

TWO NOTES ON THE CHRONOLOGY
OF THE OUTBREAK
OF THE HANNIBALIC WAR

The problem of the immediate causes of the Second Punic War is inevitably linked with the problem of the precise chronology of the outbreak of the war. Ancient opinion was unanimous that it was Hannibal's successful attack upon Saguntum which initiated the diplomatic crisis between Rome and Carthage in the year 218 B.C.¹⁾ Thirty years ago, this ancient tradition was strongly challenged first by W. Hoffmann and then by H. H. Scullard, partly on chronological grounds. Pointing to the apparent senatorial indifference to the plight of Saguntum throughout 219, and also to the apparently very late departure of the consuls to their *provinciae* in 218, Hoffmann argued that it could not have been the fall of Saguntum (news of which had already arrived in Rome during the winter of 219/218) which provoked the Roman "war embassy" to Carthage in 218 – it must have been events occurring later. Hoffmann suggested that it was, in fact, Hannibal's crossing of the Ebro River (news of which arrived in Rome in Julian June, 218) which caused the diplomatic crisis²⁾. Similarly, H. H. Scullard proposed that it was not the fall of Saguntum which caused trouble between Rome and Carthage, but rather Hannibal's departure from New Carthage for the north in command of a huge army (Julian May, 218)³⁾. For a time, the doubters of the ancient tradition had great influence⁴⁾; however, led by G. V. Sumner and A. E. Astin, the

1) Cf. T. A. Dorey, "The Treaty with Saguntum", *Humanitas* 11/12 (1959/1960), 6; expanded by A. E. Astin, "Saguntum and the Origins of the Second Punic War", *Latomus* 26 (1967), 577 and n. 1 (Pol. 3.6–30; Livy 21.1–19; App. *Iber.* 7–13; *Hann.* 2–3; *Lib.* 6; Zon. 8.21–22; Cic. *Phil.* 5.27; Flor. 1.22.1–9; Auct. *de Vir. Ill.* 42.2; Eutrop. 3.7.2–3; Oros. 4.14.1–3; possibly Cato fr. 84 Peter).

2) W. Hoffmann, "Die römische Kriegserklärung an Karthago im Jahre 218", *RbM* 94 (1951), 77–78; 94–95.

3) H. H. Scullard, "Rome's Declaration of War on Carthage in 218 B.C.", *RbM* 95 (1952), 210–212.

4) Hoffmann's and/or Scullard's arguments are accepted by F. W. Walbank, *A Historical Commentary on Polybius*, I (Oxford, 1957), 334–335; A.

scholarly defenders of the fall of Saguntum as the cause of the Roman "war embassy" to Carthage have gradually regained the field⁵). It seems safe to say that now the *communis opinio* among historians has returned to the idea that it was indeed the fall of Saguntum to Hannibal late in 219 which caused the diplomatic crisis – a crisis which occurred relatively early in 218 (and not, as Hoffmann and Scullard suggested, towards the middle of 218)⁶).

In this controversy, there are two important pieces of evidence which tend strongly to support the "Saguntum" tradition but which have not, I think, received enough attention: Ascon. *In Pis.*, p. 3 Clark, and Livy 21.26.3. The Asconius passage can secure for us, by means of the foundation date of the Latin colony at Placentia, that the diplomatic crisis between Rome and Carthage occurred *early* in the consulship of P. Cornelius Scipio and Ti. Sempronius Longus; on the other hand, the foundation date as usually read in Asconius is itself based on an emendation of the Asconius text which has not been discussed since Madvig briefly suggested it 150 years ago. Therefore, in the first part of this paper, both Madvig's emendation of Asconius here and the importance of the passage for our understanding of the events of 218 will receive their first (as far as I know) full discussion. In the second part of the paper, I propose to show how Livy 21.26.1–3 tends to undermine in a new way one of the assumptions upon which Hoffmann originally built his theory – that the two consuls of 218 left Rome at the same time⁷).

Heuss, *Römische Geschichte*² (Braunschweig, 1964), 82; W. Dahlheim, *Struktur und Entwicklung des römischen Völkerrechts im dritten und zweiten Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, *Vestigia* 8 (1968), 156, n. 87; H. H. Schmitt, *Die Staatsverträge des Altertums*, iii (Munich, 1969), 206.

5) G. V. Sumner, "The Chronology of the Outbreak of the Second Punic War", *PACA* 9 (1966), and Astin (above, n. 1), *passim*. Cf. also Dorey (above, n. 1), 7; F. Cassola, *I gruppi politici romani nel III sec. a. C.* (Trieste, 1962), 252 ff.

6) Cf. F. Hampl, "Zur Vorgeschichte des ersten und zweiten Punischen Krieges", *ANRW* i:1 (Berlin/New York, 1972), 435–437. One still finds adherents of Hoffmann/Scullard, however – cf. now J. Molthagen, "Der Weg in den Ersten Punischen Krieg", *Chiron* 5 (1975), 127; C. Ebel, *Transalpine Gaul: The Emergence of a Roman Province* (Leiden, 1976), 22–23; E. Ruschenbusch "Der Beginn des 2. Punischen Krieges" *Historia* 27 (1978), 232–234. Discussion of the immediate causes of the Hannibalic War, therefore, is by no means finished.

7) Hoffmann, 77; Cf. Walbank, *Commentary*, i, 377 (on Pol. 3.41.2).

I. *The Foundation Date of Placentia*

The traditional date for the foundation of the great *colonia Latina* at Placentia on the Middle Po was included by Q. Asconius Pedianus in his commentary on Cicero's oration *In Pisonem* (on *In Pis.* 23.53):

... video enim in annalibus eorum qui Punicum bellum secundum scripserunt tradi Placentiam coloniam deductam prid. Kal. Iun. [‘Iun.’ *Madvig*; ‘Ian.’ *codd.*] primo anno eius belli, [P.] Cornelio Scipione, patre Africani prioris, Ti. Sempronio Longo coss... (Ascon. *In Pis.* p. 3 Clark)

If one accepts the foundation date of Placentia as emended by Madvig, one arrives at a date of 31 May, AUC 536 for the founding of the colony (“... prid. Kal. Iun... [P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss...”). This is a strong argument against the reconstructions offered by Hoffmann and Scullard, for Polybius places the return of the senatorial “war embassy” from Carthage at least a month before the founding of Placentia and her sister-colony Cremona (Pol. 3.40.2–4; see below). In other words, if Madvig’s emendation is correct, this indicates that the “war embassy” returned from Carthage by late Roman April at the latest. The importance of the emended Asconius text has not usually been emphasized⁸), yet it deserves to stand as a fully independent argument against Hoffmann and Scullard.

However, before we can analyze the implications of the Asconius text, one must discuss Madvig’s emendation, which takes on critical importance.

The three Fifteenth Century manuscripts of Asconius, from which all our other Asconius MSS derive, record the foundation date of Placentia as “prid. Kal. Ian... [P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss...”. All three are copies of a medieval—apparently Ninth Century—archetype, which was found in the monastery at St. Gall by Poggio in 1417, and which

8) Only Sumner, 15 and n. 44, takes any notice of Asconius in this context, and even he passes over the passage quickly, and without emphasis. Astin, 582, n. 4, mentions Asconius only in connection with the Gallic revolt. Note that in the latest major study of the causes of the war, the useful article by Hampl, the Asconius passage goes completely unmentioned.

has since disappeared⁹). The “*prid. Kal. Ian.*” of the Fifteenth Century copies would mean that, according to Asconius, the colony of Placentia was founded on 29 December, AUC 536. This would be more than eight months into the consulship of P. Scipio and Ti. Sempronius Longus, and sometime in the winter of 218/217 B.C.

Such a date directly contradicts our other information concerning the place of the founding of Placentia and her sister colony Cremona in the chronology of 218 B.C., as A. Drakenborch first pointed out in 1740¹⁰). Drakenborch noted that, in Livy and Polybius, the foundation of Placentia and Cremona immediately precedes the great uprising of the Cisalpine Gallic tribes against Rome (cf. Pol. 3.40.3 ff.; Livy 21.25.2 ff.), while the Gallic uprising, in turn, precedes Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps into Italy by a good period of time (cf. Pol. 3.41 ff.; Livy 21.26 ff.)¹¹). He concluded that if “*prid. Kal. Ian.*” was the correct date for the founding of Placentia, then “[P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo *coss.*” could not be: the foundation of the Po colonies must be earlier than the winter of 218/217, for Hannibal’s crossing of the Alps was in the autumn of 218, and according to Polybius and Livy the founding of the colonies *preceded* the invasion¹²). Drakenborch therefore suggested that Asconius had the consul-year wrong, and that either Placentia was founded “*prid. Kal. Ian., L. Aemilio, M. Livio coss.*” (i. e., in the winter of 219/218), or else that the “*prid. Kal. Ian.*” date refers not to the actual foundation-day of Placentia, but rather to the day when the law ordering the establishment of the Po colonies was passed by the *comitia tributa* in Rome (sometime in 219 – cf. Pol. 3.40.3; Livy *Per.* 20)¹³). Either way would allow time for the Gallic uprising to follow the founding of the colonies, and for there to be a substantial period of time between these events and Hannibal’s arrival in Italy.

In 1828, J. N. Madvig suggested the reverse of Draken-

9) A. C. Clark, *Q. Asconii Pediani Orationum Ciceronis Quinque Enarratio* (Oxford, 1907), praef. xi; G. Wissowa, *RE* 2, s. v. “Asconius” no. 3, col. 1526.

10) A. Drakenborch, *T. Livii Patavini Historiarum ab Urbe Condita Libri, Qui Supersunt, Omnes cum Notis Integris*, iii (Amsterdam, 1740), 397, on Livy 21.25.2.

11) *Ibid.*

12) *Ibid.*

13) *Ibid.*

borch's solution – that the key to the problem was “*prid. Kal. Ian.*”, which should be emended¹⁴). Madvig pointed out that Polybius *agreed* with Asconius in placing the founding of the Po colonies in the consulship of Scipio and Longus, for in Polybius the decision to hurry the establishment of the colonies comes while Scipio and Longus, having received their provinces, are engaged in enrolling their armies (Pol. 3.40.3)¹⁵). Since Asconius was in agreement with Polybius that far, Madvig proposed emending the copies of Asconius by one letter: from “*prid. Kal. Ian...* [P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss.” to “*prid. Kal. Iun...* [P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss.”. This small emendation obviously seemed the most economical way to remove the apparent conflict between Asconius and the historians, and to bring him fully into line with their information, for a foundation date of 31 May, AUC 536 (i.e., “*prid. Kal. Iun...* [P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss.”) would be well before Hannibal's arrival in the Po Valley¹⁶).

Madvig's suggestion has been almost universally accepted by scholars: by Kiessling-Schöll, Clark and Stangl – editors of the Asconius copies – first of all, and also by Weissenborn-Müller, De Sanctis, Hallward, Klotz, Hanslik, Sumner, Astin, Salmon¹⁷). None of these scholars has a thorough discussion of the *validity* of the emendation, however; it seems that they have all simply followed Madvig. Yet emendation is a risky business, and while Madvig was a brilliant scholar, his original argument here was very brief, resting simply on a desire to bring Asconius'

14) J.N. Madvig, *Disputationis de Q. Asconii Pediani et Aliorum in Ciceronis Orationes Commentarius Appendix Critica, Locorum Ciceronianorum et Asconianorum Emendationes et Indices Continens* (Copenhagen, 1828), 20–21.

15) *Ibid.*, 20.

16) *Ibid.*, 21.

17) A. Kiessling and R. Scholl, *Q. Asconii Pediani Orationum Ciceronis Quinque Enarratio* (Berlin, 1875), 2; Clark (above, n. 9), 3; T. Stangl, *Ciceronis Scholiastae*, ii (Vienna/Leipzig, 1912), 12; W. Weissenborn and H. J. Müller, *Titi Livi ab Urbe Condita Libri*, iv (Berlin, 1888), 63 (on Livy 21.25.2); G. De Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani*, iii: 2 (Turin, 1917), 6–7 and n. 9; B.L. Hallward, *Cambridge Ancient History*, viii (New York/Cambridge, 1930), 33 and n. 1; A. Klotz, “Die römische Wehrmacht im 2. punischen Kriege”, *Philol.* 88 (1933), 45; R. Hanslik, *RE* 20:2, s.v. “Placentia”, col. 1900; Sumner, 15, n. 44; Astin, 582, n. 4; E. T. Salmon, *Roman Colonization under the Republic* (London, 1969), 169 and n. 3. The Clark text of Asconius, with “*prid. Kal. Iun.*” and the note that it is an emendation, appears without comment in Walbank, *Commentary*, i, 374 (on Pol. 3.40.5).

information as completely as possible into line with the information provided by Polybius and Livy. Unfortunately, that may be begging the question – at least in the present state of argument about the passage¹⁸). Moreover, in the past 150 years, *no* further arguments have been brought forward in favor of Madvig's emendation; no one (as far as I know) has *really* considered the problem of the Asconius passage since Madvig, or taken scholarly thinking any farther than Madvig did. Yet surely this emendation deserves more detailed discussion than it has so far received – for *if* Madvig is correct, then the Asconius passage takes on great significance for our understanding of the diplomatic events of 218, providing strong support for the idea that the fall of Saguntum was the proximate cause of a diplomatic crisis between Rome and Carthage occurring *early* in 218. The important additional support for the "Saguntum" tradition which the Asconius passage may provide, however, cannot be brought to bear with any real confidence as long as the emendation of the passage rests *solely* (as it does) on Madvig's brief (and indeed, incomplete) discussion of 150 years ago.

In fact, at least three further arguments deserve to be brought forward in favor of Madvig. The first concerns the actual texts of the extant Asconius copies and what they can tell us about the lost medieval archetype; the texts have never been considered here from this angle. The fact is that there is plenty of evidence in our three original copies of the lost St. Gall archetype (P Matritensis, S Pistoriensis, M Laurentianus¹⁹) to suggest that the archetype was rife with confusion in the transmission of vowels, and several cases can be adduced specifically of copied "a" for what must have been original "u". The "prid. Kal. Ian." date occurs at p. 3, l. 3 Clark (= p. 12, l. 15 Stangl). At p. 3, l. 22 Clark (= p. 13, l. 1 Stangl) – only a short distance away – two of the copyists (the scribes of P and M) saw "certaverantque..." in the archetype, yet the original text of Asconius must have had the grammatically correct "certaveruntque..." (so

18) This is why the only modern dissenter from Madvig's emendation (and a not unimportant figure in himself) felt perfectly free to return to one of Drakenborch's possibilities, that the original "prid. Kal. Ian." of the Asconius MSS should be retained, as referring to the day on which the law establishing the Placentia colony was passed by the *comitia tributa* at the end of December, AUC 535 (219 B.C.) – K. J. Beloch, "Die römischen Kalender von 218–168", *Klio* 15 (1917/1918), 399–400.

19) Stangl (above, n. 17), 7.

emended, apparently, by the scribe of S). This is precisely the mistake in the St. Gall text – substitution of “a” for original “u” – which Madvig postulated. Again, at p. 22, I. 2 Clark (= p. 24, I. 22 Stangl), the archetype had “ab eodem lege Varia castos...” (for so the three copyists unanimously read it), but the original text of Asconius must have been “ab eodem lege Varia custos...”; the Ninth Century scribe (or someone further back in the line of transmission) clearly has mistakenly substituted “a” for original “u”. At p. 24, I. 22 Clark (= p. 26, I. 18 Stangl), the St. Gall text had “nam aut clarissimi...” (for so the three copyists unanimously read it), but modern editors are agreed that the original text of Asconius probably had the less common form “num aut clarissimi...”. Again, at p. 71, I. 20 Clark (= p. 56, I. 4 Stangl), the archetype had “quam sitellam ipsam...” (for so the three copyists unanimously read it) for the correct “quam sitellam ipsum...”²⁰).

All these examples suggest that the St. Gall archetype was either copied from, or otherwise descended from, a MS in which there was some similarity between the “a” and the “u” letter-forms, a similarity which caused confusion between “a” and “u” when the St. Gall text was itself first being copied down. Such similarity between “a” and “u” was, in fact, a common feature of Ninth Century (and earlier) codices, including those from St. Gall: they used a cursive, open-topped “a” (written “cc”) which looked remarkably similar to “u”²¹). This inevitably

20) This last mistake suggests that a contributing factor to the “Iun.” for “Iun.” mistake postulated by Madvig could have been that four out of the last five words in the Asconius text just before this had themselves ended in either “am” or “al” (“...Placentiam coloniam deductam prid. Kal...”). Such a textual environment would have made “Iun.” for “Iun.” all the more natural a mistake. Confusion of “a” and “u” apparently went in both directions in the St. Gall archetype of Asconius; indeed, the confusion of copied “a” for what must have been original “u” is not quite as common as copied “u” for what must have been original “a”. Other examples (to tell from the unanimous incorrect texts of the copyists) of what must have been such errors in the St. Gall text include: p. 6, I. 5 Clark = p. 14, I. 12 Stangl (“a” or “o” for original “u”); p. 32, I. 2 Stangl (“a” for original “u”, but cf. p. 33, I. 2 Clark); p. 37, I. 16 Clark = p. 34, I. 28 Stangl (“u” for original “a”); p. 38, I. 16 Clark = p. 35, I. 16 Stangl (“u” for original “a”); p. 48, II. 13–14 Clark = p. 41, I. 19 Stangl (“u” for original “a”); p. 71, I. 20 Clark = p. 57, I. 4 Stangl (“a” for original “u”); p. 79, I. 24 Clark = p. 62, I. 7 Stangl (“u” for original “a”); p. 87, I. 3 Clark = p. 67, I. 20 Stangl (“u” for original “a”); p. 93, I. 25 Clark (“a” for original “u”, but cf. p. 72, I. 17 Stangl).

21) B.L. Ulman, *Ancient Writing and its Influence* (1932), 101; 111.

caused problems in copying; according to a standard work on medieval MSS, “the later uncial ‘a’ ... was introduced to avoid the confusions caused by cursive ‘a’, especially with ‘u’”²²). Another possibility, however, is that the medieval St. Gall scribe, who would have been familiar with these open-topped “a’s”, occasionally mistook “u’s” in the Asconius MS (whether the MS was written in cursive script or *not*) for such “a’s”. Either way easily explains how an original “*prid. Kal. Iun.*” could have become “*prid. Kal. Ian.*”.

At any rate, confusion of “a” and “u” in the lost St. Gall archetype is certain. This adds great force to Madvig’s suggested emendation of Asconius’ foundation date of Placentia from “*prid. Kal. Ian.*” to “*prid. Kal. Iun.*”, which would clear up the apparent conflict between Asconius on the one hand, and Polybius and Livy on the other.

Second, Madvig used Polybius’ statement that the Romans made the decision to hasten the completion of the Po colonies at a time when P. Scipio and Ti. Longus were engaged in enrolling their armies (3.40.2–3) as evidence – against Drakenborch – that the colonies were indeed founded *within* the consulship of Scipio and Longus (as Asconius – emended or unemended – reports)²³); but more information than this can be gotten from Polybius. Polybius’ phrase *ἔσπευσαν ἐπὶ τέλος ἀγαγεῖν τὰ κατὰ τὰς ἀποικίας* (3.40.3) indicates a Roman intention to complete the establishing of the Po colonies as soon as possible, and Polybius reports various measures which were taken to ensure this – the energetic fortification of the chosen sites, the ordering of the prospective colonists to report to those sites within 30 days (3.40.4). Such activity corresponds to, and explains, Polybius’ statement that the Gallic uprising of 218 began just after the foundation of the colonies (*ἤδη δὲ τούτων συνωκισμένων*... – 3.40.6). All this tends to show that Polybius understood from his Roman sources that the founding of Placentia and Cremona had occurred not only *within* the consulship of Scipio and Longus, but *early* in the consulship of Scipio and Longus (shortly after the enrollment of their armies, shortly before the Gallic uprising). This has some bearing on the probability of whether Asconius, who certainly understood that Placentia was founded sometime *within* the consulship of Scipio

22) *Ibid.*, III.

23) Madvig, 20–21.

and Longus, worked from a tradition which held that Placentia was *deducta* on “*prid. Kal. Ian.*” of that consul-year, or whether he worked from a tradition which held that Placentia was *deducta* (accepting Madvig) on “*prid. Kal. Iun.*” of that consul-year.

Third, there is the evidence of Livy. Livy’s narrative account of the founding of the Po colonies has not survived, but we know that it was the last item in Book 20 (“*coloniae deductae sunt in agro de Gallis capto Placentia et Cremona*” – *Per.* 20), and Livy describes the colonies at the time that the Gallic revolt began as “*nuper ... deductas*” (21.25.2). These pieces of information are completely inconsistent with the idea that the Po colonies were officially founded in the winter of 218/217, as the unemended texts of Asconius state. The question is whether they are even consistent with Madvig’s *emendation*: it is a little disturbing to find the account of the foundation of the colonies at the end of Book 20, rather than in the course of Book 21, for this might indicate that Livy was working from a tradition which held that the colonies were founded in the winter of 219/218²⁴). Madvig was aware of this problem, and argued that Livy might have begun his account of the consulship of Scipio and Longus at the end of Book 20²⁵). This has little weight, since Livy evidently presents the beginning of their consulship (their *relatio de re publica*) at 21.6.3. Much more important here is the fact that in Livy’s account, the *triumviri agris dandis assignandis* are still present at Placentia when the Gauls launch their attack (21.25.3; 25.5). That hardly indicates that, in Livy’s conception, there was a six-month gap between the founding of the colonies and the Gallic attack upon them; on the contrary, it is consistent with the Polybian tradition that the attack came *immediately* after the establishment of the colonies (*ἰθὺς δὲ τούτων [τῶν ἀποικιῶν] συνωκισμένων... – 3.40.6*). Again, Livy records variant traditions about *some* things concerning the founding of the colonies, and specifically disagrees with Polybius on one point (21.25.3–5), but he never indicates that there was a controversy concerning the *date* on which the colonies were founded²⁶).

24) So Beloch (above, n. 18), 400, in support of retaining “*prid. Kal. Ian.*”

25) Madvig, 21.

26) Livy presents alternative stories about the Gallic attack on the land commissioners (21.25.3), and *three* alternative lists of these commissioners (25.4 – the third list differs only from that preserved in Ascon. *In Pis.* p. 3 Clark in Livy’s replacing of Cn. Cornelius Scipio with C. Lutatius

Perhaps, then, the founding of the colonies was included (briefly) at the end of Book 20 as a fitting conclusion to the Gallic War which so dominated that Book²⁷). Or perhaps Livy simply included the founding of the colonies along with his account of the original Roman *decision* to found them, which seems to have occurred in 219 (cf. Pol. 3.40.3)²⁸). At any rate, the fragments of the Livian tradition seem to conform, on balance, to Polybius' version of the founding of the colonies²⁹).

Thus, Livy (like Polybius) stands in direct conflict with the idea that the Po colonies were officially founded in the winter of 218/217; instead, like Polybius but less clearly, Livy seems to indicate that Roman tradition had the colonies officially founded early in the consulship of P. Scipio and Ti. Longus, just before the Gallic rising. Such a conclusion is significant in view of the fact that Asconius says that he himself is working from the *annalistic traditions* concerning the founding of Placentia ("... video enim in annalibus eorum qui Punicum bellum secundum scripserunt tradi Placentiam coloniam deductam prid. Kal..." – Ascon. *In Pis.* p. 3 Clark) – and in view of the fact that the choice in regard to Asconius lies between accepting "prid. Kal. Ian." or "prid. Kal. Iun."

These arguments – that confusion of "a" and "u" appears to have been common in the lost St. Gall MS of Asconius, and that major Roman traditions (as exemplified in Polybius and also in Livy) appear to have placed the founding of the Po colonies sometime *early* in the consulship of P. Scipio and Ti. Longus – have, I hope, provided additional support for Madvig's emendation of Asconius' foundation date of Placentia to

Catulus). In addition, Livy disagrees with Polybius concerning the cause of the Gallic uprising which followed the establishment of the colonies. In Polybius, messages announcing Hannibal's march on Italy set off the wrath which the Gallic tribes have long felt against Rome (the *προγεγενημένη ὀργή* not only of the Insubres – Pol. 3.40.9 – but also of the Boii, who have only been feigning friendship toward the Romans in order to catch them by surprise: 3.40.6). Livy, on the other hand, has it that the Gallic tribes took up arms against the Romans "nec tam ob veteres in populum Romanum iras, quam quod nuper circa Padum Placentiam Cremonam colonias in agrum Gallicum deductas aegre patiebantur" (21.25.3) – this seems a fairly clear reaction against the thesis concerning the revolt proposed by Polybius.

27) It may be significant in this respect that Livy's discussion of just who the *conditores* of Placentia and Cremona were occurs *not* in Book 20 but precisely in Book 21 (21.25.4).

28) A possibility proposed by Madvig, 21.

29) Cf. Weissenborn-Müller (above, n. 17), 63 (on Livy 21.25.2).

“*prid. Kal. Iun. ... [P.] Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss.*” The emendation is generally accepted, and while it *must* be explicitly defended (which it never is), the probabilities seem to me – at least, after the above study – to be almost totally on the side of Madvig. I will proceed from the assumption that his emendation is correct.

To accept Madvig’s emendation is to place oneself in possession of a most valuable piece of information – the only calendar date provided by any ancient source for any of the events which occurred at the outbreak of the Second Punic War. Accepting the emendation, we find that the *colonia Latina* of Placentia was founded on 31 May, AUC 536. Now, because the founding of the colonies on the Po is coordinated by Polybius with other events (3.40.2–4), the foundation date of Placentia has great relevance to the chronology of the outbreak of the Second Punic War.

Polybius says that following the return of the senatorial “war embassy” from Carthage with the unsatisfactory Punic response to the Roman ultimatum (and *τὰ δεδογμένα*), and the arrival at Rome of the news that Hannibal had crossed the Ebro sooner than expected, the senate decided (as was noted above) to push to completion the establishment of the colonies on the Middle Po (3.40.2–3)³⁰. To implement the senatorial decision,

30) Hoffmann (76–77) uses Polybius’ chronological coordination at 3.40.2 – the return of the “war embassy” from Carthage, the news that Hannibal had crossed the Ebro, and the Roman preparations for immediate war – as evidence that war was, in fact, only declared in Julian June. However, the synchronism of the return of the “war embassy” to Rome with the arrival there of news that Hannibal had crossed the Ebro is most suspect. It is contradicted by Polybius’ own emphasis on the speed of Roman reaction to the fall of Saguntum (3.20.6), and by Polybius’ earlier account of events in 218 – in which Hannibal does not prepare to *leave New Carthage* until he has been informed of the unsatisfactory course of the final negotiations with Rome (an event equivalent to the arrival of the envoys back in Rome with *τὰ δεδογμένα*, and placed by Polybius in late winter/early spring 218 – cf. 3.34.6–7; 35.1). Indeed, to accept the synchronism would mean that in the spring of 218 the question of the consular *provinciae*, and even of the raising of *troops* (cf. 3.40.3), was simply left in abeyance for two or three months after the entry of the consuls into office (Sumner, 13, n. 40). It is possible that the reference at 3.40.2 to Hannibal’s crossing of the Ebro should be dismissed as a last reflection of a certain type of Roman apologia about the opening of the war, to which Polybius was susceptible (Sumner, 14–15; cf. Pol. 3.15.5; 30.3; 4.28.1, where he places Saguntum *north* of the Ebro, a fact he knew to be incorrect – 3.14.9; 97.6; 98.6–7). One might note also that Livy’s account of the peregrinations of the senatorial “war

the sites were industriously fortified, and the prospective colonists were ordered to report to those sites within 30 days (*ἐν ἡμέραις τριάκοντα* – 3.40.4). Accepting Madvig's emendation, it is reasonable to assume that the resultant phrase "Placentiam coloniam deductam prid. Kal. Iun. ..." refers to the date on the Roman calendar, some 30 days or so after the promulgation of the special senatorial decree, when, following the arrival of the colonists at the site, the foundation ceremonies of *colonia Placentia* occurred: 31 May, AUC 536. But if Madvig is correct, then it also follows that the order to the colonists to report to the Po within 30 days (Pol. 3.40.4) was itself probably issued by the senate sometime around 1 May, AUC 536. And that, in turn, is an indication that the senatorial "war embassy" did not return from Carthage after late Roman *April* (at the very latest), for the special decree concerning the Po colonies was not issued until *after* the return of the embassy (Pol. 3.40. 2–4). In other words, by using "prid. Kal. Iun. ... P. Cornelio Scipione... Ti. Sempronio Longo coss." for the foundation day of Placentia, combined with the information supplied by Pol. 3.40.2–4, we arrive at a fairly secure *terminus ante quem* of late Roman April, AUC 536,

embassy" through Northern Spain and Transalpine Gaul after leaving Carthage (21.19.6–20.9; highly suspect – cf. De Sanctis, iii: 2 [above, n. 17], 182) ends with the return of the ambassadors to Rome at a time when it is rumored that Hannibal has crossed the Ebro (20.9). That seems remarkably close to Polybius' synchronism at 3.40.2 – except that in *Livy's* account, the consuls for 218 have already finished levying their troops, and have departed the City for their provinces, *before* the return of the envoys! That, in turn – as is noted by Weissenborn-Müller, 67, on *Livy* 21.26.3 – seems quite similar to the Polybian tradition that both consuls for 218 departed *ὑπὸ τὴν ὥρην*, 3.41.2; 5.1.3–4. In fact, the appearance of both these traditions together at *Livy* 21. 20.9 may indicate that the synchronism at Pol. 3.40.2, *and* the picture at 3.41.2 of the departure of both consuls early in the spring, both came from the *same* source, a source which Polybius either has misinterpreted at 3.40.2, or, more probably, has conflated with another – more likely – tradition, in which the Roman war preparations follow the return of the senatorial envoys with *τὰ δεδογμένα*. That Polybius himself was a little uncomfortable with the chronological coordination at 3.40.2 might be suggested by his remark there that the news of Hannibal's crossing of the Ebro arrived at Rome "more quickly than expected" (*θᾶπτον ἢ προσεδόκων*; i.e., earlier in the Julian year). At any rate, it seems clear that Polybius' reference to the Ebro at 3.40.2 is the result either of confusion, a suspect source, or a combination of both, and should be dismissed. (His remark at 3.40.1 that these events happened while Hannibal was crossing the Pyrenees may be safely assumed to refer to *all* the events recounted in 3.40, including the Gallic revolt – cf. Sumner 13–14.)

for the return of the “war embassy” from Carthage with *τὰ δεδογμένα*.

Sumner has pointed to the Asconius text in passing, but without real emphasis, and without discussion of the problem of the emendation³¹). I would suggest that given the strong arguments presented above in favor of Madvig, the emended foundation date of Placentia should be seen as an independent and very important piece of evidence concerning the diplomatic crisis of 218. The implication of Madvig’s emendation is that the Roman declaration of war against Carthage came quite *early* in the consular year of P. Scipio and Ti. Longus (that is, within the first one and a half months of their consulship: 15 March to 1 May, AUC 536³²). The emended foundation date of Placentia is thus quite consistent with the idea that the original cause of the senatorial “war embassy” to Carthage had to do with Roman reaction to the fall of Saguntum (news of which arrived in the winter of 219/218, with action deferred *ad novos magistratus* – until the new consuls, Scipio and Longus, entered office³³). And it is *inconsistent* with the idea that the war was the result of Hannibal’s military movements of the late spring of 218 – things simply happen too soon. The implications of the Asconius text are all the more striking since Asconius’ discussion of the founding of Placentia is *not* directly concerned with the outbreak of the war itself. In other words, it seems likely that in Asconius we have a piece of information *independent* of the explicit ancient traditions concerning the outbreak of the war (which one might allege are contaminated by propaganda) but which is just as much in conflict with reconstructions such as those offered by Hoffmann and Scullard as are those traditions.

31) Sumner, 15 and n. 44.

32) It was in this period that the date of entry into the consulship was advanced from 1 May to 15 March on the Roman calendar. R. M. Errington, “Rome and Spain before the Second Punic War”, *Latomus* 29 (1970), 54, has even suggested that this change in procedure occurred precisely in the year 218, because of the deteriorating relations with Carthage; however, 222 is an equally plausible date for the change (cf. T. Mommsen, *Römische Chronologie*² [Berlin, 1859], 102; *Römisches Staatsrecht*³, I [Leipzig, 1887], 599 and n. 6).

33) cf. Sumner, 11, citing Livy 41.6.7; 8.5; note also Livy 2.22.5; 6.38.1; 30.7.7. Also in support of the thesis that 15 March, AUC 536 is the likely *terminus post quem* for the sending of the senatorial embassy to Carthage is the fact that in Livy it is the new consuls for 218 who raise the issue of Saguntum before the senate, in their *relatio de re publica* (21.6.3; cf. Errington [n. 29, above], 54).

Madvig's emended date for the foundation of the *colonia Latina* at Placentia, by indirectly indicating that war between Rome and Carthage was declared within the first month and a half of the consulship of P. Scipio and Ti. Longus, thus greatly strengthens the case in favor of the idea that it was the issue of Saguntum which led to war. This is a point which, while deserving emphasis in any scholarly discussion of the outbreak of the Second Punic War, has not often been recognized.

II. *Livy* 21.26.1-3

Yet, if one posits a war declaration with the first month and a half of the consulship of Scipio and Longus, how then does one account for the late departure of the consuls of 218 for their *provinciae*? That this event apparently occurred in late Julian July or early Julian August 218 was one of the starting points of the analysis of Hoffmann. If war had been declared just after the new consuls entered office, this means that there was a four-month delay in Roman military operations after the declaration of war – a phenomenon very difficult to explain. Given this situation, Hoffmann preferred to believe that war itself was only declared in Julian June, after Hannibal had crossed the Ebro in force³⁴).

The late departure of P. Scipio for Spain is certain³⁵). However, it has often been pointed out that the sudden Gallic revolt and the consequent need to despatch additional Roman troops to the Po (Pol. 3.40.14; cf. *Livy* 21.26.2-3) seem enough to explain it. The troops sent to the Po were drawn from Scipio's army (*ibid.*), and Scipio was therefore forced to spend additional time (Julian middle or late June to Julian late July or early August) in conducting a new levy to replace these forces³⁶). The emergency caused by the Gallic uprising does not, of course, explain the late start of the other consul, Ti. Sempronius Longus. However, it is not clear that Polybius' language (3.41.2; cf. 5.1.4)

34) Hoffmann, 77.

35) cf. the calculations of Hoffmann, 77-78; Walbank, *Commentary*, 1, 377; Sumner, 27-28.

36) U. Kahrstedt, *Geschichte der Karthager*, iii (Berlin, 1913), 370; De Sanctis, iii:2, 80; Hallward (above, n. 17), 36-37; an explanation doubted by Hoffmann, 78, but re-emphasized by Scullard (above, n. 3), 213-215; Sumner, 26-27; Astin, 583.

absolutely requires the simultaneous departure of both consuls, as Hoffmann assumed³⁷). Moreover, Sempronius is credited with quite a lot of activity in Sicily before his recall to face the arrival of Hannibal in the Po Valley (Livy 21.50.7–51.5; cf. Pol. 3.41.3)³⁸). Such argument opens up the possibility (although only that) that Sempronius could have left Rome somewhat earlier than Scipio³⁹).

That possibility can be greatly reinforced by analysis of Livy's narrative at 21.26.1–3, a passage which has not – as far as I am aware – been included in this aspect of the modern debate over the departure of the consuls:

(1) qui tumultus repens postquam est Romam perlatus et Punicum insuper Gallico bellum auctum patres acceperunt, (2) C. Atilium praetorem cum una legione Romana et quinque milibus sociorum dilectu novo a consule conscriptis auxilium ferre Manlio iubent... (3) et P. Cornelius in locum eius quae missa cum praetore erat scripta legione nova profectus ab urbe...

There are two things to note in this passage. First, it is quite clear that Livy at 21.26.2–3 was working from a tradition which held that the consuls of 218 left Rome *separately*. P. Scipio, having completed his new levy to replace the legion sent to the Cisalpina, leads his army out of Rome alone, for Spain (“... et P. Cornelius in locum eius quae missa cum praetore [Atilio] erat scripta legione nova profectus ab urbe...” – 26.3)⁴⁰).

37) First emphasized by Scullard, 213, n. 9; cf. Sumner, 15; Astin 584 (though Sumner, 16, is willing to label Polybius' similar chronology for the departure of both consuls of 218 at 5.1.4 simply an error). At any rate, since P. Scipio clearly departed Rome in Julian late July or early August 218 (for references, cf. above, n. 35), Polybius' statement at 3.41.2 that the consuls of 218 departed Rome *ὑπὸ τῆν ὄρασαν* (cf. *ἀρχομένης τῆς θερείας* at 5.1.3) cannot be accepted as referring with any accuracy to Scipio's movements (though it may be accurate regarding Sempronius – Sumner, 15). In view of the phrase *ὑπὸ τῆν ὄρασαν*, Hoffmann (77) is surely incorrect to use Pol. 3.41.2 as evidence for his hypothesis that both consuls for 218 departed Rome together in Julian *August*.

38) Scullard, 213, n. 9; Sumner, 26, n. 69; Astin, 584.

39) *Ibid.*

40) The tradition upon which Livy drew for 21.20.9, in which the senatorial “war embassy” returns to Rome about the time the news arrives that Hannibal has crossed the Ebro, and finds that the consuls have already departed, is clearly not the same tradition as that at the basis of Livy 21.26.1–3 (cf. Weissenborn-Müller, 67, on 26.3). Livy 21.20.9 is not *directly* contradictory to his later account of P. Scipio leaving Rome separately from his colleague. However, for the purpose of determining the relative histori-

Second, in the section just before Scipio leaves for Spain, Livy has a description of the measures taken at Rome when the news of the Gallic uprising arrived, and in this passage there is no mention of the presence of Ti. Sempronius Longus. The legion and 5,000 Allies conscripted in a fresh (or: recent) levy by *the consul* (“dilectu novo a consule conscriptis” – 26.2) are given to the praetor C. Atilius for use in the Cicalpina; then *P. Scipio*, having spent time enrolling a new legion to replace the one given to Atilius, leaves the City for Spain (“P. Cornelius... profectus ab urbe...” – 26.3). The conclusion would seem to me to be that Livy at 21.26.2–3 was working from a tradition in which there was only *one* consul still present in Rome when the news of the Gallic revolt arrived – namely, P. Cornelius Scipio. The implication of Livy’s narrative here, or rather the *assumption* behind it, is that Ti. Sempronius was no longer in Rome when the news from the Po became known, but had already led his army off to Sicily (Julian middle or late June, 218)⁴¹).

cal worth of Livy 21.20.9 as opposed to the account at 21.26.1–3, it is important to note that the former passage is directly attached to Livy’s story of the wanderings of the senatorial “war embassy” in the West following senators’ departure from Carthage (21.19.6–20.9) – an account long recognized as suspect (De Sanctis, iii: 2, 182; Sumner, 25).

41) This raises the question of why P. Scipio was still present at Rome after Ti. Sempronius Longus had already departed. A possible answer has been suggested by J. Kromayer, *Antike Schlachtfelder in Italien und Afrika* (Vienna, 1912), 98, n. 1. Kromayer noted that, according to Polybius, the praetor L. Manlius Vulso was stationed in the Cisalpina at the time of the Gallic uprising (3.40.11) with a legion bearing a *consular* number (τὸ τέτατον στρατόπεδον – 3.40.14; on this phrase, cf. Walbank, *Commentary*, i, 375), and that Polybius also says that the praetor who went to the aid of Vulso took *two* Roman legions from Scipio’s levy (3.30.14), while Livy only records that he took one (21.26.2). Given this information, Kromayer proposed that, in reality, two legions were withdrawn from Scipio’s levy for use in the North, but one at a time (Vulso’s “consular” legion, then Atilius’ legion). Kromayer’s thesis helps explain Polybius’ two “Scipionic” legions at 3.40.14, and it is accepted by Walbank, *Commentary*, i, 376–377, and P. A. Brunt, *Italian Manpower, 225 B.C. – 14 A.D.* (Oxford, 1971), 647. If Kromayer is correct, however, then it is reasonable to assume that Scipio remained behind in Rome because he had the task of raising an *extra* legion to replace the one given to Vulso for use in the Cisalpina (this transfer of troops may have occurred when the decision was made to hasten the completion of the *coloniae* on the Middle Po, cf. Pol. 3.40.3). Kromayer’s thesis perhaps receives some support from Livy’s description of the legion given to Atilius as one which had been newly raised (“...una legione Romana ... dilectu nova a consule conscriptis ... – 26.2; Livy 21.17.7 also

Thus, analysis of Livy's narrative at 21.26.1-3 reveals important implications for the debate concerning the chronology of the departure of the consuls of 218. It has long been recognized that the passage provides an answer for why P. Scipio apparently did not leave Rome until late Julian July or early August, 218 (his need to levy a new legion to replace the one sent to the North with the praetor C. Atilius)⁴²). However, against the idea that both consuls of 218 left Rome *together* in late Julian July or early August, Livy 21.26.1-3 also appears to preserve a tradition which held that P. Scipio left Rome separately; moreover, it is a tradition in which the basic assumption was that only one consul - P. Scipio - was still present in Rome when the news of the Gallic uprising reached the City in Julian middle or late June. That among the variant traditions available to Livy was one which held that P. Scipio left Rome *later* than Ti. Longus did is a point which should be taken into account in any consideration of Hoffmann's idea that both consuls for 218 left Rome relatively late in their consular year, and that war against Carthage could therefore only have been declared in the course of Julian June.

In this paper, I have sought to emphasize the importance of two passages in the ancient sources which have not, I think, been sufficiently utilized in the modern debate over the causes and chronology of the outbreak of the Second Punic War. Although neither passage is itself directly concerned with the outbreak of the war, it is striking that both tend to support the unanimous opinion of the ancient sources which *are* so concerned - that the issue of Saguntum was the crucial factor in the diplomatic crisis of 218 B.C. This is perhaps especially true of the traditional foundation date of Placentia found in Asconius *In Pis.* p. 3 Clark, as emended by J. N. Madvig (an emendation which, while generally accepted, is actually based on a very brief and very old discussion, and in favor of which I have sought to present powerful new arguments). When combined with the in-

indicates that Vulso's command detracted from Scipio's levy, but just how is unclear). Against the suggestion of A. Klotz (above, n. 17, 44-48) that Vulso's consular legion belonged to the consular army of 219, and was left in the North following the successful campaign against Demetrius of Pharos, is Livy's description of the army of Vulso and Atilius as an "exercitu ... tirone et in novis ignominiiis trepido..." (21.39.3; cf. also Pol. 3.70.4). This suggests forces newly raised in 218.

42) Cf. n. 36, above.

formation supplied by Pol. 3.40.2-4, the foundation date of Placentia indicates that the diplomatic crisis between Rome and Carthage occurred very near the beginning of the consulship of P. Cornelius Scipio and Ti. Sempronius Longus. It thus indirectly but very substantially supports the idea that the decisive issue in the crisis can only have been Saguntum, for Hannibal's military movements in Spain belong much later in the spring, and so cannot have been at issue when the Roman "war embassy" departed for Carthage. Analysis of the other passage I have sought to emphasize (Livy 21.26.1-3) strongly supports the other arguments previously presented by other scholars to undermine W. Hoffmann's contention that the two consuls of 218 left Rome at the same time, and late in the campaigning season (thus indicating a "late" Roman declaration of war in 218 - over Hannibal's crossing of the Ebro). In the narrative of Livy 21.26.1-3, the consul P. Scipio departs Rome for his *provincia* alone, independently of Ti. Sempronius, and, it is apparent, long after Sempronius himself has departed for Sicily. This passage thus helps remove an important modern objection to the idea that it was the issue of Saguntum, early in the spring of 218, which led to war between Rome and Carthage⁴³).

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