

PHILIP V's PELOPONNESIAN CAMPAIGNS IN THE SOCIAL WAR

Even though Polybius provides abundant detail on Philip's rapid movement over the Peloponnese in 219 and the following year, the precise chronology has not yet been determined. The reason is the historian's disconcerting alternation of cumulative and non-cumulative reckoning¹). By the former I mean those passages where Polybius gives the reader a running total of the days, as at 3,42–43: in two days Hannibal gathered materials for crossing the Rhone; ἐπιγενομένης τῆς τρίτης νυκτός²) he sent a squadron upriver; after fording it and resting one day, they returned, ἐπιγενομένης τῆς πέμπτης νυκτός, to fall upon the enemy's rear. Again, at 10,49 Antiochus the Great learns that the Arius River is three days away: ἐπὶ μὲν ἡμέρας δύο σύμμετρον ἐποίησατο τὴν πορείαν, τῇ δὲ τρίτῃ ... προῆγε νυκτός, πορεία χρώμενος ἐνεργῶ³). At other times, though, Polybius simply states the lapse of time between events without adding up the days, as at 3,65: τῇ δὲ κατὰ πόδας ἡμέρα ... τῇ δευτέρῃ ... τῇ δ' ἐπαύριον⁴). When he uses this type of count, he changes his baseline, usually without saying so. A striking instance is his description (14,8) of Scipio's progress toward Zama: ἀφικόμενος δὲ πεμπταῖος ἐπὶ τὰ Μεγάλα πεδία καὶ συνεγγίσας τοῖς πολεμίοις, τὴν μὲν πρώτην ἡμέραν ἐπὶ τινος λόφου κατεστρατοπέδευσε ... τῇ δ' ἑξῆς καταβάς εἰς τὰ πεδία ...

1) Thus the strong disagreements about the chronology of Hannibal's crossing of the Alps; contrast the treatment by G. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*², III, 2 (Florence 1968), 77–81, or Ernst Meyer, *Hannibals Alpenübergang*, MH 15 (1958) 227–241, with the interpretation of J. F. Lazenby, *Hannibal's War* (Warminster 1978), 42–48. Because of the controversy I have ignored this section of Polybius in analyzing his count of days. As far as I can judge, Polybius always uses inclusive reckoning with *days*, but one should note R. M. Errington's conclusion that in his calculation of years he was dependent on sources who sometimes employed exclusive reckoning; see his *The Chronology of Polybius' Histories*, Books I and II, JRS 57 (1967) 96–108.

2) Polybius sometimes, as here, makes a day begin at nightfall, but he is not consistent (cf. 4,70,1).

3) Cf. also 10,20: first, second, next, next, fifth.

4) Cf. 3,110–113 for a similar string of dates.

παρενέβαλε· δύο δὲ τὰς κατὰ πόδας ἡμέρας μείναντες ... τῇ τετάρτῃ κατὰ πρόθεσιν ἐξῆγον ... Here Polybius changes his point of reference twice: first, to the day of Scipio's arrival at the Great Plains; then, to the day of his movement into the plain. This now becomes Day 1, from which he reckons (inclusively) Days 2, 3 [τὰς κ. π.⁵], and 4.

With this in mind we can examine Philip's campaigns, beginning with the easier one to understand, his invasion of Laconia in 218. After sacking Thermum, the king withdrew to his fleet anchored in the Gulf of Ambracia and sailed thence to Leucas, intending to invade the Peloponnese⁶). Walbank has accepted Holleaux' reconstruction of Philip's subsequent movements⁷):

Days 1 & 2 Leucas to Corinth
 Day 3 at Corinth
 Days 4 & 5 Corinth to Tegea via Argos
 Days 6 & 7 Tegea to Sparta

But this is impossible, for Holleaux and Walbank admit that it contradicts Polybius' explicit statement that after debarking his forces at the port of Corinth and dispatching messengers to his allies he spent no time at Corinth: μείνας οὐδένα χρόνον ἐν τῇ Κορίνθῳ⁸).

We need to look at the Leucas-Sparta trip afresh. Polybius narrates it in two segments, *hysteron proteron*. At 5,17,8-18,3, Philip κατήρε ... καὶ μείνας οὐδένα χρόνον ἐν τῇ Κορίνθῳ ... ποιησάμενος δὲ τὴν πορείαν δι' Ἄργους ἦκε δευτεραίος εἰς Τέγεαν ... τεταρταῖος ἐπέβαλε τοῖς καταντικρὺ τῆς πόλεως (Sparta) λόφοις. In this sequence Philip arrives and leaves Corinth on the same day, on the next he arrives at Tegea, and on the next two days moves up to the outskirts of Sparta. This is cumulative, inclusive reckoning from the arrival of the Macedonians in the Peloponnese.

5) In Polybius τῇ κατὰ πόδας ἡμέρᾳ always seems to mean, "on the following day"; cf. Arno Mauersberger, *Polybios-Lexikon*, III (Berlin 1966), col. 1287. Livy translates (30,8,3-4), *primo ... postero die ... per insequens biduum ... quarto die*.

6) 5,13,1-14,7 and 16,5.

7) Maurice Holleaux, *Rome, la Grèce et les monarchies hellénistiques au III^e siècle avant J.-C. (273-205)* (Paris 1921), 157, n. 8; F. A. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, I (Oxford 1957), 553.

8) 5,18,1; cf. Holleaux, *ibid.*, "(en dépit de la phrase [Pol. V. 18.1 ...], cet arrêt est nécessaire pour expliquer le τεταρταῖος (18.3) et l'ἑβδομαῖος...)" and Walbank, *ibid.*, "(despite 18.1)."

At 5,18,8–10 Polybius explains that the king εἰς Λευκάδα κατῆρε. δύο δὲ μείνας ἡμέρας ἐνταῦθα, τῇ τρίτῃ ποιησάμενος ὑπὸ τὴν ἔωθινὴν τὸν ἀνάπλουον, δευτεραῖος πορθήσας ἅμα τὴν τῶν Αἰτωλῶν παραλίαν ἐν Λεγαίῳ καθωρμίσθη. μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα κατὰ τὸ συνεχὲς ποιούμενος τὰς πορείας ἑβδομαῖος ἐπέβαλε τοῖς ὑπὲρ τὴν πόλιν κειμένοις . . . λόφοις. Here the historian offers us another cumulative, inclusive sequence, but with a new baseline: Philip's first full day at Leucas. His sailing from the island is explicitly dated to the *third* day of this series (Holleaux makes it Day 1), and his rapid passage through Corinth occurs on the next day (that is all δευτεραῖος means). As we have seen, he arrived at Tegea on the following day (δευτεραῖος again). That makes the fifth day of this progression, and the arrival at Sparta two days later falls on the seventh day. This seventh day is not – as one might expect and as Holleaux and Walbank take it – the seventh day of actual travel. It is, rather, the final day in the series that begins with Philip's stay at Leucas⁹). Both τῇ τρίτῃ and ἑβδομαῖος are reckoned from this same starting point¹⁰), just as earlier δευτεραῖος and τεταρταῖος refer back to a common point, Philip's transit through Corinth.

Philip, it should be noted, came to Corinth on the fourth day, and once again on the fourth day thereafter he reached Sparta. By a quirk of inclusive reckoning, four and four do not make eight, for the middle day is part of both sequences¹¹).

Comparing Philip's rate of march with times recorded by travelers in the nineteenth century, we find that Gell covered the distance between Corinth and Argos in about six hours, that between Argos and Tripolis (near Tegea) in about nine¹²). Thus by forced marches Philip's army could cover the seventy miles in about a day and a half¹³).

Once they reached Laconia, they pillaged the entire area. Here Polybius adopts a non-cumulative system of dating, with a

9) It is left to the reader to subtract two days of rest and preparations, to obtain the time Philip actually spent traveling.

10) In this sequence δευτεραῖος means "on the next day" and does not interrupt the count, two-third-seventh.

11) Cf. Aelius Aristides, *On the Four*, 286 (Dindorf): Eubulides is the *seventh* archon from Laches, Theodotus is the *eighth* from Eubulides, and there are *fourteen* archons altogether.

12) Sir William Gell, *Itinerary of the Morea* (London 1817), 157–165 and 173. I do not include his detours to Nemea and Mycenae.

13) Cf. Walbank, *Commentary*, I, 553. Under normal circumstances Doson came from Corinth to Tegea on the third day (Pol. 2,54,5–6); on another occasion he reached Argos the day after leaving Tegea (2,70,4).

new *point d'appui*. Philip encamped at Amyclae on the first day (5,19,1); τῆ δ' ἐπιούσῃ πορθῶν ἅμα τὴν χώραν εἰς τὸν Πύρρου καλούμενον κατέβη χάρακα δύο δὲ τὰς ἐξῆς ἡμέρας ἐπιδραμῶν καὶ δηώσας τοὺς σύνεγγυς τόπους κατεστρατοπέδευσε περὶ τὸ Κάρνιον, ὅθεν ὀρμήσας ἤγε πρὸς Ἀσίνην (5,19,4–5)¹⁴). Failing to take Asine, he then pillaged the western peninsula of Laconia to Cape Taenarum. Reversing direction, he marched back to the plain of Helus, which he used as a base for operations against the eastern peninsula (5,19,5–8). Finally, ἐκ τῆς Ἑλείας ἀναζεύξας προῆγε, πορθῶν ἅμα τὴν χώραν, καὶ τεταρταῖος αὐθις εἰς τὰς Ἀμύκλας κατῆρε παντὶ τῷ στρατεύματι περὶ μέσον ἡμέρας (5,20,12). Here τεταρταῖος cannot be reckoned from the first day at Amyclae¹⁵); nor does it make any sense to suppose that it means the fourth day from the plain of Helus, for that would leave an inexplicable gap in the itinerary. It must refer back to the previous chronological datum, the arrival at Carnium. The next day Philip overran the western peninsula and returned to the plain of Helus. On the third day he ravaged that plain, and on the fourth he countermarched to Amyclae. All of this can be easily inferred by the reader.

The alternative is to suppose that Polybius has altered his baseline from Philip's arrival at Carnium to his departure from there (ὅθεν ὀρμήσας). But this would require that Polybius has omitted something of importance to the reader in what is otherwise a very complete account of Philip's movements. If his army, for instance, spent *two* days on the western peninsula, why does Polybius fail to mention its campsite? If they spent *two* days encamped near Helus, why does Polybius not say so? For he does let us know that Philip and his allies pillaged for two days before coming to Carnium.

Philip's itinerary, as I have interpreted it, is a tall order. On the third day he used foraging parties to burn crops in the plain of Helus and along the eastern peninsula (5,19,8). If he employed the same tactics on the second day, that would leave the main body of his army several hours to attack Asine plus, according to Leake's experience¹⁶), seven hours to return to the Eurotas. On this day

14) For the possible location of these campsites see Walbank, Commentary, I, 555.

15) The intervening events alert the reader that τεταρταῖος does not refer back to the "first" day at Amyclae; at 14,8,4 (Zama) the absence of activity shows that Polybius intends the simple sequence, next-two more-fourth.

16) William M. Leake, *Travels in the Morea*, I (London 1830), 232–233: the

and the next some units of foragers would have to cover up to fifty miles, and the cavalry even more¹⁷). However, as Engels notes¹⁸), "small, light units of Alexander's army were capable of great speed, as much as 40 or 50 mpd," and Polybius himself says (23,12,1) that Philopoemen at age seventy rode from Argos to Megalopolis (i. e. sixty miles) in a day. On the fourth day the return to Amyclae would require about six and one-half hours, by Leake's count¹⁹).

In any event, it is important to our understanding of how Polybius counts days to realize that τεταρταῖος must refer back to the arrival at (or departure from) Carnium, skipping over the subsequent events.

Philip's earlier campaign (4,67,6–80,16) began with his arrival at Corinth in midwinter. The next day he marched as far as Phlius; then, after a one-sided battle at Mt. Apelaurum and a difficult march in the snow, he arrived at Caphyae on the night of the third day (τῆ τρίτῃ). His army rested there for two days before pressing on to Psophis, where it arrived on the third day (τριταῖος). After the capture of the town and a pair of small forts Philip made Olympia on the fifth day (πενταῖος). After a respite of three days, he plundered Elis (no dates given), then subjugated Triphylia in six days before going on to a friendly reception at Megalopolis.

Since Polybius' dates, taken in isolation, can be ambiguous, we must attempt to interpret Philip's movements in the light of two features, the king's strategy and the structure of the historian's narrative. Philip intended to reach his objectives even before the enemy knew he was coming. That is why he chose to campaign during the winter without telling his allies of his plans, and why – to preserve secrecy – he sealed the gates of Corinth (4,67,6–8).

Eurotas to Marathonisi in three and one-half hours; 265–268: Marathonisi to Vathy in two and one-half hours, and Vathy to Scutari in one hour.

17) On modern roadmaps the distance from Asine to Taenarum and back to the Eurotas is about sixty miles. On the eastern peninsula the foragers reached the territory of Boeae. The town of this name was about three hundred stades from Helus (Paus. 3,22), but its χώρα seems to begin at the modern village of Demonia, some forty miles from the Eurotas; cf. A. J. B. Wace and F. W. Hasluck, *South-Eastern Laconia*, BSA 14 (1907–1908) 166. Polybius' remark that Philip reached Amyclae *with his whole army* implies that it would be natural for the foragers to become separated from the main force (and thus not return to the camp on the night of the third day).

18) Donald W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1978), 155.

19) *Ibid.*, 191–195: Takhúrti River to Tzasi, including a stop for lunch.

Polybius is explicit (4,69,9) that the Peloponnesians did not know of Philip's presence until they learned of his victory at Apelaureum. Only three times does Polybius give a long string of dates in describing a military campaign: for the two waged by Philip in the Peloponnese and for Hannibal's invasion of Italy. Clearly, then, Philip's winter march was no ordinary feat, and Polybius' dates should be interpreted accordingly. Whenever there is doubt, choose the quicker march.

We must also consider the structure of Polybius' recital. As we have seen, in his description of Philip's campaign of 218 the historian based his chronology on Philip's arrival at various locations: his appearance on the hills above Sparta is dated to the seventh day from his arrival at Leucas, the fourth from his arrival at Corinth; his arrival at Sparta becomes the new baseline (from which Polybius counts the *first* day at 5,19,1); finally, the return to Amyclae occurs, it seems, on the fourth day from the arrival at Carnium. Likewise, in recounting this earlier invasion, Polybius seems to be dating the events from Philip's arrival at his main destinations, beginning with his appearance at Corinth, then on to his arrival at Caphyae on the third day (sc. thereafter), at Psophis on the third day (again, sc. thereafter), and finally at Olympia on the fifth day (sc. thereafter)²⁰.

Since the normal walking time between Phlius and Caphyae in winter is ten hours²¹), Philip must have planned to make the trip in a single day, from sunrise to sunset in the middle of winter. On the way he encountered a raiding party of Eleans and their allies, who either fled or surrendered (4,69). This will have delayed his arrival until dark but surely not until the night of the following day. Thus when Polybius says that Philip reached Caphyae τῆ τρίτῃ τῶν ἡμερῶν, he indicates the king's arrival at Corinth on the first day, at Phlius on the next, and at Caphyae on the third.

Next we read, θεραπεύσας δὲ τὴν δύναμιν ἐπὶ δὴ ἡμέρας ἑνταῦθα . . . προῆγε διὰ τῆς Κλειτορίας ὡς ἐπὶ Ψωφίδος . . . πρὸς ἦν

20) Cumulative, inclusive reckoning, with change of baseline each time.

21) Cf. Edward Dodwell, *A Classical and Topographical Tour through Greece, during the Years 1801, 1805, and 1806*, II (London 1819), 427-432; Kalpaki to Zaraka in seven hours, *following two days of snowfall*. Add to this Gell's time (above, n. 12, 168-169) of two hours, forty minutes for the trip from the Lake of Stymphalus to Phlius. Caphyae and Orchomenus (Kalpaki) are about equidistant from Phlius; cf. the map in Slobodan Dušanić, *Notes épigraphiques sur l'histoire du IV^e siècle*, BCH 102 (1978) 356; see also W. K. Pritchett, *Studies in Ancient Greek Topography*, II (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1969), 120-132.

Φίλιππος τριταῖος ἐκ τῶν Καφυῶν διανύσας κατεστρατοπέδευε, which is usually translated, “on the third day after leaving Caphyae”²²). This is impossible, for the time from Caphyae to Psophis appears to be about ten hours²³), the same as for the Phlius-Caphyae leg of the expedition. One could expect Philip to cover the distance in a day or a day and a half at the most. Since he did not press his advantage but ordered his Macedonians to be ready to attack at dawn (τῷ φωτί, 4,71,3), it seems likely that Philip reached Psophis at the end of one day, not in the middle of the next. Thus I would understand Polybius to mean that Philip spent two days at Caphyae and on the third came to Psophis. The same simple sequence occurs in his narrative of Antiochus’ march to the Arius (ἡμέρας δύο . . . τῇ δὲ τρίτῃ: 10,49,2) and Philip’s own arrival at the port of Corinth (δύο . . . τῇ τρίτῃ: 5,18,9)²⁴).

Even though one might naturally connect τριταῖος with ἐκ Καφυῶν, 2,70,4 shows that this is not necessary. For there Dason, informed that Macedon is under attack, leaves Sparta and παραγενόμενος εἰς Τέγεαν καὶ τούτοις ἀποδοὺς τὴν πάτριον πολιτείαν δευτεραῖος ἐντεύθεν εἰς Ἄργος . . . ἦλθε. It is hard to take δευτεραῖος with ἐντεύθεν when the sense is, “on the next day he came from Tegea to Argos.” We have already noticed 5,20,12, ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς ἐκ τῆς Ἐλείας ἀναζεύξας προῆγε . . . καὶ τεταρταῖος αὐθις εἰς τὰς Ἀμύκλας κατήγε, where τεταρταῖος refers to an antecedent event, probably Philip’s encampment at Carnium. We should probably understand that 4,70,5 also looks back, this time to Philip’s arrival at Caphyae, the start of the second leg of his march across the Peloponnese.

22) 4,70,2-5; cf. the translations by Shuckburgh, Paton, and Foucault, as well as J. G. Frazer, Pausanias’ Description of Greece, IV (London 1898), 281.

23) Cf. Gustave Fougères, Mantinée et l’Arcadie orientale (Paris 1898), 68, n. 1, where the time from Mantinea to Psophis is twelve hours, twenty minutes, from which we subtract his time for Mantinea to Orchomenus, two and one-half hours. As an alternative to my solution one might argue that Polybius means that Philip spent two days at Caphyae, departed the next day (call it τῇ δευτέρῃ) and arrived at Psophis on the following day. Now that Philip’s army had grown to ten thousand (4,70,2), we have certain logistical problems which Donald Engels has raised (above, n. 18, 154-156). Even though the army could no longer move at maximum speed, Polybius’ account shows that Philip relied on the Macedonians and the mercenaries, not his Achaean allies. If the latter lagged behind, it would not prevent Philip himself from reaching his destination in ten hours.

24) There is, it seems, no difference between τῇ τρίτῃ and τριταῖος; cf. 3,65 and 3,110-113, where Polybius employs several synonyms meaning “on the next day”, including τῇ δευτέρῃ and δευτεραῖοι. As we have seen, τῇ τρίτῃ, δευτεραῖος, and ἑβδομαῖος are part of the same series at 5,18,9-10.

On the day after reaching Psophis Philip took the town. By now word of his invasion had reached his enemies, so that speed was no longer essential and he remained at Psophis τινὰς ἡμέρας, snowbound²⁵). Then he set out for Lasion, which he took immediately and handed over to the Achaean League; likewise, he restored Stratus, abandoned by its Elean garrison, to Telphusa (4,73,2). As Walbank notes²⁶), Philip may have disposed of Stratus without actually going to the site himself. Polybius continues, ταῦτα δὲ διαπραξάμενος ἦκε πεμπταίος εἰς Ὀλυμπίαν (4,73,3). While this is usually taken to mean a journey of five days to reach Olympia²⁷), five *hours* would be nearer the mark. Frazer, in fact, makes it six and one-half hours from Lasion to Olympia²⁸). The “fifth” day must refer back to the previous chronological datum, Philip’s appearance at Psophis on the “third” day. The reference to the snowstorm shows that these days are not counted cumulatively. The historian has changed his baseline again, and the invading army made Olympia on the fifth day after it came to Psophis²⁹).

At this point, since Philip no longer executes prodigious marches, Polybius loses interest in recording the days of the expedition. He does, however, give one last detail, born of admiration, the king’s conquest of Triphylia in six days (4,80,14).

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25) 4,72,5. These days do not interrupt the reckoning of the “fifth” day from the “third” day; cf. 5,80,6, μετὰ δὲ τινὰς ἡμέρας. Those days are included in the “five days” mentioned at 82,1. At 3,52,2, ταῖς δ’ ἐξῆς μέχρη μὲν τινος ἀσφαλῶς διῆγε τὴν στρατιάν· ἤδη δὲ τεταρταίος ὢν . . ., the time period μέχρη μὲν τινος is included in the four days.

26) Commentary, I, 525.

27) Cf. the translations of Shuckburgh, Paton, and Foucault, and also F. W. Walbank, Philip V of Macedon (Cambridge 1940), 44.

28) (Above, n. 22), 98–99, where Lasion is one-half hour from Koumani. Leake (above, n. 16), II, 235–240, traveled from the vicinity of Koumani to Psophis in about five and one-half hours, not including stops. The site of Stratus is unknown; even if Philip did march there, it hardly alters our conclusions.

29) Philip took Psophis on the morning after his arrival; he remained there for about forty-eight hours before heading for Lasion on the fourth day, and reached Olympia the next day.