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A LITERARY PASSAGE: POLYBIUS AND PLUTARCH'S NARRATOR*

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Abstract: This article deals with the presence of Polybius in the narrative world of Plutarch's works. It assumes that the explicit references made by Plutarch's narrator to Polybius have artistic, literary, and historiographic aims (to shed light on the protagonist of *Life* or on the narrative). Four passages in Plutarch's works are examined which correspond to passages within the extant complete five books of Polybius: *Aratus* 38; *Cleomenes* 25 and 27; and *De fortuna Romanorum* 12.

Keywords: Polybius, Plutarch, Narrative World, Unreliable Narrator, Aratus of Sicyon, Cleomenes III, Antigonus III Doson

Polybius is a man of numerous shifts and transitions. Coming from Greece but residing a great deal of his adult life in Rome, he best exemplifies the era called the 'Hellenistic period', chronologically placed between two ages in Greek history, namely, the Classical era and the rise of Rome in the Mediterranean and the Greek-speaking world. Polybius, however, was much more than that. In Greece, Polybius was a man of action or a historical agent (the *hipparchos* of the Achaean League, 169/8 BC) as well as a

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minor writer (Philopoemen's encomium);[1] in Rome he became an eminent historian and man of letters. As is well known, only five of forty volumes comprising his immense project, the *Histories*, survive in their entirety; the rest is found in fragments, references and citations preserved in other works.[2] This situation imposes another transition on Polybius, from a writer of his own work to a tenant residing in other authors' writings and collections. Herein lies another shift, i.e., that between historical writing and the works of other literary genres, like declamatory orations or, more interestingly, biography. Polybius finds himself in the land of *bios*.

This is our starting point: Polybius' appearances in Plutarch's writings, the biographies in particular. Plutarch's *Lives* defy a clear-cut generic categorisation.[3] In one well-known passage at the beginning of the *Alexander*, Plutarch claims that he is writing biographies and not histories (*Alex.* 1.1: *οὔτε γὰρ ἱστορίας γράφομεν, ἀλλὰ βίους*).[4] Yet, in many other places he treats his work as history (*Cim.* 2.5: *τῇ ἱστορίᾳ*; *Demosth.* 2.1: *τῷ … σύνταξιν ὑποβεβλημένῳ καὶ ἱστορίαν*; cf. *Aem. Paul.* 1.1; *Thes.* 1.2; *Lyc.* 1.1; *Tib.-Gai. Gracch.* 1.1).[5] A Plutarchan biography tells the story of a hero's life, but does not do so in the manner of history, which conveys

[1] Cf. Pol. 10.21.5. Early date: Nissen (1863) 280–1, Werner (1877) 14, Ziegler (1952) 1472–3, Walbank (1967) 121–2; a late date: Lucas (1827) 35 n. 2, Pédech (1951).

[2] Whilst fragmentary, Polybius' *Histories* (like the similar cases of Diodorus, Appian, Cassius Dio) did not enter Jacoby's project of lost Greek historians (*FGrHist*), as opposed to Polybius' monograph on the Numantian War (= *FGrHist* 173).

[3] See discussion in Duff (1999) 13–51.

[4] This may be a rhetorical commonplace: cf. Pol. 10.21.8, on history vs encomium. The direct influence on Plutarch may come from Nepos, *Pelop.* 1: *vereor, si res explicare incipiam, ne non vitam eius enarrare, sed historiam videar scribere* … ('for I fear that if I begin to give a full account of his actions, I may seem, not to be relating his life, but to be writing a history …').

[5] In *Galb.* 2.3 the relation of biography to history is presented as subtler: cf. Beck (2007) 397: '[Plutarch's] awareness includes the perception that his is a different form of historical writing'.

each detail. To use Aristotle's expression (*Poet.* 9.1, 1451b1–8) in his famous differentiation between history and poetry, a Plutarchan biography seems rather to aim at describing the general (*τὰ καθόλου*). The *Life* is interested in the *character* which is embodied in the historical statesman, and in the way such character develops and reacts to certain circumstances.[6] On the other hand, Plutarch addresses actual occurrences and deals with real historical figures; he does relate what Alcibiades did or what was done to him. Thus, the issue of genre remains elusive. A related question pertains to Plutarch's citation of other authors and historians. As these are not always mentioned by name,[7] it would seem justified to ask why they sometimes are.[8] Another point of interest is the fact that the reference to specific authors suggests research done prior to writing; this practice, which appears to tally with the conventions of history, still does not make the mode of presentation of facts in the *bios* a historical work.

The present paper proposes a way to deal with this question, assuming that Plutarch's narrative is basically a literary construction affiliated with the writing of history.[9] It is only appropriate to examine this issue by exploring Plutarch's mentions of Polybius, the most representative of Greek historiographic trends at the very cultural juncture which Plutarch saw himself as occupying.[10] Plutarch is

[6] On this 'character-viewpoint' see Gill (1983) and Pelling (2002) 308–12, 321–2.

[7] In this Plutarch is not different from many other writers in antiquity. Cf. Barrow (1967) 153 and Jones (1971) 84 on this convention. Russell (1973) 54–5 points out that the lists in the first volume of Pliny's *Naturalis Historia* are outstanding exceptions. Shipley (1997) 48 believes that the fact that Plutarch does not mention his sources indicates his wish to appear autonomous. Cf. Stadter (1989) lxxxv.

[8] Russell (1973) 54 believes the literary conventions of the *Lives* admit, or indeed require, a certain amount of reference to sources.

[9] See Duff (1999) 17 and Badian (2003) on Plutarch's works as being part of historiography. Cf. Schepens (2007).

[10] Plutarch probably saw himself as resembling Polybius in terms of his cultural position in Rome. At the beginning of Book four of the *Quaestiones Convivales* (*QC* 4.659E) Plutarch mentions the political advice

unique among his contemporaries in his sustained interest in the Hellenistic period.[11] He is also notable in his constant use of the historical writings of this time, principally those of Polybius.[12] This paper will not draw a comparison of all relevant passages in Plutarch and Polybius, but will tackle explicit references and mentions of Polybius in Plutarch's works. Polybius is explicitly mentioned twenty six times in Plutarch's extant corpus.[13] Most of these references cite Polybius as an author, the others refer to him as a historical agent. Our study will examine the passage of Polybius from his place in his own *Histories* to Plutarch's writings. For this

that Polybius gave to Scipio the Younger (cf. *Regum et imperatorum apophthegmata* (199F, 200A), namely, never to return from the forum without a new friend. In the *QC* Plutarch addresses his friend and benefactor, Sosius Senecio, with this very anecdote. The parallel between Polybius' position and that of Plutarch is made evident in *Praecepta gerendae reipublicae* (18.814C), where Plutarch mentions the advantage gained from the friendship of leaders (*καρπὸν ἐκ φιλίας ἡγεμονικῆς*) for the welfare of the community, as Polybius and Panaetius had, through Scipio.

[11] Cf. Bowie (1970) 14–15. For exceptions see Aul. Gell. *NA* 17.21.3; Plut. *Philop.* 2.6. See Geiger (1995).

[12] See Theander (1951) 52–3, 67–8; Pelling (1990) 216–19; (1997) 100–7; (2002) 288–291, 298 n. 24. A comprehensive study of Plutarch and Hellenistic historiography is still a desideratum. Suffice it here to mention Gabba (1957) and Africa (1961) 40–3 on Phylarchus; cf. Pelling (1997) 107–14. See the brief points made by Westlake (1955) 312–3 and Hornblower (1981) 68–9, 88 on Hieronymus of Cardia; Geiger (1981) 91–3; Bosworth (1992) on Duris and Hieronymus. See Mehl (2011) 185. See *Nic.* 1.1–4 on Timaeus with Muccioli (2000) 306–7 and Baron (2013) 174–5; cf. Pearson (1987) 7, 38–9, 143–4, 146 and Van der Stockt (2005). See also Goltz (1883); Walbank (1933) 15–19; Theunissen (1935) 4–13; Koster (1937) xiv–xvii; Porter (1937) xiii–xx; Errington (1969) 228–40; Manfredini–Orsi–Antelami (1987) ix–xv.

[13] There may be reason to believe that he was mentioned in the lost *Life* of Scipio, regardless of the identity of the Roman general in question. The so called 'Lamprias Catalogue' has two entries: one is the lost pair *Epaminondas–Scipio* (no. 7) and the other is the solitary *Scipio* (no. 28). Geiger (1981) 87 n. 6 assumes that the solitary *Life* was written previously to the paired one. For Africanus Major in the *Parallel Lives*: Peper (1912) 128–31; Ziegler (1949) 258–9; and Georgiadou (1997) 7–8. For Aemilianus Africanus Minor: Wilamowitz-Moellendorff (1926) 260 and Herbert (1957) 83–8.

purpose, four sections in the corpus of Plutarch will be studied here, in which (a) Polybius' name is explicitly mentioned; and (b) we possess the corresponding paragraphs in our extant complete text of Polybius (Books 1 to 5) with which we can compare Plutarch's reading. We shall explore Plutarch's way of using the figure of Polybius in his narrative world and gain insight into how Polybius' text is employed to create this very narrative world.

1. Plutarch's Narrator and the Narrative World

First, let us examine the world Polybius is made to step into. The assumption of the following discussion is that Plutarch's mention of historians and writers in his works is not only intended to show his erudition and his wide reading, nor simply to substantiate his assertions.[14] Rather, these references also have artistic, literary and historiographic aims, namely, to shed light on the protagonist, on the narrative, and on Plutarch's views concerning the course of history or the development of historiography and its significance.[15] In order to explore these notions, we will not study the relation of Plutarch the author to his sources (a difficult inquiry in itself), but more precisely the one that subsists between Plutarch's narrator and the authors he mentions, as presented in the text. While it is true that ancient literary criticism did not establish a complete differentiation between author and narrator,[16] ancient oratory was in fact not far off in its awareness of the process by which a *persona* could be adopted in the deliverance of a

[14] See the options mentioned in Barrow (1967) 153, namely, divergence from his main authorities, asserting superior credibility of one version as against others, or for the purpose of authenticating statements.

[15] Cf. Almagor (2013) 22.

[16] Nünlist (2009) 132–3. The difference between the narrator and his characters was also usually not observed, but could be found whenever it suited the argument. Cf. Hunter and Russell (2011) 197; see also Whitmarsh (2013) 63–74.

speech.[17] Therefore, despite recent doubts about this narratological orthodoxy and its applicability to classical texts,[18] we shall adopt the distinction between the narrator, who tells the story and is the one who has a voice in the narrative world, and the author, who has no voice in it.[19]

Elsewhere, I have tried to show the great advantage in the comprehension of Plutarch's works which this differentiation brings, especially in fathoming his irony.[20] When the narrative is delivered with coherence and consistency, we would say that the narrator is in agreement with the author, and is seen to be his mouth-piece. When we are in doubt whether the narrative is sincere, we would tend to think that there is some divergence between the narrator and the author. In this case, the narrator's descriptions and observations are made to convey one (explicit) meaning, while the author is seen to impart a divergent, implied one by the voice of his narrator. The narrator *tells* us a certain thing while *showing* us a different idea altogether, which we understand to be the author's true message. This is the structure of verbal irony, in which a speaker conveys both meaning A and meaning B to his audience. In that case, the narrator cannot be trusted in his utterances; he is unreliable.

[17] Cf. Quint. 8.6.54–5; cf. 6.3.85, 9.1.29 on *simulatio* (pretence of having a certain opinion) and *dissimulatio* (feigning not to understand). Note the reference to *simulatio* as the oratorical mask in 12.1.12; cf. Lausberg (1998) §§582–5, 902–4. Cf. Morrison (2007) 32–3.

[18] See Fludernik (2009) 13–14, 56–8; Morrison (2007) 30–5, 60; cf., however, Richardson (1990) 1–4.

[19] In Booth's scheme there is an *implied* author, i.e., the ideal image of the real writer, and his set of values or norms: cf. Booth (1983) 74–5: 'The "implied author" chooses, consciously or unconsciously, what we read; we infer him as an ideal, literary, created version of the real man; he is the sum of his own choices'; cf. 73. See the discussion whether the 'implied author' is necessary in Genette (1988) 93–107; Rimmon-Kenan (1983) 86–7; Kindt and Müller (2006).

[20] Almagor (2013) 20; id. (2018) 7–8, 10. Cf. Booth (1974); Wilson and Sperber (1992). Irony involves insincerity in that the speaker is pretending to be different from what he actually means or is; this is *eironeia* in its literal meaning, i.e., a pretence of ignorance (cf. Arist. *EN* 4.7, 1127a22), showing no opinion at all (the *dissimulatio* of n. 17).

The notion of an 'unreliable narrator' was proposed by Wayne Booth and has dominated the discourse of narratology ever since.[21] After Booth, scholars developed the role of the reader in the perception of the narrator's unreliability. It is now believed that the unreliable narrator is actually a reading strategy to make sense of a text, calling for the reader's response in detecting its incompleteness and in completing its meaning through interpretation.[22] The notion has been applied to several classical authors, yet needs to be explored more in Plutarch.[23]

The world the narrator is describing (or narrating) is the narrative world. It is called *diegesis* when it is the actual 'spatio-temporal universe designated by the narrative'[24] (the fictional world), and *exegesis* when it is the stratum of narration and of the 'narrator's comments, explanations, reflections and metanarrative remarks that accompany a story'[25] (the fictional story). Strictly speaking, the entire fictional universe is a 'represented' one created by the author, with the narrator being just as much part of it as the characters and the narrative.[26] The narrator may not be part of the fictional world, the *diegesis*, but he is as fictional as the *exegesis* that is made from his narrative, comments, etc. Yet in order not to overburden reading with these distinctions, let us now call the entire fictional sphere the

[21] See Booth (1983) 158–9: 'I have called a narrator *reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not … If [the narrator] is discovered to be untrustworthy, then the total effect of the work he relays to us is transformed.' On this concept see Nünning (1999), Phelan and Martin (1999), Yacobi (2001), and Olson (2003).

[22] On ancient readers' sophistication see Schmitz (1999) 161.

[23] In classical literature see, e.g., Theocritus: Berger (1984) 9; Plato's Socrates: Planeaux (2001); Apuleius: Lytle (2003) 353; Hesiod: Nisbet (2004) 155; Herodotus: Baragwanath (2008) 9, 21, 32–4, 58, 289; Lucian: König (2009) 39; Juvenal: Allan (2014) 116.

[24] Genette (1980) 2 n. 2, 94 n. 12; id. (1988) 17–8.

[25] Schmid (2010) 6; cf. 68. Cf. Coste and Pier (2009) 300. See also Fludernik (1996) 250–60.

[26] Schmid (2010) 32–3, 35.

'narrative world' (or 'universe') in a broad sense.[27] When Polybius steps into this world (upon being mentioned by the narrator), he is one of the characters, no different from the other figures in this respect. Moreover, even though Plutarch's narrator belongs to a different level within this world, the one of *exegesis* and not of *diegesis*, that narrator does not differ from the other characters since he is a fictional construct. As de Jong notes à propos of the Homeric poems, the narrator is 'a *creation* of the poet like the characters',[28] and Rabel even claims that the poet makes the narrator another character.[29] It is for this reason that the narrator is able to resemble other characters in the fictional universe.[30] The inclusion of Polybius, an author who had used a narrator in his own works, within the narrative world of Plutarch establishes a special connection between these two 'creatures' of the narrative world, i.e., the narrator and his story.

Just as external to the fictional universe as the author are the texts he uses to build it; within it are the narrator and the figure Polybius. The latter, although presented as an author and being on a different level than the story's characters, is nevertheless still part of this world, and is described by the narrator. Let us see how the mention of Polybius' name by Plutarch's narrator is instrumental in enabling the biographer to highlight aspects of the narrative world, and how the use of his predecessor's text helps Plutarch build the narrative world.

[27] Cf. Ryan (2009) 422; see Gerrig (1993); Almagor (2018) 9–11.

[28] de Jong (2004) 45; see also Richardson (1990) 180; Rabel (1997) 19.

[29] Rabel (1997) 19.

[30] The notion that the narrator can resemble or be identified with the characters in the narrative universe is an astute suggestion made by Booth (1983) 155: 'In any reading experience there is an implied dialogue among author, narrator, the other characters, and the reader. Each of the four can range, in relation to each of the others, from identification to complete opposition', etc.

2. Polybius 2.47–8 and *Aratus* 38

In the first passage, the citation of Polybius echoes the tenor and phrases of the original passage. Plutarch asserts (*Arat.* 38.11):

> Aratus says everything he can in explaining the necessity that was upon him. Polybius, however, says that for a long time (ἐκ πολλοῦ), and before the necessity arose, Aratus anticipated (ὑφορώμενον) the daring temper of Cleomenes and made secret overtures (κρύφα) to Antigonus, besides putting the Megalopolitans forward to beg the Achaeans to call in (ἐπικαλεῖσθαι) Antigonus.[31]

This is derived from Polybius, who claims (2.47.4–48.7) that Aratus foresaw what would happen (**προορώμενος** Ἄρατος τὸ μέλλον) after Cleomenes III had turned the constitution of Sparta into a despotism and was waging war with ability and audaciousness (χρωμένου δὲ καὶ τῷ πολέμῳ πρακτικῶς καὶ παραβόλως). Fearing the boldness of the Aetolians as well (information absent in Plutarch), Aratus decided to frustrate the plans of Cleomenes well in advance (**πρὸ πολλοῦ**). Aratus, according to Polybius, chose to enter into friendly relations with Antigonus, but had to conceal this appeal to the Macedonian enemy to avoid the dismay and opposition of the Achaeans. By telling a different story, Aratus publicly hid his real design (ἤμελλε τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔμφασιν ὑποδεικνύων **ἐπικρύψεσθαι** τὴν οἰκονομίαν). He saw that the people of Megalopolis would be more ready than others to seek the protection of Antigonus, being exposed to Spartan attacks, and secretly instructed two men, Nicophanes and Cercidas, to induce the citizens of that city to send them as envoys and make this application to the Macedonian king (**παρακαλεῖν** πέμπειν πρὸς τὸν Ἀντίγονον).[32]

[31] This and the following translations of Plutarch are those of B. Perrin in the Loeb Classical Library with slight changes.

[32] See Walbank (1957) 246–9; cf. id. (1933) 74–80, 164–5.

Plutarch's narrator then proceeds to relate that this very description offered by Polybius, namely, that Aratus devised his attack on Sparta well before the dramatic onslaught of Cleomenes, was given by Phylarchus.[33] The narrator hesitates, but claims that had it not been for the testimony of Polybius, one would not have trusted this account (ᾧ μὴ τοῦ Πολυβίου μαρτυροῦντος οὐ πάνυ τι πιστεύειν ἄξιον ἦν). In effect, Polybius is presented by the narrator as contradicting the portrayal of the events by Aratus.[34]

The image of Aratus we receive in Plutarch's description is in accordance with his character observable throughout the biography, i.e., an irresponsible and impetuous hero who undertakes surprising actions (cf. *Arat.* 5.4, 6.4–5, 8.5, 10.3–4, 19.3, 27.1, 29.3–4, 31.3, 31.5, 36.2) and a person who often relinquishes all accountability.[35] The introduction of the Macedonians, Aratus' enemies, into the Peloponnese (cf. *Arat.* 43.2) is an example of this behaviour. A schematic division of sources would place Phylarchus among Aratus' accusers for misbehaviour and show Aratus' own apologetic *Memoirs* as excusing his deeds out of necessity.[36] In this

[33] Cf. Gruen (1972) 618–22.

[34] In fact, Polybius admits that Aratus spoke and acted contrary to his real views (παρὰ τὴν ἑαυτοῦ γνώμην), and that he did not even mention these details in his *Memoirs* (2.47.10). Walbank (1957) 247 acknowledges the possibility that Polybius follows Phylarchus here (in spite of 2.56.1–2); another option is that the historian uses an 'independent Megalopolitan source connected with his own circle'; cf. Walbank (1933) 12, 191; id. (1984) 461–2; cf. Porter (1937) lxxii; Bikerman (1943) 298; Africa (1961) 27. It is to the credit of Plutarch's sensitive understanding of Polybius to observe that in this instance the historian appears to reflect a depiction not far from that of Phylarchus. See Koster (1937) 104.

[35] Cf. Almagor (2014) 281–2. This is evident in his response to Cleomenes to the effect that he does not control events but is controlled by them (*Arat.* 41.7), and can be found throughout the biography, e.g., in the mention of Fate or chance (*Arat.* 9.3, 12.5), or in Aratus' tendency to blame others (e.g., Erginus: *Arat.* 33.3) for his own deeds.

[36] See Walbank (1933) 4–12. Phylarchus: Pol. 2.56.1–63.6; Plut. *Arat.* 38.12; cf. Walbank (1957) 259–60 and Africa (1961) 27–30, 32, 35–7. Aratus' *Memoirs*: Walbank (1957) 228; id. (1933) 7–8, 161. See Pol. 1.3.2, 2.40.2, 2.47.11, 2.56.2, 4.2.1; Plut. *Cleom.* 16.4 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 37.4]; *Art.* 3.3,

scheme, Polybius would appear to play a middle ground: while acknowledging the secrecy and duplicity in Aratus' conduct (as Phylarchus would have it), the motive he imputes to Aratus tallies with this statesman's own approach (i.e., the danger that Cleomenes posed).[37]

Plutarch's narrator adopts this middle position of Polybius.[38] In the first part of the chapter (*Arat.* 38.5) he mentions that Aratus was criticised for surrendering his generalship at this crucial stage, and asserts that the reason usually provided, that is, Aratus' anger at the people, is not convincing; the real reason (*αἰτία δ' ἀληθής*) for this act was rather the precarious situation of the Achaeans (*τὰ περιεστῶτα τοὺς Ἀχαιούς*). Thus, he absolves Aratus from indulging in rash behaviour by pointing at the necessary contingency—the unrestrained nature of Cleomenes' new invasions.[39] Yet in the rest of the chapter, the choice of alliance with Antigonus is reprimanded as an act done without any consideration of the (Spartan) past or (Greek) future. This coalition is tantamount to a 'barbarisation' of the Peloponnese (*τὴν Πελοπόννησον ἐκβαρβαρῶσαι*),[40] set

32.5, 38.6. Apologetic: Plut. *Arat.* 33.3; *Ag.* 15.4. Misch (1950) 1.204 believes Aratus published his *Memoirs* in self-defence; cf. Marasco (2011) 106, 110, 113–4. For the afterlife of Aratus' apology cf. Paus. 2.8–9, 7.7.3–4.

[37] Polybius' reliance on Aratus: see 1.3.2, 2.40.4, 2.45–6, 2.60.2; Walbank (1957) 228, 239, 242, 245, 248–50, 253, 266; Meadows (2013). This is done to the point of distorting chronology: see Fine (1940) 140–1. Yet, cf. 12.25e.5–7 for Polybius' reluctance to rely on the *Memoirs* alone. On his use of Phylarchus see Walbank (1957) 260, 272–3, 280, 287, 289, 565–70 and cf. Pol. 2.66.4, 2.70, 5.35–39. At 2.56.1–2 Polybius promises to deal with the merits of both authors, but eventually only criticises Phylarchus.

[38] Cf. Porter (1937) 75 on *Arat.* 39: 'This chapter … shows no bias toward either Cleomenes or Aratus'.

[39] In this he seems to follow Aratus' exposition in attributing the responsibility for the deed to other people or greater forces.

[40] This may allude to Macedonian garrisons or to Illyrian and Celtic weapons. Cf. Manfredini–Orsi–Antelami (1987) 234–5. The comment is probably influenced by Phylarchus. Cf. the scholiast (*FGrHist* 81 F 57) on 'barbaric weapons' of the Thracians. In his presentation the narrator may include an implicit censure directed at Greek political conduct

opposite to a people whose ancestors were the Heracleidae. Having mentioned that Aratus justified himself with reference to necessity (ἀπολογιζόμενος τὴν **ἀνάγκην**), Plutarch's narrator then brings in Polybius to show the complete opposite, i.e., that no necessity was involved in the decision (ἐκ πολλοῦ φησι καὶ **πρὸ τῆς ἀνάγκης**). Plutarch lets the narrator undermine his own initial position by his citation of Polybius.[41]

Through the mention of Polybius and the employment of his text, Plutarch's narrator thus mimics Aratus. Firstly, he introduces a version which suggests the contrary of what he has just said. This behaviour accords well with Aratus' reversal of his lifelong policy of battling against the Macedonians by cooperating with them. Secondly, Plutarch's narrator relinquishes responsibility for his surprising acceptance of this contradictory version by stating that Polybius also seems to have supported it.[42] He is almost obliged to do so. Presenting himself as following the lead of Polybius, Plutarch's narrator changes our perception of the Megalopolitan. We now note that similarly to Aratus' sudden change of policy, Polybius also appears to contradict himself in the depiction of the Cleomenean War. He explicitly claims to pursue the account of Aratus and not

which eventually served to weaken the independent states and cities and by which Achaeans led Macedonians (Aratus) and later on Romans (e.g., Diophanes; cf. *Philop.* 16.3) into the Peloponnese. In this sense, the mention of 'barbarisation' might imply not only the army of Antigonus, but also the Romans. Although the biographer does not explicitly describe the Romans as barbarians, this is sometimes insinuated by Plutarch: see *Flam.* 2.5, 11.7: ἀλλόφυλοι. Cf. *Pyr.* 16.7 βαρβάρων (*pace* Swain (1989a) 298). For Polybius, cf. Champion (2000).

[41] One should note Plutarch's correct use of πρόφασις as the unconvincing excuse voiced to explain Aratus' resignation highlighting Polybius' ἔμφασις here (2.47.10) as the professed insincere story Aratus made publicly to conceal his true intentions (cf. Pol. 5.63.2, 6.5.3, 28.4.8). On πρόφασις in Polybius as a pretext to be distinguished from cause (αἰτία) and first event (ἀρχή) see 3.6; 22.18; Walbank (1957) 305–6; Sacks (1981) 124, 193; Baronowski (2011) 73–7; on Polybius' theory of causation see Pédech (1964) 75–98.

[42] Cf. Pelling (2002) 146, 163 n. 16 on Plutarch following the details which Polybius does not criticise.

that of Phylarchus (2.56.2).[43] Yet Polybius surprisingly introduces a report which a writer of a different historiographic inclination (like Phylarchus) would have approved of. One may find in Polybius' depiction the precise vice which the Megalopolitan attributes to his predecessor ('statements at random and without discrimination', *εἰκῇ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν εἴρηκεν*, 2.56.3).[44] In content and argumentation, therefore, Plutarch's narrator appears to claim that Polybius brought Phylarchus into his own portrayal—paralleling Aratus who introduced the Macedonians into the Peloponnese. In the correspondence Plutarch's narrator finds between Polybius and Phylarchus, there may even be a subtle criticism directed against Polybius in that his style absorbs features which he denounces in his ancestor, in particular the sensational or so-called 'tragic history', with the aim of stirring the emotions of the readers to pity.[45] Plutarch's

[43] Cf. Walbank (1957) 259–70. Cf. Ferrabino (1921) 260–8 on two different traditions which Polybius is following.

[44] Cf. 3.32.4: the vice of 'not writing similar descriptions on the same matters' (*μὴ ταὐτὰ περὶ τῶν αὐτῶν γράφειν*).

[45] See Polybius' censure, 2.56.10–13. The difference asserted between history and tragedy as that between instructing or persuading (the serious readers) through true facts and charming by the plausible follows Arist. *Poet.* 9.1, 1451a37–b7. See Walbank (1957) 262. Yet, cf. Marincola (2009) against Polybius following Aristotle. Cf. similar comments made by Polybius on other historians (2.16.13–14, 3.47.6–48.12, 7.7.1–2, 12.24.5, 12.26b.4–5, 15.34.1–36.11, 16.12.7–9, 16.18.2, 29.12.2–4, 29.12.8). On this type of history writing see Scheller (1911), Burck (1934) 178–233, Ullman (1942), Walbank (1938), (1955), and (1960), Africa (1961) 40–51, Walsh (1961) 23–8, Strasburger (1966) 82–3, Flach (1973) 22–4, Sacks (1981) 144–70, Van der Stockt (2005) 298–305, and the bibliography in Marincola (2013) 73 n. 1. For this element in Polybius' writing see Ullmann (1942) 40, 43–4, 46–7. Walbank (1957) 16 partially admits as much about Polybius: 'a readiness to embrace the terminology (but not the emotional attitudes) of 'tragic' history in the interest of … moral edification—these probably represent the sum of what a critic of Polybius' truthfulness can assemble'. Cf. ibid. 476 and 742 (*ad* Pol. 6.56.6): 'P[olybius] here uses the terminology applicable to "tragic history"; and just as he is prepared to adopt the "tragic" approach despite his many criticisms of it … so here he justifies the emphasis on sensational myths as being conducive to virtue'. See Pédech (1970) 22, Van der Stockt (2005) 299, McGing (2010) 72–4 on dramatic scenes in

narrator himself brings Polybius into his account to undermine Aratus' explanation. Both Polybius (who seemingly introduces a Phylarchan version) and Plutarch's narrator (who introduces Polybius) are thus made to resemble Aratus who unexpectedly introduces the Macedonians, his sworn enemies, into the Peloponnese.

In this example, the narrator presents the two Achaeans, Aratus and Polybius, as inconsistent. His ambivalent position towards both statesman and historian is actually part of his very imitation of these unpredictable figures. Since the versions of Aratus and Polybius are set against each other, the readers are provided with no real motive for the Achaean-Macedonian agreement and are left to wonder about it; at the same time, they are led to observe that Plutarch's narrator is unreliable.[46] It would appear that here the *literary* unreliability of Plutarch's narrator effected through the mention of Polybius both stresses this character trait of unreliability in Aratus as politician and underlines the *historiographic* shortcomings of Polybius.

3. Polybius 2.64 and *Cleomenes* 25

The same theme and literary device recur in *Cleomenes* 25 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 46] where Plutarch's narrator seems to echo the original words of Polybius while commenting on his qualities as a historian. Plutarch's narrator recounts (25.4–8 [46.4–8]) that Cleomenes' attempt against the Argolid (autumn 223/2 BC) was thought to be a deed of excessive

Polybius, and Marincola (2013) 80–5 for Polybius' attempt to raise his readers' emotions, and the use of vividness and of reversals of fortune.

[46] It will not do to address this problem by adopting just one version and follow only part of Plutarch's presentation, as in Walbank's initial description (1933) 73–77, 164, 190–4 that the Megalopolitan messengers were first sent to Antigonus Doson as early as 229 BC (and not in 226/5 BC), i.e., before the *coup d'état* in Sparta and 'the complete revelation of Cleomenes' ambitions' (191), deeming it an act 'both farsighted and courageous' (164). Later on, Walbank (1957) 246 corrected his view. See the criticism of Treves (1935) 24–5; Porter (1937) lxxiii–iv; Fine (1940) 137–9; Bikerman (1943) 295–6.

and desperate daring (**τετολμῆσθαι**), but was really done with great forethought, 'as Polybius says' (ὥς *φησι* Πολύβιος). Cleomenes was aware that the Macedonians were dispersed among the cities in winter quarters, and that Antigonus had only a few mercenaries. The Spartan king therefore invaded the territory of Argos, calculating (**λογιζόμενος**) that Antigonus would either be drawn into fighting for fear of appearing cowardly and weak, and would consequently be overpowered, or, in case he did not dare to fight, 'would be hated by the Argives'. Indeed, when Cleomenes was destroying the country (**διαφθειρομένης τῆς χώρας**) and robbing it, the Argives called upon Antigonus to fight or yield the leadership to his betters. Antigonus, however, 'as became a prudent general' (ὡς ἔδει *στρατηγὸν ἔμφρονα*), thought that disgrace lay in endangering his security and would not leave the city, keeping to his original plans. Cleomenes came with his army up to the very walls of the city, wrought havoc, and then withdrew unharmed.[47]

Polybius (2.64) has the same description of Cleomenes' invasion of the Argolid. According to the historian, most people deemed the attack a rash and risky action (*τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐδόκει*, **παραβόλως** *καὶ* **τολμηρῶς**) because of the strong fortifications on the frontier, but those who were capable of judging (ὡς δὲ *τοῖς ὀρθῶς* **λογιζομένοις**), considered it safe and sensible (**ἀσφαλῶς** *καὶ νουνεχῶς*).[48] In Plutarch's account, Cleomenes' reasoning is presented in reverse order to that provided in Polybius' original passage, which has the following: since Antigonus had already dismissed his forces, Cleomenes thought he would surely pass through the country without risking himself, and speculated that the Argives would be roused to indignation

[47] See Kromayer and Veith (1903) 209–10. The second invasion of the Argolid (Plut. *Ag.-Cleom.* 26 [47] is clearly a doublet of the first, taken from another source (probably Phylarchus, cf. *FGrHist* 81 F 57); see Walbank (1933) 109; id. (1957) 271.

[48] In 2.47 Polybius attributes to Aratus the depiction of Cleomenes' demeanour as **παραβόλως** (cf. Plut. *Arat.* 35.6 and 27.1; Walbank (1957) 246). In 2.64 he seems to oppose this view. This may mean he is not following Aratus in the latter passage and distances himself from him.

against Antigonus, after the Spartans laid waste their lands up to their walls (**τῆς χώρας καταφθειρομένης** ἕως τῶν τειχῶν). He also surmised that in case Antigonus offered battle, Cleomenes' army could easily beat him. Antigonus was indeed not swayed to change his strategy and remained inactive, 'like a wise general and king' (λίαν ἡγεμονικῶς καὶ βασιλικῶς).[49] The Spartan king thus retreated safely home (**ἀσφαλῶς** εἰς τὴν οἰκείαν ἐπανῆλθεν) after having terrified his enemies.[50]

Polybius refuses to see the actions of Cleomenes and Antigonus as influenced by impulses or anxiety (like 'most people' in the case of Cleomenes), but rather assigns judgement and calculation to both. Plutarch's narrator appears to follow the interpretation of his predecessor in the latter part of the chapter (*Cleom.* 25.4-8 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 46.4–8]). Yet he seems to adopt a completely different approach in the first part of the chapter (*Cleom.* 25.1–3 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 46.1–3]), describing the attack on Megalopolis. Here, the authorial voice depicts Cleomenes as enraged and embittered (τραχυνθεὶς καὶ ἀγανακτήσας) at Philopoemen's rejection of the Spartan offer to join his cause, to such an extent that he destroys and plunders the city.[51] He returns home in fear (φοβούμενος) of Antigonus and the Achaeans. His enemies, however, do not fight; their joint assembly at Aegium dissolves, and although Antigonus initially offers

[49] Walbank (1957) 271 believes this praise of the Macedonian king comes from Aratus, brushing away Plutarch's important note that the Achaean statesman's *Memoirs* contained abuse of Doson (*Ag.-Cleom.* 16.4 [37.4]).

[50] More plausibly, Walbank (1933) 108–9 attributes different motives to Cleomenes and basically claims that he could not have acted otherwise. Since Cleomenes was aware that the next season 'must inevitably bring with it a Macedonian invasion of Laconia', he had to strike first.

[51] See also Cleomenes' later appreciation of his own acts in Megalopolis as done to satisfy his anger (*Cleom.* 26.2 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 37.2]: ὑπ' ὀργῆς).

assistance, he nevertheless orders his forces to remain in place.[52]

Both parts of the chapter ostensibly present the same series of actions and results: Cleomenes attacks, ravages a city and a region (Megalopolis, Argos), Antigonus does not fight him, Cleomenes retreats. Outwardly, they look similar. The only difference is the motivation: in the first half, action is largely dictated by emotions, while in the latter it is ascribed to logical calculations. The two sections appear to undermine each other as explanations of the actions taken by Cleomenes and Antigonus. It is astonishing that this tension is present in Polybius as well: in 2.55.7 he emphasizes Cleomenes' outstanding emotional hostility (*δυσμενῶς*), while in 2.64 he underlines the Spartan king's cold calculation. In between the two passages, Polybius inserts his own censure of Phylarchus, an author who would rather be happy with the latter, sophisticated portrayal of Cleomenes.[53]

Both parts thus *seem* to present a similar sequence of actions, yet these are *really* different mostly because they have different motivations: in one case they stem from irrational reasons; in the other, they derive from rational calculations. This differentiation between outer impressions and reality appears throughout Plutarch's chapter. For

[52] This could not possibly come from Phylarchus, *pace* Walbank (1957) 258 and Africa (1961) 36 even though the historian did write about the sack of Megalopolis (Pol. 2.61–2). Phylarchus did not present his protagonist in such unfavourable colours (on the contrary: Pol. 2.61.4: *τὴν* Κλεομένους *μεγαλοψυχίαν καὶ μετριότητα πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους*). Pol. 2.55.2–7 (esp. 2.55.7: *πικρῶς διέφθειρεν καὶ δυσμενῶς*) is also not from Phylarchus. It is more reasonable to believe that this horrid depiction comes from a source hostile to Cleomenes, possibly Aratus himself (Polybius admits to using Aratus in 2.56.2). Presumably, the description of the Spartan atrocities in Megalopolis (and Aratus' weeping) was meant to counter the impression left by the Achaean brutality at Mantinea (Pol. 2.57; Plut. *Arat.* 45.4).

[53] Cf. Africa (1961) 58. 2.64 may even be Polybius' own sentiment. As in 2.70.7 (Polybius' favourable treatment of Antigonus, cf. 2.64.6), the positive description of Cleomenes can come from the Megalopolitan historian himself; cf. Walbank (1957) 287.

instance, there is a suggestion of dishonesty on Aratus' part. While his behaviour in disclosing the calamity in Megalopolis as depicted by Plutarch's narrator is entirely in character with Polybius' Aratus (cf. Pol. 4.8.5, 7), there are certain innuendos that Aratus, as presented by Plutarch, is not being entirely honest:[54] his weeping is prolonged, he holds his mantle to cover his face (i.e., covers the truth rather than unveiling it) and only speaks when the people are amazed, being all the more filled with trepidation at the disaster.[55] Plutarch's narrator thus subtly exposes Aratus' insincerity.

We saw that according to Polybius, Cleomenes' actions are said to appear to be derived from whims or emotions but in fact stem from calculations and strategy. Plutarch's narrator appears to be adopting this description of Polybius. Yet by viewing the two sections of the chapter side by side—the exact format we noticed in the first case above (Polybius 2.47–8 and *Aratus* 38)—his readers may get the impression that they are not given a correct portrayal, and may doubt the imputation of motivation. Is Plutarch's narrator right in describing Cleomenes' daring as the result of a *great* foresight (*μετὰ πολλῆς προνοίας*), and can Cleomenes' retreat be indeed characterised as one without fear (*ἀδεῶς ἀνεχώρησεν*)? After all, Cleomenes was wrong in his reasoning: Antigonus did not fight the Spartans, but did not lose his standing with the Argives because of his inaction. Moreover, Cleomenes did not dare to wage battle but only reached as far as the city walls. Plutarch's narrator thus exposes Polybius' inadequacy as well as his own

[54] Cf. Pol. 2.47.10: *ἠναγκάζετο καὶ λέγειν καὶ ποιεῖν πρὸς τοὺς ἐκτός, δι' ὧν ἤμελλε τὴν ἐναντίαν ἔμφασιν ὑποδεικνύων ταύτην ἐπικρύψεσθαι τὴν οἰκονομίαν*.

[55] One also notes that Aratus stands on a stage (*ἐπὶ τὸ βῆμα*). Besides being a raised place or platform for speakers, the *βῆμα* was associated with the theatre and the theatrical. Cf. *IG* II² 5021; *IG* II² 13293 (*βῆμα θεήτρου*); LSJ, s.v. II.3.

limitation in reporting or accounting for the events; he is again seen as unreliable.[56]

In a sense, all the figures of the narrative world in the chapter (Aratus, Cleomenes, Antigonus, Polybius and Plutarch's narrator) fail to deliver and they frustrate the hopes of their respective communities or readers. Like the internal audience of Argives dismayed at Antigonus (*Cleom.* 25.6 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 46.6]), who was brought by Aratus especially for the sake of fighting Cleomenes but failed to do so at this critical moment, the external readers may be similarly disappointed with the explanation advanced by Polybius suggesting another motivation (derived from Phylarchus?) and with Plutarch's narrator for introducing it into his narrative.[57]

The relation of Plutarch's narrator to Polybius can be seen in what the former does with the text of his predecessor. There are verbal echoes (e.g., Polybius: *τῆς χώρας καταφθειρομένης*; Plutarch: *διαφθειρομένης τῆς χώρας*). While Polybius claims that a sound analysis of Cleomenes' action was offered by people capable of calculating matters (*λογιζομένοις*), in Plutarch, it is Cleomenes who does the calculating (*λογιζόμενος*) in his own analysis of the presumed conduct of Antigonus. Cleomenes thus turns from an object that undergoes historical interpretation to one that interprets others. Moreover, Polybius has Cleomenes imagining the choice Antigonus would be making: either risking fighting with his present forces (**διακινδυνεῦσαι** *τοῖς παροῦσιν*) or remaining with his (original) plans (**ἐμμείνας** *τοῖς* **λογισμοῖς**) and not doing anything, thus enabling Cleomenes to retreat safely (**ἀσφαλῶς** *ὑπέλαβε ποιήσασθαι τὴν ἀναχώρησιν εἰς τὴν οἰκείαν*). Plutarch's narrator, however, transfers these thoughts to Antigonus himself; the Macedonian king considers possible disgrace in undertaking

[56] Incidentally, Polybius himself criticises Phylarchus for his inadequacy in the imputation of motives (2.56.13–16).

[57] One reader, namely, Walbank (1933) 108–9, indeed proposes other motives for Antigonus' inaction: 'knowing that until his troops arrived he was no match for Cleomenes'.

illogical risks and casting away safety, and therefore remains with his previous plans (ὁ δ' Ἀντίγονος … τὸ **κινδυνεῦσαι** παραλόγως καὶ προέσθαι τὴν **ἀσφάλειαν** αἰσχρόν … ἡγούμενος … **ἐνέμενε** [ἐν] τοῖς αὐτοῦ **λογισμοῖς**). In a Platonic move, as it were, Plutarch's narrator shifts from the impressions others fathom of the historical individual to the genuine and real article: from others to Cleomenes and from Cleomenes to Antigonus. Yet this progress from image to the real item (almost analogous to the movement in Plato's parable of the cave) is accompanied by Plutarch's narrator's producing an image (his own text, as an historical interpretation), and attempting to imitate the text of Polybius.

What we have here are basically two different attitudes to the *Histories* of Polybius. One is a treatment of the text as a literary model, containing expressions and phrases too well known to be ignored. Plutarch's narrator incorporates them in his account, yet while ostensibly echoing the original text, he changes their importance by imparting them to different characters and altering the perspective. The second approach is that of a historian. Plutarch's narrator goes beyond the text, now deemed merely an image or impression, to the real figures described in that text. He thus uses the text to undermine itself. This can be seen in the mention of safety (ἀσφαλῶς, ἀσφάλεια). Cleomenes is certain of his safe return according to Polybius (and others see his action as safe and sensible). By challenging the text, and deliberately not being truthful to its form, Plutarch's narrator mentions the safety of *Antigonus*. He is almost insinuating the eventual winner in the clash between the figures, and in actual fact sees the truth outside the text.

This attitude of Plutarch's narrator to Polybius' text, involving an apparent repetition of Polybius while completely altering the original significance, or a formal change in an effort to attain the reality of the matter, echoes the character of the protagonist of this particular *Life*. The narrator mimics the Spartan king, who appears to revert to

the letter of the Lycurgan constitution (*Cleom.* 10, 16.6–7, 18 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 31, 37.6–7, 39]) while changing its spirit.[58]

4. Polybius 2.65–70 and *Cleomenes* 27

The second instance in the *Cleomenes* where Plutarch's narrator mentions Polybius occurs almost immediately afterwards (*Cleom.* 27 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 48]). Ostensibly, Plutarch repeats the historian's view (2.65–70) that Antigonus triumphed in the battle at Sellasia (summer of 222 BC) thanks to his resources and because Fate was on his side.[59] Concerning the first factor, Plutarch writes that Antigonus, who waged war with large funds, wore out and exhausted Cleomenes, 'who could only meagerly and with difficulty provide pay for his mercenaries and provisions for his citizen-soldiers'. Cleomenes' shortage of money thus compelled him to enlist only 20,000 men in comparison with Antigonus' 30,000, 'as Polybius says' (*ὡς Πολύβιός φησι*). Fortune, Plutarch's narrator further comments, 'decides the most important affairs by a minor detail' (*ἡ τὰ μέγιστα τῶν πραγμάτων κρίνουσα τῷ* ***παρὰ μικρὸν*** *τύχη*), and in this case did not favour Cleomenes, since it was only once the Battle of Sellasia had been fought out and decided that messengers appeared to tell Antigonus of problems in Macedonia (a clash with Illyrians), news that without doubt would have terminated his intervention in the Peloponnese.[60]

These two factors are definitely present in Polybius' description. Antigonus' army, so the historian reports, numbered 28,000 infantry soldiers and 1,200 horsemen; Cleomenes' host numbered 20,000 men (2.65.3). Yet Poly-

[58] On Cleomenes' subverting of the Spartan constitution see Pol. 4.81.12–14; Mendels (1978).

[59] On the battle, its location, and date see Pol. 2.65–9; Plut. *Cleom.* 28 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 49], *Philop.* 6. See Kromayer and Veith (1903) 266–77; Kromayer (1910); Bettingen (1912) 43–51.; Ferrabino (1918–9); Honigmann (1923); Walbank (1957) 272–9 (correcting Walbank (1933) 103, 108–10, 195–6: 223 BC); Pritchett (1965) 59–70.

[60] On these eastern Illyrians (Dardanians) see Fine (1936) 25.

bius seemingly maintains that this fact was irrelevant: Antigonus perceived that the Spartan king placed his soldiers well on the strategic points on the two hills Euas and Olympus on either bank of the river Oenous (2.65.8–11). Moreover, Polybius asserts that the two commanders were gifted and their hosts were almost identical in magnitude (2.66.4: *παραπλησίους*).[61] Consequently, while the numbers are indeed present in Polybius' work, Plutarch's narrator allots more importance than does Polybius' to the divergence in the figures as the reason for the Macedonian-Achaean triumph.[62]

Polybius also refers to Fate's part in this battle: first of all, in causing the two armies to clash with each other (2.66.4: *ἡ τύχη συνέβαλε τούτους τοὺς ἄνδρας*) and second, exactly as Plutarch describes, as the reason for the postponement of the arrival of the update on the Illyrian assault of Macedonia (2.70.1)—thus determining the outcome, against all reason, as Polybius emphasises: 'thus almost always Fortune is accustomed to decide the greatest of affairs [in a way which seems to human beings] outside of reason [the sphere of rational analysis]' (2.70.2: *οὕτως ἀεί ποθ' **ἡ τύχη τὰ μέγιστα τῶν πραγμάτων παρὰ λόγον** εἴωθε κρίνειν*).[63] Plutarch's narrator alters Polybius' original words *παρὰ λόγον* into *παρὰ μικρόν* ('a slight change', 'an imperceptible change')[64] ironically creating a slight change himself to modify the meaning altogether.[65] The modification is signif-

[61] Cf. LSJ s.v., A.3; Polybius also claims that nothing was wanting with respect to defence and attack (2.65.12: *οὐδὲν γὰρ ἀπέλειπε τῶν πρὸς ἐπίθεσιν ἅμα καὶ φυλακήν*; cf. 2.66.3). See Walbank (1957) 279.

[62] Usually Polybius attaches great significance to the numbers of armies. See his criticism of Timaeus (12.26a = *FGrHist* 566 F 31b) on Timoleon's exhortation to his soldiers to disregard the fact that they were outnumbered.

[63] Walbank (1957) 289.

[64] LSJ s.v., III.5.c; cf. Pol. 15.6.8, *ἡ τύχη* as the subject: *ἡ τύχη καὶ παρὰ μικρὸν εἰς ἑκάτερα ποιεῖ μεγάλας ῥοπάς* (Hannibal's address to Scipio on the eve of Zama). Cf. Walbank (1967) *ad loc.*

[65] There is no requirement to alter the MSS into *ὀλίγον* simply because of Plutarch's variant, *pace* Wunderer (1894) 62 and Walbank (1957)

icant, and would appear to readers acquainted with the original text as tongue-in-cheek, suggesting that the actual cause for the conflict's ending is not, after all, external to the realm of rational thinking, but rather in line with the difference of the armies' strengths and other factors. Plutarch's misquotation of Polybius (eight words are virtually identical and more or less in the same order), while apparently reiterating his precursor's words, is expressed in a manner that challenges that very understanding and provides another cause for the outcome. Polybius' allusion to an erratic Fortune may derive from Phylarchus.[66] His 'tragic' history was partially made up from these references to baffling reversals of Fate.[67] The statement accredited to Phylarchus that Antigonus' Fortune was like that of Alexander's (*FGrHist* 81 F 46 = Athen. 6.251d) may offer the primary setting for this proclamation.[68]

Another element in Polybius' account which could derive from Phylarchus is the mention of funding (or rather lack thereof in the case of Cleomenes). According to Polybius (2.63.1), Phylarchus related that ten days before the battle, a messenger from Ptolemy III informed Cleomenes that he was withdrawing his subsidy to Sparta, and asked

289, and despite the fact that the combination is found nearby (2.55.4). Polybius' phrase as quoted also appears nearby (2.38.5; cf. 2.37.6); cf. 12.22.4, 29.22.2, 33.17.5 and cf. *παρὰ* (*τὸν*) *λογισμόν* (29.21.5), quoting Demetrius of Phalerum on *Tyche*. The explanation Walbank offers, namely, that 'Doson's victory is not irrational (like the novel behaviour of *Tyche* in letting the Macedonians rise to dominion [in 29.21.5]' forces an interpretation on Polybius (and note the rise of Macedonians in both cases). Assuming that Polybius meant that Doson 'merely won by a small margin, as Plutarch correctly has it' makes no allowance for artistic variation on the biographer's part. In any case, this was probably the version known to Plutarch. Moreover, there is no need to believe that Polybius made a careless reproduction of Phylarchus' text.

[66] See Ullmann (1942) 41; cf. *FGrHist* 81 F 26.

[67] Cf. Pol. 2.56.13, 15.36.2, and Marincola (2013) 84–5.

[68] See Africa (1961) 77 n. 72. The same sentiment appears in Just. 28.4. Cf. the resemblances between Justin and Phylarchus: F 16 ~ Just. 26.3.6; F 30 ~ Trog. *prol.* 27, Just. 27.2.10; F 48 ~ Just. 25.4. Alternatively, this may relate to Antigonus' premature death.

Cleomenes to reach an agreement with Antigonus. Upon hearing this news, Cleomenes 'gambled on all' (*ἐκκυβεύειν τοῖς ὅλοις*) and quickly (*τὴν ταχίστην*) decided to give battle before his soldiers would hear this, 'since he had no hope of being able to pay their salary out of his own resources' (*διὰ τὸ μηδεμίαν ὑπάρχειν ἐν τοῖς ἰδίοις πράγμασιν ἐλπίδα τοῦ δύνασθαι μισθοδοτεῖν*).[69] This explanation of Phylarchus for Cleomenes' defeat is justly termed by Walbank as the 'stab in the back' thesis (cf. *Cleom.* 28.1 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 49.1]), referring to Ptolemy's betrayal of the Spartan king.[70]

The series of examples Plutarch's narrator brings (*Cleom.* 27.1–2 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 48.1–2]) to prove the importance of financial backing to the conduct and outcome of wars does more than that. It attests to the constant internal quarrelling and divisions among the Greeks. These squabbles are present within the cities, like the rivalry between the Athenian orators (the mention of Demades),[71] as well as in the intercity strife, like that between Athens and Sparta (the allusion to Archidamus).[72] In a sense, this brings out the explanation of Phylarchus concerning the treachery of Ptolemy in that there was no united front in the Greek speaking world against Antigonus. Macedonia's triumph can thus be explained against this background. Furthermore, the mention of Polybius neatly placed at the end of the chapter may also allude to Polybius' life story and the fact that this same internal division in Greece eventually brought about the

[69] See also Pol. 2.62.9–63.4. The claim that Phylarchus thought Cleomenes in possession of 6,000 talents he had gained as loot from Megalopolis is probably the result of an error in transmission. See Walbank (1957) 267–70; Africa (1961) 33–4. The theme of Cleomenes' shortage of money recurs in Plutarch's biography (*Cleom.* 22.7 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 43.7], 23.1 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 44.1]).

[70] Walbank (1957) 270.

[71] Incidentally, the saying attributed to Archidamus is ascribed elsewhere, in Plut. *Demosth.* 17.3, to the orator Hegesippus (Crobulus) and thus to have an Athenian context as well.

[72] For the saying, cf. *Crass.* 2.7–8; cf. *Regum et imperat. apophth.* 190A, 219A.

victory of Rome over Macedonia and Greece.[73] Thus, the Greek tradition of inner conflict may seem sufficient to clarify the result of the battle.

One could assert, however, that the battle was decided by another factor, namely, the respective abilities or flaws of the generals. Like the narrator in the biography, Polybius also declares that had Cleomenes postponed battle for a few days, he would have saved his rule (2.70.3: Κλεομένης, εἴτε τὰ κατὰ τὸν κίνδυνον παρείλκυσε τελέως ὀλίγας ἡμέρας … διακατέσχεν ἂν τὴν ἀρχήν),[74] for the messengers would have arrived to reveal the calamity in Macedonia. Plutarch's narrator's acceptance of Polybius' utterance regarding the possible turn of events highlights the rash nature of the Spartan king, and implicitly explains his downfall as caused by his own shortcomings.

Polybius, Phylarchus, and Plutarch's narrator seem to propose different reasons for Cleomenes' failure: funding, Fate, and fervid character. In resourceful creativity, Plutarch lets his narrator imitate both Cleomenes and the working of Fate's pendulum, as he moves between these different explanations for the defeat.[75] In imitation of the fluctuations of Fate, Τύχη is introduced by Plutarch's narrator only to be instantly disregarded as a suitable reason for the occurrence.[76] This portrayal is inconsistent and might imply an impulsive narrator, mimicking the character of Cleomenes in general.[77]

[73] Cf. Almagor (2014) 284, 288.

[74] Since Antigonus would have returned home because of the troubles in his country. The details may come from Phylarchus. On this counterfactual conditional see Zhang (2008) 95–6.

[75] It would appear that Plutarch's ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις (*Cleom.* 27.11 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 48.11]) focusing on Cleomenes' army and funding loosely echoes τοῖς ὅλοις of Polybius 2.63.2, indicating the Spartan king's recklessness.

[76] This passage is not found in Swain (1989a), but perhaps it is close to his third significance of Τύχη; cf. 277: 'there is no discernible trace of Polybian influence in Plutarch's writings'.

[77] On Cleomenes' rashness see *Comp. Ag.-Cleom. T. et G. Gracch.* 4.2 (θρασύτερον). This characterisation is noticed in *Cleom.* 4.10 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 25.10], 26.3 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 37.3] (τὸ θράσος); cf. Cleomenes' daring, Pol. 5.36.7: τόλμαν. The influence of Stoic philosophy proved dangerous on

If someone were to say that all other reasons were set in motion by *Tyche* or that the combination of such factors itself constitutes *Tyche*, working at different levels, then this would surely have been an acknowledgement that the reference to Fortune is redundant. *Tyche* cannot be tantamount to other factors; here, the whole would surely be more than the sum of its parts. Oftentimes, *Tyche* is mentioned when there is no other explanation. Polybius himself appears to resent the turning to *Tyche* (or divinity at large) in elucidating occurrences (36.17.2–4) and condemns those who assign events to Fate (10.2.5, 10.5.8, 10.7.3, 10.9.2–3). Elsewhere, he asserts that people should take responsibility and not ascribe everything to *Tyche* (1.37.4, cf. 2.7.2, 15.21.3).[78]

This differentiation of causes may portray Polybius' own turn to Fortune as redundant, thus placing doubt on the Megalopolitan's historical acumen. Polybius' notorious dual approach to causality in introducing both divine and human causes for actions[79] is highlighted by Plutarch's narrator in yet another display of the biographer's artistic skills. The narrator may allude here to the two sides in Cleomenes' character, between ideological pursuits on the one hand and pragmatic realism on the other.[80] Plutarch's narrator may also insinuate that Polybius' reference to *Tyche* entailed a certain blindness to the situation, similar to that of Cleomenes, whose attack was undertaken prematurely.

an 'impetuous nature' (*προσεκκαῦσαι τὴν φιλοτιμίαν*, *Cleom.* 2.3 [*Ag.-Cleom.* 23.3]).

[78] Compare the conclusions of Walbank (1957) 17–18 and Pédech (1964) 336–7 with Hau (2011) 188.

[79] For the appearance of Fortune in Polybius' explanations see Walbank (1957) 17–21, esp. 18 on the episode treated here. In some sense it is a force effecting occurrences, especially those that are utterly external to human control (and whose causes cannot be deciphered by rational means). Cf. Fowler (1903); De Sanctis (1916); Roveri (1982); Hau (2011), esp. 186–92.

[80] See Roskam (2011) 214: 'laudable balance between energetic decisiveness and respect for philosophical principles'. In this he was slightly different from Agis IV; cf. Roskam (2004).

Moreover, the delay in Plutarch's narrator's storytelling (narration) between his alleged quotation of Polybius' text and the moment he brings the quotation back home to Polybius by explicitly mentioning the Megalopolitan's name at the end of the chapter is made to correspond to another delay in the chapter, i.e., that between the events in Macedonia and the call for Antigonus to return back home and deal with the situation. This allegory can be seen more clearly in our last case.

5. Polybius 2.18 and *De fortuna Romanorum* 12

The last passage with which we shall deal here is another reference to an extant passage in Polybius' text. In fact, it is the most precise of the allusions made by Plutarch. The essay *On the Fortune of the Romans* (*De fortuna Romanorum*), which discusses the part Fortune takes in Rome's prominence, could be seen as a consideration of the role Τύχη is assigned by Polybius in guiding affairs of the world and making Rome bring together nearly the entire inhabited world under its control (cf. 1.4.1).[81] It is no surprise to discover the historian's name in the essay, near its end (325F–326A), in an explicit reference. As this is not strictly a narrative, but a declamation, we are not dealing with a narrator but rather with the *persona* of an orator delivering a speech. The orator brings an example of Fortune's succour to the city and mentions the fact that after seizing Rome, the Gauls had to leave for their own country (εἰς τὴν χώραν) when they had received news of the attack of neighbouring barbarians (τῶν προσοίκων βαρβάρων). The invaders had to arrange for a peace agreement (εἰρήνην θέμενοι) with Camillus and depart. Plutarch asserts that this report is to be found in the second book of Polybius (ὅπερ Πολύβιος ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ βίβλῳ),[82] and concludes that there can be no disagreement that Fortune was the cause of Rome's pro-

[81] Cf. Swain (1989b) 513.

[82] Pelling (1979) 74 n. 6 rightly claims the use of a book number implies first-hand knowledge of the work on the author's part.

tection, by diverting (**περισπάσασα**) her enemies or by removing (**ἀποσπάσασα**) them from Rome unexpectedly (ἀπροσδοκήτως).

The reference is to Polybius' claim (2.18.3) that the Gauls, having seized Rome except for the Capitol were deterred (**ἀντισπάσματος**) when the Veneti invaded their own country (εἰς τὴν **χώραν** αὐτῶν); consequently, they made a rapid treaty with the Romans (τότε μὲν ποιησάμενοι συνθήκας) and returned home. The two passages may seem to convey the same picture, yet to learned and attentive readers Plutarch's passage may appear in an entirely different light. Firstly, the employment of the form ἀπροσδοκήτως together with τύχη suggests Plato's stipulation in *Leg.* 11.920d that someone is pardonable when breaching contracts if he or she is forcibly thwarted from realising them because of an unforeseen fate (ἀπὸ τύχης ἀπροσδοκήτου τις ἄκων κωλυθῇ). In Plato's picture, Fortune is accountable for breaching an agreement; in Plutarch's essay, by contrast, Fortune is responsible for generating a treaty. This is certainly not unintentional. In using a vocabulary that calls to mind the role of τύχη in terminating an outcome within a passage that describes its role as causing this very result, Plutarch's narrator/speaker may insinuate the ineffectiveness of allusions to τύχη in the historical clarification of events.[83]

How, then, did Rome achieve its greatness? The presenter of this declamation may insinuate the answer he proposes by the very act of referring the reader to Polybius' text. The information Plutarch gathered from other sources was incorporated in the declamation. In a way, the new composition absorbed previous texts and authors, Polybius included. The overt allusion to Polybius (with the exact book number) may appear as a call to the audience/readers to turn to that text, which was previously and autonomously present. Particularly in a declamation, this invitation to check another text may be seen as a

[83] Cf. Shorey (1921) 280 on the great role of *Tyche* in human events according to Polybius (cf. Plat. *Leg.* 4.709a–b).

performative act, elucidating the content of the speech. If the call is understood symbolically, the reference to another, outward book, which is the origin of the discourse at hand, operates as an invitation to go elsewhere, back to the previous depiction. This impact on the listener/reader (even if the action of checking Polybius' text is not really accomplished), is an emulation of the oration's content, with the Gauls leaving Rome for their own country when hearing of occurrences there.[84] Furthermore, this reference to another text indicates some kind of corresponding presence of the speech at hand and of an external text, implying a certain partition. Indeed, the language Plutarch's narrator uses here alludes to the Greek notion of *stasis*.[85] This diversity or split which exists between Greeks also subsisted among barbarian Gauls. The cause of Rome's rise to prominence while facing its enemies is now clear: it is because of the division among its foes that Rome prospered.

Seeing this outcome as the work of *τύχη* might look like the act of an unreflective author.[86] Plutarch's narrator/orator may be subtly criticising his predecessor. His playful allusion to Polybius' *ἀντισπάσματος* with different prefixes and an alliteration (*περισπάσασα* and *ἀποσπάσασα*) may point to a certain scepticism with regard to Fortune's role in effecting events. While Polybius makes the Gauls being deterred by an event in the realm of human affairs, Plutarch's presenter of the oration makes a divine element (*τύχη*) an active agent in human history, in correspondence with the declamation's overall theme. Polybius makes the turn of events entirely explicable on the human plane. This comparison makes the allusion of Plutarch's narrator/

[84] Plutarch seems to be using the same narratological technique in *Art.* 6.9, when the narrator vows to provide his readers with information in a different place (*χώρα*) in the text, mimicking Cyrus the Younger who promises to supply the Spartans with villages or cities (6.3). See Almagor (2018) 39–40.

[85] See the phrase *τῶν προσοίκων βαρβάρων*, taken from Thuc. 1.24.5 (Epidamnus). Cf. Hornblower (1991) 68.

[86] Polybius himself appears to doubt that the rise of Rome was because of *Tyche* (1.63.9).

orator to Fortune appear exaggerated, and as in the case of Cleomenes' defeat (above), may signify that the belief in the interference of an external power is not needed.[87] Indirectly, this presentation has a bearing on Polybius' account and his turn to Fortune elsewhere in his work. Perhaps Plutarch is also implicitly casting doubt on Polybius' description by the way he structures his citation: **εἰ δέ**, ὅπερ Πολύβιος ἐν τῇ δευτέρᾳ βίβλῳ … ἱστόρηκε … **ἀληθές ἐστιν**.

6. Conclusions

Our brief examination of just a fraction of Plutarch's explicit references to Polybius has dealt with all the places where these mentions can be compared with our extant text of the Megalopolitan. It yields the following results:

(*a*) In all the sections, the mention of Polybius by Plutarch's narrator (or orator) marks the transition between material from another source (or sources) to employment of Polybius' text. This stresses the portrayal of Polybius as being introduced into the narrative world Plutarch creates, almost as a late arrival and never as the first option within a chapter or a treatise. This feature is made in each case to correspond to a dramatic appearance in the fictional world (the *diegesis*) in that Polybius is comparable to the entry of Macedonians to the Peloponnese, the arrival of messengers from Macedonia or the arrival of news concerning the land of the Gauls. Presumably, in order for this narratological device to work, the trait of Polybius as a person subsisting between worlds plays a part.

(*b*) It is interesting that all of the sections in Polybius' extant first pentad, which correspond to the parts in Plutarch's works where he is mentioned, i.e., the sections discussed here, come from Book 2 of the *Histories*. This section concludes the introduction or preliminary part (προκατασκευή) of his work (2.71.7), just before the main

[87] For Swain (1989b) 514, Plutarch's example is a clear instance 'of the interrelation of divine and human causality', but this does not ostensibly appear in Plutarch's text.

period Polybius sets out to explore, on the eve of the Second Punic War, the verge of the Social War in Greece, and the eve of the Fourth Syrian War in the east; it ends with the death of three kings, Antigonus, Ptolemy III Euergetes, and Seleucus II Callinicus (2.71.9). It thus can be said to function as a transitional book, between the end of an old period (classical) and the beginning of a new one (Roman), corresponding to the personal transition Aratus and Cleomenes were probably perceived to embody, and before the great change in the fortunes of the world, whose parts now gradually were interwoven (1.3.3–4, cf. 4.28.2–6, 5.31.4–5).

(*c*) The complexity of Polybius is underlined through the use of the literary device of an unreliable narrator, who elects to use Polybius' report together with a competing version, misquotes (or allegedly quotes) him, or adds another interpretation of his text, ungrounded in the original. By doing so, Plutarch (the author) shows his readers some of the inadequacies in Polybius' work. The ensuing irony, existing in Plutarch's narrator's tongue-in-cheek references to Polybius but so clearly absent in Polybius' portrayals in his historical composition, highlights another failing of the Megalopolitan, who downplays the inner contradictions in his own account.

(*d*) Corresponding to the dualities so prevalent in Polybius' life, Plutarch's attitude towards his forerunner is ambivalent. If our interpretation is correct, Plutarch surprisingly shows a low appreciation of Polybius' work as a historian, despite using it. This attitude is in line with other passages in which he doubts Polybius' numbers and figures (*Aem. Paul.* 15.5; cf. *Philop.* 16.4). He seemingly rejects Polybius' inconsistency, his failure to deliver a plausible causal explanation, his carelessness and disregard of real motives or causes, and his partisanship. In a *tour de force* of biographical writing, Plutarch lets his narrator show forth these faults in Polybius and implicitly compare them with the character traits of his protagonists, who were also the subject matter of Polybius' writings.

The transition of Polybius' historical work into the realm of other literary genres is made easy by the fact that all tell a story or employ a narrative. It would seem that in using the example of Polybius, Plutarch puts forward the view that history writing interconnects not only with the historical period in which it is written but also with the one that receives it.[88] In this way, Polybius' journey into the works of Plutarch forever alters the manner in which his historical narrative is judged.

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[88] Polybius is aware of the weight of future reception. Adopting a rhetorical commonplace, he asks (16.20.8) his readers to criticise him if they catch him ignoring the truth. Cf. Africa (1961) 36.

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