

THE ORIGINS OF THE ACHAEAN WAR

THE Achaean war against Rome in 146 continues to provoke befuddlement and perplexity. Few problems in antiquity have proved so intractable to solution. The event was of major import: the last futile outburst of Greek resistance to Roman power, calling forth a new era, an enforced reorganisation of Greece and its subjugation, for all practical purposes, to the Roman governor of Macedon. Greek independence was thereafter chimerical. Yet the origins and motivations for that fateful struggle remain as puzzling as ever. Understandably so. A half century earlier, the Achaean League had thrown off allegiance to Macedon and opted for collaboration with Rome. A formal alliance followed in subsequent years. Relations between the two powers were sometimes rocky, but never issued in overt conflict during that half-century. In the three great eastern wars of the second century, against Philip V, Antiochus III, and Perseus, Rome and Achaea were on the same side. Yet in 146, when Rome's military might should have been incontestable, the Achaeans engaged her in a suicidal and ruinous war that brought the dissolution of the old League and the overlordship of Rome. Small wonder that the episode causes bafflement.

Explanations, of course, have been offered. A desperate rising from below, it can be argued, engendered the conflict: movements of the Greek lower classes conceived as an assault on the social structure which had been propped up by Rome.¹ A variant on this view pins blame on demagogic leaders in Achaea, anti-Roman in sympathy, stirring up the masses, and provoking war with Rome.² Or one may eschew class divisions and find personal and political rivalries in Achaea which stimulated a contest between pro and anti-Roman factions.³ Alternatively, the brunt of responsibility can be fixed on Rome. The senate determined to break up the Achaean League and suppress any independent behaviour in Greece—the culmination of Roman imperialism.⁴ Hence, Greek resistance was not a narrow political or social upheaval, but a genuine patriotic and nationalistic response.⁵

Attractive hypotheses—but ultimately unsatisfactory. It is natural to seek rational explanations, whether in social discontents, ideological motivation, or political competition. Equally natural to attempt the ascription of blame—on Roman policy makers or Greek demagogues. But the event itself mocks reconstructions that assume calculated plans or deliberate provocation. The enormous discrepancy in power between Rome and Achaea defies efforts to find a reason for Roman initiative and confounds suggestions about Achaean incentive. But historical events, even those of major consequence, are not always fashioned by purposeful design. Accident and chance have received less than their due.

Polybius, at first sight, seems to have recognised the fact. The disaster that befell Greece is attributed to ἀτυχία. In his introduction to the Achaean war, Polybius stresses that theme. Book Thirty-eight was to describe the culmination of the Greeks' ἀτυχία. There had been frequent missteps in the past, but none more deserving than this of the name of ἀτυχία.⁶ Pity and compassion are called for; the Greeks' every act fell foul of fortune;

¹ So N.-D. Fustel de Coulanges, *Questions historiques* (Paris, 1893) 121–211, an analysis adopted in various forms by numerous scholars; see literature cited in A. Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970) 78; and, most recently, J. Deininger, *Der politische Widerstand gegen Rom in Griechenland, 217–86 v. Chr.* (Berlin, 1971) 217–19, 226–38.

² T. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte* (Berlin, 1903) ii 42–5; B. Niese, *Geschichte der griechischen und makedonischen Staaten seit der Schlacht bei Chäroneia* (Gotha, 1903) iii 338, 344; G. Colin, *Rome et la Grèce de 200 à 146 avant Jésus-Christ* (Paris, 1905) 619–25; G. Niccolini, *La confederazione aerea* (Pavia, 1914) 187, 190, 192–4; G. Lehmann, *Untersuchungen zur historischen Glaubwürdigkeit des Polybios* (Münster, 1967) 325–9; J. A. O. Larsen, *Greek Federal States* (Oxford,

1968) 489–90.

³ J. Briscoe, *Past and Present* xxxvi (1967) 15–19.

⁴ G. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* (Florence, 1964) iv 3.132–3, 136–9, 141, 149; Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970), 78–9, 86–7; cf. M. G. Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 435–6, 438, 440; T. Schwertfeger, *Der achaische Bund von 146 bis 27 v. Chr.* (Munich, 1974) 10–12, 16–17.

⁵ De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.144–6, 151–4; Fuks *JHS* xc (1970) 79, 84–9.

⁶ Polyb. xxxviii 1.1–2: ὅτι ἡ λή βίβλος περιέχει τὴν συντέλειαν τῆς τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἀτυχίας. καίπερ γὰρ τῆς Ἑλλάδος καὶ καθόλου καὶ κατὰ μέρος πλεονακίς ἐπταικονίας, ὅμως οὐδ' ὁποῖοις ἂν τις τῶν πρότερον ἐλαττωμάτων οἰκειότερον ἐφαρμόσαι τὸ τῆς ἀτυχίας ὄνομα καὶ τὴν ἔννοιαν αὐτὴν ὡς τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς γεγονόσιν.

their errors preclude rational defence even by those with the best will in the world.⁷ The historian does not here assess blame: the Greeks are victims of fate and misfortune, objects of pity.⁸ Or so it would appear.

But that impression is erroneous. Polybius plays with the word *ἀτυχία*. In his analysis it becomes distinguished from *συμφορά*. The latter is a neutral term, implying no judgment, but *ἀτυχία* is redefined with a negative connotation: it takes on a discreditable meaning, shameful misfortune generated by the folly and wickedness of those who suffered it.⁹ The rationalist in Polybius emerges—or, at least, the seeker of causes. Blame is indeed to be assessed, ruthlessly and pitilessly. The authors of Achaean's *ἀτυχία* are her demagogic leaders, corrupt and impious, ignorant and evil, stirring the populace to insane hostility, provoking unparalleled frenzy and disaster.¹⁰ Finally, he has come full circle. Fortune is not the cause of Greek calamity; rather she stepped in to save the nation from the destruction that her leaders' madness and guilt had merited: 'had we not perished so swiftly, we should not have survived'.¹¹

The analysis is tortured and unconvincing. In fact, not a rational explanation at all. No effort is made to elucidate the motives or behaviour of the 'demagogues'. Polybius' virulent diatribes against the politicians cannot conceal the fact that he lacks a plausible solution. And he as much as admits it: the whole country was afflicted with an evil spell.¹²

Polybius' discomfiture is plain—and not surprising. The catastrophe of 146 left a profound impression. Himself an Achaean and a contemporary of these events, Polybius mourned the fate of his land. But he was also a friend of Roman statesmen, had spent sixteen years in Italy, and helped to arrange the Roman settlement of Greece after the war. An important passage reveals his initial impulse, a natural Greek impulse: he had defended the actions of the Achaeans and exerted himself as an apologist for the Greek cause in an effort to soften Roman vengeance.¹³ The impact of the disaster, however, had far-reaching effects on the historian's attitude. Among other things it induced Polybius to make a fresh start on his history and to examine the disturbed and troubled times that he had just witnessed and participated in.¹⁴ The writing of the history enforced a different perspective. Apologia for the Greeks was no longer pertinent. The historian's purpose was to seek the

⁷ Polyb. xxxviii 1.3: οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἀφ' ὧν ἔπαθον ἐλέησαι τις ἂν τοὺς Ἕλληνας, ἐτι δὲ μᾶλλον ἐφ' οἷς ἔπραξαν ἡτυχηκέαι νομίσει; 1.5: οὗτοι δ' οὐδ' ἀφορμὴν εὐλογον ἔδωσαν τοῖς βουλομένοις σφίσι βοηθεῖν ὑπὲρ τῶν ἡμαρτημένων.

⁸ Polyb. xxxviii 1.4: κατὰ δέ τι μείζον τὸ περὶ τὴν Ἑλλάδα τότε συμβάν; 1.6: ἐφορῶντες τὰς αὐτῶν ἀτυχίας; 1.7: τὰς τότε περιπετείας τῶν Ἑλλήνων ἐλεεινότερας νομιστέον τῶν συμβάντων Καρχηδονίους; 1.9: μεγίστας συμφοράς; cf. 3.2; Diod. xxxii 26.1.

⁹ Polyb. xxxviii 3.6–11: ἀκληρεῖν μὲν γὰρ ἅπαντας ἡγητέον καὶ κοινῇ καὶ κατ' ἰδίαν τοὺς παραλόγους συμφοραῖς περιπίπτοντας, ἀτυχεῖν δὲ μόνους τούτους οἷς διὰ τὴν ἰδίαν ἀβουλὰν ὄνειδος αἰ πράξεις ἐπιφέρουσι . . . ἡτύχησαν ἀτυχίαν αἰσχρὰν ὡς ἔνι μάλιστα καὶ ἐπονείδιστον; cf. Diod. xxxii 26.2–5.

¹⁰ Polyb. xxxviii 3.13, 9.4–5, 10.8, 10.12–13, 11.6–11, 12.5–10, 13.6–8, 15.8, 16.1–10, 17.9–10. The same conclusions expressed in Pausanias: vii 14.4–6, 15.2, 15.7, 16.6. Observe, however, that he contrasts the recklessness and deficiencies of the demagogues with *ἀτυχία*, thus returning to more normal Greek usage; vii 14.6: θρασύτης δὲ ἢ μετὰ ἀσθενείας μανία ἂν μᾶλλον ἢ ἀτυχία καλοῖτο. ὁ δὲ καὶ Κριτόλαον καὶ Ἀχαιοὺς ἔβλαψε. It does not follow that he is here repeating a source engaged in polemic against Polybius; as C. Wachsmuth, *LeipzigStudClassPhil* x (1887) 294–6; M. Segre, *Historia* i (1927) 229, n. 131; H. Hitzig and H. Bluemer, *Pausaniae Graeciae Descriptio* (Leipzig, 1904) ii 2.798.

¹¹ Polyb. xxxviii 18.7–12. Elsewhere in Polybius' work *ἀτυχία* or forms thereof is used without consistent meaning. Generally it signifies simply setback or disaster, with the victims to be pitied; i 55.2, 81.1, 82.10, ii 6.1, 56.6, iii 3.6, 5.6, 20.6, 63.6, 84.13, 85.7, iv 7.3, 13.3, 33.11, 56.1, v 67.4, 74.3, vi 2.5, vii 7.1, 14.5, ix 22.9, 33.2, 39.3, xiv 5.10, xv 22.3, 25.9, 25.24, xxiii 9.2, 10.2, 10.11, xxix 20.4, xxxix 3.3. But on occasion, as here in Book xxxviii, it carries the sense of deserved or self-caused disaster; i 21.9, 37.6, iv 19.13, 21.7, vi 8.6, vii 14.6, ix 12.10, xv 21.5, xviii 14.14, 15.6, xxii 13.9, xxiii 3.5, 10.14, xxx 8.4, 9.21, xxxii 2.8, xxxviii 8.11. And once even equivalent to disgrace; xii 13.5, 14.2.

¹² Polyb. xxxviii 16.7: πάντα δ' ἦν πλήρη παρηλλαγμένης φαρμακείας. Cf. Polybius' similar conclusion on the outbreak of the Macedonian revolt under Andriscus. He had endeavoured strenuously to find a rational cause, but, in the end, ascribed it to *δαιμονοβλαβεία*; xxxvi 17.1–4, 17.13–15.

¹³ Polyb. xxxviii 4.7: κατὰ μὲν γὰρ τοὺς τῶν περιστάσεων καιροὺς καθήκει βοηθεῖν τοὺς Ἕλληνας ὄντας τοῖς Ἕλλησι κατὰ πάντα τρόπον, τὰ μὲν ἀμύνοντας, τὰ δὲ περιστέλλοντας, τὰ δὲ παρατιυμένους τὴν τῶν κρατούντων ὀργήν. ὅπερ ἡμεῖς ἐπ' αὐτῶν τῶν πραγμάτων ἐποιήσαμεν ἀληθινῶς.

¹⁴ Polyb. iii 4.12–13, 5.6; cf. F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius* (Oxford, 1957) i 302–4; Polybius (Berkeley, 1972) 29–30, 173–4.

truth and instruct his readers, that they might thereby avoid the errors of the past.¹⁵ Hence he groped about for reasons, abandoned the notion of an unhappy fate, and fastened on the responsibility of demented Greek leaders. The point was not to justify Rome's conquest, as is usually stated, but to provide some accounting for the disaster. It was an afterthought—and an inadequate one. In the end he could find no better answer than the ravings of demagogues and a collective insanity. It might have been better to stick to his original impulse.

A re-examination of the events seems warranted. Neither calculated policy nor irrational frenzy affords a suitable explanation. *Τύχη* looms larger than one likes to think.

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Did the Roman Senate seek to emasculate, control, and eventually dismember the Achaean confederacy? One charge certainly can be levelled with justice against Rome: the deportation of one thousand prominent Achaeans to Italy after Pydna and the insistence upon their detention despite at least five missions requesting release between 166 and 154.¹⁶ The Roman posture is implicitly but unmistakably condemned by Polybius. His attitude is plain: Achaean leaders deported after Pydna were innocent of any wrong-doing, caught in the toils of the devious politician Callicrates who employed the occasion to rid himself of potential rivals and to assure his ascendancy through Roman backing.¹⁷ Rome's refusal to release the captives, even years afterwards, is explained as unwillingness to weaken Callicrates' position. Retention of the hostages provided a stern lesson: the Achaeans would then dutifully submit to Callicrates, and other Greek states would fall in line behind their own pro-Roman politicians.¹⁸ As late as 155, when many senators had softened on the matter and were prepared to countenance release, Polybius has them manipulated by the praetor A. Postumius Albinus and induced to vote for continued detention.¹⁹ Not a very pretty picture of the Roman senate. And in Achaea the reaction was one of despondency. The majority of the populace ardently desired return of the deportees; impotent and frustrated, they vented their spleen by reviling Callicrates and his associates in public, jeering them at the games, having children call them traitors to their faces, and even refusing to step into their bathwater.²⁰ But Roman intransigence cut off hopes and plunged Achaean spirits into despair. Callicrates and his counterparts elsewhere in Greece were riding high.²¹

Such is the Polybian portrait—one that has found general acquiescence in modern scholarship. But caution and prudence need to be applied. Polybius can hardly be mistaken for a disinterested reporter. He was himself among the detainees in Italy, a victim of Callicrates' slanders. Whatever personal advantage he eventually obtained from the exile, Polybius never ceased to hold Callicrates responsible for every form of wickedness and to encourage those who sought the restoration of Achaean hostages.²² Equally pertinent and disquieting is his attitude toward A. Postumius, the man who allegedly twisted the issue of restoration in such a way as to assure continued Roman refusal. Postumius was a *bête noire* for Polybius, pilloried and ridiculed for his Hellenic affectation, his conceit, and his literary excesses—not to mention his cowardice.²³ Such prejudices scarcely inspire confidence.

¹⁵ Polyb. xxxviii 4.5–9.

¹⁶ On the deportation, Polyb. xxx 7.5–8, 13; Paus. vii 10.7–11; Livy xlv 31.5–11. The Achaean embassies seeking release of the hostages: Polyb. xxx 29.1, 30.1, 32.1–9, xxxii 3.14–17, xxxiii 1.3–8, 3.1–2, 14.

¹⁷ Polyb. xxx 7.5–7, 13.8–10.

¹⁸ Polyb. xxx 32.8: *ἵνα συμμύσαντες πειθαρχῶσιν ἐν μὲν Ἀχαΐα τοῖς περὶ τὸν Καλλικράτην, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἄλλοις πολιτεύμασι τοῖς δοκοῦσιν εἶναι Ῥωμαίων.*

¹⁹ Polyb. xxxiii 1.3–8.

²⁰ Polyb. xxx 29.1–7.

²¹ Polyb. xxx 32.10–12. Polybian references to *οἱ*

πολλοί and *τὸ πλῆθος* here (xxx 32.8, 32.11, xxxiii 3.2) are not to be taken as allusions to the lower classes; as Deininger, *Widerstand*, 212–13. The hostility to Callicrates' party is depicted as general and widespread, not attached to class membership; cf. Polyb. xxx 29.1.

²² The Polybian attitude to Callicrates is well known and consistent; cf. Polyb. xxiv 8–10; and see Gruen, 'Class Conflict in Greece and the Third Macedonian War' (*AJAH* i (1976) 32–5). Polybius himself was finally instrumental in obtaining release of the exiles; Polyb. xxxv 6; Plut. *Cato*, 9.2–3.

²³ Polyb. xxxix 1.

More serious doubts about the Polybian analysis need to be expressed. The idea that Callicrates, as a Roman puppet, controlled and dominated Achaean affairs after 167 is, at the very least, an exaggeration. The repeated embassies sent by the League to recover her exiles are enough to refute it. They were certainly not promoted by Callicrates' party—who only stood to lose by them.²⁴ Prominent rivals of his faction, like Thearidas, the brother—it seems—of Polybius, remained potent in Achaean politics during these years.²⁵ Callicrates' influence endured, but his opponents had clearly not been bludgeoned into submission by Roman authority. If Polybius is to be believed, Rome's obstinacy on the exiles was designed to solidify Callicrates' control in Achaea and that of other pro-Roman politicians elsewhere, like Charops in Epirus.²⁷ But the interpretation is not borne out by facts preserved in the historian's own narrative. Charops' regime in Epirus degenerated into terrorising and self-aggrandisement; when Charops voyaged to Italy to obtain official backing *c.* 158, he was pointedly snubbed by L. Paullus and by the princeps senatus M. Lepidus and accorded no satisfaction by the senate.²⁸ Similarly, Greek leaders in Aetolia, Boeotia, and Acarnania, installed in power with Roman acquiescence after Pydna, perished or were removed in the early 150s. The senate proved indifferent to the changes: no effort to promote regimes subject to Roman will.²⁹ There is patent exaggeration too in Polybius' claim that Achaea succumbed to hopelessness and despair after Rome's decision to retain her hostages in 165/4. The report echoes language used by Polybius in describing Achaean dependency fifteen years earlier when Callicrates first came into prominence: he crushed the spirits of the populace.³⁰ In fact, expectations were not abandoned; three further embassies seeking release of the exiles followed in the next decade. Polybius, it appears, simply projected his personal disappointment into a collective Greek despair. And, one may surmise, the delegations themselves loom larger in Polybius' narrative than they did in Hellenic politics.

Retention of the hostages was a matter of prudence. Their removal to Italy after Pydna stemmed from Rome's concern for the security of her settlement. Restoration would run the risk of upheaval and renewed factional strife in Achaea. Best to leave well enough alone. It is noteworthy that the senate refused an apparently reasonable request that the exiles be given a formal trial to determine guilt and fix punishment.³¹ The motive is not far to seek. One can cite a close parallel in these very years. Around 160 Demetrius of Syria sent to Italy the confessed murderer of a Roman legate. But authorities in Rome shrewdly declined to exact a penalty, lest this appear to close the matter. They preferred to hold it in abeyance and reserve it for another occasion, should there be need to hold the Syrian king in line.³² Analogous motives prevailed in the case of the Achaean exiles. Formal trial would mean punishment of the guilty (if there were any) and freedom for the rest. Rome elected to leave the issue uncertain, a trump card to discourage unrest in Achaea.

As the years passed, this purpose seemed less compelling. Achaea had created no difficulties. By 155 an appreciable number of senators were prepared to tolerate release of the exiles.³³ Five years later, with most of them dead or aged, their value to Roman

²⁴ Cf. Polyb. xxx 29.1; Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 483-4.

²⁵ Polyb. xxxii 7.1. On the relationship with Polybius, see evidence and discussion in *Syll.*³ 626 and notes.

²⁶ *C.* 154 Callicrates dissuaded the Achaeans from joining a Rhodian war on Crete, asserting that this might evoke Roman disapproval; Polyb. xxxiii 16.2-8. Whether his stance had been concerted in advance with Rome is unattested and an unnecessary assumption. Callicrates had adopted a similar posture with regard to aid for Ptolemy in 169/8; Polyb. xxix 23-25. The decision to stay out of a distant war was a prudent one, especially since both Rhodes and Crete had claims on the Achaeans. One need not infer Roman dictation here.

²⁷ Polyb. xxx 32.8, 32.12.

²⁸ Polyb. xxxii 6.

²⁹ Polyb. xxxii 5.1-3.

³⁰ Polyb. xxiv 10.14: *συντρίψας τοὺς ὄχλους*; xxx 32.11: *τὰ μὲν πλήθη συνετρίβη ταῖς διανοίαις*. Zonaras, ix 31, asserts even that many of the exiles committed suicide—doubtless an error, based on Zonaras' confused reading of Dio or Dio's of Polybius and the fact that when decision was made to release the hostages, many of them were already dead; Polyb. xxxii 3.14-15.

³¹ Polyb. xxx 32.3-7.

³² Polyb. xxxi 33.5, xxxii 2.1, 2.10-12; Appian, *Syr.* 47; Diod. xxxi 29; Zon. ix 25. See esp. Polyb. xxxii 2.12: *ἐτήρει [the senate] δὲ τὴν αἰτίαν ἀκέραιον, ὥστ' ἔχειν ἐξουσίαν, ὅτε βουληθείη, χρῆσασθαι τοῖς ἐγκλήμασι*.

³³ Polyb. xxxiii 1.6.

policy was minimal. Polybius mobilised his friends in the senate and a quip by Cato was enough to restore the remaining Achaeans to their homeland.³⁴ The hostages had served a useful turn, primarily to assure quietude in Greece. They do not signify a Roman attempt to control the affairs of Achaëa, still less to cripple the Confederacy.

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Information on relations between Rome and Achaëa during these years is deplorably scanty. But a few incidents, fragmentarily reported, shed some light.

In 164 a boundary dispute between Sparta and Megalopolis, both members of the Achaean League, broke out afresh: an old controversy, stretching back for two centuries and involving territory that had changed hands between them several times in that period.³⁵ This time Rome, no doubt on application from one or both of the disputants, sent representatives to arbitrate: C. Sulpicius Gallus and M'. Sergius, despatched to look into affairs further east but also instructed to stop in the Peloponnese for this purpose.³⁶ Nothing further known from Polybius, whose extant text does not contain the results of the Peloponnesian mission. Pausanias has a more elaborate tale, punctuated with bitter commentary: Gallus arrived to arbitrate between Sparta and Argos, treated the Greeks with scorn and derision, and turned the matter over to Callicrates for a decision; further, he backed the claims of Aetolians at Pleuron to detach themselves from the Achaean League, a proposition endorsed by the senate which then authorised Gallus to dislodge as many states as possible from the Confederacy.³⁷ An extraordinary story and a severe condemnation of Rome, if true. How much can we believe?

That Gallus behaved arrogantly is quite plausible. He would not be the first nor the last Roman official abroad to do so. Polybius describes his subsequent insolent demeanour in Asia Minor and alludes to earlier *ἀλογήματα*, presumably the incidents in the Peloponnese.³⁸ A gross villain in Polybius' eyes. Once again, caution should be recommended. Gallus' dealings with Callicrates may have inspired the historian's hostility. Callicrates is described in the blackest terms by Pausanias, doubtless derived from Polybius.³⁹ But how villainous was Gallus' deed? Transference of the matter to Callicrates was surely not a private arrangement; rather a decision that Achaean officials should pass judgment on a contest between members of the League.⁴⁰ Rome's practice of referring disputes to another state for arbitration is common enough.⁴¹ The fact is confirmed by a fragmentary decree from Olympia, showing that ultimate decision was rendered by a Achaean arbitral board and alluding favourably to the Roman action—which had asked simply for affirmation of earlier Greek findings.⁴² Polybian prejudices against Callicrates and Gallus notwithstanding, it

³⁴ Polyb. xxxv 6.1-2 = Plut. *Cato*, 9.2-3; Paus. vii 10.12; Zon. ix 31. Hostages from other Greek states, it seems, were released as well; Polyb. iii 5.4; Zon. ix 31.

³⁵ On the earlier stages of the dispute, see Plut. *Cleom.* 4.1; Polyb. ii 54.3, ix 33.11-12; Livy xxxviii 34.8; Paus. vii 11.1-2.

³⁶ Polyb. xxxi 1.6-7. Surely not on Roman initiative, as is implied by Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 485. The senate would hardly investigate a territorial squabble in the Peloponnese unless requested to do so.

³⁷ Paus. vii 11.1-3. Mention of Argos rather than Megalopolis is probably an error by Pausanias, as generally thought; De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, iv 3.129, n. 139. But an additional Spartan dispute with Argos cannot be ruled out.

³⁸ Polyb. xxxi 6.1-5.

³⁹ Paus. vii 11.2: *Καλλικράτει δὲ ἀπάσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀνδρὶ ἀλάστορι.*

⁴⁰ Cf. Niese, *Geschichte* iii 318, n. 6; *contra*: Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 312, n. 362.

⁴¹ Cf. the reference to Corcyra of a controversy between Ambracia and Athamania at about this same time; *IG* ix 690; *SEG* iii 451; M. Holleaux, *Études d'Épigraphie et d'Histoire Grecques* (Paris, 1957) v 433-47; R. K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore, 1969) no. 4. Other instances: Dispute between Priene and Magnesia referred to Mylasa c. 161?; *Inschr. v. Priene*, 531; Sherk, *Roman Documents*, no. 7, with bibliography. Dispute between Itanus and Hierapytnia referred to Magnesia c. 140?; *IC* iii 4, no. 9 and no. 10; bibliography in Sherk, *Roman Documents*, no. 14; add S. Spyridakis, *Ptolemaic Itanos and Hellenistic Crete* (Berkeley, 1970) 55-9. Dispute between Sparta and Messene referred to Miletus c. 140; *Syll.*³ 683. And see below, p. 51.

⁴² *Syll.*³ 665. The Roman intervention is mentioned in lines 42-50. Whether this refers to Gallus' action or to another Roman mission is uncertain. In any case, Rome' representatives clearly opted for the *status quo*. And the recalcitrance of the Spartans, resulting in a fine, was dealt with by Greek judges, not by Roman dictation.

appears that Rome avoided rather than undertook interference in Achaean internal affairs.

Rome's role in the secession of Pleuron remains nebulous. Pausanias alone mentions it, in the context of Gallus' misbehaviour in Greece. The secession itself is nowhere else recorded or suggested. Even if the story be accepted, however, it says nothing of Roman initiative. Aetolians at Pleuron seized the occasion of Gallus' visit to declare their independence. After an embassy to Rome, the senate simply endorsed the wishes of Pleuron's representatives.⁴³ Whatever one makes of that tale, the further claim of Pausanias that the *patres* authorised Gallus to dismember the League as far as possible deserves no credit. Gallus' mission to the Peloponnese was simply a side-trip, a brief stopover prior to his major objective, an investigation of Eumenes' and Antiochus' activities.⁴⁴ The notion that he waited in Hellas until Greek embassies went to and returned from Rome, then received senatorial instructions to sever as many communities from Achaea as he could—which Pausanias' account requires—surpasses belief.⁴⁵ Roman policy, content to turn over arbitration to the authority of the League, would hardly at the same time endeavour to dissolve that organisation. Pausanias muddled his facts and anticipated events twenty years hence.

Rome's continued recognition of Achaean integrity is demonstrated by another incident. Inhabitants of Delos, ordered to evacuate the island after it came under Athenian control in 166, took up residence in Achaea and obtained Achaean citizenship. Private claims on Athens followed, and law suits, presumably for recovery of property. The Delians asserted a right of being treated as Achaeans; their claims should be regulated under the *σύμβολον* in effect between Athens and Achaea. The privilege was upheld by the League, but challenged by Athens. Unpleasantries resulted, perhaps even a series of raids. The matter was finally brought to Rome c. 159 by Achaean envoys taking up the interests of the Delians and by representatives from Athens.⁴⁶ The senate's response was clear and forthright: Achaean laws take precedence and Athens is to treat with the Delians in accordance with regulations made by Achaea.⁴⁷ Rome, despite her *amicitia* with Athens, would not intervene to upset Achaean arrangements. The authority of the League was explicitly acknowledged.

Still a further event needs to be cited in this connection. At some time, shortly after 160, the Athenians, whether for economic or political reasons, took it upon themselves to sack the border town of Oropus. The attack led to a series of embassies and diplomatic wrangles. Polybius recorded the story, but his account has unfortunately perished.⁴⁸ We are left, as far as literary sources go, with Pausanias' narrative, a discussion riddled with difficulties and implausibilities. To summarise the account, Oropus, having been ravaged by the Athenians, sought redress from Rome. The senate considered her grievance justified but turned the case over to Sicyon to inflict a fine upon Athens. The penalty was excessive, 500 talents, which the senate, upon Athenian appeal, reduced to 100. Still too high for Athens' taste; an arrangement was made for an Athenian garrison in Oropus and Oropian hostages in Athens. But the garrison misbehaved, the agreement collapsed, and Oropus sought assistance from the Achaean Confederacy. There was reluctance in Achaea, but a bribe to the *στρατηγός* Menalcidas, who then engaged the aid of Callicrates by promising him half the money, got the League mobilised. Athens anticipated events, however, ravaged Oropian territory further, and then removed her garrison. The Achaeans arrived too late to help; advice from Menalcidas and Callicrates for an invasion of Attica was rejected; League forces were withdrawn.⁴⁹

So far Pausanias. The account as it stands contains doubtful features. Pausanias'

⁴³ Paus. vii 11.3. Schwertfeger, *Der achaische Bund* 8, n. 20, suggests, without argument, that Pausanias has confused Pleuron with Heraclea.

⁴⁴ Polyb. xxxi 1.6–8.

⁴⁵ The tale is accepted without question by Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 500; rightly doubted by Niese, *Geschichte* iii 319, n. 1.

⁴⁶ Polyb. xxxii 7.1–4; cf. xxx 20.8–9. On the

initial expulsion, see P. Roussel, *Délos, colonie athénienne* (Paris, 1916) 16–17, 384–5.

⁴⁷ Polyb. xxxii 7.5: *κυρίας εἶναι τὰς κατὰ τοὺς νόμους γεγενημένας παρὰ τοῖς Ἀχαιοῖς οἰκονομίας περὶ τῶν Δηλίων.*

⁴⁸ Polyb. xxxii 11.5–6.

⁴⁹ Paus. vii 11.4–8.

statement that Athens raided Oropus because of dire poverty stemming from 'the Macedonian war' is difficult to take seriously.⁵⁰ Athens did not suffer in the war on Perseus and profited from its aftermath. Pausanias may have in mind the depredations of Philip V; but those occurred nearly a half-century earlier and were altogether irrelevant, perhaps another example of Pausanias' muddle-headedness. Similarly, the arrangement entered into between Athens and Oropus, involving an Athenian garrison and Oropian hostages—which was to be given up if Oropus complained!—strains credulity and betokens further Pausanian confusion.⁵¹ The notion that Achaea's general was bribed and that the promise of cash to Callicrates got the League to muster its forces can hardly be taken on faith—especially in view of Pausanias' demonstrable attitude toward Callicrates.⁵² There are other difficulties.⁵³ More important, an inscription from Oropus, almost fully preserved, sheds needed and welcome light.⁵⁴ As we shall see, it serves more as refutation than as supplementation of Pausanias.

That the tale has a basis in fact cannot be denied. An Athenian attack on Oropus and a subsequent appeal to Rome provide no difficulty. Other sources, drawing on Polybius, verify the imposition of a 500 talent fine by Sicyon and an Athenian mission to the senate seeking relief. This latter was, of course, the famous philosophic embassy of 155, headed by representatives of the Academics, Peripatetics, and Cynics, whose extra-curricular activities left a profound impression in Rome.⁵⁵ For our purposes, the significant point is, surely, that the senate, as in the case of the boundary dispute discussed above, preferred not to dictate the settlement itself, but to turn it over to another party. In this instance it was transferred again to Achaea, more specifically to the Achaean city of Sicyon. Indifference may be the principal reason; in any case, Rome minimised her interference. When Athens objected to the fine's magnitude, the *patres* reduced it to reasonable proportions, but certainly did not reverse the Sicyonian decision.

The rest of Pausanias' narrative is difficult to reconcile with the epigraphic testimony. The Oropian decree honours an Achaean statesman, Hiero of Aegira, for signal services to Oropus. It was Hiero who urged her cause before two Achaean meetings.⁵⁶ His importunings enabled the Oropians to recover their city and to restore their exiles.⁵⁷ Little point of contact here with Pausanias' story. Pausanias makes no mention of Hiero; Menalcidas and Callicrates are the moving agents in his tale. Nor does he know of any expulsion and restoration of the Oropians. Indeed, the inscription, with its gratitude expressed for Achaean support in achieving the ends of Oropus, sits ill with the account of Pausanias who has the Achaeans arrive too late, decide against further intervention, and act totally without effect.⁵⁸ Various modern reconstructions attempt some combination: first the appeal to Rome, the Sicyonian judgment, and the reduction of the fine; the Oropian raids, Athenian retaliation, installation of a cleruchy, and expulsion of Oropians; finally, Oropus seeks Achaean aid and gains the support of Hiero for recovery of the city, but the more substantial assistance arranged by Menalcidas and Callicrates falls through.⁵⁹ A dubious and unverifiable venture. The passion to reconcile conflicting evidence just because it exists is an emotion to be resisted. Pausanias has too many errors to justify a total salvage operation.

⁵⁰ Paus. vii 11.4.

⁵¹ Paus. vii 11.5.

⁵² Paus. vii 11.7–8.

⁵³ For example, the assertion that Oropus was an Athenian dependency (Paus. vii 11.4) is, at best, misleading, if not altogether erroneous: cf. U. v. Wilamowitz, *Hermes* xxi (1886) 101–2; W. S. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens* (London, 1911) 325, n. 2.

⁵⁴ *Syll.*³ 675.

⁵⁵ Polyb. xxxiii 2 = Gellius, vi 14.8–10; Plut. *Cato*, 22.1; Cic. *Acad.* ii 137; *De Rep.* iii 9 = Lactantius, *Inst. Div.* v 14.3–5.

⁵⁶ *Syll.*³ 675, lines 6–19.

⁵⁷ *Syll.*³ 675, lines 23–5: *διὰ τὴν τοῦτον πρόνοιαν καὶ καλοκαγαθίαν συ[μ]βέβηκε[ν] κεκομίσθαι ἡμᾶς τὴν*

πατρίδα καὶ κατεληλ[υ]θέναι μετὰ τέκνων καὶ γυναικῶν.

⁵⁸ Notice too the decree's reference to Oropus as *πόλιν Ἑλληνίδα ἐξανδραποδοισθεῖσαν οὖσαν*; *Syll.*³ 675, line 20. A self-interested statement, of course, but not easily compatible with Pausanias' *Ἰωρωπὸν ὑπήκοόν σφισιν* [the Athenians] *οὖσαν*; vii 11.4.

⁵⁹ So Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 504–7, the fullest discussion; similarly, Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 486–7. Some lean more heavily on the inscription: Niese, *Geschichte* iii 319–20; Dittenberger, *Syll.*³ 675, n. 3; others on Pausanias: De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.82–83; Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 315–19. Deininger, *Widerstand* 220–1, does not even betray awareness of the epigraphic document.

Hypothetical reconstructions, in any case, can be put aside. A few pertinent points require stress. The Oropian document honours Hiero; it is silent on Menalcidas and Callicrates, let alone on any bribery. The latter, of course, is hardly to be expected in an honorary decree. But a more significant item has failed to capture scholarly attention. Hiero is identified as from Aegira and son of Telecles.⁶⁰ The Telecles in question may be the same Telecles of Aegira who thrice headed embassies seeking restoration of the Achaean exiles in Italy—and surely of the same family.⁶¹ Hence, in no way a partisan of Callicrates. Hiero's effectiveness in this affair is further indication that Callicrates did not run a monolithic regime in Achaea. And the implication of Pausanias that Achaea swung into action only when Callicrates was bribed and utilised his influence as an agent of Rome should be discarded, not woven into an elaborate tapestry. The bias of Polybius and the fumbling exaggerations of Pausanias have misled us for too long.

Further, Rome's role in all this is minor and distant. When first appealed to by Oropus, she transmitted the issue for Sicyonian arbitration. After Athens contested the decision of Sicyon, the senate appeased her *amicus* by lightening the penalty, but upheld the findings. Athens proceeded to ignore that judgment as well—without any reaction on Rome's part. Oropus knew better than to try the senate again. She turned to Achaea; and, one may note, the Athenians and those who supported them pleaded their case before the Achaeans as well.⁶² The League was still very much a viable entity and uncontested by Rome.⁶³ However one reconstructs the events that followed, it is clear that the Romans abjured any further involvement. The matter was happily left in the hands of Achaea.⁶⁴

To sum up so far. The years between 167 and 150 betoken no breakdown of relations between Rome and the Achaean Confederacy, nor do they presage a coming dissolution of the Confederacy. Rome held on to the hostages, a cautious move designed to avoid the risk of untimely upheaval that might result from return of the men and from inevitable contests over restoration of their property. But the *patres* did not insist upon a puppet government bound to their will. Callicrates continued to wield influence in Achaea, but so did his opponents, like Xenon, Telecles, Hiero, and Thearidas, the brother of Polybius. Rome refrained from direct interference in Achaean politics. And she paid due regard to the League's integrity. Disputed matters brought to the senate, like the cases of Megalopolis and Sparta, Athens and the Delians, Athens and Oropus, were referred to Achaean officials, the institutions of the League, or to its constituent members. And other states too, like Rhodes, Crete, Thessaly, and Oropus, recognised the League's authority, seeking its help in war or support for their causes. Roman policy remained aloof, out of cordiality or indifference. As late as 150 there was no sign of approaching conflict.

* * *

Obscurity prevails for the years immediately preceding the outbreak of war. In the absence of Polybius' text, we must resort to Pausanias. Not a heartening prospect. His credibility is no higher just because we lack testimony to weigh against it.⁶⁵ Caution and scepticism are advisable. And it is best not to assume the end—i.e. the war itself—from the beginning.

Achaean politics do not lend themselves to clear reconstruction, on the basis of extant

⁶⁰ *Syll.*³ 675, lines 1–2.

⁶¹ Polyb. xxxii 3.14, xxxiii 1.3, 3.2; noted by Wilamowitz, *Hermes* xxi (1886) 103.

⁶² *Syll.*³ 675, lines 18–19: *πρός τε Ἀθηναίους κα[ί] τοὺς ἄλλους τοὺς ἀντιπρεσβεύον[τ]ας [ῆ]μ[ῖ]ν εἶπε*. Oropus, of course, alluded to the favour of Rome in seeking Achaean aid, but only in vague terms; lines 11–12, 21–2: *ἐπεὶ καὶ ἐν τεῖ Ῥωμαίων φίλοι καὶ πίστει διατελοῦμεν ὑπάρχοντες*. She had obviously obtained no concrete satisfaction from the senate.

⁶³ It was about this same time that both Rhodes and Crete sought Achaean support in their conflict;

Polyb. xxxiii 16.1–8. And a few years later, when Andrisus overran Macedonia, the people of Thessaly applied first to Achaea for succour; Polyb. xxxvi 10.5; cf. *Livy Per.* 50.

⁶⁴ Cf. Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 507.

⁶⁵ Notice the remarks of Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 611–12, n. 7: 'c'est une source assez mediocre . . . mais son récit, pris en lui-même, se suit bien, sans contradictions. En l'absence de moyens de contrôle, nous n'avons pas de raisons pour le supposer inexact.' A naïve and unacceptable methodology.

evidence. To judge from Pausanias, they operated simply through scandal, bribery, and petty intrigue.⁶⁶ Major events, even those leading to conflict with Rome, stem from bickerings among corrupt politicians. So Menalcidas, general of the League in 151/0, was persuaded by a bribe to support Oropus' cause against Athens. The Achaeans moved into action when Menalcidas offered half the cash to Callicrates. The expedition came to naught and Menalcidas decided to keep all the money. Hence Callicrates, in retaliation, brought a capital charge against him when Menalcidas' year of office expired. An obvious recourse presented itself: Menalcidas bribed the new *στρατηγός* of 150/149, Diaeus, who helped get him off. The sordid chain of events continues. The Achaeans turned on Diaeus who then broke with Menalcidas and provoked a conflict with Sparta. The embassies to Rome followed, further intrigues by Diaeus, Callicrates, and Menalcidas, and Achaean mobilisation for war on Sparta.⁶⁷ Hardly a satisfying analysis—though reiterated with little comment in most modern narratives. Pausanias' guidance does not promote trust.

That there was jockeying for power and contests among rival politicians is plausible enough. Callicrates had played a prominent though not an unchallenged role in Achaea for thirty years. A new generation of leaders was pressing its claims. The return of Achaean exiles in 150 will have eroded Callicrates' position further.⁶⁸ Their arrival stirred internal difficulties, at least with regard to property settlements.⁶⁹ Shifts in power relationships within the Confederacy are further indicated by Menalcidas' election to Achaea's highest post, the only known Spartan to reach that position.⁷⁰ Diaeus bursts onto the scene without prior notice—but evidently reviving the fortunes of a family which had been in prominence a few decades earlier.⁷¹ The return of the exiles, the emergence of a new generation, the stepped-up challenges to Callicrates' prestige, and the assertion of Spartan influence within the League all conspired to create a fluid political situation.⁷² Allegations of bribery and corruption may well have been slung about; a common enough device; and Pausanias—as well as Polybius—was prepared to believe the worst of men like Callicrates and Diaeus. But the important point is that dissension focused on internal Achaean matters. There is nothing, even in Pausanias' narrative, to suggest that an anti-Roman movement swelled in Achaea or that conflict with Rome was on the horizon.⁷³ Political competition underlines the vitality, not the decrepitude, of the League.

But personal struggles among the leadership tell only a part of the story. A significant issue divided Achaean opinion and burned the more fiercely in these years: the relationship of the Confederacy to Sparta. That, of course, was an old bone of contention, a source of friction for a half century and more—and one neither generated nor cultivated by Rome.

⁶⁶ The portrait goes unquestioned by some scholars. Cf. the elaborate denunciation of Achaean moral decline by Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 318–20.

⁶⁷ Paus. vii 11.7–13.1.

⁶⁸ Though there is no reason to believe that the returnees pushed Achaea in an anti-Roman direction. Only three hundred survived, according to Paus. vii 10.12. And of these, the only notable ones known are Polybius and Stratius, neither of whom sought conflict with Rome; Polyb. xxxii 3.14–15.

⁶⁹ Zon. ix 31.

⁷⁰ Of his previous career nothing is reported save for the fact that in 168 he was confined in Egypt and released upon request of the Roman legate C. Popillius Laenas; Polyb. xxx 16.2. That hardly justifies the notion that he thereafter pursued a 'pro-Roman' policy in Achaea; as Niese, *Geschichte* iii 339; De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.129; Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 316; n. 373; cf. Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 490: 'probably enough to make him something of a pro-Roman'.

⁷¹ Such, at least, may be inferred from the fact that Diophanes, an important Achaean politician in the 190s and 180s, was son of a Diaeus; Paus. viii

30.5, viii 51.1. He is last mentioned in 169—if that is, in fact, the same Diophanes; Polyb. xxix 23.2. On his career, see Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 266–84. Whether the younger Diaeus was son of Diophanes cannot be known, but probably of the same family; cf. Niese, *Geschichte* iii 339. This does not, however, make him a partisan of Callicrates, as suggested by Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 323–4; properly criticised by Deininger, *RE* Suppl. xi 521–3, 'Diaeus'.

⁷² It was once believed even that Diaeus was among the restored exiles, on the basis of Polyb. xxxviii 17.9: *Δίαυος καὶ Δαμόκριτος, ἄρτι τῆς καθόδου τετυγχότες διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀκρισιάν*. But that is improbable in the extreme. Schweighäuser's old emendation of *τετυγχότες* to *τετυγχῶς*, now generally accepted, may well be right; the reference is simply to Damocritus—who had been recently exiled; Paus. vii 13.5. In any case, Polybius, himself among the returnees, would hardly characterise the restoration as *διὰ τὴν ἐνεστῶσαν ἀκρισιάν*.

⁷³ Assertions along these lines by Niese, *Geschichte* iii 337–8, Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 611, *et al.* are based principally on hindsight.

Menalcidas' election as general for 151/0 dramatised the rise of Spartan prestige within the League. But a strong separatist strain endured in Laconia. Menalcidas himself took advantage of it to promote the interests of his native city. That much may be deduced from Callicrates' charge, even if exaggerated, that Menalcidas, while on an embassy to Rome, sought to detach Sparta from the League.⁷⁴ And it is confirmed by his subsequent behaviour. Sparta still smarted from the adverse Achaean decision on her territorial claims and the imposition of a fine determined by an arbitral board.⁷⁵ The city's position in the League once again became an issue of the first magnitude.

Matters came to a head in 150/149, the *στρατηγία* of Diaeus. Sparta, emboldened perhaps by Menalcidas' prestige and by his recent acquittal, reopened the question of her boundary dispute and voiced her demands in Rome. But more than territory was involved here. The Lacedaemonians, it appears, were challenging League jurisdiction generally. Diaeus seized the occasion for his own political purposes. He reaffirmed the authority of the League in all matters, a stance calculated to appeal to a majority of Achaeans, and one evidently echoed by Callicrates.⁷⁶ The Roman response, as reported by Pausanias, bears notice. It hardly amounts to encouragement of a separatist movement. The senate announced that all disputes, save for capital cases, are to be subject to the League's jurisdiction.⁷⁷ That decision is entirely consonant with Roman behaviour in previous years, as we have seen: Achaean authority is upheld; Rome preferred not to be bothered. As for the exception of capital cases, that was no novel verdict. A similar provision was contained in the settlement of 184/3, reaffirming Sparta's absorption in the Confederacy: capital charges would be heard by foreign judges, but all other litigation would be handled by the League.⁷⁸ The senate, as so often, simply opted for the status quo.

The decision emboldened Diaeus to take firmer steps in maintaining Achaean control of Sparta. He ignored the exemption of capital cases and pressed charges against Spartan dissidents. Further, he announced that constituent members of the League had no right to despatch individual embassies abroad. And he prepared to mobilise Achaean forces, if Sparta should remain recalcitrant.⁷⁹ Those actions should not be taken as deliberate defiance of Rome and conscious provocation of a break with the senate. Diaeus relied on a long history of Roman indifference.⁸⁰ And he was right. Sparta expected no concrete aid from Rome and capitulated by condemning twenty-four of her citizens to death *in absentia* as a gesture of appeasement.⁸¹ Achaean control was reinforced—without objection from Rome.

Sparta still hoped to reverse the trend in 149/8. The twenty-four Spartan exiles, headed by Menalcidas, brought their case to the senate. Diaeus and Callicrates were commissioned by Achaea to counter their claims. It was Callicrates' last voyage; he perished on the way. But Diaeus and Menalcidas debated at unseemly length before the *patres*.⁸² Once more Roman authorities preferred to dodge the issue. The senate refrained from making response, promising only to send a legation—which did not, in fact, go for another year and a half.⁸³ The modern conjecture that Rome was now determined to dismember the League, but concealed her purpose because occupied with Macedon and

⁷⁴ Paus. vii 12.2. The mission can hardly have come during Menalcidas' generalship. Probably some years earlier, perhaps in connection with the boundary dispute against Megalopolis; see above.

⁷⁵ *Syll.*³ 665.

⁷⁶ Paus. vii 12.3–4; for Callicrates' attitude, see Paus. vii 12.2, 12.8.

⁷⁷ Paus. vii 12.4: *προεῖπεν ἡ βουλή δικάζεσθαι τὰ ἄλλα πλὴν ψυχῆς ἐν συνεδρίῳ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν.*

⁷⁸ Paus. vii 9.5; cf. Polyb. xxiii 4.7–15; Livy xxxix 48.2–4.

⁷⁹ Paus. vii 12.4–6.

⁸⁰ Notice, for example, that, despite the settlement of 184/3 which banned Achaean jurisdiction in capital cases, the League condemned a Spartan to

death in 171; Livy xlii 51.8.

⁸¹ Paus. vii 12.6–7.

⁸² Paus. vii 12.7–9. The presence of Diaeus and Callicrates on the same mission does not argue for political collaboration. One could rarely predict what Callicrates might do; cf. his actions in 180; Polyb. xxiv 8.8–9; and Pausanias' doubts; vii 12.8; Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 321; Deininger, *Widerstand* 221–1, n. 10. Callicrates may have gone to shore up his own political position, weakened by the restoration of Achaean exiles.

⁸³ See Pausanias'—perhaps unintentionally—dry remark; vii 12.9: *τοῖς ἐκ Ῥώμης πρέσβεσι σχολαιτέρα πως ἐγίνετο ἡ ὁδός.*

Carthage, lacks both evidence and plausibility.⁸⁴ Achaëa indeed co-operated handsomely with Rome in that year. On request of the consul, she shipped Polybius to assist in negotiations with Carthage.⁸⁵ And she had delivered forces to support the Roman campaign against Andriscus.⁸⁶ The senate's response, evasive and non-committal, allowed the contending parties to interpret it as they wished. So Diaeus claimed full Achaëan control over Sparta, Menalcidas a warrant for secession.⁸⁷ For anyone who knew his history the message was clear enough: Rome elected neither to adjudicate nor to intervene. Ambiguous senatorial decrees, in effect leaving matters for disputants to construe to their own taste, can be cited for several earlier occasions—especially in Achaëan-Spartan wrangles.⁸⁸ It was standard practice: a sign of disinterest, not a prelude for conquest.

In the Peloponnese, Achaëa's general for 149/8, Damocritus, prepared to bring the Lacedaemonians back into line by force. Sparta, it appears, had formally detached herself from the League.⁸⁹ That she expected Roman backing is doubtful. Such expectation would, in any case, have been naive and empty. The new Roman commander in Macedon, Q. Metellus, did seek, in the spring of 148, to prevent any fighting in Greece. Not surprisingly. Only shortly before this, a Roman legion had been crushed by Andriscus and its commander killed.⁹⁰ The war now had to be taken seriously indeed. Metellus, newly arrived at the front, did not want upheaval in Greece which might deprive him of allies and bolster the hopes of Andriscus. Even so, however, he avoided firm action and was not prepared to insist. Metellus simply diverted a Roman embassy, on its way to Asia, asking its members to dissuade the Achaëans from warring on Sparta until the promised senatorial legation should arrive. The envoys delivered his message—in vain. Damocritus' campaign was already under way; Achaëan leaders politely ignored the request. This was not a directive from Rome, nor a sign of interventionist policy; simply a general's *ad hoc* advice—which the Achaëans found it convenient to decline.⁹¹

Damocritus' campaign found success. Spartan forces were crushed and retreated to their city. Yet the Achaëan commander preferred not to deliver the final blow. Sparta was spared and the Achaëans restricted themselves to plunder and raids in the countryside. Not a popular policy at home, as it turned out. Damocritus was saddled with an enormous fine and forced into exile since he was unable to pay.⁹² The reasons for Damocritus' hesitancy go unrecorded. Nothing suggests that his restraint came on instructions or advice from Rome. Perhaps reluctance to engage in an uncertain siege or concern about the reservists that Sparta might muster and a potentially bloody battle. Or perhaps a policy decision: some may have preferred a spared and humble Sparta to one wiped off the map and of no further use to the League. In any case, the hostile reaction to Damocritus' withdrawal shows that majority opinion in Achaëa was more militant. Diaeus succeeded to the *στρατηγία* for 148/7, a signal for vigorous prosecution of the war. But the militancy was directed against Sparta, not against Rome.⁹³

At some time after Diaeus assumed his post as general, perhaps in the fall or winter of 148, Metellus sent another message. Once more he counselled caution and asked for a suspension of hostilities against Sparta, pending arrival of the senatorial embassy.⁹⁴ What are we to make of this? Certainly not a directive from Rome. The military situation may again have induced Metellus to urge peace in the Peloponnese. Andriscus himself was not

⁸⁴ For this interpretation, see Niese, *Geschichte* iii 340; De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.132–133; Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 492. The assertion of Justin, xxxiv 1.5, *sed legatis occulta mandata data sunt, ut corpus Achaëorum dissolverent*, is worthless, based on the activities of the embassy in 147.

⁸⁵ Polyb. xxxvi 11.

⁸⁶ Livy, *Per.* 50: *Thessalia . . . per legatos Romanorum auxiliis Achaëorum defensa est*; cf. Polyb. xxxvi 10.5.

⁸⁷ Paus. vii 12.9.

⁸⁸ E.g. Polyb. xxi 1.1–4, xxii 7.5–7, xxiii 9.11–14, xxiv 1.4–7, 2.1–5; Livy xxxviii 32.9–10. Cf. the very similar results from Roman responses to Rhodes and

Lycia in 188 and 178; Polyb. xxii 5.1–7, xxv 4.1–6.1.

⁸⁹ Polyb. iii 5.6; Paus. vii 13.1.

⁹⁰ The defeat came in 148, so it is implied by Livy *Oxyr. Per.* 50; cf. Livy *Per.* 50; Zon. ix 28; Diod. xxxii 9a; Florus, i 30.4; Eutrop. iv 13; Oros. iv 22.9. Probably in the early spring.

⁹¹ Paus. vii 13.2. The episode in no way indicates that Metellus 'had been instructed to hold a watching brief over Greece'; as Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 433 and n. 61.

⁹² Paus. vii 13.3–5.

⁹³ Cf. Dio, lxxii 1; Zon. ix 31.

⁹⁴ Paus. vii 13.5.

finally defeated and killed before the close of the campaigning season in 148. And Metellus' difficulties were far from over at that point.⁹⁵ So an appeal for a peaceful Greece in intelligible. And Diaeus complied—up to a point. He had no reason to vex the Roman general unnecessarily. The solidarity of the League was the prime consideration and Sparta was already severely weakened. The request could be honoured while Diaeus pursued his purpose through circuitous means. Achaea duly instituted a truce. But at the same time she occupied and garrisoned towns in Laconia, surrounding Sparta with a hostile presence and keeping her carefully under control. A shrewd scheme, designed either to render the Spartans harmless or to provoke them into hostilities—for which Achaea would not be held responsible.⁹⁶

Sparta played perfectly into Diaeus' hands. Menalcidas, once again at her helm, violated the truce by attacking a border town. The move was hazardous and foolhardy. Achaea had a pretext to intervene; Sparta was swiftly cowed into submission. Her desperate citizens turned on Menalcidas who, we are told, took his own life. Whether there was further fighting is unknown. But Diaeus had successfully accomplished his purpose.⁹⁷ Achaean dominance of Sparta now seemed secure. And the League had also shown herself willing to respect the wishes of Q. Metellus. As late as the spring of 147 there is no sign of anti-Roman activity and no indication of an approaching conflict.⁹⁸

* * *

What followed seems clear enough in the evidence but enormously difficult to interpret. The crux of the matter, insufficiently stressed in modern accounts, lies in two Roman embassies coming in rapid succession during the summer and fall of 147 and presenting two very different postures.⁹⁹ A brief résumé of events is necessary.

The Roman mission, headed by L. Aurelius Orestes, to adjudicate between Achaea and Sparta arrived at Corinth in the summer of 147—having been promised a year and a half earlier. Orestes transmitted the senatorial decision privately to Achaean officials from each of the League's cities. Sparta was to be detached from the Confederacy. But not only Sparta: Corinth, Argos, Heraclea, and Orchomenus were also to be independent.¹⁰⁰ When the announcement was made to an Achaean assembly, a vigorous reaction ensued. All known or suspected Spartans were imprisoned, even those seeking refuge with the Romans who endeavoured in vain to protect them. Orestes returned home in anger, claiming before the senate that he and his colleagues had barely escaped with their lives.¹⁰¹ The

⁹⁵ On the chronology of Metellus' campaign against Andronicus, see the careful discussion by Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 426–7. The pretender's uprising is recorded by Zon. ix 28.8—plausibly situated in the winter of 148/7 by Morgan, *op. cit.*, 431–3. Hence, the assertions of Niese, *Geschichte*, iii 341, and De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, iv 3.135, that Diaeus was faced with a directive from a victorious general, are unwarranted.

⁹⁶ Paus. vii 13.5–6.

⁹⁷ The events registered in Paus. vii 13.7–8—whose narrative here need not be contested.

⁹⁸ Polyb. xxxviii 18.6 alleges that Diaeus executed a Corinthian and his sons for communicating with Menalcidas and for Roman sympathies—a remark that has led some to see him as on an anti-Roman path by mid-147; Deininger, *Widerstand* 222; cf. Niese, *Geschichte* iii 341, n. 4. A faulty conclusion. Quite apart from Polybian malice against Diaeus, the statement occurs in the chronological context of late 146, the execution having come βραχεῖ χρόνω πρότερον. That Diaeus would openly order the slaying of an opponent on grounds of pro-Roman sentiments in 147—when he was himself cooperating with Metellus—is unthinkable.

⁹⁹ For the chronology, see Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 436–7 and n. 73.

¹⁰⁰ So Paus. vii 14.1—the most explicit account. Justin's formulation, xxxiv 1.5, that the whole League was to be dissolved, is clearly exaggerated. Equally vague is Florus, i 32.2: *libertate a Romanis data*. The excuse used, that the four cities were newcomers to the Confederacy (Paus. vii 14.1), is, of course, spurious. So also is the pretext, given by other sources, that the cities had once belonged to Philip; Livy *Per.* 51; Dio xxi 72.1.

¹⁰¹ An exaggerated claim, as Polybius points out; xxxviii 9.1–2—though one that is repeated and embellished by some later sources; Livy *Per.* 51: *legati Romani ab Achaëis pulsati sint*; Strabo viii 381; Dio xxi 72.2; Justin xxxiv 1.9. Pausanias' narrative is fullest and reports no violence against Romans; vii 14.2–3. That is confirmed by Cic. *Imp. Pomp.* 11: *legati quod erant appellati superbius . . . ius legationis verbo violatum*. Cf. the cautious statement of Florus, i 32.3: *legatosque Romanos, dubium an et manu, certe oratione violavit*. That notice, with Critolaus as its subject, is probably conflation of two separate Achaean meetings.

patres, so it is reported, were indignant, as never before, and despatched a new embassy under Sex. Julius Caesar. And yet, in what appears a surprising turn-about, the instructions to that embassy were merely to convey a moderate rebuke and to ask the Achaeans themselves to punish those responsible for the error.¹⁰² A remarkably mild response. The League, for its part, had already released its non-Spartan prisoners and sent a legation to Rome with orders to apologise for any inconveniences caused to Roman envoys. The legation met Caesar's party *en route*, was received cordially, and accompanied the Romans to Achaëa. At Aegium Caesar delivered a singularly affable speech, barely alluding to the recent unpleasantness and requesting only that Achaëa avoid further offence to both Rome and Sparta.¹⁰³

How does one explain this *volte-face*—if *volte-face* it was? Scholarly opinion is unanimous in dismissing or minimising it. Rome had made up her mind to shatter or severely restructure the Achaean League some time ago and Caesar's embassy was no more than a playing for time.¹⁰⁴ But that is too facile. And important questions are left unanswered.

First of all, why the year and a half gap before Orestes' mission was even sent? A natural answer seems to be that Rome was awaiting the outcome of the Macedonian war. And, it has been suggested, a reorganisation in Macedon would naturally entail a general settlement in Greece as well.¹⁰⁵ But the latter proposition is far from proved—or even plausible. The precedent cited is that of L. Aemilius Paullus who arranged the affairs of both Greece and Macedon, together with the senate's *decem legati*, after the defeat of Perseus. That, however, is not a proper parallel. There were Greeks who fought against Rome in the Third Macedonian War, especially in Epirus and Boeotia, states that were to suffer for it afterwards. By contrast, Hellenic forces joined Rome's cause against Andriscus, and no state in Greece was to be found on his side. Justification for a general settlement was absent. Further, Paullus' restructuring of Macedon in 167 had no counterpart in Greece. His activities there were confined largely to hearing charges against alleged Macedonian sympathisers and authorising their deportation to Italy. Roman officials refrained from any general reorganisation of Hellas in 167.¹⁰⁶ Even less reason to imagine that the senate had any such reorganisation in mind in 148—when the Greeks had shown themselves loyal. As for a connection between Orestes' embassy and the end of the Macedonian war, nothing in the evidence attests to it. Plausible enough as a hypothesis, but unhelpful. It fails to explain the discrepancy between Orestes' drastic demands and Caesar's mild demeanour. And it assumes a senatorial decision for the wholesale settlement of Greece. A *petitio principii*.¹⁰⁷

The sharp contrast between the two embassies should suggest that the senate lacked, rather than possessed, a firm policy. And the same may explain its delay in despatching

¹⁰² Polyb. xxxviii 9.3–5.

¹⁰³ Polyb. xxxviii 10.1–5; *διαλεγόμενων τοῖς Ἀχαιοῖς ἐν τῇ τῶν Αἰγίων πόλει καὶ προφερομένων πολλοὺς καὶ φιλανθρώπους λόγους, καὶ τὸ περὶ τοὺς πρεσβευτὰς ἔγκλημα παραπειπόντων καὶ σχεδὸν οὐδὲν προσδεόμενον δικαιολογίας, ἀλλὰ βέλτιον ἐκδεχομένων τὸ γεγονός ἀπὸ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν, καθόλου δὲ παρακαλοῦντων μὴ πορρωτέρω προβῆναι τῆς ἀμαρτίας μήτε τῆς εἰς αὐτοὺς μήτε τῆς εἰς τοὺς Λακεδαιμονίους*. Similarly Dio xxi 72.2. Only a brief and uninformative notice in Paus. vii 14.3. The Latin sources omit this embassy altogether—perhaps unwilling to report any hesitancy or drawing back on the part of Rome.

¹⁰⁴ E.g. Niese, *Geschichte* iii 340, 342–4; De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.132, 136–42; Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 492–4; Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 435–41; Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970) 78–9, 86–7; Schwertfeger, *Der achaische Bund* 7–12; more cautiously, Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 615–20.

¹⁰⁵ Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 433–8. Though the conclusion is unpersuasive, Morgan deserves credit for recognising and confronting the question.

¹⁰⁶ That is clear from Livy's lengthy account of Paullus' activities: mainly sight-seeing and listening to complaints about fifth-columnists; xlv 27–31, 34–9; cf. Plut. *Aem. Paull.* 28; Polyb. xxx 13, xxxii 5.6; Paus. vii 10.7–11. There was brutal retaliation against Epirote areas which had proved hostile in the war—but no 'settlement' by the commission; Polyb. xxx 15; Livy xlv 34.1–6; Plut. *Aem. Paull.* 29.1–30.1; Strabo vii 327. Rome felt free to arrange affairs in Haliartus, Thisbae, and Coronea; Polyb. xxx 20; Sherk, *Roman Documents*, no. 2 and no. 3. But these were towns which had fought against her and been subdued. Otherwise, we hear of no territorial changes in Greece, apart from the detaching of Leucas from Acarnania; Livy xlv 31.12. Plutarch's vague statement, *ἀνελάμβανε* [Paullus] *τοὺς δήμους καὶ τὰ πολιτεύματα καθίστατο*, counts for little; *Aem. Paull.* 28.1.

¹⁰⁷ The idea that Caesar's mission was a delaying tactic until the senate could send out a senior magistrate in 146—so Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 440—begs the same question.

Orestes. Evidence on internal debate is altogether wanting. But there will surely have been some. Rome seldom took a distinct position on Spartan–Achaean matters. Arguments between hard-liners and more moderate senators could easily have postponed a decision—and may even be reflected in the two missions. Further, the *curia* itself was not always responsible for the behaviour of individual envoys abroad—and often assumed a much milder posture than its representatives.¹⁰⁸ It would be hazardous to infer from Orestes' conduct in Corinth a clearly defined policy of the senate as a whole. In any event, the *patres* had items on their agenda which took precedence over petty quarrels in the Peloponnese: namely, Africa, Spain and Macedon. They were in no hurry to arbitrate Greek disputes. The tardiness of Orestes' arrival is not unduly surprising.

A more important question, however, needs to be confronted. How does one account for the contents of Orestes' message? As our earlier discussion shows, Achaea had been stubborn in the Peloponnese, but hardly threatening to Rome. Quite the contrary. She had supplied forces for the effort against Andiscus and, at least formally, heeded the request of Metellus to frame a truce with Sparta. The senate, as we have seen, consistently recognised the integrity and collective jurisdiction of the League during the two decades after Pydna. Yet Orestes was now demanding the severance of some of Achaea's major cities, a demand which would effectively cripple the Confederacy. The move came as a bolt out of the blue—as well it might. Consternation and emotional response swept through the Achaean assembly. Its members had obviously not seen this coming. Is there an explanation for Orestes' posture? That he was acting entirely on his own, without senatorial guidance, is quite unthinkable. On the other hand, modern statements about a relentless and self-propelling Roman imperialism will not do. The senate had treated Achaea with considerable restraint, even respect, during the previous twenty years.

Nor is it true to say that the goal of dismemberment had been conceived long before, now at last to be implemented. The event often pointed to in this connection is a senatorial pronouncement to Achaean envoys who asked for help against the Messenian rebels in 184: Achaea ought not to be surprised at Roman lack of interest, even if Spartans, Corinthians, or Argives, let alone Messenians, should secede from the League.¹⁰⁹ But that response is far from the enunciation of an active policy. Indeed the reverse: an expression of Roman indifference to the internal affairs of the League. The fact is that Achaea went on to crush the Messenian revolt—without Roman assistance to either side. And the senate proceeded to acknowledge with courtesy the *status quo*.¹¹⁰ Clearly not a preamble to dissolving the League.¹¹¹ The breakup of the Boeotian Confederacy in 171 has also been cited as an example of senatorial propensity in this direction. Again, however, an unsuitable parallel. There were divisions aplenty in Boeotia between Rome and Macedon; separatist tendencies were encouraged rather than initiated by Rome.¹¹² The affair, in any case, came on the eve of a major war in Greece, not as part of a settlement. And the Boeotian League seems to have been reconstituted in some form after Pydna.¹¹³ These episodes fail to provide precedents.

So we are no closer to a solution than before. In fact, Polybius offers an answer—but

¹⁰⁸ Examples are numerous and need not be rehearsed here. See e.g. Polyb. xxii 10–12; Paus. vii 8.6, 9.1; Livy xxxix 33 (on Metellus in 186/5); Polyb. xxiii 4; Livy xxxix 36–7, 48; Paus. vii 9 (on Ap. Claudius in Greece in 184/3); Polyb. xxii 13–14, xxiii 1–2; Livy xxxix 33–35, 47 (on Ap. Claudius in Macedon in 184/3); Polyb. xxiii 5 (on Flaminius in 183/2); Polyb. xxiii 9, xxiv 9.12 (on Philippus in Greece in 183/2); Polyb. xxiii 8–9 (on Philippus in Macedon in 183/2); Livy xlii 47 (on Philippus in 172); Polyb. xxxi 1, 6 (on Gallus in 164).

¹⁰⁹ Polyb. xxiii 9.13: ἀπεκρίθησαν δὲ διότι οὐδ' ἂν ὁ Λακεδαιμονίων ἢ Κορινθίων ἢ <τῶν> Ἀργείων ἀφίστηται δῆμος, οὐ δεήσει τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς θανάτῳ εἰ μὴ πρὸς αὐτοὺς ἡγῶνται.

¹¹⁰ Polyb. xxiii 17.3, xxiv 1.6–7.

¹¹¹ Pausanias' report that the senate instructed Sulpicius Gallus to dislodge as many cities from Achaea as possible in 164 is almost certainly confused and bogus; vii 11.3; see above. Even if it be accepted, however, the *patres* plainly showed no inclination to implement those instructions.

¹¹² See esp. Livy xlii 43.5: *ibi iam motus coeperat esse discedentibus a societate communis concilii Boeotorum quibusdam populis*. On the circumstances, confused in the extreme, see Polyb. xxvii 1–2; Livy xlii 38.3–5, 43–4.

¹¹³ Cf. Paus. vii 14.6, 16.9. See the discussions of S. Accame, *Il dominio romano in Grecia dalla guerra acaica ad Augusto* (Rome, 1946) 193–6; P. Roesch, *Thespies et la confederation béotienne* (Paris, 1965) 69–71.

one which no scholar has been willing to take seriously. The Greek historian asserts that Orestes' mission was not intended to break up the League but only to throw a scare into the Achaeans and to shock them out of their stubbornness and hostility.¹¹⁴ Rome's recognition of the League was long-standing; her purpose now was simply to frighten its citizens away from the path of excessive presumptuousness; certainly not to start a war or to provoke an irremediable breach.¹¹⁵

Is this to be rejected out of hand?¹¹⁶ Polybian partiality may be suspect. And his animus toward the Achaean 'demagogues' is plain. But that hardly establishes his purpose as one of whitewashing Rome or his analysis as transmission of a pro-Roman version.¹¹⁷ Indeed, Polybius holds no particular brief for Rome in his narrative of the years after Pydna. We have seen already his negative portrayal of the senate's attitude on Achaean hostages. But that is not all. The text is liberally sprinkled with disapproving comments on Rome's behaviour in foreign affairs: accusations both of harsh cynicism and of gullibility.¹¹⁸ It has been argued that the historian altered his perspective when writing of the years immediately preceding the Achaean and Carthaginian wars, from c. 152: he was now prepared, if not to justify, at least to acknowledge without criticism a Machiavellian policy that increased Roman power.¹¹⁹ Perhaps so. But acceptance of that proposition does not alter the matter. If Polybius found virtue in the expansion of Rome's empire, he had no need to disguise her opportunism and to fabricate generous motives. Nor is that a line which the 'Roman tradition' took anyway. It is worthy of note that the Latin sources pass over Sex. Caesar's mission altogether. Their stress is on Rome's determination and unwavering decisiveness; whitewashing was irrelevant.¹²⁰ So there is no good reason for summary dismissal of the Polybian interpretation.

Is it unthinkable that the senate engaged in bluster and intimidation, without serious intent to implement her demands? Polybius' conclusion may, of course, be no more than an inference from the mild and amicable behaviour of Caesar's embassy. He almost admits as much.¹²¹ Polybius was not privy to senatorial discussions that preceded these legations.¹²² Yet he could well have been informed of their drift afterwards by his Roman friends. Not necessarily a mere shot in the dark. But speculation on these lines is unprofitable. The question remains as to whether the historian's verdict is inherently implausible.

In fact, it is eminently plausible. That Rome eventually fragmented the League, after the war, is no argument for her original intention. It is to the past that one must look: the conventional behaviour of Roman representatives abroad. The history of Roman-Greek relations in the previous forty years shows numerous instances in which threats or demands by envoys failed to be enforced, followed by a softer line or by inaction in the senate. A near

¹¹⁴ Polyb. xxxviii 9.6: τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἀρήλιον ἔδωκε τὰς ἐντολάς <οὐ> διασπάσαι βουλομένη τὸ ἔθνος, ἀλλὰ πτοῆσαι καὶ καταπλήξασθαι [βουλομένη] τὴν αὐθάδειαν καὶ τὴν ἀπέχθειαν τῶν Ἀχαιῶν.

¹¹⁵ Polyb. xxxviii 9.8: ἀποδεγμένοι τὸ ἔθνος ἐκ πολλοῦ χρόνου καὶ νομίζοντες ἔχειν αὐτὸ πιστὸν μάλιστα τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν, ἀνασοβῆσαι μὲν ἔκριναν διὰ τὸ φρονηματίζεσθαι πέρα τοῦ δεόντος, πόλεμον δ' ἀναλαβεῖν ἢ διαφορὰν ὀλοσχερῆ πρὸς τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς οὐδαμῶς ἐβούλοντο.

¹¹⁶ So Niese, *Geschichte* iii 343, n. 6: 'kaum glaublich'; De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.140, n. 153: 'al che senza dubbio nessuno imparziale presterà fede'; Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970) 86-7: 'The ruling of the Senate, delivered by Orestes, was no doubt tantamount to a deliberate breaking up of the Achaean League, immediate, or to follow, and no amount of explaining away by Polybius can obscure this'.

¹¹⁷ Cf. Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 618-19, n. 4: 'il lui arrive souvent de se laisser influencer outre mesure par la tradition officielle de Rome'.

¹¹⁸ E.g. Polyb. xxx 18.1-7, xxxi 2.1-7, 10.7, 21.6, xxxii 10, xxxiii 18.10-11. And see the fuller collec-

tion of instances in Walbank, *JRS* lv (1965) 5-7; *Polybius* 168-71.

¹¹⁹ Walbank, *Polybius*, 171-81.

¹²⁰ In fact, their judgments clearly incline to the negative: Florus, i 32.1: *haec* [Corinth]—*facinus indignum—ante oppressa est quam in numero certorum hostium referretur*; Cic. *Imp. Pomp.* 11: *legati quod erant appellati superbius, Corinthum patres vestri, totius Graecae lumen, exstinctum esse voluerunt*; *De Off.* iii 46: *sed utilitatis specie in re publica saepissime peccatur, ut in Corinthi disturbance nostris*; cf. Livy *Per.* 51; Eutrop. iv 14.1. Even harsher is the verdict of Justin xxxiv 1.3: *quaerentibus igitur Romanis causam belli*—but drawn, as it is, from Pompeius Trogus, this does not really qualify as part of the Roman tradition.

¹²¹ Polyb. xxxviii 9.6: *ἐξ ὧν* [the senate's instructions to Caesar] *καὶ λίαν δῆλον ἐγένετο διότι καὶ τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἀρήλιον ἔδωκε τὰς ἐντολάς*, etc.; see above n. 114.

¹²² He was with Scipio Aemilianus in Carthage and then on various exploratory voyages, before returning to Greece in 146; cf. Walbank, *Polybius* 10-12.

parallel to the events of 147 may be found in Q. Metellus' mission to the Peloponnese in 186/5. Metellus delivered a stern rebuke to the Achaeans for their treatment of Sparta and insisted that they rectify the situation. Achaean leaders, however, refused to let him address the assembly, thus exciting Metellus' indignation and causing him to make a bitter report back in Rome. Delegates of the League also hastened to justify their actions. The senate's response was simply to ask that future Roman envoys be treated with greater courtesy—a response very similar to the one she was to make forty years later.¹²³ A series of Roman legates made demands on Philip V in the mid-180s, to which he continually postponed compliance. The senate, by contrast with her representatives, remained passive and restrained. When partial compliance finally came, a Roman envoy warned that it was grudging and sullen; the *patres*, however, praised Philip and merely asked him to maintain a friendly attitude.¹²⁴ In 182 and 180, ambassadors from Rome sought to dissuade Pharnaces of Pontus from warring on Pergamum; both times the advice was ignored—and both times the senate declined to take action.¹²⁵ A delegation to Rhodes in 178 insisted on fair treatment for Lycia, a pronouncement which even induced the Lycians to revolt; but Rome gave no help when Rhodes proceeded to crush the insurrection.¹²⁶ Roman commissioners to Galatia in 167 endeavoured to halt the Galatian war against Pergamum but were rebuffed, without discernible reaction at home.¹²⁷ Senatorial requests in the years after Pydna were frequently ignored with impunity. A threat to Demetrius of Syria in 161 that he leave the Jews alone had no effect.¹²⁸ Roman envoys attempted a settlement between the rival Ptolemies in 162 and were baulked.¹²⁹ In 158 the senate expressed desire for a joint rulership in Cappadocia; but Attalus proceeded anyway to install Ariarathes on the throne.¹³⁰ In the late 150s, Rome ordered the restoration of Ptolemy Euergetes to Cyprus, but failed to attain her end.¹³¹ Even in 149 ambassadors from the senate ordered an end to war between Prusias and Attalus—to no avail.¹³²

A plethora of examples. And others could be added. Lycortas' words in 181 ring true: the Romans make numerous demands, on the prompting of others, but do not normally enforce the unreasonable ones.¹³³

In view of that background, Polybius' surmise—if it be no more than that—is a fair one. Orestes' stipulations represented rather less than an ultimatum. His speech to Achaean officials was a form of intimidation, designed to alarm the Achaeans into good behaviour. Peloponnesian problems were a nuisance rather than an item of prime importance to the senate. Twice within a few months Achaean and Spartan representatives had been in Rome with claims and counterclaims at a time when the senate's attention was focused on other matters. Ambiguous replies and a postponement of the promised embassy had only aggravated the situation. Threats might have a better effect in settling down the Peloponnese and making Achaia behave herself. It hardly follows that Rome had determined to shatter the Confederacy at all costs, even at the cost of going to war.¹³⁴ Orestes no doubt expected a contrite response. A compromise could easily be arranged. But the emotional furor that ensued in the assembly upset those plans. The senate, as so often, immediately back-pedalled. Despite Orestes' angry words and alleged senatorial indignation, the *patres* sent Caesar to soothe bruised feelings and show Roman cordiality. There is no

¹²³ Polyb. xxii 10, 12.5–10; Paus. vii 8.6, 9.1; Livy xxxix 33.3–8. The eventual outcome, after another embassy, was a compromise settlement arranged by arbiters in Rome; Polyb. xxiii 4.7–15; Paus. vii 9.5; Livy xxxix 48.4.

¹²⁴ Polyb. xxiii 9.5–7. For the embassies and the senate's demeanour, see Polyb. xxii 11.3–4, 13.8–14.6, xxiii 2, 3.1–3, 8.1–2; Livy xxxix 26.14, 29.1–2, 33.3–4, 34.3–35.2, 47, 53.10–11; Appian *Mac.* 9.6; and the discussion in Gruen, 'The Last Years of Philip V' *GRBS* xv (1974) 225–39.

¹²⁵ Polyb. xxiv 1.2–3, 14.1, 14.10, 15.1, 15.7–12.

¹²⁶ Polyb. xxv 4.5–8, 5.1–6.1; Livy xli 6.11–12, 25.8.

¹²⁷ Livy xlv 34.10–14.

¹²⁸ I *Macc.* 8.31–32; cf. 9.1–27; Jos. *Ant.* xii 420–434.

¹²⁹ Polyb. xxxi 10.6–9, 17–19.

¹³⁰ Appian *Syr.* 47; Zon. ix 24; cf. Polyb. xxxii 11.1, 11.8–9, 12; Diod. xxxi 34.

¹³¹ Polyb. xxxiii 11.5–7, xxxix 7.6; Diod. xxxi 33.

¹³² Appian *Mith.* 6–7; cf. Polyb. xxxvi 14.1–5; Diod. xxxii 20; Livy *Per.* 50; Plut. *Cato* 9.

¹³³ Polyb. xxiv 8.2–3. Polybius himself offers the same sentiments; xxiv 10.11–12.

¹³⁴ Cf. the elaborate intimidation of Rhodes in 167—where, despite appearances, it is hard to believe that Rome seriously contemplated making war; Polyb. xxx 4; Livy xl 20–25; Diod. xxxi 5; cf. Niese, *Geschichte* iii 192.

mention of a renewed demand for severing major cities from the League. Scholars assume that that ultimatum remained in force.¹³⁵ Polybius' text, however, gives the opposite impression.¹³⁶ And Pausanias' account implies the same: Rome's second mission was sent to adjudicate between Achaea and Sparta.¹³⁷ Orestes' terms, neither reaffirmed nor abjured, were probably passed over in silence. First blackmail, then geniality. Whether this reflects a difference of opinion in Rome or a reversal of tactic when the initial effort failed, the evidence does not show a senate bent on war or on destruction of the Achaean Confederacy. The aim was stability in the Peloponnese.

It is equally difficult to convict Achaean leaders of outright provocation. Diaeus had behaved with circumspection, though without releasing pressure on Sparta. The conduct of the assembly, after report of Orestes' terms, was hot-headed and tempestuous. But fury was directed at the Spartans—a demonstration to underline the strong feelings about Achaean authority over Lacedaemon. Despite modern repetition, it is clearly untrue to say that Roman officials were 'mobbed'.¹³⁸ At most, they were thwarted when attempting to check attacks on Spartan residents in Corinth. The outburst itself was not an anti-Roman manoeuvre; rather an expression of Achaean sentiments on the solidarity of the Peloponnese. That is borne out by the immediate despatch of a mission with orders to apologise for the tumultuous assembly and for any offence caused to Roman envoys. Thearidas, the brother of Polybius, headed that embassy, a man no doubt chosen for the good will he might command in Rome.¹³⁹ Achaean leaders were evidently concerned to avoid an anti-Roman posture. Caesar's legation graciously received and collaborated with that embassy. The storm had not yet come.

* * *

The new Achaean *στρατηγός*, Critolaus, was elected in the fall of 147, about the time of Caesar's arrival.¹⁴⁰ The tradition against him is relentless. Critolaus' year as general, of course, witnessed the outbreak of the war. For Polybius, Critolaus and his collaborator Diaeus were responsible for the débâcle. Mindless, corrupt, and wicked, they stirred up an insane conflict that issued in disaster.¹⁴¹ For Pausanias, Critolaus came to office with a frenzied determination to make war on Rome.¹⁴² A retrospective and dubious judgment. No advantage and almost certain catastrophe lay in that direction. At a time when Diaeus had sent off an apologetic embassy and when the senate's envoys came bearing glad tidings, it is extremely improbable that Critolaus secured election on an anti-Roman platform.¹⁴³

In Polybius' opinion, all hope of preventing calamity was now gone. Achaea still contained some sober-minded men, but the majority were being whipped by Critolaus into an unreasoned passion against Rome.¹⁴⁴ Critolaus' actions, however, lend themselves to a different interpretation.

The tale, as we have it, is as follows. Critolaus dealt courteously with Sex. Caesar and his colleagues. The embassy of Thearidas would go on to Rome to present the Achaean case. In the meanwhile an assembly of Achaeans would be called at Tegea, with Roman representatives present, to iron out differences with Sparta. A reasonable proposition, to the liking of Caesar, who then summoned the Spartans to that conference as well. But Critolaus upset the plan by arranging for the Achaeans to stay away. He alone turned up at Tegea where Romans and Spartans had been kept waiting for some time. And then the *στρατηγός* announced that he could authorise no settlement; a decision would have to

¹³⁵ Niese, *Geschichte* iii 343-4; Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 493; Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970) 87, n. 60; Deininger, *Widerstand* 226; Schwertfeger, *Der achaische Bund* 11.

¹³⁶ Polyb. xxxviii 9.3-6; cf. 11.2.

¹³⁷ Paus. vii 14.4: οἱ παρὰ Ῥωμαίων ἤκοντες τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν δικάσαι; cf. vii 14.3: Ῥωμαίων πρέσβεισιν ἐπι τὰ Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν.

¹³⁸ See above, p. 57.

¹³⁹ Polyb. xxxviii 10.1-2; Paus. vii 14.3. On Thearidas, cf. *Syll.*³ 626, n. 2.

¹⁴⁰ Paus. vii 14.3-4.

¹⁴¹ Polyb. xiii 10.8, 10.12-13, xxxviii 11.6-11, 12.5-10, 13.6-8.

¹⁴² Paus. vii 14.4.

¹⁴³ Yet that interpretation seems to have gone unquestioned; cf. Niese, *Geschichte* iii 344; De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.141; Colin, *Rome et la Grèce* 620; Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 325; Deininger, *Widerstand* 226-7.

¹⁴⁴ Polyb. xxxviii 10.6-8, 11.7-11, 12.6-7.

await the regularly scheduled Achaean *σύνοδος*, six months hence in the spring of 146. Caesar returned to Rome in a huff and denounced Critolaus to the senate. Rupture seemed complete.¹⁴⁵

How is one to understand this peculiar state of affairs? Deliberate insult and provocation on Critolaus' part is the usual answer.¹⁴⁶ Again, surely, too facile. A sharper probing is necessary. Why so elaborate a deception on Critolaus' part? If his purpose were simply to give affront to Rome it could have been done without these complex stage manoeuvres. An alternative motive deserves consideration. Critolaus' initial friendliness toward the Roman envoys need not be regarded as duplicity. The sending of Thearidas' mission suggests a continued desire to maintain good relations. And this may well explain Critolaus' reluctance to summon the Achaeans into special session. Achaean feeling against Sparta ran high, as had been dramatised in the meeting of the previous summer. When Caesar called the Spartans to Tegea, Critolaus considered it more prudent to arrive alone. Better not to risk another tumultuous assembly, in the presence of Roman envoys, especially with Thearidas on his way to apologise for the last one.¹⁴⁷

On that hypothesis the story begins to make some sense. Serious negotiations with Sparta seemed impossible, given the current Achaean mood. Whatever the attitude to Rome, it is clear that prevailing sentiment would tolerate no concessions to the Spartans.¹⁴⁸ Critolaus' political position depended upon riding that wave of sentiment. On the other hand, he preferred that it should not spill over into another gathering where Roman representatives might be caught in the *mêlée*. Of course, Critolaus and his friends had to reckon with the possibility that a sudden postponement of the issue might rouse Sex. Caesar's ire. But that would have appeared the safer gamble—on several counts. The case for delay, pretext or not, was, at least, arguable on constitutional grounds: the regular session of the League was not due for six months. Caesar's own statements might seem to justify a postponement: his task was to arrange a truce; only a later commission would be empowered to authorise a general settlement.¹⁴⁹ Further, as we have seen, the senate habitually took its own counsel, even in the face of inflammatory reports from returning envoys. The most recent experience will not have been lost on Critolaus: Orestes' angry report had been followed by Caesar's conciliatory mission. To many it must have appeared that Rome would once again refrain from pressing the issue to a conclusion. And Roman commitments in Spain and Africa lent weight to that supposition.¹⁵⁰ Finally, a six-month delay would allow Critolaus to direct Achaean energies against Sparta, thereby to present a *fait accompli* for any future arbiters—and it might permit Thearidas to smoothe any ruffled feathers in Rome.

On the whole, not an irrational plan. And the first efforts seemed to have paid dividends. Caesar did return to Rome with irate comments about Critolaus' deportment.¹⁵¹ But no mobilisation followed, no declaration of war, not even a senatorial decree, so far as we know. Of course, the campaigning season was over; but that itself would not paralyse the senate into silence, if Rome were determined to bend Achaea to her will. In fact, no Roman action of any kind regarding Achaea is recorded until the spring of 146, when the League assembly held its meeting. It rather looks as if Rome honoured the six-month hiatus requested by Critolaus. And even then it was Metellus who made the move, sending four junior officers from Macedon with, according to Polybius, mild and amicable language similar to that employed by Sex. Caesar the previous fall.¹⁵² Nothing suggests a Roman resolve for conflict.

¹⁴⁵ Polyb. xxxviii 10.8–11.6; Paus. vii 14.4–5.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Larsen, *Greek Federal States* 493: 'This incident made war inevitable. The deliberately planned insult and frustration must have seemed more offensive to the Romans than the outbreak of mob spirit at the time of the visit of Orestes'.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. Paus. vii 14.4: *ὁ Κριτόλαος ἀθροῖσαι δὲ Ἀχαιοὺς σφισιν ἐς κοινὴν σύλλογον οὐδαμῶς ἤθελεν*. Polybius' narrative makes it clear that Caesar invited the Spartans to Tegea and that it was only after that

invitation that Critolaus decided to cancel the meeting; Polyb. xxxviii 11.2–3.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. Polyb. xxxviii 10.7: *τὸ δὲ πλῆθος τῶν ἀνθρώπων*.

¹⁴⁹ Polyb. xxxviii 11.2: *τὴν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἐποχὴν ἕως ἂν πέμψωσι Ῥωμαῖοι τοὺς περὶ τῶν ὅλων ἐπισκοπομένους*.

¹⁵⁰ So Polyb. xxxviii 10.10.

¹⁵¹ Polyb. xxxviii 11.6.

¹⁵² Polyb. xxxviii 12.1–3. The same legation may

Critolaus, on the other hand, spent the winter of 147/6 preparing Achaëa for war—or so we are told. Magistrates were ordered to suspend the enforcement of debts, to take no debtors into custody, and to defer payment of the *eranos* loans—for the duration of the war.¹⁵³ Polybius couples with this several rabble-rousing speeches by Critolaus and harsh charges against Rome.¹⁵⁴ Do we have then a deliberate incitement to confrontation with the Romans? That would be suicidal madness indeed. Polybius, who could find no other solution, persuaded himself that such lunacy had, in fact, engulfed Achaëa. But what does ‘for the duration of the war’ mean? There was no war with Rome in the winter of 147/6, either declared or undeclared. The historian himself had asserted that Achaean leaders were convinced of Rome’s preoccupation with other matters and expected no intervention.¹⁵⁵ ‘The war’ must be that with Sparta. Achaean emotion, having reached a fever-pitch, pressed for a decisive and violent solution to the Spartan problem, once for all.

Decision came at the spring meeting of 146 in Corinth. Enthusiasm for League solidarity and a passion to punish the Spartans had attained widespread proportions. The Achaeans would no longer hear of any mediation. Metellus’ envoys happened to arrive at that occasion, with their plea for calm and restraint.¹⁵⁶ The message asked Achaëa not to permit her dispute with Sparta to generate actions inimical toward Rome. But the assembly, unusually crowded with labourers and small artisans, would not tolerate further delay. Metellus’ legates had as little effect as Orestes had the year before. They were jeered and heckled by the gathering, even forced to withdraw.¹⁵⁷ How far this reflects genuine anti-pathy toward Rome herself is indeterminable. Anti-Romanism need not have played a major role. The Spartan question was to be decided by Achaëa and efforts at intervention by any other state were to be rejected. Critolaus ranted and raved, according to Polybius. But it is noteworthy that the *στρατηγός* avoided an open break with Rome: he hoped to remain a friend of the Romans, but would not take kindly to subjection by despots.¹⁵⁸ His oratorical flourish played to the crowd. Public opinion had made its weight felt; Critolaus moved with the tide. His point was to stress Achaëa’s right to control her own League and to reject, on this sensitive matter at least, any outside arbitration. The same purpose underlies his attack on political opponents, including the recalled hostage Stratius, for reporting Achaean decisions to the Roman envoys: they place the interests of Rome and Sparta above those of their own state.¹⁵⁹ There were some who objected to Critolaus’ measures. But a militant mood prevailed. The assembly closed by declaring war on Sparta—not, be it noted, on Rome.¹⁶⁰

The war was, of course, in defiance of Roman wishes, as expressed again and again. But the very repetition of that request for peace, even when circumvented or ignored, must have convinced Achaëa that the Romans were unwilling or uninterested in enforcing it. No other explanation seems possible, unless one resorts to the hypothesis of national lunacy.

be referred to by Paus. vii 15.1—who, however, puts it after the Roman decision for war. That the senate had sent envoys in the meanwhile is unlikely, despite Pausanias’ allusion to ambassadors whose report helped determine the war declaration. A. Postumius was in Greece in the late spring or summer of 146. But evidently after war had been declared; Polyb. xxxix 1.11–12; cf. F. Münzer, *RE*, xxii. 1, 905 ‘Postumius’, n. 31; Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 441, n. 89.

¹⁵³ Polyb. xxxviii 11.10: *ἕως ἂν λάβῃ τὰ τοῦ πολέμου κρίσιν*; cf. Diod. xxxii 26.3. On *eranos* loans, see Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970) 80, n. 13; *contra*: Lehmann, *Untersuchungen* 326, n. 393, with literature cited there. That these were measures designed for the military emergency, and not items of social reform, is adequately argued by Fuks, *op. cit.* 79–81.

¹⁵⁴ Polyb. xxxviii 11.7–9; cf. 13.8; Diod. xxxii 26.4.

¹⁵⁵ Polyb. xxxviii 10.10.

¹⁵⁶ The timing was accidental; Polyb. xxxviii 12.2: *κατὰ τύχην ἐλθόντες εἰς τοῦτον τὸν καιρὸν*.

¹⁵⁷ Polyb. xxxviii 12.3–4.

¹⁵⁸ Polyb. xxxviii 12.8: *φάσκων βούλεσθαι μὲν Ῥωμαίων φίλος ὑπάρχειν, δεσπότης δ’ οὐκ ἂν εὐδοκῆσαι κτησάμενος*; Diod. xxxii 26.4.

¹⁵⁹ Polyb. xxxviii 13.3: *εἶναι γὰρ τινὰς τοὺς πλείων Ῥωμαίοις ἐνοοῦντας καὶ Λακεδαιμονίοις ἢ τοῖς σφετέροις πράγμασιν*. The advocates of compromise were few; Polyb. xxxviii 12.6: *ὀλίγοις δὲ τισὶ καὶ λίαν ἤρθεκε τὰ λεγόμενα διὰ τῶν πρεσβευτῶν*. Polybius names only Stratius and Evagoras, xxxviii 13.4. On Stratius, see Deininger, *RE*, Suppl. xi 1257–8; on Evagoras, C. Habicht, *Chiron* 2 (1972) 117–18.

¹⁶⁰ Polybius’ formulation is clearly retrospective: *λόγω μὲν τὸν πρὸς Λακεδαιμονίους πόλεμον, ἔργῳ δὲ τὸν πρὸς Ῥωμαίους*; xxxviii 13.6; Diod. xxxii 26.5. Pausanias erroneously makes this a declaration of war on Rome; vii 14.5. On opposition to Critolaus, see Polyb. xxxviii 12.6, 13.1–5. It is not certain how much truth lies in Polybius’ allegation that Critolaus was given monarchical authority; xxxviii 13.7.

Miscalculation perhaps, but not insanity. And, since previous experience had shown the Romans reluctant to exact compliance, a miscalculation is intelligible.

* * *

Can Critolaus and his colleagues, even now, have failed to anticipate Roman intervention? Few scholars find that credible. But then Critolaus did not have the benefit of modern scholarship—or even of Polybius' post-war hindsight. The first military clash tells an interesting tale. War had been declared on Sparta, but Achaean forces marched north, not south. Into the very teeth of Metellus' victorious troops? Hardly. The object was Heraclea at Oeta and the reason quite simple: Heraclea had just thrown off allegiance to the Achaean Confederacy.¹⁶¹ To the Heracleans it seemed an opportune moment. Achaea was preoccupied with the Spartan problem. And Heraclea may have nourished hopes of Roman sanction, if she could pull off a successful defection; Orestes had included her among those to be released from the League in his proposals of the previous year. But Critolaus reacted swiftly. Temporarily abandoning plans to coerce Sparta, he led Achaean forces into central Greece and undertook a siege of Heraclea. He had even taken the trouble to concert efforts with the Thebans and Chalcidians.¹⁶² The supremacy of the League over individual members remained the predominant element in Achaean policy. What followed is most revealing. Q. Metellus brought a Roman army down through Thessaly to halt Achaean advance. The development evidently stunned Critolaus, who forthwith gave up the siege and fled in panic to Locris where his forces were caught and defeated by Metellus; the *στρατηγός* himself disappeared for ever, leaving only rumour and speculation about his personal fate.¹⁶³ It seems plain that Metellus' appearance came as a shock, neither anticipated nor planned for by the Achaeans.¹⁶⁴

The fact is buttressed by two Polybian fragments. According to his account, the approach of the enemy—evidently the Romans—came as a surprise, causing panic and a fruitless effort to fly homewards.¹⁶⁵ Polybius, with the conscious superiority derived from hindsight, berates the foolish subject of these remarks: for such people the obvious always seems surprising. The contemplation of flight is compared to the non-swimmer who plunges into the sea and only then considers how he might negotiate the water.¹⁶⁶ Polybius' extant text does not name the man here under attack. The traditional identification with Diaeus is quite unsatisfactory. Among Diaeus' known activities there are no circumstances to provide a suitable context. The passages almost certainly refer to Critolaus, an appropriate fit to the narrative of Pausanias.¹⁶⁷ One may draw the obvious inference. As late as the spring or early summer of 146, Achaean attention was focused on League solidarity; recalcitrant members had to be coerced. The possibility of Roman intervention was evidently discounted. Rome had stayed her hand for so long that that possibility seemed remote. The incursion of Metellus came as a rude surprise.

Lack of evidence precludes an assessment of senatorial considerations and intentions. We do not even know the timing of Rome's decision for war. No overt action had followed Sex. Caesar's report of his frustration in the late fall or early winter of 147. Six months elapsed before Metellus' representatives appeared in Corinth, still conciliatory and still urging a peaceful resolution. But it is not difficult to imagine that Achaea's insistence upon

¹⁶¹ Paus. vii 15.2: 'Ηράκλειαν δὲ προσεκάθητο πολιορκούντες οὐ βουλομένους ἐς τὸ Ἀχαικὸν συντελεῖν.

¹⁶² Paus. vii 14.6, 15.9; Livy *Per.* 52.

¹⁶³ Paus. vii 15.3–4; cf. Zon. ix 31; Florus i 32.3; Oros. v 3.3; *Vir. Ill.* 60.2. One report had Critolaus take his life by poison; Livy *Per.* 52.

¹⁶⁴ Larsen's elaborate reconstruction of Achaean strategy is altogether speculative, with not a hint of support in the evidence; *Greek Federal States* 495. Critolaus' failure to defend Thermopylae, a fact commented on even by Paus. vii 15.3, is enough to demolish the theory.

¹⁶⁵ Polyb. xxxviii 16.11–12: παράδοξος αὐτῶ ἐφάνη ἢ ἀπάντησις τῶν πολεμίων . . . ἐβουλεύετο περὶ τῆς εἰς οἶκον ἀνακομιδῆς.

¹⁶⁶ Polyb. xxxviii 16.11–12: τοῖς τοιοῦτοις τὰ πρόδηλα παράδοξα φαίνεται . . . ὅμοιον ποιῶν ὡς εἴ τις ἀπειρος ὑπάρχων τοῦ νεῖν . . . ῥίγας δὲ διανοοῖτο περὶ τοῦ πῶς ἂν ἐκνήξαιτο πρὸς τὴν γῆν.

¹⁶⁷ See the cogent and convincing exposition of Deininger, *Philologus* cxiii (1969) 287–91—who, however, does not explore the ramifications. His thesis was anticipated but not argued by Niese, *Geschichte*, iii 347, n. 3.

ignoring Roman mediation and settling League affairs by force gradually wore the senate's patience thin. And it must have weakened the case of those senators who preferred traditional diplomatic rebuke to actual mobilisation. When Metellus' proposals in the spring of 146 were discourteously rejected, the advocates of indifference or aloofness would no longer have received a sympathetic hearing. And another element undoubtedly weighed in the balance. Organisation of the new province of Macedon was about to proceed. Warfare and conflagration in Greece while Roman commissioners were applying a settlement in Macedon would be not only an annoyance but an embarrassment. Better to quench that conflagration as swiftly and decisively as possible.

Precisely when Rome chose to go to war is unspecified. The extant portions of Polybius do not include the decision. Prolonged debates may have lain behind it but, without the aid of Livy, no details are recoverable. The final resolve, in any case, did not come until after news arrived about the reception of Metellus' envoys in Corinth. An accumulation of negative reports, this being at least the third, ultimately tipped the balance. Some time in the spring of 146, the senate authorised the consul L. Mummius to prepare a fleet and army for the *bellum Achaicum*.¹⁶⁸ But speed was important. Metellus seems to have been empowered to take action in the interim.¹⁶⁹ Hence, the sweep through Thessaly and the sudden disaster for Critolaus. Neither lengthy planning nor careful deliberation is much in evidence. Achaea pursued her aim of League unity with single-minded purpose. But, in the course of it, she had balked Roman wishes once too often.

* * *

The course of the war requires no lengthy rehearsal here. Metellus followed up his victory over Critolaus by defeating a contingent of Arcadians at Chaeronea, taking the city of Thebes which had been evacuated by its population, and crushing a levy from Patrae in Phocis. The accounts of Polybius and Pausanias leave a plain and vivid impression: all these forces were caught by surprise, stunned into panic and flight. Resistance from Rome, it appears, had not been reckoned on.¹⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the majority of Achaeans were prepared to fight the war to its conclusion. Alternatives were possible but hardly promising. Once there had been overt clash with Roman forces, Achaea could no longer hope—even with capitulation—to maintain her Confederacy intact. Though the original intent had not been to contest Rome, survival of the League now impelled its members to desperate resistance. Diaeus took over as *στρατηγός* after the death of Critolaus and instituted vigorous measures. A detachment of forces was sent to Megara to slow Metellus' advance. Orders went out to the various cities to liberate certain of their slaves, up to a number of twelve thousand, for service in the war. There were also to be special financial exactions, contributions called up both from corporate bodies and from propertied individuals. The purpose surely was not to institute a social revolution but to summon all possible resources for an emergency war effort. And a strong positive response came forth from the cities of the League.¹⁷¹

There were, to be sure, opponents of this policy in Achaea. Prominent citizens, includ-

¹⁶⁸ Paus. vii 15.1 puts this decision after and as a result of reports brought back by Roman envoys and messages sent by Metellus. The envoys referred to are probably not fresh delegations in 146, but the missions of Orestes and Caesar. Thus, a telescoped summary implying a cumulative effect. On the appointment of Mummius, see also Justin xxxiv 2.1; Vell. Pat. i 12.1; *Vir. Ill.* 60.1. It is put after the death of Critolaus by Zon. ix 31, clearly inaccurate.

¹⁶⁹ Florus i 32.3: *Metello . . . mandata est ultio*; cf. Val. Max. vii 5.4. Florus' statement is sometimes doubted; Morgan, *Historia* xviii (1969) 441, n. 89. Rivalry with Mummius may have impelled Metellus to move more swiftly, in the hopes of finishing off the war himself; Paus. vii 15.1–2; cf. Florus i 32.4; *Vir. Ill.* 60.1–2, 61.2. But it is most unlikely that he began

operations without any authorisation from Rome. Such a fact would certainly have left some trace in our tradition.

¹⁷⁰ On the Arcadians, Paus. vii 15.5–6; cf. Oros. v 3.3; Thebes, Polyb. xxxviii 16.10; Paus. vii 15.9–10; cf. Polyb. xxxviii 14.1–2, xxxix 1.11; the Patrae contingent, Polyb. xxxviii 16.4–9; cf. xxxix 1.11.

¹⁷¹ Such, at least, is indicated by a decree from Troezen listing resources contributed by corporations in compliance with the League resolution; *IG* iv 757; F. G. Maier, *Griechische Mauerinschriften* (Heidelberg, 1959) i no. 32. The activities of Diaeus, coloured, of course, in the darkest terms, are given by Polyb. xxxviii 15; Paus. vii 15.7–8. That these were emergency measures, not aimed at overturning the social structure, is capably argued by Fuks, *JHS* xc

ing the *ὑποστράτηγος* Sosicrates, arranged for an embassy to Metellus and offered terms. Metellus was pleased to co-operate, hoping to terminate hostilities before the arrival of Mummius. The returning envoys received some support for a peaceful settlement, among its advocates being the aged former hostage Stratius.¹⁷² But the bulk of Achaeans were determined to resist. Evidence is clear on this point. Diaeus had been selected to the *στρατηγία* for 146/5, in the late summer or early autumn. And another former *στρατηγός* who stood for League solidarity, Damocritus, had been recalled from exile to stiffen the resolve for defiance.¹⁷³ The proposals for capitulation were vigorously rejected and their authors imprisoned or executed.¹⁷⁴ Polybius' implication that Achaean opinion was deluded and manipulated by demagogues does not ring true. He may well be right that certain leaders pressed for continued militancy in the knowledge that they would receive no clemency from Rome.¹⁷⁵ But the Achaean populace would hardly persist in its combativeness just to save the skins of Diaeus and his cronies. Polybius' own account makes it plain that sentiment in the League overwhelmingly favoured continuation of the struggle and that its opponents were few.¹⁷⁶

It would be wrong to ascribe this wave of feeling simply to the lower classes—as if social distinctions determined Greek attitudes toward Rome.¹⁷⁷ The terminology employed by Polybius to characterise supporters of Diaeus and Critolaus is generally misconstrued: *οἱ πολλοί*, *τὸ πλῆθος*, *ὁ ὄχλος*.¹⁷⁸ Such terms are not—or certainly not always—equivalent to 'the mob', 'the rabble', or 'the masses'.¹⁷⁹ Even in Polybius' narrative of the Achaean war and its preliminaries, they generally signify a majority attitude at meetings of the League assembly or gatherings in individual cities.¹⁸⁰ In so far as they carry a negative meaning, that is due to Polybius' condemnation of the attitude itself, not to the social background of those embracing it. Nowhere in this narrative does he contrast the adherents of militancy with aristocrats, the wealthy, or the upper classes. The severest denunciations, in fact, are levelled at the leadership, men like Diaeus who certainly did not derive from the lower orders of society. The only real contrast drawn is that between intelligent opinion and corrupt judgment.¹⁸¹ Class distinctions are irrelevant for understanding the origins of the Achaean war.

A broad-gauged desire to maintain League integrity motivated the population of Achaea. That purpose was not directed against Rome from the outset, nor was Achaea engulfed by an anti-Roman frenzy. But once it became clear that the goal was attainable only by confrontation with Rome's forces, the Achaeans resolved to see it through.

(1970) 81–4; doubts expressed but not elaborated by D. Musti, *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* i 1 (1972) 1168. Notice e.g. that the liberated slaves were to be home-born and bred, the most loyal in a war; not total or indiscriminate manumission; Polyb. xxxviii 15.3, 15.5, 15.10. We may usefully compare the emergency measures taken by Pergamum in 133: privileges accorded to slaves in certain categories, but not to all; *OGIS* 338.

¹⁷² Polyb. xxxviii 17.1–4, 18.1–2. Also Andronidas, a former adherent of Callicrates; cf. Polyb. xxix 25.1, xxx 29.2. The favourable reaction of Metellus is given by Paus. vii 15.11, who probably refers to the same episode here. But if his chronology is correct—after the fall of Megara—this may be a later effort at negotiation, on Metellus' initiative. The motive—desire to steal a march on Mummius—is, in any case, plausible.

¹⁷³ Polyb. xxxviii 17.1, 17.9.

¹⁷⁴ Polyb. xxxviii 17.1–18.6.

¹⁷⁵ Polyb. xxxviii 17.7: *σαφῶς γὰρ σφίσι τὰ πεπραγμένα συνειδότες οὐδαμῶς ἐδύναντο πιστεῦσαι διότι τόχοιεν ἂν τινος ἔλεον παρὰ Ῥωμαίων.*

¹⁷⁶ Cf. Polyb. xxxviii 16.1: *<δι>ότι πάντες εἰς πρόδηλον ὄλεθρον ἄγονται*; 18.7: *τοιαντῆς δὲ τῆς ἀνοίας καὶ τῆς ἀκρισίας συμβαυούσης περὶ πάντας*; cf. xxxviii 12.6. So, rightly, De Sanctis, *Storia dei*

Romani, iv 3.153; Fuks, *JHS* xc (1970) 87–8. See also the decree from Epidaurus, honoring Achaeans who perished in the war; *IG* iv 894.

¹⁷⁷ The thesis is most recently presented *in extenso* by Deininger, *Widerstand* 220–41. See the criticisms, on a different period, by Gruen, 'Class Conflict in Greece and the Third Macedonian War' (*AJAH* i (1976) 29–60).

¹⁷⁸ Even Fuks, who does not regard Achaean militancy as confined to the lower orders, sees class connotations in these words; *JHS* xc (1970) 84–6.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. Gruen, *op. cit.* 34–5, 42, 45, 57, n. 131.

¹⁸⁰ Polyb. xxxviii 10.7, 11.5, 11.7–9, 11.11, 12.4, 12.10, 13.6, 17.1–2. Nor should special significance be attached to the word *ὄχλος*, customarily rendered as 'mob'. In fact, Polybius uses it in these passages as a synonym for *τὸ πλῆθος* (cf. xxxviii 11.9 with 11.11; 12.4 with 12.10 and 13.6) or for *οἱ πολλοί* (cf. 17.1 with 17.2).

¹⁸¹ Polyb. xxxviii 10.6–7: *τὸ μὲν σωφρονοῦν μέρος ἀσμένως ἀπεδέχετο τὰ λεγόμενα . . . τὸ δὲ πλῆθος τῶν ἀνθρώπων . . . ἔμενε δὲ νοσοῦν καὶ διεφθαρμένον.* The term *τῶν ἀνθρώπων* shows well enough that Polybius is not speaking of a social class. That is also clear elsewhere. Notice xxxviii 12.6: *ὀλίγοις δὲ τισι—* *not τοῖς ὀλίγοις.* And *τὸ πλῆθος* can be used in a positive context; see 18.4.

The fact that other states were involved in the war should not be taken to imply widespread anti-Romanism in Greece. Polybius reports that those who suffered in the conflict were Peloponnesians, Boeotians, Phocians, Locrians, and some cities located on the Ionian Gulf.¹⁸² But this is an exaggerated lament included in his general bewailing of Greece's fate after the war. Details, where known, suggest a rather different picture. The Phocians do not appear to have taken a stand against Rome. Arcadian troops, sent to support Critolaus against Heraclea had reached Elatea in Phocis when news arrived of Critolaus' defeat at the hands of Metellus. That seems to have been as much a surprise to the Phocians as to the Achaeans. Phocian officials immediately ordered the Arcadians to withdraw from Elatea.¹⁸³ The contingent from Patrae also appeared in Phocis only to suffer calamity and fly in panic across the land.¹⁸⁴ So there was fighting in Phocis and, no doubt, some devastation, but the Phocians themselves had not opposed Rome.¹⁸⁵ The same for Locris. Critolaus was caught there by Metellus' troops, in full flight from Heraclea, and thoroughly defeated. But no indication that Locrians engaged in the fighting.¹⁸⁶ Nor did Boeotia as a whole rise against Rome. Like Phocis and Locris, Boeotia served as a battleground rather than a source of opposition. It was at Chaeronea that the Arcadians, expelled from Phocis, were overtaken and crushed by Metellus.¹⁸⁷ Only Thebes among Boeotian cities, so far as we know, actually participated in the war. But her reasons are obscure and need not have been primarily directed by anti-Roman sentiment. Theban quarrels in recent months, according to Pausanias, had been with Phocis, Euboea, and Amphissa. In each case the city had submitted to arbitration by Q. Metellus. And in each case the decision had gone against her, resulting in imposition of a fine.¹⁸⁸ That this caused resentment is quite possible. But the only active Theban involvement took place at Heraclea, in conjunction with the Achaeans, at a time when Rome's intervention was evidently not anticipated. Perhaps an effort to compensate for losses sustained in the arbitral decisions. After sharing in the siege of Heraclea, Theban forces were routed at Scarphea where they were caught by Metellus together with the fleeing Achaeans.¹⁸⁹ But Roman retaliation was minimal. Metellus marched against Thebes, deserted by a frightened populace; but he refused to allow any destruction or the taking of captives, seeking only the punishment of the Boeotarch Pytheas to whom was ascribed full responsibility for Theban actions.¹⁹⁰ It is noteworthy that after the war Roman officials required Boeotia to pay damages of one hundred talents to Heraclea. Her principal crime does not seem to have been anti-Romanism.¹⁹¹ Otherwise, we have evidence only for Chalcidian participation in the war. Chalcis, so we are told, sent a contingent at the outset of the war which cooperated with the Achaeans and Boeotians and was defeated with them by Metellus.¹⁹² And some Chalcidian cavalrymen were later cut down by Mummius in unknown circumstances.¹⁹³ What may have motivated Chalcis is beyond conjecture. But her involvement does not seem to have spread even into the rest of Euboea.¹⁹⁴ No further testimony exists.¹⁹⁵ What we have hardly betokens a general upheaval against Rome.

¹⁸² Polyb. xxxviii 3.8.

¹⁸³ Paus. vii 15.5.

¹⁸⁴ Polyb. xxxviii 16.4-5, xxxix 1.11; cf. Oros. v 3.2.

¹⁸⁵ Some of the devastation, in fact, had recently been caused by the Thebans; Paus. vii 14.7.

¹⁸⁶ Paus. vii 15.3-4.

¹⁸⁷ Paus. vii 15.6; cf. Oros. v 3.3.

¹⁸⁸ Paus. vii 14.6-7.

¹⁸⁹ Paus. vii 14.6, 15.9; Livy *Per.* 52; Oros. v 3.2.

¹⁹⁰ Paus. vii 15.9-10; cf. 14.6; Polyb. xxxviii 14.1-2, 16.10.

¹⁹¹ Paus. vii 16.10. Cicero does say that Mummius brought many Achaean and Boeotian cities *sub imperium populi Romani dicionemque*; *Verr.* ii 1.55. But this was part of the general post-war settlement, not evidence for prior hostilities against Rome; cf. Paus. vii 16.9. Similarly, dissolution of the Phocian and

East Locrian Leagues—if that did, in fact, occur—is not proof of their active engagement in the war; as assumed, e.g. by De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* iv 3.174-5; Accame, *Il dominio* 16-17.

¹⁹² Livy, *Per.* 52. The subsequent comment that both Thebes and Chalcis were destroyed is manifestly inaccurate.

¹⁹³ Polyb. xxxix 6.5.

¹⁹⁴ Polybius may have included the Euboeans among those who suffered in the war; xxxviii 3.8: *Πελοποννήσιοι, Βοιωτοί, Φωκεῖς, [Ἐὐβο]εῖς, Λοκροί*. If so, this need mean no more than the Chalcidians; Polybius is here listing states and territories, not cities. And Euboea, if Pausanias is to be believed, was compensated after the war; vii 16.10. But see Accame, *Il dominio* 190, who regards this as a doublet of Paus. vii 14.7.

The war was an Achaean struggle and it was Achaea who suffered the affliction that caused Polybius such agony. Megara yielded without a fight to Metellus, and Achaean troops withdrew to the Isthmus for a last stand. Mummius arrived at that juncture, sent Metellus back to Macedon, and prepared to terminate the conflict. It did not take long. The Achaeans were resoundingly crushed and gave up the struggle. Diaeus himself committed suicide. And Mummius concluded operations with the notorious sacking of Corinth.¹⁹⁶

* * *

Recapitulation is called for. Where testimony is incomplete and sources far from impartial, no one will lay claim to a decisive answer. But the foregoing review of the evidence permits some conclusions. Neither Roman imperialism nor Greek mob hysteria explains the Achaean war. Rome countenanced the League's authority during the two decades after Pydna and showed no inclination to disperse its membership. Peloponnesian conflicts brought to the senate were referred back to Achaea, to its cities, or to its officials. Lack of concern rather than bellicosity was the predominant mood. The senate did not desire or arrange a military confrontation. Even the last Roman messages, on the edge of the storm, were pacific and conciliatory. From the Achaean side Rome was not and had not been the enemy. Achaea was absorbed in Peloponnesian problems, specifically the defection of Sparta and the issue of League sovereignty. Outside mediation was increasingly unwelcome and ultimately intolerable. But prior experience had shown that that attitude could be sustained without engendering Roman interference. The senate tended to let its representatives bark, while it refrained from biting.

The Achaean war stemmed from understandable miscalculation—on both sides.¹⁹⁷ Rome expected that a combination of intimidating demands and generous proposals would prevent conflict in the Peloponnese. Achaean leaders assumed that coercion of dissident communities in the League could continue—as it had in the past—with impunity. The peculiar circumstances of 146 undermined those expectations. In the end, Rome would not endure a conflagration in Greece when she was about to establish a stable order in Macedon. The march of Metellus was sudden and stunning. Achaea's levy, mobilised to discipline Sparta and Heraclea, now had to face Roman legions. But with the fate of the Confederacy at stake, the majority of its citizens accepted the struggle. The result was calamity, unplanned and unanticipated—ἀτυχία.¹⁹⁸

ERICH S. GRUEN

University of California, Berkeley

¹⁹⁵ Little can be made of Zonaras' vague statement that after the Corinthians abandoned their city, 'the other Greeks' surrendered; ix 31.

¹⁹⁶ Principal evidence in Paus. vii 15.11–16.10; Zon. ix 31; cf. Polyb. xxxix 2; Livy *Per.* 52; *Oxyr. Per.* 52; Florus i 32.4–7; *Vir. Ill.* 60.1–3; Oros v 3.5–7.

¹⁹⁷ A similar conclusion seems hinted at by A. H.

McDonald, *Auckland Classical Essays* (1970), 128: 'The situation was one of force and bluff or, at the best, a tragedy of errors'. But he does not explore the subject in any detail.

¹⁹⁸ Dr J. K. Davies deserves thanks for constructive comments and conversations—not necessarily to be confused with concurrence.