

THE FIRST PUNIC WAR: DECONSTRUCTION AND
REINTERPRETATION.

A HYPOTHESIS

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I, Terence Morland Hayes confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.

ABSTRACT

The First Punic War (264 B.C. – 241 B.C.) was the first of three major conflicts between the republics of Rome and Carthage for the domination of the Mediterranean World. From this point on Rome looked beyond Italy and launched her own first overseas venture into Sicily. The key source of information concerning the war is the Greek historian Polybius whose account has been accepted by most scholars since its first translation into Latin in 1419. However, in this thesis I argue that there are some highly significant anomalies in his account which have not been satisfactorily explained by scholars and that by comparing Polybius' account with variant other sources, a new hypothesis can be constructed that reveals a radically different narrative for the war. This approach indicates that the conflict was made up of at least two separate wars (264-248 and 242-241) that were divided by a peace period, and that in the first of these the Romans were defeated and forced to leave Sicily. Although the Romans were ultimately the victors, I reason that when they embarked on writing their first history, they were constrained by circumstances to obscure the defeat in order to demonstrate that Rome was unbeatable in war. This objective was skilfully accomplished, I contend, by Rome's first historian, Fabius Pictor, who rearranged the events based on the 'account' of the war by his predecessor Philinus of Agrigentum. Fabius' history quickly became accepted as the basis, particularly by Polybius, for all subsequent Roman histories.

My thesis challenges the old nineteenth century triumphalist assumptions as to the inevitability of Rome's rise to world power and strives to redress a major injustice perpetrated on the Carthaginians, and thus on their inheritors.

IMPACT STATEMENT

This research has the potential to revolutionise scholars' approach to the study of classical history. It undermines the common acceptance that the ancient historian, though subject to bias, error, and their own agenda, essentially set out to narrate their understanding of the truth. The findings in this thesis reveal the possibility that ancient historians, particularly of Rome, could manipulate their accounts to produce fundamentally false histories, that promoted their own state, to the great detriment of the conquered peoples, whose own narratives were destroyed or lost.

The results are of particular relevance within academia, and demonstrate that investigations of historical sources should include a 'Realist' approach that carefully considers the contemporary political landscapes of the authors, and the vital importance of variant sources, as well as the part played by non-European nations.

By developing new, more inclusive teaching initiatives, these concepts can not only encourage a greater diversity of students of ancient history, but also enhance the reputation of the institutions that promote them.

Outside academia, these ideas can be broadly promoted through online lectures, academic journals, books and conferences.

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INTRODUCTION

The importance of the First Punic War (264 B.C. – 241 B.C.) cannot be emphasised enough, for it was the first of three victorious wars that Rome fought against Carthage, and its successful conclusion set her on the road to an empire that lasted in the West until A.D. 476.¹ This ‘greatest and longest continuous war in history’² tested to the utmost Rome’s resources and her determination to succeed; it also demonstrated her extraordinary ability to hold her commonwealth together³ and to adapt to new methods of warfare.⁴ Except for Polybius’ continuous but concise account, the other sources for the First Punic War are limited to fragments and summaries which often appear to be confused or contradictory. Especially regrettable, is the loss of the earliest account of the war by the Sicilian historian, Philinus of Agrigentum, as well as that of the first account by a Roman, Fabius Pictor, now only preserved in a few fragments.⁵ The surviving evidence from inscriptions, numismatics and archaeology is important, but limited.⁶ Scholars have therefore felt themselves forced to accept Polybius’ narrative.⁷ This approach has given rise to a strong tendency to defend his version, rather than critically to investigate the fundamental reasons for the important anomalies contained within his account. These anomalies have produced significant disruptions in the flow of Polybius’ narrative necessitating sometimes tortuous explanations by historians. I intend to demonstrate that these key anomalies are all interrelated, and derive from an ingenious and systematic attempt to distort events in Rome’s favour.

¹ All dates are B.C. unless otherwise stated.

² Polyb. 1.63.4-5. I am following the Loeb editions unless otherwise shown, as well as the list of primary source abbreviations in the Oxford Classical Dictionary, 4th edition.

³ Eckstein 2006:34.

⁴ The prime example of this was her creation of a navy that enabled her successfully to confront the great naval power of Carthage - see Thiel 1954 for the best account.

⁵ These fragments are now fully edited by Timothy Cornell and Edward Bispham in ‘The Fragments of the Roman Historians’, Cornell et al. 2013. Also missing is Livy’s account of this war, but it can probably be inferred that he relies heavily on Fabius Pictor (and thus Philinus), due to his high regard for Fabius: Livy 22.7.4, ‘I ... have taken Fabius, a contemporary of this war [sc. the Second Punic War], to be the best-qualified authority’ *FRHist.* II. 33 T2 [EHB, TJC].

⁶ See chapter 1, pp.42-46.

⁷ I have referred in this thesis to the ‘standard’ or ‘accepted’ account of this war: by this I mean Polybius’ account, but as slightly amended by scholars, particularly Lazenby 1996.

As Rome was not a literate society until the middle of the third century, written historical records for the war were mainly restricted to bare pontifical fasti and official texts.⁸ Thus, when Fabius Pictor was writing about the First Punic War (as part of Rome's first comprehensive history) in the last decade of the Hannibalic War, he had to rely substantially on the one detailed account – that of Philinus. But though he may have accepted that this account was fundamentally correct,⁹ it highlighted many events, including momentous defeats, that must have seemed so unpalatable to the image of Rome he wished to promote that, I contend, it had to be substantially altered. By investigating Fabius Pictor's *modus operandi*, I came to the conclusion that he chose a simple and convincing way of achieving his objective – that of rearranging those losses, indicative of a humiliating surrender during the course of the war, in a systematic way so to present an 'acceptable' history for Rome and one that was persuasive - at least on a superficial basis. The concept is simple, but it was necessary for Pictor to adopt a variety of alterations and assured points of reference in order to maintain an orderly and convincing narrative.¹⁰

His method would have enabled him to claim that he was correcting the version of Philinus whose account, Polybius tells us, was favourable to Carthage and that he was not fabricating or altering events.¹¹ By moving events that, in the main, showed Rome in a particularly damaging light, and by placing them in years that could disguise or significantly moderate their original impact, Fabius was able to reinterpret the resulting outcomes into a pro-Roman patriotic narrative. This method permitted him to claim adherence to the basic facts and that it was Philinus who was in error.¹² It could be countered that the Greek historians would have challenged his account. Pictor's response would have been that it was the 'pro-Carthaginian' Philinus who had manipulated the events and that he, Fabius, had put the record straight.

⁸ See chapter 2, pp.53-7 for discussion on the advent of literacy in Rome.

⁹ See below and chapters 1 and 2 concerning the reliance on Philinus.

¹⁰ A quote from Sir Walter Scott's poem 'Marmion' is certainly appropriate here: 'Oh what a tangled web we weave when first we practise to deceive' (XVII).

¹¹ Polyb. 1.14.1-3.

¹² This did not mean that Fabius did not exaggerate, downplay, or embellish these events.

Fabius' rearrangements, of necessity, created anomalies in both the new and original locations, including, unlikely multiple operations, predictable disastrous decisions, overlong Roman sieges, inexplicable and detrimental Carthaginian inactivity, and a resulting confusion of the sources. I show that these key anomalies are all interlinked and therefore cannot be resolved by individual hypothetical solutions. It is by identifying these and relocating them where they might have originally belonged, that the original text of Philinus (that, I argue, was subsequently altered by Fabius) can be tentatively reconstructed to a meaningful degree. Based on the comprehensive analysis of all the sources available, my work rejects the rather dismissive approach, often taken by scholars, that the relevant non-Polybian authors were particularly subject to confusion, carelessness or bias as regards this war.¹³ It seeks to explain the dilemma of these ancient authors, who all wrote after Fabius in the second and subsequent centuries, when confronted with these two fundamentally contradictory, but closely interconnected accounts.

I reason that, thereby, it is possible to reconstruct, according to this line of argument, a history that shows a surprising but realistic narrative for the First Punic War and one that presents a far more coherent account of these events. It remains to be seen whether new evidence will substantiate or contradict the hypothesis that I put forward here, or perhaps reveal a more complex intermediary situation. This work will, at the very least, I hope, stimulate a re-examination of the sources and current assumptions towards them – in particular Polybius, and engender a new approach to this war and possibly other areas of republican history. In this introduction, I will give an overview of the First Punic War, the main anomalies contained within it, and the reasons why they have not been seriously challenged, together with a note on my approach for their resolution.¹⁴ In chapter 1, I will review in detail the sources for the war and the problems they present. In chapter 2, I will discuss Fabius Pictor's history, his sources, motivation, and methodology. In chapters 3 to 8, I

¹³ E.g. Lazenby 1996:6-8; Hoyos 2015:285-7.

¹⁴ Attached are 2 tables and a map of ancient Sicily to assist comprehension of my hypothesis: Table A: 'Fabius Pictor's Proposed Reallocations' showing his significant adjustments; Table B: 'Comparison of the Standard and Revised History of the First Punic War' showing in chronological order the (mainly) Polybian account set against the revised narrative, together with explanatory notes; Table C: 'Sample Excel Spreadsheet' used for building scenarios (explained in chapter. 2, pp.65-9).

will examine the key anomalies and how scholars have provided varying explanations for their resolution. Finally, in chapter 9, I will show how all these anomalies are interlinked and when corrected, can provide a compelling new narrative for the First Punic War which, though controversial, resolves its major inconsistencies and demonstrates that there is a new way of collating the ancient sources.¹⁵

Fundamental to this thesis is a detailed re-evaluation of the events of the First Punic War by an examination of the ancient sources including, not just the account of the Greek historian Polybius of Megalopolis, but also the relevant fragments, excerpts and summaries from the other sources.¹⁶ Polybius is considered to be by far the most important source for the war, as this is the only continuous one extant, but it is condensed and not intended to be comprehensive. Polybius is generally considered very reliable by modern scholars, and his stated systematic approach is distinctly modern in that he insists he only accepts verifiable evidence.¹⁷

The loss of sources for the war written by the Carthaginians means that we are obliged to rely on accounts fundamentally sympathetic to Rome, although Diodorus Siculus is thought to have borrowed extensively from the 'pro-Carthaginian' version by Philinus.¹⁸ Particularly unfortunate, is the loss of Livy's account of the First Punic War from 292 to 219 (save in very short summaries) as he is the main source for early Roman history. Cornell, after emphasising the significance of this loss 'which falls within the fully historical age' which starts 'from the 330s onwards', underscores a very important concept which is particularly relevant to this thesis:

'It does not follow that our sources are wholly reliable. Quite the contrary! Graeco-Roman history is different from most other fields of historical study precisely because much of the important primary

¹⁵ I have divided chapter 9 into six stages (9.1 – 9.6), which I argue Pictor used to implement his adjustments.

¹⁶ These include Diodorus Siculus (22.13.1-24.14.1), Cassius Dio (11.43.1-18, 20-23, 25-27, 29-32), Zonaras (8.8-17), and Appian (*Hisp.* 4; *Lib.* 63; *Pun.* 8.1.3-5, 8.9.63; *Sic.* 5.1.1, 2.1-3), as well as those fragments attributable to Philinus, Fabius Pictor and the poet Naevius.

¹⁷ For Polybius, see chapter 1, pp.28-32. For other ancient historians' methodologies claims, see Marincola 1997. For example, Diodorus (1.4. 3-5) claims to have travelled widely to correct errors in other historians' works (Marincola 1997:75). It is not clear what methodological approach was taken by the early Roman authors (who were of the senatorial class, and usually retired) but Dionysius (*Ant. Rom.* 1.6.2). says Fabius and Cincius wrote about events at which they were present (Marincola 1997:77-8).

¹⁸ For Philinus, see chapter 1, pp.33-34.

evidence is literary and self-consciously historical – in other words, the work of historians. In any other field of history (other than historiography), such texts would be regarded as secondary sources by definition. It is in the nature of secondary sources that they offer interpretation and conjecture, that they tend to be biased, that they are frequently mistaken, and that they are sometimes dishonest'.¹⁹

As Cameron notes, when discussing Claudian's techniques, modern historians have shown a curious reluctance to query even the most obvious misrepresentations, as if writing for contemporaries on contemporary events would have impeded any alterations of reality.²⁰

However, the idea that the Romans would not stoop to deception is not fully to comprehend the highly challenging circumstances which faced the Romans at the end of the Hannibalic War when, I argue, Pictor's history was being compiled. Thiel says of the Roman annalists '... that they were no pathological liars, which means that they did not lie for lying's own sake, but only when it was necessary or at least desirable *in maiorem Romanorum gloriam*'.²¹

Fabius Pictor's History and Methodology

The new approach adopted in this thesis, which is particularly applicable to this extended war of twenty-three years, is to concentrate on looking at the war as a whole,²² and to examine and assess its viability by asking fundamental questions, such as its extraordinary length, the confusion in the relevant sources, and the lack of any clear strategic objectives by either party.

The key conclusion of my work is that the Romans had suffered such a catastrophic series of disasters during the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249) and its aftermath, that towards the end of 248 they were forced to sign a treaty with the Carthaginians whereby they evacuated all of Sicily: this 'Treaty of Philinus' is the one which Polybius strenuously tried to deny.²³ When, in the last decade of

¹⁹ Cornell 1995:17. His remarks are also relevant to the First Punic War as, apart from the fasti, Egadi rams, and (possibly) the Entella Tablets, there is little archaeological evidence that affects the narrative of the war (see chapter 1, pp.42-6).

²⁰ Cameron 1970:v: this comment is in relation to Claudian's contemporary panegyrics, especially on the Gildonic War.

²¹ Thiel 1954:5.

²² One can perhaps draw an analogy with the way archaeologists use aerial photography which can give a much clearer overall understanding of the surface structures being excavated.

²³ Polyb. 3.26.1-5.

the Hannibalic War (210-201), Fabius Pictor came to write about the First Punic War in his new, patriotic history, it could not be admitted that the Romans had been so comprehensively defeated by the Carthaginians, or had violated a treaty agreement with Carthage. This humiliation was particularly galling as, in my reconstruction, it was Hamilcar Barca, the acknowledged greatest general of the First Punic War (and father of Hannibal) who engineered Rome's defeat in 248.

In 200, Rome was about to turn east and confront the great Hellenistic powers, particularly that of Antiochus the Great. It was therefore considered essential that Rome projected herself as an unbeatable force and that her history proved it. I intend to demonstrate that Fabius deliberately obscured the defeat by joining it with the final and triumphant war fought in 242-1: he then treated the intermediate 'interwar' period as one of minor guerrilla activity and overly long sieges.²⁴ This rearrangement produced a war extending over a period of twenty-four consecutive years, and it enabled him to reallocate most events within it. As Rome did not have her own account of the war, Fabius had a sole point of reference in the account of Philinus of Agrigentum that had probably been written within a few years of the end of the war and which, according to my reading, had detailed Rome's humiliation. Then, in order to provide a suitably amended, but convincing and defensible account of the war, he preserved the essence of the individual actions present in Philinus' account, and added details, that were in themselves basically accurate, from Roman sources. These included names of consuls and other magistrates, details of triumphs, senatorial decisions, and motivations for actions: he then rearranged them according to certain criteria, and given a significantly pro-Roman bias.²⁵ In order to present as coherent a narrative as possible, Fabius also endeavoured to ensure a seamless integration of his re-arranged events into their new textual settings, He sought to achieve this by adding linking sentences (with appropriate minor adjustments) to the original narrative.

Thus, when historians after Fabius wrote about the war, they had at their disposal two accounts containing essentially the same facts, but with

²⁴ This is very similar to the situation of the Second Samnite War (326-304) which is clearly two separate wars (see ch.2, pp.50-1).

²⁵ These criteria are listed in chapter 2, pp.63-4.

dramatically different sequences of narratives which resulted in different consequences and interpretations. By utilising Philinus' account Fabius unquestionably accepted its fundamental veracity, and his version soon became the accepted and 'official' account of the war.

As explained in this thesis, subsequent historians had to follow Fabius' structure and chronology of events, but some, e.g. Diodorus, who was less inclined to follow Rome's triumphalist account, also wished to take events from the original source, Philinus. However, in so doing, they recorded them in Philinus' original chronological position which unwittingly replicated the same event in Fabius' rearranged account (thus resulting in duplications), or they integrated them with Fabius' narrative, thus producing variant versions.

In my reconstruction, all the variant sources for this war, as far as we can tell on the basis of the evidence currently available, derive from Philinus' account either directly, or indirectly via Fabius.²⁶ Despite Fabius' endeavours, the rearrangement of Philinus' events in his narrative still resulted in certain significant anomalies in the logical flow of events. It is the detection and resolution of these anomalies that form the basis of my reconstruction, that I offer as an alternative hypothesis of the events.

As Fabius' official patriotic history soon became the accepted version, then by the time Polybius was writing in the middle of the second century, it had become the most authoritative record of the events and could not be altered in any fundamental way. It is, however, likely that some adjustments have been made by early authors, and I have identified that Polybius probably initiated some important changes.²⁷ However, it is otherwise impossible at this stage to identify these authors, and so they have been treated as belonging to Fabius Pictor for the purposes of this hypothesis. Fabius' history strongly influenced all later historians, especially Polybius who used him as the main source for the First Punic War.²⁸ Though Fabius' history is lost (with the exception of about 23 fragments of confident attribution), there is little doubt that much of what he

²⁶ As we have noted above, there were many details from Roman sources that Fabius would also have used, but the continuous narrative of the war would have come from Philinus.

²⁷ Polybius' changes that I have identified relate mostly to the invasion of Africa in 256-5 – see chapter 9, stage 3.

²⁸ Polybius also references Philinus to a lesser degree – see chapters 1 & 2.

wrote about the war survives in Polybius as well as in the other incomplete or summarised sources.²⁹ I therefore consider that scholars' acceptance of Polybius' account as largely impartial, accurate, objective and unbiased is far too optimistic.

The Circumstances of Rome's first Written History.

That early Roman history prior to the third century has in general been falsified, has certainly been a main consideration of scholars: 'much of what they [the first Roman historians] recorded was simply the historical tradition currently accepted by Roman society, but this tradition ... had little relation to or interest in historical truth'.³⁰ For more recent history from 264, it has been assumed by some scholars that the main sources are relatively accurate because available records have been thought to have increased significantly by this time. However, I consider that this is an unwarranted assumption, as Rome had only just started to become a literate society from the middle of the third century.³¹

The date Fabius Pictor wrote his history of Rome is particularly important as the events of the period not only influenced its type, contents and structure, but its primary position more easily enabled a patriotic history to be formulated that would both promote Rome to the Greek world, and also be acceptable to the Roman aristocracy and the populace as a whole. Although there is no supporting evidence for a specific date, a scholarly consensus has emerged that it was probably written in the last decade of the third century B.C. during the final years of the Hannibalic War.³² The turbulent conditions of this decade, when Rome was at last winning the war against Hannibal, and would then turn her attention eastwards to face the great Hellenistic powers, necessitated the promotion of a fully civilised, confident and unbeatable Rome, and a power whose piety had long ensured the favour of the gods.

That Fabius was able to construct his history so successfully is due in part to what Feeney calls the Roman Translation Project which used 'The

²⁹ See *FRHist.* II. 32-105 [EHB, TJC], and chapters 1 & 2 below.

³⁰ Forsyth 2005:3. For an acceptance of the basic authenticity and early origins of Roman sources (especially, the *Annales Maximae*) see discussion in chapter 2, pp.53-5.

³¹ For a discussion on the availability of records: see chapter 2, pp.53-6.

³² For support of this date see chapter 2, pp.48-9.

existing grid of Greek tradition [that] was the fundamental starting point for Fabius and his successors'.³³ At this time the Greeks did not have a detailed knowledge of Roman republican history, although some events that impinged on Greek (or Sicilian) history were covered.³⁴ The confused and often fraudulent family histories maintained by the noble families, and the varied and imprecise nature of the other sources also allowed Fabius much latitude for his history.³⁵ I argue that some members of the Roman aristocracy supported Fabius' project and encouraged others to promote Rome: Naevius' epic on the war is a prime example of this collaboration. Thus, Fabius' project to write an 'appropriate' patriotic history for Rome was not only unobstructed, but indeed supported at the highest levels.

Fabius' new history of Rome was very successful and hugely influential, and was used as a basis by all subsequent historians to use and develop, until Livy wrote his definitive work at the time of Augustus: 'Livy's history supplanted the works of the annalists' and 'became the standard source-book from which later writers were to draw their materials'.³⁶

Major Anomalies in the Accepted Account of the War.

A brief summary of the 'standard' war will be of assistance.³⁷ In 264 the Mamertines of Messana, being besieged by the Carthaginians and Syracusans, appealed to the Romans for help. After failed negotiations, Appius Claudius crossed over to the city and having defeated both besiegers made an unsuccessful attempt on Syracuse. In 263, the consuls landed in Messana whereupon many cities revolted to them, the Carthaginians were defeated, and

³³ Feeney 2016:238. Feeney 2016 proposes that after 240 there was a conscious and nuanced Roman Translation Project of Greek literature into Latin that included Hellenistic-style historiography. See also below ch.2, pp.56-7.

³⁴ See chapter 1, pp.27-8 for examples. Rome's very early history and legends were however of considerable interest, see Serrati 2011.

³⁵ Examples of the nature of oral evidence is discussed in Timpe 2011 and Von Ungern-Sternberg 2011.

³⁶ Livy, B. O. Foster, 1919, Introduction xxviii, xxiii. The potential impact of both Pictor's new history and Naevius' epic would probably have been highly significant, and have replaced or changed the collective memory as viewed through, for example, speeches or poetry. A good instance of this, as I have argued in chapter 9.3, is the 'putative' defeat of Gaius Regulus by Barca outside Lilybaeum in 249, which was reinterpreted as a heroic failure and transferred to his brother Marcus in 255: see chapter 9.3, pp.195-6 for reference to his subsequent legends.

³⁷ Reference to Table B will also be useful – this compares in summary the 'standard' and revised accounts of the war.

Syracuse was forced into an alliance. In the next year, Agrigentum was captured from the Carthaginians. In 260, the Romans built a fleet and won their first victory at sea. In 259-8 campaigns were fought in Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily; in 257, the Romans won a naval battle off Tyndaris. In 256, another major sea-battle was won against the Carthaginians and Africa was invaded, but after some success her army was annihilated in 255 by the Spartan mercenary Xanthippus. In the period 254-2 Panormus and Lipara were captured, and in 251 Metellus inflicted a severe defeat on Hasdrubal outside Panormus. In 250-249, a major siege of Lilybaeum undertaken by the Romans, proved disastrous with heavy losses both to their army and navy, but the siege continued. 248-3 was a period of reduced activity occupied with long sieges and guerrilla warfare. In 242-1 the Romans renewed the war by besieging Drepana and Lilybaeum; upon their relieving fleet being defeated, the Carthaginians surrendered.

Although the sources follow the same basic outline for the war, there are not only many contradictions and variations in the details, but also highly significant chronological discrepancies. Set out below is a summary of these key anomalies: they will be discussed in greater detail in chapters 3 to 8. The first key anomaly concerns the question of whether the city of Messana, the gateway to Sicily, was first occupied by Appius Claudius in 264, or by Valerius Maximus in 263. Polybius clearly states it was Appius Claudius in 264, but the triumphal fasti state it was Valerius Maximus Messala who was granted the triumph for this in his campaign in Sicily in 263 – therefore, without a secure base in Sicily, Appius' whole campaign in Sicily is suspect. It is generally agreed that the consular and triumphal fasti follow an independent tradition and are accurate from about 300: the accuracy of Polybius is therefore put in doubt.³⁸

The next set of key anomalies concern the complicated fighting during the period 260-258 where events are very confused and no clear campaigning strategies are discernible. Duilius' campaign in the west of Sicily is logistically improbable as early as 260, and is also very surprising as the Romans are simultaneously involved in a seven-month siege of Mytistratus. In the following

³⁸ Polyb. 1.11.9-12; Degraasi 1954:99. See chapter 3, pp.91-4.

two years there are a series of complicated and confusing campaigns which appear to make little strategic sense.

Another major anomaly relates to the extraordinary and perilous invasion of Africa in 256 by both consuls. This risk was compounded by the departure of one of the consuls soon after the initial landing, leaving the other to face the full might of Carthage. The destruction of the remaining army in the following year is entirely predictable and raises fundamental questions as to the veracity of the entire episode.

The exact year of Hasdrubal's defeat outside Panormus by Caecilius Metellus (251 or 250) raises further issues. However, by far the most significant problem relates to the length and timing of the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249) and, in particular, the extraordinary lack of any Carthaginian response to the Roman disasters connected with the siege. The following period 248-3 is an unexpected one of reduced activity and overly long static sieges that again highlight the important question as to why the Carthaginians signally failed to take the initiative following the Roman disasters of 249.

The final key anomaly is the extraordinary length of time (around nine months) it took for the Carthaginians to send a relief fleet to supply Hamilcar Barca in Sicily after the Romans suddenly renewed the war in 242, and descended on Drepana and Lilybaeum to finish this long conflict in their favour.

The extraordinary length of the war, poses a general problem, for it lasted twenty-three years (or twenty-four years, inclusive counting) and was the longest in classical history.³⁹ It seems difficult to believe that the young Roman republic, unlike the great Hellenistic powers or Carthage, had in the middle of the third century B.C. the vast resources in manpower, money and supplies required to continue a war lasting a whole generation.⁴⁰

³⁹ Using approximate calculations: the Peloponnesian War started in 431 and was concluded in 404 (27 years), but there was a break of 5 years (the Peace of Nicias) from 421-416, thus making 22 years. Kagan 2009:32-4 states that Thucydides wanted to emphasise the 'historical predominance of the Peloponnesian War' and that it was a single war and not composed of two separate parts. Similarly, Polybius 1.63.4-5 stresses Rome's involvement in the First Punic War was even greater and longer being 23 years (264-241) in duration.

⁴⁰ Rome had only just completed her conquest of Italy south of the Po and could not assume that her allies would accept unlimited impositions: in 259 (although possibly relating to 249) it is recorded that there was a serious conspiracy to take over the city by Samnite oarsmen (Zonar. 8.11; Oros. 4.7.12). Around 248, the Romans were desperate for money (App. Sic. 5.1.1), and in 243/2 Roman citizens had to provide funds for the building of a new fleet (Polyb. 1.59.6-8). In

Scholars' Approach to Resolving the Anomalies in Polybius' Account.

The fragmentary, conflicting and 'confused' sources have made Polybius' narrative the accepted history of the war, so much so, that as Lazenby puts it:

'Whether the facts he [Polybius] presents are generally true we, of course, have no means of telling, since there is so very little other evidence, and none that we can be sure is likely to be more accurate. All one can say is that if we reject his evidence, it is virtually impossible to give any account of the war beyond the baldest summary, and that there is rarely any absolute compelling reason to doubt the truth of what he says.'⁴¹

In my opinion, this attitude has resulted in an over-reliance on Polybius and consequently, where a significant problem is detected, there is a strong preference, either to defend his account, or to provide a range of possible but unsubstantiated explanations on which there is seldom any general agreement, rather than seriously to enquire into any underlying causes.⁴² Polybius' account highlights Rome's ability to survive extraordinary losses and to fight on until ultimate victory. This belief in the Romans' invincibility has been highlighted by Eckstein who attributes it not just to the fact that they were 'highly militaristic, bellicose, and assertive internationally' but that it was part of what he calls 'Roman exceptionalism'. This importantly included their 'exceptional ability in Italy to assimilate or conciliate outsiders and foreigners, and in the exceptional Roman ability at alliance-management'.⁴³

However, scholars generally fail to appreciate the degree to which historical sources can be manipulated and that 'it is the victor who writes the history'.

A New Approach to the Sources

With few exceptions, Roman republican history appears to be one long series of victorious wars that even though including many, often humiliating

the siege of Lilybaeum the besieging Roman army had to rely on grain supplied by Hiero (Diod. 24.1.4).

⁴¹ Lazenby 1996:5; he is following the same approach as Thiel who explains: 'For Polybius is our chief authority and, if we reject *this* authority on essential points, we have no choice but to stop talking about the first Punic war, because we can no longer pretend to know anything about it', Thiel 1954:71.

⁴² Clark (2014) is an exception to this view (see below), as is Wiseman 2011.

⁴³ Eckstein 2012:19.

defeats, nevertheless enabled the republic to evolve into the most powerful and durable empire of the ancient world. This picture of continuously successful wars has been accepted by most scholars, but it has recently been challenged by Clark who shows how the senate managed the admission of defeats by joining the accounts of lost wars with successful ones, to create extended victorious wars.⁴⁴ I contend that this attitude is particularly relevant for the First Punic War, not only because of its extraordinary length, but also due to the inclusion of highly significant anomalies that could only have arisen as a result of a deliberate manipulation of events in favour of Rome. I further argue that this necessity derived from the desire to obscure their defeat by Carthage and evacuation of Sicily in 248 (following the Roman disasters of 249) in order to convince their formidable Hellenistic neighbours that they had always been invincible in war.

An examination of the key anomalies indicated that the individual events appeared basically truthful, but chronologically inconsistent with the activities of the year in which they were recorded, and that they could present a more consistent narrative if placed in another period of the war. I concluded that the most efficient and convincing way Fabius Pictor could have rearranged events would have been to do so in accordance with certain principles, whereby one set of adjustments could be used as a basis for a further set (sequential scenario-modelling). It would seem unlikely that every adjustment is attributable directly to Pictor, but those made by later historians would have been within his established framework. Without the use of logical criteria Fabius would have produced a contradictory and unconvincing narrative, with events assigned arbitrarily.

I demonstrate below that by creating scenarios as to what would have been the most likely and logical consequences of particular series of actions, it is possible to detect whether and where these might lie elsewhere in the war, and therefore the reasons for the alterations and the criteria used.⁴⁵ Since each scenario, using the criteria, has been developed from the previous one, and has resolved its particular anomaly, a logical sequence of actions has been made

⁴⁴ Effectively 'the rewriting of battlefield losses into an overarching narrative of (at times eventual, but inevitable) success': Clark 2014:50.

⁴⁵ See chapter 2, pp.65-9 for a detailed explanation of sequential scenario-modelling.

whereby it is possible to reconstruct significant aspects of Philinus' narrative, and thus possibly a realistic version of the truth. This process has also clearly demonstrated that the amendments are all interlinked and purposefully organised.

The first scenario I constructed was to resolve the most significant anomaly of the war – the failure of the Carthaginians to take advantage of the disastrous siege of Lilybaeum by the Romans in 250-249. In this case, I postulated that the Carthaginians would most likely have been expected to advance eastwards to eject the Romans from Sicily. A similar pattern of activity was recognised within the events recorded under the year 264, and Fabius' logic for this adjustment could thereby be deduced, and thus an increasing understanding of his principles. Thus, by continuing this scenario-modelling I was able to arrive at tentative solutions for all the key anomalies to produce a surprising but, I reason, rational new narrative for the war – effectively reconstructing Fabius' likely method of composition. In chapters 3-8, I show in detail how this modelling process can be successfully applied to each of the six main anomalies.

Unfortunately, there is very little contemporary supporting evidence for any part of my reconstruction, and what exists is not conclusive. The scarcity of inscriptional or archaeological evidence for the First Punic War has been one of the main reasons that scholars feel they are obliged to rely on Polybius. This approach appears further justified in that some key inscriptions, such as the *elogium of Duilius* from his *columna rostrata*,⁴⁶ and his *elogium* included in the 'Elogia of the Augustan Forum'⁴⁷ appear to support Polybius. However, it is accepted that the first has been amended and might be a forgery, and the second is too late to act as primary evidence.⁴⁸

There is possibly a significant exception that relates to a group of bronze inscriptions known as the 'Entella Tablets', which were found in western Sicily and are now thought to date to the latter half of the war or a little later; these reveal a period of confusion after a Carthaginian invasion. This is greatly at variance with the standard Polybian history, but can possibly be interpreted as

⁴⁶ *CIL* 6.1300 =31591.

⁴⁷ *Inscr. Ital.* 13.3.13 *CIL* 06,40952.

⁴⁸ See also chapter 1, p.43, and a detailed discussion in chapter 4, pp.99-101.

supporting my new reading where I maintain there was a period of general disorder in Sicily from 247 to 243, after the Romans had departed. I have also shown potential evidence for a relevant Carthaginian invasion in 244, and for assistance given by ex-Carthaginian mercenaries to the Romans in 242-1.

Key Findings of the New Reading of the Sources

After a detailed review of the available evidence, I have come to the following conclusions which, if correct, would resolve the main anomalies that I have identified in the accepted narrative of the First Punic War. In the absence of firm proof these conclusions have to remain hypothetical.

- Fabius Pictor wrote Rome's first history around the end of the critical war with Hannibal, and that he was politically motivated to present a contrived account that displayed Rome's moral integrity, cultural development, and invincibility in war.
- The period of the First Punic War (264-241) covered at least two main wars separated by a peace period: the first war (264-248) the Romans lost, the second (242-241) the Romans won, and forced Carthage to evacuate all their territory in Sicily.
- The crucial episode of the war is the series of unprecedented Roman disasters in the years 250 and 249 that then enabled the Carthaginians to advance eastwards, and in 248 force the Romans to agree to the Treaty of Philinus whereby they quit Sicily.
- The architect of these disasters was Hamilcar Barca, the father of Hannibal and confirms why he was the acknowledged greatest general of the war.⁴⁹
- Fabius Pictor rearranged Philinus' near contemporary history of the war using a set of logical criteria in order to hide Rome's defeat, but in so doing, produced a series of very significant anomalies.
- These key anomalies are interlinked and can be resolved by building scenarios that uncover Fabius' method of composition and predict the likely true course of events and thus, to a certain extent, Philinus' history.

⁴⁹ Diod. 26.24.1; Polyb. 1.64.6.

Summary

My examination of the sources, particularly that of Polybius, clearly indicates that there are major problems with the 'accepted' account of the First Punic War and that current scholarship has been unable to provide convincing answers for them. This is not just due to Polybius' account being the only complete (albeit concise) one to have survived, but also to his reputation for reliability. Other significant factors also play a part: his history shows the Romans in a very positive light that resonates with the inherited Western traditions of Rome's undoubted unique political, legal, and cultural achievements.

Thus, there has been a strong incentive for modern scholars to defend his account. However, the results of my enquiry raise the likelihood that the 'standard' account is heavily biased against the Carthaginians, and that it has been 'doctored' to eliminate the great achievements made by the Carthaginians, particularly those under their greatest general in the war, Hamilcar Barca. I argue that these factors have discouraged scholars from viewing the war as a whole and has led them to treat each problem in isolation; the possibility that the key anomalies are all interconnected has not been contemplated.

My approach, therefore, has been firstly, to identify the most inexplicable anomaly of the war – the lack of any Carthaginian attempt to take advantage of the series of disasters connected with the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249), and to examine all the relevant sources and scholars' views. Further, by then building sequential scenarios as to what consequential actions the Carthaginians would credibly have been expected to take, and then checking them against the principles for alterations that I have found effective, I have shown that the important anomalies can be satisfactorily resolved. I maintain that it then becomes apparent that Fabius Pictor deliberately fabricated his narrative of the war in order to obscure the fact that it fundamentally comprised two wars and that Carthage, under the generalship of Hamilcar Barca, had defeated the Romans in the first and forced them to leave Sicily in 248, under the terms of the Treaty of Philinus, thus leaving the island in disarray.

Fabius, as a leading political figure in Rome, would certainly have had the motive and also the opportunity, as Rome's first historian, to be able to construct what is essentially a 'fake' history in accordance with Rome's patriotic

agenda. I argue that Fabius wrote at a time when Rome was emerging victorious from the Hannibalic War and realised the absolute necessity of constructing a history that would present her in as favourable a light as possible to the Greek world that Romans were about to enter. This was part of a conscious Roman Translation Project of Greek writings and ideas that would ensure Rome was accepted as a civilised and powerful state.⁵⁰

Since I argue Fabius rearranged events of his fellow senators' wartime actions, it is logical to suppose that he mostly had their acquiescence - or at least their tolerance. That his new history might have been part of a programme to present a favourable picture of Rome, is perhaps also supported by the epic of the war that Naevius composed at this time. The method that Fabius chose was in essence simple and convincing: to keep intact the individual actions that were mainly recorded by Philinus, but to rearrange them in a controlled and systematic way in order to hide the achievements of the Carthaginians.

⁵⁰ Bispham 2006:384 makes a cogent point when he stresses that most of the historians of Rome were Roman Senators and that their histories 'were always political'.

CHAPTER 1. SOURCES FOR THE FIRST PUNIC WAR (264-241)

Although the loss of a comprehensive source for the First Punic War has resulted in a reliance by scholars on Polybius' account, there are some incomplete sources that add valuable additional or variant information, importantly, Diodorus Siculus, Dio-Zonaras¹ and Appian. Other sources are mostly summarised or fragmentary and are generally considered of lesser importance, being often condemned as confused or biased. The inscriptional, archaeological, and numismatic evidence is rather scarce for this period and, with a few important exceptions, casts little extra light on events. The consular and triumphal fasti have survived complete for this period and provide essential information that is usually considered reliable by scholars. These sources are discussed below. Those sources, that are no longer extant, but would probably have been available to Fabius for his *annales* are discussed in chapter 2.

Sources relating to the First Punic War

Polybius is the main source for the war and he acknowledges his debt to both Fabius Pictor and Philinus; the implication given by Polybius is that the facts provided by these two main sources are not fundamentally in error, but have been subject to distortion due to bias.² Efforts have been made by scholars to separate out what Polybius took from each, including Walbank, who believes that 'Fabius himself probably employed Philinus as a source',³ and that 'Polybius' narrative often contains Punic and Roman traditions in close relation'.⁴

Except for Polybius and Diodorus, the surviving sources for the war show that 'All, in their varying ways, reflect patriotic Roman tradition',⁵ and

¹ For the First Punic War, Dio and his excerptor Zonaras are so close in what they say, or so complement each other, that they can effectively be regarded as the same source, and I have therefore referred to them as the individual 'Dio-Zonaras': they are regarded as separate when referring directly to their texts. Bleckmann 2002:36 n.1 also refers to 'Dio-Zonaras', as does Rich 2019.

² Polyb. 1.14.1-3.

³ Walbank 1945:1.

⁴ Walbank 1945:1.

⁵ Hoyos 1998:3.

the first two have been influenced by this even though they use 'other – including Carthaginian – source materials.'⁶ Thus, though none of the 'pro-Carthaginian' histories survives directly, we know that Polybius specifically states he uses the reliable 'pro-Carthaginian' Philinus of Agrigentum as one of his sources;⁷ Diodorus Siculus probably also quotes extensively from him.⁸

With so little epigraphical and archaeological evidence it is difficult to be sure of the accuracy of the ancient historians. That historians did lie is corroborated by the accusations of authors against others: 'the historians of antiquity were definitely alive to the possibility of deliberate mendacity on the part of their predecessors'.⁹ Goldsworthy stresses that we have only the Romans' version of the war: 'History tends to be written by the winning side, but the situation is more extreme when the losers were utterly destroyed - no account exists describing any part of the conflict from the specifically Punic perspective'.¹⁰ Although Polybius does not accuse Philinus and Fabius as being deliberately mendacious, he does state that because both are biased, they make false statements. This partiality had resulted in both historians falling short in their task as historians.¹¹

The most important extant non-Polybian accounts for this war are Cassius Dio, Diodorus Siculus and Appian, but useful (though limited) information is provided by various *brevariaria* and epitomes e.g.: Velleius Paterculus, Florus, the *periochae* of Livy, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, Festus,¹² and the epic poem of Naevius. Roman histories were in general heavily influenced by the Greeks, in particular Herodotus, Thucydides, and (for Sicily) Timaeus of Tauromenium.¹³ Contemporary inscriptional evidence is extremely scarce for this period, and (probably) apart from the Entella

⁶ Hoyos 1998:3.

⁷ Polyb. 1.14.1: nevertheless, for the First Punic War there is little evidence that information came directly from Carthaginian sources.

⁸ La Bua 1966.

⁹ Pitcher 2009:29. Polybius accuses Phylarcus of lying (2.56.1-2), as well as Timaeus (12.4a.1-3). Dionysius 4.6.1, 4.30.2-3 criticises Fabius Pictor, and also both Licinius Macer and Cn. Gellius (6.11.2, 7.1.4).

¹⁰ Goldsworthy 2006:19.

¹¹ Polyb. 1.14.1-15.12.

¹² Burgess & Kulikowski 2013:61.

¹³ Frier 1999:260-5.

Tablets, throw almost no light on the course of the war.¹⁴ Likewise, archaeological evidence provides general information but few specific details, though the discoveries of rams around the Egadi Islands are very probably linked to the Aegates Islands naval battle of 241, and indicate that perhaps the main class of warship involved was not the quinquereme but the trireme (or even the bireme).¹⁵ Taylor goes so far as to say 'If all the ships deployed during the First Punic War were the size of the Egadi warships, then we must dramatically rescale our understanding about the scale of the entire war'.¹⁶ Excavations at Lipara indicate a siege that appears to relate to the Roman assault in 252/1.¹⁷ One other promising source is the abundant numismatic evidence which, though it cannot provide accurate dates at present, nevertheless has the potential through the study, particularly of hoards and overstrikes, of narrowing down time parameters.¹⁸

An important question is why the Romans were so late in writing their own history, especially as some Greeks were writing on aspects of Rome's history much earlier (see, for example, Timaeus). Roman literary tradition only started with Andronicus who wrote his first play about 240. Certainly, after the First Punic War (according to the 'standard' account) they had much to celebrate, and it is surprising that they would not have wanted to counter Philinus' 'pro-Carthaginian' account quickly. It was only when victory in the Hannibalic War seemed likely that they decided a patriotic history could be written – one that crucially was primarily aimed for the Greek world.¹⁹ But it was also aimed at the Roman elite 'In more than one place it seems clear that Fabius attempted to glorify or defend members of his own *gens*, an effort

¹⁴ There is evidence from the tomb of the Scipios (*CIL* 6.1284-94) and the celebratory inscription of Duilius, but their evidence is mitigated as they were clearly re-carved later (*CIL* 6.1300 = 31591) - see Kondratieff 2004. For the Entella Tablets and the milestone of C. Aurelius Cotta, see below.

¹⁵ See discussions in Tusa & Royal 2012; Royal & Tusa 2014, see also below p.42 n.109.

¹⁶ Taylor 2015:33.

¹⁷ *AR* 1996:83; see ch.2, p.42 below for further details.

¹⁸ Carroccio 2004:43-94: this *Catalogo Delle Serie Monetali* also shows varying dates for the coinage assigned by other authors.

¹⁹ Rawson 1989:425: Fabius 'attempted to prove not only that her policy in her recent wars had been eminently just, but that she was to all intents a Greek city'. Fabius wrote in Greek, but there is also evidence of a Latin version; some of his writing indicates he wanted to explain Roman institutions and traditions to non-Romans. He also adopted Olympic dating, possibly used stades, and stated sums in talents: see *FRHist.* I. 168 [EHB, TJC]. See also discussion in ch.2, pp. 48-52 for other possible motives.

that makes sense only if the Roman elite was envisioned as reading his work'.²⁰

The important problem of why the sources for this war should be so contradictory have seldom been examined in an integrated way, instead, there has been a strong tendency to 'resolve' each of the problems arising from their statements in isolation and to reject them as confused, careless or biased. The concept that the key anomalies arise from a deliberate reorganisation of the war's events has never been considered. All or most of the literary sources later than Philinus and Pictor would likely be derived from them, directly or indirectly.²¹

Main Sources

There were some Greek historians of the third century who wrote on aspects of Roman history but whose histories have not survived: Cornell notes that Duris of Samos commented on the battle of Sentinum in 295, and Hieronymus of Cardia wrote a narrative account on King Pyrrhus of Epirus and his failed campaigns in Italy and Sicily in 280-275.²² A particularly influential historian was Timaeus of Tauromenium (c. 356-260) who, whilst covering Sicilian history, also dealt with the west (including Carthage), as well as Rome down to 264.²³ Walbank considers that Polybius derived from Timaeus details of Hiero's early history, but considers it uncertain it reached 264.²⁴ Feeney supports the idea that Timaeus was 'the father of Roman history', discusses the foundation myths concerning Rome, and argues that, for Rome, Timaeus plays a key part in establishing a date that is in historic time as opposed to mythic/heroic time: he does this by linking the foundation of Carthage with that of Rome.²⁵ Burgess and Kulikowsky argue that the importance of Timaeus' *χρονικά* '... should not be underestimated, since it

²⁰ Dillery 2002:9 & n.35. The subject is discussed in chapter 2.

²¹ It is possible that there were other wholly independent writers on the war who could have been used, but we have no evidence to support this.

²² On Duris see Cornell 1995:8; *FGH* 76 F.6. On Hieronymus see *BNJ* 154. On Pyrrhus, see Plutarch *Vit. Pyrrh.* and Garoufalas 1979.

²³ On Timaeus see *BNJ* 566 F 22; Walbank 1957:46 *ad* 5.1-5; Polyb. 1.5.1; Champion 2011:99. Frier 1999:262 believes Timaeus must be a source for the war with Pyrrhus.

²⁴ Walbank 1957:46, 53-4. *BNJ* 566 Timaios: Craig Champion considers his work ended with Pyrrhus' death (272), but is almost certain it was before the crossing in 264.

²⁵ Feeney 2007:53.

established the use of Olympiads as a reliable chronological system and thereby laid the groundwork for all later Greek chronography',²⁶ which I argue below, would likely have included Philinus.

Polybius of Megalopolis (c.200 – 118²⁷)

Polybius was born in Megalopolis in Arcadia and was appointed Hipparch of the Achaean Confederation in 170/69. After the Roman victory at Pydna in 168, he was taken as hostage to Rome where he was detained until 150. However, during this time he met Publius Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus who developed towards him a great 'friendship and intimacy'.²⁸ Polybius was clearly in a privileged position and enjoyed Scipio's patronage, which included the freedom of his house. It is therefore unsurprising that Polybius wrote very favourably of Paullus and Scipio.²⁹

The question of bias in his history is an important consideration since although he states that truth must be his main aim and stresses the importance of impartiality,³⁰ his personal circumstances make it difficult to argue that he could have been truly independent of, and impartial towards, Rome. Even though he does sometimes criticise the Romans and especially their use of power, ultimately it is clear that Polybius is an admirer of Rome.³¹ He wrote a 'universal' history of the period 220-168 during which Rome rose to dominate the Mediterranean world; his *Histories* is in 40 books, the first five of which have survived, together with excerpts from various others. The main theme of his history is to account for the extraordinary rise of Rome in less than fifty-three years and the sort of constitution that enabled her to do

²⁶ 'The work seems to have been the earliest careful attempt to correlate the standard chronological systems of the Greek world': Burgess & Kulikowski 2013:379.

²⁷ *FRHist.* I. 113 [JWR].

²⁸ Polyb. 31.23.3.

²⁹ Reiter 1988:20-21. With regard to the existence of a group of intellectuals around the Scipios that was sympathetic to Greek philosophical ideas (a 'Scipionic Circle'), Sommer 2013:311 points out that at this time there was 'a rapidly changing intellectual climate in Rome ...' which 'was about to become a cosmopolitan hub of education and erudition ... where rhetoric, philosophy, and knowledge ... were held in high esteem'.

³⁰ Polyb. 1.14.4-9.

³¹ Walbank 1945:10 considers Polybius was very far from 'applying in practice the criterion of objective, unvarnished truth'.

so; later he continued his work to 146 and showed how the Romans exercised their supremacy.³²

Walbank notes that Polybius 'alludes to *several* themes or patterns which he believes will help the reader to understand the forces of history': the first is 'his central theme, viz. that under the direction of a power called Fortune (*Tyche*) Rome rose in a little under fifty-three years from near defeat at the hands of Hannibal to become the ruler of the whole known world'.³³

However, regarding the First Punic War, Polybius states that:

'the progress of the Romans was not due to chance and was not involuntary, ... but that by schooling themselves in such vast and perilous enterprises it was perfectly natural that they not only gained the courage to aim at universal dominion, but executed their purpose'.³⁴

He includes the First Punic War in his first book: this is crucial for our study - partly because it is the only surviving continuous account of the war; he is the most important source for scholars. Ianziti says:

'Polybius' account of the first Punic War was written not in the form of a full-blown history but as a sort of summary, which was meant to serve as an introductory sketch to the work as a whole [n.32: Polybius I.3.1, I.5.1-4, I.13]. The chief characteristic of this sketch, or *prokataskeue*, was that it lacked the development of full-scale *historia*'.³⁵

Polybius' sources for the First Punic War are exclusively Fabius and Philinus.³⁶ Polybius also states that Fabius and Philinus are the two best authors on the war: 'An equally powerful motive with me for paying particular attention to this war is that, to my mind, the truth has not been adequately

³² Polybius' history was appreciated by later classical authors as their references suggest: Polybius, B. McGing, 2010, Introduction xxxiv. Livy used Polybius extensively for the period after 218: Lomas 2017 341; it is therefore reasonable to suppose that, in conjunction with Fabius, he also used him for the war, as his *periochae* (16-19) would seem to indicate.

³³ Walbank 2002:181.

³⁴ Polybius 1.63.9. However, Tyche operates on a greater overall design of the world: for example, it determined the particular period that Rome rose to greatness. It determines that new rulers can all emerge at the same time - it basically describes the inexplicable: Polybius, B. McGing, 2010, Introduction xxxiii-xxxiv.

³⁵ Ianziti 2006:178.

³⁶ Walbank 1957:65 *ad* 14.1; Phillips 2016:14, but also notes the existence of documentary sources relating to treaties.

stated by those historians who are reputed to be the best authorities on it, Philinus and Pictor'.³⁷

However, Polybius accuses both Fabius and Philinus as biased on this war:

'I do not indeed accuse them of intentional falsehood ... for owing to his convictions and constant plurality Philinus will have it that the Carthaginians in every case acted wisely, well, and, bravely, and the Romans otherwise, while Fabius takes precisely the opposite view'.³⁸

Polybius states he must therefore seek out the facts and compares them to help decide the truth: 'We must therefore disregard the actors in our narrative and apply to the actions such statements and such judgments as they deserve'.³⁹

However, the question arises as to how much Polybius borrowed from each author: attempts have been made to allocate the borrowings from each.⁴⁰ One key aspect of my thesis is in fact that the events have been basically recorded correctly (as mainly related by Philinus) but their order has been rearranged to the advantage of Rome. I conclude that the logical inference is that without considering this possibility, the anomalies remain unsatisfactorily explained.

Polybius as Critic

Being an 'impartial' historian and taking a 'balanced view' did not prevent Polybius from vigorously attacking others, but although detailing the mistakes of other historians, Polybius wants to be seen to be fair, by considering that these have arisen due to ignorance or incompetence, but he is implacable against those who deliberately lie.⁴¹ However, his impartiality

³⁷ Polyb. 1.14.1. Walbank 1957:65 *ad* 14.1 states that there is general agreement that Polybius' only sources on the war are Philinus and Pictor. Champion 2013:148 says they were his primary sources; even as far back as Bruni (15th century) they have been accepted as Polybius' primary sources: Lanziti 2006:176.

³⁸ Polyb. 1.14.2-3.

³⁹ Polyb. 1.14.8-9.

⁴⁰ For attempts to discern in his history Polybius' use of Fabius and Philinus, see in particular: Meister 1975:127-49, La Bua 1966 and Ambaglio 2005.

⁴¹ Pitcher 2009:20-1. For Polybius' approach: see above p.25 n.9.

tends to be influenced by his personal dislikes,⁴² and I argue this is particularly demonstrated in his criticism of the 'pro-Carthaginian' Philinus.

Polybius reports that, according to Philinus, the Romans arrived by sea at Messana when it was being besieged by the Carthaginians and Syracusans – then, despite defeating the latter, the Romans retreated to Messana. They then attacked the Carthaginians but were severely defeated; the result, however, was that the Carthaginians departed to their towns and Hiero fled to Syracuse: the Romans then raided both and besieged Syracuse.⁴³ Polybius criticises Philinus for inconsistency and making false statements but agrees the final result is correct. He then claims 'We can trace indeed the same fault throughout the whole work of Philinus and alike through that of Fabius, as I shall show when occasion arises'.⁴⁴

This condemnation would seem to confirm Polybius' evaluation of Philinus as being inconsistent and overtly pro-Carthaginian, however, his statements cannot be independently verified because we no longer have the relevant accounts of either Philinus or Fabius. Indeed, upon examination, the statement Polybius attributes to Philinus does not seem to be truly convincing when analysed alongside Zonaras who provides a fuller account.⁴⁵ Here it is stated that when the Romans attacked Hiero, their cavalry was defeated, but their infantry was victorious - thus giving the reason for Hiero's retreat. These results would normally be expected, as the Romans were famed for their infantry, and the Syracusans for their cavalry. It is further stated that the Romans afterwards attacked the Carthaginians and were indeed defeated, but so were the Carthaginians when they counter-attacked – the latter retreated back to their camp and did not dare emerge – thus explaining why the Carthaginians were fearful of the Romans and would have eventually dispersed to their cities.⁴⁶

What is clear is that Polybius has been 'economical with the truth' and has deliberately left out crucial details in order to make Philinus look

⁴² Pitcher 2009:35-6. Polybius does seem to be indirectly criticising Philinus on his monograph – see 'Philinus' below.

⁴³ Polyb. 1.15.1-5.

⁴⁴ Polyb. 1.15.6-12.

⁴⁵ Zonar. 8.9; see also ch.3 pp.80-81.

⁴⁶ Zonaras' excerpt gives no further details.

inconsistent and therefore unreliable (on this occasion). However, when it comes to Pictor, the example he gives is rather trifling in comparison: he contradicts Fabius concerning the siege of Hamilcar on Mount Eryx by saying its duration was not due to the exhaustion and despair of both sides but that they were like two indefatigable champions.⁴⁷ Polybius is endeavouring to show that in his history he has examined in an impartial way the works of both authors, whom he regards as generally accurate, but that he is prepared to criticise them where necessary. However, I conclude that he actually favours the Romans.

Polybius' Methodology

Polybius refers to his work as 'pragmatic history' whereby he concentrates on factual events and deeds – other aspects like genealogy, establishment of colonies, foundation of cities and their kinship ties, had already been commonly written about.⁴⁸ He stresses the historian should seek the truth above all, otherwise his work is as useless as an animal without eyes.⁴⁹ As noted above, he stresses the historian must be impartial and judge the events on their own merits and be prepared to criticise friends or praise enemies and must compare reliable but biased sources, for example, Philinus and Fabius for the First Punic War, and judge the actions that are related.⁵⁰

In order to achieve the truth the historian must undergo training by adopting his pragmatic approach which consists of three parts: the study and comparison of documents, geological survey of land and sea and their comparative distances and thirdly, the politics.⁵¹ But just studying these 'in libraries' does not make a historian adequately qualified in systematic history, but he must also have experience of practical matters, like warfare

⁴⁷ Polyb. 1.58.2-6. Polybius does criticise Fabius as being unreasonable when relating to events concerning Saguntum that precede the Hannibalic War (3.8.1-3.9.5), but nothing further on the First Punic War.

⁴⁸ Polyb. 1.2.8: 'the systematic treatment of history': 1.35.9; 9.2.1 -5. See also Phillips 2016:6.

⁴⁹ Polyb. 12.12.3; 1.14.6.

⁵⁰ Polyb. 1.12.7-8; 1.14.2-8.

⁵¹ Polyb. 12.25e.1.

and politics and of visiting the relevant places.⁵² Where accounts differ he must cross-check with many witnesses and judge the most accurate.⁵³ My reconstruction of the war's (possibly) true narrative indicates Polybius has shrewdly endeavoured to amend certain events recorded by Fabius, and to downplay others that do not promote a positive image of Rome. Thus, he falls short of his stated methodology for impartiality and ascertaining the truth.⁵⁴

Philinus of Agrigentum (Acragas)

Philinus, a Greek historian of the Sicilian city of Agrigentum, wrote a history of the First Punic War, probably as a monograph, and was contemporary to it. He probably wrote not long after its conclusion. As far as we know, he was the only person to have written about the war in any detail. Indeed, Walbank also thinks Philinus 'was probably a contemporary of the war; he wrote from the Carthaginian standpoint'. Walbank believes that:

'The fact that Diodorus used Philinus only for the First Punic War, and went over to P[olybius] as his source for the Mercenary War, suggests that Philinus wrote a monograph on the former subject (Jacoby, *FGH*, II D, p. 598); and this may be confirmed by the superlatives applied to the First Punic War in 13.11 and 63.4, if indeed they are taken from Philinus ...'.⁵⁵

His work would have followed on from Timaeus' Sicilian history which likely ended during 264, and it continued until the end of the First Punic War in 241.⁵⁶

⁵² Polyb. 12.25e.4, 25g.1-3. Lazenby points out that Polybius could not have spoken to anyone who experienced the First Punic War, and that it was only in 167 that he was brought over to Rome, thus he could not question participants which for him 'was the most important part of historical study (12.4c. 2-5)'.⁵²

⁵³ Polyb. 12.4c.2-5. Walbank 2002:10 looks at whether 'Polybius set out to construct a consistent account of how historical research should be conducted and history written',⁵³ and by examining two particular chapters (12.25e; 12.27) he notes the contradictions (the first, using the library, geographical investigation and political experience; the second, conducting research by using the eyes or the ears), and concludes that Polybius did not have 'a comprehensive exposition of how history should be written'.

⁵⁴ See chapter 9.

⁵⁵ Walbank 1957:65 *ad* 14.1. *BNJ* 174 'Philinos', 'Biographical Essay': Craig Champion thinks his work was probably a monograph as 'ancient testimony does refer to him only in connection with this war'. Although conjectural, Phillips 2016:14 believes that Philinus is the obvious author of the Truceless War.

⁵⁶ Philinus may have continued on until 238/7, being the conclusion of the Mercenary War, but contra Walbank 1968:300.

Philius survives in a few fragments (*FGH* 174); Polybius certainly uses him (and criticises him), and significant traces of what he wrote can be detected in Diodorus Siculus.⁵⁷ I contend that evidence of his work may also be detected in Dio and Zonaras, and perhaps Appian (though via an intermediate source).⁵⁸ The exact form that his monograph took is not known, but as he was probably writing in the 230s, he would very likely have been strongly influenced by the Greek *Atthides* which developed out of the earlier *horoi*, which combined various elements such as local chronology, mythology and genealogy,⁵⁹ but above all by his fellow Sicilian, Timaeus of Tauromenium, and would have been aware of his dating system that used Olympiads.⁶⁰

It would seem that Polybius is indirectly criticizing Philius when he says on monographs that one 'who believes that by studying isolated histories he can acquire a fairly just view of history as a whole' is like trying to reconstruct the living likeness of a creature from its dismembered carcass.⁶¹ It is clear that Polybius believes that while Philius and Fabius Pictor are his most reliable sources, they are both biased.⁶²

Diodorus Siculus and Johannes Tzetzes

Diodorus, a Sicilian Greek from Agrigium in Sicily, lived during the time of Caesar and Octavian – the latest date we know of him is 36 B.C., or a bit later. He produced a history of the world in at least forty books from the Creation down to his own time, but they are mostly fragmentary.⁶³ Diodorus' main emphasis is on Greece and Sicily up to the First Punic War, thereafter, his sources allow him to detail more about Roman affairs.⁶⁴ Whilst he may

⁵⁷ La Bua 1966 - see in particular part 2, chapter 5.

⁵⁸ These variations are discussed in the chapters 3 to 8 dealing with the anomalies.

⁵⁹ See Burgess & Kulikowski 2013.

⁶⁰ See chapter 2, p.58 n.59.

⁶¹ Polyb. 1.4.7.

⁶² Polyb. 1.14.2-4: 1.15.1-13. Hoyos 1989:57 says 'So at any rate Polybius affirms; and he was writing for readers who could check if they chose.' However, unlike modern times, there was a very limited ability for readers to check which authors were biased, especially for events nearly a century before Polybius was writing.

⁶³ Diodorus, C.H. Oldfather, 1933, Introduction x.

⁶⁴ For commentaries on Diodorus for the First Punic War see: Goukowsky 2006 and Scuderi 2017. Walbank 2005:7 thinks that Diodorus did not use Polybius, until the Mercenary War (book 25).

not be a historian of the first rank and is considered pro-Carthaginian, 'there is every reason to believe that he used the best sources and that he reproduced them faithfully'.⁶⁵ One of these sources was Philinus, whom he quoted extensively.⁶⁶ The modern trend is to consider him as more than just an excerptor and there is now 'a less robotic characterisation of his method of work'.⁶⁷

One very important passage for my reconstruction is Diodorus (23.16.1) which is from the text of Tzetzes and records the defeat of the Romans in the vicinity of Lilybaeum by Xanthippus at the head of an army of 'Sicels' (i.e., Carthaginians).⁶⁸ Johannes Tzetzes was a Byzantine polymath of the twelfth century (when young he wrote a commentary on the *Iliad* in A.D. 1143). Although he incorporates into his 'Histories' a large number of quotes from authors, he is considered very inaccurate: this may be due to having to rely on his memory as he was often not able to consult his books, so that only those quotes that can be corroborated can be relied on.⁶⁹ It is noteworthy that Tzetzes calls Diodorus Siculus 'Diodorus the Sicel'.⁷⁰ Tzetzes' insistence on calling the Carthaginians 'Sicels', is generally seen as supporting his inaccuracy however, he would undoubtedly have been aware that Xanthippus was a commander of the Carthaginians, for he also calls Hannibal a Sicel.⁷¹

I believe the reason he uses the word 'Sicel' lies in the period that he was writing (or shortly thereafter). The Norman king Roger II was the powerful ruler of Sicily from 1130 to 1154.⁷² He conquered all of southern Italy as well as raided the Byzantine empire; from 1146-1148 he set about conquering or establishing overlordship over the Zirid Emirates of Tunisia.⁷³

⁶⁵ Diodorus, C.H. Oldfather, 1933, Introduction xxi.

⁶⁶ La Bua 1966.

⁶⁷ Rubincam 2015:cxix – but this is hampered by the loss of so much of his work.

⁶⁸ Diodorus 1957, 23.16.1 (Tzetzes *Hist.* 3. 356-386).

⁶⁹ *OCD* 3 Rev. 1568-9, 'Tzetzes': P.B.R.F.; R.B.; N.G.W.

⁷⁰ Diodorus, 1957, 23.16.1 (Tzetzes *Hist.* 3. 386).

⁷¹ Diodorus, 1957, 25.19.1 (Tzetzes *Hist.* 3. 700-3). Forces serving in the Carthaginian army would normally be called Carthaginians, unless it was necessary to identify them separately. Polyb. 1.17.3 refers to the Carthaginians recruiting foreign mercenaries including: Ligurians, Celts and more Iberians; he later calls them Carthaginian mercenaries: 1.19.9.

⁷² Norwich 1976:394.

⁷³ See generally Norwich 1976 for raids on Greece, pp.29-133; for the 'Kingdom of Africa', pp.153-156.

Thus, the key areas that the Carthaginians in Africa had occupied were now under Roger's control as well as all the old *epikraty* – it could therefore be said that, as they were the previous inhabitants of part of the 'Sicilian Empire' of Roger II, they were Sicels or Sicilians.

Cassius Dio & Johannes Zonaras

Dio is another very important alternative source for the war; he was a Roman senator who wrote a *History of Rome* in the early third century A.D. Only fragments survive, but an epitome of it exists made by Zonaras, a Byzantine monk of the twelfth century. Hoyos believes he 'abbreviated Dio to produce his own account ... and reasonably faithfully (so the overlaps between his work and surviving Dionic fragments show)'.⁷⁴ For the First Punic War, there is little evidence that he generally dramatized events.⁷⁵ Importantly, certain episodes of the First Punic War are considered derived from Philinus e.g., the siege of Agrigentum.⁷⁶ I argue that Dio's account of the events in Sicily in 264 contains important information derived from Philinus but mediated through one of the earlier Roman historians.⁷⁷

Appian of Alexandria

Appian is also an important source for the war: he was a Greek historian of Alexandria who was probably born c. A.D. 95, gained Roman citizenship and later moved to Rome; under Antoninus Pius he wrote his history of the Roman conquests in twenty-four books and died c. A.D. 165. Appian greatly admires Rome and seeks to explain her success as being due to her merits, which include good counsel, endurance and general virtue. Appian has been the subject of much criticism due to his inaccuracy in

⁷⁴ Hoyos 1998:283. For a recent study on Dio and Zonaras see Burden-Strevens & Lindholmer 2019, and especially, Rich therein pp.217-284. As noted in the Introduction, the two authors' accounts are often considered so close that they can sometimes be treated as one – 'Dio-Zonaras'.

⁷⁵ Possible exceptions are the terrible fate of Marcus Atilius Regulus (Zonar. 8.13), and the exploits of Marcus Calpurnius and his 300 who saved the Roman army from ambush (Zonar. 8.12).

⁷⁶ Burgeon 2017:23.

⁷⁷ See chapter 3 for detailed analysis.

details, but this is usually explained by the desire of ancient authors not only to write in an interesting manner, but also to articulate their ideas concerning politics or morals.⁷⁸

His books are organised ethnographically rather than chronologically and deal separately with Rome's wars of expansion against nations in various countries, including Italy. The sections dealing with the 'Punic Wars' are intact, but vary considerably in their style: 'His description of the battle of Zama reads like an extract from the *Iliad*'.⁷⁹ However, as regards the First Punic War, only the second section dealing with the fates of Regulus and Xanthippus can be considered dramatic, rather than factual.⁸⁰ For events mostly taking place in Sicily, we have only fragments. He likely uses some named authors including Polybius, but only casually mentions some authors, including Fabius Pictor, which could well mean he did not use him.⁸¹ However, Mineo thinks Appian's sources appear 'to be so complex that it is impossible to reach any certainty at all' about them, but 'it does seem he used Coelius Antipater prolifically' and perhaps Fabius Pictor; he is 'clearly pro-Roman...'.⁸² There is no clear evidence that historians later than Fabius had any new original source other than Philinus, but it is possible that Appian was not using directly (or not often) either Philinus or Fabius Pictor but sources, now lost, that did use these two directly. One such possible source is the historian L. Calpurnius Piso Frugi whom Pliny quotes as stating that Valerius (Maximus) built a fleet of 220 ships to cross over to Messana (263).⁸³

⁷⁸ See Welch & Bonnell 2015 – particularly therein, J. Rich: 'Appian, Polybius and the Romans' War with Antiochus the Great: A Study in Appian's Sources and Methods', 65-69. Appian, H. White, 1912, Introduction xi.

⁷⁹ Goldsworthy 2006:22-3.

⁸⁰ App. *Pun.* 8.1.4. The section narrating the 'Xanthippus' battle itself appears entirely factual (App. *Pun.* 8.1.3), see chapter 9, stage 3.

⁸¹ Appian, H. White, 1912, Introduction ix. Fabius Pictor is mentioned by Appian *Hann.* 27.

⁸² Mineo 2011:126.

⁸³ Pliny *NH* 16.74 (192). This event is not recorded by Polybius who states that Rome built her first fleet in 260 (1.20.9).

Other Sources

All the Roman sources for the war are fragmentary, summarised or excerpts, but they often provide valuable pieces of information not otherwise recorded.

The early Roman poet, the Campanian Naevius, started writing plays (comedies and tragedies) from 235 and adapted Greek ones. He had fought in the First Punic War, and late in life he composed in Latin his great epic *Bellum Punicum* on the War (but with flashbacks to Aeneas' flight from Troy and the founding of Rome) in Saturnian metre; only fragments survive. Naevius introduced the dramatic *fabula praetexta*, including *Clastidium*, and was the first to write a great Roman epic that could equal the Greeks' Trojan War.⁸⁴ These *praetexta* as well as the historical epic would 'confirm a sense of Roman national identity'.⁸⁵

If my reconstruction is valid that Fabius was writing his history of Rome in the last decade of the third century, Naevius' creation of a patriotic epic would likely be contemporary. This linking towards the end of the Hannibalic War would lend support to the idea that there might have been co-ordination by elements of 'the establishment' and other patriotic individuals to project Rome to the Greek World as a civilised, moral, and indefatigable power.⁸⁶ As a poet he was not expected to adhere strictly to the truth and he had his own strong opinions concerning political issues and politicians, as perhaps indicated by his clashes with members of some of the leading families, like the Caecilii Metelli. He also upset the authorities and was exiled. He completed his epic before his death in Utica in c. 201 and, in respect of the First Punic War, he does not appear to have deviated from

⁸⁴ Cic. *De Sen.* 14 [50]; Gell. *NA* 17.21.45; Fantham 2014:326; Naev. *Bell. Pun.* 1-66; Elliott 2013:271. A possible example of this is the siege of Lilybaeum from '250 to 241'. Wiseman 2007:72 argues that there were 'plays on Roman historical themes, no doubt the *fabulae praetextae* discussed by historians of Roman drama...', and that 'Since the earliest *praetexta* our sources refer to is Naevius' *Clastidium*, on the single combat of the consul Marcellus with a Gallic king in 222 BC, modern scholars have usually inferred that the genre was an invention of Naevius himself...'

⁸⁵ Manuwald 2011:204.

⁸⁶ For further evidence of a group, see chapter 2, p.58.

Fabius' work. This might perhaps indicate that Fabius' patriotic history had been (or nearly been) completed.⁸⁷

Quintus Ennius (239 - 169) wrote (in Latin) his famous *Annals* of the history of Rome, but made only a passing reference to the First Punic War, because of Naevius' previous treatment.⁸⁸

Cornelius Nepos was a prolific writer of the first century, whose works included biographies of famous people. His short accounts of Hamilcar and Hannibal are extant and contain some information otherwise unknown.⁸⁹

Lucius Annaeus Florus wrote his highly patriotic history of Roman wars as an abridgment in the second century A.D.; he covers the First Punic War in chapter 18, which also contains some small details not otherwise known. Because his work contains many inconsistencies, errors, and much exaggeration, it is not well regarded. However, I show that he does record some events that, I argue, have been displaced chronologically by ten years and therefore are probably derived from Fabius Pictor.⁹⁰

Two significant later writers of the war are the historians Eutropius (*magister memoriae* of the emperor Valens) who wrote a brief history of Rome to A.D. 364, and Orosius, a Spanish Christian priest and pupil of St. Augustine. The latter wrote a seven book chronicle '*Historiae adversum Paganos*' covering the creation of the world through to Rome's beginning and her history down to A.D. 417. Importantly, Orosius wanted to list all the many troubles Rome had suffered in the past as recorded 'in the histories and annals'.⁹¹ Orosius sought to show that despite their great successes, the Romans had always been subject to catastrophic disasters as a punishment for their sins, but that now under Christianity, God's plan is revealed and 'marks an improvement in man's condition'.⁹² Exceptionally, he is therefore prepared to highlight disasters to Rome, e.g. in 250 when Hannibal arrived at the siege of Lilybaeum, the Romans lost much of their army and only just

⁸⁷ Naevius, E. H. Warmington, 1936, Introduction xv-xvi. See also Manuwald 2011:140-4; 194-204.

⁸⁸ Ennius, 2018, Testimonia, T 18.

⁸⁹ Goldsworthy 2006:23; see also Lobur 2019: 87-110.

⁹⁰ Florus, E. S. Forster, 1929, Introduction ix-xv. Flor. 1.18. The closing of the Temple of Janus in 235 is one example where I argue the genuine date is 245 (Flor. 1.19.1) – see ch.9, stage 5.

⁹¹ Oros. 1 *Preface* 10.

⁹² Orosius, A. T. Fear, 2010, Introduction, 8.

effected an escape.⁹³ Subsequently, at the end of the First Punic War, there was severe flooding followed by a devastating fire that caused huge damage to the city of Rome.⁹⁴

Annalists

The earliest Roman writings specifically included an account of the First Punic War were by the historians (in approximate order) Fabius Pictor,⁹⁵ Lucius Cincius Alimentus,⁹⁶ Aulus Postumius Albinus, Marcus Porcius Cato and Gaius Acilius; they were all Roman senators and (apart from Cato⁹⁷) wrote in Greek for a Greek-speaking audience.⁹⁸ They influenced all subsequent historical writing.

They collected the events they wrote about under successive years, starting with the newly elected consuls and ending with the completion of their term of office.⁹⁹ Those who wished to write in detail about Rome's history were circumscribed by tradition and normally adopted the annalistic method.¹⁰⁰ Feeney states that although the 'Romans had been drafting laws, keeping priestly and family records, writing reports to the Senate, and giving speeches for hundreds of years', it seems clear that this was not done in a systematic way and their quantity, quality and survival rates were generally poor before 240.¹⁰¹

It is certainly conceivable that the style of the *Annales Maximi* (the annual chronicles kept by the pontifex maximus which included magistrates' names and public events), with their annual notices of varying lengths,

⁹³ Oros. 4.10.2.

⁹⁴ Oros. 4.11.5-9; also mentioned by St. Augustine (*De civ. D.* 3.18).

⁹⁵ Fabius Pictor's life and works are discussed in chapter 2.

⁹⁶ L. Cincius Alimentus was born c.250; in 208 he was captured by Hannibal (*FRHist.* II. 116-7 F5 [EHB, TJC]) and probably released in 202; he was a junior contemporary of Fabius (I. 179-80). He wrote his history at some stage after his release and 'had the same scope and structure as Pictor's' (I. 180-81). Cincius wrote after Pictor, sometimes following Pictor but not always: Frier 1999:238 n.31.

⁹⁷ M. Porcius Cato 234–149 B.C.: on his life see Astin 1978. He wrote his *Origines* on the history of Rome in seven volumes in old age (*FRHist.* I. 196 [TJC]); in book four he dealt with the First Punic War (I. 198). 'Cato may have listed the chief magistrates and the allocation of provinces at the start of each year. If so, that would imply that the arrangement of the later books was annalistic' (I. 216).

⁹⁸ Wiseman 2008:240.

⁹⁹ Rich 2011:11,14.

¹⁰⁰ Rich 2011:1.

¹⁰¹ Feeney 2016:173.

influenced those of the accounts of the earliest historians from Fabius to Piso.¹⁰² This would undoubtedly apply to periods before the First Punic War when the amount of information varied considerably. Rich opines that it was only in the work of Valerius Antias, who used intensive archival research, that a 'narrative with a regular, formal structure which purported to follow the progression of events through the consular year' was formulated.¹⁰³ Livy copied this format, but his work is not extant for the period 292 to 219, save in summaries (*periochae*), that though significant, are very brief.

The Roman year revolved around the activities of the consuls and their armies but also included standard topics such as plagues, portends, the games and elections of certain officials.¹⁰⁴ The sequence of some events in a particular year may not be chronologically correct within the year, and the details of some events may be more summarised in certain years.¹⁰⁵ The starting date for the consuls taking office changed over time: before 222 it could be on any day, then it was on 15th March until 153, when it finally became 1st January, which enabled it to start with the calendrical fasti. Thus, before 222 the most important requirement was that the consuls should assume their posts at the beginning of the campaigning season.¹⁰⁶ The start of the campaigning season would therefore seem to be a practical decision; in Sicily, it may sometimes be linked with the harvest season before its height was reached which, according to Morgan, was between the end of May and the middle of June.¹⁰⁷ A further complication arises when attempting to link the Roman calendar with the true seasons because the Roman year comprises of only 355 days: a full month had therefore to be intercalated every so often, as determined by the pontifex maximus – this

¹⁰² Rich 2011:30.

¹⁰³ Rich 2011:30.

¹⁰⁴ Rich 2011:3-4.

¹⁰⁵ Rich 2011:5.

¹⁰⁶ Feeney 2007:171. Feeney emphasises that the consul's office was 'primarily a military office' and the consuls 'could and did enter office on any day'. But a flexible starting date is not universally accepted, e.g.: Morgan 1977:91 says that it is generally believed that 1st May, according to the Roman calendar, was the date consuls entered office during this war. However, Feeney's interpretation seems more realistic because the extraordinary length and exigencies of this unprecedented war would have demanded great flexibility in organisation, supply, and recruitment by the consuls. It is also significant that no starting date for the consuls is ever given by the sources for this war.

¹⁰⁷ Morgan 1977:94.

was not done regularly at this period and thus the months could grow significantly out of synch with the seasons.¹⁰⁸

Excavations, Finds and Coins

There are in addition to the literary sources, various other evidence available to scholars: a small number of epigraphic inscriptions including the recently discovered Entella Tablets, and those on the bronze rams from western Sicily.¹⁰⁹ There are also the important consular and triumphal fasti that were set up in the Forum Romanum by Augustus. Significant fragments of these were first uncovered there in 1546-47, and further pieces found later.¹¹⁰

Numismatic evidence is becoming increasingly important,¹¹¹ as is that from archaeological excavations, but few precise conclusions can be drawn that affect the narrative of the First Punic War. However, excavations at Kerkouane on the Cape Bon peninsular facing Sicily have indicated that this settlement was destroyed around the middle of the third century B.C. and has been attributed to the Roman invasion of 256 B.C.¹¹² The Roman destruction of Lipara in 252/1 is evidenced by the discovery of many catapult balls, arrow-tips and lead slingshots.¹¹³

¹⁰⁸ Morgan 1977:89-90, 96-7 estimates an intercalary month was inserted in 259. For a detailed discussion on the republican and Julian calendars with the solution of intercalation, see Stern 2012:204-227.

¹⁰⁹ See e.g. Tusa & Royal 2012, Royal & Tusa 2014 and Prag 2014. Naevius (*Bell. Pun.* 51-2) likens the bronze rams of warships to the beaks of birds. These studies also indicate that, as the size of a ram gives a strong indication of the class of the warship it was carried on, and that those discovered relate to the battle of the Aegates Insulae (241), the warships involved were no larger than triremes. The problem is that the sources state that the standard warship was of the larger quinquereme class, therefore doubt is cast on the accuracy of references to quinqueremes in the sources and the numbers required to row them (e.g., Polyb. 1.26.7-8, 63.5-8). For evidence of the relationship between ram and ship sizes see also Murray 2012:38-68. Potter 2019:27-28. The ram inscriptions are not significant for my reconstruction of the course of the war because they relate to quaestors who supervised construction of the fleet (Prag 2014:54-8), but see below, pp.44-5 for a discussion on the inscriptions of the Entella Tablets.

¹¹⁰ Rich 2014:198.

¹¹¹ See e.g. Crawford 1974 & 1985; see chapter 3 for reference to a possible Ptolemaic mint in Sicily in this period.

¹¹² Hoyos 2010:18; Lancel & Nevill 1995:268-9.

¹¹³ AR 1996:82.

Epigraphy

With the exception of the fasti, there are only a few inscriptions that are significant to the narrative of the war.

The *elogium* of Duilius from his *columna rostrata*: the column was erected in the Forum to celebrate the naval victory in 260 of the consul Gaius Duilius over the Carthaginians near Mylae. The *elogium* inscribed on the column records this victory and other deeds of Duilius in Sicily; it presents certain difficulties as to the sequence of events stated in Polybius as well as my interpretation of his actions: these problems may have arisen due to its being reinscribed at a later period.¹¹⁴ Of lesser significance, is the *elogium* of Duilius from the Augustan Forum where there were placed statues of important Romans, inscribed with short *elogia*. This also relates some details concerning the Mylae battle and how he was subsequently honoured, but it is so damaged that its interpretation is uncertain.¹¹⁵ The epitaph of Lucius Cornelius Scipio (consul in 259) from the tomb of the Scipios confirms that he captured 'Corsica and Aleria', as related in the sources.¹¹⁶

Milestone of C. Aurelius Cotta (ILLRP N. 1277)

A substantially complete milestone found near Corleone beside an ancient road leading from Agrigentum to Panormus is inscribed almost certainly with the name of a consul C. Aurelius Cotta, son of Lucius near Agrigentum.¹¹⁷ This inscription is particularly important as, if correctly dated, gives rare contemporary information relating to the middle of the First Punic War. Prag originally considered Cotta, consul in 252 and 248, to have been responsible for constructing the road - probably in 248 when the Romans were besieging Lilybaeum.¹¹⁸ However, Prag now considers 252 to be the

¹¹⁴ *CIL* 6.1300 = 31591, *CIL* 6.37040. For detailed discussion on the rostral inscription see Kondratieff 2004 and chapter 4, pp.94-5. It should be noted that all the *elogia* from the Forum Augustum are selective in their details and in terms an Augustan (re)construction of history.

¹¹⁵ *Inscr. Ital.* 13.3.13; *CIL* 06, 40952.

¹¹⁶ *CIL* 06.01287; Polyb. 1.24.6; Zonar 8.11; Liv. *Per.* 17; Front. 3.9.4, 3.10.2; Eutrop. 2.20; Oros. 4.7.11; Val. Max 5.1.2.

¹¹⁷ Prag 2006:733: *ILLRP* 01277 was found in situ in 1954.

¹¹⁸ Prag 2006:733. Lazenby 1999:176 thinks it unlikely such a road could have been built during a time of war and believes it was the consul of 200, C. Aurelius Cotta, who was responsible.

correct date as this follows the capture of Panormus in 254 and the period of consolidation of Roman power in central western Sicily (with the exception of Lilybaeum).¹¹⁹ Frontinus mentions an incident, where Aurelius Cotta ordered his knights to work, but some of them mutinied, so he got the censors to degrade them and the senate to cancel their wages arrears - this could relate to the building of this road/boundary.¹²⁰

The Entella Tablets

The Entella tablets are a series of nine inscribed bronze plaques that were discovered at the site of Entella in Sicily and came onto the market in the late 1970s: they comprise decrees of Entella and one from the nearby city of Nakone.¹²¹ They are mostly declarations of gratitude to other communities for help given during a recent crisis which would appear to be a Carthaginian invasion, and seem to have been all issued broadly around the same time.¹²² Although there has been significant debate as to the date of these tablets, mostly ranging from the mid-fourth century to the conclusion of the third century,¹²³ there is now general agreement that they date from around the time of the First Punic War or a little later,¹²⁴ and seem to reveal a confused or a chaotic situation in the island after a Carthaginian offensive.¹²⁵

That there should be a very disturbed situation in Sicily at the end of the war is not supported by the textual sources. These state that after the Roman victory off the Egadi Islands early in 241 and the subsequent treaty, the Carthaginians departed from the key cities of Lilybaeum, Drepana and Eryx in the west, and that order was established throughout the island,

¹¹⁹ Prag 2011:84-5.

¹²⁰ Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.22 (and possibly 4.1.30) may relate to the building of this road/boundary rather than to the destruction of the rampart at the siege of Lipara which is not mentioned. The possibility of road building in 252 is supported by the election of censors in 252 but not in 248.

¹²¹ *SEG* 1117-1123. *SEG* XXXII 914. Loomis 1994:127; according to Loomis, one of these, tablet VII (*SEG* XXXII 914), is almost certainly a forgery (133-7).

¹²² Loomis 1994:142 (except VII that is probably a fake); tablet III relates to Nakone.

¹²³ *SEG* XXXII 914. Loomis 1994:130: one was dated to 'the second century A.D.'

¹²⁴ Brugnone 2013:202 states a date for the Nakone tablet as 'the middle of the third century BC'; Gray 2015:58 dates it to 'the fourth or third century BC'. Loomis 1994:147 says the date is during the First Punic War.

¹²⁵ Loomis 1994:148-152 discusses the Carthaginian offensive. See also chapters 7 and 9, stage 5.

except for Hiero's kingdom.¹²⁶ Surprisingly, it was not until 227 that a praetor was sent to Sicily. The conclusion has usually been drawn that the island was at peace after the war and direct Roman rule (apart from the strategic west) was not required until 227.¹²⁷

Loomis puts the earliest probable *terminus post quem* for the Entellinoi in 254 with the capture of Panormus and subsequent revolt of some cities against the Carthaginians, but considers the *συνοικισμός* may be as late as 241.¹²⁸ The tablets give the impression that there was a significant and disturbed period from the time of the Carthaginian attack to the production of the majority of the tablets - this would fit the period from the end of 248 to 243.¹²⁹ An important factor is the surprising lack of any reference to the Romans (apart from tablet four, which is probably later than the others) as any operations would have been as part of the Roman army and thus the Geloans, who provided military help to the Entellinoi, would have been allies under direct Roman command.

The Entella Tablets, if datable to the First Punic War, provide a unique contemporary (or almost contemporary) record by a number of cities in Sicily which demonstrate the help and assistance given to one city (Entella) by the others at a time of turmoil, and which is not specifically recorded in the sources.

'The Tauromenium dipinto'

Details of a second century painting consisting of four fragments found at Tauromenium and known as 'the Tauromenium *dipinto*' were published in 1974, and very probably listed in the library of the city's gymnasium in a catalogue of their collection of historical authors. Their interest lies in the fact that not only Fabius Pictor is mentioned as one of

¹²⁶ Zonar. 8.17.

¹²⁷ Bennan 2000:91. Scullard 1961:159-164 discusses this post-war period and states that Rome imposed tribute rather than military service.

¹²⁸ Loomis 1994:149-151.

¹²⁹ See particularly tablets A1 (V), A2 (VIII), A3 (IX) and C3 (II). For review and summary, see Prag 2002.

these authors, and that he was being read in second century Sicily, but that it offers some additional information concerning very early Roman history.¹³⁰

The Consular and Triumphal Fasti

Apart from the calendar, fasti included various lists in chronological order, the most important of which for my work are the *Fasti Consulares* (consuls) and the *Fasti Triumphales* (triumphs celebrated).¹³¹ The question as to the origins of these lists, and therefore their validity, has engendered much discussion: 'The suspicion must be that what passed for the 'early republican' magistrate list in Livy's time was the result of antiquarian scholarship of the same kind as that of the Atthidographers who reconstructed the earliest Athenian archon-list.'¹³²

The *Fasti Consulares* originally contained the list of consuls from the beginning of the republic down to the time of Augustus and was set up in the Forum Romanum; it was compiled by Augustan scholars. For each year, the names of the two consuls are given together with suffect consuls and those who left or vacated their office; dictators are also recorded as well as, approximately every five years, the names of censors. The beginnings of significant wars are notified, the first being in 264 (*Bellum Punicum Primum*); every ten years, a date is inserted that records the years elapsed from 752. Events occurring during the period of office of the two consuls were linked with their names and not to a particular calendrical year: 'the consuls were the particular year'.¹³³ This is a complication that has to be considered when events are chronologically moved.

The *Fasti Triumphales* recorded all the triumphs Rome celebrated from the founding of the city in 752 until the last one in 19 B.C; each has recorded with it the year elapsed from 752:¹³⁴ also included were the date,

¹³⁰ Dillery 2002:13-5; SEG 26.1123. The new information is that it is the hero Lanoios, rather than Diomedes, whom Fabius appears to say is the founder of Lanuvium (Dillery 2002 13).

¹³¹ Degrassi 1954; Beck 2011; Bastien 2007. Rich 2014:197-258: he notes that the term *Fasti Triumphales* 'is inappropriate, since the word fasti was in fact used solely for calendars and lists of chief magistrates' however, it is now in general usage (198).

¹³² Wiseman 2008:235.

¹³³ Feeney 2007:171-5.

¹³⁴ Feeney 2007:181.

commander's full name and details of each victory.¹³⁵ The *Fasti Triumphales* are accepted as reliable from 264 because they are in agreement with the other surviving sources, and survive entire for the First Punic War; it is of essential importance in the construction of my sequence of events in this war, because the triumphs listed act as fixed references that are not subject to chronological reassignment.¹³⁶

Summary

The assumed reliability and accuracy of Polybius' continuous but concise account of the First Punic War, as opposed to the 'unreliable' and 'confused' accounts of the other fragmentary or summarised sources and the lack of inscriptional evidence, have combined to create such a strong belief in his history of the war as to be considered virtually unchallengeable. However, the above evidence, about which I will make a detailed review in this thesis, challenges these assumptions and, if correctly interpreted, can support a very different approach to the war which is elaborated in the following chapters.

¹³⁵ Rich 2014:244-252. For further information see Degraffi 1947 & 1954, and Bastien 2007.

¹³⁶ See discussion in Rich 2014:203-6 on the accuracy of the *Fasti Triumphales*. Rich concludes (p.206) 'For the later fourth and still more for the early third century, the record appears largely accurate,....Thereafter the accuracy of the record can be taken as assured'.

CHAPTER 2. FABIVS PICTOR AND HIS HISTORY

In the last decade of the war with Hannibal, Fabius Pictor set out to write Rome's first history. He would detail Rome's inevitable rise to power thanks to her unique qualities, organisation, military prowess, and piety. However, I argue below that he was severely hampered by a dearth of precise information in the limited Roman records, and so was forced to use Philinus' monograph on the First Punic War. I intend to demonstrate that the war was not continuous, but included two periods of confrontation, and that at end of the first, Rome was forced to surrender Sicily. However, as acceptance of such a significant defeat would have undermined Pictor's purpose of presenting Rome as an incomparable power, its removal was obligatory. I argue below, that as Fabius' history (at least from 264) was (probably) in an annalistic format, he was able to devise a logical, but simple (in principle) system, that enabled him to rearrange the events recorded by Philinus into a superficially convincing 'pro-Roman' narrative.

Pictor's Motives and Circumstances in compiling his history

If Pictor's motives and circumstances for writing his *Annales* are to be ascertained, it is imperative that an approximate date be deduced, but this is problematic. Frier argues that it was after 214 B.C. and before the end of the Second Punic War in 201, and Feeney is in close agreement - 'around 210-205 B.C.E.'¹ But, it has been considered that it could just as well be 'in the 190s or even later ... Cato was in his eighties, when he wrote the *Origines*'² - although Cato's longevity was exceptional. However, as there is so little evidence, Bispham and Cornell conclude that 'In our view, the only proper approach is to leave the question completely open',³ yet earlier they say, 'Whether he [Pictor] survived the war, and lived to see the subsequent Roman intervention in the eastern Mediterranean ... are questions to which no firm answers can be given, but which profoundly affect our assessment of

¹ Frier 1999:237,239; his age would therefore be in the 60s, assuming a birth around 270. Feeney 2007:95. Hoyos 2001 considers Pictor wrote about events as late as 203, but his conjecture is not supported by Bispham & Cornell (*FRHist.* I. 167 n.33 [EHB, TJC]).

² *FRHist.* I. 167 [EHB, TJC].

³ *FRHist.* I. 167 n.31 [EHB, TJC].

his work...'.⁴ Nevertheless, I contend that it is possible to establish a defensible date. Before 200, Rome was engaged in a life and death struggle with Carthage without the certainty of final victory, and therefore a patriotic history that emphasised Rome's extraordinary ability of achieving ultimate victory, whatever the cost, was essential as a warning to the aggressive and powerful Hellenistic states of the East. Eckstein stresses that Rome was now faced with the very real threat of Antiochus the Great,⁵ and that anarchy in the Hellenistic world was so prevalent that great kingdoms could suddenly collapse.⁶

Thus, the last decade of the Hannibalic War (210 - 201) is a feasible time for a new patriotic history. This period is strongly supported by Alföldi, who reasons that 'many statements of Pictor on contemporary events are much more easily understood when it is realized that they were written in the heat of the gigantic struggle, and not when it was over'.⁷ I would contend that a date in the later 190s or early 180s, when Rome's formidable military power had been firmly established, would have resulted in a Rome that was fully confident of her future, and would thus have been more prepared to accept narrating her historical disasters in their proper context.⁸

Pictor would have had several motives in mind for compiling his history, and the methods by which his aims could be achieved. A particularly important concept is advanced by Clark, who suggests that the terrible defeats of the Second Punic War 'had an appreciable impact on Romans' perception of defeat' and the early years of the second century, significantly affected both their politics and historiography.⁹ Clark develops her theme that 'Having risked – and indeed lost – so much to come through the [Hannibalic] war victorious, the idea of defeat in future engagements became especially

⁴ *FRHist.* I. 163 [EHB, TJC].

⁵ Eckstein 2006:5-6.

⁶ Eckstein 2006:8, but he also maintains that Rome's 'exceptionalism' ensured she was not subject to this problem.

⁷ Polyb. 2.24.3-16. Alföldi 1965:170 n.1: e.g. Fabius' details of the vast available manpower (800,000) that Rome could assemble at the start of the Celtic war in 225 served as a warning.

⁸ An example of the recording of multiple defeats is the Lusitanian War against Viriathus in Spain (147-139): see Silva 2013.

⁹ Clark 2014:3.

fraught'.¹⁰ Clark proposes that the Romans presented 'military events within a consistent chronological pattern wherein any defeats were followed by victories, leading to a triumph'.¹¹ Most importantly, and of particular relevance to my thesis, Clark stresses that Rome's victorious wars were 'the result of the Senate's management of the reception and recognition of information – essentially, ending wars when Rome looked like ... the winner'.¹² Clark argues that Pictor promoted this idea so that it would influence his Hellenistic audience who might have been undecided as to which side to support in the conflict (e.g., Philip V), and realize that Rome would never give up.¹³

Therefore, I propose that, in order to demonstrate that the Romans were an invincible power, Fabius had to sustain the concept that their history clearly demonstrated that she always won her wars (certainly for the previous 150 years) and that the catastrophic sequence of events that, I maintain, the Romans suffered during the period 250-248 could not be entirely acknowledged, and the true consequences had to be denied. A famous early example is the defeat of the Romans by the Samnites in the Caudine Forks in 321 during the middle of the Second Samnite War (326-304). This resulted in the signing of a 'peace treaty', followed by a peace of four years (320-317).¹⁴ However, as the war recommenced in 316 and ended in 304, the nature of the agreement was subsequently changed from a treaty (*foedus*) to that of a sworn undertaking or guarantee (*sponsio*), and the four-years' peace eliminated.¹⁵ In effect, two wars have been joined together in

¹⁰ Clark 2014:3.

¹¹ Clark 2014:4. Clark 115-119, 133 examines the Ligurian campaigns during 186-176, when there was almost continual warfare that showed defeats being compensated by (often undeserved) victories; Liguria was not properly pacified until the first century. Clark 164-169 also considers the Numantine War 143-133 in which the Romans suffered heavy defeats in 141 and 140. Mancinus' defeat in 137 and his acceptance of terms of surrender should have ended the war. However, this treaty was rejected by the senate and the war continued with more defeats until final victory in 133.

¹² Clark 2014:3.

¹³ Clark 2014:3-4, 13; she considers Pictor may have been writing shortly after Cannae.

¹⁴ Liv. 9.2.6-9.6.2.

¹⁵ Liv. 9.22.1-2 (316); 9.45.1-2 (304). See Salmon 1967:224-9. Crawford 1973 cogently argues that, despite Livy's assertion (9.5.1-2) that the agreement was not a *foedus* but a *sponsio*, the evidence clearly points to a treaty (*foedus*), and is closely linked to the nature of the agreement made by Mancinus after his defeat by the Numantines in 137. Livy 9.3.4 - 9.5.6 attempts to turn the disaster into a cause for righteous Roman retribution by saying that the Samnites had three options on how to deal with the trapped Roman army: annihilate it, let their army depart unscathed, or let their army depart under a humiliating treaty. The

approximately the same way as the one I propose for the First Punic War (Treaty of Philinus), and thus indicates that this might have been a standard policy of Fabius Pictor in 'proving' that Rome always fought her wars until final victory.¹⁶

Another motive provided for the writing of his history was the religious aspect: in 216 the Romans sustained their greatest defeat of the Hannibalic War at Cannae, and there were fears that Hannibal would march on Rome.¹⁷ This disaster could be linked to the loss of the favour of the gods (*pax deorum*), but they could be placated by paying particular attention to the minutiae of the forms of religion as this reassuringly 'linked them to the order of heaven'.¹⁸ Thus, to narrate Philinus' account of their defeats, that resulted in the humiliating Treaty of Philinus, would have also broadcast their loss of the favour of the gods, and so their impiety. It could even be considered that the Fabius' (partial) adoption of the annalistic format provided another sort of reassuring regular ritual.¹⁹

As Rome was entering the Greek world of the East, competition with (or jealousy towards) the Greeks would also have been another factor - there was certainly a timely need to compose a history to match those of the 'heroic' Greeks. This idea is strengthened by the Romans' desire for their city to be considered a civilised 'Greek' city²⁰ - indeed, 'for Dionysius, Rome is a Greek city many times over'.²¹

Another motive relates to politics, as Senators were fundamentally politicians 'for whom historiography was a continuation of politics by other

second option would ensure lasting peace and friendship with the Romans. However, the third humiliating option, which would ensure future conflict, was chosen. Livy, against popular belief, changes the treaty into a guarantee. Appian *Roman History* 83 states that Mancinus made an unauthorised treaty (like the Samnite treaty) and was handed over to the Numantines, thus placing the blame on him and exonerating Rome.

¹⁶ Due to the fragmentary nature of Fabius' history it is not possible to state that this was a standard policy he initiated for his patriotic history, but the argument above, that the Second Samnite War was really composed of two separate wars, would be in line with this approach.

¹⁷ Liv. 22.55.1-2.

¹⁸ Frier 1999:284.

¹⁹ Liv. 22.55.1-2; Frier 1999:283-4. Fabius' mission to Delphi in 216 was a consequence of this disaster.

²⁰ Alföldi 1965:125: he discusses the legendary foundation of Rome by Aeneas fleeing from Troy; Dillery 2002:8.

²¹ Gruen 1994:7; Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.90.1. The Greeks considered the Romans as barbarians: Prag 2010:69.

means'.²² As a leading member of the elite, Fabius was also possibly motivated to promote his own *gens* and its illustrious history, which was associated with Hercules. This is indicated in the Tauromenium *dipinto* where the origins of the Romans are linked to the arrival of Hercules in Italy.²³ It is likely that Fabius would also have linked himself to the 'great commander who defied Hannibal (Plut. *FM* 1.1)'.²⁴ Such promotion was part of Roman politics. The rivalry and hatred between the Fabii and that other great *gens*, the Claudia, was well-known. A prime example of this, as regards the First Punic War, is the blame placed on the 'arrogant' Claudius Pulcher when, during the Lilybaeum siege in 249, he was heavily defeated at sea by Adherbal.²⁵ Claudius was censored for blasphemy against the gods when he ignored an unfavourable omen and threw the sacred chickens into the sea (If they won't eat, let them drink!). He was condemned for his recklessness and put on trial.²⁶ Alternatively, his actions could be interpreted as taking a daring initiative to destroy the Punic fleet that, had it succeeded, would have prevented Carthage from resupplying Lilybaeum and thereby likely have ended with the city's capture and the victorious conclusion of the war.

Although, undoubtedly, Fabius wrote for the elite Romans who understood Greek, the ordinary Roman was not excluded from knowledge of his history as he could use the Latin version, or even listen to it being read out and translated into Latin by the speaker.²⁷

²² Timpe 2011:163.

²³ Dillery 2002:13-14: the third fragment of the dipinto mentions Fabius Pictor, and Dillery 2002:14 considers that 'Tauromenium was putting itself on the historiographic map by promoting historians of its region, and suggesting that events there were as worthy of record as those of Alexander the Great'. The dipinto could also be considered as a means of networking within the Greek world of the west.

²⁴ Wiseman 2007:75.

²⁵ Alföldi 1965:159-164; Polyb. 1.49.1-51.12; Diod. 24.1.5; Zonar. 8.15; Eutrop. 2.26.1; Oros.4.10.3.

²⁶ Polyb. 1.52.2-3; Suet. *Tib.* 3.2.2; Val. Max. 1.4.3; Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.7, Cic. *Div.* 1.29, 2.20; Frontin. *Str.* 2.13.9; Flor. 1.18.29. I consider that although the Romans were prepared to record their disasters, they could not admit to having been humiliatingly defeated by Hannibal's father in 249-8, as I contend, and then forced to leave the island under the Treaty of Philinus, nor as a consequence in 242, when they broke their sacred oaths under this treaty and thus treacherously attacked Drepana and Lilybaeum. See ch.9, stage 5 for possible evidence of a declaration of war in 243.

²⁷ *FRHist.* I. 168-9 [EHB, TJC] – a Latin version could have been written shortly after the Greek version. It has long been thought that some fragments can only come from a Latin text – see discussion in *FRHist.* I. 163-166 [EHB, TJC].

Polybius' motivation in following Pictor, mostly, rather than Philinus

There was clearly significant support for Fabius Pictor's patriotic version of a history of Rome because it quickly became the established official version and formed the basis for all subsequent Roman histories. I argue this posed a major problem by the time Polybius started to write his history after his arrival in Rome in 167, for he had no alternative other than to follow Fabius' history in its basic construction, even if he knew it contained major variations from that of Philinus and his own investigations.²⁸ This constraint was not necessarily entirely unwelcome, as the main theme of his history is to account for the extraordinary rise of Rome in the short space of just under fifty-three years and its type of constitution. Later, he continued this work to 146. Despite Polybius' stated aim always to relay the truth, his very great personal dependence on the Romans would have placed a significant obstacle in achieving this.²⁹ Thus, it would undoubtedly have been very difficult for Polybius to make serious modifications to Fabius' history, if they revealed Rome had suffered such heavy defeats by the Carthaginians that they had to conclude peace on very unfavourable terms. Hence, although Polybius undoubtedly may have sought to narrate the truth in writing about the First Punic War, he was constrained by his dependence on his hosts, and perhaps also by the authoritative fame of Fabius' work, to accept Fabius' established version.

Fabius' sources and their Influence on the format of his History.

It is important to establish the sources that Fabius could rely on when constructing his history, and his approach to them. The main problem facing Pictor was that (as I explain below) Rome was not a literate society until the middle of the third century, and that his Roman sources, particularly the pontifical chronicles, did not contain sufficient information to enable him to

²⁸ Bispham and Cornell (*FRHist.* I. 178 [EHB, TJC]): many of the sources 'are undoubtedly based, at least in part, on Fabius Pictor. These include much of his [Polybius'] narrative of the First Punic War in book I'. The variations are the anomalies I have identified in the following chapters 3-8.

²⁹ Polyb. 1.14.6.

write his history. He was therefore forced to turn to other, mainly Greek sources, which he had then to manipulate in order to produce a suitably patriotic narrative of Rome's achievements. Pictor appears to have written very unevenly about historical events, covering the regal period in detail, the early republic sparsely, and then events in the third century in much greater detail, particularly from the first Punic War.

Of the Roman sources, the earliest and perhaps most controversial, were the *Annales Maximi*: there are two main opposing views concerning their authenticity and reliability.³⁰ Cornell, following Cicero's quote of Ennius' reference to a solar eclipse in Rome in 400 as the strongest support for the authenticity of the *Annales Maximi*, concludes:

'It is certain, therefore, that the *Annales maximi* go back to the fifth century; but it is probable that the earliest entries were not very detailed,...In other words, the sparse and intermittent character of the fifth-century notices, and the increasing amounts of routine detail that appear in the later books of Livy's first decade, can be explained by an increase in the quantity, and an improvement in the quality, of the primary sources available to the annalists. This is an entirely legitimate inference, and in my view is almost certainly correct'.³¹

The main problem with Cornell's view, as Wiseman points out, is that there is doubt on the authenticity of the eclipse (c. 350 a.u.c.) mentioned by Cicero (and accepted by many scholars as a key reliable date in early Roman history), because Cicero derives it from the poet Ennius.³²

However, Bradley supports the antiquity and reliability of the sources, and points out that, it is not only the increasing complexity of the annals, but their documentary basis on a very wide range of historical records (as mainly provided by Livy) within a chronological framework, that is so convincing.³³ Nevertheless, these arguments are not conclusive, because it cannot be demonstrated that they are genuinely contemporary and reliable records,

³⁰ The *Annales Maximi* were also known as *annales pontificum*, *annales publici*, *annales populi Romani* - Wiseman 2008:267.

³¹ Cornell 1995:14-15; Cic. *Rep.* 1.25. Cicero *Rep.* 2.29 also states they provided details going back to the period of the kings.

³² Wiseman 2008:263.

³³ Bradley 2020:8-15. One also wonders that, if so much information was available to the Romans, they did not write an account of their own history significantly earlier than that of Fabius Pictor.

and have not been later reconstructions.³⁴ The notion that the increasing complexity of the annals is a proof of validity is not decisive – it could simply mean that later historians had fewer legends and stories to embellish for the early period.³⁵ Indeed, Dillery says that there is the implication that ‘pontifical *tabulae* underpinned the work of the early annalists but nowhere is this claim substantiated for any one of the individual historians in particular ...’.³⁶

This concept is developed by Rüpke who argues that the *commentarii pontificum* were first ‘set down by Coruncanus’ and ‘constituted a kind of official priestly document’,³⁷ which would possibly have included reconstructed material going back about eighty years.³⁸ Rüpke argues, that ‘The third century was central to the popularization of letters in Roman society...’.³⁹ Rüpke puts their start at 249 when ‘excerpts relating to prodigies obtained from Livy by Iulius Obsequens begin’.⁴⁰ Zosimus says that in 505 A.U.C (249 B.C.) disease and war forced the senate to order the *Decemviri* to consult the Sibylline oracles and sacrifice to Dis and Persephone for the calamities to stop.⁴¹

If Rüpke is correct, other sources had to be considered. Fabius had at his disposal a variety of sources and traditions. These included the archives of important families and their commemorative material: statues, dedications of spoils and temples, displays of family histories, and speeches honouring

³⁴ Millar 1989:138-9 says that from the perspective of the late third century, human memory would include ‘the previous two or three generations’ that would stretch back to around 300 B.C., and even further. He considers it matters little that there were not available ‘valid year-by-year narrative sequences’, due to the importance of developments in the fourth and early third centuries that formed the background to the later campaigns of, for example, Pyrrhus and the First Punic War. However, the problem remains that memories are fallible and subject to distortion and manipulation, making it virtually impossible to compile a detailed and valid history from these and other limited assorted sources.

³⁵ Dillery 2002:12.

³⁶ Dillery 2002:12: he also points out that none of the early historians ever quotes from them.

³⁷ Rüpke & Glock 2008:33; Enmann 1902 first proposed this.

³⁸ Rüpke & Glock 2008:33, and Rich 2011:12 thinks that it is only from about 300 B.C. that the information in these records starts to get more detailed; Duff 1962:63 notes that the fasti were secret ‘until Cn. Flavius published the calendar of religious festivals in 304 B.C.’. It is also unlikely that the wooden *tabulae* or linen scrolls (*libri lintei*) could have survived the various fires and flooding that continually beset Rome.

³⁹ Rüpke & Glock 2008:32.

⁴⁰ Rüpke & Glock 2008:26.

⁴¹ Zos. 2.4. The crucial importance of the catastrophic events of the year 249 is supported by Zosimus and thus may have been instrumental in Coruncanus inaugurating the *commentarii pontificum*.

deceased members; there were also records kept by the priests.⁴² Bradley details a variety of early inscriptional and literary evidence which, even if only partially valid, would have been of use.⁴³ It would certainly have been a daunting task to sort out, collate and interpret all this information in a systematic way, so that a chronologically viable history could be created that followed Greek concepts and chronological structures.

An inspiration for writing his history would have come from the Greek historians like Hieronymus and Timaeus who wrote about the early stages of Roman history.⁴⁴ Timaeus included some Roman events probably down to just before the First Punic War when Polybius commenced his *Histories*.⁴⁵ Bradley notes that 'It is also worth remembering that the Greek historical tradition on Rome continues seamlessly from at least the fifth century BC to the late imperial period, something evident from Dionysius' discussion of his predecessors (Dion. Hal. 1.5.4)'.⁴⁶ Considering the above uncertainty of the evidence, it would seem that Pictor's work was probably along Greek lines and started with Rome's early history including its mythological founding, briefly dealt with the middle period and ended 'with a partisan treatment of contemporary and military history'.⁴⁷

Feeney emphasises the enormous influence of Greek literature and explains how in the crucial century from 240 to 140⁴⁸ the Romans absorbed and translated this influence into the Latin language as part of a 'Roman Translation Project'.⁴⁹ Feeney stresses this was not a simple case of a higher

⁴² Feeney 2016:174-5.

⁴³ Bradley 2020:8-9, but few of these can be considered contemporary, and even the fasti were Augustan compilations.

⁴⁴ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.6.1. See also chapter 1, pp.27-8 concerning Greek sources.

⁴⁵ Polyb. 1.5.1; 39.8.4-5; *BNJ* Timaios (566) T 6a & 6b.

⁴⁶ Bradley 2020:17-8. Regrettably, Dionysius also says, they were 'only very brief and summary epitomes', but it does seem that Fabius mainly followed Diocles of Peparethus for Rome's very early history (2020:98).

⁴⁷ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 1.6.2. Timpe 2011:163. Bispham and Cornell *FRHist.* I. 171-2 stress that the hourglass model is not necessarily valid for 'the preserved fragments of any lost ancient author are a biased sample reflecting ... the interests and concerns of the secondary authors who quote them'.

⁴⁸ Feeney 2016:6: the beginning was at the 'staging of a Latin play translated from a Greek original' during the *Ludi Romani* in 240.

⁴⁹ Feeney 2016:4-5 believes that there was nothing inevitable about the Romans using Greek *exempla* to start their own literature, but it was (probably) uniquely 'one of the strangest and most unlikely events in Mediterranean history' with the Romans 'taking over systematically the Greek forms of tragedy, comedy, epic or historiography into their own vernacular languages' so that there developed in Rome 'a heavily Greek-style education and

Greek culture filling in a Roman cultural void, but that the confident Romans, after a series of great military victories, 'were actively seeking out particular features of Greek and Greek-inflected life'.⁵⁰ He argues that the year 240 was a seminal moment when 'the Roman state repositioned itself in response to new possibilities and commitments in the immediate aftermath of the Great War with Carthage in Sicily (264-241)'.⁵¹

With the perceived dearth of reliable Roman records, the credibility of Fabius' new history is seriously questioned by scholars: Alföldi, in his seminal study of the Latins,⁵² came to the conclusion that Roman history was:

'like a skilfully conceived mosaic pavement with a pattern, purposely imitating ancient art, but containing only a few little authentic mosaic stones and distorting completely the original design by a fictitious new one'.⁵³

Alföldi summarises Pictor's approach to his *annales* as follows:

'It is not the work of a clumsy scribbler but a shrewd doctrine forged by a far-sighted politician. This man was the first historian of Rome, writing in Greek for the Greeks, and trying to make them believe that his people were no barbarian horde, recently risen to power by rude force, but a highly civilized community of a most glorious past, ... The subsequent annalists did not inquire into the past themselves but tried to shape his concept in a more attractive way ...'.⁵⁴

Thus, I conclude that even though the recording of events by the Romans in the third century became increasingly reliable due mainly to the increase of literary information,⁵⁵ it was inadequate to produce a detailed narrative of the First Punic War. Fabius Pictor had therefore to rely on Philinus' history as a key reference, one that he was able to manipulate where necessary for his patriotic history, that is the subject of this thesis.

apparatus of literary scholarship, together with a developed historiographical tradition about their past and a mythological network that connected them to the inheritance of the Greeks'.

⁵⁰ Feeney 2016:11-12.

⁵¹ Feeney 2016:93.

⁵² Ending in the Latin War of 340-338.

⁵³ Alföldi 1965:124. Timpe 2011:163 believes Fabius' history was basically 'a strange and bizarre compilation, saga narration, and tendentious war report all in one'.

⁵⁴ Alföldi 1965:124.

⁵⁵ There were now state archives, as well as various information from Greek historians, like Diocles of Peparethus: Mineo 2011:112.

That there might have been others involved in the production of the new patriotic story of Rome, is indicated by the possibility that Naevius (who wrote his *Bellum Punicum* around this time) was in some way associated with Fabius Verrucosus who had family ties with Fabius Pictor.⁵⁶ This may lead to the conclusion that amongst the senatorial elite, or at least within the *gens* Fabia, there was an agreement that Rome had need of her own patriotic history to promote her standing and interests in the Greek world after the forthcoming victory over Hannibal.

This initiative would include both prose (Fabius) and verse (Naevius) and would have rendered more likely that events particularly injurious to her reputation could be obscured or deleted. In order to collect all the information for his history, especially family history, it would have been necessary for Pictor to obtain the approval, tacit or otherwise, of leading members of the elite, not just for the material, but also to a certain degree, on how it would be used, especially if he were going to present a significantly distorted version of events.

Possible Physical Format of Fabius' History

Fabius' history comprised several books⁵⁷ which would most likely have been written on papyrus as it 'remained the dominant writing material throughout Greek and Roman antiquity'. After manufacture, twenty of the sheets 'were then glued together to form a roll ..., on average 6-8 m. (20-26 ft.) long': these extended horizontally for continuous reading with 'the text arranged in columns (*σελίδες*, *paginae*)' and could take e.g., one of the books of Polybius or two to three of Homer.⁵⁸ Fabius would then have written in columns that were grouped by the events occurring during a consular term of office.⁵⁹ Use of this system, would have made it relatively easy to 'cut and

⁵⁶ Frier 1999:280. *FRHist.* I. 161 [EHB, TJC]. Scullard 1951:31-2 notes that the Fabii had been the foremost of the *gentes* in the 'early centuries of the Republic' and under Verrucosus had achieved great influence; the Fabii were linked to other families such as the Licinii and possibly the Ogulnii, Laetorii, Mamilii, Atilii, Otacilii and Manlii. Three main competing groups were active in the last decade of the Hannibalic War: the Claudian, Fabian and Scipionic (67-81).

⁵⁷ Beck 2007:260. See also discussion in *FRHist.* I. 169-172 [EHB, TJC].

⁵⁸ *OCD 3 Rev.* 250, 'books, Greek and Roman': (H.Ma.).

⁵⁹ I have argued above (pp.27-8) that Fabius was influenced by Timaeus and his Olympiad chronology, as probably was Philinus. Since Polybius also used this dating, and Fabius

paste' events or episodes from one consular year to another. It would also have made it simple to keep control of these moves, particularly as the rolls could be extended out across a suitable surface.

After these adjustments were completed and integrated into their new positions, the amended rolls would be copied onto blank rolls to form a new revised history. If Rüpke's interpretation of the annual *commentarii pontificum* being started by Tiberius Coruncanius in 249 is to be believed, then Fabius' task would have been significantly facilitated since much of the framework of annual information would already have been put in place for the First Punic War.

Fabius' possible method used in 'rewriting' the war.

Alföldi concludes his summary of Fabius' approach by stating: 'Therefore what we need to do is to uncover the pattern established by Fabius, which became the canonical account of the rise of the Roman power'.⁶⁰ Although Alföldi is concerned with events prior to the end of the Latin War (340 - 338), his reference to the necessity of uncovering the underlying pattern established by Fabius is, I propose, prescient and forms the basis of my reconstruction of the events of the First Punic War.

As I have argued that Philinus was probably writing not long after the war, he is therefore likely to be substantially accurate. The ability fundamentally to change events immediately, or shortly after a war, as opposed to one or two generations later, is significantly reduced, due to the greater survival of participants who can verify these events. Not only did Polybius trust him, but Fabius also used him and (if my hypothesis is credible) modified Philinus' account, which he would not have done if he had considered it inaccurate.

As Philinus had already written his account of the war, Fabius' options were particularly limited, because the invention of unlikely Roman victories over the Carthaginians would be seen as propaganda by readers in the

wrote for the Greeks, it is likely that Pictor used this system. As an Olympiad started 'each fourth year in late July or early August' it divided a campaigning season, so to resolve this a 'manipulated' Olympiad year was adopted whereby the season could be treated as a whole: Walbank 1957:35-7.

⁶⁰ Alföldi 1965:124.

Greek world, and face justified criticism from Hannibal's historians. The same would apply to omitting Roman defeats. Fabius could simply have ignored the events of 249-8 that followed the disasters associated with the siege of Lilybaeum - these events are seminal to my reconstruction of Fabius' approach. However, this would have resulted in a major problem because, although it would contradict Philinus, it would not prove him wrong. Some of his intended Greek audience would have been fully aware of the sequence of Rome's defeats that resulted in the treaty that followed. Minimising the significance of these actions would still be following Philinus and suggest he was also trusted as far as the final consequences were concerned, especially if one accepts the Carthaginians ultimately annihilated the besieging Roman army.⁶¹

It could be argued that the Roman elite was not averse to admitting major defeats of Roman forces (as the victory by Xanthippus shows), and were quite prepared to mitigate the negative impact on the reputation of the resilience, efficiency and morale of the Roman military, by blaming the commander. Polybius follows another path which most scholars find difficult to accept: he does not hide the facts of the siege, but instead, ignores its consequences by simply stating: 'The Carthaginians were now masters of the sea and were not hopeless of regaining their position on land ... yet they did not abandon their purpose of pursuing the siege, the government not hesitating to send supplies over land'.⁶² This has the virtue of keeping the facts of the siege, but highlights the inadequacy of Polybius' statement, such that scholars have endeavoured to supply a variety of possible (but indecisive) answers.

Fabius developed a method that promised to address these problems which was, I argue, to keep most of the basic facts, as recorded by Philinus, and then to rearrange the problematic ones in Rome's favour. As my findings indicate that the First Punic War was composed of at least two separate wars, this method of mitigating the consequences of defeats is strongly

⁶¹ See chapter 6 relating to the siege of Lilybaeum.

⁶² Polyb. 1.55.2-4.

supported by Clark's basic argument that 'the Romans processed and dealt with defeats by integrating them into longer narratives of victory'.⁶³

The key events of the First Punic War would still be in the memory of the oldest Romans alive, even if the sequence of this long war was getting blurred. However, we should accept that there would be many patriotic Romans who would not object to the new revised history. This would have allowed the Roman elite and pro-Roman historians to counter Philinus' version by claiming that he was pro-Carthaginian, and therefore that it was he who had repositioned events. This accusation could be supported by claiming that the Romans had always fought until ultimate victory, and was not just based on their current victory over Hannibal. Thus, Fabius could then state that the military events Philinus recorded as resulting from the 249 disasters, had indeed taken place, but they had occurred elsewhere in the war and were not related to them.

In Fabius' annalistic format it would be relatively simple to take the text of Philinus, add additional Roman information and then rearrange events from one year to another, although this would inevitably create distortions and anomalies. However, as long as these problems were not too obvious, Fabius' authority as a senator would be sufficient for Romans, and would be difficult for Greeks to challenge. Once Rome's authority extended eastwards into Greek lands during the second century, her critics could effectively be ignored.

The next and most difficult step for Fabius would have been to consider how he could reallocate the most unpalatable of Philinus' texts (from the Roman point of view) to locations and years where their negative impact would be minimised or eliminated, and still produce a credible pro-Roman account. In this case, in order to achieve this and to keep control of his adjustments he would have had to follow certain principles or criteria. Without these, it would be impossible to create (at least) a persuasive alternative account because haphazard rearrangements would have resulted in a confusing and unconvincing narrative.

⁶³ Quote from Fronda 2016:277 in his review of Clark 2014.

I argue that as his history was probably semi-official and written with the acquiescence of members of the Roman elite (or their clans), some of whom participated in the war, one of these criteria would have been to ensure events were kept within the same family (but not necessarily for the same date) - deeds (especially negative ones) relating to other families, would have been certainly have been rejected. Particularly significant in this respect were triumphs: these were of exceptional importance to the Romans and clearly recorded in detail in the priestly *annales* - so their dates could not be altered. Therefore, these (and other) criteria serve as definite points of reference when trying to ascertain Fabius' adjustments. Even using these criteria, his adjustments inevitably produced significant anomalies in the actual sequence of events, and that it is by identifying these that a picture can be built up to enable a possible reconstruction of Philinus' narrative.

The key anomaly in the 'standard' account lies in the extraordinary failure of the Carthaginians to take advantage of the Roman disasters of 249: as we will see, no conclusive argument has been put forward to explain this lack of Carthaginian initiative, even though a great variety of possible arguments have been considered.⁶⁴ That there followed a period of reduced activity and stalemate (247-3) reinforced my hypothesis that some form of peace or truce had been arranged between the two parties. This was further supported by Polybius' attempt to prove that the Treaty of Philinus, which forbade the Romans to enter Sicily, never existed and that the many who believed in it were misled.⁶⁵

The crucial findings are that these key anomalies are all inter-related, and that they ultimately derive from the necessity to conceal the Rome's humiliating surrender of Sicily to the Carthaginians in accordance with the Peace of Philinus in '248'. It was therefore necessary for Fabius to demonstrate that all the actions relating to this conflict with Carthage, had to be considered part of one very long continuous war, which the Romans finally won. For Fabius, a major advantage of combining the two wars (264-

⁶⁴ See chapter 6: 'Scholars' Views'.

⁶⁵ Polyb. 3.26.3-7: it also forbade the Carthaginians to cross to Italy. Polybius has had to mention this treaty that was obviously well-known, but (as I propose) he allocated it to some vague time before the war – see discussion in chapter 3.

248 and 242-241) into one long continuous war, was that it gave an adequate timescale to reassign events with greater facility, and therefore the ability to create a more convincing narrative.

The criteria Fabius uses, though simple in concept, are complex in application and have necessitated a long process of trial and error using sequential scenario modelling to determine what events have been transferred and what criteria have been applied.⁶⁶ As the triumphal fasti are considered very substantially accurate for this war, they have provided essential references when ascertaining possible adjustments.⁶⁷

The first stage of the process was to establish where the main anomalies lay. These are examined in chapters 3 to 8. The next stage in the process was to produce a scenario of the expected outcome of the most important anomaly of the war, which I have identified as the failure of the Carthaginians to take advantage of the Roman disasters of 249.⁶⁸ It would be expected that the Carthaginians would have marched eastwards to drive the Romans back towards Messina. Such an advance can be detected in events that can be attributed to 259, but which I argue in chapter 4 are extraneous for this year. The chronological difference is ten years, and this has proved to be a recurrent aspect which, I argue, functions as an essential principle for Fabius' re-arrangement. This principle is often applied to the Carthaginian activity as magistracies are unknown. It is also the default option when the other criteria listed below do not apply.

The next stage was to consider the likely Roman reaction to the Carthaginian advance, and to use this as a basis for developing a new interpretation of events. By identifying where such a Carthaginian advance can be found in the sources, the criteria used for its displacement can be determined.

In the final chapter, I will demonstrate how the scenario modelling process can be applied to the resolution of the key anomalies identified in

⁶⁶ See below pp.65-69.

⁶⁷ So important are the triumphal fasti for my hypothesis that the failure of their survival for the Second Punic War have prevented the application of my system to it; the consular fasti also provide an additional but subsidiary reference.

⁶⁸ Discussed in chapter 6.

chapters 3 to 8. In this way I have created a new narrative of the First Punic War that is a tentative reconstruction of Philinus' account.

My scenario modelling process has uncovered the following criteria for adjustments adopted by Fabius in his reconstruction of the war.⁶⁹

1. A simple reassignment of events by ten years, either earlier or later in time – this is the default principle that is used when none of the following rules are applicable. It is the single most important criterion, without which, it is not possible to resolve many of the anomalies: '10-years'.⁷⁰
2. The transfer of events from one magistrate to one of his other magistracies, or to another of the same family: 'Person'.
3. Since I argue that there were basically two wars (264-248 and 242-1),⁷¹ then certain events linked to the end of the first (249-8) could be placed at the (second) 'official' end (242-1): 'End'.⁷²
4. Following on from number 3 above, events associated with the 'renewal' of the war in 242 or the start of the peace process in 248 could be moved to the first 'official' beginning (264): 'Start'.⁷³
5. Some events have been expanded over time to fill in the 'peace' period between the Romans and Carthaginians from 247 – 243: 'Expand'.⁷⁴
6. Where a primary event is reallocated, events dependent on it, or sequential thereto, could also be moved in sequence: 'Sequence'.⁷⁵

⁶⁹ These are not comparable to cyphers or codes; where two guidelines conflict, other evidence must be considered when determining the one probably used.

⁷⁰ The criteria listed in nos. 2-6 cannot be implemented for every adjustment, thus an easily implemented practical default is necessary for these. The naval battles of Cape Hermaeum in 255 (Polyb. 1.36.10-11) is duplicated in the Aegimurus action in 245 (Flor. 1.18.30-32) – see also Lazenby 1996:148; this duplication is a result of the rule. In chapter 9.5, I reason that the anomalous Gallic attacks on the Romans during the years 238-6, mentioned by Zonaras (8.18), can be pre-dated by ten years to 248-6. Likewise, the closing of the Temple of Janus in 235 can be attributed to 245 and fits within the 'peace period' of 248-3, thus supporting my conclusion that Rome was at peace 'both at home and abroad'.

⁷¹ I have also detected a short interwar period from 262 to 261 – see chapters 8 & 9.

⁷² Appian's version of Barca's victory over Regulus in 249 which was, according to Diodorus (23.16.1), reallocated to 241 using the 'End' criterion (see chapter 5).

⁷³ E.g.: any fighting around Messana, other than in 264-3, would indicate severe, if not total, defeat for the Romans and the likely start of peace negotiations.

⁷⁴ E.g.: the combined over-long five-year sieges of Heircte and Eryx covering the years 247 to 243.

⁷⁵ As I show that the events of 262 belong to 242, and those of 261 follow on from 262, then the 261 events belong to 241: see chapters 8 & 9.6.

Explanation of the Scenario Modelling Process

My particular scenario modelling approach has been influenced by the desire of business firms to be able to build various scenarios of their possible future revenues and expenditures. In order to implement the optimum desired result, Microsoft Excel spreadsheets are often used to build these 'What-If' scenarios.⁷⁶ Although it has not been possible for me to use Microsoft's specific modelling system for my thesis, with its non-numerical data, I have been able to develop some new approaches inspired by it. Thus, I have reduced the information provided by the various sources on the war (such as: Polybius, Diodorus, Cassius Dio and Appian) into discrete 'packets', that I have then entered onto spreadsheets. These 'packets' contain information, that have been summarised from the various sources in the most condensed way that still retains the key elements of the selected narratives. It has been my experience, that when initially creating a summary, difficulties have arisen in discerning the exact information that will ultimately prove important. Notwithstanding this vital caveat, these summaries are essential in developing possible scenarios.

I have found the use of 'Excel' spreadsheets has played a crucial part in my analysis and reinterpretation of the sources on the First Punic War. Each year of the war has been allocated a spreadsheet – when linked together they make up a 'workbook'. I have further increased the number of spreadsheets to cover relevant years occurring both before and after the period of the First Punic War.

The format of each spreadsheet is of vital importance.⁷⁷ Each spreadsheet is divided into three sections: the first includes the calendar year (with a note of the consular year); names of important magistrates, i.e., the consuls (including suffect consuls) and any iteration; dictators and masters of the horse; censors; praetors and the pontifex maximus. Also included, are details of triumphs achieved, and the dates they were celebrated; the

⁷⁶ See 'Using What-If, Scenario Manager, Goal Seek, and Solver' in: Jelen 2019:449-464.

⁷⁷ See Table C for an example.

foundation dates of colonies and temples, together with relevant exceptional information (e.g., census results⁷⁸).

The second section contains the summaries of events transferred from other years recorded in the spreadsheets, together with original and revised dates, criteria used for their reallocation, and associated comments.⁷⁹

The third section details the 'standard' history according to the various sources. As stated above, these sources have been summarised in the most condensed way that is compatible with recording the key events of the actions under consideration. Each summary should relate to a particular action or linked actions as recorded by the original source. Ideally, these should consist of half-a-dozen lines on the spreadsheet, but may consist of just one line or many more, depending on the information being recorded. Ideally, they should record connected sections of the source text, and are usually in the order the author is considered to have written. The summary relates precise facts, and eschews other aspects, unless particularly relevant. Thus, individual's names, battle tactics, numbers of men and ships involved, and casualties incurred, are usually of the utmost importance, whereas descriptive passages and the combatant's emotions are usually excluded, as also are speeches (although some pertinent elements may be retained).

As shown in Table C, the 'Excel' columns relating to sections 2 and 3 show the following information across columns 'A' to 'F': the author and specific text reference; the translated text; the 'standard' date; the 'revised date' (if applicable); the criterion used (if applicable); comments. The standard date is that of the year of the spreadsheet: in some cases, e.g., 250-249 (siege of Lilybaeum), events continue beyond the calendar year, and are split over the two consular years. Where the sources significantly

⁷⁸ The census figures are subject to variations and interpretation as to their scope – they are mainly, but not exclusively, obtained from Livy - see Brunt 1987 13-33) whom I follow here.

⁷⁹ The fundamental 'ten-year' criterion was the first one to be confirmed, and had to be detected by a process of 'trial and error'. The other criteria emerged during the course of scenario building.

disagree (e.g., events in 264), it is sometimes necessary to create a separate spreadsheet where the various sources are placed adjacent to each other, and the variances highlighted.

As referred to above, the second section shows events that have been transferred from another period (that is deemed erroneous) to this 'correct' year. Thus, all the information for developing a scenario is contained within the spreadsheet: the important magistrates, triumphs gained (effectively, points of reference), summaries of the sources (including authors and textual references), 'standard' dates, and 'revised' dates (with the appropriate criteria), together with detailed comments.

My approach has been to identify the most conspicuous of the anomalies (the siege of Lilybaeum in 250-249), and to discover the most likely outcome of the siege and the movement of the Roman and Carthaginian armies. I reasoned that it would be likely that the Carthaginians would have forced the Romans either to retreat, or for the latter to have realised their untenable situation (after the debacle of their fleets), and to have quickly departed eastwards. I considered Polybius' version, that they carried on with the siege, to be highly unlikely under the circumstances. This was the first scenario I developed, i.e., 'What-if' the Carthaginians had advanced eastwards against the Romans? If this were the case, then there should be some evidence in the sources, and this could be found by using one of the criteria I had developed. The ten-year criterion is the least complex to use and provides the simplest evidence in determining the validity of the proposed scenario.

There is evidence of a similar Carthaginian advance in my summaries of the sources under the year 259.⁸⁰ Using my spreadsheets, it is a simple matter of 'copying and pasting' all the summarised information on these events from 259 into section 2 of the spreadsheet '249'. These reallocated events have then been checked against the information already under 249 to

⁸⁰ Although there is uncertainty as to whether some events of the Carthaginian advance should be recorded under 260 or 259, due to the vagueness of the sources, I have argued in chapter 4 that these should be placed in 259.

see whether they contradict any of the secure points of reference. If such is the case, then the transfer of the 259 information can be easily reversed. Under 249, there is the secure point of reference in the appointment of a dictator after the Roman disasters, and that the sources indicate he led an army into Sicily and fought some battles there, but that the conclusion of the campaign was unsatisfactory.⁸¹

By continuing with a 'What-If' approach, a sequential scenario was developed that indicated it likely that Caiatinus would have attempted to drive back the putative Carthaginian advance in 249. Such an advance was located in the year following 259 (i.e., 258), and this seemed to confirm the first hypothesis. The 'Person' criterion has been used because Caiatinus was also a consul in 258. By 'copying and pasting' the summarised information from 258 into 249, the first scenario was supported and developed.

When, in chapter 3, I examined the problem of Appius Claudius' campaign in Sicily in 264, it became apparent, that though it was a realistic account, it could not have taken place in this year. However, as I had shown that it was Valerius Maximus who had captured Messana in 263 and successfully campaigned in eastern Sicily and obtained Syracuse an ally, Appius' failed campaign had to relate to a period when Rome had suffered such disastrous defeats that these had enabled a Carthaginian army to besiege Messana, and that Syracuse had changed sides. Thus, I was able to model a sequential scenario for 248 - the year following the conclusion of the siege of Lilybaeum.

Thus, by continually repeating this process of sequential scenario modelling for each of the six major anomalies that I have examined in chapters 3-8, I was gradually able to build up a revised history of the war that followed the criteria I had uncovered and was in alignment with the secure points of reference. A coherent picture emerged which, in a manner perhaps similar to

⁸¹ Polybius does not mention the appointment of a dictator, and this is in line with his narrative that the Romans continued with the siege (1.55.1-5).

the way a jigsaw puzzle is completed, the more the pieces that fell into place, the easier it was to ascertain the complete picture.

Summary

The last decade of the gruelling war with Hannibal was the most suitable period for Fabius Pictor to produce a new patriotic history of Rome. The dearth of reliable Roman sources forced him to use the Philinus' monograph of the war, but it related a totally unpalatable view of Roman endeavours in Sicily, including defeat by Hannibal's father and a humiliating treaty of surrender. I argue that Fabius realised he could manipulate the events by applying the above criteria, and still be able to create a superficially credible narrative of the war, that obscured events detrimental to the image he wished to present of Rome. He was also able to imply that the Romans had maintained peace within the Italian peninsular during this war, and thereby deter his readers from serious enquiry on the subject.⁸²

⁸² It was only on the conclusion of the war that any serious civil problem is recorded: the revolt of Falerii (Polyb. 1.65.1-2; Zonar. 8.18; Eutrop. 2.28; Liv. *Per.* 20; Val. Max. 6.5.1a,b; Eutrop. 2. 28).

CHAPTER 3. KEY ANOMALIES: THE OPENING YEARS (264-263)

The accounts of the first year of the war (264), as mainly derived from Polybius, Dio-Zonaras and Diodorus Siculus provide what, I argue, is essential evidence for understanding the possible true course of events for the entire war. Although these accounts often appear to give rather different versions on some events, I consider that when appropriately analysed, a clear and consistent narrative can be elucidated. This narrative would indicate that there are possibly two quite independent series of actions, the first of which involves Rome's attempt to cross to Sicily to aid the Mamertines. The second series, which I argue is problematic for this year, involves the campaign of Appius Claudius in Sicily after he was invited over by the Mamertines. If, however, we consider the possibility that Fabius Pictor had assigned this campaign here from a later period of the war, when it was essential for Rome's security, what remains is a straightforward and logical account for 264. It also explains why it was only in 263 that the consul Valerius Maximus was rightly considered the conqueror of Messana.¹

Whilst it is recognised by scholars that these accounts, though differing in detail, present essentially the same fundamental narrative, thus giving credibility to the general course of events, there has been a great deal of inconclusive discussion as to the exact motives for the Romans' involvement in Sicily and the specific course of events. These problems have tended to obscure the significance of a number of major anomalies arising from these events, and have prevented scholars from exploring the option that the basic narrative might itself be fundamentally flawed. In order to develop this possibility and to analyse more easily the essential points in the narratives of the three key authors - Polybius, Dio-Zonaras and Diodorus Siculus – I have included summaries.

The actions recorded for 264 can clearly be divided into two sections: the first, comprises the request by the Mamertines of Messana to elicit help

¹ I do not examine the reasons and motives of the opposing parties for the start of the First Punic War because they are far too uncertain to provide support for my reconstruction of the war. For a detailed examination of these, see Hoyos 1998.

from the Romans, the latter's hesitancy in complying thereto, their attempts at negotiation, and finally, the crossing over with their army to Messina. The second section involves the landing at Messina and the subsequent campaigns against the Syracusans and Carthaginians. Both sections will be reviewed, and the significant anomalies identified. The events for 263, which I similarly analyse, have a particular impact on those of 264, because I have identified a major contradiction in the inability to reconcile the literary sources with the robust evidence supporting the consul Valerius Maximus as the first conqueror of Messina.²

The accounts advanced by Polybius³ and Zonaras⁴ show that in 264 Appius Claudius was able to avoid the Carthaginian fleet by a dangerous night crossing - this allowed him to enter Messina without opposition. As these two accounts find no support in the triumphal fasti (considered accurate for the war) and, I argue, raise a number of serious practical problems, it makes it unlikely that Appius could have campaigned in Sicily in 264.

As I reason in thesis, that Philinus is the ultimate source for the First Punic War, I intend to demonstrate that by comparing these three key accounts for 264, I can reconstruct to an approximate degree Philinus' possible narrative. I can then present a scenario that indicates that Appius' activity and the disputed Treaty of Philinus can be linked to a later year of the war; other relevant events are discussed in the final section.

The Key Accounts of 264

In 264 the Romans initiated the First Punic War by coming to the help of mercenaries called the Mamertines, who were originally from Campania. At some time in the 280s they had seized Messina and started plundering cities in eastern Sicily. Perhaps, around 269 Hiero, tyrant (and later king) of Syracuse, attacked them but was defeated near the river Cyamosorus. At an uncertain date afterwards, he started another campaign against them, and after capturing many cities he decisively defeated them by the river

² See chapter 3, pp.91-94.

³ Polyb. 1.11.8-9.

⁴ Zonar: 8.9.

Longanus (Loitanus). It is possible that the decisive battle occurred in 265/4 (or even in 264).⁵

The three main literary sources for the Roman involvement in Sicily in 264 and 263 are Polybius, Dio-Zonaras and Diodorus Siculus.⁶ For simplicity of reference, I have divided each of these narratives into two sections and summarised them below. 'A' concerns the initial request of the Mamertines for assistance from the Romans, followed by various negotiations, and the crossing (or attempted crossing) to Messana, and 'B' concerns the land campaigns in Sicily.⁷

Summary of Polybius 1.10.1-12.4 & 1.15.1-11:

A: After the Mamertines had been defeated by the Syracusans (at Longanus), some of the former appealed to the Carthaginians for help and some to the Romans. The Carthaginians then occupied the citadel, and after long debates the Romans voted to send assistance. After this, the Mamertines ejected the Carthaginians and asked the Romans to occupy their city. The Carthaginians then stationed their fleet near Cape Pelorias and their army in the direction of Sunes. They allied themselves with the Syracusans, who encamped near the Chalcidian mountain on the side opposite to the Carthaginians, and thereby cut off the city's exit. Appius crossed the strait at night to the city.

B: After failed negotiations, Appius led out his forces. Following a long battle, he drove the Syracusans back to their camp, after which Hiero retreated to Syracuse taking away his nearby garrisons. Next day, Appius attacked and defeated the Carthaginians, forcing them to retreat to the neighbouring cities, and laid waste their territory and that of the Syracusans and their allies; he besieged Syracuse and even Echetla.

Summary of Diodorus 22.13.9 - 23.3.1:

A: After the Syracusans had justifiably attacked and defeated the army of the Mamertines, the latter wished to make peace, but the Carthaginians, who were moored nearby, were allowed to install a garrison, whereupon the Syracusans departed. However, after they were expelled from the city, the Carthaginians made an alliance with the Syracusans, saying that Romans in Sicily must

⁵ Polyb. 1.8.1–9.8. The dates concerning the rise of Hiero and his early campaigns are highly debateable: Polybius (1.9.8) says Hiero became king after the battle of the Longanus and implies that this was just before the appeal to Rome in 264 (1.10.1-2), but also says he died in 215 (7.8.4) having reigned for 54 years, and therefore became king in 269 – see discussions in Walbank 1957:55-6 *ad* 8.3, and Hoyos 1998:33-40.

⁶ Diodorus is believed to have used Philinus extensively.

⁷ For these summaries, I have selected what I consider are the most important points.

leave at once. Then the Carthaginians marched on Messana and besieged it together with the Syracusans: Hiero encamped on the Chalcidian Mount and the Carthaginians at Eunes, with their naval force near the Pelorias headland. Appius Claudius, on being ordered to Rhegium, sent envoys to broker peace. Subsequently, the Romans and Carthaginians fought a naval battle but hesitated to fight an all-out war, so peace was discussed. However, the Romans did cross over.

B: Hiero thought the Carthaginians had treacherously allowed this crossing, so he retreated to Syracuse, the Romans then defeated the Carthaginians in battle. The consul besieged Echetla (or Aigesta) but withdrew after heavy losses to Messana'.⁸

Summary of Dio-Zonaras: Dio 11.43.5-12; Zonaras 8.8-9:

A: Due to Syracusan enmity, the Mamertines requested help from the Romans, but as the Romans hesitated, they invited in the Carthaginians. To prevent the Romans from crossing, they guarded the strait and the city, and effected peace between themselves, the Mamertines and Syracusans. When the Romans decided to intervene, the tribune Gaius Claudius was ordered across to mediate peace, but could not for fear of the enemy fleet. When he did cross in a small boat his negotiations failed, and likewise his next crossing - but the Mamertines supported him. When he attempted to cross a third time with his fleet, it was defeated by Hanno, who then urged peace talks, which failed. He later made another crossing to Messana and by seizing Hanno, helped the Mamertines to eject the Carthaginian garrison in the citadel. The Carthaginians then sent a herald to say the Romans should leave Sicily by a stated day or there would be war. Receiving no response, the Carthaginians and Syracusans besieged Messana. The former placed spies around the harbour and guarded the strait, thus preventing men or supplies from entering. However, the consul crossed by night.

B: The consul anchored off Sicily not far from Hiero's camp and landed his troops and attacked. Though his cavalry was defeated his infantry won, and Hiero retreated temporarily to the mountains, and later to Syracuse. Claudius then attacked the camp of the Carthaginians but was repulsed, but when the latter attacked, they were beaten back by the Romans and they did not try again as long as Claudius was in Messana. The consul left a garrison in Messana and made unsuccessful assaults on Syracuse, but a siege was impossible. As peace negotiations with Hiero failed, he returned to Rhegium, leaving behind a garrison in Messana.

⁸ Lazenby 1996:50 places Echetla/Aigesta 'between Carthaginian and Syracusan territory', see also Walbank 1957:67 *ad* 15.10.

There are some basic similarities between the three accounts, although details vary. There was an appeal by the Mamertines for Roman help due to the threat from the Carthaginians and Syracusans.⁹ The Romans tried to negotiate peace between the parties, but being unsuccessful they crossed into or near to Messina. The Roman army defeated the Carthaginians, and defeated or forced the Syracusans to flee; Claudius then invaded Syracusan territory and laid siege to either Syracuse or Echetla (or both), but retreated with heavy losses to Messina and departed to Italy.¹⁰

However, there are also some significant differences between the three accounts. The first variance concerns the initial request for aid by the Mamertines and the (attempted) crossing to Messina. Polybius says that after the Romans had agreed to help the Mamertines, the latter expelled their Carthaginian garrison and invited Appius to take over their city. This, he promptly accomplished during the night.¹¹ There is no mention of a tribune crossing beforehand for negotiations, nor of any naval reverse.¹² Dio-Zonaras says a tribune was involved in three negotiations over Messina: his first two failed, and his third enabled the Mamertines to eject the Carthaginians.¹³ Diodorus mentions Roman peace attempts and that a naval battle occurred.¹⁴ The sources agree that after the enemy had commenced besieging Messina, the consul (Appius) Claudius crossed over to (or near) Messina with his fleet. There is thus a complex series of operations (not mentioned by Polybius) before the Roman fleet finally crossed by night, and anchored off Sicily before the land campaign began.

Diodorus says that after outmanoeuvring Hiero, the Carthaginians were allowed to install a garrison - but later, after being expelled, the Carthaginians made an alliance with the Syracusans against the Romans

⁹ Diodorus implies this when the Romans are told to leave Sicily.

¹⁰ Polybius does not state the results of the sieges.

¹¹ Polyb. 1.11.1-3, 8-9.

¹² Lazenby 1996:45 argues that Polybius makes no mention of these events because 'It is, after all, fairly obvious that Polybius' narrative is not even intended to be complete', however, Polybius could not but be aware that his 'summary' is very much in favour of Rome.

¹³ Dio 11.43.5-9; Zonar. 8.8-9. These negotiations are separate from the peace talks with Hanno after his naval defeat.

¹⁴ Diod. 23.1-4; 2.1-2.

who were already in Sicily.¹⁵ This presumes that parts of Sicily must already have been occupied by the Romans, although this makes no sense in the present context and indicates that this passage may be either inaccurate or anachronistic.¹⁶ The two allies then besieged Messina.¹⁷ Diodorus says that on being ordered to intervene by Rome, Appius Claudius sent envoys to the two allies, but as they were clearly unsuccessful, he was initially undecided, but later attempted to cross over with his fleet. The fleet was repulsed by the Carthaginians, and futile peace negotiations took place.¹⁸ Later 'a consul' crossed over to Messina.¹⁹ Thus, contrary to Polybius' narrative, both Dio-Zonaras and Diodorus mention a naval reverse with failed attempts to make peace (see discussion below).

There are therefore different versions of the landing in Sicily: both Diodorus and Polybius maintain Appius Claudius sailed into Messina in 264 without opposition from the Carthaginians, although Diodorus together with Dio-Zonaras states there was an initial naval confrontation,²⁰ which necessitated a second attempt, and that 'the consul' landed outside the city walls.²¹ Both Polybius and Dio-Zonaras specifically state that the crossing was by night.²²

Concerning the land campaign, Polybius claims both the Syracusans and Carthaginians were defeated and Messina relieved, but Dio-Zonaras states that although the Syracusans were defeated and driven away from Messina, the defeat of the Carthaginians only forced them back to their

¹⁵ Diod. 22.13.6-8.

¹⁶ Diod. 23.1.2, n.1 (F. R. Walton): 'It is not clear from the present narrative what Romans were in Sicily at this point. Possibly there is a reference here to the small force under the command of C. Claudius, a military tribune, sent ahead to Messina by the consul (Zonaras, 8.8)'. However, Claudius was only on a short diplomatic visit and as such the demand makes no sense: in any case, the demand would naturally have been to leave Messina and not all of Sicily. Lazenby 1996:46 suggests it was simply 'an undertaking to expel the Romans from Sicily if they invaded the island'.

¹⁷ Diod. 23.1.3.

¹⁸ Diod. 23.1.4; 2.1-2.

¹⁹ Diod. 23.3.1.

²⁰ Lazenby 1996:49 thinks that 'it is doubtful whether we should reject or even supplement Polybius' account by reference to a much later and admittedly garbled tale...'. Thiel 1954:157-8 accepts the defeat, but dismisses its importance because the Carthaginians wished for peace and underestimated Rome's determination.

²¹ Polyb. 1.11.8-10; Diod. 23.2.1 & 3.1; Dio 11.43.7; Zonar. 8.8 & 8.9: see below for detailed discussion.

²² Polyb. 1.11.8-9; Zonar. 8.9.

camp.²³ However, Diodorus maintains that the Syracusans fearing treachery simply fled, and then the Carthaginians were defeated.²⁴ They all agree the Romans then set out to attack Hiero in his kingdom. Another difference is that Polybius states that both Syracuse and Echetla were besieged while Zonaras only mentions Syracuse, on the other hand, Diodorus only states Echetla.²⁵ Polybius makes no mention of casualties at these sieges but the other two sources state they were very heavy. Thereafter (expressed or understood) they retreated to Messana and thence to Italy.²⁶ Finally, Lazenby suggests that both sides exaggerated their successes, otherwise 'it is difficult to explain why Appius Claudius was not granted a triumph'.²⁷

Problems with the Key Accounts of 264

In attempting to resolve whether the Romans actually operated in Sicily in 264, I propose that there are two major problems, specifically, whether it was likely that Appius was able to cross over and occupy Messana in 264, and whether the campaigns in Sicily occurred during the course of this year. I will first deal with the crossing to Sicily.

Polybius states that the Roman fleet commanded by Appius slipped across by night into the harbour of a closely invested Messana without any confrontation. However, according to both Dio-Zonaras and Diodorus, the Romans were defeated by the Carthaginian fleet on its crossing of the strait of Messina. As we have seen above, Dio-Zonaras tells us that when the Romans finally decided to help the Mamertines, Gaius Claudius made two diplomatic crossings to Messana, and consequently it was decided to send across the fleet. Although the commander is stated as being the tribune, the fleet would normally have been commanded by the consul himself (Polybius only mentions Appius Claudius as commanding the fleet).²⁸ Dio-Zonaras

²³ Polyb. 1.11.12-15, 12.1-3; Dio 11.43.12; Zonar.8.9.

²⁴ Diod. 23.3.1.

²⁵ Polyb. 1.12.4, 15.5-10; Zonar. 8.9

²⁶ Diod. 23.3.1; Zonar.8.9.

²⁷ Lazenby 1996:50.

²⁸ Polyb. 1.11.3, 8-9. I believe that the statement that the tribune commanded the fleet is probably an attempt to exonerate the consul Appius Claudius Caudex 'Block-head'. It is quite possible that he got his cognomen for this naval defeat – a caudex can be interpreted as a block of wood. Goldsworthy 2006:72 suggests that, as Polybius does not mention the

gives reasons for the defeat and highlights the practical problems: apart from the numbers and skill of the Carthaginians, there was also the strong current and a sudden storm. He only got back with difficulty and then had to repair his remaining ships.²⁹

Polybius' assertion that he crossed over by night right into the harbour of Messina raises a number of very difficult practical issues. The Carthaginian fleet guarded the strait from nearby Cape Pelorias, and placed spies around the harbour on the lookout for any such attempt. The crossing would have been even more daunting for the Romans if they had gone by moonlight - even with the help of local pilots.³⁰

These problems are compounded by the fact that the Romans initially had no warships or decked ships of their own and had to rely on borrowing boats from some of the Greek cities in Italy.³¹ Furthermore, they had no previous experience of transporting such large numbers of soldiers and supplies by sea, and even with help from their Greek allies, the risk would have been far too great - the more so, as the tribune's earlier attempt to cross with his fleet had been defeated.³²

It is possible that Valerius Maximus considered these risks in crossing to Sicily in 263 were prohibitive, because he is stated as having built a new fleet of 220 ships. This would support the idea that the Romans had learnt the lesson of their defeat in 264, and did not dare cross again without their own strong fleet which would be capable of defending itself against the

presence of a tribune, it may be an invention or confusion of 'the actions of Appius Claudius, for the coincidence of the tribune's name is highly suspicious'.

²⁹ Zonar. 8.8-9; Dio 11.43.7.

³⁰ Lazenby 1996:49 says use was probably made of 'the north-flowing current known nowadays as the "Montante",' and sees no problem in the crossing. He comments that 'In any case, the fact of the crossing again demonstrates the ineffectiveness of ancient warships when it came to blockades'. However, Thiel 1954:155 stresses the risk involved in trying this: 'To run a blockade is always risky' and especially when 'many thousands of men had to be transported...'.
³¹ Polyb. 1.20.13-15: he says that on one occasion 'at the beginning of the war' they were confronted by the Carthaginian fleet, but apart from saying that one of the Carthaginian decked ships ran aground and later served as a copy, he makes no mention of the results of the confrontation, and it is possible that this refers to the defeat of the Roman fleet under C. Claudius mentioned by Diodorus (23.1.4) and Dio-Zonaras (11.43.7, 8.8). However, it would be surprising if the Carthaginians did not rescue it after their victory.

³² Zonar. 8.9 does mention that Claudius gained knowledge of the strait from his crossings to carry out negotiations, but certainly not for night-time navigation, and not for a large fleet.

Carthaginians whilst crossing to Sicily.³³ Although this fleet is only mentioned by Pliny, it would have been a prerequisite for ensuring the four legions of the invasion force had adequate protection against the Carthaginian fleet, which was the greatest navy of the western Mediterranean. Pliny's statement is supported by the *Ineditum Vaticanum* (4), which says that Manius Valerius believed it was necessary to command the sea as Sicily was an island. Lazenby agrees with this statement but thinks it is a prediction of preparations for the battle of Mylae in 260.³⁴ Lazenby argues that had Valerius built such a fleet in 263, the campaigns in 262-1 'would surely have been fought in a different way'.³⁵ However, Polybius states that it was not until 261 that thought was given to building a fleet to challenge the Carthaginians at sea.³⁶ When Rome decided, as I argue, to restart the war in 260, they constructed a new model vessel based on a captured Carthaginian ship,³⁷ which was larger and more robust.³⁸ In his statement, Pliny also mentions that Duilius built his fleet of unseasoned timber even more quickly than the one used against Hiero. The context indicates that Valerius' ships were also constructed of unseasoned timber. Such timber would not last for very long and this might be another reason why Duilius had to build a new one.

Polybius' account asks us to believe that Roman armies were transported and supplied via an assortment of allied craft, which was at the mercy of vigilant Carthaginian fleets, for the four years from 264 to 261. Piso's interpretation of events therefore seems credible.³⁹ If this were the case, then it would seem that Polybius wanted to conceal any reference to Appius' naval defeat as well as Valerius' fleet preparations, in order to

³³ Pliny *HN* 16.84 [192] says that 'according to the account of Lucius Piso, the 220 ships used in the war against King Hiero were built in 45 days'.

³⁴ Lazenby 1996:54; Commentary (4) by Beck, Hans in 'Ineditum Vaticanum (839)', in: *BNJ*.

³⁵ Lazenby 1996:54.

³⁶ Polyb. 1.20.7. We are not told who or what provided the model for Valerius' fleet, but Polybius 1.20.13-16 refers to a ship that ran aground in the confrontation of 264 that served as model for Duilius' new fleet in 260. It is therefore possible that some aspects of its construction served as a model for Valerius.

³⁷ Polyb. 1.20.9-16.

³⁸ Zonar. 8.11.

³⁹ After the end of 263 Syracuse could have supplied more ships, but there is no actual record of this (despite Polyb. 1.16.10), and even if so, they would still not have been able to counter the Carthaginian fleets.

emphasize Rome's ability to learn from her enemies, and then be able to defeat them 'at their own game', as occurred at Mylae.⁴⁰

It would seem, in fact, that Hanno had returned the captured ships and prisoners before the conclusion of any agreement⁴¹ - one would expect the agreement to come first, especially as Hanno had no need to appease the Romans. That the Romans were prepared to discuss peace terms with the Carthaginians, is against the Roman tradition of not entering negotiations until final victory was secured, and strongly indicates that the Romans had suffered a serious setback.⁴² I would suggest, therefore, that some form of truce was reached, and consequently, this defeat did not initiate war between the two parties, but served as a severe warning to the Romans that any further hostile action would provoke a war. That the Romans had suffered a humiliating defeat is given credence by the statement that Appius had to rouse his troops after the defeat of the tribune.⁴³ A commander's agreement in the field could be annulled later, as the infamous Mancinus treaty shows.⁴⁴

An attempted crossing that was defeated at sea by the Carthaginians, followed by some form of agreement, whereby the Romans received back their captured ships and men, seems plausible. However, Dio-Zonaras' statement that the tribune Claudius crossed in a small boat and was directly instrumental in Hanno's capture, is less convincing, especially as it portrays Claudius outwitting the Carthaginian. It would therefore seem more likely that Polybius' account is more credible when he says the Mamertines got tired of the Carthaginians and ejected them (perhaps capturing Hanno by a trick).

If my analysis of these events is valid, the dislodgement of the Carthaginians could have occurred at the end of the campaigning season, or possibly over the winter or early spring, when most of the Carthaginian fleet had returned to their base. The Mamertines could have taken advantage of

⁴⁰ Polyb. 1.20.10-12: 'As their shipwrights were absolutely inexperienced in building quinqueremes, such ships never having been in use in Italy, the matter caused them much difficulty, and this fact shows us better than anything else how spirited and daring the Romans are when they are determined to do a thing'; see also Diod. 23.21. I also argue that he wanted to hide the peace period that, I explain in chapter 8, existed for the two years (262-1) after 263.

⁴¹ Zonar. 8.8-9 & Dio 11.43.7.

⁴² See Clark 2014:39-41.

⁴³ Dio 11.43.11.

⁴⁴ See Clark 2014:166-8; Astin 1967:130-3.

this situation and invited the Romans to cross to Messana. It would therefore be the consul of the next year, Valerius Maximus, who accepted the invitation and was therefore able to sail into Messana without any opposition.⁴⁵ This interpretation would mean that, as the Romans were unable to land in Sicily in 264, the campaign by Appius cannot have taken place in this year, and that, if genuine, it must relate to a later period in the war. A later dating for Appius' campaign would also solve the otherwise inexplicable statements by Zonaras and Diodorus that the Romans should leave Messana and all of Sicily by a stated day.⁴⁶

Concerning Appius' campaign in Sicily, Dio-Zonaras states that the Carthaginians sent an army to Messana and when they received no response they besieged the city, together with Hiero.⁴⁷ Zonaras describes the next events: 'the consul who was nearby' (if this relates to 264, it could only have been Appius Claudius), crossed over by night and anchored near Hiero. That he did not sail into the harbour is to be expected, as Messana was under heavy siege. Though Claudius' cavalry was defeated, his infantry won, Hiero then retreated, and the Mamertines recovered their courage. So, Claudius attacked the Carthaginian encampment but was unsuccessful. When he was in turn attacked, he drove them back into their camp, from which they did not emerge while he was present. All this seems feasible and Dio-Zonaras again would probably have derived this from Philinus. Claudius then marched against Syracuse, assaulted it without success, and retreated. Despite this, the Syracusan people wanted to discuss peace, but Hiero would not accept it. Having left a garrison in Messana, Claudius sailed to Rhegium. After this, we are not told anything further about the Carthaginians.

Diodorus has a slightly different version, i.e., that Hiero could not believe that Claudius could simply cross over and apparently enter Messana without the agreement of the Carthaginians, and so he fled back to

⁴⁵ See my tentative reconstruction of Philinus' narrative below pp.88-91, based on the conclusions that, as it was Valerius who entered Messana without opposition in 263 (and thus was invited into the city by the Mamertines), it was Appius' fleet that had been humiliatingly defeated, and consequently, the campaign attributed to him in Sicily relates to a later period (see ch.9, stage 1).

⁴⁶ Zonar. 8.9; Diod. 23.3.2.

⁴⁷ Zonar. 8.9.

Syracuse.⁴⁸ The statement that Hiero fled from the Romans because of betrayal by the Carthaginians is only mentioned by Diodorus and demonstrates Carthaginian treachery and Syracusan cowardice, and is therefore unlikely to have derived from Philinus.⁴⁹ This betrayal is also contradicted by both of the other two authors' versions.

Diodorus says the Carthaginians engaged in battle with the Romans but were defeated. Claudius then set out against the Syracusans and besieged Echetla, but withdrew after heavy losses to Messana. Although this is a short and partial summary of the fighting, it sounds credible, because we know that Rome had problems with capturing cities in Sicily, and this could be an example of a stubborn defence holding out against a Roman army that probably did not have siege engines at this time.⁵⁰ However, Polybius states he is quoting from Philinus when he says that both Syracuse and Echetla were besieged (Polybius possibly implies Syracuse was besieged first).⁵¹ It would seem that having failed before Syracuse, the Romans made an attempt on the easier target of Echetla, but failed to take it. The fact that Diodorus only mentions the lesser city of Echetla and not Syracuse is possibly due to his summarising, or arises from a desire to reduce the severity of the Roman losses.

Lazenby states that Appius Claudius 'did make some sort of tentative approach to Syracuse ... but withdrew because he found himself unable to make much headway and was facing problems with both supplies and the health of his army'.⁵² The question then arises as to why, after all the early Roman successes in 264, the Romans appear not to have made treaties with any of the surrounding cities to ensure their conquests were secure, as happened in the following year with Valerius. Had these events of the crossing into Messana and the ensuing campaign occurred in 264, it would have been extraordinary that they appear to have had no impact on the campaigns in 263.

⁴⁸ Diod. 23.3.1.

⁴⁹ See above Polybius' criticism of Philinus.

⁵⁰ See, for example, chapter 4 for the three sieges of Mytistratus.

⁵¹ Polyb. 1.15.10-11.

⁵² Lazenby 1996:51.

Problems faced by Polybius, Diodorus and Dio-Zonaras in using Philinus and Fabius

If my hypothesis is borne out that the history of the war ultimately derives in the main from Philinus directly, or via Fabius' adjusted version of Philinus, then this would have caused significant problems for these historians when they compiled their narratives of the war. This is because there were two accounts containing fundamentally similar information but in a chronologically different order. In order to decide whether the events recorded for 264 are fundamentally accurate (even if some are anachronistic) or have been significantly embellished, it will necessary to discern if it is possible to reconcile the three key sources.

Working on the assumption that Fabius adjusts events in favour of the Romans, and Philinus records events that show the Carthaginians in a more favourable light (which I contend more readily agrees with the actual truth, as they were the victors), I shall attempt to ascertain which text probably mostly derives from Philinus. This can be deduced by reviewing which of the three key narratives gives the least favourable impression of the Romans.

- a. Polybius' summarised account shows the Romans in a favourable light: Appius is invited over by Mamertines and crosses over by night. There is also no reference to any naval defeat, and rather than taking military action immediately, he is shown as attempting peace negotiations.⁵³ Polybius also heavily criticises an aspect of Philinus' account of the initial fighting around Messana (see above). Mention is made of Appius besieging Syracuse and Echetla, but not his substantial losses incurred thereby.⁵⁴
- b. Diodorus is more critical of the allies. He says that Hiero told the Romans that they should not support the Mamertines because they had raided cities and seized Messana and deserved to be attacked.⁵⁵ He also records Hiero's belief in the treachery of the Carthaginians concerning the ease which Claudius was able to cross over to Sicily.

⁵³ Polybius 1.20.13-16 later refers to a confrontation, but implies it did not result in any Roman losses.

⁵⁴ Polyb. 1.12.4; 1.15.8-10.

⁵⁵ Diod. 23.1.4.

By omitting to state the outcome of the naval battle, he implies that neither side gained a victory. But he does mention the heavy losses the Romans suffered after besieging Echetla⁵⁶

- c. Dio-Zonaras shows the Carthaginians in a generally more positive light, and the Romans in a more negative one. He not only describes the defeat of the Roman navy, but also Hanno's reconciliatory moves in returning the captured triremes and captives to obtain peace with the Romans. He gives the correct account of the consul's ability to defeat Hiero and then the Carthaginians, after he had landed in Sicily, and so exonerates Philinus.⁵⁷ He highlights the problems of the Romans before Syracuse, e.g., the time Claudius got trapped and used negotiations with Hiero to effect an escape.⁵⁸

Dio-Zonaras' account shows the Romans in the least favourable light and therefore is likely to be significantly closer to the account of the 'pro-Carthaginian' Philinus.⁵⁹ On this assumption, I will examine his version to see if the accounts of Polybius and Diodorus can be shown to have extracted much of their narratives from Dio-Zonaras, and therefore ultimately from Philinus. As we have argued that Dio-Zonaras probably uses a source that closely followed Philinus (and perhaps directly), his narrative can be evaluated using information that the other two possibly also derived from Philinus. We will then examine how Diodorus, who is generally considered to have used Philinus directly, varies from that of Dio-Zonaras. We will then be able to ascertain whether Diodorus' account includes information that can be used to amend or add to that of Dio-Zonaras, in order to get closer to what Philinus might actually have written. We will then apply the same procedure to Polybius who consulted both Philinus and Fabius Pictor.

Diodorus' version is generally a less detailed account than that of Dio-Zonaras and consequently some significant events mentioned by the latter

⁵⁶ Diod. 23.2.1, 3.1.

⁵⁷ Zonar. 8.9: he thus casts significant doubt on Polybius' critical version of this account that the latter claims Philinus wrote (Polyb. 1.11.12-15.11). Thereby, Zonaras is defending Philinus.

⁵⁸ Zonar. 8.9, and he also mentions heavy losses.

⁵⁹ See the Table B for a comparison between the 'standard' history and my revised history.

would have been left out. However, he does provide new information on other events. Dio-Zonaras begins his narrative by saying that the Mamertines were being besieged by Hiero and asked for help from their blood brothers the Romans, and that the Carthaginians mediated peace between the Mamertines and Hiero and themselves, with Hanno guarding the city.⁶⁰ Diodorus, probably mostly derived directly from Philinus, begins his account by stating that Hiero had invaded the territory of the Mamertines and destroyed their army by the river Loitanus, whereupon they decided to seek terms with Hiero to forestall a siege. However, the Carthaginian general based at Lipara promised to help them and so they were allowed to install a garrison. After this, Hiero had to return to Syracuse having secured a great victory.⁶¹ Polybius confirms two aspects of this account, that is to say, Hiero won the battle at the river Longanus (Loitanus), and the victorious Hiero returned home, and that the Carthaginians were allowed to install a garrison.⁶²

Diodorus supplies further information when he states that after the Carthaginians were driven out of Messana they formed an alliance with Hiero and agreed to attack Messana. However, this contradicts the order of Dio-Zonaras' sequence of events, which I am assuming is likely to be correct, and so belongs to the period after the tribune's attempted peace negotiations with the Mamertines and the Carthaginians, as well as the naval defeat. Dio-Zonaras simply mentions that Hiero joined in the assault on Messana; this is the first mention of such joint activity and so must equate with Diodorus' anti-Roman alliance.⁶³

Diodorus gives additional information concerning these events: that Hanno departed with his army from Lilybaeum, with Messana as his objective; on the way he negotiated an alliance with Hiero. Hanno then issued an ultimatum to the Romans that they should immediately depart from Sicily: this must mean all of Sicily not just Messana. Upon the Romans' refusal the Carthaginians and Syracusans besieged Messana. However, in

⁶⁰ Zonar. 8.8.

⁶¹ Diod. 22.13.2-8.

⁶² Polyb. 1.9.7-8.

⁶³ Zonar. 8.9.

his next passage Diodorus clearly reverts to what Dio-Zonaras has said earlier about Appius being initially sent to Rhegium and his tribune's subsequent negotiations. The difference between these accounts is that in Diodorus' narrative, the negotiations involved the Carthaginians and the Syracusans, but in Dio-Zonaras it is the Mamertines and Carthaginians. I would argue here, that when Dio-Zonaras describes the landing of the Romans in Sicily they did not engage in negotiations but attacked immediately, and that in order for Diodorus to include Dio-Zonaras' negotiations, he has to state that these involved both allies who were then besieging Messana.

Diodorus' detail (not mentioned by Dio-Zonaras), that the Romans said they would not attack Hiero, would certainly make sense at the later stage when, I argue, the Romans had crossed over to Sicily later in the war (which I argue is 248), and wished to detach their old allies from the siege.⁶⁴ Diodorus' account concerning Hiero's justification for hostilities against the Mamertines could possibly apply in 248, but is more likely to relate to the time in 264 when the Romans were deciding whether to come to the aid of the faithless Mamertines.⁶⁵

Diodorus' next passage relates to the naval battle the Romans fought in their attempt to cross to Messana. Although he does not specify an outcome, I consider that he attempts to imply an inconclusive result, rather than a humiliating defeat, because he omits to mention the return of the captured ships and men, and then stresses that the Romans were excellent pupils and would learn naval warfare. But, it seems clear, that as the Romans then discuss peace with the Carthaginians, some form of agreement or understanding would have been concluded. Diodorus now omits Claudius' negotiations as he has already mentioned it earlier.⁶⁶

Diodorus' last statements relate the crossing of 'the consul' to Messana, which forced Hiero to flee (suspecting treachery) and to the defeat of the Carthaginians. He then says 'the consul' set out against the territory of Hiero and unsuccessfully besieged Echetla (Aigesta) with heavy losses and

⁶⁴ Diod. 23.1.4.

⁶⁵ Diod. 23.1.4.

⁶⁶ Diod. 23.2.1-2.

had to return to Messana. Surprisingly, Diodorus does not mention any attempt on Syracuse but this is possibly due to his abbreviated version (or an attempt to minimise Roman losses).

Polybius' account is also a more abridged version of events than that of Diodorus. He also states that the Mamertines, as a result of having been defeated by the Syracusans at the Longanus river, appealed for help. But he then says the Mamertines were split, with some asking help from the Carthaginians, and some sending an embassy to Rome for help and offering to surrender the city to them.⁶⁷

Polybius now ignores the attempts at early negotiations and the naval defeat, although he mentions in a later passage (relating to the building of Rome's first fleet in 260), that the Carthaginians intercepted the Roman fleet in 264. The Roman commander is not named; one of their ships became grounded and later served as a model for the Romans (260).⁶⁸ Polybius then jumps to the last part of Dio-Zonaras' narrative (before the crossing), saying the Mamertines ejected the Carthaginians, who had occupied the city (because the Romans had taken too long to make a decision) and invited Appius to cross and take over the city.⁶⁹ The Mamertine request, we have considered above, relates to Valerius' crossing in 263.

The allies then took up positions around Messana - similar to the other two sources;⁷⁰ Appius then crossed over at night right into the harbour of Messana, and tried to negotiate a peace. This proved to be a failure.⁷¹ I would suggest that Polybius wants to include some reference to negotiations in order to show the Romans are being fair brokers, and not just seeking power for themselves.

Polybius version is similar to Dio-Zonaras' account once Claudius has crossed over and engages and defeats, first the Syracusans (Hiero flees to Syracuse), and then the Carthaginians (who do not stay in their encampment but disperse to their cities). Claudius then proceeds to devastate the territory

⁶⁷ Polyb. 1.10.1-2.

⁶⁸ Polyb. 1.20.13-16: nothing further is said about the attempted interception, but Polybius leaves us to assume there was no battle. I argue above, that it may have served as a model for Valerius' fleet in 263.

⁶⁹ Polyb. 1.11.4-5.

⁷⁰ Polyb. 1.11.7-8.

⁷¹ Polyb. 1.11.8-12.

of the Carthaginians and the Syracusans and their allies. This includes a siege of Echetla, which Polybius says that Philinus correctly reports. Polybius also accepts Philinus' statement that the Romans besieged Syracuse and Echetla and remarks that Echetla lay on the borders of the Carthaginian and Syracusan provinces.⁷² He does not state the outcomes of the sieges which were clearly negative for the Romans.

If the above analysis is credible, it seems likely that Polybius uses both Philinus and Fabius Pictor selectively to create his own 'positive' narrative of Rome's intervention in Sicily, and at the same time heavily criticises Philinus unfairly on certain points (thus serving to undermine the latter's reliability).

I contend that it is likely that Polybius follows Fabius' fabricated narrative of Appius Claudius' occupation of Messina in 264 and subsequent victorious campaigns, because he wished to hide the fact that the Romans were unsuccessful in establishing a foothold in Sicily in 264 - and indeed had been humiliatingly defeated by Hanno in their attempt to cross over to Messina from Rhegium.⁷³ I also advance the possibility that there might have been a truce operating after the naval defeat. Polybius' solution is to say that when the Mamertines invited Appius Claudius to take over the city,⁷⁴ he crossed the strait at night with his army, hence there is no need for a sea-battle.⁷⁵

I believe Polybius had one further reason for fabricating a campaign in 264 - to show that this war had properly begun in 264 and became the longest continuous one in history, thus beating the length of the Peloponnesian War which was punctuated by a break.⁷⁶

⁷² Hoyos 1998:xv Map 1. Hoyos 1998:17 states that Polybius' information implies 'that Echetla was independent, as in earlier times' but that 'the Roman attack on it in 264 indicates that it was allied with Syracuse ...'.

⁷³ Polybius is presumably guided by Pictor's account.

⁷⁴ Polyb. 1.11.3; this also has the advantage of demonstrating that the Romans were not the aggressors in this war.

⁷⁵ Polyb. 1.11.8-10: this is surely a risk too far for an entire army.

⁷⁶ Polyb. 1.63.4-5. For comparison with the Peloponnesian War, see above Introduction, p.17 n.39.

Proposed Version of Philinus based mainly on Dio-Zonaras

By making a detailed comparison of the discrepancies suggested mainly by Polybius, and Diodorus, I have tentatively reconstructed a sequence of events based on Dio-Zonaras which I believe is likely to be reasonably close to the truth as presented by Philinus.

Events relating to 264

Having organised his people, Hiero marched against the Mamertines and destroyed their army on Mamertine territory near the Longanus (Loitanus) river in the Mylaean Plain.⁷⁷ Hiero then besieged Messana; the Mamertines sent envoys to their blood-brothers the Romans seeking help, but the Romans hesitated,⁷⁸ the Mamertines then sought peace with Hiero. They were prepared to submit to him, but the Carthaginian general Hannibal, whose fleet was at Lipara, intervened, promised aid and put a garrison into the city.⁷⁹ Hannibal guarded the city and the strait and effected peace between themselves, the Mamertines and the Syracusans.⁸⁰ Being outmanoeuvred, Hiero departed to Syracuse triumphant and was proclaimed king.⁸¹

After the senate had failed to reach a conclusion, the commons voted to send assistance to Messana and sent Appius Claudius to Rhegium.⁸² Appius sent his tribune Gaius Claudius with a few boats to Rhegium to negotiate with the Mamertines. But the Carthaginian fleet was too strong, so he crossed in a small boat, but as the negotiations were unsuccessful, he returned.⁸³ In these negotiations Claudius said that the Romans had no need of Messana, only that they wanted to ensure its independence. He also told the Carthaginians to depart or to try arbitration; to the Mamertines he

⁷⁷ Polyb. 1.9.7-8; Diod. 22.13.2-6.

⁷⁸ Zonar. 8.8.

⁷⁹ Diod. 22.13.6-7; Polyb.1.9.8.

⁸⁰ Zonar. 8.8: Hanno is mentioned here as the commander, but he belongs later (248).

⁸¹ Diod. 22.13.8; Polyb.1.9.8; there is no indication that it was a full-scale siege and it was probably more of a limited blockade.

⁸² Polyb. 1.11.1-4; Diod. 23.1.4.

⁸³ Zonar. 8.8; presumably the Carthaginians would think a larger Roman fleet would have hostile intentions. Diodorus 23.1.4 says Appius sent envoys to Hiero and the Carthaginians to discuss lifting the siege, but because he has summarised events so much, he has attached these negotiations to the later period when these allies were besieging Messana.

promised help.⁸⁴ Claudius crossed again to conduct negotiations after he heard that the Mamertines were tired of the Carthaginians, though they did not want the Romans either. They were very pleased when Claudius promised to help them against the Carthaginian occupiers. Finally, he returned to Rhegium.⁸⁵

A little later, Claudius set off with all his fleet to cross to Messina, but was hindered by the strong current and a storm, and was repulsed by the larger fleet of the Carthaginians, who captured some of his triremes and men.⁸⁶ He only just managed to return to Rhegium.⁸⁷ In order to prevent a great war,⁸⁸ peace was now discussed, and a truce agreed with Claudius. The Carthaginians, having control of the seas, wondered how the Romans had dared to cross to Sicily.⁸⁹ As a result of the discussions, Hanno returned the captured triremes and men. Claudius repaired his boats,⁹⁰ but would not consider a formal peace.⁹¹ Later in the year, the Mamertines dislodged the Carthaginian commander of the citadel, and invited the Romans to cross over to Messina.⁹²

⁸⁴ Dio 11.43.5-6.

⁸⁵ Zonar. 8.8; although only one embassy is mentioned, two embassies are quite possible, especially as the first shows Rome having failed.

⁸⁶ Despite Dio's statement (11.43.7) that it was Gaius Claudius (the tribune) who lost the triremes, the commander of this fleet can only be Appius Claudius, because Zonaras (8.8) states it was the entire fleet. This would have involved, at the very least, a significant part of the Roman forces and would have been the responsibility of the consul. This is supported by Zonaras' (8.9) next statement that it was 'Claudius' who repaired his ships, and to whom Hanno returned the triremes and urged peace.

⁸⁷ Dio 11.43.7; Zonar. 8.8: the strong implication is that it was mainly the current and storm rather than the Carthaginians who defeated them, but it is clear that they defeated him as they returned his triremes and captives (see below) - a positive account is being given here.

⁸⁸ Diod. 23.2.1.

⁸⁹ Diod. 23.2.1: that the Romans replied they were excellent pupils and would learn naval warfare.

⁹⁰ Dio 11.43.7-8; Zonar. 8.9: importantly, mention is made here of the existence of a truce agreed before the return of the captured ships and men: this is what one would naturally expect and logically would have been the end of hostilities for the year.

⁹¹ Dio 11.43.9 and Zonar. 8.9. Breaking a truce is not so serious a matter, but breaking a formal treaty would show the Romans in a very bad light, hence Claudius' rejection of peace talks allows him to cross over and campaign in Sicily. One wonders if the truce were rather more formal than stated.

⁹² Polyb. 1.11.4-5: if the reference to Appius is excluded, then this version is to be preferred to those of Dio (11.43.9) and Zonaras (8.9) who state how the Romans tricked and seized Hanno, and were thus more than a match for Carthaginian 'duplicity' (e.g., Zonar. 8.10, re Cornelius Scipio Asina in 260). It may seem surprising that the Romans released the Carthaginian commander; his name is given as 'Hanno' rather than Hannibal - I argue that this is to link this event to the subsequent campaign that belongs to 248, instead of to Valerius' crossing in 263 (see chapter 9, stage 1).

Events relating to a later year (248)

[After the Carthaginians had been driven out of Messina],⁹³ the Carthaginians and Hiero signed a treaty of alliance and agreed on a joint attack on Messina. Hanno, son of Hannibal, went to Sicily and gathered his forces at Lilybaeum and advanced towards Solus and encamped nearby. He went to Acragas, a friendly city, persuaded them to become allies and fortified their citadel. Later, envoys came to him at Solus from Hiero to talk about what action to take, as they had made an alliance to attack the Romans unless the latter left Sicily by a stated day.⁹⁴ The Carthaginians then sent a herald telling the Romans to leave Messina and all of Sicily by the stated day. They sent forth an army, and when the Romans did not respond they attacked Messina together with Hiero (who had departed from Syracuse with his army).⁹⁵ Hiero encamped on the Chalcidian Mount, and the Carthaginians at Eunes, with their naval force, they also seized the Pelorias headland and kept Messina under continuous siege in order to prevent supplies and men from entering. The Carthaginians also posted many look-outs around the harbour.⁹⁶

The 'consul who was nearby' managed to cross by night and anchor off Sicily.⁹⁷ He landed not far from the camp of Hiero and attacked his forces. Although his cavalry was defeated, his infantry won. Hiero retreated temporarily to the mountains and later to Syracuse.⁹⁸ Claudius then attacked the camp of the Carthaginians and was repulsed, but the Romans in turn repulsed their counter-attack. The Carthaginians would not attack as long as Claudius was present.⁹⁹ Claudius did not attack the Carthaginians again, but left a garrison and marched against Hiero.¹⁰⁰ The Romans devastated the

⁹³ Diod. 23.13.9: I argue this is a linking statement between the events of 264/3 and the actions that were moved from 248: Philinus might have said under 248: 'At the start of the campaigning season in 248'.

⁹⁴ Diod. 23.1.2-3; Polyb. 1.11.6-8; Zonar. 8.9.

⁹⁵ Polyb. 1.11.7-8. Zonar. 8.9.

⁹⁶ Zonar. 8.9.

⁹⁷ Zonar. 8.9; Polybius 1.11.8-12 unconvincingly states he sailed into the harbour by night.

⁹⁸ Zonar. 8.9; Polyb. 1. 11.12-15: Polybius' criticism of Philinus' account is, I contend, deliberately misleading. Diodorus' statement (23.3.1) that Hiero fled due to betrayal by the Carthaginians, is unlikely, especially as it shows them as 'characteristically treacherous'.

⁹⁹ Dio 11.43.12; Zonar. 8.9; Diod. 23.3.1: this rather implies that the Carthaginians did try again after Claudius departed. Polybius 1.12.2-4 does not mention the Carthaginian counter-attack but instead says they dispersed to their cities and the siege was ended.

¹⁰⁰ Zonar. 8.9; Polyb. 1.12.2-4:

territory of the Syracusans and their allies and went on to besiege Syracuse;¹⁰¹ the inhabitants made sorties and there were victories and defeats on each side. One day, the consul got trapped,¹⁰² and went to negotiate with a representative of Hiero and then managed to effect an escape.¹⁰³ However, it was not easy to capture the city, and a siege was impracticable due to lack of provisions and the prevalence of disease. Having then made a failed attempt to capture Echetla, he withdrew after heavy losses to Messana and leaving a garrison crossed over to Rhegium.¹⁰⁴

Valerius Maximus, Conqueror of Messana & his Campaigns (263)

Having endeavoured to construct a possible version of Philinus' narrative of the year 264, we must review the strong evidence that Valerius Maximus was the conqueror of Messana in 263. There are three main accounts of the Roman involvement in Sicily in 263: Polybius,¹⁰⁵ Diodorus

¹⁰¹ Polyb. 1.12.5-6 & 1.15.5 & 10.

¹⁰² Frontinus *Str.* 1.5.6 records an attack on Syracuse by the 'consul' C. Duellius who crossed into the harbour but found he was trapped by a chain from leaving, and only extricated himself with difficulty (this can be linked to Zonaras' account, in that he sent a representative to negotiate with Hiero, but at the same time prepared his ships to pass over the chain). This assumes that Frontinus' account, which involves a displacement stratagem by which Duellius' ships crossed over the chain of the harbour of Syracuse, is not a garbled version of Zonaras' account (8.16) of the mercenaries' attack on Hippo, where they similarly crossed over the chain across the harbour. Lazenby 1996:147 notes the suggestion that *in portu 'Syracusano'* may be an error for '*Hippacritano*'. If Frontinus is accurate, this would mean that in 248 Duilius had been recalled from retirement to assist the Roman force (if he had not already done so with a possible action in 250 – see chapter 6 for the Roman advance west after the defeat of Hasdrubal).

¹⁰³ Echetla is between the Carthaginian and Syracusan provinces, Polyb. 1.15.10-11.

¹⁰⁴ Diodorus 23.3.1 is basically taking his information from Philinus - per La Bua 1966:32-5, 253,a Filino attraverso Sileno' - but omits mention of Syracuse – probably because of the excerptor. It is possible therefore that the losses at Echetla and Syracuse have been conflated.

¹⁰⁵ Polyb. 1.16.1-11: Polybius says both consuls Manius Otacilius and Manius Valerius were sent to Sicily with their legions, whereupon most of the cities revolted from the Carthaginians and Syracusans and joined them. Hiero made peace terms, whereby he agreed to pay 100 talents and to return the Roman prisoners without ransom. From then on, he always provided the Romans with their urgent necessities.

Siculus¹⁰⁶ and Dio-Zonaras.¹⁰⁷ These accounts basically appear to be in agreement. They all state that both consuls went to Sicily and that very many cities revolted from the Carthaginians and Syracusans and joined the Romans, after which, the Romans moved on Syracuse. However, Hiero successfully negotiated peace, and returned the prisoners and agreed to pay tribute.

There are significant variations between these accounts. Polybius mentions no actual fighting and leaves the impression that it was Appius Claudius in 264 who was engaged in this - thus preparing the ground for Valerius' involvement. Meanwhile, Diodorus mentions that the Romans carried out the sieges of two cities before the general revolt, but also adds that the Romans operated in the far west of Sicily. It is only Dio-Zonaras who paints a less positive picture, in that many cities indeed revolted to the Romans at the beginning, but with the two consuls sometimes operating apart.¹⁰⁸ However, their campaigns against the Carthaginian garrisoned cities farther west were unsuccessful, apart from Segesta. There is some indication of considerable Roman losses, not just because Syracuse agreed to restore Roman prisoners, thereby implying initial fighting with Hiero, but also because there is a report from Frontinus that a 'Hannibal' had sent part of the army of an 'Otacilius' 'under the yoke', and that the latter had punished

¹⁰⁶ Diod. 23.4.1-5.1: Diodorus says both consuls went to Sicily and besieged and captured Hadranum. Then, as they were besieging Centuripa, envoys seeking peace came from various cities. In total, sixty-seven submitted. The Romans advanced in order to besiege Syracuse, but Hiero sent envoys. As neither side wanted war, they agreed to a peace lasting 15 years: Hiero paid 150,000 drachmas and returned the prisoners. A Carthaginian naval force bringing Hiero aid then promptly departed. The Romans continued their campaign farther west, capturing several cities: the Segestans and Halicyaeans revolted against the Carthaginians, though the latter prevented the Tyndarans from deserting them.

¹⁰⁷ Zonar. 8.9: Dio-Zonaras says that as the Etruscans and affairs in Italy were peaceful and that Carthaginian power was growing, Valerius Maximus and Otacilius Crassus went to Sicily and either together or separately gained the majority of places by voluntary submission. They then set out for Syracuse, but Hiero negotiated peace and agreed to restore the cities he had taken from them, paying money to the Romans, and liberating the prisoners. The Romans then attacked all the other cities the Carthaginians garrisoned, but were repulsed except from Segesta whose people defeated the latter and joined the Romans.

¹⁰⁸ That the consuls operated separately is indicated by the fragment in Naevius *Bell. Pun.* 29-30 '*Marcus Valerius consul partem exerciti in expeditionem ducit*'.

them.¹⁰⁹ This implies a humiliating Roman defeat, which would be a strong reason why he was not granted a triumph.

Apart from the unlikely fighting so far to the west and the possibility that Otacilius could have suffered a humiliating defeat, the campaigns described by Diodorus and Dio-Zonaras present little difficulty and seem coherent.

A crucial element for my argument, that Appius Claudius' campaigns in 264 must have taken place in a much later year than 264, relates to the problem as to the identity of the consul who was the first to capture Messana - Appius in 264 or Valerius in 263. I intend to demonstrate that there is substantial evidence to show that Valerius was the first to occupy Messana and defeat both the Carthaginians and Syracusans.

The *Fasti Triumphales* specifically state a triumph was granted to Valerius Maximus in his consulship (263/2): 'M.' Valerius Maximus M. f. M. n. Maximus Messalla, consul, over the Carthaginians and Hiero king of the Sicilians on March 17th 262¹¹⁰ - by stating this cognomen, his capture of Messana is acknowledged. This capture is also acknowledged by the *Fasti Capitolini* which detail the consuls of 263/2: 'M.' Valerius M. f. M. n. Maximus - who was given the name Mesalla while holding this office, M'. Otacilius C. f. M'. n. Crassus'.¹¹¹ Further evidence comes from Macrobius, who says that Valerius acquired his new surname because he captured Messana,¹¹² and also from Seneca who says that Valerius Corvinus was the first to conquer Messana, whose name he took and which was subsequently corrupted to 'Masala'.¹¹³ Pliny mentions that there was also on display on the side of the

¹⁰⁹ Frontinus *Str.* 4.1.19: Lazenby 1996:62 tentatively suggests that this may relate to 261 when there was trouble with some Celtic mercenaries, but the Hannibal mentioned for 261 was an admiral who was raiding the coasts of Italy (Zonar. 8.10), see chapter 9, Stage 6 where I argue that the events of 261 relate to 241.

¹¹⁰ Degrassi 1954:99; Bastien 2007:47: 'M.' Valerius M. f. M. n. Maxim(us) an. CDXC Messalla co(n)s(ul) de Poeneis et rege Siculor(um) Hierone XVI k. April.'

¹¹¹ Degrassi 1954:54.

¹¹² Macrobius *Sat.* 1.6.26.

¹¹³ Sen. *Brev. Vit.* 13.5. Lazenby 1996:52 considers that 'the circumstances that led to Valerius' taking the *cognomen* "Messala" are difficult to determine. The simplest explanation is that it was he, and not Ap. Claudius, who relieved the siege of Messana, but it is hard to believe that all our sources, and Polybios in particular, got it all so wrong'. Lazenby suggests perhaps the Mamertines granted it for having brought peace with Hiero, but adds 'that he alone triumphed surely indicates that the public perception was that it was he who was responsible for the victory'.

Curia Hostilia a picture of Manius Valerius Maximus Messala defeating the Carthaginians and Syracusans in battle in Sicily.¹¹⁴ Koptev stresses the importance of 263 and believes that 'Writing in the late 260s, he [Timaeus] considered the Roman landing in Sicily in 263 BC, directed against Hieron II, the starting point of a new era in the Mediterranean'.¹¹⁵

All the available evidence indicates that it was Valerius who first captured Messana and conducted successful campaigns against the Carthaginians and Syracusans, thus Appius could not have secured it in 264 as Polybius states.

Associated Events

Treaties with Syracuse (263 and 248)

The agreement between Rome and Syracuse in 263 raises the question whether it was a treaty or an agreement, and whether it was for a set period of fifteen years, which ended in 248.¹¹⁶ The agreement of 263 stipulated that the Roman prisoners were to be handed over without ransom, and payment of one hundred talents was to be made. Polybius adds that thereafter Hiero always provided the Romans with their urgent necessities and was always friendly to Rome.¹¹⁷ Diodorus states it was for 15 years, but Walbank points out that he 'can hardly be right in stating that it was only established for fifteen years in the first instance, since this was not the Roman practice ...'¹¹⁸: if valid, this would indicate that the treaty of 248 was not an automatic renewal of the treaty of 263.

Eckstein details the surprisingly few occasions that Hiero gave supplies and equipment to the Romans and perhaps his harbour facilities.¹¹⁹ Eckstein can find no convincing reason for the existence of a 'legal *socius foederatus*' relationship to Rome but 'simply a treaty of peace, not a formal

¹¹⁴ Pliny *HN* 35.7.22 states that the rise of painting at Rome dates from this event.

¹¹⁵ Koptev 2010:18.

¹¹⁶ Polyb. 1.16.5-11; Diod. 23.4.1; Zonar. 8.9; Eutrop. 2.19.

¹¹⁷ Polyb. 1.16.9-11: *συθήκας* is used – Walbank 1957:68 *ad* 16.9 says this is 'technically a *foedus aequum*' (see also Crawford:1973).

¹¹⁸ Diod. 23.4.1. Walbank 1957:69 *ad* 16.9.

¹¹⁹ Eckstein 1980:188-9.

alliance'.¹²⁰ Dio-Zonaras mentions that in 248 a treaty with Syracuse was concluded whereby the latter's annual tribute, which was imposed by the earlier treaty with Rome, was cancelled.¹²¹ However, as the period between the two treaties is fifteen years, he may have assumed the treaty must have been for this period and that the tribute was on an annual basis. A passage in Naevius indicates that the Syracusans were allowed to keep their monarchy and land.¹²²

External Relations: Ptolemy II Philadelphus

That Rome knew she had achieved a major victory and enhanced her reputation in the Hellenistic world is perhaps supported by the possibility that the senate now sent ambassadors to Ptolemy II Philadelphus. According to Livy, the Romans made an alliance with King Ptolemy of Egypt: this is generally considered to be in 273.¹²³ Dionysius states that the Romans sent Numerius Fabius Pictor, Quintus Fabius Maximus, and Quintus Ogulnius as ambassadors to the second Ptolemy, and that they received gifts. They were given gifts which they then gave to the treasury, but were subsequently allowed to keep them as a reward for success and mementos for their descendants.¹²⁴ However, Dio-Zonaras adopts a more patriotic angle by saying that it was Ptolemy who first sought out the Romans on account of their increasing strength and reverses they had inflicted on Pyrrhus, and also for the presents he gave. As a consequence, an agreement was made between Rome and Ptolemy.¹²⁵ He adds that the Romans in turn sent an embassy to Ptolemy – the latter gave the ambassadors gifts but when they

¹²⁰ Eckstein 1980:190.

¹²¹ Zonar. 8.16.

¹²² Naev. *Pun.* 6.37.

¹²³ Liv. *Per.* 14: this event is recorded in the summary after the closing of the lustrum of 276/5, see Brunt 1987:13.

¹²⁴ Dion. Hal. *Ant. Rom.* 20.14.1-2; Valerius Maximus 4.3.9 confirms this, and adds that the Senate had agreed to it. Justin 18.2.8-9 confirms that ambassadors were sent to Egypt but adds the somewhat unlikely story that on being presented with golden crowns they placed them on statues of Ptolemy.

¹²⁵ Westall 2011:356 makes a good case that it was the Romans who initiated the request for an alliance.

tried to give them into the treasury, the senate told them they could keep them.¹²⁶

There is a problem with the dating of the ambassadors to 273 since in such important embassies it was usual to send consulars, but N. Fabius Pictor did not reach the consulship until 266, Q. Fabius Maximus Gurges until 265,¹²⁷ and Q. Ogulnius until 269.¹²⁸ There was no pressing need for Rome to have sent ambassadors to Ptolemy in 273, because Pyrrhus had been defeated at Beneventum in 275 and was now campaigning in Greece (or Macedonia).¹²⁹ Both these problems can be resolved if one assumes that the events occurred ten years later in 263, a year when all three would have been consulars, and the Romans had defeated the Carthaginians and forced Syracuse to agree to 'friendship'.¹³⁰

Treaty of Philinus

According to Polybius, Philinus states there was a treaty between Rome and Carthage that forbade the former to go to Sicily and the latter to go to Italy, and that the Romans broke it when they first crossed to Sicily. Polybius states this is incorrect because he can find no such treaty in the archives. However, he says that he can excuse Philinus for his ignorance of this location, but he wants to know on what basis Philinus was able to make his assertion, stating that treaties were recorded on bronze and kept in the

¹²⁶ Dio 10.41.1; Zonar. 8.6. Confusion has arisen about the Q. Fabius Gurges mentioned by Valerius Maximus 4.3.9: he has been assumed by Scullard 1951:34 to be Q. Fabius Maximus Gurges the son of Rullianus and that he triumphed in 292, 276 and 265, but it is argued by Beloch that the consul of 265, Q. Fabius Maximus (Gurges), was the grandson: see discussion in *MRR* I 202 n.1.

¹²⁷ *MRR* I 202. n.1.

¹²⁸ Two examples of embassies that mainly included consulars are firstly, the embassy to Pyrrhus in 279: C. Fabricius Luscinus, cos. 282 (*MRR* I 193); then the embassy to Carthage in 218: M. Fabius (Buteo), cos. 245, M. Livius (Salinator), cos. 219, L Aemilius (Paullus), cos. 219, and C. Licinius (Varus?), cos. 236 (*MRR* I 239).

¹²⁹ Westall 2011:357 suggests that the embassy was to use Ptolemy's good relations with Pyrrhus to prevent the latter from invading Italy again, but this does seem a bit too farsighted for the Romans. Westall never considers that the embassy has been misplaced chronologically.

¹³⁰ It should also be noted that Ptolemy II may have had a more direct influence in Syracuse: the issue of two series of Ptolemaic bronze coins, that due to their style and production technique, indicate 'a short-lived Ptolemaic mint on Sicily and a subsequent production of imitative coinage by Hieron II' seems to have been established around this time - see Lorber 2018 Pt. I, vol. 1. 117; the mint could have just been 'Ptolemaic-sponsored' (Pt. I, vol. 2. 62) but the style is West Greek.

aerarium of the aediles. Thus, even though it was available for inspection, Polybius says that none had knowledge of this treaty. However, he does admit that many believed in the treaty due to Philinus' assertion.¹³¹

Scardigli explains Polybius' possible inability to find the treaty because he:

'could not find the text in the *aerarium* of the aediles, which is certainly true, yet does not exclude that the text was deliberately removed and/or destroyed. The agreement seems to have been transmitted by the annalistic tradition (see Livy 9.43.26) and dated to 306'.¹³²

Scholars generally support Polybius' belief that no such treaty existed, but that there was possible confusion with earlier treaties or agreements.¹³³ However, Hoyos gives an excellent discussion of the treaty, and if correct in arguing that it is unlikely to have been in existence, before the First Punic War, then this allows for the possibility that it could belong to a date thereafter, but before 241.¹³⁴

Additional Anomalous Events in 263

There are a number of events in the west of Sicily that are attributed to 263 and are mentioned by Diodorus and Dio-Zonaras, but not by Polybius; Lazenby casts serious doubt on some of these operations 'as being much too far west'.¹³⁵ Diodorus says 'the Romans unsuccessfully besieged Macella and the village of Hadranon',¹³⁶ and 'the Segestans, though subject to the Carthaginians turned to the Romans as also the Halicyaeans, but Ilarus, Tyrittus, and Ascelus they had to take by siege'.¹³⁷ Dio-Zonaras contradicts Diodorus, by stating that the Romans were repulsed from all the other cities the Carthaginians garrisoned, except from Segesta, whose people slew the Carthaginians and joined the Romans.¹³⁸

¹³¹ Polybius 3.26.1-7.

¹³² Scardigli 2011:33-

¹³³ For example (among a vast literature): Thiel 1954:128-134; Hoyos 2015:19-20. For support for the existence of the treaty but belonging to 306, see Forsythe 2005:311-2.

¹³⁴ Hoyos 2018.

¹³⁵ Lazenby 1996:53-4.

¹³⁶ Diod. 23.4.2.

¹³⁷ Diod. 23.5.1.

¹³⁸ Zonar. 8.9. His statement can perhaps be seen as a criticism of Diodorus (or his source), as he knew that Ilarus, Tyrittus and Ascelus were too far to the west to have been captured by the Romans in 263, and thus he could respond by stating the Romans had been

Polybius indicates that after the treaty, the Romans reduced their forces, but he gives no indication of any advance to the far west in 263.¹³⁹ This would strongly indicate that, either these actions have been invented, or that they belong to a later period. I argue that the revolt of Segesta suggests the latter: it would have been extremely hazardous for it to have revolted at this time.¹⁴⁰ An opportune time for Segesta and the other cities to revolt would have been after the Romans had captured Panormus in 254. This would have allowed the Romans to advance westwards in the following year, and give strong support for these cities if they were to decide to revolt from the Carthaginians. There would thus be a difference of ten years between the proposed date (253) and the recorded date (263): this would suggest that the Fabius would have used the default criterion.

Summary

If my conclusion is valid that Valerius Maximus was the first to enter Messina with his army in 263 and triumph over the Carthaginians and Syracusans, then this renders it highly unlikely that Appius could have achieved the same in 264. I have endeavoured to highlight the practical problems Appius would have faced in this first year of the war when crossing the strait of Messina at night in the face of a watchful enemy. I have therefore proposed that the campaigns attributed to Appius Claudius cannot belong either to 264 or 263 but, as their details appear realistic, they belong to a later period in the war when the Carthaginians were in the ascendant.

From my analysis of the incongruities of the three main accounts by Polybius, Diodorus and Dio-Zonaras, I consider that my amended account, derived mainly from Dio-Zonaras, most accurately reflects Philinus' account of the general outline of events for the initial Roman attempts to cross over to Sicily in 264, and for the campaign of Appius Claudius in Sicily in a later year of the war, that I argue was in 248.¹⁴¹

generally repulsed [from the area]. These actions are linked to the revolt of Segesta to the Romans which he had to accept.

¹³⁹ Polyb. 1.17.1-3.

¹⁴⁰ Hoyos 1998:102 is clear that this is out of the question, suggesting that its unmolested survival until 260 is inexplicable: he suggests 'Echetla' was probably meant.

¹⁴¹ See ch.9 stage 1 for details.

CHAPTER 4. KEY ANOMALIES: CAMPAIGNS IN SICILY (260-258)

The years 260-258 are interconnected by a complicated and confused series of campaigns which saw both sides fighting in both the east and west of Sicily. Thiel states that 'our knowledge of the events of the years 259 and 258 is deplorably incomplete'.¹ There are also problems with 260; for example, Lazenby, with regard to the uncertainty of Duilius' campaign in Sicily after his victory at Mylae, cautions 'if Polybius is to be believed ... he is said to have relieved the siege of Segesta and captured Makella...'.²

I argue that by a detailed analysis of the events it can be shown that they fall into two concurrent series, one of which is intrusive in these years and relates to a key period later in the war. I will examine each of the three years in turn to highlight the anomalies.

Key Anomalies 260

The events that may be attributed from the sources to the year 260, can be grouped as follows: naval activities (Scipio Asina's defeat, Duilius' victory), Roman land operations (relief of Segesta, siege of Mytistratus), and Carthaginian land operations (Hamilcar's defensive activities and his advance eastwards).

Polybius says that as the war was becoming protracted, the Romans decided to build a fleet consisting of 100 quinqueremes and 20 triremes.³ With this new but untried fleet the consul Duilius won Rome's first great naval victory over the Carthaginians at Mylae.⁴ The first significant problem arises

¹ Thiel 1954:192.

² Lazenby 1996:72.

³ Polyb. 1.20.9-10. The Romans realised they could never defeat the Carthaginians without beating them at sea. I have argued that the main vessels were triremes and that Polybius reclassified them as quinqueremes in order to increase the magnitude of the engagements and thus the war as a whole (see ch.1, p.42 n.109). I believe this fleet would be additional to the hastily built one of Valerius in 263 (see chapter 3).

⁴ Polyb. 1.23.1-10; Zonar. 8.11; Dio 11.43.16-8; Diod. 23.10.1-2; the fasti record a triumph over the Sicilians and the Punic fleet. This naval victory was preceded by the capture of the consul Cornelius Scipio Asina with his 17 ships at Lipara (Polyb. 1.21.4-7), and that shortly afterwards Hannibal with 50 ships unexpectedly encountered the Roman fleet and lost most of them (Polyb. 1.21.8-11). Thiel 1954:182, contra, Lazenby 1996:67, says it was only 'a few'

from Polybius' statement that after this victory the Romans sailed along the Sicilian coast, and having disembarked they marched inland and ended the Carthaginian siege of Segesta, after which they took Macella by assault.⁵ Polybius does not specifically mention Duilius, but Zonaras says he advanced with his infantry and rescued Segesta, and that Hamilcar would not fight him.⁶

The capture of Macella appears also to be mentioned in his *elogium* from his *columna rostrata*, but apparently not in the 'Elogia' of the Augustan Forum.⁷ However, the inscription is a copy of the early imperial period and subject to amendments and includes deliberate archaisms (even its authenticity has been questioned as being perhaps an imperial forgery).⁸ The triumphal fasti (*acta triumphorum*) states '*de Sicul. et classe Poenica*'⁹ and thus appears to contradict Polybius in putting the land action in Sicily before the naval battle. Thiel discusses the land campaign of Duilius and argues that the events listed in the inscriptions do not necessarily indicate their chronological sequence, except that these events logically must have taken place after the naval battle.¹⁰ A notable aspect of the inscription is that even though it closely links the land actions and the naval battle in time, it adds

– this makes more sense as it would otherwise have constituted another major victory to be celebrated – and, no triumph is associated with this.

⁵ Polyb. 1.24.1-2. Zonaras 8.11 informs us that a little earlier Hamilcar, in his campaign against Segesta, had ambushed a military tribune called Gaius Caecilius, but that when Duilius advanced there, Hamilcar would not fight him.

⁶ Zonar. 8.11: but he places the event after the fleet action. As Hamilcar Barca is very unlikely to be operating this early, scholars have presumed there is more than one Hamilcar, and that this is Hamilcar 'the land commander' (see Lazenby 1996:62). But if these events belong to a later period, as I argue, there is no problem in believing him to be Barca. When Zonaras 8.10 first mentions 'Hamilcar' he describes him as the son of Barca.

⁷ CIL 6.1300 = 31591, CIL 6.37040: '*[Consol Secest]ano[s socios p(optimi) R(omani) Cartaciniensiom] / [obsidione]d exemet lecione[sque Cartaciniensis omnis] / [m]aximosque magistr[at]os I[uci palam post dies] / [n]ovem castris exfociont Macel[amque opidom] / [p]ucnandod cepet'. For initial attempts to cross over to Sicily: Inscr. Ital. 13.3.13 CIL 6.40952. '... navis oc[toginta et Macellam] / [oppidum c]epit...'. but Kondratieff's reconstruction shows no mention of Macella (2004:11 n.40).*

⁸ Frank 1919:77 posits an intermediate restoration in c.150, before a final one in the time of the empire, and notes that 'Restoration of ancestral monuments in more lasting form was frequently undertaken by proud descendants or public-spirited citizens ...'. See also Kondratieff 2004:10-14.

⁹ Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48: '*C. Duilius M. f. M. n. co(n)s(ul) primus an CDXCIII navalem de Sicul(eis) et classe Poenica egit k. Intercalar'*.

¹⁰ Thiel 1954:187—9; see also Brennan 2000:278 n.9.

that the naval battle occurred during the same magistracy, indicating perhaps there was a substantial time difference between the two.¹¹

A significant problem arises concerning the feasibility of landing a sufficiently large force from the fleet that could force Hamilcar to lift his siege of Segesta, and then be able to besiege and capture Macella. This problem is exacerbated when it is considered that there is no mention of his fleet being accompanied by transport vessels. Another problem is that his fleet could not anchor at any nearby port because these were all subject to Carthage.¹² Duilius would have had to enter the Gulf of Castellammare, probably landing near the mouth of the Crimisu (Crisisus), which is some distance from Segesta. Thiel does not believe that Duilius 'beached his fleet there and marched direct on Segesta with his legionaries', pointing out the inherent dangers of an attack by Hannibal from Panormus, who would still have had 85 ships after the battle.¹³ Thiel concludes that there would have been a significant problem in securing and feeding the large number of Carthaginians on board that had been captured at the battle of Mylae, and that the march of the army to Segesta would have been 'extremely risky'.¹⁴ A point that is not mentioned, is that any significant naval battle would likely have resulted in major damage to both sides, and so repairs and resupplies would be necessary. This would delay any operations immediately after the battle.

Duilius next marched upon Macella, which was farther inland, and captured it after an assault - this could be the present Macellaro (near Camporeale).¹⁵ However, it now seems more likely that Montagnola di Marineo (southwest of Soluntum), which is much farther away, is a more likely location.¹⁶ If this is correct, then the distance from his base makes a landing by ship improbable. In order to resolve the problems arising from

¹¹ *CIL* 6.1300 =31591; Kondratieff 2004:14-16: since the inscription has been rewritten there is no guarantee that Duilius' actions all occurred during the same magistracy.

¹² Panormus was not captured by the Romans until 254 (Polyb. 1.38.5-10; Diod. 23.18.4-5), likewise Cephaloedium (Diod. 23.18.3) and Solus and Tyndaris (Diod. 23.18.5). Thermae and Lipara were captured in 252 (Polyb. 1.39.13-14).

¹³ Thiel 1954:189.

¹⁴ Thiel 1954:189.

¹⁵ Polyb. 1.24.2. Lazenby 1996:53. Zonaras 8.11 makes no mention of Macella.

¹⁶ The name of the city has been found on a fragment of tile there: *SEG* vol. LI 2001, Ins.no. 1377.

Duilius' landing, Thiel reasons that, since Polybius says it took place just after the sea battle, he must have meant that the troops on board were landed at Mylae, from where they marched by land to Segesta.¹⁷ But this is not what Polybius says.¹⁸ Thiel's interpretation presents problems. The first, is that Segesta is so far to the west of Messina that Duilius would not only have had to march nearly the whole length of the island, but probably do so along a route that took him parallel with the coast, which was largely hostile territory. Even with the addition of troops already at Messina, this would have invited enemy attacks and caused supply problems. The campaign concerning Segesta and Macella does not seem to form part of a coherent plan and appears here to be reactive and *ad hoc*.

Confusingly, Zonaras mentions in a passage placed before the Mylae battle that Hamilcar had attempted to capture Segesta, where the Romans had most of their infantry, and that he had then repulsed a rescue attempt by a military tribune called Gaius Caecilius, inflicting on him heavy casualties.¹⁹ It is difficult to account for the presence of Roman infantry as far west as Segesta before Duilius' arrival in Sicily. Although some sources state that Segesta had revolted three years earlier in 263,²⁰ there is no evidence that Rome had sent her military aid. Furthermore, since in 263 all this area was still under Carthaginian control, it would have been an extraordinary risk for this city to have rebelled. The more so, since she 'had long been friendly towards Carthage because of her ancient enmity with Selinus'.²¹ It is also very difficult to envisage Carthage delaying three years before taking severe reprisals against the city. Zonaras also notes that after Caecilius' defeat the Romans sent out the praetor urbanus, but we hear no more about him: this poses another problem because the office of praetor urbanus was not created until about 247.²²

¹⁷ Thiel 1954:189.

¹⁸ Polyb. 1.24.1-2.

¹⁹ Zonar. 8.11.

²⁰ Diod. 23.5.1; Zonar. 8.9

²¹ Caven 1980:29.

²² Zonar. 8.11. Brennan 2000: 85 & 280 n.50 quoting: Lydus *Mens. Mag.* 1.45; Brennan 2000:87 opines that 'It is not too much to suggest that it was the defense needs of Italy in the crisis years of the mid-240s that prompted the Romans to create a second praetor'.

The Siege of Mytistratus and Hamilcar's Campaigns

Diodorus starts his account of the events of 260 by saying that the Romans besieged Mytistratus and built many siege engines, but after seven months they left with heavy losses.²³ The exact year is uncertain but Lazenby thinks it may have started in 261 and that had it lasted seven months, and would have continued into 260.²⁴ However, there is no reference to either of the consuls spending the winter in Sicily in 261/0. In fact, Lazenby says 'it was an unusual departure, since previous consuls seem to have returned to Italy before the winter'.²⁵ Polybius, meanwhile, relates that the consuls of 261 were managing well and had hopes of driving the Carthaginians out of the island – this hardly tallies with a long unsuccessful siege.²⁶ Diodorus may provide a satisfactory explanation when he also says under the year 258, that Mytistratus was besieged for the third time and finally captured.²⁷ If this is true, then the first siege would probably have been the one mentioned in 260: the second siege (with siege engines) would therefore have taken place the following year in 259, and the final, successful one, in 258 (see below). This would be a clear example of Roman persistence, but these extended sieges strongly indicate that they would have had little time for other significant activities in Sicily. This begs the question as to what exactly the main Carthaginian forces were doing in Sicily during these three years (260-258).

After narrating details of the Mylae battle, the relief of Segesta, and capture of Macella, Polybius then states that after the sea battle Hamilcar, the Carthaginian land commander who was quartered near Panormus, suddenly attacked and killed around 4,000 of the Roman allies who were encamped near Thermae.²⁸ Thus, it is not quite clear if Polybius is saying that whilst Duilius was sailing to relieve Segesta, Hamilcar defeated some

²³ Diod. 23.9.3; Polybius only mentions a siege and capture in 258 (1.24:10-11). Mytistratus could be Marianopoli, west of Santa Catarina Villamosa: Lazenby 1996:75.

²⁴ Lazenby 1996:62. There would also have been major problems of supply and pay for these troops over this period.

²⁵ Lazenby 1996:75.

²⁶ Polyb. 1.20.3-4.

²⁷ Diod. 23.9.4; Polyb. 1.24.10-11.

²⁸ Polyb. 1.24.3-4: he is implying that this Hamilcar is not Barca; according to Diodorus 23.9.4 the losses were 6,000 Romans (allies are not mentioned) – very nearly the whole army.

Roman allies immediately after Mylae. Alternatively, it could be that Polybius is saying this defeat occurred whilst Duilius was campaigning in Sicily (perhaps besieging Macella) - having previously relieved Segesta.²⁹ That Duilius made no move to counter Hamilcar would seem to imply that Hamilcar and the Romans were on separate campaigns in the same general area of Sicily. This seems very unlikely. Scholars seek to resolve these problems by considering that Hamilcar's campaign at Thermae should belong to early 259 when Duilius had already returned to Rome and celebrated his triumph in February 259, but this is not what Polybius implies.³⁰ Operations in Sicily so early in the year are not only infrequent but there is no support in the sources for these actions belonging to early 259.

Rather incongruously, Diodorus, having narrated Hamilcar's victory at Thermae, informs us that the Romans captured the fort of Mazarin, he then says that Hamilcar captured Camarina (for the second time) and likewise Enna.³¹ Indeed, Zonaras says that Hamilcar captured several cities and that if Florus (consul in 259/8) had not over-wintered he would have conquered all Sicily.³² Before his victory at Thermae and subsequent eastward thrust, Hamilcar is also credited with defensive preparations in anticipation of a major Roman attack, involving the fortification of Drepana, as well as the destruction of Eryx and the transfer of its citizens to Drepana.³³ This would imply Carthage perceived there was a very great threat to its territory, but this seems unjustified at this stage, since Hamilcar was gaining territory.

Summary of Events for 260

I am proposing that for the year 260, it is possible to separate the events detailed above into two series: the first, is Duilius' victory at Mylae and the seven-month siege of Mytistratus, and the second, is Duilius' advance westwards, and Hamilcar's campaigns and defensive measures. The first series of events present little difficulty in being placed in 260, but I contend

²⁹ Diodorus 23.9.4 states it is 'Hamilcar'.

³⁰ Thiel 1954:190 n.406; Bastien 2007:48; Walbank 1957:80 *ad* 24.3; Lazenby 1996:72.

³¹ Diod. 23.9.4. Lazenby 1996:73,183 n.22 says that 'probably Mazara in the territory of Selinous'.

³² Zonar. 8.11. Lazenby 1996:74-5: Hamilcar's capture of these two cities is placed by Lazenby in 259.

³³ Diod. 23.9.4; Zonar. 8.11.

that the second series is incompatible with these events and, if valid, relate to a much later period.

I have predicated my arguments concerning the second series on the following factors. The year 260 is too early in the war for the Romans to have been able to campaign in the west of Sicily, and that therefore any such actions attributed to Duilius in Sicily should be relate to a later period.³⁴ The result of the removal of the above actions means that, as consul, he would have been in charge of the failed siege of Mytistratus. This might explain why his services were not immediately used again.³⁵ I also argue that references to Hamilcar in the years 260-259 are to Hamilcar Barca; here it is possible to detect one of the criteria adopted to re-arrange the material to create an account more favourable to the Romans, that is, the reallocation of the events by ten years, in this case, from 250-249.³⁶

Key Anomalies 259

The main events recorded for 259 consist of operations in Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily, where the Romans are involved in a second long siege of Mytistratus.

For actions in Sicily, Polybius states that the Roman troops did nothing worthy of note, and appears to know nothing about the other important actions recorded by the sources.³⁷ I reason that as Mytistratus was besieged for the first time in 260, the third time in 258 (see below), then 259 would be the logical year for the second siege. Thus, if my conclusion is sound, the Romans were involved in a second long siege of Mytistratus in 259 and Polybius could be considered accurate for this year.

The Romans appear to be concentrating their efforts elsewhere in 259, as evidenced by the triumphal fasti: consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio

³⁴ Duilius' inscriptions cannot provide definitive proof of the year and sequence of his activities due to subsequent alterations to them.

³⁵ It is possible that Duilius saw action in a later year (248), because Frontinus *Str.* 1.5.6 mentions, in an otherwise unknown incident, a stratagem he used to extricate his ships from being trapped in the harbour of Syracuse. See chapter 3, p.91 n.102.

³⁶ See chapter 9.2. As explained in chapter 2, the ten-year reallocation principle can be used as a default when none of the other criteria are applicable – they usually apply to separate Carthaginian or Gallic activity.

³⁷ Polyb. 1.24.8.

celebrated a triumph for his campaigns in Corsica and Sardinia,³⁸ and this is supported by other sources.³⁹ That the other consul, Aquillius Florus was left to continue the fighting in Sicily, is supported by Zonaras' comment that Hamilcar captured some cities 'and if Gaius Florus, who was wintering there, had not restrained him, he would have subjugated the whole of Sicily'. However, he gives no detailed information on these activities.⁴⁰ If Thiel is credible in his assertion that Hamilcar's victorious eastwards campaign relates to the spring of 259 (rather than in 260), it is difficult to believe that only Florus would have been sent to Sicily for the subsequent summer campaign. Frontinus might be providing evidence for a siege when he says 'Aquillius had beheaded three men each from those centuries whose position the enemy had penetrated' – this could well apply to siege-lines, but certainly he was in severe difficulties.⁴¹ Assuming there was a second siege in 259, it is hard to accept that there was no attempt by Hamilcar to relieve Mytistratus when he could easily have done so on his way to Enna.

As noted above, Lazenby also puts Hamilcar's operations early in the year 259, and adds that Aquillius had, in addition to his own forces, those that Hanno and Hannibal had after Agrigentum's capture [in 262] 'perhaps numbering as many as 50,000 men. If so, he [Aquillius] can hardly be blamed for failing to prevent Hamilcar...'.⁴² However, though in 262 the numbers of troops originally under Hanno and Hannibal were very large, Polybius says that in the siege of Agrigentum Hanno risked a battle but he was completely defeated, with the remnants fleeing to Heraclea.⁴³ Furthermore, Zonaras says that Hannibal managed to get away from

³⁸ Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:53: '*L. Cornelius L. f. Cn. n. Scipio co(n)s(ul) an CDXCIV de Poeneis et Sardin(ia), Corsica V id. Mart.*'; '*CIL* 6.1287 (funerary monument)'.
³⁹ Polyb. 1.24.5-7; Zonar. 8.11; Frontin. *Str.* 3.9.4, 3.10.2; Eutrop. 2.22; Oros. 4.7.11; Flor. 1.18.15-16; Val. Max. 5.1.2.

⁴⁰ Zonar. 8.11. The reference to Hamilcar having captured several cities must surely relate to Hamilcar's campaigns against Camarina and Enna, which can be attributed to 260, although due to the uncertainty of its dating by the sources, this particular campaign might have taken place in the summer of 259. I argue in Ch.9.2, that Pictor moved Hamilcar's campaigns from 249, following the Roman disasters in connection with the siege of Lilybaeum, and that this campaign was successfully countered later in the year by the dictator Atilius Caiatinus. Thus, it could be concluded that Zonaras' statement more readily applies to Caiatinus who did (temporarily) prevent Hamilcar from overrunning Sicily in 249.

⁴¹ Frontin. *Str.* 4.1.36: this incident could also relate to the third siege in 258.

⁴² Lazenby 1996:74-5.

⁴³ Polyb. 1.19.7-11.

Agrigentum, but not his men who were killed by both the Romans and the Agrigentines: thus, the Carthaginians would not have had such a significant force.⁴⁴

Summary of Events for 259

I argue that the main theatre of Roman operations in 259 was in naval operations in Corsica and Sardinia, and that Florus was probably tied down in Sicily in the second siege of Mytistratus. This situation is difficult to accord with Hamilcar's advance eastwards across Sicily during this year.

Key Anomalies 258

There are operations in Corsica, Sardinia, and Sicily where the Romans capture Hippana and, after a third long siege, Mytistratus.

Polybius does not mention any fighting in Corsica and Sardinia in 258, and says that the new consuls, Aulus Atilius and Gaius Sulpicius, advanced on Panormus, but as the Carthaginians were in winter quarters there, they refused to fight.⁴⁵ The consuls then proceeded to capture Hippana and 'Mytistratum'.⁴⁶ Lazenby says he is mistaken because Sulpicius triumphed in Sardinia,⁴⁷ and that he may have confused Gaius Sulpicius Paterculus with Aquillius Florus who was fighting as proconsul together with Aulus Atilius Caiatinus in Sicily. A possible explanation for Polybius' supposed error may lie in his aim to concentrate only on events in Sicily. Zonaras confirms the Romans fought in Sicily and Sardinia at the same time. He also states that 'a bit later' Caiatinus arrived in Sicily and finding the proconsul Florus besieging Mytistratus, used his troops.⁴⁸ If this is the case, it is worth considering why the Carthaginians in Panormus did not try to attack Florus (who only had one

⁴⁴ Zonar. 8.10, also Oros. 4.7.4-6: although Polybius 1.19.14 indicates that his mercenaries did manage to escape, but they must have suffered losses.

⁴⁵ Panormus was too difficult to besiege, and it was only in 254 that it was captured (see Ch.6, pp.123-4).

⁴⁶ Polyb. 1.24.9-10.

⁴⁷ Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48: *C. Aquillius M. f. C. n. Florus an. CDXCV pro co(n)s(ule) de Poenis III non. Oct.; C. Sulpicius Q. f. Q. n. Paterculus an. CDX[CV] co(n)s(ul) de Poenis et Sardeis III n(on Oct.)*.

⁴⁸ Zonar. 8.11. Florus triumphed as proconsul and Caiatinus as praetor: Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48: *C. Aquillius M. f. C. n. Florus an. CDXCV pro co(n)s(ule) de Poenis III non. Oct., A. Atilius A. f. C. n. Caiatinus pr(aetor) an. [CDXCVI] ex Sicilia de Poenis k. F[ebr.]*.

consular army), or at least try harass him during his 'winter' siege of Mytistratus. The simplest explanation is that the two 'consuls' who attacked Panormus were Caiatinus and Florus (acting as proconsul), and that both had sailed from Rome at the start of the campaigning season. This approach is supported by the fact that both Caiatinus and Florus were awarded triumphs for their successes in Sicily. One of the reasons for Mytistratus' stubborn defence is that it contained Carthaginian troops, and that it was only after they had escaped that Mytistratus was finally captured and destroyed.⁴⁹ Curiously, there is no mention of any military activities by Hamilcar in this year – at the very least, one would have expected attempts by him to frustrate the long siege of Mytistratus.

The Roman attempt to confront the Carthaginians at Panormus and the capture of Hippana and Mytistratus would have taken up most of the 258 campaigning season, so that there would have been little time for any further activities. However, Polybius states that they (the 'two consuls') continued their campaign and besieged and captured Camarina (which had deserted the Romans with the help of traitors), then Enna and other small Carthaginian places. They finally besieged Lipara.⁵⁰ Diodorus adds some details saying that the Romans besieged Camarina but were only able to capture it with the help of siege-engines sent by Hiero.⁵¹ This was clearly a long siege and would have taken at least a month or two. Diodorus describes further activities: the Romans captured Sittana and placed a garrison in it, as well as in other cities. They then captured Camicus (in Acragantine territory) by assault and garrisoned it.⁵²

Zonaras relates a story that as the Romans were proceeding to Camarina through a place surrounded by steep hills, they were saved from being ambushed by the Carthaginians, due to the bravery of a military

⁴⁹ Diod. 23.9.4. The city was thus considered to be of significant strategic value.

⁵⁰ Polyb. 1.24.12-13: he continues to state these subsequent activities were by both consuls.

⁵¹ Diod. 23.9.5; during this passage Diodorus starts referring only to one Roman commander rather than two – if this is valid then it would be Atilius Caiatinus, as Frontinus mentions Atilius Caiatinus nearly being trapped.

⁵² Diod. 23.9.5: also mentioned are Herbessus and Italicus. Sittana could be Hippana (Lazenby:1996:76), but if so would be too far west for this particular campaign.

tribune with three hundred of his men.⁵³ Aulus Gellius, quoting from the *Origins* of Marcus Cato, gives a variation of this story and states that a Carthaginian general organised this ambush.⁵⁴ As noted above, Polybius mentions in the final activity of the year that the consuls besieged Lipara. Zonaras informs us that it was a failure because Hamilcar occupied it by night and killed many Romans in a sudden sortie.⁵⁵ If, as I contend, that the 'Hamilcar' mentioned is Hamilcar Barca, then his success at Lipara may be linked to the 'general' who organised the ambush in the vicinity of Camarina. It would thus indicate a Carthaginian campaign in response to the Roman advances in this year.

It seems unlikely that there was sufficient time for all these events to have occurred after the capture of Mytistratus. As these actions seem genuine, it is likely that some of them relate to another period.

Summary of Events for 258

In this review, I argue that two parallel series of connected events are discernible. The first concerns the unsuccessful attempt to capture Panormus, followed by the capture of Hippana and Mytistratus. The second series of events appears to be entirely separate and is conducted by Caiatinus⁵⁶ and Florus after their capture of Mytistratus. In this later campaign they besieged and captured Camarina (after avoiding an ambush), then Enna and Camicus, and perhaps advanced to Sittana.⁵⁷ The final action is the attempt on Lipara which Hamilcar foiled.

Summary for the years 260-258

The above review clearly shows how uncertain and confusing are the events of the period 260-258 and the problems they present for historians.

⁵³ Zonar. 8.12; there are other variations including Oros. 4.8.1-3; Flor. 1.18.12; Frontin. *Str.* 1.5.15 & 4.5.10, and Liv. *Per.* 17 & 22.60.11; Ampel. 20.15; Gell. *NA* 3.7.3; [Aur. Vict.], *De Vir. Ill.* 39.3.

⁵⁴ Gell. *NA* 3.7.1-21.

⁵⁵ Zonar. 8.12. This is the only time a name is given to the Carthaginian commander.

⁵⁶ Florus suddenly 'disappears' as the Romans arrive at Camarina, leaving Caiatinus to continue the siege (Diod. 23.9.5).

⁵⁷ Diod. 23.9.5.

I have endeavoured to show in the analysis above, that in Sicily in the years 260-258, there are two separate and incompatible sequences of events that cannot have been concurrent. The first sequence involves the victory at Mylae in 260 and a seven-month siege of Mytistratus, followed in 259 with a second siege of the city, and in 258, a failed attempt on Panormus, the capture of Hippana and ending with the third and successful siege of Mytistratus. The second sequence of events, which appears to be much less likely to have occurred in these years, comprise the relief of Segesta, and capture of Macella by the Romans in 260. Then comes Hamilcar's defensive measures (including the fortification of Drepana) and advance eastwards (which might possibly have been recorded under 259) and includes his victory at Thermae, and the capture of Mazarin, Enna and Camarina. The last part of this sequence is the Roman counter-attack by Caiatinus in 258 when, after avoiding a Carthaginian ambush, he captures Camarina, Enna and some small towns, but fails against Lipara, being forestalled by Hamilcar.

I argue that all the events appear realistic, but are very unlikely to have all occurred in the years in which they have been placed by the sources. If it is considered that the events fall into two separate sequences in the narratives which cover the three years 260-258, then the first sequence relates to the years 260-258, and the second sequence likely relates to later consecutive years of the war. This would result in the first sequence of events giving a reasonable account of the fighting during the years 260-258.

CHAPTER 5. KEY ANOMALIES: INVASION OF AFRICA (256-255)

The commonly accepted reading of the events for 256-5 states that after defeating the Carthaginian fleet off Ecnomus, the consuls Marcus Regulus and Manlius Vulso launched an invasion of Africa. They landed on the Cape Bon peninsular, and then conducted successful raids. Manlius Vulso was then recalled to Rome, leaving Regulus to continue the campaign. Regulus marched inland, defeated the Carthaginians at Adys and attempted a siege of Carthage, meanwhile the Carthaginians recruited Xanthippus, a Greek mercenary, to reorganise their army. In the following spring, Xanthippus destroyed the Roman army and captured Regulus. The Romans, after winning another naval battle in 255, rescued the survivors, but on their return home suffered great losses in a storm off Sicily.

This extraordinary and audacious attempt by Rome to force Carthage to surrender Sicily presents many highly significant problems which are analysed below.

Roman Objectives for the Invasion of Africa.

Polybius informs us that as the Romans were not achieving much on land in Sicily, they realised they had to gain supremacy on the sea (which was also the Carthaginians' aim) so, in 256 they assembled a fleet of 330 warships. They then sailed via Messina to Ecnomus where their forces happened to be in the vicinity, and the Carthaginians sailed via Lilybaeum and anchored off Heraclea Minoa.¹ Thiel maintains that they went to Heraclea Minoa because 'if the Carthaginians had tried to waylay the Roman fleet near the African coast, they would have run a very serious risk of missing it altogether'.² The sea-battle probably took place off Heraclea³

¹ Polyb. 1.25.5-9.

² Thiel 1954:208. Thiel presumes the Carthaginians suspected the Romans were going to invade Africa and that their fast galleys would be unable to track the vast Roman invasion fleet.

³ Zonar. 8.12. Rankov 2011:156 puts a good case for the engagement taking place off Heraclea, and Hoyos 2015:75 is in agreement. This town borders the Halycus river which was probably the start of the *epikraty* (Diod. 15.17.5) and might support the idea that Lilybaeum was the true target.

where the Romans then won a great victory;⁴ Hamilcar organised a defensive army at Heraclea,⁵ while the remnants of the fleet sailed to Carthage.⁶ The Romans now prepared for their invasion of Africa. After repairing the captured ships and then re-provisioning the fleet, both consuls with their armies sailed to Africa and reached the Hermaeum Promontory (Cape Bon Peninsular) where they besieged the coastal town of Aspis (Clupea).⁷

There are many problems with this account. The key question is: why did the Romans risk a major invasion of Africa, rather than besiege Lilybaeum? This city would have been their next logical objective, as its capture would have forced the Carthaginians to surrender all of Sicily. Polybius states that the Roman plan was to take the war to Africa, and the Carthaginian plan was to prevent this, for they thought the country was easy to invade and the natives to subdue.⁸ Dio says that the Romans thought it better not to risk a great battle in Sicily because if they lost there, the consequences would be severe, on the other hand, if they lost in Africa they would lose 'nothing'.⁹ However, Grainger highlights a significant problem with this statement because, with Rome's main forces in Africa, there would be little to prevent the Carthaginian army from launching attacks in Sicily that would threaten Messina and even Syracuse.¹⁰ The idea of invading Africa was not new because half a century before (in 310), the powerful Greek tyrant of Syracuse, Agathocles, had done just that and nearly forced Carthage into capitulation. The outcome was that eventually his entire army was lost, and he only just managed to escape back to Syracuse. But, his

⁴ Polyb. 1.28.13-14.

⁵ Polyb. 1.30.1-2.

⁶ Polyb. 1.29.4 – thus ensuring they would not be trapped by a siege of Lilybaeum.

⁷ Polyb. 1.29.1-4.

⁸ Polyb. 1.26.1-3. One suspects that Polybius had in mind Scipio's invasion of Africa in 204. Thiel 1954:206 agrees that 'The idea of striking at Africa promised well, because Carthage's African empire was very vulnerable: the Carthaginians were not in the habit of handling the population of this empire with moderation comparable to the Roman methods of dealing with Italian allies, and therefore an invasion might easily set off revolts among the natives'.

⁹ Dio 11.43.19.

¹⁰ Grainger 2011:93.

daring plan had in the meantime forced the Carthaginians to give up their siege of Syracuse - which was his main objective.¹¹

Nevertheless, the resilience of the Carthaginians and the total loss of Agathocles' army would certainly have been a salutary lesson for any future invader. The difficulties of capturing fortified cities, as we have seen with Mytistratus, could have influenced Roman thinking. Hoyos believes that the Romans realised after eight years that they would not be able to capture the Punic strongholds in Sicily, so they built a powerful fleet of 330 ships¹² carrying a double-consular army 'with Libya as their target'.¹³ Ultimately, Agathocles' venture in Africa failed due to his inability to capture Carthage, and he was forced to abandon his army, and to depart in secret with only a few men.¹⁴ In reality, the perils of an African invasion would have been far greater than besieging Lilybaeum - the strongest Carthaginian city in Sicily.

The Invasion of Africa

As noted above, after the victory of Ecnomus, the Romans had had to carry out repairs and provide supplies for the ships and men, and this would have consumed much time. Grainger notes that the 'invasion had been subject to repeated delays – in embarking the troops at Ecnomos, in the battle, in the repairs at Messana after the battle, and in the voyaging to and fro which will have consumed several days each way'.¹⁵ This poses the major question of why the invasion still took place, because it was obvious that little could be achieved before the end of the campaigning season.¹⁶

¹¹ For the war in Africa: Diod. 20.5.1-14.6, 17.1-18.3, 33.1-34.7, 38.1-44.7, 54.1-55.5, 57.3-61.4, 64.1- 69.5; Meister 1984:393-404. Agathocles' invasion was out of desperation and he lost his army, however, the Romans' situation was different, as they were not being besieged and were not desperate.

¹² Tarn 1907:48 argues the numbers should be 100 less, and therefore 230.

¹³ Hoyos 2015:45. Thiel 1954:209-12 wonders how there could be two consular armies at Ecnomus ready for the battle and subsequent expedition, and concludes that they must have over-wintered there under the command of Blasio. However, there had been no urgent reason to take this measure. That there might have been some problems in Sicily that had to be dealt with early in the season is perhaps hinted at by Zonaras (8.12) when he says that on arriving in Sicily the consuls had first dealt with matters there.

¹⁴ Diod. 20.68.1-3.

¹⁵ Grainger 2011:92.

¹⁶ Caven 1980:35 says 'towards the end of summer'.

After the invasion fleet had crossed the sea through little-known waters unopposed,¹⁷ the Romans landed at Clupea on the Cape Bon peninsular: this was besieged and captured. The consuls then sent a message to Rome for further instructions,¹⁸ and whilst waiting they successfully plundered the surrounding countryside.¹⁹ This request would indicate that there was no real plan, and indeed Eliaeson thinks that the invasion was only a raid for plunder.²⁰ But, Thiel considers that good planning went into the expedition because Clupea was an excellent choice from which to launch a campaign, being located between Carthage and those richest cities that she controlled.²¹ His argument is not conclusive, because Clupea was just the nearest convenient base where the Romans could assemble their troops without being subject to immediate attack by the Carthaginians. The Romans were probably copying Agathocles, who in 310 also chose to land on the same peninsular at Latomiae (the Quarries).²²

The decision of the senate was momentous: Rome now recalled Lucius Vulso, who took the ships' crews and the prisoners to Rome, leaving Marcus Regulus with 40 ships, 15,000 infantry and 500 horse.²³ Hoyos calls the senate's decision 'surprising, and hard to explain'.²⁴ With hindsight, the decision to withdraw Vulso and his army and allow Regulus to march inland into hostile territory on what was likely to be a prolonged campaign without secure supply-lines, almost guaranteed the destruction of the expeditionary force.

After the departure of Vulso, Regulus left the area of the Cape Bon peninsular, marched inland and besieged and captured many towns until he

¹⁷ Florus 1.18.17-18 highlights the Romans' fear, noting that some were so terrified at the crossing, that when the tribune Nautius [Mannius] increased the alarm - he had to be threatened with the axe! There was always the danger of shipwreck and sudden storms, as in 254, off Camarina (see below) and in 253 between Panormus and Rome (Diod. 23.19.1).

¹⁸ Polyb. 1.29.1-4,6.

¹⁹ Polyb. 1.29.6-8.

²⁰ Eliaeson 1906:86 '*.. dass die Römer sich eigentlich nur einen Plünderungszug nach Afrika gedacht hatten*'.

²¹ Thiel 1954:227. See also Frank 1928:682-3.

²² Diod. 20.6.3; the quarries are close to El-Houraria near the tip of the peninsular - Champion 2012:97 and Map 5, p.xvi.

²³ Polyb. 1.29.8-10.

²⁴ Hoyos 2010:185 contra Frank 1928:682 who approves of the decision and believes that Carthage could not be captured before the winter, and that Aspis could not support 100,000 rowers and the many prisoners in the meantime.

came to the important walled city of Adys,²⁵ which he then besieged. The Carthaginians responded by electing two generals, recalling Hamilcar from Heraclea and making him the third general; they then advanced to Adys.²⁶ Frank thinks that they were 'eager to relieve Adys, where many of their wealthy citizens had their homes'.²⁷ Polybius says that instead of confronting Regulus on the plain with their elephants and cavalry, where lay their best advantage, the Carthaginians, in their haste to relieve the city, encamped on a hill that overlooked the Romans and thereby revealed how they should be attacked.²⁸ Polybius is perhaps misguided in his criticism because the Carthaginians would have needed time to rest and reorganise their army and to plan how best to attack Regulus. Goldsworthy says, 'Clearly their commanders were reluctant to commit themselves to a battle too hastily, before they had gained some advantage'.²⁹ However, Hoyos criticises the Carthaginian generals for occupying the hill even though 'they had plenty of cavalry plus elephants - forces better suited to level ground', but then speculates '[P]erhaps they disagreed on how best to act; certainly, they did not view the enemy below as a threat'.³⁰

Regulus was now in a perilous position, and must have known the dangers of confronting the elephants and cavalry in the open, as he launched a surprise two-pronged dawn attack on the hill. He eventually managed to drive the Carthaginians from their camp on it.³¹ When the elephants and cavalry descended down to level ground they departed and left their infantry to follow. The Romans pursued the infantry for a while and

²⁵ Lazenby 1996:100: 'possibly the later Roman town of Uthina (now Oudna), about 15 miles south of Tunis'. Zonaras 8.13 says that before reaching Adys Regulus encamped by the Bagradas river, which was nearby, however, the nearby river is the Mellane. He relates that a giant serpent crept out and attacked the Romans in their camp and could only be destroyed by catapults; Orosius 4.8.10-15 mentions the serpent as having a scaly back that could not be pierced by ordinary weapons. This incident has caused much discussion and Lazenby 1996:100 dismisses it as 'a splendidly absurd story of a monstrous snake'. However, as the 'monster' had an armoured back, it would seem more likely to have been a giant crocodile - an animal quite unfamiliar to the Romans. A few crocodiles survived in small lakes in the Tassili-N-Ajjer (Central Sahara) into the twentieth century - Lhote & Brodrick 1973:171-3.

²⁶ Polyb. 1.30.1-6. The other two generals were Hasdrubal son of Hanno, and Bostarus.

²⁷ Frank 1928:683.

²⁸ Polyb. 1.30.6-9.

²⁹ Goldsworthy 2006:85.

³⁰ Hoyos 2015:48.

³¹ Polyb. 1.30.9-13.

then destroyed the camp.³² Lazenby notes that the later sources give 'absurdly inflated' enemy casualty figure.³³ The main question that arises is why the Carthaginians, having outrun the pursuing Romans, made no attempt to reassemble their still formidable forces that included elephants and cavalry. Polybius makes the very surprising statement that Xanthippus had later to explain to the Carthaginians that by having elephants and cavalry, their best advantage lay in fighting on open ground.³⁴

Thereafter, the Romans devastated the countryside as they marched upon Tunis, which they captured and then used it as a base to besiege Carthage.³⁵ There was consternation in Carthage as morale plummeted due in part to Numidian raiding.³⁶ According to Polybius, Regulus believed the city could be quickly captured and he wanted to accomplish this before a successor was appointed. But his terms were rejected as too harsh.³⁷ Frank, while accepting the story, questions the terms demanded by Regulus as recorded by 'Dio Cassius - never very trustworthy for the history of the Republic'. Frank states that the terms, which include yielding up Sicily and Sardinia, paying both a tribute and the cost of the war and surrendering sovereignty, appear to be excessive, and that if Dio is accurate then it reflects Regulus' lack of sense.³⁸ However, a consul in these circumstances who was desperate to conclude a treaty before the arrival of his successor would be unlikely to present such strict terms.³⁹

³² Polyb. 1.30.13-14.

³³ Lazenby 1996:101; e.g. Eutropius 2.21 says the Romans killed 18,000 men, captured 5,000 & 18 elephants.

³⁴ Polyb. 1.32.1-5. Frontinus Str. 2.2.11 implies that it was out of fear of the legions - 'the Roman strength was in their foot soldiers and they kept to the plains'.

³⁵ Polyb. 1.30.14-15.

³⁶ Polyb. 1.31.1-3: the Numidians were attacking the Carthaginians and causing great damage, and there was an influx of refugees into Carthage, the inhabitants of which feared a siege. Lazenby 1996:102 points out that 'In those days Carthage was almost entirely surrounded by water' and that therefore 'the Roman army at Tunis should have blocked all egress'. However, there is no indication that the Romans intended to put the city under close siege or had any siege-equipment to accomplish this. On the Numidians, Hoyos 2010:185 believes: 'Though Polybius calls the rebels 'Numidians', he all but certainly is writing about the Libyan subjects of Carthage'. There is no indication that these Libyans did revolt for if they had done so, one would have expected them to have worked closely with the Roman army and continued to have done so throughout the winter.

³⁷ Polyb. 1.31.4-8.

³⁸ Frank 1928:683; Dio 11.43.22-23.

³⁹ One of the reasons why Lutatius in 241 agreed milder (not harsher) terms with Hamilcar Barca was in order to pre-empt his own successor (Zonar. 8.17); these were subsequently made more onerous by the Roman people (Polyb. 1.63.1-3). As I advance the possibility in

Perhaps tellingly, none of the sources state where Regulus went after his failure before Carthage. It has been presumed he had made his base in Tunis.⁴⁰ If this is credible, one would certainly have expected the Carthaginians to have made attempts to harass the Romans and curtail supplies by land and sea for they had the whole winter so to do, but we hear nothing of such activity. Polybius might have thought these events unnecessary for his narrative, but it is noteworthy that no other source covers this crucial period when the Romans were cut off from their home bases. Both Frontinus and Valerius Maximus say that even though Regulus now wanted to be relieved of his command and return home, on the grounds he was too poor and that his farm needed him, he was made proconsul to carry on the war.⁴¹

Analysis of the Invasion

There are many problems with Polybius' account, one of the chief being the recall to Rome of half the army - effectively abandoning Regulus to his fate. This recall brings into question whether the original plan was for a full-scale invasion of Africa. Another problem is Polybius' statement that the Carthaginians did not understand that elephants and cavalry are more suited to level rather than to hilly ground. As it is clear that uneven ground naturally impedes the full efficiency of both these elements of the army, it is difficult to believe that the Carthaginians were unaware of this. Equally difficult to believe is that these two sections simply fled before the Roman infantry. A further puzzling problem is that, despite the great superiority of Carthaginian manpower, no attempt to prevent the Romans from capturing Tunis and block their advance to Carthage. There is a complete lack of detail as to how it was possible for Regulus to capture the important city of Tunis, especially as there is no indication in the sources that he possessed siege equipment.

Ch. 9.3, that these terms may actually relate to an early stage in the siege of Lilybaeum (spring 249), when the Carthaginians feared they might have to surrender, then the terms may not seem so excessive.

⁴⁰ Scullard 1989:555-6 merely states: '[R]egulus then seized Tunis where he encamped for the winter'.

⁴¹ Frontin. *Str.* 4.3.3; Val. Max. 4.4.6. But his proconsulship at this date is not confirmed by the fasti – see *MRR* I 209. It is curious that there is no specific record of communications with Rome after the senate recalled Vulso.

A final difficulty concerning this campaign is the uncertainty as to whether he reached the walls of Carthage or just raided in its direction.

The idea that, despite their superiority in numbers, the morale of the Carthaginian was subject to such severe collapse, is difficult to comprehend when their history demonstrates their utter determination to defend their city to the very last. This resolve was experienced by Agathocles, the mercenaries in the Truceless War, and later in the Third Punic War (149-146).

Advent of Xanthippus and Defeat of the Roman Army

Polybius says that around this period the Carthaginians hired an experienced Spartan mercenary called Xanthippus (and many mercenaries) to reform the Carthaginian army. He explained to them that as their strength was in their elephants and cavalry they should fight on flat ground. The three Carthaginian generals then put him in command.⁴² Having restored their morale with strict training, Xanthippus led out the Carthaginian army of 12,000 infantry, 4,000 cavalry and nearly 100 elephants to confront the Romans.⁴³ The location of the battle is not stated, except that the terrain was flat, nor is a date recorded.⁴⁴ By using his cavalry and elephants in the proper manner, Xanthippus crushed the Roman army, and although Regulus with 500 cavalry initially escaped, they were later captured, and only 2,000 others escaped to Aspis.⁴⁵

Hoyos criticises Regulus for seeming to believe that the best method of defence against elephants is to concentrate his legions into two adjacent

⁴² Hasdrubal son of Hanno, Bostarus and Hamilcar: Polyb. 1.30.1. That the Carthaginians maintained overall charge is indicated by Valerius Maximus 1.1.14 when he refers to Regulus as having been outwitted due to the 'wiles of Hasdrubal and the Spartan captain Xanthippus'. However, Cicero (*Cic. Off.* 3.99) says it was Hannibal's father Hamilcar who was in charge.

⁴³ Polyb. 1.32.1-9.

⁴⁴ The date must be before the new consuls of 255 sailed to Africa in the early summer (Polyb. 1.36.5-6 & 10). Thiel 1954:229 reckons it 'was probably fought in the early spring of 255'. Walbank 1957:91 *ad* 32.8 on Polybius (1.32.9) calculates a date in early May. Goldsworthy 2006:88 does comment on Polybius' vagueness of location, but satisfies himself by saying that 'it is often referred to as the battle of Tunis, since this was the place he mentioned where the Roman army had occupied'.

⁴⁵ Polyb. 1.33-34. There are surprising and important variations of the battle – these are discussed in detail in chapter 9.3, pp.189-194.

divisions.⁴⁶ The small army and the lack of effort to obtain support from the Libyans and Numidians, as Hoyos notes, is particularly surprising.⁴⁷ As it is thought that this battle might have occurred in the spring of 255, Regulus would probably have had adequate time to request reinforcements from Rome over the winter. It is surprising therefore that no attempt was made by the Senate to send troops or supplies. Appian gives a very different version of the battle which includes a double-consular army fighting near a lake.⁴⁸

After their victory, the Carthaginians then laid siege to Aspis, but this was unsuccessful. This inability to capture the town is very surprising as the defensive forces were small and those of the Carthaginians were numerous.⁴⁹

Rome's Reaction to the Disaster

Early in the summer of 255 the Roman consuls sailed to Africa with 350 ships and defeated the Carthaginians at Cape Hermaeum (capturing 114 ships with their crews), and then picked up the remaining Roman soldiers from Aspis.⁵⁰ As noted above, the Carthaginians had attempted to recapture Aspis by siege but this had failed.⁵¹ However, Orosius states that when the new consuls of 255 arrived in Africa they started to lay siege to Clupea, the Carthaginians immediately arrived with a fleet, but this was heavily defeated. The consuls were then able to pitch camp by Clupea. However, the two 'Hannos' also arrived there with a large army, but were defeated losing 9,000 men.⁵² This would indicate that Clupea, had already been captured earlier by the Carthaginians and so was besieged by the consuls who were then able to repel a relieving Carthaginian army.⁵³

⁴⁶ Hoyos :2015:50.

⁴⁷ Hoyos 2015:51. However, one wonders how reliable these forces would be in a pitched battle.

⁴⁸ App. *Pun.* 8.1.3: the circumstances and reasons are examined in chapter 9.3.

⁴⁹ Polyb. 1.36.6-8.

⁵⁰ Polyb. 1.36.10-11.

⁵¹ Polyb. 1.36.6-7.

⁵² Oros. 4.9.5-7. Zonaras 8.14 has a similar but more complicated version.

⁵³ As no land victory was celebrated, it would seem the Carthaginian losses were exaggerated. Zonaras 8.14 has another version closer to that of Orosius: this is discussed in chapter 9.3.

Returning home, the Roman fleet of 364 vessels was hit by a storm off Camarina and barely 80 were saved.⁵⁴ According to Polybius, this was the greatest disaster at sea⁵⁵ – Lazenby calculates that, on the assumption this is true, ‘over 100,00 Romans and Italians perished in this single catastrophe, it is still difficult to think of a greater maritime disaster ...’.⁵⁶

Despite both these sea and land disasters, in the next year the Romans built a new fleet of 220 ships in three months⁵⁷ and concentrated on ‘blockading the Punic strongholds in the western part of the island, by sea as well as by land’.⁵⁸ Lazenby says ‘There really is no compelling reason to doubt Polybius’ as to the large size of Rome’s new fleet’.⁵⁹ However, Rome’s immense disaster off Camarina and then its apparent ability to build a new fleet so quickly and recruit and train new manpower, must bring into serious question the accuracy of the account.⁶⁰

Summary

Polybius’ basic account is seldom challenged by historians, even though the whole story of the invasion of Africa contains many incongruities. The reason given for the invasion is doubtful because Lilybaeum would have been the logical target after the Ecnomus victory. The lack of any clear plan for this major and extremely risky overseas venture seems very improbable. Similarly improbable, is the decision of the senate to recall half the army, that left Regulus in a strange and hostile country at the mercy of the Carthaginian forces and cut off from resupply from Rome over the winter. There was also no attempt by the senate to provide him with more troops or supplies.⁶¹ Regulus’ tactics in a dawn attack on the Carthaginians camped on a hill near

⁵⁴ Polyb. 1.37.1-2; Oros. 4.9.8 (of 300 ships 80 were destroyed); Eutrop. 2.22 (of 464 ships 80 were destroyed); Diod. 23.18.1 (349 warships, cavalry transports and also 300 other ships were destroyed).

⁵⁵ Polyb. 1.37.3-4.

⁵⁶ Lazenby 1996:111. I have argued in chapter 1, p.42 n.109 concerning the Egadi rams, that the losses in men were far less because triremes were probably the main class of warship and not the larger quinqueremes.

⁵⁷ Polyb. 1.38.5-6.

⁵⁸ Thiel 1954:229.

⁵⁹ Lazenby 1996:114.

⁶⁰ See chapter 9.3.

⁶¹ There is no evidence to think that the senate was hostile to Regulus since they must have had great confidence in him by allowing him to remain in Africa and take the fight to the Carthaginians.

Aspis was daring and initially successful, but the statement that their cavalry and elephants ran away from the Roman infantry is highly improbable. In addition, Regulus' apparently effortless capture of Tunis and many other towns followed by an unobstructed march to the gates of Carthage does not seem credible. The fact we do not know where Regulus over-wintered nor the location of the Xanthippus battle, raises doubts about the campaign in general.

The huge losses, in ships and particularly in manpower incurred in 255 in the storm off Camarina, would have rendered it highly unlikely that a new fleet of 220 could be quickly constructed in the following year. Either the losses of men in the storm have been inflated, or the numbers or class-type of the vessels involved exaggerated. In chapter 9, stage 3, I will show that it is possible to give an explanation for these anomalies, if it is considered that Regulus' invasion was a razzia that disastrously failed, and that some events are connected to the consul's brother Gaius in 250/249.

CHAPTER 6. KEY ANOMALIES: SIEGE OF LILYBAEUM (250-249)

After the defeat of the Roman army in Africa in 255 and the destruction of their fleet in a storm,¹ the Carthaginians took immediate advantage of these disasters by sending an army to Sicily.² But it was only five years later (250) that a battle fought outside Panormus, where Hasdrubal was decisively beaten by Metellus. During the years 250-249, the Romans besieged Lilybaeum by land and sea, but despite incurring a series of catastrophic disasters, Polybius informs us that they continued with the siege. The lack of credible explanations for the complete failure of the Carthaginians to take advantage of the Roman defeats is crucial to my theory that there is a fundamental flaw in the standard narrative of the war. I will discuss below the many problems presented by the sources and the varied solutions proposed by scholars.

Roman Advance in the West (254-251/0)

In 250 (or 251) Lucius Caecilius Metellus defeated a Carthaginian army of more than 30,000 men and 130 elephants,³ under the command of Hasdrubal outside Panormus.⁴ According to the triumphal fasti he celebrated a triumph on 7th September 250 as proconsul.⁵ The exact date of this battle is a matter of debate: Polybius states that in 255 Hasdrubal was sent with an army (that included 140 elephants) to Sicily after the destruction of the Roman fleet off Camarina.⁶ But he apparently took no action, because according to Polybius he simply drilled his army together with the elephants,

¹ Polyb. 1.32-4.

² Polyb. 1.38.1-3.

³ Oros. 4.9.13-14.

⁴ Polyb. 1.38.5-10.

⁵ Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48: '*L. Caecilius L. f. C. n. Metellus pro co(n)s(ule) a. DIII de Poeneis VII idus Septem.*'

⁶ Polyb. 1.38.1-4: the number of elephants is given here as 140. Thiel 1954:239 observes that we know next to nothing about what went on in Sicily during 256-5.

and that he did so unopposed.⁷ The lack of a Roman response was due to their fear of his elephants which were instrumental in their defeat in Africa.⁸

The long gap of five years between 255 and 250 presents particular difficulties that are discussed below, and the general opinion of scholars is that he crossed to Sicily in about 252. Thiel is one of the scholars who does not agree with the year Polybius claims for Hasdrubal's crossing to Sicily, and instead considers it should be 252. He points out that 'Panormus was left to her fate' in 254 when there was supposedly a great Carthaginian army nearby.⁹ Lazenby, also, considers that Polybius' dating for Hasdrubal's crossing to Sicily in '255 or 254' is incorrect and argues the year should be 252.¹⁰ This year appears to be in line with Polybius' subsequent statement that it was in the consulships of L. Caecilius Metellus and C. Furius Pacilus (251/0) that Hasdrubal set off at the height of the harvest to attack Metellus in Panormus.¹¹ Metellus was able to inflict a crushing victory by luring the elephants over a secretly dug trench, causing them to panic and so creating chaos in the ranks of the Carthaginians.¹²

Polybius then says that in the fourteenth year the consuls C. Atilius Regulus and L. Manlius Vulso sailed to Lilybaeum with 200 ships and besieged the city.¹³ However, these consuls belong to the fifteenth year of the war, which is 250/49. Lazenby notes that, as 'the height of the harvest' would be in June, it could be in 250 rather than 251 and that, as it is uncertain when the consular year started, Metellus could still have been consul.¹⁴ Walbank, whilst agreeing with June 250, thinks this was after the

⁷ Polyb. 1.38.4: but it does seem unlikely that the Carthaginian government would have been prepared to fund a huge mercenary army of 30,000 men for any longer than necessary.

⁸ Polyb. 1.39.9-12.

⁹ Thiel 1954:243-4 n.584. The Carthaginians were being active because Zonaras 8.14 says Cossura was retaken in 254, and they would have gone on to conquer Sicily but for the arrival of a great Roman fleet; this is the fleet which went on to besiege Panormus. It is probable that the Roman fleet of 300 ships was considered too large to be challenged. However, a Carthaginian fleet did capture some of their ships when homeward bound with plunder from Panormus: Dio 11.43.29a; Zonar. 8.14.5.

¹⁰ Lazenby 1996:118 also says Hasdrubal's crossing to Sicily would likely have been in 252 after the second naval disaster (253) when the Roman fleet was destroyed. Zonaras 8.14 states that the Romans attacked Lilybaeum in 253 on their way to raid Libya: this would seem highly unlikely if Hasdrubal had a great army there.

¹¹ Polyb. 1.40.1-2: he also says one of the consuls returned home leaving Metellus to guard the corn - this probably occurred later in the summer of 251.

¹² Polyb. 1.40.1-15.

¹³ Polyb. 1.39.15, 1.41.1-6.

¹⁴ Lazenby 1996:119-20 – for the start of the consular year see chapter 1, pp.41-2.

arrival of the new consuls for the year, thus making Metellus a proconsul, as indeed he was when he celebrated his triumph later in September.¹⁵ To account for his delay in attacking the city Hasdrubal would likely have arrived earlier in the spring.¹⁶ Zonaras mentions that the Carthaginian fleet approached Panormus and tried to rescue the fleeing Carthaginians, but inadvertently created great confusion among them.¹⁷ After their great victory over Hasdrubal, the Romans now felt confident that they could finally conquer the island and were thus keen to finish the war.¹⁸

Hamilcar's Defence Reorganisation (250)

It can be reasonably deduced that after Hasdrubal's defeat (probably) in June 250, the Carthaginians would have feared a major Roman offensive to finish their conquest of the island. They would therefore have responded to this potential threat by urgently reorganising the defences of what was left of their *epikraty*. Diodorus confirms this possibility by stating that in 250 the Carthaginians razed Selinus on their southern flank, and transferred the population to Lilybaeum.¹⁹

In order to supervise this defensive reorganisation, it would have been imperative to appoint a new, capable and dynamic commander - I argue that he was Hamilcar Barca, father of the famous Hannibal.²⁰ A major problem is that the name Hamilcar (sometimes accompanied by an epithet) is linked to many operations over a considerable period of the war, and as a result, it has been argued by Lazenby that there were two commanders of this name before 248. One is called Hamilcar 'the Carthaginian general in command of the land forces' and is first known to have operated in Sicily after the battle of Mylae', and the other is 'the Admiral'.²¹ However, there are mentions of

¹⁵ Walbank 1957:102 *ad* 40.1.

¹⁶ Diodorus 23.21.1 accuses him of being dilatory.

¹⁷ Zonar. 8.14. Thiel 1954, 261-2 accepts the presence of the Punic fleet and considers that 'if Hasdrubal ... thought of having a try at reconquering Panormus, he could not do without the assistance of a fleet'.

¹⁸ Polyb. 1.41.2-3

¹⁹ Diod. 24.1.1. Lazenby 1996, 125 suggests that the same was done to Heraclea Minoa.

²⁰ Lazenby 1996:145-6: 'Hamilcar was clearly a charismatic commander, who fully lived up to his family name, which probably means "lightning" or "sword-flash" (Semitic *Bârâq*'); Hoyos 2005:1 states that 'Barca' is a nickname.

²¹ References to another Hamilcar (the Admiral), and including one of the three commanders confronting Regulus at Aspis, relate to both the years 257 (Tyndaris): Zonar. 8.12, and 256

'Hamilcar, the one called Barca' but these are considered erroneous because Barca is believed to have arrived to Sicily in 248 or 247, and as a result they are considered to be the 'land commander'.²² The rearrangement of the narrative, according to my hypothesis, means that the Hamilcar mentioned in 260 is Hamilcar Barca, and that he is to be associated with events from 250 until the 241.²³

Hamilcar is described by Diodorus as the most distinguished man of his time and in the Sicilian War was the only leader who repeatedly defeated the Romans,²⁴ yet this is not apparent according to the standard story. Polybius also confirms that Hamilcar Barca was the best general of the war for 'daring and genius'.²⁵ Zonaras confirms that he was superior to all other Carthaginian commanders except his son Hannibal.²⁶

I have argued in chapter 4, that the activities of a 'Hamilcar' in the period 260-259 are associated with a sequence of events that are linked to, and directly precede, those of Aulus Atilius Caiatinus when he was dictator in the latter part of 249, and that therefore the former's activities belong to 250-249. Furthermore, it is very likely Hamilcar's nickname 'Barca' was omitted in order to imply he was the 'land commander' and thus to disassociate him from the significant achievements of Hannibal's father. I postulate there was only one land commander called Hamilcar, and he was Hamilcar Barca and that only he was in command in Sicily from 250 to the 'peace period' (248), and then again at the end of the war (242/1).²⁷ Lazenby would seem to attribute all references to a 'Hamilcar' from 261 to 256 as the 'commander in Sicily'.²⁸

(mainly Ecnomus & Africa): Polyb. 1.27.6-28.7, 30.1; Dio 11.43.21; Zonar. 8.12, 8.13; Diod. 23.12.1; [Aur. Vict.] *De vir. ill.* 40.1-2; Eutrop. 2.21; Oros. 4.8.6 & 16; Val. Max. 4.6.2.

²² Zonar. 8.10, Cic. *Off.* 3.99. Lazenby 1996:62.

²³ The name 'Barca' is specifically mentioned by Diodorus 22.23.1 which is possibly introductory to the events of 250 – see Diod. p.119 n.2 *ad* 22.23.1 (F. R. Walton). Barca is also mentioned in connection with the siege of Lilybaeum in 249 (Frontin. *Str.* 3.10.9) and by Cornelius Nepos (Nep. *Ham* 22.1). See also note 27 below.

²⁴ Diod. 26.24.1: he also brought an end to the Mercenary War.

²⁵ Polyb. 1.64.6.

²⁶ Zonar. 8.10.

²⁷ I argue that the following mentions of Hamilcar that are likely to relate specifically to Hamilcar Barca: Diod. 23.9.4 (260 s/be 250) Drepana, Thermae & Camarina; Polyb. 1.24.3-4 (c.260 s/be 249); Zonar. 8.11 (259 s/be 249); Zonar. 8.12 (258 s/be 249); Zonar. 8.10 (261 s/be 242/1); Zonar. 8.15 (250); Zonar. 8.16 (250).

²⁸ Lazenby 1996:202 (Index), & 62 – assuming the indexing is correct.

Regarding the reference by Frontinus of Barca, 'general of the Carthaginians' in Sicily, Hoyos claims that 'Frontinus or his source got confused' as this incident is the one referred to by Polybius where the commander is 'Hannibal son of Hamilcar'.²⁹ I suggest that it was Pictor who simply reversed the words 'Hamilcar [Barca] son of Hannibal' to hide Barca's presence at this siege. It would seem that this is in line with Orosius' statement, in relation to the siege, that when 'Hannibal the son of Hamilcar' arrived, the Romans were beaten, and they lost much of their army and only managed to escape with difficulty. This clearly refers to an important and victorious commander who is not otherwise mentioned outside of this period and can only refer to Barca.³⁰

The Problem of Drepana (250)

After the victory over Hasdrubal, we do not hear of any Roman attempts to conquer the smaller cities in the far west of Sicily, nor of any attempt on the major fortified city Drepana. This city had been attacked unsuccessfully in 254, and was now the most logical target for the Romans operating out of Panormus.³¹ Its capture would provide an ideal base from which to organise a siege of Lilybaeum – Rome's ultimate target. The Romans knew how difficult it was to besiege Lilybaeum because the consuls of 253 (Servilius Caepio and Sempronius Blaesus) had sailed there and attacked it, but had been repulsed.³² As we are informed that Drepana was fortified in 260, it is surprising that there is no reference to the Carthaginians using it a base for their fleet, from which to intercept Roman attempts on Lilybaeum.³³ This would again seem to be the situation in 250, as there is no mention in the sources of any blockade of Drepana, indicating it was completely bypassed.³⁴ Later in the siege of Lilybaeum Adherbal is reported to be stationed with his fleet at Drepana. This allowed the Carthaginians to

²⁹ Frontin. *Str.* 3.10.9; Hoyos 2005:237 n.7.

³⁰ Oros. 4.10.2.

³¹ Diod. 23.18.3: Romans were chased away by Carthalo.

³² Zonar. 8.14.

³³ Diod. 23.9.4; Zonar. 8.11. Diodorus 23.18.3 mentions that Carthalo besieged Drepana in 254, but I argue below that the correct date is 250.

³⁴ Diodorus 24.9.1 says the Roman fleet sailed from Panormus for Lilybaeum: this would confirm that it sailed passed Drepana.

prevent future Roman supplies coming past them by sea from Panormus. This also allowed them to harass the land supplies of the Roman besiegers of Lilybaeum.³⁵

Therefore, I argue that the disasters in 249, involving the destruction of Roman fleets by Adherbal and Carthalo and the stormy conditions along the extensive southern coastal route, can be directly attributed to Rome's error in not capturing Drepana at the outset of the campaign.³⁶ That scholars have not given proper consideration to this calamitous error is probably due to the statement by Polybius that after their victory over Hasdrubal, the emboldened Romans were eager to finish the war, and that there was no impediment against the easy passage of the Roman fleet to sail directly from Panormus to Lilybaeum.³⁷

Nevertheless, the fundamental problem remains as to why the Romans initially ignored Drepana, when they must have been aware that the enemy would have been able to use it as a base for their fleet to block the significant additional supplies for Lilybaeum, including siege equipment and grain.³⁸ The alternative sea route would have to been via the long and dangerous south coast of Sicily.³⁹ Carthaginian cavalry based at Drepana would also have been able to threaten the supply routes by land to the Romans at Lilybaeum.⁴⁰ The Romans must also have been aware that the Carthaginians were fortifying Lilybaeum, and Polybius notes that Drepana was always well fortified. Thiel believes the Carthaginians were also building more ships facilitated by the supervision of Carthalo. He also thinks it credible that, despite not being mentioned between the years 254 and 249,

³⁵ Polyb. 1.49.7-12; Diod. 24.1.5; Zonar. 8.15. See also below.

³⁶ Although in different circumstances, the Romans did not repeat this mistake, because in 242 they besieged Drepana and only occupied the roadsteads of Lilybaeum (Polyb. 1.59.8-9).

³⁷ Polyb. 1.41.2-3; Steinby 2014:87: 'The victory at Panormus boosted the confidence of the Romans': Diod. 24.1.1.

³⁸ Thiel 1954:262 n.651 interprets the passage in Diodorus 24.1.1: 'the transports evidently carried siege-engines and victuals for the besieging troops'. The Roman troops marched by land from Panormus to Lilybaeum: Thiel 1954:262-3.

³⁹ The very high losses incurred in the destruction of the Roman fleet off Camarina in 255 is graphically highlighted by Polybius 1.37.1-10.

⁴⁰ Polybius 1.55.4 mentions the land routes from Panormus to Lilybaeum by which supplies could be sent by the government, and Diodorus 24.1.4 says Hiero sent grain [from Syracuse].

Carthalo 'played a part in the organisation of the shipbuilding activity...'.⁴¹

Despite the demoralisation of the Carthaginians, the Romans could not have assumed an easy victory because they would probably have known that the survivors of the battle had fled back to reinforce the garrison in Lilybaeum, and that mercenaries must fight to get paid.⁴²

A risky attack like this would contravene the cautious policy the Romans had been adopting in their advance westwards, with Panormus only being captured in 254, and Thermae and Lipara in the period 252-1.⁴³ It is therefore surprising that the Romans, with their significant army and navy, did not also attempt to blockade Drepana (at least by land) when they had decided to besiege Lilybaeum.

Roman Siege of Lilybaeum (250-249)

After the victory of Metellus in the summer of 250, the Romans completed their naval preparations and commenced the most important siege of the war by attacking Lilybaeum with their whole fleet and army. It is likely that the consuls C. Atilius Regulus and L. Manlius Vulso had not yet arrived in Sicily at the time of Metellus' victory in (probably) June.⁴⁴ Polybius says that in the war's fourteenth year the consuls set sail with 200 ships and arriving off Lilybaeum, joined up with the army and besieged Lilybaeum.⁴⁵ Diodorus has a slightly different but more detailed version of events i.e., that the Romans descended on Lilybaeum, via Panormus, with a fleet that comprised 240 warships, 60 light vessels and many transports and

⁴¹ Thiel 1954:259-260 calculates that Carthage had 'no more than 70 ships' and that this was augmented by an additional 100 ships during 250-49, and that despite not being mentioned between the years 254 and 249, Carthalo 'played a part in the organisation of the shipbuilding activity...'. .

⁴² Oros. 4.9.14-15.

⁴³ Thermae & Lipara captured: Polyb. 1.39.13, Diod. 23.20.1a.

⁴⁴ Thiel 1954:260-1: Hasdrubal was pre-empting their arrival in order to defeat Metellus on his own.

⁴⁵ Polyb. 1.41.3-4, but the consuls belong to the fifteenth year of the war (250/249); Walbank 1954:103-4 *ad* 41.4 says that Polybius (1.41.4) was not wrong when he states that it was in the 14th year of the war (251/250) because that is when the Romans decided to return to the sea - not that it was the year they attacked Lilybaeum. Polybius never specifically states who the consuls were in the fifteenth year of the war.

blockaded the city with a trench, and attacked with siege-engines. They had 110,000 men, and the Carthaginians 7,000 infantry and 700 cavalry.⁴⁶

The Romans were resolutely determined to capture the city, and so the fighting was ferocious. By using battering-rams, the Romans were able to knock down some of the towers. However, Himilco, the garrison commander, effectively resisted night and day.⁴⁷

According to Polybius, it was at this point the Carthaginians evaded the blockade and slipped 50 ships filled with 10,000 troops into the city under the command of Hannibal son of Hamilcar.⁴⁸ Himilco, the garrison commander, attacked the Roman siege-works with no fewer than 20,000 men and destroyed most of them.⁴⁹ Meanwhile, according to Zonaras, the Carthaginians sent in Adherbal with a very large number of ships and supplies.⁵⁰ This is supported by Diodorus who states that 4,000 troops came as well as supplies,⁵¹ and then Adherbal and his men took heart again. The reference to Adherbal implies that he was defending Lilybaeum, but Polybius says he was the commander at Drepana.⁵² Walton quotes Wessering as saying the text is transposed and should read 'relief arrived from Carthage - Adherbal with...men and supplies...'.⁵³ Lazenby, meanwhile, notes there is a clear discrepancy with Polybius and suggests that two reliefs were sent.⁵⁴ Polybius states the garrison commander at Lilybaeum was Himilco,⁵⁵ whereas Zonaras says it was Hamilcar who made the sorties and destroyed the siege-engines⁵⁶ - thus indicating he was the commander.⁵⁷

Diodorus informs us that the Romans twice blockaded the harbour, but twice the seas destroyed it, and that the Carthaginians sent their cavalry

⁴⁶ Diod. 24.1.1. Thiel 1954:262 n.651 says that 'the transports evidently carried siege-engines and victuals for the besieging troops'.

⁴⁷ Polyb. 1.41:1-6 7, 42.13 & 45.1. Who exactly was in overall charge of the Carthaginians in Sicily is not clear, as the sources mention various leaders: Himilco, Adherbal, Hamilcar (Zonar. 8.13) and Hamilcar Barca (Frontin. *Str.* 3.10.9).

⁴⁸ Polyb. 1.44:1-7.

⁴⁹ Polyb. 1.45:1-14.

⁵⁰ Zonar. 8.15.

⁵¹ Diod. 24.1.4.

⁵² Polyb. 1.46.1-3

⁵³ Diod. 24.1.2, p.121 n.2 (F. R. Walton).

⁵⁴ Lazenby 1996:126.

⁵⁵ Polyb. 1.42.12.

⁵⁶ Zonar.8.15.

⁵⁷ Frontinus *Str.* 3.10.9 refers to this incident naming Barca as commander – see above.

to Drepana where they were of great help.⁵⁸ Zonaras confirms this by saying that Hamilcar's cavalry from Drepana prevented supplies getting through to the Romans, and that not only allied territory was overrun, but that Adherbal ravaged the shores of Sicily and Italy.⁵⁹ Diodorus details some of the problems with which the Romans now had to contend. They had lost their engines and suffered from lack of food, and the presence of pestilence from only eating meat, so that 10,000 died in a few days. As a result of these problems, the Romans were prepared to raise the siege, but grain was received from Hiero.⁶⁰

The Romans now gave up any attempt to attack and just settled down to a blockade.⁶¹ Zonaras notes that it was only after disease forced one of the consuls with his army home that Hamilcar made sorties setting fire to the engines and killing their defenders.⁶² Orosius has a contradictory narrative saying that with the arrival of Hannibal, son of Hamilcar, the Romans lost a great part of their army and only just effected an escape.⁶³

It is never stated by the sources how long the above events took, but due to the intensity of the fighting and the losses in men, equipment and supplies it is unlikely to have gone beyond the campaigning season in October or early November, when sudden storms became prevalent.⁶⁴ However, Polybius states that immediately the disaster was known, 10,000 sailors were recruited and sent overland by Rome to strengthen the siege, and that the new consul for 249/8, Claudius Pulcher, took charge. By stating that the reinforcements were sent immediately after the Roman losses were made known (together with the arrival of Claudius), Polybius is ignoring the existence of a winter siege. It must be stressed that there is no mention in

⁵⁸ The Romans were never able to maintain a strict naval blockade: Steinby 2014:90 argues that this is because 'the geography of the area favoured the Carthaginians'. Diod. 24.1.2-3 states they could then harass the Roman lines.

⁵⁹ Zonar. 8.15.

⁶⁰ Diod. 24.1.4.

⁶¹ Polyb. 1.48.1-11.

⁶² Zonar. 8.15: his account would seem more logical, but this intense period of fighting did not last long.

⁶³ Oros. 4.10.2.

⁶⁴ Beresford 2013:9 notes the 'scholarly consensus that sea-faring on the ancient Mediterranean commenced in either March or April ... before drawing to a close in October or November' – he argues that this is too bald an assumption. But, he agrees that 'galleys were usually confined to a six- or eight-month operating season extending between spring and autumn' (2013:147).

any of the sources that the troops spent the winter at Lilybaeum.⁶⁵ This is a significant anomaly, as such a commitment by the hard-pressed Roman besiegers would have been highlighted, but following Polybius, scholars have tended to ignore or downplay the issue. Thiel supposes that: 'The siege had been continued throughout the winter: a good part of the besieging forces had perished in the siege operations or in consequence of the weather conditions or lack of food or diseases resulting from both'.⁶⁶ However, not only is there no mention in any of the sources of wintry weather conditions, but there is also no mention of any very long periods of siege inactivity which the winter would have made necessary.

As soon as he could, Claudius manned the whole fleet that was at Lilybaeum and made a surprise but disastrous attack on Adherbal's ships at Drepana: this resulted in his recall by the Senate.⁶⁷ Polybius then makes what appears to be a doubtful statement, specifically, that elections having now been held (implying 248/7), one of the new consuls, L. Junius (Pullus), was sent with provisions for Lilybaeum.⁶⁸ The problem that arises from this statement is that Claudius was Junius' consular colleague for 249/8. Both Lazenby and Thiel speculate that this confusion arose from Philinus stating that Junius' operations were in the sixteenth year of the war (i.e., starting from the second half of 249).⁶⁹

The situation changed rapidly with the arrival of the newly elected consul Claudius Pulcher (249/8), as well as overland reinforcements of 10,000 sailors. After reorganising the army and siege, he decided on a surprise attack on Drepana.⁷⁰ The main aim was not to besiege Drepana itself (Polybius never says this was the objective) but the more realistic prospect of destroying Adherbal's fleet based there, as he knew the Carthaginian was unprepared.⁷¹ Claudius' men were also encouraged in this

⁶⁵ Thiel 1954:271 n.690 discusses the problem of supplies for the Romans and Carthaginian attacks.

⁶⁶ Thiel 1954:271.

⁶⁷ Polyb. 1.49.1-51.12; Diod. 24.4.1; Zonar. 8.15; Liv. *Per.* 19; Eutrop. 2.26.1; Oros.4.10.3, discussed below.

⁶⁸ Polyb. 1.52.5.

⁶⁹ Thiel 1954:283, n.726; Lazenby 1996:137.

⁷⁰ Polyb. 1.49.1-4.

⁷¹ Polyb. 1.49.4-5: Adherbal believed the Romans still had insufficient numbers to man their ships.

endeavour by the shortness of the route and the potential booty that could be acquired.⁷² The destruction of the enemy fleet would also enable Claudius more easily prevent Lilybaeum from being supplied by sea.⁷³ It has been suggested that Claudius launched his pre-emptive attack on Adherbal to 'forestall the arrival of 70 reinforcements' brought by Carthalo.⁷⁴ Claudius with his fleet of 120 ships arrived at the harbour of Drepana but was in turn surprised and outmanoeuvred by Adherbal. As a result, he lost 90 ships sunk or captured, and 8,000 soldiers killed and 20,000 captured, but he managed to escape with 30 ships.

After Adherbal's victory, Carthalo arrived at Drepana with his 70 ships, and Adherbal gave him an additional 30 ships. This enabled Carthalo to use a fleet of 100 ships to attack Roman shipping around Lilybaeum. He was able to capture or destroy a few; in the meanwhile, Himilco with his mercenaries attacked the besiegers who were now in great distress.⁷⁵

It was perhaps in July 249 that the other consul Junius collected a large fleet of 120 warships and 800 transports from Messana, and then sailed for Syracuse. Due to the urgent necessity to supply the troops at Lilybaeum and the time it was taking to collect supplies and fill the vessels, Junius divided his fleet.⁷⁶ This decision to split the fleet proved fatal and Junius has been strongly criticised for his misjudgement. However, I consider the original plan was quite sensible. It would have been for Claudius to reorganise the siege as soon as he could after his election, and for Junius to

⁷² Polyb. 1.49.5.

⁷³ Oros. 4.10.3. It is possible the famous incident of Claudius' contempt for the auspices (Cic. *Nat. D.* 2.7) had been invented due to the reputation of the Claudii for being arrogant. However, the fact that it is not mentioned by Polybius does not necessarily mean that it should be rejected – details of Roman rituals are not of significant concern for him: Driediger-Murphy 2019: 183 n.73. Livy 2.56.7 describes an accusation against the Claudii for being a 'familia superbissima ac crudelissima in plebam Romanam' – see Scullard 1951:36. Tacitus *Ann.* 1.4.1 famously notes about the emperor Tiberius: 'vetus atque insita Claudiae familiae superbia'. 'The patrician Claudii ... consistently appear as arrogant nobles and enemies of the plebs' - Richardson 2015:180; this theme very likely influences these events, especially as 'Romans ... were expected to live up to the achievements of their ancestors' and indeed behave like them.

⁷⁴ Walbank 1957:116 *ad* 53.2; Diodorus 24.1.5-7 says that after the Drepana victory the Carthaginians ordered Hannibal 'the trierarch' with 30 ships to seize grain from the stores at Panormus and bring them back to Drepana, from where Lilybaeum was resupplied with all necessities - it would seem that Panormus was not well defended.

⁷⁵ Polybius I.53.1-13: more ships could have been destroyed by the mercenaries, as Thiel 1954:282 n.723 says they 'were on or very near the beach'.

⁷⁶ Polyb. 1.52.6-7. Lazenby 1996:137.

collect all the necessary provisions and then proceed with the entire fleet to Lilybaeum via the south coast, well away from the Carthaginian fleet at Drepana. Claudius' Drepana initiative would not have been in the original plan,⁷⁷ but had it succeeded he would have been in an excellent position to tighten the blockade and await Junius and his supplies in due course.

However, once Junius heard about the disaster at Drepana, he would have been faced with some very difficult choices. One choice would have been to collect the supplies, load them onto the ships and depart in one combined fleet. A second choice would have been to send ahead the ships that were already fully loaded, together with all the warships. These warships would then return to accompany the empty supply vessels back to Lilybaeum. A third choice would have been to divide the ships into two fleets and send on immediately those merchantmen that were already laden, together with some of the warships: the other fleet would follow as soon as possible. The first option would be the safest option but would have cost too much delay, the second would have provided more safety for the merchantmen and involved less delay for some of the supplies, but much more delay for the rest, and it would have also involved greater overall risk of encountering bad weather. The third option would therefore have had to be taken in view of the urgency of the situation - but with the greater possibility of a Carthaginian interception at sea and defeat. I consider Thiel could well be right in thinking that perhaps Junius chose the last option because he had not heard that Carthalo had come from Carthage with 70 ships.⁷⁸

The actual course of events was a disaster for the Romans. It is likely that Carthalo had obtained information that Junius' fleet had just left Syracuse, so he put to sea with 100 ships. The two fleets spotted each other off Gela, whereupon the frightened Romans put in at Phintias for shelter.⁷⁹ The Carthaginians then attacked, and according to Diodorus, disabled 50 of the large freighters, sank 17 warships and made useless 13 others; they then retired to the Halycus River.⁸⁰ Unaware of these events, Junius with 36

⁷⁷ Thiel 1954:272-3 says Claudius took this action on hearing of Carthaginian naval reinforcements.

⁷⁸ Thiel 1954:284-5; Burgeon 2017:171 says Junius was still ignorant of Claudius' defeat.

⁷⁹ Polyb. 1.53.1-3 & 7-8; Diod. 24.1.7.

⁸⁰ Diod. 24.1.5-11.

warships and a large number of transports followed later (after an unspecified period), and anchoring near Phintias, discovered what had occurred. Carthalo later reappeared, after which Junius tried to return to Syracuse but was overtaken by a storm. Only 2 of the 105 warships survived and most of the men perished, but Junius did manage to get to Lilybaeum with the survivors on the 2 warships.⁸¹

When Junius Pullus, with his very reduced force, arrived at the Roman camp outside Lilybaeum he found the situation critical: Claudius Pulcher had already been recalled, but approval of the appointment of a dictator was being delayed at Rome.⁸² What happened next is unclear, but a likely scenario is that Junius Pullus would normally have taken overall command, but with his humiliating defeats and loss of most of his soldiers, he would have been seriously discredited. Pullus therefore had a choice: to assume command or to take a bold military initiative that would enable him to redeem himself.⁸³ Polybius says that soon after returning to the army he captured Eryx by surprise,⁸⁴ and garrisoned it.⁸⁵ Frank says, by doing so 'he cut off all roads from Drepana' and hindered the Carthaginian cavalry,⁸⁶ but without his own cavalry he could only be a nuisance.⁸⁷ Carthalo shortly afterwards came with an army by sea and launched a night attack on Aegithallus (probably part of Mount Eryx) and captured him.⁸⁸ This is not mentioned by Polybius, and Walbank explains this omission on the grounds that 'in a short survey

⁸¹ Diod. 24.1.5-11.

⁸² Livy *Per.* 19; Zonar. 8.15. After the debacle outside Drepana, the Senate decided to recall Claudius and ordered him to appoint a dictator to take charge, but it is not clear when this was effected. Claudius was clearly upset and appointed a certain M. Claudius Glicia who was a nonentity (a *scriba* and probably a dependent); Suetonius *Tib.* 3.2.2 says he did this as if joking at his country's peril. Thiel 1954, 291 n.741 speculates that he did this out of contempt for the Roman nobility. Glicia was rejected by the Senators who appointed their own dictator A. Atilius Calatinus (Caiatinus) together with L. Caecilius Metellus, his Master of the Horse: (Livy *Per.* 19) & *MRR* I 215. The whole incident seems inexplicable, especially as Livy says Glicia still attended the games in his purple-bordered toga (Livy *Per.* 19). It is also highly unlikely that Claudius would have left the army without appointing a leader with the requisite military experience.

⁸³ Polyb. 1.55.5-6.

⁸⁴ The Carthaginians had destroyed it earlier, except for the temple area: Zonar. 8.11; Diod. 23.9.4.

⁸⁵ Polyb. 1.55.9-10.

⁸⁶ Frank 1928:688.

⁸⁷ Diodorus 24.1.1 says that initially the Romans had 700 cavalry, but it is not mentioned in the conflict, and unless reinforced by Claudius most of the horses would have died or been eaten during the siege.

⁸⁸ Lazenby 1996:141. Zonar. 8.15.

P[olybius] may have felt justified in omitting the seizure by Carthalo'.⁸⁹ Presumably, he was part of a prisoner exchange later, for Valerius Maximus says that he committed suicide before being convicted in the courts.⁹⁰

With all these disasters the Romans had suffered, they were clearly in a desperate situation, and yet Polybius says that though the Carthaginians now controlled the sea and thought they had a good chance of recovering their territory, the Romans kept up the siege with Rome sending supplies overland.⁹¹

Review of the Roman disasters and Carthaginian Response

I argue that, after all these disasters the situation in the Roman camp at Lilybaeum was not just precarious but must have been virtually untenable, because the Romans had lost their siege equipment, their ships, and their supplies, and suffered a catastrophic number of casualties, and were now desperate for replacements. Even more importantly, there was little chance of getting these rapidly, because the supply of men and goods overland would be hazardous, subject to attacks, take a long time, and be of limited quantity. There were also the problems of disease, malnutrition, and low morale, especially knowing the Carthaginians were capable of launching further devastating attacks. Moreover, there was a delay in the appointment of a dictator who could continue the siege with vital reinforcements.

I believe it likely that as a result of all these factors the Romans would have had very little choice other than to break camp and return to Panormus, where they could safely defend themselves from any attack, and await the eventual arrival of the new dictator with his army. In due course, with supplies, fresh troops and morale re-established, they would be able to resume their offensive. The great losses incurred by the Romans are emphasised in the census for 247/6 which shows only 241,712 citizens, when compared with that of 252/1 showing 297,797.⁹² This indicates a very significant reduction of nearly twenty per cent.

⁸⁹ Lazenby 1996:141. Zonar. 8.15. Walbank 1957:119 *ad* 56.10.

⁹⁰ Val Max. 1.4.4.

⁹¹ Polyb. 1.55.1-5: surprisingly, no mention is made of Hiero.

⁹² For 247/6: Liv. *Per.* 19, but Brunt 1987:30 states 241,712. For 252/1: Liv. *Per.* 18; Brunt 1987:30,32) states this figure but notes that it could be corrupt as it should be a significantly

From the Carthaginians' point of view, they would now have been in an excellent position to launch an attack on the weakened Romans, capture their camp and take prisoners and booty. As we have seen above, the Carthaginians were well supplied with money, food and other supplies, had destroyed the Roman siege-works, inflicted huge casualties on the Romans both by land and sea, and were commanded by the greatest general of the war.⁹³ So, the incentive to exploit the situation would surely have been strong, most especially for the mercenaries.

Yet, as we have seen, Polybius maintains none of this happened and that the Romans continued the siege.⁹⁴ Most scholars have sought to explain this surprising lack of a Carthaginian initiative by suggesting a variety of answers that are discussed below.

Scholars' Views

This extraordinary lack of a follow-up by the Carthaginians on the Roman disasters of 249 has elicited great surprise among scholars.⁹⁵

Importantly, Thiel presciently states the possible outcome:

'What would have happened, if Carthage had made the most of her naval supremacy in the next years? It is easy to answer this idle question: *if* Carthage had really availed herself of the opportunity, Rome would not have won the war. *If!* For Carthage did not avail herself of the opportunity.'⁹⁶

What is very significant, is that these scholars find it difficult to believe Polybius' statement that the Romans continued the siege of Lilybaeum as best they could.⁹⁷ Instead of criticising Polybius' bald narrative, scholars

lower figure than the previous census of 292,234 (265/4), due to the losses incurred particularly in 255 and 253. However, as the census for 252/1 is high, the Camarina loss in 255 and the 253 loss of life in the storm off the Palinurus Promontory, could have been significantly over-stated.

⁹³ Diod. 26.24; Polyb. 1.64.6.

⁹⁴ Polyb. 1.55.2-4. Apart from a brief reference to the consuls of 248 harrying Lilybaeum and 'Drepanum' (Zonar. 8.16), no source at this stage discusses details in the continuance of the siege.

⁹⁵ De Sanctis 1967:175 suggests they should have besieged Panormus and Syracuse. Lazenby 1996:143 believes the war should now have ended rapidly. Hoyos 2005:9 expresses surprise at the lack of a Carthaginian initiative at this juncture.

⁹⁶ Thiel 1954:293.

⁹⁷ Polyb. 1.55.1-5.

have endeavoured to support it by proposing a large number of possible but unsubstantiated reasons.

A popular view, whether expressly stated or assumed, is that both sides were exhausted. Scullard says 'Once again the position was one of stalemate. Each side required or took a breathing space.'⁹⁸ Mommsen summarises the appalling losses suffered by the Romans and notes that '...the direct damage sustained in ships and *matériel*, and the indirect injury through the paralysing of trade, must have been immense'.⁹⁹

Another important view adopted by scholars is that the Carthaginians simply ran out of resources, particularly finances. This view is mainly based on Appian who, in an undated passage, says that both sides had major financial problems, with the Romans being over-taxed and ceasing to build ships,¹⁰⁰ and that the Carthaginians requested a loan of 2,000 talents from Ptolemy Philadelphus, which was rejected. This refusal could be regarded as a critical piece of evidence for her failure to act; the date of Appian's statement is important but controversial.¹⁰¹ Referring to Appian's statement, Hoyos considers the lack of finances to be the key factor in Carthage's inactivity. He also lists other factors: viz., that subsequently Carthage's unpaid mercenaries revolted, the Carthaginians laid up their fleet and that Hamilcar Barca's inability to attack the Roman legions directly; there was also the disruption of trade, particularly with Sicily and Italy, due to the war and the activities of privateers.¹⁰²

However, a loan request does not necessarily mean bankruptcy, but usually means an easy way of securing funds. It is an alternative to having to raise taxes, sell off property or plunder temples. There could be no doubt that a rich city like Carthage could honour her debts. Appian associates the loan request together with a mediation for peace by Ptolemy Philadelphus, but the

⁹⁸ Scullard 1961:158.

⁹⁹ Mommsen & Dickson 1921 vol.2: 48.

¹⁰⁰ App. *Sic.* 5.1.1; Appian also mentions here that the Romans were short of money and could no longer build ships.

¹⁰¹ Thiel 1954:335 n.852 places it to 'shortly after 249'; Appian states 252: p.127, margin note, *ad Sic.* 5.1.1 (H. White); Hoyos 2005:10-11 says around 250.

¹⁰² Hoyos 2005:10-11 – see also chapter 7 regarding Carthage and Hamilcar's activities in 248-3. Mommsen who, though noting the Carthaginians had real issues with funding, stresses that the organisation of their finances ensured they could continue to prosecute the war (Mommsen & Dickson 1921 vol.2: 49).

other sources do not appear to mention a peace mission during the siege of Lilybaeum in 250/249, especially as in 250 Zonaras reports that Carthage sent Adherbal with a very large number of ships carrying grain and money to Lilybaeum.¹⁰³ In 248 Zonaras records that ‘the Carthaginians caused much trouble by sailing to Sicily and making trips into Italy’, and ‘Carthalo raided Sicily and made an attempted raid on Italy’.¹⁰⁴

If the Carthaginians had run out of money in 249, the mercenaries would very likely have revolted then, not in 248. It thus seems impossible to believe that the latter, who had recently received large sums of money via Adherbal, would not have wanted to plunder the Roman camp and capture the survivors particularly, if the money had indeed run out then. It was only in 248 and 247 that the Carthaginians’ mercenaries revolted over pay.¹⁰⁵ It is important to note that a continued shortage of funds would have rendered it extremely difficult for the Carthaginians to continue, during the period 247-3, to defend Heircte and then Eryx, as well as the garrisons in Lilybaeum and Drepana. On the other hand, the Romans, in view of their military exertions and financial expenditure, would undoubtedly have contemplated a period of peace – this is explored in the next chapter.

Lancel states that ‘Carthage was a city of merchants. Its power remained based above all on trade, on the control of commercial circuits and the resources provided by that control, by the levying of customs duties’.¹⁰⁶ Thus, any serious attempt to disrupt her trade would potentially have had a severe effect on her ability to conduct the war. Zonaras says that some ‘private individuals’ in ships provided by the Romans carried out raids on the enemy, particularly in Africa.¹⁰⁷ The dates of these raids are very uncertain and, apart from attacking Hippo, the details are vague, and they do not seem to have been particularly numerous or effective. The Carthaginians still had

¹⁰³ Zonar. 8.15. Zonaras is here clearly saying that the Carthaginians had plenty of resources in both terms of food and finance for their mercenaries.

¹⁰⁴ Zonar. 8.16.

¹⁰⁵ It is very surprising that Polybius makes no mention of problems with mercenaries in Sicily in this period, especially as he covers the Mercenary War in such great detail (1.66.1 - 1.88.8). However, Zonaras 8.16 states both Carthalo and Hamilcar fought them in 248 and 247.

¹⁰⁶ Lancel & Nevill 1995:121. De Sanctis 1967:175-6 regards the safeguarding of her trade as a major priority for the Carthaginians.

¹⁰⁷ Zonar. 8.16.

control of the seas and were ruthlessly raiding Sicily and Italy, certainly in 248 and 247.¹⁰⁸ There are no indications that either supplies to Hamilcar and Carthaginian possessions in Sicily, or her international trade was affected.¹⁰⁹ Nor are there indications of any curtailment of Carthaginian trade with her colonies in Sardinia and Spain, and her trade routes eastwards along the African coast to Cyrenaica, Egypt and the Levant.¹¹⁰ Most of the trade routes were beyond the reach of Roman 'pirates'.

Another argument for the reduction of Carthaginian activity in Sicily is based on a change of policy away from Sicily and a focus on territorial expansion in Africa in order to develop its resources. The sources state that Hanno the Great captured Hecatompylus at some time between 247 and 241.¹¹¹ Polybius notes that Hanno was a rival of Hamilcar Barca in the Mercenary War: this might indicate that Hanno was seeking a rival power base in Africa.¹¹² This change of policy is associated with reduced financial resources – the inability to maintain both a fleet in Sicily and an army in Africa (Thiel), or complacency that the Romans would negotiate, and the ships would be converted back into trading vessels (Hunt).¹¹³

As scholars have emphasised, the disaster the Romans suffered make it abundantly clear that they needed time to recover and build up their financial and material resources.¹¹⁴ There is also an emphasis in scholarship that the war would be prosecuted until ultimate victory.¹¹⁵ Hoyos adds the

¹⁰⁸ See chapter 7.

¹⁰⁹ Hoyos' claim 2005:10 that the Carthaginians mothballed their fleet is mainly based on the apparent lack of their ability to get together a fleet in 242, but there is no mention in the texts of such and it would be self-destructive if they did not take vigorous measures to protect their vast maritime trade routes – a vital source of their wealth.

¹¹⁰ Hoyos 2010:39-58,111 & 2015:15-16; Wilson 2013:120-156.

¹¹¹ Diod. 24.10.1-2, and passing reference in Polyb.1.73.1; Theveste, southern Tunisia.

¹¹² Polyb. 1.75.1-2 says Hanno was replaced by Hamilcar for incompetency. Thiel 1954: 294-6 believes Hanno the Great's party, which supported the African policy, had gained the upper hand in Carthage. Thiel's view is based on two undated references to Hanno's campaign against Hecatompylus in the interior of Carthaginian territory: Polyb. 1.73.1.; Zonar. 24.10.1-2. 'Not before 247' – Diod. 24.10.1, p.135. n.2. (F. R. Walton).

Melliti 2016:246 believes that Carthage had faced problems in Africa much earlier when victory was gained over Regulus in 255, and Hamilcar had then to fight for more than six years to put down a rebellion by the Numidians and Libyans, which had severe effects on Carthage's agriculture and finances.

¹¹³ Thiel 1954:294. Caven 1980:56 adds support by saying it was 'in order to lessen the burden on both the treasury and the maritime population of Africa'. Hunt 2017:5.

¹¹⁴ Mommsen & Dickson 1921 vol.2: 48; Frank 1928:688-9; Scullard 1961:158; Caven 1980: 55.

¹¹⁵ Frank 1928:689; Harris 1979:190; Goldsworthy 2006:122-3.

threat of a Carthaginian resurgence, 'from the Roman viewpoint even a loose hegemony in Sicily could not coexist with a continuing Carthaginian presence, ... How many times, after all, had the Carthaginians sallied forth from there to make war on Sicily's Greeks...?'.¹¹⁶ Thus, though scholars are greatly perplexed at the situation, they accept Polybius' narrative. As one of the most important of scholars in the field puts it: 'The extraordinary thing is, however, that apparently no Roman even thought of trying to negotiate an end to the war, instead, they maintained the siege of Lilybaeum, sending supplies overland (55.4) ...'.¹¹⁷

Summary

There are a number of significant anomalies with regard to the events of the years 250-249. This should cast significant doubt on the accuracy of Polybius' narrative. I argue that the arrival of Hasdrubal in Sicily (probably in the spring of 250) and his subsequent defeat before Panormus in June, may have inspired the Romans to exploit their victory and prepare for a westward advance to complete the conquest of Sicily. I also argue that the ultimate objective was Lilybaeum, but to ensure a long siege could be sustained with a continuous supplies of men and matériel, the next obvious target would have been Drepana. However, according to the sources, a siege of Drepana was not even considered.

That the Carthaginians apparently did not take advantage of these disasters has puzzled scholars who have found no agreed solution. I argue in chapter 7, that had scholars fully taken into account all the problems arising from the sieges undertaken by the Romans during the following period (247-3),¹¹⁸ they would have taken a more critical approach to Polybius' account of the events of 250-248. Steinby gives what I believe is the logical answer to this situation when she points out that the results of previous attempts on Lilybaeum:

'The war started to resemble those campaigns Carthage had fought against Syracuse or Pyrrhus, where the enemy had failed

¹¹⁶ Hoyos 2005:9.

¹¹⁷ Lazenby 1996:140.

¹¹⁸ Occurring at a time when the Romans had no fleet and the Carthaginians had pro-active control of the seas.

to take the last strongholds, especially Lilybaeum, and the conflict was soon brought to a close with a peace treaty'.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Steinby 2014:97.

CHAPTER 7. KEY ANOMALIES: RAIDS AND SIEGES (247-243)

The period from 247 to 243 appears to be characterised by a stalemate comprising a period of reduced activity confined mainly to prolonged, indecisive sieges and minor guerrilla activity. Polybius gives few details of events apart from the two long sieges involving Hamilcar Barca. With one exception, he does not name the consuls for this period, and the fasti record no triumphs. However, Diodorus and Zonaras add some details of events.

I argue that an examination of the two sieges, reveals many significant practical problems that have not received adequate attention from scholars. Mommsen describes the period after 249,

‘Thus, there ensued six years of uneventful warfare (A.U.C. 506-511, 248-243 B.C.), the most inglorious in the history of this century for Rome, and inglorious also for the Carthaginian people.’¹

Carthaginian Raiding and Mercenary Revolts (248-7)

According to the standard narrative, the Carthaginians took little advantage of Rome’s weak position on land, whilst at the same time the Romans gave up the sea.² Zonaras states that Carthalo carried out ineffective raids in Sicily. He then raided Italy in order to force the consuls fighting in Sicily to leave the island. If he were unable to achieve this, he would instead be able to devastate Italy and capture some of its cities. However, when he discovered his forces were threatened by the praetor urbanus from Rome, he retreated to Sicily.³ Some of his mercenaries now revolted over lack of pay.⁴ Polybius makes no mention of Carthalo or of any

¹ Mommsen & Dickson 1921 vol.2: 49. No substantial advance in resolving the problems of the war have made, only additional inconclusive speculation, so that the views of early historians like Niebuhr and Mommsen are as valid as later scholars.

² Polyb. 1.59.1.

³ Zonar. 8.16. Whether the role of praetor urbanus had yet been created in 247 is discussed in detail in Brennan 2000:85-89.

⁴ Zonar. 8.16. During this period Rome took other defensive measures by founding Roman colonies at Aesium (Aesulum) and Alsium in 247, Fregenae in 245, and a Latin colony at Brundisium in 244 (Vell. Pat. 1.14); see also Salmon 1982:73. These are sensible defensive precautions against raids.

mercenary revolts, but he does announce Hamilcar Barca's arrival in Sicily in the eighteenth year of the war (i.e., 247). Polybius then states Hamilcar raided Locris and Bruttium, and on his return with his fleet, he seized Heircte,⁵ which he occupied for almost three years.⁶

These raids, though threatening to the Romans, had no effect on the course of the war, and this raises the question of what purpose they really served when it was quite clear that the Romans were not going to abandon the siege of Lilybaeum. One possible solution, as Thiel proposes, is that the raids by Carthalo and Hamilcar must have been small, because 'there was apparently not a single Punic warship in Sicilian waters (Polyb. 1.59.9)'.⁷ However, this statement specifically reflects the situation in 242 and cannot be taken to cover the earlier period. Thiel accepts that their fleet was still superior to the small Roman one.⁸ That Carthage could employ a large army and navy is shown by their strength during the siege of Lilybaeum. Polybius gives no hint that they were unable to maintain these forces. But further raids ceased when Carthalo's mercenaries revolted over pay later in the campaigning season of 248.

The revolt of some of their mercenaries posed an existential threat to Carthage, so severe counter-measures were deemed necessary. However, these measures threatened to spread the disaffection to some of their other mercenaries.⁹ It is possible that these events also involved Hamilcar Barca, because Zonaras states that he had taken over command from Carthalo, and that he had also been conducting destructive raids against Italy. When Hamilcar's mercenaries also revolted, he also dealt cruelly with them.¹⁰ Lazenby, who follows Polybius in the main, is forced to move Hamilcar's assumption of command in Sicily to 248 as being more likely than Polybius' date of 247.¹¹

⁵ Polyb. 1.56.1-3.

⁶ Polyb. 1.56.11.

⁷ Thiel 1954:296.

⁸ Thiel 1954:296.

⁹ Zonar. 8.16.

¹⁰ Polyb. 1.56.1-3; Zonar. 8.16. Zonaras also states that while these events were taking place Rome reached an agreement of perpetual friendship with Hiero – this took place in 248 - see below.

¹¹ Lazenby 1996:145: because Hamilcar had first to deal with the mercenaries, 248 is credible.

247-3: Roman Privateers raid Africa.

Zonaras states under 247, that although officially the Romans gave up naval warfare 'private individuals' asked to borrow ships to raid the enemy in return for the booty. They caused much damage to Hippo and later overcame the Carthaginians in a naval encounter near Panormus.¹² They apparently continued their operations in the following years, for they are recorded as devastating Africa.¹³ These events appear to contradict the statement that the Carthaginians were masters of the seas, and furthermore, Polybius makes no mention of them. Nowhere is it explained who exactly these private individuals were, and how they had acquired the skills to become such expert sailors.

The naval victory of Aegimurus over the Carthaginians (245)

Florus states that when Fabius Buteo was consul (245) the Roman fleet, having defeated an enemy fleet near Aegimurus in the African sea, was wrecked by a storm off the African coast, nevertheless a triumph was still granted.¹⁴ Florus' statement has long been recognised as a duplication of the Roman victory that was achieved ten years earlier off Cape Hermaeum in 255.¹⁵ This belief is supported by the fact that not only were both fleets sunk in a storm in the same area, but that the Romans did not have a navy in 245, and also that the 'privateers' could not have formed an adequate fighting fleet.¹⁶ There is further support in that triumphs were only celebrated for 255.¹⁷

¹² Zonar. 8.16. Thiel 1954:299 says of Hippo: 'probably Hippo Diarrhytus = Bizerta'.

¹³ Zonar. 8.16.

¹⁴ Flor. 1.18.30-32.

¹⁵ Lazenby 1996:148.

¹⁶ Lazenby 1996:148 says in relation to Florus' statement that 'his description ... makes it almost certain that he has transferred to this point the battle off Cape Hermaia, which he omits'.

¹⁷ Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48: *Ser. Fulvius M. f. M n. Paetinus a. CDX[CIX] Nobilior pro co(n)s(ule) de Cossurensibus et Poeneis navalem egit XIII k. Febr.; M. Aimilius M. f. L n. Paullus an. CDXCIX pro co(n)s(ule) de Cossurensibus et Poeneis navalem egit XII k. Febr.* Thus, both consuls celebrated a triumph.

Period of Sieges: Heircte, Eryx, Lilybaeum and Drepana

After the year 248, which was mainly dominated by the continuing siege of Lilybaeum and Carthaginian sea-raiding, the war became bogged down with more sieges and, according to Polybius, was one of stalemate between two equal opponents.¹⁸ The main actions are the Roman sieges of Hamilcar Barca at Heircte, and then Eryx - there is also a short extract from a siege at Drepana in 247. I shall now discuss each of these in turn.

Siege of Heircte (247-5)

After he had completed his initial raiding of Italy, in 247 Hamilcar seized Heircte on a height close to the sea between Eryx and Panormus, which he occupied for almost three years.¹⁹ The precise dating of events is uncertain.²⁰ Walbank suggests the period of the siege covers 247/6, 246/5 and 245/4, but Lazenby, who accepts the year of Hamilcar's arrival in Sicily as 247, says 246-244. Polybius extolls the advantages of this defensive position and that it controlled a harbour, from which Hamilcar made further raids along the Italian coasts as far as Cumae, and it was also a very strong defensive position against the Romans.²¹ The description of Heircte being a steep hill with a cultivatable plateau of at least 100 stades in circumference, matches no modern location.²² There are indeed remains of Punic fortifications in the general high ground to the west of, and north of, Palermo, some of which may relate earlier to Pyrrhus' rapid conquests of 'Herctae' and Panormus in 277,²³ or quite possibly to our war. Mercadante follows Polybius closely and considers Hamilcar's key defensive position (Heircte) to be on Monte Billiemi (north of Mte. Castellaccio) i.e., the Cozzo San Rocco where there are fortifications, and that his camp faced that of the Romans on lower ground opposite Panormus.²⁴ Lazenby thinks that Heircte itself is a fort between Monte Castellaccio (Castellaccio) (to the west of Cozzo San Roco)

¹⁸ Polyb. 1.57.1.

¹⁹ Polyb. 1.56.11.

²⁰ Walbank 1957:120 *ad* 56.1. Lazenby 1996:xvii says 246-244 (dating Hamilcar's arrival in Sicily in Sicily in 247).

²¹ Polyb. 1.56.1-11.

²² Polyb. 1.56.4; 100 stades is a round figure and therefore quite possibly a rough estimate.

²³ Diod. 22.10.4.

²⁴ Mercadante 2006:59-65. This location would seem to be the most convincing for Heircte.

and Monte Gallo near the village of Sferracavallo, and thus the harbour is in the Isola delle Femmine.²⁵ Walbank considers 'Mte. Castellacio' is indeed the best fit,²⁶ as does Melliti.²⁷ There is thus agreement about the general location of the plateau.²⁸

Hoyos believes that the Monte Castellaccio massif best meets Polybius' description of the plateau, but accepts that it does not meet all of his criteria.²⁹ He also believes that this is separate from the actual fort which should be situated near the village of Tommaso Natale in the pass that leads to the village of Sferrocavallo and thence to the harbour.³⁰ This raises another issue which has caused scholars to disagree: whether 'Heircte' represents the plateau, a fort on top of the plateau, or a nearby but separate fort guarding the harbour approaches. Polybius states 'There is also a knoll on it which serves for an acropolis as well as for an excellent post of observation... Besides this [i.e. also] Hercte commands a harbour very well situated for ships...'.³¹ Hamilcar then launched raids on Italian shores as far as Cumae, but when the Romans encamped before Panormus and about five stades from his own camp he made many land attacks on them.³² It seems reasonable to assume from this passage that Heircte is the plateau, and the fort is on top of it, and that the camp from which Hamilcar confronted the Romans (in their camp) was separate. It is therefore surprising that Lazenby maintains that the fort is located off the plateau and guarding the approach to the harbour.³³

It would seem that there is doubt about Polybius' statement that, as Hamilcar fought continuously on equal terms on land against the Romans (who were based in their own camp), he did not also make sea-raids

²⁵ Lazenby 1996:147-8.

²⁶ Walbank 1957:120-1 *ad* 56.3.

²⁷ Melliti 2016:247.

²⁸ Hoyos 2001:492 points out that the nearest alternative, Monte Pellegrino, which is just to the north of Panormus, is too small and its harbour at Mondello is unviable.

²⁹ Hoyos 2001:494.

³⁰ Hoyos 2001:494.

³¹ Polyb. 1.56.6-7.

³² Polyb. 1.56.10-11.

³³ Lazenby 1996:32) says that taking his fleet, Hamilcar 'seized what Polybius terms "the so-called place of Heirkte" (56.3). This remark is generally taken to mean that Heirkte was the name for a fort or strongpoint below the hill on which Hamilcar now established himself.'

throughout this siege period.³⁴ The consequences of believing that Hamilcar was actively making sea-raids during the whole period of the siege, is that the harbour and facilities would have had to be protected (especially when he was on his overseas forays) and that this could only be accomplished by the presence of a fort that guarded the approach to the harbour. The fort of Heircte has then to be equated with Hamilcar's camp that is mentioned by Polybius. The problem with sieges of camps (as opposed to fortresses) is that it is difficult to believe they could have lasted for almost three years, because the palisades around them could not effectively repel the opposing forces for many months, thus, it is highly unlikely that this could have continued for years.

In 247 the Romans encamped before Panormus at a distance of only about five stades from Hamilcar's camp.³⁵ This prevented Hamilcar's raiding by sea, for he was confronted with equal Roman forces from their camp.³⁶ Any attempt to take men on sea-raids would have significantly reduced the numbers in his camp, and by occupying Heircte, Polybius states Hamilcar had effectively isolated himself and could get no support from elsewhere.³⁷ Despite Polybius' statement, Mommsen (who assumes his base is on Monte Pellegrino) suggests that Hamilcar 'levied contributions from the plains, while Phoenician privateers plundered the Italian coast ...' and 'thus provided his people with copious supplies without asking money from the Carthaginians ...'.³⁸ That the positions of both sides were covered by palisades (and/or trenches) very close to each other, but so strong as to be 'equally unapproachable',³⁹ raises another issue, because neither side could reduce their numbers significantly without materially weakening their ability to resist their opponents.

Another important issue relates to Hamilcar's activities being located so far from the main area of operations of the war in the west of Sicily. Hoyos wonders why Hamilcar could 'carry on – in effect – a three-year sideshow of

³⁴ Polyb. 1.56.10-1 & 57.1-8.

³⁵ Hoyos 2001:494 calculates 5 stades = c. 950 metres, Heircte is not mentioned.

³⁶ Polyb. 1.56.9.

³⁷ Polyb. 1.56.9.

³⁸ Mommsen & Dickson 1921 vol.2: 49-50.

³⁹ Polyb. 1.57.6-7.

pinpricks with minor impact on those operations, so far as we can tell'.⁴⁰ Thiel believes all this was chiefly a diversion by Hamilcar in order to relieve Lilybaeum and Drepana by tying down large Roman forces 'in and near Panormus', and that he would also be able to prevent Roman convoys from reaching Panormus.⁴¹ But Hamilcar did not achieve these results, and it seems unlikely it took him three years to appreciate this, or that the actual result was that he was being tied down instead.

As noted above, Polybius makes it clear that that Hamilcar could not count on any outside help, and this is supported by the lack of information concerning reinforcements or supplies arriving from Carthage. This seems improbable given three years were involved. Thiel, quoting Polybius 1.59.5, assumes that the Carthaginians were revictualling Drepana and Lilybaeum, and also Hamilcar, by the use of transports 'through these years' – 'but we hear practically nothing about it' - until the Romans attacked with their fleet in 242.⁴² However, what Polybius is actually referring to is the end of the war in 242-1, when the Romans defeated the Carthaginian fleet and cut off supplies to Hamilcar on Eryx.⁴³

Supplying food and equipment to an army of 10-12,000 (or 15,000-20,000)⁴⁴ would have been an almost impossible task over such a long period, especially during the winter.⁴⁵ Although Polybius tells us that the Roman government sent supplies overland for their siege of Lilybaeum, he is silent with regard to the many problems of supplying the Roman troops at Heircte, and later at Eryx, for such very long periods.⁴⁶ All other sources are silent on the subject.

⁴⁰ Hoyos 2001:494.

⁴¹ Thiel 1954:299, and there would also be easy communications with western Sicily.

⁴² Thiel 1954:301 n.773.

⁴³ Polyb. 1.59.5.

⁴⁴ Hoyos 2001:493 estimates Hamilcar's army was 10-12,000 at the most. Walbank 1957: 121 *ad* 57.6 refers to an estimate of 15,000-20,000. Polybius never gives numbers nor whether any consuls were involved, but Diodorus 23. 20.1b mentions in a passage that can only relate to this siege (ten-year reallocation from 242 to 252) that the Romans, with an army of 40,000 and 1000 cavalry unsuccessfully besieged He(i)rcte. This would imply a full double-consular army in addition to all the troops besieging Lilybaeum (and Drepana) which, if valid, would greatly exacerbate the problems.

⁴⁵ Polyb. 1.56.4-5. The area around Heircte would possibly have initially provided enough food, but it would not have satisfied such a large number of men for any length of time.

⁴⁶ Also to be considered for a siege of such length are the likely problems of pestilence, pay and declining morale. As noted by Levithan 2013:49, the negative affect of stress on morale

Had this siege lasted three years, it seems highly unlikely that there would have been no attempt by the Carthaginian government to bring relief to Hamilcar.⁴⁷ It might be argued that during the winter Carthaginian patrols could, in good weather, operate along the Sicilian coast, but sudden storms could arise; the same problem would apply to the Romans trying to cross the dangerous Strait of Messina in this season.⁴⁸ Steinby states that: 'The Carthaginians never tried to recapture Messana or to interfere with the Roman supply route across the Straits. The crossing to Messana was probably protected by warships from Syracuse'.⁴⁹ There is nothing in the sources about the troops over-wintering, this was always exceptional at this period.⁵⁰ But, if Polybius' narrative is accepted, it means that neither side at Heircte could return home at any stage without effectively fatally weakening their respective positions.

Siege of Eryx (244-3)

After almost three years Hamilcar finally decided to break the stalemate, and he chose a suitable night to slip out of Heircte with his men, and sail west along the north coast to the nearest point from which he could access the heights of Eryx (30 stades).⁵¹ He quickly captured the city of Eryx

during a siege was cumulative, not only because the men could not respond directly from enemy fire, but also due to exhaustion from 'digging and tunnelling ...'.

⁴⁷ Polybius 1.59.1 says that Carthage controlled the seas after the disasters of 249.

⁴⁸ Beresford 2013:146 notes that 'As a consequence of the dangers and difficulties facing oared warships on anything other than relatively calm seas, naval operations on the Mediterranean were therefore highly seasonal in nature'.

⁴⁹ Steinby 2014:99. There is no evidence for this.

⁵⁰ Lazenby 1996:75. De Ligt 2007:119-120 argues against the idea that at this early period Roman soldiers habitually returned home for the winter. He points out that as from the late fourth century they were paid a stipendium and had a 'sophisticated logistical system', so that 'it became more usual for Roman armies to be kept in barracks during the winter months' – however, it was usual for the armies in Sicily to return to Italy. The only specific mentions of over-wintering are those of Florus in 259/8, Regulus' time in Africa 256/5 (though under forced circumstances), and in the siege of Lilybaeum in 250/249. Thiel 1954:271 concludes the Romans must have over-wintered around Lilybaeum as there is no indication in the sources of an interruption in the siege, and he is supported by Rosenstein 2004:33, but see below ch.9.5, pp.208-9. Rosenstein says that both Scipio Asina over-wintered in 260 (this is unlikely - see chapter 4, p.106), and Caecilius Metellus in 251/0 (but see ch.6, pp.122-4). He also mentions Mt. Eryx, but this was only for 242/1 (see ch.9.6, p.221).

⁵¹ Diod. 24.8: the distance is stated as 30 stades. Hoyos 2001:494 estimates that 5 stades = c. 950 metres, therefore 30 stades = c.5.7 kms. Thiel 1954:301 n.774 believes the landing to be near the Tonnara di Bonagia.

and then transferred the survivors to Drepana.⁵² Hamilcar was neither able to dislodge the Roman garrisons at the summit (Venus Erycina) nor at the foot (Aegithallus) of the mountain, which meant that he was under siege by both garrisons.⁵³ Hoyos says 'On the plain below him a Roman consular army was encamped, though facing it were his forces in Drepana'.⁵⁴

Polybius expresses surprise that, as the Romans were besieging Hamilcar from below, and Hamilcar was besieging the Romans on the summit and a deadlock resulted, the Carthaginians were able to bring up supplies along one path from their base by the sea.⁵⁵ Polybius says that this situation continued for another two years (244-3) until the Romans decided to build a fleet to prevent Carthage sending supplies.⁵⁶ There is mention of at least two engagements, in which Hamilcar's lieutenant Vodostor suffered losses, but in a subsequent action the Roman consul C. Fundanius Fundulus also incurred losses.⁵⁷

There are various difficulties with the accounts of this siege: no attempt appears to have been made by the Romans to attack or block off Hamilcar's base by the sea, or the route the Carthaginians had to use to access it.⁵⁸ As the Roman garrison at the top is very close to the town, it is difficult to believe it was able to resist the Carthaginian siege for two years.⁵⁹ It would conceivably have been possible for a strong Roman force to cut off the Carthaginian route to the sea and to attack the naval base, which

⁵² Diod. 24.8.1. It seems difficult to believe that Hamilcar was able to move the population to Drepana along this single path without intervention by the Romans.

⁵³ Thiel 1954:290,301: Venus Erycina is the temple of Aphrodite. Aegithallus is at the foot of the mountain.

Polyb. 1.58.1-3.

⁵⁴ Hoyos 2005:15.

⁵⁵ Polyb. 1.58.2-3. Mount Eryx is large with many paths and can accommodate the stated situation.

⁵⁶ Polyb. 1.59.5-8; the Roman fleet was ready for the campaign in 242, and when Carthage sent a fleet with supplies, it was defeated off the Aegates Insulae in March 241.

⁵⁷ Diod. 24.9.1-3.

⁵⁸ Polybius 1.58.3 mentions just a single road linking the town and the port.

⁵⁹ That the Romans may have survived is supported by the introduction into Rome of Venus Erycina where a temple to her was dedicated in 215 – Erskine 2001:198, and that this goddess would protect the city from Hannibal as she had protected Eryx (pp.221-2). Their survival would have been possible if the siege lasted only 2 or 3 months.

appears not to have been fortified or strongly defended. Lazenby appears to accept the viability of Hamilcar's situation.⁶⁰

It is difficult to see how the Romans, whose financial situation was precarious, could have continued the war, even with possible help from Syracuse. If the Carthaginians themselves had financial problems, then they would not have been able to fund the large number of mercenaries necessary for either the defence of Lilybaeum (and Drepana) over the six years (248-3), or the three years at Heircte and two years at Eryx. Polybius says both sides realised that neither side would prevail, and they left the conflict drawn, and not that they did so out of exhaustion and privation as Fabius claims.⁶¹ The Romans therefore realised that they had to build a fleet that would prevent supplies from reaching the Carthaginians and so force Carthage to seek terms.

It is difficult to believe that this complex situation on the mountain could have lasted so long, and many of the arguments relating to Heircte can apply here, e.g., the problems of resupply of men, matériel, food and pay, especially over the winter.

Siege of Lilybaeum (250-241)

There are a few brief references to the siege of Lilybaeum in the sources: Polybius says that in 249 that the Romans continued their siege of Lilybaeum, with the government sending supplies overland, and presumably involving Hiero to some extent.⁶² Zonaras says that Aurelius and Servilius harried Lilybaeum and laid waste the land belonging to the allies of the Carthaginians (248).⁶³ There are no further details of the siege for the following period 247-243, except that Diodorus states that the siege lasted ten years (similar to that of Troy).⁶⁴ Such a dearth of details for this period

⁶⁰ Lazenby 1996:149: 'Hamilcar contrived to maintain himself for another two years, despite being between two Roman forces, and although he held only a single road down to the sea, up which all his supplies had to come (58.3)'.
⁶¹ Polyb. 1.58.5-6.

⁶² Polyb. 1.55.4-5. Referring to the first treaty with Hiero that was made in 263, Polybius 1.16.19 says that from then on Hiero continued to provide the Romans with urgent necessities. Presumably this related mainly to food, but armies required much else as well: Erdcamp 2011:68-9.

⁶³ Zonar. 8.16.

⁶⁴ Diod. 24.14.1: presumably 250-241.

seems questionable. It is true that Polybius is not attempting to write a complete history of the war, but the absence of any comment on the siege of Lilybaeum for these years, during which Roman forces were heavily occupied with containing Hamilcar, does seem to cast significant doubt on its length. As emphasised in chapter 6, for an effective siege of Lilybaeum, Drepana would also have to be isolated.

Siege of Drepana (247)

The only mention of Drepana during the years 247-3 is by Zonaras. He relates a major attack on it in 247 by the consul Fabius Buteo, with his colleague Caecilius Metellus operating around Lilybaeum.⁶⁵ At some stage during the siege, Zonaras says Fabius Buteo recaptured from the Carthaginians the small off-shore island of Pelias, but an attempt by Hamilcar to retake it was foiled by the consul launching a counter-attack directly on Drepana. Though the consul was then able to link the island to the mainland and attack the city's weakest wall, the attempt on the city was clearly a failure, as we hear nothing further of the siege. Drepana was still in Carthaginian hands in 242 when Lutatius attacked it unexpectedly.⁶⁶

This siege in 247 conflicts with Polybius' narrative, as it occurs at the same time as the raiding of Italy and Sicily by Hamilcar and the siege of Heircte. It is also difficult to comprehend how, as the Romans had no fleet, it was possible for Roman forces to besiege Drepana with any hope of success, because the city would have been supplied from Carthage.⁶⁷ Thiel casts strong doubt on Zonaras' account of this siege because it is 'obscure and highly suspect', and he believes it was merely a temporary diversionary attack.⁶⁸ Lazenby however accepts Zonaras' story and thinks that it was Hamilcar's first action, and discusses the Roman capture of the offshore island of Pelias, and that Hamilcar may not have considered it important enough to retake it with his 'superior fleet'.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Zonar. 8.16.

⁶⁶ Polyb. 1.59.9.

⁶⁷ Polybius 1.56.1-11 does not give the impression that Hamilcar was based anywhere near Drepana at this time.

⁶⁸ Thiel 1954:298 n.794.

⁶⁹ Lazenby 1996:146, and 190 n.3.

Italy during the First Punic War

According to my interpretation of the improbable events recorded for the period 247-3, a period of peace existed between the Romans and Carthaginians.⁷⁰ The possibility of such a peace also draws attention to the striking fact that the sources give very sparse information on events occurring in Italy during the entire twenty-three years of the First Punic War.

According to the sources, there were no invasions or wars in Italy during this period. Even the turbulent Gallic tribes in the north of the peninsula were quiescent, and waited until after it had ended before they attacked. It seems improbable that not one single city, people, or tribe in Italy took advantage of Rome's heavy military commitments in Sicily.⁷¹ This inactivity is, I argue, especially surprising bearing in mind the heavy Roman losses of 250 and 249, and is in contrast to the continuous warfare being waged in most of the other Mediterranean lands. The dearth of information for this period has important implications because it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, for the Romans to have continued fighting the Carthaginians beyond 248 if they were also confronting major Gallic incursions at the same time. The emergency preparations taken by the Romans against the great Gallic attack on Italy in 225 clearly demonstrates their fear of the Gauls.⁷²

The lack of fighting or unrest in Italy during the war has long been noted by scholars who have expressed considerable surprise: Niebuhr considers it an 'unaccountable phenomenon'.⁷³ Plutarch emphasises Rome's good fortune in not having to confront the Gauls.⁷⁴ Polybius says there had

⁷⁰ See also ch.9.5.

⁷¹ There is mention of one incident - a Samnite conspiracy in Rome which was quickly suppressed (Zonar. 8.11; Oros. 4.7.12).

⁷² Polyb. 2.24.15-16: the Romans prepared muster-rolls showing there was available in Italy more than 700,000 foot and 70,000 cavalry.

⁷³ Niebuhr & Schmitz 1849-50 vol.2. 53. Walbank 1957:191 *ad* 21.5. Hoyos 2015:68 considers Rome was very lucky: 'Above all no other threats arose to distract her'.

⁷⁴ Plutarch *Vit. Marc.* 3.2 says 'It seemed a marvellous piece of good fortune that the Gallic War did not break out while the [First] Punic War was raging, but that the Gauls, like a third champion sitting by and awaiting his turn with the victor, remained strictly quiet while the other two nations were fighting, and then only stripped for combat when the victors were at liberty to receive their challenge'. As the Gauls were notorious for their treachery, this is a very unconvincing analogy to explain why the sources did not record Gallic attacks during this war.

been desperate fighting against them for several years (284-2) before they were subdued or expelled beyond the Po.⁷⁵ This apparently so terrified these Gauls that it was forty-five years before they attacked again.⁷⁶ This is a statement that is difficult to accept, because the Gauls had a reputation of being particularly warlike. Shortly afterwards (in 279) some Gallic tribes attacked Delphi, and mercenary bands of Gauls were continuously looking for plunder, as the Attalids found to their cost.⁷⁷ Even as late as 225, the Romans had to face a massive invasion which potentially threatened their very existence.⁷⁸

However, there is a general assumption that Rome's domination of peninsular Italy was unchallenged. This was due, not just to her military strength, but also to the unique nature of her dominance by means of treaties and colonies.⁷⁹

Summary

Apart from the sieges of Hamilcar at Heircte and at Eryx, details of activity during this period are rarely provided and are then usually brief. Polybius says, referring to Hamilcar Barca's land and naval activities at the time of the siege of Heircte, that the small-scale fighting was too much to enumerate and 'would be most tedious as well as unprofitable to the reader'.⁸⁰ Zonaras states that in the period that followed after 247 (i.e. 246-3) the various consuls did nothing calling for attention.⁸¹

Most scholars discussing this period in any detail have tended to argue over specific points, such as the location of Heircte, rather than to ask fundamental questions. These relate to the overall strategy of the combatants and the viability of the long continuous sieges which dominate

⁷⁵ Polyb. 2.19.7 to 2.20.8.

⁷⁶ Polyb. 2.21.1-2.

⁷⁷ Paus. *Attica* 4.4: in 279 they were repulsed from Delphi. Heinen 1984:422-5.

⁷⁸ Polyb. 2.22.1 – 2.31.7: a very detailed account of the fighting is given for 225.

⁷⁹ Toynbee 1965. I. 267-280 argues a key element was Rome's lack of exploitation combined with the 'partial incorporation of non-Roman communities in the Roman citizen body'. Eckstein 2006:34 talks of Roman exceptionalism – her success is not just in terms of bellicosity but in her ability 'to assimilate non-Romans into the Roman polity, and thus to create a state that was both very large-scale in terms of territory and resources, yet was also socially well integrated.'

⁸⁰ Polyb. 1.56.10-57.8, 1.57.3.

⁸¹ Zonar. 8.16.

the period and are reviewed above. Thiel is an exception, but the general assumption is that Polybius' narrative of events must be fundamentally accurate.⁸² Polybius makes it clear that even though the Carthaginians (after 249) had hopes of regaining territory, Roman determination meant that the two sides fought each other to a standstill.⁸³ This refutes the idea that the Carthaginians could have taken advantage of the Roman disasters of 249.

Polybius' account of the Roman sieges of Heircte and Eryx during the period 247-3 finds little corroboration in the other sources: Zonaras states that the various consuls achieved little.⁸⁴ Polybius appears not to be aware of a brief episode in 247 concerning a siege of Drepana which was being vigorously defended by Hamilcar, but which is incompatible with Hamilcar's raiding and being besieged at Heircte.⁸⁵ This is the only mention of any siege of Drepana occurring in the period 247-3, and appears to be an intrusive event. As for Lilybaeum, apart from the incidental operations in connection with Drepana there is no mention of this city during 247-3, let alone details of the siege. This does not seem credible, because we are told this siege lasted ten years (250 to 241).⁸⁶ Again, as with the siege of Heircte, we have similar problems in understanding how the belligerents obtained their supplies. Overall, the period from 248 to 243 raises a number of significant issues that, I argue, scholars have failed to address properly. In addition, the lack of any mention of wars in the Italian peninsula must not be taken as granted, for the maxim applies: 'absence of evidence is not evidence of absence'. My proposed resolution of these issues is discussed below in chapter 9.6, pp.217-222.

⁸² Thiel 1954:324-5 in reviewing the war, says that though the Romans had a strategy (a combined army and navy attacking Punic strongholds) 'it was applied seriously in no more than five out of a total of fourteen years..', and it would certainly seem 'that from 259 down to 242 the senate 'sailed' out of one blunder into another..'

⁸³ Polyb. 1.55.1-5: whilst still acknowledging the Carthaginians were masters of the sea.

⁸⁴ Zonar. 8.16.

⁸⁵ Zonar. 8.16.

⁸⁶ Diod. 24.14.1.

CHAPTER 8. KEY ANOMALIES: AGRIGENTUM (262-261), END OF WAR (242-241)

In 242 the Romans resumed full-scale war with the blockades of Drepana and Lilybaeum by Lutatius and his newly-constructed fleet. I will endeavour to show that the very long delay of nine months it took the Carthaginians to send a relief fleet is highly improbable. I will also examine the many problems associated with the siege of Agrigentum in 262 and subsequent events in 261, as I consider these may explain the delay of nine months.

Roman Attacks on Drepana and Lilybaeum (242)

By 243 the Romans realised that in order to secure victory in the war, a new fleet was required to secure control of the seas around Sicily. According to Polybius, the leading citizens provided funds for the construction of 200 quinqueremes on the model of a Rhodian ship – the cost to be repaid on victory.¹ Polybius says that Gaius Lutatius was appointed commander and sent to Sicily with this fleet at the start of the summer of 242.² He captured the harbour of Drepana and the roadsteads near Lilybaeum and, as the whole Carthaginian navy was in Africa, he put up siege works around the city, but kept the crews exercised.³ Meanwhile, Zonaras informs us that the consul was accompanied by the praetor urbanus, Quintus Valerius Flaccus, and together at the siege of Drepana they knocked down part of the wall. But because Lutatius was wounded they failed to capture it.⁴ Carthage was caught unprepared and had little idea that Rome would take such a decisive early initiative - especially a challenge on the sea. Polybius states that when the unexpected news reached Carthage that the Romans had arrived with a fleet, they immediately sent a fleet with

¹ Polyb. 1.59.1-8.

² This could have been in May or early June 242; see chapter 1 pp.40-1 for discussion on the start of the consular year.

³ Polyb. 1.59.8-12.

⁴ Zonar. 8.17.

corn and other provisions to Eryx.⁵ Their fleet, commanded by Hanno, was intercepted by Lutatius and defeated.⁶

As the Carthaginians sent a fleet immediately they had heard of the presence of the Romans in Sicily, this would probably have occurred later in June 242.⁷ However, we are informed by Eutropius that this defeat was on 10th March in 241, i.e., in the following year - about nine months from June 242.⁸ There is a significant inconsistency between the two accounts, as Polybius appears to minimise the difference in time between the descent on Drepana by the Romans and the defeat of Hanno's fleet. Eutropius' statement, is supported by the fact that C. Lutatius Catullus and Q. Valerius Falto (Flaccus) celebrated triumphs in October 241 for their victory.⁹

The long delay in sending a supply fleet has caused a great deal of discussion among scholars. The standard response of most scholars to this delay is that after 249, when the Romans gave up the sea, the Carthaginians had withdrawn their fleet from Sicily and had allowed their navy to be run down to a dangerously low level. They were thus completely unprepared to deal with the unexpected developments arising in 242.¹⁰ Some scholars seek to blame the policy of the Carthaginian government for this dereliction of the fleet. De Sanctis criticises Hamilcar because from 247 he was concerned mainly with land operations in Sicily and forgot about the necessity of possessing a good fleet.¹¹ However, Thiel criticises this and exonerates Hamilcar as he had warned about the dangers of adopting a new policy by starting a war in Africa, rather than concentrating on the one in Sicily. Thiel

⁵ Polyb. 1.60.1-2.

⁶ Polyb. 1.60.3-9 & 61.1-8: Lutatius intercepted Hanno, sank 50 ships, and captured 70 ships with their crews (almost 10,000), the rest fled to the Holy Isle. Eutropius 2.27.2 states the Romans captured 63 ships and sank 125, capturing 32,000 and killing 13,000. Diodorus 24.11.1 says the Carthaginians lost 117 ships, (including 20 of them with all the crews) and quotes Philinus as saying 6,000 were captured, but 4,040 according to others.

⁷ Or possibly early in July if they had problems assembling the men and supplies, but no later, as Polybius says they reacted immediately.

⁸ Eutrop. 2.27.2.

⁹ Zonaras 8.17 refers to him as the praetor urbanus Q. Valerius Flaccus. Degraffi 1954:100-101; Bastien 2007:48. '*C. Lutatius C. f. C. n. Catulus pro a. DXII co(n)s(ule) de Poeneis ex Sicilia navale(m) egit IIII nonas Octobr.*'; '*Q. Valerius Q. f. P. n. Falto pro pr(aetore) a. DXII ex Sicilia navalem egit prid. non. Oct.*'.

¹⁰ Thiel 1954:308-311; Walbank 1957:124-5 *ad* 60-61; Lazenby 1996:152-4. See also discussion in chapter 9.6.

¹¹ De Sanctis 1916:185: '*che fosse tenuta in buon assetto l'armata*'.

believes this 'foolish' policy was the fault of 'the Punic government at home and especially the followers of Hanno 'the Great''.¹²

Polybius explains the unpreparedness of the Carthaginians by saying they had not thought the Romans would challenge them again on sea, and thus their ships had not been maintained, also the crews were left untrained, and the marines only levied at the last moment.¹³ This description would not fit a fleet that had been eight or nine months in preparation, as there would have been sufficient time to remedy these deficiencies.¹⁴ I have shown above, that defence of her trading empire was a major priority for Carthage.¹⁵ Carthage would certainly not have run down her navy to a degree that she was unable to carry out these tasks. Nor would she have been able to send supplies and mercenaries to Hamilcar on Mount Eryx, as well as to Drepana and Lilybaeum. Thus, there would always have been a core of experienced officers and oarsmen available. That there was a Carthaginian navy, is confirmed by Polybius who says that when Lutatius suddenly descended on Sicily, the whole Carthaginian navy had retired to the home country.¹⁶

However, scholars have felt unable to accept Polybius' narrative of events due to Eutropius' date of Lutatius' naval victory (March 241) and his subsequent triumph (October 241). They therefore seek to explain the Carthage's delay in sending a relieving fleet. Thiel, for example, regards the long delay as 'a bad sign' and that 'The crews, marines as well as the oarsmen, were extemporized and quite untrained'.¹⁷ Accepting that the Punic ships were probably all quinqueremes, he calculates that the each ship had a crew of no more than 150 men and thus were undermanned, so further confirming that the Carthaginians were in difficulties.¹⁸ Lazenby also thinks there were manpower shortages, as evidenced by the under-manning of the ships (perhaps 140 to 245 per ship, instead of c. 340), and that this is also

¹² Thiel 1954:306.

¹³ Polyb. 1.61.4-5. This indicates that the Carthaginians were in a hurry to get a fleet together, and supports his earlier statement about the immediate despatch of a fleet (see p.157 n.5). Polybius does not mention a shortage of available rowers.

¹⁴ Thiel 1954:208 considers this and admits he is unable to resolve the issue.

¹⁵ See Chapter 6, pp.137-9.

¹⁶ Polyb. 1.59. 9-10.

¹⁷ Thiel 1954:307.

¹⁸ Thiel 1954:307 & n.797; based on 70 ships captured and their crews totalling nearly 10,000 (Polyb. 1.61.6-8).

supported by the large number of the captives being Carthaginian citizens.¹⁹ These calculations are possibly undermined by the recent discoveries of rams from the battle site in the area of the Egadi Islands that indicate much smaller vessels. If these rams are representative of the class of vessels engaged in the battle, then the Carthaginians would have had less difficulty in manning them.²⁰

Walbank endeavours to resolve the contradiction posed by Polybius' statement of Carthage's quick response, by explaining: 'And if P.'s narrative nowhere makes clear that a winter intervened ... he was perhaps misled by stress on the speed of Punic preparations in Philinus ..'.²¹ Assuming the existence of a nine-month delay, Thiel supposes that the Roman fleet must have continued its blockade of Drepana and Lilybaeum over the winter. He explains that this was possible because the Roman fleet 'was sufficiently seaworthy to prevent Punic warships or transports from reaching the harbours of the besieged strongholds'.²² In view of the sudden storms that occur during the winter in the Mediterranean, the belief that the Roman fleet was able to maintain a continuous blockade without a nearby base, is not convincing.²³ Hoyos supports the view of a limited sailing season 'Then autumn and winter arrived to close down all but emergency sailing until the new year'.²⁴

Thus, if we follow Polybius' narrative, the Carthaginians must have reacted as soon as they had heard of the arrival of Lutatius. However, since he had time to put up siege-works,²⁵ and then, according to Zonaras, launch vigorous attacks (whereby a section of the wall was demolished),²⁶ some very significant delay must be allowed for before the arrival of the

¹⁹ Diod. 24.11.1.

²⁰ Some scholars are now accepting this – at least in part, e.g., Grainger 2011:96 considers that the Romans had 'decided to abandon quinqueremes, which the Romans had never been able to manoeuvre easily,... Instead the captured ship of Hannibal the Rhodian, which was probably a quadrireme, was taken as a model'. The eleven rams from the site strongly indicate the ships may have been smaller than quinqueremes – see chapter 1, p.42 n.109.

²¹ Walbank 1957:125 *ad* 60-61.

²² Thiel 1954:310.

²³ The problem of how to supply the tens of thousands of rowers and maintain the ships during the winter is not considered. The status of Panormus is uncertain because there is no reference to it in this period – see Chapter 9.6 for a possible explanation.

²⁴ Hoyos 2015:65.

²⁵ Polyb. 1.59.10.

²⁶ Zonar. 8.17.

Carthaginian fleet. It is likely that the Carthaginians would have known of Lutatius' arrival within a short time. Thus, following this argument, either the Carthaginians did take an extraordinarily long time to make their preparations, or Polybius has minimised the period between the advent of Lutatius and the defeat of the Carthaginian fleet.

However, Diodorus has a different account to that of Polybius - one that leaves no room for any siege of Drepana and blockade of Lilybaeum. He states that Lutatius²⁷ sailed to Sicily and anchored at the trading-station of the Erycinians and that Hanno then left with his fleet from Carthage.²⁸ In order for this to be true and not contradict Polybius, it would have to relate to a separate action at a different time. Such an interpretation would leave no room for an investment of Drepana by Lutatius that had provoked the immediate Carthaginian response.

The Siege of Agrigentum

I argue below and in chapter 9 (stage 6), that it is possible to reconstruct the events that probably took place later in the summer of 242 and over the winter to the spring of 241. I have shown above that scholars have been unable to present convincing reasons for the delay before Carthage sent help to Hamilcar at Eryx. I present evidence below that the siege of Agrigentum and the subsequent Carthaginian raiding in the period 262-1 are inconsistent with the standard narrative of the course of events of the early years of the war. I will highlight the inconsistencies that the sources present concerning these events and scholars' response.

When Lutatius unexpectedly arrived with his fleet and blockaded Drepana and Lilybaeum in June 242, he prevented the Carthaginians from being able to send supplies from these ports to Hamilcar, who was besieged at Eryx. However, the Carthaginians were aware that if they could seize Agrigentum on the south-west coast, it could serve as another base for their army and for the storage of supplies.²⁹ The sources record such an attack by

²⁷ That Lutatius was crippled in his litter is confirmed by Valerius Maximus 2.8.2.

²⁸ Diod. 24.11.1.

²⁹ Walbank 1957:70 *ad* 17.8. Agrigentum is itself landlocked but had only a small harbour on the coast.

the Carthaginians in 262, and their occupation of the city, as well as the subsequent siege and seizure of it by the Romans.³⁰

Polybius states that when the new consuls in Sicily first became aware of Carthaginian activity at Agrigentum, they abandoned their other operations and encamped eight stades from it - this was at the height of the harvest.³¹ Polybius gives no information as to what the consuls had been doing previously.³² The Carthaginians attacked the Roman camp and although the Romans incurred heavy casualties they repelled the attackers. The Romans then divided their forces over two camps and dug ditches and a palisade between them. After five months, when the besieged were suffering from hunger, Hannibal, the city's commander, summoned help from Carthage. The Carthaginian government sent Hanno with 50,000 men and elephants.³³ After two months, Hanno risked a battle, which he lost – the survivors fleeing to Heraclea. Thereupon, Hannibal departed with his mercenaries, leaving it for the Romans to plunder and enslave the population.

There are a number of problems concerning the above events. After the victories over the Carthaginians and Hiero in 263, the Romans had control of a substantial part of eastern Sicily.³⁴ They had also made a treaty with Syracuse.³⁵ They therefore decided to send back two of the legions to Rome and keep the remaining two in Sicily for the rest of the campaigning season.³⁶ It therefore seems that the Romans had little fear of a major Carthaginian counter-attack in Sicily. Zonaras states that the Carthaginians transported most of their army to Sardinia to attack Rome, or should the Romans attack Sicily, then either force them out of Sicily or weaken them

³⁰ Polyb. 1.17.5-19.15; Diod. 23.7.1-8.1,3 & 9.1-2; Zonar. 8.10; Oros. 4.7.4-6; Frontin *Str.* 2.1.4.

³¹ Walbank 1957:70 *ad* 17.9: i.e., June.

³² Polyb. 1.17.6-13.

³³ Polybius 1.18.8-9 states Hanno concentrated his forces at Heraclea and implies they came directly from Carthage, but Diodorus 23.8.1 says they marched out from Lilybaeum, and he is likely to be correct, as Hanno would have passed Heraclea on the way to Agrigentum.

³⁴ Diod. 23.4.1: the Romans captured Hadranum and whilst besieging Centuripa, envoys seeking peace came from Halaesa and then other cities - 67 overall; Eutrop. 2.19: the Tauromenitani, Catanians and 50 other cities became allies of the Romans; Polyb. 1.16.3-4: says most of the cities revolted from the Carthaginians and Syracusans and joined the Romans.

³⁵ See Ch.3, pp.94-5 for discussion on treaties with Syracuse.

³⁶ Polyb. 1.17.1-2.

there.³⁷ This situation would suggest that the Carthaginians believed the Romans would not conduct warfare in Sicily in 262, and so a strong army in Sardinia would provide a deterrent. The fact that both sides reduced their forces in Sicily would also indicate that some form of arrangement between the parties might have been in place.

However, Zonaras says in the new year (262) the Romans, having guarded their country, sent a sizable force to Sicily with the consuls Postumius Albinus and Quintus Aemilius.³⁸ There is an error with the name of the first consul. The fasti state Postumius Megellus was consul in 262, but Zonaras calls him Postumius Albinus, however the latter was consul in 242.³⁹ Cary attributes this error to a textual corruption, but I believe that this may be the result of an error due to a rearrangement of the text by Fabius.⁴⁰ Polybius also states that after the Roman treaty with Syracuse in 263, the Carthaginians considered that they had insufficient forces, so they started recruiting mercenaries from abroad, including more Iberians, as well as Ligurians and Celts.⁴¹ If this recruitment is connected with the consuls' activities, then it too could be part of Fabius' adjustments.

There are difficulties concerning Agrigentum. The statement that the Carthaginians had installed a large garrison into Agrigentum that, as Thiel suggests, had no hope of success unless they captured a position on the Italian coast, is problematic.⁴² There is also no reason given concerning the choice of Agrigentum as the base for the Carthaginian forces, when Lilybaeum, with its far greater facilities, would have been the obvious choice.

Another possible anomaly arises with the use of elephants this early stage of the war. According to Polybius, the Carthaginians brought over about 50 elephants during the siege, but the Romans captured most of them.⁴³ This is the first mention of the Romans capturing elephants, but this achievement is never celebrated. This contrasts with Metellus' famed capture

³⁷ Zonar. 8.10:

³⁸ Zonar. 8.10.

³⁹ Zonar. 8.10.

⁴⁰ Zonar. p.401 n.1 *ad* 8.10 (E. Cary).

⁴¹ Polyb. 1.17.3-4.

⁴² Thiel 1954:167-8.

⁴³ Polyb. 1.18.8,19.1-2; Diodorus 23.8.1 mentions 60 elephants and that 8 were killed and 33 disabled. Polyb. 1.19.11 says most of the elephants were captured.

of elephants in his victory over Hasdrubal in 250. He paraded 104 elephants through Italy for his triumph.⁴⁴ The early use of elephants in 262 by the Carthaginians appears to contradict the sources that say in 256/5 the Carthaginians hired Xanthippus to train them in their use in war.⁴⁵

There also appear to be difficulties concerning the large numbers and different types of troops involved in the siege. Diodorus, says that those besieging Acragas together with the Romans totalled 100,000.⁴⁶ This is an unusual way of stating this, for it implies that the non-Romans were possibly the more important force. Polybius uses the word *σύμμαχοι* when he says that 'Their supplies came from all other members of the alliance'.⁴⁷ He also uses this word to describe the allies that Hamilcar defeated between the Paropus and the Hot Springs of Himera.⁴⁸ Walbank agrees that these are independent allies and thus they are 'probably Sicilians, not Italian *socii*'.⁴⁹ I believe that the prominence given to the allies would suggest that they played a particularly significant role in this siege, and that they were inhabitants of Sicily. The figure of 100,000 besiegers is very large and is not otherwise recorded until the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249). This number would therefore be more appropriate for a later stage of the war rather than in 262.

After the Romans had defeated the Carthaginians and captured Agrigentum, it would be expected that the consuls would be awarded triumphs, but this was not the case. This seems implausible, when it is considered that the Romans defeated Hanno and captured most of his elephants. And that after Hannibal had fled the city, they took Agrigentum and plundered much booty and slaves (more than 25,000).⁵⁰ It could be argued that the Romans incurred such heavy losses that it negated the possibility of triumphing, however, these losses would probably not have

⁴⁴ Oros. 4.9.14: admittedly, the numbers were greater, and they were seen by the Roman populace in the triumph, but it is still surprising that the first capture of elephants in 262 should have evoked no interest. Whether a few elephants were captured at the battle of Beneventum in 275 is a matter of dispute – see Scullard 1974:111-3.

⁴⁵ Polyb. 1.31.1-4; Zonar. 8.13; Frontin. 2.2.11. Regarding Xanthippus – see ch.5, p.118.

⁴⁶ Diod. 23.7.1.

⁴⁷ Polyb. 1.18.5.

⁴⁸ Polyb. 1.24.3-4.

⁴⁹ Walbank 1957:80 *ad* 24.3.

⁵⁰ Diod. 23.9.1; Zonar. 8.10

been due mainly from enemy action.⁵¹ Lazenby thinks the reason is that Polybius may have 'exaggerated the Roman success'.⁵²

There is the suggestion of another inconsistency in the total lack of reference of the political leaders of Agrigentum, or of any of their defence forces. The Carthaginians appear to be able to occupy the city without any opposition. This is hard to explain because Diodorus informs us that just two years earlier in 264, Hanno had gone to Acragas, a friendly city, and persuaded the leaders to become allies and had fortified their citadel.⁵³ The political situation therefore appears have deteriorated in the subsequent two years, but there is no indication of this in any of the sources. This situation might suggest that a much longer period than two years had elapsed between the first political agreement and the siege.

For the succeeding year (261), there are only a few events noted for Sicily. Polybius states that the new consuls seemed to be managing the military affairs there as well as possible.⁵⁴ However, his following statements seem to contradict his assessment of the situation in Sicily. He maintains that as the enemy controlled the seas, many inland cities joined the Romans, but more seaboard cities (through fear of the Carthaginian fleet) deserted them. He also states that the Carthaginian fleet frequently ravaged Italy, but Libya was free from enemy raids.⁵⁵

Possible Peace Period from 262 to 261

The anomalies arising from the events detailed above appear to have no comprehensive solution, if it accepted that they relate to the years 262-1. If, however, the events of these two years can be considered as anachronistic and relate to a later period in the war, then according to my hypothesis, the anomalies can be resolved. The removal of these events would show there was a dearth of military activities in 262-1. This would

⁵¹ Diodorus 23.9.1-2 gives the extraordinarily high figure of 30,000 foot and (perhaps) 1500 cavalry; Polybius 1.19.1 talks of the Romans suffering plague and privation: clearly the Romans incurred heavy losses, and most would not have been from enemy action.

⁵² Lazenby 1996:59.

⁵³ Diod. 23.1.2.

⁵⁴ Polyb. 1.20.4-5.

⁵⁵ Polyb. 1.20.5-8; Zonar. 8.10: mention is also made of an incident regarding pay problems with the Gauls.

indicate that there was peace between Rome and Carthage during these years.

This scenario finds support in a statement by Livy (when writing about events in 209) who says that previously Sicily, excluding Hiero's kingdom, had once been split between the imperial powers of the Romans and the Carthaginians. Moore comments: 'A statement for which no explanation has been found, since we do not know of a time when that part of Sicily west of the Syracusan kingdom was divided between Romans and Carthaginians...'.⁵⁶ What form of peace, whether a formal truce or simply a tacit understanding, might have been involved is unknown. It would seem unlikely that the Treaty of Philinus is applicable because it forbids the Romans and Carthaginians to cross over to the shores of each other's territory (i.e., to Sicily and Italy respectively).⁵⁷

Another possible reason for a form of truce or *modus vivendi* was the threat to Rome itself by an invasion force. This threat would have been taken very seriously by the Romans due to their defeat in the naval battle of 264, and also because Valerius' ships were not capable of challenging a large Carthaginian fleet.⁵⁸ According to my hypothesis, these events can be integrated with those of 242-1 and are explained in chapter 9.6.

Summary

There are a number of significant anomalies with the standard narrative of events for the years 262 and 261. The most important is the date attributed to the seizure of Agrigentum by the Carthaginians, that is placed by the sources in 262. This event makes little sense in 262, as the Agrigentines were traditionally their allies, and they were not under threat from the Romans. Other anomalies include the lack of a necessity for the Carthaginians to occupy Agrigentum rather than use Lilybaeum as their base, as well as their use of elephants so early in the war. There are additional problems relating to the events of 261. Not only are these

⁵⁶ Livy p.239 n.4 *ad* 27.8.16-17 (F. G. Moore).

⁵⁷ See chapter 9.1, p.174 n.25 for a discussion on the Romano-Carthaginian treaties before the first Punic War.

⁵⁸ Valerius had been able to cross over in 263 in hastily built ships, having avoided challenge.

unaccountably sparse, but they are dominated by Carthaginian raids, which appear to be unopposed by the Roman fleet. These and other problems strongly suggest that the events recorded for 262-1 belong to a much later period in the war.

CHAPTER 9. A NEW READING OF THE SOURCES (264-241)

In this final part I intend to demonstrate that, based on the above arguments and assumptions, it is possible to view the sources for the First Punic War in a fundamentally different way. I argue that the highly significant anomalies examined in chapters 3 to 8 can be explained, if they are considered to have resulted from Fabius Pictor's rearrangement of the events of the war that are mainly based on the account of Philinus. I will now show how all these key anomalies are linked together, and ultimately derive from the necessity to obscure the disastrous sequence of events that followed the Roman failure to capture Lilybaeum in 249.

Method of Analysis

In chapter 2, I proposed that Fabius took the account of the earliest writer on the war – Philinus of Agrigentum, added details from his own sources, and then rearranged this modified account in such a way as to as to conceal or obscure the achievements of the Carthaginians, and thereby produce a partisan history of Rome. I have reasoned above that Philinus' history of the period (264-241) essentially comprised two parts. In the first part, Carthage was victorious and forced the Romans to vacate Sicily, but in the second, Rome proved triumphant. I further reasoned that in manipulating Philinus' text, Fabius consequentially disrupted the logical flow of his own narrative, and that this resulted in the creation of various anomalies. I have identified six of these inconsistencies that I consider are highly significant.

The principal anomaly upon which my hypothesis is based, is the inexplicable failure of the Carthaginians to capitalise on the series of disasters the Romans suffered in connection with the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249). The resolution of this fundamental anomaly has been the cornerstone on which it has been possible to detect and reverse all the other adjustments dependent on it, and to arrive at a reasonable idea of what Philinus' narrative might have been. In the process of developing these scenarios, it has been possible to detect and substantiate to a significant

degree, a number of criteria, that I show below, were adopted by Fabius to manipulate Philinus' text.¹ In order to ascertain the possible true sequence of events, it has been necessary to take into consideration other ancient evidence, as such, for example, the *Fasti Triumphales*, the Entella Tablets, and the recent archaeological discoveries of the Egadi rams. By these means, I maintain it is possible, to a significant degree, to complete the historical reconstruction of what I believe are the most likely true events.

The process of detecting and then distinguishing the anomalous sequences of linked events from those that are valid, requires continuous overviews of the texts.² A key part in this process, has been the establishment of summaries of all relevant sources, which I have allocated onto annual schedules that replicate the system that I have proposed Fabius used for his rearrangement of Philinus' account.³ These chronologically organised summaries have facilitated the recognition of these patterns of displacement, and have helped in the detection of the criteria that Fabius would likely have used to keep control of his adjustments. It is essential to appreciate that these patterns of displacement are all interconnected and are not *ad hoc* solutions to isolated problems. Due to the fragmentary nature of some of the texts there is inevitably a certain amount of flexibility in their application, but the principles stand.

Fabius generally applied the criteria I have identified in chapter 2 to those activities that he considered unpalatable for his new history in the year they actually took place.⁴ However, those activities primarily initiated by or mainly involving the Carthaginians, Fabius generally moved by a decade to another part of the war which was deemed appropriate. This is the default criterion and has been the crucial factor in uncovering Fabius' system of adjustments. This criterion of ten years is easy to apply, and would have been especially useful for Pictor when reallocating events recorded by

¹ It is possible that authors following Fabius' approach may also have implemented their own adjustments, but I think, with the probable exception of Polybius, it is doubtful they would have fully understood the criteria he used.

² For an explanation of my use of scenarios in uncovering Fabius' proposed manipulation of Philinus' text, see chapter 2, pp.63-69.

³ The use of spreadsheets has been of prime importance in this process: see Table C for an example.

⁴ See Ch. 2, pp.63-4 for the list of criteria.

Philius, that are not otherwise subject to the other criteria. This *modus operandi* enabled Fabius to produce an account of the First Punic War that was convincing enough for foreign audiences, and patriotic enough for Roman audiences. Based on my analysis and interpretation of the sources, I detail below my reconstruction of the possible true events of the First Punic War that I propose Philinus would basically have written.

If my conclusions are valid, Fabius initiated his system of rearranging those events he considered were detrimental to Rome's image, by implementing the necessary changes in the six sequential, but not chronological, stages that I detail below. These are based on the need to hide or obscure the momentous consequences of the defeat at Lilybaeum (249). Therefore, the first stage involved removing those actions that took place in the year following the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249) and which, I argue, resulted in the Romans having to leave Sicily.⁵

Stage 1. Campaigns after the Lilybaeum Siege (248)

By reassessing the evidence of the fighting around Messana in 264, it is possible to find traces of the Carthaginians having taken advantage of the Roman disasters of 249. In chapter 3, I have detailed this evidence that shows the Carthaginians advanced eastwards, besieged Messana and defeated the Roman counter-attack. I will now integrate this into my reconstructed narrative of events for the year following the siege of Lilybaeum in 249 .

Proposed Carthaginian Campaign (248)

After the Romans' series of disasters relating to their siege of Lilybaeum in 250/249, it would have been expected that the Carthaginians would have taken full advantage of the desperate situation the Romans were in, and have launched a pre-emptive attack towards the main supply base of the Romans at Messana, with the objective of driving them entirely out of Sicily. The only evidence of such an attack lies in the events recorded under

⁵ I have therefore divided chapter 9 into the six steps that I believe Fabius took in order to rearrange the possible narrative of Philinus in a controlled way.

the year 264 that have been attributed to Appius Claudius. If the Romans were to appear to be achieving success in Sicily, military events specifically relating to attacks on Messana should only relate to the beginning of the war. Keeping events that indicated fighting around Messana in their original, later period (248), would strongly indicate the Romans had suffered severe defeats. As a consequence, this would suggest a commencement of peace negotiations, and therefore the existence of Philinus' treaty, that Fabius felt essential to obscure in his new history. Therefore the 'Start' criterion was used to keep the events connected with the same city, but to reallocate them chronologically to the start of the war 264. None of the other criteria are appropriate.

Using the evidence from 264, one can reconstruct the following account.⁶ In 248 Hanno, son of Hannibal, set out from Lilybaeum, probably at the start of the campaigning season, and encamped near Solus.⁷ He then went to Acragas, and persuaded it to become an ally. A little later, Hiero, who was now in alliance with the Carthaginians, sent envoys to Hanno at Solus to discuss the expulsion of the Romans.⁸ The Carthaginians sent a herald to the Romans saying they must vacate Sicily immediately (or at a fixed date). When they did not, the former, together with the Syracusans, attacked and laid siege to Messana.

As noted in chapter 3, Hiero encamped on the Chalcidian Mount, and the Carthaginians at Eunes, with their naval force. They also seized the Pelorias headland and kept Messana under continuous siege. The Romans having an inferior fleet were forced to cross by night near Hiero's camp.⁹ Having defeated Hiero, the Roman consul (Claudius) attacked the

⁶ Based on my proposed reconstruction of Philinus' account: see chapter 3.

⁷ This sequence of events I have attributed to 248, follow on from the reconstructed campaigns of Hamilcar and Caiatinus in 249 (see chapter 4). Hamilcar would still have been the overall commander in Sicily.

⁸ It is likely that Hiero would have seen the Romans as a broken power and that he would be treated as an equal by the Carthaginians, as in the past. Polybius 1.16.10 emphasises Hiero's loyalty to Rome, but his actual help was rather episodic and did not include troops. In 258 Hiero supplied siege-engines for the siege of Camarina (Diod. 23.9.5); in 255 he gave aid to the survivors of the storm of 255 (Diod. 23.18.1); in 252 he supplied the Romans with some ships (Zonar. 8.14); Hiero sent grain to the Romans to enable them to continue the siege of Lilybaeum (Diod. 24.1.4).

⁹ Unlike the situation in 264, the Romans were by now well acquainted with the strait, and so the risk was lessened.

Carthaginian camp but was repulsed.¹⁰ However, he managed to repel their reciprocated attack and force them back behind their rampart. They did not move whilst he was present.

He left a garrison in the city and marched against Hiero, who had fled back to Syracuse. Having laid waste Syracusan territory, the consul besieged Syracuse. There was fierce fighting and he had to repulse many sorties. However, lacking the necessary supplies and suffering from disease, the consul departed to besiege Echetla, but again suffered heavy losses. He finally retreated to Messina where he left a garrison¹¹ and then crossed back to Rhegium. A significant problem arises as to how he was able to re-cross back to Italy when the Carthaginians controlled the seas and would have been vigilant in ensuring he would be unable to repeat his success. This problem is compounded by Dio-Zonaras' earlier statement that as long as the consul was in Messina the Carthaginians were too intimidated to attack.¹² The strong implication is that the Carthaginians had tried to assault the city during his absence. Although there is no evidence that they were successful, neither is there evidence that they were driven from their camp. This enabled them to watch over the strait of Messina.

The next scenario that can now be developed would logically suggest that on the news of the defeat of 'Claudius' and his losses in men and *matériel*, together with Carthalo's continued raiding, the Romans found themselves in an intolerable situation.¹³ They would have had little option other than to send out peace-feelers. As Appian indicates, they would likely have turned to the Ptolemy II Philadelphus to mediate with Carthage and

¹⁰ There seems to be no indication as to who led the Roman army in 248 and it could be either of the two consuls, Aurelius Cotta or Servilius Geminus, but I have shown in chapter 3, that the consul 'Claudius', who besieged Syracuse, might have been Duilius who, as the victor of Mylae, would be likely to attempt a naval assault. In this scenario, Duilius would have brought the fleet down the coast to Syracuse whilst Carthalo was out raiding. In Fabius' narrative, any independent action by Duilius would have been ascribed to Appius Claudius. The alternative possibility of Duilius being in sole command would mean that both consuls would be operating in Italy.

¹¹ We are not told whether this replaced the old garrison, or it remained the same.

¹² Dio 11.43.12; Zonar. 8.9.

¹³ Hamilcar had ordered his superior fleet under the command of Carthalo to raid Sicily and then Italy, to try to prevent any Roman relief army from crossing over to Sicily. Here, I am adding to the accepted events of 248: Carthalo's raiding (Zonar. 8.16), but the raiding by Hamilcar that is associated with Panormus and Heircte under 247 (Polyb. 1.56.1-11). is developed in a separate scenario in stage 5 (and ultimately belongs to 242/1).

with Syracuse (see below). If my interpretation of events is valid, then as part of the peace negotiations, Claudius would have been allowed to cross back over to Italy with his army, while allowing the Carthaginians to remain in their camp. Claudius would probably have been allowed to leave a garrison in Messina, although these might have been mainly Mamertines. It is quite possible that, having suffered heavy casualties at Echetla and Syracuse, Claudius would then have initiated informal peace negotiations. This may be indicated by the Syracusans' wish to discuss peace, although Hiero would not accept the terms.¹⁴

Mediation by Ptolemy II Philadelphus

It is probable that Rome, being on the losing side and possibly suffering major Gallic attacks in Italy, initiated a request for the mediation of the king, and that the severe problems with their mercenaries also forced the Carthaginians to acquiesce.¹⁵ Evidence for peace negotiations can be seen in Appian's statement that at the same time the Carthaginians requested a loan from Ptolemy which he refused, he tried at their request (albeit unsuccessfully) to broker peace between them and the Romans.¹⁶ Various dates for the loan have been proposed.¹⁷ Thiel's suggestion that it was 'shortly after 249' would support 248.¹⁸ That Ptolemy should have been interested in mediating in this conflict is probably due, both to keeping a balance between the two powers, and also to his complex relations with Cyrenaica. This territory had been in alliance with his great rivals the Seleucids, and had now become a republic in 249/8.¹⁹ There is no indication

¹⁴ Zonar. 8.9: this unusual situation, occurring at a time when the Romans were retreating, may be explained by the opposition of the ordinary Syracusans to the Hiero's alliance with the Carthaginians.

¹⁵ For Gallic attacks, see below ch.9, stage 5. It is also possible that Hiero, as an ally of the Carthaginians at this time, might have encouraged negotiations, especially as he possibly had a special relationship with the king (see chapter 3).

¹⁶ App. *Sic.* 5.1.1. The king refused the loan, as he wanted to be friendly to both powers. Appian appears to indicate that the loan request and the peace proposal occurred around the same time. Whether the agreement made in 273 (or possibly 263) between the Romans and Ptolemy II was still in force is unknown. But, if effective, then the king might have tried to temper the demands of the Carthaginians (e.g. reparations by Rome are never mentioned).

¹⁷ See ch.6. p.137.

¹⁸ Thiel 1954:335 n.852. It follows that as Appian links this with the peace negotiations, the latter should also be of the same approximate date.

¹⁹ Cyrenaica under its ruler Magas, had been allied to the Seleucid King Antiochus II, but subsequent to the latter's defeat had betrothed his daughter Berenike to the son of Ptolemy

where the talks were held, but they were probably in Ptolemy's capital, Alexandria. I am postulating that all these factors would have predisposed the two major sides to accept the decision of this wealthy and impartial monarch.²⁰

The importance of Ptolemy II, the leading monarch of the Hellenistic World, being involved in such peace negotiations is highly significant, and would seem to indicate that it was of great importance that the war between the two powers be settled and peace made. There was a tradition that the policy of the Romans was never to discuss terms until final victory was achieved.²¹ However, Clark's evidence on how the Romans incorporated defeats into narratives of victory is compelling.²² Appian's statement that the mediation was unsuccessful is also not trustworthy, for he could hardly say otherwise if the Roman defeat were to be hidden. I reason below that the terms negotiated became known as the Treaty of Philinus.

Treaty of Philinus (248)

As noted in chapter 3, Philinus stated that there was a treaty that prohibited the Romans from crossing to Sicily and likewise the Carthaginians from Italy, and that this existed before the start of the First Punic War.²³ However, if my hypothesis that there were two wars is borne out, then this treaty would have been made in 248, and was therefore broken by the Romans when they 'restarted' the war in 242.²⁴ No other terms are specifically known for this treaty, but some could be a repeat of clauses in

II to secure an alliance. However, Magas died in c. 250 and was succeeded by Demetrius the Fair who was pro-Seleucid, but he died in 249. From 249/8 Cyrenaica was a republic until 246, but during this period Berenice and Ptolemy II continued their plans for a reunification: Hölbl 2001:45-6.

²⁰ Westall 2011:357-8 highlights the enormous power and extensive influence of this monarch.

²¹ Lazenby 1996:168.

²² For Clark, see above, Introduction p.18-19.

²³ Polyb. 3.26.1-7.

²⁴ It is possible that the reluctance to undertake the war in 264 could relate to the debate as to whether to restart the war in 242 (and so break their treaty), for Polybius 1.11.2 refers to the people 'worn out as they were by the recent wars'. This is unlikely to relate to the situation in early 264, because Rome had just completed her conquest of Italy without significant casualties. However, if I am correct in my interpretation of events in 250-248, the debate would refer back to the Treaty of Philinus that could be dated to 248.

the earlier treaties Rome signed with Carthage.²⁵ However, one possible clause can be identified from a statement by Zonaras under the year 247. He says that the Romans and Carthaginians exchanged their prisoners on an equal basis, but as the numbers of the latter were greater, they had to pay for these.²⁶

I consider that further support for the existence of this treaty comes from Servius (*ad Aen.* 4.628) who gives terms which accord with the circumstances of the Philinus treaty. Servius says: ‘the Romans were not to have access to the shores of the Carthaginians ... nor were the Carthaginians to have access ... to the shores of the Romans: or it could refer to the naval wars fought between the Romans and Africans’.²⁷ Corsica, as also Scardigli notes, was to continue to be neutral and accessible to both parties.²⁸ Servius’ statement regarding naval wars between the Romans and the Carthaginians (Africans) can only refer to the First Punic War.²⁹ I consider that the most plausible inference that can be drawn from a treaty that stipulated the Romans were forbidden access to Sicily, is that the Carthaginians were victorious at some stage in it.

Treaty with Syracuse (248)

If my hypothesis is valid that the events of 248 concluded with a treaty between the Romans and Carthaginians, it would be reasonable to assume

²⁵ Polybius 3.22-3.25 states there were three treaties: the first was at the beginning of the Republic (508-7); the second he does not date; the third is 279-8. Livy 7.27.2 first records a treaty in 348; a ‘dubious possibility’ in 343 (7.38.2); one in 306 ‘renewed for the third time’ (9.43.26); and a last in 279 (*Per.* 13). Diodorus 16.69.1 mentions one in 348 (which he says is the first);²⁵ and another in 279 (22.5). Polybius’ first treaty is usually accepted but its early date is disputed, the second as being the same Livy’s treaty of 348, and the third in 279 is also accepted but its status as a ‘treaty’ is disputed: Walbank 1957:354 *ad* 26.1. See chapter 3, pp.96-7 for further discussion on the Philinus treaty.

²⁶ Zonar. 8.16. In view of the great disasters the Romans had suffered in relation to the siege of Lilybaeum it is more than likely that the reverse situation is true, and that the Romans prisoners were more numerous.

²⁷ Serv. *ad Aen.* 4.628, ‘*litora litoribus contraria - aut quia in foedere cautum fuit, ut neque Romani ad litora Carthaginiensium accederent, neque Carthaginienses ad litora Romanorum: aut potest propter bella navalia accipi inter Romanos et Afros gesta*’.

²⁸ Scardigli 2011:33.

²⁹ Scardigli 2011:33 notes that the word ‘shores’ could just refer to the territories controlled by both sides and not to the whole of Sicily or Italy. However, if this treaty is set in the context of the First Punic War, it can only be the result of the conclusion of a war. Since we know these differ from the terms agreed in 241, then this supports my argument that there was an earlier war within the period 264-241.

that Syracuse would also have wanted to establish its position *vis-à-vis* one or both of the rival parties. In fact, we know from Zonaras that a treaty was concluded between Rome and Syracuse in 248 whereby the latter's annual tribute was cancelled.³⁰ Naevius indicates that Syracuse was also allowed to keep her monarchy and land.³¹ If I am correct in stating that Hiero had allied himself to the Carthaginians early in 248, it would mean that he had now switched sides. The new treaty might appear to support the belief that Hiero continued to be a loyal ally of Rome, but I have argued above that the assistance he provided Rome was rather limited.³²

Assuming the validity of my hypothesis, Hiero, having formed an agreement with the Carthaginians earlier in 248, now found himself in a difficult position. Although the Romans had left Sicily in accordance with the Philinus' treaty, the Carthaginians found they could not take advantage of their success due to the revolt of their mercenaries, which plunged the island into chaos.³³ These disturbing events probably induced Hiero to switch sides back to the Romans, who would have been pleased to renew their previous alliance, although conceding him more advantageous terms. Thiel presciently puts the lenient terms down to the Roman's fear of Hiero deserting them because he could have caused them 'a lot of extra trouble'.³⁴ I have argued that Hiero did indeed desert them, with devastating effect.

Stage 2. Campaigns after the Lilybaeum Siege (249)

Having offered a new interpretation of the key events relating to the Carthaginian campaign in 248 that ended in Rome's defeat and departure from Sicily, it was necessary for Pictor to reassign the events of the previous year that had enabled the Carthaginians to advance to Messana. I contend that these preceding events relate to the latter half of 249 and are a consequence of the failure of the Romans to capture Lilybaeum by the

³⁰ Zonar. 8.16. See discussion in chapter 3 for the nature of this treaty and whether it was a continuation of the agreement in 263 or whether, as I believe, it was a new treaty.

³¹ Naev. *Pun.* 6.37.

³² Polyb. 1.16.10.

³³ See stage 5 below.

³⁴ Thiel 1954:297-8.

summer of 249.³⁵ In this scenario, the Romans would then have had no alternative other than to retreat eastwards towards Panormus (if still in their possession) in order to regroup and await reinforcements.

The Carthaginians, under the leadership of Hamilcar Barca, would then have left Lilybaeum and followed the Romans eastwards, with the strong probability of winning victories and capturing towns. Such a scenario can only be found in the sources related to 260 and 259, approximately ten years earlier.³⁶ Towards the end of the siege of Lilybaeum in the summer of 249, Claudius Pulcher was defeated by Adherbal, and Aulus Atilius Caiatinus was appointed dictator later in the year, but he is stated to have achieved little.³⁷ However, I demonstrate below that it is possible to reconstruct Caiatinus' campaign which, if valid, would explain his lack of achievement.³⁸ Hamilcar's advance eastwards and Caiatinus' response would have occupied the rest of 249.

Consequences of Hasdrubal's Defeat (250)

In chapter 4, I have demonstrated that there are two sequences of events that cover the three years 260 to 258, and that one of these is inconsistent with the other and belongs to the period 250-249. As these events are interconnected, I consider that Fabius implemented them at the same time. I will therefore demonstrate how they can be related to 250-249.

I suggest that after Duilius' victory at Mylae in 260, the Roman land forces advanced from Messana and laid siege to the key inland city of Mytistratus and that it engaged the Romans for the rest of the campaigning season.³⁹ I also indicate that most of the other activities in the island recorded under the years 260 and 259 could relate either to 250 or to 249 (using the default criterion), and that the commander of the Carthaginian

³⁵ See stage 2 below.

³⁶ The displacement of events by ten years is in accordance with the '10-year' default criterion which is particularly applicable to Carthaginian activity. It is not always clear whether the sources place some events in 260 or 259, but the criteria I have adopted are not cyphers, and some flexibility seems realistic.

³⁷ Zonar. 8.15.

³⁸ I show below that Caiatinus' campaign ended abruptly when Hamilcar suddenly occupied Lipara.

³⁹ Mytistratus was besieged three times (260, 259 and 258) and occupied Rome's main attention in Sicily during this period – see chapter 4.

forces was probably Hamilcar Barca.⁴⁰ Included in the events that can be attributed to 250 or 249 are some that are in accordance with the next possible scenario that concerns those actions that immediately anticipated the siege of Lilybaeum (250-249).

Following Hasdrubal's defeat outside Panormus in the early summer of 250, it would be expected that the Romans would advance against the Carthaginians, who would review their defences. A clear indication of this review is given by Diodorus, who records that in 250 that the Carthaginians destroyed Selinus and transferred its people to Lilybaeum.⁴¹ Diodorus also records a similar reorganisation by Hamilcar in 260, which I have argued above is very unlikely to have taken place as early as 260.⁴² This included the fortification of Drepana, and the destruction of Eryx with the removal of its population to Drepana. Duilius' advance to rescue Segesta and his capture of Macella, that I indicate are inconsistent with the events of 260, might also be attributed to the Roman advance in 250.⁴³

Hamilcar's Eastward Advance after the Lilybaeum Siege (249)

The remaining inconsistent actions of 260 (or 259) show Hamilcar advancing eastwards, and can therefore probably be attributed to Hamilcar's attack eastwards in 249, after the failure of the siege of Lilybaeum. Having advanced to Segesta (where most of the Roman infantry were), he ambushed the tribune Caecilius who was coming to its aid.⁴⁴ Hamilcar then defeated the Romans at Thermae. He next took control of Camarina (where traitors surrendered it to him) and, in similar manner Enna.

⁴⁰ It is not always clear which activities were originally recorded under 260 or 259.

⁴¹ Diod. 24.1.1.

⁴² See chapter 4.

⁴³ See chapter 4. It is quite possible that Duilius could have been operating as a praetor or proconsul in 250. I argue in chapter 4 that he could also have been operating in 248 when trapped in the harbour of Syracuse (Frontin. *Str.* 1.5.6). Entries involving a praetor (urbanus) may also relate to 248 (Zonar. 8.11 & Naev. *Pun.* 4.34-5).

⁴⁴ If the Roman infantry were those who had fled from Lilybaeum (or the putative battle in its vicinity - see 9.4 below), they might have escaped towards Thermae, whilst Duilius was fighting Caecilius. There appears to be no later mention of the fate of Segesta, but presumably it surrendered.

At this point, his eastwards campaign appears to have faltered, because there is no further mention of it in the sources for 260 or 259.⁴⁵ However, it would be expected that the Romans would have organised a counter-attack. According to my interpretation of events, this could not have occurred in the next year (248), because it has been demonstrated in stage 1, that this involved the Carthaginian advance to Messana and Rome's subsequent defeat.

Counterattack by Caiatinus; Hamilcar's Response (249)

Following on from the previous scenario where Hamilcar advanced east after the failure of the Roman siege of Lilybaeum in the summer of 249, it might be expected that the Romans would send an army to drive him back. Possible evidence of such a response lies in appointment of Aulus Atilius Caiatinus as dictator in the latter part of 249.⁴⁶ There appear to be no details of his campaign as, according to Zonaras, he achieved nothing of note.⁴⁷ However, this appears to be contradicted by Florus, who states that when Calatinus (Caiatinus) was dictator nearly all the Carthaginian garrisons were expelled - from Agrigentum, Drepanum, Panormus, Eryx and Lilybaeum.⁴⁸ This statement cannot be accurate, because, with one exception, it is contradicted by the other sources. The exception is the capture of Panormus in 254, when he was one of the consuls involved. There is also another source that credits him with rampaging through the whole of Sicily, and many conquests, including: Enna, Drepana, Lilybaeum and Panormus.⁴⁹ Again, this statement cannot be true, except for Enna (258) and Panormus. But though both sources are clearly exaggerating his achievements, there is some basis for their statements. This can be further substantiated by evidence of a successful campaign by Caiatinus under the year 258, when, I

⁴⁵ Diodorus 23.9.4 says this was the second time, but I consider that this might just possibly be the 'first' time – and, if so, the 'second' time would relate to Hamilcar's otherwise unrecorded reconquest following Caiatinus' defeat at Lipara and his return to Rome.

⁴⁶ *MRR* I 215 [249 B.C.].

⁴⁷ Zonar. 8.15.

⁴⁸ Flor. 1.18.12.

⁴⁹ [Aur. Vict.], *De Vir. Ill.* 39.1-4.

have argued above, it is anomalous to other events in that year. His campaign can therefore be attributed to his dictatorship in 249.⁵⁰

Therefore, having been appointed dictator in 249, Caiatinus appears to have initiated his campaign by advancing to Camarina, but on the way only just avoided being ambushed by the Carthaginians.⁵¹ Caiatinus took Camarina but only with the help of siege-engines provided by Hiero. He then conquered Enna and Sittana and placed garrisons in the towns. He advanced west and obtained Camicus in Acragantine territory (and perhaps Herbessus), before reaching the Halycus river - this appears to be the farthest west he went, as he is next recorded as attempting to capture Lipara.⁵²

The sudden decision by Caiatinus to end his victorious campaign westwards against Hamilcar and to attack Lipara seems improbable at first sight. However, Zonaras says that Caiatinus went to capture Lipara, but Hamilcar entered it unobserved by night.⁵³ In my interpretation of events, I suggest that Hamilcar, having been forced into a difficult position, was the first to cross over to Lipara, where he surprised the garrison by night and captured the city, and that this forced Caiatinus rapidly to finish his campaign in Sicily and besiege Lipara.⁵⁴ Hamilcar then carried out a sudden attack on the besiegers and inflicted many casualties.⁵⁵ This, I believe might be the

⁵⁰ See chapter 4. The 'Person' guideline is applicable here as A. Atilius Caiatinus was consul for the first time in 258, and dictator in 249. Therefore, I consider that the events of his dictatorship have been reallocated to those of his first consulship, in order to obscure the counter-attack against Hamilcar, which if published, would indicate the siege of Lilybaeum had ended unfavourably for the Romans. Caiatinus was also consul in 254, but the events of that year are mostly concerned with the capture of Panormus.

⁵¹ No general is named but the most obvious candidate in this period is Hamilcar Barca.

⁵² Polyb. 1.24.12-13; Diod. 23.9.5; Zonar. 8.12. Clearly, there was no reaction from Agrigentum which I argue was still 'neutral' (see chapter 8). This incident might have helped the Acragantines' decision to join the Carthaginians in 248.

⁵³ Zonar. 8.12. Lipara was captured by the Romans in 252: Polyb. 1.39.13-14; Diod. 23.20.1a; Val. Max. 11.7.4.

⁵⁴ Polybius 1.24.13 says it was both consuls, but the account of Zonaras makes more sense. This, diversionary tactic recalls Agathocles' invasion of Africa to divert the Carthaginian forces besieging Syracuse - see chapter 5. It would seem that Hamilcar was wary of challenging Caiatinus in his advance west. His appointment as dictator indicates the senate had significant confidence in his military experience.

⁵⁵ After Caiatinus' failed attempt to get it back, Lipara is not mentioned again during the war. That the Carthaginians did capture Lipara is strongly implied by the treaty of 241: 'the Carthaginians are to evacuate the whole of Sicily and all the islands between Italy and Sicily' (Polyb. 3.27.2-3). Cavan 1980:64 says this referred to both the Lipari as well as the Aegates Islands, as Lipara had already been captured by the Romans. However, it seems unlikely that the smaller islands could hold out against the Romans once Lipara had fallen.

reason Zonaras says the dictator accomplished nothing of significance, as ultimately, all his efforts came to very little. After Caiatinus had departed from Lipara for Rome, it is probable that places like Camarina and Enna were recaptured again by Hamilcar (or surrendered to him) when he returned to Sicily.⁵⁶

Stage 3. Invasion of Africa (256-255)

The next scenario I want to consider is the desperate situation in which the Romans found themselves at the end of the siege of Lilybaeum (in the summer of 249) which, I maintain, would have forced them to retreat. There is a crucial piece of information supplied by Diodorus, that Xanthippus defeated the Romans round about Lilybaeum, which they were besieging.⁵⁷ If this is valid, it would show that the Carthaginians attacked the weakened Romans at the end of the siege or shortly afterwards. Such a disaster would have indicated that the Romans would have had to abandon the siege. I argue below that the Roman army was probably commanded by the 'proconsul', Gaius Atilius Regulus.⁵⁸ I have argued that Pictor could not hide such a catastrophic defeat, especially at the hands of Hamilcar Barca, so he had to create a different narrative by reallocating it to a time and place which significantly reduced its impact and consequences. He achieved this by placing the defeat in Africa in 255, when Marcus Atilius Regulus, the brother of Gaius was 'proconsul' there. He was thus able to turn the disaster into a heroic failure.⁵⁹ This reassignment of the battle outside Lilybaeum in 249, has therefore given rise to the next scenario which deals with Rome's involvement in Carthaginian Africa and helps resolve the incongruities of the accepted account. I have discussed the anomalies relating to the invasion of Africa in chapter 5.

⁵⁶ Diod. 23.9.4.

⁵⁷ Diod. 23.16.1: he places this at the end of the war.

⁵⁸ Possibly Junius Pullus was in titular command when he re-joined the army - see below.

⁵⁹ Walbank 1957:87 *ad* 26.11; he was possibly either the brother or cousin of Marcus – see Klebbs, *RE*, 'Atilius (47)', 2084-5. The 'Person' criterion would have been applicable; As noted in chapter 5, Marcus' term of office was extended into 255.

Original Roman Objectives (256)

The idea of taking the war to Carthaginian home territory raises many fundamental questions concerning motives, risks, objectives, and feasibility. I argue that following Rome's naval victory at Tyndaris in the 257, her next objective would have been to capture a major maritime city held by the Carthaginians. Her long sieges of Mytistratus had shown how slow progress had been inland. Panormus would have been the expected objective for attack because it was a major port on the north coast of the island and would serve as a base for the conquest of the *epikraty*. However, this posed a significant problem as they had already tried to capture this strongly defended city in 258 - but 'their challenge was not taken up'.⁶⁰ They had therefore to consider their options. They could have tried again but, as we have seen in chapter 5, the war was dragging on and they were now clearly impatient to conclude it. The other option was to capture Lilybaeum which would be very difficult but, if successful, would almost certainly force the Carthaginians to surrender the whole island, and so end the war. The Romans knew that Pyrrhus had failed to take Lilybaeum in 276. This was mainly because, as he lacked command of the sea, the Carthaginians had been able to pour troops and artillery into it.⁶¹ However, Rome's naval successes at Mylae (260) and Tyndaris (257) gave them confidence in their ability to besiege Lilybaeum by sea, as well as by land.⁶² This, I argue, would have been a bold move, but one that had some hopes of success. Had the Romans tried to capture this city earlier, but then failed with heavy losses, there might have been some justification for taking the considerable risk of an invasion of Africa.

Therefore, as Panormus blocked the northern route, the Roman plan would probably have been to sail around the southern coast of Sicily, meet up with their legions (who were marching overland) at some point along the route, and then besiege Lilybaeum by land and sea. Polybius says the oarsmen and marines were picked up near Agrigentum.⁶³ In my opinion,

⁶⁰ Polyb. 1.24.9-10.

⁶¹ Diod. 22.10.5-7, Plut. *Vit. Pyrrh.* 23.3-4: King Pyrrhus had also considered attacking Libya but failed due to his harsh methods of obtaining the required oarsmen.

⁶² The Romans raided Malta: Naev. *Pun.* 4.31-2.

⁶³ Polyb. 1.25.7-9. This was probably to avoid the dangerous Cape Pachynus.

once the Carthaginians became aware of the enemy activity, they would have presumed that the objective was Lilybaeum, and consequently, they sent a fleet to block the Romans' route. Thus, they sailed directly to Lilybaeum, and from thence anchored off Heraclea Minoa.⁶⁴ If the Carthaginians had thought the Roman objective was Africa, it is more likely they would have kept their fleet in home waters. Here they would have had the advantage of knowing the currents and shoals and that, in the event of a defeat, their ships could more easily retreat to a nearby port for safety and repairs.

As noted in chapter 5, the Romans won a great victory in the ensuing battle of Ecnomus. In this battle they first defeated the division of Hamilcar 'the Admiral', and forced him to withdraw. He then took up a land position at Heraclea, while the remainder of the Carthaginian fleet sailed back to Carthage.

Reasons for the Roman Invasion of Africa (256)

If, as I argue, the real Roman objective was to besiege Lilybaeum, their failure to achieve this necessitates an explanation. The answer is likely to have been due to the delay required to repair and re-provision both the captured ships as well as their own and to tend to the men.⁶⁵ This could only be done in a major port like Syracuse or Messana, and it would have taken a considerable time.⁶⁶ In fact, Zonaras implies some delay, when he states that Hamilcar sent Hanno to discuss peace (but really to delay the Romans), and later, when the consuls once more renewed the war, they had to sail from Messana.⁶⁷ We have seen in chapter 5 that Grainger also

⁶⁴ Polyb. 1.25.9. Despite Polybius statement (1.26.2-4), I believe the Carthaginians would have presumed Lilybaeum was the obvious target.

⁶⁵ Polyb. 1.29.1.

⁶⁶ Thiel 1954:224 thinks Syracuse is more probable as it is nearer. Hoyos believes it was Ecnomus, but the nearby city of Phintias (modern Licata) did not have a harbour but only a roadstead (Polyb. 1.53.10). There is no indication that Syracuse was used: Hiero may also have been wary of having large numbers of Romans within his city. Lazenby 1996:97, more realistically, indicates it was Messana because Zonaras (8.12) says the Roman fleet departed from there.

⁶⁷ Zonaras 8.12 informs us that Hamilcar [the Admiral] sent Hanno to discuss peace negotiations to delay matters, hoping to get reinforcements from Carthage. This does not seem realistic and may be an explanation proffered to account for the delay in setting out for Africa. I argue below that there was only one set of peace negotiations and they relate to Regulus and his siege of Carthage.

stresses that the ‘invasion had been subject to repeated delays’.⁶⁸ The idea for an invasion of Africa was, I believe, influenced not just by the campaign of Agathocles but, more importantly, by Scipio’s invasion in 204, when Fabius was probably writing his history.

The risks inherent in an invasion of Africa were manifold. The crossing itself from Sicily induced terror in some of the Romans.⁶⁹ The double-consular army could be cut off from outside help if the Carthaginians subsequently defeated the Roman fleet. The Romans also had no detailed knowledge of the country, its geography or of its climate, and the native peoples could not be relied on to join the Roman forces.⁷⁰ So, contrary to the accepted opinion, the Romans did not obtain the necessary support to guarantee success, and although the Numidians did take the opportunity to cause much damage, they acted separately.⁷¹ However, the greatest problem was the high risk of defeat, and the time it would take for any rescue of the survivors to be organised by Rome. Even a disastrous Roman defeat in Sicily would allow a far better chance for the survivors to reach safety and receive reinforcements. That there was no Roman plan after the capture of Clupea, is highlighted by the need for the consuls to request advice from the senate once they had landed in Africa, and to await their instructions (during which time they plundered the peninsular). The fact that one the consuls Manlius Vulso, was ordered to withdraw to Rome due to the lateness of the campaigning season emphasises this lack of a plan and casts significant doubt on the real objectives of the invasion.⁷²

The withdrawal of half the Roman army would have seriously weakened the remaining force and effectively guaranteed ultimate failure. The obvious course of action, in my opinion, would have been to capture a key city like Utica (as Scipio had done) or Tunis, which would have provided

⁶⁸ Grainger 2011:92; Cavan 1980:35 says, ‘towards the end of summer’.

⁶⁹ Flor. 1.18.17.

⁷⁰ Zonaras 8.12 informs us that the Romans obtained many deserters and Roman captives, but Polybius 1.29. 7-8 only mentions the capture of more than 20,000 slaves whom they sent to the boats.

⁷¹ Polyb. 1.31.8. There is no indication of Numidian cavalry helping the Romans at Adys.

⁷² When winter approached, Manius Vulso sailed to Rome (Zonar. 8.13). Pyrrhus, when he failed to capture Lilybaeum in 276, also decided to build a great fleet to invade Africa (Diod. 22.10.6-7); however, in both cases an attack on Libya was considered as a last desperate resort when no other alternative was available.

adequate supplies for the large army, and was in striking distance of Carthage – Aspis was too distant for this purpose.

Bearing these significant problems in mind, I believe that it would seem more likely that there was a methodical Roman plan to carry a significant part of the double-consular army from a point on the south coast, and promptly sail to Lilybaeum and besiege it by land and sea. The very large size of their fleet would ensure they would be able to defeat any challenge from the Carthaginians.⁷³ However, such long delays were incurred in the repair of the damaged and captured ships after their victory, that it was impracticable to commence a full siege in the same year.⁷⁴

Thus a full invasion of Africa was now clearly impracticable, but a grand razzia via the Cape Bon peninsula with only one consular army under Regulus would be far less risky.⁷⁵ It would also create consternation amongst the Carthaginians and send a powerful message that their homeland was not unassailable.⁷⁶ There are perhaps indications of there being a raid: Diodorus mentions at this time, a Roman fleet of 30 ships being blown towards a shore in disarray and that it could have been easily captured by the Carthaginians.⁷⁷ Support for the idea that only one consul (Marcus Regulus) crossed to Africa comes from Aurelius Victor, Livy, Florus, and Velleius Paterculus.⁷⁸

It therefore appears to be the case, that the request to Rome for instructions would have been made after the battle of Ecnomus when the consuls had taken their ships to Messina for repairs. I consider that in these

⁷³ An interesting point is raised by Thiel 1954:213 & 213 n.484 because he is at a loss to explain why the Romans should have taken the horse transports (which would have been a hindrance) when they were about to go into battle, for they could have easily left them at Ecnomus and returned to collect them after the battle. This would rather imply that they thought the Carthaginian fleet was at Carthage, and that they could unload their horses at their intended destination without hindrance; this in turn would suggest that Lilybaeum was their objective.

⁷⁴ It seems clear that no thought had been given to a siege over the winter. Lazenby 1996:84 points out that intelligence in ancient times was often non-existent.

⁷⁵ Eliæson 1906:86.

⁷⁶ Goldsworthy 2006:91-92 considers that the war 'would only end when one or the other side conceded defeat' and 'The Roman invasion of North Africa was an attempt to apply sufficient pressure to force Carthage to do just that'.

⁷⁷ Diod. 23.11.1. This could be the advanced ships mentioned by Polybius 1.29.2, but here there is no mention of sailing difficulties or of Carthaginians in the vicinity.

⁷⁸ [Aur. Vict.] *De vir. ill.* 40.1-2: although he does seem to say that Regulus also won the battle of Ecnomus. Vell Pat. 2.38. Liv. *Per.* 17. Flor. 1.18.17-23. It is possible that these references could be considered brief summaries concentrating on the activities of Regulus.

circumstances it likely that the senate would have instructed Vulso to guard Sicily, and then have authorised Regulus to make a limited raid on Africa.

I argue below that the necessity to state there was an invasion of Africa by both consuls was a result of the reallocation to Africa of the disastrous battle near Lilybaeum in 249. I maintain, that allowing this battle to remain in situ would have given support to those who believed that the Romans lost the war in the following year.⁷⁹

Landing at Clupea (256).

According to the accepted narrative, both consuls sailed to Africa, landed on the Cape Bon peninsular and marched to Clupea/Aspis. Zonaras says they captured it without trouble, as the inhabitants had fled, but Polybius states the garrison refused to surrender, and it had to be taken by force.⁸⁰ I believe Zonaras is more likely to be correct because the arrival, probably unexpected, of a large army, would have caused the garrison to panic, not just the civilians. I consider that Polybius has specifically taken this siege from the following year when the consuls of 255 arrived at Clupea. The reason for this is evidenced by his statement that the 2,000 men, who had been defeated by Xanthippus, escaped to Clupea, where they subsequently defeated a Carthaginian attack. This enabled Polybius to claim that the consuls of 255 had rescued the survivors, whereas I argue below, they had to negotiate their release, because the Carthaginians had previously recaptured the city and probably taken the 2,000 survivors to Carthage.⁸¹

Having captured the city, the consuls devastated the Cape Bon peninsular, taking 20,000 slaves and booty and destroying houses.⁸² On the senate's instruction, Vulso departed with his legions together with the ships' crews, leaving Regulus with 15,000 infantry, 500 cavalry and 40 ships.⁸³ This success in a strange land might have enabled the consuls to claim a triumph, but, on his return to Rome, Vulso only celebrated a triumph for the naval

⁷⁹ I reason below that the battle near Lilybaeum is the one referred to by Diodorus and is described by Appian.

⁸⁰ Zonar. 8.12. Polyb. 1.29.3-4.

⁸¹ Polyb. 1.34.9-11; 35.6-7,12. Actually, Polybius simply says the consuls took them on board.

⁸² Polyb. 1.29.7-8.

⁸³ Polyb. 1.29.8-10.

victory of Ecnomus.⁸⁴ Eutropius records him as returning to Rome from Africa victorious with 27,000 prisoners, but in my scenario these would have been from the battle of Ecnomus.⁸⁵ This triumph only for the naval battle strongly supports my hypothesis that Vulso was not involved in Africa.⁸⁶

Advance to Adys and the Battle against the Carthaginians (256)

The campaign to bring Carthage to her knees now began in earnest. Regulus led his army out of the Cape Bon peninsular, plundered his way inland and besieged and captured many towns until he came to the important walled city of Adys, which he then besieged. It is now that the Carthaginians decided to confront him.⁸⁷ On their approach to Adys, they based their force on a nearby hill in the open country overlooking the city. Regulus was now trapped between the city and the Carthaginian army. Because he feared their elephants and cavalry, he took a risky but logical course of action – he decided to make a surprise attack on the hill. At daybreak the Romans advanced on the hill from both sides and, despite a counter-attack by the mercenaries, forced them to abandon their camp on the hill.⁸⁸ This does not pose a problem, but the second phase of the battle, presents such major difficulties as to render it untenable.

The problem is that after the Carthaginian army descended onto the flat plain, their elephants and cavalry promptly departed, leaving the infantry

⁸⁴ The requirements for a triumph at this time were not fixed, and were subject to the approval of the senate – see discussion in Rich 2014:210-4. To be awarded a triumph the victor had to return to Rome with his army and apply to the senate (Pittenger 2008:13-13), but because Regulus died in Africa he could not be granted a triumph for his 'victory' at Adys or for Ecnomus. The naval triumph off Ecnomus is not in doubt because a triumph was celebrated - although only by the surviving consul Vulso. Had Vulso also participated in the capture of Clupea and the devastation of the Cape Bon peninsula, he would probably have been granted a triumph as well, but the fact that he was not, would indicate he did not go to Africa. The absence of a formal triumph regarding the engagement at Adys allowed Polybius to reinterpret it as a victory. Thus, the *fasti triumphales* have enabled a reasoned alternative narrative of events to be construct.

⁸⁵ Eutrop. 2.21. Polybius 1.28.14 says 64 ships were captured with their crews; he has earlier stated (1.26.7-8) each ship had 300 rowers and 120 marines - a total of 420 men. Thus 64 ships x 420 men = 26,880 men - clearly the same as the 27,000 'African' prisoners mentioned by Eutropius.

⁸⁶ Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48: '*L. Manlius A. f. P. n. Vulso Long(us) an. [CDXCXVII] co(n)s(ul) de Poeneis navalem egit VIII [---]*'.

⁸⁷ Polyb. 1.30.1-6.

⁸⁸ Polyb. 1.30.9-13.

to follow.⁸⁹ It is difficult to accept this account.⁹⁰ Diodorus, who often uses Philinus for this war, gives what I believe is a key clue as to what probably happened in this battle, when he speculates that there was no doubt that if the Carthaginians had descended onto the plain and used all branches of their army they would have won.⁹¹ I believe that, in this instance, this is not an idle conjecture, but probable fact. Diodorus would not have been able to contradict the established narrative, but by using this method he is able to insert what Philinus most likely recorded.⁹²

Thus, the second half of the battle has been detached and, I argue below, was used for the account of Regulus' defeat by Xanthippus in the following year. This interpretation means that it was at Adys that Marcus Regulus was defeated and either killed, or captured, and died in captivity later. The reason for Polybius' adjustment could be that he wants to turn Regulus' defeat into a heroic failure. However, as I argue below, a more convincing reason could be that he is thus able to extend the campaign into the following year. This enabled him to move the unacceptable aspects of the campaigns of Gaius Atilius Regulus in 250/249 to his brother Marcus Atilius Regulus in 256/5, and so obscure Hamilcar Barca's great victory outside Lilybaeum.

Regulus' advance to Carthage (256)

During the rest of the year, Regulus continued his campaign to Carthage, but being unable to capture it, went into winter quarters. Polybius says that after leaving Adys the Romans plundered the country and towns on

⁸⁹ Polyb. 1.30.9-15. The Romans gave pursuit, but then returned to destroy the Carthaginian camp.

⁹⁰ There could be some truth in the sources, in that the three arms of the Carthaginian army moved away from the hill, but I argue below it was only to reassemble in good order.

⁹¹ Diodorus 23.11.1. The Carthaginian casualties for this battle mentioned by Eutropius (2.21) and Orosius (4.8) include elephants and cavalry. These statements contradict Polybius' account. These two accounts also include the capture of many towns, and summarise Regulus' triumphal progress up to the point he tries to negotiate peace terms with Carthage. My main point is that these sources state the Romans fought with the elephants and cavalry, though, according to my theory, they reverse the true result.

⁹² As we have seen above, Polybius merely states that the Carthaginians did not realize how to employ the elephants and cavalry. Earlier in this passage about Carthaginian despair (23.11.1), Diodorus speculates on a missed opportunity to destroy a Roman force of 30 ships that was attempting to land – this otherwise unknown incident could be related to the advance force mentioned by Polybius (1.19.1-2) that landed at Cape Hermaeum. As with the other example, this force might actually have been severely defeated.

their way, until they arrived at Tunis, which they captured, and used as a base against Carthage.⁹³ The capture of Tunis is surprising because, even taking into account their stated losses at Adys (and those at the hands of marauding Numidians), the Carthaginians still had overwhelming forces available to them.⁹⁴ It therefore seems improbable that they apparently did not even try to save Tunis. From Tunis, Regulus advanced to Carthage, which he threatened. Peace terms are stated to have been discussed with the Carthaginians, but were too harsh for them to accept. If my hypothesis carries any weight, then the events described following the battle of Adys are fictional. They serve to continue the story of Regulus until the following year when he is stated as having been defeated by Xanthippus.⁹⁵

I argue that these peace terms probably relate to the situation at the siege of Lilybaeum in 250/249 when the Romans had vigorously assaulted its walls, knocked down some of its towers and advanced into the city, causing confusion and panic.⁹⁶ If my interpretation is valid, this would have been an appropriate moment for Gaius Atilius Regulus to have 'invited the enemy into negotiations' as Marcus Atilius Regulus is stated to have done before Carthage in 256.⁹⁷ His terms of surrender in 256 include the relinquishing of all Sicily and Sardinia, the payment of all the Romans' war expenses, and a yearly tribute. Additional terms included restrictions with whom they could make war or peace, and that they could only keep one warship for themselves.⁹⁸ I argue that these terms are far more appropriate for the situation in 249, when the all of Sicily (apart from Drepana) was

⁹³ Polyb. 1.30.14-15.

⁹⁴ See Hoyos 2007; there is no mention of Roman siege-works or surprise stratagems.

⁹⁵ Lazenby 1996:102-3: there seems agreement that Xanthippus was a Spartan, but his status is uncertain. The Romans regarded the Spartans very highly and it was no great dishonour to be beaten by them. Goldsworthy 2006:88 says 'Polybius takes obvious pride in recounting the achievements of [Xanthippus] ... whose actions confirmed the deeply held Hellenic admiration for the Spartan military system'.

⁹⁶ Polyb. 1.42.10-11. The mercenaries thought the situation lost because they went secretly to the consul in the Roman camp to discuss surrendering the city (Polyb. 1.43.1).

⁹⁷ Polyb. 1.31.4. The situation could be near the end of Gaius Atilius Regulus' consulship in 249, and would thus be the source of his urgency to offer negotiations.

⁹⁸ Dio 11.43.22-23. Dio contradicts Polybius by saying that it was Carthage that made the overtures for peace and that this was due to the large number of men that had been captured; they also sent their captive (Marcus Regulus) to negotiate on their behalf. I argue below that it is unlikely that Marcus could have been held captive since 255 (with no attempt to rescue or negotiate) and that he most likely died in captivity (probably of his wounds) and so could not have been an emissary.

already in Roman hands, and Lilybaeum appeared to be about to fall. If this is the case, then the whole concept of a siege of Carthage in 256 is further weakened.⁹⁹

Defeat of Regulus by Xanthippus (255)

After his peace terms were rejected by Carthage, Regulus departed to await the new year. He then confronted Xanthippus, but was defeated and captured. There are some important questions regarding the period from Regulus' departure from Carthage and his battle with Xanthippus. The sources neither state where Regulus and his army over-wintered, nor the date or location of the battle.¹⁰⁰ There is also a particular difficulty with the sources concerning the battle: some of these vary significantly from Polybius.

An analysis of these sources shows that they can be roughly divided into two groups, which are mutually exclusive.¹⁰¹ Since both versions of the battle seem plausible, it is probable that two different battles are described. Those sources, as exemplified by Polybius, describe a flat plain, and an army of 15,000 infantry and 500 cavalry under the command of Regulus, directly confronting a Carthaginian army with cavalry and elephants, and then being defeated.¹⁰² The other sources, as exemplified by Appian, describe Regulus with an army of 30,000 men (without any reference to cavalry or elephants), marching in hilly/rocky country around a lake and crossing a river. They were then confronted by Xanthippus, whose stratagem was to surprise the Romans by issuing suddenly from his camp. After this he attacked and defeated the Romans.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ The sources do not state there was a full siege of Carthage, but Orosius 4.8.8 states that they surrounded the city.

¹⁰⁰ Appian *Pun.* 8.1-3 says 'in the hot season' but Polybius 1.36.5-10 implies it was in the spring (before the early summer) when the new consuls set off to rescue the remnants of the army. Polybius 1.33.1 locates the battle in 'flat country'.

¹⁰¹ The allocation of the sources to these two groups are indicative rather than absolute, as they show signs of dependency from each other - see next notes 102 and 103.

¹⁰² Polyb. 1.32.1-9 & 1.33-34. The following fully or partially appear to include the factors of this group: Zonar. 8.13; Frontin. *Str.* 2.2.10-11; Eutrop. 2.21 (3 generals); Oros. 4.8.

¹⁰³ App. *Pun.* 8.1.3. The following fully or partially appear to include the factors of this group including a stratagem and Hamilcar Barca: Diod. 23.14.1-2 & 23.16.1; Eutrop. 2.21 (30,000 killed); Oros. 4.9.1-3; Val. Max. 1.1.14; Cic. *Off.* 3.99-100; Sil. *Pun.* 6.326-333.

Polybius' Description of the Battle

Polybius' narrative indicates the battle was fought in open country where the ground was even.¹⁰⁴ The commander, Xanthippus deployed his army about ten stades from the Roman camp. He then placed the elephants in a line in front of the phalanx, some of his mercenaries on his right wing, and others with the cavalry in front, on the wings. The Romans then opposed the elephants with the *velites*, who were stationed in the front. The massed legionaries were placed behind the *velites* and the cavalry on the wings.¹⁰⁵ Xanthippus sent in his elephants whilst his cavalry on the wings defeated their counterparts. The Roman infantry on the left, defeated the mercenaries opposite and chased them as far their camp. Meanwhile, as the elephants slowly trampled down the ranks of the Romans infantry, the cavalry surrounded those in the rear. The Roman infantry that had managed to penetrate through the row of elephants were destroyed by the Phalanx in the rear. Only 2,000 infantry escaped to Aspis; Regulus and 500 cavalry escaped, but were soon captured.¹⁰⁶

Polybius' Battle – Resolution

The inconsistencies that I have identified above with Regulus' actions following the battle of Adys, cast significant doubt on these activities. If I am accurate in this approach, it is reasonable to suppose that Regulus' invasion ceased at Adys. It therefore is necessary to return to the confrontation at Adys, in order to reconsider the difficulties, I have identified in the narrative. The main problem lies in the retreat of the Carthaginians in the second half of the battle of Adys. Having been forced down from the heights by the Romans, the elephants and cavalry of the Carthaginians immediately fled due to their belief that their elephants and cavalry were unsuited to level ground. This difficulty can be resolved if it is realised that it is a calculated fiction. I maintain that the most viable narrative for the second part of the

¹⁰⁴ Polyb. 1.33.1. Lazenby 1996:104 reckons that as Regulus probably retired to Aspis for the winter - it was likely 'somewhere in the "flat country" southwest of Tunis'.

¹⁰⁵ Polyb. 1.33.2-11. Zonaras 8.13 says that Xanthippus waited a while before attacking the Roman camp, when he observed it had been carelessly constructed due to their contempt for their enemy he then routed their cavalry with his elephants, killed and captured many, including Regulus.

¹⁰⁶ Polyb. 1.34.1-12.

battle, would have been that the Carthaginian army, on descending to level ground, retreated. However, the reason for this, was not they were terrified of their enemy, but to give themselves time and space to reassemble their forces, while the Roman army was busy plundering their camp. The area of the battle near Adys was a flat plain and is consistent with the Xanthippus battle (255).¹⁰⁷

The organisation of the Carthaginian forces, including their elephants and cavalry, would have been the same as Polybius describes in his version of the battle with Xanthippus in 255. The Romans would then have marched to confront the enemy and deployed in the manner described in Polybius' account. Thus, the ensuing battle and its outcome, would have been the same as the one described by Polybius for 255.

The Carthaginians were under the overall command of the three generals, but with Xanthippus directing the tactical aspects of the battle.¹⁰⁸ In order to justify the apparent ability of the Romans infantry to frighten away the elephants and cavalry of the Carthaginians, a highly improbable story had to be created: that the Carthaginians did not realise that the main strength of their cavalry and elephants lay on flat ground. This interpretation of the second half of the battle of Adys, if correct, explains why Regulus could not have captured Tunis and surrounded Carthage, and that his invasion thus was an over-ambitious 'razzia' that ended in disaster. This interpretation of the battle would also help explain why the Carthaginians did not challenge Regulus until he arrived at Adys. Although they were familiar with elephants they had not used them in war, so Xanthippus had to be hired to train them sufficiently whilst Regulus' marched to Adys.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷ Polyb. 1.30.8.

¹⁰⁸ Hamilcar, Hasdrubal son of Hanno, and Bostarus.

¹⁰⁹ Scullard 1974:148 notes that there was a smaller race of elephants native to Mauretania and Numidia: the Carthaginians were therefore familiar with their habits and environment. Jerome reports that Ptolemy III of Egypt appointed a 'Xanthippus' as governor of a newly won province of Persia (Jer. *ad Dan.* 11.8) – if this is the same person, he was thus later employed in Egypt.

Appian's Description of the Battle

Appian's version indicates that the battle was fought no earlier than June, because he mentions it was the 'hot' season.¹¹⁰ The Romans were encamped by a lake, and when news came that the Carthaginians were also encamped not far away on the other side, Regulus decided to surprise them. He ordered his men to march around the lake, even though they were tired, suffering from heat and the weight of their armour, as well as being subjected to missiles thrown down from the nearby heights.¹¹¹ In the evening, they came to a river separating the armies and Regulus crossed at once. However, Xanthippus, seeing the dire situation of the Roman army, had also prepared for action. He lined up his army, and then suddenly issued out of his camp. He defeated and captured Regulus and killed or took as prisoners, his 30,000-strong army, except the few who escaped to Aspis.¹¹²

The only source to name a location for this battle is Diodorus, who says that Xanthippus destroyed the Roman army near the city of Lilybaeum (see below).¹¹³ Appian is the only one who states the battle was near a lake and a river. Therefore, the location of this battle, that Diodorus describes as being in the vicinity of Lilybaeum, and Appian as being by a lake and a river, is unlikely to be in Africa because there are few lakes and rivers in the appropriate area of operations in Tunisia.¹¹⁴ There are however, two possible

¹¹⁰ App. *Pun.* 8.1.3.

¹¹¹ App. *Pun.* 8.1.3.

¹¹² App. *Pun.* 8.1.3. The figure of 30,000 represents a standard double-consular army. I believe that Gaius Regulus, who had been consul for the second time in 250/249, was now proconsul in charge of the army (as his brother was 'proconsul' in 255) on the dismissal of Claudius Pulcher after he had been defeated by Adherbal. Claudius Pulcher was then recalled to Rome, but Claudius Glicia, the successor he named, was rejected by the senate, and the other consul Junius Pullus had still not yet arrived. Thus, Gaius Regulus would likely have been in charge. It was Gaius who remained at the siege after 'one' of the previous consuls had departed for home (Zonar. 8.15). The large size of the army (assuming the figure is vaguely accurate) must be the remainder, both of the 110,000 men that started at the siege (Diod. 24.1.1), and of the 10,000 reinforcements of rowers (Polyb. 1.49.2-3), less those remnants who departed with the other consul. I believe that Junius Pullus, the other consul of 249, would have joined Regulus on his arrival (having lost his fleet). This is somewhat more probable than Junius going immediately to Eryx after his arrival at the Roman camp: he would perhaps have led some of the 2,000 survivors (Eutrop. 2.21) that captured Eryx.

¹¹³ Diod. 23.16.1. Scuderi 2017:60 suggests the Lilybaeum reference is due to the Carthaginians sending Regulus to request peace after their defeat at Panormus, and when the siege of Lilybaeum was about to commence.

¹¹⁴ Though there could have been more lakes as the climate has become drier over the millennia; Hoyos 2007:220 mentions a salt-marsh (Sebkhet Sijoumi) near Tunis.

lakes in western Sicily located not far from Lilybaeum that could be considered. One is the Lago di Trinita (more to the southeast) and the other is Lago Rubino (more to the northeast): both are suitable, and both have rivers running into them at either end. Lake Rubino is an artificial lake, but it is in the basin of the river Birgi, and there could have been a natural one in earlier more forested times. It is also on the route to Segesta where there was a Roman force ensconced.

Appian's narrative suggests that, despite being in camp, the Roman army was in a weakened state, and that this was exacerbated when Regulus ordered it to march (probably) during the afternoon around the western side, alongside which rose a row of hills. What may have happened is that Regulus, in retreat from Lilybaeum in 249, had reached the northern end of the lake (Lago Rubino, which is only nine kilometres from Segesta), and encamped there in order to give his exhausted army much needed rest. In the meantime, Hamilcar Barca had followed him and encamped, at or not far from, the southern end of the lake, but east of the river running into it. When his scouts told him that the Romans were marching round the western, hilly side, he sent light infantry to hurl missiles at them. As Regulus had done in attacking Adherbal's fleet, he took the initiative to attack first, but his exhausted men were unequal to the task.

Appian's Battle – Resolution

If my reconstruction of events in Africa is valid, Appian's battle, which appears to be realistic, most probably occurred in Sicily, and should relate to a situation where the Carthaginians could have decisively defeated the Romans. Such a situation is recorded by Diodorus, who says that Xanthippus wiped out the Sicels (Carthaginians) near Lilybaeum at the end of the war.¹¹⁵ I have contended in chapter 6, that after the Roman disasters relating to the siege of Lilybaeum in 249, the Romans retreated from there in the probable direction of Segesta. I consider that Appian's battle fits this scenario and that Hamilcar Barca followed Regulus and brought him (and

¹¹⁵ Diod. 23.16.1: Tzetzes, *Hist.* 3. 356-386.

perhaps Junius Pullus) to battle and decisively defeated him. This was perhaps around Lake Rubino, which is on the way to Segesta.

Summary of the Battles in Africa

I have endeavoured to show that though the sources appear contradictory, they can be shown to describe two entirely separate and incompatible battles. Polybius' battle is located in Africa, but Appian's battle would seem to relate to a more fertile clime than Africa, and could thus be located in Sicily.¹¹⁶ If the latter location is supported, it is linked to Diodorus' statement, that near the city of Lilybaeum, the Romans and Carthaginians fought each other, and that with the aid of the Sicels, Xanthippus annihilated the Roman army.

The scenario I propose for the sequence of adjustments of the two battles in Africa that seems to be the most plausible, is that Pictor was responsible for separating the Adys battle of 256 into two parts. He accepted Philinus' narrative of the first (victorious) part, but discarded the second disastrous one. He then moved Appian's account that related to the defeat in 249 of the Roman army near Lilybaeum, to Africa in 255, and replaced Hamilcar Barca with Xanthippus as the commander.¹¹⁷ Cicero confirms that Xanthippus was 'a Spartan general serving under the command of Hannibal's father Hamilcar'.¹¹⁸ I consider it likely that Polybius realised that it would be better to eliminate any possible indication of the 249 defeat (that led to the surrender of Sicily in 248), by discarding it altogether. He therefore used the disastrous second half of the Adys battle for his description of the Xanthippus defeat in 255. This accounts for there being two contrasting narratives of the battle in 255. The reference in Tzetzes' account to the Lilybaeum defeat being in 242/1 would possibly have been the decision of Diodorus, for he did not want the defeat to be forgotten, but he could only record it at the final end of the war.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ Although there were fertile areas in the Carthaginian controlled territories, the climate was hotter and drier: Lancel 1995: 273-4.

¹¹⁷ Pictor used the 'Person' criterion – see below.

¹¹⁸ Cic. *Off.* 3.99.

¹¹⁹ As we have noted above, Diodorus also added his conjecture that the Carthaginians could have won. My hypothesis concludes that there were two wars, so each had an end, and that events occurring at the end of the first war, could be moved to the end of the

Marcus Atilius Regulus (256-255); Gaius Atilius Regulus 250-249)

The significant conclusions made concerning the mirroring of some of Gaius' activities in 250/249 with that of his brother Marcus Atilius Regulus in 256/255, can be summarised as follows. Marcus was consul in 256 and was (reluctantly) made proconsul in 255.¹²⁰ However, this would not have been possible if it were admitted that he had died after the battle of Adys in 256: this could be another reason why his defeat was moved to 255. If, as I argue, Regulus was killed or captured in 256, then his command could not have been prorogued. However, this conflicts with the *Fasti Consulares* which states that Marcus was appointed after the death in office of Quintus Caedicius (*MRR I* 208-9 [256]). The latter's surprising death almost immediately after he took up his appointment (he is never mentioned as being active) is very exceptional and raises the possibility that the order has been inverted, and that it was on Marcus' death that Caedicius was appointed, probably at a late stage.¹²¹ The move of Marcus' defeat to 255, enabled key events pertaining to Gaius in 250-249 (including those of his putative proconsulship), to be reallocated to his brother Marcus. Thus, the unlikely 'siege' of Carthage in 255 (and the 'campaign' from Adys to Carthage) can be made comprehensible if it is considered to be reflecting the siege of Lilybaeum in 249. The result of Pictor's removal to Africa of Hamilcar's victory over the Romans in the vicinity of Lilybaeum in 249, meant that the siege continued 'seamlessly' into 248, and so eradicated any possibility of a subsequent Roman surrender.

In a somewhat similar fashion, the peace terms initiated by Marcus Regulus, that are specifically linked to the Carthaginians' request after Hasdrubal's defeat outside Panormus, were likely initiated by Atilius during

second war (using the 'End' criterion). Thus, the battle in 249 could be moved to the end of the war in 242/1. He also had to replace Hamilcar as commander because the Romans won the war. Hamilcar commanded at Lilybaeum in 250/249: Frontin. *Str.* 3.10.9.

¹²⁰ *MRR I* 209-10 [255] re Regulus' prorogation.

¹²¹ This Caedicius could have seen action later, for there is a mention of a tribune Quintus Caedicius in 258 regarding the attempted Carthaginian ambush of a Roman consul, which action I argue should be in 249 (see chapter 4). In this case, Caedicius would probably have been a praetor in 249 and re-named a tribune in 258 to hide his 'true' rank. Although the fasti are generally considered reliable back to 300 B.C. this does not mean that they are not subject to small adjustments.

the Lilybaeum siege.¹²² Also linked to 249, is the legend concerning the torture and death of Marcus. He was sent by the Carthaginians as ‘ambassador’ to Rome, but because he had recommended the senate reject their peace terms, they took revenge on him when, as he promised, he returned to Carthage.¹²³ According to my hypothesis, Marcus was captured in 256 after the Adys battle, and then probably died fairly soon afterwards. In a somewhat similar manner, Gaius was probably captured following his defeat in 249 by Hamilcar Barca, and later sent as the Carthaginian ‘ambassador’ to Rome to negotiate terms. As these terms were unsuccessful, he returned to Carthage. He would later be released under the terms of the Philinus Treaty, probably in 247 after which, we hear no more of him.¹²⁴ Gaius’ possible negotiations in 249 were reallocated to the aftermath of Hasdrubal’s defeat in 250 and attributed to his brother Marcus.¹²⁵ As we have seen above, this move has resulted in the unlikely story that Marcus – having been a prisoner of Carthage for five years (since 255) – was sent as ‘ambassador’ to Rome in 250.¹²⁶

Aftermath of the Xanthippus Victory (255)

Having demonstrated my interpretation of events from the arrival of Regulus in Africa until his subsequent defeat, I will now present my explanations of the difficulties relating to the rescue of the survivors.

¹²² Zonar. 8.15; Dio 11.43.26-7,30; Eutrop. 2.24-5; Oros. 4.10.1: these are not mentioned by Polybius. There is no evidence that peace terms were offered to the Carthaginians at the siege of Lilybaeum, but it would be unsurprising if at some stage, peace terms were discussed with the Romans, especially in the first part of the siege when the Romans had overwhelming force and had every hope of success.

¹²³ Zonar. 8.15.

¹²⁴ Zonar. 8.16.

¹²⁵ It is quite possible that the Carthaginians did want to negotiate in 250 after their defeat at Panormus, but the fact that Hasdrubal was condemned by the Carthaginian government and replaced by Barca, and that the Romans immediately decided to take full advantage of it to drive them from Sicily, probably makes this much less likely.

¹²⁶ Oros. 4.10.1. The idea that the Carthaginians had held Marcus prisoner for around five years is unlikely: there is no mention of any demands for his return in the years immediately after his capture, which would certainly have been a priority for the Roman state. Marcus’ return to Carthage to honour his pledge, even though he knows he will be put to death, is highly suspicious and clearly designed to display the heroic and honourable nature of the Romans. That Gaius might have been involved with negotiations after his defeat in the vicinity of Lilybaeum in 249, is not improbable. See Rich 2019:258-260 for Regulus’ speech in the senate.

Polybius says after their victory, the Carthaginians had attempted recapture Aspis by siege, but had been unsuccessful.¹²⁷ Polybius notes that those who escaped to Aspis (about 2,000) were successfully rescued in the following year by the new consuls Marcus Aemilius and Servius Fulvius. They landed their army there, having defeated the Carthaginian fleet off Cape Hermaeum. However, Zonaras has a different version in that the consuls for 255 set out for Libya (though guarding Italy from a potential Carthaginian invasion, and garrisoning Sicily), but were blown towards Cossura which they ravaged and garrisoned.¹²⁸ They then sailed on and fought a naval battle with the Carthaginians. He also states that in the middle of this sea-battle, the Romans in Aspis suddenly sailed against the Carthaginians from the rear, and the two fleets defeated the Carthaginians. The Romans later won a land battle against the Carthaginians and captured many prisoners, but saved their lives because of Regulus and those captured with him.¹²⁹

However, Orosius states that the Carthaginians had already captured Aspis, because he says that the consuls attacked Clupea first, and when the Carthaginian fleet promptly arrived, it was defeated with heavy losses.¹³⁰ The consuls returned to the siege, but then had to beat off a Carthaginian army under the 'two Hannos'.¹³¹ The consuls subsequently set off for Rome with much booty, but the fleet was disastrously wrecked (off Camarina) and barely 80 ships survived.¹³²

I consider that an explanation for these events can be found by using Orosius' narrative as a basis for comprehending Zonaras' account. This is

¹²⁷ Polyb. 1.36.6-7.

¹²⁸ Zonar. 8.14.

¹²⁹ Zonar. 8.14. Zonaras indicates that Marcus is still alive, but he could not say otherwise if the legend of his ambassadorial negotiations could be maintained.

¹³⁰ Oros. 4.9.5-6. The Romans would have had to halt siege operations temporarily in order to man their ships.

¹³¹ Oros. 4.9.7; one of the 'Hannos' could have been the person whom Polybius 1.27.5-6 describes as the Hanno who had been defeated at Agrigentum'. The consuls' robust repulse of the Carthaginian army has probably been exaggerated and they probably did not capture the city, for they celebrated no triumphs.

¹³² Oros. 4.9.8: I argue that the huge numbers drowned off Camarina (see chapter 5) are unrealistic and have been deliberately inflated to magnify the success the Romans achieved following their disaster earlier in 255. The disaster also explains why the Romans were unable to bring back the 'fruits of their success'. These losses can also be considered as a mirror image of the losses incurred by Junius' fleet in 249. For inflation of ship classes, and consequently manpower – Potter 2019:27-28.

because he reverses the situation in Aspis, by saying the Romans were already in the city. Following Orosius, we can state that it was the Romans who were attacking Clupea, but in the meantime the Carthaginian fleet arrived, and most of the Roman fleet engaged it. However, the Romans then launched that part of the Roman fleet that was beached on the shore near the city. They came up behind the Carthaginians and so a victory was gained,¹³³ and the Romans continued the siege of Aspis. The Carthaginians (commanded by the 'two Hannos') who had been sent to lift the Roman siege were repelled. It would seem therefore that Aspis was thus probably not captured by the Romans. However, it is likely that an agreement was made to exchange the Roman prisoners for those Carthaginians captured in the sea-battle. This would have allowed the Romans to raise the siege and return home.

This interpretation of events, whereby Aspis had already fallen to the Carthaginians, is supported by the fact that it would be very difficult to give credence to the idea that the 2,000 Romans who had escaped Xanthippus, could have held out against the Carthaginian armies.¹³⁴ This fits in with the narrative of the Roman survivors of the (putative) second half of the battle of Adys had been recaptured (probably just before the start of the winter of 256/5). By stating that the Carthaginians were unable to seize Aspis from the Roman survivors, the fleet is shown to be on a rescue mission to pick up the heroic survivors of the Xanthippus battle, rather than having to negotiate a prisoner exchange.

So ended a signal catastrophe for the Romans, but one they tried to mitigate by claiming a major victory at Adys, and by turning Marcus Atilius Regulus into a Roman hero, despite his flaws. I believe that there is an explanation why the rescue fleet met such a disaster when returning along the southern coast of Sicily.¹³⁵ This is because it is again a reflexion of the events of the sea disasters of 249, that occurred along this same route. The losses would probably have been comparatively small and explain why the

¹³³ Aspis (Clupea) is on the Cape Hermaeum peninsular, and is thus the same naval battle as described by Polybius.

¹³⁴ If Regulus had been defeated in the second half of the battle of Adys before winter started in 256, the Carthaginians would have had plenty of time to capture the city.

¹³⁵ Polyb. 1.37.3-4.

Romans were able to send a fleet of 300 ships in 254 to capture the city of Panormus.¹³⁶

Roman Situation at the End of the Siege of Lilybaeum (249)

I have demonstrated above how certain events in Africa reflect many of the events that occurred at the of the siege of Lilybaeum. It is now appropriate to review the situation at the end of the siege when Junius Pullus, with his much reduced force, arrived at the Roman camp outside Lilybaeum. Claudius Pulcher had already been recalled and a dictator was being selected at Rome,¹³⁷ and as argued above, the army command would probably have passed to the experienced proconsul C. Atilius Regulus.¹³⁸

With all the disasters the Romans had suffered, they were clearly in a desperate situation. Polybius appears to be ignorant of the seriousness of the situation by saying that Rome sent supplies overland.¹³⁹ But, it is difficult to see how this could be done with Carthaginian control of the sea, and their cavalry in control of the countryside. In reality, the Romans now had no prospects of taking the city by land or blockading it by sea, or indeed continuing the siege. Furthermore, it is also likely that the new dictator Caiatinus would not be able to gather a new army in sufficient time to come to their aid. The only feasible course of action would have been to retreat to Panormus or Messana and await the arrival of Caiatinus.

The situation of Junius Pullus poses a difficulty for Polybius, because he says that when Junius arrived at the camp he decided to take a bold military initiative, one that would enable him to redeem himself.¹⁴⁰ Junius achieved this by launching a successful attack on Eryx, which he then garrisoned.¹⁴¹ I consider that this initiative was an unexpected decision. This is because, as consul, he would now have been in command of the whole

¹³⁶ Polyb. I.38. 5-10. The 300 ships consist of the surviving 80 ships from the storm, plus 20 newly built ships. In my interpretation, few new ships would actually have had to be constructed.

¹³⁷ Zonar. 8.15: the dictator was A. Atilius Caiatinus (Calatinus) - the senate having rejected his choice of Claudius Glicia.

¹³⁸ See chapter 6; C. Atilius Regulus had previously been consul in 257.

¹³⁹ Polyb. 1.55.1-10.

¹⁴⁰ Polyb. 1.55.5-6.

¹⁴¹ Polybius 1.55.9-10 says that soon after returning to the army he used surprise to capture Eryx (abandoned by the Carthaginians in 250) and then to garrison it.

army, and this would have been his top priority. Thus, his actions are unlikely to be true as they are recorded. Carthalo shortly afterwards came with an army by sea and launched a night attack on Aegithallus (probably part of Mount Eryx) and captured him.¹⁴² As we hear nothing further about the episode, he was presumably part of a prisoner exchange. This is supported by Valerius Maximus who says he committed suicide before being convicted in the courts.¹⁴³

If my analysis of these events is accurate, I therefore consider that the most logical scenario of what happened is that when Junius arrived at the camp beside Lilybaeum, he took overall command of the army from Regulus, who had probably been made pro-consul after the departure of Claudius Pulcher. The army, despite all the losses it had suffered, possibly still numbered around 30,000 men. In view of their impossible situation, Junius and Regulus withdrew their army towards the pro-Roman city of Segesta, but were followed by Hamilcar Barca from Lilybaeum.

It is now that the battle described by Appian occurred. Hamilcar caught up with the Romans by a lake surrounded by hills, and he annihilated their army. There were some survivors, because Eutropius says that 2,000 escaped.¹⁴⁴ It would seem likely that some of these would have fled to Segesta, but I believe others might have gone on to capture Eryx. If I am right, Junius would have commanded those who went to Eryx, because he would have wished to redeem himself after his naval disasters. Meanwhile, Regulus would have been taken prisoner.¹⁴⁵ However, shortly afterwards, Carthalo came with an army by sea and launched a night attack on Aegithallus and captured him.¹⁴⁶ I consider these events can now be linked to Zonaras' statement (placed under 260 or 259) that Hamilcar campaigned against Segesta where the Romans had most of their infantry, but when a

¹⁴² Zonar. 8.15. His capture is not mentioned by Polybius.

¹⁴³ Val Max. Paris 1:4.4.

¹⁴⁴ Eutrop. 2.21.

¹⁴⁵ An alternative scenario is that during the army's retreat from Lilybaeum, Pullus decided to attack Eryx with some of the men, however a double-consular army of 30,000 men would require two commanders; the actual numbers could have been less, as 30,000 is a standard figure. The experienced Regulus would probably have played the major role on the battle with Hamilcar. The direct role of Pullus in this defeat would have been omitted, due to the linking of this battle with that of Marcus Regulus in 255.

¹⁴⁶ Lazenby 1996:141: probably part of Mount Eryx.

military tribune (Gaius Caecilius) tried to help he was ambushed by Hamilcar with severe losses.¹⁴⁷

Stage 4. Sieges of Drepana and Lilybaeum (250-249)

I have shown above, that by creating three scenarios Fabius could have obscured many of the events that would have revealed, what I contend, is Rome's humiliating exit from the war in 248. In this fourth scenario, I propose that Pictor's next step would have been to conceal any indications occurring during the siege of Lilybaeum, that might have predicted its dire consequences.

I have argued in chapter 6, that after their defeat of Hasdrubal in 250, it would have been logical for the Romans to have captured Drepana, as a prerequisite for a siege of Lilybaeum. However, scholars have followed Polybius and accepted that the Romans, being confident, were in a hurry to complete the conquest of Sicily by attacking Lilybaeum directly.¹⁴⁸ It would seem, from subsequent events, that this was a catastrophic decision which forced the Romans to make errors that significantly contributed to the disasters that followed.

I would like to turn my attention to the strong evidence that the Romans attacked Drepana in 250, but were repulsed with heavy losses, and that this forced the consuls of 250/249 to risk attacking Lilybaeum directly. I have shown in chapter 6, that in 250, after Hasdrubal's defeat at Panormus, Hamilcar Barca urgently reinforced the defences of Drepana in anticipation of a siege by the Romans. He also wished to protect Lilybaeum from attack via Panormus because it lay astride the sea-route from Panormus to Lilybaeum, and thus could threaten any Roman fleet movements.

I therefore argue below that the Romans did attack Drepana, but it signally failed. So, in order to redeem themselves, the consuls decided to mount a surprise attack on Lilybaeum early in the spring of 249 before their terms of office expired, and before the Carthaginians reinforced Drepana and Lilybaeum for the normal start of the campaigning season. They would

¹⁴⁷ Zonar. 8.11: I have argued above that this event relates to 249. It seems possible therefore that a Roman rescue force was sent to help the survivors at Segesta.

¹⁴⁸ Polyb. 1.41,1-2.

therefore be able to sail past Drepana without interception, blockade Lilybaeum and meet up with their troops coming overland.¹⁴⁹ This would have involved some danger, especially from the sea, but would have been less risky than sailing along the dangerous southern coast of Sicily.¹⁵⁰ This narrative would explain why there is no mention of a siege of Lilybaeum over the winter. The accepted length of the siege, from the summer of 250 to the following summer of 249, presents many difficulties regarding the ability of the Romans to reinforce and supply their troops over this period, especially during the winter.

Capture of Panormus and Roman Advance

Before discussing the siege of Lilybaeum, we will examine the evidence for a siege of Drepana in the latter part of 250.

I have demonstrated above that the Carthaginians had defeated Regulus' razzia at Adys in 256, but in the following year, they were defeated in the naval battle off Cape Hermaeum, and subsequently their army had sustained casualties in attempting to relieve the siege of Clupea. The result was that in the next year (254) the Carthaginians were not in a position to resume warfare in Sicily, so the Romans were then able to capture Panormus.

The capture of Panormus in 254, enabled the Romans in the following year to eject the Carthaginians from Iaceta, and its inhabitants to submit to them. The same process also happened at Solus, Petra, Enattaros and Tyndaris; but Cephaloedium was captured by treason, although Thermae held out.¹⁵¹ I have reasoned in chapter 3 that it was also in the following year (253) that Segesta revolted from the Carthaginians, and that more cities were acquired by the Romans.

These advances on land in 254 and early in 253, encouraged the Romans to contemplate completing the conquest of Sicily, which I have argued was their original objective in 256. Zonaras states that both consuls

¹⁴⁹ The consuls had plenty of time to prepare their ships and organise a very large army.

¹⁵⁰ After the disaster at sea off Camarina (255), the consuls knew the risks this part of the coast presented.

¹⁵¹ Diod. 23.18.3-5, 19.1. But, the Carthaginians did retake Cossura (Zonar. 8.14).

sailed to Lilybaeum in 253, but they were repulsed. It is likely that they were hoping to catch the Carthaginians unawares, because there appears to have been no plan for a siege.¹⁵² The consuls then raided the African coast. However, near Meninx (Djerba) they encountered shoals and made a difficult escape, but on their return, suffered severe losses in a storm, so it was decided to give up the sea.¹⁵³

Despite these setbacks, in 252 the Romans continued their conquests, and captured Himera; by borrowing some ships from Hiero, Aurelius captured Lipara.¹⁵⁴ During the years 252-1 the Romans were operating farther west in the districts of Lilybaeum and Selinus. However, through fear of the Carthaginian elephants, they kept to the high ground.¹⁵⁵ Evidence of their operations in the west, is possibly corroborated by the discovery of an inscription that mentions an 'Aurelius Cotta' in connection with the construction of a road or boundary between Agrigentum and Panormus. This inscription could belong to 252 when Gaius Aurelius Cotta was consul for the first time.¹⁵⁶

It would appear that (quite possibly) in the spring of 250 the Carthaginians decided to send an army under the command of Hasdrubal in order to counter the Roman advance. So, it was probably in June 250 that he attacked Panormus, but then suffered a major defeat by Caecilius Metellus.¹⁵⁷ I argue below that the Carthaginians now replaced Hasdrubal with a new dynamic commander - Hamilcar Barca. He completely reversed the grave situation in which the Carthaginians now found themselves. His first action was to reorganise their defences and to turn Drepana into an impregnable fortress.

¹⁵² Zonar. 8.14. I have deduced above that the Carthaginians did not fortify Drepana until 250, and so would not have provided a safe base for a Carthaginian fleet.

¹⁵³ Polyb. 1.39.1-7; Zonar. 8.14; Diod. 23.19.1; Eutrop. 2.23; Oros. 4.9.10-12.

¹⁵⁴ Zonar. 8.14. Diodorus 23. 20.1a says Thermae - Lazenby 1996:118 states it was also called 'Thermae Himeraeae'. He was granted a triumph: '*C. Aurelius L. f. C. n. Cotta co(n)s(ul) an. DI de Poeneis et Siculeis idibus April*', Degrassi 1954:100; Bastien 2007:48.

¹⁵⁵ Polyb. 1.39.8-12. Polybius actually says this was during the 2 years after the defeat in Africa (255), but almost certainly correctly, Lazenby 1996:118 states that this period was 'plainly the years 252 and 251'.

¹⁵⁶ See ch.1, pp.43-4.

¹⁵⁷ The sequence of events, that I propose (below) followed after Hasdrubal's defeat, and would support this date rather than one in 251.

If my conclusions are valid, the Romans would have realised that Drepana would serve as a base for Carthaginian ships, and that these would threaten the shortest supply route from Panormus to besiegers of Lilybaeum. It is therefore logical to suppose that the capture of Drepana must have been their next objective.

The Three Sieges of Drepana

A major difficulty arises from the lack of references in any of the sources of a siege of Drepana in 250, it will therefore be necessary to examine references in the texts to sieges of this city. I have identified three such sieges: the most important is in 242 when Gaius Lutatius attacked the harbour with his fleet of 200 warships.¹⁵⁸ This siege is logical, because it relates to the final part of the war, and ultimately forced the Carthaginians to send their ill-fated provisioning fleet to the Aegates Insulae in 241.¹⁵⁹

A second reference to a siege of Drepana is made by Diodorus under the year 254. He states that a Roman fleet of 250 ships, having captured Cephaloedium on the north coast, then proceeded to besiege Drepana. It would have been expected that the nearer city of Panormus would be the target. There is no indication that the Roman force was other than the full Roman fleet, as after the attempt on Drepana, the fleet went to attack Panormus.¹⁶⁰ Carthalo chased the Romans away from Drepana.¹⁶¹

Furthermore, Diodorus says that in the same year (254) Carthalo destroyed Acragas: this attack is clearly anachronous, because it was captured earlier from the Carthaginians (262) after a long siege.¹⁶² Acragas is not cited again until this incident. Lazenby talks of 'Roman troops

¹⁵⁸ Polyb. 1.59.1-12 – the roadsteads near Lilybaeum were captured at the same time to cut off help for Drepana.

¹⁵⁹ Polyb. 1.60.1-9 & 61.1-8. I have stated above that Fabius reallocated events in order to obscure actions that were significantly detrimental to the image he wished to present of Rome. However, he had to devise a system that enabled his narrative to flow in a convincing, and therefore, logical way.

¹⁶⁰ Diod. 23.18.3. Thiel 1954:244 n.586 thinks the Roman force was a small one and was an interruption to the main campaign.

¹⁶¹ Diod. 23.18.3. How Carthalo managed to achieve this without a fight, is not stated. Polybius (1.38.5-10) makes mention only of Panormus, which the Romans captured. Hoyos 2015:53 questions why 'Carthalo, who had beaten off the thrust on Drepana, was nowhere to be seen', when the Romans were besieging Panormus.

¹⁶² Diod. 23.18.2.

garrisoning Agrigentum between 261 and 255', thus implying that the Roman garrison must have been defeated by Carthalo in the following year.¹⁶³ But, there is no hint of this in the sources, and it would be surprising, if true, because it is difficult to think of any situation after 262 when the Romans would have allowed the Carthaginians to besiege and burn Agrigentum with impunity.

If my analysis is credible, the probable reason for the allocation of Carthalo's attack on the Romans besieging Drepana from its 'true' position in 250, specifically to 254, is that Carthalo's destruction of Agrigentum had been transferred from 244 to 254 (using the '10-year' criterion), and that the 'Person' principle (Carthalo) could now be used. Carthalo's burning of Acragas and the destruction of its walls would have been limited, the city was too extensive, and there is no indication that the Romans assaulted the defences. It would not have taken long to refortify it, as I show below was done in 242. Thus, both references to Carthalo in 254 are anachronous. The most likely scenario is that Drepana was besieged in 250. This is supported by Carthalo's activity around Drepana and Lilybaeum in 249, and thus he was quite likely to have been active in 250. If correct, Carthalo's incompatible action at Drepana in 254 would be linked to 250.

After Hasdrubal's defeat, a sudden descent by the Roman fleet on Drepana later in 250, would be the next logical step in their plan to besiege Lilybaeum, and so finish the war. This action was made more urgent because of Hamilcar's defensive preparations. Zonaras says that Hamilcar fortified Drepanum and transferred thereto the people of Eryx (which he destroyed to prevent the Romans from using it as a base).¹⁶⁴ These preparations can also be connected with Diodorus' statement relating to 250, that the Carthaginians razed Selinus and transferred the people to Lilybaeum.¹⁶⁵ Some of the advances the Romans made after the defeat of Hasdrubal were also transferred to 260 (using the default principle). Examples are the siege of Segesta by Hamilcar, which was raised by

¹⁶³ Lazenby 1996:181 n.26; his reference to the hoards of Syracusan coins found in Agrigentum indicating a Roman garrison in this period are speculative, as there is great uncertainty concerning their dates.

¹⁶⁴ Zonar. 8.11: this entry is dated 260, but see below for arguments that it should be 250.

¹⁶⁵ Diod. 24.1.1.

'Duilius', and the capture of Macella and Mazarin (near Selinus).¹⁶⁶ The Roman fleet of 250 would thus have been involved in gaining territory just before the advance on Drepana and Lilybaeum.¹⁶⁷

It would seem that part of Hamilcar's defensive preparations would have been to retake Segesta that had revolted in 253 (as had the Halicyaeans); the Romans also captured other cities.¹⁶⁸ Rome's preparations for an advance on Drepana would have been accompanied by other supporting military action. Thus, Hamilcar's retreat before the Duilius' move to rescue Segesta, and the capture of Mazarin (near Selinus), would be in response to this general advance.¹⁶⁹

The third reference to a siege of Drepana is made by Zonaras under 247. He states that while Metellus Caecilius was in the vicinity of Lilybaeum, Numerius Fabius was fighting with Hamilcar over the offshore island of Pelias, as part of his siege of Drepana.¹⁷⁰ No results are given, but it was unlikely to have been successful for the Romans. Furthermore, Polybius not only omits this fighting, but states that Hamilcar Barca was at Heircte from where he carried out raids on Italy.¹⁷¹ Zonaras also says that Hamilcar Barca caused the Romans great difficulty by raiding Sicily and Italy in 247. Thus, it would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to mount a major attack on Drepana.¹⁷² An additional indication that the siege is anomalous here, is Zonaras' statement that for 247 the Romans had officially decided not to use their navy in combat.¹⁷³ It has been considered that the whole affair is suspicious and uncertain because Hamilcar's fleet could readily have defeated that of Fabius.¹⁷⁴

It certainly appears that the description of the attack on Drepana is too detailed and realistic to have been concocted. Pictor would have used the

¹⁶⁶ Diod. 23.9.4; Polyb. 1.24:2.

¹⁶⁷ These events were moved to 260: Polyb. 1.24:1-2 & Zonar. 8.11.

¹⁶⁸ These events were moved to 263: Zonar. 8.9; Diod. 23.5.1. See also chapter 3, pp.97-8.

¹⁶⁹ Diod. 23.9.4.

¹⁷⁰ Zonar. 8.16. There is no mention of a triumph in the fasti. This siege is discussed in more detail in chapter 7.

¹⁷¹ Polyb 1.56.1-2, 10-11.

¹⁷² Zonar. 8.16. Thiel 1954:298 n.764 concludes that 'Zonaras' story is downright impossible', but Lazenby 1996:146 accepts the story, and Hoyos 2005:12-3 is equivocal.

¹⁷³ Zonar. 8.16.

¹⁷⁴ Thiel 1954:298, n.764.

'person' criterion to move the siege of Drepana, that is recorded under 247, to 250. This is because Metellus was proconsul in 250 as well as consul in 247, when he is stated as being in the vicinity of Lilybaeum.¹⁷⁵ It is quite possible that after the defeat of Hasdrubal earlier in 250, Metellus would have been involved in the siege of Drepana later in '250'. Fabius' adjustment would also have had the advantage of placing a major event into the 'peace period'.¹⁷⁶

Thus, we can perhaps conclude that the siege of Drepana in 247 should be placed elsewhere, and that 250 is the most logical year, as it was the next necessary step for the Romans to take, before the final attempt on Lilybaeum. But despite preliminary success, the siege failed with the besieging Roman fleet being chased away by Carthalo.¹⁷⁷ The unsuccessful attack on Drepana consumed the rest of the campaigning 250 season, and no further operations could be carried out until the new year.

Siege of Lilybaeum (249)

As I discussed in chapter 6, the manifold problems inherent in a winter siege made it prohibitive. Therefore, the consuls of 250 were now faced with the choice of renewing the siege of Drepana in the spring of 249, before their term of office ended, or of risking a direct attack on Lilybaeum. They chose the latter, because after their defeat at Drepana, they probably calculated the Carthaginians would not expect an attack on the more strongly defended Lilybaeum.

Thus, in the spring of 249, and probably before the Carthaginians had reinforced their garrisons, the consuls Regulus and Vulso attacked Lilybaeum with many ships and men, including numerous siege-engines. It is likely that, whilst acknowledging the risks involved, the consuls would have considered they stood a good chance of a rapid success. This would obviate the need to rely on additional supplies and reinforcements at a later stage. Indeed, at one point they almost succeeded when they had knocked down

¹⁷⁵ Zonaras 8.16 gives only a short extract from this siege of Drepana, and it is highly likely that Metellus would have come to support Numerius Fabius as the siege was proving increasingly difficult.

¹⁷⁶ Fabius thus used the 'Person' criterion (Metellus).

¹⁷⁷ Diod. 23.18.3.

some of the towers, but they underestimated Carthaginian resistance.¹⁷⁸ Orosius attributes this to the arrival of Hannibal son of Hamilcar at the siege; the ultimate result was that the Romans lost a great part of their army and only just effected an escape.¹⁷⁹

The new consuls of 249 continued the siege, but Claudius' attempt to eliminate Adherbal's fleet at Drepana ended in disaster, and thus all supplies had to come via the dangerous sea-route around the south coast of Sicily. Reliance on this route, resulted in the destruction of the entire fleet of Junius Pullus as well as his capture by Carthalo. I have further argued in chapter 6, that the Roman army soon had no alternative other than to give up the siege and retreat, but it was intercepted and defeated by Hamilcar. Relating such a double disaster, especially at the hands of Hamilcar Barca, would have strongly indicated that the Romans could not have continued the war for long.

A further calamity that might be relevant (as I reason below), is that the Gauls started raiding down the peninsular from 248 to 246 (rather than 238-236). This also introduces the intriguing possibility that the Carthaginians may have been in collusion with these Gauls. This was certainly seen as a real possibility when in 226 the Gauls were threatening Italy with an invasion.¹⁸⁰

In order to reduce the number of the calamities and thus the catastrophic nature of the situation, Pictor decided to remove the siege of Drepana from the early summer of 250 and replace it with an earlier start for the siege of Lilybaeum. This resulted in extending the Lilybaeum siege over the winter period of 250/249, thus greatly increasing its duration.

Stage 5. The 'Interwar' Period (247-243)

If my hypothesis of the existence of a treaty between Rome and Carthage in 248 is credible, there would then follow a 'peace' period lasting from 247 to 243 until the 'restart' of the war in 242. Fabius sought to hide this

¹⁷⁸ See chapter 6, pp.129-130.

¹⁷⁹ Oros. 4.10.2; it is quite possible that Barca has been disguised and the commander was Hamilcar son of Hannibal (see also discussion in chapter 6, p.126).

¹⁸⁰ Polyb. 2.13.2-7.

putative 'interwar' period by filling it with other events from the war. He could have continued extending the siege of Lilybaeum to fill this period.¹⁸¹ However, the main problem with this solution is that the details of the Lilybaeum siege were possibly too widely known to be amended, and that it would be better if the reader assumed it continued for some undefined period. It was probably not easy to find sufficient events to fill this period of five years, so Fabius found a satisfactory solution by extending across this period, two sieges that took place during the last two years of the war (Heircte and Eryx). We have already seen that Hamilcar was involved in suppressing the Mercenary revolt in 248,¹⁸² but he was also in command of the Carthaginians during the siege of Eryx in 242 and 241, as well as, I argue, during the slightly earlier siege of Heircte in 242.¹⁸³

I propose that Fabius' solution was to expand these two sieges, that possibly lasted about five months, to cover the inter-war period of five years (247-3). The siege of Heircte in 242 was removed from the second half of 242 (c. 3 months) and expanded over 247–245 (3 years).¹⁸⁴ The siege of Eryx, that possibly continued from late 242 to early March of 241 (c. between 2 – 3 months), was copied and expanded over 244-3 (2 years), and the original entry was kept in situ. As we have argued above, Fabius had also transferred some details concerning the other earlier siege of Drepana (the second half of 250) to 247. There were other events taking place in Sicily during these five years that did not directly affect the Romans - these are discussed below.

Sicily in the 'Interwar' Period (247-3)

The defeat of the Romans in 248, that I have proposed resulted in their departure from Sicily, left a chaotic period in the island during 247-3: a situation that Fabius had to disguise. I have shown above that in 248,

¹⁸¹ Diod. 24.14. By extending the length of this siege throughout the 'interwar' period it could be linked to its siege of 242-1, and thus give rise to the claim that it lasted for ten years (250-241) - as long as the Trojan War.

¹⁸² I opine that this continued into 247 after the Treaty of Philinus.

¹⁸³ See chapter 7, and 9.6 below.

¹⁸⁴ There is no record of a siege of Heircte in 242/1 because it had been moved to 252 (using the ten-year default criterion). Diod. 23.20.1b: this siege presents an anomaly in 252 (see chapter 7); Polybius refers to only one siege of Heircte.

Carthalo's mercenaries revolted over pay, and when the rest of his mercenaries heard about his treatment of their colleagues, they were ready to revolt.¹⁸⁵ Hamilcar's mercenaries would also have revolted at about the same time, as he is stated as attempting to put them down.¹⁸⁶ It is relevant to note that although Carthalo and Hamilcar dealt with the mutineers very severely, it is never stated that they were finally subdued.

Although there are no details concerning Messana after Claudius' putative departure from Sicily, it would seem quite feasible to conclude that the Mamertines took the opportunity to declare independence, and to join their colleagues.¹⁸⁷ A Mamertine revolt would have forced the Carthaginians (probably under Hamilcar) to abandon their siege in order to ensure the security of their other cities against the rebels. This interpretation gives a realistic explanation for Polybius' statement (under 264), that when the consul first crossed over to Messana, the Carthaginians quit Messana in fear and retired to their cities.¹⁸⁸ At the same time various native cities of Sicily would probably have attempted to regain their independence, with some probably colluding with the mercenaries. That the whole situation quickly descended into chaos, possibly ties in with the situation described in the Entella Tablets.¹⁸⁹

It would seem that the Carthaginians were now forced to retreat into their *epikraty*, and that Hamilcar and Carthalo were continuing to defend it against the mercenaries during 247. If this is the situation, then 247 could be a possible year for the attack on Entella.¹⁹⁰ These unsettled conditions find support in my argument that Carthalo captured and plundered Agrigentum in 244 (not 254).

¹⁸⁵ Zonar. 8.16. See chapter 7.

¹⁸⁶ Zonar. 8.16.

¹⁸⁷ The Mamertines had been mercenaries and had close ties with their kindred in Italy - they were originally Campanians: Polyb. 1.8.1; Zonar. 8.8.

¹⁸⁸ Polyb. 1.15.3-4. It is possible that the Carthaginians had anticipated trouble with some of their mercenaries before the siege of Messana, because Zonaras 8.9 states that they put to death their own Italian mercenaries.

¹⁸⁹ See chapter 1.

¹⁹⁰ If Entella had been taken by the Carthaginians in the period 250-249, it might be that the Entellinoi took the opportunity to rebel in 247, and thus the Carthaginians would therefore have attacked Entella and have taken away her inhabitants as a defensive measure.

Additional support for a period of chaos at this time, is the statement by Diodorus that certain 'private' individuals asked Rome for ships to raid Africa; and that amongst other things, they destroyed ships and buildings in Hippo.¹⁹¹ It is never explained who these obscure individuals were, but in my opinion, they are very likely to be the rebel Carthaginian mercenaries. If Entella had been captured by the Carthaginians in about 247, the threat to the *epikraty* would probably have been checked, and the mercenaries then occupied with other campaigns. This would have enabled Hamilcar to return to Carthage.

It is possible he may then have been called upon to suppress a rebellion in Africa in 245. Evidence for this is possibly indicated by a statement of Orosius (under 255) that a Punic general called Hamilcar was ordered to suppress a rebellion in Numidia and Mauretania, and that he achieved this with the utmost cruelty.¹⁹² A rebellion, in Mauretania, poses a problem, if attributed to 255: this is because there is no evidence of a previous conquest so far west. However, In the years after 255, the Carthaginians would have been able to expand westwards through Numidia to Mauretania. If 245 is the correct year for Hamilcar's campaign, then he must have returned to Africa by early 245 at the latest.¹⁹³ The revolt in Africa could have been the result of Hanno the Great's offensive, because he is stated as having captured Hecatompylus, southwest of Carthage in Algeria around this time.¹⁹⁴

We can now support a scenario whereby the Carthaginians, having defeated the Romans in 248, had almost the whole of Sicily in their grasp, but then their own mercenaries revolted, and forced them back to the west. After stabilising the situation in the far west, Hamilcar was recalled to Africa

¹⁹¹ Zonar. 8.16. See also chapter 7; Sicily would have been the most suitable place from which to launch their attacks.

¹⁹² Oros. 4.9.9: this campaign could have been achieved in one season. Fabius would have used the default criterion to reallocate the campaign to 255.

¹⁹³ If these events are related to 245, Pictor would also have had to reallocate them because Hamilcar was supposed to have been besieged at Heircte (or Eryx). Another support for a date of around this time, is the isolated statement by Zonaras 8.13 (under 255) that the Carthaginians, having no money, abandoned their allies [mercenaries] on a desert island. This makes little sense in 255, but would be applicable in the current situation.

¹⁹⁴ Diod. 24.10. 1-2; Lazenby 1996:144.

where he suppressed the revolt, but he left behind a chaotic situation in the island, except for the *epikraty* and Hiero's kingdom.

Italy in the 'Interwar' Period (248-3)

Now I intend to turn to the situation in Italy, where I demonstrate that Rome was faced with major problems. There is hardly any reference to political events relating to the peoples of Italy during the whole of the First Punic War, and as a result it has been presumed that Italy was at peace.¹⁹⁵ However, there are indications that some events relating to the period 248-3 can be found in the sources narrating actions after the war. These involve Gallic attacks, as well as the closing of the Temple of Janus, that indicate a period of peace in the republic.

Gallic Attacks '248-6' (238-6)

An examination of the sources for the period 238 to 236, reveals that there were major Gallic attacks in Italy. These are inconsistent with other campaigns the Romans were carrying out over the same period.¹⁹⁶ The first reference to these attacks is recorded by Zonaras under 238, when he says Publius Valerius was at first defeated by the Boii and their neighbouring Gauls, but on procuring reinforcements from Rome, he was fortunate in obtaining victory.¹⁹⁷ Orosius says various battles were fought with a new enemy, the Cisalpine Gauls. In the first battle, Valerius lost 3,500 men, but in the second, 14,000 Gauls were killed and 2,500 captured. Because of the

¹⁹⁵ See below, chapter 9.5, p.215. The only significant exception is a conspiracy in Rome in 259 of Samnite oarsmen (Zonar. 8.11), or alternatively, slaves and allied marines (Eutrop. 4.7.12).

¹⁹⁶ These Gallic attacks have tended to be played down or ignored by scholars. Frank 1928:808 accepts, with caution, skirmishes with the Gauls in 238 'though not from reliable sources', but 'if we may believe Polybius there was no threat of war till 236'. Scullard 1961:170 ignores the fighting against the Gauls in 238 and 237, but accepts that of 236 against the Boii, which is mentioned by Polybius 2.21.1-6 and Zonaras 8.18, but he wonders why the Romans did not follow up on the fighting, instead of preferring peace. However, Sampson 2016:48-9 accepts the 'The Boian War (238-236 BC)' and criticises Polybius for apparently relegating all the events to 236, and is thus 'a garbled account'. For a detailed examination of the Gauls in Italy see Williams 2001.

¹⁹⁷ Zonar. 8.18.

earlier loss, a triumph was denied to the consul.¹⁹⁸ However, in the same year, the Ligurians were conquered by Sempronius, the other consul,¹⁹⁹ and the Romans also secured Sardinia from the Carthaginians, without a fight.²⁰⁰

It is difficult to believe that all these activities were carried out in 238, particularly those involving the Gauls. Gallic attacks traditionally caused panic, and it was usual to declare a *tumultus Gallicus*, 'even trivial Gallic uprisings were taken seriously (Cic. Att. i. 19. 2)'.²⁰¹ The impact of a Gallic attack can be judged by the reaction to the great army of Gauls that invaded the peninsula in 225. The Romans mustered all the available manpower of the state to confront them. This involved more than 700,000 infantry and 70,000 cavalry.²⁰² The fact that no triumphs were celebrated for the Roman success in repelling the Gauls in 238, strongly indicates heavy losses were incurred.

The same problem of too many wars waged by the Romans at the same time, is evidenced in the next year (237). Actions were enacted against the Ligurians,²⁰³ and an expedition was undertaken to Sardinia. But when the Carthaginians objected to this, they were forced to cede it under threat of war.²⁰⁴ In addition, Zonaras says both consuls campaigned against the Gauls, and as long they kept together they were invincible. However, when they pillaged separately Flaccus became imperilled, but the Gauls were beaten back.²⁰⁵ It is very unlikely that the Romans could have conducted all these operations in the same year, especially as they were having such significant problems with these Gauls.

For the next year (236), Polybius records more trouble with the Gauls, and Rome had to send a legion to block their invasion.²⁰⁶ Zonaras has a

¹⁹⁸ It is difficult to believe that had he really defeated the Gauls so thoroughly, he would not have been granted a triumph, previous losses notwithstanding – the second battle is likely to be fictitious or grossly exaggerated.

¹⁹⁹ Zonar. 8.18; Liv. *Per.* 20.

²⁰⁰ Zonar. 8.18.

²⁰¹ Oakley 1998:126.

²⁰² Polyb. 2.24.3-13.

²⁰³ Eutrop. 3.2; he says 'and a triumph gained over them', however it is likely that this triumph relates to P. Cornelius Lentulus in 236 and not L. Cornelius Lentulus in 237, because only Publius celebrated a triumph (over the Ligurians) - *MRR I* 221-2 [237, 236].

²⁰⁴ Polyb. 1.88.8-12. Polybius is a little vague about the exact year, but Hoyos 2005:233 believes it to be 237.

²⁰⁵ Zonar. 8.18.

²⁰⁶ Polyb. 2.21.1-6.

different account, for he states both consuls were sent towards Ariminum, but having few men they arranged a truce. The Gauls then fought among themselves, with the result that the Boii had to surrender land to the Romans to obtain peace.²⁰⁷ In the same year, Lentulus repulsed the Ligurians who had attacked him, and he captured some fortresses; Varus attacked the Corsicans.²⁰⁸ Again, it seems reasonable to believe that there was too much activity in this year, especially as the Gauls are recorded as threatening a major invasion.

Further evidence that these Gallic wars do not belong to the period 238-6 is evidenced by the triumphal fasti, which record only triumphs over the Ligurians, Sardinians and Corsicans. Due to the support in the triumphal fasti and their compatibility with Roman aims after 241, we can be sure that these non-Gallic campaigns are contemporary. However, no triumphs are recorded over the Gauls despite claims for success in 238 and 237, and thus indicate that these campaigns are likely to be intrusive.

As noted above, wars against the Gauls, posed the greatest threat to Rome, and would have precluded any other activity. Thus, it is difficult to believe that Rome could have waged at the same time, all the wars stated to have been undertaken during this period. I contend that the sequence of Gallic invasions, that do appear to be genuine, are likely to be intrusive in these years (238-6), and have been reallocated from another period. I argue that the details of this three-year period of major Gallic attacks would have taken major resources away from the war in Sicily, leaving the Carthaginians victorious in the island. By assigning the correct start of this period to 248 (using the default criterion), my argument that the Treaty of Philinus was signed in 248 is supported, and that Rome was fully occupied in fighting the Gauls for another two years (247-6).

The end of these attacks would suggest that Rome now required a period of peace: this is suggested by the closing of the Temple of Janus which is discussed below.

²⁰⁷ Zonar 8.18: the mention of the Romans having few men would suggest a time of distress.

²⁰⁸ Zonar. 8.18.

Rome at Peace: The Closing of the Temple of Janus '245' (235)

I consider that evidence can be found that there was at least one year during the putative peace period (247-3) when Rome was in a state of peace with Carthage, and possibly with all her other enemies. The closing of the doors of the Temple of Janus in 235 signified that there were no current wars, and that Rome was entirely at peace with her neighbours. This event, according to tradition, had not happened since the time of King Numa Pompilius 445 years earlier, however, the doors appear not to have remained closed for more than a year.²⁰⁹

Florus states a shorter period: that they were immediately opened as the Ligurians, Insubrian Gauls and Illyrians began to cause trouble.²¹⁰ If a short period is involved, the reopening of the temple casts serious doubt that the stated year (235) is correct. The reason is that there must have been a certainty of peace before the temple could be closed, and that this suggests the most exceptional circumstances prevailed in 235.²¹¹ However, the situation in this year, was one of continuous warfare when the Romans were fighting multiple enemies.²¹² There was thus no certainty of peace in 235, and this year was no different to other years in the past, or in the following period.

If Fabius had moved the closing of the Temple of Janus to 235 from 245 (using the default criterion of ten years), this would strongly support the concept of the existence of a peace period at Rome following the disasters in Sicily in 249-248 and the Gallic invasions of 248-6, and thus emphasising that there was no war with Carthage.

²⁰⁹ Oros. 4.12.4-7, 4.8.4; Liv. 1.19.3; Flor. 1.19.1-2; Plut. *Mor. De fort. Rom.* 322 A-B; Vell. Pat. 2.38; Eutrop. 3.3; Varr. *Ling.* 5.165.

²¹⁰ For a shorter period: Flor. 1.19.2.

²¹¹ Ogilvie 1970:93-4 expresses surprise that there were no more such closures during the following 445 years until 235, and wonders if they were not generally recognised and were invented by antiquarians (or even by Octavian). However, he does consider that the 235 closure might relate to the end of the war in 241.

²¹² Zonar. 8.18. Florus 1.19.1, 2.34.64 states that immediately after the closure of the temple, the Ligurians, Insubrian Gauls and Illyrians began to cause trouble. This is a general statement relating to Rome's enemies, because there is no recorded trouble with the Illyrians until 230, or the Insubres until 222.

Possible declaration of War '243' (233)

There is perhaps another support for the existence of this peace period: this is the formal declaration of war made by Rome against Carthage. Under the year 233, Zonaras says the Romans declared the Carthaginians to be enemies. This is because the Romans claimed they had instigated Rome's current wars, and demanded money, as well as the removal of Roman ships from all these islands, since these belonged to them. The Romans sent heralds insisting they choose peace or war, but the Carthaginians merely stated that the Romans could choose what they liked; thereafter, both hated each other but hesitated to go to war.²¹³

These charges against the Carthaginians are hard to accept in 233, because Roman armies were operating in Sardinia and Corsica and would not have allowed Carthaginian shipping to operate in their ports.²¹⁴ Furthermore, it is unlikely that the Carthaginians would have recovered sufficiently from the previous conflict to want to provoke another long war with Rome, especially since Hamilcar was fully occupied in Spain.²¹⁵ However, if the default allocation criterion (ten years) is applied, it would be compatible with the situation in 243, when I argue that Rome was about to resume the war in the following year 242, and a formal declaration of war was necessary.²¹⁶

I have argued that the sieges of Heircte and Eryx (247-3) cover approximately five months (not five years, as is generally accepted) and took place in 242/1, and that the mercenaries of the Carthaginians ('private citizens'), who had revolted in Sicily in 248, had conducted raids by sea on the Carthaginian territory in Africa during the period (247-3). The Carthaginians were forced to retreat to their key bases of Lilybaeum, Drepana and (possibly) Panormus, while their army in Africa under Hanno had been extending their territory. Possibly in 244, they were in a position to

²¹³ Zonar. 8.18; Gell. *NA* 10.27.3-5. The islands involved were Sardinia and Corsica.

²¹⁴ Zonar. 8.18: the consuls campaigned against the Sardinians and Ligurians.

²¹⁵ Polyb. 2.1.7. Hoyos 1998:145-6 believes this is related to problems in Sardinia and Liguria –'surely Punic-provoked?' and attributes it to 'Punic assertiveness against Roman truculence'.

²¹⁶ I consider that Zonaras tried to make adjustments to the putative declaration of war in 243 in order to make it compatible with the situation existing in 233. Thus, the islands that in 243 belonged to the Carthaginians, he called them Roman, and then had to state war did not take place in 233.

turn their attention to Sicily again, and it may be now that Carthalo attacked Agrigentum. Thus, almost all the events attributed to the 'interwar' period 247-3 in Sicily have been shown to have taken place in other periods.

Stage 6. War Renewed; Siege of Agrigentum (242-241)

If my interpretation of events is valid, the final series of adjustments that I suggest Fabius had to apply relates to the last two years of the war (242-1). I have highlighted in chapter 8, the problems associated with the extraordinarily long gap between the descent of the Romans on Drepana and Lilybaeum in the summer of 242, and the relief fleet sent out by the Carthaginians in March 241. I have concluded that this gap can only be explained by the absence of important activity that Fabius found necessary to move elsewhere. I have also shown evidence that after the victories of 263 the Romans were at peace for the following two years (262-1), and that the war only restarted in 260.²¹⁷ I demonstrate below, that it is possible to recover the missing activity, if it is considered that it relates to the siege of Agrigentum (262), and to the sparse events of the following year (261).

It is therefore possible that Fabius reassigned to this putative peace period, the siege of Agrigentum and the subsequent raiding in 261. The advantages of this approach is that Fabius could state that the First Punic War was the longest continuous war in recorded history, and that it even exceeded the Peloponnesian War. It also confirmed that Rome always fought on until ultimate victory. However, this adjustment resulted in the significant anomaly of the long delay it took Carthage to send supplies to Hamilcar at the end of the war.

The Carthaginian delay in supplying Hamilcar at Eryx (242-1)

In chapter 8, it is demonstrated that there are two incompatible narratives of events that are attributed to Lutatius during 242/1. In the first version, Lutatius besieged Drepana until the prompt arrival of the Carthaginian fleet, which he then defeated.²¹⁸ In the second version, Lutatius

²¹⁷ This includes Livy's important comment that Sicily (except Syracuse) has once been divided between Carthage and Rome – Liv. 27.8.16-17.

²¹⁸ Polyb. 1.59.8-61.8.

sailed to Sicily, anchored near Eryx, and on the arrival of the Carthaginian fleet, defeated it.²¹⁹

I reason below that when Lutatius first attacked in 242, the Carthaginians immediately landed their forces at Agrigentum, but that after a long siege, the Romans captured it. Hamilcar then replaced Hanno and carried out raids from Heircte until besieged by the Romans later in the year – he subsequently escaped to Eryx. It was therefore only early in the spring of 241 that Carthage was able to send out a relief fleet. The second version of Lutatius' activities is now pertinent, for he anticipated Carthage's intentions and arrived in Sicily in time to intercept and defeat the Carthaginian fleet.

Siege of Agrigentum (262); Carthaginian raids (261)

There are many problems relating to the siege of Agrigentum when located early in the war. These problems raise the possibility that the siege is intrusive and has been moved from a later period. There is a surprising lack of detailed information concerning activities in 261, although there are references to Carthaginian raiding and some Gallic mercenary unrest. As these activities appear to be connected to those of 262, they could also be considered intrusive. Zonaras states that in preparation for the resumption of the war in 242, the Romans secured certain Gauls and other Carthaginian allies who had rebelled from Carthaginian employ as mercenaries, and that they had never previously paid for a foreign force.²²⁰

I referred in chapter 8 to the confusion of A. Postumius Albinus (consul in 242) and L. Postumius Megellus (consul in 262), and concluded it was due to the reallocation of the siege of Agrigentum from 242 to 262, as both consuls belonged to the *gens* Postumia. This would highlight another principle put in place to re-arrange the narrative of the war, whereby events can be reallocated between magistrates of the same *gens*.²²¹

²¹⁹ Diod. 24.11.1.

²²⁰ Zonar. 8.16. Polybius 2.7.5-11 indicates that the Romans were hiring Gauls [in 242/1] when he states that the Gallic mercenaries, whom the Carthaginians had employed to guard the city of Eryx [244-3], tried unsuccessfully to betray it. He also remarks that these were the same Gauls who had pillaged Agrigentum when they formed its garrison. In my hypothesis, these Gauls could have been installed by the Carthaginians in 247 to prevent the city from capture by the ex-Carthaginian mercenaries who had revolted.

²²¹ The 'Person' criterion.

The length of the siege poses a further problem because its completion would be in the winter period (if it had started in June), and there is no mention of the problems normally associated with this season.²²² Zonaras confirms a reduced siege length, when he states that the consuls went home for the winter: this indicates a date in September or October, and thus a siege of around three or four months.²²³ Following the capture of the city, Hamilcar Barca replaced Hanno, and consequently Fabius also assigned him to 261. Further support for this reallocation, is Zonaras' statement that this Hamilcar was the son of Barca: he is not stated as being active as early as 261.²²⁴

As winter was approaching, the consuls then departed for Rome, allowing Hamilcar to commence his operations. Polybius informs us that after the siege, many of the cities in the interior went over to the Romans, but even more of those on the coast joined the Carthaginians through fear of their fleet.²²⁵ Hamilcar's raiding activities would then have mainly taken place in the last part of 242, and Fabius moved these to 261 in order to fill this year with his activities.²²⁶

Hamilcar Barca devastated the Italian coast, Locris and Bruttium, and even reached as far as Cyme.²²⁷ It is probable that Hamilcar sent Hannibal as admiral to carry out these raids.²²⁸ Polybius says he attacked the territory of Panormus and seized Heircte,²²⁹ but the raiding had to stop when the

²²² Walbank 1957:119 *ad* 17.9. Polyb. 1.18.6: a standoff for 5 months plus 2 months (19.6) equals 7 months in total; the lack of activities for five months seems very unlikely to be true. Diodorus 23.9.1 says the siege lasted 6 months.

²²³ Zonar. 8.10.

²²⁴ Diod. 23.9.2; Zonaras 8.10 indicates this is in late 262 or early 261 - it is too early for Hamilcar to be in the war, but it sits in with my date of 242/1. Lazenby 1996:62 says he 'is not to be identified with Hamilcar Barca, the father of Hannibal' but 'as "the Carthaginian general in charge of the land forces" after the battle of Mylae'. However, if the action is at the end of the war then Zonaras is accurate, see also see chapter 4. I have argued above (stage 5) that Hamilcar had probably been recalled to Africa by 245 – he was now sent back to Sicily to take charge after Hanno's defeat.

²²⁵ Polyb. 1.20.6-7; the Carthaginian fleet must therefore have raided Sicily as well.

²²⁶ Polybius 1.20.6-7 says that after the fall of Agrigentum, the Carthaginians with their fleet terrorised the seaboard cities into joining them. A shorter siege would mean these raids would perhaps have started from the end of September or during October 242.

²²⁷ Polyb. 1.56.1-3 & 20.7-8;

²²⁸ Zonar. 8.10; this Hannibal is the son of Gisgo and not 'the Elder Hannibal' as Orosius says (4.7.7).

²²⁹ Polyb. 1.56.3.

Roman army took up a land position near his encampment.²³⁰ It is now that we can fit in the sieges of Heircte and Eryx, which are likely to have lasted in total for about five (or perhaps six months), rather than five years. That the besiegers were mainly composed of allied (including mercenary) troops would also explain the otherwise perplexing fact, that despite their outstanding victory, neither of the consuls celebrated a triumph for its capture in 262 or 242.²³¹ It would therefore seem to have been these allies (probably under overall Roman command) who were involved in besieging Hamilcar over the winter of 242/1.

These mercenaries can be linked to Zonaras' statement that the Romans recruited ex-Carthaginian Gauls (who hated their masters due to ill-treatment), as well as other Carthaginian allies who had rebelled from Carthaginian employ, and that they had never previously paid for a mercenary force.²³² Thus the Gauls and these allies were paid, but it is likely that those other ex-Carthaginians mercenaries (whom I suggest) settled in Sicily during 247-3) were not paid, because they fought out of fear of Carthaginian retribution for their revolt (248-7).²³³ The sack of Agrigentum allayed risk of a Carthaginian invasion and allowed Lutatius to take his fleet to Sicily in early March 241, to ambush the Carthaginians in the Aegates Insulae. When Agrigentum was being besieged in 242, the Romans had been forced to abandon their sieges of Drepana and the roadsteads by Lilybaeum.²³⁴ After capturing Agrigentum they would appear to have stationed part of their (probably mainly mercenary) troops around Lilybaeum, because after the Egadi battle the Romans sailed (towing the captured ships) 'to the Roman camp on the coast near Lilybaeum'.²³⁵

²³⁰ Polyb. 1.56.11. It is possible that the ex-Carthaginian mercenaries secured a victory over part of his fleet outside Panormus now, rather than in 247 when it is normally placed, and when the Carthaginian fleet was dominant (Zonar. 8.16).

²³¹ The explanation that the losses they had incurred were too heavy is nowhere stated in the sources - most of the losses would likely have been due to an epidemic of plague as well as privation (Polyb. 1.19.1), and not through enemy action; ultimately, the Romans had gained a great victory and obtained much booty and slaves (1.19.15).

²³² Zonar. 8.16.

²³³ Rome also had severe financial problems. However, they would have been entitled to plunder – especially at Agrigentum, and would be left to run their own affairs after the war - see below.

²³⁴ Polyb. 1.17.7.

²³⁵ Thiel 1954:314; Polybius 1.61.8. The other ex-Carthaginian mercenary forces would probably have been besieging Hamilcar, first at Heircte and then on Mount Eryx.

Assuming my approach is valid, I can proffer the following tentative reconstruction of Hamilcar's activities for 242-1. If the siege of Agrigentum lasted about three or four months, Hamilcar, on assuming command, would have commenced his raiding based at Heircte from perhaps the end of September or from October.²³⁶ From Heircte Hamilcar went to Eryx, where he was besieged for at least two months i.e., part of January, February and March 241.²³⁷ There is no mention of the Romans over-wintering, but there would most likely have been a blockade of Lilybaeum together with some containment of Drepana. These actions would possibly have been undertaken during the winter months by the ex-Carthaginian mercenaries (under Roman control).

Hamilcar's position at Eryx could have lasted longer than the two or three months, because after the naval victory on 10th March 241, Orosius informs us that Lutatius then went to the city of Eryx and killed 2,000 Carthaginians.²³⁸ This accords with the incident recorded under 243 when Hamilcar's disobedient lieutenant Vodostor lost many men to the Romans; the latter however then suffered a defeat through the arrogance of the consul Fundanius.²³⁹

Polybius says the Romans realised that the defeat of the Carthaginians at sea, and therefore command of the sea, would probably end the war.²⁴⁰ It would appear logical to assume that Lutatius suspected the Carthaginians would send a fleet to re-supply Hamilcar at Eryx as early as they could in the spring. He therefore arrived in Sicily by the end of February

²³⁶ I have argued that Hamilcar would have initially operated out of Panormus if, as I consider possible, it was in Carthaginian possession. The dates and timings are necessarily suggestive, but are partly based on proportionally reducing Polybius' five years (247-3) to around five months.

²³⁷ Diodorus 24.8 says that on capturing Eryx Hamilcar moved its inhabitants to Drepana. Thus, it would likely have been in early February 241 (not 244), according to my estimate, that this occurred. If he were able to achieve this, it is surprising that he did not take his army to Drepana, rather than be trapped at Eryx. Thiel 1954:201 believes it was to relieve pressure on Drepana. However, it could be the case that Hamilcar surmised that the main Roman forces would descend on the city in the spring and so completely trap him, whereas Mt. Eryx is too big to be completely encompassed by the enemy.

²³⁸ Eutrop. 2.27.2; Oros. 4.10.8. The consul of 241 (Lutatius Cerco) who ended the First Punic War, also devastated the Aegates Islands (Val. Max. 1.3.2).

²³⁹ Diod. 24.9.1-2; the consul should be Lutatius, but it is likely that when this event was reassigned (following the 'Expand' criterion) to 243, his name was changed to C. Fundanius Fundulus, one of the consuls of this year.

²⁴⁰ Polyb. 1.59.1-6.

and anchored at the trading-station of the Erycinians.²⁴¹ On hearing the Romans were at sea, Hanno was sent with a fleet containing corn and other provisions to Eryx, and reached the Holy Isle.²⁴² However, Lutatius then sailed to Aegusa to intercept him, and the next day defeated him. He sank 50 ships and captured 70 with their crews (nearly 10,000) - the rest escaped back to the Holy Isle.²⁴³

Thus, the assumed delay (possibly nine-months) in the Carthaginians' response to Lutatius' arrival with his fleet in 242, is erroneous. I have sought to demonstrate that this is the result of Fabius' reallocation of the siege of Agrigentum (together with Hamilcar's subsequent activities), from 242/1 to 262 and 261. In the subsequent peace negotiations, the Carthaginians made Hamilcar a plenipotentiary to negotiate with Lutatius.²⁴⁴

Post-War Sicily

The sources state that the Romans had full control of the island once the Carthaginians had surrendered. Zonaras says that the brother of Quintus Lutatius (i.e., Gaius Lutatius Catullus) disarmed the inhabitants and ensured order in Sicily. Thus, with the exception of Hiero's realm, the island was 'enslaved by the Romans'.²⁴⁵ Appian states that 'the chief part of Sicily (all of it that had been held by the Carthaginians) passed into the possession of the Romans. The latter levied tribute on the Sicilians, and apportioned certain naval charges among their towns, and sent a praetor each year to govern them'.²⁴⁶

²⁴¹ Diod. 24.11.1. If Lazenby 1996:152 is correct in suggesting this was the harbour used by Hamilcar at Eryx, it would mean that he was now completely cut off: this would have precipitated the Carthaginians to send aid immediately.

²⁴² Polyb. 1.60.3: 'The Holy Isle' (Hiera) is Marettimo, westernmost of the Egadi islands; Aegusa is Favignana, the southernmost of these islands: Tusa & Royal 2012:9.

²⁴³ Polyb. 1.60.1-61.8.

²⁴⁴ Polyb. 1.62.3; Zonar. 8.17.

²⁴⁵ Zonar. 8.17.

²⁴⁶ App. Sic. 5.2.2. Brennan 2000:87-9,93 thinks Appian may be summarising and is referring to events about 13 years later, but concludes that probably initially 'the praetor in Sicily commanded a small fleet and perhaps a few cohorts of *socii*, acting in concert with the Lilybaeum quaestor to protect the coastal parts of the *provincia*, and to see to the collection of taxes from ... the ex-Punic part of Sicily' - this was the *praetor inter peregrinos*. Brennan also thinks the Senate approved the creation of two new praetors in 228 (for duty in 227) for the new provinces of Sardinia and Sicily (pp.91-3).

According to my interpretation of events, the situation of Sicily after the conclusion of the final peace negotiations in 241, is that Syracuse stayed independent, and the Romans directly controlled only the west of the island - probably most of the old area of the *epikraty*. The rest of Sicily was, at least initially, in a general state of disorder, with many cities only loosely associated with Rome and effectively independent.²⁴⁷ I argue that this sequence of events is possibly supported by the Entella tablets.²⁴⁸ These are mostly agreed to date from around the end of the First Punic War or a little later, and clearly reveal a confused situation on the island, thus giving possible support to my reconstruction of events. There are also some inscriptions concerning independent relations (isopolity) between the Sicilian cities of Camarina and Phintias with Cos about 242. This independence implies a significant degree of freedom from Roman control.²⁴⁹ What appears more likely is that Rome's influence and control steadily increased in the following years, so that around 227 the first praetor was sent to Sicily and a province was officially formed. After this, and until the Second Punic War, there was peace in the island.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁷ Prag 2007:72: 'no Roman forces are attested on the island between 241 and 218 B.C. with the single exception of a reserve legion sent there in the *tumultus* of 225 B.C.'.

²⁴⁸ For details See Chapter 1, pp.44-5.

²⁴⁹ Hoyos 1998:113-4,114 n.22: *SEG* 12. 379-80.

²⁵⁰ What exactly constituted a province in the late third and early second centuries B.C. is discussed in Richardson 2008:25-30. Livy 24.9 mentions the existence of a boundary between the kingdom of Syracuse and the *provincia* in 215.

CONCLUSION

I have endeavoured to show in this thesis that the First Punic War comprised at least two separate wars (264-248 and 242-241) – the first of which the Carthaginians won - and that Rome's first historian Fabius Pictor, writing about 200 B.C., sought to hide the earlier defeat in 248 by maintaining there was one continuous war from 264 to 241. I argue that Fabius was able to achieve this deception by rearranging Philinus' earlier work on the war. His adjusted account, of necessity, produced some substantial anomalies. However, unaware of his manipulation, scholars have been at a loss to provide truly satisfactory explanations for the significant inconsistencies that I have endeavoured to highlight.

I have paid specific attention to non-Polybian sources, particularly Diodorus, Dio, and Zonaras, whose accounts are considered as deriving, directly or via intermediate sources, significant information from Philinus. By comparing this information mainly, but not solely, with that of Polybius it is possible to discover the details of the *modus operandi* that Pictor possibly used in making his reallocations.¹

Fabius used a logical set of criteria and fixed points of reference. By using his system, Fabius was able to produce a pro-Roman account of the war that highlighted Rome's superiority and emphasised, among other qualities, her unique determination to achieve ultimate victory at whatever cost in materiel and lives. Fabius' patriotic narrative of Rome's history quickly became the accepted version and ensured that all subsequent historians of Rome were effectively forced to follow his basic framework. Fabius' approach supports the well-known maxim that it is the victor who writes the history.

If my hypothesis is fundamentally correct, our understanding of the First Punic War needs to be completely revised. The Roman motives for undertaking the war can now be considered in a significantly different light. The desire to help the piratical Mamertines from subjugation, initially by Hiero, and later by the Carthaginians, seems more likely to have been

¹ For an explanation of the sequential scenario-modelling that enabled me to uncover Fabius' *modus operandi* - see, chapter 2, pp. 65-69.

opportunistic because, according to my hypothesis, the Treaty of Philinus, forbidding the Romans to cross to Sicily, was only effective from 248 when the 'first' war ended in favour of Carthage. The defeat of Appius Claudius' fleet in 264 would have necessitated a fundamental discussion on whether to launch a major invasion of eastern Sicily in order to ensure the independence of Messana. The striking success achieved by Valerius Maximus in 263 with the capture of Messana, and the proposed two years of peace (262-1), suggests that Rome did not immediately intend to conquer the rest of Sicily, because this would have involved a major war with Carthage both on land and sea. My reading would also contribute to a certain understanding of the first stages of Roman imperialistic expansion, thereby contributing to the scholarly debate on Roman imperialism.

The conclusions from my analysis of the war have shown that once the Romans were fully committed to total war with Carthage from 260, they were generally successful until the advent of Hamilcar Barca during 250. However, there was one particularly celebrated disaster: Marcus Regulus' total defeat by the Greek mercenary Xanthippus. His death and captivity long inspired legends of his Roman heroism and adherence to abiding by one's pledges, but I have shown that this is largely a brilliant piece of propaganda.²

The key conclusion of my hypothesis concerns the Roman disasters relating to the siege of Lilybaeum from 250-249. My reconstruction shows that by the summer of 250 the Romans had achieved supremacy over most of Sicily, having heavily defeated a Carthaginian attack on Panormus by Hasdrubal. However, Carthage now sent Hamilcar Barca to restore the situation; his measures included the fortification of Drepana which lay astride the route to Lilybaeum. The attack on this city by the Romans proved a disaster; they then decided to bypass Drepana and risk a siege of Lilybaeum, using all the forces at their disposal. This proved catastrophic, and they lost most of their army and almost all their navy. Attempts by the Romans to resist the subsequent Carthaginians advances failed, and the Romans were forced to sign the Treaty of Philinus in 248, which lasted until 242.

² See chapter 9.3.

My findings show that the Carthaginians did not benefit from the intervening period of peace in Sicily because her mercenaries revolted, driving the former into their traditional territory and leaving the rest of Sicily in chaos (with the exception of Hiero's kingdom). By using events that Fabius had moved to a period after the end of the war in 241, I show that Italy was now subject to attacks by Gauls, and that the Romans were heavily engaged with them until peace was obtained during 236. By 243, the ex-Carthaginian mercenaries in Sicily were becoming increasingly fearful of a Carthaginian invasion of the island, and they asked the Romans for assistance.

In 242, having built a fleet, the Romans descended on Drepana and Lilybaeum; the Carthaginians then occupied Agrigentum. I reason that, it was with the substantial help of the ex-Carthaginian mercenaries and various cities in Sicily, the Romans were able to capture Agrigentum. Hamilcar was now recalled to Sicily, but was besieged at Eryx. A Carthaginian fleet bringing him supplies was defeated in 241, and Carthage was forced to surrender. Thereafter, with exception of the *epikraty* and Hiero's kingdom, Sicily was left relatively free until the appointment of a praetor in 227.

The impact of Fabius' adjustments on other aspects of Roman history could be substantial. I have indicated that very few events, occurring in peninsular Italy during the First Punic War, are mentioned in the sources, and that this absence has led to a general assumption that there was peace in the peninsula. Such a peace seems unlikely, not only because of the excessive duration of this war, but also to the immense losses of manpower and matériel, which placed heavy demands on the citizens of Rome as well as on her allies and subjects. These demands could be expected to have created significant dissatisfaction, unrest and even revolt amongst them, and perhaps a crisis within Rome herself.³ By focusing almost entirely on the war against Carthage, I argue that Fabius was able to distract his readers from enquiring about such possible events in Italy that could have undermined his patriotic narrative of the war. It is also possible that elements of the contemporary war with Hannibal could have been subject to some manipulation, though probably not on the scale of the first war.

³ We have noted the problem with the Samnite oarsmen 259 ('249') – see p.17, n.40.

I have discussed the availability of appropriate historical records in chapter two and concluded that, with the exception of the *Annales Maximi*, it probably started after the First Punic War. It would then seem possible that the accuracy of any events prior to this war may have been subject to patriotic manipulation by Fabius. Thus, if we accept that Fabius may have used Greek authors such as Diocles and Timaeus to write about the earlier periods of Roman history, he may have adopted a similar process to the one he used for Philinus. It would seem that Timaeus was a key influence in Fabius' probable adoption of an annalistic history

As explained in chapter 2, the milieu in which Fabius wrote was one of contending families/*gens* in Rome at a time when there was a significant growth of literature from the end of the First Punic War.⁴ This was taking place when a resurgent Rome was victoriously concluding the war with Hannibal and was about to enter the Greek east and the orbit of the powerful Hellenistic states. Having been defeated in 248 at the hands of Hamilcar Barca (as I argue), and nearly overwhelmed by his son, it was imperative that Rome should have a history that clearly demonstrated she always won her wars, whatever the cost.

I have indicated that Fabius' history (in Greek) might have had the unofficial support of an influential group that included Fabius Verrucosus and Naevius, and that there might also have been a Latin version published shortly afterwards.⁵ Such support would have helped to ensure Fabius' history quickly became the official version, and all those contemporary or later authors writing about Roman history would have had to follow the basic outline of his history, although with variant details and interpretations. Not all authors followed Fabius' annalistic format fully: Marcus Porcius Cato chose to include in books 2 and 3 of his *Origines* the history the peoples and cities of Italy that were possibly not in annalistic form.⁶

However, the increasing size of many of the histories that followed must raise serious questions as to the origins of the data obtained.⁷ One of

⁴ Roman writers now had available to them the vast (but selected) amount of Greek literature that was being rendered into Latin on the Romans' own terms from 240 onwards.

⁵ See chapter 2, pp.52, 57.

⁶ *FRHist.* 1. 216 [TJC].

⁷ For instance, Gellius is xx volumes.

the key propositions of my thesis is that Pictor rearranged true events, rather than invented them (although subject to exaggeration or distortion). It is therefore, in my judgement, that these later authors used events that occurred after Pictor wrote, and duplicated them (suitably adjusted) back into pre-First Punic War history, thus producing anomalies which have been pointed out by modern historians.⁸

To be a rival to the 'illustrious' Greeks, it was also necessary to show that Rome was, in fact, a Greek city and had links to the Greeks as far back as the Trojan War. Furthermore, the achievements of her history under her kings had to rival those of the Greek rulers.⁹ It is likely that the extraordinary conquests of Alexander the Great and the successor kings would have been a strong influence on Fabius and the attitude of the Romans to imperialism. It was therefore important that Rome was seen as invincible in her wars and that defeats were always followed by victories, as evidenced by her historical narratives.

By building of a sequence of scenarios that almost all ultimately derive, in my opinion, from Fabius' main objective of hiding Rome's defeat in 248, I hope I have been able to recreate the essentials of what Philinus may have written, and thereby a far more reliable account of the war. An account that demonstrates that Rome was subject to the same extreme vagaries of fortune as were all the other great Hellenistic powers, and that her future success was far from assured. Livy admits that: 'And so variable were the fortunes of the [First Punic] war and so uncertain was its outcome that those who ultimately conquered had been nearer ruin'.¹⁰

I believe that a serious injustice has been done to the reputation of the Carthaginians and thereby to their modern 'descendants' who have been deprived of a signal victory over Rome, and a hero in the person of Hamilcar Barca, the acknowledged greatest general of the war.¹¹ Therefore, in this contemporary period of re-examining imperial accountabilities, one of the

⁸ For example: Forsythe 2005 and Wiseman 2008.

⁹ See chapter 2, p.51.

¹⁰ Liv. 21.1.2. After the victory at Cannae in 216 Hanno is recorded as saying 'How often victory shifted in the previous Punic War, very many of us are alive to remember. Never have our fortunes seemed more favourable on land and sea than they were before the consulship of Gaius Lutatius and Aulus Postumius [242/1]': Liv. 23.13.3.

¹¹ Diod. 26.24.1; Polyb. 1.64.6.

main objectives I hope my dissertation will achieve, will be a reassessment of the role played by the 'people of North Africa' in historical developments of this period and therefore to establish the contribution they provided.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AR - *Archaeological Reports*: Society for the Promotion of Hellenic Studies, & British School at Athens.

BNJ – Brill’s New Jacoby <http://www.paulyonline.brill.nl/browse/brill-s-new-jacoby>

CHCL – Cambridge History of Classical Literature

CIL – Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum

FGH – Jacoby, F. *Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker* (1926-58). Berlin.

FRHist. – Cornell, T. et al. (2013). *The fragments of the Roman historians*, 3 vols. Oxford.

ILLRP – Degrassi, A. ed., (1963, 1965) *Inscriptiones Latinae Liberae Rei Publicae*, Firenze, I-II; vol. I, 2nd edn.

Inscr. Ital. 13. - Degrassi, A., ed. (1937). *Inscriptiones Italiae* 13. Fasc. 1, ‘Fasti Consulares et Triumphales’ (Rome 1947); Fasc. 2, ‘Fasti Anni Numani et Iuliani’ (Rome 1963); and Fasc. 3, ‘Elogia’. Rome.

MRR - Broughton, T. R. (1951). *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic: 1*. New York.

OCD 3 Rev.– Hornblower, S., & Spawforth, A. (2003). *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 3rd edn. Rev. Oxford.

RE - *Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart.

SEG - *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum*.

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THE FIRST PUNIC WAR: DECONSTRUCTION AND REINTEPRETATION. A HYPOTHESIS

Map 1. ANCIENT SICILY (from C.A.H. 1928 VII Map 8)

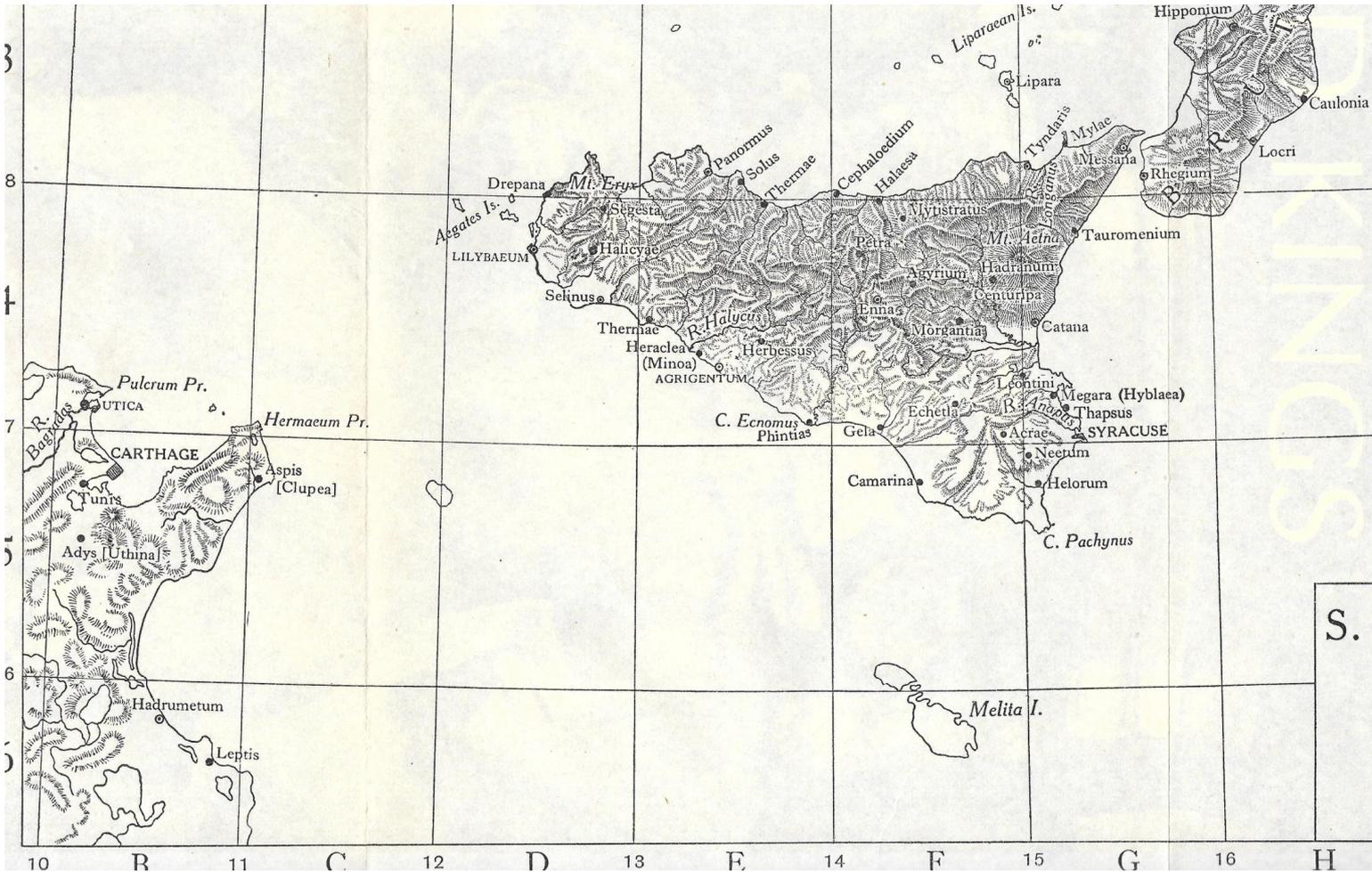


TABLE A
THE FIRST PUNIC WAR: DECONSTRUCTION AND REINTERPRETATION. A HYPOTHESIS
FABIUS PICTOR'S PROPOSED REALLOCATIONS

Standard chronology	Year	Revised chronology	Criteria
Treaty of Philinus	>264	Moved by Pictor from 248	Start
Hanno marched to Messana - joined by Hiero	264	Moved by Pictor from 248	Start
Fighting around Messana	264	Moved by Pictor from 248	Start
Romans took control of Messana	264	Moved by Pictor from 248	Start
Unsuccessful Roman attack on Syracuse	264	Moved by Pictor from 248	Start
Roman thrust west	263	Moved by Pictor from 253	10yr.
Segesta revolted	263	Moved by Pictor from 253	10yr.
Siege and capture of Agrigentum	262	Moved by Pictor from 242	Person
Hanno replaced by Hamilcar	262	Moved by Pictor from 242	Sequence
Inland cities revolted to Romans; Carthaginians raid Italy	261	Moved by Pictor from 242	Sequence
Hamilcar fortified the west	260	Moved by Pictor from 250	10yr.
Hamilcar's victory at Thermae, the drive east	259	Moved by Pictor from 249	10yr.
Caiatinus' march west – capture of Enna et al.	258	Moved by Pictor from 249	Person
Caiatinus' attack on Lipara defeated by Hamilcar	258	Moved by Pictor from 249	Person
Siege of 'Carthage'	256	Moved by Pictor from 250/249	Person
Hasdrubal sent to Sicily with large army	255	Moved by Pictor from 251/250	Expand
Hamilcar/Xanthippus defeated Regulus outside Lilybaeum	255	Moved by Pictor from 249	Person
Carthalo raided Sicily & destroyed Acragas	254	Moved by Pictor from 244	10yr.
Carthalo expels Romans from Drepana siege	254	Moved by Pictor from 250	Person
Roman siege of Heircte with army of 40,000 men	252	Moved by Pictor from 242	10yr.
Roman siege of Drepana	247	Moved by Pictor from 250	Person
Romans besieged Hamilcar at Heircte	247-245	Moved by Pictor from 242	Expand
Romans besieged Hamilcar at Eryx	244-3	Moved by Pictor from 242-241	Expand
Fighting against the Gauls in Italy	238	Moved by Pictor from 248	10yr.
Fighting against the Gauls in Italy	237	Moved by Pictor from 247	10yr.
Fighting against the Gauls in Italy	236	Moved by Pictor from 246	10yr.
Closing of Temple of Janus	235	Moved by Pictor from 245	10yr.
Declaration of war	233	Moved by Pictor from 243	10yr.

Notes

The 'Year' column shows the current location, the 'Revised Chronology' indicates the proposed original location, and the 'Criteria' column indicates the principle Fabius used to relocate each entry to its current location.

The important reallocations are shown.

TABLE B – COMPARISON OF THE ‘STANDARD’ AND REVISED HISTORY OF THE FIRST PUNIC WAR

Std.	Standard Chronology (consular years)	Adjs.	Revised Chronology (consular years)
264	<p>Messana occupied; campaign against Hiero.</p> <p>Polybius’s Version: a) After the Mamertines, had been defeated by Hiero, some asked for help from the Carthaginians and others from the Romans, who hesitated. The Carthaginians occupied the citadel of Messana. After a delay, Rome sent Appius Claudius. Meanwhile, the Mamertines ejected the garrison and Appius was invited over. The Carthaginians & Syracusans then besieged Messana. b) Appius crossed over by night into Messana, tried unsuccessfully to negotiate on behalf of the Mamertines. Appius issued out to defeat, first Hiero who fled to Syracuse, then the Carthaginians who fled to their cities. He devastated their territories and besieged Syracuse and Echetla.</p> <p>Diodorus’s Version: a) Having defeated the Mamertines, Hiero besieged Messana, so they sought terms, but the Carthaginians, installed a garrison; outmanoeuvred he departed to Syracuse. The Mamertines expelled the garrison: so the Carthaginians allied with the Syracusans, stating the Romans must quit Sicily. The Carthaginians & Syracusans besieged Messana. Appius Claudius on being ordered to Rhegium sent envoys to broker peace. Romans & Carthaginians fought a naval battle but did not want war: peace terms were discussed. b) The Romans did cross over, but as Hiero thought the Carthaginians had allowed this, he retreated to Syracuse. The Romans defeated the Carthaginians and besieged Echetla (or Aigesta) but withdrew after heavy losses to Messana.</p> <p>Dio/Zonaras’s Version: a) Due to Syracusan enmity, the Mamertines requested help from the Romans, but they hesitated: so they invited in the Carthaginians. To prevent the Romans from crossing, they guarded the strait and the city and effected peace between themselves, the Mamertines & Syracusans. Finally, Appius Claudius ordered tribune Gaius Claudius to cross with a few ships to negotiate assistance but feared the enemy fleet. He crossed over in a small boat, but the negotiations were unsuccessful. When he attempted to cross a third time, his fleet was defeated by Hanno, who urged peace talks, but the Romans rejected them. Claudius later made another crossing to Messana and by seizing Hanno, helped the Mamertines to eject the Carthaginian garrison.</p>	<p>•248</p>	<p>Carthaginians prevent Claudius from crossing to Sicily.</p> <p>Philius’s ‘Reconstructed’ Account: a) Having defeated the Mamertines, Hiero besieged Messana: some asked for help from the Carthaginians and others from the Romans, who hesitated, so they sought terms. But the Carthaginians, installed a garrison; outmanoeuvred, Hiero departed to Syracuse. To prevent the Romans from crossing, the Carthaginians guarded the strait and the city and effected peace between themselves, the Mamertines & Syracusans. Appius on being ordered to Rhegium sent tribune Gaius Claudius with a few boats to Rhegium to negotiate with the Mamertines. But the Carthaginian fleet was too strong, so he crossed in a small boat, but the negotiations were unsuccessful. When he attempted to cross a third time, his fleet was defeated by Hanno; peace terms were discussed, but the Romans later rejected them. Claudius later made another crossing to Messana and by seizing Hanno, helped the Mamertines to eject the Carthaginian garrison. The Mamertines ejected the garrison and Appius was invited over later.</p> <p>[RELATES TO 248] [b) The Carthaginians & Syracusans agreed to an alliance. A herald demanded the Romans quit all of Sicily. On no reply, they joined armies and besieged Messana. The consul crossed by night near the city and defeated Hiero who retreated to Syracuse, likewise the Carthaginians who retreated to their camp – the latter did not attack again as long as the consul was in Messana. He left a garrison and devastated their territories and unsuccessfully besieged Syracuse and Echetla. Peace talks with Hiero failed, so he returned to Rhegium, leaving behind a garrison in Messana.]</p>

	<p>b) The Carthaginians & Syracusans agreed to an alliance. A herald demanded the Romans quit all of Sicily. On no reply, they joined armies and besieged Messana. The consul crossed by night near the city and defeated Hiero who retreated to Syracuse, likewise the Carthaginians who retreated to their camp – the latter did not attack again as long as the consul was in Messana. He left a garrison and made unsuccessful assaults on Syracuse - peace talks with Hiero failed, so he returned to Rhegium, leaving behind a garrison in Messana.</p>		
<p>263</p>	<p><u>Conquests in Sicily; Peace with Hiero</u> Polybius's Version: *Both consuls were sent to Sicily with their legions: most of the cities promptly revolted from the Carthaginians & Syracusans and joined them. *Hiero made peace: he agreed to pay 100 talents and to return the Roman prisoners without ransom. He then always provided the Romans with their urgent necessities. •Carthaginians recruited more mercenaries. Diodorus's Version: Both consuls went to Sicily and besieged and captured Hadranum. Then, as they were besieging Centuripa, envoys seeking peace came from various cities - 67 submitted. *The Romans advanced in order to besiege Syracuse, but Hiero sent envoys. As neither side wanted war, they agreed to a 15-year peace: Hiero paid 150,000 drachmas and returned the prisoners. •A Carthaginian naval force bringing Hiero aid then promptly departed. •The Romans continued their campaign further west, capturing some cities, and the Segestans and Halicyaeans revolted against the Carthaginians, who prevented the Tyndarans from deserting them. •Unsuccessful Roman siege of Macella & Hadranon. Dio/Zonaras's Version: *Both consuls went to Sicily and either together or separately gained the majority of places by voluntary submission. They set out for Syracuse, while Hiero negotiated peace and agreed to restore the cities he had taken from them, paying money to the Romans and liberating the prisoners. The Romans then attacked all the other cities the Carthaginians garrisoned, but were repulsed except from Segesta whose people defeated the latter and joined the Romans.</p>	<p>•253 •253 •253</p>	<p><u>First Sicilian Conquests; Peace with Hiero</u> Philinus's possible 'Reconstructed' Account: Lucius Piso says the 220 ships used in the war against King Hiero were built in 45 days [Pliny]. Both consuls went to Sicily and either together or separately gained the majority of places by voluntary submission: 67 cities submitted. They set out for Syracuse, while Hiero negotiated peace and agreed to restore the cities he had taken from them, paying money to the Romans and liberating the prisoners. A Carthaginian naval force bringing Hiero aid then promptly departed. The Romans then attacked other cities the Carthaginians garrisoned, but were repulsed. Carthaginians prevented the Tyndarans from deserting them. Otacilius Crassus ordered those who had been sent under the yoke by Hannibal, to camp outside the entrenchments to toughen them up [Frontinus]. The Carthaginians conveyed most of their army to Sardinia [as a result of a 'truce' with Rome].</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Carthaginians conveyed most of their army to Sardinia in order to attack Rome. <p>OTHER SOURCES Frontinus: Otacilius Crassus ordered those who had been sent under the yoke by Hannibal, to camp outside the entrenchments to toughen them up. Pliny: Lucius Piso says the 220 ships used in the war against King Hiero were built in 45 days.</p>		
262	<p><u>Capture of Agrigentum:</u> Both consuls arrived in Sicily with their troops and had to leave off operations and besiege Acragas when they learnt that it had just received a strong force under Hannibal, son of Gisco. After five months the Carthaginians sent an army under Hanno son of Hannibal, to relieve the siege but he only established a camp at some distance from the city; after a further two months he offered battle to the Romans but suffered a heavy defeat. Meanwhile Hannibal escaped from the city which the Romans then entered and sacked.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> After their defeat, the Carthaginians sent Hamilcar Barca to Sicily as commander. *262/1 Many inland cities joined the Romans, but the Carthaginian fleet helped Hamilcar to induce more seaboard cities to join him. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •242 •242 •242 	<p><u>Peace with Carthage</u></p>
261	<p><u>Carthage resurgent</u> •262/1 Hannibal was sent by Hamilcar to ravage Italy. •Realising that control of the sea was crucial Rome decided to build a fleet.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •242 	<p><u>Peace with Carthage</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Realising that control of the sea was crucial Rome decided to build a fleet.
260	<p><u>Victory at Mylae, Mytistratus besieged</u> •Scipio Asina was defeated with his fleet in the Lipara islands and captured. •Duilius gained a major victory over the Carthaginian fleet off Mylae. •Hannibal continued to ravage Italy. •Duilius then proceeded along the coast and relieved the siege of Segesta that had revolted and captured Makella. •Fort of Mazarin captured by Romans. • Failed siege of Mytistratus by Romans. •Hannibal fortified Drepana and demolished Eryx.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •241 •250 •250 •250 	<p><u>Victory at Mylae, Mytistratus besieged</u> •Scipio Asina was defeated with his fleet in the Lipara islands and captured. •Duilius gained a major victory over the Carthaginian fleet off Mylae.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Failed 1st. long Roman siege of Mytistratus.
259	<p><u>Campaigns in Sicily, Sardinia & Corsica</u> •L. Cornelius Scipio campaigned successfully in Corsica & Sardinia where he defeated Hanno's army. •Hamilcar marched to Segesta, ambushed military tribune Caecilius and headed eastwards.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •249 	<p><u>Campaigns in Sicily, Sardinia & Corsica</u> •L. Cornelius Scipio campaigned successfully in Corsica and Sardinia where he defeated Hanno's army.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hamilcar defeated Roman allies at Thermae and captured Camarina and then Enna. •C. Aquillius Florus fought in Sicily. •The Romans besieged Mytistratus, built many siege engines but after 7 months left with heavy losses. •Romans achieved little in Sicily. 	•249	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •C. Aquillius Florus fought in Sicily. •7-month siege of Mytistratus with siege engines ends in heavy losses (2nd. siege). •Romans achieved little in Sicily.
258	<p><u>Various campaigns in Sicily & Sardinia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unsuccessful attempt by the consuls on Panormus. •Consul Gaius Sulpicius fought in Sardinia and defeated Hannibal off Sulci. •Hanno defeated Sulpicius in Sardinia. •Aulus Atilius & procos. Aquillius Florus captured Mytistratus after long siege (3rd. siege) and Hippana. •Atilius Caiatinus with the help of tribune Caedicius escaped ambush by Hamilcar, then recovered Camarina & Enna; Camicus also captured. •Hamilcar forestalled an attack on Lipara. 	•249 •249	<p><u>Various campaigns in Sicily & Sardinia</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Unsuccessful attempt by the consuls on Panormus. •Gaius Sulpicius fought in Sardinia and defeated Hannibal off Sulci. •Hanno defeated Sulpicius in Sardinia. •Aulus Atilius & procos. Aquillius Florus captured Mytistratus after long siege (3rd. siege) and Hippana.
257	<p><u>Naval victory – Tyndaris</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •G. Atilius Regulus defeated the Carthaginian fleet off Tyndaris. •Lipara and Malta raided. 		<p><u>Naval victory – Tyndaris</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •G. Atilius Regulus defeated the Carthaginian fleet off Tyndaris. •Lipara and Malta raided.
256	<p><u>Naval victory – Ecnomus – invasion of Africa</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Marcus Regulus & Lucius Manlius won naval victory over the Carthaginians at Ecnomus. •Consuls launched an invasion of Africa, landing on the Cape Bon peninsular. •Consuls captured the port of Clupea and raided inland, gaining many prisoners, deserters and booty. •Manlius with his army was recalled to Rome; celebrated the naval triumph. <p>•Regulus marched inland and besieged Adys.</p> <p>•Regulus made dawn attack on hill near Adys, forcing it on to the plain.</p> <p>•The legions panicked the enemy elephants and cavalry into flight and chased their infantry.</p> <p>•Regulus went on to capture Tunis and besiege Carthage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Carthage sued for peace, but Regulus terms were too harsh to be accepted. •Regulus over-wintered in Africa. 	•255 •255 •255 •250	<p><u>Ecnomus victory; raid on Africa defeated</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Marcus Regulus & Lucius Manlius won naval victory over the Carthaginians at Ecnomus. •Regulus alone launched a <u>razzia</u> on Africa, landing on the Cape Bon peninsular. •Regulus captured the port of Clupea and raided inland, gaining many prisoners, deserters and much booty. •Manlius returned to Rome from Sicily and celebrated the naval triumph. •After Regulus's invasion the Carthaginians summoned Xanthippus, a Spartan mercenary, to reorganise their army. •Regulus marched inland and besieged Adys. •Regulus made dawn attack on hill near Adys, forcing it on to the plain. •The Carthaginians under Xanthippus aided by elephants, annihilated the Romans at Adys and captured Regulus. •Remnants of his army made their way to Clupea to join the garrison there.

<p>255</p>	<p><u>Xanthippus defeated Regulus; Roman victory at Cape Hermaeum; Fleet almost lost in storm.</u> •The Carthaginians summoned Xanthippus, a Spartan mercenary to reorganise their army. •In the spring the 15,000 army, aided by elephants, Xanthippus annihilated the Romans and captured Regulus. •Remnants of his army made their way to Clupea to join the garrison there. •Clupea captured and 2,000 defeated Romans made prisoner</p> <p>----- <u>ALTERNATIVE TRADITION</u> <u>Appian</u> •The Carthaginian army led by Hamilcar & aided by Xanthippus annihilated the 30,000 Roman army and captured Marcus Atilius Regulus. <u>Diodorus</u> •Near Lilybaeum Xanthippus defeated Romans.</p> <p>----- •Consuls Marcus Aemilius and Servius Fulvius sailed to Clupea (capturing Cossura), were intercepted by a Carthaginian fleet off Cape Hermaeum, but the Romans were victorious capturing many vessels. •Picking up the survivors from Clupea the huge fleet set sail for Rome but past Camarina a terrible storm sunk most of the ships. •Hasdrubal sent to Lilybaeum with a force that included 140 elephants.</p>	<p>•256 •256 •256 •249 •241 •251</p>	<p><u>Roman victory at Cape Hemaeum; Fleet suffered some losses in storm.</u></p> <p>•Clupea captured and 2,000 defeated Romans made prisoner.</p> <p>•Marcus Aemilius and Servius Fulvius sailed to Clupea (capturing Cossura), were intercepted by a Carthaginian fleet off Cape Hermaeum, but the Romans were victorious capturing many vessels.</p> <p>•After repulsing Carthaginian army near Clupea, prisoners exchanged, and the survivors taken aboard large fleet, but past Camarina a storm destroyed quite a few vessels.</p>
<p>254</p>	<p><u>Panormus captured</u> • Aulus Atilius and Gnaeus Cornelius built another fleet and besieged and captured the Panormus. •Roman fleet captured Cephaloedium. •Carthaginians capture some returning Roman treasure ships. •Roman fleet besieged Drepana but were chased away by Carthalo. •Carthaginians recaptured Cossura. • Carthalo burnt Acragas and tore down walls. •Iaetia, Solus, Petra, Enattaros and Tyndaris eject Punic garrisons and join Romans.</p>	<p>•250 •244</p>	<p><u>Panormus captured</u> • Aulus Atilius and Gnaeus Cornelius built another fleet and besieged and captured the Panormus. •Roman fleet captured Cephaloedium. •Carthaginians capture some returning Roman treasure ships. •Carthaginians recaptured Cossura. •Iaetia, Solus, Petra, Enattaros and Tyndaris eject Punic garrisons and join Romans.</p>
<p>253</p>	<p><u>Roman fleet destroyed</u> Gnaeus Servilius and Gaius Sempronius attacked Lilybaeum but on being repulsed went with the whole fleet to raid along the African coast and got stuck in shoals; on</p>		<p><u>Roman fleet destroyed</u> Gnaeus Servilius and Gaius Sempronius attacked Lilybaeum but on being repulsed went with the whole fleet to raid along the African coast and got stuck in shoals; on returning to Rome they lost 150 ships in a storm.</p>

	returning to Rome they lost 150 ships in a storm.	•263 •263	• (Diod. & Dio) Segesta revolted and joined the Romans as also did the Halicyaeans. •Unsuccessful Roman siege of Macella & Hadranon.
252	<u>Cities captured</u> •Romans captured Lipara and Thermae. •Roman He(i)rcte besieged unsuccessfully with 40,000 infantry & 1,000 cavalry.	•242	<u>Cities captured:</u> •Romans captured Lipara and Thermae.
251	<u>Hasdrubal defeated</u> •Furius Pacilus returned to Italy with half the army. •Cos. Caecilius Metellus defeated Hasdrubal's army and elephants outside Panormus. •Ptolemy II refused request for loan for Carthage and tried unsuccessfully to broker peace between Rome and Carthage.	•255 •250 •248	<u>Hasdrubal defeated</u> •C. Furius Pacilus returned to Italy with half the army. •250 (late spring): Hasdrubal sent to Lilybaeum with a force including 140 elephants.
250	<u>Lilybaeum besieged & Drepana besieged</u> •Gaius Atilius & Lucius Manlius with army & navy besieged Lilybaeum. •Cs razed Selinus and transferred the people to Lilybaeum. •Due to disease etc. one cos. & his army returned home but though Hamilcar inflicted huge losses the siege is continued.	•250 •251 •260 •260 •260 •247 •254 •250 •256	<u>Lilybaeum & Drepana besieged</u> •(June) Proconsul Caecilius Metellus defeated Hasdrubal's army and elephants outside Panormus. •Cs razed Selinus and transferred the people to Lilybaeum. •Hannibal fortified Drepana and demolished Eryx. •Duilius then proceeded along the coast and relieved the siege of Segesta that had revolted and captured Makella. •Fort of Mazarin captured by Romans. <u>250 (late summer)</u> •unsuccessful Roman siege of Drepana. •Roman fleet besieged Drepana but fleet chased away by Carthalo. <u>249 (spring)</u> •Gaius Atilius & Lucius Manlius with army & navy besieged Lilybaeum. •249: (spring) Carthage sued for peace but Regulus terms too harsh to be accepted. •Due 'disease' Manlius Vulso with his army returned home but though Hamilcar Barca inflicted huge losses the siege is continued.
249	<u>Roman fleets destroyed – Hamilcar annihilated Roman army</u> •In summer of 249 Consul Claudius Pulcher brought reinforcements for the siege, ['Regulus stayed on as proconsul']. •Adherbal raided widely from Drepana.		<u>Roman fleets destroyed – Hamilcar annihilated Roman army</u> •(summer) Claudius Pulcher brought reinforcements for the siege; [Regulus stayed on as proconsul]. •Adherbal raided widely from Drepana.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hannibal captured stores from Panormus. •Cos. Claudius Pulcher whilst besieging Lilybaeum attempted to attack Drepana by sea but his fleet was outmanoeuvred and defeated by Adherbal. •Junius Pullus whilst bring supplies by sea to Lilybaeum sent ahead a detachment which was defeated by Carthalo; the rest of the Roman fleet was afterwards destroyed in a storm. •Claudius Pulcher recalled to Rome; Glicia appointed. •Junius whilst trying to redeem himself captured Eryx in a surprise attack but Carthalo then recaptured Eryx and Junius. <p>•Rome appointed dictator A. Atilius Caiatinus.</p> <p>•The Romans continued the siege of Lilybaeum and Drepana.</p>	<p>•255</p> <p>•259</p> <p>•259</p> <p>•258</p> <p>•258</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hannibal captured(?) Panormus and used its stores. •Consul Claudius Pulcher whilst besieging Lilybaeum attempted to attack Drepana by sea but his fleet was outmanoeuvred and defeated by Adherbal. •Junius Pullus whilst bring supplies by sea to Lilybaeum sent on ahead a detachment which was defeated by Carthalo and the rest of the Roman fleet was afterwards destroyed in a storm. *Claudius Pulcher recalled to Rome; Glicia appointed. •Junius whilst trying to redeem himself captured Eryx in a surprise attack but Carthalo in response recaptured Eryx together with Junius. •As situation was hopeless, 'procos.' Gaius Regulus departed from Lilybaeum, but Hamilcar Barca followed and annihilated his army of 30,000 and captured Gaius. • Rome appointed the dictator Aulus Atilius Caiatinus. •Hamilcar marched to Segesta, ambushed military tribune Caecilius and headed eastwards. •Hamilcar defeated Roman allies at Thermae and captured Camarina and then Enna. •Atilius Caiatinus with the help of tribune Caedicius escaped ambush by Hamilcar, then recovered Camarina & Enna; Camicus also captured. •Hamilcar forestalled an attack on Lipara.
<p>248</p>	<p><u>Sicily & Italy raided by Carthalo</u> <u>Despite losses, Gaius Aurelius & Publius Servilius harried Lilybaeum and Drepana.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Carthalo conducted raids on Sicily & Italy. •Carthalo's mercenaries in Sicily rebelled over pay. <p>•Renewal of 'treaty' with Syracuse.</p>	<p>•264</p> <p>•251</p> <p>•238</p>	<p>Rome surrenders -Treaty of Philinus <u>Philinus's 'Reconstructed' Account:</u></p> <p>b) The Carthaginians & Syracusans agreed to an alliance. A herald demanded the Romans quit all of Sicily. On no reply, they joined armies and besieged Messana.</p> <p>The consul crossed by night to near the city and defeated Hiero who retreated to Syracuse, likewise the Carthaginians who retreated to their camp – the latter did not attack again as long as the consul was in Messana.</p> <p>He left a garrison and devastated their territories and unsuccessfully besieged Syracuse and Echetla.</p> <p>Peace talks with Hiero failed, so he returned to Rhegium, leaving behind a garrison in Messana.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Carthalo conducted raids on Sicily & Italy. •Carthalo's mercenaries in Sicily now rebelled over pay. •Ptolemy II refused request for loan for Carthage but successfully brokered peace between Rome and Carthage; Treaty of Philinus agreed. •Renewal of 'treaty' between Rome & Syracuse. •Roman victory over Gauls in Italy, but only after a severe defeat.

<p>247</p>	<p><u>Stalemate – Hamilcar Barca appointed commander.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Lilybaeum (?) and Drepana continued to be besieged by the Romans. •247 (or 248) Hamilcar Barca appointed commander in Sicily. •Hamilcar conducted many raids. •Hamilcar Barca's raids stopped by Romans •Hamilcar Barca besieged by Romans on Heircte. •Unsuccessful Roman siege of Drepana. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Private Roman individuals raid Hippo. •Prisoner Exchange with the Carthaginians. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •242 •242 •242 •242 •250 •237 	<p><u>Romano-Carthaginian Peace; inter-war chaos in Sicily.</u> <u>Far west of Sicily and Panormus(?) still in Carthaginian hands, the rest controlled by the mercenaries, native cities and Syracuse.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •247 (or 248) Hamilcar Barca appointed commander in Sicily. •Ex-Carthaginian mercenaries raid Hippo. • Prisoner Exchange with Carthaginians (Treaty of Philinus). •Fighting against the Gauls in Italy.
<p>246</p>	<p><u>Stalemate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hamilcar Barca besieged on Heircte. •Lilybaeum/Drepana besieged? •Private Roman citizens raid the enemy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •242 •242 •236 	<p><u>Peace between Rome & Carthage; inter-war chaos in Sicily</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ex-Carthaginian mercenary raids. •Confrontation with Gauls in Italy: fighting avoided.
<p>245</p>	<p><u>Stalemate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hamilcar Barca besieged on Heircte. •Lilybaeum/Drepana besieged? •Private Roman citizens raid the enemy. •Romans defeated enemy fleet near Aegimurus, though wrecked off Africa, triumph granted. [Duplication with Cape Hermaeum battle]. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •235 •242 •242 [255] 	<p><u>Peace between Rome & Carthage; inter-war chaos in Sicily</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Closing of the Temple of Janus – total peace. •Ex-Carthaginian mercenary raids.
<p>244</p>	<p><u>Stalemate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hamilcar Barca captured Eryx - transferred citizens to Drepana. •Hamilcar Barca besieged in Eryx. •Lilybaeum/Drepana besieged? •Private Roman citizens raid the enemy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •242 •242 •242 •254 	<p><u>Romano-Carthaginian Peace; inter-war chaos in Sicily.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Ex-Carthaginian mercenary raids. •Carthalo burnt Acragas and tore down walls.
<p>243</p>	<p><u>Stalemate</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hamilcar Barca besieged in Eryx. •Lilybaeum/Drepana besieged? • Vodostor defeated by Fundanius Fundulus, then latter defeated by Barca. •Hanno conquered Hecatompylus? •Private Roman citizens raid the enemy. •The Romans got mercenaries from Gauls & other Carthaginian allies who had rebelled. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •242 •242 •242/1 	<p><u>Romano-Carthaginian Peace; inter-war chaos in Sicily.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Hanno conquered Hecatompylus? •Ex-Carthaginian mercenary raids. •Sicilian Mercenaries fearful of Carthaginian invasions sought alliance with Rome.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Romans had never previously paid for a foreign force. •Encouraged by this and the ravaging of Africa by private citizens on their ships, the Romans decided to build a fleet. 	•233	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The Romans had never previously paid for a foreign force. •Encouraged by this and the ravaging of Africa by Ex-Carthaginian mercenaries on their ships, the Romans decided to build a fleet. •The Romans declared war on Carthage.
242	<u>War Resumed</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Romans built fleet of 200 quinqueremes and besieged Lilybaeum & Drepana. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •262 •262 •247-3 •262 •261 •260 •247 •247 •247-5 •252 •244 •244-3 •243 	<u>Rome launches New War</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Romans built new fleet of 200 quinqueremes and besieged Lilybaeum & Drepana. •Both consuls left other operations and besieged Acragas together with Gauls and allies (ex-Carthaginian mercenaries) when they learnt had received a strong force under Hannibal, son of Gisgo. After c.3 months the Carthaginians sent an army under Hanno son of Hannibal, to relieve the siege: he established a camp at some distance from the city; after a further 1 or 2 months he offered battle to the Romans but suffered a heavy defeat. Meanwhile Hannibal escaped from the city which the Romans entered and sacked. •After their defeat, the Carthaginians sent Hamilcar Barca to Sicily as commander. •Romano-Mercenary army investment of Drepana and Lilybaeum. •Many inland cities joined the Romans, but the Carthaginian fleet helped Hamilcar to induce more seaboard cities to join him. •Hannibal was sent by Hamilcar to ravage Italy. •Hannibal continued to ravage Italy. •Hamilcar conducted many raids. •Hamilcar Barca's raids stopped by Romans. •Romano-Mercenary army besieged Hamilcar on Heircte for c. 3 months •Romano-Mercenary army besieged He(i)rcte with 40,000 infantry & 1,000 cavalry. Panormus taken? •Barca captured Eryx - transferred citizens to Drepana. •Hamilcar Barca is besieged at Eryx for at least 2 months. •Vodostor defeated by Fundanius Fundulus, then latter defeated by Barca.
241	<u>Carthaginian fleet destroyed. Peace agreed.</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Gaius Lutatius defeated the Punic fleet at the Aegates Insulae (10th. March 241) and forced the Carthaginians to sue for peace. •Hamilcar Barca besieged at Eryx until treaty was revised and implemented. •Lutatius Cerco devastated Aegates Isles • Amended treaty of Lutatius finally agreed and the war ended. •Hamilcar Barca reluctantly moved his troops from Eryx to Lilybaeum and left Sicily. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Faliscans defeated. 	•255	<u>Carthaginian fleet destroyed. Peace agreed</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Gaius Lutatius defeated the Punic fleet at the Aegates Insulae (10th. March 241) and forced the Carthaginians to sue for peace. •Hamilcar Barca besieged at Eryx until treaty was revised and implemented. •Lutatius Cerco devastated Aegates Isles •Amended treaty of Lutatius finally agreed and the war ended. •Hamilcar reluctantly moved his troops from Eryx to Lilybaeum and left Sicily. <p>Diodorus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Near Lilybaeum Xanthippus defeated Romans •Faliscans defeated.
240	<u>Peace in Sicily.</u>		<u>Peace in Sicily.</u>

239	<u>Peace in Sicily.</u>		<u>Peace in Sicily.</u>
238	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Roman victory over Gauls in Italy, but only after a severe defeat. •Rome occupied Sardinia; money obtained from Carthaginians. •Ligurians defeated by Sempronius.	•248	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Rome occupied Sardinia; money obtained from Carthaginians. •Ligurians defeated by Sempronius.
237	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Fighting against the Gauls. •Fighting against the Ligurians. •Confrontation with Carthage and occupation of Sardinia	•247	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Fighting against the Ligurians. •Confrontation with Carthage and occupation of Sardinia
236	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Confrontation with Gauls: fighting avoided. •Fighting against the Ligurians. •Invasion of Corsica.	•246	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Fighting against the Ligurians. •Invasion of Corsica.
235	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Closing of the Temple of Janus – short peace. •Corsicans revolted. •Fighting against Ligurians. •Triumph over the Sardinians.	•245	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Corsicans revolted. •Fighting against Ligurians. •Triumph over the Sardinians.
234	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Corsicans revolted. •Fighting against Ligurians. •Triumph over the Sardinians.		<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Corsicans revolted. •Fighting against Ligurians. •Triumph over the Sardinians.
233	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •The Romans try to provoke Carthage into war. •Corsicans revolted. •Fighting against Ligurians. •Triumph over the Sardinians.	•243	<u>Fighting on Several Fronts.</u> •Corsicans revolted. •Fighting against Ligurians. •Triumph over the Sardinians.

Notes to Table B

1. This summary is designed to aid the understanding of my hypothesis and is not comprehensive.
2. 'Std.' refers to the 'Standard Chronology' which is here interpreted as Polybius' account together with scholars' amendments/additions as mainly exemplified in 'The First Punic War' by J. F. Lazenby (1996). The main exceptions are the years 264 and (to a lesser degree) 263, where due to significant disagreements among scholars the three key sources are summarised. A reconstruction of what Philinus might have written has been compiled from the summaries of these authors – the colours indicating which: 'a' indicates events before the landing in Messana and 'b' indicates the events thereafter (see chapter 3 for details).
3. The 'Adjs.' column refers to year that the putative adjustments were originally placed according to the 'Standard Chronology'; entries affected are in red.
4. The beginning of each consular year is controversial, but it mostly assumed to extend from around the beginning of June in one calendar year until the end of May in the following year.

5. As the division of events between the consular years 242/1 and 241/0 are not entirely clear, some events have been placed in the calendar year 241 for ease of reference.

TABLE C THE FIRST PUNIC WAR: DECONSTRUCTION AND REINTERPRETATION A HYPOTHESIS SAMPLE EXCEL SPREADSHEET					
© Terence M. Hayes 2021.					
YEAR 247 BC	247/6				TRIUMPHS
CONSULS	L.Caecilius Metellus II N.Fabius Buteo				NONE
suffect DICTATOR M/HORSE PRAETOR URBANUS					
Pont.Max.	Ti.Coruncanus				
CENSOR	A.Atilius Caiatinus				
CENSOR	A.Manius Torquatus Atticus				Spelt ATEIC per MRR
CENSUS	247/6 = 241,212 citizens				
Founding of: COLONIES	AESIUM (AESULUM) and ALSIUM (both Roman citizen)				Aesium on the Aesis river bordering on Senonian land - modern Ancona
TEMPLES TRIBES					
REVISED HISTORY BY AUTHOR		STD.	S/B	RULE	COMMENTS
DIO					
Zonaras 8, 18	The consuls campaigned against the Gauls; as long as they were together they were invincible but when they pillaged separately Flaccus became imperilled, being surrounded by night. The Gauls beaten back pro tem.	237	247	10yr.	Clearly 'Flaccus' was defeated by the Gauls.
EUTROPIUS					
Bk. III, 1-II	Lucius Cornelius Lentulus & Fulvius Flaccus being coss. Hiero came to Rome, for the games & gifted 200,000 modii of wheat.	237 237	247 236	10yr. Error	This is clearly the same as the vague '241' visit as Eut. then makes clear in Bk. III, II As the triumph over the Ligurians was by P. Cornelius Lentulus for 236 and not Lucius, Eut. may have got them mixed up, thus the modii give could be in 236 (& thus 246 trf.?) This would be the games attended by the 'arrogant' Claudia in 246.
STANDARD HISTORY BY AUTHOR		STD.	S/B	RULE	REASONS
POLYBIUS					
Bk I, 56:1-11	Cs 'shortly afterwards' appointed Hamilcar Barca In the 18th year he started with the fleet to lay waste the shores of Italy. He laid waste Locris and Bruttium and then attacked with his fleet the territory of Panormus and seized Hercte [Heircte] (an excellent place with a sea	247 [248]	242/1	Pers. [Barca]	Often taken as 248 (18th = 247); Hamilcar ['Hanno'] was besieging Messana in 248. This is clearly a duplication of 262 - Carthalo was doing the raiding in 248.
	Firstly he laid waste the coast of Italy as far as Cyme; secondly after Rs had taken a land position 5 stades from his own camp. Hamilcar harassed them for almost 3 years.	247 [248]	242	Pers. [Barca]	This could relate to 248 and the end of the war or 242/1 - the end of the 3rd war. Presumably the defeat of the C fleet by the mercs. ended Hamilcar's sea raids, and so he moved to Eryx. I think that Panormus probably remained in Carthaginian hands after its capture in 249, and that is why he could raid Italy without his base being captured. I did not see any place that could serve as a major and secure harbour near Heircte for any length of time.
		247 [248]	242	Pers. [Barca]	It would seem that Carthalo's raid relates to 248. 247-4 std. date. Heircte
		247	247-5	Expand	
Bk I, 57:1-2.	The contest continued like a boxing match between 2 determined champions.	247-3	242-1	Expand	
Bk I, 57:2-8	The small-scale fighting was too much to enumerate both sides being equal.	248-3	242-1	Expand	Actually this is a gap filler!
CASSIUS DIO					
Zon. 8, 16	The next year the Rs gave up naval warfare but some private individuals asked for ships to raid the enemy on condition that they restored them but kept any booty. Amongst other injuries they sailed to Hippo and burned all the boats and many of the buildings. The inhabitants put chains across the harbour but the invaders dashed at the chains and by displacement passed over them.	247	247	OK	NB: Poly. 1.77-1-7 says that (under 240 but s/be 247?) that Matho continued to besiege Hippacritae (Hippo).
Zon. 8, 16	Later near Panormus they [the R. individuals] conquered the Cs on the sea.	247	242 [242/1]	Pers. [Barca]	These 'R. individuals' are obviously mercs If this is not a trf. then this could possibly relate to the Mercs defeating the Cs at sea in 247 - but below Zon. Says the Cs raided Italy. But it is much more likely that this is the victory of the merc.allies of the Rs in the war of 242/1, and fits in with Appian's '2 naval defeats & " land defeats'. Indeed, the Cs were twice defeated at Agrigentum.
Zon. 8, 16	Metellus Caecilius was in the vicinity of Lilybaeum and Numerius Fabius was investing Drepanum where the latter formed a plan to capture the little isle of Pelias which had been seized earlier by the Cs. He sent soldiers by night who captured it and killed the garrison. But at dawn Hamilcar attacked them, but in order to distract him Fabius attacked Drepanum and so forced Hamilcar to retreat back into the city. Fabius then occupied Pelias and linked it to the land by filling in the strait; he was then more easily able to attack the wall, which was weak at this point.	247	250	Pers. [Metellus]	In '262' the coss. were doing something before the Cs landed at Agrigentum - i.e. they were besieging Drepana and probably also Lilybaeum; Hamilcar was in Drepana. Another proof of trf. - Hamilcar was in charge of the fleet at this time but it made no effort to eject the Rs from Pelias, this is inconceivable for a great commander; thus passage must belong to a period when the Rs had naval superiority i.e. 250, early 249 or 242/1. Metellus is not mentioned as besieging Lilybaeum (merely in the vicinity) and it is very likely both coss were investing Drepana (MRR P.216, 247 B.C.) Lazenby (1996, 146) reckons Pelias s/be either the island of Lazzaretto (now joined to the mainland) or Columbaia.
Zon. 8, 16	Cs caused the Rs much trouble by sailing to Sicily and making trips into Italy.	247	242 [242/1]	Pers. [Barca]	
Zon. 8, 16	They exchanged each other's captives man for man; the Cs had to pay for those left over as they had more.	247	247 242/1?	OK	This is likely to refer to the previous year's 'Treaty of Philinus' - Pictor's propaganda. Could possibly refer to 242/1.
Zon. 8, 16	In the period that followed the various coss. effected nothing of note.	247	246-3	OK	
Zon. 8, 16	Rs owed the majority of their reverses to the sending out of different generals each year - they took away their office from them just as they were getting experienced.	247-3	247-4	OK	But probably refers to 250-248.
LIVY					
Bk XIX, Summary	There was an exchange of prisoners with the Cs. Lustrum closed by censors - 241,212 citizens registered.	247 247	247 247	OK OK	This implies a truce at least. 247/6; Brunt (Italian Manpower, 1987:30) 241,712
LYDUS					
De Magistratibus 1.45	In 263 rd. yr. of the coss. a second praetor created - the urban praetor for foreigners.	247	246 247	OK OK	Chronology of Lydus is confusing 510 is start of coss.; Livy implies yr. s/b 246.
VELLEIUS PATERCULUS					
History of Rome	17 yrs. afterwards [after 264] Aesulum & Alsiium were founded	247	247	OK	Aesulum on the Aesis River (Ancona). Terrenato (2018:120) 'Probably connected with the confiscations [i.e. re Caere by Rome in the early third century'] is the foundation in 247 of a small Roman colony at Alsiium, a former port town controlled by Caere.'
FESTUS					
Breviarium Bk. IV: 2	Sardinia & Corsica subdued by Metellus and he triumphed over the Sardinians. The latter have rebelled repeatedly.	247	237	10yr.	Capture of Sardinia in this year apud Festus : Sinius Capito This is a fictitious claim & likely prompted by Rome's taking over Sardinia in 237
CORNELIUS NEPOS					
Hamilcar Bk XXII:1	Hamilcar Barca was always successful.				See under 250-248; 242/1.