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## CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

## Warfare

*Patrick Baker*

In the middle of the fourth century, with the establishment of the Macedonian state under Philip II and the reforms he made to the army, the Macedonian military became the principal force to be reckoned with on the battlefields of the Greek world. And when Alexander succeeded his father in 336, he lost no time in readying his troops for war and launching his Asian conquests. Thus began a new era whose political foundations were largely shaped by military phenomena. When I was asked to write a chapter on warfare during the Hellenistic period, the editor of this volume was especially interested in whether fundamental changes occurred with the advent of the kings as dominant powers. Framed in this manner, this question points to a more fundamental one, dealing with the Hellenistic period as a whole: Did it constitute a break with – or a continuation of – the classical Greek world? The military history of the Hellenistic period is primarily that of kingdoms and their armies. Over the centuries, countless pages have been written on how these armies were commanded and on the troops which filled their ranks. Much attention has also been paid to the movement of armies; to how they were introduced to and supplied in different parts of the Greek world; to the tactics and strategies used in great battles, as described by ancient historians; to the ethnic makeup of the troops; and so forth. As a result, certain subjects have become tired and clichéd.

Regardless of the specific theme which interests them, historians of the Hellenistic period must always acknowledge the Greek heritage which stubbornly persists on the Hellenistic landscape. Yet they must also recognize all of the new elements which, taken together, serve to distinguish the period from previous ones, elements which sometimes suggest a clean break with the archaic and classical worlds. The Hellenistic period – break with or continuation of the Greek world? Any attempt to provide a definitive answer to this question would be mistaken. Things certainly changed, sometimes substantially, but rarely is it possible to speak in terms of a clean break with the classical period. Nevertheless, the changes were substantial enough to make it difficult to simply speak in terms of continuity. Thus, the question remains: Did warfare change during the Hellenistic period? The discussion which follows focuses on one aspect of this question. Studying warfare naturally involves an interest in those

who actually participated in war, and this is probably the area where changes were most striking. But studying warfare during the Hellenistic period also requires that a distinction be made between the war and those who took part in it. This distinction has a direct influence on the overall portrait of Hellenistic warfare painted below.

Hellenistic warfare can be approached from several different perspectives. The most popular of these is innovation (or difference). Thus, Hellenistic military history involves great armies supported by equally impressive supply networks and increasingly sophisticated military machinery. The troops of the period were more diverse than the traditional hoplite phalanx, which had constituted the bulk of those military forces drawn from the city-states of the old Greek world. From this perspective, war was henceforth a matter of military resources. The battlefield no longer seemed home to citizen-soldiers, both because they were now far outnumbered by other troops and because what was at stake in the conflicts went far beyond the local or regional interests of city-states or federations of city-states. Likewise, ancient authors' accounts of battles usually stress the multitude of soldiers present on the battlefield; the size of the battlefield itself, which sometimes covered entire mountains and valleys; and the thunderous clamour of troops fired up by their generals. (e.g. I *Macc.* 6.39-41; Plut. *Sull.* 16).

For part of my discussion, I will adopt a perspective which is less well represented in the historiography. It focuses on city-states at war during the Hellenistic period. I will show how, at this level, warfare had changed very little and how it is possible to speak in terms of continuity with the archaic and classical worlds. In the process, I will offer some general reflections related to my recent research. These take the form of questions regarding what needs to be understood about the place and the role of Hellenistic city-states in a world where it seemed (and this idea is unfortunately still frequently promoted in modern historiography) that city-states no longer had a place, drowned as they were in a sea of vast kingdoms which took responsibility for the most important aspects of international politics and whose vicissitudes, by themselves, provided sufficient inspiration to the historians and authors of antiquity. Thus, these kingdoms have remained at the centre of the historical narrative. Of course, not all works discussing the political history of the Hellenistic world neglect to mention individual city-states when these played a role in an important event. However, with the exception of great cities like Rhodes, such passages tend to be rare and anecdotal, while the larger narrative remains focused on the Hellenistic kings, on their military campaigns and on their dynastic struggles with their kin. This begs another set of questions which better orient the discussion which takes shape below. What is the place (or the role) of Greek city-states in this world which could, *a priori*, be described as new in comparison to the archaic and classical periods? Is it even possible to speak in terms of city-states at war during the Hellenistic period?

## I War and Hellenistic Political History

A quick glance at Hellenistic society reveals a world of permanent warfare, with conflicts occurring at various levels, and with the different levels often proving to be linked together in practice. First of all, there were the wars between the Greco-Macedonian kingdoms created from the division of Alexander's empire. Large-scale rivalries, these conflicts even took place between kingdoms which did not share

borders. Sometimes, individual kingdoms were torn apart when, in ensuring their succession to the throne, brothers and sisters were quick to take up arms. These conflicts overshadow local rivalries between city-states, which had by no means been pacified. Indeed, conflicts involving city-states continued as they had in previous periods. Many of them would have been drawn into royal wars, and it is impossible to know in detail the experiences of every individual city-state in the Aegean Basin. Nevertheless, epigraphic documents – which, thankfully, are abundant for this period – leave no doubt as to the fact that previous antagonisms were still very strongly felt and that recourse was being made to familiar tactics, be they war or diplomacy, to resolve tensions.

Not only was warfare a permanent fixture on the Hellenistic landscape, but it can also be seen as the founder of Hellenistic states, both through foreign conquests and within the borders of existing kingdoms. The process began with Alexander's conquest, a military expedition in which every inch of conquered territory was won at the point of a spear. It continued when the wars between Alexander's successors brought about the fragmentation of his universal empire. Thus, the Hellenistic kingdoms were, from the very beginning, military rivals. War was the primary means of resolving differences, and the monarchs all followed a more or less imperialist strategy (especially in third-century Egypt) by fighting amongst themselves for territories like Koile-Syria or the islands in the Aegean Sea, by making alliances against one another and even by taking their penchant for conquest abroad. For example, in Italy, Pyrrhos organized an alliance of Greek city-states against Rome and Carthage between 280 and 275 (Bengtson 1975: 98–100). Similarly, in India, the Seleukid kingdom never fully succeeded in securing the allegiance of the Baktrian satraps. As for the creation of new states within existing kingdoms, the Seleukid kingdom in Asia constitutes a particularly striking example. Fed by the mutual animosities of the numerous tribes united under royal authority, war raged uninterrupted. By the third century, the territory originally ceded to Seleukos I had fragmented into numerous smaller states, and Antiochos III, the dynasty's fifth monarch, had to re-conquer the territory of his forefathers. The example of the Seleukids clearly shows how the Hellenistic kings, as sovereigns of lands conquered by force of arms, were never at peace, not even at home. The Ptolemies paid dearly for giving the Egyptians the opportunity to liberate themselves when the latter were integrated into Ptolemaic contingents for the battle of Raphia in 217 (Will 1982: 40–4). Thus, Hellenistic warfare both established and erased frontiers (Austin 1986: 454–7).

During the Hellenistic period, war also laid the foundations of royal power and authority. Such power was not completely new; Greek city-states had been confronted with this type of government since the Macedonian expansion of the fourth century. Now, however, it represented the primary form of state authority in all territories touched by Hellenistic civilization, and this was the case for the entire length of the Hellenistic period. Alexander and his successors became kings by virtue of the 'law of the sword'. Kings were above all generals, *generalissimos*. Their dress was that of the Macedonian soldier, including the sandals, the *chlamys*, and the hat. They led their troops to combat (ten of the fourteen Seleukid monarchs died in battle) and their victories were celebrated in hymn, in honorific epithets (Great, Poliorketes, Saviour, Kallinikos), and in the numerous sources recording their military accomplishments (including stone inscriptions, papyri, Nike-type coins specially

issued following a victory, statues and trophies). Battlefield victories were a key element of royal cults. A kind of royal mystique, coupled with a theology of victory, was developed during the Hellenistic period, when the king came to be associated with the goddess Nike, Victory personified. For example, the reaction of the inhabitants of Koile-Syria to Ptolemy's victory at Raphia (Polyb. 5.86) can be summed up by quoting an inscription describing Ptolemy in the days following the battle: King Ptolemy Great God Saviour, Philopator and Nikephoros (OGIS 89). The monarchs themselves were conscious of the importance accorded to military victory in legitimizing their power over the people, and the art of war rapidly became a science studied by numerous kings and military leaders. It was believed that a good king, like a good general, had to combine within his person audacity, clear-sightedness, and self-control (Plut. *Pyrrh.* 8; *Phil.* 4; Lévêque 1968: 276-9; Austin 1986: 457-9).

Finally, is it really necessary to point out that war was a source of profit? Even if the objectives in expanding a kingdom's borders were primarily political or strategic, the spoils of victory served both to satisfy the troops in the field and to fill the royal treasury, insofar as newly-conquered peoples were added to the tax rolls and, in certain cases, to the lists of those required to pay tribute. More specifically, the conquest of ports in the Aegean Islands or along the coasts of Greece and Asia Minor meant that a Hellenistic king could open up his kingdom to the resources of Arabia, Upper Egypt and the Red Sea, not to mention the forests of Koile-Syria (a very precious commodity when it came to naval construction). Thus, war offered the means for achieving greatness while it stimulated the economy by increasing the demand for and the circulation of goods and currency (Austin 1986: 459-61). For example, the widespread use of mercenaries, which was also an important source of cultural exchange during the Hellenistic period, constituted one of the important vectors of economic and commercial vitality whose effects can be seen today in archaeological digs which document the widespread circulation of goods and currency.

During the Hellenistic period, the fourth-century hegemonic ideal of certain great classical cities like Athens, Thebes and Sparta was inherited by the Greco-Macedonian kingdoms whose reach was infinitely more vast. In this new context, city-states would have naturally held a smaller, more limited place. And it is tempting to assume that since city-states no longer carried the same weight, they did not have a significant role to play in the history of the period, one which began with all of the city-states being subjugated to larger kingdoms, a form of power they had been aware of but which had supposedly been absent from the Greek political landscape up to that point. Yet it can easily be shown that this state of subjugation was by no means new. Any disruption caused by the conquest of Greece by Philip II, and later by Alexander's campaign, had relatively little effect on the Greek city-states beyond the multiplication of their numbers (Gauthier 1984; Ma 2000a: 107). Thus, the traditional model of democratic government – which gave the people control over political life, over justice and over community administration – persisted in a new, though not necessarily inferior, form. This phenomenon was most striking in the Greek city-states of Western Asia Minor which had endured centuries of Persian domination. Their political framework, by contrast with that of the city-states of Greece itself, did not result from a long evolution, nor did it rely on a well-established tradition. After being declared free by Alexander the Great, many of them entered a significant phase

of political, economic and cultural development. As for the city-states within Greece itself, on the Aegean islands and in the Peloponnese, both the Athenian imperialism and the political context of the fourth century had, long before the Hellenistic period, made them familiar with a state of international politics where ideological, political and military stakes regularly went far beyond their local interests.

For city-states of all kinds, written documents from the period attest to an important increase in the number of diplomatic contacts, to the founding of important religious festivals, and to the diversity and prosperity of commercial activity, notwithstanding occasional periods of uncertainty related to the vicissitudes of international politics. Meanwhile, archaeological finds show how their prosperity was reflected in the construction of great panhellenic sanctuaries, or of monumental fortified walls still visible to this day. Thus, contrary to a once widespread opinion whose adherents are becoming progressively fewer in number, the Hellenistic period was not one of decline for Greek city-states. Rather, it represented the height of their development. Granted, despite successive declarations by Alexander and the Diadochoi making them independent, some of them lost no time in falling back into a state of subjugation. Ephesos provides a good example. With the exception of a few brief periods of independence, it remained a royal capital ruled by a governor with a permanent garrison at his disposal from 334 bc until the Roman Conquest. Samos did not obtain independence from the Ptolemaic kingdom until about 192 bc. The beginning of the second century is also the period when epigraphic documents related to that city's affairs first appeared and proliferated. But Ephesos and Samos are two exceptions which should not distract from the experience of hundreds of other cities which, in many cases, have left an extensive written record.

## 2 Means of War

### *Diversified troops*

The military resources of the great kingdoms have proved a subject of utmost interest to both the authors of antiquity and modern scholars. Like Alexander's army, the troops of the Greco-Macedonian armies were both numerous and cosmopolitan. When he began his conquest, Alexander had an army of between 40,000 and 50,000 men, the core of which was made up of Macedonians, both infantrymen and horsemen, who fought alongside a number of specialist contingents, manned by Greek allies or mercenaries: Greek infantry and cavalry, Cretan archers and slingers, Thracian or Balkan light infantry and cavalry, etc. Over time, Alexander's army became increasingly diversified, although it maintained a hierarchy largely based on ethnic criteria: Macedonian and Greek heavy infantry; Persian or Cretan archers and spearmen; horsemen of diverse origins; Greek engineers charged with building or maintaining siege machines and artillery and with digging mines; and so on. The famous divisions of Asian elephants were soon added to the mix, and later became particularly common in the Seleukid armies. Finally, to round out the forces, a number of interpreters and tradesmen were required (D. Engels 1978: 11-26; Rochette 1997). When the army reached India, it included some 120,000 men, although this number was reduced to 80,000 by the time of Alexander's death. And while the army's ranks were continually replenished by the very tribes it

subjugated along its route, Greeks were established in the military colonies to serve as occupying armies. It was the members of this latter group which quickly began organizing themselves into genuine Greek city-states.

Like Alexander's 'founding' army, those of his successors were composed of troops which were both cosmopolitan and great in numbers. After all, Ptolemy II Philadelphos could rely on a force of 240,000 men (App. *Preface* 10), though the figure was greatly reduced under the reign of Philopator, whose forces numbered only 75,000 men (Polyb. 5.65). While statistical data gleaned from the authors of antiquity must always be viewed with a critical eye, they nevertheless provide rough estimates which can be used for the purposes of parallel and comparison. Thus, in 217, Antiochos III mobilized almost 62,000 infantrymen and 6000 horsemen against his Ptolemaic enemies. These numbers are similar to those he is reported to have commanded at the battle of Magnesia in 189: 60,000 infantrymen and 12,000 horsemen (Polyb. 5.79; Livy 37.18).

Most soldiers were mercenaries, and demand for their services was great. During the third century, Macedonians and Greeks answered the call in great numbers by visiting recruitment centres established across the eastern Mediterranean. Material conditions (pay, etc.) were relatively good, since the new kingdoms created following the division of Alexander's empire were at the height of their power. Texts nevertheless describe problems with recruitment and pay which constantly faced monarchs and military leaders. Take, for example, the contract made between Eumenes of Pergamon and his soldiers on the subject of pay (OGIS 266, trans. Austin 196; Launey 1950: 742-3; Virgilio 1982), the one entered into by the Karian dynast Eupolemos with the defenders of Theangela, whom he had just conquered (Robert 1936: 78-9), or the difficulties the Ionian city-state of Erythrai had in providing for the pay of its mercenaries (*I.Erythrai* 24). In the second and first centuries, material conditions deteriorated and recruiters increasingly sought out barbarians: Semites, Jews, Asians. Indigenous contingents were also recruited in Egypt and Asia, while the Macedonian army conserved a more national character (Griffith 1935: 308-16).

Over the course of three centuries, Ptolemies, Seleukids and Attalids succeeded in standardizing the recruitment of troops. They did so in such a way as to ensure both a regular supply and an equal presence across the entire territory occupied by their respective kingdoms. In Egypt, a system of *kleruchia* (*klérouchia*) was established: in exchange for a parcel of land to be developed (whose size varied according to the recipient's rank), the *kleruch* (*klérouchos*) could be mobilized (with payment) and taxed. Though originally based on a form of individual tenure where the occupant's rights were limited to usufruct, the *kleruchia* was gradually transformed into hereditary and alienable property. Thus, the *kleruch* could cede his property to his sons by gift or inheritance, or sell it to a third party, just as well as he could lose it for having badly managed it (e.g. Sijpesteijn 1979: 151-8). This was an individual and essentially rural system, where the sons of *kleruchs* became *kleruchs* in turn, giving the Ptolemaic forces the appearance of a permanently garrisoned army across the territory. The Seleukids and the Attalids preferred to establish permanent rural or urban settlements responsible for their own defence and, eventually, for regular military service in the royal army. These settlements sometimes took the form of city-states, more often of military colonies (G. Cohen 1991: 41-50). By contrast to the Ptolemaic *kleruchic* system, this collective system attracted immigrants to settlements which were in

keeping with their traditions, sometimes forcing the neighboring Greek city-states to trade with their new neighbours (e.g. *OGIS* 229, Austin 182).

Given their large numbers, mercenaries were conspicuous figures in Hellenistic society. Leading no real civic life, they could nevertheless vote decrees and exercise political influence on their employers. Their influence was mainly a cultural one, with the spread of their gymnasias, cults and Greek lifestyles continuing at least until the third century. Subsequently, their influence was felt to a lesser extent. Although writers seldom portrayed them in a favourable light, and they were often an object of derision in the literature of the period (Polyb. 6.52; 15.25; or the mercenaries in the comedies of Menander: Thrasonides in *Misoumenos*, Polemon in *Perikeiromene* and Stratophanes in *Sykionios*), their superiority to the citizen-soldier was nevertheless widely recognized (Diod. 29.6).

#### *Diversified tactics*

The distinctiveness of the great kingdoms' military resources is usually most striking from a technical perspective. First of all, the diversity of troops constituted a clean break with what had been known in the classical Greek city-states, despite the fact that mercenaries had been increasingly used since the fourth century. The phalanx remained the heart of the army, the Macedonian version proving even heavier and more monolithic than its Greek counterpart, making it a wonder of the Hellenistic world. The technical specifications of the phalangite's equipment changed very little. He wore a coat of mail (which protected him better than the simple breastplates worn by Greek heavy hoplite infantry) and a helmet, while he carried a shield and a straight sword. Nevertheless, the Macedonian *sarissa* replaced the Greek pike which had been shorter (2.5 m) and, as a result, less effective. Measuring between 5 and 6 metres, the *sarissa* had to be held with two hands, thereby hindering the movement of the phalanx. Not that increased mobility was necessary, as the phalanx could simply lie in wait for an enemy charge. In fact, the *sarissa* had a sharp point at both ends, allowing it to be stuck in the ground, thereby creating an almost impenetrable wall of spikes (Markle 1977; 1978; 1982).

From a tactical perspective, land combat appears to have evolved very little, in spite of the introduction of many new categories of troops and specialized contingents. Although Alexander and Pyrrhos proved themselves to be brilliant tacticians, most battles were still decided by the clash of two phalanxes, accompanied by smaller skirmishes, with the elite troops being concentrated in the right wing. Yet Alexander's conquest included only four engagements – the battles of Granikos (334), Issos (333), Gaugamela (331), and the River Hydaspes (326) – fought in the same manner as those which had occurred in previous centuries. Across the entire period, while battles were fought with the idea of two compact masses in mind, they also took forms which reflected the armies' increasingly diverse troops. In the middle of the period, the clash of the Macedonian phalanx and the Roman legion was the source of great surprise and bitter defeat. The ultimate tool of war in the Greek world for almost six centuries had found a superior enemy. By far the best account of the struggle (notwithstanding the author's obvious bias) comes from Polybios, who tells the tragic story of the crushing of Philip V by Flamininus at Kynoskephalai (18.29–32; also Livy 31.34).

Hellenistic armies' light troops were numerous and diverse, thanks to the recruitment of barbarians and semi-barbarians (the latter category refers to barbarians from the border regions of the Greek world who used a combination of armament and tactics). As technicians of warfare, capable of managing both technical and cultural diversity, the Greeks were often sought after to prepare and even command troops. As I mentioned before, so-called 'light' troops varied significantly from one army to the next – both internally in terms of ethnicity and across time – making it impossible to provide a detailed description here. I will merely underscore the fact that although the cavalry was frequently used by Alexander – he made it his primary assault force, going so far as to charge enemy infantry on the flanks and from the back – it proved to be a less popular weapon in subsequent periods, when it was used mainly as a light contingent for skirmishes, harassing enemy troops during their movements (Brunt 1963; Hammond 1978). But although the connection between phalanx and cavalry became much less important after Alexander, it should be noted that this coincided with the emergence of squadrons with well established reputations, such as the Tarentine mounted spearmen (Griffith 1935: 246–50; Launey 1949: 601–4).

Despite their lack of efficiency, one of the most commonly evoked elements of Hellenistic armies was their dreadful scythed chariots, copied from the Persians (war chariots had not been used by the Greeks since the so-called Dark Ages). They were first described by Xenophon, who wrote of their invention by Cyrus (*Cyr.* 6.1). They subsequently appeared in the armies of Antiochos III, in 189; of Mithradates, in 86; and of Pharnakes II, son of Mithradates, in 47 (Glover 1950). Another interesting (and substantial) component of Hellenistic royal armies were Indian elephants, soon followed by their African counterparts; the latter variety proved less docile and consequently less useful. Occasionally, these animals were a decisive element for the success of an army in the field. Seleukos I apparently gathered almost 480 of them at the battle of Ipsos in 301. They were a gift of Seleukos' new ally, the Mauryan king of India, Chandragupta (Sherwin-White and Kuhrt 1993: 12). Antiochos III fielded 102 at Raphia, where his opponent, Ptolemy IV, had 73 (Polyb. 5.79). However, despite the novel and spectacular nature of these living weapons, they were far from ideal, since they could easily turn against those who used them and consequently required special precautions (Polyaen. 4.6.3). Elephants virtually disappeared from Greek battlefields after the defeat of Antiochos III at Magnesia in 189 (Scullard 1974: 180–5).

In the distinctively Greek tradition of naval warfare, exemplified by Athens and the Delian League, maritime forces came to play a critical role in the wars between Hellenistic kingdoms. After all, if the Eastern World had traditionally seen the Mediterranean as little more than another in a long list of natural boundaries, it remained the centre of the world for the Hellenistic dynasties. Consequently, it was the site of innumerable naval battles and focus of a veritable 'arms race', both in terms of the number of vessels built (150 to 200 units for Ptolemy I; 500 for Demetrios Poliorketes; 200 for Pyrrhos in Sicily) and in terms of their size (twenty, thirty and even forty-bank ships!). Triremes nevertheless remained the vessel of choice, with *pentereis* and even *heptereis* also proving particularly common. Although the Macedonians were never great mariners, Ptolemies and Seleukids fought over the forests of Koile-Syria, which were essential for naval construction. And throughout the third century, the Ptolemies controlled the Aegean Basin and Straits, a powerful maritime



position which subsequently passed for a time to the great city of Rhodes, which acted as a veritable maritime policeman (Ormerod 1924: 128–50; Berthold 1984: 98–101; Gabrielsen 1997: 42–4). In any case, the size and the weight of the fleets meant that there could be nothing subtle about maritime battles, which most often took the form of clashes between two lines of ships. That much is known from the descriptions of battles given in the sources. Naturally, there might also have been smaller skirmishes at sea, notably with pirates, which would have more closely resembled the naval battles of the classical era (e.g. *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 567; Baker 1991: 24–30).

The *poliorketika* – literally the science of siege warfare – reached its height by the end of the fourth and into the third century, by which time virtually all cities had been fortified. The remnants of these fortifications bear witness to elaborate plans and to the application of a continually improved know-how. These coveted assets integrated such elements as trenches, forward-walls, towers, *crémaillères* and sawtooth layouts, and postern-gates (McNicoll 1997). Throughout the period, siege machines, together with the mobility of light troops, were comparable to those developed during the fourth century, especially by one of the Diadochoi, famous for his ability to win over besieged cities, Demetrios son of Antigonos justly named Poliorketes, the Besieger: these included rolling towers, battering rams, artillery, etc. (Garlan 1974; 1984).

### 3 Warfare and City-States

#### *Civic armies and means of war*

There are several sources available to the modern historian for appreciating the military resources of Hellenistic city-states. The most obvious of these are the still-visible fortifications that surrounded virtually every city, which naturally have great archaeological significance and provide important technical and tactical insights. However, these fortifications also bear witness to the complex work of military organization and planning overseen by civic bodies, the details of which can be found in various texts. For example, the construction and maintenance of walls are documented in agreements reached between city-states and their contractors, as well as in administrative documents honouring the citizens responsible for this work: for example the epistates of the ramparts, *epistates teichon* were usually organized into a college, as they were at Erythrai (*I.Erythrai* 23). Meanwhile, short texts from Smyrna and Stratonikeia clearly show how the layout of that part of the city lying within the walls was also the object of planning by civic bodies, with an eye to essentially military concerns (*I.Smyrna* II.1.613a–c; *I.Stratonikeia* II.1.1003–4; Varinlioglu 1994: 189–91). Furthermore, information on the financing of fortification projects can be found in subscriptions raised for that purpose, notably those voted by the people of Kolophon at the very end of the fourth century (Migeotte 1992: 214–23). Finally, fortifications were also built to protect a city's outlying territory, and the more modest ruins of various small forts and fortresses are still visible to those who choose to stray from the beaten path (on the costs of fortifications and their manning, Baker 2000).

But while the mere existence of these fortifications is noteworthy, the individuals who manned them are even more significant. Texts describe the quartering of

citizen-soldiers in the small forts around the city's territory or in the citadel. Clearly, these men did not hesitate to take up arms in defence of the interests of their community. Furthermore, numerous military offices were filled by citizens, following democratic elections. And in the vast majority of Hellenistic city-states, efforts were made to educate future citizens in the arts of war. I use the plural deliberately, for to a great extent the city-states kept up with the technical advances of their time. Thus, while youth still studied the traditional tactics of hoplite warfare, they also received instruction in archery, firing catapults and combat in light arms. These examples are taken from the numerous inscriptions found in gymnasia, principally lists of champions (Gauthier 1997).

Clearly, evidence of Hellenistic city-states' military resources is not lacking. And yet this evidence has long remained largely ignored, perhaps because of the diverse nature of the sources. No single text provides a clear understanding of the actual situation in a given city. But by assembling all of the available evidence, it is nevertheless possible to sketch an overall view by drawing on the experiences of certain cities as recorded in inscriptions (for example, see the study of military expenses in the cities by Migeotte 2000). Thus, the impossibility of knowing the details surrounding each individual city-state's civic militia is no longer an excuse for raising doubts regarding the very existence of those institutions.

#### *City-states at war*

Determining the military means at the disposal of Hellenistic city-states only partially addresses the question of their defence. From a more pragmatic perspective, it remains to be seen exactly whom they had to defend themselves against and what concrete dangers they actually faced. The first element which set the Hellenistic period apart was a new form of political power, essentially founded on the might of astonishingly large armies. As a result, city-states also had to come to terms with a new form of war, or rather new reasons for making war. Integrated into great kingdoms which were being made and remade all around them – sometimes to their advantage, sometimes at their expense – city-states were required to operate a two-fold foreign policy. On the one hand, they actively fought to maintain their political autonomy, although autonomy and liberty were occasionally marred by compromises which brought alternating periods of democracy and oligarchy or, in earlier periods (i.e. under Alexander's successors), occasional subjugation to the authority of a tyrant. On the other hand, city-states pursued a 'traditional', smaller-scale, foreign policy based on shifting alliances and conflicts with neighbouring city-states. These territorial squabbles, settled by arms or by negotiation, may have been essentially local in nature, but they were no less important for the city-states involved. The attitude of Hellenistic city-states to this complex political landscape bears witness to their desire to maintain their independence from any and all foreign powers.

This political landscape represented various kinds of threats to city-states, and naturally elicited various kinds of military and political reactions. In the case of hostile royal armies, responses could range from simply accepting the subjection of the city-state to obstinacy and a desire to make a stand. The latter option brought about armed conflicts whose outcomes were rarely favourable to the city-states (there are numerous examples, e.g. Phokaia and Teos in 190 BC: Polyb. 21.6.1–6; Livy

37.11.15; 27.9; 28.1-2; 32.1-8). In these conflicts with Hellenistic kingdoms, city-states were primarily concerned with preserving their liberty and autonomy. Meanwhile, the royal attacker was normally interested in a city for the strategic importance of such features as its urban centre or its port, which could serve as strategic posts within a much larger territory. This helps explain why such conflicts usually took the form of a siege of a city rather than an open war on its territory. From another perspective, several factors might have led a royal army to linger on a city's territory. Perhaps it had been unable to subjugate the city's besieged population and was seeking vengeance on the hinterland. Or perhaps the attacker was trying to draw the defending troops out of the city. A final explanation would apply to cases where the king had no real interest in the city itself. Rather, he was simply taking advantage of its territory's resources to supply his troops. From yet another perspective, city-states did not hesitate to attack their counterparts. And when the enemy was another city-state, conflicts rarely centred on the siege of a city. Instead, they focused on extracting the hinterland's economic and material resources. However, it is difficult to know whether these conflicts mirrored the agonistic battles of earlier times or whether they reflected the evolution begun in the fourth century by becoming more drawn out affairs involving wars of attrition and raids.

In any case, the defence of city and hinterland alike was tirelessly maintained. Diplomatic contacts with neighbouring cities were increased and military alliances or assistance agreements were increasingly common in the course of relations between city-states. Kings or their representatives were also the object of diplomatic overtures on the part of plenipotentiary representatives sent by city-states concerned with the security of their national territories and of their inhabitants. For most city-states, the armies they maintained were primarily charged with defending the civic space (significant examples can be found in epigraphic documents: Miletos and Herakleia under Latmos made an alliance, *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 633; Priene organized against the Gauls, *OGIS* 765; other measures taken against the Gauls at Erythrai, *I.Erythrai* 28; etc.). This fact brings to mind the famous document describing the emergency measures taken by the Ephesians during one of the Mithradatic wars, in December 87 and January 86 BC: 'as great dangers threaten the sanctuary of Artemis, the city and all of its citizens, along with all of the inhabitants of the city and its territory, it is necessary that all show solidarity in facing this period; may it please the people, the affair pertaining to the defence, security and safety of the sanctuary of Artemis, of the city and its territory...' (*OGIS* 742.23-8).

This naturally leads to new questions regarding the nature of these localized conflicts. What were these minor clashes which were part of the ordinary course of life for Greek city-states and which are frequently mentioned in the epigraphic sources? Are we to see here warfare as a means of settling border disputes, as the prelude to peace treaties, as the result of shifting military alliances? Though relatively less intense and requiring fewer resources, these conflicts remained very serious from the perspective of the city-states themselves, since they dealt directly with the integrity of the civic space.

A series of documents traces the relations between the city-states in the lower Maeander valley for a period of about 75 years, covering the latter part of the third century and first half of the second century. Although it often deals with isolated and seemingly unrelated incidents, this rich epigraphic dossier describes numerous border

disputes, wars and alliances which attest to both the military conflicts and the political relationships which developed between city-states sharing a common territory (Baker 2001).

During the years 184–180 BC a peace treaty was negotiated between the cities of Miletos and Magnesia-on-the-Maeander and the respective allies, Herakleia under Latmos and Priene. The treaty brought an end to a war about which little is known, except what can be deduced from the clauses of the treaty itself, the majority of which relate to the ownership of a territory disputed by the two city-states (*SIG*<sup>3</sup> 588, trans. Burstein 37; Ager 1996: 292–6). The territory, known as Peraia, probably constituted all or part of what the city-states of the lower Maeander had been fighting over for several decades. Indeed, a common thread is woven through both the documents related to those conflicts and the treaty signed between Miletos and Magnesia. The war between these two city-states was caused by conflicting claims to arable lands situated in the valley at the edges of their respective territories. Fighting had previously erupted over the ownership of these lands between Priene and Magnesia (*SIG*<sup>3</sup> 679; Ager 1996: 321–7), Priene and Miletos (*I.Priene* 26, 27, 28; Ager 1996: 271–3), and later Miletos and Herakleia under Latmos (*SIG*<sup>3</sup> 633; Ager 1996: 290–2). As early as the last third of the third century, the introduction of Cretan soldier-colonists to the valley by Miletos created problems for both the Milesians and the Cretan settlers when the territory passed into the hands of the Magnesians, following the intervention of Philip V in 201 (Athen. 3.78c). Later, at the beginning of the second century, Asia Minor's history was affected by Antiochos III's campaign against Rome, a well known event whose repercussions were felt by the coastal city-states, including those in Ionia, which were among the main strategic points sought by the Seleukid king. Unfortunately, details are often lacking, except for sporadic comments in the works of Polybios and Livy. The Ionian city-states found themselves closely caught up in events opposing the Senate to the ambitions of Antiochos III. Forced to allow foreign armies on their territory and to provide lodging, supplies, or military support (depending on changing contexts and on what the great powers involved imposed on them), these city-states were obviously facing a difficult period. But the larger war was not the only thing which held their attention, and Maeander Valley inscriptions clearly show that civic and political activity continued regardless of the circumstances, that the city-states involved were just as (perhaps more) interested in other conflicts, and that they did not hesitate to declare war against an overly ambitious neighbour.

In the complex game of relations between city-states, former enemies frequently became allies until such time as a new disagreement separated them again. Thus, behind the dominant narrative of Hellenistic history, well documented by the authors of the period, there lies a parallel history dealing primarily with the affairs of the city-states. And yet, in previous centuries, it was this second layer which had single-handedly held the attention of historians for essentially the same reasons that they subsequently shifted their attention to the activities of great kingdoms. Thus, the theme of warfare during the Hellenistic period can actually be given a variety of definitions and explanations. For the city-states, the context of international politics had changed and, inevitably, the ways and means of making war had changed as well. In terms of their financial and human resources, as well as in terms of pragmatic imperatives, they were able to adapt themselves to the changes while keeping up with technological progress (e.g. the range of weapons taught in the gymnasia, Launey

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1950: 815-35). On this subject, I will limit myself to a single example. Several epigraphic documents allow for a relatively detailed analysis of how the islands of Kos and Kalymna organized the defence of their territory between 205 and 200. Their efforts consisted of public subscriptions calling for a general effort on the part of the population, as well as decrees in honour of particularly devoted citizens (SIG<sup>3</sup> 567, 569; Habicht and Hallof 1998: 116-21). Yet the two successive conflicts which these islands participated in had implications which went beyond merely local concerns. The first, called the 'Cretan War' because of the participation of several Cretan city-states, was instigated by the Macedonian king, Philip V. The second involved the Macedonian fleet itself. The course of events is well known, thanks especially to Polybios, and the sources leave no doubt as to the fact that Kos and Kalymna, then allies of the mighty city of Rhodes, were cast as actors, extras and victims in a drama whose plot extended far beyond their own borders. Nevertheless, the civic spirit, still very much alive, allowed them to efficiently organize the defence of the national territory of the two islands (Baker 1991).

#### 4 Peace

In a world of incessant wars, the idea of peace retained the positive connotations it had begun to take on during the fourth century. In principle, the treaties negotiated during the period were permanent, although their clauses sometimes included provisions for changes or renewals. These treaties presented peace 'as a state which must be restored, conserved, renewed, confirmed' (Préaux 1961: 234). That being said, the kings played a paradoxical role in the concert of international relations. Not simply warriors, they were also responsible for restoring and conserving order, especially from the perspective of their subjects and that of the city-states under their authority, by whom they were often heralded as saviours, protectors and benefactors. Even Alexander presented himself as the world's conciliator and peacemaker, despite the fact that his mission was essentially one of military conquest. Thus, the king embodied the 'peace of the magnanimous victory' (Préaux 1961: 233). And while the exploits of princes were the subject of official praise, many decrees also praised the work of peacemakers, diplomats and ambassadors. As the kings rarely undertook the work of negotiation themselves, these individuals were normally extremely important, recognized for their great abilities and eloquence.

This situation inexorably points to a more brutal reality: clearly, when they sought peace, kings usually had military considerations in mind. Often finding themselves in a state of temporary weakness following a less-than-successful military campaign, they saw peace as an opportunity to buy time or to seek out a weaker adversary. In other words, war was ever-present in the kings' minds while peace was merely a means of freeing up resources and 'regrouping'. Thus, the political balance was always precarious and continually put into question. The kings' preferred way of making peace was by following traditional procedures, thereby limiting the degree of innovation and retaining the idea of peace as a contract. However, negotiations often proved difficult and the terms imposed were not always fully accepted by one party or the other, resulting in ongoing tensions and leading to new conflicts (e.g. Koile-Syria, that eternal bone of contention between the Ptolemies and the Seleukids). Furthermore, there was no organization standing above the kingdoms, in a position to act as referee

or as guarantor of the treaties. With few exceptions, from the middle of the second century until the end of the period, even the Roman Senate only intervened as a party to the conflicts, and not as a superior power. Thus, while Roman military power gradually overcame that of the Hellenistic kingdoms, Rome's dominance was felt as a military adversary, and not as a referee.

Meanwhile, relations between city-states proved both constant and intense, even if they were often carried on under the shadow of the great powers. The latter were sometimes called on for help, which explains why local quarrels of limited scope are sometimes mentioned in general treaties which put an end to vast wars between great powers. On top of all this there was piracy as well as the social conflicts taking place within individual city-states. Thus, relations between Greeks had changed very little. In many cases, evidence of conflicts comes from attempts to resolve differences. Arbitration, an ancient form of conflict resolution, continued to be practised during the Hellenistic period, as numerous epigraphic documents attest. However, this abundance of documentation does not necessarily mean that it had become an increasingly popular or effective tool for securing peace. The initiative for negotiations often came from outside: a king (at least at the beginning of the period), a confederation, a neutral city-state, or the Senate after 200 BC. But warring city-states could also take the initiative and request that an external neutral power intervene as arbitrator, be it a city-state (or city-states), a king, a confederation, or the Senate. The procedures remained the same as in earlier times, although the agreements reached were fragile and often put into question, for want of institutions capable of imposing punishment for breaches. Only Alexander, the Diadochoi, and the Senate (after 146 BC) seem to have had enough authority to impose settlements. The city of Rhodes might also have played such a role for a certain time, especially during the third and at the beginning of the second centuries.

City-states were reconciled by way of alliance treaties, which settled their past differences and determined their future relations (e.g. *symmachia*), as well as by various judicial procedures which multiplied and intensified with time: mutual agreements of inter-marriage law (*epigamia*), of property law (*egktesis*) and even reciprocity of civic rights (*isopoliteia*: Gawantka 1975); purely judicial agreements (*symbola*) opened the courts of other cities to the citizens of participating city-states; proxy decrees multiplied (Marek 1984), as did decrees of *asylia* (Rigsby 1996), notably on the part of the Aitolians who, by exempting certain cities from the risk of pillage, created a web of relationships in the Aegean Sea. 'The details naturally varied greatly from one case to the next, but there was a strong continuity in the spirit and operation of negotiations from the classical period to its Hellenistic successor. The world of the city-states persisted from one era to the next' (Préaux 1961: 259).

## 5 Conclusion

According to Lévêque (1968: 279), there were really only four short periods of peace in the Hellenistic world between 323 and 150: 299–297, 249–248, 205–204 and 159–149. Subsequently, war essentially raged without interruption. And although wars did not erupt everywhere at the same time, their impact on the international political landscape was nevertheless widespread. Sometimes harsh and cruel, they also bore witness to acts of chivalry (Poliorketes, Gonatas, Pyrrhos) and clemency (treat-

ment of prisoners, recognition of the territorial immunity of certain city-states or sanctuaries) (Shipley 2000: 80–3). Fighting no longer took place as it did in archaic and early classical times, and instead saw the further development of practices introduced during the fourth century, at least insofar as the great kingdoms were concerned. Furthermore, on a smaller scale, the study of the armies in Hellenistic Greek city-states clearly shows an unconditional and enduring attachment of civic bodies to their territory and their city. On this subject, it is safe to say that for the city-states, especially those in the Aegean Basin, there never was a break with the past as fundamental as that which scholars still too often describe when discussing such key historical events as the creation of the Hellenic League by Philip II, Alexander's conquest, or the subsequent division of the Empire by Alexander's successors.

The defence of the city-state and its territory remained a national, and purely civic, preoccupation. It lay at the heart of all the relations maintained with the outside world by Hellenistic city-states, regardless of whom they dealt with. Thus, whether it was a matter of negotiating with a king or his representative for the withdrawal of a royal garrison (e.g. at Erythrai, *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 285), or with regards to a treaty creating a military alliance between two cities (e.g. Miletos with Herakleia under Latmos *SIG*<sup>3</sup> 633), the desire to preserve territorial integrity and civic independence was always a central motivation for city-states. Likewise, the multiplication of agreements leading to the amalgamation of the territory of a small city or township into that of its larger neighbour also underscores this attachment to the land and the desire to enlarge its area, or at least to maintain its limits. Just as the citizen-soldier is closely linked to the origins of democracy and to the history of democracy during the classical period, he remains relevant to the history of the city-state and to the persistence of democracy during the Hellenistic period.

As I bring this chapter to a close, it seems appropriate that I return to the question posed at the outset and which has served as an organizing thread: Did warfare during the Hellenistic period change with the advent of the kings as dominant powers in Greek political history, which henceforth encompassed the whole of the known world? However important this question might be, it remains difficult to offer a definitive or straight answer. Although the kingdoms left a profound mark on the destiny of the Greek world and the face of international politics, the more traditional world of the city-state, the same one which had begun to slowly take shape during the eighth century BC, had not changed very much. In good times and bad, the defensive needs of the city-state remained the same, even with the addition of other, less immediate, considerations which went far beyond the local context. While the city-states could not ignore this additional level of political consideration, they did not necessarily have a firm grasp on its significance. Warfare during the Hellenistic period took various forms and benefited, in terms of its technical and tactical development, from financial means which, up to that point in Greek history, were unparalleled. From this perspective, it can be said that the appearance of the kings on the political landscape constituted a factor of change in the practice of war. Likewise, the necessity of preserving the integrity of states originally conquered by force, and the inevitable temptation to subsequently expand their borders, made the resort to armed conflict a common feature of international politics. But was this really a new state of affairs for the Greeks? It is true that, except for the unique case of the conquest of Messenia by the Spartans, the Greek city-states were not tempted by wars of conquest;

nonetheless, their attachment to the lands they defended sunk roots so deep in history that only mythology could explain it. But to resolve territorial conflicts – that is to say those which touched the states at the very deepest level – the military solution had long presented itself as the only one imaginable. ‘In the politics of ancient city-states . . . , if there was a conflict, usually a territorial conflict, between two city-states, normally bordering each other, and if it was impossible to settle the differences peaceably, violence and war were the solution, and Greek history is covered by such battles fought over a piece of territory taken, lost, retaken, depending on the circumstances’ (Robert *OMS* 5.141). For the Greeks, violence was an ordinary political tool (Garlan 1972: 197–203).

### FURTHER READING

For a general account of military developments, Shipley 2000: 334–41; Tarn 1930 remains a classic, and the short book by Adcock (1957) can also serve as a starting point. Two general works dealing with the whole of Antiquity provide a particularly good overview for the uninitiated: Hackett 1989 and Hanson 1999. See Hammond 1981, D. Engels 1978 and Milns 1976 for information on Alexander and his army; Bar-Kochva 1976 on the Seleukid army, and Lesquier 1911 on the Ptolemaic army. For Roman warfare the detailed study of Cannae, Daly 2002. The subjects of fortification and siege warfare are amply covered by Garlan 1984 and 1974, and McNicoll 1997, 1986 and 1978 (Lawrence 1979 and Winter 1971 discuss fortifications from an essentially archaeological perspective). On mercenaries, a vast subject if all its facets are taken into consideration (social, economic, etc.), Griffith 1935 and Launey 1949–50 provide contextualized presentations which are rich in references. With regard to naval warfare and naval forces in general, the literature is rather sparse. Some information can be gleaned from the works already cited. Gabrielsen 1997 looks specifically at the case of Rhodes, and Hauben 1970 deals with the Ptolemaic example. More general works include Starr 1989, who dedicates a chapter of his short book to the Hellenistic period, as well as Casson 1991 and Rougé 1981. Ma 2000b offers an interesting account of the situation as it was experienced by city-states (in a book in preparation I cover the question of military institutions and armies in the Greek city-states of the Western coast of Asia Minor). Finally, two very stimulating studies on violence by the Greeks: de Romilly 2000 and Bernand 1999.