finished his business with the Achaeans, he set out with his army for Macedon, in order to get on with preparing for war. His enactment of the decree had given not just the allies, but all Greeks, good reason to expect his reign to be that of a man who was not easily ruffled, but could maintain a kingly objectivity.

[28] These events took place at the same time as Hannibal's assault on Saguntum, after he had conquered all of Iberia south of the Ebro. Now, if there had been any connection, at the very beginning, between Hannibal's first moves and what was happening in Greece, it goes without saying that my account of this phase of Greek history would have been included in the previous book instead, in the chronologically appropriate place, alongside my account of that phase of Iberian history. But since the wars in Italy, Greece, and Asia were initially separate, and became joined only in their final phases, I decided to keep my accounts of them separate too, until I reached the point when they became interconnected and began to tend towards a single outcome, when I shall write about them all at once. In this way, my account of the beginnings of each war will be clear and, when I show when and how and why they became interconnected, the connection (which I mentioned close to the start of my work*) will be comprehensible. They became interconnected at the end of the Social War, in the third year of the 140th Olympiad. After this date, then, I 217
shall give a unified account of events in their chronological order, but before that date my account of each war will be separate, as I said, and I shall do no more than recapitulate the synchronous events covered in the previous book. In this way, my account will not only be easier to follow, but will also make more of an impression on my readers.

[29] While wintering in Macedon, Philip set in motion a thorough programme of recruitment for the coming war, and secured his borders against the neighbouring barbarians. Then he arranged a meeting with Scerdilaïdas—a courageous act, because it left him at the Illyrian's mercy. At the meeting he raised the possibility of a treaty of friendship and alliance between them and, partly by promising to help Scerdilaïdas settle affairs in Illyria and partly by vilifying the Aetolians (not a difficult task), he soon persuaded him to agree to his proposal.

There is never any difference between crimes committed against individuals and political crimes, except that the latter involve more and larger consequences. Small-scale swindlers and thieves fail above

all because they do not treat one another fairly, or, in general, because they cheat one another, and this is exactly what the Aetolians had done. They had promised Scerdilaïdas a portion of the booty if he helped them invade Achaea, and he agreed and did help them. But then they gave him nothing—none of all the prisoners and livestock they rounded up while sacking Cynaethae. So, since Scerdilaïdas was already furious with them, it took no more than a brief reminder from Philip for him to be won over and to agree to join the common alliance. Philip guaranteed to give him twenty talents a year, and Scerdilaïdas guaranteed to make thirty *lemboi* seaworthy and fight the Aetolians at sea.

[30] While Philip was busy with all this, the envoys who had been dispatched to the allies reached Acarnania, as their first stop. The Acarnanians scrupulously validated the decree and agreed that the League should initiate warfare against the Aetolians, even though there were a number of reasons why they, more than any other League members, could fairly have been forgiven for hesitating and taking their time, and generally for being concerned about war with their neighbours. First, the Aetolians were just across the border; second, and far more importantly, on their own the Acarnanians were easy prey; third, and most importantly, the disasters they had experienced as a result of their hostility towards the Aetolians were still a recent memory. But I think that people with scruples never rate anything more highly than doing their duty, in both their public and their private lives. Certainly, we find that the Acarnanians have been conscientious in this respect on more occasions than anyone else in Greece, despite their meagre resources. No one should hesitate to seek their help in a crisis; on the contrary, an alliance with the Acarnanians is more desirable than one with any other Greek people, for they bring to both their public and personal enterprises reliability and a love of liberty.

The Epirots, by comparison, after listening to what the envoys had to say, ratified the decree just as readily as the Acarnanians, and voted to go to war with the Aetolians as soon as King Philip took to the field, but they also told the Aetolian ambassadors that the decision of the Epirot assembly had been *not* to go to war with them. This was a cowardly and deceitful way to go about the business. An embassy was sent to King Ptolemy as well, to request him not to send money to the Aetolians or to supply them with anything that might be used against Philip and the allies.

[31] The reason the war had started was to help the Messenians, and yet, when the envoys went there, the Messenians replied that they would not commit themselves to war until the Aetolians had been deprived of Phigalia, which lay on the Messenian border and was currently in Aetolian hands. This decision had been pushed through, against considerable dissent in the assembly, by some of the ruling oligarchy, including the ephors Oenis and Nicippus, because they were afraid of what the Aetolians might do.

In my opinion, this was a very stupid and deluded response. Of course I agree that war is dreadful, but it is not so dreadful that we should put up with absolutely anything to avoid it. After all, why do we all value equality and the right to speak one's mind in assembly? Why do we prize the word 'freedom', if there is nothing better than peace? We disapprove of the Thebans for having been too frightened to fight for Greece during the Persian invasion, and for siding with 480
the enemy instead. And we disapprove of Pindar too, for having written lines to dissuade them from fighting:

> Let him who would furnish fair weather for the state
> Seek out the gleaming light of mighty peace.

For although in the short term he seemed to be giving good advice, it soon emerged that nothing could have been more disgraceful or more pernicious than the policy he advocated.* There is no possession in the world as beautiful or as valuable as a just and fitting peace, but there is also nothing more disgraceful and pernicious than peace that is tainted by iniquity and cowardice.

[32] The oligarchs who formed the Messenian government only ever consulted their short-term interests and were always rather too eager to avoid war. Hence, although they had their fair share of crises and emergencies, and occasionally met with threatening and dangerous situations, they always slipped through the interstices. But this policy of theirs meant that the odds were always stacking up against them, and they became responsible for Messenia's being racked by terrible calamities.

The way to understand this is, I think, as follows. The Messenians have as their neighbours two of the greatest peoples of the Peloponnese, if not of all Greece—the Arcadians and the Laconians. The Laconians have always been their implacable enemies,* ever since their occupation of Messenia, whereas the Arcadians have always been their

friends and protectors. But the Messenians have consistently shrunk from fully accepting the consequences of either their enmity with the Spartans or their friendship with the Arcadians.

So whenever the Spartans were distracted by internal or external warfare, the Messenians were all right, since they remained at peace and enjoyed 'fair weather', because Messenia is somewhat out of the way. But when the Spartans had time on their hands and nothing better to do, they fell back on injuring the Messenians. Since the Messenians were incapable of standing up to Spartan military might on their own, and had also failed to take the precaution of ensuring that their friends really would stand by them under all circumstances, they were compelled either to bear the burden of slavery to the Spartans, or to avoid slavery by fleeing with their families, as refugees from their land. This is something that has happened to them several times in the past, within a relatively short period of time.

I hope and pray that the current settled condition that has been grafted, so to speak, onto the Peloponnese may take, and so that the advice I am about to give is redundant. But if things ever change, and there is a recurrence of unrest, I can see only one way in which the Messenians and Megalopolitans can hope to retain their lands, and that is if they federate, which is what Epaminondas wanted to see, and choose full cooperation in each and every situation and endeavour.

[33] This idea may perhaps gain some support from ancient history. For one of the Messenians' many donations to the Arcadians
*c.*650 was a stele that they set up by the altar of Zeus Lycaeus during the time of Aristomenes, according to Callisthenes,* with the following inscription:

> Time never fails: he has brought to justice the wicked king;
> Time and Zeus have brought to justice the traitor of Messene.
> It was not hard; what is hard is for a perjured man to escape a god.
> Hail, lord Zeus! Long live Arcadia!

Having been driven out of Messenia, they regarded Arcadia as a kind of second homeland, I think, and that is why they set up this stele with a prayer for the continued safety of Arcadia—an appropriate prayer, because the Arcadians took them in after their expulsion from Messenia during the Aristomenean War, and welcomed them as guests in their own homes and as fellow citizens. They also decreed that Messenians of the appropriate age-group could marry their daughters, and

after investigating the treachery of King Aristocrates* in the battle of the Trench, they put him to death and completely obliterated his family.

Leaving ancient history aside, however, my proposal also gains good support from what eventually happened after the foundation of Megalopolis and Messene. The death of Epaminondas in the battle 362
of Mantinea, fought by Greeks against Greeks, cast doubt on his victory, and the Spartans, who still hoped to annex Messenia, opportunistically tried to exclude the Messenians from the armistice. But the Megalopolitans and all the Arcadian members of the alliance joined forces and their efforts ensured not only that the Messenians were accepted into the alliance and were covered by the oaths and the reconciliation agreement, but also that the Spartans were the only Greeks excluded from it. In view of these cases from the past, how could anyone in the future doubt the soundness of the proposal I suggested just now?

I hope to have said enough to remind the Arcadians and Messenians how their homelands have suffered at Spartan hands, and to encourage them to do nothing that would harm the goodwill and good faith that currently obtain between them. Neither the threat of war nor the desire for peace should cause either of them to abandon the other in a crisis.

[34] To resume the narrative from where we left off: the Spartans eventually, and typically, dismissed the allies' envoys without giving them an answer. This is a measure of how far their unjustifiable and treacherous policies had left them vacillating. I am convinced of the truth of the saying that bravado is often nothing more than inanity and futility. Anyway, later, after the annual appointment of a fresh board of ephors, the original instigators—those who were responsible for the assassinations I mentioned earlier—wrote and invited the Aetolians to send an emissary to Sparta. The Aetolians were delighted with the invitation, and a short while later Machatas arrived in Sparta to act on their behalf. He lost no time in appearing before the ephors, accompanied by members of the pro-Aetolian faction,† who demanded that Machatas should be allowed access to the assembly. They wanted to see the restoration of the 'traditional' constitution, with the kings, and they wanted an end to the 'unconstitutional' dissolution of the Heraclid rulership. The ephors were unhappy about the whole business, but caved in to the pressure because they

were frightened that otherwise the men of military age would form a conspiracy. They postponed the matter of the kings, but gave their permission for Machatas to address the assembly.

When the assembly convened, Machatas stepped up and spoke at some length about the advantages of their joining the Aetolian alliance. His speech was full of unsubstantiated, outrageous abuse of the Macedonians and implausible, untrue praise of the Aetolians. After he withdrew, a heated debate took place, with some arguing in favour of the Aetolians and recommending alliance with them, and others taking the opposite point of view. But then some of the elders present reminded their fellow citizens of the benefits they had received from Antigonus and the Macedonians, and of the harm that Charixenus
240 and Timaeus had done them when the Aetolians had launched a full-scale campaign against them: they had ravaged Laconia, sold the outdwellers they captured into slavery, and devised a plot whereby the exiles were to join them and use a combination of guile and force to capture Sparta. This reminder changed the mood of the assembly, and in the end they were persuaded to retain their alliance with Philip and the Macedonians. Machatas returned to Aetolia empty-handed.

[35] The original instigators of the unrest, however, had gone too far to give up; with the help of some members of the armed forces, whom they again corrupted, they put into effect a scheme of the utmost impiety. During one of their traditional sacrificial festivals, the men of military age had to process under arms to the temple of Athena Chalcioecus, while it was the ephors' job to stay in the actual temple precinct and see to the sacrifice. This made it possible for some of the men who were processing under arms suddenly to fall on the ephors as they were sacrificing and murder them. The sanctuary, a place of safety and refuge for anyone, even a criminal condemned to death, was on this occasion treated with such contempt by the conspirators that they savagely slaughtered all five ephors at the altar and table of the goddess. They then carried out the next phases of their plan. They killed Gyridas, a member of the Council of Elders, banished those who had spoken against the Aetolians, chose ephors from among their own number, and concluded an alliance with the Aetolians.

The main reason the Spartans did these things—and why they were content to antagonize the Achaeans, ignore their debt to the Macedonians, and in general behave in an unjustifiable fashion towards everyone—was their attachment to Cleomenes. They had

never stopped hoping and longing for his safe return from exile. This goes to show that people who have a certain facility at personal relationships leave in others a very strong after-image, so to speak, of goodwill towards them even when they are far away, to say nothing of when they are present. I could cite other cases, but at the time in question, despite having enjoyed three years of government according to their ancestral constitution following Cleomenes' dethronement, without ever considering having Sparta ruled by kings, as soon as news reached them of Cleomenes' death, everyone, from the general populace to the ephorate, longed to see kings on the throne.

So the ephors—who had played a part in the conspiracy, and, as I 219
have just mentioned, had concluded an alliance with the Aetolians—turned kingmakers. One of these kings, Agesipolis III, though still a minor, was a legitimate and appropriate choice. His father was Agesipolis, whose father had been Cleombrotus II, who, as the closest relative, had reigned while Leonidas II was in exile. Guardianship of the boy was entrusted to Cleomenes, the son of Cleombrotus II and brother of Agesipolis.

But the same cannot be said about their choice from the other house.* Even though Archidamus V, the son of Eudamidas, had left two sons, borne to him by the daughter of Hippomedon, and even though Hippomedon himself was still alive, whose father was Agesilaus, the son of Eudamidas, and even though there were several other members of the house who were close relatives, though not as close as Archidamus' sons and Hippomedon, they passed over them all, and instead elevated Lycurgus to the throne, when none of his ancestors had enjoyed this dignity. But by giving each of the ephors a talent, he became a Heraclid and a king of Sparta. Everywhere in the world honours had become this cheap and easy to buy. And so the price for the ephors' folly in making this appointment would be paid not by their children's children, but by themselves.*

[36] Machatas returned to Sparta when he heard what had happened there. He urged the ephors and the kings to go to war with the Achaeans, claiming that this was the only way to put an end to the strife caused by those Spartans who would stop at nothing to break up the Spartan–Aetolian alliance, and by those in Aetolia who were working for the same end. The ephors and kings found his argument convincing, and Machatas went back home, with his mission accomplished thanks to the villainy of his associates.

At the head of an army consisting of the mercenaries and some of the citizen troops, Lycurgus invaded Argive territory. The prevailing peace meant that the Argives had taken no precautions, and Lycurgus' surprise assaults on Polichna, Prasiae, Leucae, and Cyphanta were successful. He was repulsed at Glympes and Zarax, however. Next, the Spartans declared Achaean property to be legitimate plunder for any privateer. And Machatas used the same arguments he had on the Spartans to persuade the Eleans to go to war with the Achaeans as well.

Things had gone better for the Aetolians than they had expected, and they embarked on the war with confidence. But the same could not be said for the Achaeans: they depended heavily on Philip, but he had not yet completed his preparations, while the Epirots were hesitant about going to war, the Messenians were doing nothing, and the villainy of the Eleans and the Spartans meant that the Achaeans were surrounded by enemies.

[37] Aratus' year of office was about to come to an end, and the Achaeans had chosen his son, also called Aratus, to succeed him as general. But Scopas, the Aetolian general, still had about half his term to run. The Aetolians hold their elections straight after the autumn equinox, while the Achaeans do so at the time of the rising of the Pleiades.*

The beginning of the summer, by which time the younger Aratus had taken over as general, saw the opening moves and the start of all the wars at once. This was when Hannibal began the siege of Saguntum and the Romans sent an army under the command of Lucius Aemilius Paullus to Illyria to fight Demetrius of Pharos. I covered these events in the last book. At the same time, Antiochus was poised to invade Coele Syria, since Ptolemaïs and Tyre had been surrendered to him by Theodotus, and Ptolemy was getting ready to face Antiochus. Lycurgus wanted to emulate the way Cleomenes had started operations: he encamped close to the Athenaeum in Megalopolitis and had it under siege. The Achaeans were hiring mercenaries, both horse and foot, for the looming war. Philip was setting out from Macedon with his army, which consisted of about 10,000 Macedonian phalangites, 5,000 peltasts, and a cavalry unit of 800.

While all these opening moves and preparations were taking place, the Rhodians went to war with the people of Byzantium. The causes

of the war were as follows. [38] As far as the sea is concerned, there is no better location anywhere in the known world than Byzantium; its natural defences are superb, and its position also guarantees the city's prosperity. As far as the land is concerned, however, in both respects it suffers from severe disadvantages.

As regards the sea, it commands the mouth of the Black Sea so well that no merchant can enter or leave without Byzantine permission. This means that the Byzantines control the prolific export of Black Sea goods that support people's lives elsewhere in the world. For where the necessaries of life are concerned, the Black Sea regions are acknowledged to have no rivals, in terms of both quality and quantity, as sources of livestock and slaves (the trade in which is enormous). The same goes also for the vast quantities of luxuries they supply—honey, wax, and preserved fish. They also import surplus olive oil, and wine of all kinds, from our part of the world. The traffic in grain, however, goes both ways: sometimes they supply our needs, but at other times they import it from us.

It follows that, if the Byzantines either had made mischief,[1] or if they did not live there in the first place, Greeks would necessarily be denied access to all of these commodities, or would make no profit from dealing in them. For the strait is so narrow, and there are so many barbarians in close proximity, that the Black Sea would unquestionably become a no-go area for us. Now, it may be true that it is the Byzantines themselves who make the best living from the natural advantages of their location (since they can easily export their surpluses and import whatever else they need at a profit, without too much trouble or danger), but, as I have already said, they also enable a great many goods to reach others as well. And so, since the people of Byzantium are the benefactors of all of us in common, they have every right to expect that the Greeks will not just thank them, but also will make a common effort to come to their assistance whenever the barbarian menace becomes critical.

Byzantium lies a little off the beaten track, which means that most people are unaware of its distinctive natural advantages. But everyone enjoys finding out about such things. Above all, we like to see unusual or exotic places for ourselves, but if that is impossible, we

[1] If, for example, in the past they had linked up with the Gauls, or on the occasion in question with the Thracians, which would have been more serious.

want at least to gain as accurate an impression and idea of them as we can. So I should explain how Byzantium is situated and what factors have enabled it to become so remarkably prosperous.

[39] The Black Sea has a circumference of approximately 22,000 stades, and two mouths which lie diametrically opposite one another. One of these is the Propontis channel and the other the channel from lake Maeotis,* which itself has a circumference of 8,000 stades. These two basins, the sea and the lake, drain a large number of sizeable Asiatic rivers, and a larger number of even bigger European rivers. The replenishment of the lake causes it to flow into the Black Sea through its mouth, and the replenishment of the Black Sea causes it to flow into the Propontis. The Cimmerian Bosporus, as the mouth of lake Maeotis is called, is about thirty stades across and sixty stades long, and shallow throughout. The mouth of the Black Sea is likewise called the Thracian Bosporus; it is about 120 stades long, but varies in width. Coming from the Propontis, the channel starts at the opening between Chalcedon and Byzantium, which are fourteen stades apart. Coming from the Black Sea, the channel starts at Hieron, as it is called, which is where in legend Jason, on his way back from Colchis, first sacrificed to the Twelve Gods. Hieron is on the Asiatic side of the mouth, opposite the temple of Sarapis in Thrace, which is twelve stades away on the European side.

There are two reasons why there is a constant outflow from lake Maeotis and the Black Sea. The first, which is glaringly obvious, is that when many streams flow into a basin of limited circumference, the water level constantly increases; if there were no outlets, the water would inevitably rise ever higher and occupy a larger area of the basin, but where there are outlets the extra, surplus water keeps overflowing into, and streams away through, these channels. The second reason is that, after heavy rainfalls, the rivers carry large quantities of all kinds of soil into the basins, and the silt forces the water to rise and then flow, on the same principle as before, through the channels. Since the depositing of silt and the inflow of water are unremitting and constant, the outflow of water through the mouths is also bound to be unremitting and constant. These are the true reasons why water flows out of the Black Sea. They are based not on merchants' yarns,* but on observation of the laws of physics, and it is hard to imagine a more accurate method than that.

[40] So far, so good. But there is no point in my stopping there, with a mere statement of the facts, and leaving things undeveloped. This is what most writers do, but I want to give a detailed account, to make sure that I leave my readers in no doubt about the answers to any questions they may have. For it is a distinctive feature of our times that, since everywhere in the world can now be reached by land or sea, we no longer have to rely on poets and storytellers to fill the gaps in our knowledge, as our predecessors did in most cases. They gave us, in Heraclitus' phrase,* no more than 'unreliable witnesses' to disputed facts, but I must try to give my readers an account that carries conviction on its own merits.

I maintain that the silting up of the Black Sea has been going on for a very long time, that the process is continuing now, and that therefore both lake Maeotis and the Black Sea will become entirely silted up, if the region stays topographically the same and the factors that cause the silting remain in force. For given infinite time and basins that are limited in volume, it follows that they will eventually be filled, even if silt barely trickles in. After all, it is a natural law that, if a finite quantity goes on and on increasing or decreasing—even if, let us suppose, the amounts involved are tiny—the process will necessarily come to an end at some point within the infinite extent of time. And when the amount involved is not trivial, when a great deal of soil is being carried in, the outcome I am talking about will obviously happen relatively soon, not just some time in the distant future.

That this is actually what is happening is easy to see. Lake Maeotis, at any rate, has already become silted up; most of it is no more than five or seven fathoms deep, which means that large ships can sail there now only with a pilot to guide them. Originally, as all ancient authorities agree, it was a sea that was confluent with the Black Sea, but now it is a freshwater lake, since the sea water has been displaced by the silt and replaced by the incoming river water.* The same will happen to the Black Sea as well, and is already happening, though the size of the basin makes it very hard for most observers to tell what is going on. But even so, a moment's thought will reveal the truth of what I am saying.

[41] Take the Danube, for example, with several mouths issuing into the Black Sea from Europe: the sediment that is carried down into the sea through these mouths has formed a 1,000-stade-long sandbank out at sea, a day's journey from land. Ships that cross the

open sea still accidentally run aground there at night, on 'the Breasts', as sailors call the shoals. But why does the sediment not form shoals close to land? Why is it pushed far out to sea? The reason must be that for a while the river's currents are the dominant force and push their way through the sea. As long as that is happening, earth and whatever else is caught up in the currents necessarily continues to be pushed out to sea, without just stopping and settling; but when the sea has enough depth and volume to cancel the force of the streams, then, by the laws of physics, the sediment will of course stop moving, fall to the bottom, and settle. That is why the sediment carried by large, turbulent rivers forms shoals way out at sea, with the inshore seabed retaining its depth, while the sediment carried by smaller, gentler streams forms sandbanks by their mouths.

There is especially good evidence for this during heavy rainfall, when insignificant streams gain enough impetus to overcome the waves at their mouths and push sediment out into the sea to a distance that is proportionate in each case to the force with which the streams flow in. It is foolish to be sceptical about the size of the sandbank formed by the Danube, or in general about the vast numbers of rocks and logs, and the vast quantity of earth, that issue from rivers into the sea. We often see with our own eyes how rapidly an insignificant stream, one that flows only in winter, can scoop out a bed and cut a swathe through high ground, and deposit so much wood, earth, and stones that sometimes places are altered beyond recognition.

[42] It makes little sense, then, to doubt that large rivers with a strong, year-round flow can have the effect I have been attributing to them and will eventually fill up the Black Sea. This is not just probable, but a logical necessity. The future is indicated by the fact that just as lake Maeotis is less salty than the Black Sea, so the Black Sea is distinctly less salty than the Mediterranean. This proves that when an amount of time has passed that is proportionate to the time it took to fill up lake Maeotis, in the same ratio as the size of the Maeotis basin to the Black Sea basin, the Black Sea too will be a shallow, freshwater lake, like Maeotis. In fact, this will presumably happen at a faster rate, because the rivers that flow into the Black Sea are proportionately larger and more numerous.

I hope to have said enough to convince the sceptics that the Black Sea is now silting up and will continue to silt up, until, for all its size, it turns into a shallow lake. Above all, I hope to have countered

the false and fanciful yarns of seafaring traders: we should not be condemned by our ignorance to believe everything we hear, like children. Where we have certain traces of the truth, we can use them to deduce the truth or falsity of the stories we hear. But now I resume my account of the natural advantages of Byzantium.

[43] The channel that connects the Black Sea with the Propontis is, as I have just mentioned, 120 stades long. Coming from the Black Sea, the channel begins at Hieron, and coming from the Propontis it starts with the opening at Byzantium. Between these two places, where the strait is at its narrowest, there is a sanctuary of Hermes on a promontory that juts out into the channel from the European side until it is only five stades away from the Asiatic side. This is where Darius I is supposed to have bridged the strait* when he invaded Europe to attack the Scythians.

Up to that point, the current from the Black Sea flows at a regular pace, because of the uniformity of the coastline on either side of the channel. But when it reaches the sanctuary of Hermes on the European side, where the channel is, as I indicated, at its narrowest, the confined space causes it to dash violently against the promontory. It then recoils from the promontory, as if from a blow, and strikes the Asiatic coastline opposite. From there it executes an about-turn, so to speak, and reverts once more towards the European coastline, which it strikes at the headland known as the Hearths, and then it flows back again and reaches the Asiatic coastline at a place called Bous, which is where in legend Io* first set foot in Asia after crossing from Europe. Finally, however, the current flows from Bous straight towards Byzantium, but it divides near the city. A lesser branch forms the inlet called the Horn, while the main current rebounds again. But it no longer has sufficient strength to reach the opposite coastline, where Chalcedon is located, because it has already rebounded several times and the strait is wider by then. This means that the current loses its force there and, instead of making short crossings at an acute angle, it is deflected at an obtuse angle, which carries it past Chalcedon and on through the strait.

[44] And what I have just said is precisely what makes the situation of Byzantium so favourable, and that of Chalcedon the opposite, even though at first sight one might think that their locations shared the same advantages. Nevertheless, with the best will in the world, it is hard to put in at Chalcedon, while the current carries one towards

Byzantium willy-nilly, as I have just explained. This is proved by the fact that in order to sail from Chalcedon to Byzantium one cannot simply head in a straight line across the intervening current; one has to take a roundabout route via Bous and Chrysopolis, and then let the boat be carried by the current, which will take it towards Byzantium anyway.[1]

On the other side of Byzantium, the sailing is just as straightforward, whether one is running from the Hellespont on a southerly wind, or towards the Hellespont from the Black Sea on an etesian. In the latter case, it is a straight run, with no tacking involved, along the European coastline from Byzantium to the narrowest part of the Propontis at Abydus and Sestus, and it is just as easy in the other direction, back to Byzantium. However, the same cannot be said for the voyage from Chalcedon along the Asiatic coastline, which entails winding around gulfs and the Cyzican peninsula, which projects a long way out into the sea.

As for the voyage from the Hellespont to Chalcedon, which involves hugging the European coastline and then, when one is close to Byzantium, turning and heading straight for Chalcedon—again, the same factors, the current and so forth, make this difficult. The same goes for the return journey: making straight for Thrace out of Chalcedon is quite impossible, thanks to the intervening current and the prevailing winds. In fact, attempting to sail either way between Chalcedon and Byzantium is hampered by the winds, since the south wind carries one towards the Black Sea and the north wind carries one away from the Black Sea, and yet these are the winds one must use for either journey. These, then, are the reasons for Byzantium's superb location in relation to the sea. Now I shall explain its disadvantages in relation to the land.

[45] From sea to sea, Byzantine land is completely hemmed in by Thrace. This means that the people of Byzantium are involved in everlasting warfare with the Thracians. And it is warfare of a difficult kind: they cannot just rid themselves of it by careful planning and a decisive defeat. The number of Thracians of military age makes that impossible, and there are too many princelings as well. If they

[1] Chrysopolis was the place from where shipping into the Black Sea was first taxed; it was in Athenian hands at the time, and they were acting on a proposal put forward by Alcibiades.*

subdue one, three more fearsome chieftains launch an attack on his territory. And it does not make the slightest bit of difference, as far as the Byzantines are concerned, if they capitulate, come to terms, and submit to tribute: making concessions to one chieftain creates five times as many enemies. So they are engaged in everlasting, difficult warfare. And what could be more dangerous, or more terrifying, than war with a barbarian neighbour?

But as if being racked by these unending land-based troubles were not enough, one of the many evil consequences of the warfare they have to endure reminds one of Homer's description of the punishment of Tantalus.* They have wonderfully generous land. They work the land, and it produces crops of outstanding quality and quantity—and then the barbarians come and destroy the crops, or collect them for their own use. Even apart from all the labour and expense they have invested, it frustrates them and makes them furious to see the destruction of such fine crops.

Nevertheless, they have become accustomed to warfare with Thracians and they put up with it without letting their original obligations to the Greeks go by the board. But when they were also attacked 279
by the Gauls under Comontorius, their situation became absolutely critical. [46] This band of Gauls had migrated from their homeland along with Brennus, but avoided the battle at Delphi. They went to the Hellespont, and found Byzantine land so attractive that they stayed there, rather than crossing over to Asia. They subdued the Thracians, made Tylis their main city, and threatened Byzantium with utter ruin.

In the early years, during the Gallic assaults that took place while the first king, Comontorius, was still alive, the Byzantines kept the Gauls from ravaging their land by regular payments of tribute, in tranches of 3,000, 5,000, and once even 10,000 staters. In the end, they were compelled to agree to pay eighty talents a year, and this continued up until the time of Cavarus, during whose reign the Gallic kingdom was broken up and the Gauls themselves were defeated in *c.*212
their turn by the Thracians and massacred. But meanwhile, the heavy burden of the tribute forced the Byzantines to apply for the first time to the Greeks for help and material assistance to see them through the crisis. But their pleas were largely ignored and, inevitably, the Byzantines began to tax shipping into the Black Sea. 221

[47] The imposition of this tariff by the Byzantines on the export of goods from the Black Sea caused considerable hardship and loss of profit. The affronted traders unanimously turned for help to the Rhodians, who were considered to be pre-eminent at sea. And that was how the war I shall now describe came about.

Roused to action not just by the losses incurred by their associates, but also by the damage to their own interests, the first thing the Rhodians did was send a joint embassy with their allies to the Byzantines, demanding an end to the tax. But the Byzantines were disinclined to make any concessions. They were convinced of the justice of their cause, and made that clear at the confrontational meeting that took place between Hecatodorus and Olympiodorus (the leading statesmen at the time in Byzantium) and the Rhodian delegation. The Rhodians failed to gain their immediate objective, then, but when they got back home they felt they had sufficient grounds for voting for war against Byzantium. They immediately sent an embassy to Prusias I, urging him to declare war too, since they knew that he had a number of grievances against Byzantium.

[48] The Byzantines too did pretty much the same, and sent embassies to Attalus I and to Achaeus, asking for help. Attalus committed himself to the cause, but his assistance did not amount to much at the time, because he had been confined to his ancestral kingdom by Achaeus. Achaeus, who controlled all Asia Minor and had recently declared himself king, promised to help. His decision boosted morale in Byzantium, and frightened the Rhodians and Prusias. For Achaeus was related to Antiochus III, who had succeeded to the Syrian throne, and, as I have already said, he controlled all Asia Minor.

The way in which Achaeus gained control of this vast territory was as follows. After the death of Seleucus II, the father of
225 Antiochus III, his eldest son succeeded him as Seleucus III. As soon as young Seleucus had inherited the throne, the news that Attalus had by now taken over all Asia Minor prompted him to set out in defence of his possessions there. Because of their kinship, Achaeus joined Seleucus on this trans-Taurus campaign, about two years before the events I am now covering.

Seleucus led a huge army across the mountains, but was treacher-
223 ously assassinated by Apaturius the Gaul and Nicanor. As his kinsman, Achaeus immediately avenged his murder by executing Nicanor and Apaturius, and took charge of both the army and the administration.

In this capacity, he behaved with discretion and showed himself to be a man of principle: although he had the opportunity, and although the army wanted to see him wearing the royal diadem, he chose not to. He saw himself as guardian of the monarchy for Seleucus II's younger son Antiochus.

A forcefully waged campaign, however, enabled him to regain possession of all Asia Minor. Things went unexpectedly well for him: he reduced Attalus' kingdom to just Pergamum, and made himself master of everywhere else. These successes went to his head, and he rapidly went astray. He assumed the diadem, declared himself king, 220
and was at the time in question the most oppressive and feared of all the kings and princelings in Asia Minor. This was the man whom the Byzantines hoped would be their mainstay when they acceded to war against Rhodes and Prusias.

[49] One of Prusias' old grievances against the Byzantines was that they had failed to erect some statues of him; they had voted to do so, but then they had just let the matter slide and forgotten all about it. He also did not like the fact that they had done all they could to try to end the war between Achaeus and Attalus and reconcile them to each other; in his view, warm relations between Achaeus and Attalus would harm his interests in a number of ways. And he felt insulted by the Byzantines' failure to send emissaries to him for his Soteria,* when apparently Attalus had received such a delegation from Byzantium for his games in honour of Athena. Since he was nursing these grudges, then, he welcomed the Rhodians' approach and leapt at the excuse for war. He agreed with the Rhodian ambassadors that they were to be responsible for the war at sea, while he expected to be just as effective against the enemy on land.

This was how and why the war between Rhodes and Byzantium started. [50] The Byzantines put a lot of energy into the opening phases of the war, since they were confident of Achaeus' help, and they also felt certain that, if they invited Tiboetes to join them from Macedon, that would give Prusias as much of a shock and as much reason to feel threatened as he had given them. For the reasons I have already stated, Prusias was fighting with conviction, and he had captured Hieron, a strategic location on the Bosporus which the Byzantines had acquired a few years previously for a large sum of money; they had wanted to deny anyone else the chance of making it a base for attacking merchant vessels entering the Black Sea, or

for interfering with the export of slaves and fish. Prusias had also captured the Byzantines' long-held Asiatic possessions in Mysia.

The Rhodians gave command of their fleet to Xenophantus and he sailed for the Hellespont with ten warships—six manned by Rhodians and four more from their allies. He left nine ships at anchor off Sestus to stop shipping entering the Black Sea and took the remaining ship to sound out the Byzantines and see if the war had frightened them enough for them to change their minds. But his words fell on deaf ears, so he left, recovered the other ships, and returned with the full fleet to Rhodes. The Byzantines kept requesting assistance from Achaeus, and they sent an escort to Macedon to fetch Tiboetes, who was held, as the brother of Prusias' father, to have just as good a claim to the Bithynian throne as Prusias.

In view of the fact that the Byzantines were proving stubborn, the Rhodians came up with a clever means to their desired end. [51] It was obvious that the most important factor in the Byzantines' determination to keep fighting was that they anticipated help from Achaeus. The Rhodians, then, knowing that there was nothing more important to Achaeus than the safety of his father, Andromachus, who was currently being detained in Alexandria, decided to approach Ptolemy and ask him to hand Andromachus over to them. In fact, they had made the same request earlier, but only in a half-hearted fashion; now they were genuinely committed to the project. The idea was that, by doing Achaeus this favour, they would make him so obligated to them that he would do whatever they wanted.

When the Rhodian representatives arrived, Ptolemy was not sure whether he should let Andromachus go. He had planned to make use of him when an opportunity arose: there was unfinished business between him and Antiochus, and Achaeus, having recently declared himself king, was in a position to make a difference in certain important matters. For Andromachus, the father of Achaeus, was the brother of Laodice, the wife of Seleucus II. Nevertheless, because overall he inclined to the Rhodian cause and wanted to do whatever he could to help, Ptolemy agreed to their request and handed Andromachus over, for them to take him to Achaeus.

This scheme, and the fact that they heaped Achaeus with extra honours as well, allowed the Rhodians to deprive the Byzantines of their most important source of hope. Then the Byzantines suffered

another setback when their plans for Tiboetes came to nothing: he died on his way back from Macedon. At this, the Byzantines lost heart, and Prusias scented victory. He continued to put a lot of effort into the war in Asia, which he conducted himself, and on the European side, he hired Thracian mercenaries to pin the Byzantines within their city walls. Nothing had gone the way the Byzantines had hoped. They were in trouble in every theatre of the war, and they began to cast around for an honourable way to extricate themselves.

[52] So when Cavarus, the king of the Gauls, came to Byzantium with the intention of bringing the war to an end and with his hands determinedly spread to restrain the combatants, Prusias and the Byzantines agreed to all his proposals. When the Rhodians heard of Cavarus' initiative and of Prusias' acquiescence, they saw a way to gain their objectives. They chose Aridices as their herald and sent him to Byzantium—but at the same time dispatched Polemocles as well, with three triremes. In other words, they sent the Byzantines the proverbial 'combined spear and herald's staff'.

Once the Rhodians had arrived, treaties were drawn up, 'in the year of Cothon son of Calligeiton, Hieromnemon* in Byzantium'. The agreement with the Rhodians was straightforward:

The people of Byzantium shall not tax shipping into the Black Sea and under these circumstances the Rhodians and their allies shall remain at peace with the people of Byzantium.

The agreement with Prusias went as follows:

1. There shall be peace and friendship between Prusias and the Byzantines for all time. Neither shall the people of Byzantium undertake any military activity against Prusias, nor shall Prusias against the people of Byzantium.

2. Prusias shall restore to the people of Byzantium unransomed their lands, fortresses, serfs, and citizens†. Moreover, he shall return the ships taken at the start of the war, the artillery captured in the forts, along with the timbers and worked stone, and the roof tiles from Hieron.[1]

3. Prusias shall also compel any Bithynians who are occupying property in Mysia that belongs to the people of Byzantium to return it to the farmers.

[1] As a precaution against Tiboetes' return, Prusias had destroyed all fortresses in critical locations.

That was how the war fought by the Rhodians and Prusias against the Byzantines started, and how it ended.

[53] At much the same time, the people of Cnossus approached the Rhodians and persuaded them to send them not only the ships that Polemocles commanded, but also three undecked ships. Once the ships had been launched, they sailed for Crete, but after their arrival the people of Eleutherna suspected that Polemocles had killed one of their fellow citizens, a man named Timarchus, at the request of the Cnossians. They first declared it no offence to take reprisals against the Rhodians, and then turned to military action later.

Some time earlier, the town of Lyctus had met with utter ruin. The basic situation in Crete as a whole at the time was as follows. Cnossus, in collusion with Gortyn, had subjected the whole of Crete apart from Lyctus. Since this was the only place that refused to accept their supremacy, they declared war on it, with the intention of razing it to the ground as an example and a warning to all other Cretans. At first, all the Cretan communities united for the war against Lyctus, but, typically for Cretans, they fell out with one another over some insignificant slight. Polyrrenia, Cerea, Lappa, the Oreii, and the Arcades all seceded together from the Cnossian alliance and decided to ally themselves with Lyctus, while Gortyn was divided, with the elders siding with Cnossus and the young men of military age with Lyctus. The Cnossians had not been expecting any unrest among their allies, and they asked the Aetolians, with whom they had a treaty of alliance, to send them 1,000 men. As soon as these reinforcements reached Crete, in Gortyn the elders seized the acropolis, admitted the Cnossians and Aetolians, banished or killed the younger Gortynians, and entrusted the city to the protection of the Cnossians.

[54] Meanwhile, the Lyctians had set out for a full-scale invasion of enemy territory. The Cnossians' response was to seize now-defenceless Lyctus, and remove the children and womenfolk to Cnossus. Then they set fire to the town, razed it to the ground, and did everything they could to turn the place into a ruin, before returning to Cnossus. When the Lyctians came back from their expedition and saw what had happened, they were so upset that not one of them could bear even to enter the town. They all walked around the outside, weeping and wailing for the misfortune they and their homeland had suffered, and then they turned away and went to Lappa. They were treated kindly there, and no effort was spared to make them

feel welcome. Within a single day they had become homeless refugees, aliens instead of citizens, but they continued to fight against Cnossus alongside their allies. This was how Lyctus, the oldest settlement in Crete, a colony and offshoot of Sparta, and indisputably the source of the bravest men in Crete, met all of a sudden with total destruction.

[55] Seeing that the Cnossians were committed to their alliance with the Aetolian League, and that the Aetolians were enemies of Philip and the Achaeans, the members of the anti-Cnossian alliance—Polyrrenia, Lappa, and the rest—approached Philip and the Achaeans, with a request for help and an alliance. The Achaeans and Philip allowed the Cretans to join the common alliance and sent them help in the form of 400 Illyrians, under the command of Plator, 200 Achaeans, and 100 Phocians. This force did not stay long before sailing back to Greece, but with their help the Polyrrenians and their allies made great progress. They soon had Eleutherna, Cydonia, and Aptera under siege, and forced them to leave the Cnossian alliance and come over to their side. Later, the Polyrrenian alliance sent Philip and the Achaeans 500 Cretan soldiers, and a little earlier the Cnossians had already sent the Aetolians 1,000 men. These Cretan troops fought alongside their respective allies in the Social War. The Gortynian exiles seized the port of Phaestus, and even managed to occupy the port of Gortyn itself. From these bases they kept up the struggle against their city-based opponents.

[56] That was how things stood in Crete. Another war that started at much the same time was that of Mithradates II against Sinope—a war that turned out to be, so to speak, the beginning of and pretext for the subsequent downfall of Sinope.* The Sinopeans sent an embassy to Rhodes to ask for help in this war, and the Rhodians voted to appoint an executive board of three men, with 140,000 drachmas at their disposal, which they were to spend on providing the Sinopeans with whatever they needed. So the board supplied the Sinopeans with 10,000 jars of wine; 300 talents of hair,* ready for use; 100 talents of sinews, ready for use; 1,000 complete sets of arms and armour; 3,000 coined staters; and finally four ballistas and their artillerymen. All this was given to the delegates, who then returned to Sinope, where everyone was nervously anticipating Mithradates' putting the city under siege by land and sea. All possible preparations were in hand for such an eventuality.

Sinope is situated on the right-hand shore of the Black Sea as one travels towards the Phasis.* It is built on a peninsula that bulges out into the sea, but is joined to the mainland by a neck that is no more than two stades across. The city comes right up to this neck and completely blocks it. The rest of the peninsula, as it runs out into the sea, is flat and easily accessible, though surrounded by sheer cliffs with no safe anchorage and extremely few places to climb up. What the Sinopeans were worried about, then, was that Mithradates would put them under siege by constructing siegeworks on the mainland side of the city, and on the other side by landing troops from the sea onto the level ground that overlooked the city. So they were busy strengthening the natural defences all around the sea-girt part of the peninsula, securing the approaches from the sea with stakes and fences, and placing men and stores of missiles in all the critical places. I should explain that the peninsula is not especially large, and reasonably easy to defend.

[57] That was how things stood at Sinope. I shall now resume my account of the Social War from where I broke off, with its opening
219 moves. Philip left Macedon with his army and set out for Thessaly and Epirus, intending to invade Aetolia from there. Alexander and Dorimachus, meanwhile, were realizing a scheme for capturing Aegeira. They had gathered an army of about 1,200 Aetolians at Oeantheia, an Aetolian town that lies across the gulf from Aegeira, and they had made ready enough transport vessels to ferry them across. They were just waiting for favourable weather to launch the attack. An Aetolian deserter, who had spent quite a bit of time in Aegeira, had noticed that the guards at the Aegium gate tended to be drunk and careless in the conduct of their guard duties. He had several times risked the crossing in order to get Dorimachus interested in the scheme, which he knew was exactly the kind of venture he found congenial.

Aegeira is situated on the Peloponnesian side of the Corinthian Gulf between Aegium and Sicyon, on a steep and forbidding ridge, facing the Parnassus region of the opposite coastline, about seven stades from the sea. When the conditions were favourable, Dorimachus put to sea with his troops and anchored, while it was still night, at the mouth of the river that flows down past the city. Alexander, Dorimachus, and Archidamus the son of Pantaleon took the main body of the Aetolians and advanced towards the city on the Aegium road, while the deserter and twenty picked men scrambled up the cliff. He and his men arrived

before the others, because he knew his way around. They slipped into the city through an aqueduct, found the guards asleep, and murdered them in their beds. Then they hacked through the bars with axes and let the Aetolians in through the gates. The Aetolians dashed smartly in, but then acted with such ineptitude that they were at least partly responsible for Aegeira's survival and their own deaths. They acted on the assumption that all one has to do to occupy an enemy city is get past the gatehouse.

[58] They stayed together, then, in and around the agora, for only a very short time before plunder-lust got the better of them and they spread throughout the city. It was now daytime, and they started breaking into houses and stealing property. The Aegeirans were taken completely and utterly by surprise. The inhabitants of the houses that had attracted the attention of the Aetolians all panicked and fled from the city in terror, in the belief that it was already securely in enemy hands. But the rest, with their houses intact, were alerted by the din and came out to fight. They assembled on the acropolis, and as their numbers increased, so did their courage. Aetolian numbers—and any semblance of military formation—were, however, decreasing, as I have already explained.

Dorimachus saw their danger, had his men fall in, and launched an attack on the acropolis, thinking that a bold and confident assault would scare off the Aegeirans who had gathered to try to save their city. But the Aegeirans summoned up their courage and resisted heroically. The acropolis was unwalled, and the battle was fought man to man, at close quarters. At first, the struggle was as finely balanced as you would expect, given that one side was fighting for the survival of their homeland and children, and the other side for their lives. But in the end the Aetolian intruders turned and fled. The Aegeirans, encouraged by their flight, charged the enemy with telling effect. Most of the Aetolians were so terrified that they were trampled in the gateway by their own men as they were trying to escape. Alexander fell fighting in the actual battle; Archidamus died in the scrimmage and crush at the gates. Most of the rest of the Aetolians either died in the crush or fell to their deaths as they scrambled back down the cliff. The survivors, who saved themselves only by discarding their shields, managed to escape on their ships in disgrace and despair. So the Aegeirans first carelessly lost the city of their birth and then recovered it against the odds by their determination and bravery.

[59] At about the same time, Euripidas, who had been sent by the Aetolians to take command of the armed forces at Elis, was on his way back to Elis after overrunning land belonging to Dyme, Pharae, and Tritaea and rounding up plenty of livestock. Miccus of Dyme, however, who was sub-general of the Achaean League that year, came out after him with all the men at his disposal from these three towns. They found Euripidas and his troops on their way home. They attacked, but harried the fugitives too forcefully and fell into a trap. This mistake cost them dearly: forty dead and about 200 infantrymen captured. The victory made Euripidas restless, and a few days later he set out again. This time he took a critical Dymean stronghold on the Araxus, called the Fortress. Legend has it that this fort was built in the olden days by Heracles when he was at war with Elis, to serve as the base for his operations against them.

[60] The threat posed by the capture of the fort gave the people of Dyme, Pharae, and Tritaea something else to worry about, on top of their defeat. Their first thought was to write to the Achaean general, to tell him what had happened and to ask for help, and later they sent an official delegation with the same request. But Aratus failed to raise a mercenary contingent. This was partly due to the fact that in the Cleomenean War the Achaeans had not paid their mercenaries in full, but in any case Aratus lacked initiative and his basic approach to the whole war was unenterprising and slipshod. The upshot was that Lycurgus succeeded in taking the Athenaeum in Megalopolitis, and Euripidas added to his earlier success by capturing Gorgus†, near Thelpousa.

When they realized, to their despair, that no help was forthcoming from Aratus, the people of Dyme, Pharae, and Tritaea agreed among themselves not to pay their contributions to the League treasury, and raised on their own a mercenary force of 300 foot and 50 horse, whom they used to protect their lands. Although this was generally held to have been the right decision from their own internal point of view, the same could not be said for its effect on the League. In that respect, they were held to have set a pernicious precedent and to have paved the way for anyone in the future who wanted to undermine the confederacy. But most of the blame for what they did should properly be assigned to the general, who was invariably careless, tardy, and lazy in dealing with petitions. After all, when a man is in danger, the hope of help from his friends and allies is what keeps him going, but

when there is no chance of outside help in his time of trouble, he has no choice but to fend for himself as best he can. So we should not find fault with the people of Tritaea, Pharae, and Dyme for raising a mercenary force on their own when the Achaean leader was procrastinating, but their refusal to pay their contributions to the League treasury was reprehensible. Of course, they should not have ignored their own needs, given that they had the means and resources, but they should still have observed their obligations to the League. Apart from anything else, League regulations guaranteed that they would recover their outlay; but the most important issue is that they were the founder members of the Achaean League.

[61] That was how things stood in the Peloponnese while King Philip passed through Thessaly and arrived in Epirus, where he added the full complement of Epirot troops to his Macedonians. Three hundred slingers also came to him there from Achaea, and 300† Cretans arrived from Polyrrenia. Then he marched through Epirus and into the territory of Ambracia. If his next move had been a rapid advance deep into Aetolia with this formidable army, he would have taken the Aetolians by surprise and brought the whole war to an end straight away. But to gratify the Epirots he first put Ambracus under siege, and this gave the Aetolians time to steady themselves, and to plan and prepare for the future.

The Epirots ranked their own interests above the common good of the allies. What they counted as important was gaining control of Ambracus, and they kept asking Philip to make his first priority the siege and reduction of the town. Their overriding concern was to deprive the Aetolians of Ambracia, but the only way they could see this happening was if they first gained control of Ambracus and then besieged Ambracia. For Ambracus commands both the land and the city, and is a well-fortified place with outworks and walls, in the middle of marshland and approachable only by a single narrow causeway. Anyway, Philip assented to the Epirots' wishes. He made camp close to Ambracus and began to get everything ready for putting the town under siege.

[62] Meanwhile, Scopas took to the field with the Aetolian army at full strength, marched through Thessaly, and invaded Macedon. He proceeded against Pieria, where he destroyed the grain crops and rounded up a great deal of livestock, before turning back and marching towards Dium. At his approach, the inhabitants abandoned

the town. He marched in, demolished the walls, houses, and gymnasium, burnt the stoas in the hallowed precinct, and destroyed all the other sacred donations, whether they were there to embellish the sanctuary or to serve the needs of those who came for the various festivals. He also toppled all the statues of the kings. Scopas' first move, then, right at the start of the war, was an act of aggression against gods as well as men. He then returned to Aetolia, where he was treated not as an impious criminal, but as a benefactor of the League. He was awarded honours and admired for the empty hopes and irrational pride with which he had filled the Aetolians. They now felt that no one would dare even to approach Aetolia, while they could make unmolested incursions not just into the Peloponnese, but into Thessaly and Macedon as well.

[63] So Philip instantly reaped the fruits of the Epirots' self-serving villainy. After receiving the news from Macedon, he set about besieging Ambracus. His siegeworks in general, especially his earthworks, were so effective that before long the inhabitants lost heart, and it took only forty days for the town to fall to him. He gave the garrison of 500 Aetolians a sworn assurance of their safety if they left, and satisfied the Epirots' desires by handing the town over to them. Then he set out with his army past Charadra, because he wanted to cross the Ambracian Gulf at its narrowest point, over to the Acarnanian sanctuary called Actium.[1]

After ferrying his forces across the mouth of the gulf, Philip marched through Acarnania (where he gained an additional 2,000 Acarnanian foot and 200 horse), until he reached the Aetolian city of Phoetiae. He encircled the city with his camp and launched a series of such aggressive and terrifying assaults that within two days the Aetolians stationed there surrendered. He let them go with a sworn guarantee of safety, but the next night, under the impression that the city had not yet fallen, a relieving force of 500 Aetolians came up. The king received advance warning about their approach and found a suitable spot for an ambush. All but a very few of the Aetolians were either killed or captured, with the majority being killed. Then he distributed to his men enough grain for thirty days from the vast stores

[1] The Ambracian Gulf is an inlet of the Sicilian Sea, between Epirus and Acarnania. It has an extremely narrow mouth, less than 5 stades across, but it opens up towards the interior to a width of about 100 stades and a length, measured from the coast, of about 300 stades. It forms the border between Epirus to the north and Acarnania to the south.

he had found in Phoetiae, and carried on to Stratus. He encamped about ten stades from the town, on the Achelous river, and made sorties to plunder the farmland. This went without a hitch, since none of the enemy dared to come out against him.

[64] The Achaeans were suffering badly in the war, and when they heard that the king was near by, they approached him for help. The Achaean emissaries found Philip still at Stratus. They passed on the message with which they had been entrusted, and tried to persuade him to make the Rhium crossing and invade Elis by giving his men some idea of all the livestock they would be able to take from enemy territory there. Philip listened to what they had to say and asked them to stay with him while he thought about their proposal.† Then he broke camp and set out for Metropolis and Conope. At Metropolis, the Aetolians abandoned the town and occupied the acropolis. Philip put the town to the torch and carried on to Conope.

At Conope, a body of Aetolian cavalry boldly came out and met him at the ford, about twenty stades from the town. They were sure they could either make it impossible for him to cross or at least inflict heavy casualties on the Macedonians as they emerged from the crossing. Philip could see what they were up to, and ordered his peltasts to lead the way across the river. They were to make land unit by unit in close order, with overlapping shields. His orders were carried out, and the first company reached the other side. The Aetolian horsemen probed them briefly, but found that their formation remained solid, an impenetrable wall of shields. Then the second and third companies, as they made land, locked their shields with those of the company that was already standing its ground. There was nothing the Aetolians could do, and they broke off in frustration and returned to the town. And from then on, for all their pride, the Aetolians stayed safe behind their walls, without taking any military action.

Philip crossed the Achelous with his army and plundered the farmland there as well, still meeting no resistance. Then he set out for Ithoria, a garrison town that commands the road and has outstanding natural and man-made defences. Nevertheless, his approach frightened the garrison into abandoning the place. So Ithoria fell to him. Philip razed it to the ground and ordered his marauders likewise to demolish the other towers in the region.

[65] After passing through the defile, he proceeded at a slow and easy pace, giving his men time to plunder the farmland. By the time

he reached Oeniadae, the army had plenty of provisions. He made camp close to Paeanium and decided to take this place first. It was a town of no great size—less than seven stades in circumference—but the overall construction of its houses, walls, and towers was unrivalled. A sequence of assaults enabled him to capture it, and he razed the entire defensive wall to the ground. He also broke up the houses into their component parts, and secured the timbers and tiling on rafts, which were carefully launched on the river and sent down to Oeniadae.

At first, the Aetolians planned to hold the acropolis of Oeniadae, where they had thrown up defensive walls and other fortifications, but at Philip's approach they lost heart and abandoned the place. Now that this city was in his hands, the king used it as a base for a further expedition. He invested a strongpoint called Elaus, in the territory of Calydon. Elaus was exceptionally well protected by walls and other fortifications, since Attalus had taken responsibility for the building work for the Aetolians. After the Macedonians had taken this fortress too, they plundered all Calydonia, and then returned to Oeniadae. Philip had noticed how well situated it was, especially for crossing the gulf to the Peloponnese, and he intended to fortify it. Oeniadae is a coastal city, on the border between Acarnania and Aetolia, at the entrance to the Corinthian Gulf. The part of the Peloponnese directly opposite is the coastline of Dyme, with the closest point, no more than a hundred stades away, being Cape Araxus. So Philip gave the acropolis proper fortifications, and enclosed both the harbour and the dockyard within a single wall. He was planning to make use of the building material from Paeanium to connect this wall to the acropolis.

[66] While Philip was occupied with this work at Oeniadae, a messenger arrived from Macedon with the news that the Dardanians, taking advantage of his Peloponnesian campaign, were gathering their forces and preparing a massive invasion of Macedon. It seemed imperative to Philip, under the circumstances, that he should go and relieve Macedon as quickly as possible. He dismissed the Achaean envoys, but not without responding to their petition by saying that it would be his first priority to do all he could to help them once he had dealt with this new threat. Then he quickly broke camp and started back, taking the same route by which he had come.

While he was waiting to cross the Ambracian Gulf from Acarnania to Epirus, Demetrius of Pharos arrived, with just a single *lembos*.

He had been expelled from Illyria, as I explained in the previous book.* Philip made him welcome and told him to sail to Corinth and from there to make his way through Thessaly to Macedon. Then Philip crossed over into Epirus and carried on. By the time he reached Pella in Macedon, the Dardanians had heard from some Thracian deserters of his return. They were so frightened that they immediately broke off their expedition, even though they were already close to Macedon. When Philip heard that the Dardanians had given up, he let all his Macedonian troops go home for the harvest, while he went to Thessaly and made Larissa his base for the rest of the summer.

Meanwhile, Aemilius returned from Illyria and entered Rome in triumph, and Hannibal dismissed his troops for the winter after taking Saguntum. The Romans responded to the news of the fall of Saguntum by sending envoys to Carthage to demand the surrender of Hannibal, though at the same time they were preparing for war and had appointed Publius Cornelius Scipio and Tiberius Sempronius Longus consuls for the following year. Detailed accounts of all these events can be found in the previous book. I brought them up now as a reminder, in fulfilment of the promise I made at the start to keep readers informed of parallel events in other parts of the world. So ended the first year of this Olympiad.

[67] When the Aetolian elections took place, Dorimachus was chosen as general. As soon as he had taken up his office, he mustered the Aetolian army and invaded inland Epirus, where he devastated the countryside. The destruction was carried out in a particularly bad-tempered manner, in the sense that his purpose was not so much to profit from it, but just to hurt the Epirots. At the sanctuary of Dodona, he set fire to the stoas, destroyed many of the donations, and demolished the sacred building—proving that it makes no difference to Aetolians whether it is a time of peace or of war, since in either case they are prepared to violate the canons of normal human behaviour. Dorimachus then returned to Aetolia.

It was now winter, and no one expected Philip to return at that season, but he set out from Larissa at the head of an army of 3,000 Bronze Shields, 2,000 peltasts, 300 Cretans, and about 400 Horse Guards. Once he had ferried these troops across from Thessaly to Euboea, and from there over to Cynus, he marched through Boeotia and the Megarid, and arrived at Corinth around the time of the winter solstice. His advance was so rapid and clandestine that his arrival took everyone by surprise. As soon as he got there, he shut the gates of

Corinth and posted pickets on the approach roads. The next day he asked the elder Aratus to join him from Sicyon, and wrote letters to the Achaean general and to the allied cities, informing them when and where they were all to meet him under arms. Once he had made these arrangements, he left Corinth and marched to Phlius, where he made camp by the sanctuary of the Dioscuri.

[68] Meanwhile Euripidas, with an army of about 2,200 foot (freebooters and mercenaries, supplemented by two Elean companies) and 100 horse, had set out from Psophis and was marching through the territories of Pheneus and Stymphalus, with his ultimate destination being Sicyon, whose territory he intended to plunder. He was completely unaware of Philip's presence, and during the night of the very day on which Philip had made camp at the sanctuary of the Dioscuri, Euripidas passed close by him. At dawn, just as Euripidas was poised to invade Sicyonia, some of Philip's Cretans, who had broken formation to hunt for provisions, ran into his men. Euripidas questioned them and learnt that the Macedonians had arrived. He did not share the news with anyone, but turned around and set out with his army back along the same route by which he had come. He wanted, and expected, to leave the Macedonians behind in the mountainous badlands beyond Stymphalia. Philip, completely unaware of the enemy, kept to his original plan. He broke camp at dawn and set out to march via Stymphalus itself towards Caphyae, which was where he had told the Achaeans to assemble under arms.

[69] It so happened that the arrival of the Macedonian vanguard at the pass of Apelaurum, about ten stades before Stymphalus, coincided with the arrival there of the Elean vanguard. The information Euripidas had received enabled him to understand what was going on, and he escaped from the danger by retreating across trackless country to Psophis with a cavalry escort. The rest of the Eleans, deserted by their commanding officer and alarmed by the turn of events, remained in marching order, but had no idea what to do or where to turn.

For a while, misled especially by the sight of the Bronze Shields, their officers assumed that what they were seeing was a force of Achaeans, come to do battle with them. They thought that the Bronze Shields were Megalopolitan troops, because the Megalopolitan contingent had been equipped for the occasion by Antigonus Doson with that kind of shield when they fought Cleomenes at the battle of Sellasia.* So they pulled back in good order to some high ground, still

believing that they would escape with their lives. But the Macedonians advanced to give battle, and as soon as they were close enough for the Eleans to realize the truth, all the Eleans discarded their shields and turned to flight. About 1,200 of them were taken alive, but the rest were killed either by the Macedonians or by falling down cliffs. No more than a hundred escaped. Philip sent the battlefield spoils and the prisoners to Corinth and carried on towards Caphyae. The Peloponnesians found what had happened almost unbelievable, since the news of the king's arrival and the news of his victory arrived at the same time.

[70] In the course of his march through Arcadia, snowy conditions on the Olygyrtus pass caused Philip a great deal of hardship, but he reached Caphyae after dark two days later. He let his men recover there for two days, and then set out with his army swelled by the Achaean troops, who numbered about 10,000 and were commanded by the younger Aratus. He marched through Cleitoria towards Psophis, collecting artillery and scaling-ladders from the towns on his route.[1] He reached Psophis on the third day out from Caphyae, and established his camp on the hills opposite the city, which afforded a safe vantage-point overlooking the entire city and the surrounding district.

The city's defences were so good that Philip did not know how to proceed. To the west of the city there is a swiftly flowing stream that flows only in the winter, but is uncrossable for most of that season. The depth of the bed it has gradually cut as it descends from the mountains means that the city is completely impregnable and unapproachable from that direction. To the east of the city there is the Erymanthus, a wide, fast-flowing river, often mentioned in stories.* The winter-flowing stream to the west joins the Erymanthus south of the city, so that the city is surrounded and protected on three sides by rivers. Finally, the city's northern approach is commanded by a sheer, fortified hill, which serves the city well and effectively as an acropolis. The fortification wall is exceptionally tall and well built. In addition, the Eleans had installed a garrison in the city, and now Euripidas had taken refuge there.

[1] Psophis, in Azania, is unquestionably an old Arcadian settlement. It is situated well in the interior of the Peloponnese as a whole, where the western frontier of Arcadia joins the borderlands of western Achaea. It is well placed to threaten Elean territory, and at the time in question it was governed by Elis.

[71] All these obstacles made Philip think that perhaps he should give up his plan of carrying the city by storm and siege, but he committed himself to making the attempt because of the strategic location of the place. For exactly the same factors that made it a threat at that time to the Achaeans and the Arcadians, and safe quarters for the Eleans, would make it, if it fell into his hands, a bridgehead for the Arcadians and a suitable base for allied attacks on the Eleans. On that basis, then, he told the Macedonians that they were to eat their morning meal at first light, and then equip themselves and get ready for action.

The next day Philip crossed the bridge over the Erymanthus. No one had been expecting him to attack, so he met no opposition, and swept down on the city in a terrifying manner. No one inside the city walls, from Euripidas downwards, knew what to make of this, because they had felt sure that the enemy would not attack such a strong city in the first place and try to take it by storm, nor set about a lengthy siege at this time of year. They had been so sure of this that the suspicion arose in their minds that Philip might have enlisted inside help to take the city by stealth. But lacking evidence of such treachery, most of them ran to defend the walls, while the mercenaries hired by the Eleans launched an attack from an upper gate.

Philip stationed the ladder-bearers at three different locations, and had his Macedonians form three divisions as well; when the trumpets sounded the signal the wall came under attack from all directions at once. The city garrison put up a stiff defence for a while, hurling the attackers time and again from the scaling-ladders. But their preparations had been makeshift, and after a while their supply of missiles and other necessaries began to run out. At the same time, the Macedonians' spirit had not been broken by the way things were going; every man who was hurled from the ladders was unhesitatingly replaced by the man on the rung behind him. In the end, all the defenders turned and ran for the acropolis, leaving the walls to Philip's Macedonians. Meanwhile, the Cretans tackled the mercenaries who had sallied from the upper gate and forced them to discard their shields and take to headlong flight. The Cretans harried the fugitives so closely that they burst in through the gate with them, and so the city fell from all directions at once. The men, women, and children of Psophis retreated to the acropolis, along with Euripidas and all the surviving defenders.

[72] The Macedonians immediately broke into the houses and stripped them bare, but later they made them their billets and occupied the city. The people on the acropolis had fled there completely unprepared and, faced with a bleak future, they decided to surrender. They sent a herald to Philip, who granted safe conduct for a delegation. So the city officials and Euripidas went and entered into an agreement with the king, whereby they received a guarantee of safety for all the fugitives, whether citizens of Psophis or from elsewhere. The delegates then returned to the acropolis, with instructions that everyone was to stay put until the Macedonian army had left, in case any of the soldiers broke the truce and took them as booty.

As it happened, snow prevented the king from leaving for several days. During this time he convened an assembly of the Achaeans who were there. He first pointed out to them the strength of the city and its strategic location for the war, then he assured them of the affection and goodwill he felt for the League, and finally he said that, as of now, he was entrusting the city to the Achaeans—giving it to them as a gift, and as a token of his assurance that he would always wholeheartedly look after their interests, to the best of his ability. Aratus and the assembled Achaeans thanked the king, and after dismissing the assembly Philip set out with his forces for Lasion. The citizens of Psophis then came down from the acropolis. Their city and their homes were returned to them, and Euripidas set out for Aetolia via Corinth. The Achaean officials who were there left an adequate garrison on the acropolis under the command of Proslaus of Sicyon, and put Pythias of Pellene in charge of the lower town. That was how the affair at Psophis turned out.

[73] The Elean garrison at Lasion had heard what had happened at Psophis, and as soon as they knew that the Macedonians were on their way, they abandoned the city. No sooner had the king arrived, then, than he captured the place. He further fulfilled his promise to the League by giving Lasion to the Achaeans as well, and likewise, when the Eleans abandoned Stratus, he restored it to the people of Thelpousa. Four days after this success, he reached Olympia, where he sacrificed to the god and laid on a feast for his officers. He allowed his men three days of rest there, before continuing his campaign. He advanced into Elis and sent out his marauders, while he halted at the sanctuary of Artemis. Once the marauders had returned there with the booty, he moved to the sanctuary of the Dioscuri.

The ravaging of Elis gained them a very large number of captives, while even more people sought refuge in nearby villages and on inaccessible hilltops. For Elis supports an exceptionally large population, and more slaves and farm stock are to be found there than anywhere else in the Peloponnese. Some of them, even men of substance, are so fond of country life that they have not put in a single appearance at the assembly for two or three generations. This is made possible by the fact that those who *do* take part in public life care greatly for their country cousins and look after their interests: they have arranged things so that court cases are tried at a local level and they lack for nothing.

It seems to me that all these measures and regulations, which were put in place long ago, owe their existence not just to the size of the territory, but above all to the sacrosanct life they once led. In times past, there was an agreement in place between the Eleans and the rest of Greece that, because of the Olympic Games, their land was to be sacrosanct and unviolated, so that they never knew fear or warfare.* [74] Later, however, the Arcadians challenged them for Lasion and all the territory of Pisa, and they were forced to defend their land and change their way of life. Then subsequently they showed not the slightest interest in regaining from the Greeks their ancient and traditional right of inviolability. They stayed with the new status quo, which I think was misguided of them, and showed a distinct lack of forethought. What is it, after all, that all men pray that the gods will grant them? What is that we desire so much that we are prepared to endure anything to get it? What is it that is the only unquestionable good among all the things that men consider good? It is peace. If there were people who could be granted by the Greeks a just and fitting peace as an undisputed and permanent possession, and who then showed no interest in it or preferred something else, would this not on its own be enough to convict them of stupidity?

It may well be objected that such a way of life would make them vulnerable to attack by an enemy who deliberately set out to make war on them, despite their sacred inviolability. But this is unlikely to happen, and if it ever did, the Greeks would unite to defend them. Otherwise, where minor acts of aggression against them are concerned, they will be so well off—naturally, given a life of perpetual peace—that it is hard to see how they could run short of auxiliaries or mercenaries to

guard this or that place on this or that occasion. But as things stand at the moment, they embroil themselves and their land in war after destructive war out of fear of a rare and unlikely occurrence. I hope this serves as a reminder to the people of Elis, since there has never been a better occasion than now* for getting all Greeks to subscribe to their right of inviolability.

But there still lingers an after-image, so to speak, of their ancient way of life, in the sense that, as I have already said, their land supports an exceptionally large population. [75] And that is why Philip's campaign there generated an enormous number of captives and even more refugees. But men and livestock in enormous numbers, with a huge amount of property, were holed up in the Warren—so called because the approaches to the place are narrow and difficult, and the town itself is unassailable and inaccessible. When Philip heard how many people had taken refuge there, he decided that his mission would be incomplete if he did not at least put the matter to the test.

He left the baggage and most of his forces in camp, and had his mercenaries occupy all the locations that commanded the entrance, while he advanced through the defile with the peltasts and light-armed troops. He reached the town without meeting any opposition. The refugees were all terrified at his approach; they had no experience at all of warfare and were completely unprepared, and in any case it was a motley rabble which had gathered there. So they soon surrendered. Among them was a band of 200 miscellaneous mercenaries, whom the Elean general Amphidamus had brought there. Philip had now captured a great deal of property and more than 5,000 prisoners, and had also rounded up more livestock than anyone could count. He returned for the time being to his camp, but subsequently pulled back to Olympia and made camp there, because his forces were hampered and hindered by the excessive quantities of all kinds of booty.

[76] One of the men to whom Antigonus had bequeathed the guardianship of Philip was Apelles, and at the time in question he enjoyed very substantial influence over the king. Apelles wanted to reduce the Achaean League to the same status as the Thessalians, and he now set about this in an offensive manner. The Thessalians, I should explain, in theory enjoyed their own constitution, and had a different status from Macedonians, but in fact there was no difference: they were treated in all respects just like Macedonians and

were completely subject to royal decrees. In pursuit of this aim, then, Apelles set about deliberately provoking his allies.

The first thing he did was allow Macedonians to expel from their billets any Achaeans who had got in first and secured accommodation, which at the same time entailed stealing some of their booty. Next, through his subordinates, he began to punish Achaeans for trivial offences, and if he happened to be there when any Achaeans protested or tried to help those who were being flogged, he personally authorized their detention. His thinking was that these tactics would gradually and imperceptibly accustom the Achaeans not to feel the slightest bit aggrieved however they were treated by the king—despite the fact that not long before he had campaigned with Antigonus and had seen for himself the Achaeans risking death rather than submit to Cleomenes.

A group of Achaean soldiers, however, came to Aratus and told him of Apelles' intentions. Aratus went straight to Philip, since he felt he should lodge an official complaint right away. He obtained an audience with the king and told him what had been going on. Philip responded by assuring him that the Achaeans had no need to worry: there would be no more incidents of that nature. And he warned Apelles to get Aratus' approval before issuing any orders to the Achaeans.

[77] Philip's attitude towards his fellow campaigners, and his bold and effective approach to the war, were winning him friends not only among those who were out in the field with him, but everywhere in the Peloponnese. It is hard to think of a king who was more richly endowed with the temperament necessary for the possession of power. He was outstandingly quick-witted, had an exceptional memory, and was extremely charismatic; he had the majesty and authority you would expect of a king; and above all he was an able and courageous soldier. No hasty explanation will do, therefore, to show how all these aspects of his character were cast down—how he changed from being a good king to a savage tyrant—and so I shall find a more suitable occasion* later for debating and investigating this question.

Philip set out from Olympia on the Pharae road and travelled to Heraea via Thelpousa. At Heraea he sold the booty and rebuilt the bridge over the Alpheus. His intention was to invade Triphylia, crossing the river at Heraea. Meanwhile, Dorimachus, the Aetolian general, had received from the Eleans a plea to prevent the devastation of their land, and he sent them 600 Aetolians and Phillidas to take

command of their forces. Once they got there, the forces Phillidas had at his disposal consisted of these Aetolians, the 500 or so mercenaries hired by the Eleans, 1,000 Eleans, and the Tarentines. This was the army Phillidas took to Triphylia.

Triphylia is named after Triphylus, one of the sons of Arcas.* It is situated on the Peloponnesian coast between Elis and Messenia, facing the Libyan Sea, and it forms a border with south-west Arcadia. It contains the following towns, all of which the Eleans had conquered and annexed a few years earlier: Samicum, Lepreum, Hypana, Typaneae, Pyrgi, Epium, Bolax, Stylangium, and Phrixa. The Eleans also gained Alipheira, which had always been part of Arcadia, but Lydiadas of Megalopolis gave it to the Eleans, during his reign as tyrant, in return for services rendered.

[78] Phillidas sent the Elean troops to defend Lepreum, and the mercenaries to Alipheira, while he stayed with the Aetolian troops at Typaneae and waited to see what would happen. Philip left the baggage in store in Heraea, and then set out for Alipheira across the bridge over the Alpheus, which flows past Heraea. Alipheira is perched on top of a hill, surrounded by crags, and with an approach road of more than ten uphill stades. On the acropolis, which is simply the highest part of the hill, there is a remarkably beautiful and tall bronze statue of Athena. The history of this statue—what the reason was for its original construction and who paid for it—is disputed even by the locals, since there is no certain evidence about who donated it and why. But everyone agrees that it is a perfect piece of work, that few statues have ever been made on such a scale and with such skill, and that it was sculpted by Hypatodorus† and Sostratus.

The next day was clear and bright, and at dawn Philip stationed his ladder-bearers at several locations, with the mercenaries protecting them in front and the Macedonians, divided into various units, behind each group of ladder-bearers. When the first rays of the sun fell on the hill, he gave the order for them all to advance towards the town. The Macedonians did their job with such verve and menace that the Alipheirans rushed wherever they saw the Macedonians approaching closest and gathered there—and meanwhile Philip took a picked force, scrambled up the slopes, and reached the residential area just below the acropolis without being noticed. The signal was now sounded, and all the ladder-bearers simultaneously set their ladders against the walls and began the assault.

The king rapidly took over the residential area just below the acropolis, which he found deserted. He set the houses on fire, which gave the defenders on the walls an idea of what to expect. The fall of the acropolis would leave them no chance at all. This terrifying prospect made them abandon the walls and run to the acropolis—which meant that the walls and the town immediately fell to the Macedonians. After a while, the Alipheirans on the acropolis approached Philip, and once they had received a guarantee of safety they formally surrendered the acropolis to him as well.

[79] All over Triphylia, this success of Philip's frightened people into thinking about how to save themselves and their own particular cities. Phillidas left Typaneae (where some of the houses had been plundered) and pulled back to Lepreum. That was how Aetolian allies were paid in those days—by being brazenly abandoned when the situation became really critical, and by being robbed or otherwise treated treacherously by their allies, in the kinds of ways only defeated enemies are usually treated.

Typaneae surrendered to Philip, and then Hypana did the same. News of events in Triphylia reached Phigalia, where the people were already unhappy with the Aetolian alliance, and they armed themselves and surrounded the polemarch's office. The Aetolian freebooters, who had taken up residence in the town because it was conveniently placed for them to maraud in Messenia, were at first inclined to put on a bold front and attack the Phigalians, but they abandoned that plan when they saw that the townspeople were assembling in large numbers, all equally determined to resist. Instead, they arranged a truce, collected their belongings, and left the town. The Phigalians then approached Philip and entrusted themselves and their town to his protection.

[80] While this was going on, the people of Lepreum took over part of the town and demanded the immediate departure of the Eleans, Aetolians, and Spartans (the garrison had been augmented by a Spartan contingent). At first, Phillidas just ignored them and stayed put, hoping to frighten them into giving up. But a body of troops under the command of Taurion, on its way to Phigalia on Philip's orders, was approaching Lepreum. The closer they got to the town, the more Phillidas became disheartened, while the Lepreans' courage and determination grew.

This was a fine achievement on the part of the people of Lepreum. There were 1,000 Elean troops in the town, another 1,000 Aetolians

(including the freebooters), 500 mercenaries, and 200 Spartans. The acropolis was not in their hands either, and yet they stood their ground and refused to give up. Faced with the combination of courageous resistance from the Lepreans and the approach of the Macedonians, Phillidas evacuated the town, taking the Aetolians†, Eleans, and Spartans with him. The Cretans, who had been provided by Sparta, returned home via Messenia, while Phillidas retreated towards Samicum.

Now that they had recovered control of their town, the people of Lepreum sent envoys to Philip with a view to entrusting it to his protection. When the king heard of events at Lepreum, he sent one division of the army there, while he pressed on with the peltasts and light-armed troops, hoping to intercept Phillidas. They did catch up with him, and they captured all the baggage, but Phillidas and his men just got into Samicum ahead of them. Philip made camp close to the town, and summoned the rest of his forces from Lepreum. It was clear to those inside the town that he was going to put the place under siege. The Aetolians and Eleans were completely unprepared for a siege; they had nothing going for them except for their numbers. In fear and dismay, they entered into negotiations with Philip for their safety. Philip allowed them to withdraw under arms, and they left for Elis. The king immediately took over control of Samicum. Later all the other towns approached him and begged for his protection, and so he gained Phrixa, Stylangium, Epium, Bolax, Pyrgi, and Epitalium. He then returned to Lepreum. It had taken him six days to subjugate all Triphylia.

At Lepreum, he addressed the inhabitants in suitably encouraging terms and installed a garrison on the acropolis. Then he set out for Heraea, leaving Ladicus of Acarnania as governor of Triphylia. At Heraea, he distributed all the booty among his men, recovered the army's baggage, and then left for Megalopolis, where he arrived in deep winter.

[81] While Philip was campaigning in Triphylia, Chilon instigated a coup in Sparta. He claimed a hereditary right to the throne, and resented the fact that he had been overlooked by the ephors when they chose Lycurgus as king. On the assumption that it would not take him long to gain massive popular support if he followed in Cleomenes' footsteps and encouraged the common people to hope for a redistribution of the land, with each of them receiving an

allotment, he committed himself to this policy. With the cooperation of his friends, he recruited about 200 accomplices, and set about realizing his plans. In his view, the greatest obstacles to the success of his scheme were Lycurgus and the ephors who had made Lycurgus king. So he started with them. He caught the ephors at mess and butchered them on the spot. This was Fortune's way of seeing that they received the punishment they deserved. Considering who did it to them and why, the justice of what happened is undeniable.*

Having dealt with the ephors, Chilon went to Lycurgus' house. He found the king in, but failed to apprehend him, because some members of his household helped him to slip out through a neighbour's house and evade his clutches. Lycurgus made his way across country to Pellana-in-Tripolis. Chilon was disheartened by this failure—Lycurgus' death was essential to his scheme—but there was nothing he could do now except carry on. So he went to the agora, where he arrested his enemies and gave a speech in which he reassured his family and friends and held out to the general populace the prospect of agrarian reform. So far from this gaining him any support, however, it attracted a hostile crowd. When Chilon saw how matters stood, he stole away from Sparta and made his way all alone through Laconia to exile in Achaea. Frightened by Philip's presence in the Peloponnese, the Spartans brought their movable property into town from the countryside and abandoned the Athenaeum in Megalopolitis, after demolishing the fort there.

So the Spartans, who had enjoyed the finest system of government in Greece ever since the legislation of Lycurgus,* and who had been the most powerful military presence in Greece until the battle
371 of Leuctra, went into decline when Fortune changed and turned against them. Their system of government gradually deteriorated, and in the end no city was more plagued by trouble and strife, no city more racked by land reforms and political banishments. And whereas previously they had hardly been able to bear even to hear the word
*c.*207– 'tyranny' spoken, they came to experience a harsher form of servi-
192 tude than anyone else in Greece, culminating in the tyranny of Nabis. It is true that Spartan history, and especially the events I have just mentioned, have been covered by many writers, who have stressed both the good and the bad, but from the time of Cleomenes onwards, after his thorough subversion of the ancestral constitution, Spartan

history is particularly instructive, and I shall in fact continue to mention it from time to time, as appropriate.

[82] Philip left Megalopolis and travelled via Tegea to Argos, where 218
he spent the rest of the winter. People had been impressed not just by his successes, but by the maturity of his overall approach to the campaigns of the previous year. Apelles, however, despite his setback, was still wedded to the policy of gradually subjugating the Achaeans. Clearly the two Aratuses, father and son, were major obstacles to the success of this project. Philip listened to them both, but especially to the elder Aratus because of his relationship with Antigonus and his supremacy in the Achaean League, but above all because of his intelligence and good sense. So Apelles came up with a devious way of attacking him.

He made enquiries to find out who Aratus' political opponents were and asked them to join him from their various cities. His meetings with them were opportunities for him to charm them and win their friendship. He introduced them to Philip as well, and at every such meeting he pointed out to Philip that, as long as he dealt with Aratus, his treatment of the Achaeans would have to conform to the terms of the alliance. His advice, he said, would be to gain the support of these men, and then Philip could treat everyone in the Peloponnese as he liked. Apelles also became directly involved in the elections, because he wanted one of his new friends to obtain the generalship and to deny the position to either Aratus. In pursuit of this goal, he persuaded Philip to go to Aegium for the League elections, pointing out that it was on his way to Elis as well. The king thought this was a good idea. Apelles seized the opportunity to go to Aegium in person as well, and though it was a close call he managed to persuade or dissuade enough people to ensure that Eperatus of Pharae was elected general, while Timoxenus, who had the backing of Aratus, was defeated.

[83] After the elections Philip left Aegium and marched via Patrae and Dyme to the stronghold called the Fortress, which commands the territory of Dyme and which, as I reported above, had fallen to Euripidas a short while earlier. He intended to spare no effort to recover this stronghold for the people of Dyme, and he had his entire army set up camp near by. The Elean garrison took fright and surrendered the stronghold to Philip. The Fortress was not a big place, but it was exceptionally secure. Its circumference was no more than

one and a half stades, but the height of the wall was nowhere less than forty-five feet. Philip handed it over to the Dymeans, and then proceeded to devastate the farmland of Elis. Then he returned to Dyme with his army and all the booty he had acquired.

[84] Apelles thought his plan had made good progress so far, since he had influenced the election of the Achaean general, and he now renewed his attack on Aratus. He wanted Philip to break off his friendship with Aratus once and for all, and he went about this by slandering Aratus to the king. The scheme he devised was as follows.

Amphidamus, the Elean general, had been taken prisoner at the Warren along with the refugees, as I mentioned before. When he arrived at Olympia with the other captives, he insisted on having a meeting with the king. He was granted an audience and told the king that he could induce the Eleans to enter into a treaty of friendship and alliance with him. Philip believed him and let Amphidamus leave unransomed for Elis, telling him to pass on to the people of Elis his promise that, if they came over to his side, he would return all the livestock and the prisoners unransomed, would personally see that their land was secure against invasion, and would allow them to remain free, ungarrisoned, exempt from tribute, and with their political system unchanged. This obviously very attractive and generous offer was ignored in Elis.

Apelles used this fact as the basis for the slanderous accusation against Aratus that he brought before the king. He claimed that this snub by the Eleans was Aratus' doing, which proved that Aratus' friendship with Macedon was insincere and his loyalty to Philip feigned. He said that when Philip sent Amphidamus back to Elis from Olympia, Aratus had taken Amphidamus aside and suborned him by claiming that it would be disastrous for the Peloponnese if Elis were under Philip's control. And that, Apelles said, was why the Eleans had spurned the offer outright and were staying on the Aetolians' side, even at the cost of war against the Macedonians.

[85] Philip listened to what Apelles said and immediately told him to call Aratus and repeat the accusations to his face. When the Aratuses arrived, Apelles spoke with arrogance and condescension, and at the end, before the king had a chance to speak, he added something to this effect: 'The king finds you ungrateful, Aratus, and very discourteous. He has decided to return to Macedon. He will convene an assembly of the Achaeans first, and explain his reasons for doing so.'

In response, the elder Aratus reminded Philip never to trust anything he was told without pausing and weighing the evidence, and that this principle applied especially when the alleged wrongdoer was a friend and ally. He asked the king, therefore, not to give credence to the allegations until the evidence had been considered with the extra care he deserved. It was proper for him, as a king, to adhere to this principle, and it would always be in his best interests to do so. 'And so now,' he said, 'I would ask you to summon those who heard me say what Apelles is accusing me of saying, to bring Apelles' informant out of hiding. And please do all you can to uncover the truth before convening the Achaeans and going public with this.'

[86] Philip thought Aratus had spoken well. Before dismissing them, he assured them that he would make it a priority to get to the bottom of the matter. Over the next few days, first Apelles failed to produce any evidence to support his allegations and, second, something happened that helped Aratus' cause. One of the consequences of Philip's devastation of Elis was that the Eleans began to mistrust Amphidamus and were planning to arrest him and send him in chains to Aetolia. But Amphidamus got wind of their plan and fled. Olympia was his original destination, but when he heard that Philip was in Dyme, seeing to the booty, he stole there as quickly as he could.

The news that Amphidamus had fled Elis and was in Dyme delighted Aratus, since he knew he had nothing to be ashamed of. He arranged a meeting with the king, and asked him to have Amphidamus attend as well, since no one knew the truth about the charges that had been laid against him better than the man to whom he was supposed to have spoken. And Amphidamus would tell the truth, he said, because Philip had been the reason he had fled his home and country, and his life now depended on him. The king thought this was a good idea. He sent for Amphidamus and discovered that Apelles had lied. From that day on he favoured and respected Aratus more and more, while having his doubts about Apelles, but since he had a long-standing prejudice in favour of Apelles, he could not help letting him get away with a great deal.

[87] So far from changing his policy at all, Apelles also tried to undermine Taurion, the governor of the Peloponnese. But Apelles' tactic this time was not to criticize him, but to praise him and say that he was exactly the kind of man whom the king ought to have by his side when he was out in the field. This was because he wanted to replace him as governor in the Peloponnese with someone else.

Injuring an associate by praising him was a newfangled way of doing someone a disservice, a form of malice, devilry, and cunning that was invented especially and particularly by courtiers to serve their mutual jealousies and ambitions.

By the same token, Apelles also used to seize every opportunity to malign Alexander, the commander of the Royal Household Troops. He wanted responsibility for the protection of the king's person to be under his control as well. In short, he wanted to get rid of every last trace of the system Antigonus had left in place on his death. For just as in life Antigonus had taken excellent care of both his kingdom and his ward, so when he died he left excellent provisions in place for everything. What I mean is that, in his will, he wrote down for the Macedonians an account of his arrangements, and, in order not to leave his courtiers any excuses for in-fighting and trying to get the better of one another, he also left instructions about how everything was to be managed in the future, and who was to be responsible for what. Of those who accompanied Philip on this campaign, for instance, in his will Antigonus named Apelles one of Philip's guardians, gave command of the peltasts to Leontius, appointed Megaleas to head up the secretariat, made Taurion governor of the Peloponnese, and put Alexander in charge of the Royal Household Troops.

Apelles already had Leontius and Megaleas completely under his thumb, and he was doing his best to remove Alexander and Taurion from their positions. He wanted every single office, including theirs, to be under his control, either directly or through his friends. And he would have had no difficulty in achieving this, if he had not made an enemy of Aratus. As things turned out, however, before long he paid for his selfishness and greed: exactly what he had tried to do to his associates was done to him, very soon afterwards. But for the time being I will pass over what happened and how it came to happen. I intend to explain everything in detail in subsequent books, but I shall end this book here by saying that, after the conclusion of the business with Apelles and Aratus, Philip sent his troops back to Macedon, while he returned to Argos and spent the rest of the winter there with his Friends.

BOOK FIVE

[1] In accordance with the Achaeans' calendrical system at the time, the year of Aratus the younger's generalship came to an end at the rising of the Pleiades.* So he stood down, and Eperatus took over as general of the Achaeans; Dorimachus was still general of the Aetolians. 218
At the beginning of the summer of that year Hannibal, who was by then making open war on Rome, left New Carthage, crossed the Ebro, and set hostilities in motion by beginning his march towards Italy. The Romans were in the process of sending their forces to Libya, under the command of Tiberius Sempronius Longus, and Iberia, under Publius Cornelius Scipio. At the same time Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV gave up trying to settle their dispute over Coele Syria by diplomacy and negotiation, and went to war with each other.

King Philip needed grain and money for his army, and he had the League officers convene the Achaean assembly. The assembly met, as was customary, at Aegium, and Philip could tell that Aratus was refusing to cooperate because of Apelles' intrigues against him over the election.* At the same time, it was clear that Eperatus was temperamentally ineffective and universally despised, and this too made Philip realize the villainy of Apelles and Leontius. He decided to favour Aratus once more, and persuaded the League officers to move the assembly to Sicyon, where he met with both the elder and the younger Aratus. He blamed Apelles for everything that had happened, and asked them not to desert him. They readily agreed, and when he next addressed the assembly, with their support he got everything he wanted. The Achaeans voted him fifty talents straight away for his first campaign (to cover the wages of his troops for three months) and 10,000 medimni of grain as well. And for future campaigns they voted to give him seventeen talents for every month he was fighting in the Peloponnese.

[2] After this vote, the assembly broke up and the Achaeans returned to their cities. The king consulted with his Friends and decided that, when the army had reassembled from their winter quarters, he would make the sea the main theatre of war. He had become convinced that this was the only way in which he would be able to take the enemy by surprise wherever they were, while reducing to a minimum their

ability to help one another in the case of such an attack. The point was that he was fighting against the Aetolians, Spartans, and Eleans, who shared not a single border between them. Each of them, then, had reason to fear a hostile approach by sea, because of the stealth and speed with which it could be carried out.

Acting on this decision, he began to muster a fleet at Lechaeum, consisting of his own and the Achaeans' ships, and put his men through a course of daily training designed to turn phalangites into competent oarsmen. The Macedonians carried out his orders with a will. They were not only superb fighters in formal land battles, but they were also perfectly ready to serve at sea in an emergency. And when it came to onerous chores such as digging ditches and building camps, they went about their duties with the kind of enthusiasm that Hesiod attributed to the sons of Aeacus, who 'delighted in war as they would in a feast'.*

So the king and the Macedonian army were busy in Corinth, training and preparing for naval warfare. Apelles, however, finding himself unable to control Philip, and equally incapable of enduring the humiliation of being out of favour, entered into a conspiracy with Leontius and Megaleas. They were to stay by Philip's side and seize every opportunity to make mischief and spoil his plans, while he left for Chalcis to make sure that none of the supplies Philip needed for his initiative reached him. With this pernicious pact in place between them, Apelles sailed to Chalcis, giving the king some plausible reasons why he was needed there. In Chalcis, Apelles' past as one of the king's most trusted advisers ensured that everyone obeyed him, and he kept his word to his fellow conspirators so assiduously that the king was eventually forced to live off the proceeds of pawning some of his silverware.

When the fleet had assembled and the Macedonians had mastered the techniques they would need as oarsmen, Philip distributed their rations and wages, and put to sea. Two days later he put in at Patrae. He had at his command an army of 6,000 Macedonians and 1,200 mercenaries.

[3] At much the same time, Dorimachus, the Aetolian general, sent Agelaus and Scopas to Elis with 500 Neocretans.* The Eleans were worried that Philip might put Cyllene under siege, and they were busy recruiting mercenaries and getting their own citizen contingent battle-ready, as well as carefully building up Cyllene's defences.

In view of the Eleans' preparations, Philip ordered the mercenaries hired by the Achaeans, some of his own Cretans, some Gallic horsemen, and about 2,000 of the Achaean elite corps to assemble in Dyme, where he left it to guard against the threat from Elis, and to act as a reserve force.

He had written to the Messenians, Epirots, and Acarnanians, and also to Scerdilaïdas, telling them to get their ships ready and meet him at Cephallenia. He put to sea from Patrae on schedule, sailed for Cephallenia, and hove to off Pronni. But in view of the obvious difficulty of assaulting the little town, given the narrowness of the approaches to it, he had the fleet sail on. When he reached Pale, seeing that there was enough grain in the fields to feed an army, he disembarked his men and made camp close to the town. He had the ships anchor close together and protected them with a trench and a palisade. He sent the Macedonians out to collect grain, while he rode around the town, inspecting the walls to see how he could bring siegeworks and engines to bear.

His plan was to take the town while waiting for the allies. First, it would deprive the Aetolians of critical support: they used the Cephallenian fleet to invade the Peloponnese, and also to raid the coastlines of Epirus and Acarnania. Second, it would give him and the allies a good base from which to strike into enemy territory. Cephallenia is situated off the Corinthian Gulf and extends into the Sicilian Sea, and so it commands the north-western Peloponnese, especially Elis, and the south-western parts of Epirus, Aetolia, and Acarnania.

[4] The island was not just a good place for the allies to rendezvous, then, but Philip wanted control of it also because of its strategic importance for both attacking enemy territory and defending allied territory. Pale was basically surrounded by sea and cliffs, but there was a little bit of level ground on the Zacynthos side, and that was where Philip was intending to build siegeworks and concentrate the entire siege.

While he was getting ready for the siege, fifty *lemboi* arrived from Scerdilaïdas. Intrigue and unrest among the Illyrian city despots had prevented him from sending the bulk of his fleet. The contingents due from Epirus and Acarnania also arrived, and so did the Messenians; the fall of Phigalia* meant that the Messenians now had no further reason for refusing their support. When everything was ready for the

siege, he deployed the catapults and ballistas wherever they would make life difficult for the defenders and gave his men their orders. Siege engines were brought up to the walls and under their protection sappers got to work digging mines. The Macedonians worked so determinedly that before long about 200 feet of the wall had been undermined. At this point, Philip rode up to the walls and invited the inhabitants to come to terms with him. But they refused the offer, so he set fire to the props underpinning the stretch of wall and brought it all down.

With the wall breached, he sent in as his first wave Leontius and the peltasts, drawn up in companies, with orders to force the breach. But true to his pact with Apelles, three times in a row Leontius prevented his men from completing the capture of the town, even after they had made it over the rubble of the fallen wall. Since he had previously suborned the most senior of the officers in charge of the various divisions of his regiment, and since he himself deliberately shirked his duty and never fought with conviction, in the end the peltasts were driven out of the town, badly mauled, even though they could easily have defeated the enemy. When Philip saw that his officers were hesitant and that many of his men had been wounded, he called off the siege and met with his Friends to decide what to do next.

[5] Meanwhile, Lycurgus had launched an invasion of Messenia and Dorimachus had taken half of the Aetolian forces and attacked Thessaly, with the intention, in both cases, of distracting Philip from his siege of Pale. Envoys came to the king from both the Acarnanians and the Messenians in response to these Aetolian offensives. The Acarnanians wanted him to invade Aetolia; they argued that this would force Dorimachus to abandon his attack on Macedon, and that Philip would find Aetolia completely unprotected and would be able to maraud at will. The Messenian delegation wanted him to come to their assistance. With Gorgus of Messene as their spokesman, they pointed out that, since the etesian winds had set in, Philip could cross from Cephallenia to Messenia in a single day, which meant that he would take Lycurgus by surprise and launch an effective attack.

True to his purpose, Leontius energetically supported Gorgus, since he realized that Philip would waste the entire summer in the Peloponnese. Sailing to Messenia was no problem, but for the duration of the etesians sailing back again was out of the question. From which it followed that Philip and the army would be restricted to

Messenia and forced to stay there for the rest of the summer without getting anything done. Meanwhile, the Aetolians would overrun Thessaly and Epirus, plundering and ravaging without meeting any opposition.

That was Leontius' maliciously motivated advice, but Aratus was there too, and he championed the alternative plan, that Philip should sail to Aetolia and make sure of matters there. He pointed out that, with Dorimachus out in the field with his forces, Philip had a unique opportunity for attacking and devastating Aetolia. The king was already suspicious of Leontius because of the way he had held back during the siege, and he now also realized that his support for the expedition to Messenia was not as innocent as it seemed. He decided to follow Aratus' advice.

He wrote to Eperatus, the Achaean general, ordering him to use the Achaean forces to help Messenia, and then put to sea, reaching Leucas with the fleet on the night of the second day out from Cephallenia. After getting everything ready for the Channel and passing through it, he sailed across the Ambracian Gulf (which, as I said before, extends from the Sicilian Sea to the interior of Aetolia). Shortly before daybreak, he anchored on the far side of the gulf off Limnaea. He ordered his men to get ready to move out. They were to eat their morning meal, store most of their baggage, and leave lightly equipped. Meanwhile, he met the guides and quizzed them for information about the region and the nearby towns.

[6] Just then Aristophantus, the Acarnanian general, arrived with a full-strength Acarnanian army. The Acarnanians had suffered badly at Aetolian hands in the past, and they were prepared to do anything to get their own back and harm the Aetolians in return. On the occasion in question, then, they were delighted to avail themselves of Macedonian support, and in their ranks there were to be found not only those who were legally obliged to serve, but some older men as well. The Epirots were as committed as the Acarnanians, for much the same reasons, but the size of their territory and the suddenness of Philip's arrival meant that they were unable to mobilize their forces in time.

As I have already said, Dorimachus had gone on campaign with half of the Aetolian troops, assuming that the half he left behind in reserve would be enough to protect the towns and land in the event of an unexpected invasion. Philip left an adequate guard for the baggage,

and then set out from Limnaea in the afternoon and advanced about sixty stades before halting. After his men had eaten their evening meal and taken a short rest, he set out again and marched all through the night, until at first light he reached the Achelous river between Conope and Stratus. His intention was to make a sudden, surprise attack on Thermum.

[7] Leontius could see two reasons why Philip was bound to attain his objective and the Aetolians would fail to come up with an adequate response to the situation. First, the Macedonians had arrived rapidly and unexpectedly. Second, the Aetolians had always assumed that the inaccessibility of the place would deter Philip from committing himself at such short notice to attacking Thermum. For both reasons, then, the Aetolians were going to be caught off their guard and completely unprepared. Even so, Leontius remained true to his purpose, and he advised the king to make camp by the Achelous and allow his men extra time to recover from the night march. The idea was to give the Aetolians time to organize resistance. But Aratus could see that timing was critical for the attempt and, with Leontius plainly trying to slow things down, he pleaded with Philip not to delay and miss the moment.

The king agreed with him and had his men carry straight on; Leontius was now out of his favour. He crossed the Achelous and advanced at a good speed towards Thermum, plundering and destroying farmland as he went. His route took him past Stratus, Agrinium, and Thesteia to the left, and Conope, Lysimacheia, Trichonium, and Phytaeum to the right. About sixty stades from Thermum, he reached Metapa, a town built right on the shore of lake Trichonis, at the entrance to the pass. The Aetolians had abandoned the place, and he left 500 men in the town to cover his entrance to the pass and protect his retreat. For the whole Trichonis region is so mountainous, rugged, and densely forested that the lakeside path is extremely narrow and difficult. Then he advanced through the pass, with the mercenaries at the front of the column, followed by the Illyrians, and then the peltasts and phalangites. The Cretans brought up the rear, while the Thracians and light-armed troops took a parallel course in the hills to the right of the column. His left flank was protected by the lake for almost thirty stades.

[8] At the other end of the pass he came to a village called Pamphia, which he also secured with guards. Then he carried on towards

Thermum. The road was not only steep and exceptionally rough, but there were also sheer drops to either side. Here and there, then, along the thirty-stade ascent, the path was very narrow and hazardous. But the Macedonians kept up such a brisk pace that they covered this section of the pass equally quickly.

It was late in the day when Philip came to Thermum. Once he had built his camp, he sent his men out to scour the plain and sack the nearby villages. He also told them to plunder the residential area of Thermum itself, where the houses not only held grain and other provisions, but were also exceptionally well appointed, more so than anywhere else in Aetolia. The reason for this was that every year the Aetolians accompanied their general elections at this place with a splendid fair and festival, and everyone stored their most valuable belongings there so as to be able to entertain guests and have ready to hand whatever else they might need for the occasion. Convenience aside, they also thought there could be no safer place to keep their property, because no enemy had ever dared to attack the place, which served as the natural acropolis, so to speak, of all Aetolia. And so, since the district had long enjoyed peace, the houses attached to the sanctuary and all the surrounding farmsteads were filled with valuables.

That night the men bivouacked where they were, laden with plunder of all kinds. In the morning, they picked out the most valuable and transportable goods, and made bonfires in front of their tents of the rest. They also found more than 15,000 weapons hanging in the stoas, and treated them in the same way as well. That is, they took down the most valuable items, and either kept them as booty, or in some cases used them as replacements for their own weaponry, but then heaped everything else together and burnt it.

[9] Now, so far nothing dishonourable or unjust had been done—nothing that violated the rules of war. But what can one say about what happened next? Words fail me. Remembering the Aetolian devastation of Dium and Dodona, they burnt the stoas and destroyed all the other donations, some of which were valuable works that had been made with great skill from costly materials. And they did not stop at burning the roofs of the buildings, but razed them to the ground. They also toppled the statues, of which there were at least 2,000. A lot of the statues were irreparably damaged, but they left untouched those with the names or likenesses of the gods inscribed on them. On the walls they wrote as graffiti the famous line composed

by Samus, the son of Chrysogonos and foster-brother of Philip,* who was already a burgeoning talent in those days. The line was 'Whither now has sped the divine bolt? Can you see?',* and in fact the king and his Friends, in their fierce frenzy, were convinced that what they were doing was just and fitting—that they were paying the Aetolians back in the same coin for their sacrilegious crimes at Dium.

I could not disagree more, however, and there is evidence readily available to see whether or not I am right. We can make use of examples taken not at random, but from the same royal house of Macedon.
222 When Antigonus Doson defeated King Cleomenes in pitched battle and gained control of Sparta, he had the city and its inhabitants at his mercy and was in a position to do whatever he wanted with them, but so far from mistreating them, he did exactly the opposite. He restored their ancestral constitution and their liberty, and then just returned to Macedon, having conferred on the state and its citizens the greatest of benefits. He was immediately granted the title of 'benefactor', and after his death he also came to be called 'saviour'; and his treatment of Sparta has earned him everlasting honour and glory, not just in Sparta, but throughout Greece.

[10] Or again, consider Philip II, the man who originally made Macedon great and first gave his house its high dignity. After he had
338 conquered the Athenians at the battle of Chaeronea, he achieved more through equity and kindness than he had through force of arms. Warfare and military might brought him only the defeat and subjugation of his immediate opponents, but thanks to his tact and fairness he gained the submission of the entire population of Athens and the surrender of the city. He did not prolong the war out of anger, but fought and strived for victory only until it won him the opportunity to demonstrate his leniency and generosity. And so he sent the prisoners back home without demanding any ransom, tended to the Athenian dead and entrusted their bones to Antipater, and made sure that the prisoners, once released, had proper clothing. None of this cost him much, and yet his shrewdness gained him a critically important result: his magnanimity* cowed Athenian pride and changed them from enemies to willing allies in all his ventures.

And what about Alexander? He was so furious with the Thebans that
335 he sold the inhabitants into slavery and razed the city to the ground, yet in capturing the city he never forgot the respect and reverence due to the gods. In fact, he took every precaution to ensure that sacred

sites such as sanctuaries were not harmed even by accident. And again, when he invaded Asia to punish the Persians for their impiety against the Greeks, he tried to exact from human beings the penalty due for their crimes, but he refrained from harming places dedicated to the gods, even though that was precisely where the Persians' foulest crimes in Greece had been committed.

The same goes for the occasion in question too. Philip should have kept these examples constantly before his mind. He should have shown himself to have inherited and taken over from these men not just their throne, but, more importantly, their principles and magnanimity. Even though throughout his life he tried hard to prove that he was related to both Alexander and Philip, he never made the slightest effort to imitate them. And so, since his behaviour was the opposite of theirs, as he grew older he earned the opposite reputation too.

[11] His behaviour at this time is a case in point. He let anger get the better of him and acted just as impiously as the Aetolians—trying to cure one evil with another—and it never crossed his mind that this was wrong. He kept criticizing Scopas and Dorimachus for their offensive criminality, citing their sacrilegious treatment of Dium and Dodona, but it never crossed his mind that anyone listening to him would think the same of him, since he was acting no differently. To take and destroy an enemy's forts, docks, cities, men, ships, crops, and so on and so forth—in other words, to weaken the enemy while strengthening one's own cause and moving closer to one's objective—is forced upon one by the rules and rights of war. But even in wartime gratuitous damage to temples and statues and other works of art, when there is not the slightest chance that this will either help one's own cause or weaken the enemy, is a sure sign of a fanatic in a rage.

After all, a good man does not make war on wrongdoers to destroy and annihilate them, but to improve them and correct the error of their ways. And rather than eliminate the guiltless along with the guilty, he spares and saves both those whom he judges to have done wrong and those who are innocent. For injuring people and using fear to rule them against their will are sure signs of tyranny, but benefiting everyone, and leading and ruling people with their consent, are the marks of a king. Hating their subjects, tyrants become objects of hatred, whereas kings are loved for their benevolence and clemency.

The best way to understand Philip's mistake is to imagine what the Aetolians would probably have thought of him if he had done the opposite—if he had not destroyed their stoas and statues or damaged any of their dedications. I am sure they would have regarded him as a man of the greatest integrity and clemency. They felt ashamed for what had happened at Dium and Dodona, and they were in no doubt that Philip was at the time in a position to do whatever he wanted. As far as they were concerned, he would have been right even if he had desecrated their sanctuary—but instead he would, on this hypothesis, have chosen the course of clemency and magnanimity and behaved quite differently from them.

[12] In all probability, under these circumstances, they would have felt ashamed of their conduct, while Philip would have met with their approval and admiration for the kingly and magnanimous way in which he demonstrated his piety towards the gods and restrained his anger towards them. At any rate, it is true that conquering enemies by generosity and justice is more expedient than defeating them by force of arms. First, from the loser's perspective, it is the difference between yielding of his own free will and yielding because he has no choice. Second, for the victor, chastising the enemy by force of arms comes at a high price, whereas getting the enemy to see the error of his ways by the other method costs nothing. But, third and most importantly, victory on the battlefield is due largely to subordinates, whereas the other kind of victory is due wholly to the commanding officer.

But perhaps Philip was too young to be held entirely responsible for what happened; perhaps his Friends should bear much of the blame, since they were with him at the time and played a part in events. Both Aratus and Demetrius of Pharos were members of this inner circle, but one need not have been there at the time to find it easy to say which of these two the advice is likely to have come from. First, there is the general tenor of their lives: in Aratus' case, there is no trace of any impulsiveness or impetuosity, whereas the opposite goes for Demetrius. In the second place, we have unequivocal proof of each of their principles in the advice they gave Philip later, in a similar situation. But I shall give a suitable account of this in its proper place.*

[13] To resume: Philip set out from Thermum, taking as much of the booty as he could carry or drive off, and took the same road back again. The livestock and the heavy infantry led the way at the

front of the column, with the Acarnanians and mercenaries in the rear. He wanted to get through the badlands as quickly as possible, because he was expecting the Aetolians to take advantage of the terrain to harass the rearguard. Nor did he have long to wait before that happened. About 3,000 Aetolians had gathered to offer resistance, under the command of Alexander of Trichonium, but they stayed away and out of sight as long as Philip was on the heights of Thermum. As soon as the rearguard was on the move, however, they made straight for the plateau and attacked the tail-enders. This caused confusion in the rearguard, and the Aetolians accordingly escalated the ferocity of their attack, making good use of the terrain to press home their assault. But Philip had taken the precaution of posting the Illyrians and an elite unit of the peltasts in hiding behind a hill on the descent. When they launched themselves from their ambush against the foremost of the enemy attackers, all the Aetolians turned to headlong flight across country, leaving 130 dead and almost as many taken alive.

After this success, the rearguard set fire to Pamphia and made it through the pass without further trouble. They soon caught up with the main body of the Macedonians, because Philip had halted at Metapa and was waiting for them there. The next day, after levelling Metapa, he carried on and halted at Acrae. The day after that, he carried on, plundering and destroying farmland as he went, and halted at Conope, where he stayed for two nights, before setting out again and marching beside the Achelous to Stratus. He crossed the river, drew his army up outside of missile range, and challenged the defenders to attack him. [14] For, according to information Philip had received, an Aetolian army had assembled in Stratus, consisting of about 3,000 foot, 400 horse, and 500 Cretans.

When no one took up his challenge and came out against him, he gave the vanguard its marching orders and set out again for Limnaea, where the fleet was waiting. But first, once the rearguard had passed the town, a few Aetolian cavalrymen made a tentative sortie against the tail-enders, and then the Cretans came out en masse and some of the Aetolians also emerged and linked up with their cavalry. With the scale of the engagement increasing, Philip's rearguard was compelled to turn and fight. The battle was evenly balanced for a while, but when the Illyrians came to support Philip's mercenaries, the Aetolian cavalry and mercenaries fell back and scattered in flight. Most of

them fled to Stratus, chased all the way to the gates and the walls by the king's men, who killed about a hundred of them on the way. After this engagement, the defenders of Stratus lay low, and the rear-guard safely rejoined the rest of the army and the fleet.

Philip made camp early in the day. He sacrificed a thank-offering to the gods for the success of the offensive and invited his officers to the banquet. He had undertaken what was widely regarded as a hazardous mission, and encamped in places that had never before seen an enemy army. And not only had he taken his troops there, but he had achieved everything he set out to do, and brought the army safely back again. So he was in high spirits as he got ready to entertain his officers. But Megaleas and Leontius were displeased at the king's success: according to their pact with Apelles, they were supposed to have stopped the king attaining any of his objectives. But they had failed. Things had not gone their way, but, despite their bad mood,† they came to the banquet.

[15] Right from the start of the celebrations, they aroused the suspicions of Philip and the other guests. They were plainly not as happy as everyone else at the success of the campaign. But then the wine began to flow, and when the drinking became immoderate and excessive, Megaleas and Leontius had no choice but to join in. It did not take long for them to show their true colours: as soon as the party broke up, drunk to the point of stupidity, they went looking for Aratus. They found him as he was on his way back to his quarters. They started by abusing him, and then actually began to pelt him with stones. Quite a few people came and joined in, on one side or the other, and the camp resounded to the noise and disturbance.

The racket reached Philip's ears, and he sent people to find out what was going on and to break it up. When they got there, Aratus explained what had happened and provided witnesses, and then carried on to his tent, since for the time being he was in no danger of injury,† while Leontius managed somehow or other to steal away during the commotion. When the king heard what had happened, he sent for Megaleas and Crinon, and gave them the rough edge of his tongue. So far from being repentant, they added insult to injury by saying that they would carry on until they had made Aratus pay. This made the king furious, and he immediately ordered them to be imprisoned if they failed to come up with twenty talents as surety.*

[16] The next morning Philip called for Aratus and told him not to worry, as he would give the matter his best attention. When Leontius heard what had happened to Megaleas, he went to the king's pavilion accompanied by a few peltasts, expecting that it would not take him long to bully the young king into changing his mind. At the meeting, he asked who had dared to lay hands on Megaleas and who had dared to imprison him, and, without being in the least cowed, the king replied that the order had come from him. This was not what Leontius had expected; he complained a bit, but then left in a huff.

The Macedonian fleet put to sea and sailed back across the gulf. As soon as they reached Leucas, Philip ordered the designated officers to turn their attention immediately to selling the booty, while he convened his Friends and heard the case against Megaleas. Speaking for the prosecution, Aratus gave an account of everything Leontius and his cohorts had done, from beginning to end—the massacre* they had ordered at Argos after Antigonus' departure, the pact with Apelles, their obstructive behaviour at Pale, and so on. Every point was supported by evidence and witnesses, and was irrefutable by Megaleas and Crinon. Philip's Friends unanimously pronounced them guilty. Crinon stayed under guard, but Leontius went bail for Megaleas' fine. That was how matters stood with the conspiracy of Apelles and Leontius. Their original expectations had backfired. They had thought that they would intimidate Aratus, isolate Philip, and then move things in their desired direction. But quite the opposite had happened instead.

[17] Meanwhile, Lycurgus returned from Messenia, without having achieved anything worth mentioning. Then he set out again from Sparta and occupied Tegea, but his attempt to lay siege to the acropolis, where the inhabitants had retreated, was a complete failure, and he returned to Sparta. At much the same time the Eleans overran the territory of Dyme. A cavalry squadron offered resistance, but the Eleans drew them into an ambush and easily turned them. They killed quite a few of the Gauls, and captured Polymedes of Aegium, and Agesipolis and Diocles of Dyme.

Dorimachus had originally taken to the field with his Aetolians because, as I said earlier,* he was sure that he could safely plunder Thessaly, and at the same time would force Philip to give up the siege of Pale. But in Thessaly he found Chrysogonus and Petraeus ready to offer battle, so he kept to the hills, without daring to come down

to level ground. When he heard about the Macedonian invasion, however, he abandoned his Thessalian expedition and rushed off to Aetolia. But by the time he got there the Macedonians had left; he was too slow and too late for the action.

Philip sailed from Leucas, foraged from the farmland of Oeantheia as he passed, and put in at Corinth with his fleet intact. With the ships riding at anchor at Lechaeum, he disembarked his men and then sent letters all over the Peloponnese to the members of the alliance, telling them when he expected to see their contingents, armed and ready, in camp at Tegea.

[18] Philip stayed in Corinth no longer than he needed to take care of this business. He gave the order to move out, and it took him two days to reach Tegea, via Argos. With his forces augmented by the League troops who had gathered there, he advanced over the mountains, intending to launch a surprise attack on Laconia. He wound through uninhabited parts of the mountain range and, on the fourth day out of Corinth, keeping to the hills opposite Sparta and passing the Menelaeum on his right, he reached Amyclae.

The sight of the army passing their city astounded and terrified the Spartans. They had not expected anything like that. They were still disturbed by the news of Philip's achievements in Aetolia, especially the destruction of Thermum, and there had been some talk about whether to send Lycurgus to support the Aetolians. But it had never occurred to anyone that they themselves might so soon be in danger, considering how far away Aetolia was.

They could not help but be astonished at this unexpected turn of events, because they were still tending to regard Philip as too young to pose a threat. But he confounded and disconcerted all his enemies by carrying out his initiatives with the assurance and efficiency of a more mature commander. He set sail from central Aetolia, as I said before, crossed the Ambracian Gulf in a single night, and put in at Leucas. After staying there for two days, he put to sea on the morning of the third day, and two days later, after ravaging the coastline of Aetolia, he was at anchor in Lechaeum. Then he carried straight on, and seven days later he was marching past the Menelaeum in the hills that overlook Sparta. It was no wonder that most of them could hardly believe their eyes. The Spartans, then, were in a state of abject fear. They had been caught napping, and had no idea what to do or how to cope with the situation.

[19] On the first day of this campaign, Philip halted at Amyclae, a place in Laconia, about twenty stades from Sparta in the direction of the sea, which is particularly rich in olive trees and grain. It also has one of the most famous sanctuaries in Laconia, a precinct of Apollo. The next day, he continued towards the sea, pillaging the land as he went, and came to a place called the Camp of Pyrrhus. He spent the next two days scouring and plundering the surrounding district, and then halted at Carnium. From Carnium he went to Asine, which he assaulted. When his attempts came to nothing, he left, and marched instead down the coastline of the Cretan Sea, ravaging the land as he went, all the way to Cape Taenarum.

Then he turned round again and marched past the port of Sparta, a safe harbour called Gythium, which lies about 230 stades from the city. Leaving this place to his right, he established his camp near Helus, where there is, without any doubt, the most extensive and most fertile farmland in Laconia. He used the camp as a base for sending out his marauders, who put the entire region to the torch and destroyed all the crops. Their raids took them not just to Acriae and Leucae, but even to Boeae.

[20] Philip's letter about the campaign had found the Messenians no less committed to the cause than the other allies. They rapidly raised a force of 2,000 foot and 200 horse, all their best men, and sent them on their way. Due to the distance they had to travel, however, they missed the rendezvous with Philip at Tegea. At first, they did not know what to do, but they were worried that people might think they were shirking their duty, because their earlier actions had raised doubts about them, and so they decided to try to link up with Philip by marching to Laconia through Argive territory. When they reached the town called Glympes, where Laconia borders Argive territory, they made camp, but in an inexpert and careless way. They did not bother either to dig a trench or to put up a palisade around the camp, and did not even look around for the best site, but trusted in the good intentions of the inhabitants of Glympes and pitched their tents right in front of the town wall.

On hearing of the Messenians' presence, Lycurgus set out with his mercenaries and a few Spartans. He reached the place around daybreak and launched a fierce assault on the camp. Although so far the Messenians had done nothing but make mistakes—especially in setting out from Tegea with insufficient numbers and without taking

expert advice—yet when they were actually in danger from Lycurgus' attack, they did the best they could under the circumstances to ensure their safety. As soon as the enemy appeared, they abandoned everything and ran for the safety of the town—and so, although Lycurgus captured most of the horses and the baggage, he failed to take a single prisoner, and killed only eight cavalrymen.

After this setback, the Messenians returned home via Argos. But success made Lycurgus restless, and when he got back to Sparta he began to lay plans and to consult with his Friends about how to prevent Philip from leaving Laconia scot-free and without a battle. Meanwhile, the king set out from Helus, pillaging the land as he went, and four days later got back to Amyclae, without having lost any men, around the middle of the day.

[21] After issuing his officers and Friends their orders for the coming engagement, Lycurgus left Sparta, with at least 2,000 men under his command, and took up a position at the Menelaeum. The arrangement was that those who remained in the city were to watch for his signal, and as soon as it was raised they were to lead their men out at several points and draw them up in front of Sparta, facing the Eurotas, where the river comes closest to the city. That was how matters stood with Lycurgus and the Spartans.

I would not want any reader to find my account confusing and obscure just because he is unfamiliar with the region, so I shall describe its natural features and their relative positions—as I intend to throughout my work, by constantly comparing and correlating unknown places with those which are familiar and long known. Since defeat in military engagements on land or at sea is usually due to geographical factors, and since knowing *how* an event happened is always more interesting to us than just knowing *that* it happened, topographical descriptions are important whatever kind of event is being talked about, and especially important for military events. I need never hesitate, then, to use as markers things like harbours, seas, and islands, or sanctuaries, mountains, and places with distinctive epithets. Nor, finally, need I have the slightest hesitation in using the different quarters of the heavens as markers, since they are common to everyone and, as I have said before,* are the only way in which I can give my readers an idea of unknown places.

This, then, is what the region in question is like.† [22] The overall shape of the city of Sparta is round. The immediately surrounding

countryside is flat, but here and there rough and craggy. The river that flows past the city to the east is called the Eurotas, and for most of the year is too deep to be forded. The hills where the Menelaeum is situated are on the far side of the river, east-south-east of the city, in the direction of sunrise at the winter solstice. They are rugged, forbidding, and exceptionally tall, and they command the ground between the city and the river, which flows right past the foot of the Menelaeum hill, no more than one and a half stades from the city.

As Philip marched back towards Tegea, he was bound to cross this ground. On his left, he would find the city and the Spartan forces drawn up and ready for battle; on his right he would find the river and Lycurgus' men deployed in the hills. In addition, the Spartans had dammed the river further upstream and flooded the land between the city and the hills—a clever tactic under the circumstances, since the ground there was now too wet to be walked on by the infantry, let alone the cavalry. The only remaining choice was for the army to pass right by and under the hills, in a long column which would be vulnerable to the enemy and hard to defend.

Under these circumstances, after consulting with his Friends, Philip decided that it was essential first to dislodge Lycurgus from the Menelaeum. He set out from Amyclae with a detachment consisting of the mercenaries, the peltasts, and the Illyrians, crossed the river, and made for the hills. Lycurgus could see what Philip had in mind. He got his men ready, briefed them for the battle, and signalled to the forces in the city. The officers in charge there immediately led the citizen contingent out in front of the wall, as arranged, with the cavalry on the right wing.

[23] The first troops Philip sent in, once he had drawn close to Lycurgus, were the mercenaries. The battle went well for the Spartans for a while, since they were considerably helped by both their weaponry and the terrain. But then Philip threw forward the peltasts, who were acting as his reserves, and had the Illyrians outflank the enemy and attack them from the side. Reinforced and enormously encouraged by the arrival of the peltasts and Illyrians, the mercenaries fought on with renewed conviction, and Lycurgus' men gave way before the heavily armed infantry and turned to flight. About a hundred of them died, at least as many as that were taken prisoner, and the rest escaped back to the safety of Sparta. Lycurgus himself fled across country and made it back to the city after nightfall with a few others.

Philip left the hills secured by his Illyrians and rejoined the rest of the army with the light infantry and the peltasts. Meanwhile, Aratus had set out with the phalanx and was already close to Sparta. Philip crossed the river and deployed the light infantry, the peltasts, and the cavalry as cover for the heavy infantry until they had traversed the rough ground at the foot of the escarpment. The Spartans emerged from the city to attack the covering force of cavalry, and the fighting spread and became general. The courage of the peltasts once again gained Philip an unequivocal victory. The Spartan cavalry were harried all the way back to the gates, and then Philip safely crossed the Eurotas and posted his phalangites in the rear of the column.

[24] Evening was by then drawing in. Philip had no choice but to halt where he was, and he pitched camp at the end of the defile. By sheer chance, his officers had enclosed the best possible site for anyone wanting to invade Laconia by a route that passed close to the city itself. As one approaches Sparta from Tegea, or from the interior generally, the site is at the beginning of the defile, about two stades at the most from the city, and right on the river. The side facing the city and the river is entirely protected by a tall bank, which is too steep to climb. On top of the precipice, there is a plateau with good soil and water, which is an excellent site for an army, coming or going. Anyone encamped there and occupying the hill that overlooks it would seem to have chosen a very insecure† location, because of the proximity of the city, but in fact it is the best possible place for a camp, since it commands both the entrance to the defile and the corridor itself.

In any case, Philip found it a safe place to camp. The next day he sent the baggage on ahead and drew up his army on level ground within sight of the city. He waited for a while, but then had his men turn and form a column, and set off for Tegea. He encamped for the night at the site of the battle between Antigonus Doson and Cleomenes.* The next day he inspected the battlefield and sacrificed to the gods on each of the hills—Olympus on one side and Evas on the other—before carrying on with his rearguard reinforced and reaching Tegea. Once his agents had sold all the booty, the army marched to Corinth via Argos.

A joint Rhodian–Chian delegation arrived with proposals for bringing the war to an end. Philip granted them an audience, but at the meeting he dissembled: he told them that he had always been ready to come to terms with the Aetolians, and gave them permission

to talk to the Aetolians as well about an end to the war. Then he went down to Lechaeum and saw to the fleet, since he had critical business to attend to in Phocis.

[25] Meanwhile, Leontius, Megaleas, and Ptolemaeus were still convinced that they could intimidate Philip, and cancel out their earlier blunders. They began to spread the rumour, among the peltasts and the Royal Guard, as the Macedonians call it, that their position was extremely precarious, in the sense that they would lose all their privileges and would not receive their usual portion of the plunder. They stirred the men up so much that a gang of them set about burgling the quarters of Philip's most eminent Friends, and also wrenched the doors off the king's accommodation and smashed the roof tiles. The incident made the whole of Corinth jittery and unsettled, and when Philip heard the news he raced back from Lechaeum without delay.

He convened the Macedonians in the theatre and addressed them. In part, he tried to reassure them, but he also assigned blame for what had happened to them all equally. This was greeted with uproar, and a clear division of opinion. Some wanted to see the culprits arrested and stoned to death, while others argued for reconciliation and a general indemnity. Philip pretended to be won over to the course of clemency and, after some more reassuring words to the assembly as a whole, left for Lechaeum again. He was perfectly well aware of the identities of those who were responsible for the unrest, but under the circumstances he feigned ignorance.

[26] Shortly after these disturbances, the king's intrigues in Phocis became common knowledge and met with certain setbacks. Meanwhile, faced with the fact that none of his plans had got anywhere, Leontius gave up believing that he could achieve success by his own efforts, and looked to Apelles for help. He wrote letter after letter to him, attributing his helplessness and difficulties to the rift that had opened up between him and the king, and asking Apelles to come back from Chalcis.

In Chalcis, Apelles had been acting with greater authority than his position warranted. He let it be known that, as a mere boy, the king was usually ruled by him and did nothing of his own accord, and he made sure that control and overall authority were in his hands. Consequently, the Macedonian and Thessalian governors and administrators referred all their business to him, and in their decrees and honorifics and awards the Greek cities made little mention of the

king, while Apelles was their all and everything. Philip was aware of this, and had long been finding it a source of irritation and anger, especially since Aratus was on his side and was doing a good job of seeing the matter in hand through to a successful conclusion. Philip was patient, however, and let no one know what his intentions and views were.

Apelles had no idea where he stood. He was sure that at a face-to-face meeting with the king he would steer everything in his desired direction, and in this belief he set out from Chalcis in response to Leontius' pleas for help. In anticipation of his arrival at Corinth, Leontius, Ptolemaeus, and Megaleas, the officers in command of the peltasts and the most prestigious regiments, had done all they could to stir the troops' enthusiasm for going out to greet him, and the number of officers and other ranks that formed the greeting party gave a pretentious air to his entrance. On arrival, he went straight to the king's accommodation. He expected to be let in, as was customary, but one of the chamberlains, acting under orders, blocked his way, saying that the king was engaged. Apelles was taken aback. After spending quite a while stunned by this unexpected turn of events, he withdrew in utter confusion. All his followers immediately began to slip away, without making any attempt to disguise what they were doing, until by the time he entered his quarters he was left with only his slaves.

The truism that a fleeting opportunity raises a man up or lays him low is nowhere more true than in the courts of kings. Courtiers are indeed just like the counters on an abacus, which according to the will of the person doing the calculating are worth now a fraction of an obol, and a moment later a talent. Just so, courtiers become objects of envy and then of pity at the whim of the king. When Megaleas saw that Apelles' 'help' had not turned out the way he had expected, he took fright and began to prepare for flight. Apelles was still invited to official functions such as state banquets, but was excluded from decision-making procedures and the king's daily meetings. A few days later, when the king again shipped out from Lechaeum to attend to his business in Phocis, he took Apelles along with him. His Phocian initiative fell through, however, and he turned back from Elatea.

[27] Meanwhile, Megaleas left for Athens, leaving Leontius liable for the twenty talents, but the Athenian generals refused him entry, and he went to Thebes instead. Philip took ship at Cirra, landed with

his hypaspists at the harbour of Sicyon, and made his way up to the city from there. While he was in Sicyon, he refused the accommodation offered him by the city officials. He stayed with Aratus and spent all his time with him, while sending Apelles on ahead to Corinth.

When Philip heard about Megaleas, he sent Leontius' regiment, the peltasts, to Triphylia under the command of Taurion, pretending that there was some matter there that required their urgent attention, and as soon as they had set off, he had Leontius arrested for non-payment of the bail. But as soon as the peltasts found out what had happened (from a letter written to them by Leontius), they sent emissaries to the king. The peltasts asked the king not to hear Leontius' case in their absence, if he had been arrested for any reason other than the bail; if the king did so, they said—Macedonian troops always had the right to speak as candidly as this to their kings—the regiment would regard it as a serious slight and as a condemnation of them all equally. On the other hand, they said, if the issue was Megaleas' bail, they would raise the money among themselves and pay the debt. But the peltasts' efforts made the king furious and he had Leontius executed earlier than he had originally planned.

[28] The Rhodian–Chian embassy now returned from Aetolia. They had arranged a thirty-day armistice, and they said that the Aetolians were ready to come to terms. They named the day when Philip should, if he agreed, go to Rhium for a conference, and assured him that the Aetolians would not impede the peace process at all. Philip agreed to the truce and wrote to all the allies, telling them to send representatives for a conference at Patrae to discuss the question of peace with Aetolia. Then he took ship and landed at Patrae on the second day out from Lechaeum.

Just then, he received from Phocis copies of certain letters that Megaleas had written to the Aetolians. In these letters, Megaleas reassured the Aetolians and urged them to stay in the war, on the grounds that Philip was so hard up that he was in effect completely out of it. The letters also contained certain accusations against the king and some vindictive personal abuse. Immediately after reading the letters, Philip had Apelles—who, he was sure, was behind all his troubles—bundled off to Corinth under guard, along with his son and his boyfriend. He also sent Alexander to Thebes to bring Megaleas before the authorities there for non-payment of his bail. Alexander carried out his orders, but Megaleas committed suicide before anything could

be done. At about the same time Apelles ended his life as well, along with his son and his boyfriend. So these men died as they deserved, not least for their offensive behaviour towards Aratus.

[29] The Aetolians had been looking forward to making peace. The war was causing them considerable hardship and nothing had gone as they had anticipated. His youth and inexperience had led them to expect that, in dealing with Philip, they would be dealing with a foolish child, but instead they found him to be a mature man, in terms of both his plans and their execution, while it was they who appeared incompetent and childish in both small-scale and large-scale operations. But when they heard of the peltasts' unrest and the deaths of Apelles and Leontius, they hoped that these were symptoms of widespread, serious turmoil at Philip's court, and they began to procrastinate and to postpone the meeting at Rhium.

Philip eagerly seized on the excuse this gave him, since he was confident of his prospects in the war and had already decided to find some way to avoid reconciliation. So he asked the representatives of the allies who had come for the meeting not to enter into peace negotiations, but to continue with the war effort. Then he put to sea again and sailed to Corinth. He sent his Macedonian troops back home via Thessaly for the winter, while he took ship at Cenchreae. He sailed up the coast of Attica and through the Euripus strait, and landed at Demetrias, where he arranged for the trial of Ptolemaeus, the last of Leontius' cohorts, before a court of his fellow Macedonians and had him put to death.

Elsewhere in the world, Hannibal had reached Italy and was encamped opposite the Roman forces in the Po plain; Antiochus had subdued most of Coele Syria and retired to winter quarters; and King Lycurgus of Sparta fled from the ephors and took refuge in Aetolia. The ephors thought that Lycurgus was planning a revolution. This was not so, in fact, but the ephors had received information to that effect, and they enlisted armed support and went to his house one night. But Lycurgus, forewarned, escaped with the members of his household.

[30] The Achaean troops thought very little of their general, Eperatus, and the mercenaries had no respect for him at all. This meant that no one had obeyed his orders and that, with Philip away in Macedon for the winter, there were no measures in place to defend their land. This came to the attention of Pyrrhias, the Aetolian who

had been sent to take command in Elis. He had at his disposal about 3,000 men—1,300 Aetolians, the mercenaries hired by the Eleans, about 1,000 Elean foot, and 200 Elean horse. He took these forces and launched a series of raids on Dyme and Pharae, and also on Patrae. In the end, he encamped on Mount Panachaïcum, which overlooks Patrae, and set about plundering the land all the way up to Rhium and Aegium.

The Achaean cities were receiving no help in their hour of need, and became rather disinclined to pay their League contributions. At the same time, the armed forces, whose pay had been delayed and was overdue, were equally disinclined to resist Pyrrhias' incursions. With both citizens and soldiers mirroring each other's feelings, things went from bad to worse and in the end the mercenary contingent was disbanded—all because of the ineptitude of their leader. This was the state of affairs in Achaea, but in due course of time Eperatus' term of office came to an end, and early in the summer the Achaeans chose as 217
their general the elder Aratus.

That was how matters stood in Europe. Since we have now reached a suitable point—not only the start of a new year, but also a pause in the action—I shall shift over to the events that took place in Asia in the same Olympiad and describe them instead.

[31] As I promised at the outset,* I shall first try to give an account of the war between Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV for Coele Syria. I am well aware that, at the point at which I have broken off my account of affairs in Greece, this war had almost been decided and come to an end, but I still choose to pause and interrupt my narrative there. My practice of recording in an incidental fashion the beginnings and endings of each event at the point in each Olympiad when they took place, and of relating them to contemporaneous affairs in Greece, makes me certain that I have provided for students of history sufficient information to prevent them, as they read my account, from mistaking the precise dates of particular events. But I also want my narrative to be clear and easy to follow, and, in the case of this particular Olympiad, I think such clarity can be most readily obtained if I do *not* interweave parallel events with one another; I think it essential to keep them separate and distinct, wherever possible, until I reach the next Olympiad, at which point I shall begin to record parallel events as they happen year by year. After all, since my intention is to write

not just about certain events, but about everything that happened all over the known world,* and since it is hardly an exaggeration to say, as I have explained earlier too, that I have undertaken a greater historiographical enterprise than any of my predecessors, I have to take the greatest care over treatment and organization, in order to ensure that, at both the particular and the general levels, my work is clearly structured. And so, on this occasion as on others, I shall go back a few years in the case of Antiochus and Ptolemy, and try to find for the events I am going to treat a starting point that is uncontroversial and familiar.

There is nothing more important than this. [32] The old saying that 'beginning is half the whole'* advises us to take the greatest care to ensure that everything we do is well begun. Now, although this saying has been taken to be an exaggeration, in my opinion it falls short of the truth, in the sense that one might confidently claim that the beginning is not half the whole, but reaches all the way to the end. For how could anyone make a good beginning unless he already had in mind the end of his project—which is to say, unless he knew where he was heading, and what his aim was, and for what purpose he was undertaking the project in the first place? Or again, how could he bring matters to an appropriate conclusion without at the same time looking back to the beginning and seeing from where or how or for what reason they had attained their current state? We should think, then, that beginnings reach right up to the end, not just halfway, and, as writers or readers of large-scale events, we should pay special attention to beginnings. And that is precisely what I shall now try to do.

[33] Of course, I am not unaware that plenty of other writers also insist that they write universal history, and say that they have undertaken a greater project than any of their predecessors. *Pace* Ephorus, who was the first and only writer of universal history, I shall generally avoid discussing the rest of these historians, or mentioning any of them by name. I will say only this: some of our contemporaries claim to be writing universal history after offering us no more than a three- or four-page account of the hostilities between Rome and Carthage. Yet there are certain facts that cannot have escaped anyone's notice, however obtuse they may be: that a great many critical events took place at that time in Iberia, Libya, Sicily, and Italy; that

the Hannibalic War was the most remarkable and longest war ever;[1] and that the scale of events was such that all of our gazes were drawn there, in fear of the outcome and its consequences.

Some historians, however, write even less than those who on public authority inscribe memoranda of occasional events in chronological records* on walls, and then say that they have included every incident that took place in Greece and abroad. All this is due to the fact that, while it is perfectly easy to claim to be doing important work, in practice it is hard to achieve excellence. There is nothing to prevent one, then, from making such a claim; pretty much all it takes is a little audacity. Actual achievement, however, is extremely rare, and there are few to whom it is granted in this life. Anyway, I was provoked into saying all this by the presumptuousness of those who exaggerate their own and their work's importance, but I shall now resume my narrative at the start of the topic I proposed to cover.

[34] On the death of his father, Ptolemy IV Philopator inher- 221
ited the throne of Egypt, and once he had done away with his brother Magas and his supporters, he considered himself free from danger—safe at home thanks to this action of his, and safe abroad thanks to Fortune, since Antigonus III and Seleucus III had died, and their successors, Antiochus III and Philip V, were very young—no more than boys, in fact. With his current situation giving him no cause for alarm, then, he began to rule for all the world as though he were on holiday. He became inattentive, and made himself inaccessible to his courtiers and everyone else who was responsible for the administration of Egypt; and he treated those who were responsible for Egyptian possessions abroad with disdain and indifference.

His predecessors, however, had paid more attention to their foreign possessions than they had to ruling Egypt itself. It was their possession of Coele Syria and Cyprus that had enabled them to threaten the kings of Syria on land and sea; their mastery of the most notable cities, regions, and ports along the entire coastline from Pamphylia to the Hellespont and the district of Lysimacheia had allowed them to influence the Asiatic princelings and the islands as well; and their possession of Aenus, Maroneia, and even more remote cities had enabled them also to watch over Thrace and Macedon. In this way, they had

[1] It was surpassed in these respects only by the Sicilian War.

maintained a long reach, and with the principalities as distant buffer zones, they never had to worry about their rule in Egypt—which was, of course, precisely why they paid so much attention to their foreign possessions. But the administration of all these foreign possessions was a matter of indifference to Ptolemy IV, who was distracted by unsuitable love affairs and stupefied by non-stop carousing. Naturally, then, before long he found his life and his throne threatened by several conspiracies, the first of which was that of Cleomenes of Sparta.

[35] Ptolemy III Euergetes had been Cleomenes' ally and protector. During Ptolemy's lifetime, then, Cleomenes had kept quiet, because he had no doubt that he would receive the help he required to recover his ancestral throne. But then Ptolemy died, and as time passed the situation in Greece kept calling out for Cleomenes almost by name: Antigonus was dead, the Achaeans were at war, and the Spartans had sided with the Aetolians against the Achaeans and Macedonians, which is what Cleomenes had always planned and intended. Under these circumstances, then, he felt compelled to try to leave Alexandria at the earliest possible opportunity. He began by petitioning to be sent out at the head of an adequately funded expeditionary force. But this was simply ignored, so he next begged merely to be allowed to leave, along with the members of his household, thinking that it would not be too difficult, under the circumstances, for him to regain his ancestral throne.

Ptolemy IV, however, who for the reasons I have already given spent no time over such matters and cared nothing for the future, continued foolishly and senselessly to ignore Cleomenes' petitions. So Sosibius, who was effectively the head of state at the time, met with the council to decide what to do with Cleomenes. They did not see any point in sending him off with a fleet and supplies, since after Antigonus' death they were not expecting any trouble from abroad, and they thought it would just be a waste of money. Besides, with Antigonus dead and no one left alive who could rival Cleomenes, they were worried that there would be nothing to stop him rapidly taking over in Greece and becoming a serious and formidable rival to themselves. He had made a close study of Egyptian affairs, he had a low opinion of the king, and he was aware that many dependencies were far removed from the kingdom and that there were sound, practical reasons for focusing on them. For instance, there were quite a few ships at Samos and a large number of soldiers at Ephesus.

These considerations made them reject the idea of giving Cleomenes funds for an expedition, but at the same time they did not think it would do them any good to slight and dismiss such a powerful man; that was certain to turn him against them and make him an enemy. The other option was to keep him in Alexandria against his will, but everyone rejected that idea there and then, without discussion, on the grounds that it is risky to cage a lion with sheep. Sosibius himself was particularly doubtful about the wisdom of such a course of action, for the following reason.

[36] In the days preceding the murder of Magas and Berenice,* Sosibius and his friends had been worried that the plot might fail, most probably as a result of Berenice's courage, and they felt compelled to win over the entire court by dropping hints to everyone about how much better off they would be if the plot succeeded. Noticing that Cleomenes, whom he judged to be a man of intelligence and practical insight, was petitioning the king for help, Sosibius held out the prospect of a considerable improvement in his situation, and enlisted him as a fellow conspirator.

Sosibius was plainly anxious about something, and Cleomenes could tell that it was the foreign mercenaries who were the chief cause of his concern. He told him not to worry, and assured him that, so far from doing him any harm, the mercenaries would help him. Sosibius expressed more than a little surprise at this promise, but Cleomenes said: 'Look, almost three thousand of the mercenaries are Peloponnesians, with another thousand from Crete. All I have to do is give them the nod, and they'll all put themselves at your service. With this body of men behind you, who else could cause you fear? Oh, yes: the Syrian and Carian troops!'

At the time, Cleomenes' words had cheered Sosibius up, and he had proceeded against Berenice with twice the confidence. Later, however, with Ptolemy IV proving himself apathetic, Sosibius kept running over this conversation and reminding himself of Cleomenes' arrogance and the loyalty of the mercenaries to him. At the council meeting, then, it was he who was the prime mover to the king and the king's Friends of the idea that Cleomenes should be arrested and imprisoned forthwith. Then he found the means to carry out this plan.

[37] There was a man from Messenia called Nicagoras, who had been a hereditary guest-friend of King Archidamus V of Sparta. They had not previously spent much time together, but then Archidamus

fled from Sparta out of fear of Cleomenes and fetched up in Messenia. By way of a warm welcome, Nicagoras gave him a house and supplied all his needs, and from then on they were often in each other's company. They became firm friends and grew very close to each other. Later, when Cleomenes held out to Archidamus the prospect of returning and of an end to their enmity, Nicagoras took on the task of writing letters and negotiating the terms of the reconciliation. Once everything had been settled, Archidamus set out for Sparta, trusting in the agreement that Nicagoras had brokered, but when Cleomenes came out to meet them, he had Archidamus killed, though he spared Nicagoras and the rest of the retinue. To the outside world, Nicagoras pretended to be in Cleomenes' debt for sparing his life, but secretly the whole thing made him furious, since it looked as though he had been responsible for the king's death.

Not long after Sosibius had formed his plan, Nicagoras put in at Alexandria with a shipment of horses. He disembarked—and found Cleomenes, Panteus, and Hippitas walking along the harbour quay. When Cleomenes saw him, he came over, greeted him warmly, and asked him what had brought him to Alexandria. Nicagoras replied that he had brought horses, and Cleomenes said: 'You'd have done far better to bring degenerates and sambuca-girls.* That's what the present king craves.' Nicagoras laughed, but said no more. A few days later, however, after several meetings with Sosibius over the horses, he repeated what Cleomenes had said to him on the quay. He could tell that Sosibius was interested, and so he told him the whole story of how he had originally fallen out with Cleomenes.

[38] Now that Sosibius knew that Nicagoras was no friend of Cleomenes, he persuaded him—by giving him something on the spot and promising more later—to write a letter denouncing Cleomenes. He asked him to seal it, and leave it behind when he put to sea, so that a few days later the slave would deliver the letter to him, Sosibius, as if it had come from Nicagoras. Nicagoras went along with the plan and did as Sosibius asked. When the slave brought the letter to Sosibius, after Nicagoras had shipped out, Sosibius immediately took both the slave and the letter to the king. The slave said that Nicagoras had left the letter, with instructions that he was to give it to Sosibius. Since the gist of the letter was that Cleomenes was planning to stir up rebellion against the king, if he was refused suitable equipment and supplies for an expedition, Sosibius seized his chance and immediately urged

the king and his Friends to detain and imprison Cleomenes without delay.

This was done, and Cleomenes was assigned an enormous house. He lived there under guard, differing from ordinary prisoners only in that his time was spent in a larger cell. Under these circumstances, with the future looking bleak, Cleomenes came up with a desperate plan. It was not so much that he thought he could succeed—after all, he had no grounds for such optimism—as that he wanted to die well, rather than endure anything unworthy of his courageous past. At the same time, I imagine that he bore in mind and recalled the words which tend to occur to high-minded men:*

> If am to die, let it not be an inglorious death, without a struggle.
> May I die performing some great deed, that men to come shall hear of.

[39] He waited, then, until the king was away in Canopus, and then he spread the rumour among his guards that he was due to be freed by the king. This was a cause for celebration, he said, and he laid on a feast for his companions, and sent his guards cuts of meat from the altar, garlands, and wine. The unsuspecting guards tucked in and became quite drunk. Around noon, Cleomenes, along with those of his friends who were there and his personal slaves, left the house, daggers in hand, without being spotted by the guards. They advanced into the city square, where they found Ptolemaeus, who had been left in temporary charge of the city. They took his retinue by surprise, dragged him from his chariot and locked him up, and then began to call on the crowd in the name of liberty. But the attempted coup was so unexpected that no one listened to them or joined the rebellion, so they set off for the acropolis instead, with the intention of forcing the gates there and getting the prisoners to join them. But this attempt also failed, since the garrison officers had been forewarned and had secured the gates. And so, as men of true courage, and as Spartans, they turned their weapons on themselves. So died Cleomenes, a man who not only had a way with people, but also had a natural aptitude for the conduct of affairs. In short, he was naturally endowed with the qualities of a commander and a king.

[40] Not long after this, the governor of Coele Syria, an Aetolian called Theodotus, decided to enter into negotiations with Antiochus, with a view to betraying the cities of Coele Syria to him. He despised Ptolemy for his dissolute lifestyle and overall disposition, and he

distrusted the members of the royal court because a short while earlier, despite having done Ptolemy remarkable service, especially at
221 the time of Antiochus' first attempt on Coele Syria, not only had he not been thanked, but on the contrary, he had been summoned to Alexandria and had barely escaped with his life. At the time in ques-
219 tion, Antiochus welcomed the opportunity offered him by Theodotus, and the matter was soon well in hand.

The Seleucid house should receive the same treatment from me as the Ptolemies, and so I shall go back to the time when Antiochus III succeeded to the throne, and afterwards, by way of a preface, summarize events between then and the beginning of the war I am to describe.

Antiochus was the younger son of Seleucus II Callinicus. On his
226 father's death, his brother Seleucus III inherited the throne, by right of primogeniture. At first, Antiochus moved to the interior and lived there, but then, when Seleucus crossed the Taurus mountains with an
223 army and was assassinated (as mentioned earlier*), he succeeded to the throne and became king. He entrusted the governorship of Asia Minor to Achaeus, and the inland provinces of the kingdom to Molon and his brother Alexander, with Molon as the satrap of Media and Alexander the satrap of Persis.

222 [41] Molon and Alexander proceeded to raise a rebellion in the inland satrapies, with a view to making them independent. They did not expect Antiochus to give them much trouble, because of his youth, and they hoped for support from Achaeus. But they were extremely frightened of Hermias, a cruel and devious man, who at the time was the head of state. Hermias was a Carian, and his power dated from the time when Seleucus III, Antiochus' brother, had left him in charge of the kingdom while he was busy with his campaign against Attalus. Having attained this position of authority, Hermias resented anyone else's prominence at court, and he indulged his cruel streak by punishing some of his fellow courtiers for their mistakes, on which he always placed the worst interpretation, and by concocting trumped-up charges to bring against others. In all these cases, he was a harsh and merciless judge.

The man he wanted to get rid of most of all, whose removal he considered of prime importance, was Epigenes. Epigenes had brought back the forces that had accompanied Seleucus on his expedition,

and Hermias could see that he was effective, both as a speaker and as a man of action, and extremely popular with the troops. Hermias patiently bided his time, always waiting for an opportunity and excuse to bring Epigenes down.

When the council convened to discuss Molon's uprising, the king asked everybody present in turn to say what measures he thought they should take against the rebels. The first person to offer his advice was Epigenes. He said that they should take the matter in hand at once, without further delay, and that the first and most important thing was that the king should proceed to the provinces and personally take charge of the situation. In that case, he said—if the king was there and the enemy soldiers could see that he had brought an adequate army—either Molon would not dare to make trouble at all, or if he persisted with his rebellion and did try to take military action, he would soon be seized by his troops and handed over as a prisoner to the king.

[42] Before Epigenes had even finished speaking, Hermias lost his temper and interrupted. For a long time now, he said, Epigenes had been covertly plotting to betray the kingdom, and now at last he had done the decent thing and come out into the open with this advice, which made it clear that he wanted to get the king's person within reach of the rebels, with only a small force to defend him. For the time being, however, Hermias did not press his attack against Epigenes, now that he had, so to speak, set the slander smouldering; he passed it off as an ill-timed fit of anger, rather than true hostility. In his view, the risk of a campaign against Molon was too great, and because he had little experience of warfare he was inclined against it, but he was in favour of marching against Ptolemy, whose apathy, he felt, would make him an easy target.

After this outburst, which the entire council found astonishing, he sent an army against Molon under the command of Xenon and Theodotus Hemiolius, and kept urging Antiochus to attack Coele Syria. It was only if the young king faced warfare from every quarter, he supposed, that he could avoid being punished for his earlier crimes, and could retain his current power unimpeded, because the king would be busy with military service and constantly surrounded by war and danger. And so, in the end, he forged a letter and brought it to the king, claiming that it had been written by Achaeus. The contents of the letter made it clear that Ptolemy was encouraging Achaeus to launch a bid for supremacy, and

promising him ships and funds for the duration of this venture, provided that he took up the royal diadem and made no secret of the fact that he was challenging Antiochus for the throne. After all, he was already the de facto king, even if he was denying himself the title and declining the crown presented to him by Fortune. The king was disturbed by the letter, which he took to be authentic, and was eager to invade Coele Syria.

[43] Antiochus happened at the time to be at Seleucia-at-Zeugma, where he was joined by Diognetus, his admiral, who had brought Laodice, an unmarried daughter of King Mithradates II, from Cappadocia Pontica. She was promised to the king. Mithradates claimed to be descended from one of the seven Persian Magus-slayers, and held the kingdom on the Black Sea that had originally been given to his ancestors by Darius I.* Antiochus welcomed his bride with the appropriate pomp and grandeur, and celebrated the wedding straight away, in magnificent and truly royal style. Once the celebrations were over, he left the interior and returned to Antioch, where he proclaimed Laodice queen, and then occupied himself with preparations for war.

Meanwhile, Molon had worked on both the hopes and fears of the troops from his own satrapy, until they were ready for anything. He held out the prospect of gain, and instilled fear in his officers by producing letters supposedly written by the king and filled with threats. His brother, Alexander, was a willing ally, and Molon had also secured the nearby satrapies, where bribery had won him the support of the governors. And so he marched out against the king's generals with a mighty army. Terrified at his approach, Xenon and Theodotus withdrew into the towns, and Molon gained control of Apolloniatis, which netted him a superabundance of provisions.

Even before this success Molon had been formidable, because of the size of his domain. [44] It is quite impossible to capture in words the strength and size of Media. All the royal horse-herds are managed in Media, and the Medes also have an inexhaustible supply of grain and animals. It is situated in central Asia and is, without any doubt, the largest territory in the region, with the loftiest mountains—and also with the most warlike and powerful peoples on its borders. To the east, in the direction of sunrise, there lie the desert flatlands that separate Persis and Parthia; it also verges on and commands the Caspian Gates, and borders the mountainous home of the Tapuri, not far from

the Hyrcanian Sea. To the south, it extends all the way to Mesopotamia and Apolloniatis, and borders Persis, from which it is protected by the Zagros range. The pass up through the Zagros mountains is about a hundred stades in length. Since the mountains often open out or close in, there are intermittent depressions, or occasionally valleys, which are inhabited by a large number of barbarian peoples, including the Cossaei, the Corbrenae, and the Carchi, all of whom are known as exceptional warriors. To the west, it is contiguous with the so-called Peoples of the Satrap, who in turn are quite close neighbours of tribes whose land reaches the coast of the Black Sea. To the north, it is fringed by the territories of the Elymaeans, the Aniaracae, the Cadusii, and the people of Matiene, and overlooks land that reaches up to lake Maeotis, on the Black Sea. Media itself is also broken up by a number of mountain ranges, running from east to west; the plains between the mountains teem with towns and villages.

[45] Molon's possession of Media—a kingdom in all but name—gave him formidable power, as I remarked before. But now, with the king's generals apparently ceding the open countryside to him, and with his men's confidence and determination running high as a result of their early successes, all the inhabitants of Asia were absolutely terrified of him and he seemed unstoppable. His initial plan, then, was to cross the Tigris and besiege Seleucia-on-the-Tigris, but Zeuxis foiled this plan by seizing all the river boats. So he withdrew to his camp at Ctesiphon and set about getting his men ready for the winter.

Antiochus' desire to march against Molon was revived by the news of the rebels' advance and of his own generals' retreat; he wanted to abandon the campaign against Ptolemy before it was too late. But Hermias kept to his original plan. First, he made Xenoetas of Achaea 221
commander-in-chief of the war against Molon, supplied him with troops, and sent him off on his mission. He told the king that it was a general's job to fight rebels, but that he, as a king, should make the strategic decisions and fight the decisive battles against kings. And then, with the young king subservient to his will, he set out for Apamea and called for the army to muster there. Then he left for Laodicea.

When the king set out from Laodicea, it was with a full complement of troops. He crossed the desert and entered the Marsyas valley, which lies between the flanks of the Lebanon and Antilebanon, and forms a narrow passage between these two mountain ranges.

At its narrowest point, it is dotted with marshes and lakes, where sweet flag is harvested.* [46] On one side of this pass is a garrison town called Brochi, and on the other is Gerrha, with a narrow road between them.

It took Antiochus several days to march through the Marsyas valley, cowing the towns into submission as he passed, and reach Gerrha. He found Gerrha and Brochi occupied by Theodotus of Aetolia, the road by the lake fortified with trenches and palisades, and troops posted at all the critical spots. At first, he tried to force his way through, but the natural defences, and the fact that Theodotus' men remained fresh, meant that he took more losses than he inflicted, and he gave up. The terrain was just too difficult. So when news reached him that Xenoetas had been decisively defeated and that Molon was in control of all the inland territories, he abandoned the expedition and marched to defend the threatened heartland of his kingdom.

When Xenoetas was sent into the field as supreme commander, as just mentioned, he found himself with more power than he had ever dreamt of, and he began to lord it over his friends and to underestimate his enemies. He made camp at Seleucia-on-the-Tigris, and called for help from Diogenes, the governor of Susiana, and Pythiades, the governor of the coastline of the Persian Gulf. Then he set out and encamped with the Tigris protecting his front and the enemy on the opposite bank. A lot of deserters swam over from Molon's camp. They told him that all he had to do was cross the river and Molon's entire army would come over to his side, because most of them resented his rulership and were devoted to the king.

This was welcome news to Xenoetas. He decided to cross the river, and made out that he was going to build a bridge of boats at a certain place where there were islets. But none of his preparations had anything to do with that project (and so Molon in fact took little notice of the feint); what he was busy doing was gathering and repairing the boats. Then he created an elite force of cavalry and infantry selected from all the contingents of his army. Leaving Zeuxis and Pythiades in charge of the camp, he took this force one night about eighty stades downstream from Molon's camp and ferried the men safely across on the boats. He made camp while it was still dark at an excellent site, which was largely surrounded by the river, and otherwise protected by marshes and fens.

[47] When Molon found out what had happened, he sent his cavalry to deter any further attempts at crossing, and to crush those who had already crossed. But their ignorance of the terrain made them their own worst enemies: as they approached Xenoetas' position, they found themselves sinking and struggling in the fens. The attack was completely ineffective, and many of them were killed.

Xenoetas, who was convinced that on his approach Molon's troops would defect, set out upstream beside the river and encamped close to the enemy position. At this, Molon abandoned his camp, baggage and all, and set out at a brisk pace under cover of darkness in the direction of Media. This may have been a ruse, or he may have doubted his troops' loyalty and been worried that the mass defection Xenoetas expected might really happen. Anyway, Xenoetas thought that his approach had frightened Molon off because he doubted the reliability of his troops. He first placed the enemy camp under siege and captured it, and brought his cavalry and all their equipment across the river from Zeuxis' camp. Then he addressed the assembled troops. He encouraged them to think optimistically about the outcome of the war, now that Molon had fled, and ended by telling them all to take care of themselves and tend to their needs, so as to be ready to hunt the enemy down the following morning.

[48] Xenoetas' men felt that they had nothing to worry about. They found themselves in possession of all sorts of supplies, and they gave themselves over to pleasure and wine—and to the inevitable consequence, breakdown of discipline. But after Molon had put some distance between his army and the camp, he had his men eat their evening meal, and then turned back. When he reached the camp, he found all the enemy troops lying around drunk, and he attacked at dawn. Stunned by the unexpected attack, and unable to rouse his men from their drunken stupor, Xenoetas rushed blindly at the enemy and was cut down. A large number of men were slaughtered while they were still lying in their beds. The rest hurled themselves into the river and tried to get back across to the camp on the other side, but most of them died as well.

The camps were scenes of utter chaos, confusion, and disarray. All the men were numb with shock and terror, and could think of nothing except trying to save themselves. The other encampment was clearly visible on the far bank, and they forgot about the force of the current and the difficulty of the crossing. In their frantic desire for safety,

they hurled themselves into the river and drove the mules into the water as well, laden with baggage, as though the river would miraculously come to their assistance and carry them safely across to the camp on the far bank. All this turned the river into a tableau from an overblown melodrama, as horses, mules, weapons, corpses, and accoutrements of all kinds were carried downstream along with the swimmers.

Molon captured Xenoetas' camp, and then crossed the river in safety; there was no one left to make things difficult for him, since at his approach Zeuxis too had made himself scarce. Once he had captured Zeuxis' camp as well, Molon advanced on Seleucia. The city fell to him straight away, since Zeuxis and his men had fled, and Diomedon, the city governor, had joined them. From then on Molon met no opposition as he reduced the inland satrapies. Once he had made himself master of Babylonia and the coastline of the Persian Gulf, he marched on Susa. This city also fell straight away, but his assaults on the acropolis were unsuccessful, since the governor, Diogenes, had holed up there first. Molon abandoned the attempt, then, and broke camp as soon as he could. He left the acropolis under siege, and returned with the rest of his army to Seleucia, where he made sure that all the army's needs were met. Then, after giving the troops their orders, he carried straight on, and took control of Parapotamia up to the town of Europus, and of Mesopotamia up to Dura.

The effect of the news of these events on Antiochus was, as I have already said, to make him give up on Coele Syria and turn to this field of endeavour. [49] The council met again, and the king asked them for their suggestions about what measures should be taken against Molon. Once again, Epigenes was the first to address the situation. He said that the king really should have followed his original advice and acted straight away, before the enemy had a chance to achieve such major successes, but that even now it was not too late for him to do the right thing and focus his efforts there. At this, Hermias again began to rant and rave, hurling abuse at Epigenes. He praised himself in a vulgar fashion, made false and random accusations against Epigenes, and implored the king not to make the unjustifiable mistake of abandoning the war effort in Coele Syria. Most of the people present found his words offensive, and the king was displeased. It was only the fact that the king insisted on their reconciliation that persuaded Hermias to put an end to the mud-slinging.

The consensus was that Epigenes' idea was the most practical and profitable, and they decided to march against Molon and focus their efforts there. Hermias immediately accommodated himself to the situation and performed a volte-face. Saying that they should all wholeheartedly support the king's decision, he became very actively involved in the preparations.

[50] The army mustered at Apamea, but the troops were on the verge of mutiny over their back pay. Hermias could see that the king was nervous—this kind of unrest was particularly unwelcome at such a critical time—and so he offered to pay the men all they were owed, if the king would agree to exclude Epigenes from the campaign. It would be impossible, he said, for them to achieve any of their military objectives with tempers flaring and the high command so sharply divided. The idea did not go down well with the king, who especially wanted Epigenes by his side during the campaign because of his experience and expertise. But Hermias had maliciously made sure that the king was so busy and preoccupied by administrative business, and precautionary measures, and matters that needed his attention, that he was not his own master. He gave in and agreed to Hermias' request.

Epigenes obediently† retired into private life as ordered. The members of the council were astounded at Hermias' vindictiveness, but the rank-and-file soldiers, once pacified by being paid what they were owed, gave their allegiance to Hermias, in gratitude for the fact that he had been responsible for paying their wages. The contingent from Cyrrhestice, about 6,000 strong, was the only exception: they mutinied and withdrew their services.[1] Once Hermias had intimidated the king's Friends and, by services rendered, won the loyalty of the troops, he and the king left Apamea and took to the field.

As for Epigenes, Hermias enlisted the help of Alexis, the commander of the garrison at Apamea, for the scheme he concocted. He forged a letter from Molon to Epigenes and bribed one of Epigenes' slaves to insert the letter among his master's personal papers. Alexis promptly arrived and demanded to know if Epigenes had received any letters from Molon. Epigenes angrily said 'no', and Alexis asked if he could take a look for himself. Once inside Epigenes' house, it

[1] For quite a while, they made a considerable nuisance of themselves, but in the end they were defeated by one of the king's generals. Most of them were killed in the battle; the survivors surrendered and pledged loyalty to the king.

did not take him long to find the letter, and he used this as a pretext for Epigenes' summary execution. Under the circumstances, the king was convinced that Epigenes had deserved to be killed, and although the courtiers suspected the truth, they were too frightened to do anything about it.

[51] At the Euphrates, Antiochus allowed his men time to recover before setting out again. He reached Antioch-in-Mygdonia at about the time of the winter solstice and chose to see out the first and the
220 worst of the winter there. After staying put for about forty days, he set out for Libba. At Libba, he set his council the agenda of deciding what route they should take to confront Molon, and how and from where they could get supplies while out in the field, given that Molon was in Babylonia. Hermias' view was that they should march down the Tigris, making use of the protection afforded by the Tigris, the Lycus, and the Caprus. Zeuxis vividly recalled Epigenes' death, and was almost too frightened to say what he thought, but since Hermias was patently wrong, he at last summoned up the courage to offer his advice, which was that they should cross the Tigris.

The main problem with the riverside route, he explained, was that even after travelling quite a distance, they would still face a six-day journey across a desert before reaching the Royal Canal. If the canal was in enemy hands, it would be impossible for them to cross it, and they would then have to retreat back across the desert, which would obviously be highly risky, not least because by then they would be short of supplies. If they crossed the Tigris, however, he argued, the inhabitants of Apolloniatis were sure to come back over to the king's side, because their present submission to Molon was not a matter of choice, but of the application of force and fear. Moreover, the fertility of the land would guarantee that the army was well provisioned. But the most important consideration, he said, was that they would cut Molon off from Media: he would not be able to retreat back to his province, nor receive help from there. He would be compelled to risk a battle, and if he refused the challenge his troops would promptly defect to the king's side.

[52] Zeuxis' suggestion carried the day. The army was immediately divided into three, and the troops and baggage train crossed the river at three points. They then marched to Dura, which was under siege from one of Molon's generals, raised the siege in short order, and carried straight on. Eight days later they crossed Mount Oricum and reached Apollonia.

Meanwhile, Molon had come to mistrust the general populace in both Susiana and Babylonia; after all, he had only recently conquered them, and his takeover had been very abrupt. At the same time, he needed to keep his escape route to Media open. When he heard of the king's approach, then, he decided to bridge the Tigris and cross over to the other side. His idea was to occupy the rocky part of Apolloniatis, where he felt sure that his corps of slingers, the Cyrtii, would prove a valuable asset.

Molon put his plan into effect and forced the pace of the march rapidly along. This meant that he was drawing close to his destination just as the king set out from Apollonia with his whole army—and that the light-armed advance guards from both armies met on some hillside trails. They skirmished for a while, but disengaged when the two main armies approached. For the time being, both sides withdrew to their respective camps, about forty stades apart.

Molon did not fancy the chances of fighting the royal army in broad daylight in a pitched battle; rebels were always at a disadvantage in such circumstances. As darkness drew on, then, he decided to make a night attack on Antiochus. He picked the best and fittest men from every contingent in the army, and marched by a circuitous route towards the king's camp, which he intended to attack from high ground. In the course of the march, however, a group of ten men deserted to Antiochus, and when Molon found out, he called off the attack. He turned around and made his way back to base, where his arrival at dawn threw the whole camp into noisy confusion. The men there panicked at the sight of his approach as they awoke, and almost quit the camp. Molon did what he could to calm them down.

[53] Antiochus was ready to give battle, and early in the morning he ordered the whole army to move out of the camp. He posted his lancers on the far right, under the command of Ardys, a man with a distinguished military record. Next came the Cretan allies, and then the Gauls, the Rhigosages. Next to them he deployed his Greek mercenaries, and after them came the phalanx. The left wing he assigned to the cavalry unit known as the Companions.* He also had ten elephants, which he deployed at intervals in front of the rest of the army. He divided the infantry and cavalry reserves between the two wings, their job being to outflank the enemy once battle had been joined. Finally, he rode along the line and briefly addressed his men in suitably encouraging terms. He put Hermias and Zeuxis in command of the left wing, and took the right wing himself.

In Molon's case, the turmoil of the previous night was still having a bad effect as his men left the camp, and their deployment was chaotic. Nevertheless, in view of the enemy's disposition, he posted his cavalry on both wings, and between the two cavalry units he posted his heavy infantry, including the Gauls with their oblong shields†. He placed his archers, slingers, and so on beyond the cavalry on both wings, and his scythed chariots some way in front of the rest of the army. He put his brother Neolaus in charge of the left wing, and took command of the right wing himself.

[54] The two armies now advanced towards each other. Molon's right wing stayed loyal—they engaged the men under Zeuxis' command and fought well—but the left wing went over to the enemy as soon as they were close enough for the king to see what they were doing. This treachery caused dismay in the rebel ranks and gave the king's men twice the confidence. The news reached Molon and, finding himself surrounded, he committed suicide: he could easily imagine the torture he would endure if he were captured alive. All the rebel leaders likewise fled to their various homelands and ended their lives in the same way. Neolaus escaped from the battlefield and went to Persis, where Molon's brother Alexander was based. He killed his mother and Molon's children, and then, after persuading Alexander to follow his example, he turned his sword on himself.

The king plundered the enemy camp and ordered Molon's corpse crucified and displayed in the most conspicuous spot in Media. The men assigned the task carried it out straight away; they took the body to Callonitis and hung it at the entrance of the pass over the Zagros. The king's next job was to reprimand the rebel troops, which he did at some length. But he guaranteed their safety, and detailed men to escort them back to Media and settle affairs there. He then went to Seleucia and restored order in the neighbouring satrapies. Leniency and prudence were his guiding principles throughout, but true to his nature Hermias brought charges against the people of Seleucia and fined the city 1,000 talents. He also banished the so-called Peliganes†, and killed a lot of the inhabitants of Seleucia. He either had their extremities hacked off, or had them murdered, or had them stretched on the rack. Nevertheless, partly by prevailing upon Hermias, and partly by handling things in his own way, the king was eventually able to restore peace and order to the city. He imposed an indemnity of only 150 talents for their offence.

Once he had taken care of this, he gave the satrapy of Media to Diogenes. Apollodorus got Susiana, and Tychon, the secretary-general of the army,* was given the coastline of the Persian Gulf as his province. So Molon's rebellion and the unrest it caused were quelled, and the status quo was restored.

[55] Elated by this victory, Antiochus decided to march against the barbarian princelings whose territories bordered on and lay beyond his own satrapies. He wanted to threaten and frighten them enough to deter them from supporting, with supplies or troops, any rebels within his kingdom. He first targeted Artabazanes, the ruler of the Peoples of the Satrap and neighbouring tribes, who was generally held to be the most formidable and effective of these princelings.

The prospect of an expedition into the interior terrified Hermias, who longed, as always, for a resumption of the campaign against Ptolemy. But then the news arrived that a son had been born to the king, and Hermias gave his consent to the expedition. There was a chance, he thought, that Antiochus might come to grief at the hands of the barbarians of the interior, or maybe an opportunity would arise for him to get rid of the king. He had no doubt that, with Antiochus out of the way, he would become the child's guardian and rule all by himself.

Once the decision had been taken to go to war, they crossed the Zagros and invaded. The land that was then ruled by Artabazanes is bordered on one side by Media, with the mountains forming a border between them, and on the other by the Phasis region of Pontus; it also borders the Hyrcanian Sea. It can call on a large population of warriors, especially cavalrymen, and it is self-sufficient in all the other raw materials of warfare as well. The principality was bypassed in the time of Alexander the Great and has lasted ever since the days of the Persian empire. Artabazanes gave in at the king's approach and agreed to terms that satisfied Antiochus. He was frightened, but the chief factor was his age: he was very old.

[56] Not long after this treaty had been ratified, the physician Apollophanes, of whom the king was particularly fond, seeing that Hermias was now showing no restraint in his exercise of power, became worried for the king's safety, and even more concerned and fearful for himself. When the opportunity arose, therefore, he spoke to the king, and advised him not to relax his guard; Hermias was presumptuous, he said, and he should take precautions against him without just waiting to suffer the same fate as his brother.* Finally, he asked him to stay

alert and to act immediately to defend himself and his Friends, since the danger was close at hand. In response, Antiochus admitted that he disliked and feared Hermias, and thanked Apollophanes warmly for having let affection override any hesitation he might have had in speaking to him about this matter.

Apollophanes was glad to find that he had not been mistaken about the king's character and discernment, and Antiochus asked him not to confine his help to words, but to take practical steps to ensure the safety of his king and the king's Friends. There was nothing he would not do to help, Apollophanes said, and before long a conspiracy had formed. They made out that the king was suffering from dizziness, as a way of gaining him a few days without his court duties and his usual bodyguards, while making it possible for approved Friends to see him in private, under the pretence that they were visiting his sickbed. This gave them the chance to recruit the right people for the job, all of whom were ready to help because of their hatred of Hermias.

The time came for them to put the plan into effect. Antiochus' doctors prescribed walks in the cool of the early morning. Hermias came at the appointed time to attend on the king, accompanied by those of the king's Friends who were in on the plot. The others missed the appointment because the king usually took his constitutional at a far later hour. The conspirators drew Hermias away from the encampment to a quiet spot, and then, when the king turned aside as though to relieve himself, they stabbed him to death. So Hermias died, an easier death than his crimes warranted. Freed now from fear, and considerably less hampered than he had been, the king set out for home. In the course of the journey, he met with nothing but approval for his actions and plans, and especially for the removal of Hermias. In Apamea at this time the womenfolk stoned Hermias' wife to death, and the children did the same for his sons.

[57] Back home, after dismissing his troops for the winter, Antiochus sent Achaeus official letters of protest. He charged him with having presumptuously assumed the diadem and with styling himself king, and warned that his dealings with Ptolemy, and his excessive disruptiveness in general, had not gone unnoticed. For Achaeus had felt sure that Antiochus would either come to grief in the course of his campaign against Artabazanes, or at least be absent for a long time, and in either case he had planned quickly to invade Syria. With support of the rebel Cyrrhestians, he had expected that

the kingdom would soon fall to him, and had set out from Lydia at full strength with this aim in mind. When he reached Laodicea in Phrygia, he had assumed the diadem and for the first time dared to style himself king and to write to the cities in that capacity. He had been encouraged to take this step above all by Garsyeris, who was in exile in Achaeus' court.

Day by day, Achaeus drew closer. He had almost reached Lycaonia when his troops mutinied. They were not pleased with the idea that they were marching against the man who was and had always been their natural king. When Achaeus realized how upset they were, he gave up. He turned around and, in an attempt to convince his men that he had never been intending to invade Syria, ravaged Pisidia instead. His men, enriched with booty, pledged their loyalty, and he returned to Lydia.

[58] The king was well aware of everything that Achaeus was doing, and, as I have already said, kept sending him threatening letters, but he was otherwise completely and utterly taken up with preparing for war against Ptolemy. At the beginning of spring, therefore, he 219
assembled his forces at Apamea, and gave his Friends the agenda of deciding how to go about the invasion of Coele Syria. Many ideas were aired on the topic—about the terrain, the armament they would need, and the support to be provided by the fleet—but then Apollophanes (the same man we have met before), who had been born in Seleucia Pieria, cut short all the discussion.

He said that it made no sense for the king to covet Coele Syria and launch an invasion there, and to do nothing about the fact that Seleucia Pieria* was in Ptolemy's hands, when Seleucia was the mother city and, so to speak, the hearth of his empire. Even apart from the shame involved for the monarchy in the fact that the city was garrisoned by the kings of Egypt, there were excellent, practical reasons for focusing on it. For while it was in enemy hands, it would prove a major obstacle to all their initiatives, in the sense that whichever direction they chose to advance, the threat of Seleucia would force them to devote just as much attention to protecting their homeland as to attacking the enemy; but if it was in their own hands, its critical situation would greatly help all their plans and projects on land and sea, as well as enabling them to ensure the safe defence of their homeland.

Everyone was won over by Apollophanes' arguments, and they decided to make recapturing Seleucia Pieria their first objective.[1] [59] Once this decision had been taken, Antiochus ordered his admiral, Diognetus, to sail for Seleucia Pieria, while he set out from Apamea with the army. He made camp about five stades from Seleucia, at the hippodrome, and dispatched Theodotus Hemiolius to Coele Syria with enough men to hold the narrows* and afford him protection.

I should describe the situation of Seleucia Pieria and the most important features of the surrounding region. The city lies on the coast, between Cilicia and Phoenicia. It is overlooked by an extremely tall mountain called Coryphaeum, which is washed on its western side by the final waters of the sea that lies between Cyprus and Phoenicia, and borders to the east the territories of Antioch and Seleucia. The city is situated to the south of the mountain, from which it is separated by a deep and impassable ravine. A tract of broken ground reaches from the city down to the sea, and otherwise it is almost entirely surrounded by crags and precipitous cliffs.

At the bottom of this tract of land is some level ground, where the commercial and residential areas are; the whole of this lower town has been exceptionally well fortified. The upper city is just as well protected by costly walls, and has been enhanced by the temples and other magnificent buildings that have been constructed there. From the seaward side, there is just a single approach to the upper city, a winding path of hand-cut steps that frequently twists and turns back on itself. Not far from the city is the mouth of the Orontes river, which rises in the Lebanon and Antilebanon mountains, passes through the Amyce valley, and carries on to Antioch. It flows through the city (where the force of its current is such that it collects all the human-generated filth) and finally joins the sea not very far from Seleucia Pieria.

[60] Antiochus first sent messages to the city authorities, offering money and all kinds of other incentives if they let him take possession of Seleucia without a fight. The high command remained impervious, but he seduced some of the junior officers, and once there was a pact

[1] The Egyptian garrison, which was then still in place in Seleucia, dated from the time when, to avenge the murder of Berenice, Ptolemy Euergetes had invaded Syria and had captured the city.

in place between them he began to prepare his forces. He planned to attack simultaneously by land and sea.

After dividing forces into three, he briefed the men and gave them their orders, promising crowns and other generous rewards for bravery displayed by either officers or men. He stationed Zeuxis at the Antioch gate and Hermogenes at the sanctuary of the Dioscuri, and gave Ardys and Diognetus the job of assaulting the port and the lower town. The agreement with his allies from within was that, if the lower town fell to his assault, the upper city would be surrendered to him. At the signal, fierce and forceful attacks were launched from all points at once, but most fearlessly by Ardys and Diognetus, because scaling-ladders could safely be brought up, set, and raised against the walls of the port and the lower town, whereas elsewhere an assault with ladders was completely out of the question, and the walls could not be carried unless men could somehow crawl up them on all fours.

So the men from the fleet set their ladders against the walls of the port, and Ardys' troops did the same for the lower town, and began a determined assault. The defenders from the upper city were facing danger from every quarter and could do nothing to help, and before long the lower town fell to Ardys. As soon as it was securely in his hands, the junior officers who had been corrupted by Antiochus ran to Leontius, the commander of the garrison, and advised him to send representatives to Antiochus and come to terms with him, before the upper city was taken too. Leontius, not knowing his officers had been suborned, was overwhelmed by their agitation and sent people to negotiate with Antiochus for the safety of everyone in the upper city.

[61] The king heard their petition and guaranteed the safety of all the free citizens of Seleucia, who numbered about 6,000.* After taking over the city, he spared the lives of the free citizens, ensured that those who had been banished were allowed back from exile, and that their citizenship rights and their property were returned to them, and installed garrisons in both the port and the acropolis.

While Antiochus was still busy with these arrangements, to his astonishment a letter arrived from Theodotus, offering to surrender Coele Syria to him and asking him to come as quickly as he could. At first, Antiochus was not at all sure what to do and how to respond to the offer. As I have already mentioned,* Theodotus, an Aetolian by birth, had been of great service to the Egyptian throne, but so far from being thanked for this, he had almost lost his life. This had

happened while Antiochus had been campaigning against Molon. Now, out of contempt for the king and mistrust of the court, he had control of Ptolemaïs* and Panaetolus held Tyre for him—and then he had sent urgently for Antiochus.

The king decided to defer his offensive against Achaeus and shelve all his other plans. He broke camp and set out with his army, taking the same route by which he had come. He then marched through the Marsyas valley and halted by the lake in the middle of the pass at Gerrha, but on receiving word that Nicolaus, Ptolemy's general, had closed in on Theodotus and had him under siege in Ptolemaïs, he set out with the light-armed troops to raise the siege. He left the heavy infantry, with the officers ordered to assault Brochi, the garrison town that commands the lake and the road. Nicolaus received advance warning of the king's approach and withdrew, but sent Lagoras of Crete and Dorymenes of Aetolia to hold the pass near Berytus. But the king attacked them and put them to flight straight away.

He made camp in the pass, [62] and waited there for the rest of the army to arrive as well. Then he briefed the men about the mission and set out at the head of his entire army, with his confidence high and excited by the prospect of success. He gave a warm welcome to Theodotus, Panaetolus, and their friends, when they came to meet him, and duly took possession of Tyre and Ptolemaïs, along with all the armament they held. This included forty ships, twenty of which were exceptionally well-made decked ships, none smaller than a quadrireme, while the rest were triremes, biremes, and single-banked galleys. He handed the ships over to Diognetus, his admiral.

News arrived that Ptolemy had gone to Memphis, and that the Egyptian army had gathered at Pelusium, where they were busy opening up the irrigation channels and blocking all sources of drinkable water. Antiochus decided against attacking Pelusium, and instead proceeded against city after city, trying to win them over by force or diplomacy. Those that were poorly defended changed sides out of fear at his approach, but those that felt secure enough behind their man-made and natural defences held out against him—which meant that he had to spend time establishing camps near by and besieging them.

Ptolemy should of course promptly have come to the defence of his possessions, given that this attack was an undisguised act of treaty-violation, but he had given so little thought to preparing for

war that he lacked the resources for any such initiative. [63] In the end, Agathocles and Sosibius, who were effectively responsible for the kingdom, met with the council and did what they could under the circumstances to address the crisis. They decided to prepare for war, but meanwhile to try to put Antiochus off his guard by sending envoys to drop hints that would seem to confirm the impression he already had of Ptolemy: that rather than fight he would resort to diplomacy and, through the intermediacy of his Friends, try to reason with Antiochus and persuade him to leave Coele Syria alone.

Agathocles and Sosibius were put in charge of the execution of the plan the council had approved, and they assiduously began to send envoys to Antiochus. At the same time, they wrote to Rhodes, Byzantium, and Cyzicus, and also to the Aetolian League, inviting them to send arbitrators to negotiate a settlement between Antiochus and Ptolemy. The arrival of all these missions, and the consequent toing and froing between the kings, gave them plenty of opportunities for slowing things down and gaining the time they needed to prepare for war.

They took up residence in Memphis and received the constant stream of missions there, as well as the envoys sent by Antiochus, whom they made welcome and received courteously. Meanwhile, they recalled and assembled at Alexandria the mercenaries who had been hired to garrison their cities abroad. They also sent men out to recruit more mercenaries, and gathered pay and provisions for the troops they already had, and those who were on their way. Every aspect of the preparations received their meticulous attention, and one or the other of them was constantly dashing off to Alexandria to check that they had everything they needed for the war effort.

They entrusted the manufacture of the weaponry, and the selection and distribution of the troops, to Echecrates of Thessaly, Phoxidas of Meliteia, Eurylochus of Magnesia, Socrates of Boeotia, and Cnopias of Allaria. It was critically important that they obtained the services of these men, who had campaigned alongside Demetrius II and Antigonus Doson, and so had extensive knowledge and broad experience of operations in the field. They took the rabble in hand and trained them to be competent soldiers.

[64] First, they divided them into units based on ethnicity and age, and assigned every man the appropriate weaponry, taking no account of what they already owned. Second, they formed them

into companies according to the needs of the present situation, even though that meant breaking up existing groupings and rewriting the pay register. And then they drilled them, until every man knew how to respond to the words of command, and how to wield his weapons. They even had them assemble under arms and listen to lectures, in which regard they were very ably served by Andromachus of Aspendus and Polycrates of Argos, who had recently arrived from Greece, and were experts on Greek initiatives and ideas about every aspect of warfare. They were also men of distinction in their native lands and men of property; Polycrates was especially notable for his long family history and for his father Mnasiades' fame as an athlete. Their lectures, delivered to both small groups and full assemblies, inspired the men and made them face the coming battle with confidence.

[65] Each of the officers I have mentioned held a command that suited his personal experience. Eurylochus of Magnesia was in charge of nearly 3,000 men, who made up the unit known as the Royal Guard. Socrates of Boeotia was in command of 2,000 peltasts. Phoxidas of Achaea Phthiotis, Ptolemaeus Thraseou, and Andromachus of Aspendus joined forces to train the phalanx and the Greek mercenaries, with Andromachus and Ptolemaeus in command of the phalanx of about 25,000, and Phoxidas of the 8,000 mercenaries. Polycrates was responsible for the preparation of the 700 horsemen of the Household Cavalry, and he also had the Libyan and native cavalry units under his command, which numbered about 3,000. Echecrates of Thessaly did an outstanding job training the 2,000 or so Greek and other mercenary cavalrymen, and proved invaluable in the actual battle. No one took more trouble with the men under his command than Cnopias of Allaria, who was responsible for the Cretan contingent, of about 3,000, of whom about 1,000 were Neocretans, with Philon of Cnossus chosen by Cnopias for their command.

There was also a contingent of 3,000 Libyans, equipped in the Macedonian style and under the command of Ammonius of Barce. The Egyptian corps of 20,000 phalangites was commanded by Sosibius. Thracians and Gauls made up another contingent, under Dionysius of Thrace. This contingent consisted of about 4,000 men who were either military settlers themselves or their descendants, and about 2,000 new recruits. So much by way of an account of the

numbers and various units of the army that was being prepared for Ptolemy.

[66] Antiochus by now had the town of Dora under siege, but the strength of the place and the support given it by Nicolaus thwarted his best efforts. Winter was on its way, so he granted Ptolemy's ambassadors a four-month armistice, and assented to the diplomatic niceties of trying to find a resolution to the war. It was extremely dishonest of him to enter into these negotiations, but he did not want to spend too long away from home. With Achaeus making no secret of his hostile intentions, and undoubtedly working in league with Ptolemy, Antiochus wanted his troops to winter in Seleucia. Once the truce was in place, Antiochus sent the missions off to Ptolemy, telling them that they would find him in Seleucia and were to let him know as soon as possible what he had decided. After leaving adequate garrisons in the region, with Theodotus in overall command, he returned to Seleucia.

When he got there, he broke the army up for the winter. He saw no need to continue with their training: he was convinced that it would not come to a battle. He expected all the parts of Coele Syria and Phoenicia that he had not already taken to fall to him without coercion and by negotiation, given that Ptolemy was completely disinclined to assent to a decisive battle. This was also the view of the diplomats, because Sosibius, in residence in Memphis, always received them courteously, and made sure that no member of the missions ever set eyes on the preparations that were going on in Alexandria.

[67] Even by the time the missions arrived, however, Sosibius was completely committed to war, and Antiochus' top priority was using the meetings to impress upon the Alexandrians his outright superiority in both military and legalistic terms. So when Ptolemy's ambassadors arrived in Seleucia and, as they had been instructed by Sosibius, became involved in detailed discussion of the proposed settlement, Antiochus tried to argue that the setback Ptolemy had suffered was not so terrible and to play down the obvious injustice of his current occupation of Coele Syria.

His basic tactic was to argue that what he had done was not an unjustifiable act of aggression, but reclamation of what was rightfully his. The original seizure of Coele Syria by Antigonus Monophthalmus, he said, and Seleucus I's rulership of the region, constituted the most

authoritative and legitimate claims to possession, and that meant that Coele Syria belonged to him, not to Ptolemy. In fact, he said, the purpose of Ptolemy I's war against Antigonus had been to establish Seleucus as the ruler of the region, not himself. Above all, he emphasized the agreement entered into by all the kings after they had defeated Antigonus: after due deliberation, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus had unanimously decided that all of Syria belonged to Seleucus.*

Ptolemy's ambassadors, however, argued the opposite point of view. They exaggerated the injustice of Antiochus' invasion and expressed outrage at what had happened; they argued that Theodotus' treachery and Antiochus' invasion constituted treaty-violation; and they too went back to the time of Ptolemy I, the son of Lagus, to support their case. That is, they maintained that Ptolemy had helped Seleucus on the understanding that, while Seleucus would gain the whole of Asia as his dominion, he would leave Coele Syria and Phoenicia to Ptolemy.

These and similar points were repeatedly aired by the two sides in the course of their diplomatic exchanges and meetings, but absolutely nothing was achieved because the dispute was taking place among mutual friends, which meant that there was nobody neutral there to check and restrain anyone who seemed to be wrong. But the main stumbling block for both sides was the issue of Achaeus.* Ptolemy wanted him included in the treaty, but Antiochus refused to allow the matter to be raised at all, and found it outrageous that Ptolemy would even mention a rebel, let alone want to protect him.

218 [68] The upshot was that the approach of spring found both sides weary of diplomacy, and with no treaty in place. Antiochus therefore assembled his forces for a land and sea invasion of Coele Syria, with the intention of subduing all the parts that were not already in his hands, while Ptolemy made Nicolaus his commander-in-chief, sent plenty of supplies to Gaza, and reinforced both the army and the navy. With the addition of these supplies and men, Nicolaus embarked confidently on the war, and in all his initiatives he found a willing colleague in Perigenes, the Egyptian admiral, who had been sent by Ptolemy to take command of the fleet of 30 decked ships and more than 400 transport vessels. Nicolaus, an Aetolian by birth, was the most experienced and enterprising man in Ptolemy's army. He split up his forces and had one division occupy the pass at Platanus, while he took the

other and occupied the pass near Porphyreon, where he waited, with the fleet lying close off shore, for Antiochus's invasion force.

When Antiochus reached Marathus, he was approached by some people from Aradus, who asked to join his protectorate. He agreed, and put an end to the internal strife that had been plaguing them by reconciling the island Aradians with those living on the mainland. Then he continued, past the headland called the Face of God, and reached Berytus. On the way he captured Botrys, and put Trieres and Calamus to the torch. From Berytus, he sent Nicarchus and Theodotus on ahead to secure the pass by the Lycus river,* while he rested the main army, before setting out again and halting at the Damouras river. Meanwhile, Diognetus and the fleet shadowed him down the coast. Antiochus then once again detached Nicarchus' and Theodotus' light-armed infantry from the rest of the army, and set out with them to reconnoitre the pass held by Nicolaus. After familiarizing himself with the lie of the land, he returned to camp. The next day, he left the heavy infantry behind under the command of Nicarchus, and set out with the remainder to engage the enemy.

[69] The coastline in this region is reduced by the slopes of the Lebanon mountains to a narrow strip, and this particular stretch of coastline is overarched by a forbiddingly rugged spur, which leaves only a narrow, awkward passage right by the sea. This is where Nicolaus had drawn up his troops; he had posted substantial numbers of men to hold various points, and had secured everywhere else with man-made defences. He had no doubt that he would easily halt Antiochus' invasion there.

Antiochus divided his troops into three. One division he assigned to Theodotus; his job was to engage the enemy and force a passage at the very foot of the slopes of the mountain. He put Menedemus in command of the second division, stressing the importance of his attempt on the centre of the spur. The third division, under the command of Diocles, the military governor of Parapotamia, was assigned the coast. Antiochus himself and his retinue took up a central position, so that he could survey all the action and send in the reserves wherever they were needed.

Meanwhile, Diognetus and Perigenes readied their crews and took up battle positions, keeping as close as possible to the shore in an attempt to get the land and sea battles to form a common front. At a single signal and word of command, everyone moved into the attack.

The battle at sea was indecisive, since both fleets were similar in size and strength. On land, Nicolaus' troops, making good use of the natural strength of their position, had the upper hand at first. But when Theodotus' men drove their opponents off the slopes, and then charged down from higher ground, Nicolaus' troops all turned and fled in complete disarray. About 2,000 of them were cut down during the flight, with at least that many taken prisoner as well. All the rest retreated to Sidon. At sea, Perigenes' prospects had been starting to look promising, but when he saw that the land battle was lost, he gave up and sailed to Sidon as well, without seeing further action.

[70] Antiochus led his troops down to Sidon and camped close by. He decided against assaulting the city, because it was well stocked with supplies and filled with men, either residents or soldiers who had taken refuge there. Instead, after ordering his admiral, Diognetus, to sail on to Tyre with the fleet, he decamped and marched to Philoteria, a town on the shore of the lake into which the river Jordan flows, and out of which it flows again into the plains around Scythopolis. Both these two towns surrendered to him on terms, which made him face the future with more confidence, because the territory attached to these towns was easily capable of supplying the entire army's needs and provisions for the campaign.

He left Philoteria and Scythopolis secured by garrisons, crossed the intervening high ground, and reached Atabyrium, perched on a rounded hilltop, with an ascent of more than fifteen stades. Under the circumstances, an ambush and a trick were needed to take the town. First, he enticed the garrison out to skirmish, and lured the advance guard well ahead of the rest in pursuit of his men. Then he sprang the trap: the apparent fugitives turned around, and those who were waiting in ambush emerged from their hiding-places. Many of the enemy fell in battle, and the rest fled with Antiochus' men in pursuit. In the ensuing panic Atabyrium too fell straight away.

At much the same time, one of Ptolemy's senior officers, called Ceraeas, deserted to Antiochus. He was treated with such generosity by Antiochus that quite a few other enemy officers became restless. At any rate, a short while later Hippolochus of Thessaly also defected, and brought a 400-strong cavalry squadron which had been in Ptolemy's service. After garrisoning Atabyrium too, Antiochus broke camp and set out. Pella, Camous, and Gephrous were the next places to fall.

[71] One of the results of these successes was that all the inhabitants of the nearby parts of Arabia* conferred and unanimously chose to

side with Antiochus. With his prospects and his stores improved, he set out on the march again, until he reached Galatis, where he took Abila and defeated a relieving force under Nicias, the friend and relative of Menneas.†* There was still Gadara, which had the reputation of being the strongest town in the district, but Antiochus encamped near by and built siegeworks, and soon terrified the inhabitants into submission.

Next, hearing that a large enemy force had gathered in Rabbatamana,* a town in Arabia, and was plundering and overrunning farmland belonging to the Arabians who had come over to his side, he dropped everything and marched there. He set up camp close to the range of hills where the town is. As he rode around the hilltop town, he noticed that there were only two points at which it could be approached, so he drew closer and set about constructing siege engines at those two points. He put Nicarchus in charge of one position and Theodotus of the other, and from then on acted as neutral superintendent and inspector of both men as they went about their assignments. Theodotus and Nicarchus gave it their best, and the competition between them was intense, to see who would be the first to demolish the stretch of wall in front of his engines. The upshot was that both sections of the wall fell sooner than expected.

With the walls breached, they started to assault the town, seizing every opportunity that presented itself, at any hour of the day or night, to apply maximum force. But although they kept probing, there was too large a body of troops inside the town for them to make progress, until one of the prisoners told them about an underground passage to the spring from which the inhabitants were drawing water while the town was under siege. They broke into the passage and blocked it up with wood and stones and so on, and when the inhabitants ran out of water, they were forced to surrender.

So Rabbatamana fell. Antiochus put Nicarchus in charge of the town and left him with an adequate garrison. He also sent the defectors, Hippolochus and Ceraeas, to Samaria with 5,000 foot. Their orders were to establish themselves there, and to garrison every town that submitted to him. Then he set out with the main army for Ptolemaïs, where he had decided to winter.

[72] That same summer, the Pednelissians were being besieged by the Selgians,* and turned to Achaeus for help in their hour of danger. He readily agreed, and the prospect of help enabled them to endure the siege more easily. Achaeus lost no time in sending Garsyeris off

to relieve Pednelissus, with 6,000 foot and 500 horse. When the Selgians heard about the approach of this relieving force, they had most of their troops occupy the Stairway, as the pass is called, while the rest held the entrance to Saporda and made the tracks and trails impassable.

Garsyeris entered Milyas and made camp at Cretopolis. When he heard that the passes were held against him, making further progress impossible, he came up with the following ruse. He broke camp and retraced his steps, as if the occupation of the passes had made him give up the idea of relieving Pednelissus—and the Selgians fell for it straight away and believed that he had indeed given up. They left the passes and returned either to their camp or to Selge, where the harvest was due. But Garsyeris turned around and marched briskly back to the passes. He found them abandoned, left troops to guard them, with Phayllus in overall command, and went on with the main army to Perge. From there, he sent agents to all the communities of Pisidia and Pamphylia, inviting them, in view of the threat from Selge, to join Achaeus' alliance and help relieve Pednelissus.

[73] Meanwhile, the Selgians had one of their generals lead an attack on Phayllus. They hoped that their superior knowledge of the terrain would enable them to take him by surprise and dislodge him from his strongpoints. The plan came to nothing, however, and they lost a lot of men in the course of attacking Phayllus' positions. They abandoned this idea, then, but set about besieging and assaulting Pednelissus with even more determination.

The Etenneis, the inhabitants of the highlands of Pisidia above Side, sent Garsyeris 8,000 hoplites, and another 4,000 came from Aspendus. Side, however, did not join in the relief effort; they did not want to antagonize Antiochus, but a more potent factor was their hatred of the Aspendians. Garsyeris added the reinforcements to his army and went to Pednelissus, confident that he would raise the siege straight away. The Selgians remained unintimidated, however, so he made camp a fair distance away. Food was now short enough for the Pednelissians to be in a bad way, and Garsyeris wanted to do what he could to help, so he prepared a task force of 2,000, gave each man a medimnus of wheat, and sent them to break into the town under cover of darkness. But the Selgians got wind of the endeavour and fought back, and in the end most of Garsyeris' men were massacred and all the grain was lost to the Selgians.

This gave such a boost to the Selgians' confidence that they decided to try to assault Garsyeris' position as well as the town. Reckless daring is typical of the Selgians' approach to warfare. So they left just enough men to guard their camp, while the rest surrounded Garsyeris' camp and launched a spirited attack at several points at once. Garsyeris' men were taken by surprise and came under attack from all directions. By the time the palisade was breached at several points, things looked grim, but Garsyeris had the cavalry ride out of the camp at an unguarded point. The Selgians were unconcerned: they assumed that they were panicked fugitives, fleeing certain death, and simply ignored them. But the riders wheeled around, charged the enemy from behind, and fell on them with telling effect. At this, Garsyeris' infantry plucked up courage, even though they were already in retreat, and began to fight back again. Finding themselves under attack from all sides, the Selgians eventually turned to flight. At the same time, the Pednelissians attacked those who had been left to defend the Selgians' camp and drove them out. The pursuit went on for so long that at least 10,000 of the Selgians were killed. As for the survivors, the allied troops escaped to their various homelands, and the remaining Selgians crossed the hills and sought the safety of their own homeland.

[74] Garsyeris set out straight away in pursuit. He wanted to cross the badlands and get close to Selge before the fugitives had time to stop and think about what to do. When he and his army approached the city, the Selgians became absolutely terrified for their lives and the city of their birth. They could not rely on their allies, who had suffered the same defeat as them, and they were overwhelmed with dismay at the extent of the disaster. They convened a general assembly, and decided to send out as their negotiator one of their fellow citizens, a man called Logbasis, who for a long time had been close to and a guest-friend of Antiochus Hierax,* who died in Thrace. Moreover, he had been entrusted with the guardianship of Laodice, who subsequently married Achaeus, and had brought the girl up and loved her as though she were his own daughter. So he seemed to be the right man for the job, and the Selgians sent him on his way as their ambassador. But when he got Garsyeris alone, it turned out that helping his homeland as he had been charged was the last thing on his mind: on the contrary, he urged him to send at once for Achaeus, and promised to betray the city to them. Garsyeris welcomed the opportunity and

wrote to Achaeus, explaining the situation and recommending that he come. Meanwhile, he entered into a truce with the Selgians, but kept delaying the finalization of the actual treaty by constantly raising finicky objections and queries. He was waiting for Achaeus to arrive, and he wanted to give Logbasis time for his meetings and preparations.

[75] Meanwhile, given the frequency with which the two sides were meeting and conferring, the troops from Garsyeris' camp got into the habit of entering the city to buy food—a practice that has often in the past proved fatal. It seems to me, in fact, that human beings are not the most cunning of creatures, as they are supposed to be, but the most gullible. How many camps and fortresses have fallen to treachery in this way? How many cities, even? And since this has happened and is known to have happened so often in the past, how on earth is it that every time we are faced with this kind of trickery, we behave like new-born innocents? This is only ever due to lack of familiarity with past disasters. Whatever the cost in terms of hardship and expense, we fill our stores with grain and our coffers with cash, we build defences and manufacture weapons, to make sure that we are ready for anything, and yet we completely ignore the simplest of precautions, the best defence against danger. And we do this even though we are in a position to acquire the information we need while relaxing and enjoying ourselves in a respectable fashion, by studying and investigating history.

Anyway, Achaeus arrived as and when expected, and after meeting with him the Selgians looked forward to being treated with consummate clemency. But Logbasis had spent the time gradually gathering in his own house some of the soldiers who had been coming into the city. He now began to advise his fellow citizens not to let the moment pass, but to seize the opportunity offered them by this glimpse of clemency from Achaeus. The situation should be discussed, he said, by the entire citizen body, and then they should finalize the terms of the treaty. So before long the assembly met. Everyone had been summoned even from their guard duties, and they all got down to discussion.

[76] Logbasis signalled to the enemy to let them know that the moment had come. Then he put the soldiers who had assembled in his house on alert, and began to equip and arm himself and his sons for the fight. Achaeus advanced on the city itself with half the enemy troops, while Garsyeris took the rest and set out for the

Cespedium, a sanctuary of Zeus that overlooks the city and does service as their acropolis. But a goatherd saw what was going on and brought the news to the assembly. Some of them immediately raced off to the Cespedium, others to their posts, but an enraged majority made for Logbasis' house, now that his intrigues had been exposed. They gained entry either by climbing up onto the roof or by breaking down the doorway, and then they murdered not only Logbasis and his sons, but everyone else they found there. After issuing a proclamation of freedom for any slaves who would help them, they split up into groups and dispersed to defend the critical spots.

Finding the Cespedium already occupied, Garsyeris gave up. Achaeus, however, was storming the very gates of the city. The Selgians made a sortie, and Achaeus lost 700 men, all from his Mysian contingent, before breaking off. After this incident, Achaeus and Garsyeris returned to their camp, but the Selgians were still frightened, not just of the enemy army encamped near by, but also about the possibility of further treachery from within. So they sent some respected elders out to the camp, bearing suppliant branches, entered into a truce, and negotiated an end to the war. The treaty stipulated that they were immediately to pay an indemnity of 400 talents and return the prisoners they had taken from Pednelissus, and then later were to pay a further 300 talents. Logbasis' treachery had brought the Selgians to the brink of losing their homeland, but their courage enabled them to hold on to their land and their independence, without disgracing† their kinship with the Spartans.

[77] Achaeus reduced Milyas and most of Pamphylia before returning to Sardis. While keeping up the war with Attalus,* he also began to threaten Prusias, and generally to make himself a feared and oppressive presence in Asia Minor. While Achaeus had been occupied with the campaign against Selge, Attalus had recruited Gallic mercenaries, the Aegosages, and had proceeded against the cities of Aeolis and thereabouts. These cities had previously taken Achaeus' side out of fear, so most of them came over to Attalus of their own accord, and were glad to do so; in some cases, however, force was required. The first cities to change sides on this occasion were Cyme, Myrina†, and Phocaea, and then Aegae and Temnus capitulated later, terrified by Attalus' approach. Teus and Colophon sent envoys to entrust themselves and their cities to Attalus, and he accepted them back into his alliance on the same terms as before, but took hostages as well.

The meeting with the envoys from Smyrna was amicable because no city had proved more loyal to him.

Attalus next crossed the Lycus river and proceeded against the settlements of Mysia. After that, he went to Carseae and Didymateiche. His approach terrified the garrisons of both towns, and Themistocles, who had been left in command of the region by Achaeus, surrendered them to him. Then he went and plundered the Apia plain, before crossing Mount Pelecas and halting at the Megistus river.

[78] While he was encamped by the Megistus, there was a lunar eclipse,* and the Gauls, for whom it was ominous, refused to carry on. They had been complaining for a while about the hardship of the march, but then they were accompanied on the campaign by their wives and children, who brought up the rear in carts. Attalus still had need of their services, but he could see that they were becoming dangerously unruly and defiant—they kept to themselves during the march, for instance, and made their own separate camps—and he found himself in a particularly difficult quandary. On the one hand, he did not want to see them lined up alongside Achaeus and against himself; on the other hand, he was worried about the reputation he would acquire if he had his men corral the Gauls and kill them, given that people would suppose that they had crossed from Europe to Asia in the first place because he had offered them his protection. So he seized the opportunity presented by the eclipse and undertook, in the short term, to take them back to the border and give them good land to settle in, and, in the longer term, to help them whenever they called on him, provided that he had the means and that the venture was honourable.

So Attalus took the Aegosages back to the Hellespont. While he was there, he received representatives from Lampsacus, Alexandria Troas, and Ilium; the discussions were amicable, because these cities had remained loyal to him. Then he went back with his army to Pergamum.

217 [79] By the beginning of spring, Antiochus and Ptolemy had completed all their preparations and were ready to fight the decisive battle. Ptolemy left Alexandria with about 70,000 foot, 5,000 horse, and 73 elephants.

Antiochus responded to the news that Ptolemy had set out by mustering his army. This was made up as follows. There were about

5,000 Dahae, Carmanians, and Cilicians equipped as mobile troops, under the diligent command of Byttacus of Macedon. Theodotus of Aetolia, the renegade, commanded an elite force of 10,000 men, mostly Silver Shields, from all over the kingdom, who were equipped in the Macedonian style. The phalanx, under the command of Nicarchus and Theodotus Hemiolius, was about 20,000 strong. Then there were 2,000 Agrianians and Persians, serving as archers and slingers, and 1,000 Thracians, commanded by Menedemus of Alabanda. There were also Medes, Cissians, Cadusii, and Carmanians, totalling about 5,000, under the command of Aspasianus of Media. There were about 10,000 men from Arabia and thereabouts, commanded by Zabdibelus. Hippolochus of Thessaly led the contingent of Greek mercenaries, who numbered about 5,000. Antiochus also had 1,500 Cretans, commanded by Eurylochus, and 1,000 Neocretans, under Zelys of Gortyn. Then there were 500 Lydian skirmishers, armed with javelins, and 1,000 Cardaces under Lysimachus the Gaul. The cavalry numbered about 6,000, two-thirds of whom were under the command of Antipater, the king's nephew,* while the rest were led by Themison. Antiochus' army consisted of 62,000 foot, 6,000 horse, and 102 elephants.

[80] Ptolemy marched to Pelusium and made his first camp there. After waiting for the stragglers to catch up and distributing rations, he moved out. He marched past Casius and the Barathra marshes, and on through the desert. Five days out from Pelusium, he reached the place he had in mind, fifty stades before Raphia,* and made camp. Raphia is the first city one comes to in Coele Syria after leaving Egypt via Rhinocolura. Meanwhile, Antiochus arrived at Gaza, and after resting his troops there for a while, he set out again at a steady pace. He passed Raphia and made camp by night about ten stades from the enemy.

For a while, the two armies stayed encamped that far apart, but after a few days Antiochus moved. He wanted to find a better location, and he wanted to fire his men up, so he halted aggressively close to Ptolemy: the two camps were no more than five stades away from each other. This meant that there were quite a few clashes between water-collecting and foraging parties, and both cavalry and infantry became involved in minor engagements in no man's land.

[81] At this juncture Theodotus came up with a scheme that was typically Aetolian, but required quite a bit of courage to put into effect.

Having spent a lot of time in Ptolemy's company in the past, he knew the king's character and habits, and he and two others entered the enemy camp one day just before dawn. It was too dark for his face to be recognized, and there was nothing about his clothing or general appearance that would attract attention, because of the diversity of Ptolemy's forces. Some of the skirmishing of the past few days had taken place very close to the enemy camp, and Theodotus had been able to pinpoint the position of the king's pavilion.

He boldly made straight for it. He sneaked past all the sentries without being noticed, and burst into the pavilion which the king used mainly for official meetings and for dining. He searched everywhere, but failed to find his quarry: Ptolemy's sleeping-quarters were elsewhere, away from the public, official tent. But Theodotus wounded two attendants who had bedded down there and killed the king's physician, Andreas. Then he returned to his own camp without coming to any harm, although his exit from Ptolemy's camp caused a bit of a disturbance. He was brave enough to have fulfilled his mission, but failed at the planning stage: he should have gained more precise information about where the king was in the habit of sleeping.

[82] The kings stayed encamped opposite each other for five days before being ready to resolve the issue by battle. As soon as Ptolemy began to move his forces out, Antiochus did the same. Both of them positioned their phalanxes and their elite troops, equipped in the Macedonian style, directly opposite each other. As for the wings, Ptolemy posted Polycrates with his cavalry on the far left. Then he filled the space between Polycrates and the phalanx as follows: first, right next to the cavalry, came the Cretans; then the Royal Guard; and finally, next to the Libyan phalangites, Socrates and his peltasts. The far right was occupied by Echecrates of Thessaly with his cavalry; immediately to his left stood the Gauls and Thracians, and finally, next to the Egyptian phalangites, Phoxidas with the Greek mercenaries. Forty elephants were stationed on the left, where Ptolemy himself would be during the battle, and the other thirty-three in front of the mercenary cavalry on the right wing.

Antiochus took up a position on the right wing, so that he would be fighting Ptolemy. He posted sixty elephants out in front, under the command of Philip, his foster-brother; then, behind the elephants, he placed 2,000 cavalry under Antipater, with another 2,000 alongside them at an angle. Next to the cavalry along the line were the

Cretans; then the Greek mercenaries; then the 5,000 phalangites under Byttacus of Macedon. On the far left he posted Themison's 2,000 cavalry; then the Cardaces and the Lydian skirmishers; then the 3,000 or so light-armed troops commanded by Menedemus; then the Cissians, Medes, and Carmanians; and finally, next to the phalanx, the Arabians. The remaining elephants were deployed in front of the left wing, under the command of Myiscus, one of the Royal Pages.

[83] Once the armies were in formation, both kings rode along the front of their lines with their senior officers and Friends, and addressed the troops. Both of them were relying above all on their phalanxes, and they gave their longest and most forceful speeches at that point in the formation. On each side, the king's message was reinforced by the people in command of the phalangites—in Ptolemy's case by Andromachus and Sosibius, and in Antiochus' case by Theodotus and Nicarchus. Ptolemy was also accompanied by his sister Arsinoe. On each side, the substance of the address was much the same. Since both kings had only recently come to the throne, they had no glorious and remarkable achievements of their own to bring up, so they tried to instil pride and courage in the phalangites by reminding them of the glorious achievements of their predecessors, and of the battles the troops themselves had won. Above all, however, they dangled the prospect of the rewards they would bestow, and urged and called on everyone in general, but the officers in particular, to acquit themselves bravely and well in the coming battle. With these words and others to the same effect, they rode along their lines, addressing the men either directly or through translators.

[84] When Ptolemy and his sister had passed all the way along their line to the far left, and Antiochus and the Royal Squadron had reached the far right of theirs, they signalled the start of the battle. The elephants were the first to engage. A few of Ptolemy's elephants closed with their counterparts on the enemy side, and the soldiers in the turrets on top fought well, striking and wounding one another at close quarters with their pikes. The beasts themselves fought even better, charging at one another and meeting head to head. Elephants fight by tangling and locking their tusks together, and then pushing hard while leaning into each other, trying to gain ground, until one overpowers the other and pushes its trunk aside, thereby exposing its opponent's flank. The stronger elephant then gores its opponent, using its tusks as a bull does his horns.

Most of Ptolemy's elephants shrank from battle, however, as Libyan elephants tend to. They can abide neither the smell nor the noise of Indian elephants,* and they are also, I imagine, intimidated by their size and strength. In any case, they turn and flee, without even drawing close. And that is exactly what happened on this occasion. With the elephants in disarray and driven back onto their own lines, Ptolemy's Royal Guard was forced to fall back. Antiochus then rode around the elephants and launched a fierce attack on Polycrates and his cavalry, while at the same time, on the other side of the elephants, the Greek mercenaries who had been stationed next to the phalanx attacked Ptolemy's peltasts, whose ranks had also been thrown into confusion by the elephants, and drove them back. The whole of Ptolemy's left wing, then, was being forced back.

[85] On Ptolemy's right, Echecrates waited for a while to see what the outcome was of the clash of the other wings. When he saw from the dust cloud that his own side had come off worst, and that on his wing the elephants were refusing even to approach the enemy, he ordered Phoxidas and his Greek mercenaries to engage the enemy units directly in front of them, while he led the cavalry and those who were deployed behind the elephants in a flanking movement around the path of the elephants, so that he could fall on the enemy cavalry in the rear and from the side. Before long he routed them, and Phoxidas and his men were just as successful: their charge forced the Arabians and the Medes to turn and flee in complete disarray.

Antiochus' right wing, then, was winning, but his left wing was coming off worst, as I have described. The phalanxes, stripped of both their wings, stayed where they were in the middle of the plain, without yet having seen action, and with their spirits finely balanced between hope and fear. Antiochus, meanwhile, was making certain of victory on the right, but just then Ptolemy, who had taken shelter behind his phalanx, emerged and showed himself to his men. This caused consternation in the enemy ranks, but hugely increased the resolution and determination of his own phalangites, who accordingly lowered their pikes and began to advance, led by Sosibius and Andromachus. The elite Syrian troops resisted for a short while, and Nicarchus' division also soon gave way and began to fall back.

Antiochus, who was young and inexperienced, assumed on the basis of what was happening in his part of the field that everywhere else his men were equally victorious, and continued to pursue the fugitives.

Some time later, however, one of his senior officers called on him to halt. He showed him that the dust cloud was moving away from where the phalanx had been and towards their own camp, and then Antiochus realized the truth. He started to race back to the battlefield with the Royal Squadron, but when he found that all his men were in flight, he retreated to Raphia. In his view, he had done all he could to ensure victory, and the defeat was the fault of everyone else's cowardice and timidity.

[86] Ptolemy's phalangites had won outright, and the cavalry and mercenaries from his right wing inflicted heavy losses on the enemy during the pursuit. For the time being, he left the battlefield and spent the night in the camp he had used before. In the morning, he collected and buried the bodies of his dead, and stripped the enemy corpses of their arms and armour. Then he broke camp and set out for Raphia.

After his flight, Antiochus had wanted to take up a position straight away outside the city, once he had assembled those of his men who had maintained some kind of order while fleeing. Most of them, however, had already taken refuge inside the city, so he had no choice but to do likewise. In the early morning he left Raphia with the remnants of his army and headed for Gaza, where he made camp and contacted Ptolemy for permission to collect those of his men who had fallen. A truce was granted, and he gave the dead their last rites.

Antiochus' losses were almost 10,000 infantry and more than 300 cavalry, with more than 4,000 men taken prisoner; three of his elephants died on the battlefield, and two more later succumbed to their wounds. Ptolemy's losses came to about 1,500 infantry and 700 cavalry; sixteen of his elephants were killed, and most of the rest were captured.* This was the outcome of the battle of Raphia, fought by the kings for possession of Coele Syria.

After collecting the bodies of the dead, Antiochus returned home with his army. Ptolemy regained Raphia and all the other cities in short order, since each community vied with its neighbours to be the first to change sides and renew its allegiance with him. It may be that under such circumstances everyone tends to bend with the wind, but people in that part of the world have a particular talent and proclivity for opportunistic ingratiation. But on this occasion, their behaviour was only to be expected, since loyalty towards the Egyptian kings had long been prevalent there; the ordinary people of Coele Syria have

always preferred this dynasty. And so they behaved with the utmost obsequiousness, and honoured Ptolemy with crowns, sacrifices, altars, and so on and so forth.

[87] Meanwhile, Antiochus reached the city that bore his name.* He immediately sent his nephew Antipater and Theodotus Hemiolius to Ptolemy, to negotiate a settlement and an end to the war. The possibility that Ptolemy might launch an invasion worried him, because he was uncertain about the loyalty of his men after this defeat, and was afraid that Achaeus might opportunistically attack. None of this was on Ptolemy's mind at all. He was delighted with his unexpected victory—that is to say, with having unexpectedly regained Coele Syria—and was not averse to the idea of peace. On the contrary, it was too much to his liking: his apathetic and corrupt lifestyle drew him to it. In fact, when Antipater arrived, after a few threats and complaints about what Antiochus had done, he agreed to a year-long truce.

He sent Sosibius back with Antiochus' representatives to finalize the treaty, while he spent three months in Syria and Phoenicia, settling affairs in the cities. Then he made Andromachus of Aspendus governor of the whole province, and with his sister and Friends he returned to Alexandria, the victor in a war that his subjects had not expected him to conclude so successfully, given the general tenor of his life. As for Antiochus, once he had settled the terms of the truce with Sosibius, he returned to his original project and prepared for war against Achaeus.

228 That was how things stood in Asia. [88] At much the same time the Rhodians were busy treating a crisis as an opportunity. They had recently been devastated by an earthquake, which had brought down the Colossus* and demolished most of their defences and shipyards, but they handled matters in such a calm and businesslike manner that the disaster did them more good than harm. For states as well as for individuals, the difference between complacency and care is enormous: even success may be harmful if it is managed foolishly, and gain can come even from catastrophe, if it is managed intelligently. At any rate, the Rhodians handled the matter well on this occasion. Whether their representatives were addressing general meetings or particular individuals, they talked up the enormity and horror of the disaster, while conducting themselves in a dignified and respectable manner. This way of approaching cities, and especially kings, was so

effective that it not only gained them incredibly generous donations, but even made the donors feel grateful to them.

Hieron and Gelon,* for instance, not only gave 75 talents of silver (some immediately and the balance very soon afterwards) to be put towards rebuilding the walls† and keeping the gymnasia supplied with oil; they also gave silver cauldrons and their stands, and silver jugs, to be deposited in the temples, and 10 talents to be spent on sacrifices, and a further 10 talents for the enrichment of the citizens, making 100 talents in all. They also granted exemption from customs duties for all Rhodian ships entering their ports and gave them 50 three-cubit catapults.* Finally, as if all these gifts were not enough—as if they still felt under some kind of obligation—they also set up in the Rhodian Exchange a statue group showing the people of Rhodes being crowned by the people of Syracuse.

[89] Ptolemy III also undertook to donate 300 talents of silver; a million artabas* of grain; timber for the construction of 10 quinqueremes and 10 triremes, consisting of pine, milled square, with a total length of 40,000 cubits; 1,000 talents of bronze coinage; 3,000 talents of tow; 3,000 pieces of sailcloth; 3,000 talents of bronze† for the repair of the Colossus; and 100 builders, along with 350 labourers, and 14 talents a year to pay them. He also promised 12,000 artabas of grain for their athletic and religious festivals, and 20,000 artabas to provision 10 triremes. He gave most of this, including a third of the silver, straight away.

For his part, Antigonus Doson promised 10,000 pieces of timber, between 8 and 16 cubits in length, to be used as rafters; 5,000 cross-beams, 7 cubits in length; 3,000 talents of iron; 1,000 talents of pitch and 1,000 measures of tar; and 100 talents of silver. His wife, Chryseis, gave 100,000 medimni of grain and 3,000 talents of lead.

As for Seleucus II, the father of Antiochus, as well as granting exemption from customs duties to all Rhodian ships entering his kingdom's ports, and as well as giving them 10 fully equipped quinqueremes and 200,000 medimni of grain, he also gave them 10,000 cubits of timber, and 1,000 talents each of resin and hair.*

[90] Prusias and Mithradates II* also gave generously; the various princelings who ruled parts of Asia at the time—Lysanias, Olympichus, and Limnaeus, I mean—played their part; and one would be hard put to name all the cities that contributed what they could. All this means that, in terms of time, considering the original

state of affairs before the city of Rhodes was rebuilt, it is astonishing how quickly both individuals and the city as a whole made great strides towards recovering their prosperity. This is less surprising, however, when one considers how favourably located the place is, how much it received from abroad, and how well subsidized its prosperity was; in fact, one feels that the result falls somewhat short of what it should.

I hope to have said enough to demonstrate, first, how well the Rhodians manage their affairs, which is truly commendable and inspirational, and, second, how niggardly kings are nowadays, and how easily satisfied leagues and cities are. It is not right for kings to count themselves generous if they give away four or five talents, nor should they expect the same gratitude and respect from the Greeks that their predecessors' kings earned. As for the cities, if they remembered how generous donations used to be in the past, they would wake up to the paltriness and triviality of what they receive these days in return for the highest honours and most valued privileges they have to bestow. They should try to adhere to the principle that everything has its price, normally something at which the Greeks excel.

217 [91] We left the Social War at the time when Aratus had just become general of the Achaean League, and Agetas was general of the Aetolian League. At the very beginning of the summer, Lycurgus of Sparta returned from Aetolia: the ephors discovered that the charges which had led to his flight were false, and they wrote and invited him back. On his return, he began to finalize with Pyrrhias, the Aetolian general responsible at the time for Elis, the details of their planned invasion of Messenia.

Meanwhile, Aratus found the League's mercenary force in a sorry state, and the member cities disinclined to pay the taxes required for their upkeep. He inherited this situation from the previous general, Eperatus, who, as I said earlier,* had mishandled League affairs and shown little interest in them at all. But after speaking to the Achaean assembly, Aratus obtained permission to address these issues, and was able to engage actively in preparing for war. The Achaeans voted to maintain a mercenary force of 8,000 foot and 500 horse, and an elite Achaean contingent of 3,000 foot and 300 horse, which was to include 500 foot and 50 horse from the Bronze Shields of Megalopolis, and the same number of Argives. They also voted to have three ships

patrol the Gulf of Argolis off Acte, and another three the coastline of Patrae and Dyme.

[92] So Aratus was busy with all these negotiations and preparations. Lycurgus and Pyrrhias, meanwhile, kept in touch with each other, to coordinate their departures, and then advanced on Messenia. Aratus responded by taking the mercenaries and some of the elite contingent to Megalopolis to support the Messenians. Once he had set out, Lycurgus took a Messenian town called Calamae by treachery from within, but then he carried straight on, since he wanted to link up with the Aetolians. But Pyrrhias had left Elis with a very light force, and no sooner had he entered Messenia than he was checked at Cyparissia and turned back. Unable to link up with Pyrrhias, then, and lacking sufficient strength on his own, Lycurgus made a half-hearted attempt to take Andania, and then returned to Sparta without having achieved anything.

Even though the enemy's plans were in tatters, Aratus kept his head and took thought for the future. He arranged with Taurion and the Messenians that each of them were to make ready and supply 50 horse and 500 foot. His plan was to have this force protect Messenia, Megalopolis, Tegea, and Argos, all of which, lying as they do on the borders of Laconia, are more vulnerable to war from Sparta than anywhere else in the Peloponnese, while the Achaean elite troops and the mercenaries guarded the parts of Achaea that faced Elis and Aetolia.

[93] Once these arrangements were in place, Aratus' next job, as directed by the Achaean assembly, was to pacify Megalopolis. Only a few years earlier, the Megalopolitans had been deprived of their homeland by Cleomenes, and had lost everything,* right down to the foundations, as the saying goes. Many things they lacked altogether; everything was scarce. Although they remained resolute, neither individuals nor the state had the resources actually to do anything, and the city was filled with dispute, division, and mutual antagonism. Which is what tends to happen, at a political level as well as in people's private lives, when ambitions fail for lack of resources.

The original bone of contention was the city's defences. Some people said that they should reduce the area of the city until it was small enough for them to be able not just to complete the project of surrounding it with a wall, but also to man the wall in an emergency. In actual fact, they said, the size of the city and its small population were precisely the factors that had caused its downfall. And they also

argued that landowners should be required to give up a third of their property, to encourage new settlers who would bring the population figures back up again. Their opponents, however, found the idea of reducing the size of the city intolerable, and were not at all happy with the idea that they should give up a third of their estates. But the most serious dispute concerned the law code that had been drawn up for them by Prytanis, an eminent member of the Peripatetic school of philosophy, whose services as law-maker were donated by Antigonus Doson. The Megalopolitans were deeply divided, then, but Aratus turned things around and brought the conflict to an end. The terms of reconciliation were inscribed on a stele which was set up by the altar of Hestia in the Homarium.*

[94] Once this settlement was in place, Aratus broke camp and left Megalopolis. He went to attend the Achaean assembly, leaving the mercenaries in the hands of Lycus of Pharae, who was then sub-general for the Patrae division.† Euripidas (who, at the Eleans' request, had replaced the unpopular Pyrrhias as general in Elis) waited for the Achaean assembly and then took to the field with a force consisting of 60 horse and 2,000 foot. He marched through the territory of Pharae, overran farmland right up to Aegium, and gained quite a lot of booty. But Lycus responded promptly and intercepted the enemy as they were on their way back, heading towards Leontium. He charged straight into the attack, killed about 400 of them, and took about 200 prisoners, some of them high-ranking men: Physsias, Antanor, Clearchus, Androlochus, Euanoridas, Aristogeiton, Nicasippus, and Aspasius. He also captured arms and armour, and the whole baggage train.

At much the same time, the Achaean admiral sailed for Molycria and came back with almost a hundred prisoners. He turned right around and set out again, this time for Chalceia, and when the Aetolians came out against him he captured two warships with their crews. He also captured a single-banked galley, crew and all, off Rhium, on the Aetolian side. All this booty coming in at once from land and sea operations meant that the League's coffers had sufficient funds, and that there was a general improvement in morale: the troops could now expect to be paid, and the cities anticipated some relief from their tax burden.

[95] Scerdilaïdas, meanwhile, was feeling badly treated by Philip, who had not paid him the full amount stipulated in their agreement.*

He decided to collect his money by devious means, and sent out fifteen of his *lemboi* to see to it. They put in at Leucas, where everyone treated them as friends, because they had been allies. Not long after they got there, before they had been able to get up to any other mischief, Agathinus and Cassander of Corinth sailed in with four of Taurion's ships and anchored alongside them, assuming they were friends. Taking treacherous advantage of that, they attacked, captured the ships—Agathinus, Cassander, and all—and sent them off to Scerdilaïdas. Then, after leaving Leucas, they sailed to Cape Malea, where they forced passing merchantmen to land and robbed them.

It was now almost harvest time. Since Taurion had neglected to protect the cities I mentioned a short while ago on the borders of Laconia, Aratus took the elite troops and provided cover for the grain harvest in Argive territory. Meanwhile, Euripidas and the Aetolians set out from Elis to plunder the farmland of Tritaea. When Lycus and Demodocus, the Achaean cavalry commander, found out about this expedition, they called up the levies from Dyme, Patrae, and Pharae, and invaded Elis with them and the mercenaries. When they came to a place called Phyxium, they sent out the light-armed troops and the cavalry as marauders, and placed the heavy infantry in concealment. The Eleans came in full strength to defend their territory, the marauders fell back before their assault, and Lycus's men emerged from their hiding-places and fell on the advance guard. The Eleans made no effort to resist, but turned and ran as soon as they appeared. Lycus killed about 200 of them, took 80 prisoners, and brought safely home all the livestock his men had rounded up.

Meanwhile, the Achaean admiral made several raids on Calydonia and Naupactia. He plundered the farmland and twice crushed armed resistance. He also captured Cleonicus of Naupactus, who was spared from being promptly sold into slavery by his status as Achaean *proxenos*, and was released a short while later without ransom.

[96] While all this was going on, Agetas, the Aetolian general, called up all Aetolians of military age, pillaged Acarnania, and overran all Epirus, without meeting any resistance. Then he returned home and disbanded the army. A retaliatory raid by the Acarnanians on the territory of Stratus was undone by panic, but they managed to retreat without loss, except to their honour, because the Stratus garrison thought the retreat was designed to lead them into an ambush and decided against pursuit.

Phanoteus too saw action, a trap within a trap. Alexander, Philip's governor of Phocis, devised a scheme to injure the Aetolians and enlisted the help of a man called Jason, whom Alexander had put in charge of Phanoteus. Jason wrote to Agetas, the Aetolian general, and entered into an agreement, secured by oaths and sub-clauses, whereby he would surrender the acropolis of Phanoteus to him. On the appointed day, Agetas approached Phanoteus under cover of darkness with the Aetolian army, and sent a picked unit of his hundred best men to the acropolis, while he and the rest stayed in hiding some distance from the town. Jason had primed Alexander, who was waiting in the town with a body of troops. He met the Aetolian soldiers as promised and sneaked them onto the acropolis—whereupon Alexander burst in and captured the entire elite unit. The next day, when Agetas found out what had happened, he returned home, the victim of a ruse that was not dissimilar to those he himself had often perpetrated.

[97] At much the same time, King Philip occupied Bylazora, the largest town in Paeonia, which commanded the pass from Dardania to Macedon. This vastly reduced the Dardanian threat: the town gave Philip control of their route into Macedon, and they would no longer find it easy to invade. After making Bylazora secure, he sent Chrysogonus off urgently to raise extra troops from inland Macedon, while he went to Edessa with the contingents from Bottiaea and Amphaxitis. He was joined there by Chrysogonus and the Macedonians, and then, with the army at full strength, he set out. Six days later, he reached Larissa, but he carried straight on, with a forced march by night, and made Meliteia early the next day. He raised scaling-ladders against the walls and began to probe the town's defences. The unexpectedness and rapidity of his appearance had terrified the inhabitants, and he could easily have taken the town—but he was foiled by the fact that his ladders were far too short for the job.

[98] Everyone recognizes that this is one of the worst mistakes a commander can make. Imagine a general whose strategy for capturing a town was just to turn up there, without having given the matter a moment's thought, without having made any plans, and without even having measured the height of the walls or cliffs or whatever he was intending to use to gain entrance into the town. Who could not find fault with him for that? Or suppose he had done as much measuring as he could, but then casually entrusted to unskilled hands the work

of building ladders and so on—things that with a little more attention could have made all the difference to his attempt. Who would not find him culpable?

It is not just that a commander who behaves like that is incapable of completing his assignment, but that he is bound for disaster. His incompetence has various destructive repercussions: during the actual engagement he endangers the lives of his best men, and he is in even more danger when he leaves, because by then he has earned the contempt of his enemies. It is all too easy to find examples to demonstrate that this kind of failure is more likely to lead to death or extreme danger than to getting away scot-free. And, of course, his behaviour makes it impossible for any of his future troops to trust him or feel loyal towards him, and he puts them all on the defensive. By this I mean that everyone, whether they actually suffered as a result of his behaviour or merely heard about it, has somehow been alerted to be cautious and wary of him.

Commanders, then, should never approach such matters carelessly. The mathematics involved in making ladders* and so on of the required length are not difficult, and, methodically applied, are infallible. For now, I must resume my narrative, but when a suitable occasion and context arise later in my work, I shall return to this topic and try to show how to achieve a very high degree of success in such projects.

[99] After this failure, then, Philip made camp by the Enipeus river, and called up from Larissa and elsewhere the siege artillery that had been made for him during the winter, his primary objective being the capture of Thebes Phthiotides. This city, which is situated not far from the sea, and about thirty stades away from Larissa, is critically placed in relation to both Magnesia and Thessaly—more specifically in relation to the territories of Demetrias in Magnesia, and of Pharsalus and Pherae in Thessaly. At the time in question, Thebes was in Aetolian hands, and they were using it as a base for a series of very destructive raids on Demetrias and Pharsalus, and on Larissa too, since their raiding parties penetrated as far as the Amyrus plain. So Philip counted its capture as a matter of considerable importance and was putting a lot of effort into it.

Once all 150 catapults and 25 ballistas had arrived, he advanced on Thebes. He divided his army into three and used them to surround the city, with one division encamped at Scopium, the second at a place called Heliotropium, and the third on the peak that overlooks

the town. He secured the intervals between the camps with a trench and a double palisade, and further strengthened his position with adequately manned wooden towers, a hundred feet apart from each other. Then he gathered all his artillery in one spot and set it to work against the acropolis.

[100] For the first three days, he was unable to push on with the siegeworks, because the defenders fought back with reckless bravery. But persistent skirmishing and countless missiles took their toll. Once enough of those who bore the brunt of the fighting had been killed or wounded, resistance grew less and the Macedonians started on their mines. The ground gave them no help, but they kept at it and managed to reach the wall in nine days. After that, they worked in relays, day and night, and in three days they had undermined and underpinned a 300-foot stretch of the wall. But the props were not strong enough to bear the load, and the wall collapsed before they had been fired. The Macedonians worked hard at clearing the rubble, until they were in a position to force the breach and enter the city—but just then the terrified Thebans surrendered.

This success allowed Philip to secure Magnesia and Thessaly, and at the same time he deprived the Aetolians of their chief source of plunder. It also showed his men that he had been right to put Leontius to death, for shirking his duty earlier, during the siege of Pale. Once Thebes had fallen, he sold its inhabitants into slavery, settled Macedonians there instead, and changed the name of the city from Thebes to Philippi.

Just after he had finished with Thebes, further envoys arrived (this time from Chios, Rhodes, Byzantium, and King Ptolemy) to see if they could negotiate an end to the war. Philip's reponse was the same as before: he told them that he was not averse to peace, and sent them off to see what the Aetolians' thoughts were on the matter. He himself, however, did nothing to further the cause of peace, and had no intention of changing course.

[101] When he heard, then, of the piratical exploits of Scerdilaïdas' *lemboi* off Cape Malea, where they had declared war on all passing merchantmen, and of the underhand attack they had made on some of his own ships which had been berthed alongside them in Leucas, he fitted out a fleet of twelve decked ships, a further eight without decks, and thirty *hemiolii*. When the fleet was ready he sailed through the Euripus strait. He was intent on catching the Illyrians, and, above all, on his plans for pursuing the war against the Aetolians, because

he had not yet heard the news from Italy, where, just as Philip was besieging Thebes, the Romans were defeated by Hannibal in Etruria. No report, however, had yet reached Greece.

Philip was too late to catch the *lemboi*. He anchored off Cenchreae and ordered his decked ships to sail via Malea for Aegium and Patrae, while he had the rest of the fleet hauled across the Isthmus and told them to wait at anchor in Lechaeum. He and his Friends then hurried off to Argos to attend the festival at Nemea. But just after he had started to watch the athletics, a courier arrived from Macedon with the news that the Romans had lost a major battle and that Hannibal was in control of the Italian countryside. At first, Philip showed the letter only to Demetrius of Pharos, and told him not to tell anyone else about it. Demetrius opportunistically recommended that Philip should bring the war against the Aetolians to an end as soon as possible, and should concentrate his energies instead on subduing Illyria and then invading Italy. All Greece, he said, was already subject to him, and that situation would last, now that the Achaeans had chosen to ally themselves with him and the Aetolians were struggling to recover from the war. But Italy was the first step to world conquest, which was his exclusive right, and there was no better time to invade Italy than now, when the Romans were down and out.

[102] It took little time for Philip to be seduced by Demetrius' suggestion. This was only to be expected, I suppose, in a king who was young, fortunate in war, and known for his daring. Moreover, he belonged to a house that had always fervently aspired to world dominion.* But for the time being, as I said, he showed the contents of the letter to Demetrius alone.

Some time later, he convened his Friends, with the agenda of deciding whether or not to make peace with the Aetolians. Seeing that Aratus too was in favour of a settlement (the timing was right, in his opinion, because the terms would be negotiated while they had the upper hand in the war), the king did not even wait for the return of the joint embassy that was already involved in peace negotiations, but immediately recruited Cleonicus of Naupactus as his envoy to the Aetolians. He found Cleonicus still waiting, after his imprisonment, for the Achaean assembly to meet. Then he collected the fleet and the land army from Corinth and went to Aegium. From there he advanced towards Lasion and took the fortress at Perippia; he wanted to make it look as though he were going to invade Elis, because he did not want to appear too eager for peace.

By the time Cleonicus had been back and forth two or three times, the Aetolians were requesting a full conference, and Philip agreed. He immediately called a halt to all military activity, and sent couriers to the allied cities, calling on them to send representatives to attend the conference and contribute to the peace negotiations. Then he transferred his army to a new camp at Panormus, a harbour on the Peloponnesian side of the gulf, directly opposite Naupactus, and waited for the allied representatives. Some time was needed for them all to arrive, and he spent it on a naval expedition to Zacynthos, where he personally took charge of restoring peace to the island. Then he sailed back to Panormus.

[103] Once the delegates had all gathered, Philip sent Aratus, Taurion, and some of their companions to the Aetolians, who had assembled en masse at Naupactus. When Aratus and the others met the Aetolians, they could see after only a brief discussion that the Aetolians genuinely wanted peace, and they sailed back to Philip to tell him so. The Aetolians were so eager to see an end to the war that they sent their envoys to Philip in the same convoy, inviting him and his forces over to their side of the gulf, as a way to expedite the negotiations and reach an appropriate settlement as quickly as possible. The king was encouraged by their request, and he sailed across the gulf with his army to a place in Naupactia called the Hollows, which is about twenty stades away from the town. He encamped there, protected both the ships and the camp with a palisade, and waited for the conference to begin. The Aetolians arrived at full strength, but unarmed, and established themselves about two stades away from Philip's camp. They sent representatives, and discussions began.

The king included all the allies' representatives in the first delegation he sent to the Aetolians, with instructions to offer them peace on terms that recognized the current status quo. The Aetolians readily accepted, and from then on there were constant meetings in one camp or another to discuss the details of the accord. Nothing interesting enough to record happened at most of these meetings, but at the very first one Agelaus of Naupactus had some words of advice for the king and the assembled allies that are worth mentioning.

[104] Greeks, he said, should never go to war against one another. It would be a great blessing from the gods if the Greeks could speak and act as one—if they could join hands, as people do when fording a river, to repel barbarian incursions and keep themselves and their

cities from harm. Even if that was too much to expect, he recommended that, under current circumstances, they should cooperate and take precautions, in view of the massive armies to the west and the major war that was being fought there. Even people who even now paid little attention to world affairs could not be blind to the fact that whether the Carthaginians or the Romans won the war, it was inconceivable that the victors would rest content with rulership of Italy and Sicily. No, he said, they would come, with excessive intentions and forces to match.

And so he asked everyone to take precautionary measures against the crisis. Philip's contribution would be the most important—to stop exhausting the Greeks and making them vulnerable to attack. On the contrary, he should treat them as though they were parts of his own body, or at any rate should care for all the regions of Greece as though they were his own possessions and property. If this became his policy, the Greeks would be so grateful that he would find them his constant allies in all his endeavours, and their loyalty would discourage threats from abroad to his kingdom.

If Philip was ambitious, he said, he should look to the west and keep an eye on the war in Italy. If he contained himself and waited his turn, he could make a bid, when the time was right, for worldwide dominion; the present situation was not hostile to such hopes. And he advised him to postpone until times were less critical his arguments and wars with the Greeks, and to focus on the west, or else lose the ability to make peace or war with them as he wished. 'For,' he said, 'if you ever allow the clouds now gathering in the west to loom over Greece, I deeply fear that all the games we now play with each other, our truces and our wars, will be so thoroughly denied us that we shall find ourselves imploring the gods to grant us this right, to make war and peace with one another as we wish, and in general to manage our own internal disputes.'

[105] After listening to this speech by Agelaus, all the allies committed themselves to peace. Philip was especially keen, because Agelaus' words fitted in with the plans he had already formed thanks to the advice given him by Demetrius. And so the two sides reached agreement on all the details and ratified the treaty, and when everyone dispersed at the end of the conference, they took home peace instead of war. All this—the Roman defeat in Etruria, Antiochus' defeat in Coele Syria, and the peace accord between the Macedonian–Achaean

alliance and the Aetolian League—took place in the third year of the
217 140th Olympiad.

This conference was the first occasion when Greek, Italian, and Libyan affairs became interconnected. From then on, the point of reference when Philip and the Greek leaders were deciding on war or peace with one another was no longer what was happening in Greece; everyone's eyes were turned instead towards Italy and the intentions of people there. And before long the islanders and the inhabitants of Asia found themselves in the same situation: those who had grievances against Philip or who had fallen out with Attalus no longer looked south or east, towards Ptolemy or Antiochus, but from then on looked west, and embassies went from there to both Carthage and Rome. At the same time, the Romans also began to approach the Greeks; they were concerned about just how far Philip would go, and were trying to make sure that he did not ally himself with their enemies at this critical juncture.

As promised at the beginning of my work, I have shown—and shown clearly, I think—when and how and why Greek history became interwoven with Italian and Libyan history. I shall now carry on with
216 events in Greece down to the time of the Roman defeat at Cannae. That is where I interrupted my account of events in Italy, and so I shall end this book with everything squared away.

[106] Soon after the end of the war, the Achaeans elected Timoxenus general. The end of the war meant that they could go back to their traditional ways and pursuits. Everywhere in the Peloponnese, in fact, people set about recovering their livelihoods, cultivating the land, and reviving all the rites—the traditional sacrifices and festivals and so on—that made up each city's religious calendar. In most cases, these rites had been almost consigned to oblivion by the years of incessant warfare. For some reason or other, despite being better endowed than anyone else with the necessities for a tranquil and civilized way of life, the Peloponnesians, in former times at least, have found it harder than anyone else to enjoy such a life. This is presumably because, as Euripides says,* they are 'ever-toiling† and restless with their spears', and it seems to me to be an inevitable consequence of the Peloponnesian character: they like to lead and they do not like to be answerable to anyone. They never stop fighting with one another, then, because they refuse to yield first place to anyone else.

As for the Athenians, the removal of the Macedonian threat made them feel that their autonomy would last for the foreseeable future, and, under the leadership of Eurycleides and Micion, they ceased to play any part in wider Greek affairs. Following the policy and programme laid down by their leaders, they curried favour with *all* the kings, especially Ptolemy. This indecisiveness on the part of their leaders caused the Athenians to neglect their obligations, while passing decrees and issuing proclamations that they would normally have found wholly intolerable.

[107] In Egypt, war broke out, immediately after the point in time we have reached, between Ptolemy and his Egyptian subjects. Ptolemy's decision to arm the Egyptians for the war against Antiochus had been sound under the circumstances, but in the long run proved to be a mistake. Filled with confidence after their victory at Raphia, the Egyptian troops refused to take orders from Ptolemy and, feeling that they were capable of looking after their own interests, began to search for someone to lead them and champion their independence. Which they finally achieved not long afterwards.*

Antiochus devoted the winter to large-scale preparations, and then in the early summer crossed the Taurus. After securing King Attalus' cooperation, he embarked on war against Achaeus.

For a while the Aetolians were content with the terms of the peace accord between them and the Achaean League, because the war had not gone as they had hoped. In fact, they elected Agelaus of Naupactus their general on the strength of the major part he had played in the peace negotiations. But hardly any time passed before Agelaus fell out of favour. He should not have made peace with *all* the Greek states, they complained, but only with some of them; as things were, he had completely cut them off from foreign sources of booty and now they had no chance of making a profitable living in the future. Agelaus, however, put up with this stupid criticism and kept the Aetolians so well in check that, although it went against the grain, they had no choice but to be patient.

[108] After the conclusion of the peace treaty, King Philip returned 217
by ship to Macedon. He found that Scerdilaïdas, on the same specious grounds as before,[1] had let his men pillage a town in Pelagonia called

[1] Namely, that he was still owed money, the excuse he had used for the treacherous attack on the ships at Leucas.

Pissaeum, had used threats or promises to take over certain towns in Dassaretis (Antipatria, Chrysondyon, and Gertous), and had overrun a great deal of the neighbouring Macedonian territory. Philip immediately set out at the head of his army to recover the rebel cities, as part of a general campaign against Scerdilaïdas. He had decided that it was essential for him to pacify Illyria—that until then he would be unable to go ahead with any of his plans, least of all the invasion of Italy. For Demetrius was constantly fanning the sparks of the king's hopes and aspirations in this regard, until Philip dreamt of it in his sleep and was starting to think about the practicalities. Demetrius was not doing this for Philip's sake; Philip's place in Demetrius' motives was last of three, with his hatred of Rome second, and in first place himself and his ambitions. He was convinced that this was the only way for him to regain dominion over Pharos.

Philip's campaign was in fact successful. He recovered the rebel cities, and seized towns in Dassaretis (Creonium and Gerous), in the region of lake Lychnidus (Enchelanae, Cerax, Sation, Boei), in the territory of the Caloecini (Bantia), and in the territory of the Pisantini (Orgessus). Then he dismissed his troops for the winter. This was the winter following Hannibal's devastation of the choice regions of Italy—the winter he was intending to spend at Gereonium in Daunia; the Romans had just chosen Gaius Terentius Varro and Lucius Aemilius Paullus as their consuls.

216 [109] Over the winter Philip came to appreciate that he needed a fleet and crews—not so much for fighting (he never expected to be capable of taking on the Romans at sea), as for troop transport. He had to be able to get quickly across the sea to his destination and take the enemy by surprise. He thought that, for these purposes, craft built on Illyrian lines would be best, and, despite the almost total lack of precedent from his predecessors, he ordered the construction of a hundred *lemboi*.

At the beginning of summer, then, once the fleet was ready, Philip mustered his forces. After a short period spent training the Macedonians to be competent oarsmen, he put to sea (this was just after Antiochus had crossed the Taurus). He sailed through the Euripus strait, rounded Cape Malea, and fetched up at Cephallenia and Leucas, where he waited at anchor while trying to gain information about the Roman fleet. Once he found out, to his relief, that it was in harbour at Lilybaeum, he put to sea again and sailed for Apollonia.

[110] But when they reached the river that flows past Apollonia, the Aöus, the mission was undone by the kind of panic more commonly found in land armies. What happened was this. Some of the *lemboi* from the rear, which had been anchored off an island called Sason, in the Ionian Sea off the mouth of the river, came to Philip while it was still dark and reported that some sailors from the Strait, who had berthed alongside them, had told them that when they left Rhegium there were some Roman quinqueremes there, on their way to Scerdilaïdas at Apollonia. The prospect of the imminent arrival of the Roman fleet terrified Philip, and he ordered his ships to weigh anchor without delay and sail for home. They set out in complete disarray, sailed without stopping night and day, and reached Cephallenia two days later. Philip's fear subsided a little, and he stayed for a while at Cephallenia, making out that he had returned to take care of some matters in the Peloponnese.

But there was no real reason for such panic. When Scerdilaïdas had found out during the winter that the Macedonians were building a fleet of *lemboi*, he realized that Philip was going to come at him by sea. He got in touch with the Romans, explained the situation, and asked them for help. The Romans detached only ten ships from the fleet at Lilybaeum and sent them off to him, and it was this squadron that had been sighted off Rhegium. All the Romans' plans and preparations were focused on Hannibal and the aftermath of the battle of Cannae: if Philip had not taken fright and fled for no good reason, he would have had a golden opportunity to attain his objectives in Illyria. In all probability, he would have captured the Roman squadron too, if the report he had received had not disturbed him so much. But as things were he returned to Macedon without loss, except to his dignity.

[111] Prusias too deserves a mention at this point for something he did. King Attalus, it will be recalled,* had brought some Gauls over from Europe to help him against Achaeus, because of their reputation for courage, but he came to mistrust them and there was a parting of the ways. The Gauls then began to launch savage and destructive raids on the Hellespontine communities, which culminated in their putting Ilium under siege.

The response to this situation from the inhabitants of Alexandria Troas showed considerable courage. The army of 4,000 they sent out under the command of Themistes not only raised the siege of Ilium, but also made the whole of Troas a no-go area for the Gauls, by cutting off their supplies and forcing them to abort all their plans.

But the Gauls occupied Arisbe, in the territory of Abydus, and began to intrigue against or openly attack the nearby communities. Prusias, then, led an army against them and met them in pitched battle. He annihilated the men on the actual field of battle, and massacred almost all their children and womenfolk in their encampment, leaving the baggage for his men to plunder once the fighting was over. Prusias thereby saved the Hellespontine communities from terrible danger, and made it perfectly clear to future generations that barbarians from Europe would not find it easy to enter Asia.*

That was how things stood in Greece and Asia. In Italy, as I mentioned in the previous book, one of the consequences of the battle of Cannae was that there was massive defection to the Carthaginians. I have now described what happened in Asia and Greece in the 140th Olympiad, and I shall interrupt my account at this point. In the next book, I shall first briefly recapitulate the content of the last two books and the introductory books,† and then, as promised from the start, I shall resume with an account of the Roman constitution.

BOOK SIX

Book 6 consists of greater or lesser fragments. The relative order of the fragments is certain, but it is uncertain how much text intervened between them. We may have as much as two-thirds of the full book. Subheadings have been inserted into the translation to indicate that a new topic is starting, and that, despite the sequential numbering of chapters, there is text missing between it and the previous topic.

From the Preface

[2] I am sure that some people will wonder why I have abandoned the format of giving a continuous, chronological narrative of events, and have waited until now to provide an account of the Roman constitution. I think I have made it clear on a number of occasions that I have always considered this aspect of my overall programme to be as important as any other. I did so above all at the start of the history, in my prefatory remarks, when I said that the most admirable and educational part of my project was that it would let my readers know and understand how, and thanks to what kind of political system, an unprecedented event occurred—the conquest of almost all the known world in somewhat under fifty-three years, and its submission to just one ruler, Rome.

Since that is what I had decided to do, I could see no better occasion than now for pausing and testing what I planned to say about the constitution. In everyday life, if people intend to reach a true assessment of someone, to decide whether he is bad or good, they do not base the investigation on those periods of his life when he was untroubled by external circumstances; they look at how he behaved when he was afflicted by misfortune or blessed by success, because they think that the only way to tell whether a man is fully qualified is to see whether or not he is capable of enduring total changes of fortune with courage and without compromising his principles. This is how one should examine a system of government as well, and so, since I could find no change in recent history more rapid or more extreme* than the one the Romans experienced at that time,† I postponed the account of the Roman constitution until I had reached this point of my narrative.

Just how great a change it was can be recognized from the following facts [. . .]

[. . .] Readers are simultaneously entertained and educated by an account of causes and by seeing people choose the better course in any given situation. And, whatever the situation, the chief cause of either success or the opposite is, I would claim, the nature of a state's system of government. For this is the wellspring, so to speak, which not only gives rise to all plans and practical initiatives, but also brings them to fulfilment. [. . .]

Systems of Government

[3] In the Greek world, there are states that have grown and then experienced utter collapse, over and over again. It is easy to describe the pasts of such states, and to pronounce on their futures, because reporting known facts is easy, and it is a simple matter to predict the future on the basis of the past. But the same does not go for Rome: the complexity of its constitution makes it rather difficult to describe its condition at present, and too little is known about the characteristics of both public and private life there in the past for it to be easy to predict the future. It takes an unusual amount of attention and reflection before one can clearly pick out its distinctive features.

Most of those who want to educate and instruct us in such matters say that there are three kinds of political system, which they call kingship, aristocracy, and democracy.* But I think it would be perfectly reasonable to ask these people whether they mean that these are the *only* constitutions or the *best* ones. For in fact, as I see it, in either case they are wrong. After all, there can be no doubt that we should take the best system of government to be the one that combines all three of these constitutions. This is not just a matter of theory: we have actual experience of such a system in the Spartan constitution, which Lycurgus founded along these lines. Nor, on the other hand, can we agree that these three are the only constitutions there are, because we have witnessed in the past monarchic and tyrannical governments, which obviously bear some resemblance to kingship, but at the same time differ enormously from it. That is why all monarchs cover up the truth and do their best to call themselves kings. Moreover, there have been several varieties of oligarchic constitution, which bore obvious similarities to aristocracy, but in fact differed hugely from it. And the same goes for democracy.

[4] There is excellent evidence to show the truth of what I am saying. Surely we would not want to describe every instance of monarchy as kingship *tout court*; we reserve the name 'kingship' for monarchy which has the subjects' consent and which governs by rational principles rather than by fear and coercion. Nor should we regard every oligarchy as an aristocracy, a 'rule of the best', unless it is presided over by a select group of supremely moral and wise men. Likewise, we would not describe a system of government as a democracy just because the entire population has the right to follow every whim and inclination. What we call democracy is a system where the majority decision prevails, but which retains the traditional values of piety towards the gods, care of parents, respect for elders, and obedience to the laws.

Our position, then, should be that there are six kinds of constitution*—the three commonly recognized ones I have just mentioned, and three more which are congenital with them: tyranny, oligarchy, and ochlocracy or mob-rule. In the natural, spontaneous course of events, the first system to arise is monarchy,* and this is followed by kingship, but it takes the deliberate correction of the defects of monarchy for it to develop into kingship. Kingship changes into its congenital vice—that is, into tyranny—and then it is the turn of aristocracy, after the dissolution of tyranny. Aristocracy necessarily degenerates into oligarchy, and when the general populace get impassioned enough to seek redress for the crimes committed by their leaders, democracy is born. And in due course of time, once democracy turns to violating and breaking the law, mob-rule arises and completes the series.

The truth of what I have just said will be perfectly clear to anyone who pays attention to the natural beginning, growth, and decline of each of these constitutions. For it is quite impossible to see how any of them grows, peaks, declines, and comes to an end, and when and how and where each of these phases will occur in its turn, unless one sees each constitution as an organic entity. And, in my opinion, this kind of explanation is particularly suitable for the Roman constitution, because its formation and growth have always been natural.

[5] The idea that the constitutions naturally change into one another may have been more precisely detailed by philosophers such as Plato,* but their discussions are too complex and long-winded to be accessible to most people. What I shall try to do, then, is give a brief account of as much of the theory as is relevant to political history and

ordinary purposes. Anyone who thinks he has been short-changed by my general presentation will find himself adequately repaid by the detailed account that follows. All his questions will be answered.

What, then, do I mean when I speak of 'beginnings'? Under what circumstances am I claiming that these political systems first arise? Legend has it that in the past the human race has been annihilated by catastrophes such as flood, famine, and crop-failure,* and there is every reason to think that the same will happen in the future too, over and over again. Such catastrophes also entail the simultaneous loss of all the arts and crafts, and so, in due course of time, once the human population has increased again (from the seeds sown, so to speak, by the survivors of the catastrophe), naturally enough they form bands. That is what other animal species do, and it is reasonable to expect that humans too compensate for their natural weakness by herding together with others of their own kind. Under these circumstances, it is inevitable that anyone with exceptional physical strength and mental daring will take command and set himself up as ruler over the rest. Since this is what we see happening in the case of unreasoning animals—because it is obvious and indisputable that in the case of bulls, boars, cocks, and so on the strongest takes command—we must conclude that it is a truly natural function. It seems plausible to suggest, then, that this is what primitive human life too was like—that people formed bands, as animals do, with each band following the strongest and most aggressive man among them. The determinant of these men's rulership was their strength, and that is what we call monarchy.

As for the origins of kingship, after a while there gradually arise within these groups feelings of kinship and intimacy, and then for the first time people acquire the concepts of good and bad, and right and wrong. [6] The way these concepts take root and form is as follows. The urge to mate is a universal, natural instinct, and the result is that children are born. Now, some of these children, after being reared and reaching maturity, fail to defend or otherwise show gratitude towards those who brought them up; on the contrary, they set about speaking ill of them and doing them harm. It is not hard to see that this is likely to displease and offend those of their associates who are aware of the care lavished on them by their parents and the trouble they took to ensure that their children were looked after and fed. For since human beings differ from other animals in that they alone have rational

intelligence, it plainly follows that people are unlikely to overlook this abnormal behaviour, as other animals do. No, they will disapprove of what is happening and the thought that in the future each of them too might find himself at the receiving end of such treatment will aggravate their negative response to the present. Or again, suppose someone in danger receives help and assistance from another person, but fails to show gratitude to his saviour, and in fact sets about doing him harm. It is easy to see that, in all likelihood, those who know what is going on will share the injured party's indignation and imagine the same thing happening to them, and so will find such behaviour displeasing and offensive.

As a result of these situations, a certain conception gradually arises within each individual of the importance of duty, and he begins to reflect upon it.† This is the be-all and end-all of the sense of right and wrong. Or again, if someone takes it upon himself to be the chief defender of everyone in times of danger, by resisting and retaliating against the most aggressive animals, it is likely that the general populace will signify their gratitude and respect for him, while condemning and disapproving of anyone who conducts himself in the opposite way. And it is again reasonable to suppose that this will lead people to reflect on what constitutes bad or good behaviour, and on the difference between the two, and that for utilitarian reasons good behaviour will begin to be admired and imitated, and bad behaviour will be avoided.

If, under these circumstances, the leader of the community, the man with the greatest strength, consistently supports what the general populace has come to think of as good and bad, and his subjects see that he apportions rewards and punishments as appropriate, they stop being frightened of his power, and accept his rule more because they approve of his policies. However old he gets, they work together to preserve his rule and wholeheartedly defend him against the assaults and schemes of those who would put an end to his dominion. In this way, monarchy imperceptibly slides into kingship, when reason replaces forcefulness and strength at the helm.

[7] This is how men first acquire the concepts of good and bad, and right and wrong, and how true kingship begins and develops. I say 'true' kingship, because the common people not only preserve the original king's rule, but also see that it passes down to his descendants, believing that men born from kings and brought up under their

influence will share their principles. And from then on, if any of these descendants fails to find favour with them, the criteria they use to choose their rulers and kings are no longer physical strength and forcefulness, but excellence of judgement and intelligence, because by then they have gained first-hand experience of the difference between the two.

In the olden days, anyway, once a man had been chosen as king and had gained this position of authority, he retained it for life. He saw to his subjects' security by fortifying places and enclosing them within walls, and took over land to make sure that they were well supplied with provisions. And as he occupied himself with these matters, no one ever spoke ill of him or resented him, because he did not dress or eat or drink in a way that made him stand out; he lived pretty much like everyone else, and spent all his time in close contact with the general populace.

But kingship was passed down from generation to generation within the same family, and once the kings had made everything as secure as they could and had ensured a more than adequate supply of food, the fact that there was so much of everything tempted them to begin to indulge their appetites. They felt that rulers should dress in a fashion that distinguished them from their subjects, that their food should be presented and prepared in distinctive and elaborate ways, and that they should be allowed total sexual freedom, even to the extent of sleeping with inappropriate partners. This behaviour aroused people's resentment and disgust, which in turn kindled hatred and hostile anger in the kings, and so kingship gave way to tyranny. At the same time the seeds of its dissolution were sown, as conspiracies began to be formed against the tyrants. These conspiracies arose not in the lowest strata of society, but among the most noble, high-minded, and courageous men, because they are the ones who find it hardest to bear insolence from those set over them.

[8] For the reasons I have already mentioned, the common people lent their support to these new champions of theirs in their actions against their leaders, and so kingship and tyranny were wholly obliterated, and a new era of aristocracy began. For the common people immediately repaid their debt, so to speak, to those who had got rid of the tyrants, by deferring to their authority and putting themselves in their hands. At first, these new leaders gladly accepted their assignment. They made the common good their top priority, and managed

all the private and public affairs of the general populace responsibly and carefully. But then the sons in their turn inherited this position of authority from their fathers. They had no conception of hardship, and just as little of political equality or the right of any citizen to speak his mind, because all their lives they had been surrounded by their fathers' powers and privileges. And so they either dedicated themselves to rapaciousness and unscrupulous money-making, or to drinking and the non-stop partying that goes with it, or to seducing women and preying on boys, and in the process, they changed aristocracy into oligarchy. Before long, however, it was their turn to arouse those same feelings of resentment and disgust in the general populace that I mentioned a short while ago, leading to the same result: they met with just as catastrophic an end as the tyrants.

[9] What happened was that, sooner or later, someone noticed how his fellow citizens resented and hated the ruling oligarchs, and when he summoned up the courage to speak or act against them, he found that the general populace was ready to back him all the way. They murdered or banished the oligarchs, but then, since fear of past monarchic injustice deterred them from setting up a king, and the recent villainy of the oligarchs dissuaded them from entrusting the government to just a few men, the only remaining untried alternative was for them to rely on themselves. So that was the system they resorted to: they changed the constitution from oligarchy to democracy, and assumed administrative duties and responsibilities themselves.

While those who had experienced oligarchic excess remained alive, they were content with the existing regime and were fully committed to equality of speech and the right of every citizen to speak his mind. But by the time a new crop of young men had been born and democracy was in its third generation, the principles of equal and free speech were too familiar to seem particularly important, and some people began to want to get ahead of everyone else. It was especially the rich who succumbed to this temptation and longed for power. But then, finding that their own resources and merits were not enough to enable them to get what they wanted, they squandered their fortunes on bribing and corrupting the general populace in all sorts of ways. Once this inane hunger for glory had made the common people greedy for such largesse and willing to accept it, democracy in its turn was overthrown, and replaced by violence and government by main force. For once people had grown accustomed to eating off

others' tables and expected their daily needs to be met, then, when they found someone to champion their cause—a man of vision and daring, who had been excluded from political office by his poverty—they instituted government by force: they banded together and set about murdering, banishing, and redistributing land, until they were reduced to a bestial state and once more gained a monarchic master.

This is the cycle of constitutions, the natural way in which systems of government develop, metamorphose, and start all over again. A clear grasp of the theory may not deliver the ability to make infallible predictions about *when* some constitutional event will happen in the future, but provided one's judgement is not biased by anger or resentment, one will rarely go wrong about what phase of growth or decline a system has reached, or about what transformation it will undergo next. At any rate, where the Roman constitution is concerned, the theory gives us our best chance of understanding its formation, growth, and prime, and of predicting its future reversal and decline. For, as I said not long ago, the Roman constitution is a superb example of a system whose formation and growth have always been natural, and whose decline will therefore also conform to natural laws. There will be an opportunity later to develop this idea.*

[10] For the time being, however, since it is far from irrelevant to my project, I shall give a brief account of Lycurgus' legislation. Lycurgus understood the inexorability of the natural processes I have been talking about, and realized how precarious every political system is if it is unmixed and uniform, because before long it degenerates into its vicious counterpart, from which it is naturally inseparable. Just as rust is the corruption inherent within iron, and woodworm and grubs are the corruption inherent within timbers, and just as iron and wood, even if they remain unaffected by all external sources of harm, are still destroyed by these things that form within them, in the same way every political system has a source of corruption growing within it, from which it is inseparable. For kingship it is the system we have been calling tyranny, for aristocracy it is oligarchy, and for democracy it is government by brute force. According to the theory I have just outlined, it is inevitable that each of these political systems will finally degenerate into its vicious counterpart.

As a precautionary measure, then, the constitution Lycurgus drew up was not simple and uniform. He bundled together all the merits and distinctive characteristics of the best systems of government,

in order to prevent any of them growing beyond the point where it would degenerate into its congenital vice. He wanted the potency of each system to be counteracted by the others, so that nowhere would any of them tip the scales or outweigh the others for any length of time; he wanted the system to last for ever, maintained in a high degree of balance and equilibrium by the principle of reciprocity†. Kings were prevented from becoming overbearing by fear of the citizen body, who were assigned a fair share in government; the common citizens, in their turn, were deterred from disrespecting the kings by fear of the elders, all of whom were bound to cleave constantly to justice, because the criterion for selection for the Council of Elders was virtue. This meant that the part of the system that was at a disadvantage because of its conservatism* would always be reinforced and given added weight by the predilection and inclination of the elders. And the upshot was that the constitution so framed by Lycurgus preserved independence in Sparta longer than anywhere else in recorded history.

Lycurgus used calculation to predict how the nature of each of these systems of government would dictate its beginning and its outcome; he drew up his constitution without having suffered. But in the Romans' case, even though the result was the same, in that they created the same kind of regime for themselves, this was not at all the outcome of reason, but of many struggles and trials. On every occasion, they drew on the knowledge they had gained from their setbacks to make the best choices, and this enabled them to achieve the same result as Lycurgus, and to make theirs the best system of government in the world today. [. . .]

The Roman Constitution in Its Prime

[11] <. . . thirty-two years after Xerxes' invasion of Greece. From 449
this time onward, the details were constantly being sorted out, until>† the Roman constitution reached its prime at the time of the Hannibalic War, which is where I broke off my narrative and embarked on this digression. So, now that I have given an account of its formation,* I shall try to explain what it was like at the time when, after the defeat at Cannae, the Romans were at their lowest ebb.

I am sure that people brought up within the Roman constitution will find my description incomplete, since I will pass over certain details.

They have been familiar from childhood with its customs and institutions, and this has given them such complete theoretical and experiential knowledge that, rather than finding the account as it stands impressive, they want to see all the gaps filled as well. The possibility that the writer has deliberately omitted minor topics does not occur to them, and if, for instance, he leaves out the background and subsequent evolution of certain matters, they think that this is due to his ignorance. If I had included these details, they would scarcely have noticed, given that they are trivial and incidental, but they protest at their exclusion as though they were essential. All this is because they want to appear to know more than the author. But a good critic should judge writers by what they write, not by what they leave out. If he finds errors in a book, he is entitled to think that the omissions too are due to ignorance, but if he finds the account to be entirely accurate, he must concede that the omissions too are deliberate, rather than due to ignorance.

So much for those literary critics who would rather show off than be fair. [. . .] Setting also determines whether or not any piece of work deserves approval or disapproval. In a different setting, out of its proper context, even the best and most reliable written work can often appear not only unacceptable, but even unbearable. [. . .]

There were three fundamental building blocks of the Roman constitution—that is, all three of the systems I mentioned above. Each of them was used so equitably and appropriately in the ordering and arrangement of everything that even native Romans were hard put to say for sure whether their constitution was essentially aristocratic, democratic, or monarchic. This is not surprising: the constitution would have appeared monarchic (or a kingship), aristocratic, or democratic, depending on whether one focused attention on the powers of the consuls, the powers of the Senate, or the powers of the common people. The areas of authority that each of these three had—and still have, since the situation has hardly changed nowadays—are as follows.

[12] While the consuls are resident in Rome—that is, before they take their armies out into the field—they are responsible for all matters of public concern, since all the other officers, except the tribunes of the people, are subordinate to them and carry out their orders, and it is they who present envoys to the Senate. They also draw up the agenda of issues requiring the Senate's prompt attention, and are

entirely responsible for carrying out the Senate's decrees. Moreover, it is their job to see to all matters of state that require validation by the people, in the sense that they convene assemblies, present bills, and preside over the people's decision-making. As for preparations for war and the overall management of campaigns, the power they have is almost unlimited: they can order allies around as they please, appoint military tribunes, levy troops, and select the best men for particular jobs; they have the right, out in the field, to punish anyone under their command; and they are also entitled to draw as much money from the public purse as they see fit.[1] All this means that, if one focuses attention exclusively on this aspect of the constitution, one might reasonably conclude that it was pure monarchy or kingship. It is possible that some of these functions, or those I shall go on to discuss, will change, in our own times or some time in the future, but that will not affect the validity of this analysis now.

[13] The Senate's most important role is that it controls the treasury, in the sense that it is responsible for all state revenues and almost all expenditure. With the exception of money withdrawn for use by the consuls, the quaestors must first gain the formal permission of the Senate before spending money for any particular purpose, and the prodigious amount of money spent at five-year intervals by the censors on the repair and construction of public buildings, which is by far the state's greatest expense, is also controlled by the Senate, which makes a grant to the censors. At the same time, all crimes committed in Italy that require public investigation—that is, crimes such as treachery, conspiracy, mass poisoning, and gang murder—fall under the jurisdiction of the Senate; and if any individual or community in Italy requires arbitration or formal censure or emergency assistance or a garrison, all these matters too are the responsibility of the Senate. Moreover, outside Italy, it is the Senate's business to send missions to arbitrate disputes, offer advice, make demands, accept submissions, and declare war; likewise, when missions arrive in Rome from overseas, it is entirely the Senate's job to decide how to treat them and what response to make. None of these matters is the responsibility of the people, and so, once again, a visitor to Rome who arrived when the consuls were away would think that the constitution was thoroughly aristocratic. And in fact this is exactly the impression that is prevalent

[1] They are accompanied by a quaestor, who is unlikely to refuse their demands.

in Greece and in the royal courts, because almost all their business is handled by the Senate.

[14] After all this, someone might reasonably wonder what role there is left for the people in this system of government, when the Senate is responsible for all the particulars I have mentioned, and most importantly manages all the state's revenues and expenses, and the consuls have plenipotentiary power in the run-up to war and when out fighting campaigns. But the people do have a part to play, and a very important one at that, because they control rewards and punishments. There is no other provision within the constitution for these functions, but without them human life itself has no coherence, let alone governments and constitutions. For when the difference between better and worse is ignored, or when it is recognized but poorly managed, no business that is taken in hand turns out well. How could it, if the bad are honoured no less than the good? So the people assess many of the cases where the penalty for the offence is a substantial fine, especially where the accused have held the highest offices, and all such cases where the penalty is death;[1] and they assign offices to those who deserve them, which, in a political context, is the greatest possible reward for virtue. Then they are responsible for assessing legislation; most importantly, it is they who decide whether or not to go to war; and they also either ratify or abrogate alliances, truces, and treaties. And again, all this means that it would be plausible to suggest that the people's role is paramount, and that the constitution is a democracy.

[15] Now that I have shown how the three types of political system make up the Roman constitution, I shall go on to explain how each of them is able to work, as it wishes, with or against the other two.

After setting out with his forces, a consul seems to have absolute authority to see his mission through, since he is invested with the powers I have mentioned, but in fact he still needs the people and the Senate. Indeed, he is incapable of concluding his business without them. It goes without saying that he needs a constant stream of

[1] Where capital cases are concerned, the Romans have an admirable practice which is worth recording. When someone is about to be condemned to death, as long as even one of the tribes that ratify the verdict has not yet cast its vote, it is their custom for him to be allowed to leave, and to do so quite openly. It is as if he were deliberately condemning himself to exile. These exiles find refuge in cities such as Naples, Praeneste, or Tibur, with which the Romans have treaties allowing for this.

supplies for his men—grain, clothing, wages—but this always requires the consent of the Senate. The consul's initiatives will come to nothing, then, if the Senate holds back and is obstructive. Second, the Senate also has the power to facilitate or thwart the completion of a consul's plans and projects, in the sense that, at the end of his year of office, the Senate decides whether to send out his replacement or allow him to remain and retain his command. Third, the Senate has the power to make a glorious spectacle out of any victory a consul wins, or alternatively to play it down and diminish it. For a 'triumph', as they call it, is an opportunity for a consul to display his brilliant achievements before the eyes of his fellow citizens, but a triumph cannot be properly organized, and sometimes cannot be held at all, unless the Senate is willing to fund it.

It is also essential for a consul to take the people into consideration, however far from home he may be, because, as I have already said, they are responsible for ratifying or rejecting truces and treaties, and above all because, on laying aside his office, a consul has to undergo an audit* by the people of his conduct while in office. It is altogether unsafe, then, for consuls to belittle the importance of the goodwill of either the Senate or the general populace.

[16] The Senate too, for all its power, has to pay particular attention to the masses in the political sphere and to defer to the people. Its most far-reaching and important commissions, which investigate and punish political crimes, carrying the death penalty, cannot complete their work unless the people validate the Senate's draft decree. The same goes also for matters that directly affect the Senate: it is the people who decide whether or not to pass into law any proposal that would, for example, deprive the Senate of some of its traditional authority, or abolish senatorial privileges such as the right to the best seats in the theatres, or reduce their incomes. Most importantly, if one of the tribunes of the people uses his veto, not only can the Senate not complete its deliberations, but it is not allowed even to meet or assemble at all. And the tribunes are obliged always to carry out the people's decisions and to defer to their wishes. For all the reasons I have given, then, the Senate is afraid of the masses and cannot disregard the popular assembly.

[17] The people too are in the same situation: they depend on the Senate and are obliged to defer to it. They have to do this not just in the political sphere, but in their private lives as well, because

throughout Italy a great many building projects—an almost uncountable number, in fact—are contracted out by the censors for the repair and construction of public buildings. Then there are all the properties that fall under the direct control of the Roman state—rivers, harbours, orchards, mines, farms, and so on—all of which are managed by members of the general populace, so that it is hardly an exaggeration* to say that almost everyone is involved in tendering for these contracts and profiting from them. For there are not only the people who actually buy the contracts from the censors; there are also the principal partners, and those who underwrite the purchase, and those who support the enterprise by mortgaging their property over to the state.

The Senate controls all of this. It can extend the repayment period and, in an emergency, reduce the interest or, if it proves absolutely impossible for the purchaser to fulfil his contract, annul the contract altogether. In fact, there are many ways in which the Senate can do those who manage state-owned property a great deal of harm or a great deal of good, since it has the final say on all these matters. Its most important function in this context is that the judges in most commercial lawsuits, private or public, that involve serious complaints, are drawn from its members. Everyone, then, is inextricably dependent on the Senate, and is faced with the worrying possibility that they might some day need its help, and so they take care not to do anything to frustrate or oppose its will. By the same token, no one likes to oppose the consuls' projects either, because everyone, both individually and collectively, falls under their authority when out on campaign.

[18] To a considerable extent, then, each of the three components of the Roman constitution can harm or help the other two. This enables the whole made up of all three parts to respond appropriately to every situation that arises, and that is what makes it the best conceivable system of government. For example, when a general threat from abroad forces the three estates to cooperate and collaborate, the state gains extraordinary abilities: first, since everyone competes to devise ways to combat the emergency, and everyone cooperates in their public and private capacities to complete the task at hand, there is no contingency that it is incapable of meeting; second, decisions are made and acted on extremely promptly. This gives the Roman state its characteristic feature: it is irresistible, and achieves every goal it sets itself.

Or again, suppose the external threat has been dealt with and, as a result of their victory, they enjoy prosperity and a life of ease and plenty; and suppose that this gradually goes to their heads, and that idleness leads, as it usually does, to arrogance and presumption. Under these circumstances, the way the state helps itself from its own resources would become particularly clear. For suppose one of the estates, thanks to an inflated impression of its own importance, pushes itself forward and tries to gain the upper hand over the others—well, clearly none of them does get inflated or presumptuous, because none of them is self-sufficient, as I have just been explaining, and the designs of each of them can be effectively counteracted and hampered by the others. Everything remains in its assigned place,* then, either because its impetus is checked, or because right from the start it is afraid of being curbed by the others. [. . .]

The Roman Military System

[19] After electing consuls for the year, they next appoint military tribunes, fourteen with five years' service and ten others with ten years' service. Rank-and-file soldiers have to serve for ten years if they are cavalrymen, and sixteen years if they are infantry, up to a maximum age of forty-six.[1] In an emergency, footsoldiers are obliged to serve up to the age of fifty. No one is eligible for any political post until he has completed ten years of military service.

Every year, the consuls announce at a meeting of the popular assembly the day when all Romans of military age must report for enrolment. On the appointed day, those who are liable for military service arrive in Rome and assemble on the Capitol. The junior tribunes divide into four groups,* according to the order in which they were appointed by the people or the consuls—four, because the basic and primary division of the Roman forces is into four legions. The four junior tribunes who were the first to be appointed are assigned to the First Legion, the next three to the Second, the next four to the Third, and the final three to the Fourth. The two first senior tribunes are assigned to the First, the next batch of three to the Second, the next two to the Third, and the final three to the Fourth.

[1] This does not apply to men whose property has been assessed at under 400 drachmas, who are all accommodated within the navy.

[20] With the tribunes assigned to their respective legions in such a way that every legion has the same number of officers, they next form separate panels, legion by legion. They draw lots for the tribes and call them forward one by one, in the order of the lottery. From each tribe four men are selected of more or less the same age and condition. These four men approach, and the tribunes of the First Legion first choose one of them, then those of the Second Legion choose the next, those of the Third choose the third, and finally those of the Fourth choose the fourth. Another four men approach, and this time it is the tribunes of the Second Legion who choose first, and so on in order, ending with the tribunes of the First Legion. Then another four men approach, and the tribunes of the Third Legion have first choice, with the tribunes of the Second Legion going last. With the choice rotating all the time in this orderly fashion, each legion gets men of the same quality. The prescribed number of men is 4,200 to a legion, or in times of exceptional danger 5,000. When they have reached 4,200, they used in the past to assess the cavalry, but nowadays, instead of selecting the cavalry next, they do so first, with the censor making the selection on the basis of their wealth. Three hundred cavalrymen are assigned to each legion.

[21] Once this process of enrolment is over, designated tribunes have the men fall in, now in their separate legions. From each legion they pick just one man, whomever they judge to be the most suitable, and they have him swear that he will obey his officers and carry out their orders to the best of his ability. All the rest of the men then step forward one by one to take the oath, but all they have to declare is that they will do exactly the same as the first man.

At the same time, the consuls write to the governing bodies of the allied cities in Italy from which they require contingents for the campaign, with details of how many men they are to send, and when and where the chosen men are to present themselves. The cities use the same selection and oath-taking procedure as at Rome, and, after appointing a paymaster and a commanding officer, they send the contingents on their way.

In Rome, after the oath-taking, the tribunes tell the men of their respective legions when and where they are to present themselves, without arms and armour, and dismiss them for the time being. When the men turn up as ordered, the tribunes pick the youngest and poorest among them to become *velites*. The *hastati* are chosen from the

next age group, the *principes* from those in their prime, and the *triarii* from the oldest. These are the names the Romans use for the four divisions within a legion, which are distinguished from one another not just by the age of the soldiers, but by their equipment. The tribunes ensure that as a result of the selection there are 600 from the oldest age group—600 *triarii*, that is—and then 1,200 *principes* and the same number of *hastati*; the remainder, the youngest, make up the *velites*. If there are more than 4,000 in a legion, they divide the extras proportionately among the divisions, except for the *triarii*, who always number 600.

[22] They order the youngest troops to equip themselves with a sword, javelins, and a *parma*. A *parma* is a round, sturdy shield, large enough, with a diameter of three feet, to afford good protection. Their equipment also includes an unadorned helmet, which the men sometimes cover with a material such as wolfskin, which serves simultaneously to protect the helmet and as a blazon, so that the junior officers can tell who is and who is not displaying bravery in battle. The shaft of the javelin is about three feet long and a finger's breadth in thickness; its head is a handspan long, and has been hammered out and sharpened to such a fine point that it is bound to get bent on impact, which makes it impossible for the enemy to throw it back. Otherwise, the weapon would serve both sides.

[23] The second age group, called the *hastati*, are ordered to equip themselves with the full panoply. In Roman terms this consists, first, of a shield with a curved surface, two and a half feet wide and four feet long, and also with a curvature the depth of a palm.† The shield is made of two layers of wood glued together, with the outer surface covered in canvas and then calfskin. There is iron edging along its upper and lower rims, to protect the shield against a sword's downward cut and against damage when it is rested on the ground. It also has an iron boss attached to it, which deflects potentially lethal blows from dangerous missiles such as stones and pikes. The next item of the panoply is the sword—an 'Iberian' sword—which is worn on the right thigh. It has an excellent point, and effective cutting edges on both sides, since the blade is strong and firm. Then there are also two throwing-spears, a bronze helmet, and greaves.

These throwing-spears may be either thick or slender. The shaft of the stronger variety may be either round or square, but in either case it is about a palm across. The slender ones, which resemble

medium-sized hunting-spears, are not alternatives to the stronger ones, but equally standard equipment. Both kinds have shafts about four feet long. They are fitted with a barbed iron head, which is the same length as the shaft. For practical reasons, the head is so securely attached to the shaft—it slots halfway down the shaft and is held in place by closely riveted clasps—that the iron would snap before working loose as a result of use, even though at the bottom, where it joins the shaft, it is one and a half fingers thick. That shows how well designed the joining is of the head to the shaft.

The next piece of equipment they wear is a plumed helmet, with three upright red or black feathers, about a foot and a half long, which, surmounting all the rest of his equipment, make a man appear twice as tall as he is. He strikes a fine figure, and one that his enemies find terrifying. The final item of equipment for ordinary soldiers is a metal plate, a span square, which is worn on the chest and is called a 'heart-guard'. But those whose property has been assessed at more than 10,000 drachmas wear, along with everything else, a chain-mail corslet instead of a heart-guard. The *principes* and *triarii* are equipped in the same way as the *hastati*, except that the *triarii* have regular spears instead of throwing-spears.

[24] The tribunes select ten men of suitable calibre from each of these divisions (except the youngest) to serve as company commanders, and then choose another ten men, who also rank as company commanders. Their first choice gains a seat on the military council. The company commanders in their turn then appoint the same number of adjutants. Next, the tribunes and the company commanders together divide each age group (apart from the *velites*) into ten, and assign to each tenth part two officers and two adjutants. The appropriate numbers of *velites* are then distributed equally among the sections. Each of these sections is called a 'unit', 'maniple', or 'company', and the officers are called 'centurions' or 'company commanders'. The centurions on their own then select from the men who are left two especially fit and brave men to be the standard-bearers for each maniple.

It makes sense for there to be two centurions for each unit, because it is never clear how any given centurion is going to behave or what may happen to him. War allows no excuses, and they never want the maniple to be without a centurion to lead it. When both centurions are present, the one who was chosen first commands the right half of the maniple, and the one who was chosen second commands the

men on the left, but in the absence of one of them the other takes command of the entire unit. The ideal centurion, from the Romans' point of view, is a natural leader, with a stable and resourceful cast of mind, rather than being a daring risk-taker. They would prefer to see him stand his ground under pressure and in the face of defeat, and die at his post, than launch attacks and initiate battles.

[25] The cavalry are likewise divided into ten troops. The tribunes promote three men from each troop to officer status, and they in turn choose three adjutants. The first man to be chosen takes command of the whole troop, and the other two are responsible for squadrons of ten, but they are all called decurions. In the absence of the first man, the second takes over as troop commander.

Nowadays the Roman cavalry is equipped in the same way as the Greeks. In the past, however, they had no corslets, but fought in light clothing. The advantage of this was that it made dismounting and remounting quick and easy, but the lack of armour meant that they were vulnerable in an engagement. Their lances were inefficient as well, in two respects. First, they were so light and bendy that it was impossible for the riders to hit their intended target, and the movement of the horse meant that the lance very often broke before the tip actually became embedded in anything. Second, since the lances were made without 'lizarders',* they could be used point first for one strike only, and then, once they had broken, they had no further use at all. They also used to carry a shield covered in oxhide (which resembled the knobbed cakes that are used as sacrificial offerings), but it was not resistant enough to ward off missiles, and rain rotted the hide and made it peel until it was even more completely useless than before.

But experience showed them the deficiencies of their equipment, and they soon changed over to Greek methods of construction. Greek-style lances are strong and inflexible enough to be aimed well and to guarantee the efficacy of the very first strike with the point; and the fact that they can be reversed, so that the 'lizarder' is brought into action, means that they can continue to be used as effective weapons. The same goes for the shields as well, which are designed and made for use against both missiles and direct assault. As soon as the Romans became aware of the superiority of Greek designs in these respects, they copied them—and I should say that the Romans are as ready as anyone to adopt new practices and learn from others how to do things better.

[26] Once the tribunes have divided the men up in this way among the various units of the army, and have told them how to equip themselves, they let them return home for the time being. When the day arrives on which all the new conscripts are bound by the oath they swore to muster at a place designated by the consuls,[1] they all turn up without fail, because the only acceptable reasons for failing to keep their promise are adverse omens and *force majeure*.

The allied troops arrive at the mustering point at the same time as the Romans, and their organization and management are handled by officers called *praefecti*, twelve in number, who are appointed by the consuls. The first thing they do for the consuls is select, from all the allied troops there, both cavalry and infantry with proven experience and form them into a select battalion. They are called the *extraordinarii*, which is the Latin for 'elite'. The allies usually provide the same number of infantry as the Romans, but three times more cavalry, and a third of their cavalry and a fifth of the infantry are withdrawn to make up the *extraordinarii*. The rest of the allied troops are divided into two units, called the Right Wing and the Left Wing.

When everything is ready, the tribunes take over command of both the Roman and allied contingents and make camp. They have just one simple scheme for their camps, which they use in all circumstances and terrains, and so this seems to be a suitable occasion for me to try to give readers some idea, in so far as it can be conveyed by words, of Roman military practice as regards marching, camping, and fighting pitched battles. All someone has to do is read about these things, and he will become expert in an important and valuable topic. Is there anyone so disinclined to perform fine and admirable deeds that he would refuse to spend a little time and trouble over that?

[27] First, then, a Roman military camp. Once the site has been chosen, the position that commands the clearest overall view and best facilitates communication is earmarked for the consul's tent. A flag is fixed there, on the future site of the tent, and a square patch is measured out around the flag, with the centre of each side of the square 100 feet from the flag, making an area of 40,000 square feet. On one side or edge of this square, in whichever direction seems best for foraging and fetching water, the legions are arranged as follows.

[1] Generally speaking, since each consul has been assigned half the allied troops and two Roman legions, they designate separate places for their troops to muster.

As I said not long ago, there are six tribunes to a legion. Since each consul is always accompanied by two legions of Roman troops, it plainly follows that each consul has twelve tribunes in support. They put all twelve of the tribunes' tents in a single line, parallel to the pre-selected side of the square and fifty feet away from it. The point of the gap is to leave room for the tribunes' baggage—their horses, pack animals, and so on. The tribunes' tents are pitched with their backs turned towards the square, facing outwards. (From here on, let this direction be the 'front' of the entire formation.) The tribunes' tents are placed at equal intervals from one another, with the distance between them determined by the fact that the twelve tents always cover the whole extent of the space occupied by the Roman legions.

[28] Another hundred feet are paced out in front of this line of tents, and then the line that delimits this area, the line parallel to the line of the tribunes' tents, is where the legionaries' section of the camp begins. This section is arranged as follows. They find the halfway point of the borderline I have just mentioned, take a perpendicular down from this point, and have the cavalry contingents of the two legions pitch their tents facing each other with a gap of fifty feet between them, the gap being exactly bisected by the perpendicular line. The cavalry and the infantry arrange their tents identically, and the overall shape formed by the tents of each company or troop is oblong. Each oblong faces a corridor, and the side of the oblong on the corridor is a determinate length—one hundred feet, to be precise. They usually also try to ensure that the depth is a hundred feet as well.† When they are using the larger size of legions, they increase both the length and the depth proportionately.

[29] The cavalry tents, then, run down from the centre of the tribunes' encampment like a side street coming at a right angle off the borderline and the area in front of the tribunate. In fact, the way the corridors are laid out makes them precisely resemble side streets, with either infantry companies or cavalry troops encamped on either side along the entire length of each street. The *triarii* are an exception. The basic arrangement is similar: they are placed behind the cavalry, one company of *triarii* to each cavalry troop, with no space between them, and with the *triarii* facing exactly the opposite direction from the cavalry. But the depth of the space each company of *triarii* occupies is half its length, because generally speaking there are half as many *triarii* as there are members of the other divisions.

The depth varies, then, to ensure that, even on those not infrequent occasions when there are unequal numbers of men, each division occupies an equal frontage.

Next, on either side, fifty feet away and opposite the *triarii*, they encamp the *principes*. Since the *principes* too face the intervening spaces, two more side streets are created. Just as with the cavalry's side street, these two new ones also start at a junction with the line that delimits the hundred-foot space in front of the tribunate, and end at the side of the camp opposite the tribunate, which I proposed a while back to call the front of the whole formation. After the *principes*, they encamp the *hastati*; as with the *triarii* and the cavalry, they face in the opposite direction from the *principes* and there is no space between them. Since every division was originally subdivided into ten companies, all the side streets are the same length, and break off at the same point close to the front of the camp. The tents of the final companies on each side street are turned so that they face the front of the camp.

[30] They leave another gap of fifty feet in front of the *hastati*, and the allied cavalry pitch their tents on the far side of this gap, with the corridor so created beginning and ending at the same cross-lines as the others. Where the allies' numbers are concerned, I have already said that the original infantry contingent, which consisted of the same number of men as the Roman legions, is reduced in favour of the *extraordinarii*, and that the *extraordinarii* also gain a third of the original cavalry contingent, which consisted of twice as many men as the Roman cavalry. So the design of the area of the camp assigned to the allied cavalry gives them extra depth, proportionate to their numbers, to ensure that their frontage is the same length as that of the Roman legions. With all five corridors now in existence, they have the allied infantry companies encamp next to the cavalry. Again, they increase the depth of the area assigned to them in proportion to their numbers, and again they have them turned outwards, with their backs to the cavalry, so that they face the palisade on either side of the camp.

The centurions of each company take the first and last tents at either end of their section. Although the basic design of the encampment is as I have described, in every section a gap of fifty feet is left between the fifth and sixth troops, or the fifth and sixth infantry companies, as it may be. This creates another corridor across the entire camp, at right angles to the side streets and parallel to the tribunate. They call this 'Fifth Street', because it runs alongside the fifth companies.

[31] One side of the space behind the tribunes' tents, next to the area around the command post, is used for the market, and the other for the quaestor's treasury and magazine. The spaces behind the last of the tribunes' tents on either side, forming (so to speak) the outlying wings of the row, are assigned jointly to an elite cavalry squadron detached from the *extraordinarii* and to those who have joined the expedition voluntarily, at the consul's request. These units pitch their tents on the left and right edges of the camp, facing either the treasury structures or the market. Generally speaking, it is not the case that these men just pitch their tents close to the consul; it is also their only job to look after the consul and the quaestor on the march and on all other occasions. Back to back with these units, and so facing the palisade, are the tents of the infantry assigned to the same bodyguarding duties as the cavalry.

They next leave a corridor a hundred feet wide, which runs parallel to the tribunes' tents on the other side of the market, the command post, and the treasury, from one side of the camp to the other. On the far side of this open space, the allied cavalry assigned to the *extraordinarii* make camp, facing the market, the command post, and the treasury. A fifty-foot corridor runs through the middle of these cavalry tents, directly opposite the area around the command post, leading to the rear of the camp and lying at right angles to the corridor I have just mentioned. Back to back with the cavalry, the allied infantry assigned to the *extraordinarii* pitch their tents, facing the palisade at the rear of the whole camp. The remaining empty spaces left and right of the *extraordinarii* at the edges of the camp are assigned to foreign troops and allies who join on the spur of the moment.

The overall shape of the camp, then, is a square, and at ground level the arrangement of the streets and so on makes it resemble a town. Between the tents and the palisade on every side they leave a gap of 200 feet, which has a number of important functions. For instance, it is critically important for troop movements into or out of the camp, in the sense that it is possible for each group of men to enter this space from their own side street, whereas if they converged on the same street there would be a crush and they would disrupt one another. It also serves as a place where at night they can safely pen the animals they have brought with them and livestock they have stolen from the enemy. But its most important function is to protect them

from fireballs or other missiles during night attacks, because only a very few reach that far, and they would in any case have been rendered more or less harmless by the distance involved in the clearance around the tents.

[32] Given the numbers of both infantry and cavalry (on either assumption—that is, whether the legion consists of 4,000 or 5,000 men), the dimensions of the plots occupied by the companies, the number of companies, the sizes of the gaps (whether corridors or open spaces), and all the other details, anyone who wants to spend a little time over the matter will also gain an idea of the size of the site and the total length of the perimeter of the camp.

Sometimes there is an excessive number of allied troops, either right from the start or as a result of spur-of-the-moment arrivals. If the extra troops are spur-of-the-moment arrivals, they accommodate them on either side of the command post by reducing the size of the market and the treasury to the bare minimum required for them to function. If there is an abnormally large number right from the start, they create two extra side streets, one on either side of the Roman legions, at the edge of the camp.

If all four legions and both consuls make camp together, the basic plan of the camp as described above stays the same. All that happens is the two armies set up camp back to back, joined in each case at the encampments of the *extraordinarii*, whom I had facing the 'rear' of the whole camp. The shape of the resulting camp is oblong, with twice the area of the previous one, and one and a half times the length of perimeter. When the two consuls camp together, then, this is how they arrange it; but if they keep their forces separate, everything stays the same, except that they set up the market, the treasury, and the command centre between the two armies.*

[33] Once the camp has been set up, the tribunes meet and get everyone in the camp, free men and slaves, to take an oath one by one. They swear not to steal anything from the camp, and to bring even things they find to the tribunes. They next distribute duties among the companies of *principes* and *hastati* from each legion. Two companies are detailed to take care of the area in front of the tribunate. Most of the Roman troops pass the daylight hours in this open space, and so they always like to ensure, for their own sakes, that it is carefully sprinkled with water and swept clean.

Three of the remaining eighteen companies are then assigned by lot to each tribune.[1] Each of these three companies takes turns to tend to the tribune's needs: when they encamp, they erect his tent and level the area around it, and if any of his animals need the protection of a pen, it is their job to construct it. Then they also provide two sentry details for him, with each detail consisting of four men, two to stand guard in front of the tent, and two behind, next to the horses. As each tribune has three companies at his service, and each company consists of more than a hundred men (not counting the *triarii* and *velites*, who are exempt from these duties), the work is not onerous: each company is on duty only every third day. But from the tribune's point of view, it is not just that the service is essential, but also that the dignity and prestige of his office is maintained by these means.

The *triarii* may be exempt from serving the tribunes, but every day they supply a sentry detail for the cavalry troops, with each company assigned to the troop that is quartered directly behind it. The main function of this detail is to look after the horses and make sure that they neither lame themselves by getting entangled in their tethers, nor get loose and disturb the calm and quiet of the camp by falling in with other horses. All the infantry companies take turns on a daily basis to watch over the consul at night. This not only protects him against attempts on his life, but also enhances the dignity of his office.

[34] Construction of the camp's defences—trenches and palisade—is shared between the allied troops and the Romans. The allies see to two sides, each wing taking the side where it is quartered; and the Romans see to the other two sides, with each legion taking one of them. Every company is assigned its own stretch of a side. The centurions stand by and supervise the details, and two of the tribunes assess the overall quality of the work on each side.

The tribunes also have oversight of all other camp activities. They form pairs, draw up a rota, and each pair takes charge for two months out of six. Those whose turn it is to be on duty are responsible during their two months for all operations in the field. The *praefecti* use the same system for the allied troops under their command.

[1] Remember that in each legion there are twenty companies of *hastati* and *principes*,* and six tribunes.

Every day at dawn all the cavalry and the infantry officers report to the tribunes' tents, while the tribunes are meeting with the consul. The consul tells the tribunes what needs to be done that day, the tribunes pass the instructions on to the cavalry and the infantry officers, and they pass them on to the rank-and-file soldiers at the earliest opportunity.

The way they ensure the safe transmission of the watchword for the night is as follows. One man is chosen from the tenth company (the company occupying the last plot on each side street) of each section of the cavalry and infantry. This man is excused guard duty. Every day, as the sun is going down, he reports to the tent of the tribune on duty and receives the watchword, or rather a board with the word written on it. He leaves, returns to his company, and in front of witnesses passes both the board and the watchword on to the commander of the next company, who then does the same for his neighbour. This process continues up the line until the boards reach the first companies, the ones situated closest to the tribunate, who have to return the boards to the tribunate before dark. If all the boards that have been issued are returned, the tribune knows that everyone has received the watchword and that it has passed through every company before getting back to him. If one of them is missing, he immediately tries to find out what has happened, since he knows from the signatures which division has failed to return its board. The person found to be responsible for holding up the process is duly punished.

[35] Night watches are organized as follows. The security of the consul and his tent is the responsibility of whichever company's turn it is to spend the night there, and the job of guarding the tents of the tribunes and the cavalry troops is assigned to men from every company in turn, as I explained above. Each company makes similar provisions for its own tents, drawing on some of its own men. The remaining guards are posted by the consul. Generally speaking, three sentries stand guard over the treasury, and two more are assigned to each of the legates and every member of the military council. Manning the outer perimeter is the duty assigned to the *velites*; some of their number are chosen on a daily basis to spend the night patrolling the entire palisade, and they also provide ten sentries for every entrance. In every case, one of those on guard duty—the one from each detail who is going to take the first watch—is taken in the evening by one

of the adjutants of his company to the tribune on duty. The tribune gives each of these men a little inscribed token, one for each station, and then they leave for their assigned posts.

The task of making the rounds to inspect the guards is entrusted to the cavalry. On the first morning, it is the job of the senior decurion in each legion to tell one of his adjutants to order four men from his own troop to do the rounds that night. Then in the evening the senior decurion tells the commander of the next troop that it is up to him to see to the rounds the following night. Having received his instructions, the second decurion has to repeat the process the next day, and so on. The four men selected by the adjutants from the first troop draw lots to decide who gets which watch, and then make their way to the tribune on duty, who gives them written instructions about the order in which they are to inspect the stations. Then these four men go and spend the night by the first company of *triarii*, because it is the job of the commander of this company to sound the bugle to announce each watch.

[36] When the time comes, the man who was allotted the first watch goes the rounds, accompanied by some of his friends to act as witnesses. He visits all the stations I have mentioned, not only those by the palisade and at the gates, but also those by each of the infantry and cavalry companies. At the first station, if he finds the guards awake, he takes their token from them; if he finds anyone asleep or away from his post, he calls his companions to witness the fact, before moving on. The same routine is followed by those who go the rounds in the subsequent watches. As I have just said, it is the responsibility of the centurions of the first company of the *triarii* from each legion, on a daily rota, to sound the bugle to announce each watch so that the inspectors can coordinate their visits.

At dawn, all those on inspection duty bring the tokens back to the tribune. If they return a full set, there is no need for a disciplinary hearing, and they take their leave. But if the number of tokens returned is less than the number of guard stations, the marks on the tokens are examined to see which of the stations defaulted. Once they have ascertained this, the tribune summons the relevant centurion, who brings the guard detail with him and they are examined in front of the cavalryman who had carried out the inspection. It is a straightforward matter to find out if the fault lies with the sentries, because the cavalryman simply calls on his companions to testify, as they are

obliged to. But if that is not the case, the imputation of guilt reverts to the inspector.

[37] A court martial consisting of the tribunes meets straight away to try the case, and if the defendant is found guilty, he has to run the gauntlet. This punishment is carried out as follows. The tribune on duty takes up a stick and barely touches the condemned man with it, and then everyone in the camp beats him with sticks or hurls stones at him as he passes. In most cases, the condemned man does not make it out of the camp alive, but there would be no safety for him even if he did. How could there be, when he is forbidden to return to his homeland and no member of his family would dare to give him shelter? To suffer this catastrophe once is to be completely ruined. The adjutant and the troop commander are liable to the same punishment if they fail to give the proper instructions at the proper time to the men on inspection duty or to the commander of the next troop. The punishment for transgression is severe and brutal enough to ensure the faultless conduct of night watches in the Roman army.

The rank-and-file soldiers are answerable to the tribunes, and the tribunes to the consul. A tribune (or a *praefectus* in the case of the allied troops) has the authority to impose fines, distrain property, and flog the men in his command. Running the gauntlet is also used as a punishment for the theft of goods within the camp and for lying under oath; it is also the penalty for any fully mature man who is caught letting his body be used for sex, and for anyone who receives a third conviction for a single offence. These are crimes and are punished as such, but other offences count as cowardice and as conduct unbecoming in a soldier, such as trying to gain a reward for valour by lying to the tribunes about one's actions, or abandoning one's position out of fear when assigned to a cover force, or discarding any piece of weaponry out of fear during the actual battle. Fear of the due punishment, then, sometimes keeps men in a support force at their posts in the face of certain death against vastly superior numbers, and in battle men who have dropped a shield or a sword or something have been known to hurl themselves recklessly at the enemy, hoping either to recover the lost piece or to escape by death the certainty of disgrace and the scorn of their comrades.

[38] If larger groups of men, not just individuals, commit these same offences—if, for instance, a whole company abandons its position in the press of battle—the Romans choose not to make everyone

concerned run the gauntlet or face execution. They have come up instead with a solution that does not harm their interests so much and yet acts as a deterrent. The tribune assembles the legion, and has those who turned tail step forward where all can see them. After reprimanding them severely and at length, he draws lots to select a certain number of those who lost their nerve. However many men he selects—it may be five or eight or twenty—he always aims to make their number more or less exactly a tenth of the total number of offenders. Those on whom the lot falls have to submit to a ruthless gauntlet, while the rest receive rations of barley instead of wheat, and are ordered to pitch their tents outside the safety of the encampment. With everyone equally at risk and equally frightened of the lottery, given its completely random nature, and everyone also equally liable to the public humiliation of barley rations, they have instituted an effective way to inspire fear and to repair the harm done.

[39] They also have an excellent system of incentives to motivate the men to face danger. After an engagement in which some of them have displayed bravery, the consul convenes an army assembly and calls forward those who are thought to have distinguished themselves. He first makes a speech in praise of each man individually, mentioning not only his courage, but also any other exemplary aspects of his life, and then he presents awards.

For wounding an enemy, a man receives a spear, and for killing an enemy and stripping him of his arms and armour, a medal (if he is an infantryman) or a harness-medallion (if he is a cavalryman), though the award for this too was originally just a spear. These awards are not for wounding or despoiling enemy soldiers during a set battle or in the course of taking a town; they are given to those who deliberately and voluntarily expose themselves to danger during a skirmish or in some other action where individual risk-taking is not inescapable. The first man to scale the wall during an assault on a town receives a golden crown. Anyone who shields and saves the life of a fellow Roman or of an ally is not only honoured by the consul with a similar award, but also receives a crown from the person whose life he saved, whether this is given willingly or unwillingly (in the latter case, after an investigation conducted by the tribunes). Also, for the rest of his days the person whose life was saved looks up to his saviour as a father, and is obliged to treat him in all respects exactly as if he were the one who had given him life.

These incentives inspire others to do just as well, to strive to excel in times of danger. And they have this effect not only on the men who attend the ceremonies and listen to the speeches, but on people back home too, because the admiration and respect that recipients of the awards attract goes further than their comrades in arms and their household. Only those who have received awards for bravery from consuls are allowed to wear their decorations in public, and so, after their return, they play a prominent part in parades and processions, and display their trophies in the most conspicuous places in their houses, as tokens and proof of their valour. The meticulous care taken by the Romans over rewards and punishments in the army helps to explain their outstanding success in warfare.

An infantryman is paid two obols a day, a centurion four obols, and a cavalryman a drachma. An infantryman's grain allowance is about two-thirds of an Attic medimnus of wheat per month, and a cavalryman's seven medimni of barley and two of wheat. An allied infantryman receives the same as his Roman counterpart, while an allied cavalryman's ration is one and a third medimni of wheat and five of barley. These grain rations are given free to allied servicemen, but in the case of Roman troops the quaestor deducts from their pay the cost, at a stipulated rate, of their grain, clothing, and any additional weaponry they may need.

[40] There are three stages to the process of breaking camp. At the first signal, the tents are dismantled (with the tribunes' and the consul's tents the first to be taken down, just as they were the first to be put up) and everyone packs his baggage. At the second signal, the pack animals are loaded. At the third signal, the vanguard companies move out and set the whole army in motion.

The *extraordinarii* are usually posted at the head of the column, followed by the Right Wing of the allies, and then the baggage belonging to these two units. Next comes the first Roman legion, with its own baggage train, and then the second legion, followed by both its own animals and those of the allies from the rearguard—the Left Wing of the allies, that is, which is posted in the rear of the column. The cavalry companies ride either behind their respective divisions or alongside the pack animals, to keep them from straying and to protect them. If the rear is on a state of alert, the basic marching order is the same, but the *extraordinarii* take the rear rather than the van. Every other day, the two legions and two wings either lead or follow their

counterparts; by constantly alternating the order up front in this way everyone gains equal access to unspoiled water and untouched grain fields.

If danger threatens and there is enough open ground, they adopt a different formation. The *hastati*, *principes*, and *triarii* form three parallel columns. In front of them are the pack animals of the companies leading the column. These first companies are followed by the pack animals of the second companies, who in turn are followed by the pack animals of the third companies, and so on alternately. This order of march allows them to turn to face either left or right depending on which side they are attacked from, and then to advance clear of the baggage to meet the enemy face on. This means that it takes little time and just a single manoeuvre (except that sometimes the *hastati* have to wheel around the others) for the heavy infantry to form up for battle and leave the baggage trains and their attendants sheltered behind their lines, which is where they belong in times of danger.

[41] When they are on the march and it is almost time to make camp, one of the tribunes and those of the centurions who have been given the job on this occasion go on ahead and survey the whole area where the camp is to be made. As I have just explained,* they first decide whereabouts within this area the consul's tent is to be pitched, and on which edge or side of the area around the consul's tent the army will encamp. Next, they mark out, first, the area assigned to the consul's tent, then the line on which the tribune's tents are pitched, and then the line parallel to this one, where the army encampment begins. They also outline the area to the other side of the command post, the plan of which I have just described in detail and at length.

This takes little time, since no complex measurements are involved and all the dimensions are fixed and familiar. They next plant flags. The first one marks where the consul's tent is to go; a second is planted on whichever side of this area has been chosen for the main encampment; a third is fixed in the middle of the line of the tribunes' tents; and a fourth on the line below which the legionaries are to encamp. The flag marking the command post is white, but the other three are red. On the other side of the command-post area, they plant either unadorned spears or differently coloured flags. Then they outline the side streets and fix spears in the ground to mark each street.

All this means, of course, that as soon as the army comes up to the campsite and gains a clear overview of it, the whole design is

immediately clear to everyone, with the consul's flag acting as the marker from which they can deduce the rest. No one has any doubt as to which street and which plot he is to pitch his tent on, since everyone always occupies the same plot. It is almost as if the army were returning to its native city: the soldiers of a returning army separate at the city gate and make their way unerringly home, since every man knows where and whereabouts in the city his residence is located. And that is exactly what happens when a Roman army enters its campsite.

[42] The way in which the Romans go about setting up camp, then, seems to me to be quite different, in its simplicity, from the Greek system. When a Greek army makes camp, its prime consideration is to take advantage of the natural strengths of the terrain itself. There are two reasons for this: they want to avoid the hardship of digging trenches, and they regard man-made defences as inferior to purely natural topographical features. This not only affects the arrangement of the camp as a whole, in that topographical constraints mean that no two camps ever have the same shape, but they also have to vary the details to fit in with various inconvenient terrains. The upshot is that no one knows for certain precisely which plot he or his unit is to occupy. For the sake of simplicity, however, the Romans are prepared to endure the hardship involved in digging trenches and so on, since then they always end up with identical camps, with which everyone is familiar.

So much for the most important aspects of Roman military science, and especially that branch of it that has to do with encampment. [. . .]

The Roman Constitution Compared with Others

[43] The constitutions of Sparta, Crete, Mantinea, and Carthage have long enjoyed a reputation for excellence, and there is hardly a historian who has not mentioned them. Some add Athens and Thebes as well, but I shall omit these two. I can see no point in spending much time over constitutions that did not follow the normal course of development and did not remain for long in their primes. Nor was their decline normal; it was as though fleeting Fortune allowed them to flare briefly into brilliance and then, just as the proverbs warn,

at the height of their apparent success and with every prospect of a glorious future, they experienced a complete reversal.

So, for instance, the Thebans' reputation for excellence, which they gained by taking advantage of the villainy of the Spartans and the antagonism their allies felt towards them, was actually due to just one or two outstanding individuals, who saw the possibilities inherent in the situation. Theban success at the time was due not to their system of government, but to the quality of their leaders, as Fortune rapidly revealed to the whole world. For Thebes's growth, prime, and collapse exactly coincided with the lives of Epaminondas and Pelopidas, and so we should regard the cause of Theban ascendancy at the time to be these men, not the constitution. 370s–360s

[44] The same general conclusion goes for the Athenian constitution too. Although one might claim that Athens enjoyed several periods of success, none was more glorious than the one that coincided with Themistocles at the height of his powers, and shortly afterwards the inherent inconstancy of the constitution ensured that Athens experienced a complete reversal. I say 'inconstancy', because the best analogy for the Athenian democracy is a ship without a captain. On such a ship, the crew do their duty outstandingly well as long as fear of the open sea or the threat of a storm induces them to cooperate with one another and obey the helmsman. But when there is no cause for alarm, they start to ignore their superiors and to fall out with one another. And then the in-fighting begins: some of them want to continue the voyage, while others urge the helmsman to drop anchor; some of them let out the sheets, while others interfere and order the sails furled. It is not just that this quarrelling and fighting disgust people looking on from outside; they also make things dangerous for everyone else on board the ship for the duration of the voyage. And what happens is that often, even after crossing the widest stretches of open sea and surviving the most furious storms, they founder in harbour or close to land. This is certainly what has happened on several occasions to the Athenian state. More than once, a display of exemplary virtue from both the people and their leaders has enabled it to survive an appalling crisis, but then it has come to grief for no good reason at all, at a time of untroubled calm. 480s

I need say no more, then, about Athens or Thebes, states that were ruled by the whim of mobs—in the one case a mob of exceptional savagery and brutality, in the other a mob that had been schooled in

an atmosphere of violence and passion. [45] But, moving on to the Cretan constitution, there are two questions that demand our attention. Why, first, do the most authoritative writers of the past—men such as Ephorus, Xenophon, Callisthenes, and Plato—say that the Cretan and the Spartan systems of government are the same? Second, why do they commend the Cretan constitution?

I think they are wrong in both respects, but let us look into the issues, starting with the dissimilarities between the two systems. The peculiar features of the Spartans' system of government are said to be, first, their provisions for the ownership of land, whereby no one has more than anyone else, but all citizens possess an equal amount of the land set aside by the state for its citizens. Second, there is their attitude towards money-making, which is so thoroughly disapproved of there that the conflict generated by inequality of income has been completely banished from the state. Third, there is the fact that in Sparta kingship* is held in perpetuity and membership of the Council of Elders is for life, and these are the officers who are either directly or indirectly responsible for the entire administration of the state.

[46] None of this bears the slightest resemblance to the Cretan system. In Crete, people are permitted by law to go on and on ad infinitum (as the saying goes) acquiring as much land as they can, and money-making is regarded not just as necessary, but as the most honourable occupation a man can take up. That is how highly wealth is esteemed there. And in general avarice and greed are so deeply entrenched in Crete* that it is the only place in the world where no gain of any kind is considered sordid. Moreover, political offices are filled there on an annual basis by democratic procedures.

I have often wondered, then, why we are told that these two radically different systems are cognate and akin. But the proponents of this view do not stop at ignoring such striking differences. They also append a lengthy argument to the effect that Lycurgus was the only man in the past to have grasped the critical fact that every state owes its preservation to two factors: courage against external enemies, and concord with fellow citizens. By doing away with rapaciousness, then, they say, Lycurgus simultaneously did away with all civil discord and strife. Hence, as the Spartans are free of these evils, there is no people in Greece who manage their internal affairs better and achieve

a higher degree of concord. That is how the argument goes, but then, even though they can see that, by contrast, Cretan rapacity generates an enormous number of disputes, feuds, and civil wars, both local and general, they ignore the problem this creates for their position and boldly assert the close similarity of the two political systems. In his account of the two constitutions, Ephorus even describes them in such identical terms that, if one ignored the different proper names, it would be quite impossible to tell which place he was talking about.

So much for why I regard the two constitutions as different. Next, I shall explain why, in my opinion, the Cretan system is neither to be praised nor emulated. [47] It is my view that every state is the product of two factors, which determine whether its institutions and constitution are good or bad. These factors are customs and traditions. When customs and traditions are good, they make private citizens respectful and restrained, and give the state an equitable and fair character, but when they are bad they have the opposite effect. Therefore, just as we can confidently infer that the citizens of a state with good customs and traditions will themselves be good and will have a good system of government, so it also makes perfect sense to conclude, when we come across a state where individuals are rapacious and public policies are unjust, that the traditions, local customs, and entire system of government are bad. Now, it would be extremely hard to find any people who are more devious in their private lives and more unjust in their public policies than the Cretans. I conclude, therefore, not only that the Cretan constitution is dissimilar from the Spartan constitution, but also that there is nothing else about it to admire or emulate; and so I exclude it from this comparison of constitutions.

Next, what about Plato's political system, since it too is highly acclaimed in philosophical circles?* But it would be unfair to admit it into the discussion. We do not let craftsmen or athletes take part in competitions unless they have been certified or trained, and it would be just as inappropriate to let Plato's system compete for first prize, unless or until it proves that it can act in the real world. Until then, discussing it and comparing it with the Spartan, Roman, and Carthaginian systems would be no different from bringing forward a statue for comparison with real, live human beings. Wonderful skill may have gone into making the statue, but to compare lifeless entities

with living beings is bound to strike spectators as quite absurd and futile.

[48] Let us leave those two systems, then, and return to the Spartan constitution. The laws Lycurgus drew up and the provisions he took to ensure concord within the citizen body, to keep Laconia safe, and to preserve Spartan autonomy strike me as so admirable that I can only regard his intelligence as superhuman. The equal distribution of land and the simple, communal lifestyle had the effect of inculcating personal self-discipline and eliminating political turmoil, and he made Spartans tough and brave by training them to endure hardship and face danger. Just as the combination of courage and self-discipline curbs vice and makes individuals virtually indomitable by others, so it does for communities too. And so, by forming his constitution in this way, out of these elements, Lycurgus ensured that all Laconia would enjoy a stable condition of security and that the Spartans in particular would remain autonomous for a long time.

However, I cannot see that he did anything, in either broad or detailed terms, to address the issue of political and military aggression, particularly as it manifests in the annexation of neighbouring land and gaining political ascendancy over others. He failed to put in place some provision or requirement, binding on his fellow citizens, that would have made the overall character of the city self-sufficient and self-restrained, in the way that he had already succeeded in making individuals in their private lives self-sufficient and frugal. Although he made them reserved and modest in their private lives and in their customs within their own city, he did nothing to stop them acting towards their fellow Greeks with extreme aggression, out of self-seeking ambition and the lust for power.

[49] Is there anyone who does not know, for example, that the Spartans were almost the first Greeks to covet their neighbours' land, *c.*735–715 when their rapacity led them to make war on the Messenians with the intention of enslaving them? Is there any historian who has not told the story of how they were so determined to win that they pledged themselves by oath to persevere with the siege until they had taken Messene? It is also common knowledge that their lust for power in Greece led them to do the bidding of the very people they had earlier defeated in battle. For during the Persian invasion the Spartans 480–479 fought in defence of Greek freedom and won, but after the Persians had fled back home, the Spartans betrayed the Greek cities in the

Peace of Antalcidas* in order to gain the financial resources they 386
needed to dominate their fellow Greeks.

They had realized by then that they had outstripped their political system. As long as their aim had been to rule over their immediate neighbours, or even just their fellow Peloponnesians, they made do with the resources and supplies of Laconia alone, where it was easy for them to gather what they needed, and they could quickly get back home or have supplies transported to them in the field. But once they began to send out fleets and land forces to campaign outside the Peloponnese, clearly Lycurgan legislation, with its iron currency and bartering* (they used to exchange their surplus crops each year for what they lacked), was no longer adequate. Their operations now required a commonly acceptable currency and the employment of mercenaries, and so they were forced to beg from the Persians, to tax the islanders, and to extract contributions from all Greeks. They recognized that under Lycurgan legislation the only kind of limited supremacy they could realistically go for would fall well short of the hegemony of Greece.

[50] The purpose of this digression is to let the actual historical facts show that the Lycurgan system is designed for the secure maintenance of the status quo and the preservation of autonomy. Those who believe that this is what a state is for must agree that there is not and never has been a better system or constitution than that of the Spartans. But if one has greater ambitions than that—if one thinks that it is a finer and nobler thing to be a world-class leader, with an extensive dominion and empire, the centre and focal point of everyone's world—then one must admit that the Spartan constitution is deficient, and that the Roman constitution is superior and more dynamic. The facts themselves demonstrate the truth of this: the Spartans' determination to make themselves supreme in Greece brought them before long to the very brink of losing their own autonomy, but it did not take the Romans long, after they had gained control of Italy, to subjugate the entire known world. And their attainment of this goal was significantly helped by the ease and facility with which they could keep their forces supplied.

[51] As for the Carthaginian constitution, I would say that its original design was good, at any rate where its main features are concerned. The suffetes were kings, the Council of Elders wielded power as aristocrats, and the common people had their own areas of responsibility.

The overall structure of the constitution was, in general, much the same as that of Rome or Sparta. By the time they embarked on the Hannibalic War, however, the Carthaginian system had become worse than that of Rome.* Everything—every physical body, every political system, and every realized action—naturally goes through successive phases of growth, prime, and decline, and in every respect things are at their best during their prime. This explains why at that time a qualitative gap had opened up between the two states. In so far as Carthage had grown strong and successful before Rome, by the time in question it had already passed its best, but (in constitutional terms, at any rate) that was precisely the period of Rome's prime. That is, while in Carthage the common people had by then become the dominant political force, in Rome this was still the Senate. Since policy was decided in Carthage by the masses and in Rome by the best men, Roman policies would prevail. Hence, even though the Romans met with decisive defeats, in the end, thanks to sound decision-making, they defeated the Carthaginians in the war.

[52] The details bear this out. The first case that comes to mind is their warcraft. At sea, as one would expect, the Carthaginians are better trained and equipped, because naval expertise has long been ingrained there. In fact, they have more to do with the sea than anyone else in the world. The Romans are far better at land-based operations, however. The land army is their overriding concern, whereas the Carthaginians completely ignore their infantry, and take only a little more interest in their cavalry. The reason for this is that the Carthaginians use foreign mercenaries, whereas the Roman army consists only of domestic troops and Roman citizens. In this detail especially, then, the Roman system is plainly superior, since while Carthaginian freedom always depends on the commitment of mercenaries, the Romans depend on their own valour and on the support of their allies. So even if they lose in the early stages, the Romans, unlike the Carthaginians, turn defeat into overall victory: their country and their children are always† directly at stake for them, so their emotions remain high and they continue fighting with passion until they get the better of the enemy. Hence, even though their naval expertise falls well short of that of the Carthaginians, as I have already said, the valour of their troops brings them victory in the end. Of course, experience is a major factor in naval warfare, but it is the commitment of the crews that invariably tips the scales towards victory.

Italians naturally have the edge on people of Phoenician and Libyan stock, in terms of both physical strength and mental daring, but the Romans also have customs that hugely help to foster a spirit of bravery in their young men. One example will be enough to show how much trouble the state takes to produce men who will endure anything as long as it gains them a reputation among their fellow citizens for excellence.

[53] Whenever a notable Roman dies, as part of the funeral proceedings he is carried in great splendour to the *rostra*, as they are called, in the Forum. Sometimes the body is recumbent, but more usually it is on display, sitting upright. With all the people standing around, someone—an adult son, if there is one and he happens to be there, or otherwise another family member—goes up to the *rostra* and delivers a speech in praise of the dead man's virtues and his exploits during his lifetime. This acts as a vivid reminder of the facts for the assembled people, whether or not they had been directly affected by his achievements, and they become so moved that the loss seems to be everyone's in common, not just a private family matter.

Afterwards, once the body has been buried and the customary rites have been performed, they set up an icon of the dead man in the most conspicuous part of the house, and enclose it in a wooden shrine. The icon consists of a mask that has been moulded and made up, to a remarkably exact likeness. On public holidays, they open up the shrines and carefully decorate the icons, and whenever a notable family member dies, they take them out for the funeral procession and put them on those who seem to bear the closest resemblance to the dead men, in height and general appearance. Each masked man also dresses in the appropriate clothing[1] and rides on a chariot, preceded by the staffs and axes,* or whatever other trappings are customary for the rank the ancestor had attained in his political career during his lifetime. When they reach the *rostra*, they all sit in a row on ivory chairs.

It is hard to imagine a finer sight for an ambitious young man who aspires to excellence. Indeed, how could *anyone* remain unmoved by the sight of the arrayed icons, utterly lifelike, of all those famous heroes? What spectacle could be more wonderful than

[1] Purple-bordered clothing if the ancestor had been a consul or a praetor; all-purple if he had been a censor; gold-shot if he had celebrated a triumph or achieved the equivalent success.

that? [54] And then, once the person who delivers the encomium of the man being buried has finished speaking about him, he does the same for each of the ancestors who are represented there, starting with the most ancient, and describes their successes and achievements. The reputation these heroes of the past earned for excellence is thus constantly renewed, so that the fame of those who performed noble deeds never dies, and the glory of those who benefited their homeland becomes common knowledge and is passed down from generation to generation. But the most important thing is that young men are inspired to heroic feats of endurance, in order to gain the fame that accrues to the brave.

The facts confirm this suggestion. In the past, many Romans volunteered to decide battles by single combat, and quite a few chose certain death, either in war to save the lives of the rest, or in peacetime to preserve the state from danger. And some high-ranking men took the unconventional and extraordinary step of killing their own sons, because they put Rome's interests before the natural ties of family.

There are many such stories in Rome, featuring many individuals, but I will mention just one specific case, and that will be enough for present purposes, as an example and to confirm what I have been saying. [55] Horatius Cocles, the story goes, was fighting two of the enemy at the far end of the bridge across the Tiber that lies in front of Rome, when he noticed a large body of men bearing down on him, to join his opponents. Afraid that they might force the bridge and burst into the city, he turned to those behind him and shouted for them to fall back straight away and cut the bridge. They did as he said. While the bridge was being destroyed, he stood his ground, despite taking many wounds, and checked the enemy onslaught. What his opponents found astonishing was not so much his physical strength as his grit and fearlessness. So the bridge was demolished, and the enemy assault was foiled. Horatius then threw himself into the river in full armour. He deliberately sacrificed his life;* the safety of Rome and subsequent fame were more important to him than his present existence and the years that remained to him. It seems that the determination and will to perform noble deeds is ingrained that deeply in each successive generation by Rome's customs.

[56] Another area in which Roman laws and customs are superior to those of Carthage is in their attitude towards money. In Carthage, nothing that leads to profit is considered disgraceful, whereas in

Rome nothing is more disgraceful than accepting a bribe or seeking to profit from shady transactions. Precisely because the Romans see nothing wrong with making money by respectable means, they condemn profiting by disreputable means. The difference is clear: in Carthage, candidates for office openly bribe the electorate, whereas in Rome the penalty for this is death. Given the completely different attitudes in the two states towards rewarding virtue, it is no surprise that the amount of effort people in each place devote to gaining such rewards is different too.

But the respect in which, in my opinion, the Roman constitution is most markedly superior is in its view of the gods. It seems to me that superstition, which we criticize in other people, is precisely what gives the Roman state its cohesion. In Rome, nothing plays a more elaborate or extensive role in people's private lives and in the political sphere than superstition. Many of my readers might find this strange, but it seems to me that it has been done for the sake of the common people. In a state of enlightened citizens, there would presumably be no need for such a course. But since the common people everywhere are fickle—since they are driven by lawless impulses, blind anger, and violent passion—the only option is to use mysterious terrors and all this elaborate drama to restrain them.

I very much doubt that the men who in ancient times introduced the masses to the idea of the gods and the concept of Hades just happened aimlessly to do so; on the contrary, those nowadays who want to abolish religion are acting far more thoughtlessly and foolishly, I would say. And, apart from other consequences, that is why a Greek statesman cannot be trusted with even just a talent; that is enough to corrupt him, along with ten accountants and their seals, and twice as many witnesses. Roman statesmen and diplomats, however, handle enormous sums of money in the course of their official duties, but always behave with propriety because they feel bound by the oath they have pledged. Although elsewhere it is rare to find a man who has not sullied himself with public money, in Rome one rarely hears of anyone caught embezzling. [. . .]

Concluding Remarks

[57] I hardly need to argue that every existing thing is subject to decay and decline: the inescapable facts of nature are convincing

in themselves. Where states are concerned, there are two kinds of natural agent that may be responsible for their decline, one external, the other innate. External agencies are too indeterminate to be studied with any certainty, but internal decline is capable of orderly study. I have already stated the sequence in which the various constitutions develop and how they change into one another, and anyone who is capable of drawing conclusions from premisses should by now be in a position to predict the future.

I think there can be no doubt what lies in the future for Rome. When a state has warded off many serious threats, and has come to attain undisputed supremacy and sovereignty, it is easy to see that, after a long period of settled prosperity, lifestyles become more extravagant, and rivalry over political positions and other such projects becomes fiercer than it should be. If these processes continue for very long, society will change for the worse. The causes of the deterioration will be lust for power combined with contempt for political obscurity, and personal ostentation and extravagance. It will be called a democratic revolution, however, because the time will come when the people will feel abused by some politicians' self-seeking ambition, and will have been flattered into vain hopes by others' lust for power. Under these circumstances, all their decisions will be motivated by anger and passion, and they will no longer be content to be subject or even equal to those in power. No, they will want everything, or almost everything, for themselves. When this happens, the new constitution will be described in the most attractive terms, as 'freedom' and 'democracy', but in fact it will be the worst of all constitutions, mob-rule.

I have now covered the formation, growth, and prime of the Roman state, the kind of constitution it has, and the differences, for better or worse, between it and other states, and so I end my constitutional excursus here. [58] But first I want briefly to draw on the period immediately following the point where I embarked on this digression, and give a swift account of a single event. As if I were exhibiting a single example of a good artist's work, my purpose is to reveal in actual fact, not merely in words, the nature of the Roman constitution in its prime, by showing what it was capable of at the time.

216 After Hannibal's defeat of the Romans at Cannae, 8,000 of the men who had been guarding the Roman camp fell into his hands. They all became prisoners of war, and he allowed them to send a mission

back home, to see what could be done by way of ransoming them and saving their lives. They chose ten senior officers, and after getting them to swear that they would return he sent them on their way. One of the ten, after setting out from the camp, turned and came back, saying that he had forgotten something. Once he had collected what he had left behind, he set out again, thinking that by returning he had kept his promise and was no longer bound by the oath.

When they arrived in Rome, they urgently implored the Senate not to deny the prisoners their freedom, but to let each of them pay three mnas and return home safe to his family. These, they said, were Hannibal's terms. They added that they, the senior officers, deserved to be saved: they had not been guilty of cowardice on the field of battle, nor had they done anything else to disgrace Rome. They had been left behind to guard the camp, and then, after everyone else had been killed in the fighting, they had no choice but to surrender to the enemy.

The Romans had suffered terrible defeats. At that point they had hardly any allies left, and they expected at any moment to be fighting for Rome itself. Nevertheless, after listening to what the officers had to say, they did not let the crisis push them into irresponsible action, but debated the issues rationally. Realizing that Hannibal's intention was to use this incident not just to raise money, but also to sap their troops' determination on the battlefield by letting them know that they could hope for safety even after defeat, there was no way they could grant the mission's requests. They allowed themselves to be swayed neither by pity for the families, nor by the thought of how useful the troops could be to them in the future. Nothing weighed more with them than frustrating Hannibal's calculations and all the hopes he had riding on them. And so they refused to ransom the prisoners. This was, in effect, a decree that their troops' options in battle were to win or to die, since they could not expect their lives to be saved if they were defeated.

Once notification of their decisions had been posted, they dismissed the nine delegates, who went back of their own free will because they were bound by their oath, but they sent the tenth man, the one who had thought to release himself from the oath by a trick, back to the enemy in chains. And the upshot was that Hannibal's delight at having defeated them in battle was crushed by awe of the principled stand the Romans had taken in their deliberations.

BOOK TWELVE

Book 12 is again fragmentary. As with Book 6, subheadings have been inserted into the translation to indicate that a new topic is starting, and that, despite the sequential numbering of chapters, there is text missing between it and the previous topic. In this book, there is also text missing between and within quite a few paragraphs. Unlike the fragments of Book 6, those of Book 12 are far less connected, and the ordering of some of what follows is controversial. Of the historians who were criticized in the book, most of what remains is criticism of Timaeus of Tauromenium. At a guess, we have less than half of the original.

Criticism of Timaeus on Libya and Corsica

[2] The lotus shrub is small, rough-barked, and thorny. It has a pale-green leaf, similar to that of the buckthorn, but a little longer and broader. At first, its fruit looks like white myrtle berries, in both colour and size, but the berries redden as they grow, and they reach the size of round olives. It has a very small stone. They harvest the ripe fruit, mash it with groats, and pack it into jars. It then serves as food for slaves. Free men eat it too, prepared in the same way, but with the stones removed first. As a foodstuff, it resembles figs or dates, but has a better smell. They also make wine from it by crushing the fruit and steeping it in water. The wine, which they drink undiluted, has a pleasant, sweet flavour, similar to good-quality honeyed wine, but it goes off after ten days, so they make it in small quantities according to their needs. They also make vinegar from it. [. . .]

[3] It is impossible not to be impressed by the fertility of the soil, and it has to be said, then, that where Libya was concerned Timaeus failed as a historian. Like a child who is quite incapable of thinking for himself, he seems to have been completely in thrall to the old, traditional tale that all Libya is sandy, dry, and barren. The same goes for animals: there are at least as many horses, cows, sheep, and goats there, I am sure, as in all the rest of the known world. The reason for this is that many Libyan tribes are not agriculturalists, but live on and among their animals. And who has not read about all the wild animals there—the strength of elephants, lions, and leopards, the beauty

of antelopes, the size of ostriches? Libya teems with these creatures, which do not even exist in Europe. But Timaeus made no mention of them at all. It is almost as if he deliberately set out to tell us the opposite of the truth.

His account of the island called Corsica is just as misleading as his account of Libya. In Book 2, when he mentions Corsica, he says that there are many wild animals there—goats, sheep, cattle, deer, hares, wolves, and a few other species—and that the people spend their time hunting these creatures. He says, in fact, that this is their sole occupation. But there are no wild goats or cattle on the island, let alone hares, wolves, deer, and so on. The only wild animals there are foxes, rabbits, and sheep.[1]

[4] The idea that all animals on Corsica are wild stems from the fact that the island is too thickly wooded, craggy, and rugged for shepherds to be able to follow their animals around as they graze. When they want to gather their flocks, they stand somewhere suitable and call them with a horn, and all the animals unfailingly run towards the sound of their particular horn. So, when visitors to the island see goats and cattle grazing unattended and try to round them up, the animals, not being used to this practice, turn and run. Also, if the shepherd sees people disembarking, he sounds his horn and the animals all dash off together at a furious pace in response to the horn. This is what gives the impression that they are wild. Timaeus made his account up on the basis of poor and perfunctory research.

This obedience to the sound of the horn is not surprising, since in Italy pig-farmers manage the pasturage of their animals in the same way. Swineherds there do not follow along behind their animals, as in Greece, but lead the way by sounding a horn at intervals. The animals follow behind and run towards the sound, and they grow accustomed to their particular horn to a quite astonishing extent. In fact, the first time people hear about it, they find it almost impossible to believe. Crops and fodder in general† are so abundant in Italy that herds of pigs tend to be large there, and especially in Etruria and the Gallic region.† A single brood sow might raise 1,000 or more pigs.* They do not let them out of their sties all at once, then, but in age groups.

[1] From a distance, a rabbit looks like a small hare, but when you have one in your hands you can see that it is quite different. They also taste different, and are usually born underground.

But if a number of groups are taken to the same place, it is impossible to keep them apart: they mingle during the drive, while they are feeding, and on the way back home. Hence the horn idea occurred to the herdsmen as a way of separating their pigs when they meet, without fuss and bother. For when one of the herdsmen sets off in one direction, sounding his horn, and another turns in another direction, the animals separate of their own accord and follow the sound of their particular horns so eagerly that it is quite impossible to divert them or arrest their impetus.

In Greece, however, when pigs meet in the woods in search of acorns, whoever has the most hands with him incorporates his neighbour's pigs among his own, if he has the opportunity, and takes them back home. Or sometimes a thief waits in hiding and steals someone else's pigs without the person who brought them there knowing how he lost them, since the animals tend to get well ahead of their minders as they race one another in search of acorns, at the season when they are just beginning to fall. But I have said enough on this topic. [. . .]

Criticism of Timaeus' Research

[4a] After all this, who could excuse such faults? And they are especially egregious coming from Timaeus, since he goes on and on about such blemishes in others. For instance, he criticizes Theopompus' assertion that Dionysius II* arrived in Corinth on a merchantman, when he really travelled from Sicily to Corinth on a warship. Or again, he criticizes Ephorus for mistakenly† saying that Dionysius I began to reign at the age of twenty-three, ruled for forty-two years, and died aged sixty-three. But surely no one would accuse the author of making this mistake, when it was indisputably a scribal error. Either Ephorus had less wit than Coroebus and Margites,* if he was incapable of working out that the sum of forty-two and twenty-three is sixty-five, or, if it is felt that Ephorus was the last person to commit such an error, then it was evidently introduced by the scribe. But everyone finds Timaeus' penchant for cavilling and fault-finding distasteful.

[4b] Then again, in his account of Pyrrhus, he says that even today the Romans still commemorate the loss of Troy on a certain day by stabbing a warhorse to death* with javelins in the open space in front of the city called the Campus Martius, because the fall of Troy was

due to the wooden horse. I cannot conceive of a more childish notion. If it were true, we would have to say that all barbarians are descended from Trojans, because almost all of them, certainly a majority, make a horse† their victim in their preliminary sacrifices when they are on the brink of war or about to fight a major battle against an enemy, and divine what will happen from the way the horse falls. [4c] In committing this fallacy, Timaeus seems to me to display not only ignorance, but more especially intellectual confusion in leaping to the conclusion that the reason the Romans sacrifice a horse is because Troy is supposed to have fallen thanks to a horse.

All this demonstrates the inadequacy of Timaeus' research into Libya, Sardinia, and especially Italy, and in general reveals his complete failure to undertake the questioning of informants. But this is the most important aspect of a historian's work. Events take place simultaneously all over the world, but it is impossible for one person to be in more than one place at the same time, and it is equally impossible for him personally to visit every part of the world and see what is special about them. His only option is to question as many people as possible, to believe those who deserve belief, and to be a good judge of what he hears.

[4d] Timaeus makes a great show of his virtues in this respect, but in doing so I think he is being extremely dishonest. How can we trust the accuracy of the facts for which he relied on informants when he is unreliable even about events he saw with his own eyes and places he personally visited? My evidence for this charge will be the mistakes he makes in his account of Sicily. After all, his inaccuracy can be pretty much taken for granted if he is convicted of making erroneous and misleading statements about the part of the world where he was born and grew up, and even about the best-known places there.

He tells us, then, that the source of the Arethusa spring in Syracuse is the river Alpheus—the one in the Peloponnese, which flows through Arcadia and Olympia. He claims that this river sinks into the ground and re-emerges in Syracuse after a journey of 4,000 stades under the Sicilian Sea.* The evidence he adduces for this is that once, when it rained heavily during the Olympic Games and the river flooded the precinct, the Arethusa squirted out a quantity of dung from oxen sacrificed during the celebrations, and also a golden cup that was recognized by the people who recovered it as being an implement used in the festival. [. . .]

Criticism of Timaeus on Locri

[5] It so happens that I have visited Locri several times, and have helped the Locrians a great deal. It was thanks to me that they were exempted from serving in the Iberian and Dalmatian campaigns, when by the terms of their treaty they were obliged to support the Roman war effort at sea. Since this led to their being spared hardship, danger, and considerable expense, they rewarded me with all kinds of honours and privileges.* I ought, then, to speak well of the Locrians, rather than the opposite, but in fact I have no hesitation in going on record as saying that the account of the foundation of the city given by Aristotle is more accurate than that of Timaeus. For the Locrians themselves admit, as I know, that Aristotle's account of the foundation, not Timaeus', coincides with the traditional version handed down to them by their forefathers. They supported the truth of the story by referring to two of their customs.

First, all hereditary honours there are matrilineal, not patrilineal. For instance, nobility there is taken to depend entirely on membership of the Hundred Families, as they are called. These Hundred Families were those selected by the Locrians as the households from which, in obedience to the oracle, they were going to choose by lot the maidens sent to Troy.* This happened before the colonizing expedition, and then some of the women from these families joined the expedition, and it is their descendants who even now are considered noble and recognized as belonging to the Hundred Families.

Second, there is the story about the Cup-bearer, as the priestess is called there. It is said that when the Locrians expelled the previous inhabitants of this part of Italy, the Sicels, they took over a number of Sicel customs, since they had no traditions of their own. One of these customs was for a boy, drawn from one of the most illustrious and noble families, to lead the procession at public sacrifices. The Locrians kept this custom, and altered it only in that they made a girl the cup-bearer, rather than one of their boys, because for them the mother's side is the bearer of nobility.

[6] As for a treaty with the Greek Locrians, there never was one and the Italian Locrians denied that one ever existed. On the other hand, everyone there knew of the tradition that they entered into a treaty with the Sicels. They used to tell me that, on their first arrival in Italy, they found Sicels occupying the territory which is now theirs.

The terrified Sicels were too frightened to resist, and the Locrians entered into a treaty with them, to the effect that they would be on good terms with them and would share the territory with them, 'as long as they trod this soil and bore heads on their shoulders'. Apparently, before swearing this oath, the Locrians had put soil on the soles of their shoes, and had hidden heads of garlic on their shoulders under their clothing. After swearing the oath like that, they shook the soil out of their shoes and threw away the heads of garlic, and before long, when the opportunity arose, they drove the Sicels off the land. At any rate, that is what one hears in Locri. [. . .]

[6a] It follows from all this that we should trust Aristotle rather than Timaeus.* And Timaeus' next point is quite absurd: it is inane to suggest that the slaves of those who had fought alongside the Spartans were unlikely to revive the loyalty their masters felt towards people who were their friends. For what happens when slaves meet with unexpected good fortune? After a while they try to resuscitate and assume not only their masters' loyalties, but even their guest-friendships and other relationships. In fact, they put more effort into these connections than natural relatives ever do, because they want to eradicate the humiliation of their former servility precisely by making themselves out to be the offspring of their masters rather than freedmen.

[6b] It is particularly plausible to suggest that this is what happened in the case of the Locrians. They had put a lot of distance between themselves and those who knew them from before, and the passage of time had helped them too. Rather than do anything that would act as a reminder of their former servility, which would have been sheer stupidity, they did all they could to conceal it. That, of course, is why they named their city after their wives, assumed their wives' networks of relationships, and revived the ancestral friendships and alliances that depended on their wives.

426 This is also why the Athenian raid on Locrian territory cannot be used as evidence against Aristotle's account. It makes perfect sense, given what I have been saying, for those who set sail from Locris and landed in Italy to have assumed friendship with the Spartans. They would have done so even had they been slaves ten times over. Athenian hostility towards them† is therefore perfectly comprehensible as well, based as it was on scrutiny of their sympathies rather than their ancestry.

Why, then, it may be objected, did the Spartans,* who themselves sent home those of their number who were in their prime to father children, not allow the Locrians to do likewise? But it can plausibly be argued, and the facts confirm, that the two cases were quite different: it is absurd to suggest that the Spartans would have stopped the Locrians from doing what they themselves were doing, but even granting that they had permission to leave, the Locrians would not have gone about it exactly as the Spartans did. For in Sparta it was both traditional and normal for three or four men (and sometimes even more, if brothers were involved) to share a wife,* with the children regarded as the offspring of all the men at once; and when a man had fathered enough children it was acceptable and normal for him to pass his wife on to one of his friends. Hence, since the Locrians were not bound by any curse or oath, such as the one the Spartans had sworn, not to return home until they had taken Messene, they had no need to arrange a *general* dispatch of men home. They returned home one by one, and sporadically. The infrequency of their visits gave their wives the opportunity to become more intimate† with their slaves than with their original husbands, their unmarried daughters had even more opportunity, and the upshot was the emigration. [. . .]

[7] I do not think that Timaeus was completely ignorant about such matters, but he does seem to have been blinded by his contentiousness. Once he has decided to praise or criticize someone, he forgets everything and completely loses track of what he is supposed to be doing. Anyway, I have said enough to show how Aristotle came to write his account of Locri and what his sources were, but what about Timaeus? What I am going to say next about his work as a whole, and in general about the appropriate way to go about writing history, will attract a response along the following lines. I think I have said enough to convince anyone that Aristotle's account is the more plausible. But since both of them equally argued from probability, surely it is impossible to be absolutely certain of the truth of any of these matters. All right, but suppose we grant that Timaeus' account is the more plausible. Does this justify hurling every kind of disparaging and defamatory remark at historians whose versions are less plausible? Is this a reason for more or less accusing them of a capital offence? Surely not. As I have already said,* writers who perpetuate mistakes out of ignorance are to be pardoned and gently corrected, while those who do so deliberately should be condemned without mercy.

[8] There are two alternatives. Either we have to show, as I was saying a short while ago, that Aristotle's account of Locri is partial, meretricious, or biased; or, if we lack the grounds for saying that, we must concede that those who wield against others the bitter hostility that Timaeus employs against Aristotle are in the wrong and at fault. Timaeus calls Aristotle arrogant, complacent, and irresponsible. Then he accuses him of brazenly insulting Locri by saying that the colonizing expedition consisted of runaway slaves, menials, adulterers, and kidnappers. And he says that Aristotle made these assertions with such authority that you would think that he was one of the generals who had just defeated the Persians in battle at the Cilician Gates* with his own forces, and not a scatterbrained and hated sophist who had just closed up his profitable medical clinic. He also says that Aristotle forced his way into every royal court and pavilion, and was a glutton and a gourmand who was guided in everything by his stomach. These kinds of remarks, in my opinion, would scarcely seem tolerable on the lips of a vagabond bandying unsupported abuse in a law court. Timaeus seems to have lost all sense of proportion, and yet any writer of political history, and anyone who was truly a first-rate historian, would not dare even to think such thoughts to himself, let alone write them down.

[9] So let us examine Timaeus' own practice, and compare his assertions about Locri with those of Aristotle, so that we can see which of them deserves this kind of condemnation. Timaeus assures us, then, at a certain point in the same book that he is no longer arguing from probability, but that he himself actually visited the Greek Locrians, to research the facts of the colonizing expedition. He says, first, that they showed him an inscription of a treaty, still extant, between them and the emigrants, which started with the words 'As parents to children'; second, that there were decrees to the effect that there was to be reciprocal citizenship between the two states; and third, that every time they heard Aristotle's account of the colony, they expressed astonishment at its irresponsibility. Moving on to Italian Locri, he says that he found the laws and customs there suggestive not of slavish self-indulgence, but of a charter created by free men. At any rate, they had clauses stipulating the penalties for kidnappers, adulterers, and runaway slaves, none of which would have existed had they known that they were descended from such people.

[10] The first puzzle that arises is which Locrians he visited and questioned. If there were just a single community of Locrians in

Greece, as in Italy, there would perhaps be nothing puzzling about what he says, and our questions could easily be answered. But since there are two Locrian peoples in Greece,* which did he visit? Which of the two communities did he go to, and where did he find the inscribed treaty? He leaves us in the dark about this. And yet, as I am sure we all know, this is Timaeus' speciality, the foundation of his fame and the respect in which he surpasses other historians†—I mean, the display of accuracy he makes about dates and inscriptions, and the care he takes over this. It is remarkable, then, that he tells us neither the name of the city where he found the inscription, nor the place where the treaty was set up, nor the names of the officials who showed it to him and with whom he discussed it. Had he done so, there would be no remaining puzzles; if he had identified the place and the city, any doubts could have been allayed.

But there can be no doubt that he was consciously and deliberately lying when he omitted all these details. If he had been in possession of this information, he would not have let a word of it escape, but would have clung on tightly with both hands, as the saying goes. My evidence for this is that he names Echecrates* as the person on whom he relied for information about Italian Locri. He says that Echecrates was the one he consulted and questioned about the place, and in order to avoid giving the impression that his informant was a person of no consequence, he elaborately lets us know that Echecrates' father was deemed worthy of ambassadorial status by Dionysius I. Is it likely, then, that he would have kept silent if he was in possession of a public inscription or a commemorative stele? [11] This is the man who drew up parallel tables, from the earliest times, of the ephors, the Spartan kings, and the Athenian heads of state, who related the dates of the priestesses in Argos to those of the Olympic victors, and who convicted the cities of chronological errors in their records, which were out by three months. This is also the man who hunted down records inscribed on inner walls of temples, and grants of *proxenia* inscribed on their doorposts. It is impossible to believe* that if any such information had existed, he would have been unaware of it, or that he would have omitted it had he known of it. There is no way to excuse his lying. He was a savage and unforgiving critic of others, and so it is quite proper for him to meet with the same degree of implacability when others criticize him.

Next, after his blatant lies in this regard, he moves on to Italian Locri. He tells us, first, that <he found> the constitution and general

culture of the two groups of Locrians <to be similar, and, second, that . . ., accusing>† Aristotle and Theophrastus of inaccuracies in their accounts of the city. I am aware that once again I shall be compelled to digress, in order to clarify and strengthen my case. But that is why I put off discussing Timaeus until I could do so all at once, so that I did not have to keep neglecting what I was supposed to be doing. [. . .]

Timaeus says that the worst fault in a work of history is false information, and so he advises those whom he convicts of errors in their work to find some other name for their books—any name, as long as it is not 'history'. [. . .] [12] Consider a carpenter's rule, he says. It may be too short or too narrow, but even so, as long as it possesses the essential quality of a rule, it should still be called a rule. But if it lacks† a straight edge and is off true, it should be called anything rather than a 'rule'. The same goes for works of history, he says. A book may be defective in terms of style or treatment or some other particular respect, but as long as it cleaves to the truth, it is permissible to call it a work of history. However, if it strays from the path of truth, it should no longer be called a work of history. Speaking for myself, I agree that truth must guide works of history, and I myself have expressed the same sentiment elsewhere in this work,* when I said that, just as a living body is completely useless if it loses its eyesight, so history without truth has as little educational value as a yarn. [. . .] But, as I have said, there are two kinds of falsehood—one the result of ignorance, the other deliberate—and while ignorant mistakes should be forgiven, we should never condone deliberate lies. [. . .]

From these premisses, I draw the conclusion that there is a huge difference, within the category of falsehood itself, between ignorant mistakes (which, I maintain, should be forgiven and gently corrected) and deliberate lies (which deserve to meet with merciless condemnation). But if so, Timaeus would be found especially guilty of this latter kind of falsehood, as we are now in a position to see. [. . .]

[12a] The proverb 'a Locrian approach to treaties' is used of those who violate agreements. Timaeus' account† of this is as follows. Everyone, he says, whether or not they are professional historians, agrees that, during the Heraclid invasion,* there was a pact between the Locrians and the Peloponnesians to the effect that the Locrians would light war beacons if the Heraclids invaded the Peloponnese via

Rhium rather than the Isthmus, to forewarn the Peloponnesians and allow them time to guard against the invasion. The Locrians, however, did no such thing. On the contrary, when the Heraclids came, they lit beacons signalling the arrival of friends. The Heraclids, then, crossed safely over to the Peloponnese, and the Peloponnesians, taken by surprise, could do nothing about the enemy invasion of their homeland. Thanks to the treachery of the Locrians, they had taken no defensive measures at all.

[12b] We are indeed bound† to condemn and ridicule the delirium of historians whose books read like dreams or the work of men possessed. But when people have themselves produced a great deal of the same kind of rubbish, they should avoid railing against others and just be glad to escape condemnation themselves. Timaeus is a case in point. He says, for instance, that Callisthenes' work,* with its stories of crows† and delirious women, shows him to be a flatterer rather than any kind of philosopher, and claims that he deserved the punishment he met at Alexander's hands, because he had done his best to corrupt him. He applauds Demosthenes and the other politicians who were active at the time as true Greeks, for having resisted the granting of divine honours to Alexander, but says that the punishment that befell the philosopher was divine retribution for his having invested a mortal man with aegis and thunderbolt. [. . .]

[13] Timaeus says that Democharès was a fellationist who should not have been allowed to blow on the sacred flame, and that in his practices he outdid the manuals written by purveyors of filth such as Botrys and Philaenis.* This is the kind of slanderous allegation that no whore† should make, let alone a man of culture. But in order to authenticate his foul-mouthed and generally salacious treatment of Democharès, Timaeus even repeats (from an obscure comic poet he drags in) lies against the man.

On what basis do I infer that these were lies? First, Democharès was of noble birth and good upbringing, seeing that he was Demosthenes' nephew; second, he was held by the Athenians to deserve a number of honours and offices, including the generalship, none of which would have come his way had he been suffering from that kind of disgrace. In fact, Timaeus was condemning the Athenians as much as Democharès himself, I would say, for elevating such a man and trusting him with their homeland and their lives. If there had been any substance to these charges, however, Archedicus, the comic

playwright cited by Timaeus, would not have been the only one to speak about Democharés in this way. Many of Antipater's friends would have done so too (because Democharés was quite outspoken about Antipater and said plenty of things designed to hurt not only Antipater himself, but his successors and friends as well), and so would many of Democharés' political enemies.

One of Democharés' enemies was no less a person than Demetrius of Phalerum.* In his *Histories*, Democharés condemns Demetrius in striking terms. He says that, as the leading man of Athens, Demetrius had shown his true colours by priding himself on those aspects of his administration that would have been the boast of a common tax-collector. He was proud, according to Democharés, of the number of things that were sold cheaply in Athens and of the ready availability for everyone of the necessities of life. And Democharés adds that Demetrius was not embarrassed to have a mechanical, slime-excreting snail lead his procession, and donkeys passing through the theatre as well—and in fact was not even embarrassed by the fact that Athens was leaving it up to the other Greek states to preserve all that was good about Greece, while Athens submitted to Cassander's will. Despite all this, neither Demetrius nor anyone else accused Democharés of that kind of depravity.

[14] Hence, since I regard the evidence of his fellow Athenians as more trustworthy than Timaeus' rancorous account, I have no hesitation in affirming that Democharés' life was not liable to these slurs. And even if any such disgrace really had attached to him, what historical situation or event made Timaeus feel compelled to include it in his narrative? When intelligent men decide to retaliate against their enemies, they do not think first about what ought to happen to the other party, but <they consider> what it is appropriate for them to do. The same principle applies to verbal abuse: we should not first consider what epithets our enemies deserve; the essential thing to take into account is what it is appropriate for us to say.

So when we encounter people whose standards reflect their own self-important indignation, we are bound to mistrust everything they say and to doubt all their extravagant assertions. In the present instance, then, it seems to make good sense for us to reject Timaeus' slanders against Democharés. Timaeus, however, cannot expect to be pardoned, or trusted by anyone, because it is plain to see that when he abuses others he gets carried away by his innate rancour.

[15] Speaking for myself, I cannot approve of his abuse of Agathocles* either, even if he was the most impious person in the world. I am thinking of the passage, towards the end of the *History*, where Timaeus says that in his early youth Agathocles was a common rent-boy, willing to satisfy the most debauched tastes, as oversexed as jackdaws and buzzards, ready to turn over for anyone and everyone. He also tells us that, when Agathocles died, his grieving wife sang in her dirge: 'What did I not do for you? What did you not do for me?'

Faced with all this, I am moved to express astonishment at his excessive rancour, and to repeat what I said above about his attack on Democharés. After all, Timaeus' own account of Agathocles proves that he must have been an extremely talented individual. He came to Syracuse when he was about eighteen years old, a fugitive from the wheel and smoke and clay of the pottery, but he rose above these humble origins, made himself in due course of time the master of all Sicily, terrorized the Carthaginians, and finally, after retaining his power into old age, died with the title of king. If he did all this, surely Agathocles was quite special and remarkable, and possessed great gifts and political acumen.

A historian's responsibility to future generations does not end with describing those aspects of the man which confirm his bad name and show that he deserves condemnation; a historian must also describe his commendable qualities, because this objectivity is the defining characteristic of history. Blinded by his own rancour, however, Timaeus has given us a bad-tempered and exaggerated account of Agathocles' defects, without mentioning his good points at all. But this is to overlook the fact that it is no less a lie for a historian to conceal the truth than it is for him to report something that did not happen. *My* policy has been to omit superfluous details, while retaining what is germane to my purpose.†[. . .]

[16] At Locri, two young men were once in dispute over ownership of a slave. The slave had been with his present master for quite a while, but the other young man went to the farm while the master was away, abducted the slave, and took him home. Two days later, when the first man heard what had happened, he went to his rival's house, seized the slave, and led him before the authorities, claiming that the slave should by rights remain in his possession and providing guarantors. He supported the claim by citing a law of Zaleucus* to the effect that, in the case of such disputes, the person from whom the

theft took place should retain the property until the dispute came to court. The other man, however, cited the same law in support of his claim that the theft had been from him, since it was from his house that the slave had been taken and brought before the authorities. The presiding officers had no idea how to resolve the issue, and asked the Cosmopolis to come and help them out. He defined the law as meaning that 'theft' was always from the party who had last been in uncontested possession of the disputed object for a reasonable amount of time; if the original owner of an object repossessed it from the house of someone who had stolen it from him, that was not 'theft' within the meaning of the law.

The young man complained bitterly and refused to accept that this had been the lawgiver's purpose. At this, the story goes on, the Cosmopolis invited him to debate the interpretation of the law in the manner prescribed by Zaleucus. What happens is that, at a session of the Thousand, two people debate the lawgiver's intention with nooses around their necks, and the one who is found to have misinterpreted the lawgiver's purpose is throttled to death while the Thousand look on. This was what the Cosmopolis offered. The young man replied that he was being offered a bad deal, because one of them had only a couple of years of life left (the Cosmopolis was almost ninety years old), while he, probably, had most of his life still before him. The young man's ready wit lightened the atmosphere, but the presiding officers still decided in favour of the Cosmopolis's view of what constituted theft. [. . .]

Criticism of Callisthenes

[17] In order to avoid giving the impression that I am arbitrarily impugning the credibility of such great men, I will mention just one battle. I choose it because of its exceptional fame, and because it took place not too long ago, but most importantly because Callisthenes was personally present at it. The battle I have in mind is the one fought
333 between Alexander the Great and Darius III in Cilicia.*

Callisthenes tells us that Alexander was passing through† the defile at the Cilician Gates, and that Darius and his army had reached Cilicia through the Amanid Gates. When Darius found out from the local inhabitants that Alexander was heading for Syria, he set out after him, and made camp close to the defile, by the Pinarus river.

There was a stretch of ground there, no more than fourteen stades wide, between the sea and the flanks of the mountains, with the river running at a right angle across it. Where the river issues from the mountains its banks had been gouged away, and all the way across the plain up to the coast it passed between steep, inaccessible ridges.

After setting the scene in this way, Callisthenes says that Alexander turned and marched back towards the Persian position. At his approach, Darius and his senior officers decided to draw up their entire phalanx there in the camp, just as it was, with the river, which flowed right by the camp, protecting their front. Next, he says, Darius posted the cavalry by the coast, with the mercenaries on the river bank next to the cavalry, and then the peltasts with the mercenaries on one side and the mountains on the other.

[18] But it is hard to understand how he could have deployed these troops in front of the phalanx, when the river ran right by the camp. Especially when there were so many of them: Callisthenes himself says that there were 30,000 cavalry and 30,000 mercenaries. It is easy to calculate how much space they would need. For a regular engagement, cavalry are drawn up eight deep at the most, and between every troop a gap as wide as the front of a troop has to be left, to make it possible for them to turn and wheel. So there are 800 horse to a stade, 8,000 to ten stades, and 3,200 to four stades. The available space, then, fourteen stades, would be occupied by 11,200 horse. If Darius deployed the full 30,000, the cavalry alone would form almost three arrays, one behind the other. And where, then, were all the mercenaries deployed? Behind the cavalry, presumably. Apparently not, though, according to Callisthenes, since he tells us that in the assault the mercenaries engaged the Macedonians. So we are bound to think that the coastal half of the space was occupied by the cavalry and the mountain half by the mercenaries. And then it is an easy calculation* to find out how deep the cavalry formation was, and how much space there was between the camp and the river.

Callisthenes next tells us that, as the enemy advanced, Darius, in the centre of the formation, called the mercenaries from the wing over to his position. It is hard to make sense of this, since the mercenaries and the cavalry must have been in contact in the middle of the field. Darius, then, must have already been among the mercenaries, and if so, in what sense was this a summons? Where was he calling them from? Where was he calling them to?

Finally, he says that the cavalry on the Persian right wing charged forward and attacked Alexander's cavalry, and that after bravely withstanding the charge Alexander's cavalry delivered a counter-charge, which resulted in a close fight. But he has forgotten that there was a river between them, and a river such as he had recently described.

[19] The same problems beset his description of Alexander's side. He says that Alexander invaded Asia with 40,000 foot and 4,500 horse, and that just before he entered Cilicia he was joined by a further 5,000 foot and 800 horse from Macedon. If we subtract from these numbers 3,000 foot and 300 horse, which is a generous estimate of losses incurred in previous engagements, he will still be left with 42,000 foot and 5,000 horse. So let us assume that these were his numbers.

Callisthenes says that when Alexander heard of Darius' arrival in Cilicia, he was a hundred stades away and had already passed through the defile. So he turned and marched back through the defile, with his phalanx at the head of the column, followed by the cavalry, and finally the baggage train. As soon as he had emerged into the open, he ordered the entire phalanx to reform and take up battle positions. According to Callisthenes, Alexander first made the phalanx thirty-two ranks deep, then sixteen, and finally eight, when he was near the enemy.

These statements of his are even more ridiculous than those I have already criticized. Given that men on the march each take up six feet of space, there are 1,600 to a stade when they are sixteen ranks deep, and so 16,000 to ten stades, and 32,000 to twenty stades. From which it clearly follows that, when Alexander deployed his forces sixteen ranks deep, he must have had twenty stades of space in which to do so—and an entire cavalry division, as well as 10,000 footsoldiers, left over.

[20] He goes on to say, then, that Alexander led his men forward in this extended line, when he was about forty stades away from the enemy. It is hard to imagine a more ludicrous assertion than this. Where, especially in Cilicia, would one find the kind of terrain that would allow him to lead a pike-bearing phalanx forward in an extended line twenty stades long, for a distance of forty stades? The obstacles against the employment of that kind of formation are almost too many to count. One of those mentioned by Callisthenes himself will be enough to make the point. He tells us that the torrents that pour down from the mountains in winter have gouged away so much of the

level ground that, according to his sources, most of the Persians who died during the rout lost their lives in these stream-beds.

Perhaps, it may be objected, Alexander wanted to be ready in case the enemy appeared. But what could be less ready than a phalanx in a straggling and broken line? How much simpler would it have been for him to have had his men fall in for battle from a suitable marching formation, than to lead them forward as a single front in a straggling and broken line, and then reform for battle on wooded and broken ground? A far better tactic would have been to advance in a double or quadruple array, as appropriate. Not only would it have been possible for him to find marching space for such a formation, but also it would have been easy for him to deploy his troops for battle, since the advance guard would have alerted him to the enemy's presence in plenty of time. But on top of everything else in Callisthenes' account, even while advancing in an extended line over level ground, Alexander did not post his cavalry out in front, but alongside the entire infantry.†

[21] But now we come to the worst of Callisthenes' mistakes. He says that, as Alexander drew near the enemy, he made his line eight deep. This means, evidently, that the length of the phalanx must have been forty stades. Even if they closed ranks, as Homer says,* until they locked shields, they would still have needed twenty stades of space. But Callisthenes himself tells us that there was less than fourteen stades, and of these fourteen stades, at least three must have been occupied by the cavalry, half of whom were posted by the sea, and the other half on the right.† Moreover, he says that the whole formation kept a good distance away from the mountains, in case of an attack by those of the enemy who held the high ground.[1] And we are still left with the superfluous 10,000 infantry.

It follows from all this, then, that, according to Callisthenes himself, a distance of eleven stades at the most remained for the phalanx, and in this space the 32,000 men must have stood thirty deep in close-order formation. But he says that for the battle they were drawn up eight deep.* There is no excuse for such mistakes, no gainsaying sheer impossibility. When all the information is available—how much space each man occupied, the total available space, and the number of men—errors are inexcusable.

[1] We do in fact know that Alexander deployed troops at an angle against this threat.

[22] It would take too long to recount all the other absurdities Callisthenes perpetuates; I will mention just a very few. He says that Alexander's arrangements were dictated by his desire to face Darius in person during the battle, and says likewise that Darius too originally wanted to face Alexander, but then changed his mind. But he says absolutely nothing about how each of them found out at what point in the line the other was stationed, nor about where Darius' new position was. And how did a body of phalangites manage to climb up to the brow of the river, when it was so steep and thorny? That is incomprehensible too. This kind of absurdity should not be attributed to Alexander, because there is no doubting his experience and expertise at warfare, gained since childhood. We are bound to attribute the mistake to the writer, and to think that his inexperience blinded him to the difference between what is possible and what is impossible in warfare.

But I have said enough about Ephorus and Callisthenes. [. . .]

Further Criticism of Timaeus

[23] Timaeus railed furiously against Ephorus, but his work is itself flawed in two ways. First, he savagely condemns others for mistakes of which he himself is guilty; second, the opinions he expresses in his work and the ideas he sows in his readers' minds are generally motivated by prejudice. In fact, if we agree that Callisthenes deserved to be punished and killed, what does Timaeus deserve? Divine retribution would be far more justified in his case than for Callisthenes. Callisthenes may have wanted to deify Alexander, but Timaeus tried to raise† Timoleon higher than the highest gods. Callisthenes exalted a man who, as everyone admits, had something extraordinary and superhuman about him, whereas Timaeus exalted Timoleon, who seems not only never to have done anything special, but never even to have tried. He only completed one line in his life*—the one from Corinth to Syracuse, I mean—and that was in a sense of no great significance, set against the vastness of the known world. Timaeus felt, I think, that if Timoleon, whose field of endeavour had been just saucer-sized Sicily, could be made out to deserve comparison with the most illustrious heroes, he too, who dealt only with Italy and Sicily, could reasonably expect to be compared to writers who have made the whole world the topic of their universal histories.

But I have said enough to defend Aristotle, Theophrastus, and Callisthenes, and Ephorus and Democharés, against Timaeus' invective, and by the same token to respond to those who believe him to be unprejudiced and truthful. [. . .]

[24] There are also questions to be asked about Timaeus' character. He himself says that themes that are repeated over and over again in the work of a poet or a prose writer reveal the author's true nature. The frequency of banqueting scenes in Homer's poetry, he says, suggests that he was a glutton; the frequency with which recipes crop up in Aristotle's books shows him to have been a fussy eater with no taste for plain food. In the same way Dionysius I's effeminate nature is revealed† by the fact that he liked to arrange the furniture and by his obsession with the properties of different kinds of fabrics.

But then there is no escaping the consequence that we are bound to judge Timaeus too and find his character repellent.† For despite the considerable ingenuity and forcefulness with which he condemns others, his own work is liberally laced with dreams, prodigies, and far-fetched fables—in short, with contemptible superstition and a womanish obsession with marvels. But then there are many people who as a result of inexperience and poor judgement sometimes seem somehow to be simultaneously present and absent, their eyes open but unseeing. The truth of the saying is proved by what I have just been saying, and by its consequences for Timaeus. [. . .]

[25] [Take the case of the famous bronze bull of Acragas, into which Phalaris]† used to put people, and then light a fire underneath. This was a punishment he had devised for his subjects. As the metal grew hot, the man inside was gradually roasted by the heat coming at him from all sides, until he died, burnt to a crisp; as he cried out in terrible agony, what people heard, thanks to the way the thing was constructed, sounded exactly like the bellowing of a bull. During the period of Carthaginian supremacy, this bull was taken from Acragas to Carthage; it still has the door at its withers, through which people were lowered into the bull for their punishment. Nevertheless, although there is no conceivable reason at all why such a bull should have been made in Carthage, Timaeus tried to demolish the commonly accepted version, and impugned the honesty of the poets and historians who tell the story, by claiming that the bull in Carthage is not the one from Acragas, and that in any case there never was such a bull in Acragas. In fact, he spends quite a long time over this. [. . .]

What should we call Timaeus? What terms are we to use? I do not see how he can avoid liability to all the names he calls others, which are the harshest of their kind. I have already said just about enough to prove that he was vindictive, dishonest, and arrogant; I shall now go on to show that he was also no philosopher and fundamentally uneducated. Towards the end of Book 21 he has Timoleon say, in the course of a speech, that the whole of the earth that lies beneath the starry skies is divided into three parts, called Asia, Libya, and Europe. But this is an incredible statement.* It would be incredible coming from Margites, that byword for stupidity, let alone Timaeus. Is there anyone—I do not mean just any historian—whose ignorance is so profound [that . . . ?] [. . .]

[25a] However large the jug, we can tell the contents, they say,† from a single drop. The same principle applies to the issue we are discussing at present. When we come across one or two instances of misleading information in a book, and then find that they are actually deliberate lies, clearly we can no longer trust or believe any information given by this author. But some people of a more argumentative disposition might still need to be persuaded of this, and so I should say more, particularly† about his approach to all the various kinds of speeches—political, military, diplomatic, and so on—that act, as it were, as summaries of events and give a historical narrative overall coherence. It is impossible for any reader of the book not to realize that Timaeus' versions of speeches are deliberate falsifications. He does not reproduce them verbatim, nor does he even give us an accurate paraphrase, but he first assumes what they *should* have said, and then runs through all the arguments he has heard and all the possible consequences of events, as though he were a student of rhetoric arguing against a set position.† He seems to be more concerned to display his rhetorical flair than to give an account of what was actually said. [. . .]

[25b] It is a historian's job, first, to recognize what actual words were really spoken, whatever they may be, and, second, to determine the reasons why any given action or speech led to success or failure. For the mere reporting of a fact may be entertaining, but it has no educational value; the extra factor required for the study of history to be fruitful is knowledge of causes. After all, it is the transference of similarities from one situation to another that gives us the means and the foresight to anticipate the future. Then, according to circumstances, we can either take precautions or set about the situation

confronting us with more confidence by imitating what happened in the past. But to replace the words that were actually spoken with misleading rhetorical exercises, and to include rambling speeches rather than addressing the issue of causation, is to destroy the peculiar virtue of history. Timaeus is the worst culprit in this regard, and we all recognize that his work is riddled with these flaws.

[25c] But if Timaeus is as bad a historian as I am claiming, why have some people found him perfectly acceptable and trustworthy? It is because he spends so much time in his work criticizing and abusing others. This has led to his being judged not by anything original in his work or by his own assertions, but by his condemnation of others, on which, I agree, he brought to bear an exceptional amount of industry and flair. The same goes also for Straton, the natural scientist.* He is just as impressive when he sets himself to clarifying and refuting others' views, but when he offers something of his own or develops an original idea, the experts find him to be nowhere near as clever or as assiduous. It seems to me that there is no difference here between literature and human life in general: in real life too, it is easy to find fault with others, but hard to avoid liability to reproach oneself—and in real life too it is noticeable that it is almost always those who are most ready to criticize others whose own lives are especially reprehensible.

[25d] But apart from what I have already said, there is another problem with Timaeus. Because, as a resident of Athens for almost fifty years, he studied the work of earlier historians, he assumed that he was especially qualified to be a historian. This was a mistake, I think. For since history and medicine are alike in that each of them has, broadly speaking, three major branches, there are also three corresponding types of people who take them up.

Taking medicine first, its three branches are theory, dietetics, and surgical or pharmaceutical intervention. [. . .]† Rationalist theorizing, which is chiefly Alexandrian in origin, stemming from the followers there of Herophilus and Callimachus,* is only one branch of medicine, but it makes such grandiose claims that its practitioners come to imagine themselves the only medical experts in the world. But when you bring them down to earth and give them a patient to look after, they turn out to be as useless as someone who has never even† opened a single medical textbook. Often in the past patients have entrusted themselves to these people, won over by their way with words, and have come close to losing their lives, even if they had nothing seriously

wrong with them in the first place. These theorists are as dangerous as a ship's pilot who has learnt only from books. Nevertheless, they go from city to city with great éclat, and once they have drawn a crowd, they invite up† specifically those doctors who have genuinely proved themselves in actual practice, lay logical traps for them, and get the audience to mock them. People often find a plausible argument preferable to examining the actual facts. The third branch of medicine, which exhibits genuine skill in treating individual cases, is not only rare, but is all too often overshadowed, thanks to the inability of ordinary people to see things clearly, by the arrogant verbiage of the theorists.

[25e] Likewise, political history also has three branches. The first is the study of works of history and the collation of the material they contain; the second is the inspection and mapping of inland and coastal features such as cities, battle-sites, rivers, and harbours; the third is practical political experience. History also resembles medicine in that a lot of people, attracted by the prestige that has become attached to it, want to become historians, but most of those who put pen to paper bring to the endeavour absolutely no qualifications, but only complacency, arrogance, and self-indulgence. They are as hungry for recognition as pedlars of patent medicines and they adapt their accounts to the times, in order to court favour and attempt to make a living as historians.

There is no point in going on about these people. There are others, however, whose approach to writing history is widely held to be reasonable. They are like the medical theorists: they spend time in libraries and acquire a great deal of abstract book-learning, and then persuade themselves that they have sufficient competence for the enterprise. Outsiders may think that these people are now qualified historians, but to my way of thinking they have mastered only one third of it.† To be sure, the study of earlier works helps one discover what views and ideas were held in the past about a few† places, peoples, constitutions, and battles, and gives one information about the crises and changes of fortune experienced by particular places in former times. And all this is useful knowledge, because, if we truly research the past in detail, it naturally alerts us to future possibilities. But to believe, as Timaeus did, that good book-based research is all it takes to write well about more recent events is sheer stupidity. It is the same as imagining that all you need to do to become a good, technically proficient artist is look at the work of past artists.

[25f] Some examples will help to clarify my meaning even further, starting with certain passages in Ephorus' *History*. I get the impression from his battle passages that he had an adequate understanding of naval operations, but had no experience at all of land battles. If we focus on sea battles, then, such as the one fought off Cyprus or the battle of Cnidus,[1] we are bound to be impressed by Ephorus' competence and expertise, and we learn a great deal that will serve us well in similar circumstances. But in his descriptions of the Theban–Spartan engagements at Leuctra or Mantinea* (where Epaminondas lost his life), if we pay attention to the details and consider what he says about the original deployment of the troops, and then the tactical changes that took place in the course of the actual fighting, his ignorance makes him appear ridiculous, as though he had never seen a battle in his life. 381 394 371, 362

It is true that the battle of Leuctra was straightforward, since it involved only one part of the army, and so Ephorus' lack of expertise is not particularly apparent in this instance, but Mantinea was different. Although his description of the battle gives every impression of being an expert account of the military complexities, it bears no relation to reality and makes no sense at all.† This becomes obvious if one superimposes the movements described by him onto the terrain. The same goes for Theopompus and especially for Timaeus, with whom we are concerned at present. They can get away with brief, preliminary accounts of battles, but their detailed descriptions and suggestions show them to be as inexperienced as Ephorus. [. . .]

[25g] The point is that, just as it is impossible for someone who lacks military experience to write well about warfare, it is impossible for someone who has never acted in the political sphere or faced a political crisis to write good political history. Nothing written by authors who rely on mere book-learning has the clarity that comes from personal experience, and so nothing is gained by reading their work. For without its educational element, history is altogether uninspiring and useless. Moreover, when such authors decide, despite their lack of relevant experience, to give detailed accounts of cities and terrains, obviously the same thing happens: they omit a great deal that is worth mentioning, and linger over things that do not deserve it.

[1] Both battles involved generals of the Persian king's forces. For the first, the enemy was Euagoras of Salamis, for the second, the Spartans.*

Timaeus is the worst culprit in this regard, thanks to his failure to inspect places personally. [. . .]

[25h] In Book 34 Timaeus says that he spent fifty years abroad, all of them in Athens, and admits that he had no experience at all of warfare, and had never actually seen the places he talks about.† So when matters of war or topography crop up in his account, he makes many misleading errors. On those rare occasions when he does convey something of the truth, he resembles those artists who use stuffed sacks as their models: they might sometimes capture the outline, but there is no trace of the vividness and animation of a real living creature, which it is an artist's job to capture. Timaeus and all those other historians who base themselves on book-learning are just like that: the vividness of real life is missing from their work, because only personal experience can provide it. That is why writers without direct experience of things fail to inspire their readers with genuine ambition.

That is also why our predecessors thought that vividness was an essential ingredient of history writing—vividness of the kind that would make a reader declare, when the topic was politics, that the writer must have gained experience, as a politician himself, of how public life works; or, when the topic was warfare, that the writer had served in the forces and seen action; or, when the topic was private life, that the writer had raised children and lived with a woman. And so on for all other areas of life. This vividness is most likely found only in writers who have taken up the writing of history after gaining direct experience in public life. Of course, it is hardly likely that any one person will have been involved and active in everything, but a historian must have personal experience of the most important areas of life, those that affect the largest numbers of people. [25i] The frequency with which we encounter this kind of vividness in Homer proves that it is not an impossible goal.

I imagine that everyone would now agree, after what I have been saying, that the study of works of history is only one of three branches of history, and is the least important of the three. The truth of this assertion can best be demonstrated by considering Timaeus' practice with regard to political, military, and diplomatic speeches. There are in fact few occasions that call for the presentation of every possible argument; usually, the writer has to select just a few from those that occur to him—and then of these few, some are appropriate for contemporary speakers, others for politicians of the past, and others for Aetolians or Peloponnesians or Athenians. To include every possible

argument, whatever the context, is futile and inappropriate,† yet this is what Timaeus does: whatever the topic, he invents arguments. This seems† misleading, childish, and pedantic. In the past, it has also been the reason why success has eluded many writers and they have been judged second-rate. What is essential is to select, on every occasion, those arguments that suit the context and are appropriate.

Since there is no fixed formula for which and how many of the available arguments should be used on any given occasion, what is needed is an unusual degree of attention and clarity of principle, if we are to educate our readers rather than mislead them. What is fitting in any given situation cannot readily be encompassed by rules, but it is possible to glimpse what is required with the help of precepts learnt from personal experience and practice. For the time being, however, some idea of what I am getting at can best be afforded as follows. We acquire some degree of genuine insight into what happened if writers first explain the circumstances, and the aims and predispositions of the debaters, and then, after reporting what was actually said, tell us the factors that caused the speakers either to succeed or to fail—the point being that once we have learnt to recognize these factors, when we find ourselves in analogous situations, we can apply what we have learnt, and this will enable us always to attain our goals. But these factors are, I think, hard to describe, while the easier option in writing is just to invent. Only a few discover the technique and master the art of keeping things brief and to the point, whereas writing at great length but to no purpose is a common, ordinary accomplishment.

[25k] I need to support what I have just been saying about Timaeus, as I also did when criticizing him for his errors and deliberate lies. I shall briefly bring forward as evidence specific speeches that are indisputably his work. [. . .]

Among those who ruled in Sicily after the elder Gelon,* Hermocrates, Timoleon, and Pyrrhus of Epirus are reputed to have been particularly pragmatic, and not at all the kind of men to whom one should attribute childish and pedantic speeches. But in Book 21 Timaeus tells the following story. While Eurymedon was in Sicily, trying to get the cities to take up arms against Syracuse, the war-weary Geloans sent a mission to Camarina to ask for a truce. The Camarinans enthusiastically agreed, and both sides next contacted their allies, asking them to send honourable men to Gela to discuss

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the terms of a treaty and to find a solution that would be in everyone's best interests.

The representatives arrived in Gela, and at the opening of the conference Hermocrates stepped up and spoke. The gist of his speech, according to Timaeus, was as follows. He started by congratulating the Geloans and Camarinans on three counts: for having called a halt to the hostilities between them, for having been the prime movers of the peace conference, and for having ensured that the terms of the peace would be debated by the leading citizens of Sicily, who understood the difference between war and peace, rather than by the popular assemblies. Next, after raising two or three points of order, he asked the representatives to listen and learn from him how greatly war differs from peace—despite having just thanked the Geloans for exactly that, for the fact that the discussions were not taking place in the popular assemblies, but in a congress that was well aware of such differences.†

This suggests that Timaeus was not only lacking in political sense, but was falling short of the standard of a school essay. After all, it takes no special knowledge to recognize that, although it is important to provide evidence to convince those of one's hearers who are ignorant or sceptical, there is nothing more futile and trivial than going on and on about things that one's audience already knows. [. . .] Apart from this fundamental error, that of devoting most of the speech to matters that did not need a single word, he also has Hermocrates make points that would be utterly implausible coming from an untried youngster, let alone from a man who fought alongside the Spartans at Aegospotami, and captured the entire Athenian army in Sicily, including the generals. 405 413

[26] Anyway, Timaeus' Hermocrates first feels obliged to remind the conference that in wartime men are woken from sleep in the morning by trumpets, but in peacetime by birds. Then he says that Heracles showed his true colours in founding the Olympic Games* and the truce, and that he fought and injured all those people under duress, because he had been ordered to do so, whereas he never caused anyone any trouble of his own free will. Then he says that Homer has Zeus show his disgust with Ares when he says:*

> I loathe you above all the gods who dwell on Olympus:
> Ever dear to your heart are strife and war and bloodshed.

And he likewise points out that the wisest of Homer's heroes says:*

> Outcast, outlawed, and homeless is the man
> Who longs for dread war among his own people.

Then he argues that Euripides too agreed with Homer,* when he said:

> O Peace, bountiful provider!
> Fairest of the immortal gods!
> Ever I yearn for you while you tarry,
> And I fear lest old age may o'ertake me
> Before I see the joyous hour,
> The singing and fair dancing,
> The garlanded merry-makers.†

War and peace, Hermocrates goes on to say, closely resemble sickness and health: peace enables even the sick to recover, while in wartime even the healthy die. Also, in peacetime the natural order is preserved, and the old are buried by the young, whereas in wartime the opposite happens. Above all, he says, in wartime danger threatens all the way up to the city walls, whereas in peacetime it vanishes beyond the city's territorial boundaries. And so on and so forth. It is hard to imagine how else a youngster might have argued and expressed himself—some newcomer to rhetorical studies and book-learning, who was trying to follow the prescribed guidelines and compose an essay out of positions considered appropriate to his characters. I think his Hermocrates would have sounded exactly the same as Timaeus'.

[26a] Then again, what about Timoleon's speech in the same book? In the course of a pre-battle address to the Greeks—in fact,
341 when they were just about to engage a vastly superior Carthaginian force—he urges them to forget the Carthaginians' numbers and focus on their cowardice. Despite the fact that all Libya is densely populated and teeming with people, he says, we have the proverb 'more deserted than Libya' for when we want to stress the idea of emptiness. The proverb refers not to literal emptiness, he explains, but to Libyan cowardice. 'And anyway,' he says, 'who could be afraid of men who refuse to make any use of what is unique about human beings, the natural endowment that distinguishes them from other living creatures? I'm talking about hands. These people go around all their lives with their hands inside their clothing!* But the most telling point', he goes on, 'is that they wear loincloths under their clothes, so that

even when they are killed in battle they don't expose themselves to their enemies!' [. . .]

[26b] Historians tell us that, when Gelon promised to support 480
the Greek war effort with 20,000 foot and 200 decked ships, as long as they permitted him to command either the allied land forces or the navy, the Greek deputies in Corinth gave his ambassadors a very shrewd response. They said he was welcome to come and help, he and his forces, but events themselves would, as always, reveal which men were best suited for high command. This is not the response of people whose hopes of success depended on Syracusan assistance; they clearly felt they could rely on their own resources, and were simply inviting the participation of anyone who wanted to test his courage in the contest and bid for the prize of valour. Nevertheless, Timaeus spins out every detail of this episode in his determination to present Sicily as vastly superior to all of Greece in every respect. He claims that there is nowhere in the world where more notable and noble events take place, that the wisest of the world's famous sages are Sicilian, and that the most capable and divinely favoured men of public affairs are Syracusan. He elaborates this theme so much that no young student of rhetoric, immersed in clichés†, could do more when given a paradoxical essay topic such as 'Write a speech in praise of Thersites', or 'in censure of Penelope'.*

[26c] But this excessive deployment of paradox serves only to expose the men and events he wants to highlight not to favourable comparison but to ridicule. In fact, Timaeus ends up having very much the same effect as those who have honed their logical skills to perfection in the seminar rooms of the Academy. For, in their desire to lay logical traps for their interlocutors, some Academics too deploy paradoxes, whether they are talking about things that are seemingly self-evident or things that are not so liable to immediate comprehension. In fact, they have such facility at inventing specious arguments that they debate whether it is possible for people in Athens to smell eggs cooking in Ephesus, and wonder whether they might be home in bed, dreaming these discussions of theirs in the Academy, rather than talking like this in real life. Their excessive use of paradox has brought the whole pursuit into disrepute, until even proper subjects for debate have lost credit with people generally. But their own inanity is not the worst problem: out of admiration for them, young men pay

not the slightest attention to questions of ethics and politics, which are the useful branches of philosophy, and waste their time over useless, paradoxical verbiage.

[26d] The same goes for Timaeus—and also for his admirers. Deploying paradox, and contesting every issue, he has subjugated most of them by force of words, and his apparent veracity has compelled them to give him credence. A few of them, however, have been won over and convinced by the apparent indisputability of his evidence—an impression he manages to give above all when writing about colonies, new foundations, and genealogies. In these passages, he puts on such a fine show of precision, and displays such rancour when refuting others, that you would think other writers had all been making random statements about the world in a trance, and that he alone had carried out precise enquiries and had submitted every little piece of information to intense scrutiny, to sift all the truth from all the lies.

Anyway, there are people who, as a result of long familiarity with the earlier part of his work (where the passages on colonies and so on are to be found), have come to trust the exaggerated claims he wrote down. When someone eventually produces evidence to show that Timaeus himself is guilty of the very faults which he criticizes so savagely in others (for which I took him to task over Locri and so on), their reaction is to argue back, furiously and stubbornly—argumentativeness being pretty much all these most diligent students of his history gain from their reading! On the other hand, those of his admirers who succumbed to his rhetorical claptrap, and in general to his rambling speeches, become childish, pedantic, and misleading, for the reasons I have just mentioned.

[27a] Timaeus' political sections, then, are fundamentally flawed. I have brought up most of the problems, but now I shall explain *why* he went wrong. The reason is something that most people will find implausible, but, as we shall see, it perfectly explains the charges I have brought against him. It seems to me that, although he was endowed with a capacity for detailed research and with good research skills—in other words, although he approached the writing of history in a meticulous fashion—in certain respects he demonstrates less skill and care than any given historian. Let me explain.

[27] We are naturally endowed with two instruments, so to speak, to help us acquire information and undertake research. Of the two, sight is, as Heraclitus says,* much more reliable, eyes being more accurate witnesses than ears. For his research, however, Timaeus took the pleasanter, but inferior route—which is to say that he completely avoided making use of sight and worked entirely through hearing. But there are two kinds of hearing-based research, and although Timaeus was a very meticulous reader, he behaved in a slipshod manner when it came to questioning informants, as I have already mentioned.

It is not difficult to see why he chose this research method. Book-based research is free of risk and hardship—or at least it is if you ensure that you find yourself either a city where there are plenty of historical works available, or a nearby library. Then all you have to do is recline on a couch while carrying out your research and collating the statements† of earlier writers, and there is no hardship involved in that. But although investigative work involves a great deal of discomfort and expense, it has a great deal to offer in return; in fact, it is the most important thing a historian can do.

Writers themselves bear witness to this. Ephorus, for instance, remarks on what an outstanding experience it would be if we could be personally present at all events as they happen. Theopompus* says that the greatest military expert is the man who has witnessed the most battles, that the most effective orator is the man who has taken part in the most political debates, and that the same principle applies to medicine and helmsmanship. Homer stresses this even more emphatically. For instance, when he wants to indicate what qualities are needed for a man to be effective in the world, he makes Odysseus an exemplar and says:*

> Tell me, Muse, the tale of a much-travelled man,
> A far-roaming man.

And one verse later:

> The cities of many peoples he saw, and knew their minds;
> And on the sea much anguish he suffered in his heart.

And again:

> Well versed was he in wars of men and grievous storms.

[28] I think the dignity of history also demands such a man. At any rate, Plato says that human life will be fine when either philosophers are kings or kings are philosophers,* and I would say that history will be fine either when men who have held public office take up history writing—not in the incidental way they do now, but with undivided, full-time attention, in the belief that there is nothing more important or more noble for them to do—or when would-be writers regard practical political experience as an essential prerequisite for a historian. Only then will there be an end to the errors of historians. Not that Timaeus cared about any of this in the slightest. No, he lived his entire life away from home in a single place, almost as if he deliberately avoided any active involvement in war and politics, or any personal experience of travel and sight-seeing. Nevertheless, somehow or other he has attained the distinction of being rated a first-class historian.

But it is easy for me to prove Timaeus' reliance on books, because he admits it. In the preface to Book 6, he mentions the view of some people that epideictic speeches require more talent, hard work, and preparation than history writing. He says that although this idea had already been criticized by Ephorus, he has been prompted to try to contrast history and epideictic oratory himself, because Ephorus was incapable of formulating an adequate response. But this is an absolutely extraordinary thing for him to say, not least because it is quite wrong about Ephorus. For one is constantly astonished, in Ephorus, by the high standard, throughout his work, of his style, treatment, and argumentation; and whenever he enlarges on any subject—in a digression, perhaps, or in expressing his own opinion—he is at his formidable best. It so happens, in fact, that his passage on the difference between historiography and speech writing is a model of eloquence and persuasiveness. Timaeus misrepresents Ephorus because he does not want anyone to think he is modelling himself on him, but at the same time this is to disrespect everyone else. For he thought that no one else would notice if his second-hand version of what had been a perfectly decent narrative was long-winded, unintelligible, and certainly no improvement over the original.

[28a] Anyway, his attempt to elevate history starts with the claim that the difference between history and epideictic oratory is as great as that between real buildings and structures, and the landscapes and

outlines painted for theatre backdrops. He then goes on to say that just gathering the preparatory material for writing history involves more work than the entire process of writing epideictic speeches. At any rate, he says, he is sure that people would not believe him if he told them how much it had cost him, in terms of hardship as well as money, to gather the chronicles from Tyre†, and to research the customs of the Ligurians, Celts, and Iberians. It was truly unbelievable.

It would be nice to ask Timaeus if he thinks it costs more, in terms of money and hardship, to sit in town gathering chronicles and researching the customs of the Ligurians and Celts, than it does to try to see as many peoples and places as possible with one's own eyes. Or again, is it more costly to find out about battles and sieges and naval engagements from people who were involved in them, or to take part in the action, and experience combat and its consequences oneself? Speaking for myself, I doubt that the difference between real buildings and stage-painted landscapes, or between history and epideictic oratory, is as great as the difference, from which no kind of historical writing is exempt, between asserting something from personal involvement and experience, and writing down what one has heard at second hand or in yarns.

Timaeus, however, lacked the experience to tell the difference, and so he naturally assumed that the easiest and least important aspect of a historian's work—that is, gathering books and eliciting detailed information about events from knowledgeable people—was actually the hardest and most critical. But experience is crucial for historiography: without it, writers are bound to make serious mistakes. How is it possible for someone who is ignorant about battles and sieges and naval engagements to ask someone else good questions about them, or to understand the details of what he is told? For the questioner contributes just as much to the account as his respondents, in the sense that the very act of being asked to remember the sequence of events causes fresh details to arise in the respondent's mind. Anyone who has had no experience of battle cannot ask sensible questions of those who were involved, nor, if he watched a battle, would he be able to understand what was happening. Somehow, even if he were present, he would simultaneously be absent. [. . .]

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EXPLANATORY NOTES

BOOK ONE

3 *in less than fifty-three years*: Polybius is referring to the period from the beginning of the Second Punic War—which he thinks started with Hannibal's siege of Saguntum in 219 BC—to the end of the Third Macedonian War in 168/7 BC, when Rome defeated Perseus and abolished the Macedonian monarchy. Although there were many conquests still to come, Polybius had good grounds for regarding 167 BC as the date which marked the establishment of Roman rule in the Mediterranean.

The empires that deserve to be compared . . . are the following: the Persian empire was established under Cyrus (559–529 BC) and overstepped its Asian boundaries, as Polybius says, when Darius invaded Greece in 490 BC and was defeated at the battle of Marathon, and when Xerxes tried again in 480/79 BC, only to meet with disaster at the battles of Salamis and Plataea; Alexander the Great's victories, and accession as Great King in 330 BC, marked the end of the Persian empire. Polybius dates Sparta's period of rule from her victory over the Athenians in the Peloponnesian War at the battle of Aegospotami (405 BC) to her defeat by the Athenian admiral, Conon, at the battle of Cnidus (304 BC). Macedonian supremacy, established by Philip and Alexander, is probably thought of as coming to an end with Rome's victory over the Seleucid king, Antiochus III, at the battle of Magnesia in 189 BC.

4 *the 140th Olympiad*: the Olympiad dating system was based on the four years between celebrations of the Olympic Games, starting with Olympiad 1, 776–772 BC: Olympiad 1.1 = 776/5 (an Olympiad year did not coincide exactly with a modern year), Olympiad 1.2 = 775/4, Olympiad 1.3 = 774/3, Olympiad 1.4 = 773/2, Olympiad 2.1 = 772/1, etc.

the so-called Social War in Greece: the main protagonists in the largely indecisive Social War, which lasted from 220 to 217 BC, were, on one side, Philip V of Macedon with his Achaean allies, and, on the other, the Aetolian League (the federation of north-west Greek states that controlled central Greece). The Fourth Syrian War (219–217 BC), part of a continuing frontier dispute between the Seleucid and Ptolemaic empires—Coele Syria was roughly the area of modern Lebanon, southern Syria, northern Israel—was fought between Ptolemy IV Philopator of Egypt and Antiochus III of Syria: to everyone's surprise the indolent Philopator won a great victory at the battle of Raphia in 217 BC.

Aratus of Sicyon's book: Aratus of Sicyon (271–213 BC) was one of the great leaders of the Achaean League. His *Memoirs* in at least thirty books do not survive, but were evidently used by Polybius for what he says about the earlier history of the League (2.38–70). It was traditional for a historian

to identify himself as the continuator of a distinguished predecessor (as Xenophon did of Thucydides—*Hellenica* 1.1).

5 *But since most Greeks are unfamiliar with the past history . . . of either Rome or Carthage*: Polybius' justification for writing the first two introductory books is that his Greek audience would not know the Roman and Carthaginian background. He offers no explanation, however, for the fact that almost half of Book 2 is devoted to the earlier history of the Achaean League and Greek affairs.

6 *Timaeus finished his history*: while the work proper will start in Book 3 with the 140th Olympiad and the year 220/19 BC, the introductory two books will start in the 129th Olympiad at the beginning of the First Punic War in 264 BC. Although he recognizes that you cannot keep on going backwards, Polybius fixes one more starting point, the introduction to Book 1, at 386 BC—a date which he establishes at the beginning of chapter 6 with a series of cross-references. Timaeus of Tauromenium (*c*.350–260 BC) wrote a history of Sicily from earliest times to the death of the tyrant Agathocles in 289/8 BC, which he extended to 264 BC to cover the story of Pyrrhus' wars against Rome. His use of the Olympiad system of dating became standard. Timaeus was also the first Greek historian to write at length about Roman affairs, which was, no doubt, part of the reason why Polybius was so ill-disposed to him: Book 12 of Polybius is devoted almost entirely to an attack on Timaeus.

So to begin: the following are the events referred to. At the battle of Aegospotami in 405 BC, the Spartan commander, Lysander, destroyed the Athenian fleet, thus hastening the end of the Peloponnesian War that began in 431 BC. The battle of Leuctra in 371 BC, in which the brilliant Theban general, Epaminondas, led Boeotia to victory over Sparta, marked the end of two centuries of Spartan military invincibility on the battlefield. The dissatisfaction with Spartan behaviour that eventually led to the battle of Leuctra had its origins in 387/6 BC when the Spartan admiral, Antalcidas, with Persian military backing, forced Athens and her allies (Thebes, Argos, and Corinth) into a humiliating peace agreement with Sparta (also known as the King's Peace) that in effect recognized Spartan dominance in Greece. Dionysius I of Syracuse (*c*.430–367 BC), one of the great figures of Sicilian history, had territorial ambitions in southern Italy, where he defeated an Italiote army at the Elleporus river in 389 BC, and then besieged the city of Rhegium on the Strait of Messana (it fell in 387 BC). The famous sack of Rome by the Gauls is usually dated to 390 BC, but Polybius is probably following Timaeus in dating it to 387/6 BC. The wars Rome fought against neighbouring Latins, Etruscans, Celts, and Samnites were spread out over the fourth and early third centuries BC. Roman victory in the Third Samnite War (298–290 BC) consolidated her control of central Italy.

7 *Some time later*: Celtic tribes from central Europe invaded Greece in 280/79 BC. One raiding group got as far south as Delphi, where the sanctuary was saved when Apollo sent a miraculous snowstorm; others

migrated to Asia Minor in 278/7 BC, where their aggressive plundering caused trouble for generations. In 282 BC the Romans sent help to the south Italian city of Thurii and installed a garrison. When ten of their ships crossed into Tarentine sea space, contrary to an agreement (so Tarentum maintained), the Tarentines sank four, captured one, expelled the Roman garrison from Thurii, and insulted the envoys sent to seek redress.

Agathocles: Agathocles was tyrant of Syracuse from 316 to 289 BC (taking the title of king in 304 BC) and the dominant figure in western Greek history during that time. He seems to have aimed to unite the Greek cities of Sicily and southern Italy under his rule. He had captured Messana in about 312 BC, but had lost it when he was defeated by the Carthaginians in 311 BC. After his death, some of his former Campanian mercenaries, calling themselves Mamertines, seized Messana. In due course, as Polybius explains, their actions led to the outbreak of the first war between Rome and Carthage in 264 BC.

8 *the Mamertines*: Polybius is referring here to the Campanian mercenaries of Agathocles who had captured Messana. Somewhat confusingly, he calls Decius and his men 'Romans', but they may also have been Campanian mercenaries, like the Mamertines, except in the employ of Rome. By seizing Rhegium, of course, they became the enemies of Rome.

12 *the defeat they suffered in their own homeland*: this refers to the sack of Rome by the Gauls in 390 BC.

a brief summary of the events covered in the introduction: by the term 'introduction' Polybius means the first two books, the contents of which he summarizes as follows: the First Punic War (264–241 BC); the war of Carthage against her mercenaries (241–238 BC)—what he calls the war in Libya (Libya standing for North Africa, in this case modern Tunisia); the expansion of Carthaginian power in Spain in the years 237 to 221 BC, under the leadership first of Hamilcar (the father of Hannibal), then Hasdrubal; Rome's First Illyrian War (229–228 BC); Rome's wars against the Celts of northern Italy (225–222 BC); the Cleomenean War, a series of acquisitions and conquests made by King Cleomenes III of Sparta in the years 229 to 222 BC, when he was defeated by Antigonus Doson.

13 *Philinus and Quintus Fabius Pictor*: Philinus of Acragas, whose work does not survive, wrote a pro-Carthaginian account of the First Punic War, although whether it was a separate monograph on that war or part of a larger history is not known. Quintus Fabius Pictor was the first Roman historian. His account of Rome down to his own times (the war against Hannibal), written in Greek, is preserved only in quotations by later writers. He was a senator—Polybius believed that only men of political and military experience were qualified to write history (see Introduction, p. xxii)—and this practical experience may be the reason why Polybius treats him with an uncharacteristic degree of respect, rarely bestowed on any other historian.

15 *when the opportunity arises*: for instance, at 1.58.5 he criticizes what Fabius says about the end of the First Punic War. In his long discussion of the causes of the Second Punic War, he also disagrees with Fabius (3.8.1–9).

20 *the Council of Elders*: Carthage had two governing councils, a Council of Elders, and a larger senate (see 10.18.1).

21 *Gaius Duilius*: he was consul in 260 BC, and took over command in western Sicily after the capture of his colleague in the consulship, Cn. Cornelius Scipio, at Lipara. The device known as the 'raven' (*corvus*), a special rotatable boarding-bridge described in detail in this passage, assisted Duilius in defeating the Carthaginian fleet at the battle of Mylae in 260 BC, Rome's first naval victory. He returned to Rome the following year and celebrated a triumph for this victory that was commemorated by the *Columna Rostrata* (a column decorated with the beaks of captured ships) in the Forum.

24 *land army*: in the Roman army the soldiers in the third rank from the front were called *triarii*, made up of older veterans.

25 *with their prows pointing outwards*: Polybius means that the ships were in echelon.

30 *let alone assent to them*: other sources have a different version of these events, in which it was the Carthaginians who initiated the negotiations out of exhaustion, while Regulus was extended in his command by the Senate against his wishes. If Regulus was anxious to arrange a deal before one of the consuls of the following year (256/5 BC) arrived and took over command, it does not make a great deal of sense that he would have offered impossibly harsh terms.

31 *many maniples deep*: the maniple was introduced as a unit of the legion in the fourth century BC. Each legion consisted of thirty maniples (two centuries per maniple) normally arranged in three ranks of ten maniples each: the *hastati* ('spearmen') in the front, then the *principes* ('leading men') and lastly the *triarii* ('third-rankers'). With sixty centuries (the name implying a hundred men) theoretically the strength of the legion was 6,000, but in practice was usually much less. In the late second century BC the maniple was replaced by the cohort.

33 *'one wise plan is stronger than many hands'*: this is a quotation from Euripides' lost play *Antiope*.

There is an alternative account of Xanthippus' departure . . . but now is not the time for it: no other account of Xanthippus' return to Greece is preserved in the surviving text of Polybius. We do know from other sources of a story that the Carthaginians tried to drown Xanthippus on his way home, but if that was what Polybius was referring to, it is difficult to see why it would be inappropriate to discuss it at this point. Presumably Xanthippus' story must have had relevance to some other aspect of Polybius' history: if the mid-third-century BC Ptolemaic governor of the same name is our Xanthippus, it could be that Polybius told the other story of his return in one of the lost sections on Egyptian history.

34 *Marcus Aemilius Paullus and Servius Fulvius Paetinus*: the consuls for 255/4.

Orion and . . . Sirius: modern calculations of the rising of these two stars vary slightly, but in general terms Orion rose at the beginning of July (4th) and Sirius at the end (28th).

36 *the Lesser Syrtis*: the island of Meninx, modern Djerba, is located just off the east coast of Tunisia in the Gulf of Gabes (known as Lesser Syrtis in the ancient world). It was identified as the island of Homer's Lotus-eaters (who appear in Book 9 of the *Odyssey*) by the great third-century BC Alexandrian scholar Eratosthenes.

37 *Panormitis*: the date of the battle of Panormus is disputed, but it probably took place in June 250. That one of the consuls, C. Furius Pacilius, had left for Rome implies that the new consuls (for the year 250/49) had already entered office.

38 *their Indians*: here, as elsewhere, Polybius uses the term 'Indians' for mahouts in general, wherever they might come from. The Carthaginians used African 'forest' elephants now surviving only in west Africa, but still to be found on the Horn of Africa in Polybius' day. The large 'bush' variety of the eastern plains, with which the modern world is so familiar, was unknown to the Greeks and Romans.

40 *in Sardinia*: the death of Hannibal in Sardinia was recorded at 1.24.5–7; we hear nothing more about his son.

47 *Lucius Junius Pullus*: he was in fact the colleague of Claudius Pulcher in the consulship of 249/8, not one of his successors.

50 *It is by far the tallest mountain in Sicily after Etna*: Mt. Etna is 3,340 metres high (approximately: it changes with volcanic activity), and Monte San Giuliano, the modern name of Mt. Eryx, is 751 metres—certainly not the second highest mountain in Sicily, but because it stands out from the surrounding low-lying ground it had a reputation in antiquity for being very high. The ancient temple on its summit was associated by the Phoenicians with Astarte, but according to Roman legend was founded by Aeneas.

Hamilcar Barca: the father of the famous Hannibal who commanded the Carthaginian forces in the Second Punic War.

51 *the opposing generals*: the last Roman commander mentioned by Polybius was L. Junius Pullus, but other sources indicate that he had probably been captured or had committed suicide by the time Hamilcar appeared on the scene. Hamilcar was faced with a succession of Roman opponents in the inconclusive fighting at Mt. Heircte, but Polybius was probably distracted by his own boxing simile of two fighters slugging it out.

52 *the defeat at Drepana*: the first time the Romans had been forced to abandon naval operations was after the storm that had destroyed all but 80 of their 364 ships off Camarina in 255 BC (recorded by Polybius in 1.37); the second time was their defeat at the battle of Drepana in 249 (1.49–51). Polybius here fails to take into account the equally disastrous storm of 249 that destroyed the two fleets commanded by Junius Pullus (1.54.8).

53 *the Rhodian's vessel*: this was the ship of Hannibal the Rhodian, who had run the Roman blockades so successfully until captured (1.46–7).

55 *talents*: there were 6,000 drachmas in a talent, and inscriptions indicate one drachma per day, or a little more, as a normal rate of pay for a mercenary soldier in the Hellenistic age. Exact calculations are not possible, but 2,200 talents would probably keep 20,000 mercenaries in pay for the best part of two years. So it was a huge indemnity.

56 *Antigonus or Ptolemy or Demetrius*: Polybius refers to the scale of the wars of Alexander the Great's generals and immediate successors, Antigonus I and his son, Demetrius I Poliorcetes, and Ptolemy I, founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt.

my initial suggestion: in 1.3.9–10 Polybius undertook to explain how the Romans had conceived their ambition to conquer the world. It was the first war against Carthage that had given them both the confidence to embark on such a course and the skills necessary for success.

my account of their system of government: Polybius is referring to his account of the Roman constitution in Book 6, but nothing survives there which explains why the Romans could no longer put such big fleets to sea. It is not known which constitutional analysts Polybius is criticizing in the next sentence.

57 *the rebel city*: Falerii, the main town of the Faliscans, was about 50 kilometres north of Rome. Polybius is struck by the symmetry of what happened to Rome and Carthage immediately after the First Punic War; they both faced domestic revolt, but the Faliscan revolt was suppressed by the two consuls of 241 in less than a week, a minor affair in comparison with the major struggle against her mercenaries that confronted Carthage.

in keeping with my original plan: Polybius announced his intention to cover this war at 1.13.3. The need he feels to explain its inclusion in his history perhaps betrays an unease: although he claims it is vital for understanding the causes of the war against Hannibal, this is far from obvious. The Romans did take advantage of the situation to seize Sardinia, which was an important cause of the Second Punic War, but the point could have been made without a detailed account of the mercenary war. A 'truceless' war was one without interruption in which no quarter was given.

65 *in the course of their struggles in Sicily*: i.e. during the First Punic War.

71 *Hippou Acra and Utica*: in 307/6 Agathocles captured both towns, but they are not known to have been taken by M. Atilius Regulus when he invaded Africa during the First Punic War (1.29–34).

BOOK TWO

77 *in keeping with my original plan*: Polybius is referring to the plan for the two introductory books that he set out in 1.13. The history proper would start in Olympiad 140 with the Hannibalic War, but before that it was necessary to explain how the two states had got to this point: see note to p. 13.

and set about reviving Carthaginian authority in Iberia: the implication seems to be that the Carthaginian empire in Spain had been lost or damaged as a result of the First Punic War, but we know little of its extent in that period, and it is always worth remembering that imperial ventures, both ancient and modern, have often been justified by the claim to be 'recovering' former possessions. In the second treaty that Polybius records (3.24) between Rome and Carthage (348 BC), however, although some of the details are disputed, it is clear that Rome recognized Carthaginian power in the western Mediterranean.

Demetrius II: Demetrius II ruled Macedon from 239 until his death in 229. Antigonus II Doson succeeded him, initially as regent for the young Philip (born 238), but later as king in his own right. After Doson's death in 221, Philip became king.

78 *inscribed on the shields*: in such circumstances, shields, or more generally, weapons captured from the enemy would be inscribed with the name of the victorious general and dedicated in a temple or other public location. Polybius is very fond of the sort of reversal that occurred on this occasion: the Aetolians were in fact defeated, and while the names of the Aetolian general (i.e. chief official of the Aetolian League), and of those standing for the office, were recorded on the shields, as they had wished, they were named as the people who had lost the shields, not won them.

79 *His wife Teuta*: Agron died in 231 and his widow, Teuta, became regent for his young son (by another wife), Pinnes. In attempting to extend her power she ran foul of Greek and Italian interests in the Adriatic, and was defeated by Rome in the First Illyrian War in 229. We know little about her thereafter.

80 *petition for help*: Polybius is usually fiercely critical of the Aetolians and presents them as the arch enemies of the Achaean League, but at this time they were allies against Demetrius II of Macedon.

the Dardanians: they were an Illyrian people whose territory (the modern Kosovo region) bordered on the north-west frontier of Macedon, with whom they were frequently in dispute.

81 *betraying their own friends and relatives*: we do not know the circumstances of the betrayal to which Polybius refers.

83 *she sent men . . . to kill the outspoken ambassador*: an alternative tradition has Coruncanius murdered by Illyrian pirates, not by Teuta: see, for instance, Appian, *Illyrica* 7.

84 *The Illyrians fought with their lemboi lashed together*: the lighter galleys (*lemboi*) were at a disadvantage when engaged at close quarters with the heavier, decked ships. This technique of lashing them together created a greater bulk, and reflects the change from ramming to boarding that the Romans developed so effectively in the First Punic War: for the Roman grappling mechanism known as the 'raven', see 1.22 and note to p. 21.

84 *the other consul, Aulus Postumius Albinus*: Gnaeus Fulvius Centumalus and Lucius Postumius Albinus were the consuls of 229/8. The text gives Postumius' forename as Aulus (which was his father's name): this could be a mistake of Polybius or his source, or a fault of the manuscript.

86 *the Isthmian Games*: these were held near Corinth in honour of Poseidon, and, like the Nemean Games (held originally at the sanctuary of Zeus at Nemea, but later at Argos), they were biennial. The Pythian Games at Delphi (in honour of Apollo) and the Olympian Games (in honour of Zeus) were celebrated every four years. Rome's admittance to the Isthmian Games, probably in 228 BC, was an important recognition by the Greeks of her growing influence.

both these places: in 10.8–11 Polybius discusses at length the topography of New Carthage, but refers only to the importance of its harbour for operations in Spain and to the ease of reaching it from Africa. If there was a more detailed explanation of its advantages, it does not survive.

87 *it must be a summary account*: Polybius repeatedly emphasizes the summary nature of his two introductory books: see 1.13, 1.65, 2.1, 2.35, 2.40.

Italy as a whole has a triangular shape: not a convincing assessment of the shape of Italy, but Polybius has a tendency to express geography in triangles: Sicily was triangular (1.42), the north Italian plain too (this chapter) and the Mediterranean world (34.6).

88 *barley*: in Spain at about this time, Polybius reports (34.8) that a Sicilian medimnus (*c.*51.5 litres) of barley cost 1 drachma (i.e. 6 obols), three times the price in northern Italy. Similarly with wine (a measure contained just under 40 litres, or just under 9 gallons). Spanish wheat was more than twice the price (9 obols) of Italian.

89 *its tributaries*: the Eridanus was originally the name ascribed to a legendary river of northern Europe, identified first with the Rhône, then with the Po. Polybius' sense of direction is seriously astray: the Po flows to the north-east at first, then due east. He may have been confused by his own (unsatisfactory) triangular scheme. In Polybius' time the Po divided near Ferrera and flowed into the Adriatic in two channels. Drainage engineering in the twelfth century AD created a new northerly channel, and the southerly channel is now part of the river Reno. Polybius describes the Po as at its most beautiful when the Dog-star rises, which is at the end of July.

90 *the battle*: the battle of the Allia was traditionally dated to 18 July 390, but Polybius seems to place it in 387/6. The whole story of the sack of Rome was much embellished by later tradition, most famously in Livy (5.33–55).

Alba: Alba Longa, founded by Ascanius, son of Aeneas, was about 19 kilometres south-east of Rome. A precise chronology of the Gallic wars is difficult to establish, and the subject of much scholarly disagreement.

91 *Sentinum*: the consuls, Q. Fabius Maximus Rullianus and P. Decius Mus, commanded the Roman forces at the battle of Sentinum in 295 against a coalition of Gauls and Samnites (possibly with some Etruscans and Umbrians too). It was the decisive victory over the Gauls, and gave Rome control of central Italy, in spite of a setback in 284 at Arretium (modern Arezzo). Polybius credits Manius Curius Dentatus with avenging Arretium, but this may reflect a patriotic invention that was unable to wait for the victory achieved a year later at lake Vadimo by one of the consuls of 283, P. Cornelius Dolabella.

92 *the Gauls at Delphi*: we know nothing beyond what Polybius tells us about the Roman victory in the year after Vadimo, but one of the consuls of 282, Q. Aemilius Papus, is recorded as fighting in that year. Pyrrhus, king of Epirus (in north-west Greece), was invited by the south Italian town of Tarentum to help them against Rome, and landed in Italy in May 280. The band of Gallic raiders who attacked Delphi were defeated in the autumn of 279. Polybius is presumably reckoning in terms of Olympiad years, and counting inclusively: the victory of 282 = Olympiad 124, 2; Pyrrhus' crossing in 279 = Olympiad 124, 4 (i.e. 3 years later); the defeat of the Gauls at Delphi in 279 = Olympiad 125, 2 (i.e. 5 years later).

93 *Gaius Flaminius*: Flaminius was a so-called 'new man' (*novus homo*), that is, the first of his family to become a senator. As tribune of the people he passed a law, against strong senatorial opposition, distributing confiscated Gallic land in lots to needy Roman citizens, thus foreshadowing the work of the famous Gracchan brothers a century later. The reference to the corruption of the Roman people is important in assessing Polybius' thoughts about the decline of Rome. Further evidence of Polybius' hostility towards Flaminius will be found at 3.80.

returning home with their booty safe and sound: the ambassadors to the Gaesatae recall the Gallic victory at the Allia and subsequent sack of Rome, but give a benign version of their withdrawal, which was effected by the payment of a large Roman ransom (1,000 lbs. of gold in Livy 5.48).

The word 'Gaesatae' really means 'professional soldiers': we can document this statement as coming from Fabius Pictor, a fragment of whose work says that Gaesatae was not the name of a people, but of Gallic mercenaries. Greek *gaisos*, Latin *gaesa*, are derived from a Celtic word meaning 'throwing-spear'. Hence Gaesatae must originally have meant 'people of the throwing-spear'.

96 *three days' journey from Rome*: Clusium was 160 kilometres from Rome, much more than a three days' march.

98 *naked*: the nakedness of the Gauls is also stressed at the battle of Cannae (3.114). Tacitus in his work the *Germania* (6.2) refers to Germans fighting naked.

100 *his triumph*: a triumph, decreed by vote of the people, allowed a victorious Roman general to process with his troops, booty, and captured enemies through the streets of Rome to the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus. Aemilius Papus held his triumph in 224.

101 *the temple of Athena*: Polybius talks of the temple of Athena, but is referring to the Celtic equivalent. Presumably they took down the 'immovable' standards to win special protection from the goddess.

104 *despite his youth*: Hannibal was about 25 at this stage, young for overall command perhaps, but not excessively so.

105 *the Hannibalic War*: Rome's dealings with the Celts would lead chronologically into the Social War and the Second Punic War, but the plan for his introductory books (1.3) required Polybius to bring Greek history up to date first. A little later in this chapter Polybius claims there is no need to give any background about Egypt and Asia, on the decidedly weak grounds that there was much written on them, making their history well known, and not much of interest had happened there anyway.

the history of all the known parts of the inhabited world: Polybius emphasizes the importance of universal history, and the dangers of monographs on individual topics, at the very beginning of the work (1.4), and returns frequently to the subject. Universal history is required by contemporary events, which have seen Rome's dominance unite Mediterranean history into one story.

as I mentioned before: there is no specific account of Achaean history before this.

106 *true democracy*: this is perhaps the first time that the word 'democracy' was applied to something other than an individual Greek city-state (*polis*). Although Polybius could just mean that the Achaean federation operated in a fair and independent manner, his statement at the end of chapter 37 about the nature of the League's institutions makes it more likely that he was genuinely equating the membership and workings of the League with the individual citizens and institutions of a democratic *polis*.

Magna Graecia: meaning 'Greater Greece', this was the term used for the Greek cities of southern Italy. Some definitions included Sicily. Polybius implies a connection with the Pythagoreans: Pythagoras himself emigrated to the south Italian town of Croton in about 530.

107 *Dionysius I of Syracuse*: see note to p. 6. He captured Croton in about 380.

Aratus . . . Philopoemen . . . Lycortas: Aratus (271–213) was the dominant force in the Achaean League in the third century. Philopoemen (*c.*253–182) and Polybius' father, Lycortas (died *c.*167), were friends and political allies, and the leading statesmen of the League in the early second century.

108 *all of whom died in this Olympiad*: Polybius is referring to the leading generals and associates of Alexander the Great, who divided up his empire

among themselves in the generation after his death (323). Ptolemy I Soter, founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty (that ended with the famous Cleopatra), took control of Egypt, which he ruled as king from 305 until his death in 283. Lysimachus carved out a powerful kingdom in Thrace and Asia Minor, but was killed at the battle of Corupedium in 281. The victor at Corupedium was another of Alexander's right-hand men, Seleucus, founder of the Seleucid dynasty: from his province of Babylonia, he had expanded his power to take over the whole central part of the former Persian empire. He was assassinated by Ptolemy Ceraunus, a disinherited son of Ptolemy I, who, after murdering Seleucus, was briefly king of Macedon, before dying at the hands of Celtic invaders. Allowing for some uncertainty about when Ceraunus died, it is possible to fit all four deaths into the 124th Olympiad (284–280).

the return of the Heraclids: the myth of the return of the descendants of Heracles to the Peloponnese explained how it came about that the states of the Peloponnese were ruled by different Dorian groups in historical times.

the Macedonian kings: Polybius mentions the following. Demetrius I Poliorcetes ('besieger of cities'), a major player among the successors of Alexander the Great, held the throne of Macedon from 294 to 287. Cassander was the son of Antipater, whom Alexander had left in control of Macedon while he invaded Persia. From 317 Cassander controlled Macedon until his death in 297. Antigonus II Gonatas ruled Macedon from about 277 until his death in 240/39.

109 *recording their confederacy*: the reasoning seems to be that these four cities founded the new League and so did not have to establish their membership of it with an inscribed record.

110 *the Acrocorinth*: meaning 'the top of Corinth', the Acrocorinth was the acropolis of ancient Corinth, but was so high that it functioned as a fortified citadel more than an integral part of the city (as, for instance, at Athens).

the imposition of tribute by Rome: as a result of their defeat in the First Punic War, 264–241.

112 *They had earlier been recipients of his generosity*: Ptolemy III Euergetes ruled Egypt 246–221. In 251 Aratus had visited Euergetes' father, Ptolemy II Philadelphus, and had come away with a gift of 150 talents and the promise of an annual grant from Egypt of 6 talents,

113 *their benefactor*: Philip II had extended Megalopolis' territory in 338.

Nicophanes and Cercidas of Megalopolis: we know nothing more about Nicophanes, but Cercidas was involved in winning Macedonian support for the Achaean League against the Spartan king Cleomenes, and took part in the battle of Sellasia in 222. He was also a poet. A small amount of his work survives and seems to justify the description of him found in a papyrus text as a Cynic—although the usual Cynic intolerance of existing

political and social institutions does not seem to have put him off a political career.

116 *who was general at the time*: there is a problem with the chronology, as the Achaean general (i.e. chief official) in 225/4 was Timoxenus, not Aratus. Possibly Polybius was using the term 'general' here as military commander rather than as head of the League.

118 *Phylarchus*: Phylarchus was a third-century historian from either Naucratis or Athens. His *Histories* (in 28 books) covered the period from the death of Pyrrhus in 272 to the death of Cleomenes in 220/19. Most of what we know of his work comes from Polybius' extensive, but extremely hostile, analysis in these chapters. The hostility probably stems originally from Phylarchus' anti-Achaean bias, a stance never likely to endear him to Polybius, but also from what Polybius regards as the careless, tragic, and unrelievedly sensational character of his writing.

130 *their ancestral constitution*: Cleomenes had introduced radical social and constitutional reforms at Sparta, all or most of which Antigonus now abolished. But some years later the Spartans still had no king (4.22.4)—in the traditional constitution there had always been two kings—and it seems at this time that merely by expelling a tyrant you could be said to be 'restoring the ancestral constitution'.

Antiochus III: Ptolemy III Euergetes of Egypt and Antigonus II Doson of Macedonia died in 221, Seleucus III of Syria in 223.

131 *as I have already mentioned*: at 2.41.2.

BOOK THREE

132 *I also explained . . . before this date*: at 1.3.1–6.

I shall show: Book 3 covers the Hannibalic War up to the Roman disaster at the battle of Cannae in 216. The war of Philip V against the Aetolians (the Social War, 220–216) is covered in Books 4 and 5 (with Philip's plan for an alliance with Carthage at 5.101–2). The Fourth Syrian War between Antiochus III and Ptolemy IV (219–217) is narrated in 5.34–87, and the war between Bithynia and Byzantium (220) at 4.38–52.

133 *The narrative will be interrupted at that point by an account of the Roman constitution*: Polybius' analysis of the Roman constitution in Book 6 interrupts the story of the Second Punic War. It is not clear why Syracusan affairs were treated in a digression, as the situation in Syracuse was an integral part of the struggle between Rome and Carthage. In a fragment from Book 15, Polybius is highly critical of the attempt by Philip V of Macedon and Antiochus III of Syria to carve up Egypt when the young Ptolemy V succeeded to the throne in 204. After Hannibal's defeat in 202 (recounted at the beginning of Book 15) the main focus of Polybius' attention shifts to the eastern Mediterranean. Philip V's ambitions and actions in the Aegean eventually led to war with Rome, the Second Macedonian

War (200–197). The Roman defeat of Antiochus III (192–188) sent shock waves throughout the Mediterranean world. The campaign of Cn. Manlius Vulso against the Galatians (189) was part of Rome's ordering of western Asia Minor. Two other wars in Asia Minor also win a place in Polybius' narrative, those of Prusias II of Bithynia against Eumenes II of Pergamum (186–183), and of Pharnaces of Pontus against his Anatolian neighbours (*c.*183–179), before Polybius rounds off his initial plan for the work with Rome's victory over Perseus, king of Macedon, and abolishment of the Macedonian monarchy (171–167).

135 *a fresh start*: it is not altogether clear which years Polybius thought of as the 'disturbed and troubled period', but it is tempting to regard the fresh start to which he refers as the beginning of Book 35, Book 34 having been a digression entirely devoted to a discussion of geography. The troubled period would then be about 151–145/4.

This troubled period: it is curious that Polybius does not attempt to summarize events between the defeat of Macedon in 168 and the beginning of the troubled period. Rome's second war against the Celtiberian tribes of eastern Spain took place between 153 and 151. Carthage declared war against King Masinissa of Numidia (modern Tunisia) in 151/0. The war in Asia Minor between Attalus II of Pergamum and Prusias II of Bithynia lasted from 156 to 154. Ariarathes V was expelled from his central Anatolian kingdom of Cappadocia in 158 and was restored in 156. Demetrius II of Syria was held as hostage in Rome for sixteen years, but escaped in 162 (with the help of Polybius) and ruled Syria until he was defeated and killed in 150 by a pretender to the throne, Alexander Balas. The Achaean politicians, Polybius among them, who had been deported to Italy after the defeat of Macedon in 168, were finally allowed to return to Greece in 150. The Third Punic War (149–146), the war against the Macedonian pretender, Andriscus (149/8), the withdrawal of Sparta from the Achaean League (149/8), and subsequent Achaean War (146/5) round off the story of Rome's conquests.

136 *in contravention of the treaty*: by the treaty of 226 the Carthaginians had agreed not to cross the river Ebro in arms (see 2.13.7).

the return of Xenophon's Greeks: Polybius is referring to the famous march of the 10,000 in 401/0, when Xenophon took charge of the Greek mercenaries employed victoriously against the Persian king Artaxerxes and led them from the heart of Persia to the Black Sea coast—an achievement that he himself immortalized in his work, the *Anabasis* ('the march up country'). Polybius adds as the second 'cause' of Alexander's invasion of Persia the campaigns of the Spartan king Agesilaus in Persia's most western provinces, from which he was recalled by troubles in Greece in 394.

139 *in the preceding books*: Polybius is referring to what he said at the end of Book 1 (1.88), but he said nothing further about it in Book 2. Presumably, in using the plural 'books', he is thinking of Books 1 and 2 together as a unit.

142 *he was not to cross the Ebro*: the Ebro lay 160 kilometres north of Saguntum, but later Roman historical tradition, seeking to increase Carthaginian responsibility for the war, placed the river south of the city. Polybius' geography is usually sound, but in chapter 30 of this book he clearly associates Hannibal's capture of Saguntum with a breach of the Ebro clause. The simplest explanation is that Roman obfuscation of the issue confused Polybius into accepting the incorrect location of Saguntum; and it is probably reflected in this chapter too.

143 *which was forbidden by the treaty*: Demetrius of Pharos had taken Queen Teuta's place as the main player in Illyria. She had made the treaty with Rome to which Polybius refers (see 2.12).

146 *I shall give a thorough account of this episode . . . appropriate date*: the account of Demetrius' attack on Messene (probably in 214 BC) does not survive.

Chaereas and Sosylus: nothing is known of Chaereas, but Sosylus of Sparta accompanied Hannibal. He wrote a work (now lost) in seven books about Hannibal's campaigns.

147 *repudiated by the Roman people*: at the end of the First Punic War the terms set for the Carthaginians by Lutatius Catulus were rejected by the people in Rome, who then sent a ten-man commission to investigate. The final terms agreed were slightly harder on the Carthaginians.

148 *because of the fertility of the soil*: 'Emporia' means 'markets' in Greek.

149 *had to leave within five days*: this condition is not specified in the text of the treaty as reported in the previous chapter. Some editors have been inclined to insert it there at the end of the first clause; or it could be that Polybius is making an assumption based on the terms of the second treaty, where it does appear (chapter 24).

Carthage, Tyre and Utica: the Phoenician city of Tyre on the Syrian coast was the main founder of both Carthage and its satellite Utica. The traditional foundation dates (Utica, 1101 BC, Carthage, 814/13 BC) do not receive confirmation in the archaeological record.

150 *against Pyrrhus*: alternatively the Greek could be translated to mean that the treaty is with Pyrrhus, not against him.

the Jupiter stone: both the text and meaning of 'the Jupiter stone' are uncertain.

151 *Philinus' history*: Polybius discusses Philinus' accuracy in Book 1 (1.14), but nowhere mentions this treaty.

Messana and Rhegium: for Polybius' coverage of the events leading to the First Punic War, see 1.7–12.

152 *in the previous book*: not actually in the previous book, but in 1.83.

154 *a prize essay without educational value*: this is a conscious echo of what the great fifth-century historian Thucydides said about his own work (1.22): he intended it to be 'a possession for ever rather than a prize essay written for present gratification'.

155 *The Carthaginian suffete*: Polybius actually uses the word 'king' for the chief magistrate of the Carthaginians, but we know that the name of the official (two were elected annually) was (in Latin) 'suffete'.

159 *I shall discuss in detail later*: Polybius is looking ahead to Book 34; unfortunately it is not preserved.

160 *which I described in the previous book*: at 2.22–35.

167 *as I described earlier*: 2.21–2.

168 *along the river*: it is fairly clear that Polybius is thinking of the Rhône.

171 *the setting of the Pleiades was imminent*: the Pleiades set in early November, but the first snows on the mountain tops would seem to place the time in late September or early October.

173 *as I said earlier*: 3.49.

174 *its own separate place*: in spite of claiming that he is saving up his geographical comments for Book 34, Polybius in fact says much about geography as he proceeds through his narrative. The forced comparison he makes two sentences later between readers impatient for every little geographical detail and gourmands at a dinner-party may come from Plato, *Republic* 2.354b—or both may reflect a proverb.

175 *the perfect opportunity to investigate and study these matters*: Polybius is probably thinking of the period after 146 when, with the Achaean League now destroyed by Rome, leading Greek politicians had no political affairs to conduct.

183 *and mustered at Ariminum*: the promise to find their own way to Ariminum was made at 3.61.

186 *ten*: Polybius obviously means that each unit should end up with ten men, i.e. the leader should choose nine in addition to himself.

190 *a truly Punic trick*: Carthaginian perfidy was proverbial among Roman authors of the second century BC and later, and almost certainly originates in the readiness with which Hannibal employed military tricks, as opposed to what the Romans liked to think of as their own, 'honest' approach to warfare.

196 *Friends*: in Hellenistic monarchies, 'Friends' was the general term for courtiers. Here Polybius extends it to include Hannibal's chief military advisers.

an indisputable defeat: probably the last military disaster that Rome had experienced was the defeat in Africa of M. Atilius Regulus in 255 during the First Punic War (Polybius' account is at 1.31–6).

197 *a single general with full powers*: i.e. a dictator. The dictator was a fully constitutional official in the Roman system, appointed in emergencies, originally for no longer than six months. Julius Caesar's appointment as 'perpetual dictator' in 44 was completely hostile to the status of a dictatorship as an emergency office.

197 *Maximus*: Q. Fabius Maximus Verrucosus was consul in 233, 228, 215, 214, and 209, censor in 230, and had been dictator already in 221. His tactics of avoiding pitched battle gained him the nickname *Cunctator* ('the delayer'). Although he was the main architect of Rome's victory over Hannibal, the title 'Maximus' goes back to his ancestor, Q. Fabius Maximus Rullianus, consul in 322.

198 *But I will analyse these matters in more detail elsewhere*: unfortunately, Polybius' account of the dictatorship does not survive. His statement that all other officers of state, except the tribunes, withdrew, is not correct: they remained in place, but subordinate to the dictator. Marcus Minucius Rufus, one of the consuls of 221, was appointed Master of the Horse, second-in-command to the dictator.

200 *The myth*: the Phlegraean ('burning') plain where the battle between the gods and the giants took place was originally in the Chalcidice in the north of Greece, but the term also came to apply to other places, such as, like here, Campania. The defeated giants were buried in various volcanic locations.

201 *the river Athyrnus*: the Athyrnus is better known as the Volturnus.

203 *as Homer put it*: *Odyssey* 10.232 and 258, in which both Eurylochus and Odysseus are said to hold back, 'sensing a trap' (as there was in their case, set by Circe).

205 *and sent him off to his brother*: the original plan for the consuls of 218, set out at 3.40, was to send P. Cornelius Scipio to Spain and Tiberius Sempronius Longus to Africa. Scipio had set out for Spain, but Hannibal's speed of advance had caught him by surprise and he could only follow Hannibal to Italy.

210 *unprecedented in Roman history*: the details of the constitutional position are unclear. Certainly, having two dictators would seem to undermine the whole point of the office, but there is a tradition in the sources that there was a move to make the power of the dictator and of the Master of the Horse equal. The dictatorship disappears shortly after this for over a century (reappearing in the first century), and perhaps this reflects constitutional tinkering with the office at this time.

213 *in his handling of the Illyrian War*: Lucius Aemilius Paullus had been consul in 219, when he was sent to Illyria.

As I explained earlier: see 1.16 for Polybius' previous statement on numbers.

221 *Among the dead were Atilius and Servilius*: Marcus Atilius Regulus had become suffect (i.e. 'additional') consul in 217 when Flaminius was killed. Polybius was wrong: Atilius was not killed at the battle of Cannae, and was appointed censor in 214.

222 *the general they had sent to Gaul*: L. Postumius Albinus (mentioned by Polybius at 3.106).

BOOK FOUR

225 *the boy-king Philip V*: Philip was 17 when he succeeded to the throne in 221.

226 *their committee*: ephor was the title of the chief officials among a number of Dorian Greek states, most famously at Sparta. The committee at Messene is presumably the board of ephors.

227 *the Cleomenean War*: this was covered in 2.45–70.

228 *general assembly of the Aetolians*: this met twice a year, but it could be called for special sessions. Polybius also refers here to the *apokletoi*, who were a small select committee of the Council and dealt with much of the League's business. The chief officer of the League, as in the Achaean League, was called the general.

230 *these qualities of his*: Aratus captured Sicyon in 251 (2.43), Mantinea in 227 (2.53); he expelled the Aetolians from Pellene in 241 (as recorded by Plutarch in his *Life of Aratus* 31); and he captured the citadel of Corinth in 241 (2.43).

233 *particularly effective*: it is not known what aspect of Aetolian and Achaean weaponry and tactics Polybius is referring to.

237 *their treaty with Rome*: for the terms of the treaty that Queen Teuta had made with Rome, see 2.12.

238 *polemarchs*: meaning 'war leader', this was the title of a state official who appears in various Greek cities, but with differing functions. At Cynaethae, apart from being in charge of the city gates, we do not know what else they did.

'among all their crimes was a single act of perfect justice': at 15.26a Polybius calls this a proverb.

239 *hauling his ships across*: the *diolkos* (literally = 'dragging across') was a trackway across the isthmus of Corinth, built perhaps in the time of the famous Corinthian tyrant, Periander (*c*.627–587), enabling ships to be dragged by pulleys and rollers between the Saronic Gulf and the Corinthian.

240 *Ephorus*: Ephorus of Cyme (*c*.405–330) in Asia Minor wrote an influential work of *Histories* in thirty books which does not survive. Polybius cites him as the first person to write universal history (5.33).

Philoxenus and Timotheus: Philoxenus of Cythera (*c*.435–380) was an innovative poet who lived at the court of Dionysius I of Syracuse and was sent to the quarries for impertinence. Timotheus of Miletus (*c*.440–360) was another great poetic innovator. Large parts of his work the *Persians*, which tells the story of the battle of Salamis from a Persian point of view, are preserved on papyrus. Euripides is said to have composed the prologue. Both Philoxenus and Timotheus wrote dithyrambic poetry, choral poetry in honour of Dionysus: the Guilds of Dionysus were the powerful guilds formed by actors and musicians in different parts of the Greek world.

241 *climatic conditions*: the theory that makes a man's character the product of his natural environment seems to develop in the fifth century BC, and is first communicated to us in detail in the work *Airs, Waters, Places*, one of the many works attributed to the medical superstar, Hippocrates of Cos (469–399). Whether Polybius got it direct from there or through later exponents of the theory is not clear.

the appalling massacre: it is not known what happened in the 'appalling massacre', or when it occurred.

244 *at the beginning of his reign*: in 335 Thebes took advantage of a rumour that Alexander had been killed on campaign in Illyria to revolt. Alexander marched south with astonishing speed, took the city, and razed it to the ground, leaving only the temples and the house of the famous lyric poet Pindar.

245 *depopulating it again*: these events are covered in chapters 6, 16, 18, and 19 of this book. Cleomenes' capture of Megalopolis in 223 is narrated in 2.55; 2.61–3.

control of the sanctuary: the oracular shrine of Apollo at Delphi was traditionally administered by an ancient council of panhellenic representatives, the Amphictiony. In the third century the Aetolian League had sufficient representatives to take control of the Amphictiony's voting.

246 *had voted against war*: described in chapter 15.

the Peace of Antalcidas: for the Peace of Antalcidas, see note to p. 6. The examples that Polybius takes from Spartan history to parallel Aetolian behaviour do not advance his case. The term 'harmost' refers to a Spartan military governor.

247 *the start of my work*: again Polybius refers back to 1.3.

249 *the policy he advocated*: Polybius misunderstands the lines of Pindar, taking them as support for the Thebans' pro-Persian position during Xerxes' invasion in 480/79. Pindar was in fact referring to internal political peace and stability. Polybius' mistake suggests either that he had not read Pindar properly, or, more probably, that he had taken the quotation from an anthology.

their implacable enemies: in the eighth and seventh centuries, Sparta expanded its territory by conquering its neighbour, Messenia, and enslaving its population as helots, in what are usually referred to as the First and Second Messenian Wars.

250 *according to Callisthenes*: Callisthenes of Olynthus (*c.*370–327), nephew of Aristotle, is primarily known as a historian of Alexander the Great. His *Deeds of Alexander*, which does not survive, was influential on the whole Alexander tradition. He also wrote a now lost *Hellenica* in ten books covering the period 386–356. He fell out with Alexander, was falsely implicated in a conspiracy against the king, and executed.

251 *King Aristocrates*: Aristocrates, a shadowy figure historically, was traditionally renowned as one of the great heroes of Messenian resistance to Sparta. Pausanias, the second-century AD writer, records this story, however, of how Aristomenes was bribed to withdraw the Arcadians from the battle, thus bringing about the defeat of the Messenians.

253 *the other house*: the Spartan kings came from two royal families, the Eurypontids (the junior house) and the Agiads (the senior).

by themselves: they were murdered in 219/18 by Chilon, who thought himself, rather than Lycurgus, the legitimate king: the story is in chapter 81 of this book.

254 *the rising of the Pleiades*: about 22 May.

256 *lake Maeotis*: this was the ancient name for the Sea of Azov.

merchants' yarns: Polybius seems anxious to establish that there was no flow *into* the Black Sea, and it may be that the yarns to which he refers were precisely of this reverse flow. If so, the merchants were in fact right: while at the surface the current takes water out of the Black Sea, there is a deeper flow in the other direction.

257 *in Heraclitus' phrase*: Heraclitus of Ephesus, who lived around 500 BC, was a pre-Socratic philosopher. He wrote a work of studied obscurity, the interpretation of which has been debated since the fifth century.

replaced by the incoming river water: Polybius is wrong—the Sea of Azov is not a freshwater lake.

259 *Darius I is supposed to have bridged the strait*: preparatory to his expedition against Athens and Eretria in 490, the Persian king Darius invaded the territories on the European side of the Bosporus. Herodotus (4.85–8) names Mandrocles of Samos as the person who bridged the Bosporus for Darius.

Io: Io, priestess of Hera, was seduced by Zeus, but was changed into a heifer when Hera found out. Her all-seeing guard, Argus, was killed by Hermes, but Hera sent a gadfly to torment Io, who wandered the world until Zeus restored her. The Greek name Bous means 'heifer', and accounts for the association with Io.

260 *Alcibiades*: the Athenian general Alcibiades seized Chrysopolis in 410 during the Peloponnesian War, after he won a great naval victory over the Spartans at the battle of Cyzicus.

261 *the punishment of Tantalus*: Tantalus offended the gods when allowed to dine with them. His offence varies in different versions of the story, but killing and serving up his son, Pelops, as food, is the most common. As Homer describes in *Odyssey* 11.582–93, Tantalus was condemned to stand in water with fruits dangling above his head, but when he wanted to drink and eat, the water would drain away, and the wind would blow the fruits out of reach.

263 *Soteria*: a festival instituted in cities all over the Hellenistic world in thanks for deliverance from danger. The occasion and the details of Prusias' festival are unknown.

265 *Hieromnemon*: title of a religious official found in many Greek cities and with differing duties.

267 *downfall of Sinope*: Mithradates II ruled the small kingdom of Pontus (*c.*250–220). We know nothing more about his attack on Sinope, nor indeed if it took place at all: Polybius says only that the inhabitants were expecting an attack. He presumably continued the story in a now lost part of a subsequent book.

300 talents of hair: the hair and sinews were for use in torsion catapults, and since the quantities were so enormous for selling on to others for use in torsion catapults.

268 *towards Phasis*: i.e. due east along the north coast of Turkey towards modern Georgia.

275 *as I explained in the previous book*: 3.19.

276 *the battle of Sellasia*: Cleomenes' defeat at the hands of Antigonus Doson in 222 is described by Polybius at 2.65–9.

277 *often mentioned in stories*: this is presumably a reference to Heracles' capture of the Erymanthean boar, one of the 'labours' set by Eurystheus.

280 *so that they never knew fear or warfare*: Elis presided over the Olympian Games, and according to tradition had been declared inviolable.

281 *now*: this statement can hardly make sense after the defeat of the Achaean League in 146. It is, therefore, reasonably sound evidence that Book 4 was composed before that time.

282 *I shall find a more suitable occasion*: Polybius picks up this promise at 7.11–14, where Philip's treacherous attack on Messene in 215/14 is seen as the crucial moment of change in his career.

283 *Arcas*: Arcas, son of Zeus and Callisto, was the hero who gave his name to Arcadia. Triphylus is not recorded as one of his sons in the older stories, and was presumably invented when Triphylia (meaning 'three tribes') became part of the Arcadian League in the fourth century.

286 *the justice of what happened is undeniable*: Polybius is referring to the story that he recounted in chapter 35 of how the ephors took a bribe to declare Lycurgus king, when he was not the legitimate successor.

the legislation of Lycurgus: not the king just referred to, but the famous, semi-mythical founder of the Spartan state.

BOOK FIVE

291 *the rising of the Pleiades*: towards the end of May, 218 BC.

Apelles' intrigues against him over the election: Apelles had contrived to get his candidate, Eperatus, elected general of the Achaean League against

Timoxenus, the choice of Aratus—as recounted at the end of Book 4 (4.82).

292 *'delighted in war as they would in a feast'*: the quotation does not appear in the surviving works of Hesiod. The suggestion that Polybius repeats it from his source seems likely.

Neocretans: Cretan mercenaries were usually archers, and the term Neocretans may refer to Cretans armed differently.

293 *the fall of Phigalia*: Aetolian marauders had set themselves up in Phigalia in order to raid Messenia (4.79). Now that they had been expelled, Messene was free to help Philip and the Achaean League.

298 *the foster-brother of Philip*: 'foster-brother' (*syntrophos*) was a title applied to young men brought up at court in the company of the heir to the throne. Philip later had Samus executed (attested by a surviving fragment of Book 23 (23.10)).

'Whither now has sped the divine bolt? Can you see?': the line of Samus plays on 'divine' and 'Dium', both words spelt the same in Greek. The Aetolian destruction of Dium and Dodona were covered in 4.62 and 4.67.

his magnanimity: after his victory at Chaeronea, Philip treated the Athenians with leniency, but probably for strategic reasons, not wanting to push them to desperate resistance. For the purposes of his argument Polybius exaggerates Athenian goodwill: they remained, at best, lukewarm towards Philip.

300 *in its proper place*: the advice offered by Aratus and Demetrius to Philip at Messene is preserved at 7.11–14.

302 *twenty talents as surety*: the details of the affair are far from clear. Megaleas and Crinon seem to have been fined twenty talents, presumably for defying the king. Leontius put up the money to secure bail for Leontius. Their offence hardly warranted death, and in the end Philip was simply using the situation to rid himself of disloyal courtiers.

303 *the massacre*: Polybius makes no mention of this massacre elsewhere.

as I said earlier: at 5.4.

306 *as I have said before*: at 3.36–8.

308 *the battle between Antigonus Doson and Cleomenes*: the battle of Sellasia in 222, narrated at 2.65–9.

313 *As I promised at the outset*: the plan was explained at 3.2.

314 *everything that happened all over the known world*: Polybius first explained the importance of writing universal history at 1.4. He emphasizes the greater clarity that universal history brings at 4.28.

'beginning is half the whole': the proverb is recorded by Plato (*Laws* 6.753e) and others. That Polybius meant what he says is well demonstrated by the care with which he establishes his starting point in the first five chapters of Book 1.

315 *chronological records*: it is not at all clear what sort of records Polybius has in mind here. The context requires that they were some sort of official account of events, but, like the *Acta Diurna* ('the Daily Record') in Rome, they may have functioned almost like a newspaper and contained information on legal matters and private affairs as well as official events and ceremonies.

317 *Berenice*: the wife of Ptolemy III Euergetes and mother of Ptolemy IV and Magas. She is best known for her role in the story in which she dedicated a lock of her hair for the safe return of her husband from war with Syria. When the lock disappeared, the mathematician and astronomer Conon of Samos declared that it had become a constellation. Callimachus made the story famous in his poem the *Lock of Berenice*, later adapted by the Roman poet Catullus (poem 66) and by Alexander Pope in *The Rape of the Lock*.

318 *sambuca-girls*: the sambuca seems to have been a triangular, four-stringed instrument, perhaps of eastern origin.

319 *high-minded men*: spoken by the Trojan hero Hector in Homer, *Iliad* 22.304–5.

320 *as mentioned earlier*: at 4.48.

322 *Darius I*: Darius, assisted by six other noblemen, had seized the throne of Persia in a bloody conspiracy against the usurper, Gaumata, the Magus. The Mithradatic claim to descent from Darius, or from one of the seven, although doubted in the past, may well be true.

324 *where sweet flag is harvested*: presumably for medicinal purposes.

329 *the Companions*: these were originally the personal retinue of the Macedonian king, functioning both as political advisers and cavalry. By the time of Philip II their numbers had grown to 800. Whether they were still Macedonians in the time of Antiochus III is not known.

331 *secretary-general of the army*: this officer seems to have been in charge of army administration.

the same fate as his brother: Apollophanes was referring to the death of Antiochus III's brother, Seleucus III, who was assassinated by the Gaul, Apaturius, and Nicanor: see 4.48.

333 *Seleucia Pieria*: Seleucia was founded in about 300 by Seleucus I at the mouth of the river Orontes, which linked it to Antioch. Strategically and economically important, it had fallen under Ptolemaic control during the Third Syrian War (246–241), but was recovered by Antiochus III in 219.

334 *the narrows*: Polybius is referring to the Bekaa valley, the relatively narrow strip between the Lebanon and the Antilebanon mountain ranges.

335 *about 6,000*: it is notoriously difficult to calculate the population of ancient cities, but 6,000 seems a small total for an important centre like Seleucia. If the figure recorded only adult male citizens, the overall population would be something like 30,000.

As I have already mentioned: see 5.40.

336 *Ptolemaïs*: modern Acre in northern Israel.

340 *all of Syria belonged to Seleucus*: in the power struggles that followed the death of Alexander the Great, Antigonus I Monophthalmus ('the one-eyed') carved out a centre of power for himself in Syria, until his ambitions were brought to an end when he was defeated and killed at the battle of Ipsus in 301 by a coalition of Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus. In the agreement after Ipsus, Seleucus was awarded Syria.

Achaeus: Achaeus, his maternal uncle, was a worry to Antiochus and an obvious potential ally for Ptolemy. The implication of this passage is that, although Antiochus may not have known it for sure, Ptolemy had already allied himself to Achaeus.

341 *the Lycus river*: now the Nahr el-Kelb, just north of Beirut.

342 *the nearby parts of Arabia*: 'Arabia' included everywhere from the Syrian desert south to Arabia proper and eastern Egypt.

343 *Nicias . . . Menneas*: Polybius clearly assumes we know who Nicias and Menneas are, but they are in fact otherwise unknown to us.

Rabbatamana: modern Amman, the capital of Jordan.

the Selgians: Selge was a city in Pisidia, in southern Turkey, said by the geographer, Strabo (12.7), to have been founded by Spartans (see below, chapter 76). There is no reason to think there was any Spartan connection.

345 *Antiochus Hierax*: Hierax ('the hawk') (*c.*263–227) was the second son of Antiochus II of Syria. He fought successfully with his brother, Seleucus II, for control of Asia Minor, but was defeated by Attalus I of Pergamum. He fled to Thrace, where he was murdered in 227.

347 *Attalus*: the addition of the cities mentioned in this chapter to the kingdom of Pergamum attests the growing power of its king, Attalus I (ruled 241–197).

348 *a lunar eclipse*: the eclipse occurred on 1 September 218.

349 *the king's nephew*: probably not Antiochus III's nephew, but a first cousin.

Raphia: modern Rafah, in the Gaza strip about 32 kilometres from Gaza itself.

352 *Indian elephants*: the Ptolemies got their elephants from the Horn of Africa (Greek papyri tell us something of the hunting expeditions sent to capture them). These, like those of the Carthaginians (see note to p. 38), were forest elephants, much smaller than the elephants from the plains of east Africa so well known to the modern world; smaller, too, than the Indian elephants used by the Seleucids.

353 *sixteen of his elephants were killed, and most of the rest were captured*: this statement does not make sense. Ptolemy won the battle and could not have lost all his elephants. In addition, a decree of the priests of Memphis in Egypt honouring Ptolemy IV states that he captured all the elephants.

Attempts to adjust the text of Polybius are not convincing: he simply made a mistake, attributing the loss of elephants to the wrong side.

354 *the city that bore his name*: i.e. he had returned to the Syrian capital, Antioch-on-the-Orontes.

the Colossus: Seleucus II of Syria was one of the benefactors of Rhodes after the earthquake, and as he died in 225, the earthquake must have happened earlier. Why the account is inserted here, out of chronological order, is not known, and it is not easy to think of a reason. Polybius' main interest in the earthquake is the generous response of the international community. The Colossus of Rhodes was a huge bronze statue of the sun god Helios (32 metres high). In 305/4 Rhodes had successfully resisted a year-long siege by Demetrius Poliorcetes, and Chares of Lindos was commissioned to build this celebration of their victory to the honour of their patron god. It was paid for from the sale of equipment left behind by Demetrius. The statue may have stood on a hill outside the city, or near the harbour, but not, as is often imagined, over the entrance to the harbour. Although Ptolemy III offered money for its repair, the Rhodians decided not to restore it.

355 *Hieron and Gelon*: Hieron was the ruler of Syracuse who guided the affairs of his city with great skill and success through the troubled years of the First Punic War all the way into the Hannibalic War. He died in 216. His son Gelon, who was joint ruler, died just before him. Their lavish gifts advertise (as intended) the wealth and power of Syracuse.

three-cubit catapults: catapults that could fire a bolt three cubits long (i.e. about 1.3 metres).

artabas: an artaba was a dry unit of capacity, probably in Polybius' time just under 39 litres. As it was a unit of capacity, not weight, its weight would vary, but an artaba of wheat probably weighed about 20–30 kilograms. Ptolemy's gift to Rhodes was, therefore, a huge amount.

hair: as in 4.56, the hair was for use in torsion catapults.

Prusias and Mithradates II: Prusias I of Bithynia (*c.*230–182) and Mithradates II of Pontus (*c.*250–220) ruled principalities on Turkey's north coast. Lysanias and Limnaeus are not otherwise known, but Olympichus is recorded in inscriptions as an associate of Philip V of Macedon and ruler of Alinda in Caria, in south-west Turkey.

356 *as I said earlier*: in chapter 30 above.

357 *and had lost everything*: the events were reported at 2.55.

358 *Homarium*: the sanctuary of the Achaean League was that of Zeus Homarius at Aegium. What exactly the epithet 'Homarius' signifies is not certain, but it probably involves the Greek word meaning 'together'. Hestia was the goddess of the hearth.

their agreement: made at 4.29.

361 *making ladders*: the calculations for making ladders of the correct length are described at 9.19.

363 *world dominion*: clearly, Polybius has in mind particularly Philip II and his son Alexander the Great. Although Philip V came from a different family, by Polybius' time they tended to be seen as the same line.

366 *as Euripides says*: it is not known from which play this comes.

367 *Which they finally achieved not long afterwards*: it is not clear what Polybius is referring to. Although in 206 the south of Egypt revolted from Ptolemaic rule it was not recovered for twenty years. Polybius seems to have in mind something more specific.

369 *it will be recalled*: Attalus' recruitment of Galatian mercenaries is recorded in chapter 77 above. The Galatians were the descendants of the Gallic/Celtic tribes that had crossed to Asia Minor and settled there in the first quarter of the third century BC. See note to p. 7.

370 *to enter Asia*: Polybius condones, even praises, Prusias' annihilation of the Galatians and massacre of their women and children. Elsewhere too he displays a chilling ruthlessness. He criticizes Phylarchus for exaggerating and sensationalizing the woes of the Mantineans when they surrendered in 223 to Antigonus and the Achaeans: in fact all that happened was that their property was seized and they were all sold into slavery (2.58).

BOOK SIX

371 *more rapid or more extreme*: the change referred to is the Hannibalic War in general, and the battle of Cannae in particular. Presumably the following sentence, where the text breaks off, introduces an analysis of the effects on Rome of Cannae.

372 *kingship, aristocracy, and democracy*: Polybius takes to task theorists who recognize only three types of constitution, kingship, aristocracy, and democracy, but we do not know whom he has in mind. The most famous political theorists of the ancient world, most notably Plato and Aristotle, were well aware of the degenerate forms of the basic types (tyranny, oligarchy, and mob-rule), and of the concept of a 'mixed' constitution—of which the most celebrated example in the ancient world (before Rome) was Sparta, founded by their great, but historically shadowy, founder, Lycurgus.

373 *six kinds of constitution*: Polybius has, in fact, listed seven types of constitution: the three good forms, their three degenerate equivalents, and the mixed form. For the theory of the cycle of constitutions, see Introduction, p. xix.

monarchy: Polybius' use of the Greek word *monarchia* is confusing, as it describes both the primitive state of rule (i.e. primitive kingship), out of which genuine kingship develops, *and* the degenerate development of kingship, which we know as tyranny.

373 *philosophers such as Plato*: Polybius is presumably referring to such passages as Plato, *Republic* 5.499a; 8.544c; *Laws* 3.677a; 4.709a; Aristotle, *Politics* 3.15.1286b; 7.12.1316a; *Nicomachean Ethics* 8.1160b. It is, however, clear that he was not a great admirer of philosophical discourse, and his acquaintance with such works may well have been indirect, acquired through the now lost works of contemporary philosophers.

374 *flood, famine, and crop-failure*: Plato, *Laws* 3.677a talks of the many destructive events in human history, floods, disease, and others, that depleted mankind, but it became a common theme.

378 *There will be an opportunity later to develop this idea*: Polybius is talking about later in this book, not about subsequent books. Unfortunately, his account of the manner in which the Roman constitution developed does not survive (it must have come between chapters 10 and 11).

379 *its conservatism*: Polybius is thinking of the monarchy, which needed the support of the elders.

now that I have given an account of its formation: this is missing from the text, but the account of earlier Roman history ended in 449, implying that the mixed constitution was in place at that date.

383 *a consul has to undergo an audit*: there was no obvious and systematic audit process, but tribunes could and did prosecute former consuls for financial mismanagement.

384 *it is hardly an exaggeration*: it is, on the contrary, a considerable exaggeration. Polybius is here talking about private individuals engaged in these contracts, who would be very largely from the equestrian class, part of the wealthy Roman elite.

385 *Everything remains in its assigned place*: we do not know how Polybius finished his assessment of the Roman political system, but there must have been some transitional passage to take us into the detailed description of the Roman army, with which the text resumes.

The junior tribunes divide into four groups: there were six military tribunes in each legion, the twenty-four of the basic levy (i.e. the four 'City Legions') being appointed by the people in the Tribal Assembly (*Comitia Tributa*), and the tribunes of any further legions that were needed all appointed by the consuls.

389 *'lizarders'*: the lizarder was a spike on the butt end of the spear (so called because you could kill lizards with it?): it could be used to stick the spear in the ground when you were not using it, or as a weapon if the main point of the spear broke.

394 *between the two armies*: in spite of saying in chapter 26 that the Romans adopt one camp plan at all times in all places, Polybius seems to envisage a different arrangement of market, treasury, and command centre when the two consuls camp separately. There have been many attempts to explain what exactly he means, which is anything but clear. One solution has been to argue that, although he seems to have been setting out the arrangements

for a single consular army (i.e. two legions), this is in fact, for the sake of convenience, a description of just half the normal, four-legionary, camp. And it is only when, unusually, a single consul makes camp with his two legions that they need to move the location of the market, treasury, and command centre, for greater security.

395 *hastati and principes*: there were also, of course, ten companies of *triarii*, whose duties he comes to later in this chapter.

401 *As I have just explained*: in chapter 27.

404 *kingship*: by Polybius' time the Spartan kingship had been abolished. He must, therefore, be talking about Sparta's famous Lycurgan constitution, of which the dual kingship was a vital part.

avarice and greed are so deeply entrenched in Crete: there is no obvious reason why Polybius disliked the Cretans so much, but his hostility is consistent: see 4.53 (hostile comments too in the later fragmentary books—7.11, 8.16, 24.3, 28.14, 33.16).

405 *philosophical circles*: Polybius dismisses Plato's *Republic*, on the perfectly reasonable grounds that it was not a real constitution, but an intellectual construct.

407 *the Peace of Antalcidas*: see note to p. 6.

iron currency and bartering: Plutarch (*Life of Lycurgus* 9) reports that Lycurgus had banned all gold and silver money from Sparta. Although this did not stop them using other people's money, it was not until the third century that a Spartan king, Areus, issued a silver coinage.

408 *the Carthaginian system had become worse than that of Rome*: this chapter makes clear Polybius' belief that even mixed constitutions decline. In the case of Carthage and Rome they decline in the direction of extreme democracy (mob-rule). Carthage was further along in this process than Rome, and thus its policies, devised by the masses rather than, as at Rome, by the aristocratic element in the state (the Senate), were inferior to Rome's.

409 *the staffs and axes*: the *fasces*, made up of a bundle of rods and an axe-head, and carried by lictors, were the symbol of authority for the elected officers of state. The consuls had twelve, dictators probably twenty-four, praetors six.

410 *he deliberately sacrificed his life*: this is the earliest extant version of the Horatius story. In Livy (2.10), and most of the later versions (including Macaulay's famous poem on the subject), Horatius survives.

BOOK TWELVE

415 *1,000 or more pigs*: sows can be very productive. Irish veterinary sources indicate five litters every two years, with from eight to sixteen piglets per litter and a productive life of up to ten years, but this is nowhere near 1,000. Polybius must have misunderstood his source, which perhaps

indicated that in the lifetime of a sow, she and her daughters might produce 1,000 offspring.

416 *Dionysius II*: tyrant of Syracuse 367–357. While away in Italy he was ousted, but held on to the citadel of Syracuse. He recovered the city briefly in 346, but was again confined to the citadel, which he surrendered two years later to the Corinthian general Timoleon, one of the great figures of fourth-century Sicilian history. Dionysius was taken to Corinth, where he retired into private life.

Coroebus and Margites: proverbial fools. During the Trojan War, Coroebus of Phrygia came to the aid of Troy because he loved Cassandra. He was killed defending her. Margites was the hero of a seventh/sixth century BC comic poem of that name, traditionally attributed to Homer (a few fragments survive).

by stabbing a warhorse to death: Polybius is referring to the ritual of the October Horse, the horse sacrificed each year to Mars on the Ides of October, probably as part of the purification rites of the army after its return from campaign.

417 *under the Sicilian Sea*: the link between the fountain of Arethusa in Syracuse and the river Alpheus in the Peloponnese is alluded to by many ancient authors.

418 *all kinds of honours and privileges*: during the war against Hannibal Epizephyrian Locri (on the toe of Italy) had been under Carthaginian control after the battle of Cannae until it was recaptured in 208. The treaty specifying her duties was probably made at the time she returned to Roman rule. The Iberian and Dalmatian campaigns to which Polybius refers date to the mid-150s. His visits to Locri at this time indicate the considerable freedom of movement he enjoyed while apparently under detention in Rome: see Introduction, pp. xii–xiii. Aristotle's account of the foundation of Locri does not survive, and we rely for it, and for what both Timaeus and the Locrians themselves say, almost entirely on Polybius.

maidens sent to Troy: discussion of Locri is complicated by the fact that Locris was also the name of an area of central Greece, from which Epizephyrian Locri was founded in the seventh century. Tradition has it that at the fall of Troy when the (Greek) Locrian chieftain Ajax, son of Oileus (not the more famous Ajax, son of Telamon) raped Cassandra, the Delphic oracle declared that the Locrians must send two virgins every year to Ilium, where they were killed, or, in later times, served in the temple of Athena.

419 *we should trust Aristotle rather than Timaeus*: what follows concerns the disagreement between Aristotle and Timaeus on the servile origins of the Epizephyrian Locrians. Aristotle maintained that Italian Locri was founded by slaves from Greek Locris who had been living with citizen women while their husbands were away fighting against Messene. Timaeus put up arguments against this, which Polybius tries to refute.

420 *the Spartans*: there was a tradition that the south Italian town of Tarentum was founded by the offspring of Spartan citizen women and helots (slaves), to whom the women had to turn in the absence of their husbands on campaign in Messenia. The counter-version of this story was that, while the Spartans had sworn not to return home until they had captured Messene, some of the Spartan soldiers had not taken the oath, and were sent home in the tenth year to father children.

to share a wife: this is the only firm evidence of polyandry at Sparta, although both Xenophon and Plutarch report that Spartan men did lend their wife to other men to beget children.

As I have already said: Polybius' earlier statement to this effect is not in the surviving fragments of Book 12.

421 *the Cilician Gates*: the battle at the Cilician Gates refers to Alexander the Great's victory at the battle of Issus in 333 BC. Aristotle's father, Nicomachus, was a doctor in the Macedonian court: presumably it is this that gives rise to the jibe about Aristotle himself. Timaeus was well known for the abuse he directed against those with whom he disagreed.

422 *two Locrian peoples in Greece*: Western (Ozolian) Locris was situated on the north shore of the Corinthian Gulf, just west of Delphi. It was separated from Eastern Locris by Phocis. Eastern Locris, divided into Epicnemidian and Opuntian Locris, looked out over the sea to the island of Euboea.

Echechrates: we do not know who this Echechrates was, although attempts have been made to identify him with a Pythagorean philosopher of that name.

It is impossible to believe: Polybius is losing the run of himself here. The original point was simply that Timaeus had failed to specify whether it was the East Locrians or the West Locrians he had visited.

423 *elsewhere in this work*: at 1.14, for instance.

the Heraclid invasion: on the myth of the 'return of the Heraclidae' to the Peloponnese, see note to p. 108.

424 *Callisthenes' work*: Callisthenes was falsely implicated in a conspiracy against Alexander, and executed. Strabo and other later sources attribute to Callisthenes the story that when Alexander was lost in the western desert of Egypt, on his way to consult the oracle at Siwah, he was shown the way by two crows.

Democharesâ . . . Botrys and Philaenis: Democharesâ, nephew of the Athenian orator Demosthenes, was himself an Athenian orator and politician active at the end of the fourth century and in the first three decades of the third. We know very little about Botrys of Messana or Philaenis of Samos other than that they wrote explicitly sexual works (that of Philaenis, if she did write it—and there were doubts about her authorship—was entitled *On Sexual Positions*).

425 *Demetrius of Phalerum*: philosopher and politician, who governed Athens for ten years until ejected by Demetrius Poliorcetes in 307.

426 *Agathocles*: Agathocles was tyrant of Syracuse from 316, and took the title of king in 305.

a law of Zaleucus: the seventh-century figure Zaleucus of Locri was famous as one of the earliest lawgivers in Greek history, although the traditions about the laws he made are late and unreliable. In the story that follows, the Cosmopolis was presumably the chief officer of state in Locri, and the Thousand was the main political assembly.

427 *Alexander the Great and Darius III in Cilicia*: the battle of Issus in 333 BC. The Cilician Gates to which Polybius refers do not describe the famous pass in southern Turkey (modern Gülek Bogazi), some 45 kilometres north of Tarsus, leading across the southern Taurus range from the Cilician plain northwards into Cappadocia (through which Alexander had already marched on his way south), but the narrow passage (modern Merkes Su) between the sea and the Amanus mountains leading through the Syrian Gates south to Antioch. The Amanid Gates led due west from the Cilician plain into Syria.

428 *it is an easy calculation*: Polybius' whole critique of Callisthenes is trivial, careless, and marred by poor reasoning and incorrect calculations.

430 *as Homer says*: *Iliad* 13.131–3.

they were drawn up eight deep: on Polybius' own calculations, the length of the line must, in fact, have been five and a half stades, not eleven.

431 *one line in his life*: Polybius' metaphor is not clear. It might be taken from running ('he only completed one race') or from a board-game called Five Lines ('he only completed one line').

433 *But this is an incredible statement*: since it was quite normal to divide the world up into Europe, Asia, and Africa (Libya), we cannot easily imagine why Polybius took exception.

434 *Straton, the natural scientist*: Straton of Lampsacus was head of the Peripatetic school of philosophy at Athens, which had been founded by Aristotle. He wrote on a wide range of subjects, including physics and cosmology (hence the name, *physikos*, 'natural scientist'). He died in 269 BC.

Herophilus and Callimachus: Herophilus of Chalcedon (*c*.330–260 BC) was one of the great medics of the Hellenistic age. He was famous for conducting dissections of human bodies, as a result of which he was able to make many remarkable observations (on the structure of the eye, for instance, of the liver, the intestines, the reproductive organs). He identified the nervous system and was regarded as authoritative on the pulse. Instead of referring to Herophilus' great contemporary, Erasistratus of Ceos, Polybius names Callimachus, another distinguished member of Herophilus' school.

436 *at Leuctra or Mantinea*: on Leuctra, see note to p. 6. In the 360s the Theban general, Epaminondas, after his great victory over the Spartans at Leuctra, invaded the Peloponnese on three occasions, finally breaking the power of Sparta. At Mantinea in 362 Epaminondas faced a coalition of Greek states. His victory established Thebes as the single most powerful Greek state at the time, but his death in the battle deprived Thebes of the one person capable of exploiting the situation.

the Spartans: in 381 BC, after ten years of war with Persia, Evagoras, king of Salamis on Cyprus, was defeated at the battle of Citium. At the battle of Cnidus in 394 a Persian fleet under the command of the Athenian admiral, Conon, defeated the Spartans.

438 *after the elder Gelon*: Gelon (died 478/7) was tyrant of Gela first and then of Syracuse. His great victory over the Carthaginians at the battle of Himera in 480, which gave him control of virtually the whole of Sicily, was said to have taken place on the same day as the Greek victory over the Persians at the battle of Salamis. Hermocrates was best known for his role in the successful defence of Syracuse against the Athenians during the Peloponnesian War. He died in 407. Polybius' statement at the end of chapter 25k, that Hermocrates took part in the battle of Aegospotami in 405, is a mistake.

439 *founding the Olympic Games*: although the first Olympic Games were dated to 776 BC, there was a tradition that they were founded earlier by Heracles. A truce was declared before each Olympic festival, forbidding armies to enter Elis, thus protecting access to the games.

when he says: *Iliad* 5.890–1.

440 *the wisest of Homer's heroes says*: Nestor in *Iliad* 9.63–4.

Euripides too agreed with Homer: from Euripides' play *Cresphontes*, of which only fragments survive.

hands inside their clothing: a mark of respect to the king.

441 *Thersites . . . Penelope*: Thersites was, according to Homer (*Iliad* 2.212 ff.), the ugliest man at Troy. For his attempted demagoguery he was given a beating by Odysseus. The normal school exercise was to write an attack on him, not a eulogy. Conversely, the norm was to praise Penelope, Odysseus' faithful wife, although attacks on her do survive.

443 *as Heraclitus says*: Heraclitus of Ephesus was one of the famous pre-Socratic philosophers. Reading is counted as a function of the ears.

Ephorus . . . Theopompus: for Ephorus, see note to p. 240. Theopompus of Chios was another major figure of fourth-century history writing, famous particularly for his history of Philip II of Macedon in fifty-eight books.

and says: *Odyssey* 1.1–3; 8.183.

444 *kings are philosophers*: Plato, *Republic* 5.473c–e.

TEXTUAL NOTES

I have translated the Teubner text of T. Büttner-Wobst (2nd edn., 1905), except at the following points:

1.2.7–8: The text of this and the previous sentence is highly lacunose, but the general sense is clear.

1.12.6: Reading ἀναδραμόντες τι (Waterfield).

1.45.9: Reading περὶ τοὺς ἀγωνιζομένους <τόπους> (Waterfield).

2.30.8: I have filled the gap in the text with a reasonable guess, without pretending to know exactly what the original Greek would have been.

2.35.6: The text is corrupt and probably lacunose; I have translated what I take to be the general sense.

2.56.10: Reading ἐκπλήττειν (Casaubon).

2.66.6: Retaining Κρῆτας (MSS). See Walbank ad loc.

2.70.2: Reading παρ' ὀλίγον (Wunderer).

2.71.2: Büttner-Wobst's ὑφ' ὑμῶν is a misprint for ὑφ' ἡμῶν.[1]

3.2.8: Retaining Αἴγυπτον (MSS); see Walbank's note on 15.20.

3.5.7: Retaining δὲ τὰ (MSS) instead of Büttner-Wobst's δ' ἔτι.

3.5.8: Reading διὰ τὸ κἄλλους πολλοὺς (Orsini).

3.21.9: Reading τὸ κατὰ μέρος instead of τοῦτο τὸ μέρος (Waterfield).

3.22.7: Omitting ἐν πέντε δ' ἡμέραις ἀποτρεχέτω (MSS).

3.24.11: The lacuna probably contained more, now irrecoverably lost.

3.39.7: There is no need to posit a lacuna: see Walbank's introductory note on 3.39. On the other hand, on balance I think that the sentence omitted from the next section probably was not written by Polybius.

3.53.1: Reading <ἂν> ἀπολέσθαι (Foulon).

3.64.5: Omitting μόνον (Bekker).

[1] Other minor misprints or irregularities that could have an effect on meaning, or at least make thing difficult for the unwary: 2.16.1: ἐπιμένούσης; 2.17.10: there should be no punctuation after γεωργίαν; 2.26.5: space needed between λείας and ἐγκρατεῖς; 2.62.4: no punctuation after σωμάτων (though I suspect this is just a random mark, as at 2.27.4, 2.33.6, 2.38.9, 3.6.7, 4.67.8, 5.70.1, 5.78.4); 3.1.8: ἐμφασιν; 4.45.9: πόλεμο; 5.2.9: comma not question mark after Χαλκίδα; 5.23.10: full stop missing from end of paragraph; 5.57.5: comma not question mark after πόλεις; 5.69.8: comma not question mark after προσβολάς; 5.101.10: colon needed after 'κείνῳ; 6.13.6: comma not full stop after ἐπαγγέλλουσαν; 6.16.1: close up δήμο υ; 6.31.12: colon needed after δεόντως; 6.40.6: colon needed after τεταγμένων; 6.40.10: colon needed after τόπους; 6.46.11: colon needed after ἔστιν; 6.56.2: colon needed after καθηκόντων; 12.26a.3: apostrophe needed after παρ;

3.65.11: I suspect a lacuna here. The transition to the next chapter is too abrupt for careful Polybius. Perhaps a sentence is missing, with an introduction to Scipio's wound, and the return of the cavalry units to their two camps.

3.71.6: Omitting τὸν ἀδελφὸν (Waterfield).

3.100.2: Reading Τίβυρνον (Nissen), but the truth is that we cannot be sure what name Polybius wrote.

4.9.8: Reading πείθεσθαι (Orsini).

4.14.8: Reading μεγάλως (Waterfield).

4.14.9: Omitting this entire sentence (Aymard). The sentence reads: 'These things took place during the previous Olympiad, and then what follows took place during the 140th Olympiad.' But there is no such break between chapters 14 and 15; if it belongs anywhere, it might be at the end of §4. The sentence could be a carelessly placed later insertion by Polybius himself.

4.34.5: I have filled the gap in the text with a plausible guess.

4.52.7: Reading πολιτικὰ (Wilhelm).

4.60.3: Retaining γόργον (MSS). There seems no point in substituting one unknown place name for another, and though Bursian's Στράτον at least mentions a place we know to have been close to Thelpousa, it is an unlikely emendation. Γόργος means 'grim', and could well have been the name of a stronghold in mountainous Arcadia.

4.61.2: Retaining τριακοσίους (MSS). Yes, there were 500 Cretans in §55, but they have been reduced without explanation to 300 by §67.

4.64.3: Büttner-Wobst's βουλεύσασθαι must surely be a misprint for βουλεύσεσθαι.

4.78.5: Polybius or his scribe seems to have written 'Hecatodorus' (left over in his memory from 4.47.4?), but he meant 'Hypatodorus'.

4.80.5: Some mention of the Aetolians is essential. Perhaps ἀναλαβὼν τοὺς Αἰτωλοὺς has dropped out before ἐξεχώρησε (Waterfield).

5.14.12: There is a short lacuna of two or three words in the text. I have filled it with a reasonable guess, without pretending to know exactly what the original Greek might have been. The Teubner text repeats the idea of failure.

5.15.6: Another lacuna. I tentatively read τότε τῆς κακουχίας (Walbank, A_r R).

5.21.10: I can see no reason for excluding the phrase square-bracketed in the Greek, nor can I find any commentary on this passage in Büttner-Wobst's confusing preface. Pédech retains the clause in his Budé edition.

5.24.5: Reading <μηδέν> ἐν ἀσφαλεῖ (Walbank).

5.50.6: A word has dropped out: εὐηκόως? Büttner-Wobst (vol. ii, p. xlviii, ad loc.) says that the lacuna is six letters long, however.

5.53.8: Omitting καὶ before Γαλάτας (Waterfield).

5.54.10: Reading Πελιγῶνας (Walbank; see his note ad loc.).

5.71.2: The text of this sentence is lacunose.

5.76.11: Reading καταισχύναντες [καὶ] (Waterfield).

5.77.4: Reading Μύρινα (Wilcken): Smyrna is mentioned a little later.

5.88.5: Reading <πρὸς τὴν τοῦ τείχους οἰκοδομὴν καὶ> after τάλαντα (Walbank). See Walbank's note ad loc.

5.89.3: The word χαλκοῦ has likely dropped out (Reiske).

5.94.1: Reading Πατρικῆς, with a capital Π (Vischer).

5.106.4: The first word of the Euripidean quotation, translated 'ever-toiling', is corrupt, and the original probably irrecoverable.

5.111.10: The words bracketed in the Greek, ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ βύβλῳ, probably conceal a more extensive corruption and lacuna, along the lines of τ' ἐν ταύταις ταῖς βύβλοις πραγματείας καὶ τῆς (De Sanctis; see Walbank's note ad loc.).

6.2.7: Reading τῆς τότε Ῥωμαίοις συμβάσης (Kampe).

6.6.7: Reading θεωρία (Schweighäuser).

6.10.7: Reading ἀντιπαθίας (Reiske; see Walbank's note ad loc.).

6.11.1: It is not certain how many of these words were written by Polybius himself, rather than the source of this fragment, and there is also a lacuna, with the text reading 'thirty- . . . years'. 'Two' is the best guess: see Walbank's note ad loc.

6.23.3: Reading ὁ δὲ μήνισκός ἐστι καὶ παλαιστιαῖος (Waterfield). This is a devilishly difficult and corrupt clause. It must, as everyone agrees, contain a reference to the depth of the shield, after its length and width. Büttner-Wobst's reading not only bears little resemblance to the received, garbled text (ὁ δὲ μίζους ἔτι [ἐστι HL] καὶ παλαιστιαῖος), but would give the shield a thickness of a palm, which is far too great.

6.28.4: Omitting πλὴν τῶν συμμάχων (Fabricius). It is not just that the allies are not the only exception to the rule, but also that the first example Polybius gives of such irregularity is the case of the *triarii,* in the very next chapter. The phrase even smells like an interpolation, interrupting the cool, logical sequence of Polybius' text.

6.52.7: Reading <ἀεὶ γὰρ> (Waterfield).

12.4.8: Reading πολυχοίαν (Waterfield). Mention of a large labour force runs exactly contrary to Polybius' point, since it does not take many people to blow one horn.

12.4.8: Reading καὶ μάλιστα τὴν Γαλατίαν [παρά τε τοῖς Τυρρηνικοῖς καὶ Γαλάταις] (Pédech).

12.4a.3: Retaining ὅταν καταψεύδηται (MSS); see Walbank's note ad loc.

12.4b.3: Retaining ἵππῳ (MSS); see Walbank's note ad loc.

12.6b.4: I can see no good reason for the addition of πάντας.

12.6b.10: Reading συνηθεστέρας (Bekker).

12.10.4: This last clause is lacunose, but the general sense remains clear.

12.11.5: There seems to be a considerable amount of text missing, and the gap makes the translation of the 'He tells us, first, that . . .' sentence uncertain. Almost as plausible as the version I have given is: 'He tells us, first, that shared citizenship rights and other mutual privileges <obtain> between the two groups of Locrians <and, second, that . . ., accusing>.

12.12.1: Reading ἐπιδέῃ (Pédech).

12.12a. 1: Reading Τίμαιος (Lucht) ἐξιστόρηκεν (M); see Walbank's note ad loc.

12.12b.1: A few such words are missing.

12.12b.2: Reading κόραξί τε (M).

12.13.2: Omitting ἀπὸ τοῦ σώματος εἰργασμένων (Castiglioni).

12.15.12: The simplest solution to this impossible sentence may be just to omit τῆς ἀπεχθείας αὐτοῦ χάριν, thinking of it as a typically compressed marginal gloss ('[he adopts this policy] so as to avoid attracting hostility') that has entered the text.

12.17.2: Retaining διαπορεύεσθαι (MSS).

12.20.8: Reading ἐξίσου πάσι τοῖς πεζοῖς (Pédech). Brilliant.

12.21.4: Filling the gap according to Schweighäuser's guesswork.

12.23.4: Reading ποιεῖν (Suda).

12.24.3: Most of the last four English words are missing in this lacunose sentence.

12.24.4: Perhaps it is easier to read two gaps in this sentence, rather than three, as Büttner-Wobst does: <ἀλλ'> ἀνάγκη τὴν ἀκόλουθον ποιεῖσθαι διάληψιν καὶ δυσαρεστεῖσθαι <καὶ τῷ Τιμαίῳ> κατὰ τὴν διάληψιν.

12.25.1: Polybius' own words from the beginning of this section are lost. I have more or less made these up.

12.25a.1: Omitting ἐκ τῶν παροιμιῶν (Wunderer).

12.25a.3: Retaining καὶ μᾶλλον (M); see Walbank ad loc.

12.25a.5: A lacuna is possible, but not necessary: see Walbank ad loc.

12.25d.3: A few words or letters survive from this lacuna, but not enough to make sense: '. . . in general . . . falsely attributed to the pursuit . . .'

12.25d.5: The MSS καὶ seems to make good sense. Nor is the hiatus too harsh, since, in spoken speech at least, καὶ elides into the next word if it starts with a vowel.

12.25d.6: There is surely a lacuna, so one cannot be sure, but while I like Büttner-Wobst's καλοῦντες, I can't see any reason for μόνον οὐ.

12.25e.4: This sentence is highly lacunose, and one cannot be entirely sure of the sense of it, but there is certainly no reason to add πραγματικὴν as well.

12.25e.5: Retaining ἐνίων (M), and therefore no lacuna.

12.25f.4: Omitting τῷ συγγραφεῖ (Walbank).

12.25h.1: Omitting the quotation marks and retaining ἐγένετο (M). See Walbank ad loc.

12.25i.5: Something like this must be the meaning, but the surviving Greek is too mutilated to have any meaning at all.

12.25i.5: Reading φαίνεται (Mai), instead of the conjectural ἅμα.

12.25k.7: Reading παρ<αλλα>γάς (Heyse).

12.26.5: This extract from Euripides' largely lost *Cresphontes* was slightly misremembered by Polybius (or Timaeus)—excusably so, since nothing vital is omitted or altered (and so I take it that the slips are original, rather than the copyist's), and determining the metre, and therefore the correct reading, of Euripidean lyric poetry is rarely easy. I have translated Polybius' version, but a better text, with a few extra lines as well, is given by J. Diggle, *Tragicorum Graecorum Fragmenta Selecta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 114. In line 5 of the excerpt (line 6 in Diggle), Büttner-Wobst fails to report that the transmitted text of Polybius contains ἂν, not σὰν (I say this on Diggle's authority). I have translated ἄν.

12.26b.5: Retaining τόποις (M).

12.27.5: Reading ἀποφάσεις (Büttner-Wobst).

12.28a.3: Reading Τυρίων (M).

GLOSSARY

acropolis the high point of some Greek cities, often the defensive point around which the early settlement grew. The best known example is Athens, where the acropolis was both citadel and state sanctuary.

aedile one of the annually elected officials of the Roman state. There were four of them in the time of Polybius. The office, held between the quaestorship and the praetorship, was not a required part of a senatorial career, but the duties of the aediles in seeing to the welfare, order, and entertainment of Rome offered good opportunities for ambitious young politicians to make a name for themselves.

agora main meeting place of a Greek city, usually centrally located, intended particularly for political functions. Originally an open space, but in time civic buildings began to be built on the perimeter.

***akation* (plural *akatia*)** literally a small *akatos*, a word which covers a range of small oared boats, merchant galleys, and even a ship's boat or dinghy.

***as* (plural *asses*)** Roman bronze coin, ten to the *denarius*. Polybius (6.39) seems to indicate that a cavalryman's wage in the Roman army was one denarius per day, a legionary's a third of that.

bireme a two-level oared warship or galley (*dikrotos* = double splasher in Greek). The word was used for ships that were smaller than triremes, as well as two-level quadriremes. It seems not to be used for ships larger than quadriremes, although some of the larger units (*see* quinquereme, sixer, sevener) were certainly two-level warships.

censor senior Roman senatorial official, established in the fifth century BC. Two were elected for a period of eighteen months every four years, later every five years (but the intervals were irregular). The duties of the censors included maintaining the citizen lists (for which a census was needed), supervising the morals of the community (which might include removing members of the Senate), and leasing public lands and contracts.

centurion backbone of the Roman army, in command of a century (80 men). There were 60 centuries in each legion.

consul title of the chief military and civil official of the Roman Republic. The summit of a successful senatorial career. Two were elected each year; re-election was permitted, but there was supposed to be a ten-year interval. The minimum age was 42.

drachma, *see* talent

ephor title of the chief civil official at Sparta and in other Dorian states. Five were elected annually at Sparta. They functioned as a sort of popular balance to the power of the kings.

forum the main square of a Roman town with multiple use as a venue for commercial, judicial and political activities. Public buildings lined the square, which was itself often adorned with statues and other monuments. The Forum Romanum in Rome, with its temples and other state buildings (the senate house, for example) was the centre of the city's political, religious, and commercial life.

friend (of a Hellenistic king) general word for a courtier (who might or might not be a personal friend of the king), and also occurring in the system of court titles used by all the Hellenistic monarchies (e.g. 'the order of the friends', 'the order of the first friends', etc.).

guest-friend a form of ritualized friendship common among the Greek and Roman upper classes, involving reciprocal bonds of hospitality and care between individuals from different places.

hastati, principes, triarii each legion consisted of 30 maniples (two centuries per maniple) normally arranged in three ranks of ten maniples each: the *hastati* ('spearmen') in the front, then the *principes* ('leading men'), and lastly the *triarii* ('third-rankers').

hemiolius normally *hemiolia*, a light, fast, two-level oared warship or galley, originally utilized by pirates, but eventually added to the major fleets of the Hellenistic period. Its name, 'one-and-a-half', implies that two levels of oars were not present along its entire length, perhaps to allow room for sail handling. It was classed as aphract ('undecked' or 'open': see *lembos*).

hoplite Greek heavy infantryman, deployed in ranks.

hypaspist member of an elite unit of the Macedonian army introduced by Philip II. Hypaspists continued to serve in Hellenistic armies, but probably with differing functions.

legate term denoting either the commander of a Roman legion, or a Roman senator serving on the staff of an army commander or provincial governor, or an official ambassador of the Roman senate.

legion largest unit of the Roman army, made up of 30 maniples containing about 4,500 to 5,000 men.

lembos, -oi small, fast and manoeuvrable oared warship or galley that normally lacked a full deck to cover and protect the rowers. *Lemboi* were built in various sizes with oars at one or two levels and were used for a wide range of duties.

lictor an attendant of Roman magistrates who carried their symbols of power (the rods and axe) and cleared the way for them. A consul had twelve lictors, a praetor six, a dictator twenty-four.

medimnus a measure of grain, about 51.5 litres.

measure of liquid, about 8.5 liquid gallons.

mna, *see* talent

obol, *see* talent

outdwellers (*perioikoi*) found elsewhere, but best known in Sparta where they were communities of free, but second-class citizens. They served in the Spartan army, and enjoyed local autonomy, but had no role in devising Spartan foreign policy.

peltasts originally Thracian troops armed with a small round shield (*pelte*), but subsequently used of other light infantry. Confusingly, by the time of Philip V they seem to have become elite, heavily armed troops.

phalanx, phalangite the close-order formation of Greek hoplites in battle line, deploying in eight ranks at the beginning (more later). Reformed by Philip II and Alexander the Great it became more man- oeuvrable and more closely integrated with the other units of the Macedonian army.

praetor Roman official second to the consuls, in whose absence from Rome they were the chief magistrate. Initially their primary function seems to have been the administration of justice, but in time they came to command armies and govern provinces. In Polybius' day there were six of them.

principes, see *hastati*.

proconsul by decree of the Senate a consul whose year of office had come to an end could be extended in his command 'in place of a consul' (the same applied to praetors). As the Roman empire grew, this mechanism became a regular part of the system.

proxenos instead of sending permanent ambassadors abroad, Greek states often appointed their own representative in a foreign state with the title of *proxenos*, in the same way that modern governments sometimes appoint honorary consuls. The position attracted honours and privileges.

quadrireme oared warship or galley with four files of oarsmen per side pulling double-manned oars placed at two levels. With a crew size roughly equal to or slightly less than that of a trireme, quadriremes were still considered upgrades in size, primarily because they were heavier and carried a larger ram. The smallest of the heavier, decked galleys, this warship was popular with the Romans and Rhodians for its speed, manoeuvrability and moderate cost.

quaestor title of the most junior of the elected Roman magistrates. Their duties were primarily financial, although as assistants to provincial governors they also could have a judicial and military role. By the first century BC election to the quaestorship gave automatic entry to the Senate.

quinquereme decked galley with five files of oarsmen per side pulling single-, double-, or triple-manned oars set at one, two, or three different levels (depending on the period and navy). Heavier than quadriremes and triremes, quinqueremes carried larger rams and delivered more powerful ramming blows. The wider decks were also useful for catapults and large numbers of deck soldiers.

rostra the speaker's platform at Rome in the Comitium (the political space to the north of the Forum), originally decorated with the prows (Latin *rostra*) of ships captured at the battle of Antium in 338 BC.

satrap/satrapy satrap was originally the title of the governor of a province (satrapy) of the Persian empire that the Seleucid kings (and occasionally others) continued to use.

senate although technically an advisory body, in Polybius' time the Senate was the most powerful political assembly of the Roman state, particularly influential in finance, foreign policy, and religion. There were 300 senators at this time, mostly, but not exclusively, land-owning aristocrats, who had held one of the elected magistracies of the state (quaestor, praetor, consul).

sevener decked galley with seven files of oarsmen per side pulling multi-manned oars set at multiple levels (but no more than three). Seveners (*heptereis* in Greek) were classed among the heavier units in Hellenistic fleets; they were heavier and beamier than quinqueremes and sixers, carried larger rams, and delivered more powerful ramming blows.

sixer decked galley with six files of oarsmen per side pulling multi-manned oars set at multiple levels (but no more than three). Sixers (*hexereis* in Greek) were heavier and beamier than quadriremes and quinqueremes and were favoured by the Romans as flagships for their larger fleets.

stade unit of length containing 600 feet, but the length of a foot was not standard, and so precision about the stade depends on the context. Allowing five and a half stades to the kilometre gives an approximate idea of what Polybius intended.

stater Greek coin minted in silver (sometimes in gold). The value varied, but the silver was usually four drachmas (occasionally two), the gold twenty (in Athens).

stele a stone slab with decoration or inscription, used as tombstones or for the publication of state decrees and laws.

stoa an open-colonnaded building.

talent the largest unit of Greek currency (worth, say, about £500,000): 36,000 obols = 6,000 drachmas = 60 mnas = 1 talent. Greek money was not on the whole fiduciary, but worth its weight: the primary meaning of 'talent' is a weight—close to 26 kgs (somewhat over 57 lbs).

triarii, see *hastati.*

tribune, military staff officers in the Roman army. There were six in each legion.

tribune of the people officer of the Roman plebs created in the early fifth century BC. Ten became the standard number. Although not technically magistrates they functioned in much the same way. Their job was to protect the plebeians. Their most famous power was the veto, with which they could stop the political machinery of the state.

trireme oared warship or galley with three files of oarsmen per side, each man pulling a single oar set at three different levels. Fast and manoeuvrable, triremes (*triereis* in Greek) were the most popular and long-lived of all ancient warship designs, although their precise specifications varied from city to city, and from period to period. Triremes were built in both decked and undecked versions. The classical Athenian trireme (about which we know the most) was crewed by 200 men, including 170 oarsmen.

tyrant the word appeared first in the seventh century BC in the neutral sense of a sole ruler who was a usurper rather than a hereditary king. Although early tyrants did not invariably behave 'tyrannically', Plato's and Aristotle's criticism of tyranny as the worst form of government established a general hostility towards it. The tyrants of Polybius' day were military dictators.

velites light-armed skirmishers.

INDEX OF PROPER NAMES

To save space, place names are assumed to include the names of their inhabitants, so the entry 'Carthage' also lists references to 'the Carthaginians', 'Elis' also covers incidental mentions of 'the Eleans', and so on. But I have not included identificatory names: an Alexander is identified as 'son of Acmetus', but Acmetus does not warrant an entry; nor does Aetolia when it is used merely to identify e.g. Theodotus 'of Aetolia'.

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