

# POLYBIUS, ROME AND THE HELLENISTIC WORLD

*Essays and Reflections*

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*Polybian studies, c. 1975–2000*

During the years following the end of the Second World War there was a remarkable surge of interest in Polybius, which it is hard to dissociate entirely from the contemporary clash of powers and the rise of the United States to preeminence, which were to dominate the next fifty years. For Polybius' central theme was of course the century-long struggle between Rome and Carthage and the rise of Rome to domination in her own world of cities and kingdoms, the *oecumene*. Be that as it may, the publication of a succession of books<sup>1</sup> and articles<sup>2</sup> on Polybius during the sixties – a trend already foreshadowed in the forties and fifties in Ziegler's important *Real-Encyclopädie* article, von Fritz's long study of Polybius' discussion of the mixed constitution and the first volume of my own *Commentary*<sup>3</sup> – has led more than one scholar to speak of a 'Polybian renaissance'.<sup>4</sup>

Some of this work has reflected historians' current interest in such topics as rhetoric and narrative technique, but on the whole older problems have remained uppermost in discussion: on the one hand Polybius' views on his own craft, his methods of composition and the content and purpose of his work and, on the other, his explanation of how and why Rome had been so successful, together with his own attitude towards Rome and her domination since 168 BC. In this introductory chapter I propose to describe and discuss what seem to me to have been the main trends in recent Polybian scholarship, covering roughly the last quarter of a century (though occasionally I shall go back earlier), and to indicate how the papers in this volume relate to these. During this time

<sup>1</sup> See Welwei (1963); Pédech (1964); Roveri (1964); Moore (1965); Eisen (1966); Lehmann (1967); Petzold (1969).

<sup>2</sup> For a selection of important articles and reviews of books on Polybius see Stiewe–Holzberg (1982); and for a detailed survey of work on Polybius between 1950 and 1970 see Musti (1972).

<sup>3</sup> K. Ziegler, *RE* xx1.2, s.v. 'Polybios', cols. 1440–1578; von Fritz (1954) and Walbank, *Comm.* 1–III; see also Devroye–Kemp (1956).

<sup>4</sup> The phrase goes back to Schmitthenner (1968) 31; cf. Holzberg in Stiewe–Holzberg (1982) 11 and Nicolet (1983b) 15.

there have been several new books and around 200 articles, contributions to colloquia, collected papers and the like on Polybius. Of these I shall touch only on those which seem to me to be the most significant.<sup>5</sup>

#### I GENERAL SURVEY

I will begin with some of the basic work on Polybius' text. Here, perhaps the most important development has been the continuation of the excellent Budé edition, with French translation, which has now reached Book XVI under a series of editors.<sup>6</sup> There is still no Oxford text of Polybius and the proposed (and much needed) revision of Paton's Loeb edition seems to have run into the sand. Unfortunately the current pressure in universities for immediate publications makes scholars less inclined to take on work likely to occupy several years. There has been a German translation of Polybius by H. Drexler<sup>7</sup> and in English a Penguin selection translated by Ian Scott-Kilvert.<sup>8</sup> Only a few recent articles have concerned themselves with textual problems. A. Díaz Tejera has suggested new readings in Books II–III<sup>9</sup> and S. L. Radt has critical notes on a score of passages.<sup>10</sup> There have, however, been two important books on Polybius' language and style, one by J. A. Foucault, the other by M. Dubuisson, who investigates Polybius' knowledge of Latin and how far this is reflected in his writing.<sup>11</sup> For all readers of Polybius it is a great boon that, after a long silence, Mauersberger's *Polybios-Lexikon* is once more making progress and has now reached  $\pi\omicron\iota\acute{\epsilon}\omega$ ; a revision of Volume 1.1 ( $\alpha$ – $\gamma$ ) has appeared and this is eventually to apply to the whole of Volume 1. The new volumes contain many improvements and this important project is warmly to be welcomed.<sup>12</sup>

One problematic aspect of Polybius' text arises out of the odd way it is made up: from Book VI onwards it consists in the main of extracts assembled in the *excerpta antiqua* and the Constantinian selections, supplemented by passages from Athenaeus and the *Suda*. In Volumes II and III of my *Commentary*<sup>13</sup> I have attempted to explain and, where necessary,

<sup>5</sup> For a full bibliography see *Année philologique* for the relevant years.

<sup>6</sup> Book I (P. Pédech, 1969), Book II (P. Pédech, 1970), Book III (J. de Foucault, 1971), Book IV (J. de Foucault, 1972), Book V (P. Pédech, 1977), Book VI (R. Weil and C. Nicolet, 1977), Books VII–IX (R. Weil, 1982), Books X–XI (E. Foulon and R. Weil, 1990), Book XII (P. Pédech, 1991) Books XIII–XVI (E. Foulon, R. Weil and P. Cauderlier).

<sup>7</sup> Drexler (1961–3). <sup>8</sup> Scott-Kilvert (1979). <sup>9</sup> Díaz Tejera (1985). <sup>10</sup> Radt (1990).

<sup>11</sup> Foucault (1972); Dubuisson (1985).

<sup>12</sup> For Vol. II.1 see Glockmann and Helms (1998); and for the revision of Vol. 1.1 see Collatz, Helms and Schäfer (2000).

<sup>13</sup> Walbank, *Comm.* II, 1–28, III, 1–62.

emend the order in which these passages now stand in Büttner-Wobst's standard text; but that order cannot always be established with certainty. In 1985, for example, I published a proposal to reassign two Polybian passages from the *Suda*: xvi.29 to immediately before ix.40.3, and xvi.38 to immediately before x.25.<sup>14</sup> (For a proposed modification of the order of the fragments in Book XXII see the addition to the last note in chapter 4, below.) I have discussed Athenaeus' contribution to our current text of Polybius elsewhere.<sup>15</sup>

A stimulating essay by Fergus Millar argues that our present text of Polybius, which adds up to less than a third of the original, presents too Roman a flavour.<sup>16</sup> This view can be contested. After all, Polybius' primary, declared purpose was to write, not a simple continuation of Greek history, but an account of the take-over of the 'inhabited world', the *oecumene*, by Rome; and although, especially in the later books, we no longer have access to considerable tracts of the original narrative concerned with Greece and the Near East, it seems unlikely that a full text would have shown a very different emphasis. For one thing, the order in which events throughout the *oecumene* are presented in each Olympiad year, always beginning with *res Italiae*, seems designed to establish a Roman pattern and this continues throughout the *Histories*. The possibility that the way the extracts have survived may have introduced bias was originally suggested by Momigliano in a Vandoeuvres colloquium<sup>17</sup> and was subsequently taken up by W. E. Thompson, who argued, somewhat unconvincingly, that the *excerpta antiqua*, taken only from Books VI–XVIII, represent a working-over of Polybius' text for a military handbook.<sup>18</sup> In its most general form the argument is perhaps still *sub judice* but an important article by P. A. Brunt warns readers of Polybius against possible distortion arising from the selective nature of the Constantinian excerpts.<sup>19</sup> The relevance of fragments both for Polybius' own text and for authors whom he quotes and criticises was the subject of a conference held at Leuven in 2001.

The proceedings of conferences on particular historical or historiographical topics have contributed substantially to Polybian studies in recent years. I have already mentioned the Vandoeuvres conference of 1973. Equally important for Polybian studies were the proceedings of a colloquium held at Leuven in 1988 on the purposes of history,<sup>20</sup> at which

<sup>14</sup> Walbank (1985b).    <sup>15</sup> Walbank (2000).    <sup>16</sup> Millar (1987).

<sup>17</sup> Momigliano (1974b) 35–6.    <sup>18</sup> W. E. Thompson (1985).    <sup>19</sup> Brunt (1980).

<sup>20</sup> Verdin, Schepens and De Keyser (1990). See the separate references, all 1990, to Verduyts, Schepens, Dubuisson, D'Huys and Wiedemann, and chapter 15 of this volume.

six of the seventeen papers directly concerned Polybius and almost all the others touched on his work. Among other topics dealt with here were Polybius' methodology, his use of *topoi*, his attitude towards Rome and various rhetorical aspects of his writing. A collection of papers on *Greek Historiography*,<sup>21</sup> edited by S. Hornblower, who contributes an important introduction, deals with Polybius at many points and especially in a paper by Peter Derow, who discusses 'historical explanation' as it affects Polybius and his predecessors.<sup>22</sup> Several volumes in a series entitled 'Hellenistic Culture and Society', published by the University of California Press, are important for the study both of Polybius and of the society in which he grew up. I shall mention some of these in the course of this survey. Meanwhile, one should note the inclusion in the series of three volumes devoted to colloquia. Two of these, both published in 1993, contain the proceedings of conferences held at Berkeley<sup>23</sup> and at Austin, Texas<sup>24</sup> in 1988. An important topic, discussed in both volumes, is Hellenistic kingship, for which the evidence of Polybius is indispensable. A third colloquium, held at Cambridge in 1993,<sup>25</sup> contained two papers (by H. Mattingly<sup>26</sup> and A. M. Eckstein<sup>27</sup>) that are relevant to Polybius.

Reference may also be made here to one or two volumes containing the collected papers of scholars whose work has been largely concerned with Polybius. In 1998 Doron Mendels published a collection of his essays, about a dozen of which drew directly on Polybius, especially as a source for social and economic issues in third- and second-century Greece;<sup>28</sup> and in 1985 I published a selection of papers, most of them with a Polybian background.<sup>29</sup> There have also been several important books specifically devoted to Polybius, by K. Meister, H. Tränkle, K. Sacks, D. Golan and A. M. Eckstein;<sup>30</sup> my own Sather Lectures on Polybius were published in 1972.<sup>31</sup> Two studies of Greek historiography, by C. V. Fornara and K. Meister, contain important sections on Polybius.<sup>32</sup> Fornara is interested in him as an example of Greek historiography as contrasted

<sup>21</sup> Hornblower (1994).

<sup>22</sup> Derow (1994). I have criticised Derow's treatment of Polyb. iii.6.7 on ἀρχή, αἰτία and πρόφασις in my review in *Histos*, December 1996; it is the αἰτία, the events leading up to a decision to go to war, that constitute 'processes involving several elements' and not the decisions (κρίσεις) themselves, as Derow suggests.

<sup>23</sup> Bulloch, et al. (1993). This book contains a good deal on Polybius, especially in papers by K. Bringmann and L. Koenen on Hellenistic kingship.

<sup>24</sup> Green (1993). <sup>25</sup> Cartledge, et al. (1997). <sup>26</sup> Mattingly (1997).

<sup>27</sup> Eckstein (1997). <sup>28</sup> Mendels (1998). <sup>29</sup> Walbank (1985a).

<sup>30</sup> Meister (1975); Tränkle (1978); Sacks (1981); Golan (1995); Eckstein (1995).

<sup>31</sup> Walbank (1972a). <sup>32</sup> Fornara (1983); Meister (1990) 153–66.



with other literary genres and Meister's general handbook has a special section on Polybius.

Finally, the volume of work devoted to Polybius has been considerably augmented as a result of the growing interest in the Hellenistic world and in the rise of Rome in recent decades. This has led to several important publications, many of which, though not directly concerned with Polybius, necessarily draw on and discuss his work. For the Hellenistic world generally I will mention only the indispensable political survey by Ed. Will, Claire Préaux's outstanding study of the Hellenistic world (though it has little on Polybius), the histories by Peter Green, Graham Shipley and myself, and Volume VII.1 of the new edition of *The Cambridge Ancient History*. Volume VIII deals with Roman events from 220 to 133 BC, which includes most of the period covered by Polybius' *Histories*; Volume VII.2 covers the First Punic War.<sup>33</sup> Also relevant here are Volume III of the *History of Macedonia* by N. G. L. Hammond and myself, which covers most of the period treated by Polybius,<sup>34</sup> and R. M. Errington's *History of Macedonia*.<sup>35</sup> On Roman expansion and Polybius' treatment of this see also the recent works of W. V. Harris, E. S. Gruen, W. Huss (a notable history of Carthage), and J. Seibert (on Hannibal).<sup>36</sup>

Chapters 3–10 of the present volume concern incidents and institutions figuring in Polybius' account of the Greek and Hellenistic world. Chapters 3 and 4 deal with aspects of Hellenistic Egypt, chapter 5 compares two well-recorded processions, one in Ptolemaic Alexandria under Ptolemy II and the other in Daphne near Antioch in the Seleucid kingdom under Antiochus IV, as examples of image-creation in the two main Hellenistic kingdoms. Chapter 6 discusses Polybius' picture of Hellenistic Macedonia, chapter 7 the rôle of sea-power in the Antigonid monarchy and chapter 8 demonstrates the logic behind Polybius' apparently improbable claim (v.102.1) that the Macedonian royal house (under the Antigonids) had always aimed at universal power. In chapter 9 I trace the importance of the Achaean League and its shrine at the Homarion, aided by the Homeric echoes of the name Achaea, down to AD 67 and defend Polybius' account of the early development of the League; and in chapter 10 I offer a solution to the old problem concerning the constitution of the Achaean assemblies.

<sup>33</sup> Will (1979), (1982); Préaux (1978); Green (1990) especially 269–85; Shipley (2000); Walbank (1981); *CAH*, 2nd edn, VII.1 (1984), VII.2 and VIII (1989).

<sup>34</sup> Hammond and Walbank (1988). <sup>35</sup> Errington (1986).

<sup>36</sup> Harris (1979); Gruen (1984); Huss (1985); Seibert (1993).

II POLYBIUS' VIEWS ON THE CONTENT AND PURPOSE OF HISTORY:  
METHODOLOGY AND ASPECTS OF COMPOSITION

Polybius stands out among ancient historians in his anxiety to define the sort of history he wrote. In ix.1.1–5 he distinguishes three kinds of history: the 'genealogical kind', which is attractive to the casual reader (τὸν φιλήκοον), 'accounts of colonies, city foundations and kinship ties', which appeal to the reader with antiquarian interests, literally 'the man with curiosity and subtle learning' (τὸν πολυπράγμονα καὶ περιττόν) and, finally, 'affairs (πράξεις) of peoples (ἔθνη), cities and rulers'. His own work, he tells us, falls into the third category and he describes it as of interest to the politician (ὁ πολιτικός). Probably because it dealt with πράξεις,<sup>37</sup> he calls it 'pragmatic history' (πραγματική ἱστορία), an expression not found earlier and probably his own formulation. It is a phrase which has provoked much controversy; indeed, scarcely anyone discussing Polybius as a historian can have failed to come up with his own translation of this.<sup>38</sup>

Two main issues arise in relation to Polybius' use of the expression 'pragmatic history': what it implied in terms of content and whether Polybius regarded it as restricted to a particular historical period. Petzold has argued for a didactic element in 'pragmatic history'<sup>39</sup> and this view has been taken up and developed in a long and important article by his pupil B. Meissner,<sup>40</sup> who claims that any definition of 'pragmatic history' must take into account all aspects of Polybius' work. This paper contains some excellent observations, for example that Polybius' extensive criticism of other historians is intended in part to furnish negative examples of what is to be avoided, and it offers a good characterisation of Polybius as a historian. But its definition of 'pragmatic history' seems to me to rest on the fallacy that this phrase must embrace in its meaning everything that Polybius chooses to include in his *Histories*.<sup>41</sup>

A more recent study of the phrase, that of H. Beister,<sup>42</sup> is particularly concerned with the question whether 'pragmatic history' is supposed to apply only to the period covered in Polybius' *Histories*. On this there have been several views. Meister,<sup>43</sup> pointing to the passage referred to above (ix.1.1–5), argues that, although in practice Polybius is dealing only

<sup>37</sup> Cf. xxxix.8.6: Polybius will write τὰς κοινὰς τῆς οἰκουμένης πράξεις, the common events of the inhabited world.

<sup>38</sup> See Walbank (1972a), 66–96. For a bibliography of recent suggested meanings of the phrase see Beister (1995) 329 n.1.

<sup>39</sup> Petzold (1969). <sup>40</sup> Meissner (1986). <sup>41</sup> Cf. Walbank (1972a) 56 n. 148.

<sup>42</sup> See n. 38. <sup>43</sup> Meister (1990) 160.

with contemporary and near-contemporary events, ‘pragmatic history’ covers the whole of the period following the ‘age of colonisation’, which indeed means the colonisation of the eighth to the sixth centuries and excludes the expansion into Asia after Alexander. This view in effect defines ‘pragmatic history’ more as the description of a historical period than as a kind of historiography. Beister, however, argues convincingly that ‘pragmatic history’ need not essentially contain any chronological component: it is simply, as Polybius says, ‘the events of peoples, cities and rulers’. It is also history useful to the πολιτικός who, Beister thinks, can be either a politician or a student of politics.

It is true that Polybius nowhere specifically restricts ‘pragmatic history’ to any particular period; but in his own work, obviously, it is with the period he is covering, namely from where Timaeus’ *Histories* ended to 146 BC, that it is concerned. The phrase ‘peoples, cities and rulers’ is one often to be found in inscriptions and elsewhere as a piece of official Hellenistic jargon.<sup>44</sup> This seems to stamp ‘pragmatic history’ as primarily political and military, although in Polybius’ sixth book and elsewhere it clearly does not preclude the discussion of other matters; for, as Meissner shows, the *Histories* contain much that is not purely military or political, for example the drawing of moral lessons.<sup>45</sup> But these elements are not to be regarded as included in the definition of ‘pragmatic history’. Polybius also touches on events which took place earlier than his own chosen period, where his narrative or comments on his narrative render that necessary;<sup>46</sup> such events are neither included under ‘pragmatic history’ nor are they excluded by any chronological aspect attached to the phrase. How in fact Polybius saw the remote past is a subject on its own and one discussed both in chapter 12 below and in an interesting article by G. A. Lehmann.<sup>47</sup>

If ‘pragmatic history’ refers basically to history with a political and military content, another phrase used by Polybius, ‘apodeictic history’ (ἀποδεικτική ἱστορία), seems rather to describe a method of composition.<sup>48</sup> This expression has also been the subject of much controversy. In a well-argued exposition, K. Sacks has shown that the word ἀποδεικτική (or the phrase ‘with *apodeixis*’, μετ’ ἀποδείξεως) simply relates to a fuller narrative in contrast to a summary (κεφαλαιώδης)

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Walbank (1972a) 56 n. 145. <sup>45</sup> See Eckstein (1995).

<sup>46</sup> E.g. i.12.7–9 (general statement), ii.18–20 (early Celtic invasions), 38–40 (early Achaean history), iii.22–7 (Punic–Roman treaties).

<sup>47</sup> Lehmann (1989/90). In chapter 11, I discuss Timaeus’ views on the past.

<sup>48</sup> Polyb. ii.37.3, iv.40.1 (with διήγησις); cf. x.21.8 (ὁ μετ’ ἀποδείξεως ἀπολογισμός), contrasting the *Histories* with Polybius’ biography of Philopoemen.

account.<sup>49</sup> It does not describe a special kind of historical treatment; nor does it in itself mean ‘history which investigates causes’ – though in practice it is difficult to see how an extended historical narrative could exclude such an investigation.

Polybius also claims that his history is ‘universal’, not in Ephorus’ sense of covering the whole of the past,<sup>50</sup> but in embracing the whole *oecumene* at a time when its history has itself become a single whole. This claim, as I have explained elsewhere,<sup>51</sup> implies a certain sleight of hand, inasmuch as it involves Polybius in projecting the concept of the unity of a historical composition (in contrast to a ‘continuous history’ like that of Xenophon) onto the events it describes. Polybius’ notion of ‘universal history’ has come to the fore in recent years. In particular, J. M. Alonso-Núñez has taken up this theme,<sup>52</sup> stressing the geographical limitations implied in Polybius’ concept of the *oecumene* and attaching importance to the idea of the ‘four world-empires’, leading up to that of Rome, which, he argues, played an important part in Polybius’ thought.<sup>53</sup> In contrast, Doron Mendels has contended<sup>54</sup> that the *topos* of the ‘four – or four-plus-one – world-empires’ (i.e. Assyria, Media, Persia, Macedonia plus Rome) had not yet crystallised at the time Polybius was writing. More recently Katherine Clarke has discussed the same question, emphasising the spatial aspect of Polybius’ unified *oecumene* in contrast to Derow and Millar, both of whom point rather to Roman *imperium* and the universal enforcement of Roman orders as an expression of power.<sup>55</sup> Clarke sees the unified *oecumene* as *σωματοειδής*, ‘like a corporeal whole’; the biological metaphor used here is one which, she claims, is significant for Polybius’ interpretation of the development of historical institutions, including states and empires.<sup>56</sup>

Another aspect of Polybius’ view of historiography which has attracted recent attention is the antithesis which he draws between utility and pleasure and the rôle he proposes for these two concepts in the composition of his *Histories*. I have discussed this in chapter 15 below and it is also the subject of an article by V. D’Huys,<sup>57</sup> who in an analysis of Polybius’

<sup>49</sup> Sacks (1981) 171–5.      <sup>50</sup> Cf. Polyb. v.53.2 for Ephorus’ universal history.

<sup>51</sup> See Walbank (1972a), 67; this sleight of hand is facilitated by Polybius’ emphasis on the rôle of Fortune, *Tyche*, in bringing about this unity. On ‘continuous history’ see Cicero, *Ad fam.* v.12.2, 12.6.

<sup>52</sup> Alonso-Núñez (1990) especially 186 n. 32 for a bibliography of earlier discussion of this topic in some of the works mentioned above in n. 1.

<sup>53</sup> Alonso-Núñez (1983).      <sup>54</sup> Mendels (1981).      <sup>55</sup> Derow (1979) 4–6; Millar (1987) 1.

<sup>56</sup> Clarke (1999a) 124; see also (1999b) 278–9, with useful bibliography.

<sup>57</sup> D’Huys (1990) with bibliography at 267 n. 1.

account of the battle of Zama (xv.9–14) shows how particular *topoi*, which are to be found in accounts of battles in earlier historians as well as in Homer and the tragedians, also occur in Polybius, but only to a limited extent and at points where they help to clarify the narrative. Polybius, in short, does not sacrifice truth in order to create an effect. Others who have touched on this problem are S. Mohm, K. Sacks, J. Boncquet and H. Labuske.<sup>58</sup> Polybius' contrasting of utility and pleasure is only one of the themes in his work that look back to some of his predecessors and it raises the question whether his place in a historical tradition should be regarded as an important element in any assessment of his work.

The study of tradition in historical writing is discussed at length in an important recent book by J. Marincola.<sup>59</sup> In this study Marincola assesses the literary and moral traditions inherited by a succession of Greek historians, including Polybius, which help to shape their writing. He isolates the various rhetorical and compositional devices they employ, in order, for instance, to establish their *bona fides* and their competence as historians, and he identifies the precepts, examples and modes of operation, which they hand down from one to another for adoption (with or without modification) in order to support their claims. This approach is new in so far as it treats historical texts, not least that of Polybius, more as a form of self-definition than as an unprejudiced factual narrative. It sees historical texts as a means of negotiation between the historian and his readers. It involves studying Polybius in his social context, especially in his relationship to a reading public and a tradition of historical writing; and it leads to a consideration of his purpose in writing *in that particular context* rather than simply accepting his historical statements as if they were all objectively determined. When, for example, Polybius remarks that the Rhodian historians Zeno and Antisthenes were moved by the desire for glory and renown, he is formulating an aspect of motivation carrying implications for other writers, including himself, which must be taken into account in assessing anything he and others write. From this perspective historiography can be seen as a form of self-projection.

I have summarised this argument at some length as it seems a good illustration of a new approach to be found increasingly in writers on historiography. One should perhaps note, however, that it is basically less novel than it might appear to be. The good critic has always known that behind a historian's account lie assumptions and aims directly related to his predecessors, to his contemporary situation and (if he is a public

<sup>58</sup> Mohm (1977) 250–61; Sacks (1981) 122–70; Boncquet (1982–3); Labuske (1984).

<sup>59</sup> Marincola (1997); I have reviewed this work in *Histos* (1997), 1–9.

figure like Polybius) to his own political career, his present stance and his future ambitions; also that literary presentation can affect the emphasis of his narrative.

I will close this section with a look at several further methodological questions which have attracted the attention of Polybian scholars. The first of these is a query: did Polybius set out to construct a consistent account of how historical research should be conducted and history written? The question arises particularly in relation to two chapters in the twelfth book (xii.25e and 27). In the first of these, which introduces an elaborate comparison between practitioners of medicine and historians, Polybius identifies three fields in which the 'pragmatic historian' may work. First, in a library, studying and comparing memoirs and other documents; secondly, by investigating geographical features of all kinds, which of course involves travel; and, thirdly, by acquiring political experience. Discussing these, he asserts that it is folly to think that one can write satisfactory history by applying oneself (as Timaeus did) to only the first of these. In xii.27, however, he introduces a quite different distinction, based on whether the historian uses his eyes or his ears. Here the ears are the organs employed both in reading (presumably aloud) and in interrogating eye-witnesses of historical events; reading – Timaeus' method – is easy, but interrogating witnesses is very difficult, though in fact it constitutes 'the most important part of history'. A few lines earlier, however, Polybius has told us that information conveyed through the eyes is superior to what we learn through the ears. The different approach adopted in these two chapters and the apparent contradiction in xii.27 (where the eyes are superior to the ears but the interrogation of eye-witnesses through the ears is the most important thing of all) present problems on the assumption that they are part of a developed and coherent guide to writing history. The likelihood, as Schepens has observed,<sup>60</sup> is that Polybius' remarks in the two passages are independent of each other and have simply grown out of his primary purpose at this point, that of demolishing all Timaeus' pretensions. They are not, therefore, to be reconciled as elements in a comprehensive and internally consistent exposition of how history should be written.

A second issue which is basic for our view of Polybius as a historian is that of truthfulness and how far he was committed to this in principle and in practice. Polybius, of course, repeatedly asserts the importance of truth, which, he insists, is essential if history is to be of any use – though in his criticism of other writers he distinguishes between deliberate and

<sup>60</sup> Schepens (1974) and (1990) 50 n. 39; see also Sacks (1981) 26 n. 10.

unintentional falsehood and in consequence how the two should be judged.<sup>61</sup> Important objections to taking this distinction simply at face-value have, however, been raised by M. Vercauysse,<sup>62</sup> who points out that in his many criticisms of other historians Polybius invokes no single, clearly defined criterion for distinguishing between ‘true’ and ‘false’ and for evaluating sources on that basis, but that he adduces a variety of grounds on which to question their veracity, the one constant element in these criticisms being Polybius’ purpose, which is to confirm his own status and reliability. Such passages Vercauysse would read primarily as a means towards self-definition and so demote the issue of truth *per se* to a secondary level. How far Polybius himself satisfied his own demand for truth is a question implicit in Schepens’ work on such compositional devices as emphasis and vivid description (ἐνόργεια), which can result, if not in falsehood, at any rate in a distortion of the actual narrative of events.<sup>63</sup>

A third and important aspect of Polybius’ compositional method is his insertion of speeches, a traditional feature in ancient historiography, which served more than one purpose and in itself raises the question of truth and falsehood, depending on the accuracy with which the original speech (if it was ever made) is reproduced. Several scholars have discussed the rhetorical aspect of this convention. Mogens Hansen has written on the ‘battle-exhortations’, which both in Polybius and traditionally account for many such speeches; and C. Wooten has drawn attention to the influence of Demosthenes on Polybius’ speeches. Some aspects of Wooten’s argument have been queried by T. Wiedemann, in a paper which discusses the impact of rhetoric on Polybius’ composition generally. In particular he mentions the battle-scene and the character-sketch as areas where rhetoric is employed and he furnishes a useful analysis of the various situations which Polybius chooses to emphasise by the insertion of speeches.<sup>64</sup> In a lecture already mentioned above,<sup>65</sup> Fergus Millar suggests that Polybius uses speeches as a way of exercising criticism without revealing his own views; this, as we shall see later, is relevant to some passages directly concerned with Roman policy in the Third Punic War. A rhetorical device not without some similarity to the use of speeches (if Millar’s point is accepted) is discussed by J. Davidson, in a stimulating discussion of what he calls ‘the gaze in Polybius’,<sup>66</sup> by which he means Polybius’ habit of presenting events not directly but

<sup>61</sup> See especially Polyb. xvi.14.3 (Zeno and Antisthenes). See on this Luce (1989).

<sup>62</sup> Vercauysse (1984) and (1990). <sup>63</sup> Schepens (1975); see also Gill (1984).

<sup>64</sup> Hansen (1993); Wooten (1974); Wiedemann (1990). <sup>65</sup> Millar (1987) 15–16; see above, n. 16.

<sup>66</sup> Davidson (1991).

rather as seen through the eyes of several characters in the narrative, a device which diverts the reader from the historian.

A fourth aspect of Polybius' compositional technique has, on the contrary, the result of drawing the reader's attention rather towards the author. I refer to his constant indulgence in polemic against other writers, including his predecessors, those whom he has used as sources and his contemporaries. This is a topic dealt with in most books on Polybius' method, for example those of Meister and Sacks.<sup>67</sup> A more recent study of the question, particularly as it concerns Timaeus, is Guido Schepens' contribution to the Leuven conference on ancient historiography frequently mentioned above, in which he discusses the purpose behind Polybius' polemic. In an earlier paper on this subject I had stressed some of the personal motives behind Polybius' attacks on other historians – political in the case of Phylarchus, social prejudice in that of Pytheas, jealousy in that of Timaeus and so on.<sup>68</sup> Schepens rightly emphasises Polybius' genuine concern for methodology, as an element in his polemic, and the importance of his anxiety to correct what he regarded as faults springing from a wrong conception of what history was about. This is, I think, correct and demonstrates how a critical historian like Polybius is often moved by more than one sort of motivation. More recently, Marincola has emphasised Polybius' use of polemic as a means of self-definition and has shown how this often reveals not merely his critical spirit and his concern for the nature of historical writing, but also a liking for rhetorical display (ἐπίδειξις) and some indulgence in Alexandrian pedantry. This subject is also discussed by J. Boncquet and by H. Verdin, who in the course of discussion at the Leuven conference of 1988 commented that Polybius' most methodologically directed criticism is to be found in his most polemical passages. This is a useful warning against trying to set up too rigid a separation between the various concerns by which he was motivated<sup>69</sup>.

A final point which seems in place here is one raised by Marincola about the rôle of the historian,<sup>70</sup> when, as is true for Polybius, he is himself a statesman or military man who played a part in events which he was subsequently to describe. Whether, and in what circumstances, he should use the first or third person to refer to himself in this situation may seem a trivial or even pedantic point, but it has several implications for the

<sup>67</sup> Meister (1975); Sacks (1981) 66–78. <sup>68</sup> Walbank (1962).

<sup>69</sup> Schepens (1990); Marincola (1997) especially 222–34; Boncquet (1982–3); Verdin in Verdin, Schepens and De Keyser (1990) 71.

<sup>70</sup> Marincola (1997) 188–92.



*Histories*. Marincola has shown that up to Book XXXVI Polybius follows the norm introduced by Thucydides, which was to use the third person to describe his participation in actual events and the first person when he wrote as a historian. From xxxvi.11–12 onwards, however, Polybius ceases to make this distinction in describing his own part in historical events and comments on this fact (in xxxvi.12): it is done, he explains, because of his close personal involvement in the events from 150 onwards and because he wishes to avoid the tedious repetition which would arise if he stuck closely to the accepted convention. Marincola observes that the change in rôle and mode of reference make what follows appear ‘to lose the perspective of history and become suspiciously like memoirs’. This is true and significant, and perhaps indicates the point at which this account should turn to a related aspect of Polybius’ work that has especially occupied scholarship.

### III POLYBIUS AND ROME

Since Rome lies at the centre of the *Histories*, it is not surprising that much recent work on Polybius has been on issues related to Rome. In particular, the causes of her successful rise to world domination, and the various factors which he sees as contributing to it, have continued to evoke controversy. These factors include such matters as the relevance of early Roman history, dealt with in some form in the lost *archaeologia* in Book VI, to his general theme, the superiority of the Roman army and problems connected with its composition, organisation and functioning, other aspects of Roman life and culture, the ἔθνη καὶ νόμιμα (vi.11.4) which shaped the way Romans lived and, not least, the part played by Fortune, *Tyche*, in the rise of Rome. Another aspect of Polybius’ concern with Rome is his attitude towards the ruling power, whether he began by being critical of her conduct and came over in due course to a full acceptance of her supremacy or, indeed, whether he was favourable to Rome from the time he decided to write his history or was, on the contrary, critical (and how critical?) of her policy throughout his life. Closely linked with this are the reasons for his decision to extend his *Histories* to cover the years 167 to 145 in a further ten books (XXXI–XL). There has also been a study by Arthur Eckstein of Polybius’ use of moral criteria, not only in relation to Rome but also in his judgemental remarks on other historical situations.<sup>71</sup> This book is important in drawing attention to an aspect

<sup>71</sup> Eckstein (1995).

of Polybius' thought which some scholars (including myself) have been liable to underestimate.

In a separate article<sup>72</sup> Eckstein has also examined Polybius' views on the Romans generally and has argued that he did not see them as basically different from others or as in any way extraordinary or specially favoured by fortune, but simply as a people who enjoyed the advantages of outstanding military skill and moral superiority. M. Roux explains their undoubted military skill as lying especially in the effectiveness of Roman generalship – though he also points out that Polybius describes several battles in which fortune played an important part in the Roman victory.<sup>73</sup> There is a very full discussion of the rôle of fortune (however defined) in the wider context of Rome's rise to ecumenical power in J.-L. Ferrary's important study of the ideological background of that rise;<sup>74</sup> and I deal with one aspect of the place of *Tyche* in the *Histories* in chapter 16 below. Recently Andrew Erskine has argued that there is an element of the stereotyped picture of the barbarian in Polybius' description of the Romans, although (like other Greek writers) he never calls them barbarians in his own voice.<sup>75</sup>

On Polybius as a specifically military historian there is a general critique by E. W. Marsden.<sup>76</sup> Peter Connolly discusses (with impressive illustrations) the character of Polybius' manipular army and his comparison of it with the phalanx; and P. Sabin tries to make sense of what exactly went on at the battle-face at the time of Polybius (with useful bibliography).<sup>77</sup> The most important work on Polybius' account of the Roman army in the middle republic is that of Peter Brunt,<sup>78</sup> who shows convincingly that Polybius is not invariably content to rely on his own knowledge of Roman army organisation acquired as an eyewitness during his years in Rome, but that his description of the annual levy of troops (the *dilectus*) on the Capitol, for instance, must derive from an earlier, somewhat antiquated, account, since the procedures described could not possibly have been carried out there with the numbers available in the late third and early second centuries. Brunt's book is also indispensable for its discussion of Polybius' analysis of the number of troops available to Rome against the Gauls in 225 (ii.24) and so a few years later against Hannibal.

At the very outset of his first book Polybius makes it clear that an important factor in Rome's success was her 'mixed constitution';<sup>79</sup> and an account of this occupies much of Book VI. The unitary view of that

<sup>72</sup> Eckstein (1997).    <sup>73</sup> Roux (1993).    <sup>74</sup> Ferrary (1988) 265–76.

<sup>75</sup> Erskine (2000).    <sup>76</sup> Marsden (1974).    <sup>77</sup> Connolly (1981) 64–207; Sabin (2000).

<sup>78</sup> Brunt (1971) especially 625–34 on the Roman levy.    <sup>79</sup> i.1.5 with Walbank, *Comm.* 1 ad loc.

book as having been written as a single whole, was advocated in 1954 by C. O. Brink and myself,<sup>80</sup> and this seems now to be generally accepted.<sup>81</sup> But a good deal has been written on how the various elements contained in the book mesh together in Polybius' exposition. These are, first, the cycle of seven good and corrupt constitutional forms, which alternate in the so-called *anacyclosis*; secondly, the 'mixed', or, more correctly, the 'balanced', constitution of the Hannibalic period, with its combination of kingly, aristocratic and popular elements; and, finally, the biological concept of a constitution which has its 'natural' beginnings, growth, perfection, decline and end. In addition, there is the basic problem raised by any historical 'pattern' which depends for its fulfilment on the actions of individuals exercising their free will. Recent discussion of this area in Polybius' thought is to be found in articles by A. Díaz Tejera, E. Braun, J. M. Alonso-Nuñez and S. Podes.<sup>82</sup> In particular Podes compares the account of the cycle of constitutions contained in vi.4.7–19 with the fuller version in vi.5.4–9.9 and discusses the relationship between the actions of individuals and the social forces which, in Polybius' account of the *anacyclosis*, appear to bring about a predetermined sequence. This same contrast between personal action and social forces is also emphasised in a stimulating essay by David Halm,<sup>83</sup> who distinguishes those elements in the constitutional cycle which are attributable to 'nature' (φύσις) from those arising out of the freely taken decisions of men, between the degenerative factors which produce decay in the good constitutions and the unconstrained actions of individuals which bring about the overthrow of the corrupt forms. Halm argues that Polybius' cycle of social change nevertheless derives ultimately from patterns of behaviour rooted in human nature, which has within it contradictory impulses towards voluntary cooperation and towards personal aggrandisement, both of which play a rôle in the cycle. Halm would interpret Polybius' cyclical scheme rather more flexibly than the text of Polybius suggests. But the order in which the constitutions appear in that sequence is fairly inflexible, since it is only by keeping some residual kingly and aristocratic powers in the

<sup>80</sup> Brink and Walbank (1954). <sup>81</sup> See for example Eisenberger (1982).

<sup>82</sup> Díaz Tejera (1975); Braun (1983) (querying whether Polybius was influenced at all by Aristotle); Alonso-Nuñez (1986); Podes (1991a) and (1991b). How Polybius saw constitutional 'decline' is discussed in chapter 13 in this volume.

<sup>83</sup> Halm (1995). Halm convincingly corrects my interpretation (in *Comm.* 1) of vi.5.2–3. Polybius there states that if there are any omissions in his general exposition of the *anacyclosis*, they will be clarified in what follows (τῶν ἐξῆς ῥηθησομένων). I took the 'general exposition' to refer to the account in 4.7–10 and 'what follows' to the fuller account in 5.4–9.14. Halm points out that the words τῶν μετὰ ταῦτα ῥηθησομένων (9.14) refer to the rest of the book, and that this makes it more likely that the 'general exposition' of 5.3 refers to 5.4–9.14 and the clarification mentioned there also indicates the rest of the book.

successive changes that Rome is able, eventually, to step out of the cycle and embrace a ‘mixed’ constitution.

Polybius’ ‘mixed constitution’ clearly springs out of Greek political theory and a basic question, which has led to considerable discussion, is whether it really offers a valid account of the Roman constitution at the time of the Hannibalic War (or indeed in the second century, when Polybius was writing). Momigliano thought it had no validity at all; in his book *Alien Wisdom* he dubs it ‘Polybius’ non-existent mixed constitution’.<sup>84</sup> That is because he thought that Polybius had simply missed out some of the most important elements in the Roman state. He did not, for example, understand the nature of the Roman confederacy and he ignored the Latin allies. More recently the pendulum has swung the other way. In his recent book on the constitution of the Roman republic<sup>85</sup> Andrew Lintott argues that, though perhaps inadequate in its description of the functioning of various political and constitutional organs, Polybius has given us a very fair analysis of where power at Rome resided. He credits him with originality as the author of a critique which goes beyond general theory in its appreciation of the part played by internal conflict in the development of a constitution rightly seen by Polybius as ‘the product of history’. In a series of controversial papers (and one book) Millar has also argued in favour of the reality of Polybius’ ‘mixed constitution’ and especially of the rôle he assigns to the people.<sup>86</sup> Rejecting Gelzer’s long popular model of a state run essentially by the *nobiles*,<sup>87</sup> Millar argues that Polybius is right in assigning real power to the people. He is supported in this interpretation by A. Jacobson<sup>88</sup> (who, however, deals mainly with a period somewhat later than Polybius), but is sharply criticised by K.-J. Hölkeskamp.<sup>89</sup> The debate seems likely to continue.

There have been many other contributions to the discussion of the constitutional section of Book VI, several of them relating Polybius’ views to those of later writers who propose cyclical historical models or theories involving mixed constitutions. Two books which merit mention here are those of G. Trompf and W. Nippel;<sup>90</sup> L. Canfora also sets Polybius’ account in a wider context.<sup>91</sup> How far the cyclical concept inherent in the *anacyclosis* can be reconciled with a linear view of history is the subject of a paper by K. E. Petzold.<sup>92</sup> Chr. Schubert draws attention to

<sup>84</sup> Momigliano (1975) 44.      <sup>85</sup> Lintott (1999).

<sup>86</sup> Millar (1984), (1986), (1987), (1989), (1995), (1998).

<sup>87</sup> Gelzer (1912).      <sup>88</sup> Jacobson (1999).      <sup>89</sup> Hölkeskamp (2000).

<sup>90</sup> Trompf (1979) especially 4–115; Nippel (1980).      <sup>91</sup> Canfora (1993).      <sup>92</sup> Petzold (1977).

Polybius' use of medical terminology and the existence of a theory of 'checks and balances' within the Hippocratic corpus.<sup>93</sup> There are also two important papers by Claude Nicolet, one discussing Book VI and the other Roman institutions generally.<sup>94</sup> A recent study by W. Blösel<sup>95</sup> takes up the old problem of how far Cicero's *De re publica* can be employed to throw light on the possible contents of Polybius' lost *archaeologia*. This topic is touched on in chapter 14 below, where there is also discussion of Polybius' distinction between the path taken by a state declining from democracy into mob-rule and that of an unnamed state (actually Rome) which eventually slides back onto the wheel of the *anacyclosis* after enjoying a period under a mixed constitution. This distinction is more closely analysed in chapter 18.

Polybius is not exclusively concerned with political issues in his account of Rome. His interest in customs and traditions (ἔθη καὶ νόμιμα) is discussed by R. Martínez Lacy;<sup>96</sup> and one important aspect of this side of Roman life which did not escape Polybius' attention, the relationship of clients and patrons, has been dealt with in a paper by I. E. M. Edlund.<sup>97</sup> The importance of religion in Roman life was fully recognised by Polybius and this subject has received considerable attention from Polybian scholars. His sources for what he has to say on religion – some of them contradictory – are discussed by G. J. D. Aalders.<sup>98</sup> For Paul Pédech Polybius was virtually without belief in the gods;<sup>99</sup> and K. Doering includes Polybius in a general discussion of religion as a means of social control, with particular reference to vi.56.6–15.<sup>100</sup> M. G. Morgan, however, points out that the real purpose of this passage in Polybius is to emphasise the piety of the Roman upper class, though he admits that the reference there to the manipulation of the masses does not quite fit that picture.<sup>101</sup> On this subject there is more in Eckstein's book;<sup>102</sup> and there is also a relevant article by van Hooff.<sup>103</sup> An article by G. Schepens on Timaeus' (and Polybius') account of Phalaris' bull contains a useful bibliography on the theme of religion in Polybius;<sup>104</sup> but the most recent relevant study of this topic is by J. E. Vaahtera.<sup>105</sup>

I have left to the end of this section consideration of Polybius' views on Roman imperial expansion and work on that topic. Three questions have dominated discussion: first, how far Polybius is consistent in his picture of Roman aims and Roman actions leading to the wars which eventually

<sup>93</sup> Schubert (1995).<sup>94</sup> Nicolet (1974), (1983b).<sup>95</sup> Blösel (1998).<sup>96</sup> Martínez Lacy (1991).<sup>97</sup> Edlund (1977).<sup>98</sup> Aalders (1987).<sup>99</sup> Pédech (1965).<sup>100</sup> Doering (1978).<sup>101</sup> M. G. Morgan (1990).<sup>102</sup> Eckstein (1995) 140 n. 88.<sup>103</sup> Van Hooff (1977).<sup>104</sup> Schepens (1978).<sup>105</sup> Vaahtera (2000).

secured ecumenical domination; secondly his own attitude towards Rome as a dominant power; and, thirdly, why he decided to extend his *Histories* to cover the years 167–145 in Books XXXI–XL. It was Polybius' belief (i.3.6) that the Roman decision to aim at universal dominion was taken at the end of the Hannibalic War. Nearly forty years ago,<sup>106</sup> I published a paper arguing that Polybius' detailed account of how the major wars broke out was inconsistent with his general thesis and more in accord with what at that time was the widely accepted view of Maurice Holleaux,<sup>107</sup> that the Romans acquired their empire more or less piecemeal in a succession of wars characterised by Holleaux as 'defensive imperialism'. Today, and not least as a result of a study by W. Harris,<sup>108</sup> that view is no longer tenable. My own position was seriously undermined by Peter Derow,<sup>109</sup> who showed convincingly that Polybius' account of Rome's behaviour in her major wars and in the events leading up to these was quite consistent with his overall view of Roman policy. One particular merit of Derow's paper is to have demonstrated that for the Romans and for Polybius 'ecumenical domination' did not necessarily imply direct political control, but simply characterised a situation in which the conquered peoples were henceforth obliged to do what Rome commanded.

Polybius' views on the character of Roman expansion, therefore, no longer present a serious problem. But his attitude towards Rome as the dominant power continues to be controversial. In several articles and a book<sup>110</sup> I have in the past argued that, in the years following his removal to Rome in 167, Polybius was critical of Rome and expressed that attitude in several anti-Roman comments on Roman policy in Books XXX–XXXIII, covering the years 167 to 152, but that after then, and during the Third Punic War, the Macedonian rising and the Achaean War, he swung over to support of Rome and approval of her use of *Realpolitik*. This view has provoked considerable criticism, especially in an article by B. Shimron, in which he concludes that Polybius never came round to supporting Rome.<sup>111</sup> Dubuisson was inclined to follow my view that Polybius did indeed swing over to a pro-Roman position;<sup>112</sup> but Millar has argued that he took an adverse view of Rome from 168 onwards and never changed this.<sup>113</sup> Nowhere, he points out, does Polybius express positive approval of Roman policy. Ferrary is exceptional in arguing that

<sup>106</sup> Walbank (1963).      <sup>107</sup> Holleaux (1921).

<sup>108</sup> Harris (1979); see especially 107–17 on Polybius' evidence. For a useful critique of Harris see North (1981).

<sup>109</sup> Derow (1979).      <sup>110</sup> Walbank (1963); (1965b); (1972a) 157–83; (1974); (1981/2).

<sup>111</sup> Shimron (1979/80).      <sup>112</sup> Dubuisson (1990).      <sup>113</sup> Millar (1987).

Polybius was basically pro-Roman from 167 onwards, despite his series of critical remarks on Roman policy in the books covering the years 167 to 152.<sup>114</sup> These, he claims, do not reflect basically anti-Roman feeling and his readers were expected to give at least two cheers for Rome.

Most other recent writers accept that there is some degree of anti-Roman feeling in Books XXX–XXXIII, or at least some divergence from Roman criteria. Yet these were of course the years in which Polybius must have resolved to write his *Histories*. In a book entirely concerned with the problem of Polybius' attitude towards Rome, Domenico Musti argues that throughout his life Polybius remained devoted to the ideals and the institutions of the Hellenistic world and in particular his own Achaean Confederacy, but that this did not necessarily make him an enemy of Rome.<sup>115</sup> Musti also lays stress on some economic motives for Roman warfare, evidence for which he claims to find in Polybius. However, such motives hardly obtrude in Polybius' analysis of the rise of Rome to world dominion.

An important passage for this controversy has been Polybius' account (xxxvi.9) of views held in Greece concerning the rights and wrongs of the Third Punic War. There were, he tells us, four views. The first was that the Romans were wise and statesmanlike to destroy Carthage, their secular enemy. A second view claimed that their action illustrated a growth of moral corruption in Rome, which was fast becoming a tyrant city. A third view was that Rome had shown impiety and treachery towards Carthage, and that this revealed a decline from earlier Roman claims to fight wars straightforwardly; and a fourth view defended Rome against this charge, pointing out that it was the Carthaginians who had behaved treacherously by making an act of surrender (*deditio*) and then going back on it. There is no agreement about which, if any, of these views are those of Polybius himself. Harris thinks he accepted the second and the fourth;<sup>116</sup> but Eckstein, who discusses the problem in detail in his study of 'moral vision' in the *Histories*,<sup>117</sup> takes the view (shared by J. W. Rich)<sup>118</sup> that Polybius was ambivalent about the Third Punic War, but too closely involved on the Roman side to speak out critically. Many years ago, in a chapter in his book on *Alien Wisdom*,<sup>119</sup> Momigliano declared that it was a waste of time asking whether Polybius supported Rome or not; clearly he did. 'Polybius', he coldly remarks elsewhere,<sup>120</sup> 'studied the West under Roman auspices and according to Roman needs, if not by

<sup>114</sup> Ferrary (1988) 265–91.      <sup>115</sup> Musti (1978).      <sup>116</sup> Harris (1979) 271–2.

<sup>117</sup> Eckstein (1995) 217.      <sup>118</sup> Rich, reviewing Eckstein's book in *CR* 49 (1999) 26.

<sup>119</sup> Momigliano (1975) 22–49.      <sup>120</sup> Momigliano (1974a) 4.

Roman order.’ But equally clearly Polybius was to some degree uneasy at the recent resort to terror and repression. Because he did not choose to give us his own explicit views on this matter, we can never reach complete certainty how he stood. But I am now inclined to think that something like Momigliano’s assessment of Polybius’ position is right – though I see him as a little less subservient than Momigliano suggests. I would only add that, besides paying attention to the constraints exercised on him by a Roman environment between 167 and 145, we should perhaps also bear in mind his mainly Achaean environment from 145 onwards.

The question of Polybius’ attitude towards Rome is closely linked to the problem presented by his decision to extend the *Histories* to take in the years 167 to 145, and the reasons he offers for so doing (iii.4–5); and this in turn is affected by our uncertainty about the dates at which the various parts of the *Histories* were written and published. In 1957 I argued that five or six books had appeared by 150/49 and that a final revision appeared posthumously.<sup>121</sup> Various scholars have since suggested modifications of this view. G. A. Lehmann puts the publication of the first six books soon after 145/4, but also argues for a posthumous edition of the whole. R. Weil is completely sceptical about the possibility of ascertaining the dates of composition and publication and does not even accept that Polybius adopted a revised plan.<sup>122</sup> Ferrary, however, believes that Books I and II appeared in 150/49, III–IV in 145 or 144 and the rest at later intervals. This avoids the assumption of a second edition of Book III, since on its first appearance it can, on this dating, have included the chapter containing the plan for the proposed extension. This is very neat, but runs up against one problem: how could Polybius, in a book published in 145 or 144, seriously speak of possible ‘reversals of fortune’ (iii.4.5) for the defeated states in the situation after the Achaean War? (Shimron assumes this remark to be a mere general maxim, which can be ignored.<sup>123</sup>) However, this brings us to the final problem, why Polybius chose to extend his *Histories* to 145.

In iii.4.12 Polybius tells us that the extension will enable the reader to ascertain the condition of each people after the struggle was over and all had come under Roman domination ‘until the disturbed and troubled times that afterwards ensued’. When did these ‘troubled times’ begin? Shimron thinks it was in 158, as some of the events mentioned as belonging to them suggest;<sup>124</sup> but this seems hard to sustain, for in iii.4.12 Polybius speaks of making what is virtually a new start with the ‘troubled

<sup>121</sup> Walbank, *Comm.* 1, 292–7.

<sup>122</sup> Weil (1988).

<sup>123</sup> Shimron (1979/80) 104–5.

<sup>124</sup> Shimron (1979/80) 109–10.