

CHAPTER 15  
WAR AND SOCIETY

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I. INTRODUCTION

Peloponnese stretches three ambitious fingers towards the coast of Africa. Taenarum is the middle cape, and the longest, a terror to mariners despite the pleading temple to Poseidon set upon its rocky tip. And in the years after the death of Alexander the Great, this crag redoubled its evil fame as a hiring fair for mercenary soldiers.<sup>1</sup> Here that breed of 'exiles, deserters, a congeries of evil-doers' (Isoc. 8.44) awaited those who came to bid for their services, thrust into the sea as far from respectable hearths as geography allowed. And to Taenarum bidders came, for despite their dark reputation mercenaries were ubiquitous in the armies of the Hellenistic world: sometimes whole hosts were hireling, or nearly so; often mercenaries formed the corps in which most confidence was placed; rarely were they absent.

Yet a mercenary arriving in Latium would despair of his reward. In the middle Republic, when the Romans traded a parochial sway in Italy for lordship of the Mediterranean world, they employed mercenaries only rarely. This contrast between the Greek world and Rome betrays the dissimilarity of their military cultures, the different ways Greeks and Romans thought about the nature of military prowess. The Hellenistic Greeks, although they valued inborn courage, were inclined to regard soldiering as a learned craft, while the Romans, although they accepted that there was much to learn about warfare, were more apt to think that fighting displayed inherited virtue. This disparity of outlook is a matter of delicate shading rather than stark contrast, but it has consequences for the evolution of military technique, the harmony of society and the incidence of war.<sup>2</sup>

II. THE HELLENISTIC WORLD

That many in the Greek world were prepared to sell their swords requires little explanation. Greece had always been rich in poverty; frequent warfare

<sup>1</sup> Griffith (1935) 259–60.

<sup>2</sup> That Roman culture was more martial than Greek, and that this contributed to Roman expansion, is conventional: but note A. M. Eckstein's attack on this view (2006) 118–243, more briefly (1997) and (2000) 867–71.



Figure 15.1 Third-century terracotta statuette of a mercenary, carrying a sword and other gear, a caricature type also common in contemporary comedy.

drove men from the land; the Greek genius for political tangle created tribes of wandering exiles. For centuries Greeks had served as mercenaries, both in the East where their reputation as infantry was high, and in the pay of Greek tyrants – especially in the West, in Sicily – who could not trust their own citizens in peace or in war.<sup>3</sup> The question, rather, is why, despite the expense, dubious loyalty and bad repute of mercenaries, Hellenistic monarchs and Greek cities hired them in large numbers when they could have used their own people as soldiers (fig. 15.1).

The widespread use of mercenaries by mainland Greeks pre-dates the ascendancy of Macedon. In the Peloponnesian War Athens is found hiring

<sup>3</sup> Parke (1933) 3–13.

barbarian specialists, light infantry from Thrace.<sup>4</sup> The hiring of mercenaries with unusual skills – archers from Crete are perhaps the most prominent – remains common in the Hellenistic era, and does not present the same puzzle as the enrolment of outsiders to fight in ways that would have been familiar to citizens.<sup>5</sup> As fourth-century Greece staggered towards its confrontation with Macedon the use of Greek mercenaries to supplement – or occasionally replace – citizen-soldiers became more common.<sup>6</sup> Orators' railing at this development has been distilled into diagnosis of decline: moral enfeeblement or decadence, learned men said once; now they speak of the decay of civic patriotism or the expansion of the private sphere at the expense of the public.<sup>7</sup>

Shifts in the Greek outlook there may have been, but they explain no more than why citizens might have been reluctant to serve, not why hiring mercenaries was more appealing than enticing or compelling natives. Through the fifth century and beyond most Greeks believed that the state was defended by a hoplite army that included, and drew its ethos from, its social élite, 'good' men, to whose social superiority were ascribed *aretê*, excellence, *andreia*, courage, and so success on the battlefield.<sup>8</sup> Mercenaries – 'murderers, mutilators, thieves, housebreakers' (Polyb. 13.6.4) – were the very opposite, destitute, criminals and exiles, the very type of 'bad' men, a perception hardly leavened by the occasional exiled aristocrat or gentleman adventurer, like Xenophon, in their ranks. How could such wretches, deficient by definition in *aretê* and *andreia*, possibly be victorious on the battlefield? The widespread use of mercenaries in the fourth century and the Hellenistic era necessarily implies a revolution in attitudes towards what made an effective warrior.

### 1. *Military excellence as craft*

Polybius identifies skill at arms as the characteristic excellence of the mercenary, and points to the technical skill of soldiers as a significant factor in battle.<sup>9</sup> With programmes of public military training for young men, Hellenistic cities endorsed the importance of skill with sweat and treasure. At Athens from the late fourth century ephebes – young men in training – were instructed in hoplite fighting, the javelin, the bow and shooting the catapult ([Arist.] *Ath. Pol.* 42.3). Young men's games in many Hellenistic

<sup>4</sup> Parke (1933) 17–18. Economically on fourth-century and Hellenistic mercenaries, Hamilton (1999) 180–3.

<sup>5</sup> Griffith (1935) 236–63. <sup>6</sup> Burckhardt (1996) 76–153.

<sup>7</sup> Compare, e.g. Grote (1846–56) xi.389–96 with Sinclair (1988) 59.

<sup>8</sup> Van Wees (1995a); Pritchard (1998) 44–53. For the aristocratic ethos behind this conception, conveniently, Donlan (1999).

<sup>9</sup> Polyb. 11.13.3, 15.13.1; cf. Diod. Sic. 19.109.1–2; Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1116b.

towns had a military cast: they competed not only in running, wrestling and boxing, but with the bow and the javelin; even in fighting in armour and with the catapult. In the Hellenistic gymnasium expert teachers of these martial skills were provided.<sup>10</sup> This is far from the amateur ethos of fifth-century Athens, where Thucydides could have Pericles boast that the Athenian army took no training and needed none – the natural courage of the free Athenian citizen would triumph – and where it could be seriously debated (in Plato's *Laches*) whether taking instruction in the technique of hoplite fighting from a paid professional was of any use.<sup>11</sup>

It was not only skill with weapons that was acquired. Good order and physical courage find more mention in Polybius than skill at arms as decisive factors in battle. But good order – maintaining formation in all circumstances – was also understood to be a result of training and practice; Hellenistic games gave prizes for *eutaxia*, 'discipline'.<sup>12</sup> And physical courage could be conceived as a mixture of inborn quality and experience.<sup>13</sup> To the degree that military excellence – skill, order and courage – was understood more as an acquired than an inborn quality,<sup>14</sup> to that degree the mercenary could be conceived as a satisfactory replacement for, or superior to, the citizen soldier (Diod. Sic. 29.6.1). The widespread use of mercenaries depended on military quality being conceived less as inborn *aretê*, and more as learned craft, *technê*.

It was not only the common soldier whose excellence was conceived as a craft, but the excellence of generals as well. 'Tactics is the highest craft [*technê*] of war', and tactics was the disposition, movement and formation of troops upon the field of battle.<sup>15</sup> Tactics and trickery – stratagems – were the two main intellectual divisions of Hellenistic generalship. In a battle opposing generals might first try to get the better of each other with stratagems, but if 'both outgeneral the other, as in a preliminary contest of intellect', and prove equal in that department, then they 'use different formations, vying with each other in this skill as well' (Diod. Sic. 19.26.9–27.1). If civic trainers were supplied to the young soldier-in-training, books were written for the commander, both comprehensive military manuals and (especially) books treating formations and offering lists of stratagems used by generals of old. Books descended from these genres survive from the Roman period: Asclepiodotus, Aelian and Arrian on tactics, Frontinus, Polyaeus and Julius Africanus on stratagems. But practical experience was better than reading, and at least one Hellenistic general is reported to have

<sup>10</sup> Launey (1949–50) 11.815–35; Lendon (2005) 141–3. Cf. Plut. *Phil.* 7.4.

<sup>11</sup> Thuc. 2.39; Pl. *Lach.* 182e–184c; see ch. 5 in this volume, p. 134.

<sup>12</sup> Polyb. 10.23.1–9; games: Crowther (1991b). <sup>13</sup> Polyb. 6.48.3, 52.10.

<sup>14</sup> Polyb. 1.6.6, 2.20.9, 3.35.8, 89.5; Diod. Sic. 19.30.5–6.

<sup>15</sup> Quoted Plut. *Phil.* 14.5; cf. Polyb. 9.20.9.

taken employment as a mercenary commander – on Crete, the very home of diabolical stratagems – to keep up his skills.<sup>16</sup>

The Greeks had always admitted the existence of skills, *technai*, in which anyone could be trained. But in the classical Greek city it was vulgar trades – that of the potter, of the sandal-maker – that tended to be conceived in this way. *Aretê*, prowess in noble activities – politics and warfare in particular – tended rather to be ascribed, viewed as the nature or inheritance of man or city: natural ability might merely (even this was disputed) be augmented by training. To treat all warlike accomplishments, even the planning of generals, fundamentally as a matter of training or experience – as a *technê* – marks a shift from older thinking, or at least the victory of an advanced strain of thinking, which can be seen in Thucydides and Plato and Xenophon, over that of their traditionally minded contemporaries.<sup>17</sup>

In the fifth century the idea that skills suitable for upper-class persons could be envisioned as *technai* is associated especially with the sophists, itinerant intellectuals-for-hire who were ambitious to teach skills that had traditionally been thought inborn, and who were thinking deeply about whether men acted as they did because of their nature, *physis*, or human convention, *nomos*. So there arose a distinction between socially acceptable (military and intellectual) and *déclassé* (banal) *technai*.<sup>18</sup> In the late fifth century teachers of military skills to the sons of the rich – military sophists – appear in Greece; in the fourth, military experts become common, and begin writing manuals. The question of whether to employ such men is the pretext of Plato's *Laches* and arises for discussion in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (1.6.12–14). Sophistic teaching can explain why generalship came to be understood as a craft, and why formations and stratagems – the parts of command most easily reduced to theory – were emphasized. The parallel is to the contemporary formalization of training in rhetoric: in both cases teaching came to emphasize what could best be taught rather than what worked best in the real world, and students were left to hammer reality to a matching shape. But even so this new vogue in aristocratic education, limited to a tiny handful of the rich, can hardly explain why the business of the common soldier in the line came to be understood to be as much *technê* as *aretê*.

Perhaps mercenaries were not merely the beneficiaries of this change in outlook, but were in part its creators. The Ten Thousand trod a deep-rutted path east in the pay of a Persian dynast. But when they returned from their miraculous march to the Black Sea – having demonstrated their quality empirically under the most exacting circumstances – they were the first large

<sup>16</sup> Plut. *Phil.* 13.3–6. On Hellenistic command, see Beston (2000); Lendon (2005) 143–52.

<sup>17</sup> Thuc. 2.86–9; Pl. *Resp.* 374b–d; Xen. *Cyr.* 2.1.22–9, as against Arist. *Eth. Nic.* 1116b.

<sup>18</sup> Compare Diod. Sic. 20.63.4 with 26.1.1; cf. Arist. *Pol.* 1337b.

group of Greek mercenaries to be hired by a mainland Greek state, Sparta.<sup>19</sup> The Spartans had hired Greek mercenaries in small numbers during the Peloponnesian War, and had also sent helots out to fight their battles.<sup>20</sup> These developments were predictable, because Sparta had the only Greek army all of whose soldiers took regular training during the fifth century.<sup>21</sup> The Spartans were the first to think military excellence acquired, rather than inborn: ‘man differs little from man by nature, but he is best who trains in the hardest school’, as Thucydides has a Spartan king say.<sup>22</sup> So the Spartans were the first to view fighting as – at least in part – a *technê*. As Xenophon put it, ‘you’d think everybody else mere improvisers in soldiering, and the Lacedaemonians the only artisans (*technitai*) of war’.<sup>23</sup> And this Spartan conception – fighting as *technê* – proved successful in practice: Spartan victories in the fifth century, her triumph in the Peloponnesian War, and her ascendancy thereafter, produced trained corps in imitation, most famously the Sacred Band at Thebes.<sup>24</sup> In the fourth century Thebes defeated Sparta, and the trained army of Macedon defeated all: thus was the Spartan insight spread and reinforced.

## 2. Consequences

The conception of warfare as a collation of crafts had, it is attractive to suppose, a number of historical consequences. A first, strictly military, was to allow more rapid innovation in military technique. By modern standards military methods changed extremely slowly in antiquity – 1914–18 saw more innovation than any ancient century – but some periods saw more change than others, and the Hellenistic centuries were an era of comparatively rapid evolution.

Where a dominant method of fighting – classical Greeks fighting in the phalanx, for example – enacts a cultural ideal, like the brave immobility of the citizen-soldier, innovation is slow. Changes in ways of fighting are resisted on cultural grounds, as when the Athenians used their heavy infantry, their ‘steady hoplite foot soldiers’, as marines:

they are used to jumping ashore frequently and running back fast to their ships again, and it does not seem shameful to them not to die bravely standing their ground against the enemy onset, and fair excuses are ready to hand for them when

<sup>19</sup> Cartledge (1987) 318–21. <sup>20</sup> Mercenaries: Parke (1933) 15–16; helots: Talbert (1989) 25.

<sup>21</sup> Arist. *Pol.* 1338b; there are traces of élite – and perhaps trained – units in other fifth-century armies: see ch. 5 in this volume, pp. 144–5, and Pritchett (1971–91) II.221–2.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted Thuc. I.84.4; cf. 2.39.1; Lendon (2005) 106–14.

<sup>23</sup> Quoted Xen. *Lac.* 13.5; cf. Plut. *Ages.* 26.4–5. Spartans were forbidden, of course, to practise any banalistic crafts, Plut. *Lyc.* 24.2; cf. Hdt. 2.167.

<sup>24</sup> Pritchett (1971–91) II.221–4; on the influence of Spartan ways in Greece after the Peloponnesian War: Rawson (1969) 33–55.

they cast away their arms and flee in what they call ‘not shameful flight’. Such phrases are what usually result from using hoplites as marines, and rather than being worth ‘a thousand praises’ they deserve the opposite. For one should never accustom men to bad habits, especially not the best part of the citizens.

(Pl. *Leg.* 706c–d)

The view of fighting as craft, by contrast, is a weaker sea-anchor to change: individual military crafts are less firmly rooted in the wider culture, and there is less resistance to abandoning or modifying them. It had been a great thing when Athenian cavalrymen were willing to serve as hoplite marines at Salamis (Plut. *Cim.* 5.2–3); it had been an even greater thing when prosperous Athenians had been willing to row in the Athenian fleet at the battle of Arginusae (406).<sup>25</sup> In classical Athens how a man fought was an important part of who he was, an expression of standing not lightly to be sacrificed. The soldiers of Philip V’s Hellenistic phalanx, by contrast, easily adapted to rowing or even digging (Polyb. 5.2.5).

So in Hellenistic times it was possible – and common – to retrain soldiers and existing units to fight in a different style. Philopoemen reformed the infantry of the Achaean League on the Macedonian model (Plut. *Phil.* 9.1–3). The generals of Ptolemy IV could take a variously armed body of mercenaries, divide them by age and origin, and retrain them ‘paying no attention to how they were armed before’ (Polyb. 5.64.1). Others could learn the tactics of the cavalry of Tarentum in southern Italy, and so ‘Tarentine’ cavalry could appear all over the Hellenistic world.<sup>26</sup> The large shield of the Gauls could be adopted and fighting with it even become a contest in Hellenistic games.<sup>27</sup> When Pyrrhus fought in Italy his dispositions seem to have been influenced by Italian tactics, and his revised tactics in turn seem to have influenced tactics in Greece. Certainly Hannibal cast away the Greek-style weapons his army carried to Italy and adopted Roman ones (Polyb. 18.28.9–10). As the states of the eastern Mediterranean had more and more contact with Rome, they experimented with Roman ways of fighting; it has recently been argued that in the 160s the infantries of both Ptolemaic Egypt and the Seleucid empire were systematically reformed along Roman lines, and that by the first century BC, when Rome put an end to Hellenistic armies, they were largely equipped and fighting in the Roman style.<sup>28</sup> Conceiving military skills as crafts decoupled specific methods of fighting from the ideals of their practitioners, and made them more amenable to change.

<sup>25</sup> Xen. *Hell.* 1.6.24; cf. Thuc. 3.18.3.      <sup>26</sup> Griffith (1935) 241–51 cf. Lendon (2005) 153–5.

<sup>27</sup> Polyb. 5.53.8, 10.29.6; games: Launey (1949–50) 11.817–20.

<sup>28</sup> Sekunda (2001b), and esp. 117–24 for Roman influence before the 160s, and 176–9 for the first century BC.

Second, and more broadly significant, it may be that to conceive military skills as *technai* played a role in social unquiet. The Greeks had never wanted for reasons to divide into parties and murder their neighbours, but these reasons had changed, or at least multiplied, over time. If in the fifth century oligarchs killed democrats and democrats killed oligarchs, if helots and Spartans slaughtered each other, and if haters and lovers of Athens fell to blows, it appears that in fourth-century and Hellenistic Greece a greater share of the pervasive unrest is to be attributed to the economic resentment of the free poor for the rich, of debtor for creditor, and of landless for landed.<sup>29</sup> Yet changed economic circumstances are not a fully adequate explanation: in the fifth century the social gulfs were vast enough, and the misery of the poor abject enough, to justify any amount of strife. But fifth-century Greek society was aristocratic in tenor. The poor looked upon the rich with envy, but also with respect as their natural betters: 'We had our generals from the greatest houses, first in wealth and birth, and we prayed to them like gods' (Eup. fr. 103.4–6). A consequence of this attitude was the long sequence of aristocratic politicians in democratic Athens. This habit of deference depended in part on a set of intellectual heirlooms: the assumption that *aretê* was heritable – 'the *aretê* of those who are well born shows in their children'<sup>30</sup> – and the Homeric bundling of all ascribed *aretai* together with wealth and birth. To be rich and well born, then, carried with it the presumption that one was also better.<sup>31</sup> Yet in the fourth century, at least at Athens, deference tended to decay. Respect for the claims of wealth and birth was unpredictable in the Athenian courtroom: a speaker might argue that the rich and well born were usually quite worthless,<sup>32</sup> and a poor soldier might regard his out-of-shape rich comrade with contempt (Pl. *Resp.* 556d–e). To envisage military skill as *technê* may have played its part in tarnishing aristocratic glamour, for to understand martial prowess thus was to untie the Homeric bundle of *aretai* and shake out its largest element. If prowess in war was not an inborn virtue but a set of crafts that anyone could learn, the powerful lost much of their right to respect: viewed no longer as natural superiors, they may have come to be viewed as enemies instead.

Military excellence as craft could also undermine civic harmony by reducing the dependence of the rich citizen upon his neighbours. If the artisan of war – the mercenary – was as effective a soldier as the citizen, the ordinary man was no longer necessarily his wealthy brother's potential shield-fellow (Pl. *Resp.* 556d). As the reliance of leading citizens upon their

<sup>29</sup> Fuks (1984a). <sup>30</sup> Quoted Eur. fr. 232; cf. Arist. fr. 94 Rose. <sup>31</sup> Donlan (1999) 113–53.

<sup>32</sup> Ober (1989) 192–259; cf. Dover (1974) 91–2. There had, of course, been plenty of doubts in fifth-century Athens as well: Donlan (1999) 137–9. Speaker: Arist. *Rh.* 1390b–1391a.



humbler townsmen declined, so might their need to treat them with tact. In a world of mercenaries the rich could defend the city with their treasure, and demand power in exchange. Perhaps this is one reason that in the Hellenistic era democratic regimes commonly evolved into oligarchies, *de facto* or *de jure*.<sup>33</sup> And to fund expensive mercenary contingents the rich might increase their pressure on the poor.

The old conception of military excellence as *aretê* tended to bind a Greek city together: the poor admired the rich, and the greater needed the lesser. Military excellence as *technê* cut at both roots of that concord. It is against this troubled background that the military training of young men in Hellenistic cities should perhaps be understood. It is sometimes supposed that public military training – in the Hellenistic gymnasium or *ephebeia* or both – was universal among young male citizens. But some suspect that it was in practice confined to the upper strata of society.<sup>34</sup> Certainly the Athenian *ephebeia*, even if originally universal, soon became optional and socially élite,<sup>35</sup> and the well-known gymnasiarchal law of Beroea excludes tradesmen from the gymnasium, a gymnasium in which the presiding official was to ensure that the ephebes practised their archery and javelin-throwing every day.<sup>36</sup> No doubt it was in the interest of the city as a whole to have citizens trained in war. But in a world where rich and poor increasingly regarded each other with suspicion, the warlike training of the sons of the rich assumes a more sinister aspect. It may reflect at least the anxiety of the rich to reclaim part of their ancestors' immemorial legitimacy: of old, great men had basked in the easy assumption that they were best in peace and war, but the Hellenistic rich were obliged to practise the crafts of war to reclaim by artifice the respect that had been rendered, by nature, to their forebears.

Finally, conceiving the use of weapons, and generalship, as crafts had the potential to be a structural cause of war. Hellenistic dynasts were heirs to the martial tradition of Alexander the Great:<sup>37</sup> Alexander had conquered his realm with the spear and the might of his successors depended in part on their too being conceived as warrior kings, able both to command in war and to fight hand-to-hand in person, as Alexander had.<sup>38</sup> Macedonian soldiers 'were wont of old to deem him kingliest who was best in arms'.<sup>39</sup> But this model of kingship did not in itself compel the kings to make war. For Hellenistic kingship had any number of ascribed qualities – qualities that ruler and ruled conspired to accept that the king possessed unproven: the king was divine, but never obliged to throw thunderbolts to prove it; the king was the embodiment of the law; the king was the benefactor

<sup>33</sup> De Ste Croix (1981) 300–26. <sup>34</sup> E.g. Ma (2000) 347. <sup>35</sup> Pélékidis (1962) 169.

<sup>36</sup> For an accessible text, Gauthier and Hatzopoulos (1993); English translation, Austin (1981) 203–7.

<sup>37</sup> Plut. *Pyrrh.* 8.1; Polyb. 5.102.1. <sup>38</sup> Gehrke (1982); Austin (1986) 457–9.

<sup>39</sup> Quoted Plut. *Demetr.* 44.5; cf. Polyb. 11.39.16; *Suda s.v. basileia*.

of all.<sup>40</sup> Martial excellences could easily have been ascribed qualities as well, assumed to be in kingship's chrestomathy of merits and so needing no proof; the military ability of some Romans of high family in the late Republic was conceived in this way, or so Sallust had his Marius complain (*Jug.* 85). But while the divinity of Hellenistic kings was assumed, kings felt a powerful need to take training at arms and prove their military ability by fighting actual wars, like the restless campaigns of Pyrrhus and Demetrius Poliorcetes.<sup>41</sup> Why? Was it in part the definition of command in war as a set of learned crafts that barred it from the comfortable realm of a purely ascribed quality – inherited or god-given – and compelled Hellenistic kings to take the field to prove it? Was it in part the classification of actual hand-to-hand fighting as a set of skills that compelled Hellenistic kings to throw themselves into the heat of the action at the head of their troops,<sup>42</sup> or to seek out single combat with the enemy leader,<sup>43</sup> as lesser generals also did,<sup>44</sup> despite the terrible dangers to man and state that the king's hazarding himself posed (Polyb. 10.32.7–33.6)? Did kings have to show they could fight because fighting – unlike godhood, say – was understood to be a *technè* that anyone could practise?

At the same time, for war-making to be imagined as a collection of crafts implied that the king's chosen wars would not necessarily command the passion of all his subjects. The old ascribed military virtue – ascribed to man, or family, or class or city – easily flattered all those to whom it was ascribed to vindicate it in war. But conceiving fighting as craft was part of the process of the 'civilianization' of Greek society, the growing distinction – evident in the fourth century and tending to increase over time – between those who practised civilian and military functions, be they mercenaries or, more usually, citizen professionals.<sup>45</sup> The boastful captain, brought on stage for mockery in the Greek New Comedy (and so in Roman comedy), emphasizes the extent of this cultural divide. Over time even different regimens of exercise and diet were recommended for the civilian athlete and the soldier (Plut. *Phil.* 3.2–4). The wars of fifth-century Greece were the wars of the whole citizenry; the wars of the Hellenistic kings were the wars of their hosts of martial craftsmen. For the rest, the kings' wars crashed terrifyingly overhead like the Wild Hunt in its career.

If in the Hellenistic period the idea of military excellence as an inborn virtue tended to lose ground, among Greek-speakers, to the notion of such excellence as a learned craft, the former concept – despite its diminution

<sup>40</sup> Billows (1995a) 56–80.

<sup>41</sup> Training: Polyb. 22.3.8–9; Plut. *Phil.* 13.3; wars: esp. Plut. *Pyrrh.* 13.1, 14.2–8, 22.1.

<sup>42</sup> Polyb. 10.49; Livy 27.32.4–6, 31.24.11–17; Plut. *Pyrrh.* 22.6, 34.1–2.

<sup>43</sup> Plut. *Pyrrh.* 7.4–5, 24.2–3. <sup>44</sup> Plut. *Phil.* 7.6–7; Polyb. 11.17–18; Livy 26.39.15–17.

<sup>45</sup> Polyb. 24.11.2; Plut. *Phoc.* 7.3; *Pyrrh.* 16.2. Cf. the growing distinction between military men and civilian politicians in fourth-century Athens, Hansen (1989b) 17–21.

never extinct – found a new significance because of its age-old role in establishing the relative military quality of ethnic groups.<sup>46</sup> Greeks had always been contemptuous of the martial potential of non-Greeks, but before the conquests of Alexander they had never had at their disposal large numbers of non-Greeks whom they could, if they chose, enroll as soldiers. Yet Greek and Macedonian ascription of superior inborn prowess to themselves ensured that Hellenistic kings did everything they could to recruit as many ethnic Greeks and Macedonians as possible for their armies. This encouraged the use of Greek mercenaries – suspicion of mercenaries never died, but even bad Greeks were better than barbarians – and enforced upon the kingdoms elaborate measures for the care and breeding of scarce Greek and Macedonian soldiers, in an attempt to maintain European standing armies, a stage beyond the *ad hoc* employment of mercenaries. In Egypt this need manifested itself in a system of land-grants to soldiers,<sup>47</sup> in Asia Minor and further east in chains of military colonies in which colonists from Greece enjoyed lands in exchange for service.<sup>48</sup> Only slowly and reluctantly, in the face of an absolute scarcity of Greeks and Macedonians, did Hellenistic monarchs yield to the necessity of training their native subjects for the phalanx, and the subsequent revolt of the native Egyptian troops with whom Ptolemy IV had won at Raphia in 217 did not encourage repetition of the experiment (Polyb. 5.107.1–3). In the sandy penitralia of Alexander's empire all Greeks and Macedonians were nature's noblemen and war's adepts – at least compared to their subjects: among Greek-speakers themselves excellence was pursued by practice and training, as a craft.

### III. THE ROMANS

By the third century Rome was a full member of the Hellenistic cosmos, trading and treating and fighting with Greece, the Hellenistic kingdoms and the Hellenized maritime power of Carthage. And if, unlike the Greeks and Carthaginians, the Romans employed mercenaries rarely,<sup>49</sup> this was hardly for want of the treasure to pay them: by 300 Rome dominated Italy, and could have laid her under tribute of money. In fact the Romans did not employ mercenaries for a deeper reason: they saw no cause to pay others to do something they yearned to do themselves, and they had allies who shared their outlook. For centuries Romans of all classes – and many of

<sup>46</sup> E.g. Polyb. 1.2.6, 2.38.2–3, 5.44.7, 6.52.10; Diod. Sic. 17.111.4, 19.101.1.

<sup>47</sup> Lesquier (1911); and economically on Hellenistic military settlements, Hamilton (1999) 177–80.

<sup>48</sup> Billows (1995a) 146–82.

<sup>49</sup> Griffith (1935) 234–5 gathers the clear instances, but there are other cases, in which the status of the Roman *auxilia* is unclear, where they might well be mercenaries, e.g. Livy 23.46.6–7 (215 BC), 24.47.11 (213 BC), 26.10.5 (211 BC), 27.8.15 (209 BC), 27.38.11 (207 BC), 28.20.1 (206 BC). Rarity of Roman use of mercenaries is noted by Diod. Sic. 29.6.1; Livy 24.49.8.