

The Ancient History Bulletin

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Edited by:

Monica D'Agostini ✦ Edward Anson ✦ Catalina Balmaceda
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Timaeus, Aristotle, and Polybius' degrees of truth*

Giustina Monti

Abstract: Polybius uses the criticism of historians to prove his statements and his historical interpretation. It is, above all, his apodeictic method that requires it: by placing under investigation others' mistakes, at the same time he has the opportunity to highlight what a historian must not do and enucleate the canons of the right historiographical method. This article will focus on Polybius' historiography in relation to truth and the criticism of the historian Timaeus. It will also show that Polybius' notion of truth appears to be multifaceted and it becomes a whole and unbroken essence only when a proper historian deals with it after taking all the required steps corresponding to the phases of historical science.

Keywords: Aristotle; autopsy; Lokroi Epizephyrioi; Polybius; Timaeus; truth

I

Polybius explains his methodology not through methodological chapters or in the preamble of his work, but through the criticism of his predecessors,¹ especially Timaeus, to whom he apparently devoted an entire book, the twelfth, to criticize him. This article will focus on a selection of passages from the aforementioned book where Polybius finds fault with Timaeus and highlights his errors. Through a close look at the language used by Polybius, the article aims at offering an explanation of Polybius' notion of truth.

But why is Polybius so preoccupied with Timaeus? Various explanations have been offered for why Polybius' main target was Timaeus. Walbank maintains that Polybius harboured a profound antipathy towards Timaeus, both because he saw him as a fearsome competitor and because he felt a strong resentment following the importance that Timaeus had devoted to Magna Graecia.² Paul Pédech reflects on 12.26d, where Polybius explains how Timaeus gained his fame through detailed accounts on colonisations, foundations, and kinships, and states that Polybius mocks Timaeus' pretensions to ἀληθινολογία, his constant desire to proclaim the truth and to denounce the false, and his passion to persuade by demonstration (μετ'ἀποδείξεως).³ Kenneth Sacks believes that Polybius, while writing book

* I follow the Teubner edition of Polybius by T. Büttner-Wobst, and all translations are mine. I would like to thank the *British Academy* and the *Leverhulme Trust* for their generous support through a *BA/Leverhulme Small Research Grant*. I am thankful for the helpful feedback from the anonymous referees which improved this article. I also thank the editors, and, especially and immensely, John Marincola and Tim Rood for reading earlier drafts of this article. All remaining errors and infelicities are, of course, my own.

¹ See, for example, 1.14.1-8 (criticism of Fabius and Philinus); 2.56-63 (criticism of Phylarchus); 3.32.8-10 (criticism of histories κατὰ μέρος); 3.47.6-3.48.12 (criticism of the so-called Hannibal's historians); 7.7.1-8 (against historians who wrote about the death of Hieronymus); 15.34.1-2 and 15.36.1-11 (against works κατὰ μέρος on Agathocles); 16.14.1-8 and 16.17.9-18.3 (criticism of Zeno and Antisthenes).

² Walbank 1962: 5-12.

³ Pédech 1964: 50.

12, had the clear intention of describing the historian's task and that the criticism of Timaeus was not as important as the description of his own methodology.⁴

While underlining that Polybius has a didactic intention so that, whenever he spots mistakes, he intends to give a lesson in historical method, Vercruysse claims that there is a hidden reason, which is present between the lines but which Polybius himself does not mention: whoever discovers the mistakes of others shows that he knows his job well, but Polybius does not openly declare it because that is exactly what he himself reproaches Timaeus for acquiring, that is, a reputation at the expense of the authors whom he censured.⁵ Thus, Vercruysse adds, Polybius, with the intention of giving the impression that he is indeed worthy of faith, does not offer assurance that he tells the truth, but he does it in a less direct way:⁶ thinking that he is in a sort of "agonal situation",⁷ Polybius tries to *convince* his readers⁸ as if they were the jury in a court, also adopting the rhetorical figures that lawyers use in their speeches, such as metaphors, similes, antitheses. Marincola explains why Polybius adopts a hostile tone when dealing with Timaeus: the latter had lied deliberately; moreover, since Timaeus himself had been "a prodigious and wide-ranging polemicist", he deserved the same treatment.⁹

It seems then clear that Polybius uses the criticism of historians to *prove* his statements and his historical interpretation. It is, above all, his apodeictic method that requires it:¹⁰ by placing under investigation others' mistakes, he has the opportunity at the same time to highlight what a historian must not do and enucleate the canons of the *right* historiographical method.

II

An excellent example of Polybius' use of rhetorical figures to convince his readers is constituted by a passage from the criticism of Timaeus (12.25h.1-3):

[1] Ὅτι Τίμαιος φησιν ἐν τῇ τριακοστῇ καὶ τετάρτῃ βύβλῳ ἑνὶ πεντήκοντα συνεχῶς ἔτη διατρίψας Ἀθήνησι ξενιτεύων καὶ πάσης ὁμολογουμένως ἄπειρος [ἐγένετο] πολεμικῆς χρείας, ἔτι δὲ καὶ τῆς τῶν τόπων θέας'. [2] λοιπὸν ὅταν εἷς τι τῶν μερῶν τούτων ἐμπέσῃ κατὰ τὴν ἱστορίαν, πολλὰ μὲν ἀγνοεῖ καὶ ψεύδεται· κἂν ποτε δὲ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐπιψαύσῃ, παραπλήσιός ἐστι τοῖς ζωγράφοις τοῖς ἀπὸ τῶν (ἀνασσο)αγμένων θυλάκων ποιούμενοις τὰς ὑπογραφάς [3] καὶ γὰρ ἐπ' ἐκείνων ἢ μὲν ἐκτὸς ἐνίοτε γραμμὴ σῶζεται, τὸ δὲ τῆς ἐμφάσεως καὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας τῶν ἀληθινῶν ζῶων ἄπεστιν, ὅπερ ἴδιον

⁴ Sacks 1981: 66-78.

⁵ Vercruysse 1990: 29.

⁶ Vercruysse 1990: 31.

⁷ Vercruysse 1990: 31: "dans une situation agonale".

⁸ See Pédech 1964: 355 ("L'historien doit faire partager sa conviction au lecteur de la même manière qu'elle s'est formée en lui") and Vercruysse 1990: 31 ("A notre avis l'intention générale est de convaincre les lecteurs").

⁹ Marincola 1997: 231-232.

¹⁰ On this particular style and method, see Pédech 1964: 43-53; Petzold 1969: 3-20; and Musti 2010: 203-210.

ὑπάρχει τῆς ζωγραφικῆς τέχνης. τὸ δ'αὐτὸ συμβαίνει καὶ περὶ Τίμαιον καὶ καθόλου τοὺς ἀπὸ ταύτης τῆς βυβλιακῆς ἕξεως ὀρμωμένους.

[1] Timaeus says in his Book 34 “having lived abroad and spent fifty years at Athens without interruption” he was “admittedly inexperienced both in every kind of military operation and besides in the observation of the places”.

[2] It remains that whenever, in the course of his history, he falls into one of these parts, he is ignorant of many things and he tells many lies; and if he ever does touch on the truth, he is similar to those painters who draw sketches taking stuffed dummies¹¹ as models. [3] indeed, in those cases sometimes the outward outline might even be preserved, but what belongs to the expressiveness and energy of the real living creatures is missing, that very one which is characteristic of the art of painting. The same thing happens to Timaeus and, in general, to those historians who base themselves on the same bookish habit.

Historians who use only written sources for their historiographical research work are treated as third-class painters. The persuasive technique of Polybius is expressed with a captivating simile, since he knows well that the figures of speech remain etched in the mind of the public.

The concept Polybius seems to underline is that if historians fail to follow not only truth but also the correct research procedure when writing history, they will inevitably be led to ignorance and falsehood (πολλὰ μὲν ἀγνοεῖ καὶ ψεύδεται), as he has already underlined in the case of authors of historical works κατὰ μέρος¹² who, not having enough subject matter, are driven to tell falsehoods¹³ or “to render small things great and to sprinkle them with many accounts not worthy of memory”.¹⁴ This reference might appear even more suggestive if one reflects upon two terms used by Polybius later in the passage, ἐνεργείας connected to ζῶν.¹⁵ Indeed, Polybius had already used such terms in his proemial passage regarding histories κατὰ μέρος: according to Polybius, authors of histories κατὰ μέρος, just like people looking at the dismembered limbs of a body, will never have an adequate view of the energy

¹¹ This is how Montanari translates it in GE. A more literal translation would be “loaded up bags”.

¹² At 1.4.7-10, Polybius draws a clear-cut demarcation line between two different ways of writing history: histories dealing with only one topic, one war or one character, which he defines as histories κατὰ μέρος, ‘by single topic’, and his own ‘universal’ history, a kind of history that none of his contemporaries has ever written. The best approach to writing history is universal history since Polybius suggests that if one writes κατὰ μέρος, he will have only a partial knowledge of the events. On this passage, see Monti 2022: 315-320, and 331-332. The term used by Polybius to describe his own history is τὰ καθόλου, which is commonly translated as ‘universal’, but which carries a series of different meanings ranging from “history offering an overall view of the events” to “complete and intact history”, from “history in which no part is missing” to “history shareable by all”. On the meaning of the term and the likelihood that this is a Polybian neologism, see Monti 2024b (forthcoming).

¹³ 3.47.6: καὶ γὰρ ψευδολογεῖν καὶ μαχόμενα γράφειν αὐτοῖς ἀναγκάζονται.

¹⁴ 7.7.6: ἀναγκάζεσθαι τὰ μικρὰ μεγάλα ποιεῖν καὶ περὶ τῶν μηδὲ μνήμης ἀξίων πολλοὺς τινὰς διατίθεσθαι λόγους.

¹⁵ Walbank 1967: 396 clarifies that ζῶν might also refer to human being and that its use might “denote any figure in a work of art, not only an animal and not necessarily even a living creature” which suggests that Polybius is using it with the general meaning of “the living subject of a painting”.

of historical events (= body).¹⁶ Finally, a further connection of this passage with the proemial one might be considered the idea of drawing/painting: just as it is not best conduct to be a painter who does not look at living creatures but at stuffed dummies (that, of course, also lack ἐνεργεία), so, as Polybius declares at the beginning of his work, it is not the right procedure to try to get an idea of the entire inhabited world looking at cities drawn on maps separately.¹⁷ Thus, in both passages a sort of negative idea emerges of the action of looking at something which is not real and living but at an artificially sketched work, just like cities on a map (1.4.6) or stuffed dummies (12.25h.2-3).

The importance of this passage is also underlined by the usage of the word ζωγράφος. Polybius uses it only thrice in his work as we have it now, thus it might have some sort of significance when used (given its rare employment): the word occurs twice in an earlier passage (12.25e) and once in 12.25h, where the adjective ζωγραφικός, used only here in Polybius,¹⁸ also appears. In 12.25e.7, Polybius had already compared the bookish historian to painters, though in a slightly different situation:

τό γε μὴν ἀπ'αὐτῆς ταύτης (τῆς) δυνάμεως ὀρμηθέντα πεπεισθαι γράφειν τὰς ἐπιγινόμενας πράξεις καλῶς, ὃ πέπεισται Τίμαιος, τελῶς εὐθηθεὶς καὶ παραπλήσιον ὡς ἂν εἴ τις τὰ τῶν ἀρχαίων ζωγράφων ἔργα θεασάμενος ἰκανὸς οἴοιτο ζωγράφος εἶναι καὶ προστάτης τῆς τέχνης.

However, being convinced that those who take their cue from this ability in research are able to describe well subsequent events, as Timaeus believed, is completely silly and similar to the following case, as if someone, having contemplated the works of painters of the past, believed himself to be a skilled painter and a master of the art.

In this case, the bad painters in question look exclusively at their predecessors to train themselves and have the presumption of knowing the art of painting, just as Timaeus looking only at his predecessors' work presumes to know how to write history. So, the similes at stake are different although the protagonists are the same (Timaeus and painters). Nevertheless, the triggering factor is the same, namely the fact that Timaeus' knowledge and research are based exclusively on the reading of books.

But there seems to be even more, since this passage, just like 12.25h, might once again evoke the proemial passage. In Polybius, the juxtaposition of the verb θεάομαι and the adjective ἰκανός occurs in 12.25e.7, and the only parallel appears in the proemial passage 1.4.7, where the expression occurs with the verb θεάομαι modified by the adverb ἰκανῶς (διερριμμένα τὰ μέρη θεώμενοι νομίζοιεν ἰκανῶς αὐτόπται). In both passages, Polybius criticises the way in which the protagonists of the action look at things. It is not the act of looking in itself to be wrong, but how such people look at the objects of their examination. Moreover, in both passages, such people have the firm belief that they are adequate for their job, but this is a false belief provoked by observing something in the wrong way.

¹⁶ 1.4.7-8: ὡς ἂν εἴ τις ἐμψύχου καὶ καλοῦ σώματος γεγονότος διερριμμένα τὰ μέρη θεώμενοι νομίζοιεν ἰκανῶς αὐτόπται γίνεσθαι τῆς ἐνεργείας αὐτοῦ τοῦ ζώου καὶ καλλονῆς. On this passage, see Monti 2022: 315-321.

¹⁷ 1.4.6: ὅπερ ἐκ μὲν τῶν κατὰ μέρος γραφόντων τὰς ἱστορίας οὐχ οἶόν τε συνιδεῖν, εἰ μὴ καὶ τὰς ἐπιφανεστάτας πόλεις τις κατὰ μίαν ἐκάστην ἐπελθὼν ἢ καὶ νῆ Δία γεγραμμένας χωρὶς ἀλλήλων θεασάμενος εὐθέως ὑπολαμβάνει κατανοηκέναι καὶ τὸ τῆς ὅλης οἰκουμένης σχῆμα καὶ τὴν σύμπασαν αὐτῆς θέσιν καὶ τάξιν.

¹⁸ Before Polybius the adjective is used once by Xenophon, *Symp.* 4.21.5, and once by Plato, *Tht.* 145a.

A corollary to this statement, given Polybius' obsession with the historian's ability and expertise,¹⁹ might be that one has to be an expert on the subject in order to be able to see in the *right* way and not to get the wrong impression. Otherwise, what is seen might be deceitful, as it is wrong. The idea of deceit has been already expressed by Polybius in his critique of Phylarchus (2.56.12) and might be connected to Plato.²⁰ This element reappears in Polybius' attack against Timaeus. Moreover, in the part where Plato reflects on poets' deception of their spectators, he uses a metaphor which involves painters and their being inadequate to represent the truth of reality: he underlines that poets are similar to painters who render their works inferior to truth (φαῦλα ποιεῖν πρὸς ἀλήθειαν) and cause people to have false beliefs and to be unable to distinguish the greater from the lesser.²¹ This inability to represent reality and truth is then peculiar to writers of histories κατὰ μέρος whom Polybius *charges* with making some events bigger and not offering an adequate representation of some other events.

Thus, one might gather that Plato's simile is a key element, a sort of hub connecting the two passages of book 12 (25e and 25h) to the proemial passage (1.4.6-7) and the critique against Phylarchus (2.56), and from this one might also draw the following considerations. If authors of histories κατὰ μέρος are inferior to Polybius and to authors of universal history because just like painters they give a distorted and falsified image of reality (like the poets accused by Plato and compared to painters), Timaeus, at least according to Polybius, is at an even lower level, because he tries to shape his historical work looking at what others have represented. Indeed, Timaeus is not similar to the painter who only gives a falsified image of the reality because the painter does not succeed in rendering a truthful image, despite the fact that he seeks to reproduce reality. On the contrary, Timaeus is more similar to those painters who look at paintings of their colleagues, which means that they have distorted images of already distorted images. Indeed, Timaeus is similar to the painter who tried to copy not the living beings, but the dummy which is already a not-so-perfect copy of the living being. Lastly, one can infer that Timaeus' knowledge is even more falsified by the fact that he was probably looking at works κατὰ μέρος of his colleagues.

Moreover, according to Plato, imitative works (in this case he refers to poetry and to its criticism)²² may cause severe damage (λώβη)²³ to some of the listeners because most of them do not have the antidote (φάρμακον) to *mimesis*, in the sense that they do not really know what *mimesis* is, and they confuse it with reality.²⁴ Indeed, only the person who is the 'most expert' (ἐμπειρότατον)²⁵ will be able to deal with this kind of source, whereas the one who

¹⁹ See, for example, 16.14.1-8; 16.17.9-11; 16.18.1-3; 38.4.1-8.

²⁰ On deception and lie connected with poetry in Plato, see Plebe 1960: 761-788. See also Zucchelli 1985: 305-306, who links the concept to Gorgias, and Marincola 2010: 457 with footnote 35, who stresses the importance of deception in Polybius' remarks and the fact that "It is the whole tradition of poetry as 'deceit', beginning with Gorgias (or indeed even Hesiod) and culminating in Plato, that seems to animate Polybius here".

²¹ Plato, *Rep.* 605a-c. On the interpretation of this passage, see Belfiore 1983: 40 and 44-46, where she shows that in Plato's mind poetry presents just *eidola aretes*, and Gastaldi 2013: 60-64.

²² For Plato, tragic poetry is a deformation of reality, that is of truth, and the poetic *mimemata* are three degrees away from truth: *Rep.* 596 c-598 b; on this, see Palumbo 2013: 64. According to Salkever 1986: 278, the poetic imitation is not adequate also because generally what is imitated is not actually real.

²³ I borrow the terminology used by Gastaldi 2013: 49.

²⁴ See Gastaldi 2013: 49-55.

²⁵ Plato, *Rep.* 601d.

just imitates things “does not have either knowledge or correct opinions about the beauty or flaws of the objects they imitate”.²⁶

Thus, Polybius' intention is to demonstrate (by means of a selective reworking of Platonic aesthetics) that it is not enough to draw on the works of the past: no matter how much they may be worthy of trust, they will never be able to give readers back the *true* truth of the facts, because each work is characterized by style, tendencies, the cultural substratum of the author, all elements which act like a filter. Truth, therefore, is returned to readers not as it is, but filtered and, consequently, it loses its strength and its liveliness (τὸ δὲ τῆς ἐμφάσεως καὶ τῆς ἐνεργείας τῶν ἀληθινῶν ζώων).²⁷

III

Of course, even though a historian would go a step further and avail of autopsy – another important part of the historiographical research –, nevertheless, he should possess the right expertise in order to see things as they are (12.4c.1-4d.4):

[4c.1] ὁ δὲ Τίμαιος περὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος τῆς ἀλογίας οὐ μόνον ἀπειρίαν, ἔτι δὲ μᾶλλον ὀψιμαθίαν δοκεῖ μοι πολλὴν ἐπιφαίνειν, ὅς γε, διότι θύουσιν ἵππον, εὐθέως ὑπέλαβε τοῦτο ποιεῖν αὐτοὺς διὰ τὸ τὴν Τροίαν ἀφ' ἵππου δοκεῖν ἐάλωκέναί. [2] Πλὴν ὅτι γε κακῶς ἰστόρηκε καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Λιβύην καὶ τὰ περὶ τὴν Σαρδόνα, καὶ μάλιστα τὰ κατὰ τὴν Ἰταλίαν, ἐκ τούτων ἐστὶ συμφανές, [3] καὶ καθόλου διότι τὸ περὶ τὰς ἀνακρίσεις μέρος ἐπισέσυσται παρ' αὐτῷ τελέως ὅπερ ἐστὶ κυριώτατον τῆς ἱστορίας. [4] ἐπειδὴ γὰρ αἱ μὲν πράξεις ἅμα πολλαχῆ συντελοῦνται, παρεῖναι δὲ τὸν αὐτὸν ἐν πλείοσι τόποις κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν καιρὸν ἀδύνατον, ὁμοίως γε μὴν οὐδ' αὐτόπτην γενέσθαι πάντων τῶν κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην τόπων καὶ τῶν ἐν τοῖς τόποις ἰδιωμάτων τὸν ἕνα δυνατόν, [5] καταλείπεται πυνθάνεσθαι μὲν ὡς παρὰ πλείστων, πιστεύειν δὲ τοῖς ἀξίοις πίστεως, κριτὴν δ' εἶναι τῶν προσπιπτόντων μὴ κακόν.

[4d.1] Ἐν ᾧ γένηται μεγίστην ἐπίφασιν ἔλκων Τίμαιος πλεῖστον ἀπολείπεσθαί μοι δοκεῖ τῆς ἀληθείας. [2] τοσοῦτο γὰρ ἀπέχει τοῦ δι' ἐτέρων ἀκριβῶς τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐξετάζειν ὡς οὐδὲ τούτων ὧν αὐτόπτης γέγονε καὶ ἐφ' οὓς αὐτὸς ἤκει τόπους, οὐδὲ περὶ τούτων οὐδὲν ὑγιὲς ἡμῖν ἐξηγεῖται. [3] τοῦτο δ' ἔσται δῆλον, ἐὰν ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Σικελίαν δεῖξωμεν αὐτὸν ἀγνοοῦντα περὶ ὧν ἀποφαίνεται. [4] σχεδὸν γὰρ οὐ πολλῶν ἔτι προσδεήσει λόγων ὑπὲρ γε τῆς ψευδολογίας, ἐὰν ἐν οἷς ἔφω καὶ ἐτράφη τόποις, καὶ τούτων ἐν τοῖς ἐπιφανεστάτοις [ἐν τούτοις] ἀγνοῶν εὐρεθῆ καὶ παραπαίων τῆς ἀληθείας.

[4c.1] Regarding this matter, Timaeus seems to me to show not only inexperience derived from lack of thinking, but even more a great deal of slowness in learning, since, when they [the Romans] sacrifice a horse, he immediately supposed that they do this because they think that Troy has been captured by a horse. [2] Besides, he has badly carried out research on matters about Libya, and Sardinia, and especially Italy; [3] it is evident from these, and in general, because the part relative to enquiries has been completely swept

²⁶ Plato, *Rep.* 602a. See Gastaldi 2013: 60-61.

²⁷ 12.25h.3.

away by him, which is the most important part of historical research. [4] For since events occur at the same time in many places, and it is impossible that the very same person is present in many places at the same moment, and likewise that a single man is eyewitness of all the places in the inhabited world and the peculiarities in these places, [5] what remains is to inquire from as many people as possible, to trust those who are worthy of trust, and to be not a bad judge of the circumstances.

[4d.1] And in this aspect, Timaeus, while engaging in a great deal of showing off, seems to me to go excessively far away from the truth: [2] indeed, he is so far from scrupulously investigating the truth through others that not even of those events of which he has been an eyewitness and those places to which he goes, not even regarding such things does he tell us anything correct. [3] This will be clear, if in the topics regarding Sicily, we prove that he is ignorant about his claims: [4] indeed, probably there will be no longer need of many further words about his falsehood, if, in regard to the places where he was born and grew up and the most famous of these, he is found ignorant and away from the truth.

Polybius points out that the target of his criticism is actually a *bad* historian. Indeed, he writes *κακῶς ἱστορήκε*, which might be understood on two levels. The first, more superficial, level is that of literal translation, with which Polybius wants to signal that Timaeus has conducted bad historical research: in this case, the verb *ἱστορέω* is used in its characteristic meaning of ‘to inquire’. The second and more careful reading of this passage could lead to another, metaphorical, not explicit level: Polybius wants his readers to understand that Timaeus is a historian who does not know how to do his job well, he does not deserve this name. In this case the verb *ἱστορέω* indicates the historiographical work, the search for historical truth, and the adverb *κακῶς* highlights that Timaeus did not respect this criterion.

Using an image taken from football, one can say that Polybius goes studs up on Timaeus. Not only is Timaeus ignorant and incapable of thinking, but he also understands things with a certain delay. By means of the refined and rare word *ὀψιμαθία*,²⁸ probably inspired by Timaeus himself,²⁹ Polybius describes his colleague and brings into question his learning abilities.³⁰ Timaeus, as Polybius will declare later on,³¹ is lazy, and it is probably his laziness which drives him to slowness, if one follows Polybius’ line of reasoning. One might also infer that, in Polybius’ mind, Timaeus cannot solve the problem of his ignorance not only because he lacks the capability of reflecting on events, but also because he lacks learning speed and

²⁸ Only 15 occurrences in the TLG, of which 3 before Polybius: Hippocrates, *Praeceptiones* 13; Aristoxenus F 39 (Wehrli); Theophrastus, *Char.* 27.1. The verb *ὀψιμαθέω* does not occur in Polybius (in the TLG there are 23 occurrences) as well as the adverb *ὀψιμαθῶς* (only one occurrence, Galenus, *De differentia pulsuum libri iv*, 8.601 Kühn). Walbank 1967: 328, drawing on Theophrastus description of the *ὀψιμαθής* (*Char.* 27) as someone who “displays excessive zeal in inappropriate activities”, interprets the abstract noun *ὀψιμαθία* as “pedantic irrelevance”.

²⁹ The adjective *ὀψιμαθής* (which has a wider usage with 98 occurrences in the TLG, but only 8 before Polybius) occurs only once in Polybius (12.8.4), who actually seems to report Timaeus’ words in this case. Moreover, Timaeus (*FGrHist* 566 F 156) accused Aristotle of being *ὀψιμαθής*. On Timaeus’ fragment, see Baron 2013: 116-120.

³⁰ Mauersberger 2006, s.v. translates it as “pomposity with later acquired knowledge” (*Wichtigtuerei mit spät erworbenem Wissen*).

³¹ 12.27a.4. On this passage, see Monti 2022: 326-329.

performs actions which are now inappropriate to his (i.e. Timaeus') years.³² Timaeus' brain, as the usage of ὀψιμαθία might suggest, also seems to be similar to the brain of old people, if one gives credit to Theophrastus who reports that men who turn sixty might be affected by ὀψιμαθία.³³ Moreover, the concept of ὀψιμαθία, "learning the truth too late",³⁴ seems to retain a tragic flavour as well, since it has been shown that human ὀψιμαθία is indeed a pattern present in tragedy.³⁵ Once again, Polybius reworks meanings, connects concepts, and assigns new meanings to them. So, though ὀψιμαθία is typical of the tragic character and not of the writer (so not really like dementia), nevertheless one can speculate that Polybius – as he also adumbrates when he compares Timaeus to a certain kind of painter in the passages which have been analysed at the beginning of this section –³⁶ is accusing Timaeus of being a sort of tragic writer, the tragic writer of historiography, thus with all the defects of a historian writing κατὰ μέρος.³⁷

To these remarks, one should add that this passage seems to be the summary of Polybius' previous accusations against historians writing κατὰ μέρος. In 2.63.5, Polybius charges Phylarchus with ἀλογία, lack of thinking, together with irrationality and/or improbability, and, especially, together with ἀσκεψία, the incapacity of reflecting on the events.³⁸ The reference to the part related to enquiries, τὸ περὶ τὰς ἀνακρίσεις μέρος (12.4c.3), which has been neglected by Timaeus, recalls the concept of the historian as good judge of what has been heard, underlined later at 12.4c.5 (κριτὴν δ' εἶναι τῶν προσπιπτόντων μὴ κακόν), and seems to allude to passages which are related to the Polybian criticism of historians writing κατὰ μέρος works: in 2.56.4, while criticising Phylarchus, Polybius stresses the necessity for the historian to judge the events rightly (ἀναγκαῖόν ἐστιν ἡμῖν διευκρινεῖν), and in 7.7.6 he laments the ἀκρισία, the lack of judgement, of the historians who wrote about the death of Hieronymus. The ἄγνοια of historians writing κατὰ μέρος, evoked by the terms ἀγνοοῦντα (12.4d.3) and ἀγνοῶν (12.4d.4), referred to Timaeus of course, has been discussed by Polybius in 2.58.13 and 2.62.2, the passages relative to Phylarchus, and in 3.38.7, where he gets angry with the so-called historians of Hannibal. Moreover, the term ψευδολογία (12.4d.4) recalls the verb ψευδολογέω used to attack, once again, the historians of Hannibal (3.47.6).³⁹ But, the strongest reference to the criticism of historians writing κατὰ μέρος is the expression Τίμαιος πλεῖστον ἀπολείπεσθαί μοι δοκεῖ τῆς ἀληθείας, which is used only twice by Polybius, in this passage and in the proemial passage 1.4.8, where Polybius is indeed criticising histories κατὰ μέρος (λίαν πολὺ τι τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπελείποντο).⁴⁰ Moreover, Polybius employs

³² Cf. Diggle 2004: 477-478.

³³ Theophrastus, *Char.* 27.1-2: ὁ δὲ ὀψιμαθῆς τοιοῦτός τις, οἷος ῥήσεις μανθάνειν ἐξήκοντα ἔτη γεγονὼς καὶ ταύτας λέγων παρὰ πότον ἐπιλανθάνεσθαι.

³⁴ For this translation see Davies 2007: 17, who reflects on the comic usage of this concept in Aristophanes' *Clouds*.

³⁵ See Rutherford 1982: 147-150, and footnote 21 (for some bibliography on the topic).

³⁶ 12.25e.7 and 12.25h.2-3.

³⁷ Indeed, Polybius always connects the idea of writing in a tragic style with historians writing κατὰ μέρος. See, for example, 2.56-63; 3.47.6-8; 3.48.8-9; 7.7.1-8; 15.34.1-2.

³⁸ On this Polybian neologism, see Monti 2022: 331-332.

³⁹ The verb ψευδολογέω occurs only once in Polybius, and the noun ψευδολογία thrice, in 4.42.7, where Polybius is criticizing the sailors, in 12.4d.4, and in 33.21.1, where he underlines his action of confuting a false account.

⁴⁰ The expression τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπελείποντο hardly occurs in Greek texts: apart from later authors, it appears once in Herodotus (2.106: he is writing about two statues of an unknown man in Ionia: some of the

the same expression as the one used by Herodotus in 2.106 (πολλὸν τῆς ἀληθείης ἀπολελειμμένοι), which is the only one occurrence preceding the two in Polybius, but with the superlative degree of πολλόν. Finally, Polybius comes back to the theme of the correct view of events only if one is an expert and possesses ἐμπειρία, when he underlines that, on the contrary, Timaeus is affected by ἀπειρία (12.4c.1). Thus, the reader might easily infer that Polybius is underlining that Timaeus will never be able to see the truth.

Another noteworthy concept is expressed when Polybius emphasizes that Timaeus has neglected the phase of personal investigations (12.4c.3). We learn, therefore, that the research and the work of the historian consist of various phases, of which the most important seems to be the one related to personal enquiries.

So, what are the other phases?

Polybius accurately describes, using once again the rhetorical expedient of the simile, the three branches of historical science in 12.25d-25e,⁴¹ where he states that history and medicine are similar, because they are both divided into three branches. In medicine, for example, one can distinguish:

1. A theoretical branch (ἐνὸς μὲν μέρους αὐτῆς ὑπάρχοντος λογικοῦ), which had its beginnings in Alexandria.
2. A dietetic branch (τοῦ δ' ἐξῆς διαιτητικοῦ), which deals with the management of food.
3. A surgical and pharmacological branch (τοῦ δὲ τρίτου χειρουργικοῦ καὶ φαρμακευτικοῦ), which acts through surgical interventions and drug administration.

Doctors who belong to the first category are often preferred: they do their training from books, but if they are led back to reality and are entrusted with sick people, their experience is equal to those who have never studied medicine. Despite this, the persuasive capacity of the discourse of such theoretical doctors often prevails over proof of facts, τῆς τοῦ λόγου πιθανότητος καταγωνιζομένης πολλάκις τὴν ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων δοκιμασίαν (12.25d.6).⁴² Once again, Polybius is leaving the reader a hint, since the mention of the 'persuasive capacity' (πιθανότης) might recall the πιθανότητες all marshalled on the side of falsehood mentioned in 13.5.4 (πασῶν τῶν πιθανοτήτων μετὰ τοῦ ψεύδους ταττομένων).⁴³

Polybius, then, continues (12.25e.1):

τὸν αὐτὸν δὴ τρόπον καὶ τῆς πραγματικῆς ἱστορίας ὑπαρχούσης τριμεροῦς, τῶν δὲ μερῶν αὐτῆς ἐνὸς μὲν ὄντος τοῦ περὶ τὴν ἐν τοῖς ὑπομνήμασι πολυπραγμοσύνην καὶ τὴν παράθεσιν τῆς ἐκ τούτων ὕλης, ἑτέρου δὲ τοῦ περὶ τὴν θέαν τῶν πόλεων καὶ τῶν τόπων περὶ τε ποταμῶν καὶ λιμένων καὶ

people looking at them infer that it is the image of Memnon, but “they are very far from the truth”), and twice in Polybius (1.4.8; 12.4d.1). Due to its rarity, one could infer that it might have significant importance.

⁴¹ On this passage, see Zangara 2007: 122-129.

⁴² Walbank 1967: 388 observes: “the threefold division of medicine is traditional, but P’s division differs from that in Celsus, *Proem.* 9 (*in tres partes medicina diducta est, ut una esset quae uictu, altera quae medicamentis, tertia quae manu mederetur. Primam διαιτητικὴν secundam φαρμακευτικὴν tertiam χειρουργίαν Graeci nominarunt*). Polybius compresses *pharmaceutice* and *cheirurgia* into one and adds the λογικοί, who are to provide the parallel with Timaeus (cf. 25 e 4); but the division is not necessarily his own, and he may well be drawing on some handbook of medicine from the third or second century”.

⁴³ On this passage, see Monti 2024a (forthcoming).

καθόλου τῶν κατὰ γῆν καὶ κατὰ θάλατταν ιδιωμάτων καὶ διαστημάτων, τρίτου δὲ τοῦ περὶ τὰς πράξεις τὰς πολιτικάς.

In the same way, political history also possesses three parts, of which the first has to do with being familiar with the records, and with the comparison of the material derived from them, the second has to do with direct observation of cities and places, rivers and harbours, and in general the peculiarities and the distances both through land and sea, the third has to do with political activities.

Thus, historical research is formed by three parts, but many historians, and Timaeus is certainly among them, can be compared to the theoretical physicians: indeed, drawing only on history books, they completed only one of the phases of historical research (12.25e.4).⁴⁴ But, in order to reach the complete truth and to fully understand the dynamics of history, one must instead resort to all three phases, which might be regarded as degrees or steps, because, as Polybius underlines, not all phases have the same importance, since some are more important than others (12.27.1-3):

[1] δυεῖν γὰρ ὄντων κατὰ φύσιν ὡς ἂν εἴ τινων ὀργάνων ἡμῖν, οἷς πάντα πυνθανόμεθα καὶ πολυπραγμονοῦμεν [ἀκοῆς καὶ ὀράσεως], ἀληθινωτέρας δ' οὐσίας οὐ μικρῶ τῆς ὀράσεως κατὰ τὸν Ἡράκλειτον - ὀφθαλμοὶ γὰρ τῶν ὤτων ἀκριβέστεροι μάρτυρες - [2] τούτων Τίμαιος τὴν ἡδίων μὲν, ἤττω δὲ τῶν ὁδῶν ὠρμησε πρὸς τὸ πολυπραγμονεῖν. [3] τῶν μὲν γὰρ διὰ τῆς ὀράσεως εἰς τέλος ἀπέστη, τῶν δὲ διὰ τῆς ἀκοῆς ἀντεποιήσατο.

[1] For by nature we possess two instruments, as it were, sight and hearing, with which we inquire about and investigate everything, and although sight is closer to the reality not by a little as Heraclitus says - for eyes are more accurate witnesses than ears -, [2] nevertheless Timaeus started studying by the pleasanter of these two paths, though inferior. [3] Indeed, in the end he shrank from what is deduced from sight, and pursued what can be heard.

The resort to the term ἀληθινωτέρας clearly suggests that Polybius has in mind the fact that there are degrees of truth, but above all it underlines that sight is not the most truthful instrument of all, but it is 'just' a more reliable instrument in comparison with hearing, and in any case the historian must be an expert if he is to truthfully interpret what he sees and give a true account of the events.⁴⁵ Of course, the motif of autopsy is an important one in relation to historiography, since the need to see with one's own eyes is a guarantee of the historical reality,⁴⁶ and it underlines the powerful imposition of the persona of the historian, which brings with it the fact that autopsy is in a way subordinated to the historian's subjectivity, as Nenci has suggested.⁴⁷ With respect to his predecessors, Polybius' innovation is precisely this, the fact of having understood the subjective character of autopsy:⁴⁸

⁴⁴ Cf. 12.25g and 12.25h.

⁴⁵ As is clear from the passages mentioned *supra* in footnote 19.

⁴⁶ See Nenci 1955: 15-16: "l'esigenza, cioè, di vedere con i propri occhi come garanzia della realtà storica di quanto viene conosciuto".

⁴⁷ Nenci 1955: 15-16.

⁴⁸ Thucydides had partially recognised this when he underlined that people at the same events did not give the same accounts because of their memory or favourability towards one or the other side (1.22.1-4). However, Thucydides is reflecting on his sources, so his remarks are related to just one aspect of historical research, the difficulty of dealing with different kinds of accounts from different people. On the other hand,

therefore, just as doctors need not only direct observation of the patient and of the symptoms, but also their experience, so only an expert historian will be able to best interpret the actions, the facts, the reality of which he will be a direct witness and, consequently, able to faithfully and objectively report them.

Hence, what seems to emerge is that the scrupulous historian must proceed through all the phases of the historical research, step by step, and he should not neglect any of them. Only in this way will he be able to get to the *true* truth. Furthermore, truth does not seem to have a fixed image, but appears as a flexible entity which might even be characterized by degrees, and, thus, measurable in a certain sense, as is the case of Plato's allegory of the cave, when the images pertaining to the sphere of perception are defined as ἀληθέστερα, "truer".⁴⁹

IV

A notable example of the idea that the historian has to perform all the procedures to reach the *true* truth, which might lead to the concept of degrees of truth, can be also found in another passage from book 12 where, as part of his harsh polemic against the historian Timaeus, Polybius makes his position on the different accounts about the foundation of Lokroi Epizephyrioi very clear (12.5.3-6), even though Polybius had claimed that this topic is not quite a topic within the realm of history proper (9.1.4; 9.2.1-2; 10.21.3-4).⁵⁰ The passage concerns the story of Lokroi Epizephyrioi in which Timaeus argued with Aristotle regarding the origins of this colony in Magna Graecia. Aristotle, probably in one of the 158 *Constitutions*,⁵¹ claimed that the colony was founded by slaves from Lokroi (in Greece) who had joined the women of the nobility while their husbands fought in the Messenian war. Timaeus, on the other hand, in the ninth book of his *Histories* (FGrHist 566 F 11) refuted Aristotle's thesis by asserting that:

- the Locrians of Greece were not allowed to own slaves at that time (FGrHist 566 F 12 *apud* Pol. 12.6);
- Lokroi Epizephyrioi, like the motherland, was on friendly terms with Sparta and hostile to Athens: if the founders of Lokroi in Magna Graecia had been slaves, it would have been unlikely to maintain the same alliances as their masters (FGrHist 566 F 12 *apud* Pol. 12.6a);
- it is unacceptable that the Locrian noblewomen lived with their slaves and that their husbands did not have the opportunity to return home, since the Spartans themselves sent home those young Lacedaemonians who were not bound by the military oath (FGrHist 566 F 12 *apud* Pol. 12.6b);
- Timaeus' thesis was also confirmed by documentary evidence, as he personally saw a treaty between the Greek Lokroi and Lokroi Epizephyrioi which began with the terms ὡς

Polybius' reflection is about the full concept of autopsy: if the historian is not endowed with expertise, his autopsy will be faulty even if he is a historian. Hence, Thucydides refers to the historian's effort and the difficulty of interpreting his sources, whereas Polybius is reflecting on the possible fallacy of autopsy.

⁴⁹ Repellini 2013: 173 underlines that in the allegory of the cave Plato shows the presence of degrees of truth. On the relation between Plato's cave and Polybius, see Monti 2022: 319-320.

⁵⁰ See Thornton 2020: 310 footnote 24.

⁵¹ Walbank 1962: 6; Champion 2010, *BNJ* 566 F 11a, *Commentary*.

γονεῦσι πρὸς τέκνα (“as is fitting for fathers towards their children”),⁵² clearly indicating a relationship of equality and not, on the contrary, between masters and slaves (*FGrHist* 566 F 12 *apud* Pol. 12.9).

Polybius, on the other hand, criticises Timaeus' claims: “First of all, one would be in confusion as to which of the Locrians he turned up and carried out these investigations” (12.10.1). Polybius, therefore, casts doubt on the ability of Timaeus to conduct historiographical research: he does not specify which Locris (since there were two different regions called Locris in Greece, Opuntian Locris located to the north-east of Phocis, and Ozolian Locris located to the south-west of Phocis),⁵³ nor does he explain who the magistrates who showed the written text were,⁵⁴ an unusual attitude for a historian who is very precise in chronologies and written documentation.⁵⁵

It is in the light of these reflections that Polybius does not at all believe that Timaeus is trustworthy and this is the reason why, at the beginning of the discussion on the foundation of Lokroi, he states (12.5.3-6):

[3] διόπερ ὀφείλω μᾶλλον εὐλογεῖν Λοκροὺς ἢ τούναντίον. [4] ἀλλ' ὅμως οὐκ ὤκνησα καὶ λέγειν καὶ γράφειν ὅτι τὴν ὑπ' Ἀριστοτέλους παραδιδόμενην ἱστορίαν περὶ τῆς ἀποικίας ἀληθινωτέραν εἶναι συμβαίνει τῆς ὑπὸ Τιμαίου λεγομένης. [5] σύνοιδα γὰρ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ὁμολογοῦσιν ὅτι παραδόσιμος αὐτοῖς ἐστὶν αὕτη περὶ τῆς ἀποικίας ἢ φήμη παρὰ πατέρων, ἦν Ἀριστοτέλης εἴρηκεν, οὐ Τίμαιος. [6] καὶ τούτων γε τοιαύτας ἔφερον ἀποδείξεις.

[3] And so I ought much more to speak well of the Locrians than the opposite. [4] Nevertheless, I did not hesitate both to declare and to write that the history of the foundation of the city transmitted by Aristotle happens to be truer than the one told by Timaeus. [5] Indeed, I know very well (and the people there agree)⁵⁶ that the traditional account on the colony handed down to them by their fathers is the one which Aristotle, not Timaeus, has told. [6] And of this, they were adducing such proofs.

Thus, despite the fact that Aristotle's story was somewhat unfavourable to the inhabitants of Lokroi, Polybius was not afraid of reporting the account which looked rather truthful to him.

To justify his complete and utter impartiality in favouring Aristotle rather than Timaeus, a few lines before Polybius underlines that he had been in the city many times; he also acted as a benefactor in their regards, by pleading their case with the Romans, since the Locrians were not in a position to send auxiliary troops to Iberia and Dalmatia. In return for being freed from “misery, risk and a considerable expenditure” (καὶ κακοπαθείας καὶ κινδύνου καὶ δαπάνης ἰκανῆς τινοῦ ἀπολυθέντες), they granted him every kind of honour and privilege.

⁵² This document is thought to be a later forgery: see, for example, Brown 1958: 48; Walbank 1967: 345; and Musti 1977: 145-146, who dates the treaty to the 4th century B.C.

⁵³ On this topic, see Luraghi 1991: 143-159.

⁵⁴ 12.10.5-6.

⁵⁵ 12.10.4: καίτοι διότι τοῦτ' ἴδιόν ἐστι Τιμαίου καὶ ταύτη παρημίλληται τοὺς ἄλλους συγγραφέας καὶ καθόλου τῆδέ πη τῆς ἀποδοχῆς *** - λέγω δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἐν τοῖς χρόνοις καὶ ταῖς ἀναγραφαῖς ἐπίφασιν τῆς ἀκριβείας καὶ τὴν περὶ τοῦτο τὸ μέρος ἐπιμέλειαν - δοκῶ, πάντες γινώσκομεν.

⁵⁶ They should be the Locrians of the metropolis, “the metropolitan Locrians in Greece”: see the Loeb edition of the *Histories*, translated by Paton, revised by Walbank and Habicht: 357.

In his line of reasoning, this is not a biased opinion against Timaeus, who had indeed a more positive account of the story, and his historical research. In Polybius' reasoning, the choice of a version less favourable to the Locrians – thus not intended to praise a people whose patron he had even been – demonstrates that he is writing for the sake of truth, even more so as “praise was usually regarded as incompatible with truth”.⁵⁷

In addition to the critique against Timaeus, who, once again, is branded as a liar, and to the Polybian stance in favour of Aristotle, in this passage there is a significant statement which gives rise to a reflection: Polybius says that the Aristotelian narrative is ἀληθινωτέρων compared to the one of Timaeus. Indeed, noteworthy is the use of the comparative. The first question one should ask is why Polybius is addressing the issue of the two versions in such a way, why he uses the comparative ἀληθινωτέρων, what the adjective's degree means and why he is not using its zero grade, the simple ἀληθινός. What does Polybius want us to understand in this passage? Does he want to show us that there are various degrees, *gradus veritatis*? Or, according to what we have seen, are there different degrees that the historian has to go through in order to reach the *true* truth, since the adjective could be better translated as ‘closer to reality than’ or ‘quite/rather close to reality’?

Mario Pani, arguing that ancient historians had the consciousness of history as a literary genre in its own right, states that the historian's task was to look for external truth and report it.⁵⁸ The truth, therefore, is one, and it transcends the protagonists or those who write history; there are, however, “plural truths” (to borrow the effective terminology used by Mario Pani) which could be defined as immanent to the historian, subjective truths that constitute the limit of the writer of history because they are influenced by personal factors, such as partisanship, ill will, the limits of information or the inability to attend all events.

V

At this point, it is important to notice how Polybius presents the topic and how self-referential this presentation is. In fact, he does not simply state that Aristotle's version is truer than Timaeus', but he introduces the idea of hesitation with the verb ὀκνέω preceded by the negative:⁵⁹ he, the historian, plucked up the courage to say and write his thoughts as a scrupulous historian would do.⁶⁰ However, the story related by others is not *his* truth: therefore, from Polybius' words, one might infer that it is not on purpose, but rather a coincidence (συμβαίνει)⁶¹ that the account handed down or even taught (παραδιδόμενην

⁵⁷ Woodman 1988: 43. More generally, on hostility, bias, truth and impartiality, see Woodman 1988: 40-47; 73-74; 82-83.

⁵⁸ Pani 2004: 348: “ricercare e trovare la verità esterna e rispecchiarla”.

⁵⁹ Schweighäuser 1822, s.v., translates as “non dubitandum, non verendum”, and Mauersberger 2006, s.v., renders the verb as “fear” (*fürchten*), but also as “hesitate” (*zögern, Bedenken tragen*).

⁶⁰ He uses this verb two other times in the negative form and in association with his role: in 16.20.5, writing about the incompetence of Zeno from Rhodes in matter of geography, he states that he did not hesitate to write to him personally and to point out his big mistakes; in 18.55.9, he declares about Polycrates and other characters that he will not hesitate, at the right time, to show plainly their indecent actions. To my knowledge, there is no such use in previous historians.

⁶¹ The term seems to attenuate the value of the assertion.

ιστορίαν)⁶² by Aristotle is truer than that told (λεγομένης) by Timaeus. In this passage, Aristotle appears as the teacher who hands down a tradition, whereas Timaeus is just a storyteller (although there might still be some truth in his version) or – even worse – a fabulist.⁶³ On the contrary, Polybius is performing all of these actions: he transmits a tradition and testifies to it by speaking and writing (καὶ λέγειν καὶ γράφειν). Even more so, since he knows what he is doing, he is conscious about his role, whereas Aristotle, or even better, Aristotle's tradition just 'happens to be the truer one'.

Indeed, the second part of this passage is introduced by σύνοιδα: not only does he know this, he knows it extremely well. The verb does not simply mean 'to know', but it is its intensifier. In addition, it also belongs to the legal sphere,⁶⁴ since it is often translated as "to know that something is true", "to know something about a person as a potential witness" or "to bear witness".⁶⁵ This shade is not surprising, as the verb is formed with one of the roots of ὀράω, and one is supposed to see something to be a witness. More to the point, another nuance of its meaning is remarkable, since it bears the sense of "to be fully conscious" and "share the knowledge with someone".⁶⁶ Thus, here Polybius might be introducing himself as an historian acting with full consciousness. He has just mentioned the technical term ἱστορία,⁶⁷ connecting it to Aristotle, a few lines before, a word which, again, shares its root with ὀράω and, consequently, with the σύνοιδα discussed here:⁶⁸ so, to do his job well, the historian must be the witness of the events, he must see the actions he is describing. In fact, he – Polybius – had done so, since – as he declares – he had been many times in the city of the Locrians.

Furthermore, he perhaps appears to have checked all the different traditions of the story, when he describes the Locrians as ὁμολογοῦσιν: Herodotus, for example, uses this verb, when he is giving the account of different traditions and wants to underline that people agree on that particular account.⁶⁹ However, this word also belongs to the semantic field of legal terminology, as it could mean "to admit" or, even better, "to confess": if one follows Polybius' argument that the truer version of Aristotle was also the one less favourable to the Locrians, it is not unforeseen that they 'confess, admit' a story which puts them in a bad light. Nonetheless, unexpectedly, Polybius might perhaps assign the role of storyteller to Aristotle now (εἴρηκεν), but I think that this might be explained by the fact that the direct object of

⁶² The expression could also be interpreted as 'the traditional story', 'the history of the foundation according to the tradition'. Cf., for example, μηδένα νομίζειν ἄλλον θεὸν ἢ τοὺς παραδεδομένους, "the traditional gods" (Dinarchus 1.94). See LSJ, s.v.

⁶³ The verb λέγειν does not seem to have a different meaning than just 'tell', without any implication on writing history. See Schweighäuser 1822, s.v., and Mauersberger 2006, s.v.

⁶⁴ Polybius often used legal terminology to describe his historical method, as ἀνακρίνω / ἀνάκρισις, βασιανίζω / βάσιανος, ἐλέγχω / ἔλεγχος, ἐξετάζω. See Mauersberger 2000, 1.1, s.vv.; Id. 2003, 1.2, s.vv.; Verduyck 1990: 36 and footnote 120. See also Farrington 2015: 40, who argues that Polybius acts both as a dikast and as an orator. Thornton 2020: 47-51 reflects on the concept of Polybius' history "as a court".

⁶⁵ See LSJ, s.v.

⁶⁶ Cf. Chantraine 1974, III.779.

⁶⁷ In Polybius, the word reflects a certain awareness of genres, it is related to the genre of history, and it is used to describe the historian's work. See Schweighäuser 1822, and Mauersberger 2006, s.vv. Moreover, from 34.4 it is clear that Polybius was mindful of the specific genre, since he states that history should aim at truth (τῆς μὲν οὖν ἱστορίας ἀλήθειαν εἶναι τέλος), whereas poetry should not be assessed according to historical truth. See also 10.21.5-8, in which he separates the genre of the encomium from history.

⁶⁸ Chantraine 1974, III.779. On the meaning of ἱστορία, see also Keuck 1934.

⁶⁹ See, for example, 1.23; 1.171; 2.4; 4.154.

the verb is the relative pronoun referred to φήμη, which in this case is not the rumour, but the story known by oral tradition,⁷⁰ thus ‘told’ and not ‘written’. Anyhow, such confusion and mixing of the terms cast doubt among his readers.

This two-faced passage, a display of both historical and oratorical technique, ends with another polysemous expression, ἔφερον ἀποδείξεις. In the standard translations,⁷¹ this phrase is interpreted as Polybius saying that the Locrians used to provide the proofs about which he is going to talk in the subsequent lines.⁷² Of course, this is a coherent translation and the Locrians appear to be the logical subject of the sentence, but another translation is nevertheless possible: the imperfect ἔφερον can also be a first-person singular (“and I was providing such proofs of these accounts”). The tense of the verb might cause issues with this interpretation,⁷³ since one might ask when in the past Polybius was talking and proving this. However, the difficulty can be solved if one reflects upon what he has written a few lines before, in 12.5.4, introducing this topic: he did not hesitate both to speak and to write in favour of Aristotle’s version, so, perhaps, he had proved even before why he preferred the philosopher’s account. Anyway, I would suspect that here Polybius is intentionally ambiguous.

In addition, the use of the word ἀπόδειξις is thought provoking, as it assumes diverse meanings: it belongs to the legal sphere, as we have seen, with the meaning of ‘proof’, but it is also translated as ‘demonstration’ and ‘display’. Thus, Polybius is playing the role of the orator in attacking Timaeus and he needs to demonstrate that he is right, to provide proofs and to plead his case against him. At the same time, he is a historian, and this behaviour is part of his ‘apodeictic’, demonstrative style:⁷⁴ Polybius often insists on the necessity for an historian to provide proofs of his accounts⁷⁵ and he invokes his sources as witnesses, but he has to demonstrate that they are credible.⁷⁶ Also, the mention of ἀπόδειξις together with ἱστορία cannot but evoke Herodotus’ preamble to his *Histories*: Ἡροδότου Ἀλικαρνησέος ἱστορίας ἀπόδειξις ἦδε, “This is the display of the historical research of Herodotus from Halicarnassus”. In the same methodological way, Polybius is displaying the results of his own historical research about the foundation of Lokroi Epizephyrioi having dug into the different traditions of the city’s history.

It is surprising though that the nexus φέρω/ἀπόδειξις is scarcely present in previous historians. It is absent in Herodotus, Thucydides and Xenophon.⁷⁷ After Polybius, Diodorus

⁷⁰ Cf. Schweighäuser 1822, and Mauersberger 2004, s.vv.

⁷¹ See, for example, the translations of Paton, Pédech and Sonnino.

⁷² καὶ τούτων γε τοιαύτας ἔφερον ἀποδείξεις: “And they used to provide such proofs of these accounts”.

⁷³ In Polybius the imperfect is almost often durative, especially in relationship with the *verba dicendi*. See de Foucault 1972: 129-132.

⁷⁴ See *supra*, footnote 10.

⁷⁵ See, for example, 4.40.1-3; 7.13.2; 31.30.2.

⁷⁶ Cf. Vercruysse 1990: 21.

⁷⁷ As for the abstract term ἀπόδειξις, Herodotus has six occurrences (1.p; 1.207; 2.101; 2.148; 7.50; 8.101), with the meaning ranging from ‘display’ and ‘achievement’ to ‘demonstration’, ‘proof’, and ‘evidence’; it is attested twice in Thucydides (1.97.2; 2.13.9), bearing the meaning of ‘explanation’ and ‘demonstration’; finally, the term is present twice in Xenophon (in *Cyr.* 8.6.15 in the sense of ‘review, check’, and in *Mem.* 4.6.13 with the significance of ‘proof’). Even when the abstract word is used with the meaning of proof, there is no direct action of the historian in bringing such evidence.

Siculus uses it, probably because he was looking at Polybius' way of writing history.⁷⁸ Interestingly, those two words together were employed nine times by Aristotle, compared to only two occurrences in Polybius: the philosopher generally used this expression when he was demonstrating an argument, and, fascinatingly, in the *Rhetoric*, where there is a concentration of this usage in only one passage (three out of nine), Aristotle is describing the epideictic style and speeches.⁷⁹ Besides, both Polybian passages, this one and 12.25k, are in a context where the historian is arguing against Timaeus. What is more, this terminology is also used in two of the remaining fragments of Timaeus, although, in this case, it is hard to separate Timaeus' voice from Diodorus' who transmits the fragment, especially because he was 'imitating' Polybius' style.⁸⁰ In *FGrHist* 566 F 85, Timaeus was writing about the Argonauts and the route they followed after stealing the fleece, and, in the middle of the fragment, one reads "and they bring proofs of this" (ἀποδείξεις δὲ τούτων φέρουσι): it is not specified to whom the third person refers, presumably 'the writers'⁸¹, although Diodorus mentions Timaeus alone. The second fragment, *FGrHist* 566 F 38, deserves equal attention, as Diodorus is commenting on Timaeus' way of writing history (a statement based on Timaeus' words?):

Τίμαιος δὲ τὴν ἄγνοιαν τούτου τοῦ συγγραφέως ἐλέγξας, ἀκριβῶς ἀποφαίνεται τούτους αὐτόχθονας εἶναι: πολλὰς δ' αὐτοῦ φέροντος ἀποδείξεις τῆς τούτων ἀρχαιότητος, οὐκ ἀναγκαῖον ἡγούμεθα περὶ τούτων διεξιέναι.

Timaeus brought convincing proofs of this historian's [Philistus] ignorance, accurately showing that they were indigenous; and since he adduces many proofs of their antiquity, there is no need to go through them.

Timaeus was harshly quarrelling with Philistus over the colonization of a city (περὶ δὲ τῶν κατοικησάντων ἐν αὐτῇ πρώτων Σικανῶν, writes Diodorus), the very same matter on which Polybius disagrees with him.

Thus, whether these two fragments preserve Timaeus' own words or he had his work described by these words, they still might be of some importance if seen as a part of the entire framework. Indeed, since there is no trace of the two words together in previous historians, but there is enough presence in Aristotle especially, and, probably, in Timaeus/Diodorus, one might speculate that Polybius was playing with words. First of all, he appears to put together two concepts, the 'inquiry' of Herodotus and his own 'demonstrative technique': once more, his action seems active, deliberate and conscious. He is again working on two different levels, as the verb is two-pronged, being interpreted as a first-person singular or a third-person plural: reversing what Timaeus declared, he is dropping the subtle hint that he, Polybius, was bringing the counter-proofs of what Timaeus wrote; taking it as third person, since Aristotle used this expression too, Polybius' suggestion would be that he was mimicking the philosopher's style, his account being the truer one.

⁷⁸ Cf. Rood 2004: 158. On Polybius' influence upon Diodorus, see, also, Bianchetti 2005: 127-153, and Achilli 2012: 1-20. Diodorus uses this expression ten times: 1.25.4; 1.28.4; 1.29.1; 1.29.6; 1.96.3; 2.31.6; 3.74.6; 4.56.4; 5.6.1; 19.56.1. This usage might have been part of Diodorus' style inspired by Polybius, but it is difficult to understand where Diodorus was writing in his own words and where he was reporting the words of another historian.

⁷⁹ *APo.* 74b (Bekker); 77a; 79a; *Metaph.* 1005a; 1087b; *Ph.* 252a; *Rh.* 1417b (three times).

⁸⁰ Diodorus is "the historian whose narrative manner is closest to Polybius": see Rood 2004: 158, and footnotes 13 and 28.

⁸¹ This is the translation given by Champion in *BNJ*.

But, if truth is one and an unbroken essence, as one would imagine, one does not infer this from the passage above, since it transmits uncertainty instead. The definition of its entity seems to escape: in fact, Polybius appears to go in a certain direction when he clearly separates Aristotle's act of writing from Timaeus' act of telling stories, but soon afterwards he weakens this strong opposition between writing and telling, and he assigns the action of telling stories also to Aristotle who in this case represents the 'truer truth'.

Polybius' hesitation might be explained in this case by his firm belief that it is almost impossible to write non-contemporary history due to the lack of autopsy and inquiry, the most important parts of the historian's work⁸²; consequently, if he chooses this path, he will need "to write hearsay from hearsay" (ὡς ἀκοήν ἐξ ἀκοῆς γράφειν).⁸³ Moreover, Polybius makes a statement especially on writing about foundations of colonies and cities (which is the main theme of the fragment we are discussing here): in this particular case, the historian has two possibilities, to tell the story of another pretending that it is his own story (which is the most dishonourable action of all) or to find a previous account with which he agrees, and that was treated and transmitted sufficiently well.⁸⁴ Although the historian must avoid this, sometimes he will need to deal with previous events to explain contemporary events:⁸⁵ in this case, "the prohibition on non-contemporary history could be ignored when the author believed he had superior information".⁸⁶ This might be the case with the passage above: Polybius judges Aristotle's account as one of a higher standard, but he is still tied up with his conviction that it is difficult, if not even unmanageable, to write non-contemporary history. Hence, he could have had to weaken his statement on the truer account, since Aristotle did not employ the proper instruments of history. But, if the imperfect ἔφερον is taken as a first person, then one finds oneself facing Polybius' intervention in the account of another writer: since he thought that Aristotle's story was better, he tries to 'help' him and intervenes in the historiographical process. This could be the explanation of the gradual weakening of the opposition which appears not so strong anymore.

Polybius seems to lead his reader to the following phase of this account: of course, Aristotle's version is truer, but it is not the truest one, since he related a story, but he did not research deeply into it. Therefore, it needs to be completed with another phase of historical research, which is inquiry: Polybius intervenes and provides evidence for Aristotle's account. Furthermore, Aristotle is not a politician, which is the quality that shapes the perfect historian, according to Polybius (12.25e). The historian should be a good judge of the events and of the different versions (12.4c.4-5), but to do so he needs to be involved in politics (12.25i): the account of political or military episodes is useless if the historian did not experience politics or war (12.25g). Indeed, the inexperienced in such matters is not able to ask witnesses the right questions, and he does not understand what is happening even in the case that he is present (12.28a-9-10).

⁸² 12.25g.1-28a.10.

⁸³ 4.2.1-3. See Walbank 1957: 450, and Marincola 1997: 98.

⁸⁴ 9.2.1-3.

⁸⁵ 1.12.8-9; 3.7.4-7.

⁸⁶ Marincola 1997: 99.

Hence, Aristotle is not a historian *tout court* in Polybius' opinion, and so he cannot manage a history *stricto sensu*, though he is closer to it than Timaeus.⁸⁷ It might be stated that here the "highly intrusive explicator"⁸⁸ and the "intrusiveness of the Polybian narrator"⁸⁹ find one of their greatest expressions. I also believe that the main point here is perhaps that, there being diverse truths and various degrees of truth – at least according to Polybius –, the most crucial features become the person who deals with truth, how he gets to it, and how he manages it.

Furthermore, Polybius, still within the dispute over the origins of Lokroi, reports the hypothetical reflection of those who will read what he wrote about Timaeus, about his work, and about the tasks of the historian (12.7.4):

ὅτι μὲν οὖν ἀμφοτέροι κατὰ τὸν εἰκότα λόγον πεποιήνται τὴν ἐπιχείρησιν, καὶ διότι πλείους εἰσὶ πιθανότητες ἐν τῇ κατ'Ἀριστοτέλην ἱστορίᾳ, δοκῶ, πᾶς ἄν τις ἐκ τῶν εἰρημένων ὁμολογήσειεν· ἀληθὲς μὲντοι γε καὶ καθάπαξ διαστεῖλαι περὶ τινος οὐδὲν ἔστιν ἐν τούτοις.

Everyone, I believe, would agree on the basis of what has been said that both [Timaeus and Aristotle] have conceived their reasoning according to plausibility, and that there is more persuasiveness in Aristotle's account; however, it is not possible to define precisely the truth of anything in these matters once for all.

Based on this statement, scholars have hypothesised that this was Polybius' line of reasoning, namely that neither Aristotle nor Timaeus told the truth, but they were based on plausible elements: on the basis of these seeds of truth, Aristotle's story appeared to Polybius more credible, but not more truthful than Timaeus' one. Walbank, indeed, claims that the arguments of both Aristotle and Timaeus are based on likelihood.⁹⁰ According to Pédech, in Polybius' mind the verisimilitude is nothing but the complement and the substitute element of the truth, since also likelihood belongs to the category of Logic and is the result of rational data. Therefore, Pédech adds, since the events develop rationally, through a logical link between causes and consequences, the historian has a duty to verify the coherence of a piece of information, to evaluate whether the different parts have a logical connection and whether the results of an action do not contradict the premises: for Polybius, in fact, "le raisonnement est un outil effective de critique".⁹¹ Polybius, Pédech continues, goes further: he maintains that if a historian finds that a piece of information contradicts the logical link or modifies the natural order, he can rectify it and restore truth based on likelihood.⁹²

However, I believe that the statement at 12.7 is clear: Polybius is not reporting his own ideas, but only what the readers might think; equally doubtless is what he states in 12.5, that Aristotle is closer to the truth/reality than Timaeus. Therefore, one could affirm that Polybius' statements regarding the historical method go in one direction only, that is towards the duty that the writer of history has to always adhere to the truth. Pédech's

⁸⁷ Of course, the imperfect could be a third-person plural, as we have seen, but it is nevertheless true that Aristotle appears to be unable to 'defend' himself, and he still needs someone else to bring proofs of his account's truth on his behalf.

⁸⁸ Marincola 1997: 10.

⁸⁹ Rood 2004: 150.

⁹⁰ Walbank 1962: 7.

⁹¹ Pédech 1964: 391.

⁹² Pédech 1964: 389-391.

hypothesis, on the other hand, might be valid if one transfers it to the level of Polybius' implementation of the canons established by him, since Polybius has perhaps not always stuck to the truth, but, as Pédech says, "il peut la rectifier et rétablir la vérité selon la vraisemblance".⁹³

VI

Consequently, in Polybius' philosophy of history, is truth unique or are there different *gradus veritatis*? The image that Polybius has of the truth, I believe, is that of an unbroken essence but which at the same time is formed by various parts that he makes correspond to the phases of historical science. Truth is not something that is given immediately and completely, but the historian reaches it throughout a long and hard path, punctuated by various difficulties: going back to the etymology of ἀλήθεια,⁹⁴ it seems that even for Polybius it is an entity that one succeeds to *unveil* slowly, step by step. Therefore, the Platonic doctrine is transposed to historical truth: just as the slave enclosed in the cave is slowly educated to the absolute truth, so the historian comes to "possess" the historical truth after different passages.⁹⁵ There are, therefore, *gradus veritatis* that are made explicit in the phases described by Polybius, which however still lead to the one and only unique truth. In this sense, the story of Aristotle is closer to the truth than that of Timaeus: the philosopher had adhered much more to the historiographical procedure, even though he had not completed all the steps of historiographical research, whereas the historian Timaeus, in the opinion of Polybius, touched only the first step, that is that of the "bookish acquisitions".

Hence, the partial and plural truths (which seem also to be influenced by different sorts of things, from bias or blame to the author's background), though they are essential to reach the *true* truth and are part of the preliminary historiographical research and path, can only participate in the historiographical procedure and science if they are thought to be part of it, but they cannot exist by themselves. They appear only as a component of an obligatory route to reach the transcendent truth, since Polybius repeatedly returns to support the historian's need to narrate events without praising friends too much and blaming enemies,⁹⁶ but with total objectivity, without deliberately falsifying.

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⁹³ Pédech 1964: 391.

⁹⁴ The lexicographer Hesychius explained ἀληθεία as "not false and what is not forgotten (concealed)" (ἀψευδῆ καὶ τὰ <μη> ἐπιλανθανόμενα). In the second half of the 11th century AD, a similar explanation of Ἀληθές, was given by the *Etymologicum Gudianum*, with the addition of a clear statement on its etymology, from 'forgetfulness' or from the verb 'conceal' (Ἀληθές: παρὰ τὸ λήθη τὸ μὴ λήθη τοῦ δικαίου ὑποπίπτον[τος], and Ἀληθές: παρὰ τὸ λήθω τὸ μὴ λήθη τοῦ δικαίου ὑποπίπτον). Finally, in the mid-12th century AD, the *Etymologicum Magnum* underlined that Ἀληθές was the opposite of lie, and re-stated the link with non-forgetfulness and/or non-concealment and justice (τὸ μὴ λήθη ὑποπίπτον τοῦ δικαίου: τὸ ἐναντίον τῷ ψεύδει). See, also, Luther 1935: 26; Jens 1951: 240-246; Luther 1954: 35; Mette-Snell 1955, vol. 1, s.v.; Pokorny 1959: 651 and 853; Frisk 1960, s.v.; Heitsch 1962: 24-33 (cf. id. 1963: 36-52); Bultmann 1964: 238-239; Krischer 1965: 167; Chantraine 1968, s.v. λανθάνω; Starr 1968: 350; Levet 1976: 14-15.

⁹⁵ On the relationship between Polybius and the allegory of the cave, see *supra* footnote 49.

⁹⁶ See, for example, 1.14.5-8; 10.21.5-8; 12.28a.1. Cf. Lucian, *Hist. Conscr.* 7.

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The Athenian naval campaign and the failure of the Lamian War: a re-evaluation*

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Abstract: This paper seeks to question a number of long-standing suppositions about Athens' performance in the Lamian War (323-322 bce). It has often been maintained that Athens suffered significant naval defeats (particularly at Amorgos), such as to destroy Athenian sea-power; it is further supposed that this failure by sea ultimately cost Athens the war itself. Close consideration of the literary traditions and inscriptional records suggest that these assumptions are ill-founded. It is posited here that aims of the naval sphere and its nexus with the land campaign can be understood differently, and that the explanation for Athens' failure can be found in Diodorus Siculus, who provides our main literary treatment of the war. The absence of Athens' key allies (notably the Aetolians) at a critical juncture in the land campaign, combined with the Greeks' misapprehension of the Macedonian appetite for a truce, were the vital factors in Athens' downfall.

Keywords: Lamian War; Athenian navy; Amorgos; Cleitus; Athenian grain trade

'Athens lost the Lamian War at sea. That is now generally agreed.' Thus Bosworth, in the opening of his 2003 piece entitled 'Why did Athens lose the Lamian War', sums up the *communis opinio* which stretches back to such luminaries as Droysen and Beloch.¹ Particular emphasis is often placed on a naval defeat suffered by the Athenians at Amorgos; that loss is deemed by some as a counterpart to the battle of Salamis, with Salamis forging the foundation of Athenian naval power and Amorgos marking its total destruction. In this estimation of the importance of the naval realm to the outcome of the Lamian War, fought against Macedonian hegemony by a coalition of Greek states spear-headed by Athens in 323-322 BCE, there has been little shift in the two decades of scholarship ensuing since Bosworth's piece.² Despite the fact that Diodorus, our main narrative authority for the war, betrays no apprehension that the events at sea turned the tide of the Greeks' fortunes, this entrenched notion that the war was lost at sea is in many ways unsurprising: the performance of the Greek allies by land was generally creditable. In contrast to the victories won against

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¹ Bosworth (2003) 14; Beloch (1925) 73; Droysen (1877) 68. So too Ashton (1977) 2 n. 12: 'There is virtual unanimity that the defeat near Amorgos marks the end of Athens' era of greatness' (and he cites at n.12 a selection of similar views published to that date). A disastrous naval campaign is posited also by Schmitt (1992) 120 in his extensive treatment of the war; of the naval campaign, he summarises thus (141): 'Wie unsicher unsere Kenntnis über die Einzelheiten des Seekrieges sein mag, fest steht, daß die athenische Flotte unter erheblichen Verlusten unterlag.'

² See for example Harding (2015) 56; Walsh (2018) 303. Dissenting voices are few, although see Burckhardt (1996) 139; Green (2003) 2 and (on the sea battle at Amorgos in particular) Heckel (1992) 185-86. Wrightson (2014) 529 does not believe that the defeat at Amorgos necessarily incurred significant ship losses but nonetheless regards it as the action which cost the Greeks the war because of their loss here of the 'strategic initiative'.

Antipater or his allies in Boeotia and Thessaly, it is maintained that at sea Athens sustained such significant ship losses that the Athenian navy was fatally undermined and could not supply the city by sea in the (putative) event of a siege; further, that it failed in its objective of preventing crossings into Europe by Antipater's fellow Diadochoi, Leonnatus and Craterus, whose provision of additional troops served to reverse the numerical advantage in land power that the Greek forces had originally enjoyed over Antipater, and so ultimately undermined the prospects of Greek success by land too.³

It is the purpose of the following discussion to subject these premises to close scrutiny, and to suggest that these common conceptions of the Lamian War are much less securely founded than is usually conceded. My aim is not to deny that the Athenians and their Greek allies, who may have been unable to match the fleet of 240 ships under the Macedonian Cleitus, suffered naval defeats.⁴ While the narrative of the naval campaign is heavily reliant on a perilously brief notice in Diodorus, which leaves unclear much about the locations, numbers and sequence of engagements by sea, and which may not be a synopsis of the whole naval war, the sparse evidence for the naval realm points to a number of Athenian defeats. Diodorus' cursory note opens with a statement of Macedonian dominance in the Aegean in the spring of 322 and subsequently catalogues only Macedonian victories under Cleitus:⁵

καὶ τὰ μὲν κατὰ τοὺς Ἑλληνας ἐν τοιαύταις εὐημερίαις ὑπῆρχε. τῶν δὲ Μακεδόνων θαλασσοκρατούντων οἱ Ἀθηναῖοι πρὸς ταῖς ὑπαρχούσαις ναυσὶν ἄλλας κατεσκεύασαν, ὥστε γενέσθαι τὰς πάσας ἑκατὸν ἑβδομήκοντα. τῶν δὲ Μακεδονικῶν νεῶν οὐσῶν διακοσίων καὶ τεσσαράκοντα τὴν ναυαρχίαν εἶχε Κλεῖτος. οὗτος δὲ ναυμαχῆσας πρὸς Εὐετίωνα τὸν Ἀθηναίων ναύαρχον ἐνίκησε δυσὶν ναυμαχίαις καὶ συχνὰς τῶν πολεμίων νεῶν διέφθειρε περὶ τὰς καλουμένας Ἐχινάδας νήσους.

³ At the outbreak of war, the Athenian general Leosthenes already had at his disposal up to 8000 mercenaries and 7000 Aetolians (Diod. 18.9.1-3, 5) before the Athenian forces (5500 Athenians, 2000 mercenaries: Diod. 18.11.3) even reached him, and the Athenians were keenly recruiting other allies (Diod. 18.10.3, 5; Plut. *Dem.* 27.2; for inscriptional evidence of such additional alliances, see IG ii³ 1 376 with Oikonomides (1982); IG ii³ 1 378.10-13). At the same time Alexander's erstwhile regent in Macedon, Antipater, was able to mobilise only 13 000 Macedonian infantry and 600 cavalry (so Diod. 18.12.2; cf. 18.12.4: the Greeks 'far outnumbered' the Macedonians). At Opis, Alexander had ordered Antipater to send from Macedonia replacements for his 10 000 discharged veterans (Arr. 7.12.4), and the latter was clearly at a disadvantage at the outbreak of Lamian War; the stratagems which Polyaeus (*Strat.* 4.4.2-3) ascribes to him in this conflict show him grappling with his relative lack of manpower (on which see also Walsh (2015) 14-15).

⁴ At 18.10.2, Diodorus documents the Athenian decree ordering the preparation of 240 vessels at the start of the war, but there is doubt that a fleet of this scale was ever actually deployed by the Athenians (cf. Diod. 18.15.8): Engels (1989) 322; Sekunda (1992) 351-54; Burckhardt (1996) 137; Green (2003) 1; Bosworth (2003) 14-15; but see also below, n.22. (Given Athens' many evocations of the Persian wars in the Lamian War (cf. below, n.69), the ambition to mobilise 200 triremes might perhaps stem from a desire to match the scale which contemporary Athenians (e.g. *Dem.* 18.238) thought Athens had contributed during the Persian Wars; the declaration of the Lamian War speaks explicitly of Athens' prior defence of Greece *by sea*: Diod. 18.10.3.) Diodorus' account of this decree presents a number of issues. His text — with 200 of the ships to be quadriremes, and only 40 triremes — is problematic, and (with the exception of Morrison (1987)) scholars tend to reverse the respective numbers of ship-types to reflect better the proportions attested in the Athenian naval inventories (IG ii² 1629.783; IG ii² 1631.167-74). His use of παρασκευάζειν in reference to these ships has also provoked debate: see Bosworth (2003) 15, who argues that the equipping (and launching) of existing vessels is intended, against Morrison's suggestion that a construction of an entirely new set of 240 ships is meant.

⁵ Wrightson (2014) 520-24 provides a useful overview and critique of the key attempts to reconstruct the number, location and order of battles in the naval campaign.

The affairs of the Greeks were thus in thriving condition, but since the Macedonians had command of the sea, the Athenians soon made ready other ships in addition to those that they already had, so that there were in all one hundred and seventy.⁶ Cleitus was in command of the Macedonian fleet, which numbered two hundred and forty. Engaging with the Athenian admiral Evetion he defeated him in two naval battles and destroyed a large number of the ships of enemy near the islands that are called the Echinades. (Diod. 18.15.7-9; trans., Geer)

In addition, Attic inscriptions, though poorly preserved, betray the loss of Athenian ships (and by implication possibly an Athenian defeat) at the Hellespont, while the *Marmor Parium* and anecdotes in Plutarch indicate the Athenian naval defeat at Amorgos.⁷ The fact of Athenian defeats, then, is not at issue. I do wish to argue, however, that

(1) the scale of Athens' naval losses is far from clear;

(2) discussions of the aims of the naval theatre and its relationship with the land campaigns have been predicated on unwarranted assumptions, and that other constructions are possible (and perhaps preferable); and, finally

(3) that we need not look to the naval campaign to explain the outcome of the Lamian War, because Diodorus offers an alternative and credible explanation of it.

i. The scale of Athens' losses

Let us begin with the question of the severity of Athens' naval defeats. The complexity of assessment is best illustrated in connection with the battle of Amorgos. This is a clash which our chief narrator of the Lamian War, Diodorus, does not see fit to mention by name at all. Instead, the supposed importance of the Amorgos clash to the ultimate outcome of the war is predicated in part on the conjecture that it was the last, and thus decisive, naval engagement — a conjecture nowhere explicitly supported in our sources — and in part on the fact that it is the only naval encounter deemed important enough for acknowledgement on the *Marmor Parium*, where Amorgos appears in the entry for the archon year 323/2.⁸ In reality, all we can take from the *Marmor* is that Amorgos was the most significant naval clash of that archon-year, which was not the final year of the war. The same entry documents the siege of Lamia: that was a dramatic event, and gave its name to the treatment of the war in an epic by the apparently lamentable poet Choerilus (and thence to the war more generally in later literature⁹), but militarily Lamia was inconsequential. Amorgos may have been

⁶ IG ii² 505.17-19 refers to the sending out of an 'initial expedition' under Evetion, which may pertain to the fleet here mentioned as already in existence before its strength was raised to 170 vessels.

⁷ IG ii² 398a + 438.7-10 (c. 320/19 BCE, mentioning a *naumachia* at the Hellespont); IG ii² 493.19-23, honouring Nikon of Adybus in 302 BCE for his assistance to shipwrecked Athenians in 'the former war'; the location of the battle is not specified, but the honorand's residence in Abydus is suggestive. (IG ii² 505 and 506 also allude to naval conflicts in this war, but without preserving the locations.) For Amorgos, see *Marmor Parium* FGrH. 239 B9; Plut. *Demetr.* 11.3-5, *de fort. Alex.* 338a.

⁸ As the final battle, see (e.g.) Ashton (1977) 1 n.7; Morrison (1987) 93-94; Sekunda (1992) 350; Bosworth (2003) 20; *contra*, Schmitt (1992) 136-37; Wrightson (2014) 529.

⁹ See Ashton (1984); Walsh (2011). For its contemporaries, the Lamian War was the 'Hellenic War': see below, n.69.

likewise. Overall, the *Marmor* is an unreliable index of significance: it documents no specific battles for the next year (322/1), in which the war ended, thus ignoring the final clash at Crannon (in which the Macedonians had the better of the fighting); contrast Plutarch, who in his *Demetrius* (10.2) dates the liberation of Athens in 307 as being ‘in the fifteenth year from the time of the Lamian War and the battle of Crannon’ (my emphasis).

Plutarch, meanwhile, mentions Amorgos in two anecdotes, but in these he gives rather different impressions of the Athenian losses.¹⁰ In one (*Demetr.* 11.3-5), Amorgos is described as a disaster (ἥσσαν) (the very term used by Thucydides of the crushing Athenian defeat at Syracuse), while in the other (*de fort. Alex.* 338a) the Macedonians are credited with sinking a mere ‘two or three triremes.’¹¹ Both anecdotes are polemical and clearly the product of literary shaping: the first serves as a vehicle for the denigration of the Athenian politician Stratocles, who is accused of duplicitously concealing news of a crushing defeat from the Athenians, while the second mocks the pretensions of the Macedonian admiral Cleitus, who styled himself as the ‘new Poseidon’ on the basis of his trivial victory.¹² Neither, it may be ventured, allows a secure judgment on the severity of the defeat, although it might further be noted that in the ‘catastrophizing’ version in the *Demetrius* a mention of the repatriation of damaged hulls — a gesture generally not associated with outright defeats — has led some to suspect exaggeration of the scale of the loss in this anecdote.¹³

As a brief aside, Plutarch’s story about Stratocles, which he in fact tells in two places (thus also *Prae. ger. reip.* 799f) might even conceal within it a vague trace of an Athenian naval victory. The anecdote revolves around Stratocles’ announcement of a naval victory, with concomitant celebratory sacrifices at Athens, and then the revelation of a naval defeat three days later; Stratocles’ two reports supposedly pertain to Amorgos, so that Stratocles’ initial announcement of victory is an act of deliberate deceit. In the version in the *Demetrius* 11, it is explicitly claimed that the two reports concerned the same battle, named as that at Amorgos. The version at *Prae. ger. reip.* 799f, however, is more ambiguous, and may point to the basis of the story in fact being the receipt, in quick succession, of news from two *different* theatres: the first legitimately a success, but overshadowed by the subsequent news of a loss at Amorgos.¹⁴ Such a scenario would fit well with the vision of Athens during the war found in Plutarch, who attests elsewhere to a flurry of battle reports and multiple celebrations in

¹⁰ Landucci Gattinoni (2008) 92-95 canvasses the scholarship on this contradiction, in particular Sordi (1987).

¹¹ Cf. Thuc. 7.72.4.

¹² For Plutarch’s purpose with the Stratocles material, see Monaco (2013) 120-21; see also below, n.14. Stratocles’ close association with Demetrius Poliorcetes and his apparent domination of the Athenian political scene from 307/6 BCE (see Tracy (2000) 228 on his prolific authorship of decrees) made him a contentious figure; the traditions on him, both from his own lifetime and subsequently (such as in Plutarch), are generally negative, and imbue him with the traits of Aristophanes’ Cleon. On Stratocles’ career, see particularly Paschidis (2008) 78-106; Bayliss (2011) 152-86; on the parallels between Cleon and Stratocles, and on the importance of comedy in the shaping of the traditions around Stratocles, see Marasco (1981) 63-64; O’Sullivan (2009) 64-75; Xenophontos (2011) 609-11; Monaco (2013); Luraghi (2014).

¹³ Morrison (1987) 93-94 cf. Schmitt (1992) 138.

¹⁴ Bayliss (2011) 158-59 suggests instead that Stratocles here was behaving analogously to other generals who withheld news of defeats in order to preserve the morale of their troops (compare for example Xen. *Hell.* 4.3.10-14). Such analogies falter, however, on the grounds that Stratocles was not (supposedly) duping fighting men on the eve of another clash but deceiving a home population for a brief interlude in which they were not themselves at a battle front. Luraghi (2014) 193 doubts Stratocles’ role in this anecdote, but still assumes that the two reports pertained to the same battle.

the city.¹⁵ On this reading, Stratocles will have been guilty of voting celebrations before news had come in from all the various theatres of conflict; his supposed response, that he was glad that the Athenians had been happy if only for a short period, will not have had the brazen insolence that the shaping of the story by Plutarch, who is notoriously hostile to Stratocles, bestows upon it.

Returning to the question of the losses incurred at Amorgos, there is also the inscribed Athenian naval inventory for the year in which the *naumachia* there occurred. On this account of Athenian ship numbers taken at the close of the archon-year, the naval *epimeletai* catalogued some 315 triremes and (likely) 50 quadriremes.¹⁶ This is indeed a reduction on the numbers recorded for the year 325/24, when some 360 triremes and 50 quadriremes were logged, but trireme numbers had been falling in the period prior to the Lamian War (records show 399 of them in 330/29, for example), and the tally of 315 for 323/22 scarcely marks a catastrophic collapse of the Athenian force; there remained enough hulls for a vast fleet.¹⁷ (To appreciate this scale of remaining infrastructure, it is worth recalling that the great expedition against Sicily had initially seen a mere 134 ships sent.¹⁸) In an attempt to reconcile these naval records with the supposedly disastrous nature of the loss at Amorgos, Ashton suggested that the battle took place so late in the archon-year that notification of the losses did not reach Athens in time for the naval curators to register them in their count of the ships; on this reconstruction, the decline that is present in the numbers for 323/22 is the product of a more realistic assessment by the *epimeletai* of the numbers of *sea-worthy* vessels at Athens' disposal, rather than capturing a less absolute defeat at Amorgos.¹⁹ A more scrupulous assessment of the naval stocks may well have contributed to the reduction of the listed total, but it is certainly unwarranted to exclude the impact of Amorgos given the lack of any definitive evidence of the true scale of the Amorgos defeat.

In addition to the total figures, the naval records document the numbers of ships still at sea at the time the record was being compiled. Attempts have been made to use these data too to evaluate Athens' naval performance, and such discussions again betray a tendency to assume severe naval defeats.²⁰ The data are in fact incomplete. In particular, the number of

¹⁵ Plut. *Phoc.* 23.4. A deme decree from Kollytos had formerly been taken as the voting of an extravagant sacrifice to Agathe Tyche in celebration of a momentous event in the Lamian war (see Tracy (1994) 242, cf. (1995) 26-27), but in his recent edition of the inscription Matthaïou (2008) 91-93 disputes that the deme's revenue raising was connected to Tyche and suggests the decree belongs to 327 BCE. Might there, however, be a hint of optimism in frustratingly lacunose *IG ii² 505*, which indicates that its honorands were awarded golden crowns for their repeated support of Evetion's multiple missions?

¹⁶ *IG ii² 1631.167-74*.

¹⁷ For ship numbers in 330/29, *IG ii² 1627.266-78*; for 323/22: *IG ii² 1629.783ff*. On the issue of manpower losses (as distinct from loss of hulls), see below, n.55.

¹⁸ Thuc. 6.43, of which 100 were Athenian and 34 allied ships; an additional 83 were sent subsequently (Thuc. 7.16.2, 7.42.1). For discussion of the figures, Hornblower (2008) 1061-66.

¹⁹ As not reflecting the loss at Amorgos, see Ashton (1977) 7-8; *contra*, Bosworth (2003) 20 n.49. If the engagement(s) at the Hellespont (above, n.7) preceded Amorgos (and therefore also took place in 323/22, which some deem likely), the numbers lost here too will be captured in the naval tally published at the end of this archon year.

²⁰ See for example Schmitt (1992) 140-41, who takes it as almost certain that the inscription recorded 143 ships at sea, marking a loss of 27 ships (based on an original fleet of 170, the figure drawn from Diod. 18.15.8); he then uses this figure as a basis for positing further that, in a subsequent battle in 322/21, the Athenians lost about the same number of ships, thus bringing the total lost to 50-60 ships.

triremes still at sea (IG ii² 1631.172) is partially lost: it may be 94, 144, 184 or 234.²¹ There is, moreover, no certainty of the full scale of mobilisation against which any of these reconstructed numbers should be evaluated. Diodorus seems to imply at 18.15.8 that 170 ships marked the fullest mobilisation from Athens, but even if this figure is accepted as a maximum deployment in the whole naval realm and not just as a figure for the fleet under Evetion, Diodorus gives no indication of how many of these were triremes.²² Less attention gets paid to the more secure figure in IG ii² 1631.174, which indicates that, at the close of 323/22, 49 of Athens' total of 50 quadriremes were still at sea, with the remaining one present in the dockyard.²³ Given the shifting preference for these heavier vessels in this period,²⁴ it is hard to imagine that the 49 had seen no active engagement — and difficult, on this basis, to see the naval curators' records as evidencing significant Athenian defeats to date.

Diodorus himself names only one naval theatre: a clash near the Echinades where, he says, Cleitus destroyed a large number of the ships of the enemy. This at least seems to betoken a serious loss, but even here there are problems for the evaluation of the loss for Athens: the ships are not directly said to be Athenian, and Diodorus' phrasing might indicate a distinction between the Echinades clash and the formal *naumachiai* waged between Cleitus and the Athenian commander Evetion, leaving open the possibility that this was some other kind of engagement (on which, see further below).²⁵ So in terms of evidence for a destruction of Athens' fleet, there is far from a compelling case.

ii. The strategic objectives of the naval campaign

There is a second angle from which Athens' naval performance has been adjudged a telling failure, and that is a strategic one. Prevalent in the modern scholarship is a belief that the fundamental aim of Athens' naval endeavor was to prevent the crossings of Leonnatus and then Craterus to aid the beleaguered Antipater — and, concomitantly, an assumption that Cleitus' key purpose was to ferry across Craterus' troops from Cilicia.²⁶ Bosworth raised a rare

²¹ On the possible restorations, see Ashton (1977) 4, 7.

²² So too Ashton (1977) 7. It should be recollected, in this context, that Diodorus reports the commissioning of a fleet of 240 — of which 200 were to be triremes — in the initial Athenian decree for war at 18.10.2 (on which see above, n.4). If such numbers *had* been mobilized (and Just. 13.5.8 does make a claim that 200 triremes were launched, although this is widely dismissed), then *exempli gratia* the possibility cannot be excluded that the naval record listed 184 triremes as still at sea at the close of 323/22. Such a fleet would have been outnumbered by Cleitus' 240 vessels but would still have been a fleet to reckon with, and a fleet that would not betoken a collapse of Athenian naval potential.

²³ The number 49 is also only partially preserved, but of the restorations possible given the space of the lacuna the lowest possible restored figure is 49: see Ashton (1977) 5.

²⁴ The massive armada commissioned by Alexander at the end of his life was to be of ships heavier than triremes: so Diod. 18.4.4.

²⁵ Morrison (1987) 94-95; Sekunda (1992) 351; Wrightson (2014) 533; *contra* Bosworth (2003) 16-17, who insists that Diodorus intends the Echinades to be one of the two defeats that he says the Athenian admiral Evetion suffered at Cleitus' hands.

²⁶ See for example Morrison (1987) 94; Wrightson (2014) 526; Worthington (2020) 25. Cleitus is sometimes also presumed to have transported Leonnatus' troops, although this is rightly questioned by Wrightson. It is in fact unclear how many troops crossed with Leonnatus. Diod. 18.14.2, 5 gives him only 4000 infantry and 2000 horse in Thrace, and has him arriving to aid Antipater in Thessaly with more than 20 000 infantry and 1500 horse; the second figure was reached after Leonnatus had enlisted 'many additional' soldiers from Macedon itself. When Antipater had hastened from Macedonia at the outbreak of war, he had left his

voice of dissent when he questioned whether such a blockade could ever have been seriously contemplated by the Athenians, given that both sides of the Hellespont were in Macedonian hands at the start of the war, and Athens' cleruchy in the Chersonese was likely long gone.²⁷ In fact in the assessment of the objectives we are again on shakier ground than is often recognized. Cleitus' assumed co-ordination with Craterus is a case in point. While Cleitus was among those sent homewards with Craterus by Alexander from Opis in 324, it need not be assumed that the major fleet subsequently constructed in Cilicia and commanded by him in the Lamian War was intended primarily as an instrument for Craterus' repatriation of Alexander's veterans. It is never explicitly designated thus in the sources, and Alexander himself had had other ambitious plans for naval conquest in the west.²⁸ Cleitus' own grandstanding after the Lamian War — not only masquerading as Poseidon, but conducting business while walking on purple tapestries — hints at significant independent ambitions (to which his subsequent securing of a satrapy at the conference of Triparadeisos also speaks), and his connection to Craterus was not so absolute as to prevent him subsequently aligning himself with Craterus' arch-rival, Perdiccas, in the latter's attempt on Egypt.²⁹ The problematic nature of Cleitus' supposed subordination to Craterus is further evident in the fact that the only naval locations with which Cleitus is explicitly linked in any sources are Amorgos and the Echinades, neither obviously key to the movements of Craterus from Cilicia.³⁰ The transfer of troops across the Hellespont (both those of Leonnatus and of Craterus) could as well have been effected by the 110 vessels that Antipater had had at his disposal from the start of the war, without any necessary involvement of Cleitus' fleet.³¹

In reality, the interplay between land and naval actions may have been far more fluid and nebulous than is generally allowed. It may be observed, in particular, that all three of the known theatres of naval activity in the Lamian War — the Hellespont, Amorgos and the Echinades — sit on Athenian trade routes.³² The significance of the Hellespont for Athenian grain supply is too well-known to need discussion here, although it may be further observed that in *IG ii² 398a + 438* the honorand not only aided Athenian survivors from the *naumachia*

subordinate, Sippas, with instructions to levy as many troops as possible (so Diod. 18.12.2); Leonnatus may well have garnered these soldiers in transit. The strategic imperative of blocking Leonnatus at the Hellespont is thus not as obvious as often assumed.

²⁷ Bosworth (2003) 20. The status of the Chersonese is, admittedly, difficult to ascertain: see Anson (2012) 54.

²⁸ Only Just. 12.12.8 seems to imply that Cleitus (among others of Alexander's *philoï*) was a subordinate of Craterus when Alexander dismissed his veterans at Opis; Arr. 7.12.4 does not mention Cleitus at all. For Alexander's vast fleet building and ambitions in the west, see Diod. 18.4.4, Bosworth (1988) 209-210.

²⁹ Grandstanding: Plut. *de fort. Alex.* 338a; Athen. 12.539b-c, citing Phylarchus and Agatharchides. Such gestures equal the pretensions of Craterus' monument at Delphi, on which see Dunn and Wheatley (2012) 43-44. For his later association with Perdiccas: Just. 13.6.16. For his satrapy, Diod. 18.39.6, Arr. *FGrH*. 156 F9.37.

³⁰ It is often assumed that the *naumachia* at the Hellespont involved Cleitus, and that it concerned the transit of troops. As Heckel (1992) 185 has observed, however, no evidence directly links Cleitus to this arena (he is named in neither *IG ii² 398a + 438*, nor *IG ii² 493*); he is named in *IG ii² 506.12*, but this inscription does not specify the Hellespont as the site of the *naumachia*. See also Wrightson (2014) 525, who believes that Cleitus was not the commander at Abydos.

³¹ For this fleet, see Diod. 18.12.2; it had been sent by Alexander to transport money to the royal treasury in Macedonia. Relevant here are the arguments of Schmitt (1992) 132-34 that Antipater's fleet will not have remained in the vicinity of Lamia during the siege.

³² Bosworth (2003) 20-21 was already inclined to understand the Lamian naval conflicts in the Hellespont as grain-related; Wrightson (2014) 533 notes too that the Echinades sit on the western grain routes, and Schmitt (1992) 136-37 that Amorgos is on a shipping route.

near the Hellespont (presumably in the Lamian War) but subsequently sent grain to Athens when there was a shortage;³³ it is tempting to believe that this might support the connection, here suggested, between this battle and the passage of Athenian grain ships. The grain route from Egypt and Cryene, on which Amorgos lies, had become increasingly important to Athens from the 330s. Into the 320s there was intense interest in sources to the west, including the Po Valley, to the extent that Athens had sent out a colony to the Adriatic for the protection of this trade in 325/4; hence, perhaps, the action near the Echinades, off the Acarnanian coast.³⁴ The distinction, noted earlier, that some see in Diodorus between Cleitus' formal battles with the Athenian fleet and his action at the Echinades perhaps derives from the latter being a less formalized skirmish with grain transport vessels and their protective convoys (which latter may itself have included an Athenian squadron);³⁵ something of a parallel, in a near-contemporary context, for more informal engagements around grain fleets in a broader military setting is afforded by the interplay between the Rhodians and the Antigonids in 305-304, in which merchant and pirate fleets, raider tactics and light skirmishing vessels rather than formal *naumachiai* were important components of the naval conflict.³⁶

Control of the Aegean routes and the policing of piracy were themselves intrinsic not only to the immediate needs of Athens (food supply remained a pressing issue³⁷) but also to the Athenians' status.³⁸ The safety of the seas may have featured in Athens' imperial rhetoric already in the fifth century: it has been seen as implicit in Thucydides' discussion of the thalassocracy of Minos and his clearing of the sea of pirates (1.4), which may be intended as a precursor of the Athenian empire.³⁹ Naval guardianship is also notably present in the much-

³³ On this decree see Engen (2010) 311-12.

³⁴ For Egypt, Cyrene, and Amorgos: Rutishauser (2012) 33, 185, 203, who observes that the strategic significance of Amorgos to this grain route was such that the Athenians installed a garrison there during the Social War. For the Adriatic colony: *IG ii³ 1 370*. For trade with Italy, including the Po region, see Rhodes and Osborne (2003) 525; Moreno (2007) 342-43; Athens' concerns for its trade in the west are evidenced also in speeches about the Etruscans by Hyperides and Dinarchus, in an expedition led by the Athenian general Diotimus against Etruscan pirates in 335/34 (*IG ii² 1623.276-285*, with Verdejo-Manchado and Antela-Bernárdez (2021); for the apparent success of the mission, [Plut.] *Vit. x. orat.* 844a), and even in the depiction of Dionysus harrying Etruscan pirates in the relief adorning the choregic monument of Lysicrates of 335/34 (with the choice of decoration reflecting the subject matter of the winning dithyramb: so the notes on *IG ii³ 4 460* on *AIO* (<https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII34/460>)).

³⁵ For the use by Athens of military squadrons to escort grain convoys, see Potts (2008) 48-9; Gabrielsen (2015) 188-89.

³⁶ Diod. 20.82.2; 20.84.5-6; 20.93.2-5; 20.97.5. For the use of raider tactics as a complement to formal sea battles, see further Gabrielsen (2013) 146.

³⁷ Although some shipments were clearly reaching Athens in the mid-320s (see Dem. 56.9 for one instance), supply remained an ongoing issue: see Garnsey (1988) 151-54; Tracy (1995) 32-33. Issues with the food supply are documented largely through inscriptions, as (so Lambert (2012) 97) is the focus of Athenian diplomacy on grain trade issues.

³⁸ Harding (1995) 113 sees Athens' imperialism as expressed in the economic sphere in the fourth century. In fact, the 'sale of protection' by Athenian triremes and the privateering by Athenian trierarchs (both widespread, if not publicly condoned, in the fourth century) served as a source of revenue in place of imperial tribute: see Gabrielsen (2021) 68-69.

³⁹ Hornblower (1991) 21-22. As Hornblower further observes, Thucydides himself pays little further attention to this theme in his subsequent narrative, beyond noting the harassment of trade vessels by the Spartans at 2.69.1; Plutarch, by contrast, links Cimon's campaigns on Skyros with the suppression of piracy (Plut. *Cim.* 8.3) (although see Dawe (2008) for doubts about the pirate claim). More tangibly, we might note the

debated 'Congress Decree' of Plutarch's *Pericles* 17, a document which indicates at the least that the patrolling of the Aegean was being portrayed in the fourth century (when some believe this text was fashioned) as a concern of their fifth century forebears.⁴⁰ Further, military and economic interests at sea had become increasingly intertwined in the fourth century, and control of trade routes and the safety of the seas had increasingly become the focus of contention among the Aegean powers.⁴¹ In the 350s and 340s, Athenian orators complain that Philip of Macedon sought to challenge Athens' position as protector of the seas and to undermine Athens' own security by dominating the grain trade routes; Athens was even moved to vote war in response.⁴² The value of sea control had not diminished for players subsequently: mastery of the grain routes was clearly a concern for all sides in the Persians' so-called Aegean War against Alexander, and Athens' own naval mobilisations remained predominantly for the protection of grain convoys.⁴³ Strikingly, an element of imperial rhetoric remains present in these later Athenian activities: thus the choice, as leader of the colonizing expedition sent to the Adriatic in 325, of Miltiades, a descendant of the Miltiades who had led an Athenian colonizing expedition to the Chersonese in the sixth century, has been seen as 'reflect[ing] a historical consciousness and an aspiration to reconnect with [Athens'] imperial past.'⁴⁴

This backdrop of pronounced interest in, and competition for, mastery of the sea as a goal in its own right — and not merely as an adjunct to a land campaign — may offer another

presence of Athenian 'guardians of the Hellespont' charged with controlling the grain supply at some time after 430: *IG* i³ 61.36.

⁴⁰ For a useful overview of scholarship on the Congress Decree, see Tronson (2000) 359-62. Seager (1969) 132-33 sees the reference in the decree to the freedom of the seas as an indication of the decree's fourth century provenance, on the basis that 'of the freedom of the seas as a theme for diplomatic discussion there is no trace until the fourth century.' This may be so, but this has no impact on the point being advanced here: that for fourth century Athenians, the safety of the sea had become an element of Athenian hegemony and could be imagined by them (rightly or wrongly) as being a facet of the Athenian empire in its hey-day.

⁴¹ The complex interplay of military and commercial behaviours in general (some of them predatory) has been extensively illuminated in the works of Gabrielsen, esp. Gabrielsen (2015) cf. (2021) 68-71.

⁴² At [Dem.] 7.14-15, Philip's proposal to work with the Athenians against piracy is seen by the speaker (Hegesippus) as a threat to Athenian supremacy; earlier (at 7.2) the Athenians are urged not to accept Halonessus from Philip, because to do so would be to concede to him an authority over the seas that belonged rightfully to Athens itself. In Dem. 18.87 (330 BCE), it is claimed that Philip had 'proposed to get control of the shipping trade in grain', having noted Athens' reliance on importations (cf. 18.241, 301-2), and a decade earlier he had indeed captured Athenian merchant vessels (so Dem. 4.34), and seized vast numbers of grain ships in 340 BCE (Didymus *Dem.* cols. 10.34-11.5; Philoch. *FGrH.* 328 F162; Theop. *FGrH.* 115 F292). For the vote of war, Diod. 16.77.2-3; on the causation of this war (the siege of Byzantium, according to Diodorus, but the seizure of Athenian grain vessels according to Didymus), see the summary of scholarship in Harding (2006) 211. Against this backdrop, it is interesting that Bosworth (1971) sees the Congress decree (on which, see above n.40) as a product of Philip's rhetoric post-Chaeronea, and as a document designed to show Philip as the inheritor of Athens' mantle; we would again have here, then, an indication of the contestation of sea control between Athens and Macedon.

⁴³ Gabrielsen (2015) esp. 188-92; cf. Burke (2010) 398-99. Of note are Dem. 18.301-302, *IG* ii² 1623.276-85 and *IG* ii² 1628.37-42; it is believed that Athens consistently had vessels patrolling the trade routes throughout the 320s. For the Aegean War, see esp. [Dem.] 17.19-20, with Rutishauser (2012) 201-3; Ruzicka (1988) 139, 142; note also *IG* ii² 1627.241-65, documenting for 330/29 a number of Athenian horse-transport triremes agreed by legal review to have been rendered useless because of enemy action which, in temporal terms, might fit with action in the Aegean War.

⁴⁴ For Miltiades as leader, *IG* ii³ 1 370 col. 1.2; on the significance of the choice, see the commentary in AIO (<https://www.atticinscriptions.com/inscription/IGII31/370>). For the earlier Miltiades' colonising, see Hdt. 6.36.

way to understand the naval activities during the course of the Lamian War. The ‘domination of the sea’ by the Macedonians, the statement of which opens Diodorus’ brief excursus, will have been a situation to which Athens, in line with that city’s traditional aspirations, will have needed to respond; the resurgence of Athens’ panhellenic rhetoric around the Lamian War itself will only have intensified that imperative. Cleitus, too, may have been contending for such control of the seas and for the profits that could accrue thereby, objectives that will have made Athens his prime adversary.⁴⁵ We might think of him not so much as a tool of Craterus as an independent agent, and his navy a forerunner of the non-state-based fleets (usually castigated in the traditions as pirate fleets) which became important players elsewhere in early Hellenistic period, particularly under the Antigonids.⁴⁶ Naval dominion for him will have been a means of securing his own status as a power-player in the contests of the Diadochoi, just as Rhodes’ emergence as *prostates* of the Aegean and leader of the war against piracy in the vacuum left by the collapse of Athenian power significantly elevated the political importance and economic standing of that island.⁴⁷

On this understanding, the conflicts at sea were not integrally aligned with the land war as such, but rather represented a second, distinct front on which the Athenians were engaged. The separateness of the two theatres may explain the difficulties that have beset modern attempts to align the naval realm in Diodorus’ account with the land war. Scholars have posited a variety of reconstructions of the order, location and objectives of the naval clashes, all underpinned by an assumed relationship with the land campaigns:⁴⁸ witness in particular the attempts to correct the ‘Echinades’ of Diodorus 18.15.9 to ‘Lichades’, and thus place that engagement more conveniently in the vicinity of a besieged Antipater at Lamia.⁴⁹ A fundamental distinction between the two spheres, rather than some failure of understanding on his part, may also explain Diodorus’ paucity of attention to the naval campaign and his own lack of integration of it with his land campaign narrative. In this connection, it may not be coincidental that Diodorus’ brief excursus on naval affairs has no place within the elaborate ring structure in which, so Walsh has recently argued, Diodorus has constructed his Lamian War narrative, and in fact sits alongside material on Perdiccas’ campaigns in Cappadocia which Walsh deems a digression; it is again as though the naval realm did not feature in Diodorus’ thinking about the trajectory of the land campaign.⁵⁰ One might suggest instead that, with his insertion of a couple of lines about the naval sphere in his account of 322 BCE, Diodorus intends rather to give his reader a sense of a fight evenly-poised at that point: the Greeks had had the best of it by land, the Macedonians, by sea, and neither realm had seen a decisive engagement.

⁴⁵ For the raiding of merchantmen by naval commanders, Athens itself yields much evidence: compare the action of the Athenian Diopieithes in the northern Aegean in 342 (Dem. 8.9), and, on a widespread level, [Dem.] 51.13-14 with schol. Dem. 21.80 (cf. Gabrielsen (2015) 193-95, with further examples). For the political and financial gains associated with the exercise of dominion of the seas (including through the market for protection against pirates) see also Gabrielsen (2001) 232-37.

⁴⁶ For early Hellenistic piracy, see Gabbert (1986).

⁴⁷ Diod. 20.81.3 for Rhodes’ assumption of leadership in the protection of the seas.

⁴⁸ Wrightson (2014) reviews the key scholarship and evaluates the reconstructions.

⁴⁹ Landucci Gattinoni (2008) 92 gives a convenient summary of the scholarship. The case for retaining the Echinades has been most forcefully argued by Bosworth (2003) 17-18, cf. now also Wrightson (2014) 530-31.

⁵⁰ For his part, Walsh (2018) 313 cf. 315 suggests that Diodorus was forced to omit any proper treatment of the naval campaign because of the difficulty of integrating this ‘much more complex’ realm into his ring composition framework.

iii. *The reasons for the Athenians' capitulation after Crannon*

In the light of such factors, we might reappraise whether Diodorus is in fact guilty of obscuring the different 'reality' of the modern construct of the war's conclusion, namely that the Athenian losses at sea quashed all their chances in the war. Serious consideration may be given instead to Diodorus' explanation of the final demise of the Greek effort against Antipater, about the trajectory of which he is quite explicit. Diodorus refers to the deliberations of the Greek generals in the wake of Crannon, and his account indicates their belief that, despite their recent defeat, the war had not yet been decided. The crux was the absence, at that time, of allied contingents from the land campaign, most notably the Aetolians whose contingent had been the most numerous in the Greek alliance: Leosthenes had some 7000 Aetolians serving with him early in the war.⁵¹ They had been granted permission, while Antipater was under duress and contained in Lamia, to 'go home for the present because of some national business'; Diodorus thereafter mentions the continued absence not only of the Aetolians but also of 'not a few of the other Greeks' in the clash that saw the death of Leonnatus, with the result that the Greek force that faced the combined Macedonians after the arrival of Craterus in Thessaly were 'far inferior in numbers' to their foe.⁵² The perception that it was the missing allies who were key is not confined to Diodorus: it is there in Plutarch, and it was still circulating when the Suda was compiled, where it is claimed that Antipater was saved 'when the Aetolians withdrew, and then the others.'⁵³ This again strongly suggests that it was not the decisive fate of the naval war that determined the Greeks' deliberations.

As an explanation, the absence of key allies is legitimate and sufficient. Athens' own citizen resources were already significantly committed: Diodorus affirms that all citizens up to the age-class of 40 were enrolled for the land offensive, and on Sekunda's calculations of the Athenian population, the totals of mobilized Athenians mentioned by Diodorus closely approximate the total citizen figure for these age-groups predicted by his life tables.⁵⁴ The Athenians will not have had the capacity themselves to compensate for the temporary withdrawal of their most numerous ally, which will have had a serious impact on the short-term viability of the land campaign regardless of the outcome of clashes on the naval front.⁵⁵

⁵¹ Diod. 18.9.5 for the Aetolians. For the total of the Greek army (30 000), see Just. 13.5.8, cf. Burckhard (1996) 135.

⁵² Diod. 18.13.4; 18.15.2; cf. 18.17.1, with Diodorus yet again noting that 'many of [the Greeks], despising the enemy because of their former good fortune, had gone away to their own cities to look after their private affairs.' Diodorus gives the Greek army at Crannon at 25 000 infantry and 3 500 cavalry.

⁵³ Plut. *Phoc.* 26.1; Suda sv Antipatros (A2704).

⁵⁴ Diod. 18.10.2; at 18.11.3 it is recorded that, from the seven tribes allocated to campaigning outside Attica, a force of 5000 infantry and 500 horse was amassed, giving by extrapolation a mobilization of 7857 from all ten tribes. On this figure and its relationship to the total citizen population, see Sekunda (1992); *contra*, Hansen (1994) 308-10, who continues to argue for a higher Athenian citizen population figure.

⁵⁵ Sekunda's model has the striking corollary that the Athenians will have needed to withdraw citizens from the land front to man the ships (so Sekunda (1992) 348-55). On this premise, Athenian naval losses will have had an impact on the numbers they were able to (re)supply to the land front, but this impact will be nowhere near that of the absences of the Aetolians and others. Apart from the fact that we do not know how many ships the Athenians lost, it needs to be noted that the crews of Athenian ships could be 70% non-Athenian (see Gabrielsen (2021) 52 n.4 on *IG I³* 1032.3, 50, 172, 305 with its demarcations of citizens, *xenoi* and slaves among the crews of four triremes in the late fifth / early fourth centuries). While *IG ii²* 493 lauds Nikon of Abydos for

Leosthenes' successors at Crannon believed, moreover, that the Greek position might be redeemable should the missing allies return:⁵⁶

τῆ δ' ὕστεραία Μένων μὲν καὶ Ἀντίφιλος οἱ τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἡγεμόνες
συνεδρεύσαντες ἐβουλεύσαντο πότερον ἀναμείναντες τοὺς ἀπὸ τῶν πόλεων
συμμάχους καὶ καταστάντες ἀξιόμαχοι περὶ τῶν ὄλων διακρίνονται ...

On the next day [after Crannon] Menon and Antiphilus, the leaders of the Greeks, came together and took counsel whether they should wait for the allies from the cities and then, when they were in a position to fight on equal terms, seek a final decision... (Diod. 18.17.6; trans, Greer)

If Diodorus is right that the Aetolians soon afterwards deployed an army of over 10 000 against Antipater and Craterus, this optimism was not unfounded.⁵⁷ We need not assume, then, that Diodorus has failed to apportion blame for the ultimate demise of the war correctly on the naval failures of the Athenians, whose *demos* he elsewhere does not hesitate to present in a hostile fashion.⁵⁸

The absence of any decisive impact from the naval campaign is further evident in the still-undecided nature of the military situation after Crannon, to which the ensuing developments attest. In Menon and Antiphilus' contemplations, the alternative to awaiting the return of the allies was not abject surrender, but the sending of envoys concerning an ending of the war (περὶ διαλύσεως);⁵⁹ they felt even strong enough to reject Antipater's initial response, which was an insistence that the cities come to terms one by one rather than *en masse*. This confidence may have stemmed from an apprehension of the fact that the continuation of direct military hostilities after Crannon was not necessarily in the interests of either side. Against their own temporary manpower crises, the Greeks were also surely reckoning on pressures on Antipater and Craterus to end hostilities in Greece so that they might themselves engage with the turmoil to the east. Relationships between the Diadochoi,

assisting 'many Athenian citizens' in the wake of a *naumachia*, the honorary nature of this text cautions against taking from this that the crews were largely Athenian; the Athenian navy of the Lamian War will surely have drawn on such other pools of manpower in addition to citizen sailors. Burckhardt (1996) 137-38 (cf. more generally Burckhardt (2018) 157) posits the hiring of some 10 000 mercenaries for the ships (to mirror the number hired by Athens for the land campaign). Further, drawing upon the census figures recorded under Demetrius of Phalerum (Ctesicles *FGrH*. 245 F1), Bosworth (2003) 15 suggests that Athens may have had around 10 000 metics available for the fleet; these same census data put the Athenian slave figure at 400 000.

⁵⁶ A pause in hostilities will also have allowed Athens' own manpower to be replenished; in both *IG* ii² 493 and *Agora* XVI 104 the honorands (from Abydos and Heracleion respectively) are praised for providing supplies to facilitate the repatriation of Athenian citizen survivors of a sea battle (so too possibly the honorand of *IG* ii² 492), and presumably these men did eventually return.

⁵⁷ Diod. 18.24.1-2. An even greater force (of 12 000) deployed soon afterwards: so Diod. 18.38.1-3, who notes that with the addition of Thessalian allies, this force was bolstered to 26 500. Westlake (1949) argues that these numbers must include significant numbers of mercenaries. Just how soon the first Aetolian force was redeployed depends upon the contentious reconstruction of the chronology of this period, but it will belong to late 322 (thus only months after Crannon) or (more likely) 321: see Anson (1986) 215-16 (cf. Anson (2002/3) and Boiy (2007) for further discussions of the broader chronological reconstruction.

⁵⁸ For Diodorus' hostile presentation of the Athenian *demos* see for example Diod. 18.10.4 (where Diodorus implicitly agrees with the 'Greeks of superior understanding' who urged against the war), and further Burckhardt (1996) 132, 134; for Diodorus' anti-Athenian shaping of other kinds see Walsh (2018) 309-10.

⁵⁹ Diod. 18.17.6-7. On Diodorus' terminology, compare Thuc. 4.19.1, where the Spartans in 425 invite the Athenians to end the war (λακεδαιμόνιοι δὲ ὑμᾶς προκαλοῦνται ἐς σπονδὰς καὶ διάλυσιν πολέμου) and offer 'peace and alliance and the most friendly and intimate relations.' Sparta had been discomfited by events at Pylos but neither side had won a conclusive victory and both had reason to countenance an end to the fighting.

while superficially amicable, were tense: Diodorus claims that once Perdiccas had gained the guardianship of the kings and control of the royal armies at Babylon, his friendship with Antipater was only feigned, and that his marriage to Antipater's daughter, Nicaea, which Perdiccas contracted in the months after the Lamian War, was but a temporary measure to ensure Antipater's acquiescence; Diodorus also explicitly attests to the ambition of Craterus at least to return to Asia after the settlement of the Greeks.⁶⁰

Further, the Athenians were now aware that they might achieve what had been their underlying objective in the war — the exemption of Samos from Alexander's 'Exiles decree', on which see also below⁶¹ — by appealing over Antipater's head to the authority of the kings, thus in reality to Perdiccas.⁶² Notable in this context is Walsh's contention that the Athenians from the very start of the war had 'aimed at forcing a political, rather than a purely military, settlement through an act of aggressive posturing.'⁶³ Perdiccas ultimately proved no friend of Athens and decided in favour of the Samians, but an Athenian gamble on him was not completely unrealistic: later, the Aetolians were indeed saved by the diversion of Antipater and Craterus to deal with Perdiccas, whose ambitions had finally been revealed to them by Antigonos, and with whom the Aetolians themselves had made a compact against Antipater.⁶⁴ There are tantalizing hints of such remaining Athenian ebullience in fragments from Dexippus' *Ta met' Alexandron*, in which Dexippus imagines an exchange between Athenian envoys and Antipater after Crannon. Dexippus' Athenians are strikingly uncowed; they announce their intentions to send envoys to the kings and seem to demand concessions from Antipater, provoking rebukes from that Macedonian on their ill-founded confidence.⁶⁵ For all its late, rhetorical nature, Dexippus' portrayal of the dynamic at this meeting may not be completely unfounded.⁶⁶

⁶⁰ Diod. 18.23.1-3 on Antipater, Nicaea and Perdiccas; 18.18.7 for Craterus' preparations to return to Asia.

⁶¹ Diod. 18.8.6-7 cf. Just. 13.5.2 for the Exiles Decree as the motive for war; Diodorus' framing of the Lamian military narrative with passages concerning the Samian cleruchies (Diod. 18.18.6, with Amendola (2022) 171 n.629) underscores the centrality of that issue to the war. In our thinking about the naval campaign, then, we should also countenance the likelihood that Athens directed naval resources to the prevention of the Samians' reclamation of their island. *IG* XII.6.43 and XII.6.42 refer to πόλεμος between Samian exiles at Anaia and Athenian cleruchs; the date is unspecified but the context suits the Lamian War and its immediate aftermath. Related also to this conflict over Samian control may be *Agora* XVI 100: so Tracy (1995) 19-20, Amendola (2022) 182-83. See further Errington (1975); Habicht (1997) 31-33.

⁶² Demades sought to undermine the relations between Perdiccas and Antipater, and to mobilise Perdiccas against Antipater in Greece (an attempt for which he ultimately paid a heavy price): Diod.18.48.2, Plut. *Dem.* 31.5 cf. *Phoc.* 30.6 (wrongly identifying the target of Demades' overtures as Antigonos), Arr. *FGrH.* 156 F 9.14; *PBerol.* inv. 13045 D II.3-8; for the location of this solicitation see Amendola (2022) 139-40.

⁶³ Walsh (2015) 5.

⁶⁴ Judgment against Athens: Diod. 18.18.6. Amendola (2022) 172-73 argues that Perdiccas' involvement in the Samian issue came about not (as is often assumed) because Antipater deferred the decision to him, but because of the Athenian embassy; he further (184-87) discusses the likelihood, based on *PBerol.* Inv. 13045 FII.15-19, that this embassy brought an honorary crown to Perdiccas. For Perdiccas and Aetolia: Diod. 18.25.1-5; 18.38.1.

⁶⁵ See Dexippus *FGrH.* 100 F33g-k, with the readings suggested by Martin (2005) 302; Antipater chides the Athenians ἐν τῷ σφετέρῳ θάρσει δοξάζετε ἐπισχύσ[ειν].

⁶⁶ There are certainly resonances between Dexippus and other traditions (see Martin (2005) 303), suggesting that his account is not divorced from the wider tradition. There is, moreover, a trace of similar Athenian ebullience in an anecdote about Demetrius of Phalerum in what may be the same context: see Demetr. *De elocutione* 289 = Demetr. 12 SOD.

The situation in the aftermath of Crannon was, then, still fluid, not one in which the fate of Athens had already been conclusively determined by a collapse in their military position. It was only Antipater's ensuing military action against individual cities of the Greek alliance, and his bestowal of generous terms on their capitulation, that ultimately isolated the Athenians to the point that they were forced into submission; even then, on the point of capitulation, the Aetolians and Athenians consulted once more with their generals about pressing on with the conflict.⁶⁷

On this reading, the failure of the Lamian War was in the first instance diplomatic — a faltering of the Hellenic alliance — rather than military, with a misapprehension of Antipater's willingness to strike a deal compounding this diplomatic failure. This crumbling of the alliance under Athens' leadership is itself perhaps not surprising. While it was the death of Alexander that had ultimately triggered the outbreak of war, it had been the threat posed by Alexander's 'Exiles Decree' to the particular vested interests of Athens (on Samos) and Aetolia (at Oeniadae) that had really provided the impetus, and these two players had struck an early alliance; Diodorus goes so far as to claim that many other states, by contrast, welcomed the Exiles Decree.⁶⁸ The Athenians' harking back to long-standing panhellenic themes of freedom in their rhetoric at the subsequent outbreak of what they styled an 'Hellenic war' — note for example at the start of the war the promises to 'free Greece from garrisons' — may have been designed to appeal to a broader swathe of Greek *poleis*, but perhaps did little to disguise the more narrowly Athenian ambitions at play, and may even have stirred suspicions around a revival of Athens' own imperialism.⁶⁹ Low has recently shown just how Athenocentric the formulation of panhellenism within Athenian discourse had become in the period between Chaeronea and the Lamian War, and in the war itself Diodorus directly links the Athenians' assertion of liberty and their venturing to claim 'the leadership of the Greeks' through their declaration of hostilities in 323.⁷⁰ It is hardly surprising, then, that some of the allies found their own domestic interests more pressing than their commitment to Athens' war, particularly when the military situation was still strongly in the Greeks' favour. It is the absence, at a critical juncture, of the Aetolians that is the most perplexing element of the campaign: Diodorus is frustratingly opaque about the 'domestic issues' (διὰ τινὰς ἐθνικὰς χρείας) that prompted their untimely withdrawal home.⁷¹

⁶⁷ Diod. 18.17.7-8.

⁶⁸ Diod. 18.8.6-7; for the alliance, see *IG* ii³ i 381 with Worthington (1984). For caution about accepting Diodorus' claims about wider Greek receptivity to the restoration of exiles, however, see Worthington (2015) 98-99; note too the mention of embassies (unfortunately of unspecified origins and numbers) appealing the Decree at Diod. 17.113.3-4.

⁶⁹ For the revival of Athenian-led panhellenism, see the decree crafted at the start of the war by the Attic orators and reported in Diod. 18.10.2-3. For the casting of the war as a Hellenic War for freedom, and thus in the tradition of the Persian Wars, see further *IG* ii² 467 + Add. p. 661.6-8; *IG* ii² 448.43-44; *IG* ii² 505.17; *IG* ii² 506.9-10; Osborne (1981) D43.6-12; Hyp. 6.10, 12, 16, 19-22, 37 (with Hermann (2009) 23-24); cf. also *PHibeh* 1.15 (a rhetorical exercise c. 260 in which the Athenian Leosthenes on the eve of war exhorts his audience to remember Marathon and Salamis). Walsh (2015) 6 sees the Athenians' first move in the war — the occupation of Thermopylai (Diod. 18.11.5) — as a political gesture evoking the Persian Wars, with confirmation offered by Hyp. 6.12, 18.

⁷⁰ Low (2018) 460-65; Diod. 18.9.1. See also Low's interesting suggestion (465-66) of an Athenian reticence in their panhellenic rhetoric pre-Chaeronea, a reticence she links to an apprehension of the potentially negative, imperialist spectre which panhellenic rhetoric could raise.

⁷¹ Bosworth (2003) 17-19 links the naval clash at the Echinades with the Aetolian withdrawal and suggests that the Macedonian fleet had blockaded Oiniadae in order to lure away the Aetolians and open a second front. Wrightson (2014) 521 is right to see this as chronologically unfeasible. When referring to the

It was, however, by this withdrawal of the Aetolians and other Greek allies, and not by the performance of Athens' navy, that the outcome of the Lamian War was fundamentally determined.

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Le relazioni diplomatiche fra i Romani e i popoli dell'Abruzzo antico fra IV e III sec. a.C.

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Abstract: The article examines the sources concerning the diplomatic relations between the Romans and the pre-Roman populations of Abruzzi at the turn of the 4th and 3rd centuries BC. From the alleged war between the Marsi and the Romans to the agreements of 304 with the Frentani, Marsi, Marrucini and Paeligni, from the Marsic revolt in the area of *Carseoli* to the treaty with the Vestini in 302, the attested diplomatic relations seem to indicate voluntary collaboration. This feeling is strengthened by other clues, such as the inscription of Caso Cantovios and the heroism of the Frentanian Oblacus in the Roman army at Heraclea. These agreements ultimately represented one of the greatest Roman diplomatic achievements and contributed to the formation of the inexhaustible army that led to the conquest of the Mediterranean.

Keywords: Pre-Roman Abruzzi, Marsi, Paeligni, Marrucini, Frentanians, Vestini, Roman diplomacy, Romano-Italic relationships

Uno dei nodi centrali della conquista romana dell'Italia, fra IV e III secolo¹, è il rapporto fra i Romani e le popolazioni italiche all'epoca delle guerre romano-sannitiche. L'importanza dei *socii* per Roma nei secoli successivi, e in particolare nel II secolo, è stata ben sottolineata da Arnaldo Momigliano, che ne ha fornito un'interpretazione oggi largamente diffusa: la guerra avrebbe svolto la funzione di garantire la tenuta dell'accordo con gli alleati, tenendoli impegnati e appagandone il desiderio di gloria e bottino². Questo meccanismo si sarebbe instaurato almeno dal 280, con la guerra romano-tarentina, ma si può forse anticipare la collaborazione militare dei *socii* a un'epoca anteriore³.

Le popolazioni dell'Abruzzo antico costituiscono un oggetto di studio interessante. Si cercherà di analizzare l'importanza delle relazioni diplomatiche fra i Romani e questi popoli fra IV e III secolo, nonché la misura della penetrazione romana in Abruzzo e il ruolo di queste popolazioni nel proseguimento dell'espansione romana in Italia. Il primo episodio da discutere nei rapporti fra i Romani e i popoli della regione è una battaglia del 308, combattuta contro Marsi e Peligni, alleati dei Sanniti. Non si hanno tracce di ulteriori scontri con questi

¹ Tutte le date, ove non diversamente specificato, sono da intendere a.C.

² MOMIGLIANO 1975, pp. 42-46 (ma vd., fra gli altri, anche FRANK 1914, pp. 30-45 e 59-79, e DE SANCTIS 1907, pp. 457-458). HARRIS 1984, pp. 91-93, ha tuttavia sottolineato come, dietro alle guerre costantemente combattute dai Romani fra III e II secolo, risieda soprattutto la loro volontà espansionistica.

³ La questione della partecipazione militare italica agli eserciti di Roma è complessa; sul tema, rimane fondamentale ILARI 1974, che però analizza estensivamente gli anni fra il 200 e il 168. Non si può far risalire la *formula togatorum*, l'elenco dei compartecipanti agli sforzi militari di Roma, oltre la prima metà del III secolo, ma forme di collaborazione esistevano da prima (oltre ai casi descritti *infra*, si pensi al tardivo arrivo dei Sanniti come alleati militari dei Romani al termine della guerra latina nel 338: Liv. VIII 11, 2). Sulla *formula togatorum*, oltre a ILARI 1974, pp. 57-85 e bibliografia precedente, vd. BARONOWSKI 1984, LO CASCIO 1991-1994, KENT 2018, pp. 259-260 e, sui meccanismi della richiesta di uomini per l'esercito, ROSENSTEIN 2012.

popoli fino ai *foedera* stipulati nel 304 con Frentani, Marrucini, Marsi e Peligni, che nonostante l'assenza di una guerra continuativa includevano anche una *pax*. Nel 302 anche i Vestini, che pure avevano già combattuto contro i Romani nel 325, conclusero un accordo con Roma; in Marsica ebbe luogo una rivolta. Infine, già agli inizi del III secolo emergono i primi esempi di collaborazione fra soldati di provenienza centro-italica e Romani.

Questi episodi, in definitiva, pur se testimoniati da fonti che riportano (com'è ovvio) un punto di vista romanocentrico, sembrano comunque delineare una verisimile collaborazione fra Roma e i popoli dell'Italia centrale, che si sviluppò in breve tempo senza grandi difficoltà ed ebbe immediate ripercussioni sull'espansione romana in Italia.

1. La guerra del 308: Marsi e Peligni contro Roma

Nel 308, durante le fasi finali della cosiddetta 'seconda guerra sannitica'⁴, Marsi e Peligni⁵ prestarono aiuto ai Sanniti contro i Romani guidati da Q. Fabio Massimo. Secondo Livio, «di questa battaglia si sarebbe perduto anche il ricordo, se quella non fosse stata la prima volta che i Marsi presero le armi contro i Romani. I Peligni imitarono la defezione dei Marsi, ma incontrarono la stessa sorte»⁶. La narrazione di Diodoro è però molto diversa da quella di Livio: i Romani, infatti, si sarebbero diretti contro i Sanniti per accorrere in aiuto dei Marsi⁷. Diodoro è stato talvolta ritenuto più fededelegno, poiché i popoli della costiera abruzzese in passato avevano mostrato benevolenza verso i Romani quando questi avevano attraversato i loro territori per recarsi a combattere contro i Sanniti, scesi dalle montagne a saccheggiare i territori dell'Abruzzo costiero e, dunque, odiati dalle popolazioni locali⁸. Altri hanno invece creduto alle parole di Livio: nel 304 Marsi e Peligni (assieme ad altri popoli) stipularono dei *foedera* con i Romani, per i quali Livio utilizza anche il termine *pax*⁹; si dovrebbe dunque ipotizzare una guerra ininterrotta, proseguita fino al 304 ma non esplicitamente descritta dalle fonti¹⁰. Livio e Diodoro, nel menzionare i Marsi rispettivamente come nemici e alleati,

⁴ La classica articolazione cronologica delle guerre sannitiche (343-341, 326-304 e 298-290) è stata più volte contestata. Da un lato, occorre considerare l'approfondita analisi di SORDI 1965, che ha rivisto la divisione dei conflitti alla luce dei notevoli problemi di cronologia posti dalle fonti, spesso discordi e in alcuni casi apparentemente inconciliabili, giungendo a individuare tre momenti di guerra nel 336-334, 327-322, 311-304. A questa ricostruzione vanno aggiunte anche le considerazioni di CORNELL 2004, che ha notato come le fonti non parlino di tre guerre sannitiche, ma di un unico conflitto svoltosi nell'arco di oltre mezzo secolo; la suddivisione a oggi entrata nei manuali venne utilizzata per la prima volta (a notizia di Cornell) da NIEBUHR 1832.

⁵ I Marsi erano stanziati nella zona dell'antico lago Fucino, prosciugato alla fine del XIX secolo; i Peligni occupavano la zona della Conca di Sulmona (detta anche 'altopiano peligno'). Su questi popoli, vd. fra gli altri LETTA 1972, BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, I pp. 79-353 e II.1 pp. 83-282 (fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche), GROSSI 2011, BOURDIN 2012, pp. 125-133, recentemente LETTA 2018. Vd. anche BENELLI 2018 sulla difficoltà di identificare i gruppi etnici dell'Italia centrale.

⁶ Liv. IX 41, 4: *neque eius pugnae memoria tradita foret, ni Marsi eo primum proelio cum Romanis bellassent. Secuti Marsorum defectionem Paeligni eandem fortunam habuerunt* (trad. it. L. Perelli, Torino 1979).

⁷ Diod. Sic. XX 44, 8: κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἰταλίαν οἱ τῶν Ῥωμαίων ὑπατοί, Μαρσούς πολεμουμένοις ὑπὸ Σαμνιτῶν βοηθήσαντες, τῇ τε μάχῃ προετέρησαν καὶ συχνούς τῶν πολεμίων ἀνείλον, «in Italia i consoli romani, venuti in soccorso dei Marsi attaccati dai Sanniti, superarono [questi ultimi] in battaglia e uccisero molti fra i nemici» (trad. mia).

⁸ Liv. IX 13, 7; vd. BELOCH 1926, pp. 308 e 403, e AFZELIUS 1942, p. 165.

⁹ Per questi accordi, vd. *infra*.

¹⁰ Cauto DE SANCTIS 1907, pp. 333-335; COSTANZI 1919, pp. 162-164, LETTA 1972, pp. 76-79, e recentemente CAIAZZA 2011 (in part. pp. 322-323), ritengono che si combatté con i Marsi e i Peligni fra 308 e 304. Anche SORDI

utilizzavano probabilmente tradizioni diverse, ma in questo caso non è necessario scartare alcuna delle due testimonianze, che sembrano piuttosto potersi affiancare. Vi sono più elementi che lo suggeriscono.

1. Anzitutto, non è detto che i Romani abbiano combattuto contro le intere popolazioni di Marsi e Peligni. Più volte è stata sottolineata l'imprecisione delle fonti riguardo alla definizione politica e territoriale dei popoli italici¹¹; è difficile distinguere fra interi popoli, contingenti e zone limitate del territorio italico, se non quando le fonti ne menzionano gli insediamenti. Nei passi di Livio e Diodoro non sono specificati i luoghi di combattimento, e del resto Livio sostiene proprio che Marsi e Peligni si unirono all'esercito sannitico. Questi popoli erano insediati su un territorio difficile da espugnare¹², ma Q. Fabio Massimo li affrontò in una sola battaglia, segno che appunto non li combatté nelle loro zone di pertinenza, ma ne affrontò due semplici contingenti di rinforzo a un esercito sannitico¹³.
2. Livio non riferisce l'origine delle ostilità con Marsi e Peligni; con loro, al contrario, i Romani avevano intessuto buoni rapporti già nel 343 e nel 340¹⁴. Nel 325, quando i Vestini si allearono con i Sanniti contro Roma, i Romani avrebbero temuto la possibilità che anche gli altri popoli dell'Italia centrale si schierassero con il Sannio¹⁵. Già dalla seconda metà del IV secolo, a Roma era nota l'importanza strategica, anche geograficamente, dell'attuale Abruzzo, e ci si preoccupava delle alleanze dei popoli locali.
3. Livio, per la campagna del 308, usa il sostantivo *defectio* riferito ai Marsi; questo «tradimento» presuppone relazioni amichevoli prima del 308, anche se non dimostra l'esistenza di accordi pregressi. La lunga fedeltà dei Marsi a Roma, un tema presente nella storiografia antica¹⁶, potrebbe aver indotto Livio o già le sue fonti a minimizzare la portata del conflitto, presentandolo come un incidente di percorso nelle amichevoli relazioni romano-marsiche¹⁷. Tuttavia Livio, a differenza di Diodoro, non nega una battaglia contro i Marsi: se davvero esistevano due versioni della vicenda, una che attestava una guerra contro i Marsi e una secondo cui i Romani sarebbero andati in loro aiuto, Livio potrebbe aver tentato di stemperarne il contrasto; questa ipotesi, tuttavia, non è dimostrabile. Si potrebbe piuttosto ritenere che l'uso del termine *defectio* sia determinato dalla prospettiva romanocentrica di Livio: esso non

1969, pp. 80-86, individua una guerra continua conclusasi prima del 307; data inoltre la fondazione di *Carseoli* e la relativa rivolta dei Marsi al 305 anziché al 302 – per questo evento, vd. *infra*.

¹¹ Vd., di recente, BOURDIN 2019.

¹² Vd. ad esempio CAIAZZA 2011, p. 322.

¹³ Così anche SALMON 1985, p. 252.

¹⁴ Rapporti non ostili con Marsi e Peligni sono stati ipotizzati, con ottime argomentazioni, ad esempio da OAKLEY 1997-2005, II, pp. 699-701, sulla scorta di Liv. VII 38 (Marsi e Peligni vennero attaccati nel 343 dai Latini, in quel frangente nemici di Roma) e VIII 6 (i Romani nel 340 attraversarono il loro territorio senza problemi). *Contra*, LETTA 1972, pp. 70-71.

¹⁵ Liv. VIII 29, 1-6; questo passo costituisce anche la prima considerazione liviana approfondita sui popoli dell'Abruzzo antico.

¹⁶ Si pensi solo alle parole di App. BC I 46, 203 sui trionfi di Roma «mai sui Marsi, mai senza i Marsi».

¹⁷ LETTA 1972, pp. 77-79.

autorizza a ipotizzare il tradimento di un'alleanza, di cui non c'è notizia nelle fonti a questo livello cronologico; semplicemente, i Marsi, che fino a quel momento non avevano mai posto problemi, sarebbero passati improvvisamente (almeno in parte) nello schieramento dei Sanniti, combattendo così per la prima volta – Livio su questo è chiarissimo – contro i Romani.

4. Infine, le fonti parlano solo di una campagna contro i Marsi nel 308 e di un *foedus* quattro anni dopo. Questo periodo fu denso di scontri con i Sanniti, ma i Marsi vengono menzionati una sola volta e in questi anni non si combatté nel loro territorio¹⁸. È dunque difficile credere che una guerra con i Marsi sia stata passata del tutto sotto silenzio, evitando di menzionare non solo il popolo, ma anche la regione nella quale si sarebbe combattuto. Fosse anche solo per accrescere la gloria delle vittorie romane, i Marsi sarebbero entrati nelle fonti, esattamente come sono menzionati da Livio nel 308. Si può ipotizzare una momentanea alleanza fra Marsi e Sanniti, ma gli scontri nel 308 non sembrano direttamente legati alla stipula del trattato nel 304, e non sembra potersi individuare una collaborazione militare continua fra Marsi e Sanniti.

Sicuramente una parte dei Marsi si unì ai Sanniti nella lotta contro Roma nel 308, come sostiene Livio; un'altra parte dei Marsi, tuttavia, dovette parteggiare per Roma, e per questo venne attaccata dai Sanniti. In sostanza, è ipotizzabile con buone basi una divisione dei Marsi in 'fazioni': di fronte all'avanzata romana, alcuni volevano approfittare dell'arrivo della nuova potenza, magari anche per inimicizia con i Sanniti, mentre altri non accettavano l'intrusione di questi nuovi attori nella scena politica centro-italica. I Romani, come dice Diodoro, sarebbero intervenuti nel 308 per difendere i Marsi (evidentemente, quelli 'filoromani'); l'attacco era diretto contro la coalizione di Sanniti e Marsi 'antiromani'. Del resto, in quest'epoca non mancano attestazioni di divisioni politiche interne nei popoli italici¹⁹. Diodoro e Livio, probabilmente, riportarono la notizia in maniera diversa perché seguivano tradizioni storiografiche che avevano evidenziato elementi differenti: gli uni l'aiuto ai Marsi, che metteva i Romani in buona luce; gli altri lo scontro con Marsi e Sanniti, che Roma sconfisse facilmente nonostante la loro unione²⁰.

¹⁸ Si parla di scontri in Umbria, Etruria meridionale, Apulia (Salento), ad *Allifae*, fra gli Ernici, a *Calatia* e *Sora* (e in generale sul confine fra Sannio e *Latium*) e nel Sannio pentro, dove venne combattuta la battaglia di *Bovianum*: Liv. IX 41-44; Diod. Sic. XX 44, 8-9; 80; 90, 3-4 (dove però Diodoro menziona i Peligni: ma vd. subito *infra*); 101, 5.

¹⁹ La casistica è ampia. Un esempio può essere visto in *Satricum*, una cittadina sul corso del Liri omonima di quella distrutta a inizio IV secolo (Liv. VI 33, 4; vd. la discussione per l'identificazione di *Satricum* in SALMON 1956, pp. 102-103, LA REGINA 1989, p. 398, e OAKLEY 1997-2005, III, pp. 145-147). Fra 320 e 319, i Satricani dapprima si ribellarono ai Romani, poi li riaccolsero, con un repentino tradimento della nobiltà locale (probabilmente, un avvicendamento al potere fra fazione antiromana e filoromana): vd. Liv. IX 12 e 16. Nel 294 è attestato un attacco romano contro la marsica *Milionia* (Liv. X 35), quando i Marsi erano già alleati di Roma (vd. anche *infra*). Infine, va menzionata la rivolta del 307, quando il *nomen Hernicum* votò la guerra contro Roma con la notevole eccezione delle città di Alatri, Ferentino e Veroli, segno di una netta divisione degli Ernici (Liv. IX 42, 11), che peraltro figurano poi fra gli alleati dei Sanniti (Liv. IX 45, 5). Di 'fazioni filoromane' si può parlare con relativa sicurezza in questo periodo anche in Magna Grecia (URSO 1999). Sulla vicinanza fra i Romani e gli aristocratici locali, vd. ora TERRENATO 2019, *passim*. Sulle guerre civili e le divisioni interne in età antica, vd. ad esempio BÖRM-MATTHEIS-WIENAND 2016 e BÖRM 2019.

²⁰ Ci si riferisce alla distinzione fra storiografia 'italica' e 'romanocentrica' proposta da MAZZARINO 1965-1966, II.1, pp. 85-102 e *passim*. Non disponendo delle fonti annalistiche, se non in forma frammentaria, è

Diversa la questione dei Peligni, che Diodoro ritiene sconfitti dai Romani nel 306/5²¹. Almeno per loro, si può pensare a una guerra senza interruzioni, se sono menzionati da Livio nel 308, da Diodoro nel 306/5 e, per il *foedus* che stringeranno con Roma, nel 304. Tuttavia, secondo Diodoro, nel 306/5 i Romani «diedero la cittadinanza a coloro che erano ben disposti verso i Romani». Gli scontri si conclusero dunque con l'attribuzione ad alcuni Peligni della cittadinanza, molto probabilmente *optimo iure* piuttosto che *sine suffragio*²²; evidentemente, si trattava dei capi della 'fazione' filoromana. È probabile che una parte dei Peligni nel 308 avesse portato aiuto ai Sanniti e fosse stata affrontata da Roma, che però trovò alleati all'interno della stessa compagine peligna, come sembra essere successo anche con i Marsi. Nel 306/5, l'intervento romano dovette essere mirato a eliminare i *leader* 'filosanniti' dei Peligni per evitare il ripetersi di un'alleanza come quella testimoniata da Livio nel 308; i notabili peligni 'filoromani' furono premiati attraverso la concessione della cittadinanza. Neppure in questo caso, perciò, è possibile pensare a scontri protrattisi dal 308 al 304; al contrario, per i Peligni si può vedere un intervento diretto romano nel 306/5 che pose fine alle ostilità.

Non si può dunque parlare, né per i Marsi né per i Peligni, di guerra continuativa contro i Romani fra 308 e 304. Proprio gli accordi del 304 offrono ulteriori spunti di riflessione.

2. Gli accordi diplomatici del 304: Frentani, Marrucini, Marsi e Peligni

Nel 304, i Romani mossero contro gli Equi, colpevoli di aver prestato aiuto ai Sanniti nella guerra appena conclusasi. Impotenti di fronte alla superiorità militare romana, gli Equi vennero sottomessi in poco tempo²³. Secondo Livio, la loro sconfitta spinse le popolazioni confinanti a chiedere a Roma un accordo: Frentani, Marrucini²⁴, Marsi e Peligni inviarono

impossibile verificare l'esistenza e la natura delle tradizioni di provenienza di queste due notizie, che restano due visioni diverse sul significato dell'intervento romano, ma non per questo necessariamente antitetiche.

²¹ Diod. Sic. XX 90, 3: κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἰταλίαν Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν Παλιγνοὺς καταπολεμήσαντες τὴν χώραν ἀφείλοντο καὶ τισὶ τῶν δοξάντων τὰ Ῥωμαίων πεφρονηκέναι μετέδωκαν τῆς πολιτείας; la datazione si può porre al 305 confrontando Diodoro con Liv. IX 44, 5, che riferisce assalti nella pianura Stellate (la Φαλαρνίτις di Diodoro) ma, significativamente, non menziona i Peligni.

²² Diodoro non specifica di quale tipo di cittadinanza siano stati investiti i Peligni. Nel caso degli Ernici (Liv. IX 43, 23-24; vd. anche *supra*, n. 19) e degli Equi (Liv. IX 45, 6-7), rispettivamente nel 306 e 304, Livio presenta la *civitas sine suffragio* come un'imposizione. Le città fedeli degli Ernici, avendone la possibilità, chiesero infatti di mantenere le proprie leggi e rifiutarono la *civitas sine suffragio*, segno che non era un riconoscimento (vd. HUMBERT 1978, pp. 212-217). Sulla complessa questione dei rapporti giuridici fra Romani ed Ernici, che risalgono all'inizio del V secolo, vd. ora SÁNCHEZ 2016. Qui Diodoro lascia intendere che l'attribuzione della cittadinanza fosse un premio, dunque si parlerà di *civitas optimo iure*.

²³ Liv. IX 45; Diod. Sic. XX 101, 5. Degli Equi conosciamo solo le guerre combattute contro i Romani; l'ultima si era conclusa nel 388 con la loro sconfitta (Liv. VI 2, 14 e 4, 7-8). Nel 304, i Romani catturarono in pochi giorni numerosi *oppida*, il console P. Sempronio Sofo celebrò un «lodato trionfo» (vd. Diod. Sic., *loc. cit.*; cfr. *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1, p. 96), e il *nomen Aequum* venne pressoché annientato (Liv. IX 45, 17). Livio parla nuovamente degli Equi in due sole altre occasioni nella prima decade, e in entrambe ne rileva la debolezza (X 1, 7-9 e 10, 7). Sulle successive campagne contro gli Equi, vd. anche SALMON 1985, pp. 271-272 e BENELLI 2018b; sulla persistenza degli Equi nelle colonie romane in età mediorepubblicana, vd. FAUSTOFERRI 2011.

²⁴ I Marrucini occupavano la zona che oggi corrisponde alla parte più settentrionale della provincia di Chieti; i Frentani ne abitavano la zona costiera e confinavano anche con Carricini e Pentri. Per i Marrucini vd. FIRPO-BUONOCORE 1991-1998, I, pp. 355-428, BOURDIN 2012, pp. 125-133 e, in maniera sintetica, MENOZZI-ACCONCIA

«ambasciatori per chiedere pace e amicizia», e il Senato accordò loro un *foedus*²⁵. Secondo Diodoro, i Romani strinsero una *συμμαχία* con Marrucini, Marsi e Peligni²⁶.

La natura dell'accordo varia, da una richiesta di *pax* e *amicitia* risultante in un *foedus* (Livio) alla stipula di una *συμμαχία* (Diodoro); questi termini indicano realtà molto diverse fra di loro. Che una richiesta di pace dipenda dalla guerra contro gli Equi è poco verisimile, dal momento che questi popoli non vi avevano preso parte. Occorre piuttosto guardare alla conclusione, nello stesso 304, della guerra sannitica, che aveva toccato i territori di Frentani, Marrucini, Marsi e Peligni, e alla quale Marsi e Peligni avevano partecipato nel 308. Tuttavia, una *pax* presupporrebbe la recente conclusione di una guerra, come per Equi e Sanniti, mentre gli scontri con Marsi e Peligni si erano conclusi già da qualche anno. È dunque necessario analizzare anche la condizione di Marrucini e Frentani²⁷.

I Frentani vengono menzionati per la prima volta da Livio in questa occasione, nel 304. Già nel 319 i Romani avevano affrontato dei *Ferentani*, che alcuni editori di Livio hanno interpretato come *Frentani*; tuttavia, che il passo liviano alluda ai Frentani sembra potersi escludere, vista anche la brevità della campagna del 319²⁸. I Marrucini vengono menzionati di sfuggita da Livio nel 325²⁹, ma affrontarono i Romani solo nel 312, quando questi, secondo Diodoro, conquistarono la marrucina *Pollitium*³⁰. Diodoro non fornisce ulteriori dettagli sulla

2018; per i Frentani, inclusi fra i popoli sannitici, vd. fra gli altri BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, I, pp. 461-537, TAGLIAMONTE 1996 (*passim*), BOURDIN 2012, pp. 161-171, e TAGLIAMONTE 2018, con bibliografia relativa.

²⁵ Liv. IX 45, 18: *De Aequis triumphatum; exemproque eorum clades fuit, ut Marrucini, Marsi, Paeligni, Frentani mitterent Romam oratores pacis petendae amicitiaeque. His populis foedus petentibus datum.*

²⁶ Diod. Sic. XX 101, 5: ὁ δὲ δῆμος ὁ Ῥωμαίων πρὸς τε Μαρσούς καὶ Παλιγνούς, ἔτι δὲ Μαρρουκίους, συμμαχίαν ἐποίησατο. Sono tramandate varie lezioni per il nome dei Peligni (Παλλινούς, Παλλίνους e Πεληνούς, tre alternative comunque improbabili); la felice congettura Παλιγνούς è di Rhodomann.

²⁷ BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, I, pp. 75-76, proprio a causa di questo *foedus* nel 304, ritengono che i Frentani avessero già combattuto contro i Romani. Questa posizione non è del tutto accettabile, poiché un *foedus* (come un *amicitia*) non deve necessariamente seguire una guerra. Vd. la stessa posizione anche per i Vestini (BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.2, p. 824), ma vd. anche *infra* per una diversa interpretazione.

²⁸ Liv. IX 16, 1: *Aulius cum Ferentanis uno secundo proelio debellavit urbemque ipsam, quo se fusa contulerat acies, obsidibus imperatis in deditionem accepit.* La maggioranza dei codici tramanda la lezione *Ferentanis*, ma sono attestate anche le lezioni *Frentranis*, *Frentanis* e *Forentanis*. OAKLEY 1997-2005, III, p. 171, propende per *Frentanis* (così come, fra gli altri, AFZELIUS 1942, p. 164, TOYNBEE 1981, p. 158, FIRPO 1994, pp. 43-45 e GROSSMANN 2009, p. 88). Tuttavia, il passo parla di *urbs ipsa*, mentre i Frentani non abitavano una sola città; è più probabile che si parli di un'altrimenti ignota città dal nome di *Ferentum*. A questo riguardo, Hdn. Gr. II 2, p. 886 L., menziona una Φερέντιον «città dei Sanniti». L'identificazione della Φερέντιον di Erodiano con i Ferentani in Livio resta però ipotetica.

²⁹ Liv. VIII 29, 4.

³⁰ Diod. Sic. XIX 105, 5: κατὰ δὲ τὴν Ἰταλίαν Ῥωμαῖοι δυνάμεσιν ἀδραῖς πεζῶν τε καὶ ἰπέων ἐστράτευσαν ἐπὶ Πολλίτιον, Μαρρουκίων οὖσαν πόλιν. Ἀπέστειλαν δὲ καὶ τῶν πολιτῶν εἰς ἀποικίαν καὶ κατώκισαν τὴν προσαγορευομένην Ἰντέραμιναν. BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, I, pp. 362-363, osservano che sia nel 312 sia nel 308 fu console P. Decio Mure, che nel 312 rimase a Roma malato nominando un dittatore mentre il collega Valerio combatté i Sanniti, sui quali avrebbe celebrato un trionfo (Liv. IX 29, 3; *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1, p. 96); secondo un'altra tradizione, Decio avrebbe invece celebrato un trionfo sui Sanniti (*Vir. ill.* 27). L'assalto ai Marrucini non sarebbe dunque avvenuto nel 312 ma nel 308, assieme alla battaglia contro Marsi e Peligni di cui si è parlato. La confusione delle notizie, però, non deve spingere a spostare gli eventi: si è visto come la battaglia del 308 sia stata combattuta contro una sola parte dei Marsi, peraltro schierata nell'esercito sannitico; inoltre, Livio nel 312 dà più spazio alla censura di Appio Claudio e al timore di una guerra da parte degli Etruschi, dunque può avere operato una cernita fra le informazioni che leggeva; infine, sia Diodoro che Livio (IX 28, 8) menzionano la fondazione di *Interamna Sucasina*, segno che almeno questo dato combaciava nelle loro fonti ed era datato al 312.

campagna – assieme alla fondazione di *Interamna Sucasina*, è l'unica informazione che dà sugli avvenimenti in Italia del 312 – e la città non è localizzabile. Anche in questo caso, il combattimento è isolato dal contesto bellico; il territorio marrucino era ristretto, e se la metropoli dei Marrucini era Teate (Chieti), *Pollitium* non ne era certo la città più importante. È difficile ritenere che la conquista di *Pollitium* nel 312 sia l'unico indizio rimasto di una guerra proseguita, nel silenzio delle fonti, fino al 304, quando i Marrucini chiesero accordi diplomatici ai Romani.

Frentani, Marrucini, Marsi e Peligni non avevano dunque combattuto direttamente contro i Romani negli ultimi anni, se non in maniera episodica e (limitatamente a Marsi e Peligni) fornendo contingenti ai Sanniti; fra i Peligni esisteva inoltre una fazione filoromana, che ricevette la cittadinanza nel 306/5. È perciò del tutto improbabile che abbiano chiesto una pace, accordo che dovrebbe formalmente chiudere delle ostilità: si tratterà più probabilmente di *amicitia* o *societas* (poi sancite da un *foedus*). Forse, come dice Livio, la paura di quanto accaduto agli Equi potrebbe aver contribuito a indurre questi popoli a chiedere l'amicizia di Roma³¹, ma sulla loro scelta dovette influire soprattutto la recente vittoria romana sui Sanniti, che ebbe luogo all'inizio stagione bellica del 304³². Che gli accordi del 304 con Frentani, Marrucini, Marsi e Peligni siano stati definiti dopo la campagna contro gli Equi è vero, ma il fattore determinante fu, piuttosto, la conclusione della ventennale guerra contro i Sanniti con il *foedus* del 304 fra Sanniti e Romani, ormai egemoni del centro Italia³³.

Occorre infine comprendere la natura di questi accordi: secondo Livio, alla richiesta di *pax* e *amicitia* i Romani replicarono concedendo un *foedus*; Diodoro parla di *συμμαχία*. Se si segue Livio, si può credere a un'iniziale richiesta di *amicitia*, accordo che prevede un certo equilibrio nei diritti dei contraenti³⁴; per credere a una richiesta di *pax*, al contrario, occorrerebbe supporre una guerra recente e non attestata con tutte queste popolazioni. L'uso del termine *συμμαχία* da parte di Diodoro può parimenti riferirsi alle conseguenze del *foedus*, che secondo la terminologia utilizzata nel I secolo a.C. avrebbe effettivamente posto i contraenti nella condizione di *socii*. La concessione di un *foedus* da parte del Senato spiega tutti i termini utilizzati da Livio e Diodoro. Un *foedus* costituiva un netto irrigidimento rispetto all'*amicitia*, poiché i trattati contenevano clausole che regolavano i diritti e i doveri dei contraenti con maggior rigore; esistono anche dei precedenti per la concessione di *foedera*, da parte dei Romani, a fronte della richiesta di accordi meno rigidi³⁵. Un *foedus* poteva comunque contenere anche degli obblighi dei Romani nei confronti di queste popolazioni, accontentandole nelle loro richieste. La narrazione liviana, dunque, appare attendibile, con una richiesta di *amicitia*, accordo flessibile, tramutata dal Senato in un più rigido *foedus*.

³¹ BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.1, p. 292, credono al nesso fornito da Livio. Notano però (II.2, p. 824) che le fonti non attestano un legame fra questi accordi e quello con i Vestini del 302 (vd. *infra*), che al contrario sarebbe motivato dalla vittoria nella guerra sannitica.

³² Liv. IX 45, 1 attesta che l'ispezione del console P. Sempronio Sofo avrebbe confermato la pacificazione dei Sanniti. Livio non va preso alla lettera, ma non c'è motivo di dubitare che la campagna nel Sannio del 304 sia stata dedicata per lo più alla definizione degli accordi diplomatici, senza combattimenti o con scontri molto limitati. Anche in *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1, p. 96, i trionfi su Equi e Sanniti sono vicini (24 settembre sugli Equi, 29 ottobre sui Sanniti).

³³ Vd. anche OAKLEY 1997-2005, III, p. 588, e FORSYTHE 2005, p. 310.

³⁴ Sull'*amicitia*, vd. ora BURTON 2011.

³⁵ Nel 354, i Sanniti chiesero ai Romani una *amicitia* e ottennero, come in questo caso, un *foedus* inclusivo di *societas* (Liv. VII 19, 4: *Res bello bene gestae ut Samnites quoque amicitiam peterent effecerunt. Legatis eorum comiter ab senatu responsum; foedere in societatem accepti*). Assai simile a questo caso fu quello dei Vestini, che nel 302 richiesero un'*amicitia* ma ottennero dal Senato un *foedus* (vd. *infra*).

Questa stessa dinamica si riscontra, infatti, anche negli anni successivi.

3. I Vestini e la rivolta dei Marsi

Nel 302, due anni dopo, anche i Vestini³⁶ ottennero dai Romani un *foedus* dopo aver chiesto loro un'*amicitia*³⁷. Nello stesso anno i Marsi si ribellarono a causa della fondazione di *Carseoli*, nel territorio degli Equi; l'esercito romano li costrinse a rinchiudersi nelle città e *intra dies paucos* conquistò gli insediamenti di *Milionia*, *Plestina* e *Fresilia*. Ai Marsi venne requisita una parte del territorio e venne rinnovato il *foedus* stretto nel 304³⁸.

Questi anni sono caratterizzati da numerosi problemi: Livio presenta alcune varianti, che trova nelle sue fonti³⁹, e vi sono due datazioni diverse per la fondazione della colonia di *Carseoli*, collocata da Livio sia nel 302 sia nel 298, peraltro la prima volta in territorio marsico, la seconda in territorio equo⁴⁰. Fra le soluzioni proposte per spiegare le discrasie ci sono una presunta confusione fra Equi e Marsi in Livio⁴¹, la retrodatazione al 308 di questa guerra con i Marsi⁴² e un ritardo nella fondazione della colonia, che sarebbe stata decisa nel 302 ma conclusa nel 298, anche a causa dei numerosi conflitti combattuti in questi anni (inclusa la rivolta marsica)⁴³. Livio, per il 300, riferisce una sostanziale assenza di guerre esterne⁴⁴; soprattutto, sostiene che la rinnovata serenità si doveva anche al fatto che «il trasferimento di un buon numero di cittadini nelle colonie aveva reso la plebe più tranquilla e meno gravata»⁴⁵. Poiché il 301 è un anno dittatoriale⁴⁶, il 300 segue il 302: la deduzione di *Carseoli*

³⁶ Sui Vestini vd. BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.2, pp. 821-952 (sulle fonti letterarie ed epigrafiche), l'ampia trattazione di BOURDIN-D'ERCOLE 2014 e la recente sintesi di MENOZZI-ACCONCIA 2018.

³⁷ Liv. X 3, 1: *eodem anno Romae cum Vestinis petentibus amicitiam ictum est foedus*.

³⁸ Liv. X 3, 2-5; *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1, p. 97, riferisce un trionfo sui Marsi. I centri di *Milionia*, *Plestina* e *Fresilia* non sono bene identificabili: vd. LETTA 1972, pp. 85-86 n. 169; BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.1, pp. 279-281 e bibliografia relativa; per *Milionia*, quasi sicuramente da localizzare a Cesoli di Ortona dei Marsi (AQ), al limite nordorientale della piana del Fucino, vd. LUSCHI 2004 e GROSSI 2011, p. 208 e n. 94.

³⁹ Nel 302, il comando delle operazioni contro Cleonimo di Sparta in Meridione sarebbe stato di M. Emilio o di C. Giunio Bubulco (X 2, 1-3); l'anno successivo, il *magister equitum* sarebbe stato M. Emilio Paolo o Q. Fabio Massimo Rulliano (X 3, 3-4); contro gli Etruschi secondo alcuni sarebbe avvenuto uno scontro, secondo altri no (X 3, 6-5, 11 e 5, 13). Inoltre, il 301 è un cosiddetto 'anno dittatoriale' (*Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1, pp. 424-425: [*Hoc an*]no dictat. [et mag. eq. sine cos. fuerunt]); sugli anni dittatoriali, vedi anche MRR, I (rispettivamente pp. 141, 148, 163, 171), SORDI 1969 con bibliografia precedente, DRUMMOND 1978 e MORA 1999, pp. 42-46.

⁴⁰ Rispettivamente, Liv. X 3, 2 (*simul Marsos agrum vi tueri, in quem colonia Carseoli deducta erat quattuor milibus hominibus scriptis*) e 13, 1 (*Eodem anno Carseolos colonia in agrum Aequicolorum deducta*).

⁴¹ BELOCH 1926, p. 422. Sui problemi di identificazione fra Equi e Marsi, vd. DE LUIGI 2003, pp. 156 e 161-162 (con bibliografia relativa); la somiglianza fra le *facies* culturali dei due popoli (vd. GROSSI 2011) spiegherebbe alcune indecisioni nelle fonti.

⁴² SORDI 1966; SORDI 1969, pp. 81-86; BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.1, pp. 368-371.

⁴³ DE WEVER 1969, p. 384; SALMON 1969, p. 59; SALMON 1985, p. 272 e 298 n. 5; CORBIER 2000, p. 198; OAKLEY 1997-2005, IV, pp. 44-45 e 69-70. I Romani combatterono in questi anni contro Cleonimo, in Apulia (Liv. X 2), contro gli Etruschi (Liv. X 3-5), contro gli Equi e i Nequinati (Liv. X 9, 5).

⁴⁴ Il periodo fu turbolento in politica interna, con aspre discussioni sull'apertura del pontificato ai plebei (Liv. X 6-9).

⁴⁵ Liv. X 6, 2: *plebem quietam et exoneratam deducta in colonias multitudo praestabat* (trad. L. Perelli, Torino 1979).

⁴⁶ Vd. nuovamente MRR, I, p. 171.

doveva essere già iniziata, anche se si concluse, probabilmente, solo nel 298.

La rapidità dell'intervento romano suggerisce che la rivolta marsica fu piuttosto limitata; del resto, se la menzione di *Milionia*, *Plestina* e *Fresilia* indica la portata di questa ribellione, questa non dovette riguardare che una parte dei Marsi⁴⁷. Nel 303 era stata fondata la colonia di *Alba Fucens*, in territorio equo vicino al lago Fucino, a ridosso della Marsica⁴⁸. L'ulteriore arrivo di coloni romani in una zona ricca quale la Piana del Cavaliere, dove sorse *Carseoli*, dovette turbare gli equilibri anche economici raggiunti dai Marsi, stanziati non lontano da lì: la fondazione di *Carseoli*, dopo *Alba*, dava in mano ai Romani tutto il percorso da Tivoli alla Marsica attraverso la Piana del Cavaliere⁴⁹. L'intrusione romana ad *Alba* poteva aver preoccupato i Marsi, ma la colonia a *Carseoli* rischiava di porli sotto il controllo di Roma. Se la partecipazione di alcuni Marsi alla campagna sannitica del 308 mostra che in Marsica, come in altre regioni italiche, esisteva una fazione antiromana, il *foedus* romano-marsico del 304 non implica che questa fosse del tutto scomparsa. Una 'fazione' definibile come 'antiromana' dovette dunque ritenere che fosse il momento opportuno per far scoppiare la rivolta. La ribellione del 302 non va riportata a un repentino e generale ripensamento di tutti i Marsi, ma al turbamento degli assetti economici, commerciali e viari causato dalla colonizzazione, che diede nuova forza alla fazione antiromana.

Per quanto riguarda i Vestini, la situazione è analoga agli altri *foedera*. Anch'essi chiesero l'*amicitia* ma il Senato concesse loro un *foedus*, indizio – di nuovo – che i Romani volevano accordi rigidi e duraturi, non rapporti informali. Nemmeno in questo caso si può parlare di una guerra fra Vestini e Romani che giustifichi la richiesta di un accordo⁵⁰. Il territorio vestino era vicino a quello dei popoli che nel 304 avevano ottenuto il trattato dai Romani: anche i Vestini potrebbero aver voluto aggiungersi agli alleati di Roma. Di fianco a tanti popoli che intrattenevano relazioni amichevoli con i Romani, la mancanza di un accordo avrebbe rischiato di essere intesa come appartenenza a uno schieramento avverso a Roma⁵¹. Inoltre, i *foedera* contenevano quasi certamente anche delle obbligazioni da parte romana;

⁴⁷ OAKLEY 1997-2005, IV, p. 45. Conosciamo numerosi insediamenti marsici (si pensi a *Marruvium*, *Antinum*, *Cerfennia*, *Lucus Angitiaie*), dunque la menzione di queste sole tre città limita la portata della rivolta. *Milionia*, come accennato, si ribellerà nuovamente nel 294: Liv. X 34, 1-3.

⁴⁸ Liv. X 1, 1. *Alba* va individuata ad Albe, nel territorio di Massa d'Albe (AQ), su una lieve altura che sovrasta l'accesso da Nord-Ovest all'attuale piana del Fucino: la colonia era sicuramente minacciosa per i Marsi. Vd. LIBERATORE 2014 per le prime fasi della colonia.

⁴⁹ Vd. anche FAUSTOFERRI 2011 sull'importanza della Piana e sul periodo di coesistenza fra Romani ed Equi (che continuarono a popolare la zona). Si può aggiungere che viene ascritto a questi anni lo sviluppo del santuario di Ercole Vincitore a Tivoli, naturale conseguenza del potenziamento della *via Tiburtina/Valeria* dopo la colonizzazione di *Alba* e *Carseoli* (vd. GHINI 2019, pp. 308-309 e bibliografia relativa). L'appropriazione romana del volume commerciale di quest'asse viario è dunque più che una mera ipotesi. Sul ruolo e la natura delle colonie romane in questo periodo, un tema assai discusso, vd. fra gli altri BRADLEY 2006 e BRADLEY 2014 con bibliografia relativa.

⁵⁰ BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.2, pp. 823-826, pensano (con qualche dubbio) a un'alleanza vestino-sabina che resistette qualche tempo dopo il 304; l'ostilità sabina contro Roma troverebbe conferma nella presa di *Amiternum* nel 293 (Liv. X 39, 2: *Amiternum oppidum de Samnitibus vi cepit*). Tuttavia fra il 325, quando Romani e Vestini combatterono, e questo episodio nel 302, l'unica menzione dei Vestini è nell'*excursus* liviano dedicato all'ipotetica invasione italica di Alessandro Magno (Liv. IX 16-19; sull'*excursus*, vd. SORDI 1965). Inoltre, per *Amiternum* Livio è esplicito nel dire che i Romani la tolsero ai Sanniti; *Amiternum* era certamente schierata con questi ultimi, ma si era in un contesto di guerra aperta (la 'terza' guerra sannitica) e questo non implica né che tutti i Sabini stessero combattendo contro i Romani, né che fossero stati alleati dei Vestini.

⁵¹ Si pensi all'alleanza vestino-sannitica del 325 (Liv. VIII 29, 4 e *supra*) e ai timori che provocò a Roma: fra le popolazioni della zona, i Vestini erano quelli che si erano mostrati più ostili nei confronti dei Romani. Il trattato, per loro, era assolutamente necessario, se non si voleva passare per nemici.

nel teso periodo successivo alla ‘seconda’ guerra sannitica, i Vestini avrebbero potuto ritenerle rassicuranti.

Fu dunque l’ingresso dei popoli centro-italici nell’alleanza romana a spingere i Vestini a rivolgersi a Roma. Una visione d’insieme dei *foedera* con i popoli dell’Abruzzo antico suggerisce che i Romani siano stati riconosciuti come nuova potenza egemone in Italia centrale pur senza una conquista sistematica del territorio. Questo non significa che l’adesione all’alleanza romana fosse completa o condivisa da tutti, e sacche di resistenza antiromana continuarono a esistere per qualche anno; al contempo, però, già dai primi anni del III secolo si possono vedere prove tangibili della collaborazione fra popoli centro-italici e Romani.

4. Un’alleanza antica

Una prima attestazione di questa collaborazione consiste nella lamina bronzea votiva di Caso Cantovios, proveniente dalle vicinanze del santuario di *Lucus Angitiaie*, a Luco dei Marsi (AQ)⁵².

La lamina, forse il frammento di un cinturone di bronzo di tipo sannitico, apparteneva alla collezione Torlonia, ma oggi se ne sono perse le tracce; ne rimangono trascrizioni e apografi⁵³. L’iscrizione è databile, secondo quasi tutti gli studiosi, alla fine del IV o all’inizio del III secolo⁵⁴. Si riproduce qui il testo secondo l’interpretazione avanzata da Adriano La Regina⁵⁵:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 | <i>Caso Cantouio-</i>
<i>s Aprufclano cei-</i>
<i>p(ed) apur finem</i>
<i>Çalicom en urbid Casontonia</i> |
| 5 | <i>socieque dono-</i>
<i>m atolero Açtia</i>
<i>pro l[ecio]nibus Mar-</i>
<i>tses</i> |

⁵² *CIL* I², 5 = *ILLRP* 7 = *AE* 1991, 567 = *CIL* IX, *Suppl.* fasc. 3 (2020), 7858; notizia di ritrovamento in «NSA» s. 3, vol. 2, 1877-1878 (1878), pp. 157-158 e tav. XIII. Il testo riportato nella notizia di ritrovamento è: *caso . cantovio || s . aprufclano . cei || p . apurfinem . e || salico . menur || bid . casontonio . || socieque . dono || m . atoier .. attia || pro . i . . . nibus . mar || tses*. Vd., fra gli altri, PERUZZI 1961, LA REGINA 1989, DEL TUTTO 1999, DEL TUTTO 2002, DUPRAZ 2015, AGAZZANI 2018.

⁵³ Vd. appunto il *CIL* e «NSA» (n. prec.), nonché le fotografie in LA REGINA 1989 (figg. 230-231).

⁵⁴ *Contra*, AGAZZANI 2018, pp. 664-665, che propone una datazione più alta sulla base della rilettura dell’iscrizione, che andrebbe legata alla conquista dell’*arx Carventana*, nel territorio degli Equi, riferita da Liv. IV 53. Non tiene però conto della questione geografica: l’arrivo dei Romani (e del latino) non si può collocare in Marsica prima del IV secolo. Anche le motivazioni archeologiche (l’esistenza dei cinturoni sannitici ben prima del IV-III secolo) non giustificano *per se* uno spostamento della datazione.

⁵⁵ LA REGINA 1989, p. 401.

«Caso Cantovios di *Aproficulum* prese [scil. questo oggetto] presso il confine gallico nella città di Casontonia, e i compagni lo portarono in dono ad Angitia per le legioni marsiche.»⁵⁶

Rispetto al testo riportato sulla notizia di ritrovamento, La Regina, con ottime argomentazioni, espunge la E finale di l. 3 perché la interpreta come un danneggiamento del supporto scrittorio o come una lettera cancellata e legge l'incerta S iniziale di l. 4 come una C/G. L'ipotesi di La Regina è che le parole alle ll. 3-4, *apur finem Çalicom*, corrispondano ad *apud finem Gallicum*. Il «confine gallico» dovrebbe riferirsi all'*ager Gallicus*, vicino al quale si combatté nel 295 la battaglia di *Sentinum*, tradizionalmente identificata nell'odierna Sassoferrato (AN), nella quale ai Sanniti si unirono Galli ed Etruschi⁵⁷. Dopo il trionfo, il console Q. Fabio Massimo Rulliano avrebbe portato il suo esercito a Perugia per combattere le ultime resistenze etrusche della zona⁵⁸. Le parole *en urbid Casontoniā* potrebbero indicare un insediamento forse nell'attuale vallata del Casentino (AR)⁵⁹ o il futuro *municipium Casventinorum* attestato vicino a Montoro (Narni, TR)⁶⁰. Il Casentino non è troppo lontano da Perugia, anche se non si trova sul percorso verso Sassoferrato o Roma; Montoro si trova invece sul percorso da Roma a Perugia (e Sassoferrato). Giulio Firpo, inoltre, ha recentemente proposto di individuare *Sentinum* nella zona di Rapolano (SI)⁶¹, e del resto nell'*ager Gallicus* si combatté anche pochi anni dopo, nel 284, quando M'. Curio Dentato vi condusse l'esercito romano per affrontare i Galli che avevano attaccato Chiusi⁶². Restano dunque molti dubbi sull'individuazione della zona geografica dell'*urbs Casontonia*⁶³, ma la relativa certezza della menzione del *finis Gallicus* permette di accettare a grandi linee l'interpretazione di La Regina, compatibile anche con la datazione su base paleografica e con il contesto di rinvenimento⁶⁴. Caso Cantovios, un nome sicuramente italico, sarebbe stato un alleato dei Romani nella campagna seguita alla battaglia di *Sentinum*, durante la quale saccheggiò *Casontonia*. Che Cantovios combattesse dalla parte dei Romani è dimostrato dalla scelta del latino nella dedica sulla lamina: se fosse stato un avversario di Roma, non si vedrebbe il motivo di ricorrere a una lingua diversa da quella locale⁶⁵. L'iscrizione pone anche altri problemi, quali l'identità dei dedicanti (i *socie* di l. 5); la stessa scelta del latino rimane comunque difficile da spiegare in un santuario della Marsica a un'epoca così antica. Questi aspetti, tuttavia, non cambiano il significato della lamina, che testimonia la trionfale esibizione di una spoglia di vittoria

⁵⁶ Visti i notevoli problemi posti dalla lettura e dall'interpretazione del testo, si segnala che la traduzione è solamente esemplificativa.

⁵⁷ Sulla battaglia di *Sentinum* vd. fra gli altri Polyb. II 19, 5-6, Liv. X 27-29, *Inscr. Ital.* XIII 1, p. 97, Frontin. *strat.* I 8, 3 e II 5, 9, Flor. I 13, *Vir. ill.* XXVII 3 e 5, XXXII 1 e XXXIV 4, Oros. III 21 e Zonar. VIII 1 (ma anche Duride di Samo in *FGrHist* 76 F 56a-b).

⁵⁸ Per la campagna in Etruria, vd. Liv. X 31, 1-7.

⁵⁹ LA REGINA 1989, p. 401.

⁶⁰ Plin. *nat.* III 113 (*Casventillani* fra le genti dell'Umbria); *CIL* XI, 4209 = EDR130857, da Terni, metà III secolo d.C.; *AE* 1996, 601, da Montoro, con SENSI 1997.

⁶¹ Vd. FIRPO 2015, pp. 209-257 (con bibliografia precedente); *contra*, vd. MORELLI 2023.

⁶² Vd. Polyb. II 19, 7-20, 7; sul conflitto, vd. anche Liv. *per.* XII; Dion. Hal. XIX 13; Flor. I 8; App. *Sam.* 6 e *Gall.* 11; Eutr. II 10; Oros. III 22, 12-15.

⁶³ Si vd. FIRPO 2004, che sottolinea bene il problema toponomastico sollevato da *Casontonia*.

⁶⁴ Vd. anche DEL TUTTO 2002; *contra*, nuovamente AGAZZANI 2018, con diversa ricostruzione.

⁶⁵ *Vir. ill.* XXXII 1 (la biografia di Q. Fabio Massimo Rulliano), tuttavia, elenca i Marsi nell'esercito nemico a *Sentinum*. Poiché però nessun'altra fonte, incluse le altre vite nell'anonimo *de viris illustribus*, li menziona, è probabile che si tratti di una svista dell'anonimo autore, piuttosto che di una partecipazione di contingenti marsici dalla parte dei Sanniti (comunque non impossibile).

ottenuta, assieme ad altri Marsi, come alleati dei Romani.

Questa testimonianza rafforza l'ipotesi che anche i *socci* di recente acquisizione come i Marsi abbiano iniziato ad aiutare militarmente i Romani quasi immediatamente dopo la conclusione del trattato. Inoltre, la collaborazione di alcuni di loro (fra i quali Caso e i suoi compagni) fu, se non entusiastica, senz'altro volontaria, tanto che celebrarono le vittorie ottenute al fianco dei Romani per aumentare la propria gloria⁶⁶.

Nella battaglia di Eraclea, nel 280, si trova un altro esempio di collaborazione fra Italici e Romani: un *princeps* italico cercò infatti eroicamente di uccidere Pirro nelle fasi iniziali dello scontro. Per il personaggio sono attestati nomi e provenienza diversi dalle tre fonti che ce ne parlano, Dionisio, Plutarco e Floro⁶⁷: si sarebbe chiamato Oblaco, Oplaco od *Obsidius*, di provenienza frentana o ferentana ma, secondo Dionisio, anche Ούλσίνιος (=Volsiniensis?). I nomi Oblaco e Oplaco sono simili, mentre *Obsidius*, testimoniato da Floro, si discosta dalle altre testimonianze; è comunque certo che si tratti dello stesso personaggio. Per quanto riguarda l'oscillazione fra Φερεντανοί/*Ferentani* e Φρεντανοί(/*Frentani*), si nota lo stesso problema filologico già sottolineato per la campagna romana del 319, che alcuni ritengono rivolta contro i Frentani ma che andrebbe posta, piuttosto, contro una *Ferentum* (o, forse, *Forentum*) apula. Il termine Ούλσίνιος, che Dionisio affianca a Φερεντανών (ἔθνος), potrebbe rimandare però anche a *Ferentium*, l'insediamento etrusco vicino a *Volsinii* celebre per aver dato i natali a Otone⁶⁸. Tuttavia, l'etnico della *Ferentium* etrusca, attestato solo epigraficamente e in latino, era *Ferentienses*, non *Ferentani*⁶⁹. La menzione di Ferentani per quelli che sembrano essere Frentani si ritrova, sempre in Dionisio, quando parla dei popoli coalizzati con Roma ad *Ausculum*⁷⁰. Il nome greco dei *Volsinienses*, pur se raramente attestato, è solitamente Ούλσίνιοι ο Ούλσινίται⁷¹, mentre Ούλσίνιος, oltre che in questo passo, compare solo una volta in Zonara⁷². Plutarco, peraltro, nel riferire l'episodio parla di un

⁶⁶ Del resto, LETTA 2005 sottolinea la ricezione della lingua e cultura romana fra i Marsi già durante il III secolo; forse i Marsi costituiscono un caso particolarmente precoce di 'romanizzazione'.

⁶⁷ Dion. Hal. XIX 12: ἀνὴρ τις Ὀβλάκος ὄνομα, Ούλσίνιος ἐπίκλησιν, τοῦ Φερεντανῶν ἔθνους ἡγεμῶν, ὄρων τὸν Πύρρον οὐ μίαν ἔχοντα στάσιν, ἀλλὰ πᾶσι τοῖς μαχομένοις ὀξέως ἐπιφαινόμενον, προσεῖχεν ἐκείνῳ μόνῳ τὸν νοῦν, καὶ ὅποι παριπτεύοι τὸν ἴδιον ἀντιπαρήγεν ἵππον [...]; Plut. *Pyrrh.* 16, 8-10: ἔνθα δὴ Λεοννάτος ὁ Μακεδῶν ἄνδρα κατιδὼν Ἴταλὸν ἐπέχοντα τῷ Πύρρῳ καὶ τὸν ἵππον ἀντιπαρεξάγοντα καὶ συμμεθιστάμενον αἰεὶ καὶ συγκινούμενον, ὄρας, εἶπεν, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τὸν βάρβαρον ἐκείνον, ὃν ὁ μέλας ἵππος ὁ λευκόπους φέρει; μέγα τι βουλευομένῳ καὶ δεινὸν ὅμοιός ἐστι. [...] ἀμφοτέρων δὲ τῶν ἵππων πεσόντων τὸν μὲν Πύρρον οἱ φίλοι περισχόντες ἀνήρπασαν, τὸν δὲ Ἴταλὸν μαχόμενον διέφθειραν. ἦν δὲ τῷ γένει Φρεντανός, ἱλῆς ἡγεμῶν, Ὅπλακος ὄνομα.; Flor. I 13, 7: *Apud Heracleam Campaniae fluviumque Lirim Laevino consule prima pugna, quae tam atrox fuit ut Ferentanae turmae praefectus Obsidius, invectus in regem, turbaverit coegeritque proiectis insignibus proelio excedere.* CORBIER 2009, pp. 225-226, e KENT 2020, pp. 45-46, ritengono fittizio questo episodio, mentre BAUDRY-BUR 2021, pp. 295-296, vi prestano fede, con buone argomentazioni.

⁶⁸ Suet. *Otho* 1, 1; Tac. *ann.* II 50.

⁶⁹ Vd., fra le altre, CIL XI, 2710a, 3007, 7421. Non esistono attestazioni letterarie del latino *Ferentienses* né del corrispondente termine greco. Quanto detto sopra vale anche per l'identificazione con l'ernica *Ferentinum* proposta da BAUDRY-BUR 2021, p. 296, il cui etnico era *Ferentinates* (vd. ad esempio Liv. IX 42, 11 e XXVI 9, 11, Plin. *nat.* III 64).

⁷⁰ Dion. Hal. XX 1, 5: Λατίνους δὲ καὶ Καμπανοὺς καὶ Σαβίνους καὶ Ὀμβρικούς καὶ Οὐλοῦσκους καὶ Μαρουγκίνους καὶ Περίγνους καὶ Φερεντανούς καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ὑπηκόους, εἰς τέτταρα διελόντες μέρη, τοῖς Ῥωμαικοῖς παρενέβαλον; la lezione Φερεντανούς è attestata nei codici, mentre Charles Gabriel Cobet e Carl Jacoby hanno proposto l'emendazione Φρεντανούς, che in questo contesto è alquanto probabile.

⁷¹ Diod. Sic. XIV 109, 7; Str. V 2, 9; Jo. Ant. fr. 50 M. (= Const. VII, EV p. 170 De Boor).

⁷² Zonar. VIII 7, 4.

«italico», non di un etrusco⁷³. Infine, Οὐλσίνιος era un'ἐπίκλησις, un «soprannome», termine mai accostato agli etnici⁷⁴: Dionisio, con Οὐλσίνιος, non indica la provenienza di Oblaco, ma ne riferisce solo un soprannome. Il personaggio rimane etnicamente 'Ferentano' o 'Frentano'. Effettivamente, i nomi Oblaco, Oplaco e *Obsidius* sembrano rimandare più alla lingua osca che all'etrusco⁷⁵.

Ad ogni modo, nessun Frentano o Ferentano poteva servire nell'esercito in quanto cittadino romano: a nostra notizia, *Ferentum* non figura fra le colonie dedotte fino al III secolo e all'epoca tra i Frentani non erano state dedotte colonie. Oblaco si trovava nell'esercito romano per un accordo diplomatico stipulato fra il suo popolo e Roma, in qualità di alleato, proprio come Caso Cantovios. Non si può escludere che Oblaco, da *praefectus* (come lo definisce Floro) e, forse, nobile, avesse la cittadinanza romana, ma anche in questo caso il suo *status* gli sarebbe stato attribuito dai Romani contestualmente agli accordi diplomatici con il suo popolo. Oblaco, se le parole di Floro sono attendibili, comandava poi una *turma*: il suo popolo, frentano o ferentano, aveva dunque fornito più uomini all'esercito, segno di una partecipazione comunitaria agli sforzi militari romani. Del resto, ad *Ausculum*, un anno dopo il gesto di Oblaco, contro Pirro combatterono numerosi popoli: Dionisio elenca Latini, Campani, Sabini, Umbri, Volsci, Marrucini, Peligni e, appunto, Ferentani⁷⁶. Alcuni di questi popoli non avevano ricevuto né la cittadinanza né colonie, e anche in questo caso la loro partecipazione ad *Ausculum* dovette essere motivata da un accordo diplomatico.

Nei quindici anni trascorsi fra il 295 e il 280 (le battaglie di *Sentinum* ed Eraclea), specialmente dopo la sconfitta dei Sanniti nel 290, la collaborazione fra Italici e Romani dovette intensificarsi. Forse si può riportare già al 295 la collaborazione militare fra i Romani e le genti appenniniche, con Caso Cantovios, ma è certo che nel 280 gli Italici facessero parte dell'esercito romano e che alcuni di loro ricoprissero un alto grado militare coerente con il loro *status* in patria. Inoltre, il gesto di Oblaco, anche se va ascritto all'ambito di un'etica guerriera ben attestata fra i popoli antichi, non è quello di un soldato che combatte malvolentieri. Se Oblaco era un Italico che militava come alleato sotto le insegne di Roma, il suo violento assalto contro Pirro ne testimonia l'adesione convinta all'esercito romano, o

⁷³ Plut. *Pyrrh.* 16, 10. L'aggettivo Ἰταλός in senso etnico (e non geografico) è usato altrove, in Plutarco, per persone non etrusche: cfr., ad esempio, *Aem.* 20, 2 (i Peligni); *Mar.* 34, 1 (gli Italici del *bellum sociale*). Lo stesso vale per Ἰταλικός, che però assume un'accezione più marcatamente geografica: vd., ad esempio, *Comp. Lys. Sull.* 4, 5 (i Sanniti Lamponio e Telesino); *Pyrrh.* 18, 8 (gli alleati di Pirro); *Mar.* 32, 6 (i popoli coalizzati nel *bellum sociale*).

⁷⁴ Dionisio definisce ἐπίκλησις vari elementi onomastici, di carattere gentilizio e non (Dion. Hal. I 76, 3: 'Silvia' per Rea Silvia; II 46, 3: 'Tirannio' per Tallio Tirannio; II 48, 3: 'Fabidio' per Modio Fabidio; V 21, 1: 'Porsenna' in *Lars Porsenna*), e *cognomina* (XII 1, 1: 'Felix' per Spurio Melio; XII 5, 1: 'Cosso' per Aulo Cornelio; XIV 7, 1: 'Rufo' per Publio Sulpicio). Non usa mai il termine per definire la provenienza di un personaggio. Un uso analogo si trova in Plutarco, che parla di ἐπίκλησις per *cognomina* e *agnomina* (a puro titolo di esempio: *Caes.* 64, 1 per 'Albino'; *Cic.* 17, 1 per 'Sura'; *Aem.* 25, 4 per 'Enobarbo') e per i soprannomi greci (*Ant.* 36, 3 per Alessandro 'Helios', figlio di Antonio; *Dem.* 42, 11 per Demetrio 'Poliorcete').

⁷⁵ Anche DE SANCTIS 1907, p. 393 n. 3 riteneva che Oblaco fosse un Italico e faceva rimontare a una fonte greca questo aneddoto con la giusta motivazione che, se provenisse da fonte romana, il nome non sarebbe così poco romano; così, fra gli altri, anche RAWSON 1971, p. 25. MÜNZER 1937 riteneva che Oblaco fosse un Frentano; il nome di *Obsidius* costituirebbe una distorsione, forse dal verbo *obsidere*. Al contrario, SALMON 1958, p. 174, reputa più attendibile il nome *Obsidius*, attestato anche durante la guerra sociale (*Oros.* V 18, 25, dove un *Obsidius* era un *Italicus imperator* di provenienza marrucina). Il suffisso *-idius* era diffuso fra le popolazioni del centro Italia (vd. SCHULTEN 1902); riscontriamo attestazioni latine non di *Obsidii* ma dell'equivalente *Opsidii*: *CIL* IX, 3062, a S. Valentino Citeriore (PE); *CIL* V, 2791, a Fumane (VR); *AE* 2016, 455, a Padova.

⁷⁶ Dion. Hal. XX 1, 5. Vd. *supra*, n. 70, per i Ferentani in questo passo.

quanto meno suggerisce che seppe sfruttare al meglio l'occasione di combattimento fornita dai Romani⁷⁷.

Almeno fra Marsi e Frentani sembrano esserci le premesse per individuare, nel primo quarto del III secolo, una collaborazione attiva e partecipe delle élite locali all'espansione romana. Non ci si può spingere a ritenere che intere popolazioni dell'antico Abruzzo aderissero senza obiezioni alle idee, alla cultura e alla politica romana; tuttavia, l'esistenza di personaggi come Caso Cantovios e Oblaco, che affiancarono Roma volontariamente e vollero mostrare le loro gesta ai posteri e sul campo di battaglia, suggerisce che una parte dei ceti dirigenti centro-italici accettarono i *foedera* conclusi fra IV e III secolo e parteciparono con impegno all'alleanza romana e allo sforzo militare che comportava.

Conclusioni

Le popolazioni dell'Abruzzo preromano non conclusero accordi diplomatici con Roma fino al 304, alla fine del 'secondo' conflitto romano-sannitico, ma in precedenza la loro inimicizia con i Romani fu solo episodica. Gli scontri con queste popolazioni furono sporadici: il caso dei Vestini è attestato solo nel 325, e furono solo dei contingenti di Marsi e Peligni a unirsi ai Sanniti nel 308. Non si può ritenere che i Marsi, i Peligni e gli altri popoli della zona abbiano combattuto continuamente contro i Romani dal 308 fino al 304. Anche il conflitto con i Marsi nel 302 va ridotto alla dimensione di una rivolta locale, non a un tentativo di staccarsi dall'alleanza romana sostenuto da tutti i Marsi.

Difficilmente ai Marsi, ai Peligni e agli altri popoli poteva essere sfuggito che Roma stava accerchiando il Sannio⁷⁸. L'accordo chiesto dalle popolazioni italiche nel 304 sembra volto a prendere tempo in vista dell'arrivo dei Romani. Gli Italici chiesero una *amicitia*, un accordo poco vincolante; i Romani imposero invece un rigido *foedus*, ponendo le basi diplomatiche dell'espansione nell'intera Italia centrale. Ne costituiscono una conferma la costruzione della via Valeria da Tivoli verso l'Appennino abruzzese (307)⁷⁹ e la stipula di un *foedus* con i Piceni (299), che portava ancora più a Nord il 'fronte' dei popoli legati ai Romani⁸⁰. Questa 'avanzata diplomatica' si svolse in appena cinque anni, dal 304 al 299, e portò nell'orbita romana una vasta area che includeva l'attuale costa molisana, gran parte dell'Abruzzo e le Marche meridionali.

Dall'inizio del III secolo, le popolazioni centro-italiche iniziarono poi una collaborazione militare con i Romani che, a parte qualche incertezza (le rivolte marsiche dopo la fondazione di *Carseoli*, il passaggio di *Milionia* ai Sanniti nella terza guerra romano-sannitica), proseguirà

⁷⁷ HELM 2017, p. 204, attribuisce una certa importanza al fatto che, secondo Polyb. XVIII 28, 10, i *socii* fossero alternati ai Romani nell'ordine di battaglia. L'elemento potrebbe indicare una mancanza di fiducia negli alleati, ma il gesto di Oblaco porta piuttosto a ritenere che anche questi *socii* (almeno il contingente di Oblaco) fossero solidamente schierati con Roma.

⁷⁸ Vd. VACANTI 2016.

⁷⁹ A Tivoli arrivava con il nome di via Tiburtina; vd. WISEMAN 1970, pp. 139-140. Per i censori del 307 M. Valerio Massimo e C. Giunio Bubulco, che diedero l'avvio alla costruzione, vd. Liv. IX 43, 25 e MRR, I, p. 165.

⁸⁰ Liv. X 10, 12. Significativo il fatto che quasi subito (X 11, 7) i Piceni informarono i Romani di essere stati contattati dai Sanniti per entrare in un'alleanza antiromana (offerta che avevano rifiutato). Questo indica, se non altro, che i Piceni erano generalmente favorevoli ai Romani; vd. BUONOCORE-FIRPO 1991-1998, II.2, p. 826.

fino alla guerra sociale⁸¹. I *foedera* si rivelarono solidi e gli accordi in essi contenuti dovettero essere bene accolti da questi popoli, se occorsero più di due secoli perché si rivoltassero. Si può affermare, in definitiva, che i *foedera* stipulati fra 304 e 299 costituiscano un risultato assai notevole conseguito dalla diplomazia romana: l'origine della coalizione romano-italica che combatterà le grandi guerre di espansione del III-II secolo va individuata in questi accordi⁸².

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⁸¹ Vd., ad esempio, BENELLI 2018, pp. 99-100; *contra*, FIRPO 2015, p. 279, che definisce «insufficiente» già nel 290 (l'anno della campagna sabina di M'. Curio Dentato) l'assetto dato alla zona dai *foedera* del 304-302.

⁸² Vd. ARMSTRONG 2016, p. 162: «While the second century BC saw the most significant expansion of Rome's foreign territories [...] all of this merely represented the expansion of a system created during the preceding period».

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Not *Stratēgos Autokratōr* (?)

Some notes on Clearchus' Rise to Power at Heraclea Pontica*

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Abstract: It is generally believed that Clearchus I, tyrant of Heraclea Pontica (364/3–352 BCE) came to power as *stratēgos autokratōr* “general plenipotentiary.” This widely held view is based upon a statement in Justin’s epitome of Pompeius Trogus’ *Historiae Philippicae* that says Clearchus was granted *summum imperium* by the demos. This paper shows that the equivalence of Justin’s *summum imperium* with the Greek *stratēgeia autokrateira* is a modern construction. It will, furthermore, demonstrate that the ancient sources cannot support the certain correspondence between *summum imperium* and *stratēgos autokratōr*. Ancient literary testimony, however, describes Clearchus as an arbiter and paints a clear picture of stasiotic struggle preceding his tyranny suited to this role. Thus, while modern scholarship has tended to emphasize the military character of Clearchus’ coming to power, this paper examines Clearchus through a new lens to call attention to the tyrant as a mediating figure. In this respect, Clearchus from the Black Sea turns out to be in good company among other Greek tyrants who exploited internal stasis to achieve personal power.

Keywords: tyranny, *stratēgos autokratōr*, *summum imperium*, arbiter, Justin, Black Sea

Sometime in 364 or 363 BCE on the southern shores of the Black Sea, Clearchus (391/90–353/2 BCE) rose to power at Heraclea after an especially turbulent bout of *stasis*. A joint foundation between Megara and the Boeotian League of the sixth century BCE (Ps.-Scymnus 1016–17, Diller; Ephorus, *FGrHist* 70 F 44b), Heraclea Pontica had endured factional strife before.¹ In fact, during the late Archaic and Classical periods, Heraclea experimented with both democratic and oligarchic government.² When Clearchus came of age in the first quarter of the fourth century BCE, an oligarchic regime, known as the Council of 300, exerted its dominance over Heracleote affairs and by the 360s tension with the demos had reportedly escalated with demands for the

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¹ Burstein 1976, 12–22 and Erçiyas 2003, 1403–1404 discuss early Heraclea Pontica. For a review of stasiotic struggles at Heraclea, see Burstein 1976, 23–46; Saprykin 1997, 21–56; Gehrke 1985, 70–72; Avram 2009, 209–27.

² Ancient testimonia: Arist. *Pol.* 1304b31–39; 1305b2–13; Aen. Tact. 11.10, 12.5. For a political history of Heraclea Pontica, see Burstein 1972; Robinson 1997, 111–113, 2011, 157–59.

cancellation of debt and the redistribution of land (Just. *Epit.* 16.4.2).³

Historical reconstructions of Clearchus' rise to power usually run as follows. As a young man Clearchus studied with Plato and Isocrates at Athens; at some point upon his return, he was exiled from his native Heraclea and served as an officer in the mercenary army of Mithridates, the son of the neighboring Persian satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia. When Heraclea became embroiled in *stasis*, Clearchus was recalled to mediate between the Council of 300 and the demos. At the behest of Mithridates, he was supposed to have handed the city over to Persian control and been appointed ruler in return, but Clearchus deviated from this plan, capturing Mithridates and ransoming him instead. At this point, Clearchus is said to have changed allegiance from the oligarchic Council of 300 to the demos, whom he instigated in the assembly and by whom he was given *summum imperium* for curbing the 300's power (Just. *Epit.* 16.4.16). In the end, Clearchus is said to have arrested, ransomed, and executed 60 members of the Council with the remainder having fled into exile. Members of the 300 who had escaped made a last-ditch attempt to regain power, but they were ultimately repelled by Heracleote forces. For the defeated and captured, there awaited torture and execution, leaving Clearchus now undisputed "tyrant" of Heraclea Pontica.⁴

Today, scholarly consensus holds that when the demos bestowed *summum imperium* onto Clearchus, they appointed him to what was known in the Greek world as *stratēgos autokratōr*, often translated as "general plenipotentiary," or commander with enhanced power.⁵ In the classical Greek world, special executive power (*autokrateira*) was usually designated to a single *stratēgos* to deal with a serious military emergency or to lead a military campaign against an external foe.⁶ Modern series on Greek tyranny, studies of the Clearchids, and histories of the Black Sea region regularly assign the title *stratēgos autokratōr* to Clearchus and adopt this reading of his becoming tyrant.⁷ For example, Stanley Burstein's seminal study of Heraclea Pontica speaks of Clearchus as *stratēgos autokratōr*, as does Sian Lewis' monograph on Greek tyranny and Miles Lester-Pearson's and Stefania Gallotta's very recent treatments.⁸ In this paper, I intend to demonstrate that the equivalence of Justin's *summum imperium* with the Greek *stratēgeia*

³ Mandel 1988, 35–70 and Saprykin 1997, 131–141 have useful overviews of the sociopolitical and economic milieu before Clearchus.

⁴ The fullest account of Clearchus' rise to power is Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Historiae Philippicae* (16.4), but bits of the story are also enhanced by the *Suda* (s.v. Κλέαρχος). Photius' epitome of Memnon's local history (*FGrHist* 434 F 1) regrettably begins with Clearchus already in power.

⁵ On the meaning of αὐτοκράτωρ, see Missiou-Ladi 1987, 336–39; Stephanus s.v. αὐτοκράτωρ; Chantraine s.v. αὐτοκράτωρ.

⁶ Some representative studies include Scheele 1923; Bearzot 1988, 39–57, 1991, 79–87; Maronati 2007, 65–85.

⁷ See, for example, Mossé 1969, 129; Burstein 1976, 52; Mandel 1988, 48–49; Saprykin 1997, 134; Bittner 1998, 28–29; Lewis 2009, 99; Davaze 2013, 146–49 mentions Clearchus' role as arbitrator against the backdrop of Heraclea's stasiotic conflict but equates Clearchus' later appointment of *summum imperium* with *stratēgos autokratōr* (160–61, 164); Harris 2017 (although Harris' focus is admittedly not on Clearchus as *stratēgos autokratōr* but as *prostatēs tou dēmou*, an interpretation first suggested by Lenk (see n. 15 below)); Lester-Pearson 2021, 143 (Lester-Pearson refers to Clearchus as "general with plenipotentiary power by the demos," a usual translation of *stratēgos autokratōr*); Gallotta 2021, 275–76. For a general emphasis on the military aspect of Clearchus' career, see Davies 1993, 240–42; Trundle 2006, 69; Tuplin 2018, 32.

⁸ For these references, see n. 7 above.

autokrateira in historical interpretations of Clearchus' rise to power is a modern construction. This paper will also show that the ancient evidence cannot support the certain correspondence between the terms *summum imperium* and *stratēgos autokratōr*. Ultimately, I suggest that the historical circumstances surrounding Clearchus' recall from exile and the extant literary testimony about his becoming tyrant point to Clearchus achieving political preeminence at Heraclea Pontica as an arbitrator figure, just as a handful of other well-documented cases of tyranny.

Before beginning it should be noted that our sources for Clearchus' tyranny present no small set of challenges. They comprise fragmentary authors, such as the local historian Memnon⁹ and Justin's epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Historiae Philippicae*,¹⁰ and a handful of references scattered throughout Isocrates' *Epistles*, Aristotle's *Politics*, Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, and the *Suda*. With few exceptions, they also appear to derive from a hostile tradition, which likely originated with Clearchus' political enemies (i.e., the Council of 300) or the descendants of these political enemies.¹¹ It is also writ large that the sources are often colored by a discourse of anti-tyrannism in which the depiction of Clearchus as "tyrant" can carry with it pejorative connotations.¹²

Deconstructing the summum imperium/stratēgos autokratōr equivalence

This section tries to unpack how the *summum imperium/stratēgos autokratōr* parity came about and, specifically, how it has been applied to Clearchus. To my knowledge, the correspondence

⁹ Drawing on earlier local histories, such as the one by Nymphis (see n. 11 below), Memnon composed a history of Heraclea sometime between the first century BCE and second century CE. What we can use of Memnon's history today is thanks to Photius' *Library* in the form of an epitome of books 9–16 of Memnon's original history. Naturally, the extent to which Photius accurately preserved the history of Memnon has long been a matter of contention among scholars. See, e.g., Treadgold 1980, 67–80; Wilson 1994, 5. For commentaries on Memnon's fragments, see *BNJ* 434 (Keaveney and Madden); Heinemann 2010; Davaze 2013.

¹⁰ Pompeius Trogus was active in the late first century BCE. His work comprised a universal history in Latin under the title *Historiae Philippicae*. Although the original work is lost, it is usually agreed that Pompeius drew mostly on late Classical and Hellenistic authors as his sources. For the status quaestionis and for bibliography on Trogus' sources, see Borgna 2018, 131–33; 2019, XXV–XXVII, esp. XXVII n. 80. Of course, the degree of Justin's originality in the epitome of Pompeius Trogus' *Historiae Philippicae* is also disputed (e.g., Goodyear 1992, 210–33; Yardley and Heckel 1997, 1–19; Borgna 2018) as is Justin's date (e.g., Alonso-Núñez 1987, 56–72; Syme 1988, 358–71; Yardley 2003; Borgna 2018, 39–44), which ranges between the second and fourth centuries CE.

¹¹ Key to understanding the underlying hostility toward the Clearchid tyranny in the literary sources are the local fragmentary historians (i.e., Promathidas, Amphitheus, Nymphis, and Domitius Callistratus) upon whom Memnon and others likely drew. For discussion of the local historians, see Dana 2011, 243–46. Nymphis, especially, is worth mentioning as his family reportedly suffered exile at the hands of Clearchus himself (*BNJ* 432 (Billows), T 3) and his history of Heracleote affairs down to the fall of the Clearchid dynasty (281 BCE) served as a main source for Memnon, for which see Jacoby *Komm.* III.B.259–60, 269–70; Desideri 1967, 366–416, esp. 389–91, 1991, 7–24; Davaze 2013, 58–65; Gallotta 2014, 65–77; *BNJ* 432 (Billows), esp. T 3–4 and F 10. Still, the hostile position toward Clearchus and his successors need not have arisen in Nymphis' history exclusively. After all, a number of Clearchus' political enemies went into exile upon his accession to power and, according to the latest study of the politics of exile at Heraclea Pontica by Loddò 2022, 155–182 these exiles proved an enduring threat to the Clearchid regime.

¹² Bibliography on the archetypal figure of the tyrant is too extensive to list here in full. Some useful overviews include Lewis 2004, 2009, 2021; Mitchell 2013, 153–63; Luraghi 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2015, 2018; Boyd 2016.

between this peculiar Greek magistracy and the Roman power title does not appear in scholarship predating the mid-twentieth century. For example, histories of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries by Grote or Beloch make no such connection.¹³ A 1910 doctoral dissertation by Apel dedicated to the Clearchid tyranny at Heraclea neglects to mention the *stratēgeia autokrateira* in connection with any stage of Clearchus' career.¹⁴ Nor does Lenk's 1927 article on the tyranny at Heraclea Pontica.¹⁵ The ascription of this office to Clearchus is also absent from the 1921 Pauly-Wissowa entry on the tyrant.¹⁶ Scheele's 1923 monograph on the institution of *stratēgos autokratōr* in classical Greece does not assign this position to Clearchus nor to any other Heracleote tyrant for that matter.¹⁷ A 1966 numismatic study by Franke on the coinage of Clearchus and his brother regent, Satyrus, is the first reference that I have been able to track down, which claims that Clearchus took up the office of *stratēgos autokratōr*, but Franke supplies testimonia to neither ancient nor modern sources from which he derived this detail.¹⁸ It is only through a reference in a nearby footnote that Franke discloses his consultation of Berve's forthcoming book on Greek tyranny published in the following year.¹⁹ In sum, it appears that until the middle of the twentieth century, scholarship offered no interpretation of Clearchus as *stratēgos autokratōr* or linked this magistracy with the Roman title of *summum imperium*.

All this, however, changed with Berve's magisterial volumes published in 1967, which is still regarded as an authoritative source on Greek tyranny.²⁰ There, Berve describes the moment of Clearchus' ascent to power as follows, "Die Versammlung, die auf seine Anregung darüber beriet, wählte ihn spontan zum Strategos autokrator."²¹ In the corresponding section of his second volume devoted to notes, Berve cites Justin's passage at 16.4.16 where Clearchus is granted *summum imperium* and equates this Latin phrase with the Greek *stratēgos autokratōr*.²² We shall consider momentarily on what philological grounds these two titles might be connected, but for now it is worth asking where Berve's correlation between Clearchus' obtaining of *summum imperium* and the *stratēgeia autokrateira* might have originated. The answer reveals itself as we continue to read Berve's reconstruction of the events which led to Clearchus' tyranny. Berve says that Clearchus followed the "derselbe Weg zur Tyrannis, den der ältere Dionysios beschritten hatte" and mentions some conspicuous modeling of Dionysius on the part of Clearchus by making his son the namesake of the Syracusan tyrant.²³ This suggestion by Berve,

¹³ Beloch 1922 III.1.137; Grote 1869, 12: 462–63.

¹⁴ Apel 1910, 24–30.

¹⁵ Lenk 1927, 77–83.

¹⁶ Lenschau, s.v. Klearchos (4), RE 11, 577–79.

¹⁷ For the reference to Scheele, see n. 6 above. It is worth mentioning here that none of the other studies in n. 6 treat Clearchus as *stratēgos autokratōr* either.

¹⁸ Franke 1966, 130–39 (*stratēgos autokratōr* at p. 131).

¹⁹ Franke 1966, 131 n. 9.

²⁰ Berve 1967.

²¹ Berve 1967, 1: 316: "The assembly, which deliberated on his suggestion, impulsively elected him *stratēgos autokratōr*."

²² Berve 1967, 2: 680.

²³ Berve 1967, 1: 316: "same path to tyranny that the elder Dionysius had trodden...." Apel 1910, 31 describes Clearchus' regime as "eine Militärmonarchie," which may also have influenced Berve's hypothesis.

in turn, likely originated in a remark made by Diodorus Siculus that Clearchus “imitated the path of the tyrant of Syracuse, Dionysius (I)” (ἐζήλωσε μὲν τὴν διαγωγὴν τὴν Διονυσίου τοῦ Συρακοσίων τυράννου, 15.81.5). But nowhere in his comparison of Dionysius and Clearchus does Diodorus mention the *stratēgeia autokrateira*. We might just as easily and perhaps more logically assume that when Diodorus (or a source he consulted in preparing book 15) referred to these tyrants’ “path” (τὴν διαγωγὴν, Diod. Sic. 15.81.5), he was speaking in broader terms about their shared “demagogic” practices rather than any specific office.²⁴ Be that as it may, it is now clear that Berve’s drawing of a parallel between Justin’s *summum imperium* and *stratēgos autokratōr* was his own conjecture. Admittedly, it was not an entirely poor guess, but it was nonetheless a guess without any firm grounding in the ancient literary evidence or testimony related to Clearchus. And yet, the degree to which Berve’s suggestion has come to dominate subsequent historical reconstructions of Clearchus’ rise to power is striking for it can be found in most scholarship starting with Franke in 1966 up until today.²⁵ So, now that we know likely where and with whom the *summum imperium/stratēgos autokratōr* equivalence arose, it is time to consider if there are philological reasons or other arguments for linking *summum imperium* with *stratēgos autokratōr*.

Summum Imperium

Imperium is “most commonly used to denote the authority of certain Roman civic and military office holders,” although it is often noted that the term had a broader usage.²⁶ Romans, for instance, also used it to refer to the power of foreign kings and leaders.²⁷ In a recent study of *summum imperium auspiciūque*, Vervaet concluded that *summum imperium* is quite malleable indeed, signifying not “one specific *genus imperii*.”²⁸ *Summum imperium* defines the *imperium* of the consul or dictator,²⁹ but also the authority of *tribuni militum consulari potestate* (Livy 5.14.1), of consular and praetorian proconsuls (Livy 28.27.12, Cic. *QFr.* 1.31), and it is even extended to propraeors and other officials *cum praetorio imperio* (Cic. *Verr.* 2.14; *Leg. agr.* 1.9, 2.34, 2.99).³⁰ Thus, *summum imperium* in a Roman context, at any rate, does not denote “the power of one particular category of official *cum imperio*, but rather serves to denote the authority of that official who in

²⁴ It has long been the consensus view that Diodorus consulted Ephorus for his history of Greece in books 11 through 16 of the *Bibliothēke*. Scholars, on the other hand, disagree about the other sources used by Diodorus. Timaeus, Philistus, *Hellenica Oxyrhynchia*, and Ctesias are among the usual list of candidates for books 14 and 15. My own view regarding Diodorus as an author in his own right and how he used his sources is closest to that of Harding (2021, xxxvi–xliv).

²⁵ See n. 7 for a sample of bibliographic references.

²⁶ For the quote, see Lushkov, s.v. *Imperium*, *EAH* 6, 3433–3435. On the shades of *imperium*’s application and meaning, some definitive studies include Mommsen 1888; Brunt 1977, 95–116; Bleicken 1981, 1993, 117–33; Richardson, 2008.

²⁷ E.g., nn. 33–39 below.

²⁸ Vervaet 2014, 29.

²⁹ It is usually assumed that *summum imperium* was attached exclusively to consular power or that of a dictator (see, e.g., Badian 1965, 110–21; Giradet 1992, 177–88, 2000, 167–227, 2001, 153–209; Roddaz 1992, 189–211; Brennan 2000, 39, 261 n. 50; Hurllet 2006).

³⁰ For greater detail, see Vervaet 2014, 29–51.

a certain well-defined context holds the supreme command.”³¹ Considering the wide-ranging application of the power title in Roman political and constitutional history, it seems unlikely that Justin (or the historian Pompeius Trogus whose work he epitomizes) had one particular post, such as *stratēgos autokratōr*, in mind when he used it in relation to Clearchus.³²

Still, it is worth investigating further if the historical sources which use this pairing confirm the versatility evinced in the world of Roman politics and administration. In the extant remains of Justin’s epitome *summum imperium* is used on one other occasion to report Hannibal’s appointment in 196 BCE as suffete, Carthage’s highest magisterial office (32.4.10).³³ If we probe other Latin authors writing about non-Roman affairs, like Justin (and Pompeius Trogus), the *Lives* of Cornelius Nepos supply a handful of instances. Nepos avails himself of *summum imperium* to describe the power held by the Spartan king (*Them.* 4.2);³⁴ Eumenes’ command over other high-ranking Macedonians (*Eum.* 7.1);³⁵ the chief position held by Tissaphernes among Persian satraps, (*Ages.* 2.3);³⁶ the generalship at Athens (*Phoc.* 2.4),³⁷ and the chief power entrusted by Lysander to ten men in cities formerly allied to Athens after the Peloponnesian War (*Lys.* 1.5).³⁸ Curtius Rufus also employs *summum imperium* in reference to Pharnabazus’ command over the coast during Alexander the Great’s conquest of Asia (3.13.14.2).³⁹ According to the use of this pairing by Latin-speaking authors writing about Greek and other non-Roman affairs, *summum imperium* does not easily graft onto one single magistracy and, therefore, should not necessarily be equated with *stratēgos autokratōr*.⁴⁰ As Vervaeet astutely notes of the Roman administrative world, rather than referring to one particular *genus imperii*, *summum imperium* in non-Roman contexts also displays malleability. One question that remains is if Justin or Pompeius Trogus

³¹ Vervaeet 2014, 29.

³² Of course, we know that Pompeius Trogus drew on late Classical authors in composing the *Historiae Philippicae* (see n. 10 above), who could have specified the office which was granted to Clearchus in 364/3 BCE, but even this likelihood cannot confirm that Trogus’ original Greek source assigned the supreme generalship and not some other post to Clearchus. For some likely possibilities, see below pp. 8–11.

³³ Just. *Epit.* 32.4.10: *nec cum reversus Karthaginem summum imperium tenuit* (“not even when he had returned to Carthage and held the highest office”).

³⁴ Nep. *Them.* 4.2: *Idque Eurybiadi, regi Lacedaemoniorum, qui tum summae imperii praeerat, fore affirmabat* (“and he asserted that it was so to Eurybiades, king of the Lacedaemonians, who held the chief command at that time”). N.B. Nepos’ *summae imperii* in this passage is not precisely the same as *summum imperium*.

³⁵ Nep. *Eum.* 7.1: *si potius ipse alienigena summi imperii potiretur quam alii Macedonum* (“if he [Eumenes], a foreigner, should occupy the highest command rather than one of Macedonians”).

³⁶ Nep. *Ages.* 2.3: *Tissaphernes, qui summum imperium tum inter praefectos habebat regios* (“Tissaphernes, who among the king’s satraps at that time held the chief authority”).

³⁷ Nep. *Phoc.* 2.4: *cum apud eum summum esset imperium populi* (“when he [Phocion] had the highest office from the people”).

³⁸ Nep. *Lys.* 1.5: *quibus summum imperium potestatemque omnium rerum committeret* (“to whom he [Lysander] had entrusted the highest office and power over all matters”).

³⁹ Curt. 3.13.14: *Pharnabazi quoque, cui summum imperium maritimae orae rex dederat* (“and Pharnabazus, to whom the King had given the highest command over the coast”).

⁴⁰ Yarrow 2006, 193 has observed that ἀτοκράτωρ is a usual translation for two Roman power titles – *dictator* and *imperator*. However, she also presents Memnon’s use of the term ἀτοκράτωρ as a case study of the fluidity of the Greek word for translating a variety of Roman magistracies (2006, 192–95). Yarrow’s remarks concerning ἀτοκράτωρ thus resembles the versatility with which *summum imperium* is applied to a wide range of Greek and non-Greek positions.

used *summum imperium* in a generalizing sense to refer to the highest command at Heraclea Pontica, what might that office have been? For this we turn to the political and constitutional history of Heraclea.

High Office at Heraclea Pontica

The evidence for Heraclea's political institutions is rather thin on the ground. But luckily its status as a colonial foundation and its settlement of two further colonies on the Black Sea have allowed scholars to extrapolate, albeit not without caution, on the offices and institutions through the *mētropolis-apoikia* relationship.⁴¹ At Chalcedon and Heraclea, inscriptional evidence shows that a *basileus* served as the eponymous official.⁴² It is widely held that a *proaisymnon* mentioned in documents from Heraclea's colonies, Callatis and Chersonesus, also presided over a college of *aisymnētai* at Heraclea.⁴³ We hear of a body of judicial magistrates called *nomophylakes* at Chersonesus, usually considered likely at Heraclea Pontica as well.⁴⁴ Aristotle once refers to a board of *strategoi* (*Oec.* 1347b13) overseeing a naval campaign, but never to a *stratēgos autokratōr*.⁴⁵ Bearing in mind the evidence we have for the highest offices at Heraclea Pontica, then, it is certainly possible that when Justin says the assembly appointed Clearchus with *summum imperium* he had *basileus* or some other preexisting office, such as *proaisymnon/aisymnētēs*, in mind. The post of *aisymnētēs* is especially tempting, since we know of others, such as Pittacus of Mytilene, who also took up this position and were also associated with tyranny.⁴⁶ But even these possibilities still leave us with an *argumentum ex silentio*, and it is difficult to say if the office of the *aisymnēteia* worked in precisely the same way at Heraclea as it did in sixth-century Mytilene or elsewhere.⁴⁷

⁴¹ For an overview of Heraclea's institutions, see Avram, Hind, and Tsetschladze 2004, 957; Burstein 1976, 20–21. For an in-depth study Robu 2014 is useful.

⁴² *I.Kalchedon* 7, 8, 10, 19; *I.Heraclea* 2b, 4. For *basileus* as the eponymous official, Callatis (*I.Kallatis* 3, *SGDI* 3089 = *I.Kallatis* 7) and Chersonese (*IOSPE I*² 186–187) also provide inscriptional evidence.

⁴³ Callatis: *ISM* III, 10, l. 1–2, 35, l. 2–3; Chersonese: *IOSPE I*² 352, l. 57; *IOSPE I*² 690, l. 1–2. On this position see, Robu 2014, 387 n. 295, cf. n. 296 for an alternative interpretation.

⁴⁴ *IOSPE I*² 342, 343, 359 = *IOSPE I*³ 22, 51, 52.

⁴⁵ For a discussion of the college of generals at Megara and its colonies, see Robu 2014, 391–401.

⁴⁶ Aristotle presents Pittacus of Mytilene as the sole historical example of an elective tyranny (αἰρετὴ τυραννίς, *Pol.* 1285a31–32), which he claims was known as the *aisymnēteia* (*Pol.* 1285a31). Dionysius of Halicarnassus also calls Pittacus *aisymnētēs* (*A.R.* 5.73.2–3 = Theophr. *F* 631, Fortenbaugh). Nicolaus of Damascus (*FGrHist* 90 *F* 54) assigns an *aisymnēteia* to a shadowy seventh-century leader of Miletus named Epimenes. Gorman 2001, 92–5, however, argues that Nicolaus applied the term anachronistically. On Teos, *aisymnētēs* is used synonymously with “tyrant” (*Syll.*³ 38 = *ML* 30B; *SEG* XXXI.985). Other *aisymnēteia* are attested at Samos (Theodorus Metochites, *Miscell.* 668–669 names Phoebias, see also Carty 2015, 34–37), at Naxos (*Syll.*³ 955), and at Miletus and its colonies Olbia and Sinope, where the titles *stephanophori* are synonymous with *aisymnētai* of the *molpoi* (*Milet* III.122–128).

⁴⁷ For example, at Heraclea's *metropolis*, Megara, the *aisymnētai* are thought to have functioned in the same way as the *prytaneis* at Athens: they formed a smaller body of the council (Rhodes, s.v. *Aisymnetes*, *BNP* 1, 407–8).

Clearchus, the Arbiter

Another equally appealing possibility, and one for which we have more than one ancient source, is that when the demos endowed Clearchus with the highest command, they were simply reaffirming the post for which Clearchus had been brought back in the first place, namely that of arbiter. When *stasis* erupted in 364 BCE, the Council of 300's first step, even before recalling Clearchus, was to inquire after a mediator to arbitrate between them and the demos. Justin tells us that the Council first sought help from Timotheus, the Athenian leader, and next from Epaminondas the Theban (*Epit.* 16.4.3). Both candidates refused and consequently the Council “hastened” (*decurrent*) to Clearchus, whom they had previously banished (*Epit.* 16.4.4).

In Justin, the Council recalls (*vocarent*) Clearchus to take up the position of “arbiter of civil discord” (*arbiter civilis discordiae*, *Epit.* 16.4.8). Earlier, Justin describes the role Clearchus assumed upon his return as “the guardianship of his homeland” (*tutelam patriae*, *Epit.* 16.4.5). Later, Justin has Clearchus disingenuously volunteer to withdraw his support from the demos in the speech leading up to his appointment: “nor would he take part in their civil discord (pl.)” (*neque civilibus discordiis interfuturum*, *Epit.* 16.4.13). The *Suda* (s.v. Κλέαρχος) records that deteriorating into oppressive *stasis* (ἐκπίπτουσιν οἱ Ἡρακλεῶται εἰς στάσιν βαρεῖαν) the Heracleotes wished to return to amity and become reconciled (ἐπανελθεῖν εἰς φιλίαν καὶ συμβάσεις βουλόμενοι), and they chose Clearchus as “*ephor* for renewing civic harmony” (προαιροῦνται ἔφορον τῆς αὐθις ὁμονοίας τὸν Κλέαρχον). The *Suda* (s.v. Κλέαρχος), furthermore, speaks about Clearchus’ power coming from the commons (ἐγκρατῆς δ’ οὖν τῶν κοινῶν γενόμενος), which seems to allude to the moment in Justin when *plebs summum ad eum imperium defert* “the people grant him *summum imperium*” (*Epit.* 16.4.16).⁴⁸ Thus, both sources which report directly on Clearchus’ rise to power give an account of his recall by painting a vivid picture of the internal upheaval besetting Heraclea Pontica at the time.⁴⁹ These sources also use language and titles with obvious ties to arbitration to describe Clearchus’ special appointment. Perhaps by looking at Clearchus as a military figure, as most scholarship has tended to do since Berve, other aspects of Clearchus’ immediate rise have been unduly neglected. I suggest that rather than speculate a military-style office for Clearchus in 364/3 BCE we ought to consider the duty for which Clearchus was originally summoned and the titles for which we have solid textual evidence. In other words, instead of interpreting *summum imperium* as *stratēgos autokratōr*, a magisterial office for which there is no evidence of its existence or deployment at Heraclea Pontica at any point in its history, a ready solution is that *summum imperium* represented the special appointment to which Clearchus had been designated as arbitrator. Indeed, most scholarly discussions pre-dating Berve by Grote, Lenschau, and Lenk also emphasize the element of mediation in Clearchus’ early career.⁵⁰ This reading of Clearchus’ path to the tyranny would mean that when Justin describes

⁴⁸ Although Aristotle does not specify a historical example, when he discusses the rise of tyrannies from oligarchies in the *Politics*, he describes one scenario, strikingly familiar from Heraclea Pontica, where a tyrant arises when mercenaries and “a neutral arbiter” (ἀρχοντι μεσιδίῳ) are entrusted with the maintenance of internal security, and the arbiter becomes master of both [disputing parties] (γίνεται κύριος ἀμφοτέρων, *Pol.* 1306a27–29).

⁴⁹ For modern accounts of this *stasis*, see Burstein 1976, 48–50; Gehrke 1985, 72.

⁵⁰ Indeed, works pre-dating Berve’s study emphasize Clearchus’ arbitrator position (e.g., Grote 1869, 12: 463; Lenschau, s.v. Klearchos (4), *RE* 11, 578; Lenk 1927, 79). See also, Davaze 2013, 146–49 who more recently draws attention to Clearchus as arbiter.

the soon-to-be tyrant shifting his allegiance from the Council of 300 to the demos, and the assembly bestowing *summum imperium* upon him, the people were in fact (re)confirming the role of arbiter for which Clearchus had been recalled in the first place.

Several factors contribute positively to this interpretation of the genesis of Clearchus' tyranny. The first is that Heraclea Pontica, as was already mentioned, had faced *stasis* before and on at least one of these documented occasions, exile for the oligarchic party had also been the solution (Arist. *Pol.* 1304b31–39).⁵¹ Accordingly, when Clearchus took the steps that he did, after the demos had put their trust in him to resolve the political and social crisis, he was not undertaking any radically new maneuver or at least one that Heraclea had not experienced before.

Second, while it is acknowledged that a *stratēgos autokratōr* could wield wide, executive powers, not without civil implications, historical instances of this special magistracy usually take place in times of foreign military campaigns. Dionysius I of Syracuse was elected *stratēgos autokratōr* to carry out the war against an invading Carthaginian host (Diod. Sic. 13.94.5).⁵² The Phocian tyrants, Philomelus, Onomarchus, Phayllus, Phalaecus, were similarly made *stratēgoi autokratores* in succession during the Third Sacred War.⁵³ Even the rare Athenian case of Alcibiades', Nicias', and Lamachus' appointments as *stratēgoi autokratores* arose on the occasion of a long-distance military expedition (Thuc. 6.8.2).⁵⁴ Naturally, it would be misleading to assert that no external pressure threatened the safety and autonomy of Heraclea, which would have made an able military commander highly desirable. In the years preceding Clearchus' ascent the satraps of western Anatolia had led a revolt against the Persian king Artaxerxes (404–359/58 BCE).⁵⁵ In fact, Ariobarzanes, satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia and father of Mithridates, led this uprising and had strong incentive for bringing a city with Black Sea access under his control.⁵⁶ Nevertheless, despite the delicate situation in which Heraclea found its foreign policy in the 360s BCE, the account provided by the ancient sources, as we have already seen, is clearly one of internal turmoil and not the onslaught of an invading Persian army. The Heracleotes, then, stood more in need of an able administrator to oversee domestic issues and deal with external threats through the traditional means of diplomacy than a supreme general of warfare.⁵⁷

Third, although once tyrant Clearchus' eccentric self-presentation and image management

⁵¹ On this particular stasiotic episode, see Burstein 1976, 19, 23–24; Robinson 1997, 111–12, 2011, 157; Avram 2009, 219–21.

⁵² Of course, there is a company of other Syracusan leaders, most of whom are also associated with tyranny, who were similarly appointed *stratēgos autokratōr* (e.g., Gelon (?), Hermocrates, Dion, Timoleon, Agathocles, and Hiero II). For a sampling of bibliography on the Sicilian cases of *stratēgos autokratōr*, see Scheele 1923, 19–51; Berve 1956, 73–4; Westlake 1969, 174–202; Caven 1990, 50–58; Zambon 2008, 179–90; De Angelis 2016, 218; De Lisle 2021, 15; Pownall 2022, 35–47.

⁵³ For a summary overview of the succession of the Phocian tyrants as *stratēgoi*, see D.S. 16.56.5. For scholarly discussion of the Phocian examples, see Scheele 1923, 10–12; Buckler 1989, 22, 47, 85, 98, 141; McInerney 1999, 199–204; Maronati 2007, 65–85; Pascual González 2018, 98.

⁵⁴ For Athens, see also M. Scheele 1923, 3–10; Bearzot 1988, 39–57.

⁵⁵ For these events, see Debord 1999, 287–301.

⁵⁶ Devaze 2013, 148.

⁵⁷ On Heraclea Pontica's long-standing history of diplomatic relations with Persia, see Debord 1999, 300; Briant 2002, 699.

drew a fair measure of censure from the ancient sources (i.e., Clearchus is said to have claimed to be a son of Zeus and appeared in public decadently attired),⁵⁸ these so-called peculiarities, when read from a different angle, can help to shed new light on Clearchus' leadership goals.⁵⁹ By evoking Zeus as a ruler whose regime, according to one prevalent tradition, was held to have brought with it order, stability, and justice, Clearchus may have been trying to align these same values with his own objectives as arbiter.⁶⁰

Fourth and finally, Clearchus would be well in the company of other arbitrator tyrants, both tyrants who once in power mediated disputes, like Periander of Corinth,⁶¹ and those who owed their power to a mediating role or to acting as a corrective force within an unstable political community (e.g., Pittacus of Mytilene, Cypselus I of Corinth, Gelon of Syracuse, Solon and Pisistratus of Athens, and Tynnondas of Euboea).⁶²

One counter argument to this reappraisal of Clearchus might be that, while a handful of scholars have examined archaic arbitrator tyrants, tyrants as mediators are not a well-documented feature of the historical record during the Classical and Hellenistic periods. This putative shortfall of later arbiter tyrants, however, has much to do with conventional approaches to studying Greek history, some of which have been influenced by the ancient authors themselves. For instance, Aristotle's discussion of elective tyranny in the *Politics* lists only one historical example of an arbiter tyrant, Pittacus of Mytilene (1285a31–32). Some have pointed to the artificiality of Aristotle's treatment of tyranny and view his strict categorizing tendencies as contradicted by the historical evidence.⁶³ Moreover, work of the last two decades on Greek tyranny has challenged the conventional idea of an archaic age of tyrants and a Classical period devoid of them and sees tyranny as a political alternative resurfacing during the Archaic, Classical, and Hellenistic periods.⁶⁴

One early Hellenistic example of a “tyrant” designated to set matters to rights in a war-torn

⁵⁸ Justin (*Epit.* 16.5.7–11), Memnon (*FGrHist* 434 F 1.1.1), Plutarch (*De Alex. fort.* 5 = *Mor.* 338b), and the *Suda* (s.v. Κλέαρχος) paint Clearchus' behavior as megalomania: he pretentiously claimed to be the son of Zeus, he wielded a thunderbolt, and he named his son Ceraunus “Thunderbolt.” He wore make-up and luxurious dress, reminiscent of kings in tragedy. In the *Suda* (s.v. Κλέαρχος), Clearchus even demands *proskynesis*. For an analysis of Clearchus' literary portrait in Memnon (via Nymphis) which linked the tyrant to oriental despotism, see Heinemann 2010, 102–9.

⁵⁹ For a study of this aspect of Clearchus' public persona, see Boyd *forthcoming*.

⁶⁰ On this view of Zeus in Greek religion, see Lloyd-Jones 1971. For the motif of the tyrant as Zeus-nurtured ruler in epinician, see Morgan 2015, 36 *et passim*. On the continued importance of Zeus as a paradigm for Hellenistic kings in poetry, see Brumbaugh 2019.

⁶¹ *Hdt.* 5.94–96, *Strab.* 13.1.38–39, *Diog. Laert.* 1.74. Page 1955, 152–53 suggests that Alcaeus' poems served as a source for this story in antiquity. The fragments of Alcaeus typically cited in support of this theory are F 167, 306 (f) Voigt.

⁶² Fabbrini 2002, 265–267 emphasizes the figure of the tyrant as a mediator figure. Similarly, on the archaic tradition of tyrants who come to power as lawgivers and stabilizing forces in their communities, see Parker 2007, 13–39. I recognize that for some Solon of Athens might be a controversial figure to include in this group, but the latest work on the Athenian statesman has drawn affinities between him and other tyrants of his time (see e.g., Goušchin 1999, 14–23; Irwin 2005, 205–280; Parker 2007, 14, 24–8; Sagstetter 2013; Bernhardt 2022, 414–61).

⁶³ For Aristotle on Pittacus, see Romer 1982, 25–46; Schütrumpf 1991, 543. For a critical assessment of Aristotle's treatment of tyranny as “historical,” see Sprawski 1999, 59; Lewis 2006, 8, 2009, 91.

⁶⁴ On this line of research, see Lewis 2006, 2009, 2021; Mitchell 2013.

and *stasis*-ridden city is Demetrius of Phalerum.⁶⁵ His appointment as *epimelētēs* of Athens and his efforts to institute legal reforms certainly suggest an effort to stabilize the city (Diod. Sic. 18.74.3).⁶⁶ It should be noted that despite Demetrius' many achievements in power, a hostile tradition in the sources assigns him a disillusioned sense of grandeur, similar to Clearchus, that is preserved infamously in anecdotes about statues erected throughout the city in his honor.⁶⁷

Aratus of Sicyon is another case in point. Plutarch says that he was chosen as mediator plenipotentiary (αὐτοκράτωρ διαλλακτής, *Arat.* 14.2) and resolved the civil conflict brought about by the return of exiles to Sicyon with a 150-talent financial settlement from Ptolemy II. Aratus is not remembered as a tyrant in the extant literature, but recent opinion notes strong resemblances in his actions and conduct toward other tyrants, and his close working relationship with a handful of tyrants or former tyrants is certainly suggestive.⁶⁸

Early Hellenistic Samos offers another instance of a tyrant as arbitrator. Scholars describe the atmosphere on Samos at the end of the fourth century BCE as one of intense factionalism largely thanks to shifting power dynamics in the eastern Aegean after the death of Alexander of the Great and the return of the exiled Samian population to their native island. When Perdikkas enforced Alexander's original decree to restore all exiles (322/321 BCE), it is agreed that property disputes, social upheaval, and all out violence on Samos attended the return of the Samians after a forty-year absence from the island.⁶⁹ Among the returning exiles was a young Duris, who would later succeed his father Kaios as tyrant of Samos. The sources do not reveal the precise details of how Kaios attained power, but it is usually thought, considering the fragile social situation on Samos at the time, that Kaios came to power as an arbiter figure who mediated this crisis.⁷⁰

In early first-century BCE Athens, we hear about a certain Medeios holding an unprecedented three eponymous archonships in a row after a slave revolt and during a time of economic hardship — catalysts, no doubt, for *stasis*.⁷¹ The sources do not record Medeios as tyrant, but the latest analysis of his career invites reconsideration of Medeios as a type of elective tyrant not dissimilar to Athens' sixth-century mediator (and perhaps also tyrant) Solon.⁷² The political potency of acting as an arbitrator (διαλλακτήν) for one's community was recognized by Plutarch as one of the most important roles in which a statesman might serve (*bis* at *Mor.* 823B9 = *Praec. Ger. Reip.* 31 and at *Mor.* 825E2 = *Praec. Ger. Reip.* 32). Similarly, in *On the fortune and virtue of Alexander the Great* Plutarch says that Alexander fancied himself "a mediator

⁶⁵ The bibliography relating to Demetrius of Phalerum is too expansive to fully detail within this space. Some representative studies include Gehrke 1978, 149–93; Williams 1997, 327–46; Fortenbaugh and Schütrumpf 2000; Haake 2007, 60–82.

⁶⁶ On Demetrius in the role of lawgiver, see Dow and Travis 1943, 144–66; Gagarin 2000, 347–65; Tracy 2000, 331–45.

⁶⁷ For a sampling of this hostile tradition, see *Ath.* 12.542B–C, 542E–F, 13.593G; *Diog. Laert.* 5.76.

⁶⁸ Our impression of Aratus today might be very different indeed if Phylarchus' lost histories had survived, for whom Aratus was the antagonist of his work (*FGrHist* 81). On Aratus, see Gruen 1972, 609–25; Hillen 2012.

⁶⁹ Kebric 1977, 5–7.

⁷⁰ Barron 1962, 189–92. Kebric 1977, 7.

⁷¹ Antela-Bernárdez 2021, 199–201.

⁷² Antela-Bernárdez 2021, 201–202.

for all” (διαλλακτῆς τῶν ὅλων νομίζων) (Mor. 329C1). Clearly, in the historical record and in political discourse, arbitration continues to be presented as an effective platform for acquiring and legitimizing power long after the Archaic period. Some of the aforementioned rulers are called *tyrannoi* in the ancient sources and others are not. The increasingly prevalent binary in the Hellenistic period between democracy as “legitimate” government vs. tyranny/oligarchy as “illegitimate” and the individual author’s leanings undoubtedly influenced the labels attached or not attached to these figures. What is more, there is good reason to study the connection between Hellenistic tyranny and mediation further, since in recent decades studies of the Greek polis have demonstrated not only the continuation of stasiotic conflict throughout the Hellenistic period, but have also used documentation of these crises as evidence for “the abiding relevance and vitality of the Hellenistic polis.”⁷³ To summarize, then, these examples demonstrate first that arbiters associated with tyranny are in fact attested in the Greek world beyond the Archaic period and that that they continue to surface in moments of intense *stasis*, just as at Heraclea in 364/363 BCE.

Conclusion

At all events, it is now clear i) that Justin’s *summum imperium* cannot *a priori* be equated with *stratēgos autokratōr* and ii) that this interpretation of Clearchus’ rise to power, in fact, originated from a hypothesis made by Berve in his influential 1967 study of Greek tyranny. It is also now evident that an emphasis on Clearchus’ beginnings as a warlord, although the prevailing interpretation in modern scholarship, has overlooked documented historical circumstances of Clearchus’ ascent at Heraclea Pontica. Not only should we entertain possibilities for Clearchus other than *stratēgos autokratōr* because all other attested cases of these generals tend to occur in moment of *external* warfare, but also because our sources unanimously report that at the time of Clearchus’ recall the foremost challenge facing the city was *internal* strife. The best option, then, is the one for which we have the strongest textual evidence, that is, Clearchus came to power as an arbiter (*arbiter civilis discordiae* (Just. 16.4.8); ἔφορον τῆς αὐθις ὁμονοίας (Suda s.v. Κλέαρχος)), appointed first by the Council of 300 to resolve the crisis afflicting Heracleote society and later reaffirmed by the demos for this same purpose.

By examining Clearchus through the lens of mediator we have gained fresh insights into his elevation to power, and we can appreciate Clearchus as one among a collection of tyrants who, in times of social and political instability, were placed in positions of power so as to reestablish justice and order. And, if longevity counts as one measure of stability, we can attribute some level of success to Clearchus. After all, the political preeminence he established in 364/3 BCE was passed on to successive generations of his descendants, the Clearchids, who ruled Heraclea Pontica for the next eight decades.⁷⁴ Finally, this reexamination of Clearchus’ ascent also contains a broader methodological point. It reminds us of an important lesson about how hypotheses, when unquestioningly accepted, can inadvertently influence scholarship, and how these assumptions may transmit inaccuracies over time. Let the tyrant Clearchus from the Black

⁷³ On the Hellenistic Greek polis, see Gruen 1993, 339–54; Gauthier 1993, 211–31; Deininger 1993, 55–76; Zimmermann 2008, 9–21. For *stasis* in the Hellenistic polis, see Börm 2018, 53–83 and p. 56 (for the quote).

⁷⁴ See Lester-Pearson 2021, 141–60 for a recent study of the later Clearchids.

Sea serve as a welcome reminder of the importance of renewed curiosity, even for historical figures about whom we think we know all there is to know.

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