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POLYBIUS, ARISTAENUS, AND THE FRAGMENT 'ON TRAITORS'

Late in the campaigning season of 198 B.C., the Achaean League abandoned its traditional place within Macedon's Hellenic Symmachy and entered into war on the side of Rome against the Macedonian king, Philip V. The Achaean politician Aristaenus, *strategos* of the League in 199/198, played a crucial role in bringing about this reversal of policy. The strategic impact of the Achaean decision is not in doubt: the Macedonian political–military system in Greece was weakened, while the Romans and their allies gained a firm base in southern Greece from which to threaten the Macedonian homeland next summer. What has been in some question among scholars, however, is the extent to which the Achaean decision was controversial among Greeks in the second century, both in the 190s and later. It is the purpose of the present paper to re-examine this question, with particular attention being paid to Pol. 18.13–15: the famous discussion 'On Traitors' by the historian Polybius, himself an Achaean statesman of a later period. I will suggest that – contrary to current scholarly opinion – the discussion 'On Traitors' was evoked, precisely, by Polybius' reflections (and unease) about the behaviour of Aristaenus and the Achaean League in 198, behaviour which was, in fact, highly controversial.

I. POLYBIUS AND THE ACHAEAN DECISION OF 198

Even a cursory examination of the ancient testimony reveals how controversial the decision of 198 was within Achaea itself. The controversy is understandable. Though the Achaeans had originally pursued on anti-Macedonian policy in the Peloponnese, in the 220s it was alliance with Macedon that had saved the League from destruction at the hands of Sparta. The price for his aid demanded by Antigonus III was Macedonian occupation of Corinth and its citadel; it was a price the Achaean statesman Aratus of Sicyon was willing to pay.[1] Over the next two decades Macedon (now under Philip V) gave Achaea crucial military support, while individual Achaean cities were the beneficiaries of valuable royal favours.[2] In fact, association with Macedon in this period not only saved the League from destruction, but even resulted in the League's territorial expansion, and this despite its continued military weakness. Naturally there were tensions from time to time; but, as our sources tend to point out, the Achaeans had many reasons to be grateful to the Antigonid kings.[3]

However, bitter experience with the Romans during the First Macedonian War (212/11–205) seems to have made the Achaeans wary of too close an association with the Antigonids. Similarly, the mild resurgence of Achaean military power fostered from 207 by the army reforms of Philopoemen carried with it the implication of less Achaean dependence on King Philip.[4] Certainly, the League did not react enthusia-

[1] On the diplomacy of 225/224, cf. E. S. Gruen, 'Aratus and the Achaean Alliance with Macedon', *Historia* 21 (1972), 609–25.

[2] For detailed discussion, cf. A. Aymard, *Les Premiers rapports de Rome et de la confédération achaïenne (198–189 av. J.-C.)* (Bordeaux and Paris, 1938), 50–7.

[3] On Achaea's territorial expansion, cf. Aymard, *PR* (above, n. 2) 52. On the ancient testimony that the Achaeans were grateful (or ought to have been grateful) for the favours received from Macedon: ibid. 53–4.

[4] Cf. R. M. Errington, *Philopoemen* (Oxford, 1969), 63–7.

stically when Philip found himself embroiled in a new war with Rome (autumn 200): the king's requests for military support were sidestepped.[5] But the loose terms of the Hellenic Symmachy did not make military contributions to Macedon obligatory.[6] Moreover, a new and difficult conflict with Sparta (now under King Nabis) made it natural for the Achaeans to concentrate on purely Peloponnesian matters.[7] It is worth noting that the League did do what it could to help Philip out diplomatically (with Rhodes: cf. Pol. 16.35), thereby implicitly rejecting a Roman diplomatic overture of spring 200 (cf. Pol. 16.27.4). And the autumn of 200 saw the election of Cycliadas as Achaean *strategos*, a man with a favourable view of Macedon.[8]

We may therefore characterize the Achaean position regarding Macedon in 200 as one of benevolent neutrality. The terms of the Hellenic Symmachy allowed this. I would suggest that little change can be discerned over the next year and a half. Cycliadas was followed in office by Aristaenus (autumn 199), a man who certainly took a less enthusiastic view of Macedon.[9] Moreover, Cycliadas himself was banished from Achaea, and eventually ended up at King Philip's court.[10] But not much can be made of Cycliadas' exile, for we simply do not know the reasons behind it. And since we have to guess, the most obvious reason has nothing to do with Macedon: Cycliadas had proved a terrible failure in the war against Sparta.[11] Note, too, that early in Aristaenus' own *strategia* the Achaeans once more swore their loyalty to the Hellenic Symmachy (Livy 32.5.4–6). If Philip had worried about any slippage of Achaean goodwill because of the war with Rome (32.5.3), this renewal confirmed the Achaean–Macedonian relationship (*societatem firmabat* – 5.6). Achaean expressions of loyalty had been assured by turning over certain Peloponnesian towns to the League.[12] Nevertheless, the swearing of Achaean oaths of loyalty in the winter of 199/198 was viewed by all sides as a very serious act. At the least, it formally committed the League not to side with Philip's enemies.[13] Moreover, the Achaean assembly that approved this oath of loyalty – an assembly, presumably, presided over by Aristaenus – cannot have been much different in composition from the assembly that had elected Aristaenus *strategos* a short time before. This is another warning not to take Aristaenus' election (or Cycliadas' exile) as indications of a major shift in Achaean sentiment away from Macedon and towards Rome.[14] Note that Cycliadas

[5] Livy 31.25; cf. 32.21.10–11.

[6] Aymard, *PR* 54.

[7] On the importance to League politics of the narrow, 'Peloponnese-centred' point of view of the Achaeans, see now E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome* II (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1984), 445–6.

[8] Errington, *Philopoemen* (above, n. 4), 85–6 notes the relationship between the Achaean mission to Rhodes and the Roman diplomatic initiative of spring 200. But to characterise the Achaean mission as 'anti-Roman' (86) is perhaps too strong: Rome to the Greeks in the autumn of 200 was not yet the overriding issue; Philip was. For Cycliadas' attitude toward Macedon, cf. Livy 32.19.2.

[9] This seems a fair inference from Livy 32.5.3 and 19.2.

[10] Livy 32.19.2; cf. Pol. 18.1.2.

[11] See Livy 31.25.3; and Plut. *Philop.* 13.1 (Nabis' destructive raids on the Megalopolis area).

[12] Heraea, Alipheira, and the Triphylia region (all promised to Achaea as early as 208), plus Orchomenus: for discussion, cf. Aymard, *PR* 57–61 (with the notes). Philip apparently initiated these concessions (cf. Livy 32.5.3–4) – but it will hardly have been unwelcome to Aristaenus that they occurred during his term of office.

[13] Hence Aristaenus' dancing around this issue in his speech in autumn 198, and the reluctance of the Achaean *damiurgoi* – on legal grounds – even to bring the question of an alliance with Rome before the Achaean assembly: Livy 32.21.1–22.8 (discussed below). Note also the comments evidently made by the Macedonian envoy Cleomedon at that time (implied from Livy 32.21.5 and 11).

[14] Cf. the slightly different comments of Aymard, *PR* 78–9.

himself had played a large role in the Achaean avoidance of military aid to Macedon in 200 (Livy 31.25.6–11).[15] Thus, amid the vagaries of Achaean factional politics, the rise and fall of various politicians, and the continuing pressure of the war with Sparta, we can see in 200–198 a general and consistent Achaean agreement on Macedonian policy: a desire to maintain traditional good relations with Philip, while remaining outside the dangers posed by his new conflict with Rome.[16]

In late summer 198 the ability of Achaea to maintain this diplomatic stance came to an end. Large Roman forces, commanded by the consul T. Quinctius Flamininus, now arrived in central Greece; Flamininus intended to winter on the Corinthian Gulf, and also to attack Macedonian Corinth itself. He therefore decided the time was ripe to ask the neighbouring Achaeans to join the war against Philip. It was this outside diplomatic initiative, not any spontaneous political movement within the League, that forced the Achaeans to reconsider their relations with Macedon.[17]

It is obvious that most Achaeans found the Roman diplomatic initiative unwelcome (see below). Yet we also have a hint that the *strategos* Aristaenus actually had a hand in its origin. According to Livy one important reason why Flamininus approached the Achaeans was that he knew that Aristaenus personally favoured alliance with Rome (32.19.1–2).[18] How could Flamininus have known? The implication is that there had been contacts between him and Aristaenus – perhaps indirect, certainly not public.[19] Perhaps Aristaenus was simply responding to the threatening growth of Roman forces around the northern Peloponnese.[20] But in any case Aristaenus apparently engaged in some highly unorthodox behaviour, and even if Polybius had no more to say about it than Livy, we begin to see the degree of controversy which, in Achaean circles, may have surrounded him.[21]

Official contacts with the Romans led to a decision by the *damiurgoi* (board of

[15] On the importance of this incident for understanding the character of Achaean politics in 200–198, cf. Gruen, *HWCR* II (above, n. 7), 445 n. 35.

[16] Errington, *Philopoemen* 72–5 and 81–7, sees Achaean politics between 200 and 198 as riven by Macedon's new war with Rome, and by stark conflict between a 'pro-Macedonian' and a 'pro-Roman' party. This seems too simple a picture. Errington mentions Cycliadas' role in the rejection of Macedon in 200 all too briefly (87), and does not note the swearing of Achaean allegiance to Macedon early in the *strategia* of Aristaenus. See the brief criticism of Errington's approach by Gruen (last note) – who himself misses the significance of the swearing of Achaean loyalty to Macedon early in 198. No doubt the *effect* of Cycliadas' absence after late 199 was to weaken the effectiveness of his faction, which certainly had a favourable view of Macedon (cf. Livy 32.19.2) – and hence (indirectly, though eventually crucially) to weaken Macedonian influence.

[17] On the military background to Flamininus' diplomacy with the Achaeans, cf. A. M. Eckstein, 'T. Quinctius Flamininus and the Campaign against Philip in 198 B.C.', *Phoenix* 30 (1976), 127–41.

[18] *Elatiam obsidenti consuli rei maioris spes adfulsit, Achaeorum gentem ab societate regia in Romanam amicitiam avertendi. Cycliadan principem factionis ad Philippum trahentium res expulerunt; Aristaenus, qui Romanis gentem iungi volebat, praetor erat.*

[19] Cf. The comments of M. Holleaux, *Rome, la Grèce et les monarchies hellénistiques au III^e siècle av. J.-C. (273–205)* (Paris, 1921), 227–8, and in *CAH* VIII.170; Aymard, *PR* 79 and n. 48.

[20] Aymard (last note) suggests that Aristaenus had been in secret correspondence with Flamininus ever since the consul first arrived in Greece, but his hypothesis is based on the usual scholarly view that Flamininus was a philhellene who would have been attractive to many Greeks; against which, see Eckstein, 'Flamininus' (above, n. 17) *passim*. The threat posed by the nearby presence of Roman troops is a major theme in Aristaenus' speech to the Achaeans in Livy 32.21, and in Polybius' own comments on Aristaenus' policy at 18.13.8–10.

[21] A parallel controversial case of Achaean diplomacy would be Aratus' secret negotiations with Antigonus Doson in the mid-220s, which win Polybius' approval but which Aratus himself preferred to leave out of his memoirs: see Pol. 2.47.6ff. and 50.5, with F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* I (Oxford, 1957), 246–7.

magistrates) to put the Roman proposal to a special Achaean assembly (*synkletos*) at Sicyon. The decision to let diplomacy proceed even this far may have come only by a very close vote.[22] The board evidently allowed time for Philip to be informed, so that he could send an envoy to the *synkletos*;[23] meanwhile, we are told, arguments among the Achaeans over the Roman proposal reached a high pitch (Livy 32.20.3).

The first day at the Sicyon assembly was devoted to speeches from the foreign ambassadors. Envoys from Pergamum, Rhodes, Athens, and from the consul's brother L. Flamininus, all pressed the Achaeans to join the war against Macedon. By contrast, Philip's envoy Cleomedon urged the Achaeans to continue their present policy of benevolent neutrality – and to abide by their oaths.[24]

The second day of the *synkletos* was given over to discussion among the Achaeans themselves. Here the hesitation of the assembly is striking: no one could be prevailed upon to speak publicly on the Roman issue at all (Livy 32.20). In the end, Aristaenus himself was forced to present the case for joining Rome (32.21). This was undoubtedly something Aristaenus would have preferred not to do personally. Politically, it left him exposed and isolated as the sole public advocate of the Roman alliance: the decision of 198 would henceforth always be linked to his name.[25] In addition, it seems that, as proposer of a decree, Aristaenus could no longer sit with the *damiurgoi* in administering the assembly (such administrators were supposed to be impartial); and the absence of his vote would soon create a crisis within the board of *damiurgoi* itself.[26]

It is important for our purposes – and relatively easy – to establish that Aristaenus' speech in Livy (32.21) reflects fairly closely what stood in the original (lost) Polybian text. First, Polybius as an Achaean would certainly have covered the decision of 198 in detail, and Aristaenus' Livian speech certainly shows a detailed knowledge of Greek (especially Peloponnesian) history and affairs – the type of sophistication typical of Polybius.[27] Second, the main argument in Aristaenus' Livian speech is precisely the main argument offered by Polybius himself in his later discussion (and defence) of Aristaenus and the Achaean decision; the close agreement here between Livy and Polybius is not likely to be a coincidence.[28] The point is that Polybius, in Aristaenus' speech and elsewhere, presented the Achaean decision as taken very reluctantly, and only because of fear.

Fear is the main argument of Aristaenus in Livy: that is well known. Primarily this is terror of Rome. The Achaeans must now explicitly accept or reject the Roman offer of alliance, and the consequences of rejecting the Romans are clear: the speech is filled with references to sacked cities, evoking bad memories of Roman raids in the First Macedonian War.[29] But we should note that in Aristaenus' speech there is fear of Sparta also. Spartan power and hostility under Nabis were already a deep Achaean worry;[30] Aristaenus suggests that if Sparta were to attack the League by land in

[22] Note the sharp division among the *damiurgoi* at Livy 32.22.2–3. It is possible that Aristaenus himself cast the decisive vote allowing diplomacy to proceed: so Aymard, *PR* 81–2 with n. 51.

[23] Cf. Aymard *PR* 82 and n. 53; also: *Les Assemblées de la confédération achaïenne* (Paris and Bordeaux, 1938), 324.

[24] The speeches of the foreign ambassadors: Livy 32.19.6–13. For Cleomedon's emphasis on the Achaean oaths, cf. 32.21.5 and 11.

[25] Cf. Pol. 18.13.8–10; note the comments here of Aymard, *PR* 91, and also 82 with n. 55.

[26] For the legal situation, cf. Aymard, *Assemblées* (above, n. 23), 359–61 and 370ff; J. Briscoe, *A Commentary on Livy, Books XXXI–XXXIII* (Oxford, 1973), 210. For the political impact of Aristaenus' removal from the board, cf. Aymard, *PR* 91 and 94.

[27] Cf. Aymard, *PR* 94.

[28] Compare the tone of Livy 32.21 with Polybius' comments at 18.13.8.

[29] Livy 32.21.7; 21.15; 21.17; 21.26–8; 21.32.

[30] ...*terrebat Nabis Lacedaemonius, gravis et adsiduus hostis* (Livy 32.19.6).

conjunction with Roman raids from the sea, the result might well be the total destruction of Achaea itself.[31] Considerations of safety must therefore outweigh Achaean concern for the oath of loyalty to Philip, especially because Philip is himself too weak to abide by the implicit return promise of Macedonian protection.[32]

But even Aristaenus could not completely banish the issue of Achaea's formal ties to Macedon, or the feeling of Achaean indebtedness to the Antigonids (indebtedness which in Livy Aristaenus himself acknowledges).[33] The speech produced an uproar of argument in the assembly (Livy 32.22.1). And when five of the *damiurgoi* announced they would put forward a motion favouring the Roman alliance, they were blocked by the other five, who announced that it was illegal to propose or vote on any measure detrimental to the alliance with Macedon (22.2–3). There is no reason to doubt that this was literally true – which only reveals once again the boldness of Aristaenus' actions.[34]

An alliance with Rome would have been blocked if the dead-lock among the *damiurgoi* had held (Livy 32.22.4). But one was prevailed upon to change his vote, allowing the proposal to go forward to the assembly by a bare majority of six to four.[35] Livy says that this man (Memnon of Pellene) was convinced by his father Pisias that Achaea faced destruction unless it joined with Rome, and that Pisias even threatened to kill him unless he voted to put the proposal (32.22.5–7). As with the main theme of Aristaenus' speech, something very much like this story must have stood originally in Polybius.[36]

When it came to the actual vote in the assembly, it turned out that a majority within most city delegations were in favour of accepting the Roman alliance (Livy 32.22.8). But the men from Dyme, Megalopolis and Argos walked out of the assembly, rather than even participate. These were cities with especially close ties to the Macedonian kings (32.22.10–11). As for the balance of sentiment in the other cities, Livy twice remarks that no one blamed those who departed the assembly; rather, their position was understood (22.9 and 12).

The picture that emerges (again, from what must be basically Polybian material) is of a highly divisive proposal voted on reluctantly by the Achaeans as their only alternative to destruction.[37] Just how divisive the decision was became clear shortly afterwards, when Argos – the largest and most important city in the League – seceded and went over to Philip.[38] Moreover, the controversy did not cease over time: 25 years

[31] Cf. esp. 32.21.28; also: 21.9; 11; 13.

[32] Cf. esp. 32.21.9 and 28; also: 21.4 and 13.

[33] ... *Macedonum beneficiis et veteribus et recentibus obligati erant* (Livy 32.19.7); Aristaenus' own acknowledgement, in the Livian speech: 32.21.25.

[34] On the illegality of the proposed Sicyon vote, cf. Aymard, *PR* 55 and 94; Errington, *Philopoemen* 224; Briscoe, *Comm.* (above, n. 26), 210.

[35] If Aristaenus had still been able to cast a vote among the *damiurgoi*, presumably this crisis would not have occurred: the motion to put the proposal to the assembly would have been immediately carried by six to five. Cf. Aymard, *PR* 91 and 94–5. Meanwhile, the *synkletos* was soon to reach its legal time-limit for a session (Livy 32.22.4).

[36] Note that both the name of the reluctant *damiurgos* and the name of his threatening father are preserved by Livy – who surely had no reason to care!

[37] The versions of the last day at Sicyon preserved in the (evidently) non-Polybian traditions are even more emphatic than Livy concerning the contentiousness (and even violence) which surrounded the Achaean vote for the Roman alliance: App. *Mac.* 7; Paus. 7.8.1–2; Zon. 9.16. For discussion, cf. Aymard, *PR* 95 n. 58.

[38] On the Argive secession, see Livy 32.25.1–11 (the sole ancient source). Recent modern discussions: J. Deininger, *Der politische Widerstand gegen Rom in Griechenland, 217–86 v. Chr.* (Berlin and New York, 1971), 46–7; J.-G. Texier, *Nabis* (Paris, 1975), 46–7.

later, a prominent politician such as Archon could once more reveal publicly the unease felt by many Achaeans over the decision of 198, in view of the many benevolent actions performed by the kings of Macedon for the League (cf. Livy 41.24.12–14).[39]

Most of the above is obvious enough, and has been duly noted by scholars.[40] The story has been reiterated here in detail because, particularly in the major scholarly discussions of the Polybian fragment commonly called 'On Traitors', a different opinion has generally been offered. For instance, Walbank asserts that we should not see Aristaenus and the Achaeans of 198 as the obvious subjects of the fragment, because 'Polybius needed to provide no elaborate *apologia* for the Achaeans, since only an insignificant minority questioned the wisdom of the policy'.[41] Earlier, in the most important individual study of the fragment, Aymard had argued that the great majority of Achaeans supported Aristaenus 'une fois consommée la rupture avec la Macédoine' – the proof being Aristaenus' political power in Achaea down to the return of Philopoemen from Crete in 193.[42] But it is clear from our exposition above that Walbank is very wide of the mark. As for Aymard, his qualification ('une fois consommée la rupture...') virtually invalidates his major point. In any case, a statesman who is politically successful can still be a controversial figure: there is no contradiction in this.[43]

One can go further. One of the delegations that strenuously objected to the decision of Aristaenus' *synkletos*, walking out rather than even voting, was the delegation from Megalopolis – Polybius' home town.[44] The Megalopolitans felt bound to the Antigonids by deep gratitude: for when the town had been destroyed by the Spartans in 223, Antigonus Doson had rebuilt it, and even acted as its new law-giver.[45] The fierce Megalopolitan feelings expressed in 198 are not likely to have disappeared overnight. On the contrary: it is easy to see how Aristaenus and the decision to abandon Macedon would have remained topics of deep controversy within the town, and that this would have formed a natural part of the political milieu in which the young Polybius came to adulthood.[46]

Moreover, it is clear that Aristaenus was a controversial figure for the men to whom the young Polybius gave his political adherence. This group was originally centred on Philopoemen – whose differences of opinion with Aristaenus concerning policy towards Rome were famous within Achaea. Pausanias and Plutarch even claim that at one point Philopoemen angrily accused Aristaenus of striving to see Rome's complete domination of Greece; and this harsh denunciation finds close verbal echoes in Polybius' own presentation of Philopoemen's attitude towards Aristaenus at 24.13.17. Walbank suggests that Pausanias and Plutarch derived their information

[39] The passage is obviously drawn from Polybian material, as was realised long ago: cf. H. Nissen, *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Quellen der vierten und fünften Dakade des Livius* (Berlin, 1863), 241.

[40] See, most recently, Deininger, *Widerstand* (above, n. 38), 43–6; Gruen, *HWCR* II.445.

[41] Walbank, *Comm.* I (above, n. 21), 12. This is a direct response to the contrary position taken by C. Edson in *AHR* 47 (1942), 827.

[42] A. Aymard, 'Le fragment de Polybe "Sur les traîtres" (xviii, 13–15)', *REA* 42 (1940), 15.

[43] Aymard's position is all the more striking in view of his earlier, detailed analysis of the sharp political conflict which took place at Sicyon: *PR* 79–102.

[44] For Megalopolis as Polybius' home town, cf. Suda, s.v. *Πολύβιος* (and note Paus. 8.30.8). Cf. Walbank, *Comm.* I.12.

[45] The Megalopolitan departure from Sicyon in protest: Livy 32.22.10. On Antigonus Doson's favours to Megalopolis, cf. Aymard, *PR* 53 (with sources).

[46] Cf. the excellent (but brief and general) comments of E. Gabba, 'Studi su Filarco: Le biografie plutarchee di Agide e di Cleomene', *Athenaeum* 35 (1957), 32 – which are usually ignored.

here from Polybius' own *Life of Philopoemen* – which may well be the case.[47] At any rate, it is clear what type of things could be said (and obviously *were* said) about Aristaenus in Philopoemen's circle.

After Philopoemen's death, leadership of his group devolved upon Archon and Lycortas (Polybius' father). Both men were opponents of Aristaenus and his ideas. Lycortas had been publicly humiliated by Aristaenus in a debate in 185,[48] while in 170 (in circumstances far more difficult for Achaea than those of 198) he urged that the League remain *neutral* in the new war between Macedon and Rome (Pol. 28.6.3–5). It is therefore not hard to imagine the kind of things that were sometimes said in Lycortas' household regarding Aristaenus personally, as well as about the trend of Aristaenus' policies.[49] As for Archon, he is the very man we find in Livy 41.24 expressing moral reservations about the decision of 198. The young Polybius had good relations with him (cf. Pol. 28.6–7).

This need not mean that within the Philopoemen–Lycortas–Archon group the Achaean change of alliance in 198 was completely condemned. Men's opinions were bound to differ, and/or alter over time. Philopoemen himself supported Rome against Antiochus and Aetolia in the war of 191–189 (cf. Pol. 39.3), obviously because he felt this policy to be in Achaea's best interests. Further, within Archon's speech in Livy 41.24 we have an explicit reference to the threat of destruction which Rome posed to Achaea in 198.[50] Likewise, Aristaenus' other argument of 198, concerning the threat posed to Achaea by Nabis of Sparta, might be expected to have had some impact (either at the time or in retrospect) on men from the Achaean town that seems to have suffered the most from Nabis' raids.[51] Thus, some of the men around Philopoemen may have reluctantly concluded that some justification did exist for Aristaenus' policy in 198 (although again, one wonders about Lycortas).

From the above discussion we have arrived at three firm conclusions. First, Aristaenus' opening to the Romans was a highly controversial issue in Achaea, both in 198 and for years afterwards. Second, the decision of 198 is likely to have been especially controversial in Polybius' own home town of Megalopolis. Third, Aristaenus was an intensely controversial figure – and questions about the events of 198 caused definite unease – particularly among the men who were the young Polybius' political mentors.

If the Achaean change of alliance was so much a matter of dispute among the Achaeans themselves, it stands to reason that it was equally or even more controversial in other Greek states. Our information on this subject is slight, but intriguing.

First, in Polybius' own account of the peace conference held at Nicaea in late 198, we find King Philip levelling bitter accusations against Achaea. Addressing the Achaean representatives now present on the side of Rome, Philip enumerated the

[47] For the possible connections between Pol. 24.13.7 on the one hand, and Plut. *Philop.* 17.3 and Paus. 8.51.4 on the other, cf. F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* III (Oxford, 1979), 266. That Pol. 24.13.7 constitutes a very harsh assessment of Aristaenus by Philopoemen is accepted by Errington, *Philopoemen* 225–6.

[48] Pol. 22.9.1–12. On this incident, cf. the comments of G. A. Lehmann, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Glaubwürdigkeit des Polybios* (Munster, 1967), 198–9.

[49] Note also Lycortas' strong words concerning Achaean independence before the Roman senate in winter 189/188 (Livy 38.32.6–8), and his bluntly anti-Roman speech in 184 (39.36–7, esp. 37.9). In the anti-Roman atmosphere leading up to the Achaean War of 146, Callicrates' public statues were replaced by those of Lycortas: Pol. 36.13.1–2.

[50] Livy 41.24.14: *...nihil metus praesens ab Romanis sententias nostras inclinaret.* This is obviously meant to be ironic.

[51] Megalopolis' sufferings at the hands of Nabis: Plut. *Philop.* 13.1. Note the comments of Aymard, *PR* 111 n. 28.

many favours the League had received from himself and from Antigonus Doson, and the high honours the Achaeans had conferred on the monarchs of Macedon (18.6.5–6). The king then read out 'the decree by which the Achaeans decided to abandon him and change over to the Romans (*τὸ περὶ τῆς ἀποστάσεως ψήφισμα...*), taking occasion to dwell at great length upon their *ἀθεσία* and their *ἀχαριστία*' (6.7). This is the language of moral condemnation. The charges of *ἀπόστασις* and *ἀχαριστία* (abandonment; ingratitude) are obvious enough.[52] But the key term is *ἀθεσία*. Translators have often rendered *ἀθεσία* at 18.6.7 as 'fickleness' or 'instability'.[53] Occasionally in Polybius, *ἀθεσία* does have this connotation,[54] but in the overwhelming majority of cases, as Walbank notes, the meaning of *ἀθεσία* is much darker: 'positive treachery rather than negative instability'.[55] That is undoubtedly the meaning of *ἀθεσία* at Pol. 18.6.7: Livy translated it *perfidia*.[56] Moreover, Philip's complaints about Achaean treachery and ingratitude must have taken on additional pointedness from the fact that one of the two Achaean envoys present at Nicaea, and directly addressed in this speech, was Aristaenus himself – the engineer of the Achaean change of alliance.[57]

Second, in 195 we find the Aetolians, at a conference of Greek states, bitterly and publicly denouncing the Achaeans as one-time soldiers of Philip who had deserted him when his fortunes declined – deserters (*transfugas...*) who nevertheless had unfairly received more from Rome than had the Aetolians, loyal Roman allies (Livy 34.24.6–8).[58] Once again, this remark must have taken on additional pointedness from the physical presence of Aristaenus, who was the Achaean representative at the conference. Indeed, in Livy the Aetolian attack calls forth an angry response from Aristaenus personally (34.24.1–4). It is obvious that Livy drew his depiction of this incident from Polybius.[59]

We cannot gauge the real depth of feeling involved in these passages. Though King

[52] On the negative connotation of *ἀπόστασις* at Pol. 18.6.7 ('Abfall; Verrat'), cf. A. Mauersberger, *Polybios-Lexikon* I, 1 (Berlin, 1961), s.v. *ἀπόστασις*, col. 203.

[53] Cf. E. S. Shuckburgh, *The Histories of Polybius* II (London and New York, 1889), loc. cit. – kept by A. Bernstein in the new edition, *Polybius on Roman Imperialism* (New York, 1980); W. R. Paton, *Polybius: The Histories* V (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), loc. cit.; D. Roussel, *Polybe: Histories* (Paris, 1970), loc. cit.; I. Scott-Kilvert, *Polybius: The Rise of the Roman Empire* (Harmondsworth, 1979), loc. cit. Note in general P. Treves, *Polibio: Il libro secondo delle Storie* (Naples, 1937), at Pol. 2.32.8.

[54] The clearest case seems to be at Pol. 3.49.2.

[55] *Comm.* I.208 (discussing Pol. 2.32.8). Cf. also 3.70.4 (with *Comm.* I.404); 3.78.2 (with *Comm.* I.412, and note Livy 22.1.2–4); 4.29.4; 8.21.10; 9.30.2; 24.14(8).7. Hence the old conclusion of J. Schweighaeuser, *Lexicon Polybianum* (Leipzig, 1795) 9, s.v. *ἀθεσία*: *certe gravius quid Polybius τὴν ἀθεσίαν dicere consuevit, quam... levitatem et inconstantiam.*

[56] 32.34.14. So too Schweighaeuser, *Lexicon* (above n. 55) 9. Cf. Mauersberger I, 1 (above, n. 52), col. 22, on 18.6.7: 'Treulosigkeit'; H. Drexler, *Polybios: Geschichte* II (Zurich and Stuttgart, 1962), 942, at Pol. 18.6.7: 'Treulosigkeit' (and Drexler's own comment, 1388: 'mit Recht'); M. H. Chambers, *Polybius: The Histories* (New York, 1966), at 18.6.7: 'treachery'; J. A. Foucault, *Recherches sur la langue et le style de Polybe* (Paris, 1972), 327: 'manquement à la foi jurée'.

[57] Aristaenus as one of the two Achaean representatives at Nicaea: Pol. 18.1.4. Philip confronts the Achaean envoys directly: cf. Pol. 18.6.5, within the context of the king's various speeches in 18.5–6.

[58] *questus deinde Achaeos, Philippi quondam milites, ad postremum inclinata fortuna eius transfugas, et Corinthum recepisse et id agere ut Argos habeant...* Note also that the Aetolian speaker here lumps the Achaeans not only with the dishonest Romans (23.7–8), but also with the Athenians, whom he describes as betrayers of Greece, i.e. Greek freedom (*...communem causam prodentes* – 23.5).

[59] Cf. J. Briscoe, *A Commentary on Livy, Books XXXIV–XXXVII* (Oxford, 1981), 85. Some Livian re-working may have occurred (ibid.).

Philip was an old hand at political manoeuvres himself, his bitterness at the Achaeans may well have been real.[60] It is also easy to see how the Achaean action would have been upsetting to Philip's other Greek allies. On the other hand, whatever the Aetolians later said in 195, as allies of Rome in 198 they must have welcomed the addition of the Achaeans to the Roman side. Yet it seems clear that their sudden change of alliance left the Achaeans – and not least Aristaenus himself – open to charges that they had acted treacherously. Even if such charges were occasionally motivated purely by the politics of the moment, they would not have been made unless they were expected to have impact (either on the Achaeans themselves, or on other Greeks). Thus there should be no question that when Polybius came to write of the decision of 198, he well knew that he was dealing with an Achaean action that had been viewed askance by a significant number of Greeks.

We should note the gravamen of the Aetolian attack in 195. The Aetolian envoy Alexander had witnessed Philip's anti-Achaean tirade at Nicaea.[61] Now Alexander describes the events of 198 as a case of treachery by mercenaries who could no longer wring any advantage out of their paymaster (cf. Livy 34.23.6). Beyond this he heavily implies that the Achaeans had joined the Roman side in 198 out of sheer territorial greed: they wished then to gain Corinth for themselves at Philip's expense, as they wished now (in 195) to receive back Argos by co-operating with Rome against Nabis of Sparta (ibid.). We have here a hint, then, of another aspect of the criticism that was levelled against the League: not only had the Achaeans betrayed their sworn word to Philip, but they had acted out of base motives.[62]

Now, there should be no question that T. Quinctius Flamininus promised Corinth to the League in 198 as an inducement to change sides. We have explicit testimony to this offer; and we are also told that after Sicyon the Achaeans persistently *claimed* Corinth – first at Nicaea, later before the Senate itself.[63] It is difficult to believe that Flamininus' promise did not play at least some role in the Sicyon deliberations.[64] Polybius did not hide the offer: indeed, most of our information about it derives (directly or indirectly) from the scattered references he made to it. Yet, very oddly, the issue of Corinth is completely missing from Livy's account of the Sicyon deliberations, including Aristaenus' long speech setting forth the reasons for (and the advantages of) the Achaean change of alliance. In Livy, as we have seen, only Achaean fears are stressed – not desire for expansion. One may assume that Corinth was similarly missing from Polybius' original version of the Achaean deliberations (including Aristaenus' speech) – for otherwise, Livy would surely have enlarged upon the Roman friendliness and generosity implied by such an offer.[65]

[60] Cf. Gruen, *HWCR* I. 175.

[61] Cf. Briscoe, *Comm.* II (above, n. 59), 87, with *Comm.* 233.

[62] Hence the point of Aristaenus' bitter retort to Alexander in Livy: the Aetolians themselves are inveterate robbers (34.24.1–4). Beyond Alexander's remarks about Corinth and Argos, note that the Aetolians also strongly objected to Achaean possession of Heraea (Pol. 18.42.7), a concession of Philip's during Aristaenus' *strategia* (see above, n. 12) which the Romans had allowed the Achaeans to keep (Pol. 18.47.10).

[63] The offer: Livy 32.19.4; cf. Pol. 18.45.12. Achaean claims at Nicaea: Pol. 18.2.5; Livy 32.33.7. At Rome: note Pol. 18.11.4, cf. 10.11; Livy 32.37.3.

[64] Cf. Eckstein, 'Flamininus' 139–40. Aymard (*PR* 85–6) doubts that such an offer was ever explicitly made at Sicyon – partly because he thinks it inconceivable that such a major policy decision as the fate of Corinth could have been made by a mere Roman commander in the field, and not by the Senate. This is to take an excessively legalistic view of magisterial–senatorial relations in the middle Republic. The evidence is clear that Flamininus made the offer of Corinth to the Achaeans – and that he was able to keep his promise.

[65] For the theme of Achaean fear (and fear alone) as responsible for the League's change of

It seems probable, therefore, that in his crucial first description of the Achaean decision (somewhere in the lost Book 17), Polybius consciously *chose* to put all the stress on Achaean fear. This is obviously the element he wished to impress upon the minds of his readers, to the exclusion of all other complicating factors. But a silence is also a gloss. That is, Polybius' narrative account of the Achaean decision of 198 had a definite theme and thesis, one evidently not accepted by all Greeks: ἀνάγκη (necessity) had led the Achaeans to abandon Philip and join Rome. It is easy to see how this simplification of the situation of 198 constituted an implicit *defence* of the behaviour of Aristaenus and the League – a 'silent polemic' against charges such as those Polybius knew had been made by the Aetolians, charges he himself would later recount.

No doubt Polybius' defence was sincere. The story of the pressure put on Memnon of Pellene did not come out of nowhere. And it is clear that during 198 T. and L. Flamininus had established a typically Roman reputation for brutality towards states they perceived as hostile.[66] Moreover, in Polybius' personal reflections on the decision (in 18.13), he himself is emphatic about the threat the Achaeans faced to their existence (13.8), although he also vaguely indicates the presence of other factors (cf. 13.9). In addition, Polybius clearly believed that, in general, circumstances often left Greek statesmen no option but co-operation with Rome: thus in the Achaean political debates of 170 he sided with Archon against his own father's proposal of Achaean neutrality.[67]

Polybius' thinking about ἀνάγκη here evidently informed his final judgement on Aristaenus. He consistently comes to Aristaenus' defence, not only (as I am arguing) in his narrative account of the Sicyon decision in Book 17, but also (as we shall see) in Book 18, and again in Book 24. Yet this phenomenon only serves to reveal once again the extent of the political debate over Aristaenus: a man whose policies were universally regarded as correct does not need to be defended again and again. Indeed, it seems clear that in order to arrive at his positive evaluation of Aristaenus and his policies, Polybius had to make an intellectual break both with his own father and with his early political idol Philopoemen.[68]

In defending Aristaenus' actions in 198, Polybius was also defending Achaea. That he was capable of shaping his narrative in a pro-Achaean manner is well understood.

alliance, see above, 143–4. That Livy has not simply made a 'slip' in his use of Polybius here is further indicated by Archon's reflections on the decision of 198, later in Livy 41.24.11–15 (also from Polybius), where the issue is similarly presented as having been purely a conflict between Achaean obligation to Macedon and Achaean fear of Rome. No mention of Corinth, then, in Book 41 either – and it is highly unlikely that Livy (for some reason) would have suppressed mention of Corinth twice.

[66] Cf. Eckstein, 'Flamininus' 126–38. The authenticity of that reputation is confirmed by the vast amount of loot Flamininus' army brought back from Greece in 194: cf. Livy 34.52.2.

[67] See Pol. 28.8.6–7 and 28.7.1, with the comments now of A. M. Eckstein, 'Polybius, Syracuse, and the Politics of Accommodation', *GRBS* 26 (1985), 277–9. Note that in the extant text of *The Histories*, which is not more than a quarter of the original, Polybius uses the word ἀνάγκη 83 times: see Mauersberger I, 1, s.v. Lehmann, *Glaubwürdigkeit* (above, n. 48), 220, argues that much weight is given by Aristaenus in Livy 32.21 to an intelligent weighting of the chances of both sides in the on-going war; but surely Aymard (*PR* 93) is more correct to characterise Aristaenus' Livian speech as 'au total... un discours uniquement destiné à effrayer et à terroriser'.

[68] Compare Philopoemen's harsh opinion of Aristaenus at Pol. 24.13.7 with Polybius' own much more positive opinion, given immediately after at 13.8. The first phase in Polybius' intellectual break with the Achaean 'hard-liners' is apparent, by his own account, in 170: cf. Eckstein, 'Polybius and Accommodation' (above, n. 67), 277–9.

Thus, he often interprets events so as to make Achaea's enemies (chiefly Aetolia and the kings of Sparta) look particularly reprehensible.[69] And note especially here Polybius' implicit defence of Aratus' decision to invite Macedonian intervention in the Peloponnese in the mid-220s: he indicates that the Achaeans, under pressure from Sparta, simply had no choice.[70] Not everyone believed this interpretation of events, or found Aratus' manoeuvre acceptable.[71] This does not mean that Polybius' interpretation of the Achaean *volte-face* of 225/224 is wrong, but the parallel with the Achaean *volte-face* of 198 is obvious. It looks as if Polybius shaded his account of the decision at Sicyon in a fashion similar to his interpretation of Aratus' decision a quarter-century before: by emphasising ἀνάγκη. If Polybius thereby created a picture of Sicyon that he thought to be both 'patriotic' and also correct in essentials, this would not have been a violation of his canons of historiography.[72] What our discussion so far has revealed is the background of controversy over the Achaean decision – both within Achaea and among the other Greeks – which makes explicable the way Polybius consciously shaped his narrative of that decision. The seriousness of the controversy over 198 also explains why Polybius felt uneasy when he came to record this crucial action of the League.

II. THE CONTEXT OF THE FRAGMENT 'ON TRAITORS'

I would suggest that the fragment of Polybius' *Histories* called 'On Traitors' (Pol. 18.13–15) should be viewed against this background of the controversy over Aristaenus and the Achaean decision of 198. In the current state of the Polybian MSS, we can never be strictly certain of the context of the fragment, for it is only found in two Byzantine collections of historical *excerpta* (Vat. Urb. Gr. 102 and Tours MS 980), and in both collections the material that originally stood immediately around the fragment has been lost.[73] Nevertheless, some solutions to the question of the circumstances that provoked Polybius' comments here are more probable than others, and we can work within these probabilities.

The earliest scholar to suggest a possible context for the fragment was Reiske (1763): he thought it arose *per occasionem narrationis de aliquo oppido, Philippo tradito*.[74] This seems difficult to accept, for Polybius' digression from his narrative here is long and it is also emotionally committed – hence, unlikely to have been provoked by some minor incident.[75]

Similar thinking led Schweighaeuser (1790) to posit a more important context. He was impressed by the prominent appearance of a defence of Aristaenus early in the fragment, and concluded that 'On Traitors' was an appendix to (and a direct commentary on) the lost Polybian narrative of the Sicyon decision.[76] However,

[69] For Polybius' prejudices and patriotism, see in general Walbank, *Comm.* I.12–13. A *locus classicus* regarding Aetolia is Pol. 2. 46.1–5. For Polybius' bias against Sparta, see Gabba, 'Filarco' (above, n. 46), 24. (For Lycortas' attitude, cf. Livy 39.36. 6ff.) For Polybius' prejudice against Nabis, cf. D. Mendels, 'Polybius, Nabis and Equality', *Athenaeum* 57 (1979), 333.

[70] Cf. Pol. 2.50.11, with 2.51.4.

[71] Cf. T. W. Africa, *Phylarchus and the Spartan Revolution* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1961).

[72] See Pol. 16.14.6, with the comments of Edson, *AHR* 47 (1942), 827.

[73] These two manuscripts apparently date from the late tenth century: see J. M. Moore, *The Manuscript Tradition of Polybius* (Cambridge, 1965), 19 and 130.

[74] J. Reiske, *Animadversionum ad Graecos Auctores Volumen Quartum* (Leipzig, 1763), 606.

[75] Cf. F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* II (Oxford, 1967), 565.

[76] J. Schweighaeuser, *Polybii Megalopolitani Historiarum Quidquid Superest* IV (Leipzig, 1790), 29 (where the general title of the fragment is given as *Non fuit Proditor Aristaenus, Achaeos a societate Philippi ad amicitiam Romanorum traducens*); cf. also VII (Leipzig, 1793), 327–8 and 330–1 (especially 331).

Aymard has shown how unlikely this is. In both manuscripts of *excerpta*, the fragment appears *after* Polybius' description of the Nicaea peace conference of late 198 and *before* his description of events leading up to the battle of Cynoscephalae in spring 197. That is, the fragment seems embedded in discussion of events of winter 198/197 – and not (as one would expect on Schweighaeuser's hypothesis) with events of summer and autumn 198.[77] Therefore, the fragment evidently occurred too late in the Polybian text to be a direct commentary on Sicyon.[78]

Nissen (1863) already seems to have been bothered by the place of the fragment in the Polybian text. Without directly criticising Schweighaeuser, he briefly offered a modification of his thesis. Nissen noted that in Polybius' account of the Nicaea conference King Philip strongly condemns the Achaeans for their action in going over to the Romans (18.6.5–7). He therefore suggested that the digression 'On Traitors' was ultimately provoked by Polybius' recording of Philip's remarks, and that consequently it constitutes a retrospective justification (*nachträgliche Rechtfertigung*) – i.e. not a direct commentary – concerning the Achaean decision of 198.[79]

This was the state of scholarly discussion until 1940.[80] Aymard's detailed study of the fragment then completely changed the situation. Aymard argued forcefully, despite the appearance of Aristaenus in the fragment, that its evident location within the Polybian narrative made it simply impossible for 'On Traitors' to have originated as a direct commentary on the Sicyon assembly (see above). As for Nissen's hypothesis, Aymard contended that Philip's speech at Nicaea, addressed as it is to the Achaeans in general, and referring not just to treachery but to ingratitude, seems a particularly weak precipitating incident to provoke Polybius into a long discussion of traitors – a discussion which only occurs hundreds of lines later in the text.[81]

This nagging problem of the odd location of 'On Traitors' could be eliminated, however, – so Aymard suggested – by abandoning the idea that the point of departure for the fragment had *any* connection with Aristaenus and the Sicyon decision. Instead, Aymard proposed a totally different original context for the fragment: it was a direct commentary on the fate of the city of Argos during the winter of 198/197.[82] Argos had seceded from the Achaean League after Sicyon, opening its gates to a Macedonian garrison. But after the failure of peace talks with Rome in the winter of 198/197, Philip felt compelled to give Argos up, in order to concentrate his forces for the decisive battles against the Romans. He therefore entered into an unusual agreement with Nabis of Sparta, who took over 'temporary' control of the city. Philip evidently hoped in this way to confirm Nabis in his anti-Achaean policies, so that the League would be unable to provide significant help to Rome. Instead, as soon as Nabis had Argos firmly in his hands, he entered into a truce with Achaea and an alliance with Rome against Philip. Nabis evidently hoped in this way to gain permanent control over Argos (a major prize); meanwhile, he carried through a social revolution in the city which went especially hard on the upper class which had provided the leaders of the original pro-Macedonian coup.[83]

The idea that 'On Traitors' is a commentary on these odd events had several

[77] Cf. Aymard, 'Traitres' (above, n. 42), 13–14. [78] Ibid. 14.

[79] Nissen, *KU* (above, n. 39), 326 n. **.

[80] Cf. F. Dübner, *Polybii Historiarum Reliquiae* I–II (Paris, 1839: Didot), I.602 and II.206, who follows the opinion of Schweighaeuser; B. Niese, *Geschichte der griechischen und makedonischen Staaten* II (Gotha, 1899), 681 n. 3, who makes Nissen's connection between Pol. 18.13.7 and 18.6.5–7 (Philip's speech at Nicaea); cf. also P. Waltz, *Polybe* III (Paris, 1921), 324 n. 1.

[81] 'Traîtres', 15–16; cf. already *PR* 91 n. 38. [82] 'Traîtres', 16–17.

[83] Ibid. 17. See Livy 32.25 and 32.38.

advantages, Aymard asserted. First, it established a context for the fragment in an important incident of winter 198/197, thereby neatly explaining its location in the Polybian text. Second, the leaders of the anti-Achaean coup at Argos fitted the definition of 'traitors' which Polybius establishes in the course of the digression, where the emphasis is on admitting foreign garrisons into a city (cf. 18.14.9 and 15.1–3). Third, the ironic fate of the leaders of the coup (despoiled by Nabis) also fitted with the last acerbic comments in 'On Traitors', concerning the inevitably negative fate of those who betray their state – though human irrationality ensures that such traitors will always exist (18.15.4–16).[84]

It is safe to say that Aymard's 'Argos thesis' is now the scholarly *communis opinio* regarding the context of 'On Traitors'. Aymard's most prominent and most persistent champion has been F. W. Walbank.[85] But the 'Argos thesis' has also been accepted by Pédech, Lehmann, Roussel, Deininger, Briscoe, Texier, and Scott-Kilvert.[86] In the past 30 years, only Gabba – back in 1957 – has registered a different opinion.[87] Yet I think the 'Argos thesis' suffers from several weaknesses, weaknesses so severe as to call into question the idea that 'On Traitors' is a commentary on Argive events.[88]

First, the 'Argos thesis' does not really dispose of the problem of the odd location of Pol. 18.13–15 within the Polybian text. It is obvious that the topic of 'On Traitors' is Polybius' attempt to establish a proper definition of treason: this question occupies 18.13.1–15.3, by far the greater part of the fragment. But such a discussion of the definition of treason, in relation to the history of Argos in this period, only fits into Book 18 as a *retrospective* comment: that is, a comment on the earlier, post-Sicyon rebellion of Argos from the Achaean League, in which the city had been 'betrayed' to Macedon. This Argive rebellion had taken place the previous autumn (198), and – like the Sicyon decision that immediately preceded it – had already been covered in detail by Polybius in Book 17.[89] Surely, then, the most logical *Argive* context for Polybius to have written a digression on the proper definition of treason (especially one in which Aristaenus is so prominent) was back in Book 17. It is true that Aymard's idea has the attraction of providing modern scholars with a specific incident of winter 198/197 to which a retrospective essay on the definition of treason *might*, in Book 18, be attached – the turning over of Argos to Nabis. But even here the placement of the essay does not seem completely logical, and the disconcertingly retrospective character of the digression remains, whether Polybius' point of departure in Book 18 was contemplation of events at Argos or of those at Sicyon.

Second, the 'Argos thesis' presupposes that the emotional focus of 'On Traitors' is a condemnation of treason, and specifically that the digression represents Polybius' gleeful comments on the ironic fate of the leaders of the Argive secession.[90] But in fact

[84] 'Traîtres', 16–17.

[85] Cf. *Comm.* I.12 and n. 4; *Comm.* II (above, n. 75), 564–5; *Polybius* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1972), 85–7.

[86] P. Pédech, *La Méthode historique de Polybe* (Paris, 1964), 200 n. 512; Lehmann, *Glaubwürdigkeit* 221; Roussel, *Polybe* (above, n. 53), 1390; Deininger, *Widerstand* 47 n. 11; Briscoe, *Comm.* 214; *Texier, Nabis* (above, n. 38), 48 n. 23; Scott-Kilvert, *Polybius* (above, n. 53), 504–5.

[87] 'Filarco' 31–4. But the unlikelihood of Gabba's own thesis (see below, 155) has unfortunately tended to obscure his cogent criticism of Aymard (cf. esp. 'Filarco' 31–2).

[88] Note, however, that if Aymard *is* correct, then the notion of 'treason', even when it came up in a context (Argos) quite removed from Aristaenus and the decision of 198, nevertheless immediately brought the latter to Polybius' mind (cf. 18.13.4–10). One could hardly have a better refutation of the claim that Aristaenus and his policies were non-controversial.

[89] This is obvious from the narrative of Livy 32.22ff., where the secession of Argos (32.25) is an integral part of the account of the immediate aftermath of the Sicyon decision.

[90] Cf. Aymard, 'Traîtres', 17: 'En effect, l'Achaïen Polybe, en racontant les événements

the emotional focus of 'On Traitors' is completely different from this, indeed the opposite: just as the basic topic of the digression is the proper definition of treason, so the emotional focus of the digression is to *defend* certain people from *incorrect* accusations of treason.[91] Most of 'On Traitors' is, in fact, devoted to this task. After an introduction explaining how difficult it is to arrive at a proper definition of treason (18.13.1–3), first Aristaenus is defended from charges Polybius considers false (13.4–10), and then the Peloponnesian politicians of the fourth century, who invited Philip II to intervene for them against Sparta, are similarly defended from charges Polybius considers false, with the accuser (this time) being named – Demosthenes (18.14, *passim*). Throughout, a definition is constructed which absolves both Aristaenus and the fourth-century politicians of any taint of treason: 13.4–5; 13.11; 14.9–10; 15.1–3. There is, of course, a condemnation of traitors, on grounds of their irrationality (15.4–16); this appears at the very end of the digression, as a sort of coda to the main theme. But if the main emotional focus of the digression is a *defence* of certain people, rather than an attack on certain people, then this hardly squares with the hypothesis that Pol. 18.13–15 is in origin a comment justifying the harsh fate of Argos. Moreover, a spirited defence of the politicians who brought Macedon into the Peloponnese in the fourth century (18.14, *passim*) verges on the nonsensical if the digression is meant as an attack on the Argives for inviting in Macedon in 198.[92]

Third, one should note that Livy's narrative of the pro-Macedonian coup at Argos, very detailed, is objective and neutral in tone, presented without bitterness or recriminations against the Argives. We may assume that the same tone was adopted by Polybius, Livy's obvious source for the Argive events – for if Polybius had condemned the Argives for their behaviour, then Livy would surely have made the most of it, since he was dealing here with a city that had preferred Macedon to Rome.[93] But if we then assume that Polybius himself had adopted a neutral tone in his original narrative of the Argive secession in Book 17, it becomes hard to see why he would suddenly have adopted a bitterly condemnatory tone in a retrospective commentary on the Argive secession in Book 18 (i.e. if the point of the entire digression is 'the Argives got what they deserved – but people never learn').

Fourth, the behaviour of the Argives in 198, and their later fate, actually does not conform at all well to the rather narrow paradigm for traitors established by Polybius in the digression. According to Polybius, traitors should be defined as those men who, especially in the midst of factional in-fighting, introduce foreign garrisons into their town, submitting it to a foreign power in order to secure factional or personal advantage (18.15.1–3); such traitors also often overthrow the established laws, again for their own advantage (14.9). But the Argive *principes*, though they helped bring in a Macedonian garrison, did not act on behalf of a faction or for their own personal gain. It is true that their action had something of the elements of a plot, but it did not constitute a secret betrayal of the Argive people; rather, all the aristocrats did was to encourage and openly join with the prevailing strongly pro-Macedonian sentiment among the Argives. Indeed, we are explicitly told by Livy that the *principes*

d'Argos, devait qualifier les Argiens de traîtres et se rejouir de leur châtiment'. This 'châtiment' is, supposedly, the punishment of traitors described in detail at 18.15.5ff. (cf. 'Traîtres', 17 n. 2).

[91] Cf. Gabba, 'Filarco' 32.

[92] On the conflict between the 'Argos thesis' and the appearance of 18.14 in the digression, cf. Gabba, ibid.

[93] For Polybius as the obvious source of Livy's account of the Argive secession, cf. Nissen, *KU* 138, cf. 134.

only acted when they saw that the Argive masses agreed with them (32.25.1). Thus what occurred at Argos was not so much a secret plot as a popular movement – a natural reaction, in a city possessing close relations with Philip, to the Achaean decision to turn against Macedon. Or at least this is the way Livy, based on Polybius, presents these events.[94] Moreover, the pro-Macedonian revolution at Argos does not seem to have led to the overthrow of the established laws (why should it have?).

In 18.15, Polybius goes on to discuss the inevitably bad end of the men he has defined as traitors. The bad end is quite specific. Treason is always detected sooner or later; traitors are treated badly and with justified contempt by their foreign masters; if not, they are treated badly and with justified contempt by the people they have betrayed; and in any case, even if they escape physical retribution for their deed, they are haunted by an evil name, universal hatred, and paranoid fears for the rest of their lives (15.7–12). As with Polybius' definition of traitors, little of this actually fits the Argive *principes*, let alone the mass of the Argive population. The *principes* did not secretly 'betray' the city (see above). Nor does an 'evil name' seem to have become attached to anyone. It is true that Philip later turned Argos over to Nabis – but he did not do so out of contempt for the Argives and their previous 'treasonous' behaviour. Philip acted from military necessity, because it was impossible for him to do what he wished, which was to defend the Argives himself: Livy is explicit about this, as he is explicit that Philip wanted Argos returned if he defeated Rome (32.38.1–2).

Once Nabis was in control of the city (a coup in which *no* Argive participated: Livy 32.38.4–6), it is true that he and his wife treated the Argive *principes* cruelly. But there is no hint in Polybius or Livy that in this fashion the upper class 'got what they deserved'. On the contrary, the point for Polybius seems to be to emphasise the cruelty and rapacity of Nabis and Apia. This is sufficiently clear from Pol. 18.17, and is typical of Polybius' treatment of Nabis in general; it should be noted that the stories of Nabis' cruelty to the Argive *principes* exactly parallel Polybius' earlier horror stories of his cruelty to the leading citizens of Sparta.[95] Indeed, Oliva is obviously correct to say that the story of Nabis' rule over Argos is told 'through the eyes of the wealthy citizens' – that is, *from the point of view of the Argive principes*.[96] Nor is this surprising: Polybius was biased against Nabis, not against his victims.[97]

As for the 'universal hatred' said by Polybius to attach to traitors, later we find Flamininus, for his own political reasons, going out of his way to excuse the vast majority of the Argives (and this would include most of the upper class) for their previous anti-Roman behaviour (Livy 34.32.6–7: from Polybius). There is thus no likelihood that in 195 the surviving members of the Argive aristocracy, leaders of the pro-Macedonian coup of 198, were further punished by Rome. On the contrary: it seems that under the peace settlement of 195 there was to be a significant return to these people of property 'liberated' by Nabis (cf. Livy 34.35.4), and Livy now presents

[94] Cf. Deininger, *Widerstand* 47. Evidence for strong popular support for the revolution: Livy 32.25.1 (discussed in the text); 25.3–5, 7–8.

[95] Compare Pol. 18.17 and Livy 32.38.8 with Pol. 13.6–8 (especially 13.8, where Nabis acts, as at Argos, to extract money, by torture, from leading citizens).

[96] P. Oliva, *Sparta and her Social Problems* (Amsterdam and Prague, 1971), 287.

[97] Polybius' bias against Nabis: cf. Mendels, 'Nabis' (above, n. 69) *passim*; see also 'Polybius and the Socio-Economic Revolution in Greece (227–146 B.C.)', *AC* 51 (1982), 86–109. Aymard's hypothesis that Polybius despised the Argives because of their secession from the Achaean League ('Traîtres', 17 and n. 2) is undermined both by the neutral tone of Livy 32.25 and also by the historical background we have established above: the strong opposition at Megalopolis itself to Aristaenus' policy (perhaps strongest among Polybius' own political mentors). This probably later led the historian to take a more understanding view of the Argive action in 198.

a picture of a happy and unified Argos (34.41.1–3). From beginning to end, then, the story of the Argives has important differences with the paradigm for traitors Polybius establishes in 18.13–15.[98]

Fifth, a stark fact must be faced. While Aristaenus and the Achaean decision of 198 are mentioned prominently in 'On Traitors', and a whole string of fourth-century Peloponnesian politicians (some rather obscure) are specifically named and discussed as well, the Argives are simply never mentioned at all – not even in Pol. 18.15.4–16, where we would most expect it. If the immediate and direct context of 'On Traitors' was the fate of Argos under Nabis, this seems difficult to understand.

In sum: the 'Argos thesis' has serious weaknesses. It does not avoid the problem posed by the odd location of 'On Traitors' within the Polybian text;[99] it is not congruent with the emotional focus of the digression (which is to defend certain people *wrongly* accused of treason); it does not accord with the neutral tone Polybius apparently took in his account of the secession of Argos from Achaea in 198 – or with the sympathetic perspective he apparently adopted in his narrative of Argive suffering under Nabis; it is not consistent with Polybius' narrow definition of treasonous acts; it does not conform to the specific dark fate of traitors Polybius posits at the end of the digression; and it sits oddly with the fact that the Argives are never mentioned. Aymard was a great scholar, but while his idea here is ingenious, and is now the *communis opinio*, one must conclude that Argos in winter 198/197 is unattractive as a possible context for 'On Traitors'. Is there, then, a better alternative?

Gabba, whose telling critique of the 'Argos thesis' has been included among some of the arguments presented above, proposed one. Polybius' fierce defence of the fourth-century politicians who brought Macedon into the Peloponnese to defend their states against Sparta (18.14) seemed to Gabba to fit perfectly with the actions of Aratus and Achaea in inviting Macedon into the Peloponnese against Sparta in 225/224: so perhaps Polybius' point in 'On Traitors' was to defend Aratus.[100] Walbank has rightly criticised this hypothesis: if Aratus lies at the base of Polybius' reasoning in 'On Traitors', why is he never explicitly named and defended?[101] One may add that Gabba's proposal greatly intensifies the retrospective character of the digression: why would Polybius suddenly return to an (implicit) defence of Aratus' actions (recounted back in Book 2) so late in the narrative? This is not the answer we are seeking.

However, there does exist a more attractive possibility than either the 'Argos thesis' or the 'Aratus thesis'. It is based on the old idea of Nissen that 'On Traitors' is a *nachträgliche Rechtfertigung* of Aristaenus and the Achaeans in 198. As we have seen, an implicit defence of Aristaenus and Achaea apparently characterised Polybius' narrative in Book 17. In Book 18, defence of Aristaenus and his policy was still on Polybius' mind.

In favour of Nissen's hypothesis is the simple fact that Aristaenus and the events

[98] Walbank has suggested that the rift between Philip V and the Peloponnesian poet Alcaeus was caused by the bloody consequences of his having turned Argos over to Nabis: 'Alcaeus of Messene, Philip V, and Rome, *CQ* 37 (1943), 6–7. This cannot be proved, but if correct it hardly suggests that the Argive *principes* suffered from 'universal hatred'. We do know that there were many anti-Nabis Argive exiles with Flamininus in 195 (Livy 34.25.12 and cf. 34.33.6–7), and surely these men were representatives of the upper classes; they may well have had an influence on some of Flamininus' peace terms with Nabis (cf. 34.35.4). This is not what Polybius proposed happens to 'traitors'.

[99] An additional complication is that the deepest humiliation inflicted on the Argive upper class, at the hands of Nabis' wife Apia (Pol. 18.17), only occurs at a point in the Polybian text substantially *after* the digression 'On Traitors'.

[100] 'Filarco' 33–4.

[101] *Comm.* II.564.

of 198 are mentioned prominently in 'On Traitors', and right at the beginning. In 18.13, Polybius strongly and explicitly defends Aristaenus against the charge of treason: one should not view as traitors those men who, under the pressure of circumstances, ally their states with certain kings, or lead their states to exchange established diplomatic relationships for new ones, for such men have often conferred the greatest benefits on their countries by these actions – and Aristaenus is the prime example (18.13.4–10). If Aristaenus had not engineered the alliance with Rome, Achaea would have been destroyed (13.8); as it was, Aristaenus not only saved the Achaeans but even increased their power (13.9); he was a saviour and benefactor (13.10). Even Aymard admits that the whole first third of 'On Traitors' (18.13) is a defence of Aristaenus and his policy.[102]

Moreover, a good case can be made that the shadow of Aristaenus hangs over the *second* third of 'On Traitors' (18.14) as well. Here Polybius argues that Demosthenes was wrong to denounce as traitors to Greece those Peloponnesian politicians who allied their states with Macedon in the 340s; Demosthenes was judging affairs from a purely Athenian perspective, but the interests of the other Greek states were not always those of Athens (14.7–11). The Peloponnesians who led their states into alliance with Philip II were, in fact, the opposite of traitors: the new alliances procured for their states long-sought protection against Sparta (cf. 14.6 and 14.15), without detriment to their rights (cf. 14.10), and therefore these new alliances allowed them 'to breathe freely and entertain the thought of liberty' (*ἀναπνεῦσαι καὶ λαβεῖν ἐλευθερίας ἔννοιαν* – 14.6). Moreover, while the statesmen of the Peloponnese procured these advantages for their own communities, the policy of Demosthenes led *his* community into military disaster at Chaeronea (14.13–14).

It has long been recognised that in this passage only the remarks about the Athenian military defeat have historical validity. By the 340s, Sparta had long since ceased to be a threat to the other states of the Peloponnese: they did not need to be 'rescued' from Spartan aggression by Macedon.[103] After Chaeronea, the Peloponnesian states described by Polybius as 'liberated' from the Spartan yoke by Philip in fact consistently sought to *escape* from Macedon; moreover, in these attempts they consistently sided with their alleged 'oppressor', Sparta.[104] Even on Polybius' narrow definition of treason – namely, allowing the overthrow of established laws and the imposition of foreign troops – the Peloponnesians were not completely innocent of Demosthenes' charge. After Chaeronea, many Peloponnesian *poleis* did receive Macedonian garrisons. Most striking is the case of Neon and Thrasylochus of Messene: defended by Polybius at 14.3, they were actually restored to power in Messene by foreign (Macedonian) force in 331.[105]

How are we to account for the fact that Pol. 18.14 is so oddly tendentious? Aymard knew the answer. Pol. 18.14 is a 'secondary digression' within the principal digression, a clever argument introduced merely to serve as an example supporting a judgement (in 18.13) Polybius knows is controversial.[106] That is: the distortions in 18.14 are the result of an attempt by Polybius to assimilate the fourth-century Peloponnesians to the circumstances and behaviour of Aristaenus in 198. This parallel with Aristaenus is highly artificial, and essentially a failure, but the point is that *Aristaenus* is the

[102] 'Traîtres', 11.

[103] Cf. P. Cloché, 'À propos d'un chapitre de Polybe', *AC* 8 (1939), 363–5; P. Treves, 'Démosthène, d'après M. Werner Jaeger', *LEC* 8 (1940), 290; criticism accepted by Walbank, *Comm.* II.568.

[104] Cf. Cloché, 'Polybe' (above, n. 103), 365–7; Treves, 'Démosthène' (above, n. 103), 291–3.

[105] Cf. the comments of Treves, 'Démosthène', 291.

[106] 'Traîtres', 11–12.

paradigm. Thus, although Sparta did not constitute a threat to the statesmen of the 340s, fear of Sparta *did* play a significant role in the Achaean decision at Sicyon.[107] Similarly, the association of the fourth-century Peloponnesians with Macedon did not allow them to 'breathe freely and entertain the thought of liberty' (14.6), but Aristaenus' association of Achaea with Rome *could* be seen as conferring freedom on the Achaean League – freedom from Sparta (as in 14.6), and freedom from Rome itself, for by 194 the Roman armies had withdrawn to Italy. Moreover, the actions of the men of the 340s do not completely absolve them from the charge of treason as Polybius himself defines it (see above), but Aristaenus (and only Aristaenus) *is* innocent by Polybius' standards. Finally, the specific words describing (inappropriately) the effect produced by the policy of the 340s – that it allowed the Peloponnese 'to breathe freely and entertain the thought of liberty' (*ἀναπνεῦσαι καὶ λαβεῖν ἐλευθερίας ἔννοιαν* – 14.6) – clearly echo the words in 18.11.4 and 11.6 regarding the aims of the Greeks in Rome in winter 198/197, especially concerning Macedonian withdrawal from Corinth (*ἔννοιαν λαβεῖν ἐλευθερίας* – 11.4; *ἀναπνεῦσαι*, with reference to the Peloponnese – 11.6). That is, the words in 18.14 seem directly to recall the words Polybius uses shortly before to describe the goals of Greek (especially Achaean) policy, especially in the Peloponnese, immediately after Sicyon. As such, those words in 18.14 would lead the reader back to the new anti-Macedonian stance of Aristaenus. In all these ways, Aristaenus and the events of 198 (in 18.13) constitute the model for the men and events discussed in 18.14. That the model actually does not fit only serves to make the paradigm clearer.[108]

Thus the image of Aristaenus in autumn 198 seems to dominate most of 'On Traitors'. In 18.13 Aristaenus' policy is directly and strongly defended. In 18.14 he is the model to which Polybius forcibly assimilates the Peloponnesian politicians of the 340s. Indeed, since by the final definition of treason in 18.15.1–3 only Aristaenus is completely innocent, his reach seems to extend into the final third of 'On Traitors' as well. This finding has important implications: for if the figure of Aristaenus in autumn 198 is such a dominating factor in 'On Traitors', then the digression is more likely to have originated in a discussion having to do with Aristaenus than in one of, say, Argos.

Indeed, Polybius may be telling us as much. Twice in the digression he refers back to his point of departure. At the beginning, he explains that he has often wondered at the many errors made by men, and especially concerning traitors (13.1), and therefore wishes to say 'something suitable to the occasion' (*τὰ πρέποντα τοῖς καιροῖς* – 13.2). The phrase is unfortunately vague; we can only ask ourselves what specific occasion might have provoked Polybius into direct comments 'correcting' misconceptions on the subject of traitors, and defending men who have been wrongly accused.[109]

The second reference to the starting point of 'On Traitors' is far more helpful. Polybius asserts that those men who, at the bidding of circumstances, induce their states to exchange established relationships for new ones should not be considered

[107] See above, 143–4.

[108] Walbank has long found the verbal echo of Pol. 18.11.4 and 6 at 18.14.6 to be paradoxical, since the one case describes the effect of Macedon being invited into the Peloponnese (18.14.6), while the other describes the effect of Macedon being driven out of the Peloponnese (18.11.4 and 6): cf. 'Alcaeus' (above, n. 98), 8 n. 1; *Comm.* II.568; *Polybius* (above, n. 85), 85–6. The hypothesis presented above would resolve this paradox, neatly explaining Polybius' wording at 18.14.6 as an association with Aristaenus and his policies.

[109] On the meaning of *τὰ πρέποντα τοῖς καιροῖς* at 18.13.2, cf. Walbank, *Comm.* II.565.

traitors (13.5); far from it (13.6) – since such men have often conferred the greatest benefits on their states. Polybius continues (13.7–10):

ἵνα δὲ μὴ πόρρωθεν τὰ παραδείγματα φέρωμεν, ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων ῥαδίως ἔσται τὸ λεγόμενον κατανοεῖν. εἰ γὰρ μὴ σὺν καιρῷ τότε μετέρριψε τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς Ἀρίσταινος ἀπὸ τῆς Φιλίππου συμμαχίας πρὸς τὴν Ῥωμαίων, φανερῶς ἄρδην ἀπολώλει τὸ ἔθνος. νῦν δὲ χωρὶς τῆς παρ' αὐτὸν τὸν καιρὸν ἀσφαλείας ἑκάστοις περιγενομένης, αὐξήσεως τῶν Ἀχαιῶν ὁμολογουμένως ὁ προειρημένος ἀνὴρ κἀκεῖνο τὸ διαβούλιον αἴτιος ἐδόκει γεγονέναι·

I wish to draw attention to the phrase *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων ῥᾳδίως ἔσται τὸ λεγόμενον κατανοεῖν* (13.7), particularly *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων*. Walbank, contrasting *τῶν ἐνεστώτων* with *πόρρωθεν* ('far-off times') earlier in 13.7, would translate: 'what I have to say is easily observed *from the time with which I am dealing*',[110] Mauersberger is similar; so too Scott-Kilvert, the most recent translator of Polybius into English: 'what I have to say can easily be observed *in the times of which I am writing*'.[111] If this understanding of the meaning of *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων* is correct, then 18.13.7 is as vague as 18.13.2, and therefore is of no help in determining the specific context of 'On Traitors'. However, there are good grounds for thinking that this rendering of 18.13.7 is not correct, and that Polybius is indicating something more specific here.

It is well understood that, in general, the phrase *τὰ ἐνεστῶτα* in Polybius means 'the immediate situation'; 'd. augenblickl., gegenwartige Situation, Lage' (Mauersberger).[112] In the extant Polybian text, *τὰ ἐνεστῶτα* is used nearly 40 times with the preposition *περὶ* or *ὑπὲρ* to mean 'concerning the present, immediate situation'; some specific circumstance, not 'the present' as opposed to 'the past', is always what is meant. This usage hardly supports the usage of *τὰ ἐνεστῶτα* at Pol. 18.13.7 advocated by Walbank.[113]

In the extant text, the phrase *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων* or *ἐκ τῶν ἐνεστώτων* is itself also used three times. Once is at 18.13.7, which we will leave aside for the moment. A second case is Pol. 39.1.11. This is the support Walbank adduces for his translation of *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων* at 18.13.7 ('from the time with which I am dealing').[114] In 39.1, Polybius is discussing the character failings of A. Postumius Albinus (*cos.* 151). Among his other faults (30.1–9), Albinus was fond of pleasure and averse to toil (1.10). Polybius continues: *τοῦτο δ' ἔσται δῆλον ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων* (1.11); there follows a description of Albinus' abortive campaign in Greece in 146 (1.11–12), illustrating precisely those faults mentioned in 1.10. Given the surrounding context, then, it may be doubted that the phrase *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων* at 39.1.11 means something as vague and general as 'this will become clear from the age under discussion'. Rather, it is obvious that Polybius' point has to do with Albinus' specific actions in his campaign of 146. A better translation would therefore seem to be: 'this will become clear from the very events I am discussing', specific events which immediately follow. Indeed, Shuckburgh, Drexler and Roussel all translate the phrase

[110] *Comm.* II.565.

[111] Mauersberger, *Polybios-Lexikon* I, 2 (Berlin, 1961), col. 811, s.v. *ἐνίσταμαι*; Scott-Kilvert, *Polybius* 505.

[112] Mauersberger, *Polybios-Lexikon* I, 2, col. 811.

[113] Pol. 2.26.3; 2.54.14; 3.15.4; 3.70.3; 3.70.9; 3.86.7; 3.118.7; 4.23.3; 5.49.1; 5.74.8; 5.75.9; 5.103.6; 9.3.4; 9.26.3; 9.37.1; 9.42.4; 11.20.5; 11.27.6; 15.1.5; 15.3.3; 15.7.5; 15.17.5; 16.25.1; 16.31.1; 16.32.3; 18.8.4; 20.1; 20.9.6; 21.10.4; 21.15.10; 21.19.2; 22.14.7; 28.6.3; 28.19.1; 38.17.6. Note also 11.25.8; 14.4.1; 15.15.4; 31.12.9.

[114] *Comm.* II.565 (cf. also *Comm.* III.727). So too Mauersberger, *Polybios-Lexikon* I, 2, col. 811 (on Pol. 39.1.11).

at 39.1.11 in precisely this way.[115] But this conclusion about Pol. 39.1.11 means the passage cannot be used to support the translation of 18.13.7 offered by Walbank (or Scott-Kilvert).

Moreover, a third Polybian passage must be included in any debate over the meaning of 18.13.7 – though it never has been. This is Pol. 16.15.1. In 16.14–15, in the context of events in the year 201, Polybius enters into a digression on historical method: he allows that historians should have a partiality for their own country, but he warns against the intentional and gross distortions sometimes perpetrated by patriotic writers (16.14.6). The latter practice is degrading to the craft of the statesman–historian; both writer and reader should be on guard against it (14.7–10). Polybius continues: *δῆλον δ' ἔστι τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκ τῶν ἐνεστώτων* (15.1). He has been discussing the specific case of the historians Zeno and Antisthenes of Rhodes (14.1–5); now, after the digression on method, he returns to them, showing that, although both claim the battle of Lade in 201 as a Rhodian victory over Macedon, even on their own evidence it was obviously a Rhodian defeat (15.2–8). Given the context, the meaning of the phrase *δῆλον δ' ἔστι τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκ τῶν ἐνεστώτων* at 15.1 is unambiguous: 'what I am saying is made clear *by the present case*' – i.e. the case of Zeno and Antisthenes, referred to previously at 14.1–5 and now reiterated at 15.2–8. Indeed, this is how the passage has always been translated.[116]

Polybius' expression at 16.15.1 closely echoes the one at 18.13.7. If anything, the meaning of the latter passage is made even clearer by Polybius' use of the intensive *αὐτῶν*. Our conclusion must be that in all probability, Pol. 18.13.7 should *not* be translated: 'not to draw examples from far-off times (*πόρρωθεν*), what I am saying is easily observed from the time of which I am writing'. Such a meaning for *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων* is totally without parallel in extant Polybian usage. Rather we ought to translate: 'not to draw examples from far-off times, what I am saying is easily observed *from the very circumstances under discussion*'. Such a translation would still preserve the contrast with *πόρρωθεν*, and would conform to what we know of Polybian usage.[117]

But what are these 'circumstances under discussion'? Polybius immediately continues: 'for if Aristaenus had not then (*εἰ γὰρ μὴ . . . τότε*) in good time made the Achaeans throw off their alliance with Philip and change it for that of Rome, clearly the whole Achaean people would have been destroyed' (18.13.8). But as it was (*νῦν δὲ*), the League had gained safety, and even increased its power (13.9).

I would therefore suggest that it was, precisely, a discussion of Aristaenus' actions in 198 which provoked the digression 'On Traitors', and which is referred to by the phrase *ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων ῥᾳδίως ἔσται τὸ λεγόμενον καταvοεῖν* at 13.7: these are 'the circumstances under discussion'. The parallel would be with the discussion of Zeno and Antisthenes in 16.14.1–5, which provokes the digression on historical method, and where a reference back to the point of departure, encapsulated in the phrase *δῆλον δ' ἔστι τὸ λεγόμενον ἐκ τῶν ἐνεστώτων*, then appears at 15.1, after which Polybius returns to further discussion of Zeno and Antisthenes to illustrate the

[115] Shuckburgh, *Polybius* II (above, n. 53), 536; Drexler, *Polybios* II (above, n. 56), 1334; Roussel, *Polybe* 1196. Cf. also Dübner II (above, n. 80), 150 (following Schweighaeuser).

[116] Cf. Dübner I.579; Shuckburgh II.182; Paton V (above, n. 53), 31; Drexler II.911; Roussel 812.

[117] Pol. 18.13.7 is translated in the fashion I suggest by Dübner I.602; Shuckburgh II.213; Paton V.111; Drexler II.948; Roussel 845. Note that the translations of Pol. 16.15.1, 18.13.7 and 39.1.11 offered by Dübner/Schweighaeuser, Shuckburgh, Paton, Drexler and Roussel all have the virtue of consistency.

point of the digression (15.2–8). The difference would be that in 18.13–14, Polybius goes on to attempt the assimilation of other (fourth-century) examples to the primary example of the digression, Aristaenus.

This reconstruction is further supported by the presence of τότε at 18.38.8. It is somewhat mysterious: to what, exactly, does 'then' refer? This τότε worried Aymard, but he argued that Polybius in 13.8 was perhaps simply drawing a temporal contrast with the νῦν δὲ at 13.9.[118] Walbank does not accept that such a temporal contrast is meant, and has even acknowledged that τότε refers back precisely to ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων at 13.7 (which is obviously the case). Yet Walbank suggests that this fact provides us with no evidence for the point of departure of the digression.[119] But if the phrase at 13.7 means 'what I say [about traitors] can easily be observed from the very circumstances under discussion', and this is followed by 'for if Aristaenus had not then drawn the Achaeans away from Philip (13.8)...but as it was (13.9)...', surely this provides us with a second indication (beyond ἐξ αὐτῶν τῶν ἐνεστώτων) of the existence of a discussion of Aristaenus in 198 *outside* the digression, yet linked closely *to* it. This, indeed, was the conclusion about τότε in 13.8 reached by the two earliest students of the digression, Reiske and Schweighaeuser.[120]

In sum: once he is properly understood, it seems that Polybius himself, in 18.13, gives us two distinct indications of the origin of his digression 'On Traitors'. Both indications imply that its origin lay in a discussion, in Book 18, of Aristaenus and the Sicyon decision. If so, we no longer need to speculate about Argos.[121] But we do have to face the consequence that Polybius, having described Aristaenus and the Achaean decision in detail in Book 17, nevertheless returned to the subject again early in Book 18. How might that have come about?

Nissen's idea was that such a retrospective discussion might have been provoked in Polybius by his recording of Philip's speech at Nicaea attacking the Achaeans (18.6.5–7). This is possible, but cannot be proved one way or the other.[122] Another possibility offers itself in connection with Pol. 18.12.2–5. Having presented his readers with a detailed account of T. Flamininus' political manoeuvres concerning the Nicaea peace talks (18.1–12.1), Polybius in 12.2–5 presents a general evaluation of Flamininus' achievements in 198. Looking back especially on the events of the autumn, Polybius praises Flamininus' πρόνοια and ἀγχινοία (12.2); he had handled the enterprises of the Roman State, and his own private projects and ambitions, with consummate skill (the result being his prorogation in command of a continuing war against Philip). Perhaps Polybius' contemplation of Flamininus' accomplishments in 198 (especially the autumn) led the historian into a parallel retrospective contemplation of the achievements of Aristaenus as Achaean *strategos*, a passage which followed 18.12.2–5 and was parallel to it in mood – a passage which, in turn, led to the digression 'On

[118] 'Traîtres', 14 n. 7.

[119] *Comm.* II.566.

[120] Schweighaeuser VII (above, n. 76), 331 thought, of course, that this 'outside discussion' was Polybius' narrative of the Achaean decision of 198 (with the digression 'On Traitors' coming immediately afterwards). This cannot be the case (see above, 151). Reiske (above, n. 74) 606 thought that the τότε indicated a discussion of the decision of 198 *non in eo loco sed alio quidam superiore*; nevertheless, he held that the origin of the digression did not concern Aristaenus (rather, the betrayal of some unknown town).

[121] Given the conclusions reached above, one may also wonder if the phrase τὰ πρέποντα τοῖς καιροῖς at 18.32.2, rather than being too vague to use, actually constitutes yet a third indication that the origin of 'On Traitors' lies with a discussion of Aristaenus outside the digression.

[122] There are some verbal similarities between Pol. 18.6.7 and 18.13.5 – note the appearance of forms of μετατίθημι, a relatively rare word in Polybius, in both passages – but these are too slight a foundation upon which to build a case.

Traitors' (precisely because Aristaenus and his policies were so controversial). Or again, perhaps such a passage on Aristaenus (or Achaea?) was part of a general survey of the situation in Greece at the end of Flamininus' first year there: the discussion of Flamininus at 18.12.2–5 might suggest that some sort of general summing up was in Polybius' thoughts. In either case, it is tempting to link the mysteriously retrospective character of 'On Traitors' with the clearly retrospective character of 18.12.

No such passages on Aristaenus or Achaea appear in Livy's narrative account of winter 198/197 in Greece, an account which is obviously based on Polybius. This is one reason why scholars have found Aymard's 'Argos thesis' attractive, since Argos at least appears in Livy's narrative here.[123] But the fact must be faced that Polybius' general evaluation of Flamininus' behaviour in autumn 198 (18.12.2–5) is *itself* missing from Livy's narrative – and this is quite odd, given Polybius' positive assessment of the Roman commander. Indeed, the whole digression 'On Traitors' is missing from Livy! We cannot know, therefore, how much else of this section of Polybius Livy has left out.

The solutions offered by Nissen and by myself are speculative. Given the state of the Polybian text, they can hardly be anything else (the current *communis opinio* that 'On Traitors' concerns Argos is equally speculative, and much less securely based in what little evidence we possess). This means that some occasion other than one of the possibilities envisaged above might have provoked a Polybian discussion of Aristaenus, and thence the digression 'On Traitors'. As Aymard himself has said, if Aristaenus was associated with treachery in the minds of many men, 'Polybe pourrait avoir signalé, puis refuté ces accusations *à n'importe quel moment.*'[124] Indeed, the context of the famous 'debate' between Philopoemen and Aristaenus at Pol. 24.11–3 – which ends with another defence of Aristaenus – is similarly uncertain, and partly for the same reasons. But at least in the case of 24.11–13 the alternative contexts suggested by scholars all have some logical connection with Aristaenus.[125] This last fact only serves to emphasise the likelihood that it was some discussion of Aristaenus and his policy in 198 (rather than a discussion of Argos) which provoked 'On Traitors'.

III. CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

As Momigliano once warned, we should not expect Polybius to be a passive source.[126] Polybius was no simple chronicler: his history of Rome's rise to world power was also intended as a handbook of practical politics for statesmen like himself.[127] Such a purpose entailed the making of rational judgements about important political decisions of the past, based upon their practical impact for good or ill. This is the aspect of *The Histories* with which we have been concerned.

One of the important political decisions Polybius had to evaluate was the Achaean abandonment of Macedon in 198 in favour of Rome, engineered by the *strategos*

[123] This trend in method began with Aymard, 'Traîtres', 16.

[124] Ibid. 15 (my italics). Aymard, of course, denies the premise that Aristaenus' reputation was controversial (ibid.).

[125] For discussion, cf. Walbank, *Comm.* III.264–6. Like 18.13–15, the 'debate' in Pol. 24.11–13 is patched together from later excerptors – hence the similar problem of context.

[126] A. Momigliano, *Polybius between the English and the Turks* (Oxford, 1974), 1.

[127] On the nature and purpose of Polybius' πραγματικὴ ἱστορία, see now K. S. Sacks, *Polybius on the Writing of History* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1981), especially 178–86.

Aristaenus. This decision (I have argued) was highly controversial, and the controversy posed problems for Polybius, both as an Achaean and as a historian. Through Livy's account of the Sicyon *synkletos*, and also in the digression 'On Traitors' in Polybius' own Book 18, we can see Polybius wrestling with the problem, and ultimately coming to the defence of both Aristaenus and Achaea. To judge from Livy, Polybius' narrative of the Sicyon decision (in the lost Book 17) emphasised one factor and one factor only – Achaean fear of Rome and Sparta. Doubtless this was the main factor in the Achaean decision, but it also seems likely that the Roman offer of Corinth played a role too. Polybius' account, apparently, was therefore a 'silent polemic' against later charges of Achaean territorial greed (as well as treachery) in 198. Still, the controversial Achaean decision bothered Polybius enough to make him insert a new, explicit defence of Aristaenus early in Book 18. For (I have argued) the context of the digression 'On Traitors' is a discussion of Aristaenus and the decision of 198, and not (as most scholars now believe) a discussion of Argos.

Polybius' purpose in Books 17 and 18 was certainly patriotic (a defence of Achaea), but was also more than that. In terms of practical politics Polybius could argue that Aristaenus had acted correctly. Indeed, we know that Polybius himself acted in a rather similar fashion in 170, breaking with his own father in a crucial debate over Achaean policy towards Rome; his handling of Aristaenus and the Achaean decision of 198 therefore derived from inner conviction. Polybius clearly believed that Aristaenus had acted properly in 198: his correct perception of the situation facing Achaea (and his personal political courage) led not merely to security for the League, but even to an eventual expansion of its power. Thus, Polybius did not view Achaea's siding with Rome in the Second Macedonian War as either immoral or a mistake. Much later, Achaea would suffer disaster at Roman hands – but Polybius held that this was the result of mad and foolish decisions made by the Achaeans themselves (misled by their leaders).[128] A correct understanding of Polybius' narrative in Book 17, and of the context and character of the digression 'On Traitors' in Book 18, therefore reveals a basic theme of Polybian ideology, and also shows how it affected the construction and presentation of *The Histories*. The theme: states with limited power have limited options; only if a politician understands this will he be able to choose courses of action realistically, and so bring benefit to his community.[129]

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[128] Stupidity: Pol. 38.1.5; 3.7; 10.13; 11.10–11. Madness: 38.12.7; 13.8; 16.2; 18.8.

[129] Cf. now Eckstein, 'Polybius and Accommodation', 281–2. I wish to thank the editors of *CQ*, the anonymous readers, and especially Ernst Badian, for their helpful criticism – which is not to imply their agreement with the final result. The writing of this paper was facilitated by a generous grant from the University of Maryland.