

Antiochos IV and Rome: The Festival at Daphne (Syria), the Treaty of Apameia and the Revival of Seleukid Expansionism in the West

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Abstract

This paper takes as its point of departure the Roman elements in Antiochos IV's procession at Daphne in ca. 165 BC. It will revisit the alleged aim of rivaling the festival celebrated by Paullus at Amphipolis sometime before. I argue that Antiochos, after his two Egyptian campaigns, no longer was in awe of Rome, and that he was conducting (or preparing to conduct) a policy of imperial restoration aimed not only at Iran and Central Asia, but at Asia Minor and Greece as well. The aggressive dynamics of Seleukid imperialism, and the ferocious interstate competition that characterized the world of the Hellenistic dynasties, left no room for balances of power or voluntary admittance of secondary political status: Antiochos still had behind him the vast military and financial resources of Asia. The Daphne Procession conveyed to an audience of ambassadors sent by the Aegean *poleis* a confident image of a most powerful, military successful and universalist empire capable of resuming its role as protector of Greek freedom. At the heart of the procession was the probable self-presentation of King Antiochos, Theos Epiphanes, as the New Dionysos—the victorious conqueror god who brings happiness to the West. Taken together with the king's imperial activities in Asia Minor and mainland Greece, and his open disregard of the military clauses of the Treaty of Apameia, these ideological 'messages' add up to the likelihood that Antiochos was aiming to restore Seleukid power in the Aegean region—the 5,000 Roman-style infantrymen marching at Daphne may have been incorporated into the Seleukid main army in consideration of a possible military confrontation with Rome.

1. Introduction

The famous festival hosted by Antiochos IV Epiphanes at Antioch and Daphne in c. 166 BC was connected to Rome in three respects.¹ First, the festival is

¹ All dates are BC, unless otherwise specified. I am grateful to the editors, Altay Coşkun and David Engels, for their many useful comments on the first draft of this paper. I also wish to express my appreciation for the critical assessment and generous suggestions by the anonymous reviewer from the press. All remaining errors and heresies are mine.

reported to have been organized as a response to the festival at Amphipolis appropriated by Aemilius Paullus in *c.* 167, after the Roman conquest of Macedon. Second, among the many troops said to have marched in the sacrificial procession were 5,000 professional infantrymen armed as Roman legionaries. Third, the ostensible presence of army units from western Asia Minor, as well as a strong force of 64 fully equipped war elephants, seems to defy the ‘military clauses’ of the Treaty of Apameia.²

The sacrificial procession that led from Antioch to the sacred grove of Daphne, is described in relative detail by Polybios.³ He mentions a splendidly outfitted army of more than 40,000 infantry and *c.* 10,000 cavalry. Half of the footmen were Macedonian phalangites, including a royal infantry guard of 5,000 Argyraspides (‘Silver Shields’), and 5,000 shock troops wearing breast-plates and chain armor ‘after the Roman fashion’; they were likely part of the Argyraspides regiment, which usually numbered 10,000. Furthermore, there were troops identified as Thracians, Mysians, Kilikians, and Galatians.⁴ The

² The date of the festival can be established by the fact that it was a reaction to Paullus’ festival at Amphipolis, which had been proclaimed and organized after the Battle of Pydna (June 168) and probably was held in 167; since Antiochos too needed time to prepare and send out sacred embassies to the poleis of Greece and Asia Minor, the Daphne Festival can be dated to the late Summer of 166, but not later; see, conclusively, MITTAG (2006), p. 282–283, and now also ERSKINE (2013), p. 166; cf. WALBANK (1996), p. 125 with n 39. Polybios (30.26.9) moreover associates the festival with the end of the Sixth Syrian War (Summer 168), but the assumption that it took place immediately after the Seleukid army’s return from Egypt in late 168 or early 167 misapprehends this religious happening as a secular ‘victory parade’, or even an imitation of a Roman *triumphus*; so e.g. MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 97–98, who nevertheless dates the festival to Sept./Oct. 166 in an attempt to *also* interpret the alleged ‘parade’ as prologue to Antiochos’ expedition to the Upper Satrapies in 165. Possible connections to the abortive campaign of 165 were treated at greater length by BUNGE (1976), p. 56–57, and BAR-KOCHVA (1989); the latter dates the festival to August 165, discarding the association in the Ancient sources with both the Egyptian campaign of 168 and the Amphipolis Festival of 168/7; GELLER (1991), by contrast, dates the festival to 169, which must also be rejected because this would place the festival *before* Paullus even won the Battle of Pydna.

³ POLYB. 30.25–26 *ap.* ATHEN. 5.194–195; DIOD. SIC. 31.16. The Daphne Festival has attracted much scholarship, often considering it in tandem with Kallixeinos’ account of the first celebration of the Ptolemaia Festival in Alexandria, a century or so earlier (which bears many similarities to the Daphne Festival). Extensive examinations of the festival’s date, significance, and its connection to Rome include BUNGE (1976); BAR-KOCHVA (1989); BELL (2004), p. 138–150; JOHNSON (1993); WALBANK (1996); EDMONSON (1999); CARTER (2001); MITTAG (2006), p. 281–295; STROOTMAN (2007), p. 308–314 and (2014a), p. 251–253; IOSSIF (2011); ERSKINE (2013); and MARI (2017).

⁴ When Kallixeinos in the late third century compiled his much lengthier description of the so-called Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphos, which was part of the Ptolemaia, he had at his disposal detailed (illustrated) documentation commissioned by the royal court and dispatched across the Mediterranean; see MOEVS (1993) and KUTTNER

horsemen included such prestigious units as the cataphracts, ‘Nisaeen’ (*sc.* Iranian) heavy cavalry, ‘selected thousand’ (ἐπίλεκτοι χίλιοι), companions, and the royal horse guard, most of whom wore dresses adorned with purple to emphasize their close connection to the dynasty. Directly associated with the court were *c.* 1,000 *philoï* and 600 (*basilikoi*) *paides*, or royal pages. The 250 pairs of *monomachoi* that were also present have in the past been believed to have been ‘gladiators’, and thus proof for Antiochos’ admiration for Rome; but they were, more likely, athletes, probably from the *poleis*.⁵ There were 1,000 sacrificial cattle and 300 more cattle provided by the sacred embassies from the Aegean *poleis*. Finally, Polybios mentions 140 horse-drawn chariots, two chariots drawn by elephants, and the 64 war elephants already mentioned. Both Polybios and Diodoros mention games and feasts which lasted an entire month. They write selectively about the banqueting that took place after the sacrifices, and both do so specifically to expose Antiochos’ alleged unkingly behavior in front of his many guests.

Concerning the festival in general, Diodoros writes for this occasion that Antiochos:

*[...] brought together the most distinguished men from virtually the whole inhabited world (oikoumenē), adorned all parts of his palace in magnificent fashion, and, having assembled in one spot and, as it were, having put his entire monarchy (basileia) upon a stage, he revealed everything and left [his enemies] ignorant of nothing [...]. In putting on these lavish games and stupendous festival Antiochos outdid all earlier rivals.*⁶

Diodoros then says that the Senate became wary of Antiochos’ political ambitions, and sent an embassy led by Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus to speak

(1999); Polybios may have used such an ‘official’ accounts of the festival, too. On previous relations of Seleukids and Galatians see COŞKUN (2011). The ‘Macedonians’ of course were troops armed and organized in the Macedonian manner, but likely they also had a Macedonian identity—still a strong focus for group cohesion and transregional ‘imperial identity’ that moreover connected these individuals directly to the dynasty and thus to the reigning king: STROOTMAN (2007), p. 272–274 and 324 with JANSEN (1984), p. 56; also see n. 45, below. For discussion of the Seleukid ‘legionaries’ see SEKUNDA (1997) and SEKUNDA (2001), arguing *i.a.* that Roman military success against the classic Macedonian phalanx compelled the Seleukids and Ptolemies to reform their armies.

⁵ CARTER (2001), suggesting, however, that they were local athletes from Syria; GÜNTHER (1989) argues that the *monomachoi* were inserted into the Polybian text by Athenaios. On traveling athletes and connectivity in the Hellenistic and early Roman eastern Mediterranean see most recently VAN NIJF / WILLIAMSON (2015).

⁶ DIOD. SIC. 31.16.1 (transl. C.H. OLDFATHER, Loeb, with adjustments: ἐναντίαν λαβὼν διάθεσιν συνήγαγεν σχεδὸν ἀπὸ πάσης τῆς οἰκουμένης τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους ἄνδρας εἰς τὴν πανήγυριν, καὶ πάντα τὰ τοῦ βασιλείου μέρη διαφέροντως ἐκόσμησεν, εἰς ἓνα δὲ τόπον ἀθροίσας καὶ καθάπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῇ ἀναβίβασας τὴν βασιλείαν ἅπασαν ἐποίησε μηδὲν ἀγνοεῖν τῶν περὶ αὐτόν. On the ‘theatricality’ of Hellenistic kings see STROOTMAN (2014), p. 42–53; cf. earlier CHANIOTIS (1997) and HESBERG (1999).

with the king. Antiochos' ambitions apparently had been expressed quite openly at this international event, and from what we read in the sources, the power pageantry and cosmopolitan symbolism of the procession indeed reaffirmed the Seleukid dynasty's place at the heart of an expansionist, universalistic empire.⁷ The king, however,

*[...] held such friendly conversations with them, that they caught no hint of intrigue on his part, nor anything to indicate such enmity as might be expected to exist covertly after the rebuff that he had received in Egypt. His true policy was not, however, what it appeared to be; on the contrary he was deeply disaffected towards the Romans.*⁸

Antiochos, I argue, remained on friendly terms with Rome because he first needed to reassert his authority in the Iranian highlands by making a tour through the Upper Satrapies, similar to the one earlier made by his father, Antiochos III. The aim of this ritualized progress-cum-military campaign was to reorganize the eastern vassal monarchies, recruit troops and collect tribute and

⁷ For this author's view of the nature of the empire see my entries *s.v.* 'Seleukid Empire' in the online *Encyclopaedia Iranica* (2008) and *Encyclopedia of Ancient History* (2012). Following the seminal work of MANN (1986), and recent studies of pre- and early modern Eurasian empires, I approach the Seleukid Empire not as an impersonal 'state' in Weberian terms but as a shifting transcultural *network* of exchange and exploitation that loosely united a diversity of polities and local elites; cf. STROOTMAN (2013b) and STROOTMAN (2014a), with references. The idea of state borders was unknown beyond the level of the 'city state': like most preceding and succeeding Eurasian world empires, the emic conceptualization of the Seleukid polity saw king's reach as stretching to the very limits of the civilized, human world: the 'Ocean' to the north and south, the Inner Asian steppe and Pamir Mountains to the east—and war in the west; cf. STROOTMAN (2014b) and, for a slightly different interpretation of these – to my mind – *symbolic* world borders, KOSMIN (2014). On universalistic ideology as a means to overcome diversity in the Seleukid Empire see STROOTMAN (2010); STROOTMAN (2017b) and BANG (2012); and cf. ENGELS (2014b) and ENGELS (2017). Empires, though founded on conquest are essentially negotiated enterprises in which interactions with local elites are key: local elites sat on top of communities and often were entangled horizontally with other local elites, and vertically with the imperial court, *viz.*, the dynastic household; see STROOTMAN (2011a); STROOTMAN (2013a) and STROOTMAN (forthcoming a); cf. MA (2000), who perhaps overestimates the power of the Seleukid court to impose its will on cities but does allow for a limited measure of civic-imperial negotiation *after* the integration of a city into the imperial framework. The (mobile) court functioned as a ritualized contact zone where power relations were (re)negotiated and where the empire's imagined universalistic sovereignty was assumed to reside (as we will see, the Daphne Festival functioned as a 'great event' of the court, *i.e.* a widely publicized occasion meant to attract representatives of local polities over large geographical distances). On the integrative agency of the court in the Seleukid Empire see HERMAN (1997); STROOTMAN (2011b) and STROOTMAN (2014a).

⁸ DIOD. SIC. 31.17 (transl. C.H. OLDATHER, Loeb): οἷς ὁ βασιλεὺς ὁμίλησε φιλοφρόνως, ὥστε μηδὲν ὑποπεῦσαι περὶ αὐτοῦ πραγματικὸν ἢ διαφορὰς ἔμφασιν ἔχον τῆς δοκούσης ὑποκουρεῖν ἐκ τῆς κατὰ τὴν Αἴγυπτον γενομένης προσκοπῆς. οὐκ ἦν δὲ τῇ προαρέσει τοιοῦτος, ἀλλὰ καὶ τούναντίον ἀλλοτριώτατα διέκειτο πρὸς Ῥωμαίους.

war elephants. The Upper Satrapies were still pivotal to Seleukid military power, and in being accepted there as ‘great king’ the actual presence of the ruler was all-important. During Antiochos’ absence in the east, a conflict with Rome obviously had to be avoided. After a successful return from the east, marching into Asia Minor would have been a logical next step to take. At the beginning of this paper, I drew attention to the 5,000 infantrymen in the Daphne procession who had been outfitted with breast-plates and chain armor ‘after the Roman fashion’. The introduction of ‘legionaries’ into the Seleukid army is usually taken as evidence for Epiphanes’ admiration for Rome, or at least as military innovation following Roman successes in war. We cannot exclude, however, the possibility that an additional objective of this innovation was to be better able to fight the Romans if necessary.

Diodoros unambiguously states that Antiochos was hostile towards Rome, and Antiochos’ own universalistic and militaristic representation at Daphne was not very peaceful either. Conventional historiography has ignored this, and prefers to think of Antiochos as subservient to Rome—as if he could foresee that one or two generations later Rome would become, and remain, the sole hegemonic power in the eastern Mediterranean.

According to modern scholarly views, Antiochos respected the limitations imposed on his empire by the Treaty of Apameia, and did all he could to avoid antagonizing Rome. If we follow Polybios, a new ‘world order’ had come into existence, and Antiochos knew his place. It has even been suggested that the king, like Polybios himself, was an admirer of Rome.⁹ But would Antiochos IV, the Great King of Asia, really have believed that Rome was unbeatable? Diodoros paraphrases Polybios,¹⁰ but his tone is more neutral. He likely used an additional source. In fact, Diodoros describes Antiochos as the most powerful king of his day at the end of his reign, which is a far cry from Polybios’ derogative portrayal of the king.¹¹

In this paper, I intend to take Diodoros seriously. In the passage cited above, Diodoros makes quite clear that the real objectives of Antiochos were, in fact, obvious. My aim is to find out what Antiochos’ ‘true policy’ was.

In answering this question, I revisit a suggestion from my 2007 dissertation on court culture, ideology and royal rituals in the Hellenistic empires. This is the idea that the principal aim of the Daphne Festival was to reposition the Seleukid Empire as the leading power in the Aegean. This followed directly from another argument, namely that the annual festival at Daphne was a New Year Festival, and that the procession, as described by Polybios, was rich in Dionysiac and

⁹ See below.

¹⁰ POLYB. 30.27.1–4. On (the reappraisal of) Diodoros as an historian see now RATHMANN (2016), and specifically on his historical method RATHMANN (2014).

¹¹ DIOD. SIC. 31.17a; cf. 30.15; APP., *Syr.* 45 (234); *2Macc* 1.13. On Polybios’ partiality see below, section 2.

universalistic imagery. The ‘message’ conveyed at Daphne was therefore not merely one of military strength but also one of imperial ideology. The king’s association with Dionysos suggests that he, the self-proclaimed Theos Epiphanes, had arrived to bring the Greeks good tidings of a Golden Age of peace and abundance.

In what follows, the evidence will be reviewed from three perspectives. First, I will examine if it is at all true that Antiochos respected the Treaty of Apameia. I will then examine what Antiochos’ aims were regarding the west by looking at his actual policies in the important region where Seleukid and Roman ambitions could potentially collide: the Aegean. Finally, I will return to the festival and procession at Daphne and reinterpret the accounts by Polybios and Diodoros in light of the foregoing exploration. What was the message sent out to the world by the highly evocative symbolism of the procession, and how can we understand the festival’s purpose from the contemporary geopolitical context? But first, a critical assessment will be made of the principal historical source for the proposition that Rome’s superiority was already universally acknowledged in the 160s: Polybios of Megalopolis.

2. Romans and Seleukids in Polybios’ World View

Until the disruption of the Seleukid Middle East by inter-dynastic conflicts, the revolts of Tryphon and Timarchos, and the expansion of the Parthians in Iran—all of which occurred *after* the death of Antiochos IV in 164—the Seleukid Empire remained, in essence, an empire. The dynasty still controlled the vast resources of the Fertile Crescent and exercised nominal suzerainty over the Upper Satrapies. Antiochos IV restored Seleukid hegemony in Armenian lands and, like his predecessor, Seleukos IV, strengthened or rebuilt imperial networks in Asia Minor and across the Aegean. But how can we reconcile these imperialist activities with Polybios’ portrayal of Antiochos as a ‘castrated king’, to use U. Gotter’s term?¹² I would suggest that the problem here is simply Polybios’ exceedingly prejudiced view of Antiochos, as well as his Rome-centered bias.

In the introduction I mentioned that conventional historiography perceives Antiochos IV and his empire as somehow subordinate to Rome—as if Antiochos already expected Rome to become the world’s sole hegemonic superpower for all time. This assumption is more than a legacy bequeathed by past generations of Classicists who wrote late Hellenistic history from hindsight, since they were interested, above all, in tracing the inevitable rise of Rome. It is also based on the authority of Polybios. The basic assumption is that during his ten-year

¹² GOTTER (2013).

residence in Rome as a hostage (188/187–178),¹³ Antiochos was impressed by the stability and power of the Roman Republic, and it was there and then that he realized that Rome had acquired dominance over the entire Mediterranean.¹⁴ This view is clearly based on an analogy with Polybios himself. It was, after all, Polybios who was impressed by Rome while staying there as a hostage, according to his own writings. Polybios was the first to recognize Roman supremacy in the Hellenistic Mediterranean, which he famously described as ‘unique in history’.¹⁵ The fragmentarily preserved Books 30 and 31 of Polybios’ *Histories*, moreover, constitute the principal source for Antiochos’ reign apart from *1* and *2 Maccabees*. It will therefore be useful to briefly discuss this analogy, as well as the reliability of Polybios’ appraisal of Antiochos’ reign and the relative position of his empire *vis-à-vis* the Roman Republic.

Notably, Polybios wrote about Antiochos *at least* two decades after the king’s death.¹⁶ Most of what inspired Polybios to devise his grand theory of a Roman-led *symplokē* of the Mediterranean (in fact a limited geopolitical scope: see below) occurred after Antiochos’ stay in Rome. The destruction of the kingdom of Macedon and the defeat of Polybios’ own Achaian League in 168–167, the sack of Carthage and Corinth in 146, the disruption of the Seleukid Empire by internal dynastic strife after Antiochos’ death, and growing Roman influence at the Hellenistic courts: most of it post-dates the reign of Antiochos IV.¹⁷ Some of these events impressed Polybios because they were part of his personal biography, and he always describes them from a Roman or (mainland) Greek perspective. The rather limited Roman interventions in the eastern Mediterranean between Polybios’ arrival at Rome in 167 and his death around 118 clearly interest him more than the earth-shattering Seleukid-Parthian wars of 150–129, in which the Seleukids lost control over Iran and Mesopotamia. These losses, and not the half-hearted Roman encroachments in the western

¹³ For Antiochos’ stay at Rome consult MITTAG (2006), p. 37–40, and see Scolnic in this volume.

¹⁴ The hypothesis was first put forward by ABEL (1941) – who argued that Antiochos picked up a republican ethos while he was in Rome – and was further developed by VAN ‘T HOFF (1955); it is accepted by BELL (2004), p. 146. MITTAG (2006), p. 39, rightly notes that if Antiochos learnt about the Republic’s strengths while he was in Rome, he surely must have become acquainted with its weaknesses as well.

¹⁵ POLYB. 1.1.5.

¹⁶ Books 30 and 31 of the *Histories*, devoted to the 153rd and 154th Olympiads (168/167–160/159), were composed after 146; see WALBANK (1990), p. 18–20.

¹⁷ On the role of hindsight in Polybios’ construction of Seleukid failure see HELLER (2008); cf. n. 24, below. See now also the important reappraisal of Polybios’ biased views of Ptolemaic kings by FISCHER-BOVET (2016).

Seleukid periphery, effectively terminated the kingdom's status as an Eurasian world empire.¹⁸

Polybios' personal experience is the first of three noteworthy biases in his assessment of what was going on in the world. The second bias that makes it problematic to assume that Antiochos perceived Rome in the same way that Polybios did, is Polybios' conceptualization of the Mediterranean as the world's geographical center. His grand theory of global history was that Roman expansion from c. 220 integrated the lands bordering on the Mediterranean into a single system of interaction – a process he described as the *symplokē* ('interweaving') of 'almost the whole inhabited world (*oikoumenē*)'.¹⁹ I am not claiming that Polybios was wrong or that he made it all up. As an historian, Polybios was a far stride ahead of Livy and his annalist sources because he 'considered history in its universality';²⁰ and his proposition that the Mediterranean had become a Roman inner sea proved to be a correct assessment in hindsight. Polybios, however, had relatively little interest in, or knowledge of, lands beyond the Levantine coasts. Regions like Mesopotamia, Iran and Central Asia that we now think of as integral parts of the Hellenistic World are peripheral in Polybios' world view. The historian habitually associates the Seleukids with Syria (*sc.* the Levant). 'Syria', it is true, serves as *pars pro toto* for the entire Seleukid realm; but it is revealing that the part chosen to represent the empire in its entirety is its westernmost province. By thinking of the Mediterranean as the heart of the inhabited world, Polybios pushes Mesopotamia, Iran and Central Asia to the back of the historical stage. This Rome-centered view is often uncritically reproduced in modern historical narratives.²¹

¹⁸ As expressed by the appropriation of the Seleukid imperial title *Basileus Megas* by the victorious Arsakid king Mithradates I ('the Great') after c. 147; see STROOTMAN (2017b); cf. SHERWIN-WHITE / KUHRT (1993), p. 218–219.

¹⁹ POLYB. 4.28.1–6 and 1.1.6; on universal history and the concept of *symplokē* as an ideological and ideological strategy in the *Histories* see QUINN (2013); cf. KLOFT (2013).

²⁰ BICKERMAN (1945), p. 148.

²¹ See e.g. GRAINGER (2002), p. 351, maintaining – against his own emphasis on continued Seleukid military strength (p. 350) – that after Apameia, 'Rome was clearly the one and only superpower in the known world'; the same is true of Polybios' all-too schematic claim that the so-called 'Day of Eleusis', with the Battle of Pydna, marked the completion of the Roman conquest of the *oikoumenē* in 168 (POLYB. 29.27.1–8); the unreliability of Polybios' account of 'Eleusis' has already been pointed out by GRUEN (1976), p. 73–75, and SHERWIN-WHITE (1977), p. 62–65; see most extensively MORGAN (1990). It is clear that even though the Sixth Syrian War did not result in the capture of Alexandria and the fall of the Ptolemaic Dynasty, the war was hardly a failure, as already Porphyry knew: *He will overrun the richest districts of the province (sc. Egypt) and succeed in doing what his fathers and forefathers failed to do, distributing spoil, booty and property to his followers (In Dan. 11.21–4 = FGrHist 260 F 49a; transl. BURSTEIN), with Dan 11.43: He will gain control of the treasures of gold and silver and all the riches*

Polybios' Mediterranean perspective is not as obvious as it may seem. For Greek historians of the Classical period, from Herodotos to Xenophon, the 'wider' world beyond the Aegean had been Asia. The first generations of Hellenistic historians who preceded Polybios had used the conquests of Alexander and the ventures of the Diadochs as their works' main organizing principle.²² They were more interested in India than in Italy. Like them, Polybios primarily addressed an Aegean, Greek audience.²³ By making Rome the focal point of his narrative, however, and shifting attention away from the east and towards the west, he broke with the Greek historiographical tradition of looking east. This is not the place to discuss whether the establishment of Roman hegemony in the Mediterranean created a first Great Divergence of west and east, terminating a more extensive form of Afro-Eurasian globalization that had existed since *c.* 550 under the continuous political domination of successive Persian and Macedonian dynasties; neither can we discuss here whether Roman expansion created an altogether new form of Mediterranean interconnectivity or that it merely intensified a much older process of the *longue durée*. We do, however, need to be aware that Polybios' notion of *symplokē* describes, in fact, the interweaving of a rather limited geographical space. What historians now think of as the 'Hellenistic World' remained largely outside of Roman-led *symplokē*. It is noteworthy in this respect that sources from the Near East until *c.* 150 reveal no awareness of the existence of a Roman world empire at all!²⁴

of Egypt, with the Libyans and Kushites in submission (NIV Translation); cf. MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 97; HEINEN (1972), p. 657–658; MORGAN (1990); MITTAG (2006), p. 222–223. The opposite view, *viz.*, that frustration about Roman intervention in Egypt triggered Antiochos' alleged crazy behavior, including the persecution of Judaism, is defended by VAN 'T HOF (1955), p. 74–81; this point has been further developed by GRUEN (1993).

²² USHER (1985), p. 100–105; also see MEISSNER (1992); PRIMO (2009). Polybios' approach is foreshadowed by that of Timaios of Tauromenion, who wrote Mediterranean history because he made his native land Sicily the focal point of Hellenic history; see BARON (2013), p. 43–57.

²³ MILLAR (1987); CHAMPION (2004); QUINN (2013). Polybios' Hellenocentricity is evident also from his adoption of Timaios' use of the four-year Olympiad as the principal unit of chronology; see USHER (1985), p. 104; MCGING (2010), p. 19. Polybios never thought of the Romans as quasi-Greeks, but neither were they seen by him as barbarians: on the ambivalence of Polybios' image of the Romans as civilized barbarians see ERSKINE (2000).

²⁴ To my best knowledge, Rome is conspicuously absent from the rich corpus of Babylonian cuneiform texts from the Hellenistic period. In the book of *Daniel* – a source contemporary with Antiochos IV's reign and in its final redaction focused on events in the Seleukid west, *viz.*, Judea – Rome is excluded from the two prophecies about the succession of empires, *sc.* Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the composite statue (*Dan 2*) and Daniel's vision of the four beasts rising up from the sea (*Dan 7*); though of course part of an anti-Seleukid rhetoric, the presentation of the Seleukid Empire as the last great power in human history would have made no sense had the author(s) of *Daniel* thought of Rome as the most powerful empire of their time (in fact, apart from a brief reference

The third and last bias distorting Polybios' assessment of Antiochos' achievements is his political partiality regarding Seleukid intra-dynastic conflicts. In the eyes of his personal enemies, Antiochos IV had usurped the kingship that rightfully belonged to the minor king known as Antiochos the Child, the son of Antiochos' elder brother, Seleukos IV (187–175).²⁵

Polybios was one of those enemies. In Rome, the historian from Megalopolis was a member of the circle of friends surrounding the Seleukid prince Demetrios. This Demetrios was an elder son of Seleukos IV and, in the eyes of some, was a more rightful claimant to the Seleukid succession than his uncle, the reigning king Antiochos IV. Demetrios had arrived in Rome in 178 to replace Antiochos as hostage, probably in an agreement meant to take the pressure off rising tensions caused by Seleukos IV's imperialistic activities in Asia Minor (to which we will return shortly).²⁶ In his writings, Polybios does not conceal that he was a staunch supporter of Demetrios' claims to the Seleukid diadem.²⁷ In 162, Demetrios secretly left Rome with the help of Polybios, among others.²⁸ He sailed to Phoinikia and the following year was able to capture and execute his uncle's son and successor, the minor king Antiochos V, together with the boy's regent, Lysias. He thereupon assumed the diadem and reigned as Demetrios (I) Soter until his death in battle in 150.²⁹

Demetrios and his circle likely constituted Polybios' main source of information for events related to the Seleukid court (about which Polybios is

in *Dan* 11.18 to a 'commander' who defeated and humiliated Antiochos III, Romans are absent from *Daniel*).

²⁵ Antiochos may have been held responsible by his contemporaries for the young king's death in 170; see MITTAG (2006), p. 47–48.

²⁶ APP., *Syr.* 45 (232); cf. MITTAG (2006), p. 40, arguing that the exchange had been demanded by the Senate. Note, however, that Scolnic (in this volume) is now suggesting that the exchange happened only in 175.

²⁷ POLYB. 31.19; for the court-like nature and international connections of Demetrios' household in Italy see POLYB. 31.14–15; DIOD. SIC. 31.18.1; for references and further sources consult EHLING (2008), p. 122–123. On Polybios' participation in an internationally-oriented Greek elite community in Rome see WALBANK (1990), p. 74–77, with SOMMER (2013) on *philia* in Polybios' self-presentation, and ECKSTEIN (1995), on the importance of aristocratic values in the *Histories* in general.

²⁸ POLYB. 31.11–15; DIOD. SIC. 31.18. Polybios' unfavorable portrayal of the senators who refused to acknowledge Demetrios' claims implies that another senatorial faction, presumably led by Aemilius Paullus, supported the 'escape' of the prince; cf. WALBANK (1990), p. 9, n. 42; GRUEN (1976), p. 73–74. Polybios seems to have functioned as go-between; cf. MCGING (2010), p. 140–141. Also note Polybios' unfavorable portrayal of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, a friend of Antiochos who advocated the king's cause in the Senate after the Daphne Parade (POLYB. 30.27.1–3 and 30.7–8); cf. MORGAN (1990), p. 47, n. 47.

²⁹ *IMacc* 7.1; *2Macc* 14.1; JOS., *Ant. Jud.* 12.389; LIV., *Per.* 46; EUSEB., *Chron.* I col. 253 Schoene.

very knowledgeable). Polybios' *philia* with the exiled pretender explains his exceptionally hostile depiction of the 'usurper' Antiochos IV.³⁰

3. *Antiochos IV and the Treaty of Apameia*

It has often been noted that Antiochos IV ignored the military clauses of the Treaty of Apameia.³¹ The treaty had been concluded in 188 by a Roman delegation and the king's father, Antiochos III the Great, following the latter's defeat against a combined Attalid-Roman army in the Battle of Magnesia, one year earlier. The treaty obliged Antiochos III to pay a war indemnity of 15,000 talents, to retreat his forces from Asia Minor, and send twenty hostages to Rome.³² Severe restrictions were imposed on the possession of war ships and elephants, at least in the Levant. A highly ambiguous clause furthermore disallowed Antiochos III to recruit troops among people who were 'under the sovereignty of the Roman people' (*sub dicione populi Romani*).³³

Antiochos IV however had at his disposal a 'forbidden' force of war elephants, which he marched to Egypt, and were later used in combat during the Makkabean War.³⁴ More significantly, the king self-confidently paraded these elephants at Daphne for all the western world to see.³⁵ Apparently, the elephant was still a common emblem of Seleukid power (and also to be associated with Dionysos, as we will see shortly).³⁶ The existence of a substantial force of war

³⁰ BUNGE (1976), p. 53; cf. POLYB. 26.1.1–14 and 30.26.9, questioning Antiochos' legitimacy by stressing his purported illegal behavior (a similar aim and procedure is at the heart of *1 and 2 Maccabees*); *pace* VIRGILIO (2008), arguing that Polybios' negative portrayal of Antiochos aimed at justifying the rise of Rome. Also see POLYB. 31.12, defending the legitimacy of Demetrios' claims. On Polybios appraisal of Antiochos in general see WELWEI (1963), p. 68–76.

³¹ Most compellingly by PALTIEL (1979); also see MORGAN (1990), p. 47–48; MITTAG (2006), p. 224.

³² The treaty furthermore regulated the delivery of 540,000 *modii* of grain to Rome, the payment of 477 talents and 1,208 drachms to Eumenes II; the treaty's content is paraphrased by POLYB. 21.17.1–8, and cited in more detail by LIV. 38.38.1–17.

³³ LIV. 38.38.10. On the imprecise territorial aspects of the Treaty of Apameia see MITTAG (2006), p. 50 n. 1, with further references.

³⁴ *1Macc* 1.17, 3.34, 6.30, 6.34–37, and 6.43–46; *2Macc* 11.4, 13.2, and 15; JOS., *Ant. Jud.* 12.295, 366, 371–374; JOS., *Bell. Jud.* 1.41–44.

³⁵ POLYB. 30.25.11; see SEKUNDA, in this volume.

³⁶ For the image of the elephant as a symbol of the Seleukids see COŞKUN (2012); KOSMIN (2014), p. 1–3. Antiochos IV used the image of an elephant on bronze coinage, as did previously his brother, Seleukos IV (*SC* II, no. 1353–1356); perhaps best known are the elephant heads on Antiochos' coinage from Ptolemais-Ake, a Mediterranean port (*SC* II 1477; *SNG* Spaer 963–972), and to be dated to c. 169/168; cf. SPAER (1976) and MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 125–130. After Antiochos' death, elephants still figure on the

elephants, moreover, is attested by Polybios' and Appian's accounts of the failed mission of the legates Gnaeus Octavius, Spurius Lucretius, and Lucius Aurelius, who arrived at Laodikeia on the Sea in 163, after Antiochos' death, and ordered the burning of the Seleukid Mediterranean war fleet and the crippling of the elephants stationed there.³⁷ Octavius got himself killed doing this, and the absence of a Roman reaction to his death suggests that the Senate was divided about the mission, or that Octavius had no mandate for these radical actions to begin with.³⁸ In 150, Demetrios I still fielded 25 elephants against Alexander Balas in Syria.³⁹ Since elephants do not breed well in captivity, this relatively late date indicates that in the reign of either Demetrios or his predecessor, Antiochos IV, the elephant corps had been replenished from Baktria or India,⁴⁰ something that the Treaty of Apameia expressly forbade.⁴¹

Antiochos may have employed troops from beyond the Taurus, as units of Mysians, Thrakians, and Galatians presented themselves at Daphne.⁴² Although formulated somewhat ambiguously, the treaty seems to have disallowed this;⁴³ 1 *Maccabees* claims that the majority of the troops led by Lysias against the Makkabean forces in 163 consisted of hired soldiers 'from the isles of the sea' (*sc.* from the Aegean) as well as allied forces.⁴⁴ Whether the troops at Daphne were really drawn from Asia Minor must remain uncertain: Polybios mentions ethnicity, not countries.⁴⁵

coinages of Demetrios I (*SC* II 1646; 1745), Alexander I (*SC* II 1791; 1872; 1876), Antiochos VI (*SC* II, Nr. 2243), and lastly Alexander II (*SC* II, Nr. 2243).

³⁷ POLYB. 31.2.9–11; APP., *Syr.* 46 (240). The location is given by Appian; for the date see GRUEN (1976), p. 81, and for discussion and references consult EHLING (2008), p. 120–121.

³⁸ GRUEN (1976), p. 81–82.

³⁹ SACHS / HUNGER III Nr. 149, obv. ll. 8–11, dated to 23 Simānu 162 SE; for the date of the battle – June or March 150 – see VAN DER SPEK (1998); EHLING (2008), p. 152–153.

⁴⁰ Cf. JUST. 38.9.4; for the enduring integration of Baktria in the Seleukid fabric of empire until *c.* 140 see WENGHOFER / HOULE (2016); STROOTMAN (2017a) and *id.* (in press).

⁴¹ POLYB. 21.42.12; LIV. 38.38.7–8.

⁴² POLYB. 30.25.4–5; cf. BAR-KOCHVA (1989), p. 468–469, arguing that they were recruited for Antiochos' planned eastern campaigns.

⁴³ LIV. 38.38.9–10; cf. STON-JENKIS (2001), showing that in contrast to formerly held views, Asia Minor remained an important recruiting ground for mercenaries after 188, as also the Attalids and Ptolemies continued to hire troops there.

⁴⁴ *IMacc* 6.29: καὶ ἀπὸ νήσων θαλασσῶν ἦλθον πρὸς αὐτὸν δυνάμεις μισθωταί. Cf. EHLING (2008), p. 114 with n. 21 and 22, for discussion and references.

⁴⁵ Soldiers could adopt 'ethnic' regimental identities even if not having these from birth; on ethnic denominations and *esprit de corps* in the Seleukid army see now HOULE (2015). Also see ENGELS in this volume, who persuasively argues that the 'Macedonian' phalanx of the Seleukids may have consisted in large part of troops recruited among Babylonians.

Furthermore, there is evidence that Antiochos maintained a fleet in defiance of the clause that forbade his father to possess more than ten small warships.⁴⁶ Antiochos' two desert marches into Egypt in the Sixth Syrian War obviously had to be supported by a fleet,⁴⁷ and according to 1 *Maccabees* this fleet was a large one.⁴⁸ Around 169 these ships defeated the Ptolemaic navy in a sea battle off Pelousion.⁴⁹ In the second year of the conflict, Antiochos sent a fleet to Cyprus, which again was victorious in a naval engagement.⁵⁰

Antiochos' apparent lack of concern for the treaty begs the question of whether the treaty's military clauses were at all binding to him. The Senate at least did nothing to enforce them upon him. Nor was he ever so much as reprimanded. It has been suggested that Rome did not correct Antiochos because the Senate trusted him,⁵¹ or that the military clauses took effect 'only if the king showed signs of moving into Asia Minor, Europe or the Aegean, [but] that there was no ban on such weaponry when it was pointed in other directions',⁵² or that Rome simply did not know what was going on in the east.⁵³ All this seems to be tantamount to ascribing superpowers to the Senate: the basic assumption in each case is that the Romans somehow would have been able to control Antiochos, if they had wished to do so, without actually being present in the Levant.

The answer to the question of whether Antiochos was bound to his father's agreement with the Romans is readily available in both versions of the treaty that have been preserved: there was no such thing as a Seleukid 'state' and both Polybios and Livy unequivocally declare that the treaty was concluded – in accordance with Hellenistic practice, we may add – between 'Antiochos' (III) and 'the Roman people'.⁵⁴ The arrival in 163 of the embassy of Octavius at Laodikeia to (unsuccessfully) try and enforce the military terms of the treaty retroactively, sometimes is cited as evidence that there existed a kind of regular, internationally accepted Staatsrecht.⁵⁵ But the point is that the uneven

⁴⁶ For the 'naval clause' see LIV. 38.38.8–9.

⁴⁷ This is corroborated by LIV. 45.12.1.

⁴⁸ *1 Macc* 1.17; also see POLYB. 22.7.4, recording for 188/187 that Seleukos IV promised the Achaian League ten 'long ships' (*sc.* war galleys).

⁴⁹ LIV. 44.19.9; cf. MITTAG (2006), p. 165.

⁵⁰ LIV. 45.12.7; cf. 11.9. Nothing in the Treaty of Apameia forbade cities like Tyre, Arados or Tarsos to have navies, and military contractors could theoretically place privately owned warships at the king's disposal.

⁵¹ NIESE (1903), p. 171–172. Cf. SCOLNIC in this volume.

⁵² MORGAN (1990), p. 48 n. 49, following WILL (1982), p. 224.

⁵³ EHLING (2008), p. 119–120.

⁵⁴ POLYB. 21.17.8 and LIV. 38.38.1–2; and rightly highlighted by PALTIEL (1979), whose conclusion that the treaty applied only to Antiochos because that is what the treaty says, usually is rejected without much discussion.

⁵⁵ E.g. MITTAG (2008), p. 224 n. 43; cf. MORGAN (1990), p. 48, n. 49. So also the vague statement of DIOD. SIC. 29.24 that in *c.* 179 Seleukos backed away from moving his army into Asia Minor and against Eumenes II because he suddenly 'remembered' the

diplomatic relation between an institutionalized civic community (a *populus* or *dēmos*) and a person was *au fond* ambiguous—not to mention the complications of intercultural diplomacy over large geographical distances. The Octavian embassy more likely was sent *ad hoc* because the unexpected death of Antiochos and the accession of his minor son, Antiochos V, offered Rome an opportunity to destabilize the Seleukid dynasty.⁵⁶

B. Meißner has rightly pointed out the fundamental distinction between the highly formalized Roman conception of peace treaties and the more differentiated and *ad hoc* customs prevalent among Hellenistic kings.⁵⁷ E. Gruen emphasized the Senate's readiness to adapt to Hellenistic practices as well as, more importantly, the elasticity with which agreements could be interpreted, especially decades after their conclusion.⁵⁸ Furthermore, if there was a universal custom governing treaties between Hellenistic dynasties, it must have been that they lasted no longer than the lifespan of the individuals who had made the agreement. This is an important dynamic behind the so-called Syrian Wars, as J. Grainger showed: individual kings scrupulously honored agreements but warfare between Ptolemies and Seleukids resumed as soon as one of the kings involved in the last peace had died.⁵⁹ For example, after the peace that ended the Fourth Syrian War in 217, Antiochos III, even though it was he who had lost the war, could campaign with his field army in Anatolia, Armenia, Iran and even Central Asia for years without having to fear a Ptolemaic attack from Koile Syria, knowing that his adversary, Ptolemy IV, was bound by an oath. But just one year after the accession of Ptolemy V Philadelphos in 204, the notorious anti-Ptolemaic pact with Philip V had been concluded, and in 202 Antiochos III violently attacked the Ptolemies in Koile Syria. It is probably significant that the only part of the treaty that was inherited by Antiochos III's successor, Seleukos IV, was the promise to deliver part of the indemnity in annual payments of 1,000 talents for the duration of twelve years; that apparently was a pledge that could not be broken until it was fulfilled.⁶⁰

agreement his father had made with the Romans: he more plausibly reconsidered because Roman legates had arrived on the scene in support of Eumenes' claims (DIOD. SIC. 29.22), which presumably entailed the possibility of a direct military confrontation with Rome, a war for which Seleukos at that time apparently had no appetite.

⁵⁶ SHERWIN-WHITE / KUHRT (1993), p. 222.

⁵⁷ MEIßNER (1992).

⁵⁸ This is one of the main arguments in GRUEN (1984), emphasizing also ensuing misunderstandings, particularly regarding the (non-)equivalency of the Greek concept of interstate *philia* and Roman *amicitia*. On meaning and use of *amicitia* in Greek cities see more recently COŞKUN (2008), with WILLIAMS (2008). On the similarities between *philia* as alliance between individuals and *philia* as alliance between polities in the third-century Aegean see now STROOTMAN (forthcoming a).

⁵⁹ GRAINGER (2010).

⁶⁰ POLYB. 21.17.4–5; LIV. 38.38.13; cf. 42.6.6–7.

In sum, from Antiochos' point of view he was not bound by oaths his father had sworn; the Romans, for their part, approached the Seleukid kings with the usual flexibility that reflected shifting power relations within the divided Roman elite. But apart from the Octavius incident after Antiochos' reign, and perhaps the Day of Eleusis five years earlier, the Senate refrained from antagonizing the Seleukid court. I suggest that this is the important point here: though the Day of Eleusis, if at all historical, may have been a Cuba Crisis of sorts, the Romans from their side, *too*, avoided armed conflict with the King of Asia.

4. *Seleukid Imperialism in Asia Minor and Greece after Apameia*

Today, the most conspicuous legacy of Antiochos IV—not counting his appearances in *1* and *2 Maccabees* and the book of *Daniel*—is not to be found in the Middle East but in Greece: the Olympieion in Athens. Replacing a smaller, derelict building of the Peisistratid era, Antiochos commissioned the temple's construction around 175. It was still unfinished at the king's death in 164,⁶¹ and would not be completed until the reign of the philhellene Roman emperor, Hadrian, who finally dedicated the sanctuary in 132 CE. Vitruvius described the colossal temple built by Antiochos and his architect, Cossutius, even in its unfinished form as 'a work not only universally esteemed, but counted among the rarest specimens of magnificence', and equated the Olympieion with the Temple of Artemis at Ephesos and the Temple of Apollon at Didyma.⁶² The costs of the columns alone amounted to *c.* 700 talents of silver.⁶³

The building of the Olympieion has been dismissed as merely 'cultural' patronage, and thus as a non-political activity.⁶⁴ But can the construction of the biggest Pan-Hellenic temple ever built, located in the symbolic heart of Greece, and meant to house a gigantic statue of the most powerful of all the gods really

⁶¹ VITR., VII *praef.* 17; cf. POLYB. 26.1.11; STRABO 9.1.17; VELL. 1.10.1. PAUS. 1.18.6 highlights Hadrian's additions.

⁶² VITR., VII *praef.* 15; LIV. 41.20 comments on the unique magnitude of the monument, and PLUT., *Sol.* 32.2 later counted it with Plato's *Krition* among 'the many beautiful works to remain unfinished'. The temple's colossal size – the ground plan measured 41 x 108 m. and the naos was surrounded by a double row of in total 104 Corinthian columns, all of them 17 m. high and 2 m. in diameter – can therefore be seen as an expression of the power and wealth of Antiochos IV; cf. TÖLLE-KASTENBEIN (1994), p. 213. On Cossutius see ABRAMSON (1975).

⁶³ MITTAG (2006), p. 116 n. 102.

⁶⁴ Skeptical is already MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 55–63, followed by SHERWIN-WHITE / KUHRT (1993), p. 221. MATTERN (2008), p. 618–619, groups the Olympieion with the third-century Artemis Temple at Sardeis and the Zeus Temple at Lebadeia in Boiotia, commissioned by Antiochos IV too – and like the Olympieion unfinished at the king's death (PAUS. 9.39.3), in a category of Hellenistic (Seleukid) 'giant temples'.

be seen as a politically neutral act? Royal *euergesia*, and especially the patronage of sanctuaries and cults, was a forceful and well-tested instrument of empire-building in the Hellenistic Aegean. The religious sphere, moreover, was the principal ‘contact zone’ wherein ‘global’ empire and local community interacted.⁶⁵

For the Senate, the construction of a temple of course was no *casus belli*. Athens, like most poleis, was an autonomous polity. But this huge building project reveals that Antiochos reactivated, and presumably expanded, Seleukid *philia* and *xenia* networks across the Aegean and into mainland Greece.⁶⁶

Under Antiochos’ rule, the longstanding Seleukid connections to Milesian elite families were as strong as they had been in the third century.⁶⁷ The existence of imperial networks in the Aegean region are also apparent from Antiochos’ funding of a theater in Tegea, a city wall in Megalopolis, and a huge temple of Zeus Basileus in Lebadeia.⁶⁸ It has been suggested that Antiochos included ‘little towns like Tegea among the beneficiaries [because] perhaps he simply built wherever he was allowed to do so’.⁶⁹ But Tegea was not insignificant, and neither was Megalopolis. Quite the contrary: these were not only important centers of the Achaian League, but most of all strategically located, heavily fortified cities.⁷⁰ Their geopolitical significance was military above all, and there is archaeological evidence that the fortifications in Megalopolis were actually constructed at this time.⁷¹ Antiochos’ other

⁶⁵ STROOTMAN (2013a); STROOTMAN (2017c); also WRIGHT (2012).

⁶⁶ Cf. e.g. MERRITT (1967), p. 61–63, on an Athenian honorific decree of c. 170 BC awarding citizenship to Menodoros, a representative of ‘King Antiochos’ (IV), also mentioning an honorific statue of Antiochos in Athens. On the Seleukids’ good relations with Athens before and after the reign of Antiochos IV see respectively HABICHT (1989) and WRIGHT (2008).

⁶⁷ HOMMEL (1976); HERMANN (1987); QUASS (1993), p. 106–107.

⁶⁸ LIV. 41.20.6; Lebadeia: BRINGMANN / VON STEUBEN (1995), no. 396, cf. MATTERN (2008), p. 619–620.

⁶⁹ LAUTER (1986), p. 17: ‘Warum er unter die Empfänger seiner Gaben Städtchen wie Tegea und Lebadeia einbezog, bleibt gleichwohl rätselhaft. Vielleicht baute er einfach dort, wo man ihn gewähren ließ?’; the translation cited here is by BRINGMANN (1993), p. 15–16, who is skeptical of the image of a rather random choice of sites.

⁷⁰ MATTERN (2008), p. 624–625, emphasizing also the strategic and symbolic importance of Lebadeia in Boiotia, which was moreover home to a famous oracle. In the second century CE, Pausanias (9.39.2) praised the grandeur of Lebadeia, and ranked the city ‘among the most prosperous in Greece’. Mattern’s suggestion that with his building activities Antiochos IV may have aimed at presenting himself as heir of Alexander the Great is very unlikely: between 305 and 150 BC, Alexander is entirely absent from Seleukid royal representation, and for the reign of Antiochos IV too there is no evidence that ever associated himself with Alexander; STROOTMAN (2017b).

⁷¹ That is, the reign of Antiochos IV as the precise date of the donations to Tegea and Megalopolis is unknown; for the evidence see BRINGMANN / VON STEUBEN (1995), no. 55.

benefactions were also substantial and directed at important cities and sanctuaries: Rhodes,⁷² Miletos,⁷³ Kyzikos;⁷⁴ and, last but not least, the Pan-Hellenic Apollon sanctuary on Delos, perhaps the main hub of ‘international’ connectivity in the Aegean.⁷⁵

With his benefactions to Megalopolis and Tegea, Antiochos continued a policy of rapprochement with the Achaian League that his brother, Seleukos IV, had initiated. In 185, Seleukos had asked the Achaians for an alliance, and offered them ten warships.⁷⁶ The hostility of Seleukos IV towards Rome has often been noted.⁷⁷ He had openly entered the stage of Aegean politics by reclaiming the Seleukids’ role as suzerains of the Anatolian dynasties, and by giving his daughter, Laodike, in marriage to Perseus.⁷⁸ It is hard to see this marriage as anything else but the establishment of an alliance between the two the dynasties.⁷⁹ Seleukos’ activity in the Aegean may have worried, or angered, the Senate and it may have prompted the otherwise unexplainable crippling of Rhodian power shortly thereafter.⁸⁰ Around 180/79, Seleukos assembled a vast army to assist his kinsman, Pharnakes I of Pontos, in a war against Ariarathes IV and Eumenes II, but retreated when Roman delegates arrived in Asia Minor to support Eumenes.⁸¹

⁷² LIV. 41.20.7; *Syll.*³ 644/645 Z. 12–27 = BRINGMANN / VON STEUBEN (1995), no. 210; cf. MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 57; MITTAG (2006), p. 105–106 n. 45.

⁷³ *SEG* 36 (1986), 1046 = BRINGMANN / VON STEUBEN (1995), no. 283; cf. MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 56; MITTAG (2006), p. 106 n. 47.

⁷⁴ LIV. 41.20.7 = BRINGMANN / VON STEUBEN (1995), no. 240; cf. MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 57; MITTAG (2006), p. 106 n. 46.

⁷⁵ POLYB. 26.1.11; LIV. 41.20.9; ATHEN. 5.194a = BRINGMANN / VON STEUBEN (1995), no. 170; cf. MITTAG (2006), p. 105 n. 44, also drawing attention to the decrees in honor of Antiochos found on Delos. It is possible but uncertain that Antiochos donated an expensive purple curtain for the entrance to the sanctuary of Zeus at Olympia, and funded the restoration of the famous cult statue; see MITTAG (2006), p. 107 with n. 49.

⁷⁶ POLYB. 22.7.4, using the term *φιλία* (a ritualized obligation of mutual aid) and at 22.7.1 writes *συνμαχία* (military alliance) in a similar context. Seleukos’ pact with the Achaian League is seen as a violation of the Treaty of Apameia by BEVAN (1902), p. 123 n. 2; BOUCHÉ-LECLERCQ (1913/1914), p. 229; MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 33; and GRUEN (1984), p. 645, n. 164. The Achaian Council accepted the alliance but declined the ships.

⁷⁷ BEVAN (1902), p. 124; BOUCHÉ-LECLERCQ (1913/1914), p. 228; WILL (1982), p. 303.

⁷⁸ The marriage is usually thought to have taken place at Perseus’ accession, probably in 178; cf. POLYB. 24.5.8; LIV. 42.12.3; APP., *Mac.* 11.2; *SIG*³ 689. MORGAN (1990), p. 49, argues that Seleukos asked the Rhodians to provide a flotilla to escort his daughter though the Aegean to Macedon in order not to antagonize the Romans.

⁷⁹ *Pace* SEIBERT (1967), p. 44.

⁸⁰ POLYB. 25.4.4–8; LIV. 41.6.8–12; cf. MITTAG (2006), p. 113 with n. 88 for further references.

⁸¹ DIOD. SIC. 29.22 and 24. See PAYEN in this volume.

Like his predecessor, Antiochos maintained good relations with several of the middle powers in the Aegean, including Rhodes,⁸² the Achaian League,⁸³ the Attalid king Eumenes II,⁸⁴ and probably Pharnakes I of Pontos and Perseus, King of the Macedonians. Ariarathes IV of Kappadokia was a blood relative who was married to his sister, Antiochis;⁸⁵ as ruler of a Seleukid satellite kingdom, Ariarathes had sent his army to fight for his father-in-law, Antiochos III, in the Battle of Magnesia in 190 (though he became a friend of the Romans after 188 and sided with Eumenes II against Pharnakes I in the Pontic-Pergamene war of 183–179).⁸⁶ With his policy of (re)building dynastic networks in Asia Minor, Antiochos continued a policy of his predecessor, his brother Seleukos IV. Nor did this form of empire-building come to an end after the death of Antiochos IV. His successor, Demetrios I, married the widow of Perseus of Macedon, his own sister Laodike,⁸⁷ and around 161/160 gave Antiochos IV's daughter, Nysa, in marriage to Pharnakes of Pontos.⁸⁸ Demetrios supported his cousin Orophernes III against Ariarathes V in the Kappadokian fraternal war of c. 160,⁸⁹ and still in the 130s the energetic Antiochos VII Sidetes gave financial support to Ariarathes V of Kappadokia.⁹⁰

Antiochos also restored and expanded his family's network of friends in the Greek poleis. Direct control of cities, particularly in the contested arena of the Aegean, was impractical, if not impossible, for empires; empire in the Aegean therefore had in the past predominantly taken the form of hegemony by means of diplomacy and force, rather than territorial conquest and state formation.⁹¹ As

⁸² WIEMER (2002), p. 291–292.

⁸³ MITTAG (2006), p. 110–111.

⁸⁴ MITTAG (2006), p. 107–110. See MICHELS in this volume.

⁸⁵ APP., *Syr.* 1.5; Cf. PAINITSCHKE (1986–1987); GÜNTHER (1995); MCAULEY in this volume.

⁸⁶ LIV. 37.31.4; APP., *Syr.* 6.32. For his alliance with Eumenes see POLYB. 24.1, 5, 8; 25.2. On marriage alliances and Seleukid client kings in Asia Minor see GABELKO (2009); MCAULEY (2017); cf. SULLIVAN (1990). Also see MICHELS, MCAULEY and PAYEN in this volume.

⁸⁷ EHLING (2008), p. 88–89.

⁸⁸ MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 54; EHLING (2008), p. 140.

⁸⁹ On the conflict between Orophernes and Ariarathes see BALLESTEROS PASTOR (2008).

⁹⁰ As follows from the largescale import of tetradrachms of Antiochos VII; see LORBER / HOUGHTON (2006). Imitative tetradrachms in the name of Antiochos VII were struck at several Kappadokian mints during the reign of Nysa, a granddaughter of Antiochos III, who was regent for her minor son Ariarathes VI Epiphanes from c. 131/130 to 126, as well as by several later Kappadokian rulers well into the first century BC; see for Nysa's coinage KRENGEL / LORBER (2009), and for the later issues LORBER / HOUGHTON (2006).

⁹¹ STROOTMAN (2011a); STROOTMAN (forthcoming a). From the fourth century, cities increasingly were protected by defensive walls and elaborate fortifications; poleis in the Hellenistic period moreover often disposed of their own, independent military

a result, several competing imperial projects had been active in this region simultaneously. No Roman provinces, moreover, had yet been created in Greece or Asia Minor, and all Roman legions had returned to Italy even after the Third Macedonian War.⁹² The Greek poleis were still autonomous polities and they had a long history of maintaining *philia* with a number of imperial dynasties at the same time, and despite the presence of an abundance of oracular shrines, no one in Greece was actually able to foresee the future.

There is no indication that Antiochos' imperial activities in Asia Minor and Greece worried the Senate. Certain powerful Senators may have been friends of Antiochos. He had after all been in Rome long enough to build up personal alliances. It was only with his conspicuous military successes in the second year of the Sixth Syrian War that the Senate acted; the Senators probably did so because they realized that direct control of Egypt by the Seleukids could cause a shift in the power balance in the eastern Mediterranean, a shift that would again make the Seleukid Empire the only superpower in the region. Although the Polybian account of Popilius Laenas' alleged humiliation of Antiochos is no longer universally accepted as truthful, the significance of the so-called Day of Eleusis is still debated. All we can say with certainty, is that Antiochos at that time had no desire to have a conflict with Rome. He also may have been satisfied with the military defeat of the Ptolemies. After all, he had successfully fended off an unprovoked attack by the old enemy, and had made the aggressors pay dearly. Also, the booty and slaves taken during the campaigns probably were sufficient to satisfy his military leaders with gifts and repay his money-lenders, as well as expand his military capabilities and show his magnanimity to the peoples of his empire.⁹³

capabilities, and when threatened by an imperial power could invoke the help of a rival empire; on the vitality of civic military culture and defensive capabilities in Hellenistic Asia Minor see MA (2004); MIGEOTTE (2008); BOULAY (2014).

⁹² See especially KALLET-MARX (1995), showing how the establishment of Roman rule in Greece and Asia Minor was not suddenly and irreversibly imposed after the spectacular victories over Philip V and Antiochos III; instead it was a prolonged and differentiated process that took place mostly after the sack of Corinth (*i.e.* in the time that Polybios developed his views on Rome's role in world history); cf. also SHERWIN-WHITE / KUHRT (1993), p. 218: 'The dates of 188 (Peace of Apamea), 168 (Battle of Pydna) and 146 (sack of Corinth) mark significant phases in Rome's eastward expansion, but are of relatively slight significance for understanding the end of Seleucid rule.' Kallet-Marx's distinction between 'hegemony' and 'empire' however is misleading since it *a priori* assumes that 'hegemony' is not a form of empire – indirect rule in fact is the most common form of empire in pre- and early modern Eurasia; cf. e.g. DOYLE (1986), p. 45; MORRISON (2001), p. 5–6; BARKEY (2008), p. 9; BANG / BAYLY (2011), p. 6–7; on indirect rule in the (later) Seleukid Empire see below, n. 144.

⁹³ Whether the permanent conquest of Egypt was the aim of the campaigns is an open question; see however FISCHER-BOVET (2014), arguing forcefully that Antiochos did intend to occupy Egypt. Antiochos did capture Memphis, the provincial capital of Egypt,

Another reason may have been that his primary aim at that time was to reaffirm his dynasty's control over the Upper Satrapies. A prolonged campaign to Baktria and India could only be undertaken if Rome was not hostile, and the hostile Ptolemies were beaten.

5. *A Hellenistic New Year Festival*

Because of the participation of the army, previous scholarship has reduced the procession at Daphne to a military parade, a 'spectacle', and sometimes the festival has even been rendered a victory celebration or indeed an attempt to imitate the Roman *triumphus* ritual.⁹⁴ The religious aspects of the festival are often underestimated or ignored. The sources make it very clear, however, that the celebrations at Daphne were religious and had an eastern Mediterranean, Hellenistic form: Antiochos sent out sacred ambassadors to invite the Greek poleis to participate, and the festival comprised a procession (*pompē*), sacrifices,

and his troops advanced southward to the Thebaid; cf. MITTAG (2008), p. 171. For a detailed account of the events during the Sixth Syrian War see GRAINGER (2010), p. 291–308.

⁹⁴ E.g., GRUEN (1974), p. 76; WALBANK (1996), p. 126–127; EDMONDSON (1999), p. 87; and BELL (2004), p. 146–148. BOULEY (1986) heaps conjecture upon conjecture by supposing that Antiochos was *mocking* a Roman triumph. The notion that Hellenistic imperial *pompai* such as the so-called Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphos or the procession at Daphne were modeled on the Roman triumph was dismantled already by VERSNEL (1970), p. 250–254, who more convincingly argued the opposite to explain similarities, namely that the late Republican ritual of *triumphus* and comparable Hellenistic celebrations had a shared background in older Mediterranean festivals; also see JOHNSON (1993) and ERSKINE (2013), p. 47–48. RICE (1983) argued that the Hellenistic custom of including troops in *pompai* goes back to the reign of Alexander, specifically the 'military procession' organized at Soloi (ARR., *Anab.* 2.5.8) because there only soldiers had been present to observe the periodic rites of the Macedonian *koinon* and *basileia* (but misses the point that these warriors *were* the people, and that Macedonian kingship was a military and religious office). In fact, the participation of men-at-arms in processions may have had older, Macedonian roots, on which see now MARI (2017); also see DILLERY (2004), p. 271, arriving at a similar conclusion for different reasons. Though the festival at Daphne can be connected with the Egyptian campaigns, the conceptualization of the procession as a (military) 'parade', *viz.*, essentially a secular event, is rooted in the now obsolete presumption that in the Hellenistic period Greek religion 'declined', and moreover undervalues the religious and ritualistic aspects of kingship. See for instance WALBANK (1996), p. 120, who admits that processions 'were basically religious', but *a priori* assumes that in the Hellenistic period processions had lost most of their cultic character 'even in the *polis*'. BAR-KOCHVA (1989) argues in a similar vein that the procession was not religious but a parade marking the beginning of Antiochos' campaign to the east (and therefore should be dated to 165); but Daphne was located in the west of the Seleukid Empire and an unlikely point of departure for a march to the Upper Satrapies.

sacrificial meals and ritualized feasting, as well as games. The festival at Amphipolis hosted by Aemilius Paullus, that Antiochos' wished to outdo, was a Hellenistic, Pan-Hellenic festival, too.⁹⁵ The procession cannot have been a 'spectacle' because the soldiers in the procession were not hired actors giving a show but the principal *participants*. Furthermore, citizens of Antioch and representatives of other poleis participated in the celebrations.

The festival at Daphne had been a repetitive festival and it most likely took place annually, sometimes in the presence of the king.⁹⁶ Some ten years ago I proposed to understand the celebrations at Daphne as new year celebrations.⁹⁷ Several aspects of the procession are indicative of this, in particular the attendance of (images of) 'all the gods [...] worshipped by men and all of the demigods', as well as Ge (Earth) and Ouranos (Sky), Nyx (Night) and Hemera (Day).⁹⁸ These primordial deities can be associated with Creation, which in turn is the type of myth associated with the Akītu-type of new year ritual in the Near East. Above all, the erratic behavior of Antiochos that Polybios ridicules may, in reality, have been a form of ritualized role reversal. New year festivals in the Mediterranean and the Near East often comprise rites of reversal.⁹⁹ The well-known Mesopotamian Akītu festivals, adopted in various local forms in the Levant during the Neo-Babylonian period, focused on the person of the king; during the festival, the temporary abdication and humiliation of the king coincided with a period of ritual anomy in which social order collapsed so that the world could be recreated, and order restored.¹⁰⁰ Diodoros even says about Antiochos, that 'if his diadem had been removed, no one would have believed that he was the king and the master of all.'¹⁰¹ Immediately preceding this remark, Diodoros writes that Antiochos 'rode on an inferior horse by the side of the procession, ordering one part to advance, and another to halt, as occasion required.' The skinny horse and the deliberate creation of chaos evoke

⁹⁵ As emphasized by JOHNSON (1993) and ERSKINE (2013). GRUEN (1986), p. 660, and still BELL (2004), p. 139–140, confuse the festival at Amphipolis in 167 with Paullus' later *triumphus* at Rome. PELLIKAN PITTINGER (2008), p. 272–274, emphasizes the Greek character of the Amphipolis festival but undervalues its religious aspects.

⁹⁶ LIV. 33.48.4–6 and 49.6 has recorded the celebration of the festival in the presence of a Seleukid king in 195 or 196 BC; cf. ATHEN. 12.540a; OGIS 248 l. 52–53.

⁹⁷ STROOTMAN (2007), p. 308–310; cf. STROOTMAN (2014a), p. 251–252.

⁹⁸ POLYB. 30.25.12–19 *ap.* ATHEN. V 195a.

⁹⁹ See VERSNEL (1993), p. 1–14.

¹⁰⁰ See generally BIDMEAD (2002); for Babylonian new year festivals in the Hellenistic period consult LINSSEN (2004), p. 71–87; Seleukid rulers sometimes performed the role of Babylonian kings in the festival Akītu in Babylon: see SHERWIN-WHITE / KUHRT (1993), p. 130–131; STROOTMAN (2013a), p. 70–80; RISTVET (2015), p. 153–210.

¹⁰¹ DIOD. SIC. 31.16.2; the king's subservient role during the sacrificial feasts, too, is revealingly described by Polybios as behavior unworthy of a king (30.26.1–8).

associations with Dionysos and with Dionysiac processions.¹⁰² That too suggests the coming of a new year or new age. The Dionysian aspect is important and we will return to it shortly. The occasion may be tentatively identified with the Autumn equinox at the beginning of the month Dios/Tašrītu (Sept.–Oct.), which is the date of the Macedonian new year *and* new year in Late Bronze Age Ugarit and Iron Age Israel (as well as for the smaller, mid-year Akītu of Mesopotamian calendars).¹⁰³

As a sacred place the sanctuary at Daphne had a pre-Hellenistic origin.¹⁰⁴ Drawing on the age-old East Mediterranean custom of deity-translation, its cults deliberately amalgamated local Syrian and migrant religions to create a communal focus for identity formation.¹⁰⁵ It is also clear that Antiochos enlarged and changed the festival, creating, at least for this occasion, a massive event with a substantially extended geographical impact. The enlarged festival seems to have been organized to attract sacred embassies specifically from the Aegean poleis:

*This same king (sc. Antiochos IV) when he heard of the games celebrated in Macedonia by Aemilius Paullus the Roman general, ambitious of surpassing Paullus in magnificence sent out envoys and sacred embassies (theoroi) to the poleis to announce the games he was about to give at Daphne, so that the Greeks were very eager to visit Daphne then.*¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² STROOTMAN (2007), p. 310, and (2014a), p. 251–252; also rightly stressed by IOSSIF (2011). KÖHLER (1996), p. 156, conjectures that Antiochos did *not* create chaos, but, on the contrary, felt personally responsible for the flawless execution of the festival: ‘Die Sorge um den planmäßigen Festablauf ist aber sicher positiv zu verstehen, der Herrscher demonstrierte durch das persönliche Eingreifen sein Verantwortungsbewusstsein.’

¹⁰³ Conversation with Jan Wagenaar, March 2006; cf. WAGENAAR (2005); the Macedonian and Babylonian calendars had been synchronized by the early Seleukids; as a result of this, the Macedonian new year fell halfway through the Babylonian year about the time of the autumn equinox; see SAMUEL (1972), p. 142; HANNAH (2005), p. 82–97; cf. PARKER / DUBBERSTEIN (1956). Tašrītu means ‘Beginning’ in Akkadian, and the month was associated with the solar deity Shamash, who could be identified with the Greek Golden Age deity Chronos (Saturn), whose festival contained elements of ritual reversal, too; see VERSNEL (1993), p. 89–135. I hope to treat these matters at more length in a future publication. Incidentally, at Ugarit the Autumn equinox also marked the start of the harvest of wine grapes. On the correlations of Babylonian Akītu and the Syrian festival see also RISTVET (2014).

¹⁰⁴ STROOTMAN (forthcoming b).

¹⁰⁵ *Ibidem*. On the widespread East Mediterranean practice of *Göttergleichungen*, and the varying degrees of what he called the transcultural *Übersetzbarkeit* of local deities (*i.e.* the measure of translatability of a god from one cultural area or community to another), see ASSMANN (2003), p. 28–37; cf. BACHMANN-MEDICK (2014), exploring what in cultural exchanges is translatable and what is not.

¹⁰⁶ POLYB. 30.25.1/31.3.1 (transl. E.S. SHUCKBURGH, Loeb): ὁ δ’ αὐτὸς οὗτος βασιλεὺς ἀκούσας τοῦ ἐν τῇ Μακεδονίᾳ συντελεσθένους ἀγῶνας ὑπὸ Αἰμιλίου

For the practice of empire, visibility and presence of the ruler was key.¹⁰⁷ Since premodern empires were first negotiated enterprises, the constant interaction with elites was of vital importance for their success and survival.¹⁰⁸ The Daphne Festival, in its new Pan-Hellenic and imperial form, was organized well in advance to attract representatives of lesser polities, particularly from Greece and Asia Minor. Diodoros, as we have seen, wrote that Antiochos ‘brought together the most distinguished men from virtually the whole inhabited world’.¹⁰⁹ The word that Diodoros uses here, *oikoumenē*, usually refers to the world of interconnected Greek and Hellenized poleis.¹¹⁰ The specific mention by Polybios of sacred embassies indicates also that delegations from poleis were overrepresented; these embassies together offered no less than 300 cattle, adding up to an even bigger herd of 1,000 that was also part of the procession, and presumably were supplied by the king.¹¹¹ The presence of these animals in the procession implies that the *theoroi* were not spectators but participants.¹¹² The crucial event at the conclusion of the procession, after all, was sacrifice. Sacrifice was followed by communal feasting in which the sacrificial meat was distributed among the participants.¹¹³ These feasts play a major part in the ancient narratives of the Daphne Festival.¹¹⁴

Παύλου τοῦ Ῥωμαίων στρατηγοῦ, βουλόμενος τῆ μεγαλοδοξία ὑπερᾶραι τὸν Παῦλον ἐξέπεμψε πρέσβεις καὶ θεωροὺς εἰς τὰς πόλεις καταγγελοῦντας τοὺς ἐσομένους ἀγῶνας ὑπ’ αὐτοῦ ἐπὶ Δάφνης, ὡς πολλὴν γενέσθαι τῶν Ἑλλήνων σπουδὴν εἰς τὴν ὡς αὐτὸν ἄφιξιν; cf. DIOD. SIC. 31.16.1, quoted above.

¹⁰⁷ HEKSTER (2004); specifically for the Seleukid Empire see KOSMIN (2014), p. 142–180.

¹⁰⁸ See note 7, above. On the importance of local elites for the Seleukid Empire see GORRE / HONIGMAN (2013) for Jerusalem; ENGELS (2013) for the Syrian Tetrapolis; and STROOTMAN (2013a); STROOTMAN (2017a); STROOTMAN (forthcoming a) for Babylon, the Iranian highlands, and the poleis of Asia Minor respectively.

¹⁰⁹ DIOD. SIC. 31.16.1.

¹¹⁰ See below.

¹¹¹ POLYB. 30.25.12 *ap.* ATHEN. 5.195a.

¹¹² Neither were the soldiers simply there to put on a show before a passive audience: they too were participants in communal rituals; for them, ritual marching and feasting will have strengthened regimental identity, and reaffirmed their bonds with their benevolent, charismatic leader.

¹¹³ On the significance of meat eating in ancient Greek feasting rituals see EKROTH (2011); MCINERNEY (2010), p. 173–195; MCINERNEY (2014); VAN DEN EIJNDE (2017a). Also see below, n. 128.

¹¹⁴ POLYB. 30.26.3–8; DIOD. SIC. 31.16.2–3. Polybios (30.26.3) says that the banquets organized by the king for his personal guests ‘sometimes 1,000 tables were laid and sometimes 1,500’ (ἔστροτο δὲ εἰς εὐωχίαν ποτὲ μὲν χίλια τρίκλινα, ποτὲ δὲ χίλια πεντακόσια μετὰ τῆς πολυτελεστάτης διασκευῆς). Feasting likewise takes pride of place in the preserved account of the Alexandrian Ptolemaia festival organized by Ptolemy Philadelphos; see CALANDRA (2011) for the material aspects of the banqueting pavilion.

6. *Ritualized Feasting and the Seleukid Court*

It is tempting to try to determine the number of participants on the basis of the number of sacrificial cattle. This is not possible. Even if we assume that only the 300 animals supplied by the poleis were slaughtered, this could still have nourished up to 120,000 people if the cattle were fat and the meat distributed in minimal portions of 0.25 kg; if however the cattle was meagre, and the meat divided into big portions of 2 kg, a mere 10,000 people could have been provided with meat.¹¹⁵ Some general observations may nonetheless be made. It has been estimated that the hecatomb sacrificed at the Greater Panathenaia in Classical Athens yielded 20,000 to 30,000 portions of edible meat (but here the uncertain factor is the actual number of cattle in a given hecatomb).¹¹⁶ Following these estimations, the 300 cattle supplied by the *theoroi* of the poleis could have fed *c.* 60,000 to 90,000 people. The 1,000 cattle in the king's herd represented an additional number of portions ranging from at least 32,000 to at most 400,000 portions, or an intermediary range of 200,000–300,000 if we follow the figures of the Panathenaia.

There can be little doubt that the 300 animals of the sacred embassies were there to be sacrificed. It would be rash, however, to infer from this round number that there were also 300 delegations, representing the same number of poleis. Rather, numerous delegations will have contributed to a total of three hecatombs, or ritual groupings *nominally* consisting of 100 sacrificial cattle (citizens of Antioch and Seleukeia in Pieria will have contributed to these civic hecatombs). But even if comprising exactly 3 x 100 pieces of cattle in actuality, the three hecatombs together were hardly sufficient for the court, its numerous guests, and the *c.* 50,000 troops (not counting non-combatants such as groomsmen, muleteers or, indeed, cattle-drivers). It certainly was not enough to also distribute portions among the citizens of Antioch and Seleukeia, who we

¹¹⁵ Here I use the recent estimates by MCINERNEY (2010), p. 175–176, and NAIDEN (2012), p. 65–66. Drawing on earlier calculations on the basis of epigraphical evidence by M. H. Jameson, R. Osborne and R. Rhodes, and following EKROTH (2008) in assuming that at most Greek festivals it was the norm that participants received equal, or nearly equal, portions (though of course not of equal quality), Naiden proposes a high figure of 2 kg and a low figure of 0.25 kg for one portion; assuming that a full hecatomb of 100 cattle yielded between 6,400 and 10,000 kg of edible meat, this would be sufficient for at least *c.* 3,200 and at most 40,000 people per hecatomb. McInerney reckons with 220 kg of edible meat for one ancient cow and with average portions of 0.5 kg; in his view, a full hecatomb would ideally yield 44,000 portions of meat, but on average only 30,000 because in practice hecatombs usually comprised less than the prescribed 100 pieces of cattle. The bigger portions probably were meant to nourish families.

¹¹⁶ See resp. NAIDEN (2012), p. 66; and MCINERNEY (2010), p. 176.

know also participated in the rituals.¹¹⁷ Moreover, it is very unlikely that the troops were nourished by anyone else but the king. Indeed, a festival like this provided the king with a pre-eminent occasion, and also *obligation*, to demonstrate his capability of taking care of his followers, nourishing them from his own livestock in a majestic gesture of ‘Homeric generosity’.¹¹⁸

The enormous scale of the feasting hosted by the king – the entire festival at Daphne lasted a whole month¹¹⁹ – illustrates the important role of sanctuaries and festivals in what I would like to call the Mobile Court Model of imperial integration. Like the preceding Assyrian, Achaimenid and Argead courts, the Seleukid court was a contact zone where the dynasty interacted with various local communities and interest groups. Representatives of local elites were continuously drawn to the imperial center by the gravitational force of the so-called great events of the court (in particular inaugurations and weddings), while the court itself – consisting of the king, his household and friends, and often accompanied by the army – almost continuously moved from place to place. It can be shown that these movements took into account religious calendars to a significant degree, so that the king would be in time to attend local or regional festivals.¹²⁰ The movements of the itinerant courts were, of course, also determined by military considerations and the fortunes of war.

Antiochos’ elevation of the Daphne Festival to imperial status accords with his well-known efforts to elevate Antioch to a higher status as an imperial center.¹²¹ With Mesopotamia and West Iran still firmly under Seleukid control, Antiochos’ apparent policy of strengthening the strategically located Seleukid region in NW Syria suggests a policy aimed at the west. This crossroads of land

¹¹⁷ POLYB. 30.25.6 (civic horsemen) and 20.25.12 (ephebes).

¹¹⁸ STROOTMAN (2007), p. 327–328, cf. STROOTMAN (2014), p. 187–188. On nourishing and leadership in Homeric epic see VAN DEN EIJNDE (2017b); cf. HITCH (2009), p. 141–143. Antiochos VII Sidetes is said to have provided huge amounts of food for his guests, too: Poseidonios *ap.* ATHEN. 5.210d.

¹¹⁹ POLYB. 30.26.1.

¹²⁰ See STROOTMAN (2013a) for the Near East and STROOTMAN (2017c) for mainland Greece. On the mobile court as an instrument of imperial rule in the Hellenistic world see generally STROOTMAN (2013b). From Hellenistic Greece, some instances are known of festival dates being adapted to the travel schedules of Macedonian kings; in 290, the Pan-Hellenic Pythian Games were held at Athens to allow Demetrios Poliorketes to preside over them and attract representatives of the poleis to his court, for Delphi at that time was controlled by the Aitolians, with whom Demetrios was at war (PLUT., *Demetr.* 40.4).

¹²¹ STRAB. 16.2.4; on the urban expansion and monumentalization of Antioch under Antiochos IV see DOWNEY (1961), p. 55–63; MITTAG (2006), p. 145–149. Human occupation and cultivation of the fertile Amuq Valley north of Antioch increased after the Macedonian conquest and reached a peak in the first part of the second century BC, which is probably to be connected with Antiochos IV’s investments in the region: see DEGIORGIO in GERRITSEN *et al.* (2008), p. 250; cf. HANNESTAD (2013), p. 251–252.

and sea routes had earlier been developed as an imperial hub by Seleukos I, who thereby aimed to connect the Near East with the Aegean (by sea) and inner Asia Minor (by the Royal Road).¹²²

The expanded Daphne Festival was meant to rival the games at Amphipolis hosted by Paullus.¹²³ The festival at Amphipolis had been aimed at the cities and kings of Asia Minor, as well as the poleis of mainland Greece,¹²⁴ and it had likewise attracted sacred embassies from the cities bringing sacrifices (*legationes cum victimis, sc. θεωρίαι*).¹²⁵ Amphipolis was far from insignificant: it was a well-connected port city, a hub of Aegean networks of exchange and interaction. Amphipolis, furthermore, had strong links with the Macedonian monarchy and aristocracy from the fourth century BC,¹²⁶ and the Artemis Temple at Amphipolis was one of the sanctuaries singled out in Alexander's posthumous *hypomnemata* for major investments, next to such sites as Delphi, Dodona, Delos and Ilion.¹²⁷ Though not a Pan-Hellenic sacred place per se, Amphipolis was to all accounts a major contact zone of the Hellenistic world.

The Greek embassies were drawn to Antioch for a more important reason than their being subjected to a great show of monarchical pomp and circumstance. They had come as participants, not spectators, as we have seen. Ritualized feasting has long been recognized as an important setting for the creation of group cohesion and the negotiation of power relations.¹²⁸ In particular, royal courts, with their flexible but highly ritualized modes of behavior, were key venues for the integration of the various local elites into the fabric of 'global' empire through collective participation in solemn rituals, communal consumption of drink and food, and ritualized gift exchange.¹²⁹

¹²² On the early Seleukid development of the Seleukis as an 'imperial' region see recently KOSMIN (2014), p. 93–119, and STROOTMAN (2014a), p. 68–72, with differing interpretations of the region's significance for the Seleukid imperial project.

¹²³ LIV. 45.32.8–33.7; PLUT., *Aem.* 28.3–29.1.

¹²⁴ LIV. 45.32.8: *Ab seriis rebus ludicrum, quod ex multo ante praeparato et in Asiae ciuitates et ad reges missis qui denuntiarent, et, cum circumiret ipse Graeciae ciuitates, indixerat principibus, magno apparatu Amphipoli fecit.*

¹²⁵ LIV. 45.32.1.

¹²⁶ AEL. ARIST., *Symmachikos* A, 38.14, p. 715 D; already in 422, the Amphipolitans had institutionalized a cult with yearly sacrifices and games for their 'liberator' and latter-day *hērōs ktistēs*, the Spartan commander Brasidas (THUC. 5.11.1).

¹²⁷ DIOD. SIC. 18.4.4–5.

¹²⁸ See generally WIESSNER / SCHIEVENHÖVEL (1998); DIETLER / HAYDEN (2001); HAYDEN (2014); BLOK *et al.* (2017). I am grateful to Floris van den Eijnde for drawing my attention to the publications of Dietler and Hayden.

¹²⁹ On ritualized feasting and gift exchange at the Hellenistic courts see STROOTMAN (2014a), p. 188–191. At the Daphne Festival, booty from the last war against the Ptolemies may have been distributed among military leaders and entrepreneurs; cf. n. 21, above.

In a preceding section we have looked at Antiochos' reaching out to the Aegean. This section, in addition, focused on the converse movement: the attraction of representatives of Aegean polities to the Seleukid court. The last section of this paper will now consider the ideological implications of the procession.

7. *The Symbolism of the Procession: World Empire and Golden Age*

We already saw that Diodoros uses the word *oikoumenē* to describe the radius of the Daphne Festival.¹³⁰ Universalistic imagery was also a noticeable element in the procession, which included images of Earth and Heaven, Night and Day, and Dawn and Noon.¹³¹ Among the troops were units from various parts of the world, including Thrakians, Galatians, Mysians and Iranians. P. Iossif has argued that the various 'ethnic' units in the procession at Daphne also had symbolic meaning; they presented Antiochos as a ruler of all nations, and reanimated the dynasty's claims to Asia Minor and Thrace as Seleukid *doriktētos chōra*.¹³² At Antioch, Antiochos had issued a new type of victory coinage in 173/172. The new tetradrachms with the image of Zeus Nikephoros on the obverse reached back to the dynasty's founder, Seleukos I Nikator,¹³³ which may have entailed a claim to Seleukos' far-stretching *doriktētos chōra* in east and west.

There is also the probable association of the king with Dionysos. Such an association is best known from the Ptolemaic context: most of all, the Dionysiac imagery in the Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphos a century earlier had associated the advent of the victorious king with Dionysos' triumphant return from India.¹³⁴ It is of course no coincidence that scholars have frequently examined the processions of Ptolemy I and Antiochos IV in tandem. They are similar in many respects. But in the Hellenistic world, royal entries were

¹³⁰ DIOD. SIC. 31.16.1.

¹³¹ POLYB. 30.25.16.

¹³² IOSSIF (2011), p. 136–143, following BRIANT (1999); also see STROOTMAN (2007), p. 313, n. 195.

¹³³ See e.g. *SNG Spaer* 977, 1004, 1005 (Antioch); cf. MITTAG (2006), p. 142–143. Since direct references to Alexander are absent from Seleukid self-presentation between c. 305 and 150, it is improbable that this coinage was also meant to evoke the memory of Alexander, as assumed by BEVAN (1900); cf. SVENSON (1995), p. 171.

¹³⁴ The Dionysiac procession is described in full detail by Kallixeinos of Rhodes, *FGrHist* 627 F 2 *ap.* ATHEN. 5.196a–203b. The association of Dionysos with India was not an exclusively Ptolemaic idea, as we find it also around 300 with Megasthenes, *viz.*, in a Seleukid context (STRAB. 15.1.6); on Megasthenes and Seleukid myth-making see KOSMIN (2013). There is no hint in either the written or the numismatic evidence that a secondary reference to Alexander lies hidden behind the references to Dionysos.

commonly shaped like a divine *parousia*.¹³⁵ Dionysiac imagery at Daphne included the king's disorganizing behavior, discussed above, the presence of 800 ivory tusks as votive offerings,¹³⁶ and chariots drawn by elephants. Dionysos featured on Seleukid coinage since the reign of Seleukos IV (187–175 BC), who had struck bronze coins at Ekbatana showing quite consistently Dionysos on the obverse and an Indian elephant on the reverse.¹³⁷ Antiochos IV was the first Seleukid to portray himself wearing an elephant scalp.¹³⁸

Dionysos was *der kommende Gott*, the epiphany deity *par excellence*.¹³⁹ For this and other reasons he became a powerful symbol of ideal kingship: as the conqueror of Asia, Dionysos was a victorious god and a savior whose arrival in the west signaled the beginning of a golden age of plenty and good fortune.¹⁴⁰ There may be a link with the enigmatic inscription *OGIS* 253, dated to 167/166 but of unknown provenance, in which Antiochos IV is hailed as the 'Savior of Asia'.¹⁴¹ A promise of liberation and peace was thus conveyed at

¹³⁵ STROOTMAN (2007), p. 289–305 and STROOTMAN (2014), p. 233–246; cf. VERSNEL (1970), p. 250–253. On royal entries also BRIANT (2009); PERRIN-SAMINADAYAR (2009); KOSMIN (2014), p. 151–157; MITTAG (2015) [n.v.].

¹³⁶ POLYB. 30.25.12.

¹³⁷ *SC* II, no. 1353–1356. Antiochos IV used images of elephants on his bronze coinage too (*SC* II, no. 1554 f.), as did some of his successors: Demetrios I (*SC* II, no. 1646; 1745), Alexander I (*SC* II, no. 1791; 1872; 1876), and Antiochos VI (*SC* II, no. 2243). The last time elephants feature on Seleukid (bronze) coinage is in the reign of Alexander II Zabinas (*SC* II, no. 2243), who also had himself portrayed wearing an elephant scalp (see below). The image of triumphant Dionysos was known in Greece already in the pre-Hellenistic period (see e.g. HDT. 2.146); but it was only after the death of Alexander that he became associated with India, and elephants became part of Dionysiac processions, first of all in early Ptolemaic Alexandria; see GOUKOWSKY (1978), p. 11–15; KÖHLER (1996), p. 111–112; BOARDMAN (2014), p. 10–13. Dionysian symbolism was adopted most abundantly by Antiochos IV's grandson, Mithradates VI Eupator.

¹³⁸ *SC* II, no. 1533: Susa. On the association of the elephant scalp with Dionysos, *viz.*, the conquest of India—first encountered on Ptolemaic coins—see KÖHLER (1996), p. 112 with n. 394. Elephant scalps are later also worn by Demetrios I (*SC* II, no. 1696; Seleukeia on the Tigris), Demetrios II (*SC* II, no. 1989; Seleukeia on the Tigris), and finally Alexander II (*SC* II, no. 2234; Antioch).

¹³⁹ BURKERT (1994), p. 162, with n. 6 on p. 412.

¹⁴⁰ TONDRIAU (1953); VERSNEL (1970), p. 250–253; HEINEN (1983). On Golden Age imagery in Hellenistic royal ideology and representation see ALFÖLDI (1977); PRÉAUX (1978), p. 201–238; STROOTMAN (2014c).

¹⁴¹ *OGIS* 253: Βασιλεύοντος Αντιόχου θ[εοῦ Ἐπιφανοῦς τοῦ] | σωτήρος τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ κτίστ[ου καὶ εὐεργέτου] | τῆς πόλεως, ἔτους σμ' καὶ [ρ' ἐν τῷ συντελουμένῳ] | ἀγῶνι Χαριστηρίῳς ὑπὸ [- - - - -] | ἀπίοντος Ὑπερβερεταίου. (ll. 1–5; emendations Dittenberger). Already KÖHLER (1900), p. 1105, rejected Dittenberger's suggestion that the inscription came from Babylon, as did SHERWIN-WHITE (1982); cf. VAN DER SPEK (1986), p. 72. For interpretations see ZAMBELLI (1960), p. 378; BUNGE (1976), p. 63; PIEJKO (1986). MUCCIOLI (2006) connects the inscription to Antiochos' departure to Iran in 165–164.

Daphne by a king who already in 172/173 had styled himself *Theos Epiphanes* and in *c.* 169/168 had adopted, in addition, the epithet *Nikephoros*, bringer of victory, to commemorate his Egyptian campaigns.¹⁴²

8. *Conclusion: the Dynamics of Empire*

It is clear that the Treaty of Apameia, and the loss of Asia Minor, cannot have caused the eventual decline of Seleukid power in the Middle East.¹⁴³ There remained a huge empire, comprising at its core the entire Levant, Mesopotamia and West Iran, with nominal suzerainty over Armenia and the Upper Satrapies.¹⁴⁴ The dynasty's military and financial resources were still enormous. Antiochos IV reorganized his empire, restored Seleukid hegemony in Armenia, and defeated the Ptolemies on land and at sea.

This paper began by quoting Diodoros' statement that at Daphne in 167/6, Antiochos made clear before an audience of envoys from the Aegean poleis what his political ambitions were. Which, then, were those ambitions?

Evidence has been adduced to substantiate the hypothesis that the Seleukid Empire under Antiochos IV was still an expansive, imperialistic polity with a vigorous universalistic ideology, and that Antiochos actively rebuilt his dynasty's power networks in Asia Minor and Greece in an attempt to reestablish Seleukid hegemony in the Aegean region. First it was shown that Antiochos not only discarded the military and territorial clauses of the Treaty of Apameia, but likely was not even bound to the oaths sworn by his father. The leading Senators in Rome seem not to have minded, either. Second, we saw how Antiochos, following the example of his predecessor, Seleukos IV, continued the pre-Apameia imperial policy of maintaining bonds with civic elites in Asia Minor

¹⁴² MØRKHOLM (1963), p. 37 and 72; cf. MITTAG (2006), p. 118–119. These epithets were mainly used in Antioch, Ptolemais, Seleukeia on the Tigris, and Ekbatana, and the three types of tetradrachms on which all three appear (with the head of Zeus, the king and Apollon on the obverse) apparently were used to pay troops during Antiochos' eastern campaigns: cf. DE CALLATAÏ / LORBER (2011), p. 424, who emphasize that the self-proclamation by a living king as *Theos Epiphanes*, an innovation of Antiochos IV, 'was in no way a timid move'.

¹⁴³ See esp. SHERWIN-WHITE / KUHRT (1993), p. 215–216; cf. GRAINGER (2002), p. 350, claiming that the loss of Asia Minor with its geographical and political fragmentation was in fact advantageous to the Seleukids; there was however considerable loss of prestige, cf. e.g. GERA (1998), p. 93.

¹⁴⁴ For the emerging new view of the Seleukid Empire as increasingly a system of vassal kingdoms held together by kinship, friendship diplomacy, and the charismatic overlordship of the imperial suzerain see ENGELS (2011); ENGELS (2014a); WENGHOFFER / HOULE (2016); ENGELS (2017); STROOTMAN (2011b; 2017a; 2017b); for the pervasiveness of diverse forms of indirect rule in premodern/early modern Eurasian empires in general see also n. 92, above.

and Greece by means of euergetism and *philia*, as well as with local dynasties by means of marriage diplomacy and, more importantly, the kinship bonds resulting from these marriages. As the New Imperial History teaches us, all this network-building must be understood as imperialistic activity.¹⁴⁵ Third, we looked at the political aspects of the Daphne Festival, and saw how this event was staged to attract embassies from the Aegean poleis and facilitate negotiations between them and the empire. Fourth, the ideology of the festival was considered, and it was argued that it conveyed an image of the empire as very powerful, splendid, and cosmopolitan. In addition, the probable association of the ruler with Dionysos, in combination with the festival's new year imagery, presented Antiochos IV Theos Epiphanes as one who had come to liberate and bring peace.

Antiochos' Aegean policies were an elaboration of a common Hellenistic rhetoric of empire that can be traced back to the third and fourth centuries. As a source of manpower, wealth and prestige, the world of the Aegean poleis had always been pivotal for the rival superpowers of the Hellenistic world, and until the rise of Antiochos III and the coming of Rome, the Seleukid, Antigonid and Ptolemaic dynasties had simultaneously competed for the favor of the same poleis. The Fifth and Sixth Syrian War had reduced the Ptolemaic *basileia* from a world empire to a mere kingdom of Egypt, and with the Antigonid dynasty gone and Roman power not yet firmly established, the Aegean had become a power vacuum in the eyes of many – particularly in the eyes of the only monarch of imperial rank left standing: Antiochos IV. He, moreover, had become the only legitimate heir to the title King of the Macedonians since the dethronement of Perseus in 168, at least theoretically.¹⁴⁶ In his bid to outdo Aemilius Paullus' games at Amphipolis by his own show of force at Daphne, Antiochos propagated his own greater ability to support the poleis and protect their autonomy. If anything, Antiochos IV was a warlord in an honor-driven aristocratic milieu, surrounded by powerful military leaders whose prestige and social position depended on their king's ability to lead them to military success.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ The number of recent titles is substantial; new studies that have successfully used a network approach to empire include BARKEY (2008); HÄMÄLÄINEN (2008); BURBANK / COOPER (2010); FARUQUI (2012); BALLANTYNE (2012).

¹⁴⁶ The title had been the prize of his ancestor Seleukos I, when he defeated Lysimachos at Koroupedion in 281. Antiochos IV descended from Antigonos I and Demetrios I in the matriline; on the matrilineal transmission of royal titles in the Hellenistic dynasties see STROOTMAN (2010); cf. CARNEY (2000), p. 4–8; MITCHELL (2007), p. 62–63; STROOTMAN (2016).

¹⁴⁷ For the predominance of war and victory in the ideology *and* practice of Macedonian, *viz.*, Seleukid monarchy GEHRKE (1982/2013), GROPP (1984) and GRUEN (1985), are fundamental, with earlier BICKERMAN (1938), p. 11–30; see now also EHLING (2001) and CHANIOTIS (2005), p. 57–77. For (differing) analyses of the underlying

This of course is not to say that Antiochos actively sought a direct confrontation with Rome. It is clear that until the outbreak of the Sixth Syrian War, he aimed at reorganizing his power base without antagonizing Rome. In 172, still at the beginning of his reign, he may even have assured a Roman embassy of his compliance with Roman wishes.¹⁴⁸ But as a political and military force, Rome was still of little consequence in the Middle East; the now accepted idea of Roman supremacy in this period was constructed only afterwards by Polybios, and moreover restricted to the Mediterranean. At the end of the Sixth Syrian War, Antiochos' financial and military resources must have been considerable, as the Daphne Festival aimed to show.¹⁴⁹ Antiochos was realistic in his assessment of the military strength of Rome, and Rome's system of alliances in the Aegean. But he had no reason to think of his own power and overlapping alliances as inferior, as Polybios from hindsight claimed they were.¹⁵⁰

Recently, some scholars have made a case to reinterpret Antiochos' allegedly erratic behavior as in fact 'rational' statesmanship.¹⁵¹ It has not been my intention to make a similar argument. On the contrary: despite the fact that the dynamics underlying Hellenistic imperialism can be rationalized by historians in retrospect (e.g. that wars of conquest were partly motivated by the wish to obtain the resources needed for the gift distribution that bound elites to the dynasty), I assume that Antiochos IV's motivations were to a considerable degree cultural, *viz.* ideological and honor-driven (e.g. that wars were also motivated by the very real obligations placed upon the king's shoulders to uphold the public image of a charismatic and victorious war leader).¹⁵² Though

incentives for the pervasiveness of war see AUSTIN (1986); ECKSTEIN (2006), p. 79–117; STROOTMAN (2014a), p. 49–53.

¹⁴⁸ Reported only by LIV. 42.26.7–8, with even more hindsight as regards Rome's eventual Mediterranean dominance than Polybios had.

¹⁴⁹ As Livy, following Polybios, said: a man who knew how to arrange a banquet and organize games could also conquer in war (LIV. 45.32.8–10). A substantial resurgence of Seleukid power under Antiochos IV is also manifest from the increased quality of the king's tetradrachms; cf. MØRKHOLM (1966), p. 51–63.

¹⁵⁰ History in a sense proved Polybios wrong. The post-Seleukid ruler, Mithradates VI, had a considerably weaker power base than his grandfather Antiochos IV; but he was not exactly a 'castrated king', and fear of Rome did not withhold him from empire-building in Asia Minor and 'liberating' the poleis of Greece, even though by then the Romans had become a far more powerful presence in the region than they had been in Antiochos' time (as Mithradates eventually found out). Compare the contrasting evaluation of Antiochos' reign in *Dan* 11.40–44, a *contemporaneous* source from the Near East itself: *He will invade many countries and sweep through them like a flood. [...] He will extend his power over many countries; [...] and he will destroy and annihilate many* (NIV Translation); as was stressed above, the book of *Daniel* shows no awareness of Rome as a power of any significance in the Near East.

¹⁵¹ See e.g. MITTAG (2006) and FEYEL / GRASLIN-THOMÉ (2014).

¹⁵² STROOTMAN (2007), *passim*, and see n. 147, above.

admittedly a little speculative, I hold that the humiliating defeat of Antiochos III in the Battle of Magnesia cannot but have implanted into his son an urge, if not a social obligation, to retaliate.

At the beginning of Antiochos' reign, Seleukid control of Syria and Mesopotamia was unchallenged. After the two Egyptian campaigns, and the festival at Daphne, Antiochos campaigned successfully in Armenia, forcing the rebellious king Artaxias into subsidiary status again.¹⁵³ At that time, Diodoros writes, Antiochos' power 'was unmatched by any of the other kings'.¹⁵⁴ The Daphne procession showed that he had a huge campaigning army at his disposal, an army which at that time may well been the strongest military force in the world.¹⁵⁵ The following year, Antiochos followed in his father's footsteps and marched eastward from Babylonia to reaffirm his dynasty's supremacy in the Upper Satrapies, the military power house of the Seleukid Empire. His untimely death in 164, while still only in West Iran,¹⁵⁶ annulled any plans he may have had for Asia Minor and the Aegean after his return to the west.

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¹⁵³ DIOD. SIC. 31.17a; cf. *Dan* 11.40–44: *he will set out in a great rage to destroy and annihilate many* (NIV translation). On the Armenian campaign see MITTAG (2006), p. 292–298.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibidem*.

¹⁵⁵ An army of about 50,000 regular troops, as we have seen, which during a big campaign would have been temporarily expanded with locally levied troops to perhaps 70,000 or 80,000 men; in other words, an army of approximately the same size as Antiochos the Great had fielded at Raphia (65,000) and Magnesia (85,500), and larger than the ones fielded by the Romans in the great battles of Kynoskephalai, Magnesia, and Pydna.

¹⁵⁶ POLYB. 31.9.3; PORPH., *FGrHist* 260 F 56. On the location of Antiochos' death see MITTAG (2006), p. 319–320.

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