

THE EXPANSIONIST POLICY OF JOHN HYRCANUS AND HIS RELATIONS WITH ROME

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1. *Preface*

In his famous excursus on the Jews, Judaea and Judaism, which serves as a background to the account of the siege of Jerusalem by Titus, Tacitus summarizes, in a typically condensed dictum, the political situation in the East after the failure of Antiochus IV 'to abolish Jewish superstition and to introduce Greek civilization'; and so he writes: 'since the power of Macedon had waned, the Parthians had not yet come to their full strength, and the Romans were far away, the Jews set over themselves kings'¹. After this sweeping generalization, he goes on to describe, succinctly and conventionally, the horrible suppression by those kings of their own people, and then states: 'Gnaeus Pompeius was the first Roman to subdue the Jews'². In one respect Tacitus is certainly right: with the decline of the Seleucids, there was no great power, a king or a kingdom, that succeeded in imposing its authority firmly in the East in the second half of the second century. In the absence of such a power, medium-size and small polities were able to assert their independence and some launched an aggressive foreign policy³. Tacitus, however, does not bother to mention these political developments; if we were to depend on him, we would know nothing about the growth of the Hasmonaean state, and we would not guess that despite the fact that 'the Romans were far away' – as he avers, presumably suggesting that the Romans were not involved in the inter-state politics of the East – there did exist diplomatic relations between the Hasmonaean rulers and the Jews and Rome. And yet, it is well to bear in mind that the available evidence on the relations between Rome and Judaea from the time of Judas Maccabaeus to the interference of Pompeius in the affairs of Judaea, and the conquest of Jerusalem in 63⁴, depends by and large on Jewish sources; Roman

* I am very grateful to Dr. Guy D. Stiebel who skillfully drew the two maps.

¹ Tac. *Hist.* 5,8: *rex Antiochus demere superstitionem et mores Graecorum dare adnitus ... Tum Iudaei Macedonibus invalidis, Parthis nondum adultis (et Romani procul erant), sibi ipsi reges imposuere.*

² Tac. *Hist.* 5,9: *Romanorum primus Cn. Pompeius Judaeos domuit.*

³ On the decline of the Seleucids and the rise of new polities see, e.g., WILL 1982, 410-417; 432-436; 445-453; HABICHT 1989, 356-373; GRAINGER 1990, 170-189; SARTRE 2005, 5-35.

⁴ All dates are BCE, unless mentioned otherwise.

sources are almost non-existent.

Before proceeding to deal with John Hyrcanus' conquests and those relations, it may be of interest to look at Strabo's description of Coele-Syria:

Now the whole of the country beyond the territory of Seleucia, extending in the direction of Egypt and Arabia, is called Coele-Syria; but the [country] marked off by the Libanus and Antilibanus is called specifically by that name. Of the remainder the [seaboard] from Orthosia to Pelusium is called Phoenicia, which is a narrow country and lies flat along the sea, whereas the interior beyond Phoenicia as far as the Arabians, between Gaza and Antilibanus, is called Judaea⁵.

Greek historians and geographers of the third and second centuries, for instance Eratosthenes and Agatharchides of Cnidus, would not have used the term 'Judaea' in the sense that Strabo uses it in this passage. Under the Ptolemaic rule this region was officially named 'Syria and Phoenicia'⁶, and under the Seleucids 'Coele-Syria and Phoenicia'⁷. It is doubtful that Strabo was the first author to use it in this sense, but in any case his account is somewhat puzzling. On the one hand, to refer to all the cities located along the Mediterranean coast from Ptolemais (Acre) to Pelusium under the term 'Phoenicia', may well allude to his following a source pre-dating the Hasmonaean rise. On the other hand, the Hasmonaean territorial extension to the Antilibanus was achieved only under Alexander Jannaeus, that is, the early first century, and by that time all the coastal cities from Raphia to Dora, except for Ascalon, had been conquered by the Jews. The obvious conclusion to be drawn is that the term 'Judaea' extended geographically as a result of the conquest and annexation of more and more territories by the Hasmonaean rulers.

The origins of the Hasmonaean aggressive, expansionist policy go back to the wars waged by Judas Maccabaeus against the Seleucids and the 'nations roundabout' Judaea⁸. Employing both diplomacy and military power, Judas' brothers Jonathan and Simon contributed significantly to the aggrandizement of the Judaeian state, and John Hyrcanus, Simon's son, followed suit; his territorial achievements surpassed his predecessors' by far: towards the end of his reign the Hasmonaean state extended from the Jezreel valley in the north to the Negev in the south, including also part of Moabitis in Transjordan⁹. As is argued later on, cooperation with Rome was a mainstay of his foreign policy,

⁵ Str. 16,2,21, H.L. Jones' translation in Loeb Classical Library, with a few changes.

⁶ BAGNALL 1976, 11-24.

⁷ BENGTON 1944, 159-169.

⁸ For the phrase 'the nations roundabout' see *I Maccabees* 5,1.10.38.57; 12,53. On this phrase, and its usage in the Bible, see SHATZMAN 2007, 246-247.

⁹ On the wars and army of the Hasmonaeans see BAR-KOCHVA 1989; SHATZMAN 1991, 11-33.

and in this respect he followed his predecessors who had reckoned, naively in hindsight, that even diplomatic, and not necessarily military support on the part of Rome could help them in their encounter with the Seleucids. Their expectation that their relations with Rome would restrain effectively their Seleucid opponents proved wrong. John Hyrcanus was much more successful, but not necessarily because he was a better strategist and statesman; the different circumstances have also to be taken into consideration. However, there is no doubt that his aggressive political-ideological goals would not have harmonized in the long run with the imperialist trends underlying Roman foreign policy.

2. *The Chronology of John Hyrcanus' Conquests: The Historiographical Sources*

There are no contemporary historiographical sources for the rule of John Hyrcanus, and thus the available information on his reign is poorer in comparison with what is known about his predecessors, that is, thanks to the survival of *I Maccabees* and *II Maccabees*. And yet, as is explained later on, the last two verses of *I Maccabees* help to date the composition of the book prior to the conquests of John Hyrcanus, thus supplying valuable information for the dating of the beginning of the wars of expansion of Hyrcanus¹⁰. Another contribution of *I Maccabees* to the subject under discussion is the encomium of the Romans in chapter 8, which reflects to some measure the image of Rome from the angle of the Jews of Judaea at the time of Hyrcanus, and possibly of the ruler himself, if the author of the book was closely connected to him as is commonly held. But of course the major and, practically, sole historiographical sources for the deeds and policy of Hyrcanus are the works of Flavius Josephus; written some two centuries after the events they offer two versions, one short and one long.

The short account (*War* 1,61-65) reports that Antiochus VII Sidetes invaded Judaea and besieged Jerusalem, apparently at the beginning of Hyrcanus' rule; the latter managed to end the siege by paying the Seleucid king three hundred talents (out of three thousand talents he allegedly extracted from king David's tomb), raising at the same time a mercenary force. Then, however, when Antiochus waged war on the Medes (= Parthians), Hyrcanus attacked at once (*eutheōs*) the cities in Syria (*tas en Suria poleis*). He captured Medaba, Samaga (or Samoga) and other towns in their vicinity, Shechem and Mount Gerizim,

¹⁰ See below p. 45 with n. 65. *II Maccabees*, ending in Judas' Maccabaeus victory on Nicanor in 161, has nothing relevant to offer.

subjugating the Cuthaeans (= the Samaritans), and took also many cities of Idumaea, including Adora and Marisa. He advanced against Samaria and his sons besieged it; one of them, Aristobulus, defeated Antiochus Aspendius (= Antiochus VIII Grypus) who came to rescue the city; they then captured and destroyed Samaria, and also attacked Scythopolis and overran the country this side of Mount Carmel, that is, most probably, the valley of Jezreel.

The account does not give precise dates, only a relative chronology: the siege of Jerusalem occurred some time after Hyrcanus' takeover of Judaea; Antiochus Sidetes' expedition against the Parthians followed the conclusion of the siege of Jerusalem; Hyrcanus' attack on the cities in Syria took place soon after Antiochus had set out to attack the Parthians; Hyrcanus' wars are described as a series of consecutive attacks on cities, beginning in the conquest of Medaba and Samaga in Transjordan and going on without any interruption until the capture of Samaria and, so it seems, Scythopolis. Obviously it is only with the help of other sources that one can attain an absolute chronology for this sequence of events, if indeed that was the case and not simultaneous campaigns.

Josephus' *Antiquities* has a much longer account, rich in details and containing some digressions. It begins with the invasion of Judaea and the siege of Jerusalem by Antiochus VII, a siege that was terminated by Hyrcanus' paying three hundred talents (out of five hundred he consented to pay), giving hostages, including a brother of Hyrcanus, and pulling down the battlements of the city wall; the extraction of three thousand talents from David's tomb and the raising of mercenaries is also mentioned¹¹. This is followed by the information, not reported in *War*, that the Seleucid king and the Hasmonaean ruler concluded friendship and military alliance (*philia kai summachia*) and that Hyrcanus participated with a Jewish force in the Parthian expedition of Antiochus, in which the latter won a victory but later was defeated and died (13,350-353). Then we are told that upon receiving the news of the death of Antiochus, Hyrcanus immediately (*euthus*) waged war on the cities in Syria (*tas en Suria poleis*), captured Medaba after six months of difficult siege, Samaga and the neighbouring places, Shechem, Mount Gerizim and the Cuthaean

¹¹ *Antiquities* 13,336-349. Several points in this account are somewhat unclear or contested. According to Diodorus Siculus (34/35,1,5), Antiochus demolished the walls of Jerusalem and this is also told by Porphyry (Eusebius, *Chronica*, 1,255 [ed. Schöne]), who adds that the king slaughtered the best of the Jews. These versions, accepted by some scholars, stand in contrast to the Josephan account and are suspect, particularly the massacre story, in view of the character of the peace agreement concluded on this occasion, on which see HOOVER 2003, 30-33. It is also worth to notice that disarmament, included in the initial demands of the king, is not mentioned later; it would be impractical in view of Antiochus' expectation that Hyrcanus' army would participate in his Parthian expedition; perhaps the demand referred to specific types of weapons, for instance artillery.

nation, and then the Idumaeen cities Adora and Marisa, subduing and coercing the Idumaeans to become Judaeans (13,254-258). At this point the story of the conquests is interrupted by a report of the embassy Hyrcanus sent to renew the friendship with the Romans, including a quotation of the *senatus consultum* decreed on that occasion (13,259-266), followed by an account of the wars between the Seleucid contenders for the rule of Syria (Demetrius II, Alexander Zabinas [or Zabinas], Antiochus VIII Grypus and Antiochus IX Cyzicenus) that were advantageous for Hyrcanus (13,267-274)¹². The story of Hyrcanus' campaigns is then resumed: his attack on Samaria, the siege of the city by his sons, the defeat they inflicted on Antiochus Cyzicenus (not Grypus as in the *War*) who came to rescue it, supported by troops of Ptolemy IX Lathyrus, the control gained by the Jews over Scythopolis and the adjacent places (13,275-281).

Unlike the report of *War*, the account in *Antiquities* (13,236) includes an absolute date for Antiochus Sidetes' invasion of Judaea: it occurred in the fourth year of his reign, the first year of Hyrcanus' rule, in the 162nd Olympiad. The dates, however, are contradictory: the 162nd Olympiad covers the years 132/1-129/8, while both the fourth year of Antiochus and the first year of Hyrcanus are generally accepted as 135/4¹³. To overcome the difficulty some scholars raised the possibility that the siege lasted from 134 to 132, but this seems unlikely¹⁴. Other scholars are divided, some advocating 132/1¹⁵ and some 134/3¹⁶. For more than one reason the latest possible year for the conclusion of the siege, which lasted more than a year¹⁷, must be 131. It is obvious that some time must have elapsed between the conclusion of the siege of Jerusalem and the start of the Parthian expedition of Antiochus Sidetes, and this is usually dated in the early part of 130¹⁸. The attempt to date it in spring 131 has to be rejected for it is based on a wrong interpretation of the term

¹² The *senatus consultum* and the account of the wars are discussed below, 6. b).

¹³ Simon was killed in the month of Shebat in the Seleucid year 177 (*I Maccabees* 16,14), that is, February 135 or 134 (SCHÜRER 1973, 200 n. 1). According to several scholars (e.g. STERN 1965, 170; KASHER 1990, 116; ESHEL 2008, 63), the murder of Simon and the accession of Hyrcanus to the throne took place in 134. However, there is no sure way to ascertain which of these years is the right one, and *pace* VANDERKAM (2004, 285 with n. 122), Josephus' testimony on the length of the priesthood of Jonathan and Simon (*Antiquities* 13,228; 20,240) poses some problems.

¹⁴ See MARCUS 1933, 346-347 n. c; SCHÜRER 1973, 202-203 n. 5; *contra* BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 404.

¹⁵ See, e.g., NIESE 1903, 295-296 n. 4; BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 433-444.

¹⁶ See, e.g., MEYER 1921, 268 n. 1; KLAUSNER 1959, 61; SCHÜRER 1973, 202-203.

¹⁷ The siege began a short while before the setting of the Pleiades (November) and was not yet over by the time of the following Feast of Tabernacles (*Antiquities* 13,238.241), that is, October. See MARCUS 1933, 347 n. c; SCHÜRER 1973, 203 n. 5.

¹⁸ See, e.g., MEYER 1921, 270-272; TARN 1932, 581; WILL 1982, 413-415. FISCHER (1970, 29-35) quotes the Greek and Latin sources; the Armenian version of the relevant part of the *Chronica* of Eusebius (Porphyry) is given in German translation.

*Parthuēnē*¹⁹. It may therefore be inferred that Antiochus settled his business in Jerusalem several months earlier, that is, in late 131, if indeed the invasion of Judaea began in 132/1 and not in 134. Furthermore, a number of bronze coins minted in Jerusalem bear a lily on the obverse and the name 'King Antiochus Euergetes', an anchor and the dates 181 and 182 on the reverse; the dates are of course according to the Seleucid Era (S.E.), that is, 132/1 and 131/0²⁰. The minting of these coins in Jerusalem evidences that by October 131 at the latest Antiochus VII and John Hyrcanus had concluded *philia kai summachia* as Josephus says (*Antiquities* 13,249).

It should be emphasized that the above discussion is no proof at all that the siege of Jerusalem had not started three or four years before October 131. Indeed, in view of the difficulties Hyrcanus must have faced at the beginning of his rule, in consequence of the murder of his father Simon and the war he conducted against the murderer, Ptolemy son of Abubus, and given Antiochus' financial and territorial claims from the Hasmonaeans that had been turned down by Simon (*I Maccabees* 15,28-36), as well as the likely possibility that Ptolemy acted in concert with Antiochus²¹, it stands to reason that the frustrated Seleucid king will have utilized the opportunity to attack the Hasmonaeen enemy after making the necessary military preparations and with no much delay; there was no sense in letting Hyrcanus have free time to strengthen and consolidate his power. As well coinage evidence may well point to an early date of the invasion of Judaea. Included in the above mentioned coins of Antiochus VII that were minted in Jerusalem there is an undated series that were presumably struck in 133/2²², which would date the beginning of the

¹⁹ See FISCHER 1970, 3 and chap. 2 (esp. 39; 47). Fischer asserts that the place-name *Parthuēnē* that Josephus uses in his account of Antiochus Sidetes' expedition (*Antiquities* 13,253) refers to the original province of the Parthians, situated south-east of the Caspian sea, and not to the Parthian kingdom, which is called, so he claims, *Parthia* or *Parthuaia*. Since the distance from Babylonia, where Antiochus stayed for some time in the first stage of his campaign, to *Parthuēnē* is more than one thousand km., the expedition must have extended over two full seasons of war, and hence started in spring 131, not 130. Fischer's whole argument, however, rests upon an error: Josephus employs *Parthuēnē* three more times only, in addition to the present case, always to refer to the Parthian kingdom (*War* 1,273; *Antiquities* 18,353; 20,245); *Parthuaia* appears merely once (*Antiquities* 14,119), also in a reference to the Parthian kingdom, that is, the two forms of the term conveys the same sense. For the evidence see SCHALIT 1968, 96, and for criticism of Fischer's interpretation see R.M. ERRINGTON, "JHS" 92 (1972), 234 and especially D.R. SCHWARTZ 1996, 93-95.

²⁰ BARAG (1992-1993, 3) renders these Seleucid dates as 131/0 and 130/29; for MESHORER (2001, 30-31) these are years 131-130; for HOUGHTON (1983, 84 nn. 831-834) years 132/1 and 131/0, which are the correct dates. On these coins see esp. HOOVER 2003; HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 391-392; cf. also RAPPAPORT 1978, 89; BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 433. MESHORER (2001, 30) errs in describing the anchor type as the obverse and the lily as the reverse; see HOOVER 2003, 33 with n. 4.

²¹ See *I Maccabees* 16; 18; cf., e.g., KASHER 1990, 116; STERN 1995, 86-87; RAPPAPORT 2004, 351.

²² See HOUGHTON 1983, 83, apparently followed by DABROWA 2010, 69 n. 10; HOOVER 2003, 29 n. 1.

siege a year earlier. All in all, it is much more likely that Antiochus invaded Judaea in 134 rather than in 132/1²³. This is important because the time of Antiochus' invasion has to be taken into account in the discussion of the documents relevant to the relations between Rome and Hyrcanus.

In a meticulous, methodologically instructive article, Daniel R. Schwartz has convincingly established that Antiochus VII set out on his Parthian expedition in spring 130 and died in the early winter of 129/8; other dates that have been advocated by various scholars (winter 130/129, spring 129, spring 128 or even 126) cannot be upheld any more; his dating has been recently corroborated by Babylonian texts²⁴. In contrast to the controversy about the time of Antiochus' demise, there was almost complete consensus among scholars in accepting Josephus' words in *Antiquities*, namely that Hyrcanus embarked upon his aggressive campaigns 'immediately' (*euthus*) after receiving the news of Antiochus' death; his conquests were considered to have been achieved within a very few years, save for the war against Samaria which was dated about 110-107²⁵. Only a few scholars did not accept Josephus' description of the immediate burst of Hasmonaean conquests following the death of Antiochus VII. Menahem Stern questioned the possibility that all the conquests were accomplished within such a short time (129-128) and Bezalel Bar-Kochva dated the 'first round of conquests' after 126 or 125, that is, after the downfall of Demetrius II²⁶.

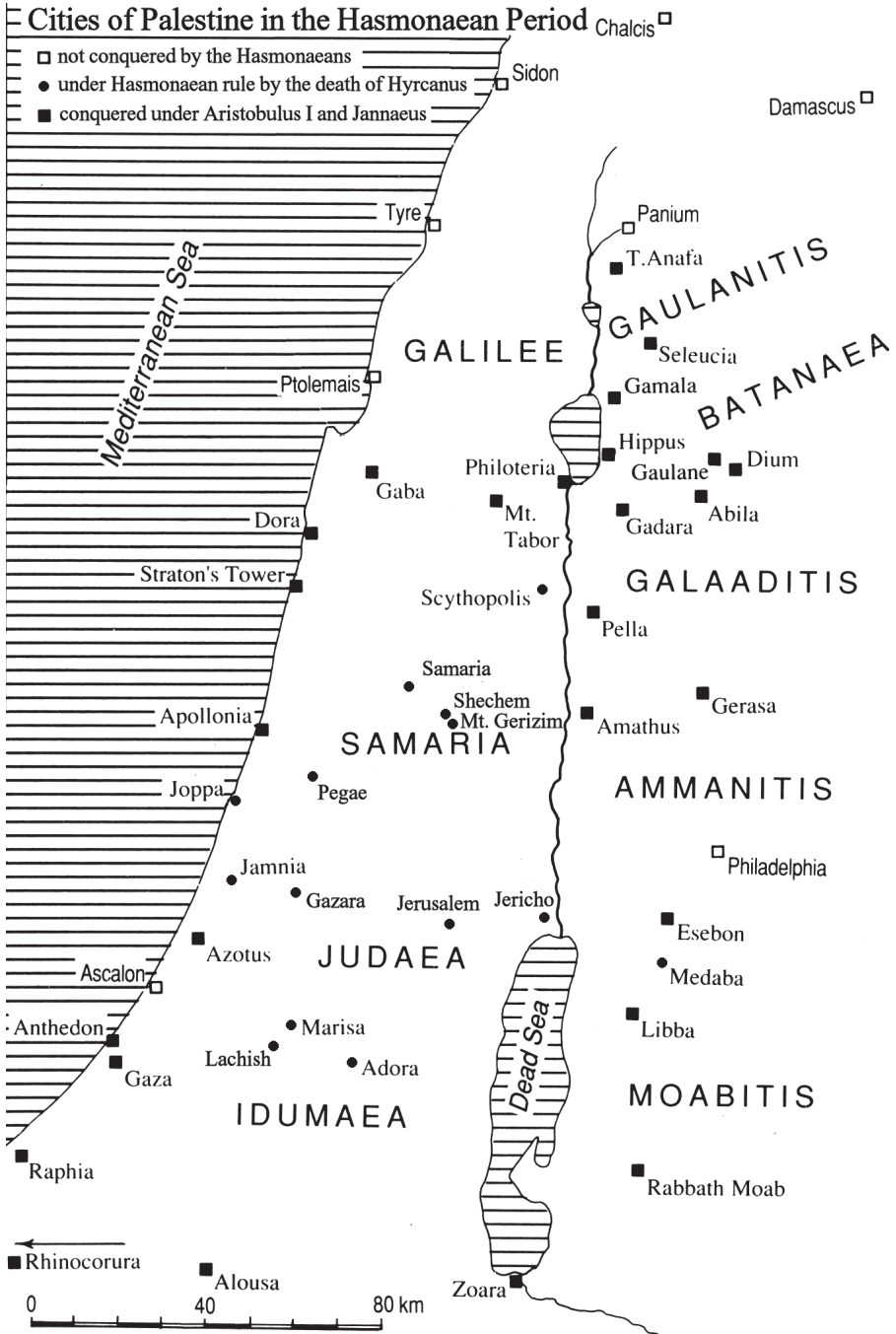
The separation between the early conquests, whether in about 129-128 or after the mid-120's, and the much later campaign against Samaria and Scythopolis is an inference from the *Antiquities*' split account (13,254-258; 13,275-281) and implies a rejection of the *War's* version of an unbroken series of conquests. However, the question which version of the course of the campaigns, continuous or with a long interval in between, is the correct one can now be answered quite securely with the help of archaeological finds that had not been known to former scholars.

²³ For the view that Antiochus VII launched his attack on Judaea in the first year of Hyrcanus' rule see also, most recently, DABROWA 2010, 67-68 with n. 4.

²⁴ D.R. SCHWARTZ 1996. Schwartz's is a comprehensive survey and analysis of the ancient sources (Babylonian, Greek, Roman, Jewish and numismatic), as well of the modern scholarship since the eighteenth century. For the recently adduced Babylonian evidence see HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 350 with n. 19. The written sources are presented in FISCHER 1970, 29-35; the Armenian version of Eusebius' *Chronica* is given in German translation.

²⁵ See, e.g., BEVAN 1902, 249; SCHÜRER 1973, 207-210; KASHER 1990, 119-121; RAJAK 1994, 291-292; COHEN 1999, 110 (on Idumaea).

²⁶ STERN 1991 [= 1961], 84-85; BAR-KOCHVA 1989, 560-562. HENGEL (1974, I, 62; II, 44-45 n. 32) dated the conquest of Marisa in about 110, a remarkable inference from the few archaeological finds that could suggest this dating at the time of his writing.



3. *The Chronology of John Hyrcanus' Conquests: The Archaeological Sources*

The Josephan chronology of the conquests of John Hyrcanus has to be completely abandoned or thoroughly revised in view of the evidence accumulated in numerous archaeological finds discovered in excavations conducted in very many sites in Israel in the last thirty years or so. These finds, supported in some cases by older ones, contribute significantly towards a better understanding of the character of the Hasmonaean conquests²⁷.

The various archaeological finds relevant for the topic under discussion – inscriptions, Rhodian amphora stamps, inscribed lead weights, coins, etc. – have been revealed both in well-known cities and towns like Marisa/Maresha, Samaria (later Samaria-Sebaste), Mount Gerizim, Shechem and Scythopolis (Tel Iztabah) and in non-urban sites, that is, fortresses, farm-houses and small villages. The latter are scattered in Idumaea and the northern Negev and in western Samaria.

The evidence concerning Marisa is exceptionally abundant and is presented here in some detail. In their account of the excavations of the upper city, which were conducted in the late 19th century, Macalister and Bliss date the Hellenistic city in the third and second centuries, a chronology that fits with, and required by, the pottery finds, the inscriptional data, the dates supplied by the Rhodian amphora stamps, and the coins that were discovered in the site and in the under-ground caves surrounding Marisa²⁸. Sixty-one coins were unearthed (13 Ptolemaic, 19 Seleucid, 25 of John Hyrcanus), but no dates are given. In the excavations of Prof. Amos Kloner, conducted since the 80's of the 20th century, both in the upper and lower city, were discovered about nine hundred fifty coins: 2 of the 4th century, 135 Ptolemaic, 7 of the city of Side (late 3rd to the early 2nd century), 716 Seleucid coins, 47 city coins with the latest dated in 108/7, 29 Nabataean coins that had been minted a long time before the Hasmonaean conquest, and 9 Hasmonaean coins. The latest Seleucid coin, in a hoard of 25 tetradachms, is dated 113/2²⁹. The evidence of the coinage finds is supported by the other archaeological evidence. Of the hundreds of ostraca (in Greek, Aramaic and other scripts) and other inscriptions, of whatever kind, that were discovered in the upper city, the lower city

²⁷ For previous surveys of the evidence see BARAG 1992-1993; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998.

²⁸ BLISS - MACALISTER 1902, 52-61; 64-70.

²⁹ BARKAY 1992-1993; BARKAY 2003-2006. Dr. Barkay is about to publish the coins discovered in the excavations of Prof. Kloner, and the catalogue she has prepared lists 950 coins. I wish to thank Dr. Barkay and Prof. Kloner for sending me a copy of the catalogue. About 400 additional coins have been discovered in the I. Stern - B. Alpert digs but they remain unreported (ARIEL - HOOVER 2011, 62; 65)

and the under-ground complexes, no one is dated in the 1st century, that is, after the Hasmonaean conquest; the latest funerary inscription is from the year 112/1³⁰. Of particular importance are six lead weights, all engraved by the same hand and bearing a Macedonian shield device and the name of a functioning *agoranomos* called Agathocles; four of these weights have the date 205 (S.E.), that is, 108/7³¹. Hundreds of amphoras were discovered in the excavations of Bliss and Macalister and of Kloner; the latest is dated, by the handle stamp, to 113/2³². The figurines and the altars found are dated not later than the end of the 2nd century³³. The enormous number of the various pottery vessels are Hellenistic, dating from the 4th to the 2nd century³⁴. As well were discovered numerous lamps, 150 alone in the excavations of Bliss and Macalister, and they too are dated in the Hellenistic period, to the late 2nd century³⁵. Two points deserve attention: except for breaches made in the defensive walls, both of the lower and the upper city, no traces of fire were unearthed and it is clear that the city was not demolished deliberately; secondly, after a short Hasmonaean occupation the city was abandoned and its buildings collapsed by negligence; it was not settled subsequently³⁶.

It emerges that Marisa was not captured in the 120's, and more specifically not earlier than the year 112/1. D. Barag was of the opinion that the city was occupied in 111 and Kloner tended to accept this date, regarding, however, 108 as another possibility for the capture of the city³⁷. According to Finkielsztein there were two Hasmonaean conquests, that is, the city was first taken and colonized by Hyrcanus in 111-110, but then was re-conquered by the Samaritans with the support of the local population, only to be regained by Hyrcanus by 107. This reconstruction of the events is based on the coins evidence, the date of the latest funerary inscription and the date of the lead weights, as well on Josephus' report that Hyrcanus attacked Samaria, 'being motivated by hatred of the Samaritans who, in compliance with the kings of Syria, harmed

³⁰ BARAG 1992-1993, 5 with n. 12; KLONER - ESHEL - KORZAKOVA - FINKIELSZTEJN 2010, 35-146.

³¹ FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 33-38; FINKIELSZTEJN 2010; KORZAKOVA 2010.

³² BLISS - MACALISTER 1902, 131-134; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 40; 54; KLONER 2003; ARIEL - FINKIELSZTEJN 2003.

³³ BLISS - MACALISTER 1902, 154-155 and plate 85; ERLICH - KLONER 2008, 101-104; KLONER - ESHEL - KORZAKOVA - FINKIELSZTEJN 2010, 147-173.

³⁴ BLISS - MACALISTER 1902, 124-128; LEVINE 2003, 73-114; REGEV 2003, 163-178.

³⁵ BLISS - MACALISTER 1902, 129; LEVINE 2003, 115-121; REGEV 2003, 179-182.

³⁶ Many scholars took it for granted that the city was destroyed; see, e.g., AVI-YONAH 1993, 951; KLONER 2001, 111; BAR-KOCHVA 2002, 9. The archaeological evidence, however, points to abandonment rather than destruction, and see FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 47; Kloner, in KLONER - ESHEL - KORZAKOVA - FINKIELSZTEJN 2010, 32; 220-221.

³⁷ BARAG 1992-1993, 11; Kloner, in KLONER - ESHEL - KORZAKOVA - FINKIELSZTEJN 2010, 1-2; 205; 220-221.

the *Marisēnoi* who were settlers (*apoikoi*) and allies of the Jews' (*Antiquities* 13,275). According to Finkelstejn's interpretation, a) the *Marisēnoi* mentioned here were Jews settled in Marisa by Hyrcanus after the conquest of the city in 111; b) the Graeco-Macedonians of the city of Samaria reckoned that it was for their own security to cooperate with Antiochus VIII or Antiochus IX, or both, and to assault the Jews who settled in Marisa; c) the fact that they conquered Marisa and established Hellenic institutions is proved by the weights of the *agoranomos* Agathocles; d) Hyrcanus regained his control of Marisa only after the destruction of Samaria in early 108³⁸.

Josephus' report is a notorious *crux*. A look at the map can easily demonstrate that, considering the distance between the two cities, some seventy km. as the crow flies, and with Judaea situated in between, it was almost impossible for the Samaritans to reach Marisa without being intercepted by the Hasmonaean army; military wise an assault on Marisa could have been a recipe for disaster. Moreover, it strains credulity that the Samaritans would have embarked on such a risky campaign in the wake of the Hasmonaean conquest of Mount Gerizim and Shechem that presented a threat on Samaria itself. Commentators and historians concluded that the text's *Marisēnous* must be a corruption of the original reading and tried to relate it to sites situated closer to Samaria with a similar name; most of the suggestions are untenable and need not be detailed here. R. Marcus suggests that 'Marisa' is a textual error for 'Samaria', that is, that part of the district of Samaria that Hyrcanus presumably colonized after he took Shechem and Mount Gerizim³⁹. The received text, however, has *Marisēnous*, not *Marisa*, and a suggestion to read *Samareis* instead of *Marisēnous* would result in nonsense in the present context⁴⁰. The best emendation proposed is that of M. Avi-Yonah, namely, *Gerasenous*; he means the people of Gerasa, a settlement in the toparchy of Acrabattēnē, located some thirty-five km. south-east of Samaria. Josephus' vague wording is supposed to refer to Jews from Judaea who had settled in that site and its vicinity under Hyrcanus or his predecessors⁴¹. Avi-Yonah's suggestion is simpler and more reasonable solution to the problem than Finkielstejn's reconstruction of the events, which ignores the practical, military obstacles

³⁸ FINKIELSZTEJN 1988, 48-49; FINKIELSZTEJN 2010, 185.

³⁹ MARCUS 1933, 366 n. a.

⁴⁰ SIEVERS' proposal to read *GARIZEINOUS* (1990, 144) is also unacceptable. Given Hyrcanus' attack on Mount Gerizim and the destruction of the Samaritan temple, injuries to the Garizeinoi, whether or not including the descendants of the old Israelite population, would not have constituted a cause for Hyrcanus to hate vehemently the people of Samaria.

⁴¹ AVI-YONAH 1951, and for the location of the site see AVI-YONAH 1976, 61; 108-109; it is identified with modern Jureish (Old Israel Grid 180/167). BAR-KOCHVA (2002, 16-28) supports Avi-Yonah's suggestion in a comprehensive discussion.

involved and is extremely speculative.

But when was Marisa captured? One has to bear in mind that the latest archaeological object found testifies to a *terminus post quem* for the relevant event or development; it could have occurred in that year, the next year or several years later. In the present case the four or five year gap between the latest Seleucid coin of the hoard (113/2), the latest amphora handle (113/2) or the latest funerary inscription (112/1) and, on the other hand, the latest city coin from the time of Hyrcanus (107) and the dated lead weights of 108/7 need not be taken as evidence that Marisa was captured twice, that is, in 111 as well in 107. A weight dated 143/2 whose provenance is probably from Marisa testifies to the existence of the office of *agoranomos* by that time in the city⁴², and there is no reason to suppose, for want of additional weights, that the office was defunct for some forty-five years and emerged again only in 108/7. Besides, there is one weight that can perhaps be dated to year 109/8⁴³. In sum, since the chronological gap is probably illusory, the only sure inference that one may draw from the present known archaeological data is that Marisa was captured in 108/7 or shortly later, that is, before the death of Hyrcanus in 104.

According to the latest published reports of the excavations conducted on Mount Gerizim since the 80's of the last century, about 13000 to 16000 coins have been unearthed in the site, but only about a half of them have been identified, of which about 3500 belong in the Seleucid period. The latest dated coins, apart from the Hasmonaean ones, are from the year 112/1 or 111/0. Of the identified coins 546 are Hasmonaean and of these 52 are of John Hyrcanus, one of Aristobulus I and 480 of Alexander Jannaeus. Clear signs of fire and destruction are in evidence in all the areas excavated, except Area K where the Hasmonaean coins were discovered. It is reasonable to infer that the Hasmonaean continued to garrison the site after its conquest and the destruction of the Samaritan temple in about 110⁴⁴. The excavations of Tell Balatah (Shechem), particularly the coins and the destruction evidence, indicate that stratum I of the Hellenistic period came to an end at the late second

⁴² KUSHNIR-STEIN 2011, 39 no. A9.

⁴³ FINKIELSZTEJN 2010, 188 no. 14. For the possibility that two weights bear the date 107/6 see KUSHNIR-STEIN 2011, 38-39.

⁴⁴ MAGEN 2000, esp. 114-115; 118 (the coins); MAGEN 2008, 1707. These reports supersede the numismatic details given in MAGEN 1993, 13-14; 119-120; 142-143. SARTRE (2005, 13; 379 n. 26) dates the conquest of Mount Gerizim in 128, thus following the account of Josephus, on the ground that the discovery of coins of Ptolemaïs dated 112/1 is 'fairly weak evidence'. One may disagree, and in any case the data disproves Sartre's objection: 139 coins of Alexander Zebinas, 82 coins of Antiochus VIII Grypus and Cleopatra Thea, and 197 dated coins of Ptolemaïs that stop in 111. Given this numismatic evidence, the notion that there were two destructions, one in about 129 and one in 110 (see VANDERKAM 2004, 292 with n. 140) is unacceptable.

century; the latest coin from this stratum is of Ptolemaï's, dated 112/1⁴⁵. The latest amphora stamp from Samaria is from about the year 110 and the latest coin dated with certainty is from 112/1; one coin is possibly from 110. The excavations of the site have yielded finds attesting the siege and destruction of the city, and it is worth to note that no coins of John Hyrcanus were found, only of Alexander Jannaeus⁴⁶. The latest datable amphora stamp from Tel Iztabah, the site of Scythopolis in the second century, is from about 108. Of the 1346 coins recovered at Tel Iztabah 466 date from the Hellenistic period and the latest Seleucid coins are of Antiochus VIII Grypus (13) and Antiochus IX Cyzicenus (6); only 6 Hasmonaean coins were found, finds testifying to a conflagration on a large scale were unearthed in the site; in short, the finds point to the destructive capture of the city in about 108⁴⁷.

Megillath Ta'anith (Scroll of Fasting), a late Second Temple period treatise, lists days on which fasting was forbidden; many of these commemorate joyful events of the Hasmonaean period, including three that took place under Hyrcanus⁴⁸. This source states that the capture, or destruction, of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim occurred on the 21st of Kislev, i.e. November/December⁴⁹; that the conquest of Samaria occurred on the 25th of Marheshvan, i.e., October/November⁵⁰; and that the 'people of Beth Shean [= Scythopolis] and the valley [= Jezreel valley] went into exile on the 15th and 16th of Sivan', that is, May/June⁵¹. On the basis of this source and the archaeological finds it would seem that the siege and conquest of Shechem and Mount Gerizim were accomplished in late 110. From Josephus' reports one could infer that the capture of Scythopolis took place during the year-long siege of Samaria, and that the latter was conquered some time later; if so, Scythopolis will have been taken in spring 108 (*Megillath Ta'anith* and archaeological evidence) and Samaria several months later in the same year. If, however, the somewhat con-

⁴⁵ WRIGHT 1965, 170-184; BARAG 1992-1993, 7; CAMPBELL 1993; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 41 (coins). SARTRE (2005, 13) dates the conquest in 128, without explaining his rejection of the archaeological evidence. S. SCHWARTZ (2001, 33) accepts the new dating, thus retracting his former support of the traditional date (1993, 11; 20-21, nn. 6, 7, 9).

⁴⁶ FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 40 (amphora stamp); 41 (coins). On the destruction associated with the conquest, the coins of Jannaeus and the absence of Hyrcanus' coins see SHATZMAN 1991, 61-63 with the literature there cited. On the conquest see also BAR-KOCHVA 2002, 28-34.

⁴⁷ MAZOR - BAR-NATHAN 1998, 33-34; 36; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 41; ARIEL 2004. The betrayal of the city by Epicrates, Antiochus Cyzicenus' commander (*Antiquities* 13,280), need not exclude a violent confrontation with the local population.

⁴⁸ The authoritative study, with a critical edition, is NOAM 2003 (Hebrew). For a short account see SCHÜRER 1973, 114-115.

⁴⁹ NOAM 2003, 100-103; 261-265. For the Jewish calendar see SCHÜRER 1973, 587.

⁵⁰ See NOAM 2003, 96-97; 243-349; note that the scholion is irrelevant to the conquest of the city.

⁵¹ NOAM 2003, 69; 196-197 (on Beth Shean). For the conquest of Scythopolis see also Syncellus I 559 (ed. Dindorf); SCHÜRER 1973, 210 n. 22.

fused reports of Josephus are construed to mean that the conquest of Samaria preceded that of Scythopolis, the latter will have been taken by Hyrcanus' sons in spring 107 and Samaria in the early winter of 108. Either way, it emerges that the latest dated finds from Samaria (110) yield a *terminus post quem*, not a definite date for the conquest of the city. All in all, the combined sources indicate that the military campaigns of Hyrcanus and his sons in the regions north of Judaea extended from 111 or 110 to 107; a precise chronology of the sequence of the events cannot be established as yet⁵².

Now, for a survey of the evidence concerning the non-urban sites. The Hellenistic site of Tel Beer-Sheba, with a fortress and a temple, was apparently abandoned shortly after 112/1: the latest amphora stamp, out of the 39 amphora stamps that were found in the excavations conducted by Y. Aharoni, is dated to 113/2 and the latest dated coin, out of the 20 second-century Seleucid coins, is a tetradrachm of Ascalon from the year 112/1. Two coins of John Hyrcanus, the demolition of the temple and the removal of pagan symbols point to a Hasmonaean conquest of site⁵³. To judge by the coins of John Hyrcanus found in Tel 'Ira, the Hellenistic fortified settlement there came under Hasmonaean control in the late 2nd century⁵⁴. The archaeological finds at Horvat 'Uza indicate that the occupation of the Seleucid fortress ended in the late 2nd century and that the site was re-occupied in the Roman period⁵⁵. Although the interpretation of the archaeological finds from Tel Arad is disputed, it seems that the Hellenistic fortress (3rd-2nd centuries) was taken by the Hasmonaean⁵⁶. Some finds from Khirbet Yattir, about 12 km. north-west of Arad, suggest the possibility that the site was taken by Hyrcanus⁵⁷. Archaeo-

⁵² The dating of the conquest of Samaria in the autumn of 110 is untenable (*contra* BARAG 1992-1993, 11). *Pace* FINKIELSZTEJN (1998, 40; 49), the dating of the last Rhodian amphora handles from Samaria c. 110 need not imply that the siege of the city began in early 109; it could have occurred in late 109 or even in early 108. Also, the weights from Marisa are irrelevant to the siege of Samaria (*contra* FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 50). The claim that the siege lasted two years has no real support in the archaeological evidence (*contra* DABROWA 2010, 73-74 with n. 28).

⁵³ KUSHNIR-STEIN - GITLER 1992-1993, 14-18; BARAG 1992-1993, 6. The Nabataean coins were minted from 129 to the conquest of the site by Hyrcanus (KUSHNIR-STEIN - GITLER 1992-1993, 18) or even from the mid-2nd century (BARKAY 2011, 72). For the amphora stamps see COULSON - MOOK - REHARD 1997; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 40; 53-54; for the removal of pagan figurines and offerings see R. Giveon in AHARONI 1973, 54-55. Derfler's chronological analysis of the finds, particularly the numismatic evidence, and his claim that a Jewish temple was established in the site after the Hasmonaean conquest, which he mistakenly dated in 127 (DERFLER 1984, esp. 86-92; DERFLER 1993, esp. 59-65), are vitiated by misunderstanding of the religious policy of the Hasmonaean, and should be dismissed in view of the more recent studies of the coins and amphoras. See also SHATZMAN 1991, 56 with n. 84; TAL 2006, 70-71.

⁵⁴ BEIT-ARIEH 1993a, 645; KINDLER 1999.

⁵⁵ BEIT-ARIEH 1993b; FISCHER - TAL 2007.

⁵⁶ SHATZMAN 1991, 55-56; HERZOG 1997, 250-251; HERZOG 2002, 41-45.

⁵⁷ ESHEL - MAGNESS - SHENHAV 1999, 422.

logical evidence points to the destruction of the local temple in Lachish (constructed *ca.* 200) after the mid-2nd century, probably during the Hasmonaean conquest of Idumaea⁵⁸. The site of Khirbet er-Rasm, probably an inn/caravanserai situated about 11 km. north of Marisa and on the border of Judaea, was abandoned and set on fire at the time of the capture of Marisa⁵⁹. The following two sites are located in western Samaria: one at Mazor, a Hellenistic farm house that suffered destruction in the late 2nd century, probably at the time of Hyrcanus⁶⁰, and the other at Shoham, a Hellenistic (3rd-2nd centuries) farm with three fortified buildings, replaced by a Hasmonaean settlement (numerous Hasmonaean coins) with an impressive fortress⁶¹. Several other farm houses and villages of western Samaria (at Rosh Ha'ayin, Tirat Yehuda, Ofarim, Qula and Kh. Burnat) were abandoned or suffered destruction in the second century, but it is difficult to decide whether that happened in the time of Hyrcanus or earlier⁶².

In sum, the archaeological evidence confirms the conquest of most of the cities reported by Josephus to have been captured by John Hyrcanus. The finds also show that he started his campaigns against Marisa (and Idumaea), Shechem, Mount Gerizim, Samaria and Scythopolis not earlier than the year 112 and that it took him several years to conquer these cities. To the list of the captured cities we may now add many non-urban settlements (fortresses, farm houses and villages) not mentioned by Josephus. The conquest of Adora, Medaba and Samaga, however, is still known only thanks to Josephus, but there is no reason to doubt the reliability of his report. Several suggestions to reconstruct the chronological sequence of the campaigns have been proposed, non lacking difficulties⁶³, but there is no need to delve into this problem here. At any rate, it is clear that Josephus made a great chronological error in stating that John Hyrcanus set out on his campaigns immediately after the downfall of Antiochus VII Sidetes, unless the conquests in Transjordan, of which we do not have any archaeological evidence, took place soon after the year 129, but this seems extremely implausible strategically. Also, to assume that the term *'poleis* in Syria' refers to some unknown towns is no more than idle conjecture. It is rather much more probable that Josephus' error resulted from faulty reading of Nicolaus of Damascus, his sole source for *War*, and of both Nicolaus and Strabo, his main sources for

⁵⁸ AHARONI 1973, 3-5; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 48; 55 n. 5; TAL 2006, 68-69; FAUST - ERLICH 2011, 253-254.

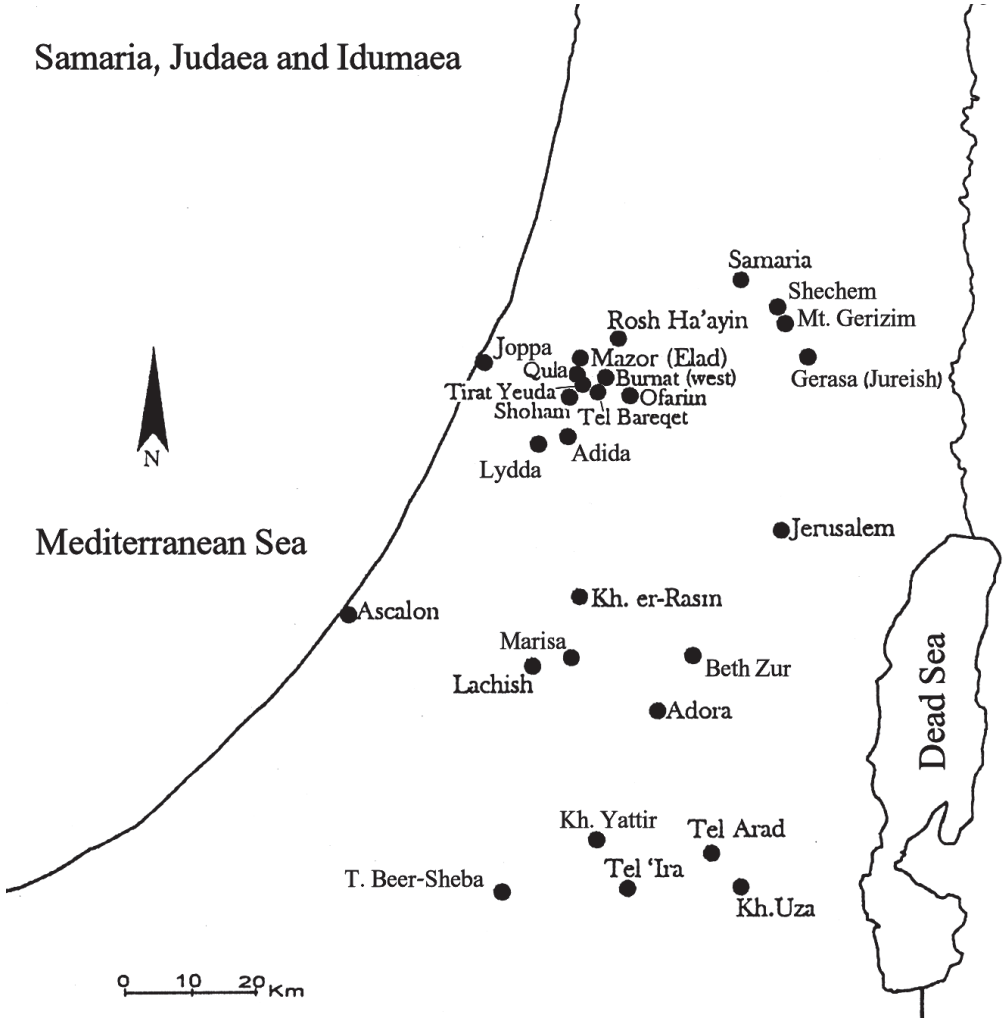
⁵⁹ FAUST - ERLICH 2011, esp. 197-230.

⁶⁰ AMIT - ZILBERBOD 1998.

⁶¹ DAHARI - 'AD 2008.

⁶² For a short account see FAUST - ERLICH 2011, 252.

⁶³ See BARAG 1992-1993, 8-11; FINKIELSZTEJN 1998, 45-52; BAR-KOCHVA 1989, 561; BAR-KOCHVA 2002, 32-33.



*Antiquities*⁶⁴. Finally, in view of the present-known evidence, War's version of one period of campaigns fits better the archaeological evidence than the *Antiquities*' account of two separated series of campaigns.

4. *Foreign Policy Based on Religious Ideology and Pragmatism*

Since the occurrence of the conquests is dated securely in the later years of Hyrcanus' rule, two questions come to mind: what kept him so long from embarking on expansionist, aggressive campaigns after the downfall of Antiochus VII? What were his goals and motivation? Let us take the later question first.

As heir to his uncles Judas Maccabaeus and Jonathan and to his father Simon, Hyrcanus will have followed most naturally their foreign policy. His predecessors' attitude towards the Gentiles, as well as their actual treatment of and relationships with them, is known primarily thanks to *I Maccabees*, whose accounts are complemented by *II Maccabees*' description of Judas' feats. Before examining in what respects Hyrcanus followed his predecessors and what changes he introduced in the Hasmonaean foreign policy, a brief explanation of the date of the composition of these two works is in place.

The arguments adduced by not a few scholars to date the composition of *I Maccabees* in the time of Hyrcanus seem to me rather persuasive, while attempts to ascribe the work to the time of Alexander Jannaeus, or even later, face grave difficulties and are untenable⁶⁵. One point should be highlighted. The two concluding verses of *I Maccabees* (16,23-24) are based on a biblical formula which is employed in the books of *I Kings* and *II Kings* to record the death of the old kings of Judah and Israel⁶⁶. The formula consists of four elements: a reference to the chronicles of the king; the duration of the reign; the death and the burial of the king; the name of the successor. The verses do indeed allude to the formula but record the first element only, obviously because at the time of the writing Hyrcanus was still alive. The recording of the rebuilding of the walls of Jerusalem by Hyrcanus without mentioning the conquests of Medaba, Idumaea, Samaria etc. indicates that the work was written some time after the demise of Antiochus VII Sidetes in 129, following which evolved the political conditions opportune for the restoration of the walls, but prior to the beginning of Hyrcanus' great campaigns, that is, before

⁶⁴ Cf. BAR-KOCHVA 1989, 560-561.

⁶⁵ See, e.g., MOMIGLIANO 1931, 34-36; SMITH 1978; BAR-KOCHVA 1989, 152-168; S. SCHWARTZ 1991, 33-38; WEITZMAN 1999, 50-51; *contra*, e.g., GOLDSTEIN 1976, 62-64 (the early years of Alexander Jannaeus); SCHÜRER 1973, 181 (the early decades of the first century).

⁶⁶ See, e.g., *I Kings* 11,41-43; 14,19-20; *II Kings* 10,34-36.

the year 112. Given the author's attempt to adhere to the biblical formula and to give substance to the achievements of Hyrcanus, he would have surely mentioned the territorial conquests, had he had any knowledge of them, and for that reason the two verses cannot be ascribed to a postulated, later redactor or interpolator⁶⁷. Chronologically the late occurrence of Hyrcanus' military campaigns corroborates what is ascribed to him in these verses and vice versa.

As is generally recognized, the author of *I Maccabees* presents a pro-Hasmonaean outlook and attitudes; some scholars even consider him as a court historian⁶⁸. Now, although hostility towards the Gentiles pervades almost the entire work, it is noteworthy that phrases enunciating this hostility and the very issue of the Jewish-Gentile conflict decline sharply after the restoration of the Jewish religious liberty⁶⁹. The issue is mentioned and the phrases are used much less frequently and only sporadically in the accounts of the rule of Jonathan and Simon. This varied emphasis on the hostile attitude towards the gentile nations surrounding Judaea most probably reflects a change in the policy adopted by these Hasmonaean rulers, as well in the actual relations with those nations (see below)⁷⁰.

Now to *II Maccabees*, an abridgement of Jason of Cyrene's lost work that comprised five books (*II Macc.* 2,23). It is widely agreed that Jason probably wrote his history in the first Hasmonaean generation and that the abridgement was written not later than *ca.* 122; according to a recent, plausible interpretation it was composed by 143/2⁷¹. *II Maccabees* differs from *I Maccabees* in many respects, and its depiction of the relations with Gentiles is more nuanced, but essentially the author is no less uncompromising in his opposition to pagan cult and preaches for its wiping out from Judaea⁷². It is also important to bear in mind that one major focus of the work is upon the achievements of Judas Maccabaeus, who is extolled for his devotion to the Lord and his exploits in defending Jews loyal to the Law. In this respect the work supports *I Maccabees'* account on the nature of the wars Judas Maccabaeus conducted against the Gentiles.

⁶⁷ Cf. BAR-KOCHVA 1989, 162-164.

⁶⁸ According to GEIGER (1857, 206), he was an official historian of the Hasmonaeans. See also, e.g., GOLDSTEIN 1976, 62-64; SCHUNK 1980, 292; RAPPAPORT 2004, 48-49.

⁶⁹ One index of the level of hostility towards the Gentiles is the use of the term *ta ethne*, on which see SHATZMAN 2007, 244-248.

⁷⁰ S. SCHWARTZ's claim (1991, 23-33) that the author falsely attributed to the Hasmonaean brothers the implementation of the Deuteronomic law concerning the peoples of Canaan is vitiated by his failure to realize that it is only Judas Maccabaeus who is credited with a consistent policy that accords with the Deuteronomic law. On this point cf. WEITZMAN 1999, 47-48.

⁷¹ See, e.g., ABEL 1949, xlii-xliii; MOMIGLIANO 1975; DORAN 1981, 111-113. For arguments to date the writing of the abridgement in the year 143/2 see D.R. SCHWARTZ 2008, 11-15.

⁷² See SHATZMAN 2007, 252-258. On biblical elements in *II Maccabees* see D.R. SCHWARTZ 2008, 61-66.

The clue to Judas' policy towards the nations surrounding Judaea is to be found in the deeds he committed. In his wars he killed as many as he could of the enemy he encountered, demolished and set in fire towns and forts he conquered, annihilated the civilian population he captured, burned pagan temples and destroyed various artefacts of gentile cult. That this was the way he treated the Gentiles is reported both by *I Maccabees* and *II Maccabees*. The religious-political objects are clear: he aimed at achieving physical destruction of all the heathen living in Judaea or around it and the total elimination of gentile cult. His actions point at an attempt to implement the Deuteronomic law that instructed the Israelites to destroy completely the Canaanites living in Eretz Israel⁷³.

A different Hasmonaean policy towards the neighbouring nations emerges under the leadership of Jonathan. Only in one case did Jonathan seemingly continue the policy of his deceased brother, and that occurred following his defeat of Apollonius, the Seleucid commander of Alexander Balas who had gone over to Demetrius II. Pursuing the fugitives who fled to Azotus and sought to find shelter in the temple of Dagon, he set fire to Azotus and the adjacent villages and burned the temple. Possibly it was because of the special circumstances that Jonathan was not able to control his troops or perhaps he let them take vengeance of the opponents, knowing that Alexander Balas, the Seleucid king with whom he was cooperating, would not mind an extreme punishment of people deemed rebels on account of their support of his enemy⁷⁴. At any rate, this case should not be regarded as an implementation of a general policy, for no other case of such destruction is reported under Jonathan⁷⁵, nor does the author of *I Maccabees* mention the destruction of a city or the burning of a gentile temple by Simon⁷⁶.

Pragmatism is at the root of this change of behaviour. Jonathan and Simon were not only High-Priests but also Seleucid office-holders, appointed to these positions by foreign kings; once they decided to advance their hold of Judaea and consolidate their rule by cooperating with the Seleucid kings they could not help modifying the original Hasmonaean policy. The usual policy

⁷³ See *I Maccabees* 5,3; 5,5; 5,28; 5,44 (burning of temple); 5,50-51; 5,65; 5,68 (destruction of altars and statues of gods); *II Maccabees* 8,5-6; 10,23; 12,3-7; 12,13-16; 12,23 (burning of a temple); 12,27-28. Cf. SHATZMAN 2007, 240-242; 252-258. See also KASHER 2007, 170-176. COHEN (1999, 118) misses this fundamental element of the policy of Judas.

⁷⁴ See *I Maccabees* 10,69-73 (Apollonius' provocation); 10,77-84 (the battle and the destructive actions); 10,88-89 (pleased with Jonathan's deeds, Alexander Balas donates him Akkaron). Josephus (*Antiquities* 13,99-105) misunderstood *I Maccabees*, his only source for these events, and took Apollonius as a commander of Alexander Balas.

⁷⁵ The killing of the Sons of Iamri (*I Maccabees* 9,36-42) was a case of blood-revenge, belonging in the sphere of personal, tribal relations, and has nothing to do with religious-national wars.

⁷⁶ For the change of policy cf. SHATZMAN 2007, 242-246.

adopted by Jonathan and Simon in dealing with gentile towns they took in Judaea was to expel the population and to purify the sites from all signs and objects of pagan cult; this is how Beth Zur was treated by Jonathan and Gazara and the Akra by Simon⁷⁷. No information is given concerning the fate of the gentile inhabitants of the rural territories of Beth Zur and Gazara or, for that matter, of Akkaron. Possibly it was a negligent problem because, presumably, the majority of the population was Jewish, as was the case of the three districts of Aphaerema, Lydda and Ramathaim which Demetrius II gave to Jonathan⁷⁸.

The very deeds of Jonathan and Simon as well as what they refrained from doing indicate that the brothers put restraints upon themselves in their treatment of Gentile population and cultic sites in sensitive areas in consideration of their relationships with the Seleucid kings. They did expel Gentiles and purify sites of pagan cult in territories they considered to be under full Jewish ownership. But even in the latter case, they did not annihilate the conquered local inhabitants as Judas had done, possibly in order not to exacerbate still more the tense relations with the surrounding peoples. The decision of Jonathan and Simon not to exterminate the conquered gentile population could be justified by appealing to the Covenant code of *Exodus* that orders to *expel* the pre-Israelite inhabitants of Eretz Israel and to the priestly code in *Numbers* that commands to dispossess (*horish*) them, which can mean to expel and not necessarily to exterminate. One could, therefore, find biblical support for not following the Deuteronomic law concerning the ban (*herem*) on the Canaanites⁷⁹. In sum, real-politic considerations induced Jonathan and Simon to deviate from the policy carried out by Judas in his wars against the Gentiles living in Judaea and around it.

The change of the treatment of the Gentiles living in Eretz Israel did not entail giving up the religious-national goal of liberating and taking control of the Promised Land. In this respect, Simon's answer to the envoy of Antiochus VII Sidetes who demanded to return to his possession Joppa, Gazara and the Akra, is revealing and instructive: 'We have neither taken other men's land, nor have we possession of that which belongs to others, but of the inheritance of our fathers; however, it was unjustly taken in possession by our enemies at a certain time. But we, taking the opportunity, have recovered the inheritance of our fathers' (*I Maccabees* 15,33-34). In asserting his and Israel's right to

⁷⁷ *I Maccabees* 11,65-66 (Beth Zur); 13,43-48 (Gazara); 13,49-50 (Akra). For epigraphic and archaeological finds corroborating the conquest of Gazara by Simon and the resettlement of the city by observant Jews see FREY 1952, no. 1184 (the 'Pamparas' graffito); REICH 1981 (Jewish ritual baths); PASTOR 1997, 68; 207 n. 89.

⁷⁸ *I Maccabees* 10,89 (Akkaron); 11,30-37 (the three districts). See on this STERN 1965, 106-110; SCHÜRER 1973, 182.

⁷⁹ See WEINFELD 1993, esp. 155 with n. 37

rule their ancestral land, Simon contests in the first place the legal basis of Antiochus' demand; by implication this holds good for all the foreign kings like him, notably the Seleucids, the Ptolemies and Alexander. It is well to bear in mind that Simon bases the legal right to rule the cities and territories he and his brothers had conquered and annexed to Judaea on an argument that fits Hellenistic diplomatic negotiations. The two main arguments raised in this encounter by the two parties, as it is reported by the author of *I Maccabees*, namely rule based on the right of conquest versus rule based on ancestral rights, or original possession, accord with those used to justify territorial claims by rulers and *poleis* from Archaic Greece through the Hellenistic period⁸⁰. In other words, the political-legal dispute between the Seleucid king and the Hasmonaean ruler is to be understood on the background of similar territorial disputes known from Greek and Hellenistic history. However, it stands to reason that internally Simon will have presented the right to rule Palestine on the basis of God's promise of Eretz Israel to the people of Israel, extensively attested in the Bible⁸¹. If there was some Jewish opposition to the Hasmonaean expansionist wars⁸², that was the best way to defend and justify them. It emerges that even before John Hyrcanus ascended the throne, he, as the heir apparent (*I Maccabees* 13,53), must have been well-equipped with Greek legal-political arguments and Jewish ideology to pursue the religious-national expansionist policy that had become an essential part of the Hasmonaean heritage by that time.

As in the case of Judas Maccabaeus (above), the clue to the foreign policy of Hyrcanus is to be sought in his deeds, that is, both diplomatic activities and military campaigns. The latter point to partial renewal of Judas Maccabaeus' treatment of the Gentiles, notably the destruction of several of the captured cities and country sites, and yet some settlements were spared, like Marisa. Gentile temples, as well as the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, were demolished, and in wiping out idolatry from the Land of Israel Hyrcanus followed loyally the original Hasmonaean policy. In contrast, the coerced conversion of the Idumaeans to Judaism was an innovation as well as a deviation from the methods his predecessors employed against the heathen. Continuity and change then characterized Hyrcanus' treatment of the beaten enemies. He aimed, presumably quite early on, at the extension of the Hasmonaean

⁸⁰ See MEHL 1980-1981 (esp. on the Seleucids); GUIZZI 1997, 42-48; CHANIOTIS 2005, esp. 191-193; 197-202.

⁸¹ See *Genesis* 12,1-7; 12,14-17; 15,7-21; 26,2-4; *Exodus* 8,16-17; 23,27-31; 32,1-3; *Numbers* 13,1; 27,12-13; 33,50-53; *Deuteronomy* 1,6-8; 4,20-22; 31,3-7; 32,48-49; 34,1-4, etc.

⁸² The section called King's Law included in the *Temple Scroll* (11QT) puts various limits on the king's authority, including his right to conduct an offensive war (col. 58,18-21). For the hostility of the Qumran sect to Hyrcanus see ESHEL 2008, 63-89.

rule and the 'degentilization' of Eretz Israel; the materialization of these goals depended on the forming of the necessary economic conditions and political connections and the building up of appropriate military resources, as well their skilful utilization at the right time.

The assassination of Simon, the war Hyrcanus fought against Ptolemy son of Abubus, the ravaging of Judaea by the Seleucid army, the year-long siege of Jerusalem and the surrender terms imposed by Antiochus VII, all these ruled out any attempt to implement plans or intentions the new Hasmonaean ruler may have had of launching expansionist wars. Thereafter Hyrcanus was obliged to participate, with his Jewish army, in the Parthian expedition of Antiochus VII. The circumstances of his return from that expedition, after the death of the Seleucid king in late 129, are unknown. Even if the Jewish army had not suffered serious casualties in the campaigns against the Parthians the long march to the east and the return must have taken considerable toll and the troops needed time to recuperate. Nothing is known about the administration of Judaea in the absence of Hyrcanus, but surely on his return he had to take care of the restoration of the normal management of the country; indeed, the refortification of Jerusalem should have been at the top of his agenda. Another challenge he probably had to contend with was the repatriation of the hostages, including his own brother, he had delivered as part of his agreement with Antiochus VII; there is no reason to assume that these had been released by the Seleucid king before his embarking on the eastern expedition. Given these constraints, imponderable as they are, the time was not appropriate to be entangled in aggressive campaigns. In addition, Hyrcanus could not have ignored the inner political struggle that started off in the Seleucid kingdom in the wake of the Parthian expedition of Antiochus VII; posed by the dangers and risks involved in this struggle Hyrcanus seems to have decided to prefer caution rather than active intervention.

5. *Hyrcanus and the Seleucid Familial Wars*

The first opponent Hyrcanus had to face was Demetrius II (129-126/5) who had been released from his captivity by the Parthian king and returned to Syria even before the demise of his brother Antiochus VII⁸³. Coins attest his control of, *inter alia*, Berytus, Sidon, Tyre, Damascus, Ptolemaïs and Ascalon⁸⁴, and

⁸³ *Antiquities* 13,253. On the career of Demetrius II (with sources and modern literature) see GRAINGER 1997, 42-44; EHLING 1998, 142-147; HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 409-412.

⁸⁴ See esp. HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 423-434; cf. STERN 1991, 87 with nn. 59-61; EHLING 1998, 145-146.

apparently he did not conceal his intention to attack Judaea, which did not materialize because of the failure of his abrupt invasion of Egypt and the outbreak of a revolt in Syria⁸⁵. Rather than crossing swords with Demetrius, Hyrcanus presumably resorted to defensive measures, establishing at the first opportunity friendship (*philia*) with Alexander II Zebinas (128-122), the rival of Demetrius to the Seleucid throne who was supported by Ptolemy VIII Physcon. Demetrius suffered defeat in a battle fought near Damascus and shortly afterwards was killed at Tyre in 125⁸⁶; three years later the victor, Alexander Zebinas, lost the battle he waged against Antiochus VIII Grypus, son of Demetrius II and Cleopatra Thea, and was put to death⁸⁷. The deadly wars between the rivals for the Seleucid throne may well have given Hyrcanus pause for thought; the continuation of the internecine wars could further weaken the Seleucid power and in the meantime he could strengthen his own resources. The possibility that this thought engaged his mind finds corroboration in Josephus' account of Hyrcanus' behaviour during the years following the demise of Antiochus VII. Josephus attributes Antiochus VIII's refraining from marching on Judaea, after he had defeated Alexander Zebinas and attained sole rule of Seleucid Syria, to his concern that his half-brother Antiochus IX Cyzicenus might attack him (*Antiquities* 13,269-271). The implication is that Antiochus VIII had been aware of the hostile intentions of his half-brother for several years (from about 120 onwards) before the latter embarked on his campaign to seize control of Syria in about 114 (below). The potential confrontation between these two competitors for the Seleucid throne constitutes the background to the subsequent narration of Josephus:

Antiochus [IX] Cyzicenus came into Syria and waged continuous war against his brother [i.e. Antiochus VIII Grypus] for many years. But during all this time Hyrcanus lived in peace; for after the death of Antiochus [i.e. VII Sidetes] he too revolted from the Macedonians, and no longer furnished them anything either as a subject or as a friend; instead, the state progressed and flourished immensely during the days of Alexander Zebinas and especially under these brothers. For the war between them gave Hyrcanus leisure to exploit Judaea undisturbed, with the result that he amassed a limitless sum of money⁸⁸.

⁸⁵ *Antiquities* 13,267; Appian, *Syrian Wars* 68; Justin, *Philippics* 38,10,7. Cf. GRAINGER 1990, 165-169.

⁸⁶ *Antiquities* 13,267-268; GRAINGER 1997, 43 (Demetrius' death is wrongly dated to 126); EHELING 1998, 146-147; HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 409.

⁸⁷ *Antiquities* 13,269. See GRAINGER 1997, 7; EHLING 1998, 148-149 (but Zebinas lost his life in 122); HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 441.

⁸⁸ *Antiquities* 13,272-273. Marcus' translation in Loeb Classical Library, with a few changes. Cleopatra Thea, daughter of Ptolemy VI, was the mother of both Antiochus VIII Grypus and Antiochus IX Cyzicenus; the first she bore to Demetrius II and the latter to Antiochus VII Sidetes, Demetrius' younger brother. Cleopatra's two sons were, therefore, half-brothers and cousins.

Here, in contrast to *Antiquities* 13,254, there is no mention at all of Hyrcanus' attack on the *poleis* of Syria after the death of Antiochus VII, an incompatibility that suggests an infelicitous combination of two sources by Josephus. We are told that Hyrcanus revolted from the Macedonians (= the Seleucid kings), that is to say, he restored the Hasmonaean political independence and liberty, lost on the surrender to Antiochus VII, and lived in peace 'during all this time' (*panta touton ton chronon*), which must be understood to refer to the period from the death of Antiochus in 129 until Hyrcanus launched his aggressive campaigns, and that occurred, as is now known thanks to the copious archaeological evidence, about 112⁸⁹. In other words, for about seventeen years Hyrcanus maintained neutrality while the competitors to the Seleucid throne, first Demetrius II and Alexander Zabinas, then the latter and Antiochus VIII, and later the brothers-cousins Antiochus VIII and Antiochus IX, were fighting with each other. It was during those years that the Hasmonaean ruler rebuilt the city walls of Jerusalem and understandably has been gradually building up his military power. It seems that some time after the outbreak of open war between Antiochus VIII and Antiochus IX he came to reckon that the time was opportune to initiate aggressive military operations in order to expand his rule. The external political circumstances Hyrcanus had to contend with are known to some extent thanks to the available literary sources, defective though they are, and the numismatic sources provide much additional valuable information⁹⁰.

Justin reports that after poisoning his mother Cleopatra Thea Antiochus Grypus and his kingdom had peace for eight years; he also attempted to poison his half-brother Antiochus Cyzicenus, thereby provoking the latter to hasten his fight for the reign (*Philippics* 39,2,7-9). Cleopatra was eliminated in 121, and hence the eight year peace lasted to 114 or 113⁹¹. The attempt on the life of Antiochus Cyzicenus betrays that even in those years of peace Antiochus Grypus was apprehensive of the claims of his half-brother to the Seleucid throne, and this is congruous with what Josephus tells about him (above). Ap- pian, too, reports that Antiochus Grypus plotted against Antiochus Cyzicenus and that the latter then embarked on war, drove out his opponent and became king of Syria (*Syrian Wars* 69). In the 62nd book of his work Livy recorded the occurrence of seditions (*motus*) in Syria between the kings (*Epitome* 62); since the years covered in that book extended from 118 to 115 and possibly to 114 as well, it seems that according to Livy the military confrontation between the

⁸⁹ *Contra* MARCUS (1933, 364 n. b) who construes this phrase to mean the years 129 to 104.

⁹⁰ The exhaustive treatment of the literary sources and the numismatic evidence of BELLINGER 1949 is still valuable, although some revisions of his conclusions have been made thanks to the accumulation of new coinage finds.

⁹¹ The date of Cleopatra's death is suggested by coinage evidence; see HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 469; cf. GRAINGER 1997, 45-47.

two half-brothers had started by 114. The takeover of Syria by Antiochus IX is dated by Eusebius to the fourth year of the 166th Olympiad, that is, 113/2⁹². The coinage evidence of the city mints that operated in the Seleucid kingdom, comprising Cilicia, Syria, Coele-Syria and Phoenicia in this period, helps to determine somewhat more precisely the actual extent of control of the two half-brothers in these years, and this is summarized in the following table⁹³.

<i>Mints</i>	<i>Antiochus VIII Grypus</i>	<i>Antiochus IX Cyzicenus</i>
Cilicia (Tarsus, Mallus, etc.)	121/0-114/3; after 112-96	114/3-112
Antioch on the Orontes ⁹⁴	121/0 - spring/summer 113; 112-111/0; 109-96	113 - spring/summer 112; 110/09; 96-95
Seleucia in Pieria	c.110-109 ⁹⁵	
Damascus	120/19-113; 110/09 or 109/8-108/7 ⁹⁶ ; 107/6-105/4?; 104/3-99/8	113/2-111/0 or 110/09; 107/6-105/4? ⁹⁷
Tripolis		105/4
Laodicea in Phoenicia (Berytus)	110/09	
Sidon	120/19-113	113/2-111/0
Ptolemaïs	121/0-113	113/2-107/6
Ascalon	121/0-113; 112/1-103 ⁹⁸	113-113/2
Samaria		c.112-110

⁹² Eusebius, *Chronica* 1,259 (ed. Schöne); KARST 1911, 122 (German translation of the Armenian version of Eusebius).

⁹³ The table is based mainly on HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 485-550 (accounts and catalogues). The identity of several mints not registered in the table is uncertain and new numismatic evidence might necessitate some revision of the chronology.

⁹⁴ For chronologies of the reigns of Antiochus VIII and Antiochus IX at Antioch, which have been proposed since 1918, mainly on the basis of the numismatic evidence, see HOOVER 2007, 284-286; as it seems now there were three separate reigns for each, not two as reported by Eusebius or four as suggested by some researchers.

⁹⁵ The city was granted autonomy by September 109 (BELLINGER 1949, 69; HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 485; 506-507). That the autonomy was nominal is argued by GRAINGER 1990, 171.

⁹⁶ No coins of Damascus are known for the years 110/09, 107/6-105/4, and hence it is possible that either of the half-brothers could have held Damascus in any of these years. See HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 540; that 'Cyzicenus held Damascus from 113 to 109/8' (ibid. 485) is incorrect.

⁹⁷ See previous note.

⁹⁸ See SPAER 1984; HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 516-519; 547-548. For the Marisa hoard of Ascalon's Seleucid tetradrachms see BARKAY 1992-1993.

The coinage evidence indicates that Antiochus IX set out to war in 114/3, more precisely in 114 if Livy's report is accepted. He first took control of Cilicia and then, in 113, won Antioch, Damascus, Sidon, Ptolemaïs and Ascalon; as well other cities along the coast of Palestine, notably Dora and Joppa, probably came over to him. The activity of a mint in Samaria that struck silver hemidrachms and obols of Antiochus IX in these years is significant both because this city had never minted silver for a Seleucid king and the support it gives to Josephus' account of the connection between Samaria and this king during the siege of the city by Hyrcanus⁹⁹. The emission of silver tetradrachms of Antiochus IX at Tripolis in 105/4 testifies to his hold of the city in that year and possibly in previous years as well; such a hold may well be implied in Josephus' report that he retired to Tripolis after his failure to lift the Hasmonaean siege of Samaria¹⁰⁰. But the spectacular success of Antiochus IX was short-lived¹⁰¹, although he got an unexpected aid from Cleopatra IV who had fled from Egypt and married him, bringing Ptolemaic troops from Cyprus as her dowry (Justin *Philippics* 39,3,2-3). In 112 Antiochus VIII returned from Aspendus in Pamphylia, where he had collected an army after his flight from Syria the year before, defeated his half-brother near Antioch, captured the city and had Cleopatra IV executed. Antiochus IX managed to escape but he lost control, in addition to Antioch, of the Cilician cities, Damascus (somewhat later than the other cities), Sidon, which became an autonomous city¹⁰², and Ascalon. He maintained his rule in Ptolemaïs, until 107/6, and took possession of Antioch in 110/9 but lost it to his half-brother the following year. The supremacy of Antiochus IX barely lasted more than a year, 113-112, and the renewal of the deadly war in 112 exposed the inability of either of the competitors to eliminate his opponent and to establish permanently his rule over the Seleucid kingdom.

The archaeological evidence presented above indicates that it was about this time that Hyrcanus embarked on aggressive military campaigns in order to expand the Hasmonaean state. The time was indeed opportune to take advantage of the weakening of the Seleucid power and the continuous debilitating struggle between Antiochus VIII and Antiochus IX. Following the passage quoted above on the prosperity of Judaea under Hyrcanus' rule and dur-

⁹⁹ See HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 546-547.

¹⁰⁰ See HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 540-541; *Antiquities* 13, 277-279.

¹⁰¹ There is some exaggeration in DABROWA's description of the extent of the rule of Antiochus IX (2007, 450-451; 2010, 72); coins of the latter from the mint of Ascalon found at Marisa and Tel Beer-Sheba testify to trade connections between these latter two and Ascalon, not to the king's rule over Idumaea and the Negev.

¹⁰² Sidon was granted autonomy by Antiochus IX in 110 and started issuing its own municipal coinage (HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 541-542).

ing the Seleucid familial wars (*Antiquities* 13,273), Josephus writes as follows:

Moreover, when Cyzicenus ravaged his land, [Hyrcanus] openly displayed his plan (*probairesis*), and seeing that Antiochus was bereft of his allies from Egypt and that both he and his brother were fairing badly in their struggle with each other, he was disdainful of both of them¹⁰³.

Some ravaging of Judaeian territory by troops of Antiochus Cyzicenus, in their advance along the coast of Palestine in 113, may well explain its mention here. The 'plan' in this context quite obviously refers to Hyrcanus' expansionist policy, and 'openly displayed' to his carrying it out in practice. The 'allies from Egypt' were probably the contingent the Ptolemaic princess Cleopatra IV had brought to Antiochus IX as a dowry; Antiochus became 'bereft' of that contingent as a result of his defeat in the battle he fought against his half-brother in 112, following which Cleopatra was captured and cruelly put to death. Now, let us look at the structure of Josephus' description of Hyrcanus' wars. The first part (13,254-258) is interrupted by: a) an account of Hyrcanus' initiative to get support from the Romans (13,259-266); b) a review of the Seleucid familial wars (13,267-272); and c) an explanation of Hyrcanus' attitude towards these wars (13,273-274). The first unit repeats, with a few additions, the account in *War* (1,62-63) of the military campaigns of Hyrcanus; one way or another, these accounts stemmed from one source, most probably Nicolaus of Damascus' *Universal History*. The information for units b and c, on the other hand, must have been derived from other sources¹⁰⁴, and it is obvious that Josephus introduces this information at this point in order to provide the reader with a better knowledge and understanding of the political circumstances surrounding Hyrcanus' motivation, preparation and decision to embark on expansionist wars at the time he did. That is to say, unit c is meant to explain the whole series of campaigns and not merely to present the reasons for the attack on Samaria that is reported in the sequence (13,275-281); and unit b sheds light on a major preparatory diplomatic step Hyrcanus had taken in anticipation of the opportunity to set out to war. That was not the first time that Hyrcanus applied to Rome, and to comprehend his sending of an em-

¹⁰³ *Antiquities* 13,274. Marcus' translation in Loeb Classical Library, with several changes.

¹⁰⁴ Generally speaking, Josephus used his *War*, the material for which he had derived from the *Universal History* of Nicolaus of Damascus, as his basic source for the description of the period of Hyrcanus in *Antiquities*, occasionally reading again the work of Nicolaus and adding information he found in the *Ta meta Polubion* of Strabo, which sometimes resulted in puzzling contaminated versions. It seems that the *senatus consultum* (unit b) was taken from a collection of public documents which Josephus, or one of the historians he followed, consulted without being able to date it precisely in the reign of Hyrcanus. See RAJAK 1981, 72 [= 2002, 88].

bassy to get support from the Romans it is necessary to examine his relations with Rome from the very beginning.

6. *Hyrchanus and Rome*

Hyrchanus' attitude towards Rome cannot be elucidated on the basis of explicit evidence, and it is only indirectly that one can grasp what position he held concerning the relations with Rome. As is generally agreed, the author of *I Maccabees* was a loyal supporter of the Hasmonaean dynasty, an official historian according to one view, and it is worth noting that he accords Hyrchanus and his achievements with the highest esteem¹⁰⁵. He composed his work a few years after 129 and before 113, that is, during the reign of John Hyrchanus. What he writes about Rome naturally reflects the attitude maintained in the Hasmonaean court towards the super power that had taken control of the Mediterranean by that time; the eulogistic image of Rome he portrays in his work (8,1-16)¹⁰⁶, in connection with Judas Maccabaeus' sending of an embassy to establish an alliance with Rome, may be taken as representative of the contemporary Hasmonaean regime's position. The encomium evinces admiration for the Romans and their spectacular military and political achievements, as well as belief in Rome's fair treatment of her friends and capability to make and depose kings and rulers: 'the Romans were powerful people ... and well-disposed towards all who attached themselves to them' (8,1); 'they had destroyed and enslaved the remaining kingdoms and islands who had risen up against them' (8,11); 'they preserved friendship with their friends and those who relied on them' (8,12); 'those whom they wish to help and to make kings, they let be kings, and those whom they wish – they remove' (8,13). The lesson is sharp and clear: given Rome's overwhelming power and supremacy, a player in the international arena should co-operate with her and consistently keep her friendship in order to succeed politically. That such a lesson indeed guided Hyrchanus can be inferred from his attempts to get Rome's reconfirmation of the Judaeo-Roman friendship alliance, as well as backing for his political and military goals and ventures, and three *senatus consulta* cited

¹⁰⁵ *I Maccabees* 13,53: 'And Simon saw that John his son was a man and he made him commander-in-chief of all his forces'; 16,4-10: Hyrchanus gets full credit for the crushing defeat of Cendebeus, Antiochus VII's general. *Pace* GOLDSTEIN 1976, 520, John, not Simon, must be the subject of the actions performed in this account, and note that the addition of the name of Simon in his translation of verses 4 and 6 has no basis in the Greek text. Note also that Josephus' account of the war against Cendebeus (*War* 1,52-53; *Antiquities* 13,225-227), referred to by Goldstein, deviates from *I Maccabees* and must have been derived from a different source. Cf. ABEL 1949, 278-279; RAPPAPORT 2004, 347.

¹⁰⁶ On this encomium see SORDI 1975; FLUSSER 1983, esp. 156-158; DELCOR 1991.

by Josephus testify to his doing so. In the following the decrees are presented in chronological order and interpreted in correlation with the circumstances of Hyrcanus' rise to power after the murder of Simon and with what is now known about his expansionist campaigns¹⁰⁷.

a)

Josephus reports that while settling the affairs of Judaea in 47, Julius Caesar instructed the consuls to record the permission he granted Hyrcanus II to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem (*Antiquities* 14,144), and the historian cites a *senatus consultum* seemingly decreed accordingly (14,145-148). The cited *s.c.*, however, has nothing to do with Caesar's instruction to the consuls; it deals with the request of three envoys of the Jews, 'good men and allies', to renew the friendship (*philia*) they had formed with Rome and to receive letters to autonomous cities and kings 'in order that their country and ports shall be secure and suffer no harm'. The senate, presided by the praetor Lucius Valerius, son of Lucius, and convened in the temple of Concordia on the Ides of December, decided to confirm all the requests and to accept the golden shield, worth fifty thousand gold pieces, presented by the envoys; two senatorial witnesses were present at the writing of the decree. Now, no praetor, or senator for that matter, by the name Lucius Valerius, son of Lucius, is known from the period of Caesar's dictatorship¹⁰⁸. Moreover, the number of witnesses at the writing of the senate's decrees was at least eight in Caesar's time, save for once when it was six; earlier, in the second century and until the 70's of the first century, the usual number of the witnesses was two or three¹⁰⁹. Also, in 47 the Jews did not possess any ports since Pompeius had taken all the coastal towns from Judaea in 63. It emerges that the *s.c.* cited by Josephus was mistakenly dated in the time of Caesar, most probably because of a confusion between Hyrcanus I and Hyrcanus II¹¹⁰.

¹⁰⁷ The circumstances and dates of these *senatus consulta* have been extensively debated since the 19th century, but references to former studies are here selective. I consider the decrees as basically genuine documents, but the question of their authenticity cannot be discussed here. STERN's study (1991, 78-95) probably provides the best analysis of the decrees. Although the present discussion differs in some respects from my former treatment of the decrees (SHATZMAN 1999, 66-70), the main conclusions remain the same.

¹⁰⁸ For the lists of magistrates in the years 48-44 see BROUGHTON 1951-1952, II, 272-334.

¹⁰⁹ See VIERECK 1888, 104 with n. 3; RICCOBONO 1941, nos. 30-31; 33-37 (cf. *Cic. Fam.* 8,8,5-6); SHERK 1969, 7 with n. 12, and nos. 1-2; 4-5; 7; 9-10; 15; 18; 22-23; 26-27; 29. MOMMSEN's treatment of the number of the witnesses (1887-1888, III.2, 1005) is incomplete.

¹¹⁰ See esp. STERN 1991, 79-82. It was claimed by Th. Mommsen and several other scholars that the *s.c.* must have postdated 121 because it was only in that year that the temple of Concordia, mentioned in the decree, was built. However, there existed at least one temple of Concordia even before 121; see L. RICHARDSON 1992, 98-99; cf., e.g., ABEL 1949, 275-276; GIOVANNINI - MÜLLER 1971, 161 n. 16; SCHÜRER 1973, 196 n. 17.

Clarification of three matters can show that the cited decree was indeed passed in the time of Hyrcanus I, and more precisely in 135 or 134. To begin with, the identity of Lucius Valerius, son of Lucius; only two magistrates by this name are known to have held the praetorship in the period from the time of Simon (142-135/4) onwards, namely Lucius Valerius Flaccus, consul 131, and his son and namesake, consul 100, who may be excluded from consideration for in *ca.* 103, the probable year of his praetorship, there was no reason for the Jews to send an embassy to Rome out of concern about the safety of ports¹¹¹. Given his aristocratic position, and under the terms of Lex Villia, the consul of 131 will have held the praetorship in 134, possibly 135 if his advance to the consulate was delayed for a year; objections to his identification as the praetor of the *senatus consultum* are not cogent¹¹².

Secondly, some similarity, in content and in names of the envoys, between

¹¹¹ See BROUGHTON 1951-1952, I, 490; 500 (consul 131); 574 (consul 100); II, 628-632 (list of all the known Valerii).

¹¹² Attempts were made, because of the resemblances between *I Maccabees'* account (15,16-24) of the Jewish embassy to Rome that included Numenius son of Antiochus and the senate's decree cited by Josephus, which mentions the same person, to date the praetorship of Lucius Valerius c. 139 (e.g. MOMIGLIANO 1931, 157; FISCHER 1970, 97-98; EILERS 2008, 212 with n. 9). However, a seven-year interval – let alone a ten-year interval if the praetorship is dated c. 142 (e.g. SIEVERS 1990, 117) – between the praetorship and the consulate for an aristocrat like Lucius Valerius Flaccus is extremely improbable (cf. BROUGHTON 1951-1952, I, 491-492 n. 2). We have almost complete lists of praetors for the period 197 (the first year six praetors were elected) to 166 when Livy's account breaks off. For the period 165-131 we have the names of 91 praetors, out of about 210 who served in these years, but the year of office of 45 of those 91 is not known. A check on praetors-elected consuls (= PEC) in the period 197-180 (based on the data in Broughton) gives the following results:

interval	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PEC	3	10	5	5	5	1	1	2	1	1	1	1

The average interval is 4.2 years; 64% of the *praetorii* reached the consulate within four-year interval. For the period 179-131, that is when the compulsory two-year interval between the praetorship and consulate of the Lex Villia of 180 was in force, the data (taken from Broughton, not including those whose praetorship is listed as 'the latest possible date') are as follows:

Interval	2	3	4	5	6	7	9
PEC	17	7	5	3	5	1	1

The average interval is 3.4 years; 74% of the *praetorii* reached the consulate within four-year interval. It is worth mentioning that Lucius Valerius Flaccus was Flamen Martialis, a priesthood he probably got in 154 (BROUGHTON 1951-1952, I, 451). The implication is, given the usual procedure in such cases (WISSOWA 1912, 504-506), that the Pontifex Maximus chose Lucius Valerius out of three candidates who were nominated by the pontifical college, which is telling of his elevated social connections. All in all, both the statistics and Valerius Flaccus' social standing strongly support 135 or 134 as the year of his praetorship. Besides, the whole argument depends on misinterpretation of the similarity between the letter of the consul Lucius in *I Maccabees* 15,16-24 and the senate's decree (below).

the letter in *I Maccabees* (15,16-24) and the Josephan *senatum consultum*, has led many scholars to draw contradictory conclusions¹¹³. According to one view, the letter in *I Maccabees* is a forgery; the senate's decree is an authentic document and is to be dated in the first year of Hyrcanus' reign¹¹⁴. Conversely, several scholars argue that the two documents deal with the same event, namely a Jewish embassy that came to Rome in 142; if so, the senate's decree has nothing to do with Hyrcanus I¹¹⁵. In point of fact, as the following table demonstrates, the letter and the *s.c.* contain both similarities and dissimilarities, which reveal that the two documents are connected to two different embassies to Rome, one that arrived in 142 and one at the beginning of Hyrcanus' rule¹¹⁶.

<i>I Maccabees</i> 15,16-24	<i>Antiquities</i> 14,145-148
a) Letter of the Roman consul Lucius	a) Decree of the senate, presided by the praetor Lucius Valerius, son of Lucius
b) The envoys are emissaries of the High-Priest Simon and of the Jews	b) The envoys are emissaries of the Jews; Simon is not mentioned
c) The preamble is short and addressed to king Ptolemy (VIII Euergetes Physcon)	c) The preamble is detailed, specifying date and place of meeting, witnesses, names of the Jewish envoys, all in line with the style of <i>s.c.</i>
d) Numenius son of Antiochus is the only envoy directly mentioned (15,15; cf. 14,24); another member of the embassy was Antipater son of Jason (14,22; cf. 12,16)	d) The embassy consists of Alexander son of Jason, Numenius son of Antiochus, and Alexander son of Dorotheus
e) The value of the golden shield given by the Jewish envoys is 10000 minas (= 50000 staters according to most commentators)	e) The 50000 pieces of gold value of the shield is considered equivalent to the value of the golden shield mentioned in <i>I Maccabees</i>
f) Letters are sent directly to kings, cities and countries, with a copy to Simon	f) The Jewish envoys request to receive letters to various states
g) The main goal of the embassy is renewal of a formerly existing friendship alliance	g) The main goal of the embassy is renewal of a formerly existing friendship alliance

¹¹³ For a clear exposition of the problems and literature see SCHÜRER 1973, 194-197.

¹¹⁴ See, e.g., GIOVANNINI - MÜLLER 1971, 160-163.

¹¹⁵ See, e.g., SCHÜRER 1973, 196; GRUEN 1984, 749-750.

¹¹⁶ I mainly follow RAPPAPORT 2004, 336-343.

The dissimilarities noticeable in items a and c can be explained on the assumption that the letter of the consul was based on the senate's decree, but need not have repeated all the details mentioned in the decree. That is to say, these dissimilarities do not necessarily rule out the possibility that the two documents were generated by the activity of the one and same embassy. In addition, the similarities between several of the items compared could suggest that the two documents dealt with the same event, notably e and g, and also b and f if one is ready to ignore the absence of Simon (in the *s.c.*) in these two cases. However, these similarities are misleading. Polybius reports, on three occasions, the donation of a crown worth ten thousand gold pieces: by Rhodes, Ariarathes V king of Cappadocia and the Seleucid king Demetrius I, all three cases within eight years¹¹⁷. No one has claimed that the identical value of the crowns indicates that such a crown was donated only once and that the three reports should be amalgamated; this holds good for item e: a shield worth 50000 gold pieces may well have been donated on two occasions within eight years. As for item g, the renewal of alliances or treaties with Rome was a normal procedure, and there is no need to refer both reports of such a diplomatic act to the same event; I shall come back to this point. The similarities in items b and f are useless as a means to disassociate one embassy from another because the details reported could be mentioned in any Roman official document (a *s.c.* or a letter of a magistrate) emanating from the appearance of foreign delegations before the Roman senate. On the other hand, the absence of any reference to Simon in the senate's decree may well point out that this document, unlike the letter of Lucius, had nothing to do with Simon. Indeed the confusion between Hyrcanus I and Hyrcanus II, by Josephus or his source, is only explicable if the senate's decree related to an embassy sent by Hyrcanus, but not by Simon. As well item d requires the separation of the senate's decree in Josephus from the mission recorded in *I Maccabees*. The fact that none of Numenius' colleagues in the embassy mentioned in the senate's decree is identical with his fellow-envoy in *I Maccabees* betrays the existence of two different embassies. On the other hand, that Numenius is mentioned both in Lucius' letter and the *s.c.* is in line with the preference of the Hasmoneans to employ time and again the same persons or members of the same family, apparently endowed with the right qualifications, on diplomatic missions, which was the practice prevalent in the Hellenistic world¹¹⁸. Additional indications that each of the two documents is a product of a different mission are the extradition clause in *I Maccabees* (16,21) and the concern for the safety

¹¹⁷ Polybius 30,5,4 (Rhodes); 31,32,3 (Ariarathes V); 32,2,1 (Demetrius I).

¹¹⁸ For instance, Apollonius son of Alexander participated in two delegations, one *ca.* 128-125 (below *b*) and one *ca.* 113 (below *c*). See GERA 1988, 263-264.

of ports in *Antiquities* (14,147); the first is absent from the senate's decree but accords with the inner political situation at the time of Simon¹¹⁹, and the latter is absent from Lucius' letter but is relevant to the external political situation in the first year of Hyrcanus' rule. In sum, the *senatus consultum* cited by Josephus was passed in response to a mission sent by John Hyrcanus a short time after his takeover of the rule in Judaea.

Finally, the renewal of the friendship with Rome. It was customary to renew alliances or friendship treaties with Rome on several, varied occasions, including the accession to the throne of rulers; in the latter case it was a diplomatic-political action, probably not legally required¹²⁰. Soon after he succeeded his father Philippos V in 179 Perseus sent envoys to the senate to renew the friendship treaty with Rome (Livy 42,58,9), Antiochus IV did the same in 173, two years after he ascended to the Seleucid throne (Livy 42,6,6-8); the request of Ariarathes V, king of Cappadocia, to renew the friendship treaty with Rome was approved by the senate in 163, the year of his ascendancy to the throne¹²¹. It is then entirely consistent with the custom of foreign rulers to seek the recognition of Rome that Simon acted to renew the friendship treaty with Rome in 142, soon after he took over the rule in Judaea in consequence of the downfall of his brother Jonathan, and that Hyrcanus did the same in 135/4¹²². But of course for Hyrcanus it was not merely a matter of political-diplomatic protocol; as explained above, in 135/4 there were good reasons to be apprehensive for the safety of Judaea and the ports mentioned in the *senatus consultum*.

b)

The second decree is inserted by Josephus after his report of the death of Antiochus VII (*Antiquities* 13,259-266). We learn that Jewish envoys (Simon son of Dositheus, Apollonius son of Alexander and Diodorus son of Jason) appeared before the senate, submitting several requests: a) the return of 'Joppa, and ports, and Gazara and Pegae and whatever other cities and places Antiochus took from them in war, contrary to the decree of the senate'¹²³;

¹¹⁹ See RAPPAPORT 1995, including a defense (279-280) of the reliability of the extradition clause (*contra* MOMIGLIANO 1931, 155) and a reasonable explanation of the list of kings and countries that received copies of the letter of the consul Lucius (281-283).

¹²⁰ See TÄUBLER 1913, 121-126; CIMMA 1976, 146-156. That the renewal of friendship was not legally necessary is argued by HEUSS 1933, 46-48 (*contra* MOMMSEN 1887-1888, III.1, 593-595, arguing that a friendship treaty with a king expired on the latter's death).

¹²¹ Polybius 31,3; Diod. Sic. 31,19,8; Livy, *Per.* 46.

¹²² Cf. BROUGHTON 1951-1952, I, 491-492 n. 2. The objection of GIOVANNINI - MÜLLER (1971, 166-167) to regard Lucius' letter and the senate's decree as attesting the renewal of the friendship treaty is based on arguments partly misconceived and partly wrong.

¹²³ *Antiquities* 13,261. According to one view, the 'ports' mentioned here are anchorages adjacent to Joppa (KASHER 1990, 118).

b) the prohibition of the marching of royal soldiers through the Jewish territory 'and that of their subjects'¹²⁴; c) the annulment of certain decrees issued by Antiochus during the war, contrary to the decree of the senate (13,262); d) the sending of Roman envoys in order to bring about the restitution of the places taken by Antiochus; e) the assessment of the damage caused by the war (13,263). In their request they referred to the friendship and alliance existing between the two peoples and asked to be given letters to 'kings and free cities' to secure their return to Judaea (13,263). Convened by the praetor Fannius son of Marcus on 13th of February, the senate re-confirmed the friendship and the alliance, but postponed discussion of the specific requests until it was free from other concerns. That is to say, the senate did nothing to help the Jews to implement their requests, and obviously no legates were sent to intervene in the Hasmonaean-Seleucid conflict underlying the requests.

Proposals to date this decree of the senate in conjunction with another *s.c.* cited by Josephus and mentioning Antiochus son of Antiochus (see *c*) below) are untenable because the circumstances of the two cases differ substantially in certain respects and the responses of the senate to the Jewish requests are essentially poles apart¹²⁵; the dating of these two *s.c.* has to be determined independently of each other. A major clue for the dating the present decree is the name of the praetor. Two magistrates by that name are known from this period¹²⁶; one is C. Fannius M.f., the consul of 122, and hence a praetor by 125; the other is C. Fannius C.f., who held the praetorship some time before 118, that is, in the 120's¹²⁷; it emerges that the praetorship of both most probably fell after the demise of Antiochus VII in late 129, and hence the decree was passed in about 128-125¹²⁸. Still, many scholars proposed to associate the senate's decree with Antiochus Sidetes' invasion of Judaea and siege of Jerusalem¹²⁹; Tessa Rajak's article on this topic is probably the most comprehensive attempt in this direction¹³⁰. According to Rajak, the cessation of the siege was

¹²⁴ This is perhaps a reference to the local population of Akkaron and Adida (*I Maccabees* 10,89; 12,38).

¹²⁵ For a survey of previous discussions and views see SCHÜRER 1973, 204-206 with n. 7.

¹²⁶ See the list of Fannii in BROUGHTON 1951-1952, II, 564-565.

¹²⁷ BROUGHTON 1951-1952, I, 519 n. 2; BROUGHTON 1986, 89-90; SUMNER 1973, 53-55; 171-174. Rajak's assertion that 'neither the identification of the Fannius in question nor the careers of the Fannii of the period are secure' (RAJAK 1981, 74 [= 2002, 90]) is incompatible with the evidence and arguments presented by Broughton and Sumner.

¹²⁸ See esp. STERN 1965, 148-151; STERN 1991, 83-87, refuting proposals to date the document in the time of Antiochus VII (e.g. F. MÜNZER, "Hermes" 55, 1920, 439; GINSBURG 1928, 65-77).

¹²⁹ It strains credulity that soon after the withdrawal of Antiochus from Jerusalem Hyrcanus would have sent the delegation to Rome, thus jeopardizing the hostages he delivered to Antiochus (*contra*, e.g., DABROWA 2010, 70).

¹³⁰ RAJAK 1981, esp. 72-79 [= 2002, esp. 88-96].

unexpected and the terms of the treaty were much less than what Antiochus wished to achieve by this campaign, namely to inflict a total defeat on John Hyrcanus¹³¹. She conjectures that the termination of hostilities and the character of the settlement, allegedly favourable to the Jewish side¹³², were due to Roman intervention reflected in the *senatus consultum* cited by Josephus, which she dates to the time of the siege. Ingenious as it is, however, Rajak's treatment of the sources does not stand scrutiny. To begin with, not only the lifting of the siege is not included in the Jewish requests, which would be the most urgent problem needed to be solved if Rajak were right, but it is also clear that the senate refrained from taking any action on this occasion; no legates or a message were sent to comply with the appeal of the Jewish delegation¹³³. Secondly, Rajak's proposal to interpret the phrase *psephisthenta hupo Antiochou* of the *s.c. (Antiquities 13,262)* as a reference to senate's decrees passed in behalf of Antiochus is based on the emendation of *hupo* into *huper*, and this on the ground that Josephus is an author who generally observes elision in prepositions. It is indeed true that usually Josephus observes elision in his usage of *hupo*, but certainly not invariably; there is a sufficient number of cases to show that occasionally he deviates from this rule, and some of the examples are telling¹³⁴. Moreover, the emendation is superfluous because, *pace* Rajak, the sense of the passage is intelligible¹³⁵. Thirdly, as Bezalel Bar-Kochva has shown, Rajak's assessment of the military situation and of the terms of the peace settlement is mistaken: Antiochus had achieved his main goals in the surrender agreement and there was no point in prolonging the siege, especially given the logistic difficulties involved. In other words, the termination of the war had nothing to do with the *senatus consultum* or, for that matter, the supposed Roman intervention¹³⁶.

Do the above listed requests of the Jewish embassy (p. 61 f.) accord with the political and military conditions obtaining in Syria and Judaea following the death of Antiochus Sidetes? Four points need to be clarified before answering this question. Firstly, Antiochus' conditions for the termination of the war included the surrender of arms, the paying of tribute for 'Joppa and the other cities round about Judaea', and the stationing of a Seleucid gar-

¹³¹ RAJAK 1981, 66; 71-72 [= 2002, 82; 87-88].

¹³² For a different evaluation of the terms of the agreement, subordination of Hyrcanus to the Seleucid king, see DABROWA 2010, 69.

¹³³ RAJAK's conjectures to explain away these obstacles to her theory (1981, 77 n. 20; 78 [= 2002, 93 n. 20; 94]) are not persuasive at all, and see BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 418 with n. 112.

¹³⁴ RAJAK 1981, 76 [= 2002, 92]. See, e.g., *War* 1,155; 1,246; 1,388; 1,489 (*hupo Alexandrou*; contrast 1,502: *bup' Alexandrou*); *Antiquities* 13,91; 13,106; 13,275; 13,314 (*hupo aktratou*; contrast *War* 1,81: *bup' aktratou*); 13,320 (contrast 13,138); 13,365; 13,412.

¹³⁵ RAJAK 1981, 73-76 [= 2002, 90-92]; *contra*: BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 430 n. 114.

¹³⁶ See BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 435-437; cf. also HOOVER 2003, 30-31.

ri son in Jerusalem; the terms were accepted by the Jews, save for the last one (*Antiquities* 13,246-247). Secondly, Antiochus put Jerusalem under blockade after having ravaged Judaea (*Antiquities* 13,236), and it stands to reason that as part of the preparations for the siege he had occupied places controlling the roads leading from the coast to Jerusalem; the garrisoning of ports, notably Joppa, and towns like Gazara and Pegae was indispensable for the security of the supplying lines needed for the conduct of the siege. Thirdly, the return of Joppa and the other cities in question is not included in the terms of the peace agreement, while the tribute mentioned probably refers to the tribute in arrears since the Jewish occupation of those cities. It is worth recalling that already at the time of Simon Antiochus had made clear his claim on Joppa, Gazara, the Akra and other places outside the borders of Judaea occupied by the Jews, demanding payment of the tribute due thereof, a demand which was rejected by Simon (*I Maccabees* 15,28-31.35). It appears, therefore, that there is no basis for the argument of not a few scholars that Antiochus VII withdrew the Seleucid forces garrisoning those cities and places after the termination of the war, handing them over to the Jews, or violated the terms of the peace agreement by keeping them under his rule¹³⁷.

Now to the requests addressed to the senate by the Jewish delegation that came to Rome sometime *ca.* 128-125. There is no reason to doubt that the cities, ports and other places mentioned in the first request were still held by Antiochus VII at the time of his death; subsequently they were ruled in succession by the claimants to the Seleucid throne, beginning with Demetrius II. From the point of view of the Jewish emissaries, those sites had been taken by Antiochus in defiance of the *senatus consultum* passed in the first year of the rule of Hyrcanus (above *a*), which confirmed the request of the former Jewish delegation that 'their country and ports shall be secure and suffer no harm'; implicitly the request follows Simon's assertion of the Jewish rights to these places (*I Maccabees* 15,33-34). The second request was obviously associated with the marching of Seleucid forces through Jewish territory during the wars waged by Demetrius II and Alexander Zebinas in the period 128-125; no doubt the Jewish population suffered damages as a result of these campaigns, and hence the appeal to the senate to forbid that encroachment upon Jewish land. The third request refers to unspecified decrees issued by Antiochus during the war in Judaea contrary to the same *senatus consultum*; one way or another they must have been detrimental to the Jewish interests but remained in force after the death of Antiochus. All in all, the requests of the delegation fit the situation prevailing in Judaea in the early 120's and constitute an

¹³⁷ Cf. SIEVERS 1990, 138-139 n. 11; BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 437-438; *contra*, e.g., SCHÜRER 1973, 205-206 n. 7; RAJAK 1981, 74 [= 2002, 90].

attempt to undo by a diplomatic means the destructive achievements, from a Jewish angle, of Antiochus VII. The attempt failed because at that stage the senate was not ready to interfere in the Jewish-Seleucid conflict, and consequently the cities, ports and other places mentioned by the Jewish emissaries continued to be under Seleucid rule.

c)

The third *senatus consultum*, embedded in a decree of Pergamum, relates that in response to the matters submitted by a five-member delegation sent by the nation of the Jews and the High Priest Hyrcanus the senate decreed (*edogmatisen*) that 'king Antiochus son of Antiochus shall not wrong the Jews'; that 'forts, ports, territory and what ever else he may have taken from them he shall return'; that 'it shall be allowed to them to export [goods] from their ports'; that 'no one, even a king or a people, exporting [goods] from the territory of the Jews shall be exempt from paying taxes, save for Ptolemy king of the people of Alexandria, for he is our ally and friend'; and that 'the garrison in Joppa shall be expelled, as they have asked' (*Antiquities* 14,247-251). One learns from the decree of Pergamum that a copy of the *s.c.* was sent to Pergamum and that the city resolved to 'do everything possible on behalf of the Jews in accordance with the decree of the senate'; a copy of the decree of Pergamum was sent to Hyrcanus (14,252-255). Pergamum was surely not the only city to have received a copy of the senate's decree, although in this case the list of the addressees is unknown to us (cf. *I Maccabees* 15,22-24).

There was only one 'Antiochus son of Antiochus' in this period, namely Antiochus IX Cyzicenus, the son of Antiochus VII; Antiochus VII was a son of Demetrius I, and Antiochus VIII Grypus a son of Demetrius II. According to some scholars, however, Antiochus IX was not a match for John Hyrcanus, as his failure to help Samaria demonstrates (*Antiquities* 13,277-279), and his poor performance stands in contrast to the conquests referred to in the senate's decree and particularly to his possession of Joppa; in other words, Antiochus IX could not have posed a threat that would have obliged Hyrcanus to apply to Rome for support. It is also questionable that Hyrcanus would have sought Roman protection against the conquests of Antiochus IX at the very time that he himself was engaged in aggressive, expansionist campaigns. Hence, it is argued, the conquests and the events mentioned in the *s.c.* are really those of Antiochus VII and there must be a mistake in the name transmitted in the text of Josephus¹³⁸. On re-examination of all the relevant evidence, however, the whole argument falls apart. As Menahem Stern has already shown about fifty years ago, Antiochus IX's victories in 113 and the first part of 112 gave

¹³⁸ See SCHÜRER 1973, 205-206 with n. 7.

him control of Syria including Joppa and the Jewish ports referred to in the senate's decree; his military achievements in those years perfectly accord with what is ascribed to him in the senate's decree, which has therefore to be dated *ca.* 113¹³⁹. The numismatic evidence accumulated since then (above p. 53 f.), as well as the results of the archaeological excavations, old and recent (above pp. 37-43), have confirmed, directly and indirectly, Stern's dating and interpretation of the *senatus consultum*¹⁴⁰: at the time the decree was passed Antiochus IX seemed very powerful thanks to his recent military and political successes; by that time John Hyrcanus had not yet launched his expansionist campaigns; Antiochus IX' military weakness and poor performance attested during the siege of Samaria are due to his decline after 111 and are not relevant to the situation in 113.

Two other matters reported in the *s.c.* deserve attention. Export of goods from Judaea and the tax collection that goes with it appear to have been of such importance for John Hyrcanus as to be included in the list of requests submitted to the senate in order to have his endorsement for these economic and fiscal activities. This fits in with and gives specific substance to the report of Josephus about the endeavour of Hyrcanus to utilize the peaceful years between the death of Antiochus VII and the launching of his military campaigns for the amassing of wealth (*Antiquities* 13,272-273, above p. 51). This, too, supports the dating of the *s.c.* at the time of Antiochus IX. Secondly, since Hyrcanus failed to attain the senate's support for the restoration of Joppa, and ports and other places mentioned in the former *senatus consultum* (see above *b*)), there is no reason, certainly no evidence, to suppose that he had been able to liberate them from Seleucid control before 113. It is in this light that the present senate's decree has to be understood; that is to say, from the point of view of Hyrcanus and the Jews Antiochus IX was in possession of Joppa, forts, ports, and territory that legally were theirs; in reality he had taken control of them thanks to his victories over Antiochus VIII Grypus.

John Hyrcanus must have been planning his military campaigns for some time before 113, and his enlistment of mercenaries was probably part of the preparations for the war. True, Josephus relates that the employment of mercenaries was somewhat connected to the peace agreement with Antiochus VII, that is, *ca.* 134; he also reports that Hyrcanus extracted money from King David's tomb to be able to pay the Seleucid king and to hire mercenaries¹⁴¹.

¹³⁹ STERN 1991, 88 ff. and esp. 92-93. For the rejection of the dating of this *s.c.* to the time of Antiochus VII see also EILERS 2008, 214-215.

¹⁴⁰ *Contra* BARAG 1992-1993, 9, who misrepresents Stern's interpretation. Cf. BAR-KOCHVA 1996, 291-292, who ignores Barag's inference.

¹⁴¹ *War* 1,61; *Antiquities* 13,249; cf. 7,393: the looting of the tomb is associated with the payment to Antiochus VII, but there is no mention of the mercenaries.

The story, however, is utterly unreliable, firstly because the treasures allegedly kept in David's tomb, if there were ever treasures there, could not have survived the conquest of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in 586; secondly, to all intents and purposes it is a defamatory story, invented by Nicolaus of Damascus to justify the misconceived and vain attempt of Herod to loot what was considered as the grave of David at his time or by the opponents of the Hasmonaeans to denigrate the memory of Hyrcanus. That is to say, the hiring of mercenaries is authentic; its association with the peace treatment and the alleged looting of David's tomb is part of the pejorative rumour and cannot be trusted¹⁴². In any case, the initial spectacular success of Cyzicenus occasioned a good opportunity for Hyrcanus to apply to Rome. He did not ask for material support, but it was a good diplomatic step on his part to obtain the backing of the senate before he started conducting expansionist wars. Now an honorary inscription for Cn. Papirius Carbo, consul in 113, was set in Delos by Antiochus VIII; whether the inscription was set during the praetorship, consulate or pro-consulate of Carbo it testifies to the close connection between the two¹⁴³. The passing of a senate's decree directed against Antiochus IX will have gratified Antiochus VIII and his friends in the senate, and it has been suggested, on the basis of the present and two other inscriptions, that the return of Antiochus VIII to Syria was helped by Rome¹⁴⁴. In addition, the Senate's concern for the financial interests of Ptolemy 'king of the Alexandrians', i.e., Ptolemy IX¹⁴⁵, reveals a bit of the factors that were involved in the passing of the decree. It is well to bear in mind that Cleopatra IV, the divorcee of Ptolemy IX Lathyrus, fled from Egypt and married Antiochus IX, bringing Ptolemaic troops from Cyprus as her dowry (Justin *Philippics* 39,3,2-3). Antiochus Cyzicenus' cooperation with Cleopatra will surely have been regarded as an hostile act by the authorities in Alexandria, and it may well be significant that his hold on Ascalon was probably less than a year, apparently a result of the close ties Ptolemaic

¹⁴² See BAR-KOCHVA 2010, 405-407 with n. 20, refuting FISCHER 1983. Cf. also SIEVERS 1990, 139-140. On Herod and David's tomb see *Antiquities* 7,394; 16,179. The credibility of the story is also belied by the evidence on the wealth of Simon (*I Maccabees* 14,31; 15,32).

¹⁴³ DITTENBERGER 1903, no. 260; HATZFELD - ROUSSELL 1910, 395; STERN 1991, 93-94 with n. 100.

¹⁴⁴ BEVAN 1902, 255; HATZFELD - ROUSSELL 1910, 396 with n. 1

¹⁴⁵ Underlying the sobriquet 'king of the Alexandrians' is presumably the active participation of the people of Alexandria in the familial Ptolemaic struggles, mentioned, *inter alia*, in Josephus, *Against Apion* 2,49-53; see BARCLAY 2007, 196-198. Note, however, that in the *Lex de provinciis praetoriis* of 100, known only from Greek copies, the phrase used is 'the king reigning at Alexandria and Egypt' (*basilea ton en Alexandria kai Aiguptōi basileuonta*); see CRAWFORD 1996, 239 ll. 39-40; 240 ll. 8-9. The sobriquet in the Josephus' text of the *s.c.* might then be a free literary rendering of the formal Latin appellation of the king. Ptolemy IX Philometor Soter II Lathyrus reigned with his mother Cleopatra III from 116 until she finally expelled him from Egypt in 107.

Egypt had with that city¹⁴⁶. All in all, it seems that Hyrcanus' success in attaining the senate's decree against Antiochus IX on this occasion was due in part to senatorial support of Antiochus VIII Grypus and to circles at Rome interested in helping the interests of the Ptolemaic king¹⁴⁷.

In sum: we have three senate's decrees for the period of John Hyrcanus: the first – about 134; the second (the Fannius' decree) – about 128-125, following the death of Antiochus VII; and the third, concerning Antiochus IX – about 113. On the first occasion the Jewish envoys asked for the renewal of the friendship with Rome and for the senate's support of the safety of their country and ports. In the other two cases, the envoys requested the senate's help in regaining the possession of specific places and territories, no doubt lost in consequence of the peace agreement with Antiochus VII. The implication is that those territories, notably Joppa, were re-conquered by Hyrcanus in his wars from 112 onwards, which is not reported by Josephus.

7. Conclusion

The first recorded contact between the Jews of Judaea and Roman officials is a letter which was sent 'to the *demos* of the Jews' by Roman legates who had arrived in Syria in 164; in that letter they endorsed the terminating of the religious persecution made by the powerful Seleucid minister Lysias, and promised to support their case at Antioch¹⁴⁸. Three years later the senate agreed to accept the request of the emissaries of Judas Maccabaeus for a treaty of friendship and alliance with Rome¹⁴⁹. Both the letter and the alliance con-

¹⁴⁶ According to BELLINGER (1949, 68), Cleopatra III probably helped Antiochus VIII to win Ascalon; on the short rule of Antiochus Cyzicenus in Ascalon see also HOUGHTON - LORBER - HOOVER 2008, 547-548. On the involvement of Romans and the Ptolemaic authorities in the efforts to fight back Antiochus IX see esp. STERN 1991, 94-95. None of the sources cited by Dabrowa (Pomp. Trog. *Prolog.* 39; *Antiquities* 13,270-273; Justin, *Philippics* 39,2,10; Appian, *Syrian Wars* 68) supports his claim that the Egyptian kings aided Antiochus IX (DABROWA 2007, 450-451 with n. 5; 2010, 72). Pace Dabrowa, Cleopatra's flight from Egypt, caused by her forced divorce from Ptolemy IX Lathyrus, and marriage to Antiochus IX is evidence for enmity, not cooperation.

¹⁴⁷ The visit of the prominent senator Lucius Memmius, probably a *praetorius*, in Egypt in 112, where he was sumptuously entertained at public expense, exemplifies the interest Roman senators had in Egypt at that time. See BROUGHTON 1951-1952, I, 539; BROUGHTON 1986, 141-142; SUMNER 1973, 90.

¹⁴⁸ *II Maccabees* 11,4-7. See SHATZMAN 1999, 60.

¹⁴⁹ *I Maccabees* 8,17-32; *II Maccabees* 4,11; Diod. Sic. 40,2; *War* 1,38 (with a chronological error); *Antiquities* 12,415-419; Justin, *Philippics* 36,3,9; for my view on the authenticity and significance of this treaty see SHATZMAN 1999, 59-64. See now also RAPPAPORT 2004, 226-231. After surveying exhaustively the sources and the modern literature Zollschan concludes that what Judas' delegation achieved in 161 was a senate's declaration of *libertas* for the Jews, not a treaty (ZOLLSCHAN 2005, esp. 34-37). Here I cannot delve into the thesis of Zollschan but three brief comments are in place. Firstly, one cannot exclude

stituted a Roman declaration that the *demos*, or *ethnos*, of the Jews belonged in the sphere of Rome's interests. Later, about 143, Jonathan, too, sent envoys to renew the alliance treaty with Rome¹⁵⁰ and Simon followed suit by sending envoys to confirm the alliance a short time later¹⁵¹. Evidently, as said already above, Hyrcanus followed a well-established Hasmonaean policy in his appeals to Rome.

What were the goals of those alliances? What were the parties to the treaties to gain by them? These questions have often been asked and debated, and not only in connection with the treaties between Rome and Judaea, but also with not a few other small polities. Indeed, as some scholars claim, they may have had more symbolic than practical character, but it would be wrong to infer that for the Romans they were devoid of any significance¹⁵². At least they served to advertise and affirm Rome's *imperium*, *imperium nostrum*, that is to say, the concept and claim that Roman overall supremacy or control comprised all the Mediterranean countries, including the great Hellenistic kingdoms, a concept that came to prevail at Rome during the second century¹⁵³. In practice the concept of *imperium nostrum* manifested itself by the senatorial policy that aimed at undermining the Seleucid power, at helping create a smaller Seleucid kingdom. It has been noticed that the senate did not send legates in response to the Jewish appeals, the usual method applied when it meant business, and hence it has been argued that this should be construed as a sign of its unwillingness to undertake active intervention on behalf of Judaea¹⁵⁴. One may add that from the time of Judas Maccabaeus to the late second century Rome waged war in the eastern Mediterranean only when its direct interests were threatened in Greece and Asia Minor. This interpretation is correct as far as it goes; but it does not show that the senate did not intend its decrees and letters to be considered carefully and obeyed by those who received them. For several, various reasons, including manpower problems that cannot be

the possibility that both a declaration of *liberty* and a treaty were attained by the Jewish delegation in 161, although such an occurrence is unprecedented according to presently known Roman treaties from the second century. Secondly, Zollschan does not explain the mention of *philia* in the sources and her attempt (2005, 11-12) to ascribe the delegation mentioned in *II Maccabees* 4,11 to an otherwise unknown mission to Roman envoys in Antioch in 174 is not persuasive; see D.R. SCHWARTZ 2008, 220-221. Thirdly, *War* 1,38 is based on an Hellenistic source and not on *I Maccabees* and thus constitutes an independent evidence on the delegation to Rome (*contra* ZOLLSCHAN 2005, 12).

¹⁵⁰ *I Maccabees* 12,1-4.16; *Antiquities* 13,163-165.169. See STERN 1995, 60-61; SHATZMAN 1999, 65-66; RAPPAPORT 2004, 284-287.

¹⁵¹ *I Maccabees* 14,16-18; 14,24; 14,40; 15,16-24; *Antiquities* 13,227. For discussion see above § 6 a).

¹⁵² See DAHLHEIM 1977, 178-186; GRUEN 1984, 50-51; KALLET-MARX 1995, 192-197; SHATZMAN 1999, 70.

¹⁵³ SHATZMAN 1999, 54-58. On the concept of *imperium* see now J. RICHARDSON 2008, and for a critical review SHATZMAN 2010.

¹⁵⁴ SHERWIN-WHITE 1984, 77-78; GRUEN 1984, 86-87.

detailed here, it was not ready to apply harsher methods to impose its will and carry out its decrees¹⁵⁵. However, the Hasmonaean appeals and the senate's decrees made an impact: the close relationship of Judaea with Rome was publicized in the Hellenistic world during the period in question and the consciousness that the Jewish people and its rulers were *sub imperio nostro* will have taken roots at Rome.

John Hyrcanus was most probably aware of the first aspect of that development, but one may doubt whether he could have grasped the full meaning of such Roman concepts as *imperium nostrum* and *orbis terrarum*. The fact is that he was a realistic ruler. In ca. 128-125, when the senate did not endorse his request for support to regain Joppa, Gazara, Pegae and other Jewish territories, he did not attempt to take control of those places by force. In about 113 the senate endorsed his request for the restoration of forts, ports and territories held by Antiochus Cyzicenus, as well as the evacuation of the garrison from Joppa, and accordingly sent a threatening letter to the king; this time Hyrcanus launched a series of campaigns that immensely extended the territory under Hasmonaean control. In both cases he resorted to diplomacy to attain his goals; in the early one he was not successful and probably had not yet created the necessary military capacity; in the later case his diplomatic step succeeded and his military power was patently more than adequate for accomplishing the goals. The Romans were indeed far away *geographically*, as Tacitus says, but from the point of view of John Hyrcanus no major decision or action concerning foreign policy could be taken without first getting the blessing of Rome.

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¹⁵⁵ Cf. SHATZMAN 1999, 71.

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