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ROME AND THE THIRD MACEDONIAN WAR

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Rome and Macedon

It is sometimes easy to forget that the Romans and Macedonians were part of a vast, interconnected world, united by proximity to the Mediterranean Sea. The two states did not develop in isolation, but had a long history of interaction well before their first conflict in the late third century. In the early months of 323, Arrian reports, a Roman embassy appeared before Alexander the Great at Babylon.¹ This unlikely tale alleges that the Macedonian conqueror, struck by their orderly appearance and straightforward manner of speaking, and learning about their republican political institutions, sagely predicted greatness for the Romans.² There also exists a report that Alexander, and later Demetrius the Besieger, demanded that the Romans rein in some pirates from Etruscan Antium, who regularly harassed the western coastline of Greece.³ Alexander's uncle on his mother's side, Alexander I of Epirus ("the Molossian"), invaded southern Italy in 334 and struck a treaty with Rome in 332, while engaged in operations against the Lucanians and Bruttians on behalf of the Tarentines. Livy, our main source for these events, is deeply skeptical that Alexander would

¹ Arr. *Anab.* 7.15.5.

² This torch-passing story seems too good to be true. Arrian refused to vouch for it, saying he could find no trace of it in his best sources, Aristobulus and Ptolemy, nor, even more astonishingly if it were true, in any Roman source. Arrian also thought it unlikely that the Romans would have sent a delegation to a foreign and distant king from whom they had nothing to gain or fear (*Anab.* 7.15.6). Arrian's authorities for the story, Aristus and Asclepiades, are little more than names to us now and probably lived long after Rome was well known to the Greeks. On the other hand, the tale apparently appeared in Cleitarchus (cf. Plin. *NH* 3.57), who was perhaps writing early enough (i.e. before Rome's involvement in the wider Mediterranean world) that he lacked a motive to make it up (unless, of course, *POxy* LXXI.4808 proves that Cleitarchus was writing in the late third/early second century; discussion: Prandi 2012). But it is in any case hard to explain why the story does not appear in the extant sources that used Cleitarchus' lost account (Justin and Diodorus Siculus). Bosworth 1988: 83–93 (with other literature cited at 83 n. 96) believes the tradition of a Roman embassy to Alexander is based on fact, reported by Cleitarchus, but that the reaction of Alexander, and his prediction of future Roman greatness, were later elaborations by Aristus and Asclepiades.

³ Strab. 5.3.5 (C232).

have adhered to the pact: had he not been killed in action against the Lucanians, the historian repeatedly notes, the Epirote king would eventually have turned his arms against Rome as well.⁴ Livy is of course looking ahead to the famous Italian invasion of Alexander's nephew and successor, Pyrrhus of Epirus, himself a cousin of Alexander the Great. The man for whom the term "Pyrrhic Victory" is named – he won many battles against the Romans, but lost too many men in the process – introduced Rome to war elephants and the Macedonian phalanx, as well as to Hellenistic diplomatic protocols.⁵ Word of the Roman victory over the Epirote king soon reached the courts of the great Hellenistic kings, and in 273, the Egyptian pharaoh Ptolemy II Philadelphus sought, and was granted, *amicitia*, "friendship," with the Romans.⁶

"The Storm Clouds Appearing from the West"

In 229 and again in 219, the Romans fought two short campaigns in Illyria, just across the Adriatic Sea from Italy on the northwest coast of the Balkan peninsula. Polybius marked the significance of the first Roman crossing of the Adriatic in arms with an editorial comment: "this event should not be passed over in silence, but must be studied with great care by those wishing to grasp accurately both the purpose of this work and the formation and growth of Roman dominion."⁷ The first war was directed against the Illyrian Ardiaei and their queen, Teuta, as a consequence of their state-sponsored piratical activities against Italian shipping in the Adriatic.⁸ The second was provoked by the aggression of Demetrius of Pharos, who had been given a portion of the Ardiaean kingdom as a reward for his friendship with and loyalty to Rome during the first war.⁹ According to Polybius,

⁴ Livy 8.3.6, 17.9–10, 24; cf. Just. *Epit.* 12.2; Gell. *NA* 17.21.33.

⁵ Plut. *Pyrrh.* 15.1–26.2; Livy *Per.* 13, 14; Dion. Hal. 20.1–12.

⁶ Dio fr. 41; Zon. 8.6.11; Dion. Hal. 20.14.1–2; Val. Max. 4.3.9; Just. *Epit.* 18.2.9; App. *Sic.* 1; Eutrop. 2.15; Livy *Per.* 14. On the many problems surrounding the embassy, see Heuss 1933: 28–9; Holleaux 1935: 60–83; Dahlheim 1968: 141–46; Errington 1971: 8–9; Gruen 1984: 62–3, 673–5; Grainger 2002: 5–8; Eckstein 2008: 201–2; Burton 2011: 107–8. On Roman contacts with the East and eastern interest in Rome before the late third century, see Walbank 1963: 2–3.

⁷ ἄπειρ οὐ παρέργως, ἀλλὰ μετ' ἐπιστάσεως θεωρητέον τοῖς βουλομένοις ἀληθινῶς τὴν τε πρόθεσιν τὴν ἡμετέραν συνθέασσθαι καὶ τὴν αἴτησιν καὶ κατασκευὴν τῆς Ῥωμαίων δυναστείας (Polyb. 2.2.2).

⁸ Polyb. 2.2–12; App. *Ill.* 7; Dio 12.49; Zon. 8.19. The causes of the war are discussed in Harris 1979: 195–7; Gruen 1984: 17, 56–7, 360–8 (esp. 365–6); Eckstein 2008: 29–60; Waterfield 2014: 13 (bizarrely concluding that the Romans, because they were preoccupied with the Gallic War, "were almost looking for a *casus belli*" against the Illyrians). On the ancient Illyrians, see now Dzino 2010.

⁹ Polyb. 3.16, 18–19; App. *Ill.* 8; Dio 12.53; Zon. 8.20. The causes of the war are discussed in Gruen 1984: 368–73; Eckstein 2008: 60–76; Burton 2011: 262–7.

the Romans' decision to take action against Demetrius in 219, even though he had been technically in breach of the treaty ending the first war for several years by then, was motivated not just by the need to secure Italy's eastern flank before the impending war with Hannibal and Carthage, but also as a hedge against the increasingly prosperous Macedonian kingdom under its vigorous and dashing new teenage king, Philip V. Demetrius had fought alongside Philip V's predecessor and cousin, Antigonos III Doson, at the Battle of Sellasia in 222.¹⁰ That smashing victory, which resulted in the downfall of Cleomenes III of Sparta, was, according to Polybius, the reason that Demetrius was "pinning all of his hopes on the royal house of Macedon" in his upcoming conflict with the Romans.¹¹ In this he was to be disappointed. Philip was far too preoccupied with his war against the Aetolian League (the so-called "Social War"), and then the siege of Ambracus in Acarnania, to be of any help in Demetrius' war.¹² Following his defeat at the hands of the Roman legions, Demetrius nevertheless fled to Macedon where he spent the remainder of his life at Philip's court.¹³

Although, according to Polybius, Rome had given some thought to Macedon in launching the war against Demetrius,¹⁴ this was probably the first time that Philip had given any thought to Rome. As a 9- or 10-year-old, in 229, he may have overheard discussions at court of Rome's recent victory over Illyrian Ardiaei, kin to the inland Illyrians, with whom the Macedonians waged perpetual warfare on their northwestern borderlands. He may even have heard stories or read about Rome's epic twenty-three-year struggle with and victory over the Carthaginians in the First Punic War (264–241), which catapulted Rome into the exclusive club of first-tier powers in the Mediterranean. The presence of Demetrius at his court, smarting from his recent brush with Roman power, no doubt deepened Philip's knowledge of and perhaps interest in Rome.

¹⁰ For the Sellasia campaign, see Polyb. 2.65–70 (with Demetrius' presence noted at 2.65.4); cf. Plut. *Cleom.* 27–9, *Philop.* 6.

¹¹ Δημήτριον τὸν Φάριον ... πάσας δ' ἔχοντα τὰς ἐλπίδας ἐν τῇ Μακεδόνων οἰκίᾳ (Polyb. 3.16.2–3). Discussion: Burton 2011: 263.

¹² Polyb. 4.61.1–8.

¹³ Polyb. 3.19.8.

¹⁴ *Supra* and Polyb. 4.29.7: Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ θεωροῦντες ἀνθοῦσαν τὴν Μακεδόνων οἰκίαν ἔσπευδον ἀσφαλίσασθαι τὰ πρὸς ἕω τῆς Ἰταλίας ("The Romans, seeing that the royal house of the Macedonians was flourishing, were hastening to secure the eastern flank of Italy"). Because the Romans did not punish Scerdilaidas, a formal ally of Macedon, unlike Demetrius (cf. Polyb. 4.29.7), for committing essentially the same treaty violations as Demetrius (raiding south of the Lissus line, etc.), Eckstein 2008: 66 takes this to mean that the Romans did not feel threatened by Macedon. But this could just as easily mean that the Romans did not want to provoke Philip into joining in the Illyrian war by attacking his ally Scerdilaidas.

When news of the Roman military disaster at Lake Trasimene reached Philip at Nemea in late summer, 217, Demetrius saw his chance for revenge on Rome and his restoration to power in Illyria.¹⁵ He urged Philip to put an end to the Social War, and instead turn his attention to the conquest of Illyria and an invasion of Italy. This would be the first step, Demetrius argued, on the road to Philip's conquest of the entire world. Demetrius recognized (and Polybius agrees with him) that the young king was particularly susceptible to such advice, being personally ambitious and "descended from a house that, more than any other, was always covetous of conquering the entire world."¹⁶

Reinforcement came a few weeks later in the form of a speech delivered by the Aetolian League statesman Agelaus of Naupactus. Agelaus argued that Greeks should not continually wear themselves out in endless internecine conflicts, but present a united front against barbarian invaders – especially at the present moment,

in view of the vastness of the armies and the greatness of the war taking place in the West. For it is obvious even now to all who pay even a little attention to politics that whether the Carthaginians defeat the Romans or the Romans the Carthaginians in this war, it is highly unlikely they will remain content ruling over their Italian and Sicilian subjects, but will surely come here and expand their designs and power beyond what is just and reasonable. Therefore I beg you all, and especially Philip, to secure yourselves at this particularly dangerous moment ... If Philip yearns for action, let him consider it worthwhile looking to the West and focus on the war going on in Italy, so that when the time is right he might compete for mastery of the entire world ... [In the meantime], I call upon you to defer your differences with the Greeks and your wars here until you have rested enough, and give special attention to this matter above all, so that you might have the power make war or peace with others whenever you wish. For if once you wait for these storm clouds appearing from the west to settle over Greek lands, I am indeed very worried that these truces and wars and in general the games which we now play with each other will turn out to be over for all of us, so that we will pray to the gods to grant us still the power of fighting and making peace with each other whenever we wish, and in general to have the power of disputing among ourselves.¹⁷

¹⁵ On Demetrius' motives, see Polyb. 5.108.5–6.

¹⁶ πρὸς δὲ τούτοις ἐξ οἰκίας ὀρμώμενον τοιαύτης, ἢ μάλιστα πῶς αἰετῆς τῶν ὄλων ἐλπίδος ἐφίεται (Polyb. 5.102.1). For Philip's ambitions and sincere (though false) belief that he was descended from both the Temenid and Antigonid ruling houses, see Walbank 1993.

¹⁷ Polyb. 5.104.2–11. On the speech, see Mørkholm 1967; Deininger 1973; Mørkholm 1974; Champion 1997; Champion 2004: 55–6; Eckstein 2008: 79, 83; Waterfield 2014: 1–2. I accept Champion's point that the speech is for the most part authentic, especially on the issue that matters here – the storm cloud metaphor. It was apparently memorable enough to be reprised at Sparta in 210: Polyb.

All parties responded positively to the speech – especially Philip, who was now very eager for peace. Of course, Polybius notes, Agelaus' words converged with Philip's own impulse, the groundwork for which had been laid by Demetrius of Pharos.¹⁸

For Polybius, Philip's shift in focus from East to West marks the critical moment in world history when the *symplokē*, "the intertwining," first occurred: from this point forward, the affairs of Greece, Italy, and Africa became intermingled, and embassies went back and forth between the eastern and western Mediterranean. This vast, interconnected world, in contact for centuries through trade, piracy, and warfare, was now, and for the duration of world history, intertwined politically.

Philip Joins the Fray

Encouraged by Demetrius and Agelaus, Philip soon began laying the groundwork for a western expedition. His first task, *de rigueur* for Macedonian kings about to undertake wide-ranging major wars of conquest, was to secure the frontiers of the homeland. The Illyrian warlord Scerdilaidas, former ally of both Demetrius of Pharos and Philip (and now a Roman international *amicus*¹⁹), had been causing trouble on Macedonia's northwestern frontier and made deep inroads into the kingdom itself.²⁰ After driving Scerdilaidas from Macedonia during autumn 217, over the course of the following winter Philip began constructing a fleet of one hundred light galleys (*lemboi*) for the planned invasion of Italy. He launched the fleet in summer 216, but as he approached the territory of Rome's *amicus* Apollonia on the Illyrian coast, it was reported to him that a Roman war-fleet was on its way from Rhegium to assist Scerdilaidas. Philip, not rating the chances of his little *lemboi* against Roman war-ships, reversed course and retreated into Macedonia. In the event, only ten Roman ships appeared off the Illyrian coast. It was an embarrassing debacle for Philip, but, as Polybius notes, he escaped with no losses – except for his dignity.²¹

9.37.10. Mørkholm 1967: 244–6 (cf. Waterfield 2014: 1) is sceptical that the speech is authentic since, among other reasons, it is suspiciously similar to Polybius' *symplokē* scheme (on which, see below). Champion 1997 stresses that Polybius's scheme (however exaggerated or premature) cannot on its own prove the speech inauthentic.

¹⁸ Polyb. 5.105.1.

¹⁹ On this status, see now Burton 2011. On Scerdilaidas, see above, n. 14.

²⁰ Polyb. 5.108.1–4, 8–10.

²¹ Polyb. 5.109–10; Livy 24.40; Vitr. *Arch.* 10.16.9–10; Plut. *Anat.* 51.2; Zon. 9.4.3. Polybius (5.110.9–10) interprets Philip's retreat as panicked rather than strategic, and criticizes the king for letting slip the opportunity to become master of Illyria by giving in to irrational fear; after all, the Romans were

But Philip's haste to break off Illyrian operations may also be explained by another bit of intelligence that probably arrived at the same time as the report of the mobilization of the Roman fleet. The Romans had been spectacularly beaten by Hannibal's Carthaginians at the Battle of Cannae in southern Italy in late summer, 216.²² It was time to redouble his efforts to invade Italy, to become a second Pyrrhus. To do this he would have to make contact with the victorious Hannibal.

Travel was notoriously slow in the ancient world; as the incident of the *lemboi* demonstrates, false rumor often outran reliable intelligence. It is perhaps not surprising, then, that the first contacts and negotiations between Hannibal and Philip took place over a matter of months rather than weeks. The only reason we know of their secret negotiations is because Philip's chief negotiator, Xenophanes of Athens, was intercepted by the Roman fleet on his return journey to Macedon in the company of the Carthaginian legates Gisgo, Bostar, and Mago.²³ The Roman authorities seized the treaty document, which Polybius later accessed in the Roman archives, and reproduced in full in his *Histories*. The treaty was both a mutual assistance and a mutual defense pact, but its terms slightly favored Hannibal, who was envisioned as the only party entitled to decide matters of war (in Italy, at least) and peace. The treaty was in part designed to keep Philip out of Italy rather than invite him in; with Rome within an ace of being defeated, Hannibal was serving notice that Italy would soon be his patch, and that it was with himself as its master that Philip would have to deal in future.²⁴ All the treaty promised Philip was protection from future Roman aggression by means of a clause in the eventual peace settlement between Carthage and Rome.²⁵ Given the set of hypotheticals upon

preoccupied with the aftermath of Cannae. But the Roman ships were a manifestation of that preoccupation – and Rome's determination to dig in and mobilize her allies and friends rather than surrender to Hannibal. Hence, as Walbank 1940: 70 recognized, the need for Philip to re-strategize and make contact with Hannibal, without whose help (especially at sea) Philip could not hope to succeed in his grand plan. Discussion: Badian 1952: 90; Hammond 1968: 16–17; Errington 1971: 111–12; Gruen 1984: 375–7; Eckstein 2008: 86; Burton 2011: 235–6; Waterfield 2014: 45 (who argues that Polybius' antipathy toward Philip has turned an orderly strategic withdrawal into a panicked retreat).

²² According to Polybius, 70,000 Roman and allied troops were lost, 10,000 were captured, and only 370 of 6,000 cavalry and 3,000 infantry survived (Polyb. 3.117.2–4), while Livy states that 91,000 infantry and 5,400 cavalry perished, and 3,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry were captured (Livy 22.49.15–18).

²³ Livy 23.34.1–5; cf. App. *Mac.* 1. Livy (23.33.6) has Xenophanes intercepted on his way to Italy as well, but this may be an error.

²⁴ Rosenstein 2012: 145–6. The possibility of Philip coming to Italy was at least vaguely kept open by the clause mandating Philip's help during the war with Rome if agreed upon (Polyb. 7.9.10–11).

²⁵ Polyb. 7.9.13. Demetrius of Pharos was promised more by the terms of the alliance: the return of some of his friends, evidently in custody in Italy since 219 (cf. Badian 1952: 87; Walbank 1967: 56), and the Roman renunciation of their interests and friendships in Illyria (Polyb. 7.9.13–14).

which the treaty was founded, its terms were perforce left vague, its commitments loose: a vague promise of mutual friendship here, another of mutual protection there, with the usual escape clauses and provisos (“if necessary,” “if agreed upon,” “if required”), in addition to the formulaic ban on betraying the agreement, and the commitment to having the same friends and enemies.²⁶ This vagueness, plus the fact that things did not, in the event, conform to Hannibal’s expectations, perhaps explains why no clear evidence of joint Carthaginian–Macedonian operations survives in the historical record.²⁷

The so-called “First Macedonian War” was a mostly desultory affair. Without a decent fleet (and help from the Carthaginians frustratingly remote), Philip could not realistically hope to cross to Italy. His options in Illyria were limited by the presence of a Roman naval contingent of fifty ships stationed at Brundisium, a mere 75 miles away across the Adriatic as the crow flies. For their part, the Romans’ involvement in the eastern front of the war with Hannibal could never amount to anything more than a defensive holding action.²⁸ In 211, Roman envoys cast about for allies in the East, and ended up securing a treaty of alliance with the Aetolian League, perennial enemy of Macedon, with the option of other, non-aligned states joining in later.²⁹ With these proxies thus engaged, the Romans could devote almost their full attention to the western front (encompassing Italy, Spain, and lately Sicily as well), and restrict their military activities in Greece to patrolling the Adriatic coastline with the fleet. On land, the “First Macedonian War” would come to resemble nothing more or less than a reignition of the Social War – or, as the Greeks themselves apparently called it at the time, “The Aetolian War.”³⁰

A brief review of events is necessary. In late summer, 214, Philip raided the Illyrian coast with 120 *lemboi*, attacking and taking Oricum

²⁶ Polyb. 7.9.4 (friendship), 5–7 (protection), 8 (ban on betrayal), 8–9 (same friends and enemies), 11, 15 (provisos). Additional sources for the treaty: Livy 23.33.9–12; App. *Mac.* 1; Zon. 9.4.2–3. Discussion: Walbank 1967: 42–56; Coppola 1993: 169–94; Bederman 2001: 185–9; Pfeilschifter 2005: 73–4; Eckstein 2008: 83–5; Scherberich 2009: 158–60 (with others listed at 159 n. 10); Waterfield 2014: 45–6.

²⁷ The “Macedonian Legion” that was said to have fought alongside Hannibal at Zama in 202 (Livy 30.33.5, 42.7) is an invention. A Carthaginian fleet appeared in Greek waters in 208, but retreated before it could make contact with Philip – if that was its purpose (Livy 28.7.17–18, 8.8).

²⁸ Few scholars follow Harris 1979: 205–8 or Rich 1984, the former arguing that Rome was eager to assert greater control in Greece during the war, the latter that Roman campaigning in the East was not as sporadic or half-hearted as Livy’s surviving account seems to indicate. For a critique of these theories, see now Burton 2011: 84 n. 24, and of Rich in particular, below, n. 42.

²⁹ Livy 26.24.8–14. A fragment of the treaty also survives on an inscription: *SEG* 13.382 = *JG* IX 1², 241.

³⁰ Eckstein 2008: 77, 102.

and laying siege to Apollonia. The Roman propraetor in charge of the fleet, M. Valerius Laevinus, quickly recovered Oricum and sent a detachment of troops to Apollonia, which easily slipped into the city by night. Another night attack, this time on the Macedonian camp near Apollonia, followed. Thanks to the lassitude of the Macedonian sentries, over a thousand Roman troops were in the camp before being detected, and in the rout that ensued, the king was roused from his bed and forced to flee for his life, half-dressed and disheveled – an indecent state barely worthy of a common soldier, much less a king, Livy caustically remarks.³¹ Valerius dispatched the Roman fleet to the mouth of the Aous River to prevent the Macedonians escaping by sea. Philip, still not fancying his chances against Roman war-ships, hauled his light galleys ashore, set fire to them, and retreated overland back to Macedonia.³²

The loss of Polybius' original account of the subsequent eastern campaigns, and the inadequacy of Livy's intermittent summaries of it, obscure the course of the war for the next few years. With the Roman fleet now in full control of the Illyrian coastline, Philip turned to land operations, first in Messenia in the western Peloponnese, and then on the western fringes of the inland Illyrian states. Rome remained passive until Philip once again pushed through to the Illyrian coast by subduing Lissus in 213/12.³³ Roman negotiations with the Aetolian League soon followed, but it was a long time before the aforementioned treaty was finally struck in late 211. Some individual and joint Roman–Aetolian operations followed in Acarnania and on the island of Zacynthus, but Philip was by now considered sufficiently entangled in the war with his neighbors that the Romans could safely withdraw from the fight for the remainder of the campaigning season.³⁴

In 210, the Aetolians and the Romans under their new Roman commander Sulpicius Galba captured the important coastal town of Anticyra on the north shore of the Corinthian Gulf in Phocis.³⁵ The Romans then turned their attention to diplomacy in the Peloponnese, successfully bringing Elis, Sparta, and Messenia into the anti-Macedonian coalition as Roman *amici*.³⁶ After thus reigniting internecine warfare across Greece, the

³¹ Livy 24.40.2–13.

³² Livy 24.40.16–17.

³³ Polyb. 8.13–14.

³⁴ Livy 26.24.15–16.

³⁵ Livy 26.26.1–3.

³⁶ Provision was made for the inclusion of Elis and Sparta in the Aetolian treaty of 211 (Livy 26.24.9). No positive evidence for these informal alliances exists, but all states concerned were active against

Romans were now content to withdraw to a defensive posture, guarding the Adriatic coast with the fleet, and leaving the land war in the hands of their Peloponnesian and Aetolian friends. The following year, the senate evacuated all Roman land forces from Greece.³⁷

Philip then set to work securing a marching route along the Thessalian coastline in order to link up with his Peloponnesian allies. He was shadowed by the Roman fleet, lately joined by the fleet of a new Roman *amicus*, Attalus I of Pergamum.³⁸ The joint Roman–Pergamene fleet tried to slow Philip’s advance southward, but to little effect.³⁹ The king soon reached the Peloponnese, where his Achaean League allies drew him into conflict with its arch-enemy Sparta. The Roman fleet tried to distract Philip by raiding the Peloponnesian coast, but again achieved very little.⁴⁰

Meanwhile, in 209, 208, and 207, several attempts by neutral powers to mediate between Philip and Aetolia failed.⁴¹ The war dragged on as Philip became increasingly bogged down in Peloponnesian military and political disputes. Finally, in 207/6, in the face of Philip’s considerable successes on land, and Rome’s apparent indifference even to naval operations in Greece,⁴² the Aetolians agreed to terms with the king. This “separate peace,” struck without the Roman senate’s knowledge or approval, would become a serious bone of contention between Aetolia and Rome in the years to come.⁴³ The Romans, after one last-ditch attempt to reverse the result of the separate peace in summer, 205,⁴⁴ decided to cut their losses and negotiate with Philip. They could do little else: pursuing the war in Greece without a major ally, especially now that the final showdown with

Philip during the war and appear as *adscripti* on the Roman side in the Peace of Phoenice in 205. On the *amicus* status of the *adscripti*, see now Burton 2013: 213 n. 26.

³⁷ Livy 26.28.3, 9.

³⁸ On the establishment of the Roman–Pergamene friendship, see now Burton 2011: 84–7.

³⁹ E.g. in 210 at Echinus across the Malian Gulf from Thermopylae (Polyb. 9.41), and in 209 at nearby Lamia (Livy 27.30.1–2). Philip was victorious in both encounters.

⁴⁰ The Romans raided the Peloponnesian coastline between Sicyon and Corinth in 208, but Philip soon drove them off (Livy 27.31.1–3, 33.2). The Romans managed to install a garrison at Cyllene in Elis and fend off a Macedonian attack (during which Philip was thrown from his horse, but recovered and fought on foot “with great courage,” according to Livy), but the king escaped laden with massive spoils and in possession of the Elean fort of Phycus (Livy 27.32).

⁴¹ On these initiatives, see now Eckstein 2002 and 2008: 91–116.

⁴² Livy states explicitly that the Romans paid little attention to Greek affairs for two years (Livy 29.12.1), and there is no record of any activity by the Roman fleet in eastern waters for 207 or 206. Rich 1984: esp. 137–43 denies a two-year gap existed, but this requires acceptance of his arbitrarily revised chronology, which flatly contradicts Livy’s statement and his account.

⁴³ See now Burton 2011: 270–8, with earlier discussions there cited.

⁴⁴ The proconsul P. Sempronius Tuditanus was despatched to Greece with 35 ships, 10,000 infantry, and 1,000 cavalry in spring, 205 (Livy 29.12.2).

Hannibal was looming, would have been a dangerous division of their resources. The Peace of Phoenice was signed and ratified before the year was out.⁴⁵

Despite the failure of his plan to reconquer all Illyria and invade Italy, and the ineffectiveness of his alliance with the Carthaginians, Philip emerged from the conflict relatively unscathed, and in a better position than before. He gained Atintania, former Roman *amici*, kept the parts of Illyria (including, perhaps, Lissus) he conquered in 213, and was confirmed in possession of the Dessaretian lands he seized from Scerdilaidas in 217.⁴⁶ For the Romans, who, as the war with Hannibal showed, were culturally predisposed to accept nothing less than total victory, this was a disappointing result – and would require correction.

A War of Revenge?

Within two years of the signing of the Peace of Phoenice, disturbing intelligence about Philip's activities in the eastern Aegean began to make their way to Rome. In winter 203/2, Philip and the king of the Seleucid empire, Antiochus III, signed a secret pact to carve up the Ptolemaic empire, including Egypt itself, whose throne had recently been occupied by a 5-year-old boy, Ptolemy V Epiphanes.⁴⁷ The pact was perhaps the worst-kept secret in the Mediterranean world at that time, since most other states in the East soon knew about it, and were quick to inform the Romans of its existence.⁴⁸

Soon Rome's eastern friends began appearing before the senate to complain about Philip, who had been ravaging Asia Minor since 204. In 202, delegates from the Aetolian League arrived in Rome decrying the king's attacks on Aetolian dependencies in Thrace and Asia Minor. The ambassadors were sternly rebuffed by the senate, still angry over the Aetolians' separate peace with Philip.⁴⁹ By late summer or autumn 201, ambassadors from Rome's friends, the beleaguered states of Rhodes, Pergamum, Egypt,

⁴⁵ Terms: Livy 29.12.13–14; cf. App. *Mac.* 3.2.

⁴⁶ See Walbank 1940: 103 (with earlier sources there cited); Badian 1958a: 61; Eckstein 2008: 113; Waterfield 2014: 56.

⁴⁷ On the pact, its scope, and effects, see now Eckstein 2008: 124–229; cf. Eckstein 2006: 271–5.

⁴⁸ Polyb. 14.1a.4 on the leaking of intelligence about the pact.

⁴⁹ App. *Mac.* 4.2; cf. Livy 31.29.4. *Pace* Badian 1958b: 208–11 (followed by Ferrary 1988: 51 and n. 26), this embassy appears to be authentic: Dahlheim 1968: 196 n. 45; Briscoe 1973: 130; Gruen 1984: 396–7 n. 214 (the latter two citing older literature); cf. 79, 441; Twyman 1999: 1284 (dating the embassy to 201; cf. Briscoe 1973: 130 (with older literature there cited); Derow 1979: 7–8; Waterfield 2014: 62–3); Eckstein 2008: 211–17 (dating it to autumn 202, following Holleaux 1935: 293–7); Burton 2011: 270.

and Athens, all came before the senate to complain of the pact and the violence of the kings.⁵⁰

This Mediterranean “diplomatic revolution,” as Arthur Eckstein has rightly labeled it,⁵¹ made it harder for the Romans to ignore Philip’s activities in Asia Minor any longer. The consul P. Sulpicius Galba proposed to the citizen assembly a declaration of war on Philip, but the people, exhausted by their recent war with Carthage, flatly and unanimously rejected it at the instigation of a tribune, Q. Baebius. The latter was from a prominent consular family, which indicates that the senate, too, was divided over whether to support Rome’s friends against Macedon. Sulpicius then delivered a persuasive speech, warning the people not to wait for Philip to attack Italy, like another Pyrrhus or Hannibal, or to abandon their friends in their hour of need, lest it lead to another Saguntum, the ill-fated Spanish ally of Rome whose cries for help were ignored when the city was under siege by Hannibal in 219. The words of Sulpicius had their intended effect. The people voted in favor of the proposal, and envoys were dispatched to the East armed with a conditional declaration of war on Philip.⁵² One group of envoys soon appeared in Athens, currently under attack by Philip’s general Nicanor, demanding that Philip make war on no Greek state and submit his differences with Attalus of Pergamum to arbitration. Another embassy, headed by M. Aemilius Lepidus, met with the king himself while he was in the midst of besieging Abydus on the Hellespont. Aemilius demanded that Philip not wage war on any Greek state, nor interfere with Ptolemy’s possessions, and that he submit his differences with Rhodes and Attalus to arbitration. Philip, in turn, warned the Romans not to violate the Peace of Phoenice by siding with those who had already done so. The discussion was at an end, and a state of war came into being.⁵³

⁵⁰ Livy 31.1.9–2.2; Just. *Epit.* 30.3.5 (Athens, Pergamum, and Rhodes; cf. Paus. 1.36.5–6, 7.7.7–8; Flor. 1.23.4–5; Fest. 7.2 (Athens)); Just. *Epit.* 30.2.8 (Egypt); App. *Mac.* 4.2 (Rhodes and Athens). Egypt had been a Roman *amicus* since 273 (above, n. 6), and Athens since 209 or 208 (Burton 2013). Rhodes may also have been a Roman friend at this time since Polybius (30.5.6) records an *amicitia* dated to around 306, but some have regarded this as improbably early; discussion: Burton 2003: 356–7.

⁵¹ Eckstein 2008: 181–270. It was revolutionary in the sense that the Hellenistic states behaved uncharacteristically by calling upon an outsider (i.e. Rome) to assist them, and witnessing traditional rivals, such as Rhodes and Pergamum, working together. The Roman decision to intervene was also revolutionary in that it contributed to a system in which great powers grew increasingly more powerful at the expense of second-tier powers, and the Polybian *symplokē*, the “intertwining” of eastern and western Mediterranean affairs, intensified.

⁵² Livy 31.6.1–8.4; conditional declaration of war: Polyb. 16.34.4, with Walbank 1967: 543–4; Rich 1976: 76–87; Eckstein 2008: 277.

⁵³ Polyb. 16.27.1–2, 34.1–4; Livy 31.18.1–5; Diod. Sic. 28.6 (Romans at Athens); Polyb. 16.34.1–7; Livy 31.18.1–4; cf. App. *Mac.* 4 (parley at Abydus). Philip’s reference to treaty-breakers is probably an allusion to the Athenians, whom Aemilius also mentions, and who had had two Acarnanians (allies of

The impasse between Rome and Macedon marked the beginning of the war, but its causes had been bubbling under the surface for some time. The causes of the Second Macedonian War are a source of great scholarly controversy, bound up as they are with such insoluble problems as the nature of Roman imperialism and Roman ambitions in Greece in this period – to say nothing of the loss of most of Polybius' account of the run-up to the war.⁵⁴ Roman greed was probably not a significant motivating factor: Sulpicius does not mention opportunities for plunder in his speech to the people, where one would expect to see an appeal to baser instincts. In fact, the consul builds his case on a moral argument: one should, if possible, help and protect one's friends, demonstrating *fides*, "good faith."⁵⁵ Sulpicius also plays on Roman fears and paranoia, beginning his speech by raising the specter of Philip becoming another Pyrrhus or Hannibal, attacking Italy by land and sea.⁵⁶ Although he does not mention the revenge motive explicitly, his reference to Philip's pact with Hannibal was surely designed to inspire such feelings in his audience. The revenge motive appears repeatedly in the sources, all of which ultimately descend from Polybius, and is bound up with the idea that the Second Macedonian War was a continuation of the First, a war that, for the Romans, was interrupted by a period of inconvenient but necessary peace.⁵⁷ It was simply unacceptable that Philip's predatory, opportunistic behavior during Rome's darkest hour had resulted in net gains for the king.⁵⁸ There can be little doubt that many Romans felt this way, although it is only natural that the bulk of the

Macedon) executed for violating the Eleusinian mysteries in mid-September, 201. See Burton 2013: 210–11.

⁵⁴ For Polybius' famous division of causation into *aitiai* ("causes"), *prophaseis* ("pretexts"), and *archai* ("beginnings"), see his analysis of the outbreak of the Second Punic War at 3.6–30 (with Pearson 1952; Pédech 1964: 80–8; Walbank 1972: 157–60). Whether he subjected the outbreak of the Second Macedonian War to such formal analysis is difficult to know since no trace of it exists among the extant fragments or the post-Polybian historiographical tradition. See Bickermann 1945: 148; Pédech 1964: 118–19; Walbank 1963: 12; Derow 1979: 10–11.

⁵⁵ On *fides* in Sulpicius' speech, see Burton 2011: 241 (ignored by Waterfield 2014: 68). On *fides* generally, see Burton 2011: 40–5 (in friendship between individuals) and 114–58 (in international friendships), with earlier scholarship there cited.

⁵⁶ Livy 31.8.4–10; cf. Zon. 9.15.2.

⁵⁷ Revenge: Livy 31.1.9, 11.9; 34.22.8; 45.22.7; Flor. 1.23.4. *Contra* Gruen 1984: 385, the fact that the specific grounds for revenge – that Philip provided financial and military assistance to Hannibal – are untrue does not mean that feelings of revenge for Philip kicking the Romans when they were down, and without provocation from Rome, did not exist. As Polybius says (3.32.7), "I regard [the war] with Philip ... as resulting from that with Hannibal" (θεωροῦμεν ... τὸν δὲ Φιλιππικὸν [πόλεμον τὰς ἀφορμὰς εἰληφότα] ἐκ τοῦ κατ' Ἀννίβαν). The second war as a continuation of the first: Livy 31.1.8–10; App. *Mac.* 3.2; Just. *Epit.* 29.4.11; Zon. 9.15.1.

⁵⁸ This is why his Illyrian gains, recognized in the Peace of Phoenice, would be demanded back at the Nicaea conference in November 198 (Polyb. 18.1.14; Livy 32.33.3; below, p. 34).