INTRODUCTION

A FULL-LENGTH picture of Polybius will not be attempted in this introduction, which is intended merely to survey a number of problems relevant to the study of his text. Because his upbringing and political fortunes played a part in determining the sort of book he was to write, the first section is concerned with his life and the places he visited. The second deals with his views on history and the writing of it. These views reflect external influences and the literary traditions of the Hellenistic age, but even more the innate disposition of the man. The impression he makes is of a somewhat crude and utilitarian rationalist; but this attitude is not without its inconsistencies. No one, for example, can read many pages in the *Histories* without running into difficulties raised by Polybius' references to Fortune, *Tyche*. Belief in *Tyche*, a characteristic ingredient of the popular philosophy of Polybius' time, is not easily reconciled with either his rationalism or his moral purpose; section three is devoted to an analysis of this central problem. The fourth section contains a brief survey of the sources of which Polybius availed himself in the different parts of his work; and a short final section outlines the chronological system which forms the framework of the *Histories*. In all sections discussion has been kept to a minimum, with frequent references forward to the commentary for particular examples and details of bibliography; for in a work of this kind it is in close association with the relevant passages that detailed problems are most profitably discussed.

§ 1. *Polybius' Life and Journeys*

Born about the end of the third century[1] at Megalopolis, Polybius spent his first thirty years acquiring the military and political experience of an Achaean statesman. His father Lycortas was an eminent politician, a follower, though hardly (as has been suggested)[2] a relative, of Philopoemen. In 182 the young Polybius was selected to

[1] The date is uncertain. Beloch (iv. 2. 228), following Mommsen (*RG*, ii. 449; *Röm. Forsch.* ii. 538 f.) in the view that Polybius took part in Manlius Vulso's Galatian expedition of 189, dates it to 208; Susemihl (ii. 80 n. 2*c*) puts it as early as 211/10. Against this is the reference in iii. 39. 8 to the measuring of the Via Domitia (see ad loc.), which certainly suggests that Polybius lived until 118. If any trust can be placed in the statement of Ps.-Lucian (*Macrob.* 23) that Polybius died from a fall off a horse at the age of 82, this would suggest a date round about 200 for his birth; but the author of the *Macrobioi* may be inaccurate, and in any case we do not know how long after 118 he may have lived, so that attempts to be more precise are somewhat hypothetical.

[2] See ii. 40. 2 n.

carry the ashes of Philopoemen to burial,[1] and some time later he wrote his life.[2] The boy's upbringing was shaped by the family's position as rich landowners. His interest in military matters is shown by his lost book on *Tactics*,[3] and by many digressions in the *Histories*;[4] he was also much given to riding and hunting.[5] His knowledge of literature was not extensive;[6] the occasional quotations from the poets frequently suggest the use of a commonplace-book rather than first-hand acquaintance,[7] and his philosophical studies too were of a limited character.[8] Despite his use of the word *ἀφιλόσοφος* as a term of abuse,[9] and despite references to Heracleitus,[10] Plato,[11] Aristotle,[12] Demetrius of Phalerum,[13] and Strato of Lampsacus,[14] he shows little evidence of deep study of any of these writers; and the philosophical background in book vi seems to lie mainly in recent or contemporary popular writers rather than in the original minds of the fourth and third centuries.[15] On the other hand, he had obviously read closely and critically the historians of his own and preceding generations, such as Timaeus, Phylarchus, Theopompus, and Ephorus.[16]

[2]

[1] Cf. Plut. *Philop.* 21. 5 *τοῦ στρατηγοῦ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν παῖς Πολύβιος*; the phrase would fit a birth-date about 200, but hardly one much earlier.

[2] x. 21. 5 f. The *Life of Philopoemen* was probably an earlier work. Against the view of P. Pédech (*REG*, 1951, 82–103) that it was written at Rome for Scipio Aemilianus see Ziegler, *RE*, 'Polybios', cols. 1472–3 n. It was Plutarch's source for his *Philopoemen*.

[3] Cf. ix. 20. 4; Arrian, *Tact.* 1; Aelian, *Tact.* 1, 3. 4, 19. 10.

[4] e.g. iii. 81. 10, 105, v. 98, x. 16. 1–17. 5, 22–24, 32. 7–33, 43–47, xi. 25. 6; but Polybius' detailed description of military matters throughout his *Histories* reveals the technical skill and passionate eye of the professional.

[5] xxxi. 14. 3 (boar-hunting with Demetrius of Syria), 29. 8 (hunting with Scipio); other references in von Scala, 24 n. 3.

[6] So, rightly, Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1465, against von Scala, 65 ff.

[7] Cf. Wunderer, ii, *passim*.

[8] Cf. Ziegler, op. cit., cols. 1467–71, drawing on and modifying the conclusions of von Scala, 86–255.

[9] e.g. xii. 25. 6 (Timaeus), xxxvi. 15. 5 (Prusias).

[10] iv. 40. 3, xii. 27. 1.

[11] Cf. iv. 35. 15, vi. 5. 1, 45 (mentioned with Ephorus, Xenophon, and Callisthenes), vii. 13. 7, xii. 28. 2; on the theory of Friedländer (*AJP*, 1945, 337 ff.) that Polybius based his account of his own early relations with Scipio on the pattern of Socrates and Alcibiades in the *Greater Alcibiades* see xxxi. 23–30 n.

[12] See Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1470, criticizing von Scala, 127 ff. Susemihl (ii. 81 n. 4) and Niese (*GGA*, 1890, 892) are agreed that von Scala has not proved that Polybius was acquainted with such rare works as the *Poetics, Politics*, and *Nicomachean Ethics*.

[13] Especially xxix. 21; but this does not imply an extensive knowledge of Demetrius.

[14] Polybius shows a first-hand acquaintance with Strato's theories on the silting-up of the Black Sea; cf. iv. 39–42 nn.

[15] See the commentary to this book, *passim*.

[16] See i. 5. 1, ii. 16. 15, viii. 10. 12, xii. 3–15, 23–28 a, xxxiv. 10. 5, xxxix. 8. 4(Timaeus); ii. 56. 1-63. 6, v. 35-39 n. (Phylarchus); viii. 9-11, xii. 4 a 2 (reference in Timaeus), 25 f 6, 27. 8, xvi. 12. 7 (Theopompus); iv. 20. 5, v. 33. 2, vi. 45. 1, ix. 1. 4, xii. 4 a 3 ff. (reference in Timaeus), 22. 7, 23. 1, 23. 8, 25 f 27. 7, 28. 9-12, xxxiv. 1. 3.

Of Polybius' career between Philopoemen's death and the Third Macedonian War only a little is known. In 181/0 the Achaean Confederation designated him one of three ambassadors to visit Ptolemy V Epiphanes in Egypt, *νεώτερον ὄντα τῆς κατὰ τοὺς νόμους ἡλικίας*,[1] but the trip was cancelled when the king suddenly died, and he next appears as Hipparch of the Confederation for the year 170/69.[2] This was a critical moment in his country's history. Involved in an irksome war with Perseus of Macedonia, the Romans were carefully watching all Greek states for signs of disloyalty. Polybius has left a detailed defence of his behaviour;[3] but his family tradition was one of maintaining an independent, if friendly, attitude towards Rome, and in 170 independence among Greeks was a quality little respected by the Senate. In the purge which followed the downfall of Perseus Polybius found himself one of a thousand eminent Achaeans who were summoned to Rome, ostensibly for examination, and subsequently detained there without any pretence of justice.[4]

Once at Rome, Polybius was more fortunate than most of his colleagues. Soon after his internment began, and while he was still in the city, he had the good fortune to attract the attention of the 18-year-old Scipio Aemilianus. The acquaintance, which took its origin 'in the loan of some books and conversation about them',[5] quickly ripened into friendship, and when shortly afterwards the other internees were distributed into custody among the municipal towns of Italy,[6] Polybius received permission to stay on in Rome, where he became Scipio's mentor and close friend.[7] His position was now highly ambiguous. Technically a foreign internee, he enjoyed friendship on equal terms with men like Aemilianus, his brother *Q.* Fabius,[8] and the whole of their brilliant circle. In this company he made the acquaintance of the Seleucid prince Demetrius, and did not hesitate to encourage and support his plans to escape from Italy.[9]

[1] xxiv. 6. 5. Polybius will have been little more than twenty at this time; see above, p. 1 n. 1.

[2] xxviii. 6. 9.

[3] xxviii. 13. 9–13, xxix. 24. 1–4, 7–8.

[4] xxx. 13, 32. 1–12; Paus. vii. 10. 11; Livy, xlv. 31. 9.

[5] xxxi. 23. 4; the books may well have been lent from the library of Perseus, which had fallen into the hands of Scipio's father, Aemilius Paullus (Plut. *Aem. Paul.* 28. 8; Isid. *Orig.* vi. 5. 1). See von Scala, 176; and above, p. 2 n. 11.

[6] xxxi. 23. 5; Paus. vii. 10. 11.

[7] xxxi. 23 ff.; Diod. xxxi. 26. 5; Vell. i. 13. 3; Plut. *Mor.* 659 F; Ps.-Plut. *Mor.* 199 F.

[8] xxx i.23. 5.

[9] Cf. xxxi. 11–15 for his own account of the incident, probably written shortly afterwards, but reserved for later incorporation in the Histories, when its publication could no longer harm him. See discussion ad loc. for Ziegler's view (op. cit., col. 1452) that Polybius was acting with the connivance of Scipio, and virtually in the role of 'eines geheimen politischen Agenten im Dienste dieser Partei'.

Cuntz has argued[1] that until the remnant of the internees was amnestied in 150, Polybius will have been restricted to Latium under pain of death; but there was all the difference in the world between allowing him to return to Greece, where he could exercise political influence, and letting him leave the boundaries of Latium and even Italy in responsible company in order to make journeys in the west.[2] As De Sanctis points out,[3] Polybius is known to have visited Epizephyrian Locri several times,[4] and by his influence to have secured the immunity of its citizens from military service 'in the Spanish and Dalmatian campaigns'. Since Schweighaeuser this Dalmatian campaign has been identified with that of 156/5;[5] Cuntz's argument[6] that the reference is to the war of 135 against the Ardiaei and Pleraei,[7] is unconvincing, for these peoples were not Dalmatians.[8] On balance, then, it may be assumed that Polybius was allowed as far as Locri during his internment. In that case why not also outside Italy?

It seems in fact probable (though it is a hypothesis not susceptible of complete proof) that the journeys which Polybius made 'through Africa, Spain, Gaul, and on the ocean that lies beyond',[9] are to be dated in part before his release from internment. The evidence is discussed in the relevant notes. Summarized, it suggests that Polybius accompained Scipio to Spain in 151, when he acted as legatus to the consul Lucullus, that during his stay in Spain he went with Scipio to Africa, where he met Masinissa, and that he crossed the Alps on his way back to Italy.[10] In 150, thanks to the influence of Scipio and the acquiescence of Cato,[11] the internees were released, or at least the three hundred of them who still survived. Polybius had barely had time to reach Arcadia when a request arrived from the consul

[1] Cuntz, 55–56; this penalty seems implied by Paus. vii. 10. 12, *ὑποσχεῖν δίκην*.

[2] His parole would have afforded sufficient security, especially when underwritten by Scipio, who, though certainly still young, must have carried weight by reason of his family connexions.

[3] iii. 1. 209–10.

[4] xii. 5. 1–3.

[5] Cf. xxxii. 13; Livy, *ep.* 47; Flor. ii. 25; Zon. ix. 25; App. *Illyr.* 11; Strabo, vii. 315; auct. *de uir. ill.* 44; Zippel, 130 ff.; De Sanctis, iii. 1. 210.

[6] Cuntz, 46–49; accepted by Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1461. Cuntz also makes the Spanish War that of D. Iunius Brutus in 138/7 (Strabo, iii. 152) rather than that of 153 (xxxv. 1), the usual view.

[7] Livy, *ep.* 56; App. *Illyr.* 10; cf. Zippel, 132. The Dalmatian War of 119 (App. *Illyr.* 10; Livy, *ep.* 62) is certainly too late.

[8] Cf. De Sanctis, iii. 1. 210.

[9] iii. 59. 7.

[10] Cf. iii. 48. 12 n.; 57–59 n.

[11] xxxv. 6; Paus. vii. 10. 12. Unsuccessful attempts had been made in 164 (xxx. 32), 159 (xxxii. 3. 14–17), 155 (xxxiii. 1. 3–8. 3), and 153 (xxxiii. 14).

for149, M'. Manilius, to proceed to Lilybaeum *ὡς χρείας οὔσης αὐτοῦ δημοσίων ἕνεκεν*;[1] he readily obeyed, but when at Corcyra he received reports which suggested that the Carthaginians had accepted the Roman terms, he returned home.[2] After the war again flared up, however, he joined Scipio at Carthage and was present at its fall.[3] It was probably in 146, shortly afterwards, that he undertook the voyage of exploration in the Atlantic, which carried him both down the African coast and some way up that of Portugal.[4] Ziegler[5] would date this voyage to 147 before the fall of Carthage; but Polybius will scarcely have left Scipio during the siege,[6] and there is no chronological difficulty in placing his voyage of exploration after the fall of Carthage and before his return to Greece. He is known to have been at Corinth shortly after its destruction; but this event cannot be dated with accuracy,[7] and an Atlantic voyage may have been a welcome distraction from the embarrassment of being in Achaea at the headquarters of a Roman general operating against the Confederation.

The *Histories* enable us to follow Polybius' movements for the next two years. He spent the rest of 146 and part of 145 working to secure as favourable a settlement as possible in Greece,[8] and he visited Rome once more in the course of these negotiations.[9] After that it becomes impossible to attach dates to his journeys. He was at Alexandria sometime during the reign of Ptolemy Euergetes II (Physcon),[10] but whether in the company of Scipio[11] or not cannot be determined. At some equally uncertain date he was at Sardes, where he met the Galatian Chiomara,[12] and he may have visited Rhodes.[13]

[1] xxxvi. 11. 1.
[2] Ibid.
[3] xxxviii. 19–22.
[4] See iii. 57–59 n.; xxxiv. 15. 7.
[5] Op. cit., col. 1455.
[6] Cf. Cuntz, 53.
[7] xxxix. 2; cf. De Sanctis, iii. 1. 211.
[8] On the honours paid to Polybius see xxxix. 3. 11; Paus. viii. 30. 9. Other statues were erected according to Pausanias at Megalopolis (Paus. viii. 30. 8), Tegea (Paus. viii. 48. 8), Pallantium (Paus. viii. 44. 5), Lycosura (Paus. viii. 37. 2;
cf. *IG*, v. 2. 537) and Mantinea (Paus. viii. 9. 1; *IG*, v. 2. 304). There is also epigraphical evidence for dedications at Cleitor (*IG*, v. 2. 370; see Frontispiece) and Olympia (*Syll.* 686).
[9] xxxix. 8. 1.
[10] Strabo, xvii. 797 = P. xxxiv. 14. 6. Physcon reigned 170–163 and again 145–116; Ziegler seems right in dating Polybius' visit to the second of these two periods; he stresses the elimination of the Greek element from the city (op. cit., col. 1461).
[11] Scipio's embassy to the east was probably in 140 (Broughton, i. 480–1, with references); fg. 76 neither supports nor contradicts the view that Polybius accompanied him on it. Mioni (15) connects Polybius' visit to Alexandria with his reorganization of Greece, but there is no evidence for such an assumption.
[12] xxi. 38. 7 = Plut. *Mar.* 258 E. Chiomara was probably young when the incident of 189 took place; and there is no necessity to date Polybius' meeting with her before 169 rather than after 146, though of course the earlier date cannot be excluded.
[13] xvi. 15. 8 refers to archives in the Rhodian prytaneum; but Polybius had not necessarily consulted these in person (see below, p. 31 n. 8). Nor can it be deduced from xvi. 29 that he had visited Sestus and Abydus (so Mioni, 125); and had he seen Byzantium (iv. 38), he would almost certainly have said so. Valeton (190–3) assumed that Polybius had visited Media (v. 44) and Ecbatana (x. 27); here again silence seems to suggest the opposite.

During these years he undoubtedly spent some time in the company of Scipio. Cicero[1] makes Laelius say that Scipio, Polybius, and Panaetius had frequently discussed together problems of the Roman constitution; but when such conversations are to be dated—whether at Carthage or on some subsequent occasion, such as Scipio's eastern embassy—remains quite obscure.[2] It is often assumed that Polybius accompanied Scipio to Numantia;[3] but his personal acquaintance with New Carthage,[4] and Scipio's inquiries in Gaul (probably incited by Polybius),[5] can equally well date to the earlier Spanish journey of 151/0, for the composition of a monograph on the Numantine War[6] is no evidence that Polybius himself took part in it, when approximately seventy years old. Another work by Polybius, *Περὶ τῆς περὶ τὸν ἰσημερινὸν οἰκήσεως*, on the habitability of the equatorial region, is recorded by Geminus;[7] it has been conjectured[8] that this was in fact merely part of book xxxiv of the *Histories*, but Ziegler[9] rightly argues that Geminus is quite explicit in his statement, and that there is no reason to think that Polybius did not write a separate monograph on a topic for which Strabo consulted only the general historyThe date when this monograph was written is quite unknown. Pédech (Reg, 1948, 439; Méthode, 588–90) argues that the work *Περὶ τῆς περὶ τὸν ἰσημερινὸν οἰκήσεως* was written after P.'s voyage along the coast of Morocco and utilized the results of that voyage.

Polybius died, according to the author of the *Macrobioi*,[10] from a fall off a horse at the age of 82; the authority is not impeccable, but the statement would fit reasonably well into the other data on Polybius' life,[11] and may be accepted.[12]

§ 2. *Polybius' Views on History*

At the outset of his work Polybius indicates its double purpose:[13] it is to provide useful training and experience for the practical

[1] *De rep.* i. 34.

[2] On the date of Panaetius' arrival in Rome see Pohlenz, *RE*, 'Panaitios', col. 424 f.; Brink and Walbank, *CQ*, 1954, 103 n. 3. The evidence is not adequate to determine when it took place, and views fluctuate between a date before 149 and one as late as 132.

[3] e.g. Cuntz, 16 ff., 56–59; Mioni, 16; Ziegler, op. cit., cols. 1458 f.

[4] x. 11. 4; cf. De Sanctis, iii. 1. 112.

[5] xxxiv. 10. 6–7 = Strabo, iv. 190; cf. *Class. et med.*, 1948, 161.

[6] Cic. *fam.* v. 12. 2.

[7] Geminus, 16. 12. (*p. 628.)

[8] Cf. M. C. P. Schmidt, *Jahrb.* cxxv, 1882, 113.

[9] Op. cit., col. 1474.

[10] Ps.-Lucian, *Macrob.* 23.

[11] See above, p. 1, n. 1, for the evidence suggesting that Polybius lived after 120.

[12] How the composition of the *Histories* fits into the above chronology is a subject enveloped in controversy. It is fully discussed in the commentary at iii. 1–5 and vi introduction; see also Brink and Walbank, *CQ*, 1954, 98–102.

[13] i. 1. 2.

politician, and at the same time to teach the reader how to bear the vicissitudes of Fortune, by describing those that have befallen others. Throughout the *Histories* both aspects are repeatedly stressed. The discussion in book iii[1] on the distinction between causes, pretexts, and beginnings is specifically directed towards the statesman,[2] and it is as something essential for statesmen as well as students that he includes his account of the Carthaginian treaties.[3] The description of the Gallic invasions of Italy is designed especially to teach those who direct the fortunes of the Greeks how to cope with such attacks.[4] It is, in particular, statesmen who can correct their own conduct by a study of the change in character displayed by Philip V,[5] and statesmen (as well as students) who will profit from the account of the Roman constitution.[6] The moral lessons of history, though useful to *πραγματικοί ἄνδρες* (for indeed they are often bound up with the practical lessons),[7] are frequently aimed at a wider public. Thus the fate of Regulus, which illustrates the unexpected element in history and the success that can be achieved by determination,[8] is recounted 'in order to improve the readers of this *History*';[9] and these readers are invited in their turn to pass moral judgement on the government exercised by Rome.[10]

Usually, however, it is not clear to what particular audience Polybius is directing his frequent didactic observations on the advantages that will accrue from reading his work, for, as he himself admits,[11] many of these hammer at ancient themes; and the constantly repeated antithesis between *τὸ χρήσιμον* and *τὸ τερπνόν*[12] and their synonyms smacks of the schools and rhetorical *communes loci*. Both aims, pleasure and profit, are admissible; but the scale comes down very sharply on the side of profit. The criterion of utility is repeatedly urged whether the point in question be great or trivial. It may be the claims of history in general[13]—usually implying

[1] iii. 6. 6 ff.

[2] iii. 7. 5, *ἀνδρὸς πραγματικοῦ μὴ δυναμένου συλλογίζεσθαι πῶς καὶ διὰ τί καὶ πόθεν ἕκαστα τῶν πραγμάτων τὰς ἀφορμὰς εἴληφεν*; iii. 31 develops the theme as it concerns both statesmen and others.

[3] iii. 21. 9–10; for the distinction between statesmen and students see the note ad loc.

[4] ii. 35. 5–10, especially 35. 9 for the reference to Greeks.

[5] vii. 11. 2.

[6] iii. 118. 12. In ii. 61. 11 Polybius implies that it is especially statesmen who will profit from reading of the loyal and courageous behaviour of the Megalopolitans.

[7] e.g. the study of Philip's *metabole* (above, n. 5), the factor of morale in meeting a Gallic *tumultus* (above, n. 4). Polybius regarded both right conduct and morale as ultimately paying practical dividends.

[8] The same lesson is drawn from the Gallic *tumultus*: compare ii. 35. 5–10 with i. 35. 1–5.

[9] i. 35. 6.

[10] iii. 4. 7.

[11] i. 1. 2.

[12] Cf. i. 4. 11, vii. 7. 8, ix. 2. 6, xi. 19 a 1–3, xv. 36. 3, xxxi. 30. 1.

[13] e.g. ii. 56. 10, v. 75. 6, xii. 25 g 2, xxxix. 8. 7.

'political history'[1]—which Polybius is pressing; it may be the study of a particular topic, geography,[2] causality,[3] the biography of some selected individual (provided this is not treated as encomium),[4] or even so practical a matter as the principles of fire-signalling,[5] perfected by Polybius himself. What matters is that the reader shall gain advantage from his reading. To this end Polybius draws a clear distinction between political (and military) history, *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία*,[6] on the one hand, and, on the other, forms of history written with different objects in view and other criteria in the writing. Thus genealogies may interest *τὸν φιλήκοον*, and accounts of colonies, foundations of cities, and relationships *τὸν πολυπράγμονα καὶ περιττόν*; but the *πολιτικός* is interested in the affairs of nations, cities, and rulers, and it is for him Polybius writes. This kind of writing is *ὁ πραγματικὸς τρόπος*,[7] and it is austere in character (though it can include contemporary developments in art and science).[8] In this austerity it stands in contrast to the sensational and rhetorical writing of so many of Polybius' immediate predecessors. Phylarchus, for example, confuses the categories of history and tragedy;[9] and this is true of many other writers, whose names are not always mentioned,

[1] Cf. ix. 2. 4, where *ὁ πραγματικὸς τρόπος* is preferred *διὰ τὸ πάντων ὠφελιμώτατον αὐτὸν . . . ὑπάρχωιν*. On the meaning of *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία* see below, n. 6.

[2] iii. 57. 9.

[3] vi. 2. 8 (hence the study of the Roman constitution, a prime cause of Roman success), xi. 19 a 1–3; see below, p. 11 n. 8.

[4] x. 21. 3; cf. xv. 35: in discussing great men one should add appropriate remarks on the role of *Tyche* together with any instructive reflections one can.

[5] x. 47. 12–13.

[6] Polybius often uses the phrase *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία* as a mere synonym for *ἱστορία*, 'serious history'; in ix. 1–2 it distinguishes a political and military narrative from the more mythical studies of genealogies, or of the foundations of cities, colonization, and ties of kinship. It never means 'history which investigates causes'. This is *ἀποδεικτικὴ ἱστορία*. Thus in ii. 37. 3 Polybius calls his main history, contrasted with the summary account in books i and ii, *ἀποδεικτική* (cf. iii. 1. 3 *μετ' ἀποδείξεως ἐξαγγέλλειν*); and in iv. 40. 1 his account of the Black Sea is *ἀποδεικτική*, being based on the principles of natural science, in contrast to the unsupported assertions of other writers; in x. 21. 3 he admits that writers on the foundations of cities—a branch of history which is specifically contrasted with *πραγματική* (ix. 1–2)—may give an account of these topics *μετ' ἀποδείξεως*, though in the same chapter (x. 21. 8) he contrasts his own history, written impartially and *μετ' ἀποδείξεως*, with the encomium, which is both *κεφαλαιώδης* and exaggerated (cf. viii. 8. 5–9); and in xviii. 33. 6 Polybius claims to have recounted Philip V's *metabole* and the actions involved in it (*τὰς ἐν ταύτῃ πράξεις*) *μετ' ἀποδείξεως*, inasmuch as he has described *πότε καὶ διὰ τί καὶ πῶς ἐγένετο*. Cf. *CQ*, 1945, 15–16; Gelzer, *Hermes*, 1954, 347. Pédech (*Méthode*, 21–32) stresses three elements in *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία*, (*a*) the account of public events and political actions, (*b*) the narrative part of a historical work, (*c*) concern with contemporary history in contrast to *κτίσεις* (cf. ix. 2. 4 n.); on *ἀποδεικτικὴ ἱστορία* see Petzold, *Studien*, 16 ff. and Walbank, *Polybius*, 57 n. 153; n. 9: on 'tragic history' see Meister, *Kritik*, 109–26.

[7] ix. 1. 4–5, 2. 4.

[8] x. 47. 12–13, a concession to his own interest in fire-signalling; cf. above, n. 5. *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία* can also properly include an account of the *anacyclosis* (vi. 5. 2), since it is relevant to an understanding of the growth of the Roman state.

[9] ii. 56. 10–13. On 'tragic history' see Bull. Inst. Class. Stud., 1955, 4–14.

among them historians of Hannibal's Alpine crossing,[1] others (perhaps Timaeus is meant)[2] who include fables about Phaethon in their accounts of the Po valley,[3] and writers about Hieronymus of Syracuse,[4] Agathocles of Alexandria,[5] the wonders of Ecbatana,[6] or the miracles of Iasus.[7] Zeno of Rhodes is given to such sensationalism; Polybius singles him out for special criticism.[8] In general, exaggeration—*τὰ μὲν μικρὰ μεγάλα ποιεῖν*—and the rhetorical elaboration of such matters as descriptions of places and accounts of sieges Polybius considers more likely to be found in the work of historians whose theme is limited (*ἁπλᾶς καὶ μονοειδεῖς λαβόντες ὑποθέσεις*) than in that of universal historians like himself.[9]

In several places Polybius expatiates upon the superior merits of universal history. None of his contemporaries[10] and virtually none of his predecessors[11] had attempted history of this sort. Yet it is only from universal history that one can gain a proper notion of cause and effect and estimate the real importance of events, and so understand and appreciate the work of *Tyche*.[12] It is true that universal history acquires a special significance from the hundred and fortieth olympiad, since from that date events themselves had taken on a universal character, and the history of the various parts of the inhabited world had coalesced into an organic whole;[13] but Siegfried is hardly right in thinking[14] that universal history is proper only to the period with which Polybius is concerned, otherwise he would not have praised Ephorus as *τὸν πρῶτον καὶ μόνον ἐπιβεβλημένον τὰ καθόλου γράφειν*.[15] The position is rather that universal history, while always preferable, had now become the only form capable of treating the period which opened in 220; and it is the type of history which is at once universal and *πραγματική* that Polybius especially commends.

[1] iii. 48. 8; elsewhere Sosylus and Chaereas, writers on Hannibal, are criticized for retailing the gossip of the barber's shop (iii. 20. 5; see below, p. 28).
[2] Timaeus is accused of sensationalism in xii. 24. 5, 26 b 4 ff.; but cf. ii. 13–15 n.
[3] ii. 16. 13–15.
[4] vii. 7. 1–2.
[5] xv. 34. 1–36. 11 (probably aimed at Ptolemy of Megalopolis).
[6] x. 27. 8.
[7] xvi. 12. 3.
[8] xvi. 18. 2.
[9] xxix. 12. 4–5; cf. vii. 7. 6, making the same point in criticism of historians writing special histories, which give over-sensational accounts of the downfall of Hieronymus of Syracuse.
[10] i. 4. 2.
[11] ii. 37. 4.
[12] iii. 32; cf. ix. 44, viii. 2. 1–11; see below, p. 11 n. 8.
[13] i. 3. 4–5; cf. iii. 1. 4, iv. 2. 1 ff.
[14] Siegfried, 21; on pp. 20–25 Siegfried has an interesting survey of the works of Polybius' predecessors.
[15] v. 33. 2; on the limitations of Ephorus' universal history see Mioni, 23, who points out that Ephorus did not write a history of the whole world, but welded into a whole the separate histories of the Greek states; the conception of a worldhistory could hardly precede the career of Alexander.

In the course of his work Polybius succeeds in conveying a fairly comprehensive picture of what he regarded as the prerequisites for the writing of *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία*. In an elaborate comparison between the career of medicine and that of the historian,[1] he defines the latter's task as the study and collation of memoirs and other documents, acquaintance with cities, districts, rivers, harbours, and geographical features generally, and finally experience of political activity; and of these the last two are essential, for one can no more become an historian by studying documents than one can become a painter by looking at works of former masters.[2] The essential thing is to see the sites, so that one can, for example, test out the account of a battle on the spot,[3] and as far as possible to interview those who actually took part in important events[4]—*ὅπερ ἐστὶ κυριώτατον τῆς ἱστορίας*. Equally, no one can write about fighting and politics who has not had some experience as a soldier and as a practical politician.[5] It is on personal experience that Polybius lays his main emphasis, *αὐτοπάθεια*,[6] and above all on personal inquiry, *πολυπραγμοσύνη*.[7] 'It will be well with history', he writes,[8] adapting Plato's famous words (*Rep.* v. 473 C–E), 'either when statesmen undertake to write history . . . or when those proposing to become authors regard a training in practical politics as essential to the writing of history.' He could put forward this thesis with the greater confidence because he had himself made many voyages,[9] and played an active part as a politician and a general.

The object behind this programme of restless activity was to get at the truth. 'Truth is to history', Polybius writes,[10] 'what eyesight is to the living creature.' If history is deprived of truth, all that

[1] xii. 25 e.

[2] xii. 25 e 7; the analogy is a false one, for Polybius' arm-chair historian does not study memoirs as a model, as the painter studies his predecessors, but as a source.

[3] Cf. xii. 25 f 5.

[4] xii. 4 c 3, *τὸ περὶ τὰς ἀνακρίσεις μέρος*; this like so much else was scamped by Timaeus. The main period of Polybius' history fell within the lifetime of people who could be questioned (iv. 2. 2–3), and he made full use of his opportunities; see below, pp. 33 f.

[5] xii. 25 g 1–2.

[6] xii. 25 h 4 ff.; such personal experience would give among other things the ability to appreciate the economic problems which arise in history; cf. ii. 62. 2.

[7] xii. 27–28, 28 a.

[8] xii. 28. 3–5.

[9] Cf. iii. 59. 7; see iii. 57–59 n. and above, § 1, for discussion of the chronology of Polybius' journeys in the west. He was famous as a traveller, and on a *stele* at Megalopolis, Pausanias records (Paus. viii. 30. 8), *γέγραπται δὲ καὶ ἐλεγεῖα . . . λέγοντα ὡς ἐπὶ γῆν καὶ θάλασσαν πᾶσαν πλανηθείη*. For his role as *αὐτόπτης* cf. iii. 4. 13.

[10] i. 14. 6, quoted again at xii. 12. 3; cf. xxxiv. 4, if indeed this passage of Strabo is from Polybius.

remains is an idle tale, *ἀνωφελὲς . . . διήγημα*.[1] One of the main objections to the sensational history of such writers as Phylarchus is that it obscures the truth and so prevents the reader from benefiting by what he reads;[2] and it is a great fault in Timaeus that he puts out false statements.[3] What would be permissible in panegyric is quite out of place in history;[4] and Polybius contrasts his own treatment of Philopoemen in his encomium on the hero with that in the *Histories*, where he has tried to apportion praise and blame impartially.[5] In general, only absolute truth is to be tolerated in history;[6] and the problem of securing it Polybius sees partly as one of scale. As the writer of a 'universal history'[7] he is critical of those who work on a smaller canvas. The fault of the special study, the monograph, is that it puts things out of perspective, and does not allow the reader to see events in their proper proportions, and so to appreciate the continuous nexus of cause and effect;[8] it is also an incentive to its author to exaggerate the importance of his own topic and material.[9] On the other hand, the very magnitude of his task perhaps renders the universal historian more liable to the occasional factual slip or misstatement; if this should unfortunately happen, it is excusable,[10] and such errors should be treated, not with the bitterness and virulence displayed by Timaeus in his attacks on Ephorus, Theopompus, and Aristotle,[11] but with the kind of charitable good nature which led Polybius himself to write to Zeno pointing out his errors *χάριν τῆς κοινῆς ὠφελείας*[12]—unfortunately after the book was already published and so too late for Zeno to correct them.

In two situations Polybius was prepared to allow exceptions to his general rule. Certain historians had reported miraculous happenings in connexion with the statue of Artemis Cindyas at Bargylia

[1] i. 14. 6.

[2] ii. 56. 12 (cf. 56. 2); the same point is made in iii. 47. 6 of the historians who describe Hannibal's Alpine crossing.

[3] xii. 7. 1.

[4] viii. 8. 5–9.

[5] x. 21. 6–8.

[6] xxxviii. 4. 5, *συγγραφέα δὲ κοινῶν πράξεων οὐδ' ὅλως ἀποδεκτέον τὸν ἄλλο τι περὶ πλείονος ποιούμενον τῆς ἀληθείας*; here in fact the assertion is intended to justify Polybius in haranguing his Greek audience in a rhetorical rather than an historical fashion (*ἐὰν παρεκβαίνοντες τὸ τῆς ἱστορικῆς διηγήσεως ἦθος ἐπιδεικτικωτέραν καὶ φιλοτιμοτέραν φαινώμεθα ποιούμενοι περὶ αὐτῶν τὴν ἀπαγγελίαν*.

[7] See above, p. 9.

[8] Cf. iii. 32. Polybius is saying the same thing in a slightly different way in viii. 2, when he argues that it is only from general histories that one really appreciates the grandeur of the great achievement of *Tyche* in reducing the world to the dominion of Rome. On the importance of establishing causes see iii. 6. 6 f. (and especially 6. 14–7. 3), iii. 31, v. 21. 6, vi. 2. 8, xi. 19 a 1–3, xii. 25 b 1, xxii. 18. 6, xxix. 5. 1–3, xxxvi. 17. 4. For the problem of causality and *Tyche* see below, § 3.

[9] vii. 7. 6.

[10] xxix. 12. 11.

[11] xii. 4 a 1, 7. 6, 8. 1, 11. 4, 12. 1–4.

[12] xvi. 14. 7–8, 20. 8.

and the temple of Zeus in Arcadia. 'To believe things which are beyond the limits of possibility', comments Polybius,[1] 'reveals a childish simplicity, and is the mark of a blunted intelligence.' On the other hand, such statements may contribute towards sustaining a feeling of piety towards the gods among *τὸ πλῆθος*, and if so they are excusable, provided they do not go too far; *τὸ δ' ὑπεραῖρον οὐ συγχωρητέον*. This admission may seem shocking, but it hardly affects Polybius as an historian, since he was little concerned with miracles and not in any case writing for the common people. More dangerous is his concession to patriotism. 'I would admit', he writes,[2] 'that authors should show partiality towards their own country (*ῥοπὰς διδόναι ταῖς αὑτῶν πατρίσι*), but they should not make statements about it which are contrary to the facts.' The concession is carefully hedged about; but it is clear that Polybius availed himself of it in his own work. The extent of his bias can easily be exaggerated. It has, for example, been alleged[3] that Polybius' picture of Philip V is distorted in order 'to motivate and thus to excuse the Achaean League's declaration of war on Philip in 198 B.C.'; and the fragment 'on traitors and treachery' (xviii. 13–15) has been quoted as evidence for the violent controversy which surrounded the Achaean decision. The digression on treachery was, however, evoked by the handing over of Argos by Philip to Nabis of Sparta in the winter of 198/7.[4] Certainly there is a hint at Aristaenus' decision to have the Achaean League declare war on Macedon: Polybius wishes to make it quite clear that this was not treachery according to his definition. But there is no evidence for a storm of controversy. Polybius needed to provide no elaborate *apologia* for the Achaeans, since only an insignificant minority queried the wisdom of the official policy.

It is much more in the hostile treatment he accords to opponents of the Achaean League that Polybius' *ῥοπαί* appear. His venom towards Aetolia has long been noted and needs no illustration;[5] and if the hostile picture of Cleomenes of Sparta and the distorted account of Aetolian machinations in the decade before the Social War go back to Aratus' *Memoirs*, Polybius must shoulder the responsibility for swallowing his version uncritically, as well as for many anti-Aetolian *obiter dicta*.[6] Recently it has been demonstrated[7]

[1] xvi. 12. 3–11.

[2] xvi. 14. 6.

[3] Edson, *AHR*, 1942, 827.

[4] See Aymard, *REA*, 1940, 9–19; probably inaccessible to Edson.

[5] See Brandstaeter, 199 ff.; J. V. A. Fine, *AJP*, 1940, 129–65. But the case should not be overstated. Thus Brandstaeter makes a long and eloquent defence of the Aetolian claim to be considered true Greeks; but the accusation that they were not comes in a speech of Philip V, which may well record his actual words (xviii. 5. 8), and does not therefore necessarily commit Polybius.

[6] e.g. ii. 46. 3, iv. 3. 1, ix. 38. 6 (but this is in a speech of Lyciscus of Acarnania).

[7] Feyel, *passim*; for detailed discussion of his thesis see the commentary on xx. 4–7.

that political prejudice has also produced a completely false picture of conditions in third-century Boeotia; the account of social decadence in xx. 5–7 can be refuted from the evidence of contemporary coins and inscriptions, and is to be interpreted as a reflection of Achaean hostility. Frequently, too, Polybius' assessment of a situation is determined by the attitude of those concerned in it towards Achaea or Rome.[1] How far in all these instances the bias is consciously applied it is difficult to say; but Polybius' willingness to grant something to patriotic prejudice probably rendered him less alert to the risks he was running.

Another field in which practice fell short of theory was in the speeches which, following Greek tradition, Polybius included at intervals throughout his *Histories*; some thirty-seven survive, and several times Polybius makes it clear that such speeches should represent the actual words of the speaker. It was the custom of Hellenistic historians to set rhetorical compositions in the mouths of their characters, and Polybius condemns this wholeheartedly in Timaeus. 'A writer who passes over in silence the speeches made and the reason (sc. for their success or failure) and in their place introduces false rhetorical exercises and discursive speeches, destroys the peculiar virtue of history.'[2] Similarly Phylarchus tries[3] 'to imagine the probable utterances of his characters' instead of 'simply recording what was said, however commonplace'; and both Chaereas and Sosylus[4] are roundly condemned for setting down versions of rival speeches made in the Senate on the question of war with Carthage, when they had no access to a reliable source. There is certainly a proper place in historical composition for speeches 'which, as it were, sum up events and hold the whole history together';[5] but they must give what was actually said, *τὰ κατ᾽ ἀλήθειαν λεχθέντα*.[6] In fact Polybius does not always come up to the standard he sets. The long report of the speeches delivered by Flamininus, Philip V, and the other participants in the conference held in Locris in the winter of 198[7] has all the marks of being derived from a verbatim account of the meeting, and may be accepted as authentic. But once he went outside the scope of Achaean and Roman records, Polybius is unlikely to have had access to much reliable material for speeches, and must have drawn largely on earlier literary accounts or the

[1] See below, p. 24.

[2] xii. 25 b 4.

[3] ii. 56. 10.

[4] iii. 20. 1, 20. 5.

[5] xii. 25 a 3. Polybius here classifies speeches as *δημηγορίαι* (addresses in public assembly), *παρακλήσεις* (exhortations, usually to soldiers), and *πρεσβευτικοὶ λόγοι* (ambassadors' speeches); in xii. 25 i 3 *δημηγορίαι* are called *συμβουλευτικοὶ λόγοι*. For an analysis of Polybius' surviving speeches according to these three categories see Ziegler, op. cit., cols. 1525–7.

[6] Cf. ii. 56. 10, xii. 25 b 1, 25 i 8, xxxvi. 1. 7.

[7] xviii. 1–10; cf. Walbank, *Philip*, 159 ff., and references there quoted.

uncertainties of an oral tradition; this probably helps to explain why many of his speeches, and especially such pairs as those of Hannibal and Scipio before Zama,[1] read like a series of commonplaces. But he never concedes to the historian the right to improvise,[2] and it would be unjust to assume that he consciously composed rhetorical exercises for inclusion in his *Histories*. Set occasions *are* apt to produce commonplaces, and people's speeches, like their actions, are often governed by prevalent attitudes and traditions.[3] Polybius is therefore entitled to our confidence that he made a determined effort to discover what was actually said *καθ' ὅσον οἷόν τε πολυπραγμονήσας*,[4] and that any failure here and there is due to practical shortcomings rather than a deliberate betrayal of principle.

There is, however, another field in which Polybius sometimes appears to fall short of the standards implied in his criticisms of others. His attacks on various of his predecessors—Timaeus, Phylarchus, and others—for a style of presentation that is inaccurate, sensational, and full of expressions of wonder, has already been mentioned.[5] But it was so deeply rooted a feature of historical writing in the Hellenistic period that Polybius allows it to influence his own presentation to a greater degree than his professions would suggest; indeed the principle of adducing the *περιπέτειαι* which have befallen others in order to encourage the reader to endure the vicissitudes of fortune, *τύχης μεταβολάς*, was in itself an invitation to dwell on such events. The clearest example of this is his treatment of the downfall of the royal house of Macedon;[6] but the use of the word *παράδοξος* fifty-one times in books i–iii, apart from various

[1] xv. 6. 4–8. 14, 10. 1–7, 11. 6–12.

[2] Ziegler (op. cit., col. 1527) asserts that for a great many of his speeches Polybius must have either drawn his material from literary sources or 'followed the formula indicated in xxxvi. 1. 6, not *εὑρησιλογεῖν καὶ διεξοδικοῖς χρῆσθαι λόγοις, ἀλλ' ἀεὶ τοῖς ἁρμόζουσι πρὸς τὸν ὑποκείμενον καιρόν* and to give *τὰ καιριώτατα καὶ πραγματικώτατα* of these'. But here Ziegler confuses two things, the behaviour proper to a politician and that proper to an historian; it is the former who should avoid discursive talk and restrict himself to what the occasion demands; the latter must find out as carefully as possible *τὰ κατ' ἀλήθειαν ῥηθέντα*, and then report only the most vital and effectual part of this. There is a similar error in my observations in *CQ*, 1945, 10 n. 4 (rightly criticized by Balsdon, *CQ*, 1953, 158 n. 4), where the argument in xii. 25 i 4 ff. is misrepresented; in that passage, as in xxxvi. 1. 6, it is the statesman, not the historian, who is required *τοὺς ἁρμόζοντας καὶ καιρίους* (sc. *λόγους*) *ἀεὶ λαμβάνειν*. The misunderstanding (shared by Wunderer, ii. 11) arose through the sudden changes of point of view, which cause Polybius to speak now as an historian (xii. 25 i 6) and now as a statesman profiting from the reading of history (xii. 25 i 8).

[3] See below, pp. 19–20.

[4] xxxvi. 1. 7.

[5] See above, pp. 8–9, and for general observations along these lines, iii. 58. 9.

[6] xxiii. 10–11; cf. Livy, xl. 3. 3 ff., drawing on Polybius. For discussion see *JHS*, 1938, 55–68; Ullman, *TAPA*, 1942, 25–53; cf. Warde Fowler, *CR*, 1903, 448.

synonyms like *παράλογος, ἀνέλπιστος, ἀπροσδόκητος*,[1] clearly indicates the part played by the unexpected in his narrative. An example of this tendency towards a sensational presentation can be seen in Polybius' battle-pieces. Thus Hannibal's crossing of the Rhone, with the enemy on one side and the Carthaginians on the other, gives scope for a vivid picture.

'With the men in the boats shouting as they vied with one another in their efforts and struggled to stem the current, with the two armies standing on either bank at the very brink of the river, the Carthaginians following the progress of the boats with loud cheers and sharing in the fearful suspense (*συναγωνιώντων*), and the barbarians yelling their war-cry and challenging to combat, the scene was in the highest degree striking and thrilling (*ἦν τὸ γινόμενον ἐκπληκτικὸν καὶ παραστατικὸν ἀγωνίας*).'[2]

This account may go back to some eyewitness such as Silenus; but one cannot but observe a certain affinity with similar passages such as that in which the feelings and behaviour of the people of Lilybaeum are described as they stand on the walls to watch the trierarch Hannibal run the Roman blockade,[3] or in particular the description of the clash at Cynoscephalae. 'As the encounter of the two armies was accompanied by deafening shouts and cries, both of them uttering their war-cry and those outside the battle also cheering the combatants, *ἦν τὸ γινόμενον ἐκπληκτικὸν καὶ παραστατικὸν ἀγωνίας*.'[4] The two rival armies, and the third group shouting—the parallel is complete, and suggests the influence of rhetorical elaboration which may ultimately draw on Thucydides' famous account of the battle in the Great Harbour at Syracuse. Nevertheless, in such passages as these Polybius does not develop the situation at length nor with the resources of emotional and tragic writing necessary to elicit the pity of his readers and to thrill them with sensation for its own sake. He feels no obligation to omit everything that savours of *τὸ τερπνόν*,[5] but he draws a contrast[6] between the sieges and battle-scenes of the 'tragic' historians and his own accounts, *αὐτὸν τὸν ἀληθῆ καὶ κύριον . . . λόγον*, and asks the reader's pardon if he appears to be *λήμμασι χ ρώμενοι τοῖς αὐτοῖς ἢ χειρισμῷ πραγμάτων ἢ τοῖς τῆς λέξεως ῥήμασι*— which would seem to cover the kind of instance just mentioned. In short, the degree of rhetorical embroidery which appears in these examples is something very different from that displayed in the works of the 'tragic' writers. If Polybius seems often to lay special stress on the unexpected, it is because he regards it as objectively present in the fabric of events, and necessarily to be stressed if the historian is to fulfil his true function as a moral historian.[7]

[1] Lorenz, 11–12; cf. *CQ*, 1945, 8–10.
[2] iii. 43. 7–8.
[3] i. 44. 4–5.
[4] xviii. 25. 1.
[5] Cf. i. 4. 11.
[6] xxix. 12. 7–10.
[7] See below, § 3.

A slight concession (in principle) to politic piety and (in practice) to local patriotism, a limited success in retailing the real contents of some of his reported speeches, a readiness to embrace the terminology (but not the emotional attitudes) of 'tragic' history in the interest of *τὸ τερπνόν* or moral edification—these probably represent the sum of what a critic of Polybius' truthfulness can assemble. They amount in total to very little, and leave the overwhelming impression of a reliable and conscientious writer, with a serious theme and a determination that at all costs his readers shall comprehend and profit by it.

§ 3. *Tyche*

The role in history which Polybius assigned to *Tyche* is notoriously hard to define. He regarded the study of the past as essentially a means of attaining practical ends by learning lessons;[1] but the value of such lessons is seriously reduced if the sequence of cause and effect is at the whim of some incalculable and capricious power.[2] On the other hand, the lessons of history were moral as well as political, and one important moral lesson lay in learning how to meet those vicissitudes which demonstrably occurred in every man's life.[3] To have left these out of his *Histories* would have falsified the observed course of human events. It would also have deprived Polybius of much of his purpose in writing at all. Unfortunately in discussing these vicissitudes he made use of a word familiar to his contemporaries, but to us (and probably to them too) exceptionally ambiguous because of the variety of its meanings and the difficulty of deciding which is present in any particular passage.

It is clear that in many places the word *Tyche* is used quite loosely, where a tense of *τυγχάνω* would have served as well.[4] When, for instance, the Mamertines took possession of the wives and families of the men of Messana, *ὥς ποθ' ἡ τύχη διένειμε παρ' αὐτὸν τὸν τῆς παρανομίας καιρὸν ἑκάστοις*,[5] the sense is simply 'as they happened upon them'. Such examples[6] can be neglected; they reflect current colloquial usage, and have no special significance. Elsewhere, however, the introduction of *Tyche* seems to mean something rather more, and fortunately a passage survives[7] in which Polybius discusses the

[1] See above, pp. 6 ff.

[2] Cf. Erkell, 140.

[3] Cf. i. 1. 2, stressing the two purposes, political and moral, and describing history as *ἐναργεστάτην . . . καὶ μόνην διδάσκαλον τοῦ δύνασθαι τὰς τῆς τύχης μεταβολὰς γενναίως ὑποφέρειν*.

[4] These passages are conveniently assembled in Hercod, 100–1; cf. Warde Fowler, *CR*, 1903, 446 ff.; P. Shorey, *CP*, 1921, 281.

[5] i. 7. 4.

[6] There are similar examples at v. 42. 8 and x. 33. 4–5; they are common throughout the *Histories*.

occasions when *Tyche* may properly be invoked. 'In the case of things of which it is difficult or impossible for mortal men to grasp the causes,' he writes, 'one may justifiably refer them, in one's difficulty, *ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν . . . καὶ τὴν τύχην*'; such things are heavy and persistent rain, drought destroying the crops, outbreaks of plague, in short what would today be termed 'acts of God'.[1] When a cause is to hand, as for example in the case of the contemporary depopulation of Greece, *οὐχί μοι δοκεῖ τῶν τοιούτων δεῖν ἐπὶ τὸ θεῖον ποιεῖσθαι τὴν ἀναφοράν*;[2] 'but where it is impossible or difficult to detect the cause, *διαπορητέον'*. One example of such an *aporia* is the Macedonian rising behind the false Philip, a wholly incomprehensible movement, which can only be termed *δαιμονοβλάβειαν . . . καὶ μῆνιν ἐκ θεῶν*[3]. But in general one should not be prompt to ascribe to *Tyche*[4] events for which a cause can be found.

This passage reserves for the workings of *Tyche* the area which lies completely outside human control and those events of which the causes are not easy to detect or for which there are apparently no rational causes at all. Clearly 'acts of God' and irrational or fortuitous acts of men are not identical; but they have this in common, that they stand outside the sphere of rational analysis. Consequently they can both be described in terms of *τύχη*, or *θεός τις* , or the *θεοί* who nurse their *μῆνις*, or (elsewhere) *τὸ δαιμόνιον* or *ταὐτόματον* (for all these phrases seem to be roughly synonymous).

It is well known that Polybius' concept of cause and effect is somewhat one-sided, and fails to allow adequately for the interaction of events and the dynamic and dialectical character of almost any train of causation.[5] This may help to explain why happenings which are external to the particular sequence of cause and effect with which he is concerned are often attributed to *Tyche*, though there may be a perfectly rational explanation of them in their own context. Thus the early fortunes of the elder Scipio in Spain received a great fillip from *ταὐτόματον*[6] when the Spaniard Abilyx persuaded Bostar to release the Spanish hostages, and promptly handed them over to the Roman; for this act of Abilyx, though based on reason and calculation (cf. iii. 98. 3, *συνελογίσατο παρ' ἑαυτῷ*), was extraneous to Scipio's plans and unforeseeable on the Roman side.[7] *Tyche* can also

[1] For an example see xi. 24. 8; at Ilipa Hasdrubal would have been driven from his entrenchments but for the intervention of *θεός τις*; in short, a storm of unprecedented magnitude forced the Romans back into their camp.

[2] xxxvi. 17. 4 ff.

[3] xxxvi. 17. 15.

[4] xxxvi. 17. 1, where, however, the words *τοῖς τὴν τύχην καὶ τὴν εἱμαρμένην ἐπιγράφουσιν* appear to be those of the excerptor.

[5] See the notes to iii. 6 ff., discussing Polybius' account of the causes of several wars.

[6] iii. 97. 5; cf. 99. 9 *ἐκ τῆς τύχης*.

[7] Similarly, in iv. 3. 4, the Aetolian aggression in the Peloponnese was assisted by τα?τ?ματον, since the home authorities did not foresee the relations between Dorimachus and the brigands; and in v. 34. 2 Ptolemy IV contrasts his own action in ridding himself of domestic dangers with the help given him δι? τ?ν τ?χην in the deaths of his two rivals, Antigonus and Seleucus, abroad. Here the concept of synchronism (see below, n. 2) also comes in. Hannibal's attack on Rome foundered (ix. 6. 5) because γ?νεται παρ?δοξ?ν τι κα? τυχικ?ν σ?μπτωμα πρ?ς σωτηρ?αν το?ς ?ωμα?οις; by a pure coincidence an abnormally large number of troops happened to be present at Rome and could be led out against the enemy. Rhodian feeling against Philip was exacerbated by the action of Tyche (xv. 23. 1); for at the moment when his representative was expatiating on his magnanimity, a messenger arrived with news of the enslavement of the Cians.

manifest itself in the simultaneous occurrence of similar events within separate and independent fields. The fact that the Romans defeated the Boii at Lake Vadimo only five years before the destruction of the Gauls at Delphi[1] suggests that '*Tyche*, as it were, afflicted all Gauls alike with a sort of epidemic of war'; and Polybius chose the date at which he begins his main narrative[2] *διὰ τὸ καὶ τὴν τύχην ὡς ἂν εἰ κεκαινοποιηκέναι πάντα τὰ κατὰ τὴν οἰκουμένην*, for by a series of coincidences new figures were then active in almost every part of the world.

Within the field thus assigned to *Tyche* it might logically seem that events of any kind might be regarded as her handiwork; but in practice she is restricted to certain contexts. In particular, events of a sensational and capricious character are attributed to her.[3] Often she will decide great issues by a narrow margin; thus the Illyrian invasion which compelled Antigonus Doson to march north came just too late to save Cleomenes.[4] Or a great general, Epaminondas or Philopoemen,[5] having risen to success on his merits, may be defeated through no fault of his own, *τῆς τύχης ἥττων*. In such cases, *Tyche* may justly be censured.[6] Her caprice is especially liable to precipitate a sudden reversal of men's lot. Thus *Tyche* caused Hannibal to be crucified on the very cross on which Spendius had died, apparently for the sake of ironical contrast.[7] At Medion the Aetolians debated in whose name they should dedicate the spoil

[1] ii. 20. 7.

[2] iv. 2. 4. Similarly the Roman defeat in Cisalpine Gaul just after Cannae occurred *ὥσπερ ἐπιμετρούσης καὶ συνεπαγωνιζομένης τοῖς γεγονόσι τῆς τύχης* (iii. 118. 6; on the chronology see the note).

[3] These will frequently be disasters; but in such cases one must be careful to distinguish the occasions when they are due to lack of judgement rather than to *Tyche* (i. 37. 4, ii. 7. 1–3).

[4] ii. 70. 2.

[5] ix. 8. 13, xxiii. 12. 3. A few stout-hearted men make headway *τῆς τύχης ἀντιπιπτούσης*, but they are few (xvi. 28. 2).

[6] xv. 20. 5–8, xvi. 32. 5, xxxii. 4. 3. *Tyche* turns against Sparta so that her constitution deteriorates and after being the best becomes the worst (iv. 81. 12); and Athens and Thebes in turn decline *ὥσπερ ἐκ προσπαίου τινὸς τύχης* (vi. 43. 3–5).

[7] i. 86. 7; contrast rather than a specific pleasure in cruelty (so Erkell, 140) is what Polybius associates with *Tyche*.

they were going to win; but *Tyche* showed her power inasmuch as they were themselves obliged to concede spoils to the Medionians.[1] Sometimes this reversal of fortune is vividly illustrated, as on the occasion when Callicrates' portraits were carried away into the darkness on the same day that those of Lycortas were brought out, so that people observed that 'it is the characteristic function of *Tyche* to bring to bear in turn on the lawgivers themselves the very laws they originated and passed'.[2] This capricious and irrational force allows no one to prosper indefinitely; and recognizing this Demetrius of Phalerum was able to foretell the downfall of Macedon, a prophecy which greatly impressed Polybius, who witnessed its fulfilment.[3]

One of Polybius' main moral lessons is the need for moderation in success, in the light of this instability of fortune, and the certainty that no prosperity can last.[4] The events at Medion,[5] the fate of Achaeus[6] or Perseus,[7] the contrast of the pictures of Lycortas and Callicrates,[8] and the fate of Hasdrubal at Carthage[9] evoke the same trite homily with monotonous regularity; sometimes it comes from Polybius' own mouth, sometimes in the words or behaviour of some historical figure—Antiochus weeping at the downfall of Achaeus, remembering the inconstancy of *Tyche*[10] (just as Scipio Aemilianus was to weep over the sight of burning Carthage, and for the same reason),[11] Scipio himself pointing to the wretched Hasdrubal[12] exactly as his father Aemilius Paullus had moralized over the vanquished Perseus,[13] the Punic envoys before Zama urging moderation on the Romans,[14] Hannibal begging the elder Scipio to remember *ὡς εὐμετάθετός ἐστιν ἡ τύχη καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν εἰς ἑκάτερα ποιεῖ μεγάλας ῥοπάς*, so that it behoves all men *ἀνθρωπίνως βουλεύεσθαι*[15] Scipio accepting these premises in his replies both to Hannibal and to the Punic envoys who came after the battle,[16] Syrian ambassadors making a similar plea after Magnesia.[17] It is the mark of a great man to have learnt this lesson;[18] both Scipio[19] and Hannibal[20] came up to this test, whereas Philip V,[21] and the Spartans after the Peloponnesian War,[22] failed.

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[1] ii. 4. 3. *Tyche* likes to dash reasonable expectations by lifting a man up and then suddenly (*παρὰ πόδας*) casting him down (xxix. 22. 1–2).

[2] xxxvi. 13. 2.

[3] xxix. 21.

[4] Cf. xxiii. 12. 4–7 (on Philopoemen's death): *ἀλλά μοι δοκεῖ κατὰ τὴν κοινὴν παροιμίαν εὐτυχῆσαι μὲν ἄνθρωπον ὄντα δυνατόν, διευτυχῆσαί γε μὴν ἀδύνατον*; ii. 31. 3.

[5] ii. 4. 3.

[6] viii. 21. 11.

[7] xxix. 20. 1–4.

[8] xxxvi. 13. 2.

[9] xxxviii. 20. 1.

[10] viii. 20. 10.

[11] xxxviii. 21. 1–3, 22; cf. Brink and Walbank, *CQ*, 1954, 104.

[12] xxxviii. 20. 1.

[13] xxix. 20. 1–4.

[14] xv. 1. 8.

[15] xv. 6. 6–7. 6. Mioni (141 n. 13) thinks that *Tyche* is here equivalent to Providence (see below, p. 22); but the passage is exactly parallel to the others quoted.

[16] xv. 8. 3, 17. 4–6.

[17] xxi. 16. 8.

[18] Cf. vi. 2. 5–6.

[19] x. 40. 6, 40. 9, xxxviii. 21. 1–3.

[20] xv. 15. 5.

[21] xviii. 33. 4.

[22] xxxviii. 2. 7; shortly afterwards *ἀπέβαλον τὴν ἡγεμονίαν*.

Polybius implies that the reversal which is bound to follow upon prosperity will come because that is the way things happen, the way of *Tyche*, regardless of any steps we may take.[1] It is in the nature of prosperity that it does not last; and the reason for behaving moderately is not to avert the blow, but simply that moderate conduct is more fitting to a man and may help to secure mitigation of one's lot when misfortune comes.[2] There is one exception. After a minor success, Perseus' friends urged him to offer terms to the Romans;[3] the latter, they thought, might be disposed to accept them as a result of their set-back, and if they rejected them, *νεμεσήσειν τὸ δαιμόνιον*, whereas the king by his *μετριότης* would win over *τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους*. Now it is true that Polybius' views often coincide with those expressed by his historical characters;[4] but on this occasion he immediately makes it clear[5] that Perseus' friends were quite wrong in their views about how the Romans would behave, and Perseus' fate shows equally well that they were wrong about the behaviour of *τὸ δαιμόνιον*. Polybius did not believe that heaven could be moved by a politic exhibition of *μετριότης* or indeed that arrogance in itself drew divine vengeance upon it.[6] It is the instability of fortune which he makes his theme; and indeed it was morally more edifying to have men behave with moderation in prosperity because it could not in any case last, than to have them moderate because they were afraid lest arrogance might precipitate disaster.

Slightly different is the concept of *Tyche* as a power which punishes wrongdoing. For example, she punished the Boeotians for the unhealthy state of their public affairs, *ὥσπερ ἐπίτηδες ἀνταπόδοσιν . . . ποιουμένη*.[7] The Spartan ephors, who had been bribed to make Lycurgus king, were murdered by Cheilon, *Tyche* thus exacting *τὴν ἁρμόζουσαν . . . δίκην*.[8] This phrase is also used of Philip and

[1] In xxxix. 8 Polybius says that *Tyche* is *ἀγαθὴ φθονῆσαι τοῖς ἀνθρώποις*; on the personification of *Tyche* see below, p. 25.

[2] For public opinion will then operate; and this is a powerful force; cf. xxxviii. 3. 2.

[3] xxvii. 8. 4.

[4] See above, p. 19.

[5] xxvii. 8. 8 ff.

[6] Cf. above, n. 1, where it is prosperity which arouses the jealousy of *Tyche*, not arrogance. In several passages (e.g. xxvii. 6. 2, 15. 2, xxxi. 11. 3), where Polybius is believed with good reason to be his source, Diodorus introduces *Tyche* in a form which (as in Polyb. xxvii. 8. 4) penalizes arrogance. It does not, however, follow that the same nuance was in Polybius, for in the case of Regulus Diodorus has the concept of divine nemesis (Diod. xxiii. 15. 2–6), which is wholly absent from Polyb. i. 35; see the note on the latter passage.

[7] xx. 7. 2.

[8] iv. 81. 5. A parallel case is that of the Carthaginian mercenaries, who had broken every law and to whom *τὸ δαιμόνιον* gave *τὴν οἰκείαν ἀμοιβήν*, forcing them to eat each other.

Antiochus,[1] who after their nefarious plot against the dominions of the infant Ptolemy, were led on by *Tyche* to attack the Romans, and so met ruin and defeat; their dynasties perished, while that of Ptolemy was revived. The action of *Tyche* against Philip is developed at length.[2] As if to punish him, she sends against him a host of furies, which lead him into a succession of acts culminating in the destruction of his own son, a sign of divine wrath.[3] Here *Tyche* takes on a purposive character, which is also evident when the sacrilege committed by Antiochus Epiphanes and Prusias meets speedy vengeance in the form of death or disaster.[4]

Close in attitude to this are several passages in which *Tyche* seems to approximate to something like Fate or Providence.[5] '*Tyche*', writes Polybius,[6] 'is for ever producing something new (*καινοποιοῦσα*) and for ever playing a part (*ἐναγωνιζομένη*) in the lives of men, but in no single instance has she ever put on such a show-piece as in our own times', with the rise of Rome to world-dominion in fifty-three years. In this passage, as Warde Fowler observed,[7] the use of such words as *σκοπός* (i. 4. 1), *οἰκονομία*, and *συντέλεια* (i. 4. 3) suggests that *Tyche* is here conceived as a power working to a definite goal, the domination of Rome. It is this *Tyche* which Hirzel compares with the Stoic *πρόνοια*,[8] and Fowler with the *φύσις* of book. vi;[9] it appears again when the Gallic invasions, interludes in the main drama, which contribute nothing to its development, are described as *τὰ ἐπεισόδια τῆς τύχης*.[10] It does, of course, create a difficulty, on Polybius' definition of *Tyche* as a power which restricted its activity to that

[1] xv. 20. 5–8.

[2] Cf. *JHS*, 1938, 55–68.

[3] xxiii. 10. 14.

[4] xxxi.9. 4 *τοῦ δαιμονίου*, xxxii. 15. 14 *ἐκ θεοπέμπτου*; cf. xviii. 54. 11 (Dicaearchus). See below, p. 25 n. 5.

[5] Cf. Warde Fowler, *CR*, 1903, 446–7.

[6] i. 4. 5. The metaphor of *Tyche* as a producer of plays appears elsewhere. Thus a Rhodian ambassador tells the Aetolians that the evil effects of their Roman alliance are now manifest, *τῆς τύχης ὥσπερ ἐπίτηδες ἐπὶ τὴν ἐξώστραν ἀναβιβαζούσης τὴν ὑμετέραν ἄγνοιαν* (xi. 5. 8); and Polybius makes the same remark (xxix. 19. 2; cf. fg. 212) of the Rhodians themselves after their left-handed diplomacy during the war between Rome and Perseus. It links up with similar metaphors making *Tyche* an umpire (e.g. i. 58. 1) or the stager of a contest (ii. 66. 4), and reproduces the vocabulary of popular philosophy; see the examples from Diogenes and Lucian quoted by Herzog-Hauser, *RE*, 'Tyche', cols. 1668–9.

[7] *CR*, 1903, 446.

[8] Hirzel (862–9, Appendix VII) suggests that, where it is not a purely verbal echo of popular usage, Polybius' *Tyche* is equivalent to the Stoic *πρόνοια*; but if this were so, there seems no good reason why he should not have used the technical term, rather than a word like *Tyche*, which is so fraught with ambiguities (cf. Hercod, 76–103; Mioni, 199 n. 32; Erkell, 140–1).

[9] *CR*, 1903, 446–7; Fowler suggests that Polybius avoids the word *φύσις* in this context, because in book vi it describes á recurrent process, whereas the rise of Rome is a unique problem, soluble only in the course of his history. He therefore preferred the word *τύχη* to one which might imply that the growth of Rome was the result of natural law.

[10] ii. 35. 5; see the note ad loc.

sphere which is not amenable to reason;[1] for the whole of his history is based on the assumption that Roman success can be explained in rational terms. 'By schooling themselves in vast and perilous enterprises', he writes,[2] 'it is perfectly natural that they not only gained the courage to aim at universal dominion, but executed their purpose'; and the sixth book is written mainly in order to analyse the role which the Roman constitution played in Roman success.[3]

There are other passages in which this stress on rational explanation is given great prominence. The achievements of the elder Scipio had been attributed by most people to *Tyche*; in fact, Polybius replies, it is those who are incapable of taking an accurate view of opportunities, causes, and dispositions who attribute *εἰς θεοὺς καὶ τύχας* what is really due to shrewdness, calculation, and foresight.[4] Both Eumenes and Hiero owed their success entirely to their merits, and had no help at all from *Tyche*.[5] Flamininus,[6] like the younger Scipio,[7] was helped a little by *ταὐτόματον*, but in the main prospered through his own innate qualities. When men act foolishly they must take the responsibility, and not try to make *Tyche* the scapegoat.[8] Nor must the rise of the Achaean League be attributed to *Tyche*: *φαῦλον γάρ αἰτίαν δὲ μᾶλλον ζητεῖν χωρὶς γὰρ ταύτης οὔτε τῶν κατὰ λόγον οὔτε τῶν παρὰ λόγον εἶναι δοκούντων οὐδὲν οἷόν τε συντελεσθῆναι*.[9] Roman success in battle has its specific causes; only the superficial will attribute it to *Tyche*.[10] These passages do not deny the existence of *Tyche*; but they clearly limit the area within which one may legitimately use it to account for historical events.

Consequently, in attributing Roman success both to calculation and rational causes and, simultaneously, to the overriding power of a *Tyche* which comes close to 'providence', Polybius raises a problem which has stirred up much debate and evoked many attempts at a solution. One answer has been to postulate a development in his beliefs: beginning as a believer in the capricious *Tyche* of Demetrius of Phalerum, he later came round to the view that *τύχη* was merely

[1] See above, p. 17.

[2] i. 63. 9; on this passage, which clearly belongs to the same order of thought as i. 3. 7–10, see the note ad loc.

[3] Cf. Brink and Walbank, *CQ*, 1954, 97–122.

[4] x. 5. 8; cf. 2. 5, 3. 7, 7. 3, 9. 2–3, and (in general terms) fg. 83. But in x. 40. 6 and 40. 9 Polybius speaks without hesitation of *Tyche's* having favoured Scipio.

[5] xxxii. 8. 4, vii. 8. 1.

[6] xviii. 12. 2.

[7] xxxi. 25. 10, 29. 2, 30. 1–3; probably fg. 47, which, Ziegler (op. cit., col. 1534 n. 1) thinks, refers undoubtedly to the younger Scipio.

[8] Cf. ii. 7. 1–3 (Epirotes), xv. 21. 3 (people of Cius), i. 37. 4 (the Roman commanders at Camarina; but in i. 59. 4 the disaster at Camarina is included among *τὰ ἐκ τῆς τύχης συμπτώματα*).

[9] ii. 38. 5; here, as at Rome, the cause lies mainly in the constitution.

[10] xviii. 28. 5; and cf. i. 63. 9, quoted above (n. 2).

a convenient label to cover a gap in our knowledge,[1] and, in Cuntz's opinion, ended up a complete rationalist who would allow nothing to be without its cause;[2] alternatively, he began by attributing Roman success to prowess, but subsequently came to belive in a *Tyche* which meant rather different things at the different stages of the ideological development which this theory postulates.[3] The fatal objection to such views is that they not only build up a preconceived system by an arbitrary division of passages, but that in each case they are obliged to separate passages which despite apparent contradictions can be shown to be closely linked together. For example, the ideas of *Tyche* as a capricious, and as a just, retributive power are fundamentally contradictory. But Polybius can write without any feeling of awkwardness: 'Who of those who reasonably find fault with *Tyche* for her conduct of human affairs, will not be reconciled to her when he learns how she later imposed on Philip and Antiochus the fitting penalty, and exhibited to those who came after, as a warning for their edification, the exemplary punishment which she inflicted on the above-named kings?'[4] Clearly it is the same *Tyche* which is now just and now capricious; and it is consistent with this that the metaphor of *Tyche* as the play-producer is applied both in contexts where mere change and sensational incident are uppermost, and in those where the concept is that of providential design.[5] Since the same *Tyche* operates on both occasions, her characteristics are the same; thus it is a mark of the capricious power of Demetrius of Phalerum's *Tyche* that she is always *καινοποιοῦσα*, but this is also true of the providential *Tyche* which seems to stand behind the rise of Rome,[6] and is not inconsistent with a rational nexus of causation.[7] This simultaneous application of both *Tyche* and rational causation itself has its parallel in the incident of Regulus,[8] whose failure is on the one hand attributed to two straightforward causes, viz. his error in demanding unconditional surrender and the arrival of Xanthippus,[9] and on the other used as an illustration of the caprice of *Tyche*.[10]

This absence of well-marked divisions between the various uses of a word which, by its very history, had become singularly illadapted to the conveying of clear and precise thoughts[11] is against

[1] von Scala, 159 ff.; his views were adopted by Bury, *Ancient Greek Historians* (Cambridge, 1909), 200 ff.
[2] Cuntz, 43–46.
[3] Laqueur, 249–60.
[4] xv. 20. 5–6.
[5] Cf. xi. 5. 8 (*Tyche* as it were deliberately brings the folly of the Aetolians on the stage), i. 4. 5 (the show-piece of *Tyche*, the rise of Rome to world-dominion), xxix. 19.2 (*Tyche* brings the folly of the Rhodians on the stage).
[6] xxix. 21. 5; cf. i. 4. 5.
[7] Cf. i. 63. 9; above, p. 22 n. 2.
[8] i. 30–35.
[9] Cf. Balsdon, *CQ*, 1953, 159 n. 2.
[10] Cf. i. 35. 2; the contradiction is noted by Siegfried, 67 n. 119.
[11] Cf. Erkell, 146.

any theory which would assign these different usages to different periods of Polybius' mental development. It is equally against the theory of Siegfried,[1] who sees Polybius as a man 'with two souls in his breast', switching easily and without inner conflict from a scientific, rational, view of a universe subject to the law of cause and effect, to a religious attitude which sees history as the working out of a plan by an external power of *Tyche*. This bisection is not plausible as a psychological account of Polybius, as one comes to know him in his work; nor is it adequate as a treatment of the evidence, for the contradictions in Polybius' account of *Tyche* are not one but several. The various conceptions merge one into another; and it often appears as if the particular aspect of *Tyche* which Polybius invokes in any instance, no less than the extent to which he allows *Tyche* to be introduced into the situation at all, depends in part at least upon his own sympathies in the matter, and upon how far he is removed from the incidents he is describing. When, for example, the Macedonians rallied behind Andriscus with such will and vigour that they even defeated the Romans, their perversity placed them outside the range of comprehensible conduct, and Polybius dismisses it as what might be called a heaven-sent infatuation, *δαιμονοβλάβειαν . . . καὶ μῆνιν ἐκ θεῶν*.[2] The same word, *δαιμονοβλάβεια*, is used of the folly which led Perseus to ruin his hopes of Genthius' help by his niggardliness;[3] and when Philip V, whose end is portrayed in the form of a tragedy, murders his son,[4] Polybius comments: 'Who can help thinking that, his mind being thus afflicted and troubled, it was the wrath of heaven (*θεῶν τινων . . . μῆνιν*) which had descended on his old age, owing to the crimes of his past life.'[5] One of the most notorious of these crimes was the compact made with Antiochus to partition the domains of the infant Ptolemy Epiphanes; and this outrage was doubly avenged by *Tyche*, at once when she raised up the Romans against the two guilty kings, reducing them to tributaries, and again later, when she re-established Ptolemy's dynasty, while those of his enemies sank in ruin.[6] In all these cases—Philip, Perseus, and the Macedonian people—Polybius' own sympathies were heavily engaged, and he uses a terminology which represents a fundamentally anti-Roman policy as divinely inspired infatuation.[7]

This does not necessarily imply that *δαιμονοβλάβεια* was the work of an objectively existing power. On the contrary, most progress has been made in the understanding of Polybius' attitude towards

[1] Op. cit., *passim*.
[2] xxxvi. 17. 15.
[3] xxviii. 9. 4.
[4] See above, p. 14 n. 6.
[5] xxiii. 10. 14.

[6] xv. 20; cf. xxix. 27. 11–12 (*Tyche* arranges that the fall of Perseus shall involve the survival of Egypt).
[7] Where *Tyche* is not specifically mentioned, the word *δαιμονοβλάβεια*, like *τὸ δαιμόνιον*, has the same implications.

Tyche and its synonyms by those scholars—Shorey, De Sanctis, Mioni, and Erkell—who have stressed the verbal and rhetorical elements in his formulation.[1] It has been correctly pointed out that he is not unwilling to draw his colours from the palette of the tragic historians 'wenn es möglich ist, ohne die Wahrheit zu verletzen'.[2] Ziegler has drawn attention[3] to the fact that in several passages Polybius modifies his references to *Tyche* with some such words as *ὥσπερ* or *ὡσανεί*.[4] Similarly, of the two instances where sacrilege seems to be followed by a swift, retributive punishment, it is significant that that of Antiochus Epiphanes was the result of divine anger, *ὡς ἔνιοί φασι*, while Prusias' fate was such *ὥστε παρὰ πόδας ἐκ θεοπέμπτου δοκεῖν ἀπηντῆσθαι μῆνιν αὐτῷ*.[5] These qualifications suggest a real and prolonged doubt about the existence of an objectively active *Tyche*; and this impression is confirmed by what Polybius has to say about religion in general, in a passage[6] which stamps him as fundamentally a sceptic, and by his definition of *Tyche* as the convenient label with which one distinguishes acts of God and the irrational or fortuitous interventions of men.[7]

To a large extent, therefore, the personality with which Polybius invests *Tyche* is a matter of verbal elaboration, helped by current Hellenistic usage, which habitually spoke of *Tyche* as a goddess; and this helps to explain many of the inconsistencies, for consistency is not essential to a rhetorical flourish. With regard to his main theme, however—the work of *Tyche* in making Rome mistress of the world in fifty-three years—one must allow for at least the possibility that as he looked back on this startling and unparalleled process Polybius jumped the step in logic between what had happened and what had had to happen, and so in a somewhat muddled way invested the rise of Rome to world power with a teleological character; in so doing he probably fell a victim to the words he used and to his constant personification of what began as a mere hiatus in knowledge. Certainly the use of teleological expressions[8] in i. 4. 1–3 points in that direction. But if this is so, it remains equally true that Polybius had neither the clarity in philosophical thought nor a sufficiently fine sense of language to enable him to isolate the contradiction in his ideas. The word '*Tyche*' was already corrupted

[1] Shorey, *CP*, 1921, 280 ff.; De Sanctis, iii. 1. 213–15; Mioni, 140–7; Erkell, 140–6.

[2] Erkell, 145; see above, pp. 14–15.

[3] Ziegler, op. cit., cols. 1538 f.

[4] e.g. ii. 20. 7, xxiii. 10. 2 *καθάπερ . . . ἂν εἰ . . .*, 10. 16 *ὥσπερ ἐπίτηδες ἀναβιβαζούσης ἐπὶ σκηνήν*, xx. 7. 2 *ὥσπερ ἐπίτηδες ἀνταπόδοσιν . . . ποιουμένη*, xxix. 19. 2, xxxviii. 18. 8; and in iv. 2. 4 the word *κεκαινοποιηκέναι* is qualified with *ὡς ἂν εἰ*.

[5] xxxi. 9. 4, xxxii. 15. 14.

[6] vi. 56. 6–15.

[7] xxxvi. 17.

[8] See above, p. 21 n. 7. That *τύχη* here means simply 'the course of events' (so Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, ii (Munich, 1950), 194) is hard to reconcile with 4. 4.

when he adopted it; as Erkell observes,[1] it covered all the gradations in sense between a sharply defined philosophical concept and a hazy, outworn cliché, and Polybius was not the man to find a lonely way across the morass. Consequently, to the question whether he believed in an objective power directing human affairs, the answer cannot be an unqualified 'No'; but in so far as it is a qualified 'Yes', his belief was neither sufficiently strong nor sufficiently clear for him to recognize any inconsistency with his normal, rational formulation of the character of *Tyche*.

This is perhaps unsatisfactory; but Polybius' lack of clarity can be paralleled in other writers. Shorey[2] quotes the hesitations of Plato, who in the *Laws* attributes a great role to *Tyche* yet insists on the control extended by Providence over the minutest details, of Julian the Apostate, of Dante, and of Renan, all of whom at times admitted Fortune illogically into their philosophical schemes. This discussion may conveniently close with an extract from a contemporary historian. 'The putsch would have succeeded if Hitler had not been saved by what can only be regarded as a miracle. It was mere chance that on 20 July the midday conference should have been held in a flimsy wooden hut, and not in the usual concrete bunker, where the explosion would have been deadly.'[3] The author of this passage was habitually a clear and factual writer. The equivocal and contradictory terms in which he comments on an incident sensational in itself and fraught with fatal consequences are perhaps not without relevance to the problem of *Tyche* in Polybius.

§ 4. *Polybius' Sources*

The vast literature which exists on Polybius' sources[4] is perhaps disproportionate to the results it has achieved; and the chief reason for this is that for the main part of his work Polybius has used a great variety of material, much of it no longer identifiable, and has woven it into a close and homogeneous fabric in which the separate threads are not now distinguishable. Both the character of this material and Polybius' method of dealing with it are alike described in the course of his work with complete and typical frankness. In a passage in book xii, already quoted,[5] the preparation of the historian is defined as the study and collation of written sources, acquaintance

[1] Erkell, 146.

[2] *CP*, 1921, 280–1.

[3] Chester Wilmot, *The Struggle for Europe* (London, 1952), 421.

[4] There is a sensible survey in Mioni, 119–27; see also the useful summary in Ziegler, op. cit., cols. 1560–4, with bibliography in cols. 1441–4; among older works those of von Scala and Valeton are still worth consulting, though neither recognizes the limit of what is possible and useful in studying this problem. More detailed references and bibliography will be found in the commentary.

[5] xii. 25 e; see p. 10 n. 1.

with relevant sites, and political experience; but in the same book[1] Polybius explains that the most important activity, at any rate for recent and contemporary history, is the questioning of as many as possible of those who participated in the events. Indeed, one reason for his choice of 220 as the opening date for his main history was the fact that *συμβαίνει τοῖς μὲν αὐτοὺς ἡμᾶς παραγεγονέναι, τὰ δὲ παρὰ τῶν ἑωρακότων ἀκηκοέναι*;[2] evidence for events of an earlier date would be mere *ἀκοὴ ἐξ ἀκοῆς* and would serve as a safe foundation neither for judgements nor for statements.[3] From this it follows that the introductory books i and ii must necessarily fall into a different category from the *Histories* proper. They are admittedly derivative, and based wholly on written authorities. Here, to an extent unnecessary for the later books, Polybius finds it important to discuss the merits of these authorities and to explain what amount of confidence he places in them. On the other hand, neither his inclination nor ancient historical practice led him to indicate how closely he followed them nor the points at which he passed from one to another.

Four historians receive special mention in books i and ii. They are Aratus and Phylarchus on Greek events, and Fabius Pictor and Philinus for the First Punic War.[4] Aratus is explicitly given as the source for the Cleomenean War, though Polybius does not conceal the omissions which are to be found in his *Memoirs*;[5] the rejection of Phylarchus is justified at length, but he appears nevertheless to have been used occasionally in default of other evidence.[6] In contrasting Fabius and Philinus, Polybius' sympathies are less closely engaged; he recognized both to be honourable men, and uses their accounts to check each other.[7] That Philinus was also his source for the Carthaginian Mercenary War is improbable;[8] but Fabius is likely to have been used for the account of the Gallic Wars in book ii[9] as well as for later events.[10] These four writers, however, cover neither the whole of the contents of the introductory books nor yet the many digressions in the main part of the work which draw on incidents taken from earlier periods in Greek history. For the preliminaries of the First Punic War, including the rise of Hiero of Syracuse, Polybius probably followed Timaeus;[11] and Timaeus was very probably his

[1] xii. 4 c 2–5; see p. 10 n. 4.
[2] iv. 2. 2.
[3] iv. 2. 3.
[4] Cf. i. 14–15 (Fabius and Philinus); iii. 26. 3–4 (criticism of Philinus); ii. 56. 2 (Aratus and Phylarchus).
[5] ii. 56. 2 (source), 47. 11 (omissions); see in general ii. 40. 4 n.
[6] Cf. ii. 47. 11 n., 70. 6 n. On the probable use of Phylarchus for the account of Cleomenes' death see v. 35–39 n.
[7] See i. 14. 1 n. for discussion of these two authors and criticism of recent attempts to minimize or even to deny the use of Fabius and Philinus by Polybius.
[8] i. 65–88 n.
[9] ii. 18–35 n.; no source is specifically mentioned.
[10] See below, p. 28 n. 11.
[11] i. 8. 3–9. 8 n.; cf. 6. 2 n.

source for the digression on the Pythagoreans in south Italy as well.[1] This is not rendered less likely by the violent and even malevolent attacks on Timaeus in book xii and elsewhere,[2] for criticism of an author by Polybius did not exclude use of his works. Callisthenes, for instance, is severely attacked in book xii,[3] but Polybius uses him for a digression on early Messenian history,[4] and probably for references to the Spartan seizure of the Cadmea in 382 and the peace of Antalcidas.[5] Ephorus too was both criticized and used. Though he is the object of polemic in several parts of book xii,[6] he is mentioned with approval on various occasions,[7] and Polybius may have used him in book iv for the passage dealing with the wealth and neutrality of Elis.[8] Theopompus is also criticized,[9] but there is no evidence that Polybius used him as a source.

These are in general[10] the authorities to which Polybius turned for his account of events before 220. When he comes to his main narrative in book iii, written sources are still very important, though here—and no doubt increasingly in the later books—they are supplemented by other material. For the Hannibalic War Fabius continues to be used.[11] But it seems reasonable to assume[12] that in addition Polybius read as widely as possible among writers on both the Roman and the Carthaginian sides. Of these he mentions two, as usual censoriously; they are Chaereas, and Sosylus of Lacedaemon, who retail 'the gossip of the barber's shop'.[13] But there were others, too, writing about the Hannibalic War in Greek, and mainly from the Carthaginian side: Silenus of Caleacte, who like Sosylus accompanied Hannibal on his expedition, and may well be Polybius' source for the Carthaginian campaigns in Spain before Hannibal set out for Italy,[14] Eumachus of Naples, and Xenophon. The latter two[15] are

[1] ii. 39. 1 n.
[2] See i. 5. 1–5 n., ii. 16. 15, viii. 10. 12, xii. 3–16, 23–28 a.
[3] xii. 17–22.
[4] iv. 33. 2 n.
[5] Cf. iv. 27. 4–7; alternatively the source may be Ephorus. See the note ad loc.
[6] xii. 22. 7, 25 f; see also vi. 45–47. 6 n.
[7] For references see iv. 20. 5 n.
[8] iv. 73. 6–74. 8 n.
[9] viii. 9–11; cf. Mioni, 119.
[10] The account of early Roman history in book vi presents a special problem. The half-dozen fragments which survive do not allow anything very useful to be said about the sources of the section as a whole. See vi. 11 a n.
[11] 11 Cf. iii. 8. 1 for his view of the causes of the war; for his career during the war see i. 14. 1 n.
[12] Cf. Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1562: 'Im ganzen darf man als sicher annehmen, daβ P. alles, was es an Literatur über den 2. Punischen Krieg gab, sich verschafft und mit dem ihm eigenen kritischen Scharfsinn die verläβlichsten Nachrichten herausgesucht und verarbeitet hat.'
[13] iii. 20. 5; see discussion ad loc.
[14] See iii. 13. 5–14. 8 n., discussing the relationship with Livy, who probably went back to Silenus via Coelius. Ziegler (op. cit., col. 1562) hazards a guess that Polybius may have introduced the works of Silenus to Coelius—an hypothesis not in the nature of things susceptible of proof.
[15] On them see i. 3. 2 n.

no more than names; and from such references as iii. 47. 6 it is apparent that there will have been others, of whom not even names now survive.[1] On the Roman side we are rather more fully informed. L. Cincius Alimentus, who was praetor in Sicily in 210/9, and was taken prisoner by Hannibal,[2] wrote a history of Rome from the earliest times which helped to fix the senatorial tradition for the Hannibalic War; like that of Fabius it was in Greek. He will hardly have been overlooked by Polybius. The histories (also in Greek) of C. Acilius will perhaps have been used for the later part of the Hannibalic War; but if they were published about 142, as seems likely,[3] they must have appeared too late for Polybius to use them for the years down to Cannae. Also available, and equally certain to have been read by Polybius, was the *πραγματικὴ ἱστορία* of A. Postumius Albinus, the consul of 151, whom he censures sharply for his vanity, loquaciousness, indifferent Greek, and love of pleasure.[4] There is, however, no indication in the text of how Polybius used these or other Roman historians writing in Greek;[5] nor is it clear whether he drew on Cato's *Origines*, for, as De Sanctis points out,[6] if books i to xv were written before 146,[7] he will scarcely have been able to utilize for this part of his work Cato's later books, which were in all probability published after their author's death.[8] Another possible Latin source is L. Cassius Hemina,[9] who may have published his first three books before 150; but almost nothing is known about him or the contents of his work. Ennius Polybius may have read—*Annales* ix and x dealt with the Second Punic War—but there is no evidence for use of him in the *Histories*.[10]

For his account of the Greek East, Polybius' written sources are even more obscure. For events round about the end of the third

[1] There were for instance the writers of epitomes of the Hannibalic War (v. 33. 2 n.), among whom Meyer would include Menodotus of Perinthus, known only as a writer of *Hellenica*.

[2] Livy, xxi. 38. 3.

[3] Cf. Livy, *ep*. 53, accepting Madvig's emendation *C. Acilius*. Acilius wrote a history of Rome going down at least to 184 (Dion. Hal. iii. 67. 5).

[4] xxxix. 1, retailing Cato's witticism in reply to Postumius' attempt to excuse his Greek. Cicero (*pr. Acad*. ii. 137) on the contrary calls him 'doctum sane hominem, ut indicat ipsius historia scripta graece'.

[5] Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1562. Mioni (122) suggests that one of these authors was P. Cornelius Scipio, the son of Africanus Maior, the author of 'historia quaedam Graeca scripta dulcissime' (Cic. *Brut*. 77); but nothing is known of its contents, though *Graeca historia* can mean 'history written in Greek' (cf. Cic. *de diu*. i. 49, where Silenus' work is called *Graeca historia*).

[6] iii. 1. 203.

[7] See Brink and Walbank, *CQ*, 1954, 98–99.

[8] Cf. R. Helm, *RE*, 'Porcius (9)', cols. 160–1; there seems to have been a gap between the publication of books i–iii and iv–vii. It is of course not impossible that Polybius had access to the manuscript, but not particularly likely.

[9] Cf. De Sanctis, iv. 2. 66.

[10] Cf. Scullard, *Scip*. 9.

century he quotes the Rhodian historians Antisthenes and Zeno[1] as typical of writers of 'particular histories' covering that period, and deserving special regard because they were Rhodian statesmen. Zeno was the author of a history of Rhodes, but this probably contained wider material used by Polybius; he is likely to be the source for the events in Crete and Sinope in book iv,[2] and for the chapters on the earthquake of 225 in book v.[3] Polybius criticizes his accounts of the battles of Chios and Lade,[4] of Nabis' attempt on Messene,[5] and of the siege of Gaza and the battle of Panium,[6] and relates with satisfaction his own letter to Zeno correcting them.[7] But for other names one has to fall back on conjecture. There were, for example, writers of monographs on Philip and Perseus and their wars with Rome;[8] they included a certain Strato, and the Poseidonius mentioned by Plutarch in his *Life* of Aemilius Paulus.[9] As Mioni observes,[10] there were many local historians, whom Polybius' general contempt will not necessarily have precluded him from using. The writers on Hieronymus who are criticized at vii. 7. 1 may have included Baton of Sinope, who was probably his contemporary and wrote *Περὶ τῆς τοῦ Ἱερωνύμου τυραννίδος*.[11] Polybius mentions the public career of Ptolemy of Megalopolis;[12] he may have made a limited use of his anecdotal and scandalous history of Ptolemy Philopator for Egyptian events, including the death of Cleomenes.[13] But the complicated picture of the use of sources which seems to emerge from a comparison between the treatment of the events associated with Cleomenes' death in Polybius and in Plutarch[14] shows how little can be ascertained about the literary sources for the greater part of the *Histories*.[15]

Moreover, Polybius' written sources were not limited to published histories. He is the more ready to criticize historians of Scipio Africanus' achievements[16] in Spain and Africa, who attribute his

[1] xvi. 14. 2; he will direct his criticism *οὐ πρὸς ἅπαντας, ἀλλ' ὅσους ὑπολαμβάνω μνήμης ἀξίους εἶναι καὶ διαστολῆς*. It seems probable that Polybius knew Antisthemes only through Zeno; he is never quoted as an independent authority.

[2] iv. 53–56.

[3] v. 88–90.

[4] xvi. 14. 5–15. 8.

[5] xvi. 16. 1–17. 7.

[6] xvi. 18. 1–19. 1.

[7] See above, p. 11 n. 12.

[8] viii. 8. 5, xxii. 18. 5; cf. iii. 32. 8 n. They will include the writers mentioned by Livy, xl. 55. 7 (following Polybius) for their accounts of the fate of Philocles, Demetrius' murderer.

[9] Diog. Laert. v. 61; Plut. *Aem. Paul.* 19.

[10] Mioni, 123.

[11] Athen. vi. 251 E; see Polyb. vii. 7. 1 n.

[12] xv. 25. 14, xviii. 55. 6–8.

[13] von Scala, 263–5; see v. 35–39 n. On the possible use of Ptolemy Physcon see xxvi. 1 n.

[14] See v. 35–39 n.

[15] For some suggestions on the type of source which seems to have been used for the revolts of Molon and Achaeus and the Fourth Syrian War see v. 40. 4– 57. 8 n.

[16] x. 2. 5 ff., 9. 2.

success to Fortune and the gods, because he had had the advantage of drawing directly on the evidence of his friend and close companion C. Laelius—though whether C. Laelius composed memoirs on the subject or merely talked to Polybius is conjectural.[1] Still more valuable, he had at his disposal a letter sent by Africanus himself to Philip V of Macedon, in which he apparently dealt with his Spanish campaign and in particular his capture of New Carthage.[2] Polybius also used an *ἐπιστόλιον* written *πρός τινα τῶν βασιλέων*[3] by Scipio Nasica on the campaign against Perseus in the Third Macedonian War; but it is significant for his critical attitude towards his sources that he did not accept Nasica's figures for the forces involved.[4] Such material as this, similar in genre to Aratus' *Memoirs*, and leading on to the memoirs and commentaries of the first century, may have been available to a wider extent than can be ascertained. It will have been supplemented by published speeches, such as that of Astymedes of Rhodes,[5] which Polybius appears to have read, or Cato's famous speech on the Rhodians,[6] which he inserted in the fifth book of the *Origines*.

Written material was also to be had in official archives, and Polybius made some use of these. He supports his polemic against Zeno and Antisthenes, who represented Lade as a Rhodian victory, by an appeal to the dispatch sent by the Rhodian admiral to the Council and Prytaneis 'which is still preserved in the Rhodian Prytaneum'.[7] This may imply that he consulted the document himself; on the other hand, he does not say so, and it is equally possible that Zeno quoted it, but tried to draw from it conclusions unacceptable to Polybius. Schulte discusses a number of passages for which he is inclined, in the main following Ullrich, to see a source in the Rhodian record office.[8] There is not one of these, however, which

[1] x. 3. 4–6; for the theory that Laelius' *Memoirs* were an important source for Polybius' account of Africanus see Laqueur, *Hermes*, 1921, 131 ff., 207–25. But his information to Polybius is generally thought to have been oral; cf. Meyer, *Kl. Schr.* ii. 427 ff. In either case, despite many faults in the tradition going back to him, he will have been a most valuable source of information (cf. Scullard, *Scip.* 10–12).

[2] x. 9. 3; according to Cicero (*off.* iii. 4) 'nulla . . . eius ingenii monumenta mandata litteris, nullum opus otii, nullum solitudinis munus exstat', which suggests that the letter was no longer extant; cf. Scullard, *Scip.* 10.

[3] xxix. 14. 3.

[4] Cf. Plut. *Aem. Paul.* 15. 5; see Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1562.

[5] xxx. 4. 10–11.

[6] Livy, xlv. 25. 3; Gell. vi. 3. 7.

[7] xvi. 15. 8.

[8] Ullrich, 27 ff., 39, 44, 59, 73; Ullrich considerably reduces the number of passages which, according to Valeton (213–16, 221–2), had drawn on the Rhodian records, and his own list is yet further reduced by Schulte (36–39), who leaves only iv. 52. 5 ff., 56. 2–3, v. 88. 5 ff., xvi. 7. 1, xviii. 2. 3 ff., xxxi. 31. 1. See ad locc. for discussion of these passages. Mioni (123 n. 38) has a much longer list, and has apparently reverted to the more credulous attitude of Valeton.

could not equally well have drawn on some other source, such as Zeno, and a direct use by Polybius of the Rhodian records has yet to be proved. For the Achaean records at Aegium[1] the case is altogether stronger and more likely. It is conceivable that Polybius owes to a memorandum kept here his detailed account of the conference between Philip and Flamininus in Locris in 198.[2] But it is no longer possible to assign passages to sources deriving from the Achaean record office with any degree of certainty.[3] A similar use of Aetolian and Macedonian royal records has been alleged;[4] neither source seems very likely. Indeed Polybius' main access to public records was at Rome, where there would be official accounts available of embassies sent or received by the Senate.[5] Whether he himself consulted the Carthaginian treaties in the 'treasury of the aediles'[6] or merely saw a version privately circulated[7] is uncertain. But such passages as those giving the *senatus consultum* relative to the peace with Philip,[8] or the terms of the peace with the Aetolians[9] or Antiochus[10] clearly go back to a documentary source, for which a Roman origin seems plausible.[11] Another official source available at Rome was the *annales* of the pontifex maximus. It now seems established[12] that the *annales maximi* were first published by P. Mucius Scaevola, who was pontifex maximus from 131/0 to a date between 123 and 114; but the material then published will have been available in the form of inscriptions on the original wooden boards in the regia at an earlier date for any historian who wished to consult it, including Polybius. M. I. Henderson argues (*JRS*, 1962, 277–8) that there was only a single board, the entries on which could be erased with a sponge; if this is so there was no accumulation of boards within the *regia.* It seems doubtful, however, if the records of magistrates, elections, and commands, and the sacerdotal details which made up the contents of the *annales* will have been of great interest to him. Finally, mention should be made of the inscription on a bronze

[1] This seems to be implied in xxii. 9. 10, *προφερομένου τοῦ στρατηγοῦ πάσας τὰς συμμαχίας* (*contra* Schulte, 40).

[2] xviii. 1–11; see above, p. 13 n. 7.

[3] Cf. Schulte, 40, 'inritum esse puto in Polybii historiis tabularii Achaici reliquias indagare'. Valeton (206–13, 222) has a fanciful list of passages, and Mioni (123 n. 37) is equally unconvincing. Details of Achaean embassies at Rome can have come just as easily from a Roman source.

[4] Schulte (40–41) attributes the treaty between Philip and Hannibal (vii. 9) to the Macedonian records; but the Romans captured the first version sent and Polybius can have seen this in Rome. Mioni (123 n. 39) attributes xi. 5 to the Aetolian records; but the general reference to the Romano-Aetolian treaty carries no such implications.

[5] Cf. Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1564, 'nicht zu bezweifeln ist, daβihm das römische Archiv zugänglich gewesen ist'.

[6] iii. 26. 1 n.

[7] Cf. iii. 21. 9–10.

[8] xviii. 44.

[9] xxi. 32. 2–14.

[10] xxi. 43. 1–27.

[11] See also n. 4, above, for the treaty between Philip and Hannibal.

[12] For the most recent discussion of the problems connected with the *annales maximi* and bibliographical references to earlier work on the subject see J. E. A. Crake, *CP*, 1940, 375–86. (*p. 628.)

tablet, which Polybius himself discovered on the Lacinian Promontory,[1] giving full details left by Hannibal of his numbers and troop formations. The use which he made of this shows that not too much attention need be attached to his gibes at Timaeus for his discovery of 'inscriptions at the back of buildings and lists of proxeni on the jambs of temples'.[2]

Literary sources, official documents, and archives provide the framework of Polybius' history; but, as the passages quoted above[3] make clear, the real business came in the questioning of eyewitnesses. It seems fair to assume that Polybius' insistence on this is not mere talk, and that he had in fact mastered and habitually used this specialized technique in order to ascertain what he wanted to know; indeed on occasion he appears to have enlisted his friends to make inquiries for him.[4] Of the hundreds of informants who must in this way have contributed to Polybius' material and share the anonymous responsibility for a fact here and a mark of emphasis there few can still be identified. If C. Laelius gave Polybius his information orally,[5] he was not the only representative of an older generation to be questioned. Whether the men 'present at the occasion' (*τῶν παρατετευχότων τοῖς καιροῖς*) of Hannibal's crossing of the Alps[6] were Gauls, Greeks, or Carthaginians, we cannot say; but if Polybius met them after he came to Italy, they must already have been men of 70. He certainly talked to Carthaginians who had known Hannibal,[7] and supplemented his information from Masinissa,[8] who (probably in 151/0) discoursed on Hannibal's avarice as a particular illustration of a fault common to Carthaginians in general. Masinissa's son Gulusa is also mentioned as an informant, specifically on the use in parts of Africa of elephants' tusks as door-posts and palings, but almost certainly also for events connected with the Third Punic War.[9]

Polybius' detention at Rome was no handicap in carrying out his interrogations. It was if anything an advantage; for, apart from the great concourse of internees and resident Greeks, there was a constant stream of ambassadors and other visitors from all parts of the Mediterranean, to whom it cannot have been difficult for Polybius to gain access. Thus he mentions Perseus' friends as informants on the negotiations between Perseus and Eumenes, which broke down

[1] iii. 33. 17–18, 56. 1–4.

[2] xii. 11. 2; in any case the gibe is rather that a man who claimed to make such search for accurate information should be as unreliable as he claims Timaeus is.

[3] See p. 27 nn. 1 and 2.

[4] xxxiv. 10. 6–7; Polybius probably had Scipio question the Massaliotes about Britain and north-west Europe (cf. p. 6 n. 5).

[5] See above, p. 31 n. 1.

[6] iii. 48. 12; this is clearly not a reference to Silenus, as Mioni (121) seems to think, but to oral informants.

[7] ix. 25. 2.

[8] ix. 25. 4.

[9] xxxiv. 16, xxxviii. 7–8; cf. von Scala, 269.

through the avarice of the two kings;[1] one of these was probably Pantauchus, the son of Balacrus, one of Perseus' *πρῶτοι φίλοι*,[2] who played an important role in the approach to Genthius. Both he and Hippias surrendered to the Romans after Pydna,[3] and it seems certain that they and many other eminent Macedonians will have been brought to Rome. It was no doubt to some member of this group that Polybius owed intimate knowledge of affairs at the Macedonian court during the last years of Philip's reign.[4] Besides Macedonians, there were assembled in Italy internees from most of the states of Greece. Since the thousand Achaeans fell in number to three hundred in sixteen years,[5] they were evidently for the most part elderly men in 167, and so valuable informants on earlier events. Aetolians, too, like Nicander of Trichonium,[6] could supplement the Achaean version from the opposite camp. von Scala[7] has many suggestions on informants both in Rome and elsewhere—Praxo of Delphi,[8] Menyllus of Alabanda,[9] Stratius the doctor of Eumenes,[10] and a source for the affairs of Athamania and Zacynthus dependent on the close connexion between Amynander and Philip of Megalopolis;[11] the case for some is plausible, but more often von Scala presses the details in a way which testifies only to his own fertile imagination. In any case a list of names is without significance. One has only to consider the multitude of highly placed informants who will have found themselves in Rome at some time or other during the years 167 to 150, and the host of others whom Polybius will have met and talked to during the years 145 to his death, when we know virtually nothing of his movements, to realize that the identification of half a dozen names means next to nothing. Faced with the anonymity of almost all his informants, Polybius' readers can only take on trust his facts and the exercising of his critical judgement in selecting them.

The above account of Polybius' use of his sources neglects two special problems—books vi and xxxiv. Following a tradition of old standing, which was to be maintained by ancient historians long after his time,[12] Polybius treated geography as an essential part of

[1] xxix. 8. 10.

[2] xxix. 3. 3; cf. xxvii. 8. 5.

[3] Livy, xliv. 45. 2.

[4] Cf. *JHS*, 1938, 64–65.

[5] Paus. vii. 10. 12. von Scala (274–5) suggests that Stratius of Tritaea, who is mentioned as a fellow internee, and later resumed political life in Achaea, may have given Polybius information on the assemblies at Corinth in 146 (xxxviii. 12. 5–13. 7, 17. 1–18. 6). So he may; but so may dozens of others.

[6] Probably a source for Philip V's invasion of Thermum in 218 (v. 6–14) and for events in the Syrian War (xx. 11, xxi. 25). On Nicander see further xxvii. 15. 14, xxviii. 4. 6 (deportation to Rome); cf. Woodhouse, 258 n. 1; von Scala, 275.

[7] von Scala, 270–8.

[8] Cf. Livy, xlii. 15 ff.

[9] xxxi. 12. 8; cf. Livy, xliii. 6. 5. von Scala thinks he is meant in xxxix. 7. 2.

[10] xxx. 2. 2–4.

[11] Livy, xxxv. 47. 5–8, xxxvi. 14. 7.

[12] See *Class. et med.*, 1948, 156–7.

historical studies. References to geographical details occur throughout the *Histories*. In book iii. 57. 3, for example, there is criticism of writers who gave fantastic accounts of the Spanish mines—almost certainly Dicaearchus, Eratosthenes, and Pytheas;[1] and book iv contains a highly technical discussion of the merits of the site of Byzantium and the hydrography of the Bosphorus and the Pontus.[2] In the main, however, Polybius reserved questions of geography for special treatment in book xxxiv; it is consequently more convenient to deal with the sources there used as part of the commentary to that book. Book vi likewise stands by itself. Polybius' sources for the discussion on the Roman constitution present a complicated and perhaps ultimately insoluble problem; they are treated in detail in the commentary to vi,[3] along with the problems of Polybius' sources for other parts of this book, such as the *archaeologia*,[4] and the chapter on the constitutions of Crete and Sparta.[5]

§ 5. *Chronology*

In default of any universally accepted era such as we use today, Polybius adopted as a chronological framework for his *Histories* a system based on 'Olympiad years'. It had probably originated with Timaeus;[6] but whether in the meantime other historians had taken it over is unknown.[7] As the basis of a narrative largely concerned with military history the Olympiad system, calculated from a festival which took place each fourth year in late July or early August, was far from ideal. Without adaptation it would have involved dividing each campaign into two halves, recounted under separate olympiad years; and naturally no military historian was prepared to accept a limitation so irrational. Consequently Polybius used a 'manipulated'[8] olympiad year, which allowed him to treat a single season's campaigning as a whole. The occasions on which he gives precise chronological data are few; the main passages are iii. 1. 11, 16. 7, 118. 10, iv. 66. 7–67. 1, v. 105. 3, 111. 9.[9] Hence there has been much controversy about his system, and a variety of attempts to formulate the principle which allowed him to divide up his campaigns in the way he does. The best solution, and almost certainly the right one,

[1] See the note ad loc.
[2] iv. 38–45; see the note to iv. 38. 1–45. 8 for the special source-problem.
[3] See in particular notes to vi. 3. 5, 3. 7, 4. 7–9. 14.
[4] See above, p. 28 n. 10.
[5] Cf. vi. 45–47. 6 n.
[6] Cf. xii. 10. 4, 11. 1 f.; whether Ephorus had preceded him in this is not known (so Unger, *Phil.*, 1881, 49 ff.). See Kubitschek, *RE*, 'Aera', cols. 627–8.
[7] Cf. Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1565.
[8] Ibid.
[9] iv. 14. 9 is probably an insertion by some later reader, which has been incorporated in the text; see the note ad loc.

is that of De Sanctis,[1] which assumes a certain flexibility in Polybius' methods. Polybius wrote, he argues, without any consistent and rigid chronological scheme. Normally he closed his olympiad years with the end of the year's campaigning and the retirement of the troops into winter quarters; this meant that its end coincided roughly with the autumn date of the Aetolian new civil year and, for the greater part of the period of the *Histories* with that of the Achaean.[2] However, this system was capable of modification. The third book, for instance, ends virtually with the battle of Cannae, for obvious reasons; and such incidents as are appended in iii. 118[3] are selected to confirm the impression of overwhelming disaster, despite the fact that the revolt of Tarentum did not take place until 213, and the defeat of Postumius Albinus was probably not sustained until the end of winter 216/15. On the other hand, many of the events which followed on the defeat of Cannae, including the revolt of Capua, which opened up a new series of actions, were reserved for book vii[4] (which nominally covered Ol. 141, 1. 2 = 216/14) though many of them may have occurred before the end of the campaigning season of 216. Similarly in book xv, which contained the events of Ol. 144, 2 = 203/2, Polybius included the peace negotiations after Zama,[5] because, though they belonged to the end of 202 or even early 201, they rounded off his account of the battle and the war. In this way Polybius was ready to modify his olympiad system for dramatic or other reasons. But as a rule a year would be reckoned from the beginning of the campaigning season subsequent to its nominal opening. Thus Ol. 140 covers 219–216 (though in book iii Polybius includes Hannibal's preliminary campaigns in Spain for 221 and 220),[6] Ol. 141 the years 215–212, and so on; in short an olympiad year was equated for practical purposes with the Julian or consular year coinciding with its second half.[7]

For indicating dates during the period before his main history opens Polybius uses various methods. Frequently he gives synchronisms based on olympiad years for the convenience of his Greek

[1] iii. 1. 219–23; accepted by Ziegler, op. cit., cols. 1564–7. For earlier discussion see Unger, *Phil.*, 1874, 239; *S.-B. München*, 1879, 119 ff.; Nissen, *Rh. Mus.*, 1871, 244 ff., 1885, 349 ff.; H. Steigemann, *De Polybii olympiadum ratione et oeconomia* (Diss. Breslau, 1885); O. Seipt, *De Polybii olympiadum ratione et de bello Punico primo quaestiones chronologicae* (Diss. Leipzig, 1887).

[2] See v. 106. 1 n.

[3] See notes ad loc.

[4] Cf. De Sanctis, iii. 1. 222; Ziegler, op. cit., col. 1566.

[5] xv. 17–19.

[6] iii. 13–14.

[7] The general problem of the relationship between Polybius' olympiad year and the plan of the history as a whole will be discussed in the second volume, since it is one immediately relevant to the assembling of the fragments and the assigning of them to their books. (*p. 628.)

readers;[1] and having thus established a date he works forwards or backwards from it.[2] It has been argued[3] that for his earlier Roman chronology, including the lost parts of the *archaeologia* in book vi,[4] he made use of a synchronized table with olympiad years as its basis. But this has not been established, and it seems more probable that for these earlier periods lying outside his main history, Polybius drew largely on his sources, and that, for example, his account of the Gallic Wars was based on consular years, and his chronology of the early development of the Achaean Confederacy on Achaean *strategos* years running from May to May.[5] For the view that P. sticks closely to the Olympiad year see R. Werner, *Die Begründung der römischen Republik* (Munich, 1963), 46 ff., 68 f.; H. H. Schmitt, *Antiochos*, 194 n. 1. P.'s chronological method is also discussed in Pédech, *Méthode*, 449 ff. His chronology for the earliest Roman history, including the regal period, constitutes a special problem, which is discussed in its proper place.[6]

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[1] See for example i. 3. 1, 6. 5, ii. 20. 6, 41. 1, 41. 11, 43. 6, iii. 22. 1–2.
[2] e.g. i. 6. 1, ii. 18–35 (Gallic Wars), ii. 41. 11–15, 43. 1–8 (early Achaean history).

[3] Leuze, *Jahrzählung*, 105–209.
[4] See notes on vi. 11 a.
[5] See references in n. 2.
[6] See vi. 11 a 2 n.