Preface

This book is a revised and expanded version of the doctoral dissertation I defended at the University of Leuven in 2009. I owe an enormous debt of gratitude to my supervisor, Hans Hauben, for everything he has taught me about ancient history, research methods, and writing clearly and concisely, as well as for his enormous intellectual honesty. His advice and meticulous criticism have been indispensable, and his critical reading of the manuscript has led to countless improvements. To the other members of the dissertation committee, Johannes Engels, Guido Schepens, Stefan Schorn, and Peter Van Nuffelen, I am also very grateful for their invaluable comments which have been extremely helpful in turning the thesis into a book.

For reading parts of the manuscript at various stages my thanks go to Christoph Begass, Aude Cohen-Skalli, Tom Deneire, Bram Fauconnier, Lisa Irene Hau, Hubert Meeus, Sofie Remijsen, Brian Sheridan, Jan Tavernier, Dorothy Thompson, and Shane Wallace. Whenever I needed advice on philological matters, I could call on Willy Clarysse, Tom Deneire, Ilse De Vos, Erika Gielen, and especially Aude Cohen-Skalli, who always answered my questions about textual criticism both very swiftly and very thoroughly. Jan Bollansée has been equally generous with his time and his expertise in the field of ancient historiography, and so have Tom Boiy and Jan Tavernier for the many issues of Ancient Near Eastern history that confront the commentator of Diodoros' XIXth book. Bart Van Beek, in turn, knew how to solve any computer problem. From the bibliography it will be clear how a large a debt I owe to the published work of several experts in Hellenistic history and historiography. The scholars from whose knowledge I have benefitted in conversations over the years are too numerous to mention, but those who have been particularly supportive of me deserve a special mention: Edward Anson, Elizabeth Carney, Hans-Joachim Gehrke, Waldemar Heckel, John Marincola, John Moles, Joseph Roisman, Robin Waterfield, and Pat Wheatley.

I would like to extend my gratitude to the editors of *Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur und Geschichte*, Marcus Deufert, Heinz-Günther Nesselrath and Peter Scholz, not only for including the book in their series but also for their thorough reading of the manuscript and their many helpful suggestions and corrections. To Willard Paul Meaker and Michael Park I am indebted for correcting my English, and to Robin Mössinger and Leon Große-Stoltenberg for their help with the bibliography. Annika Müller assisted valuably with the checking of the proofs. For the excellent collaboration in the book's production process I

would like to thank Benedikt Krüger at Walter De Gruyter and Katharina Ehlgen at Datagroup Deutschland.

My doctoral research from 2005 to 2009 was generously funded by the University of Leuven's Research Council, and a Leverhulme Visiting Fellowship at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David in Lampeter was very beneficial in allowing me to work on revising and expanding the thesis in 2010/11. Ever since I arrived at the University of Mannheim in September 2015, Christian Mann has been extremely supportive and provided the ideal work environment in which I could finish the book manuscript. I would also like to thank the Verein zur Förderung des Historischen Instituts und des Antikensaals an der Universität Mannheim e.V. for kindly subsidising part of the publication costs.

I am very grateful to my parents, Hubert Meeus and Carla Vanvinckenroy, for their constant encouragement and support in academic and non-academic matters: they have literally been there whenever I needed it. Last but not least, the limited belief that tends to be awarded to prefatory topoi and the magnitude of my debt to her make it impossible adequately to express my gratitude to my wife, Melanie Meaker: nothing I can write could even begin to describe how much I owe to her in every other aspect of life and in finishing this book, which would never have happened without her.