

**The Men who would be King: Kings and Usurpers in the
Seleukid Empire**

**by
Boris Chrubasik
Christ Church
Oxford**

**A Thesis Submitted to the University of Oxford for the Degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

Michaelmas Term 2011

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Abstract

This thesis examines usurpation in the Seleukid empire between the third and second centuries BCE. Since the title ‘usurper’ was attributed by ancient authors to defeated opponents of the Seleukid king, this study is essentially a study of constructed historical narratives. If usurpers are placed in their historical context, however, the histories of their claims to the diadem can be reconstructed. By analysing the literary and documentary evidence, chapters 2 and 3 assess the interaction between kings, usurpers and the groups within the kingdom (such as cities, dynasts and the army). More precisely, an investigation of usurpers’ strategies and the royal images they employed in their interactions with the groups within the kingdom is undertaken, and, wherever possible, the groups’ perception of and reaction to usurpers is examined. By focussing on usurpation, conclusions regarding the possibilities and limits of monarchic rule in the Seleukid kingdom, the kingship of the Seleukid rulers and the structure of the Seleukid empire can be drawn. This study argues that the Seleukid kings were in constant competition with other internal power holders, illustrating the precarious position of the Seleukid kings to sustain the monopoly of power in the empire. The dynamics between the Seleukid king and different power holders within the kingdom are demonstrated in chapter 4 in two case-studies on the Attalids of Pergamon and the Baktrian kings. Chapter 5 reviews

the possibilities of usurping the diadem as well as Seleukid reaction to usurpers. The concluding section fundamentally challenges scholarship's reassessments of the 'strength' of Seleukid kingdom. It is argued that it was a kingship without a strong dynasty and supporting aristocracy which formed the basis of a weak empire.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to my supervisor John Ma for his continuing guidance, encouragement and patience throughout the development of this study. I also would like to thank my former supervisors, Charles Crowther, Ulrich Gotter and Kai Trampedach, for introducing me into the world of Hellenistic history, as well as my examiners Katherine Clarke and Stephen Mitchell for their valuable comments. Further gratitude is owed to Matthew Bladen, Angelos Chaniotis, Matthew Gibbs, Benjamin Gray, William Mack, Christian Seebacher and Christopher Tuplin for reading parts of this work as well as to Jane Anderson, Michael Athanson, Rob Bennett, Beate Dignas, Karl-Ludwig Elvers, Benjamin Foster, Georgy Kantor, Dietrich Klose, Jack Kroll, Julien Monerie, Elizabeth Payne, Jonathan Taylor, Bert Smith and Peter Thonemann for help and advice.

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List of Abbreviations

Aramaic, Cuneiform and Hieroglyphic Documents

<i>AD</i>	II: Sachs, Abraham J, Hunger, Hermann (1988), <i>Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia: Vol. II</i> , Vienna. III: Sachs, Abraham J, Hunger, Hermann (1996), <i>Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia: Vol. III: Diaries from 164 B.C. to 61 B.C.</i> , Vienna. VI: Hunger, Hermann (2006), <i>Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia: Vol. VI: Goal Year Texts</i> , Vienna.
<i>Bab.</i>	Babylonian Version of Dareios' Rock inscription at Bisitun
<i>BCHP</i>	Finkel, Irving, Spek, Robartus van der (in preparation), <i>Babylonian Chronicles of the Hellenistic Period</i> . Preliminary versions of the texts available at http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/chron00.html [30 September 2011].
<i>CM</i>	Glassner, Jean-Jacques (2004), <i>Mesopotamian Chronicles</i> , ed. and trans. Foster, Benjamin R, Atlanta, GA.
<i>DB</i>	The Old Persian Text of Dareios' Rock Inscription at Bisitun
<i>LBAT</i>	Pinches, Theophilus G, Strassmaier, Johann N (1955), <i>Late Babylonian Astronomical and Related Texts</i> , Providence, RI.
<i>NCBT</i>	Newell Collections of Babylonian Tablets
<i>Urk. II.</i>	Sethe, Kurt (1904-16), <i>Hieroglyphische Urkunden der griechisch-römischen Zeit, 1-3: Urkunden des Aegyptischen Altertums</i> , begr. v. G. Steindorff, Abt, II, Leipzig.
<i>TADAE</i>	I: Porten, Bezalel, Yardeni, Ada (1986), <i>Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt: Letters</i> , Jerusalem.
<i>YOS</i>	<i>Yale Oriental Studies</i>

Coins

<i>BMC Greek and Scythic Kings</i>	Gardner, Percy (1886), <i>The Coins of the Greek and Scythic Kings of Bactria and India in the British Museum</i> , London.
<i>BMC Mysia</i>	Wroth, Warwick (1892), <i>Catalogue of the Greek Coins of Mysia</i> , London.
<i>BMC Parthia</i>	Wroth, Warwick (1903), <i>Catalogue of the Coins of Parthia</i> , London.
<i>BMC Pontus</i>	Wroth, Warwick (1889), <i>Catalogue of Greek Coins: Pontus, Paphlagonia, Bithynia, and the Kingdom of the Bosphorus</i> , London.
<i>BMC Seleucids</i>	Gardner, Percy (1878), <i>Catalogue of Greek Coins: The Seleucid Kings of Syria</i> , London.
<i>CH</i>	<i>Coin Hoards</i>
<i>CSE</i>	I: Houghton, Arthur (1983), <i>Coins of the Seleucid Empire from the Collection of Arthur Houghton</i> , New York. II: Hoover, Oliver D. (2007), <i>Coins of the Seleucid Empire from the Collection of Arthur Houghton, Part II</i> , New York.
<i>ESM</i>	Newell, Edward T. (1938), <i>The Coinage of the Eastern Seleucid Mints: From Seleucus I to Antiochos III</i> , New York.
<i>IGCH</i>	Thompson, Margaret, Mørkholm, Otto, Kraay, Colin M. (1973), <i>An Inventory of Greek Coin Hoards</i> , New York.
<i>SC</i>	I: Houghton, Arthur, Lorber, Catherine C. (2002), <i>Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part I: Seleucus I to Antiochos III</i> , 2 Vols, New York/Lancaster, PA. II: Houghton, Arthur, Lorber, Catherine C, Hoover, Oliver D. (2008), <i>Seleucid Coins: A Comprehensive Catalogue, Part II: Seleucus IV to Antiochos XIII</i> , 2 Vols, New York/Lancaster, PA.
<i>SNG Cop.Epirus</i>	Anon. (1943), <i>Sylloge Nummorum Graecarum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals in the Danish National Museum: Epirus-Acarnania</i> ,

	Copenhagen.
<i>SNG Cop.Mace</i>	III: Anon. (1943), <i>Sylloge Nummorum Graecarum: The Royal Collection of Coins and Medals in the Danish National Museum: Macedonia, Part III, Philip III-Philip VI; Macedonia under the Romans; Kings of Paeonia</i> , Copenhagen.
<i>Svoronos</i>	Svoronos Ioannes N. (1901-8), <i>Τα νομίσματα τοῦ κράτους τῶν Πτολεμαίων</i> , 4 Vols, Athens.
<i>WSM</i>	Newell, Edward T. (1941), <i>The Coinage of the Western Seleucid Mints from Seleucus I to Antiochus III</i> , New York.

Inscriptions

All abbreviations follow the guidelines in the index volume *SEG* 36-45 (1986-1995) and subsequent volumes. Where the format of *SEG* is not followed, the following abbreviations are used.

<i>BE</i>	Bulletin Épigraphique in <i>Revue des Études Grecques</i> (referred to by year and lemma number)
<i>I.Milet</i>	Rehm, Albert (1914), <i>Milet, III. Das Delphinion in Milet</i> , (nos. 31-186), Berlin. Hermann, Peter (1997-2006), <i>Milet VI. Die Inschriften von Milet</i> , (nos. 187-1580), 3 Vols, Berlin.
<i>I.Pergamon</i>	Fränkel, Max (1890), <i>Die Inschriften von Pergamon: 1. Bis zum Ende der Königszeit</i> , Berlin.
<i>SEG</i>	Chaniotis, Angelos, Corsten, Thomas, e.a. (1923-), <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> , Leiden.

Papyri

All abbreviations of papyri follow the guidelines of Oates, John F, Bagnall, Roger S, Clackson, Sarah J, e.a., *Checklist of Greek, Latin, Demotic and Coptic Papyri, Ostraca and Tablets*, <http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/texts/clist.html>, Month 200.

Primary Material

<i>BAA</i>	Brodersen, Kai (1991), <i>Appians Antiochike (Syriake 1,1-44,232): Text und Kommentar: nebst einem Anhang: Plethons Syriake-Exzerpt</i> , Munich.
<i>BAS</i>	Brodersen, Kai (1989), <i>Appians Abriss der Seleukidengeschichte (Syriake 45,232-70,369): Text und Kommentar</i> , Munich.
<i>EK</i>	Edelstein, Ludwig, Kidd, Ian G. (1972-1999), <i>Posidonius</i> , 3 Vols, Cambridge.
<i>FGrHist</i>	Jacoby, Felix (1923-62), <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> , Berlin and Leiden.
<i>HCP</i>	Walbank, Frank W. (1957-79), <i>A Historical Commentary on Polybius</i> , 3 Vols, Oxford.
<i>PCG</i>	Austin, Colin, Kassel, Rudolf (1983-2001), <i>Poeti Comici Graeci</i> , 8 Vols, Berlin.

Secondary Material, Journals and Other Abbreviations

All abbreviations of journals follow *L'année philologique* and otherwise *Der Neue Pauly* (reprinted in *Brill's New Pauly*). The abbreviations of journals and series not mentioned in either of these, are listed here.

<i>AchHist</i>	<i>Achaemenid History</i>
ANSNM	American Numismatic Society: Numismatic Notes and Monographs
JSHRZ	Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit
LGPN	Matthews, Elaine, Fraser, Peter M, Catling Richard W.V. e.a. (1987-), <i>A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names</i> , Oxford.
NABU	<i>Notes assyriologiques brèves et utilitaires</i>
NNA	<i>Nordisk Numismatisk Årsskrift</i>
NPG	National Portrait Gallery, London
Robert OMS	Robert, Louis (1969-90), <i>Opera Minora Selecta: epigraphie et antiquités grecques</i> , 7 Vols, Amsterdam.
SE	Seleukid Era

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A Note on Editions of Literary Sources

All quotations of classical authors and biblical texts follow the standard abbreviations in *Der Neue Pauly* (reprinted in *Brill's New Pauly*).

All editions quoted in this thesis, which are not listed in the primary bibliography, are found in the Loeb collection, including books 1-15 of the revised Polybios edition.

All translations not found in the primary bibliography are from the Loeb collection; modified, or by the author.

A Note on Spelling

The English custom to latinize the spelling of Greek words is not followed in this thesis. Nevertheless, for overall readability there have been some compromises, which the individual reader might not always deem satisfactory. Therefore, slight changes to spelling, such as from Seleucus to Seleukos and from the Aetolians to Aitolians were made throughout; 'awkward' constructions such as Makkabaioi instead of Makkabees, were avoided. Prominent personal names, such as Philip and Alexander, were left in their modern spelling, as were 'well-known' geographical names, such as Judaea (instead of Judaia) and Athens (instead of Athenai).

I hope the reader will look kindly on this personal interest that Greek names should remain visibly so.

The House of Seleukos

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Figure 1: *CAH*² 7.1, 490-1; modified. Copyright of Cambridge University Press.

Map 1: The Hellenistic East

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Map 2: Asia Minor

The map originally located here has been removed from this version of the thesis

Map 3: The Levant

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Map 4: The Eastern Satrapies

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1 Introduction: Molon the King

It was in his account of a battle in 220 BCE between two Hellenistic armies in the southern district of Apollonia in Babylonia, west of the mighty Zagros ridge, that the Hellenistic historian Polybios recorded the following event:

Molon aware of what had happened and already surrounded on every side, haunted by the tortures he would suffer if he were taken alive, put an end to his life, and all who had taken part in the plot escaped each to his home and perished in a like manner. Neolaos, escaping from the battle to his brother Alexander in Persia, killed his mother and afterwards himself, persuading Alexander to follow his example.¹

What had happened? King Molon had been ‘formidable’ (Pol. 5. 43. 8). He had been a high power holder in the Seleukid kingdom who had declared himself king in 222 BCE, the year of the accession of Antiochos III. He had crossed from Media into Babylonia and had taken control of the former Seleukid territories with relative ease (Pol. 5. 48. 10-16). He won more than one battle against the troops which the Seleukid king had sent to the east and he minted his own coinage with his own royal portrait with energetic curls (a reference to Alexander the Great) and the precious diadem. The reverses of his coins bore the legend βασιλεὺς Μόλων in the genitive (SC 950). When Antiochos III marched against him with an enormous force, Molon’s army, which relied on the numbers of slingers (Pol. 5. 52. 5), defected and μετεβάλετο πρὸς τοὺς πολεμίους, ‘went over to the enemy’ (Pol. 5. 54. 1).

The Seleukid king commanded that Molon’s dead body was to be impaled in the most conspicuous place in Media (Pol. 5. 54. 6). After further administrative

¹ Pol. 5. 54. 3-5: ὁ δὲ Μόλων συννοήσας τὸ γεγονὸς καὶ πανταχόθεν ἤδη κυκλούμενος, λαβὼν πρὸ ὀφθαλμῶν τὰς ἐσομένας περὶ αὐτὸν αἰκίας, ἐὰν ὑποχείριος γένηται καὶ ζωγρίᾳ ληφθῇ, προσήνεγκε τὰς χεῖρας ἑαυτῷ. παραπλησίως δὲ καὶ πάντες οἱ κοινωνήσαντες τῆς ἐπιβολῆς, φυγόντες εἰς τοὺς οἰκίους ἕκαστοι τόπους, τὴν αὐτὴν ἐποίησαντο τοῦ βίου καταστροφὴν. ὁ δὲ Νεόλαος, ἀποφυγὼν ἐκ τῆς μάχης καὶ παραγενόμενος εἰς τὴν Περσίδα πρὸς Ἀλέξανδρον τὸν τοῦ Μόλωνος ἀδελφόν, τὴν μὲν μητέρα καὶ τὰ τοῦ Μόλωνος τέκνα κατέσφαξε, μετὰ δὲ τὸν τούτων θάνατον ἐπικατέσφαξεν αὐτόν, πείσας τὸ παραπλήσιον ποιῆσαι καὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον.

changes, punishments and pardons, the rebellion of Molon (τὴν Μόλωνος ἀπόστασιν) was put down (Pol. 5. 54. 13).

Molon's revolt is a story about the politics of the Hellenistic world and of the Seleukid kingdom in particular. It is the story about a king and his high-powered friends, secession, cities and war; it is also a story about usurpation. Molon's revolt was not the only usurpation in the Seleukid empire – far from it. If we disregard the murder of Seleukos I and the taking of the diadem of Ptolemaios Keraunos, the first known usurpation occurred in the middle of the third century BCE when Antiochos Hierax, the brother of Seleukos II, declared himself king in Seleukid Asia Minor. More usurpers would follow after Molon's revolt: Achaïos appeared in the year of Molon's death and Timarchos, Alexander Balas, Tryphon and Alexander Zabinas followed in the second century BCE. It is these usurpers which form the central focus of this thesis. Although the usurpers of the Seleukid empire have so far been largely neglected by scholarship, this is not the primary reason why they have been chosen for this present study; rather they form the subject of this thesis because an analysis of usurpation allows us to characterise the history of power in the Seleukid kingdom from a different angle.

Hellenistic and Seleukid history has been thriving in the past twenty years.² Studies have largely focused on foreign policies and the history of specific geographic areas, with regional studies outside Asia Minor being of recent interest.³ Current scholarly trends of the period can be presented in roughly three potentially overlapping groups. A specific focus on the epigraphic documents (mainly from Asia Minor) in the footsteps of L. Robert has encouraged major thematic studies on the

² This introduction is not a bibliographical essay and this section does not attempt to give an overview of the large Seleukid studies. Instead, it will illustrate different directions in current Seleukid research which have influenced this work. The direction of the 'big' studies on Seleukid history, such as Will (1979; 1982); Bickerman (1938); Habicht (1989b), 324-87; Holleaux (1942); Robert/Robert (1983); Rostovtzeff (1941) and Schmitt (1964), will be apparent throughout this thesis.

³ For two different angles on Antiochos III and Rome: Dreyer (2007); Grainger (2002). On the Syrian Wars: Grainger (2010). Regional studies: Wiemer (2002), on Rhodes (not part of the Seleukid empire, but part of the world of Asia Minor) and Michels (2009). On the Levant: Sartre (2001).

interaction between the Seleukid king and groups within his kingdom; the discourse of Seleukid language; different aspects of the kingdom, such as the Seleukid *philoï*; and communities in Seleukid Asia Minor. Since new epigraphic documents are frequently discovered in modern Turkey, the vitality of this research is hardly surprising.⁴ The important revisionist study of S. Sherwin-White and A. Kuhrt, which places emphasis on the eastern parts of the Seleukid empire, has fostered a second trend in recent Seleukid studies, which focuses on continuity between the Achaemenid empire and the Seleukid kingdom. Building on the work of A. Kuhrt, P. Briant and other leading Achaemenid historians, recently G. Aperghis and L. Capdetrey have published thematic studies on the administration and economy of the Seleukid state, which stress continuities between the Seleukid kingdom and the Achaemenid empire. Moreover, this field of ‘new Seleukid history’ creates an image of a strong and vital Seleukid empire.⁵

The newest trend in current Seleukid studies is very similar to the first since it places emphasis on one set of documentary material and was also advanced by L. Robert. Scholars, such as H. Seyrig, E. Newell and later O. Mørkholm and G. Le Rider, have continuously stressed the importance of Seleukid numismatics and have prepared the ground for current research. Until the late 1990s, Seleukid numismatics was not always incorporated in general Seleukid history.⁶ This area is now supplemented by numismatic studies that focus on a particular set of evidence, such as mints or hoards (largely inspired by Le Rider’s 1965 doctoral thesis), or thematic

⁴ On the discourse of Seleukid power: Ma (2002). On kings and groups within the kingdom: Dignas (2002); Mileta (2008). On the *philoï*: Savalli-Lestrade (1998). Villages: Schuler (1998). Important recent documents: e.g. Knoepfler (2010), 33-62 on the Ionian *koinon*; Isager/Karlsson (2009), 39-52 on honours for Olympichos at Labraunda; *SEG* 47. 1745 on the granting of polis status at Phrygian Tyriaion.

⁵ Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1987); eadem (1993); reactions in *Topoi* 4.2. (1994). Recent studies on the administration and economy of the empire: Capdetrey (2007); Aperghis (2004); Engels (forthcoming). Moreover, this trend has fostered documentary studies on Babylonian material: e.g. Boiy (2004); idem 2007; Invernizzi (2004).

⁶ E.g. Seyrig (1950); idem (1986); Newell: *ESM* and *WSM*; Le Rider (1965); idem (1999); idem/Callataÿ (2006); Mørkholm (1963); idem (1991).

studies of Seleukid coinage. The latter in particular has benefited from the publication of catalogues of Seleukid coinage.⁷ Two recent German studies of the second-century Seleukid kingdom paid tribute to the importance of numismatic evidence prior to the publication of the coin catalogues. Similar to the studies on Asia Minor which create a Seleukid history through the epigraphic evidence (e.g. Ma [2002] ch. 2), these studies now also incorporate the numismatic material in order to analyse other parts of the Seleukid empire.⁸ It should not be surprising that this trend to use literary, epigraphic and primarily numismatic evidence in political history has fostered research in areas in which epigraphic material is very rare, such as the Seleukid east and the Levant. This approach is also apparent in the recent studies on the Baktrian rulers, who were the contemporaries and successors of the Seleukid kings in central Asia, as well other eastern rulers.⁹

This present thesis is inspired by all three current trends in Seleukid history and in particular by the current interest in documentary studies. It represents a thematic study of a political phenomenon – usurpation – and it analyses the literary and documentary evidence of the Seleukid empire. This thesis was motivated by the ubiquity and vitality of the existence of usurpers in the third and second centuries BCE, as depicted on their coinage. While usurpation was not confined to the Seleukid kingdom, the frequency of the phenomenon allows us to draw conclusions beyond individual revolt.¹⁰ For example, if we place the above passage on Molon in a political

⁷ Studies on specific mints or hoards: Davesne/Le Rider (1989); Duyrat (2005) on Arados; Hoover (2007), 63-90 on Tyros; Le Rider (1998) on Seleukeia on the Tigris; idem (1999), on Antiocheia on the Orontes. Le Rider's study is to be supplemented by a study of the second-century mint by Hoover/Houghton (forthcoming). Thematic studies: e.g. Iossif/Lorber (2009), 87-115 on Seleukid beards; Meadows (2009), 51-88 on Pamphylian coinage. See also recent doctoral theses on Seleukid coinage: Erickson [2009] on deities; Dodd [2009] on political imagery. The Seleukid coin catalogues: *SC*.

⁸ On Antiochos IV: Mittag (2006). On the second-century Seleukid empire: Ehling (2008).

⁹ On Baktria: Coloru (2009); Holt (1999); Kritt (2001); see also the catalogue by Bopearachchi (1991). For a catalogue of Elymaean coinage: Haaff (2007). For the Persis: Klose/Müseler (2008) in a dialogue with Wiesehöfer (1994) and idem (2011), 107-21.

¹⁰ For the Antigonid kingdom, see, e.g. the usurpation of Alexander Kraterou: Knoepfler (2001), 287-95 (with further literature). For Ptolemaic Egypt, beyond the usurping family members, see, e.g. the former commander Galaistes: Huß (2001), 602-3.

framework of Seleukid kings, it is a story of revolt in a Hellenistic kingdom. The kings were the centres of the kingdom's administration and the agonistic element of this form of government has long been illustrated by scholarship.¹¹ This image of kingship also implies the strength of individual dynasties and thus the causes of Molon's revolt have been interpreted as a disruption of order. However, this image of Seleukid kingship does not explain the appearance of so many usurpers in a period of roughly one hundred and twenty years.

If we shift our analysis from a purely dynastic and political perspective to a sociological framework the answer becomes clearer. H.-J. Gehrke has illustrated that Hellenistic kingship can be explained using M. Weber's theory of charismatic rule.¹² Indeed, the plausibility of Gehrke's interpretation is apparent in an abundance of examples; Attalos I's claim to kingship after the defeat of the Galatians at the source of the river Kaikos (Pol. 18. 41. 7) is only one of them. Moreover, victories could not only make individuals worthy of kingship, but they also could make kings worthy of their diadem; Polybios' often quoted characterisation of Antiochos III after his return from the east is the most striking example. Polybios stresses the implications of the success of the king not only for the east but also for the western parts of his empire by writing, 'for it was through this expedition that he seemed worthy of the kingship not only by those in Asia, but also by those in Europe'.¹³ However, further refinement is required since this approach also illustrates the limits of the use of charisma. M. Weber argues that no power or ruler could exert successful and stable rule without the subject's interest and acceptance in being ruled and their belief in the ruler's legitimacy; brute force was not stable in the long run.¹⁴ Thus, a king was not worthy

¹¹ Bickerman (1938), 13; Walbank (1984), 62-100; Austin (1986), 450-66; Gehrke (2003); Virgilio (2003).

¹² Gehrke (1982), 247-77.

¹³ Pol. 11. 34. 16: διὰ γὰρ ταύτης τῆς στρατείας ἄξιός ἐφάνε τῆς βασιλείας οὐ μόνον τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν Εὐρώπην.

¹⁴ Weber (1980), 122.

of kingship because he was successful in his attempts which ascribed him charisma, rather he needed an audience which judged these successes to be valid. The second, (third, fourth, etc.) actor needs to be introduced at this stage. They were the audiences of royal performance and the agents of their own actions. What difference would have Attalos I's acclamation in the Kaikos valley have made if nobody had cheered? The king's success was dependent on successfully communicating his achievements. He had to be persuasive through 'royal offers', a dialogue between ruler and ruled, which had to be understood and accepted by both agents involved, thus creating 'social magic'.¹⁵ J. Ma has illustrated that it was the communication between power holders and the Makkabees which could *make* usurpers kings.¹⁶ His analysis of royal documents underlines that it was the acceptance of the kings' offers which made a king *the* king. However, Gehrke's use of charisma illustrates that there are more discourses of royal communication than through royal language alone. Polybios alludes to this in his description of the military victories of Antiochos III's campaign as a display of success. Here we need to combine Ma and Gehrke's approaches: Antiochos III's display of royal military prowess or luxury (royal performance in other words) does not immediately 'create' charisma which in turn makes him accepted as a ruler, as implied by Weber. Rather, analogous to the verbal discourses through royal language, royal success and luxury initiated non-verbal discourses which stress the rulers' interest in the acceptance by the groups within the kingdom.¹⁷ The Seleukid king had performed and (according to Polybios) his audiences accepted the message.

¹⁵ See Habermas (1987), 371-97; 427-35 who stresses the necessity of consensus for political decision-making and the distortion in uneven relationships. This relationship between two agents and the question of how 'social magic' could be created has been treated by Bourdieu (1991), 42. Applied by: Veyne (1990); Flaig (1992).

¹⁶ Ma (2000b), 71-112.

¹⁷ E.g. Alexander (2006), 29-90, esp. 29-37; Fischer-Lichte (2003), 33-54, esp. 37-41.

It will be argued in this thesis that the Seleukid king was not *legitimate* in a dynastic sense, rather in sociological terms he was *accepted*. There were many elements which could enhance the possibility of rulers' acceptance, including military victories and descent from former successful kings. Through descent Seleukid princes could become kings while they were children. Dynasty, however, was not a guarantee; 'dynastic' kings could also lose their kingship and become unaccepted.¹⁸

It is at this point that Molon and the usurpers re-emerge in the picture. The Seleukid king was not the only power holder in the Seleukid kingdom, he was only the biggest player. For example, the king's Friends and the king's friends in particular could fulfil important roles in the administration of the empire and thus could obtain powerful positions,¹⁹ powerful enough to rival the king. By reading Molon's revolt as a sociological phenomenon, Molon had been a friend of the former Seleukid kings and had persuaded his troops to follow him. For them he was their king since he had conquered a large part of Babylonia. From this perspective, the usurpers do not look very different from the Seleukid kings. If this is the case, the Seleukid usurpers will provide us with information about kingship in the Seleukid empire and the Seleukid rulers themselves.

The timespan of this thesis (246-c.125 BCE) is determined by the appearance of usurpers after the succession of more than two Seleukid kings. Ptolemaios Keraunos will not be included, since he usurped the kingship in the far western parts of the kingdom before the peaceful succession from Antiochos I to Antiochos II confirmed the Seleukid dynasty. Since both literary and documentary evidence for the period of cousin and brother warfare from the accession of Antiochos VIII onwards is very limited, this period also will not be a part of this study. Thus, this thesis

¹⁸ E.g. Seleukos III (Pol. 4. 48. 6-9); see below ch. 2.1; Demetrios I (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 59-61); see ch. 3.1; cf. see Austin (2003), 121-33, here 123; Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 268-9.

¹⁹ For the distinction between the circle of 'Friends' and the king's 'friends': Ma (2011), 521-43, here 526-7.

investigates the Seleukid state over a period of c. 120 years, in the middle of the kingdom's existence. For this period, this study questions the influential paradigm of 'new Seleukid history' and the strength of the Seleukid empire, as endorsed by Sherwin-White and Kuhrt and later adopted by other scholars.²⁰ It will argue that although the Seleukid kingdom was dynamic and proved to be vital over a period of more than two centuries, the kingdom was structurally weak and intrinsically different to its Achaemenid predecessor, and it is the study of Seleukid usurpers which will allow us to draw these conclusions.

1.1 Usurpation as an Interpretative Model

Usurpation shows a state in disorder. If the usurpers wanted to compete with the Seleukid kings, they had to persuade the groups in their spheres of influence that they were the better option for the diadem. Therefore, their 'royal offers' to the groups within their spheres of influence had to be more successful than those of the Seleukid king and perhaps also more visible. Moreover, the difference between the 'royal offers' of kings and usurpers provides a viable tool to assess the dynamics of power within the Seleukid kingdom. An individual usurper's attempts, such as Molon's revolt, might be considered to be an exception and thus only illustrate the possibility that only certain individuals could secede from the king (forcing us back to a dynastic framework of historical explanation). However, by comparing a sample of usurpations from different geopolitical areas, periods and political constellations, we are able to derive recurrent themes in usurpers' attempts to claim the diadem. In order to create these patterns, these individual usurpations will be placed in a historical narrative (chs. 2.1; 3.1) before being analysed (chs. 2.2; 3.2; 3.3). The examination of usurpers' strategies to take the diadem will provide us with a new understanding of power in the

²⁰ Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993); Aperghis (2004); Capdetrey (2007).

Seleukid kingdom (chs. 4; 5). It has been presupposed that in a sociological framework, there was little difference between Molon's claims to the diadem and those of the Seleukid king. However, verifying this postulation requires some methodological considerations on how to talk and write about usurpers.

1.1.0 Talking about Usurpers and the Choice of Words

The term 'usurper' is always negative. It describes an individual who has obtained a position of supreme power and authority without just cause. This description comes with a 'cultural package'. It assumes there is a judging authority which can differentiate between a 'power holder' who had an army and claimed some territory 'rightfully' and one who revolted and usurped power; in other words, the term 'usurper' contains a cultural judgment between right and wrong.²¹ By following this argument we slip back to a dynastic model of the Seleukid kingdom and this is only natural since our sources follow a Seleukid narrative (see below 1. 1). Molon was labelled a usurper by the Seleukid king (e.g. Pol. 5. 41. 6) since he had been defeated. In the normative narrative of Seleukid (court) history his rule was translated into an act of usurpation. Two examples will illustrate this. Demetrios I, a son of Seleukos IV, came to the Levant, executed Antiochos V, the son of Antiochos IV, and ruled until he was killed in battle by the armies of Alexander Balas (I Makk. 10. 50; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 61). Alexander Balas himself, perhaps a son of Antiochos IV, came to the Levant, defeated Demetrios I in battle and executed the royal court. He was king until he was defeated by Demetrios II and (mainly) Ptolemaios VI, and was murdered by his friends (Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10. 1).²² Stepping away from a discourse of Seleukid

²¹ Cf. Foucault (1988-90), I 17-35, here 31-2. Foucault's description of a day labourer, first integrated then expelled from his community is a comparative case study for labelling; cf. Gutting (2005), 1-28 and Rouse (2005), 95-122 for an introduction to Foucault's approach and its modern perception.

²² For both, see ch. 3.1.2 and 3.2.2.1

language, both kings had come to the Levant, had persuaded the groups in the kingdom that they were worthy to be king and were accepted; they were challenged defeated and were killed. Who was a usurper? – Both? None? The critical reader might attribute these difficulties to the ‘uncertainties of the second century.’ However, I will argue that it was not the political situation of the second century that created these problems. In a sociological framework of power in the Seleukid kingdom, the term ‘usurper’ itself is meaningless, false and unhelpful since kings were accepted or unaccepted. Strictly speaking, if we disengage the label ‘usurpers’ from the cultural context of the Seleukid empire it simply did not exist.

It is helpful, however, not to be too strict with terminology. When comparing the actions of any given Seleukid king and a second contender for the diadem, labelling one of the individuals as a ‘usurper’ avoids confusion. Moreover, I argue it is more plausible to use a common term in a descriptive way (without its cultural baggage) than to create a ‘neutral’, seemingly unmarked term. Therefore all Seleukid kings (and this includes Demetrios I and Demetrios II) are described as kings, while all contenders (including Antiochos Hierax, Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas) are designated as usurpers.

Moreover, at times it is difficult to distinguish between ‘dynasts’ and ‘usurpers’, and at a first glance it seems hard to explain how Attalos I differed from Achaïos. Both did not imagine themselves to be under a Seleukid umbrella and thus extended their own influence in the former Seleukid space of Asia Minor (for the Attalids, see ch. 4.1). However, in this case we are not only differentiating between Seleukid terminology. Two initial differences are immediately striking (fully discussed in ch. 4). The Attalids were local dynasts, political power holders over land within Seleukid authority in north-western Asia Minor, in the periphery of the kingdom. If they seceded they questioned Seleukid authority over the Aiolis, but did

not endanger the kingship of the Seleukid king. Achaïos, while acting in a space where the Seleukid king was not always present, was a Seleukid ‘high power holder’, a friend of former kings and at least a Friend of the current king. He was a member of a small elite, commander of Seleukid units and was in charge of regions which the Seleukid king defined as politically central (Lydia, Sardis and the royal road in Phrygia). For this reason, Attalos was acceptable to the Seleukid king, while Achaïos was dangerous and considered a usurper. Of course the spheres between seceding dynasts and usurpers could blur and overlap. In periods when a king and dynast were vying for the same territories, dynasts could theoretically ‘become’ usurpers since they could become dangerous for the Seleukid kings. Now having covered the theoretical ground, how can we practically know about usurpers and how can we write a narrative of usurpers in order to adequately analyse their claims to power?

1.1.1 Writing Usurpation

The major resource when writing about usurpers in the Seleukid empire is the documentary and literary evidence. While the former is sparse, the latter requires methodological considerations. An analogy might be helpful to explain how to proceed. One of the most famous portraits of the English king Richard III in the National Portrait Gallery in London (NPG 148) depicts a middle-aged man with shoulder-length hair, wearing a black bonnet with a jewelled hat and a gold tunic with a black, ermine-lined jacket over it. With his left thumb and index finger he is placing a golden ring on the little finger of the right. His right shoulder is far wider than normal, illustrating the hunch-backed image of Richard III the viewer expects (pl. 1.1).²³ However, on closer investigation there are some oddities with regard to the shoulder and x-ray examinations of the portrait in the 1970s have convincingly

²³ Strong (1969), 262-4, pl. 515.

illustrated that the hump of Richard III was a seventeenth or eighteenth century addition to an early sixteenth-century portrait. The x-ray also revealed that the eyes in the original portrait were drawn less in a slit-like fashion.²⁴

What happened? One of the mile stones in the evolution of the hunch-back of Richard III was Thomas More's description of the king: 'evill featured of limbes, crooke-backed, the left shoulder much higher than the right...' It is this image which influenced Shakespeare's creation of the villain in his historical play *Richard III* and which has influenced the changes to the portrait.²⁵ This is not the place to discuss the reasons for this construction of a hunch-backed king, or to discuss the context of the legitimisation of the Tudor dynasty after the usurpation from the Plantagenet line and T. More and W. Shakespeare's interest in a pro-Tudor narrative.²⁶ However, what this example illustrates is the creation of a post-usurpation image: the victor *writes* history and is able to determine that Richard III was hunch-backed and a usurper (for Seleukid post-usurpation narratives, see ch. 5.2).

This short interlude into British history is of course superficial and perhaps unacceptable to a historian of the early modern period. Nevertheless, it fulfils the purpose of this analogy. It is vital that the image of the hunch-backed king is questioned and this is exactly what the ancient historian needs to do with the image of usurpers in our literary evidence. The narratives regarding the Seleukid usurpers are largely negative: for example, Antiochos Hierax had a villainous character (Iust. 27. 2. 7) and Tryphon killed his ward (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 218-19). However, we need to remember where these narratives come from and we need to avoid a positivist reading of our sources. For this reason we need to consider in absolute brevity the major

²⁴ Tudor-Craig (1977), 93 (P44).

²⁵ More (1641), 6. For the Arden edition of Shakespeare's *Richard III*: Hammond (1981).

²⁶ E.g. Potter (1983); with Hipshon (2011), 208-43, esp. 210-17.

historians of the period whose narratives have influenced later writers: Polybios, Poseidonios and the author of the first book of Makkabees.²⁷

It is generally agreed that Polybios used a pro-Seleukid source for most of his account of the Seleukid kings, which came from the immediate surroundings of the Seleukid court.²⁸ Although he finds admiration for Antiochos III (which we should not simply attribute to the pro-Seleukid character of his source), it is hard to conceal that Polybios' attitude towards kings is not positive. Philip V's character deteriorates in Polybios' narrative from being a mild king (e.g. Pol. 4. 24. 9) to a tyrant (e.g. Pol. 8. 12) and Polybios' decision to translate Seleukid references of luxury to drunkenness does not flatter his former friend Demetrios I (Pol. 33. 19; see ch. 5.2).²⁹ General criticism of the Seleukid rulers is also apparent in what has remained of the work of Poseidonios of Apameia.³⁰ The author of the first book of Makkabees, on the other hand, was written primarily for the Hasmonean rulers who wanted to distinguish themselves from the Seleukid kings.³¹ It is these three sources which later influenced the accounts of Diodoros, Josephus, Appian, Strabo and Pompeius Trogus/Justin.³² However, if our main sources are based on Seleukid court historiography, or evoke largely anti-monarchic or even anti-Seleukid tendencies, the image they present of usurpers perhaps should not be entirely surprising. Quite the contrary: the image is perfect since it fulfils the needs of both the literary genres in question and the interests of its authors.

²⁷ On sources regarding the Seleukid empire: Primo (2009). His approach to the sources, however, is not always followed in this thesis.

²⁸ Schmitt (1964), 175-85; Primo (2009), 126-59, esp. 132-43.

²⁹ On Pol. and kings: Welwei (1963). On Pol. and Philip V: Walbank (2002b), 91-106, here 102-5. On Philip V and Antiochos III: McGing (2010), esp. 95-128. For a similar reading of Pol. and the Aitolians: Champion (2007), 356-62. On narrative strategies: Mitsis (2011), 481-506. For a survey of Polybian studies: Walbank (2002a), 1-12; and for the earlier period: Musti (1972), 1114-81.

³⁰ Primo (2009), 159-76. For Poseidonios' self-sufficiency, the criticism of luxury and the luxury of kings: Bringmann (1986), 29-59; Kidd (1986), 1-21.

³¹ Schunck (1980), 291-2. An introduction to I Makk: Goldstein (1976), 3-160; Bartlett (1998) and Williams (1999); cf. Schunck (1954)

³² On these authors: Primo (2009). On Appian: Brodersen has illustrated Appian's reliance on Polybios: *BAA* and *BAS*. For individual Strabo passages: Radt (2002-10). On Josephus' use of sources for the Hasmonean period: e.g. Atkinson (2011), 7-27; Feldman (1994), 41-68.

Where does this leave us? If we return to the portrait of Richard III we are aware that the portrait has an added hump. Moreover, we know that Thomas More's description of the king was important for the Tudor's constructed image of Richard III. This is the same for our usurpers. We are aware that the image portrayed in the literary sources is part of a narrative which was hostile to usurpers and either the ancient authors or the authors' sources were responsible for this depiction (Polybios' pro-Seleukid source becomes Thomas More). In order to create a historical image of the king when the portrait was painted we have to take the additional layers of paint off from Richard III's shoulder; for our usurpers we have to deconstruct the pro-Seleukid and anti-monarchical narratives in order to write a historical narrative on usurpers. This approach is not revolutionary.³³ Structuralist and post-structuralist studies have made scholarship aware of the discursive character of literary narratives, formed by the author's interests as well as their cultural influences.³⁴ The approach of this thesis pays attention to the literary genre, the author's intentions and the audience of the pieces, and thus it will be possible to create a different picture of the politics of the Seleukid empire.

This picture of Seleukid history will be constructed in combination with the documentary evidence from the period, particularly epigraphic, archaeological and numismatic material as well as historical geography. For the Seleukid kings, the epigraphic evidence clearly illustrates the language of power as well as the vying for communicative successes which had to be undertaken in order to establish stable relations within the kingdom (Ma [2002]). Usurpers' royal documents, however, are very rare. While there are a few inscriptions which could be attributed to third-century usurpers, most are either too fragmentary (*I.Milet* 270) or uncertain (*SEG* 1. 366; *RC*

³³ Cf. Briant (2002), 6-8 and the criticism in Harrison (2011), esp. 19-37.

³⁴ For structuralist readings of ancient history: e.g. Vidal-Naquet (1986); Ma (2000b), 71-112; and idem (2002) on Seleukid history. For interpretations on the Roman empire inspired by post-structuralism: Veyne (1990); Flaig (1992).

41). For the second century, the first book of Makkabees preserves some of usurpers' royal letters.³⁵ Moreover, as it has been outlined above, there are other discourses of royal success than those constructed through language, such as (successful) military campaigns or the display of wealth. A royal image, consisting of different royal *personae*, was established with the aim to support the communicative efforts of the kings. Most of these discourses are either lost or transmitted in fragments through the literary sources. However, one major aspect of royal communication towards the groups in the kingdoms has survived, the royal coinage, and this evidence is particularly revealing for understanding usurpers' exchanges with their audiences.

1.1.2 The Use of Coinage and Royal Images

The royal coinage of the Seleukid usurpers is the only remaining documentary evidence of their claims to the diadem and at times only a few individual items survive. For Molon, for example, only one tetradrachm is known (SC 950) and thus no conclusions with regard to the extent of this coinage can be made.³⁶ It can, however, be corroborated using the bronze coinage (SC 949; 951), which has survived in a few issues and perhaps indicates a larger output of coinage. One could argue that if we have only a few examples of precious coinage of some usurpers, such as Achaïos, Molon and Timarchos, then it is questionable to what extent the usurpers used the coinage as a communicative tool to display their own *persona*. However, it is only Molon for whom hardly any coins survive. For example, there are now five precious issues known for the coinage of Achaïos, all with different mint markers, thus indicating a higher output than previously assumed (SC 952-3; Ad199-200). Secondly, it is possible that the immediate output cannot be compared with the

³⁵ Ma (2000b), 71-112.

³⁶ The mint marker which links the coin to issues from Antiochos III (SC 905; 908-9) should presumably vouch for the coin's authenticity; pl. 3.3-4.

surviving coinage. The attestation of overstrikes from Demetrios I (*SC* 1686-7; 1689) on the precious coinage of Timarchos has encouraged scholarship to suggest that the usurpers' initial output of precious tetradrachms was collected and overstruck.³⁷ However, this assumption might need some clarification. While it is possible that rulers reverted to overstrikes for individual coins in the treasuries in order to signify a change of a ruler,³⁸ initially it seems difficult to imagine an organised Seleukid collection of coinage already in circulation. Yet J. Kroll, in a recent article on fourth-century Athens, convincingly illustrates the possibility of state power to devalue specific coin series, which were then collected by the money lenders and overstruck by the state.³⁹ Although the Seleukid empire was not the city of Athens, Kroll argues that the literary sources suggest that the practice of devaluation and collection was not limited to Athens.⁴⁰ While it is uncertain to what extent the Seleukid king could influence the local economy, Kroll's emphasis on both money changers and individuals' interest in exchanging devalued coins also might have an impact on a potential practice in the Seleukid empire. If agency was placed in the hands of the individual, the administrative effort of collection was reduced.

This hypothesis can be corroborated if we consider which usurpers' coinage only survives in a few specimens. The coinage of Antiochos Hierax, Alexander Balas, Tryphon and Alexander Zabinas is attested in reasonably large quantities; it is the coinage of Molon, Achaïos and Timarchos which is relatively rare. However, if we compare these quantities to the political climate after the usurpers' attempts, patterns emerge. After the usurpation of Antiochos Hierax and Alexander Balas, the general

³⁷ Le Rider (1965), 332-4; *ESM* p. 86; *WSM* p. 269.

³⁸ Cf. Klose/Müseler (2008), 16-18 illustrating overstrikes on coinage from Seleukos I; Fischer (1988) 17 suggests that Molon's tetradrachm was struck over a different coin; however, this has not been acknowledged by scholarship.

³⁹ Kroll (2011), 229-59.

⁴⁰ Leukon I: Polyain. 6. 9. 1; Dionysios I of Syracuse: [Arist]. *Oec.* 2. 1349b. Since the ancient accounts connect these practices with the unlawful behaviour of tyrants, they might be a discursive invention. Nevertheless, it is striking that the 'tyrannical' aspect was the profit the tyrants made, not the collection of the coins and thus the practice could still be valid: Kroll (2011), 229-59, here 230-1.

structures of the Seleukid kingdom in these specific areas were generally weak: Asia Minor was lost to the Seleukids (see chs. 2 and 4.1) and the second-century Levant was divided in at least two rivalling camps (see ch. 3). The locations of Molon, Achaïos and Timarchos' kingships, however, were re-incorporated back under Seleukid control by Antiochos III and Demetrios I. While it is of course possible that the initial output of Molon and Timarchos' coinage was not as large as that of Achaïos and Tryphon (since their reigns lasted longer), it is at least plausible to suggest that their initial output was larger than is represented in our surviving samples and the usurpers' precious coinage in Babylonia, Media and Lydia was collected and overstruck.

What does the surviving coinage tell us? The coinage can help us to understand usurpers' attempts to claim the diadem in two parts: first, it allows us to map a political landscape of usurpation and power plays. The continuation of mint markers from king to usurper or from usurper to king enables us to determine the changeover of specific cities. If the coinage can be attributed to certain cities (and this has been the constant effort of the big corpora *ESM*, *WSM* and *SC*), the reach of usurpers' power can be interpreted. However, if more than one contender for the diadem (king and usurper) were in the same vicinity, these attributions might also illustrate the political dynamics of the period. The city's minting of a particular coinage might illustrate that the city allied itself with a power holder; however, it also might indicate that the city simply did not want to be within the political sphere of a second power holder (this will be elaborated in ch. 3.3.2). It should be added that, like inscriptions, the minting of coinage is only one small glimpse of a particular period in time, thus it might potentially over-emphasise the moment of minting and underestimate the political surroundings for which no evidence survives.

Nevertheless, it is these little snippets which might indicate the dynamics of the period even if the picture may at times be slightly distorted.

Secondly, the usurpers' coinage allows us to see one element of the usurpers' political *persona*: their conscious political programme which they wanted to distribute to their audiences, literally in the coin-pouches of their troops. It is possible to argue that coinage does not reflect any personal decisions of the ruler since this was decided at court. Moreover, it could be suggested that in fact no political decision is connected to the coinage at all; rather this decision was made by the die makers and mints where royal coinage was created.⁴¹ However, the coinage of the Seleukid kingdom does not support these conclusions. Every Seleukid king from Antiochos I onwards created a distinct portrait which was different from that of his predecessors. Moreover, it was from the period of Seleukos II onwards that only the current rulers' portraits were displayed on the coinage. Certain features became 'Seleukid' and while it could be argued that this simply could be a continuance of monetary practices, this thesis argues that the continuation of certain elements also had a political value (ch. 5.2). The Seleukid portrait for the period between Seleukos II and Seleukos IV was 'relatively' young, idealised. Since the reign of Antiochos I, Apollo on the Omphalos was the predominant motive on the reverses and was only altered during the reigns of Seleukos II and Seleukos III, before reverting to the Omphalos style under Antiochos III. Therefore, a Seleukid canon and formulae were established which placed emphasis on the individual portrait. The Seleukid coinage was a medium of political communication. Of course the coinage was only *one* aspect of the Seleukid royal image. The portrait on the coinage might be different from the image of the sacrificing king in Babylon. The image of Antiochos III in Baktria losing his teeth in

⁴¹ Levick (1982), 104-16 who argues for the influence of the imperial court; Kraft (1972), esp. 94-6 whose analysis of later Roman coinage from Asia Minor negates political considerations. For the coinage of Alexander the Great: Le Rider (2003), esp. 55-63 who minimises the dynastic link in order to underline the credibility of the coinage.

battle (Pol. 10. 49. 14) and his relatively idealised image on the coinage illustrate these different extremes in the *personae* of the royal image of Antiochos III.⁴² In the absence of other sources, the coinage allows us to establish one aspect of this ruler's image and to compare it with its contemporaries.

The importance of the Seleukid coinage as a political medium of communication is further underlined on the coinage of the usurpers. While the usurpers place certain stress on continuity on their coins to guarantee credibility, the usurpers' coinage is strikingly different from that of their Seleukid contemporaries.⁴³ Thus, while the Seleukid usurpers' coinage allows us to analyse only one aspect of usurpers' *persona*, the usurpers' coinage nevertheless enables us to draw conclusions with regard to their claims to the diadem (chs. 2.2.; 3.2. and 5.1). Further aspects of the usurpers' royal image have to be disentangled from their original literary context, as outlined above. In the deconstructing of the literary texts in particular, this undertaking is not free of controversy. It is not always possible to ascertain which image of the usurper is to be reconstructed (particularly from far-removed literary sources) and therefore scholars might disagree occasionally on individual points of the narrative. For example, the question of whether Molon held Zeugma cannot be reached with certainty without additional evidence (although he presumably did not). However, this is also not the ultimate scope of this thesis. Instead, this study will create a picture of usurpation and establish patterns in the competition for power in the Seleukid kingdom; these patterns will remain unchallenged by any controversy with regard to the narrative.

⁴² See Smith (2004), 59-102, esp. 73.

⁴³ On credibility of coinage: Martin (1985); Meadows (2001), 53-63.

1.2 Usurpers in the Seleukid Kingdom

Bearing in mind these methodological and analytical paradigms outlined in this introduction, a new picture of usurpers in the Seleukid kingdom will be created. It will offer a new understanding of Seleukid kingship and thus it will provide new avenues for understanding the Seleukid empire as a whole. Chapters 2 and 3 will construct a narrative on usurpers in the third and second centuries BCE and they will analyse each usurper's attempt to claim the diadem. The consequences of this image will become apparent when the dynamics between king and usurpers are contrasted with the dynamics between the Seleukid king and seceding local peripheral dynasts in chapter 4. It will also illustrate the administrative patterns of local power holders in the kingdom and will emphasise the dangers of usurpation for the Seleukid king. The final chapter will locate the origins of usurpers and the source of usurpation as evident in the usurpers' attempts. It will also assess Seleukid reaction. Moreover, it will examine the consequences of usurpation for our understanding of Seleukid kingship and the Seleukid empire.

2 Usurpers in Asia Minor: The Third Century

The second half of the third century BCE witnessed two major usurpations in Asia Minor. Both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos were placed in charge of Asia Minor, and in due course, both proclaimed themselves king. They were the only members of the Seleukid family who tried to usurp the diadem in Asia Minor. Ptolemaic expansion in the region and the secession of Attalos I of Pergamon as an independent monarch motivated the installation of both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos, but also weakened Seleukid administration of Asia Minor, newly installed firmly under Antiochos II. J. Ma describes the period between the death of Antiochos II (246 BCE) and the accession of Antiochos III (222 BCE) as ‘the collapse of Seleukid power in Asia Minor,’¹ and it seems plausible to extend this period to the re-affirmation of Seleukid power with the taking of Sardeis in 213 BCE. It is this period that this chapter will analyse in its specific geopolitical constellation. It will examine the usurpers’ attempts to claim kingship and assess the limits and possibilities of Seleukid control. It will explore how these two individuals were able to claim the diadem and, by assessing the success of their achievements, this chapter will illustrate the limits of the Seleukid dynasty. Although Antiochos Hierax was a member of the Seleukid family, in his conflict with Attalos I of Pergamon he was in the end inferior and lost his kingdom. Although Achaïos did not rigorously stress his Seleukid relations, he nevertheless was able to establish himself as king in former Seleukid territories and successfully battled against Attalos I until he was overpowered by the Seleukid army, roughly eight years later.

¹ Ma (2002), 43. Accession of Antiochos III in 222 BCE; *BAA*, 207-208; Grzybek (1992), 190-204, here 195-7.

2.1 The Deflation of Seleukid Asia Minor, 246-240 BCE

The long-lost inscription from Adulis on the Red Sea is a Ptolemaic imperial interpretation of Ptolemaic successes during the Third Syrian War that followed the death of Antiochos II in 246 BCE. If we read the narrative with an awareness of imperial language, we can see how Ptolemaios III was able to cut deep into Seleukid territory (*OGIS* 54).² He was received in Antiocheia on the Orontes and marched as far as Babylon.³ A revolt in Egypt (*App. Syr.* 65. 346; *Iust.* 27. 1. 9) apparently stopped the Ptolemaic advance.⁴ On 11 July 245 BCE, Seleukos II was named as king of Babylon and the astronomical diaries mention the young king in direct succession to his father.⁵ After perhaps four years of war, Seleukos II was able to make a truce with Ptolemaios III.⁶ However, the Ptolemaic king had made large conquests in Asia Minor and had reduced the Seleukid space significantly. Ptolemaic troops again controlled the Ionian and Karian coast;⁷ his troops had set foot on the Hellespont and

² Latest bibliography: *I.Estrema Oriente* 451. The text identifies Egypt, Libya, Syria, Phoinike, Cyprus, Lykia, Karia, the Kyklades as Ptolemaic territories as well as campaigns into Kilikia, Pamphylia, Ionia, the Hellespontos, Thrakia, Mesopotamia, Babylonia, Susiane, Persis, Media, and Baktria. A (now lost) hieroglyphic account also lists the conquered territories, including Macedon, Thrace, the Persis and Elam; *Urk.* II.158; see Hölbl (2001), 291; 192n.90.

³ Antiocheia: *FGrHist* 160. Babylon: he was not received as king in the city (*BCHP* 11. 2). For the title of the king: van der Spek (1997-8), 167-75, here 170n.13.

⁴ *P.Haun.* 6. fr.1. 15-7 (with Bülow-Jacobsen [1979], 91-100). *FGrHist* 260 F43 ...*cumque audisset in Aegyptio seditionem moveri*: Huß (1978), 151-6, here 155-6; Hauben (1990), 29-37; see also Huß (2001), 373-5 with bibliography.

⁵ The children of Antiochos II in Babylon: *AD* II 245 A obv. 13. The change from Antiochos to Seleukos: *AD* II 245 B, Lower edge. For the short duration of Ptolemaios III's campaign: Huß (2001), 345.

⁶ *Iust.* 27. 2. 7: *Interea Ptolomeus cum Antiochum in auxilium Seleuco uenire cognouisset, ne cum duobus uno tempore dimicaret, in annos X cum Seleuco pacem facit.*

⁷ A narrative: Grainger (2010), 171-94. Karia: see Bagnall (1976), 89-102; Ouranion: it is uncertain if it became Ptolemaic: Varinglioglu (1992), 155-74, here no. 2 with p.173. Kildara: the use of *προσεληλυθόσι* to describe the joining of the Kildareians to Ptolemaios' cause indicates a Ptolemaic occupation: Blümel (1992), 127-33, here 131; cf. Meadows [2008]. Bargylia: a new inscription from Bargylia, which also mentions Kildara Theangela and Thodos(a); published with different readings by: Ma (2002), 380-2; Dreyer (2002), 119-38; Wiemer (2001a), 1-14; regardless of these uncertainties, the regions seem to have been Ptolemaic until the Seleukid takeover. Euromos: Blümel (1996), 61-2. Herakleia under Latmos: Wörrle (1988), 421-76, here 434-6. Amyzon: see *RC* 38 with Ma/Derow/Meadows (1995), 71-80, here 76-9. Ionia: Priene: *I.Priene* 37.153 (line 175 after the improved text by Magnetto [2008]). Samos: *IG* 12. 6. 1. 156. For the political context: Habicht (1957b), 152-274, here 227-30 and no. 59. 13-14; cf. Hallof/Mileta (1997), 255-86, here 260-1 and 283. Ephesos: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8. A Ptolemaic force at Ephesos: *Pol.* 5. 35. 11. Its strategic position: *Pol.* 18. 40a. Miletos: for the occupation by Philip V in 201 BCE (*Pol.* 16.15.6):

gained the southern coast of Pamphylia and Kilikia.⁸ However, Ptolemaios was not able to establish himself in the Aiolis or in the Karian hinterland as his predecessors had been able to do.⁹ While these areas were still nominally under Seleukid authority, Mylasa, the Maiander valley and the city of Smyrna slipped from Seleukid control.¹⁰ Ptolemaic troops stationed on the coast of Asia Minor and growing Attalid expansion must have caused friction with Seleukid interests. This is evident in the wars between Antiochos Hierax and Achaios against Ptolemaic and, more and more frequently, against Attalid troops. Furthermore, the Ptolemaic king also knew how to interfere in Seleukid politics. The evidence shows Ptolemaios III and his successor Ptolemaios IV in communication with both Seleukid pretenders, thereby influencing the political sphere of Asia Minor beyond their occupied territories.¹¹

Herrmann (2001), 109-16, here 111. For both Kolophons: Gauthier (2003a), 470-85; Gauthier (2003b) 61-100. Lebedos/Ptolemais: *I.Magnesia* 53. 79-81; it is not certain when Lebedos was refounded as Ptolemais: cf. Cohen (1995), 189; Herrmann (1965), 29-160, here 114n.41 quotes a (still) unpublished fragmentary inscription mentioning Ptolemaios III and Berenike II; cf. Kinns [1980], 251-5. Teos: while there is no direct evidence, it is probable that Teos became Ptolemaic in this context; Robert quotes an unpublished inscription mentioning Ptolemaic queens: Robert *OMS* IV, 149. For Herrmann (1965), 29-160, here 115 the city was Attalid since the defeat of Antiochos Hierax.

⁸ For Kilikia: Rough Kilikia was Ptolemaic: cf. Jones/Habicht (1989), 317-46, here 332; cf. Guéraud (1931-2), 20-27 no. 8 on a gymnasium at Nagidos dedicated to Ptolemaios, apparently in decay in 232/1 BCE. For Seleukid Kilikia: see below n.34. For Lykia: collection of evidence in: Bagnall (1976), 105-10; Hölbl (2001), 48-51; 66-7. For Pamphylia: evidence for Pamphylia is restricted to the eastern coast of the Pamphylian sea; cf. Jones/Habicht (1989), 317-46, here 328-35. For Arsinoe (east of Alanya): Cohen (1995), 336 with bibliography. See also an Alexandrian epitaph of an envoy from Arsinoe in Pamphylia dating to 234 BCE: *SEG* 38. 1680. Ptolemais: it is possible that the city mentioned in Strabo was refounded during the campaign of Ptolemaios III: Strab. 14. 4. 2; Cohen (1995), 339; Robert (1987), 326; cf. Huß (1976), 191.

⁹ For Karia: Mylasa: *I.Labraunda* 1-4; cf. Kobes (1995), 1-6. Alabanda: Alabanda was presumably in the sphere of Olympichos from 240 BCE onwards: see Meadows [2008]; cf. Habicht (1999), 19. It is possible that Ptolemaic influence in the later third century did not extend over the Latmos. Çamlidere (Harpasos valley): the inscription from Çamlidere is dated to the wars against Aristonikos and the name of the tribe, Ptolemais, does not allow for conclusions with regard to Ptolemaios III's conquest: *contra* Briant/Brun/Varinglioglu (2001), 241-59. For coinage in the Harpasos valley: Delrieux (2008).

¹⁰ Olympichos: for the strategos of Karia under Seleukos II: *I.Labraunda* 9. 3-5; *I.Labraunda* 1. 1; *I.Labraunda* 3. 7. For independent dynasts: Pol. 5. 90. 1; *I.Didyma* 439 (with Habicht [1960], 160); and perhaps *I.Labraunda* 134. Alinda as his fortress: Robert/Robert (1983), 147-50; *I.Labraunda*, p.92. Labraunda/Mylasa: *I.Labraunda* with *BE* (1950), 182, *BE* (1965), 368 and Habicht (1972a), 162-70; Dignas (2002), 59-66. Antigonid dominance of place and dynast: *I.Labraunda* 5. 7-11; 16-8; 48-9; *I.Labraunda* 6. 2-3; 8-9; *I.Labraunda* 7. 11-3; cf. Billows (1995), 96.

¹¹ For Ptolemaios III's contact with Antiochos Hierax: Porphyrrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8. Polybios' narrative on interaction between Ptolemaios IV and Achaios: Pol. 5. 42. 7-8; 5. 66. 3; 5. 67. 12-13; 8.15.1-2; Schmitt (1964), 161-4; 166-71.

The other political power active in Asia Minor in the third century BCE is more difficult to assess: the Galatians.¹² There is no evidence for the Galatians in the period in question; however, since they were involved in the power politics of Asia Minor as soon as they had set across from Europe in 278/7 BCE, it is very likely that they continued to be active throughout the third century. Nikomedes was the first Hellenistic ruler who hired the Galatians for their military service against his brother Zipotes the Younger; K. Strobel even suggested that they remained in the service of the Bithynian ruler in their battles against Antiochos I.¹³ A dossier of documents from the cities of Asia Minor illustrates the military activity of the Galatians against the Seleukids, and although they might have been hired as any other mercenaries in the Hellenistic period,¹⁴ the evidence describes them as sacrilegious bandits, ravishing the Greek countryside and spreading terror.¹⁵ Possibly in 268 BCE, Antiochos I defeated the Galatians in the ‘Elephant Battle’ after which he probably concluded a treaty. While the Seleukid king might have accepted their settlement in central Anatolia, it is possible that he granted territories to the Galatian tribes as well.¹⁶ On the level of high power politics, Antiochos I presumably used this victory in his attempt to gain acceptance in Asia Minor. He took the title of *sotēr*, claimed to be first who defeated the Galatians from Western Asia Minor (App. Syr. 65 [343]) and received honours from the Greek cities.¹⁷ However, at the local level, we also find honours bestowed on Achaïos the Elder, *kyrios* of the estate around Laodikeia on the Lykos (and somehow

¹² On the Galatians: Strobel (1996). For the later period: Mitchell (1993).

¹³ Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 2-5. For Nikomedes’ active role and the alliance: Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 2. For the crossing: Paus. 10. 15. 2, dated to 278/7 BCE; cf. Paus. 10. 23. 14; Liv. 38. 16. 9. For the war against Antiochos I: Strobel (1996), 246; Trog. *Proleg.* 25; Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 6; Liv. 38. 16. 9.

¹⁴ Strobel (1994b), 66-96, here 75; Strobel (1996), 242.

¹⁵ For the raid of the sanctuary at Branchidai: *I.Didyma* 426. Priene: *I.Priene* 17 for sacrilegious behaviour, esp. ll. 4-13 and the murder of Greeks ll. 13-5. This is echoed in the literary sources: e.g. Pol. 3. 3. 5; Liv. 38. 16. 10; Paus. 10. 15. 2.

¹⁶ ‘Elephant Battle’: App. Syr. 65 (343); Luk. *Zeux.* 9. For the date: Wörrle (1975), 59-87, here 62; cf. Grainger (2010), 80-1. Settlement: Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 6; Strobel (1996), 261.

¹⁷ Honours: *I.Smyrna* 573. 101 (=OGIS 229); *I.Erythrai* 207. 22; 36; 49; 72 with Habicht (1970), 93-6; *Syll.*³ 426. 21 with Habicht (1970), 103. *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1. 12-13.

related to Antiochos I). He was hailed as *sotēr* when his officials bought back hostages taken by the Galatians.¹⁸ Yet the defeat of the ‘yoke of Asia Minor’ was only one part of how to proceed with the Galatians. The Seleukid kings hired Galatian mercenaries for their services and paid them for it. It might be the payment of Galatian troops which was later transformed by an Attalid source into tribute payments so that we read in Livy that ‘in the end even the kings of Syria did not refuse to pay them tribute (*stipendium dare non abnuerunt*)’ (Liv. 38. 16. 14). As the example in Livy’s account illustrates, a discourse of victory over the ‘barbarians’ does not mean that the Seleukid kings did not hire Galatian troops as late as Antiochos III (Liv. 38. 12. 4).¹⁹

Thus, the Galatians re-emerge as both ‘plundering barbarians’ and royal auxiliaries. The Galatians reappear as individual ‘bandits’ in the 230s BCE, when Attalos I of Pergamon used the Galatian raids as a basis for his acceptance as king. Moreover, it was also in this period that the Galatians were in the service of Antiochos Hierax.²⁰ Evidence for the earlier period between the 270s and 240s BCE is missing and perhaps one could suggest that Seleukid control of Asia Minor as well as Attalid command of the region of the Aiolis and Mysia contributed to the relative control of the Galatians (see ch. 4) and thus to their absence in our sources. Did the Galatian tribes already move southwards from their settlements into the area of Amorium, north east of Antiocheia in Pisidia, or did this only happen in the 230s BCE?²¹ It is questionable that it was only Antiochos Hierax who, after breaking with his brother, decided to hire the Galatians as mercenaries or allied with them as Nikomedes had. Galatian auxiliaries also presumably played a role in the military

¹⁸ For Achaïos the Elder: *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1. 7; 9; 14-15; 24-6.

¹⁹ Cf. Strobel (1991), 101-34, here 123-4.

²⁰ See below, 2.1.1.

²¹ Strobel (1994a), 29-65, here 55 suggests that the next phase of expansion only began in the context of the wars between Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II and Attalos I. For Antiocheia in Pisidia: e.g. Mitchell (1998), 1-18.

engagements between Antiochos I, Antiochos II and Ptolemaios II. They were probably a powerful basis for the military calculations of the Seleukids from this period onwards.²² If we can attribute any historical validity to the four thousand Galatians who mutinied under Ptolemaios II in 275/4 BCE (Kall. *Del.*, 171-87), one has to wonder where they came from.²³ Moreover, it is questionable if after this disaster the Ptolemaic kings no longer hired Galatian mercenaries. The Galatians only appear as individuals in the inscriptions of the Greek cities, which praise its heroes against the Galatian threat, as well as in the royal language of kings, including Antiochos I, Attalos I and Prusias I. It is these accounts which give us a glimpse of the Galatians' potential power, the reason why the Galatian tribes were also a part of the Hellenistic armies in Asia Minor and why they became an important factor in the political struggles of the 240s and 230s BCE.

2.1.1 A Royal Usurper: Antiochos Hierax

It was in this period of political troubles in Asia Minor that Antiochos Hierax claimed the diadem for himself. Writing a narrative of Antiochos Hierax' reign is very difficult. The only account of his kingship is in Justin's version the 'Brothers' War' taken from the universal history of the Augustan historian Pompeius Trogus. Justin's account can be corroborated with the Armenian version of Porphyrios' chronology of the Syrian kings.²⁴ For this reason a historical narrative of the kingship of Antiochos Hierax contains even more gaps and conjectures than, for example, the narratives of Achaïos or Alexander Balas. Nevertheless, even with these uncertainties, a narrative

²² Strobel (1996), 261; cf. idem (1991), 101-34, here 123.

²³ Fraser (1972), I 657-8 with III 923n.336-7; Strobel (1994b), 66-96, here 78; idem (1991), 101-34, here 108-9.

²⁴ On Justin: Yardley/Develin (1994), 4-10 with references. On both authors: Primo (2009), esp. 209-10; 295-303.

highlights the patterns of this usurpation which are necessary for analysing his claims to kingship.

Antiochos Hierax was the second son of Antiochos II and his wife Laodike, and the younger brother of Seleukos II. He must have been born around 255 BCE.²⁵ Soon after his brother's acclamation in 245 BCE, he appears alongside him in Babylon (*AD II* 245. 13). Later, while Seleukos II fought off Ptolemaic troops in the Levant, Antiochos must have returned to Asia Minor when a few years later his brother appointed him to defend Seleukid interests (*Iust.* 27. 2. 6).²⁶ The sources suggest that the phase between his appointment and the peace treaty between Ptolemaios III and Seleukos II was rather short, and it is not possible to assign specific military campaigns of Hierax to this period. It is probable, however, that Hierax' campaigns involved safeguarding the Hermos valley and limiting Ptolemaic expansion into the Kaystros and maybe (though less likely) in the Maiander valley. In these military campaigns Antiochos was probably supported by Alexander, the commander of Sardeis (*Porphyrios FGrrHist* 260 F32. 8), who was Antiochos II's governor of Asia Minor or, as titled in an inscription from Bargylia, the one 'left behind by the king' (*I.Iasos* 608. 47-8). Additionally, it was presumably this Alexander (who was also the brother of Antiochos Hierax' mother Laodike) who was actually military commander of the campaigns, given Antiochos' age.²⁷

The military appointment of a royal family member during the war between Seleukos II and Ptolemaios III had the desired results. Justin indicates future troubles between Seleukos II and Antiochos when he writes that 'in the meantime, Ptolemaios had learned that Antiochos was coming to Seleukos' aid (*in auxilium venire*) and, to

²⁵ According to *Iust.* 27. 2. 7 Antiochos Hierax was fourteen years of age when he was put in charge of Asia Minor. As a reaction to this, Ptolemaios sought a peace treaty, which is dated to 242/1 BCE.

²⁶ As already stressed by Wilcken (1893), 2457-9, here 2457 the post that was often granted to close relatives, notably sons; see below, n.84.

²⁷ The Seleukid commander is also attested in other inscriptions: *RC* 29. 4; *I.Smyrna* 573. 101. Laodike: *Plut. mor.* 489a-b; cf. Heinen (1984), 412-45, here 420-1.

avoid fighting both at the same time, he made a ten-year peace treaty with Seleukos (Iust. 27. 2. 9). It was apparently in the context of this treaty that Antiochos took the opportunity to declare himself king (Iust. 27. 2. 10). Successful military campaigns, perhaps against Ptolemaic troops at the end of the Third Syrian War, might have made his claims palatable to his troops. His secession was apparently supported by Alexander and his mother Laodike, who was probably still in Sardeis at the time. One should perhaps even assume that Antiochos had a guardian to support his claims to the diadem; this could have been Alexander.²⁸

It was from this point onwards that Antiochos was under pressure to succeed. He established a kingdom which lasted roughly eleven to twelve years. Yet most of his politics remain in the dark, if they are not mentioned in the victories of others. In order to maintain his position, Antiochos Hierax had to defend his newly acquired kingship against his brother, fight off Ptolemaic forces on the coast of Asia Minor and he had to accommodate the most important power holder in western Asia Minor, Attalos I of Pergamon, for which he had to rely on his army and recruit fresh troops. Plutarch mentions the cities over which Hierax ruled in a side note (Plut. *mor.* 489B), but what was the extent of Antiochos' kingdom? – Evidence is sparse but nevertheless instructive. Porphyrios mentions Hierax's control of Phrygia in a note (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). Numismatic evidence strongly suggests that later the Hellespont became Antiochos' centre of coinage and economic activity. Since the earliest coin hoards would appear to have a closure time of 235-230 BCE, no epigraphic and numismatic evidence can be dated to the early years of Hierax' kingship.²⁹ Initially, Antiochos was in control of the city of Sardeis (through his uncle Alexander), and

²⁸ For Seleukid guardians see, e.g. Polybios' discourse on Hermeias: Pol. 5. 41-2; see below, pp.65-6.

²⁹ Neither the 'Sardeis Basis' hoard (*CH* 9. 499 = Le Rider [1991], 71-88) with a closure time of ca. 240 BCE, nor the Meydancikkale hoard (Davesne/Le Rider [1989]) with a closure time between 240 and 235, contain coins of Antiochos Hierax. For these hoards, see below n.34; *SC* i.2 Appendix 3. See also the 'Seleukos III' hoard in *SC* ii.2 Appendix 3. For the earliest hoard with Hierax, the Kirzali hoard, with a closure time between 235-230 BCE: *CH* 8. 324; cf. Boehringer (1993), 37-47, here 43.

Smyrna, and the Gulf of the Hermos valley indicate stable Seleukid relations. In the south, Kolophon, Teos and Ephesos became Ptolemaic in the 240s and remained in Ptolemaic control during Hierax' reign. Later, Antiochos Hierax could have tried to establish himself in the Maiander valley and some coin issues indicate that it was possible that he had control of the area for at least a short period of time.³⁰ Although surviving evidence might distort this image, the geographical space of Antiochos Hierax' kingship seems to have been the Hermos valley, the Hellespont and parts of Phrygia.

After Seleukos II received the news of his brother's usurpation, the king returned to Asia Minor. He must have marched as close as Lydia, where he defeated his younger brother in a battle. Antiochos Hierax retreated east, perhaps to meet his ally Mithridates II of Pontos (*FGrHist* Porphyrios 260 F32. 8). Seleukos II followed his brother and was defeated in battle near Ankyra.³¹ The narrative is violent, describing how during the battle 'practically all of his [Seleukos'] army had been cut to pieces by the barbarians' and even the king himself went missing.³² The sources stress the valour of the Galatians as the contributing factor of Antiochos Hierax' victory.³³ While Antiochos Hierax also presumably recruited troops from other territories under his control, such as Lydia and Mysia, the ancient accounts' stress on the Galatians indicates that the Galatian tribes of Phrygia provided Antiochos Hierax with a valuable force even without access to Seleukid troops from the Seleukid colonies in northern Syria, such as Apameia (Strab. 16. 2. 10).

³⁰ SC 909-12; see below.

³¹ Trog. *proleg.* 27: *item in Asia adversus fratrem suum Antiochum Hieracem, quo bello Ancurae victus est a Gallis.*

³² Plut. *mor.* 489B: πάσης ὁμοῦ τι τῆς στρατιᾶς ὑπὸ τῶν βαρβάρων κατακοπείσης; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8.

³³ Galatian valour: Iust. 27. 2. 11. Mercenaries: Trog. *Proleg.* 27; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8; Iust. 27. 2. 10.

The depiction of the battle at Ankyra and the flight of Seleukos II to Kilikia Pedias (Plut. *mor.* 508D) marked the loss of Asia Minor beyond the Tauros for the Seleukid king.³⁴ Yet what about the victor? Justin describes the difficulties between the Galatians and Antiochos Hierax, writing that ‘the Galatians, thinking that Seleukos had fallen in the engagement, turned their weapons against Antiochos himself, expecting to have a freer hand in pillaging Asia if they wiped out the royal line entirely.’³⁵ While it is impossible to ascertain the origins of the historical narrative from which this interpretation derives, a comparison between the accounts of Livy and Porphyrios sheds some light on the events which followed the defeat of Seleukos II. Porphyrios (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8) mentions the campaigns of Antiochos Hierax in Greater Phrygia where the king collected tribute. It is very likely that Antiochos Hierax tried to ally himself with additional Galatian tribes and recruit new troops for his forces after the battle and thus he affirmed his local control. Justin’s account mentions that Antiochos Hierax paid the Galatians for their obedience, thus securing an alliance (Iust. 27. 2. 12); a procedure which was not very different from previous rulers and is perhaps reflected in Livy’s account on Seleukid bribes. Given the negative characterisation of Hierax in Justin’s narrative, as well as the general

³⁴ For Kilikia: Polyain. 4. 9. 6. Perhaps Seleukos II tried to reaffirm stronger Seleukid influence over those areas which were near Ptolemaic territories since the Third Syrian War: see *SC* 678; Le Rider (1999), 129-31, however, evidence is limited. The apparently 34 fresh coins from ‘uncertain mint 36’ (cf. lemma in *SC* 676-7) do not indicate a Seleukid mint in the direct vicinity: *contra* Davesne/Le Rider (1989), 330-1. ‘Uncertain mint 36’ had been connected with ‘uncertain mint 37’ which is now located in Mesopotamia (*SC* ii.1 pp.666-7). Although the absence of these issues in the ‘Seleucus III’ hoard might perhaps exclude a mint in Mesopotamia (*SC* ii.1 p.661), the location of the mint in plain Kilikia (perhaps Tarsus) does not allow for conclusions regarding a Seleukid re-taking of Rough Kilikia under Seleukos II. Instead the coinage perhaps should be seen as booty. Nevertheless, the Seleukids did not lose access to the Kilikian gates. Moreover, there is no evidence for the ‘peace’ between Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II in 236 BCE, proposed by Tarn (1928), 699-731, here 720, accepted by Bickerman (1944), 76-7 and others (e.g. Will [1979], 295; Allen [1983], 198). Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II and their mother Laodike are mentioned in a declaration dated to 8 Addaru 75 SE (21 March 236 BCE). This declaration is quoted in a letter from 173/2 BCE: Lehmann-Haupt (1892), 328-34, here 330-2. Although Seleukos II and Antiochos Hierax are mentioned in this declaration as benefactors, their donations could have been made long before 236. Thus, there is no evidence of a peaceful meeting in that year. A new edition is under preparation by R. van der Spek and R. Wallenfels. Many thanks to J. Monerie (Paris) whose copy of the text I used.

³⁵ Iust. 27. 2. 11: *...sed Galli arbitantes Seleucum in proelio cecidisse in ipsum Antiochum arma vertere, liberius depopulaturi Asiam, si omnem stirpem regiam extinxissent.*

discourse on the Galatians in Asia Minor (outlined above), the payment of the Galatians, who ‘wanted to wipe out the royal line’, presumably should not be interpreted as anything else but the payment of troops after battle, the affirmation of local power and the recruiting of new troops.³⁶ Nevertheless, according to Porphyrios (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8), Antiochos’ position was not entirely stable. He was ‘betrayed by his courtiers and attacked by the Galatians’ (or possibly the other way around), but he managed to escape and withdrew to Magnesia. Who were the betraying courtiers? If indeed he retreated to Magnesia, which Magnesia was it?

The betrayal of the courtiers follows the same *topos* as the difficulties Antiochos Hierax encountered with his Galatian allies. Depending on the date of the battle at Ankyra and the betrayal of the courtiers, Antiochos Hierax continued to reign for roughly nine years and thus while his position might not have been entirely stable, he must have been able to re-establish his authority relatively quickly. Does the retreat to Magnesia reveal the extent of Antiochos Hierax’ kingship in this period? Although it is not possible to give a definitive answer to which of the two cities he retreated, two scenarios can be imagined. In the first scenario, Antiochos Hierax fled to Magnesia on the Maiander.³⁷ He purposely did not escape to Laodikeia on the Lykos, Antiocheia, Seleukeia/Tralleis, Alabanda or Alinda, either because the cities shut their gates or because Magnesia offered him more. But what did Magnesia offer the king? Magnesia was very close to the Ptolemaic coastline, on the road between Ptolemaic Priene and Ptolemaic Ephesos. It was in Magnesia where supposedly Ptolemaios III supplied Antiochos Hierax with troops.³⁸ If the Ptolemaic troops were a decisive factor, then the retreat to Magnesia would have been understandable. The evidence

³⁶ Justin generally describes Hierax in a negative way, stressing his ‘villainous audacity’: Justin 27. 2. 7; cf. the ‘ransom’ of the Seleukids: Liv. 38. 16. 13; cf. above, ch.1.1.1.

³⁷ Ma (2002), 45.

³⁸ The translation of troops is entirely dependent on the Latin (*auxiliares accipiens*) edition of the Armenian chronicles by Schoene/Petermann (1875), 251-2 and the German translation (bundesgenössische Hilfe erhaltend) by Jacoby, *FrGHist* 260 F32. 8.

suggests that soon after reaching Magnesia Hierax fought a decisive victory, but the enemy is not mentioned. Who was it? The Galatians would have been very strong and the situation in Asia Minor would have been very unstable if the Galatians could advance all the way down the Maiander valley to Magnesia. It is difficult to imagine which other enemies Antiochos Hierax could have fought in the area. Other evidence for Antiochos Hierax's control over the Maiander valley is lacking, with the exception of three connected coin issues, which also could have come from any other place (SC 909-12). There is a further argument which makes Magnesia on the Maiander in my opinion a less likely option. Although admittedly an argument *ex silentio*, most striking is the lack of any mention of Antiochos Hierax in the dossier of Olympichos, thus calling into question his proximity to Alinda and his sphere of influence. Despite the dossier of Labraunda's lack of material for the period between c.240 and c.230 BCE, the later documents illustrate the changes in power quite well. Thus, while it is possible that Hierax retreated to Magnesia on the Maiander, the absence of Antiochos Hierax in these documents makes evidence of a permanent presence in the Maiander valley relatively slim.

Magnesia under Sipylos on the other hand might offer a more plausible solution for the enemy mentioned in Porphyrrios, although it is not convincing in every respect. In this scenario, Antiochos, attacked by Galatians and betrayed by his courtiers, made his way through the Hermos valley. The Seleukid colony of Magnesia was probably founded by Antiochos I and it was located on the northern slope of Mount Sipylos.³⁹ A treaty of *sympoliteia* between Smyrna and Magnesia under Sipylos from the early years of Seleukos II's reign describes the large body of troops stationed in Magnesia (*I.Smyrna* 573. 35). Since Antiochos Hierax is not mentioned in

³⁹ Foundation of Magnesia: *I.Smyrna* 573. 100-1. The colonists still lived in Magnesia when the inscription was published. For the mention of colonists, see: ll. 14; 21; 35-6; 43; 47; 49; 59; 71; 73-4; 84; 92; 101. Fortress: the Fortress (χωρίον Παλαιμαγνησίαν) had the potential to guard the surrounding (σύνεγγυ[ς]) landscape, see: ll. 94-5.

the inscription, the document should presumably date to the period before his appointment. The Smyrneians apparently used the absence of the Seleukid king to extend their sphere of influence.⁴⁰ It is significant that the coastal city of Smyrna refers to Seleukos II and not Ptolemaios III, who controlled a large number of the coastal cities, and clearly indicates that although Seleukid dominance was declining, the area was not under Ptolemaic influence. Hierax, on his retreat into the Hermos valley, did not go to Sardeis but instead went to Magnesia under Sipylos for strategic reasons. The fortress of Magnesia overlooked the Hermos valley and was a safe retreat. The soldiers could have joined him if they were not already under his standard since his command of the campaigns against Ptolemaios III. Moreover, other Seleukid colonies, such as Thyateira, were in the area and might have been able to provide Antiochos with troops.⁴¹ The decisive victory in the ancient sources was perhaps fought against the Galatian tribes or Attalid troops. However, since there is no evidence of Ptolemaic activity on the Aiolian coast, it is difficult to imagine how Ptolemaic support should have reached Antiochos Hierax.

The following chronology is even more difficult to assess and only fragmentary evidence gives an indication of Antiochos Hierax' activities. It appears that soon after the events at Magnesia Antiochos married a daughter of Ziaelas of Bithynia.⁴² During the Third Syrian War, Ziaelas had been allied with Ptolemaios III, as a letter to Kos dated between 246 and 242 BCE indicates (*RC* 25. 22-6).⁴³ However, since the end of the Laodikean War the Bithynian king apparently did not take part in any other power plays in the area.⁴⁴ He died probably in 230 BCE when,

⁴⁰ See Ma (2002), 49-50.

⁴¹ For Thyateira: e.g. Cohen (1995), 238-42.

⁴² For Ziaelas and the marriage: *RC* 25. 9; Arrian *FGrHist* 156 F29; Habicht (1972b), 387-97.

⁴³ For Ptolemaic activity in the region cf. Herzog/Klaffenbach (1952), nos. 8. 5-6. In these lines the letter from Ainos mentions Ptolemaios and his wife Berenike. Ptolemaios could not have acquired this territory before the Laodikean war and this also provides a possible date for the letter of Ziaelas; cf. commentary on *RC* 25; Habicht (1972b), 387-97.

⁴⁴ Habicht (1972b), 387-97, here 394-97.

according to Trogus, he was slain by the same Galatians which were defeated with Hierax at battle near Pergamon (Trog. *prol.* 27). Married to a daughter of one of the kings of northern Asia Minor, this period probably marked the peak of Antiochos Hierax's kingship. Since he was defeated near Lake Koloe in the later part of his reign (*I.Pergamon* 27), the Hermos valley and with it Sardeis remained under Antiochos' control, even if the city minted no coinage until the arrival of Achaïos.⁴⁵ If the king was in control of Sardeis, he presumably also continued to control certain parts of Phrygia, although it is possible that his ties there were weakened in the later period. The numismatic evidence from mainly Alexandria Troas, Lampsakos, Ilion, Abydos, Parion, Lysimacheia and Skepsis does not only indicate that the Hellespont became Hierax' economic centre from the early 230s BCE onwards, but it also suggests that Hierax was able to push back the Ptolemies from the area.⁴⁶ While Ptolemaic troops took control of the coast of the Troad in the Third Syrian War and re-founded Larisa as Ptolemais (as shown above), it is doubtful that Larisa, located on the route south of Alexandreia Troas, became a Ptolemaic enclave in Antiochos Hierax' territory. Ptolemaic garrisons must have been forced to leave the city and Ptolemaic influence in the Troad and the Hellespont must have ended for now. The area of the Skamandros valley was very fertile and rich in resources, but could only be reached by the northern route through Mysia into Phrygia and by a southern route close to Pergamon. Antiochos Hierax' activities in the Hellespont, however, seem to indicate more than the king's interest in the Troad. Similar to his father Antiochos II and his nephew Antiochos III, Antiochos Hierax attempted to control the Bosphoros; his

⁴⁵ Seleukos II: *SC* 652-63. Antiochos Hierax and 'Sardeis': *app. crit.* to *SC* 900-3. Achaïos: *SC* 952-9; Ad199-201. Also, the suggested period of independence in Seyrig (1986), 35-8 presumably does not fit this context: accepted by Gauthier (1989), 166-7; see, however, Price (1991), 321.

⁴⁶ This list is arranged by the numbers of dies, which were minted under Antiochos Hierax. Alexandria Troas had 17 different dies for Antiochos Hierax, followed by Lampsakos with 11 dies and Abydos with 6: Boehringer (1993), 37-47, here 37. Cities, such as Teos, did not mint coins for Antiochos Hierax, which might suggest that they were under Ptolemaic influence during this period: *SC* i.1 p. 292.

minting activity in the area and in Lysimacheia indicate military campaigns on the northern fringe of Asia Minor and the usurper's interest in Thrace.⁴⁷ The attraction of the Bosporos region is supported by the sale of the fortress at Hieron in the name of Seleukos II to the people of Byzantion. While the precise context is unclear, it is intriguing to combine the sale of the Hieron with the increasing activities of Antiochos Hierax and to propose that Seleukos II tried to limit his brother's influence.⁴⁸

Hierax' activities in the Troad and the Hellespont, however, were dangerous for another player in western Asia Minor, the ruler of Pergamon. Further campaigns of Antiochos Hierax were commemorated in the Attalid victory monuments on the acropolis of Pergamon. Although the Attalids monumentalised their victories, the inscriptions also describe a conflict spreading over a large geographical area and illustrate Hierax' attempt to secure his position in Asia Minor during his later years. In contrast to his Seleukid predecessors, Antiochos Hierax was not able to reposition Attalos I under his rule or to secure an alliance with the ruler of Pergamon. Two, not mutually exclusive, scenarios illustrate these events. One could argue that Attalos I (close in age to the Seleukid princes) saw the quarrel between Seleukos and Antiochos as an ideal opportunity to extend his own influence in Asia Minor (Iust. 27. 3. 1). However, it also is possible that Attalos I was encouraged by Seleukos II to oppose Antiochos Hierax. The Attalid rulers were semi-independent dynasts under the umbrella of Seleukid authority and one could argue that Attalos I only opposed the Seleukid usurper. His kingship was perhaps acknowledged by Seleukos II, as the eastern kings were under Antiochos II (see below ch. 4). Although certainty cannot be reached, the ancient accounts describe that some time after his accession in 241 BCE,

⁴⁷ Thracian activities of Antiochos I and Antiochos II: *I.Illion* 45; *IGBulg.* I² 288 with Avram (2003), 1181-1213. For Antiochos III: Grainger (1996), 329-43; see below ch. 4.1.2.

⁴⁸ Pol. 4. 50. 2-3; Dion. Byz. *Anaplys Bospor.* 92-3 (Güngerich); Regardless of the precise circumstances, we should place the sale in this context: cf. Moreno (2008), 655-709, here 669.

Attalos I claimed the diadem following a successful battle against the Galatian tribe of the Tolistoagoi and was celebrated in Pergamon as their saviour (Pol. 18. 41. 7).⁴⁹ Nevertheless, despite these Attalid successes, Antiochos Hierax and his Galatian allies were able to launch at least one successful campaign against the king in Pergamon. One of the inscriptions on the acropolis of Pergamon, dated to c.230 BCE, commemorates a victory by Attalos against the Tolistobogian and Tektosagian Galatians and King Antiochos at the Aphrodision.⁵⁰ Despite the Attalid commemoration of a victory against their enemies, the Aphrodision mentioned in the inscription is most likely the Aphrodision Philip V destroyed (Pol. 18. 2. 2; 18. 6. 3).⁵¹ Therefore, although the troops of Antiochos Hierax were defeated, the place of defeat was very close to the city of Pergamon and thus illustrates Hierax' military prowess. If Hierax was able to advance so close, his campaign successes against Attalos are undeniable and the ambiguity of Attalid power in this early phase of the Attalid kingdom (before the rewriting of the dynasty's history in the monuments on the acropolis) is clearly visible.

It would appear, however, that in the long-term Hierax was not able to win battles against Attalos I. Porphyrios reports a list of lost battles, some of which were also commemorated in the Athena temple on the acropolis of Pergamon. The inscriptions from Pergamon provide a tentative chronology. Moreover, they presumably illustrate the extent of Antiochos Hierax' territories destroyed by the Attalid king. Attalos I seems to have driven Antiochos Hierax from Phrygia following battle (*I.Pergamon* 22). Attalos then pushed Hierax south, which resulted in further

⁴⁹ See e.g. Schalles (1985), 51. Saviour: *I.Pergamon* 43-5. The declaration should probably be dated to the mid 230s BCE, although Attalos presumably antedated his kingship later to the time when he took over the reign: Allen (1983), 196-9; cf. Bickerman (1944), 73-83, here 77 (although Bickerman's analysis of the tile stamps is by now rejected).

⁵⁰ *I.Pergamon* 24; Habicht (1972b), 387-97, here 394.

⁵¹ It was presumably in the outskirts of Pergamon, not far away from the later founded Nikephorion: Liv. 32. 33. 5; Strab. 13. 4. 2; Hansen (1971), 35; cf. Kohl (2002), 227-53, esp. 238-47 whose proposal for the new location of the Nikephorion is not entirely convincing.

defeats in Lydia at the Artemis sanctuary at Koloe near Sardeis (*I.Pergamon* 27; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8; Strab. 13. 4. 5). Driven further south, Antiochos Hierax' troops were finally defeated in Karia. From there Antiochos was apparently driven out of Asia Minor in 228 or 227 BCE (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). It is possible that the cities of the Troad, and especially Alexandria Troas, now used the political vacuum left by the absence of Antiochos Hierax to engage actively in their civic display of independence. If this was the case, the celebration of the Great Panathenaic festivals perhaps could be dated to 229 BCE or 225 BCE.⁵² In contrast to Porphyrios' account, after Antiochos' expulsion from Asia Minor the king seized his last opportunity to keep his remaining troops under his standard by marching east, as Demetrios' Poliorketes had done before him (Plut. *Dem.* 46. 3-50. 9). Antiochos moved towards Mesopotamia in order to conquer his brother's kingdom, while Seleukos was on campaign against the Parthians.⁵³ Although Antiochos Hierax was successful in at least one battle (Polyain. 4. 17), he was ultimately defeated (Iust. 27. 3. 7) and he apparently fled to his relative Ariarathes of Kappadokia (Iust. 27. 3. 8). Afterwards the evidence becomes difficult to reconcile. According to Justin's account, Antiochos went to the Ptolemaic king 'whom he thought he could rely on more than his brother [...]' (Iust. 27. 3. 9).⁵⁴ Antiochos Hierax presumably retreated north into the Propontis or Chersonnesos, which was under (perhaps recent) Ptolemaic occupation.⁵⁵ According to the narrative, Antiochos Hierax escaped from his Ptolemaic host but died soon thereafter, apparently in Thrace (Pol. 5. 74. 4), and –

⁵² For the text: *SEG* 53. 1373; discussion with references: Knoepfler (2010), 33-62; Ma (2007), 55-7; esp. 56.

⁵³ Arsakes apparently assumed command in Parthia and started to revolt following the news of the defeat of Seleukos II at Ankyra. Seleukos II marched against them, and while it is plausible that Seleukos II was able to push them back (Strab. 11. 8. 8), he was not able to re-take the province (Iust. 41. 4. 4-10): Coloru (2009), esp. 157-73.

⁵⁴ Iust. 27. 3. 9: *ad Ptolemeum hostem, cuius fidem tutiorem quam fratris existimabat, decurrit, [...]*.

⁵⁵ Perhaps it was now that Priapos was taken: *SEG* 34. 1256; See Ma (2002), 45; Şahin (1984), 5-8 and *BE* (1987) no.280.

following our narrative – was murdered by a band of Galatians in 226 or 225 BCE (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8).

The deaths of Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II mark the endpoint of the accounts of the ‘War of the Brothers’ and it is difficult to disentangle the historical thread from these narratives. Nevertheless, Antiochos Hierax reigned for a period of more than ten years and established a kingdom in western Asia Minor which spanned from at least the Hermos valley to the Hellespont and east into parts of Phrygia. Attalid success marked an end to his kingdom and western Asia Minor was indeed not a Seleukid sphere for the majority of the 220s BCE. It is possible that without Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II would have paid more attention to the dynast of Pergamon who now called himself king. However, it was only after the death of Seleukos II that the future kings began to claim Asia Minor for themselves again.

2.1.2 The Cousin ‘Left Behind by the King’: Achaïos

It was after the accession of Seleukos III that the young king started an expedition into Asia Minor in order to ‘defend their affairs’ (σφετέροις πράγμασιν, Pol. 4. 48. 7). The king was also accompanied by Achaïos, his οἰκεῖος. Achaïos had been a commander under Seleukos II (Polyain. *strat.* 4. 17. 1) and it is possible that he knew Asia Minor, or at least Phrygia, because his family were local landlords in the Lykos valley.⁵⁶ Seleukos III probably marched through Kilikia Pedias and Tarsos, where two mints struck coinage for him. He presumably crossed the Tauros, or, as has recently been suggested, he boarded ships and landed on the coast of Pamphylia to go inland perhaps via Termessos (where he struck coinage). From here he campaigned to

⁵⁶ For the family: see below, pp.63-4.

Apameia and Laodikea, where further coinage for the king was minted.⁵⁷ In Phrygia, however, the expedition came to an abrupt halt. It is possible that although the king had crossed with a great army, some did not see the king as the driving force behind the expedition. He was still a young man at this point and Appian describes how his campaign was met with difficulty since the king failed to obtain obedience.⁵⁸ He was ambushed (perhaps set up by his courtiers?) and was assassinated by two Galatians with Greek names, Apaturos and Nikanor, probably in early 222 BCE.⁵⁹ ‘Achaïos, however, sought after them and immediately avenged his murder by putting Nikanor and Apaturos to death. He took the command of the force and the whole of (royal) affairs, which he conducted both wisely and magnanimously.’⁶⁰ Achaïos did what a successor had to do. He avenged the king’s death, thus making himself suitable for kingship himself. Polybios’ narrative describes how, although the troops (τῶν ὀχλῶν) urged him to take the diadem, he instead saved the kingship (τὴν βασιλείαν) for Antiochos, the younger of the sons of Seleukos II (Pol. 4. 48. 10).⁶¹ The newly acclaimed Antiochos III received some of the army from Achaïos (possibly the royal guard) and he entrusted Achaïos with the government on this side of the Tauros.⁶²

⁵⁷ Either Seleukos II or Seleukos III secured Kilikia Pedias from the Ptolemies. It is possible that Seleukos II went as far as Seleukeia on the Kalykadnos, however, this would conflict with Porphyrios’ account (*FGrHist* 260 F46). For Tarsos: *SC* 917-9. For Termessos: *SC* 916; Meadows (2009), 51-88, here 71. For a Phrygian mint, perhaps Apameia: *SC* 915; cf. *SC* 906-8 (with the same signature). Mørkholm argued that the coinage was minted in a military camp. Houghton shows further evidence, which supports that there was workshop in a city. *SC* 915; cf. Mørkholm (1969), 5-20, here 14-5.

⁵⁸ Age: Alexander cannot have been born much earlier than 243 BCE: Stähelin (1923a), 1241-2; Pol. 4. 48. 7 (Σέλευκος ὁ νέος). Phrygia: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32.9. Constitution of the king: App. *Syr.* 66 (348) with *BAS* 207.

⁵⁹ Polybios only mentions the avenging of the murder by putting these individuals to death and not the execution of other courtiers: Pol. 4. 48. 9. Appian *Syr.* 66 (348) states that he was poisoned in a court conspiracy. For the year of his death: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9, and *CM* 4 r. 2 with van der Spek’s translation (http://www.livius.org/k/kinglist/babylonian_hellenistic.html [15 September 2011]).

⁶⁰ Pol. 4. 48. 9: Ἀχαιοὶ δὲ κατὰ τὴν ἀναγκαιότητα τὸν φόνον αὐτοῦ μετῆλθε παραχρῆμα, τοὺς περὶ τὸν Νικάνορα καὶ τὸν Ἀπατούριον ἀποκτείναντες, τῶν τε δυνάμεων καὶ τῶν ὀλῶν πραγμάτων φρονίμως καὶ μεγαλοψύχως προσέστη.

⁶¹ The coins minted with the image of Seleukos III (*SC* 915) and the legend of King Antiochos have to be dated to the period immediately after the death of Seleukos III: *SC* 999.

⁶² For the royal guard: Pol. 5. 41. 5; see Schmitt (1964), 110. Governor: Pol. 5. 40. 7: ...διαπιστεύων τὴν μὲν ἐπὶ τάδε τοῦ Ταύρου δυναστείαν Ἀχαιοῶ, κτλ.

Achaios was successful in his position and, although he advanced energetically and recovered ‘the whole on this side of the Tauros’, the evidence perhaps exaggerates his success. He might not have been master of the rest of this side of the Tauros as Polybios indicates (Pol. 4. 48. 10-11), however, he clearly reversed Attalos I’s achievements. On Achaios’ way to Sardeis it seems plausible that he established Seleukid control in Phrygia. He became the master of Sardeis and once in control of the city it is possible that Magnesia under Sipylos and Smyrna joined his side or were taken. He then took Kolophon, as well as probably Teos, and seems to have moved north into the Aiolis, taking cities such as Temnos and Aigai as well as Phokaia and Kyme, thus advancing close to Pergamon itself. Indeed, Attalos was ‘pushed back into his ancestral kingdom’ (Pol. 4. 48. 11). Achaios took Didyma Teiche and Karseai and established Themistokles as a *strategos* of Mysia. The Troad remained Attalid and Achaios does not seem to have ventured further north.⁶³

Seleukid control was re-affirmed and Achaios’ success must have come close to the Ptolemaic possessions on the Ionian coast. With Samos as a naval base and Ephesos as a military base (Pol. 5. 35. 11), Ptolemaic forces and garrisons could be mobilised quickly. Polybios’ mention of a ‘forged’ letter between Ptolemaios IV and Achaios (Pol. 5. 42. 7) perhaps reflects Ptolemaic interests in Asia Minor during this period.⁶⁴

It is unclear how deep into the Karian hinterland Achaios ventured. Olympichos, with his seat in Alinda, was presumably still independent, without any concern for

⁶³ See Ma (2002), 57. Sardeis: although there is only evidence of Sardeis when it was Achaios’ royal capital, it should be assumed that the city became the administrator’s provincial capital relatively early: Pol. 5. 77. 1. Magnesia under Sipylos: Magnesia is not mentioned in Attalos’ conquest, but probably fell to Achaios with Smyrna and Sardeis. Smyrna: although Attalos praises the Smyranean envoys (since the city had preserved to the greatest extent their faith towards him: Pol. 5. 77. 6), it was still taken by Achaios, since Polybios writes that the city later went over (μεταθέμεναι) to Attalos: Pol. 5. 77. 4. Kolophon/Teos: both cities went over to Attalos: Pol. 5. 77. 6. Aiolis: maybe SC 965. Attalos took back cities which had formerly joined Achaios out of fear: Pol. 5. 77. 2; cf. Schmitt (1964), 165. Mysia: in the Attalid conquest of Mysia, Polybios mentions Themistokles, ‘the strategos of this place left behind by Achaios’, Pol. 5. 77. 8: ...στρατηγὸς ὑπ’ Ἀχαιοῦ καταλειμμένος τῶν τόπων τούτων.

⁶⁴ For Schmitt (1964), 161-164 Ptolemaios’ main interest lay in Seleukid Syria, as he intended to weaken the Seleukid empire. However, it would appear that the Ptolemaic kings had still serious interests in Asia Minor as well: Pol. 5. 42. 7.

Seleukid reprisals and, as in the case of Antiochos Hierax, the dossier of Olympichos does not suggest any involvement of Achaïos south of the Maiander valley, let alone in Karia.⁶⁵

In 220 BCE, after Antiochos III put down the revolt of Molon, the king decided to move against the barbarous dynasts to intimidate them and to stop them from supplying goods and military aid to potential rebels by launching a campaign against Artabazanes who was considered to be the most important and energetic of the dynasts (Pol. 5. 55. 1-2). According to Polybios, it was the king's engagement in far away campaigns from where he might not easily return which led Achaïos to make a decision:

For Achaïos, at the time when the king fought against Artabazanes, being sure that Antiochos would suffer a certain misfortune and even if he did not die, he hoped because the king was so far away, to fall into Syria before his return and with the assistance of the Kyrrhestai who were in revolt from the king and speedily he would make himself master of the king's affairs. And with all his forces he set out from Lydia. When he reached Laodikeia in Phrygia he assumed the diadem and for the first time ventured to take the title *basileus* and use it in his letters to the cities. He took this step mainly at the instigation of Garsyeris, the exile.⁶⁶

Achaïos marched with a vast force towards the Kilikian gates. The absence of the king in the eastern satrapies might have been a reason for Achaïos' usurpation at this point, but the revolt of the Kyrrhestai was also presumably a major cause. He also might

⁶⁵ Tralleis/Seleukeia: W. Günther rightly pointed out that in *I.Milet* 1058. 6 Dionysios, son of Iatrokles, does not use the epithet of Seleukeia, but rather of Tralleis. His suggestion that Tralleis dropped its Seleukid ethnicon in the early 220s during the turmoil of the period is attractive but perhaps not convincing: Günther (1988), 383-419, here 397-8. *I.Milet* 47-9 which are dated to 194/3 BCE (with Wörrle's redating of the Milesian *stephanephoroi* list [*I.Milet* 124]; Wörrle [1988], 421-76, here 428-37) contain the letter alpha with a curved bar, which would have been outside Günther's scope. Moreover, C. Habicht identified that Sosikrates from Abdera in *I.Milet* 1058. 2 also appeared in an inscription from Eretria (to be dated closer to 280 BCE): Habicht (1989a), 94; Knoepfler (2001), 269. If *I.Milet* 1058 could be from the period before the initial renaming, then there would be no evidence for the renaming of Tralleis as Seleukeia after a new Seleukid takeover. See *I.Milet* 143 with the addendum in Herrmann's *I.Milet* n143; cf. Ma (2002), 57. Olympichos: see above, n.10.

⁶⁶ Pol. 5. 57. 3-5: ὁ γὰρ Ἀχαιοῦς, καθ' οὓς καιροὺς ἐπὶ τὸν Ἀρταβαζάνην ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐστράτενε, πεισθεὶς καὶ παθεῖν ἂν τι τὸν Ἀντίοχον, καὶ μὴ παθόντος ἐλπίσας διὰ τὸ μῆκος τῆς ἀποστάσεως φθάσειν ἐμβαλὼν εἰς Συρίαν καὶ συνεργοῖς χρησάμενος Κυρρησταῖς τοῖς ἀποστάταις γεγονόσι τοῦ βασιλέως ταχέως ἂν κρατῆσαι τῶν κατὰ τὴν βασιλείαν πραγμάτων, ὥρμησε μετὰ πάσης τῆς δυνάμεως ἐκ Λυδίας. παραγενόμενος δ' εἰς Λαοδίκειαν τὴν ἐν Φρυγίᾳ διάδημά τε περιέθετο καὶ βασιλεὺς τότε πρῶτον ἐτόλμησε χρηματίζειν καὶ γράφειν πρὸς τὰς πόλεις; Γαρσυήριδος αὐτὸν τοῦ φυγάδος εἰς τοῦτο τὸ μέρος μάλιστα προτρέψαμένου.

have been influenced by Ptolemaic diplomatic activities, which Antiochos III accuses him of (Pol. 5. 57. 1). Interestingly, it was not in Sardeis that Achaïos assumed the diadem; rather he proclaimed himself king in Laodikeia on the Lykos.

Laodikeia on the Lykos was founded by Antiochos II, probably between 261 and 253 BCE. It was located on the crossroad between the east-west route from Ephesos towards Apameia and the Kilikian gates, and the northern route coming from the Hermos valley and Sardeis. Moreover, as mentioned above, the second northern road from Phrygia led to Lykia and Pamphylia via Laodikeia and Apameia. Laodikeia was of vital importance not only for its connections by land, but also for its location near a fertile plain. The evidence for the Hellenistic settlement is sparse and most inscriptions cannot be dated with certainty.⁶⁷ However, it is likely that due to its geographical importance, the settlement pre-dated the Seleukid foundation. An inscription from Denizli gives an account of honours for Banabelos and Lachares and their landlord Achaïos by the two local villages Babakome and Kiddiokome.⁶⁸

It was in Laodikeia, which was founded near the seat of his family and which bore the name of one of his family members, that Achaïos assumed the diadem. It is conjecture to assume that the Laodikeans were particularly loyal to the house of Achaïos, but it is possible that the community felt closer to their local benefactor than to the Seleukid king. This place was important for Achaïos: his kingship began here and its significance is illustrated in his royal name. All of his coins bear the legend βασιλεὺς Ἀχαιοῦς in the genitive form.⁶⁹ Instead of adopting a Seleukid name, as his cousin Alexander had done by taking the royal name Seleukos (Porphyrios *FGrHist*

⁶⁷ Des Gagniers (1969), 2-3. For the city: Traversari (2000); Thonemann [2006], ch. 5; *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1-8. The dating of 1 and 2 and 4 is secure but outside Achaïos' time of activity. The dating of 5 seems to be at the beginning of the second century.

⁶⁸ *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1 with Wörle (1975), 59-87. For the administration of private property within the royal land: idem (1975), 74-86. For a broader picture: Schuler (1998), 160-80 and esp. 173-5; Boffo (2001), 233-55, here: 238; cf. Billows (1995), 96-9.

⁶⁹ SC 952-9; Ad199-201. For possible Pisidian issues: SC Ad202-4; C954.

260 F32. 9), he intentionally underlined distinction to his Seleukid relatives and made reference to the place of his kingship: Asia Minor.

Achaïos continued his expedition, acting like a king and sending royal letters to cities. It is striking that up to this point Achaïos' troops seemed to have no reservations about their new king. Achaïos was interested in uniting his troops with the revolting Kyrrhestai on the other side of the Taurus (Pol. 5. 57. 4), but apparently the undertaking was too dangerous and his troops did not follow him. It perhaps was only when he was near Ikonion, close to Lykaonia, that, according to the Polybean narrative, his soldiers realised that 'they marched against their natural king (κατὰ φύσιν) and mutinied'.⁷⁰ Achaïos, aware of the disaffection, turned back to Pisidia, wishing to persuade his soldiers that he did not have the intention of crossing the Taurus (Pol. 5. 57. 6-7). Pisidia gave his troops enough booty and the successes there and gained 'goodwill and confidence of them all (πάντας εὖνους αὐτῷ καὶ πεπιστευκότης)' and he returned home (Pol. 5. 57. 8); defection and concerns for their king κατὰ φύσιν were apparently not an issue any longer.⁷¹ It was from this period onwards that King Achaïos began to mint coins at Sardeis and fulfilled the administrative and benefactoral duties in his own name.⁷² In coastal Asia Minor, Achaïos attempted to participate in the wider sphere of international power politics (in the dispute between Rhodes and Byzantion), but the Ptolemaic king persuaded Achaïos not to take any further interest in these matters. In mainland Asia Minor, however, Achaïos seems to have been unhindered in his attempts to establish a stable administration. At least one *strategos* with the name Themistokles is attested in Mysia as well as another individual, Aribazos, 'the one left in charge' of Sardeis in the last

⁷⁰ He also might have taken the northern route after Apameia and passed Philomelion before his soldiers mutinied, but as he turned to Pisidia afterwards, the first route seems more likely; see: Will (1962), 72-129, here 120; cf. Schmitt (1964), 165n.5; Ma (2002), 56; cf. Mittag (2008), 47-56, here 50.

⁷¹ See Ma (2002), 57.

⁷² For a detailed study of the imagery on the coinage, see below, 2.2.2.

years of Achaïos' reign. The corpus of Tralleis/Seleukeia might reveal an honorific decree for an embassy to the king.⁷³ In 218 BCE the people of Pednelissos called on Achaïos for help, resulting in a campaign in which (according to Polybios) Achaïos subdued most of Pamphylia (Pol. 5. 77. 1). The fact that Pednelissos asked Achaïos for help should perhaps illustrate that both Seleukid and Ptolemaic control in the area was lacking.⁷⁴ The Selgians acted confidently in the Kestros valley by threatening Pednelissos and blocking the pass between Kretopolis and Perge, thereby hindering Achaïos' commander Garsyeris from entering the plain (Pol. 5. 72. 3-9). Other cities, such as the Etenna and Aspendos, supplied Achaïos with troops. Side refrained from doing so, but in this case Polybios' second explanation (that they hated the Aspendians) should presumably be more convincing than his first (that they wanted goodwill from Antiochos III; Pol. 5. 73. 3-4); the 'goodwill' presumably should be interpreted as part of a discourse which emerged in the aftermath of the death of the usurper. The Ptolemaic cities east of Side must not have been taken over and could have remained Ptolemaic, connected on the water with the Ptolemaic settlements of Kilikia Tracheia.

Polybios continues his narrative with Achaïos returning to Sardeis, trying to recover his lost territories which Attalos I had taken while Achaïos was engaged in Pisidia and Pamphylia. He could not surpass his earlier successes though, and

⁷³ See Ma (2002), 57n.19. The Ptolemaic king released Achaïos' father, Andromachos, from Egypt and it seems that Achaïos no longer supported Byzantines: Pol. 4. 51. 1-6. Wiemer (2002), 103-4 minimises Ptolemaic interests in the conflict. Strategos: Themistokles as strategos of probably Mysia: Pol. 5. 77. 8. There is a second strategos called Themistokles, but the inscription also could have been from the later period of Antiochos III: *I.Tralleis* 17. 9 (= RC 41). Sardeis: Pol. 7. 17. 9; Tralleian inscription: honorary inscription for Leonides who was honoured for his embassy to the king: *I.Tralleis* 26. 1-6. Ma connected two inscriptions, *IMilet* 143. 5 and *I.Tralleis* 26. 1, which both name Menodoros, son of Timeon (for the redating see above, n.65). If both inscriptions stand in a close chronological relation, the honorific decree also should be dated to around 218/7 BCE. This is hypothetical, but nevertheless intriguing: Ma (2002), 57n.19; Sherk (1992), 252n.86.

⁷⁴ Cf. Meadows (2009), 51-88.

Thyateira and Teos remained Attalid.⁷⁵ Moreover, he began to menace Prusias and all those living on this side of the Tauros (Pol. 5. 77. 1), although it seems Achaïos did not have too much time for this.⁷⁶ After Antiochos III and his troops were defeated at Raphia, the Seleukid king prepared to lead an expedition against Achaïos (Pol. 5. 87. 8).

The fragmented character of books seven and eight of Polybios' histories only provides a very scattered account of the campaign of Antiochos III. The narrative breaks off after Polybios writes that in the beginning of summer 216 BCE Antiochos III crossed the Tauros, when he made an arrangement (κοινοπραγία) with Attalos against Achaïos.⁷⁷ It is possible that Antiochos was interested in a quick expedition. Rather than recovering territories in Asia Minor, it might have been more plausible to attack the usurper directly. The later expeditions of Zeuxis and Philip V in Karia suggest that inland Karia was not on the route of the king and it is plausible that he did not cross through the Maiander valley now. Instead, he might have moved directly from Lykaonia towards Apameia and Laodikeia on the Lykos, which must have become Seleukid along the way, and one could speculate about the latter city's fate given its relations to the usurper. It is possible that during this campaign Seleukid troops moved into Pamphylia (again probably only as far as Side) and Hellespontine Phrygia. By 214 BCE Achaïos was surrounded in his capital, Sardeis.⁷⁸

⁷⁵ Ma (2002), 59. Thyateira: Pol. 16. 1. 7; Robert (1962), 37-8. Teos: *SEG* 41.1003 with Ma (2002), 58n.25 and 308-21; cf. Allen (1983), 47. We do not know about Kolophon: cf. Herrmann (1965), 29-160, here 114-15.

⁷⁶ For Attalid success: Pol. 5. 77. 2-78. 6.

⁷⁷ For the beginning of the campaign: Pol. 5. 109. 5. For the arrangement: Pol. 5. 107. 4; Ma (2002), 59; 60n.30.

⁷⁸ Polybios' sources: Primo (2009), 141; 158; Schmitt (1964), 181-5. For the double nature of the reconquest: Ma (2002), 59. For Antiochos III's success: Pamphylia: while Meadows's analysis of the Pamphylian era coinage seems correct, I am uncertain if Antiochos III's campaign would have led through the coastal regions: Meadows (2009), 51-88, here 75. It is possible that Selge was never taken: Strab. 12. 7. 3. Pisidia: the campaign of 197 might suggest little Seleukid attention beforehand: Liv. 35. 13. 5; 15. 7. Karia: inland Karia seems to have remained Olympichos' territory and Antiochos seems not to have come near. The decrees from Tralleis and Nysa and Magnesia cannot be dated with certainty to this conquest. Hellespontine Phrygia: the area was Seleukid, but it might not have been recovered at this point: Pol. 21. 46. 10 with Liv. 38. 39. 15. Schwertheim (1988), 70-3; Wörle (1988),

At this point, Polybios' narrative begins again. While the way to Sardeis does not seem to have been difficult for the Seleukid king, the siege was long-lasting. It is possible that some of Achaïos' troops changed allegiance and joined Antiochos III; however, Achaïos was able to retain enough troops to guard the city. The fortifications of Sardeis appear to have been strong and Achaïos' soldiers did not defect. It was only with a stratagem of the experienced former Egyptian soldier Lagoras from Krete (just as Hyroiades, the Mardian) that Sardeis was finally taken. Lagoras had noticed a spot at the most precipitous point which was unguarded but where it was still possible to enter the city. When he and a group entered and opened the gates the city fell with the exception of the acropolis (Pol. 7. 15-8).⁷⁹ The acropolis remained guarded by Achaïos' troops and Polybios does not mention soldiers defecting to their 'natural king.' Both the longevity of the siege and the absence of defection from Achaïos' troops indicate that it would be an oversimplification to suggest that the quick campaign of Antiochos III to Sardeis was met with little resistance. Instead, it seems that the Seleukid king took cities, but only those along his route, and was primarily interested in quickly reaching Sardeis.

Antiochos, however, only had the city of Sardeis. Aribazos and the garrison fled to the acropolis of the city, where Achaïos and his family had found refuge (Pol. 7. 18. 7). While in Polybios' narrative of treacherous deeds a group of Kretans had the major initiative for Achaïos' capture, a few key points are worth emphasising. Sardeis did not fall because its soldiers left Achaïos. The initiative for Achaïos' rescue out of the acropolis lay with Sosibos, an advisor to Ptolemaios IV, which suggests that the

460; Ma (2002), 60n.30. Sardeis: the dossiers of Antiochos III for Sardeis serve as the *terminus ante quem* for the capture of the whole city. *SEG* 39. 1283 with Gauthier (1989), 15-19. Furthermore, three coins from western Asia Minor (perhaps Aeolis/Ionia or Mysia) might reflect Antiochos' campaigns against Achaïos: *SC* 963; 965; 966.

⁷⁹ The Kretan Lagoras seems to have been in Ptolemaic service before joining Antiochos III, Pol. 5. 61. 9; cf. Hdt. 1. 84 on the fall of Kroisos' city.

rescue was supported by the Ptolemaic king. Sosibos also financed the rescue.⁸⁰

Achaïos trusted the plan laid out to him and Polybios' narrative describes the fate of Achaïos in a tragic tone: dressed in plain clothes, the traitors could easily tell who Achaïos was since 'some of them would take hold of Achaïos and others gave him a hand down as they were unable to put aside for the present time their habitual attitude or their respect for him,' and he was captured without being able to defend himself.⁸¹ He was brought in front of Antiochos III and the next morning, once discussions how he was to be punished were determined, he was made an example of. 'It was resolved first then to mutilate the distressed one and after that his head was cut off and sown into an ass skin, while his body was impaled.'⁸² In the aftermath, a quarrel between Aribazos, the commander of the city, and Achaïos' wife led to the surrender of the acropolis. This did not only mean the end of Achaïos, but also the end of Achaïos' legacy (Pol. 8. 21. 8-9). Antiochos fined the city, occupied it, and had the gymnasium commandeered for the use of the troops, before he relieved the city with benefactions.⁸³ Sardeis was once again a Seleukid place only to be lost following the defeat of Antiochos III to the Roman armies at Magnesia.

2.2 Usurping the Diadem in Asia Minor

Both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos were placed in charge of Asia Minor during a period when the Seleukid authority over western Asia Minor was contested

⁸⁰ Polybios' narrative of the capture: Pol. 8. 15-21. For service to the Ptolemaic king: Pol. 8. 15. 2; Pol. 8. 15. 8. Ptolemaic funds: Pol. 8. 15. 7. For the 'dramatic' effect of this narrative: Miltisios (2011), 481-506, esp. 485-92.

⁸¹ Pol. 8. 19. 3-6; 8. 20. 3-4 [...]: τῶν δὲ πάλιν ἐκδεχομένων τὸν Ἀχαιοῖον, οὐ δυναμένων γὰρ καθόλου τὴν ἐκ τῆς συνηθείας καταξίωσιν στέλλεσθαι πρὸς τὸν παρόντα καιρὸν, κτλ.

⁸² Capture and handover: Pol. 8. 20. 5-12. 8. 21. 1-2. Punishment: Pol. 8. 21.3: ἔδοξε δ' οὖν πρῶτον μὲν ἀκρωτηριάσαι τὸν ταλαίπωρον, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτεμόντας αὐτοῦ καὶ καταρράψαντας εἰς ὄνειον ἄσκον ἀνασταυρῶσαι τὸ σῶμα. For an analysis of the punishment, see below, chs. 2.3 and 5.2.

⁸³ Ma (2002), 61-2; *SEG* 39. 1283-5 with Gauthier (1989), 20-9; 33-9; cf. Knoepfler (1993), 26-43, here 28.

and the monarch himself was not able to defend his interests in the region. Following their usurpations, they had to successfully communicate their kingship to their armies and the cities of western Asia Minor in order to be accepted as kings. This was especially difficult, as the usurpers did not only have to compete with the Seleukid kings, but also with Attalos I and, to a certain extent, with the Ptolemaic kings as well. In order to assess both usurpers' claim to kingship, it is therefore necessary to analyse both kings' communication with the relevant groups in the kingdom.

2.2.1 Kingship by Descent: Antiochos Hierax

Before analysing the usurpation of Antiochos Hierax, it is worth considering the context of his appointment in Asia Minor. According to the literary evidence, the key motive was the Ptolemaic expansion in western and southern Asia Minor. If we accept the evidence which suggests that Antiochos was no older than fourteen, then his promotion could not have been determined by his military expertise. At this age, military experience was hardly possible and it is plausible that instead his uncle, the governor of Sardeis, was military commander during his first years. Alexander was probably still the chief administrator on this side of the Tauros, as he had been under Antiochos II, and thus in charge of the Seleukid contingents. From this perspective, the promotion of Antiochos Hierax made no strategic difference. The literary evidence suggests the following: Seleukos II thought it was necessary to promote his brother to a post of high command (Iust. 27. 2. 6). The appointment of the prince had its desired effects since (according to the evidence) it was this nomination which led Ptolemaios III to make a peace treaty (Iust. 27. 2. 9). While Justin's narrative of Antiochos Hierax' is very difficult to assess, I argue that we can interpret this account in two ways: 1) the age and military experience of the king was not decisive. Antiochos Hierax was the king's brother and this was the important factor. If this was

the case, it illustrates the greater impact a member of the royal family could have in contrast to a high-ranking royal official. 2) Seleukos II was concerned about the military success of his commander in Asia Minor. His uncle Alexander had already been fighting in Asia Minor under Antiochos II and was now leading the commands against Ptolemaic units. The nomination of Antiochos Hierax was perhaps aimed at limiting the perception of any commanders' individual military success by placing his brother in charge of a territory where the king was not present; Seleukid troops were now fighting under Antiochos Hierax (even if only by name). One could also argue that while the appointment of Hierax enabled the Seleukid king to hinder Seleukid commanders from gaining too much prestige, it was exactly this prestige which enabled Antiochos Hierax to claim the diadem.

The place and circumstance of Antiochos Hierax' acclamation would be helpful to assess his royal claims, but the sources do not mention either. Nevertheless, the specific time of usurpation is worth some consideration. One could argue that Seleukos II had not been promoted by his father, as was usually the case with those princes who were to succeed their fathers to the Seleukid diadem.⁸⁴ Yet this does not explain why it was now that Antiochos Hierax revolted and not soon after his brother had left Asia Minor. If we follow the relative chronology that Antiochos Hierax revolted after the peace with Ptolemaios III (as suggested by Justin and Porphyry),⁸⁵ it would be tempting to place the birth of the later Seleukos III in the period before Antiochos Hierax' revolt. Seleukos III (or rather Alexander) must have been born in c.243 BCE at the latest, and the birth of the king's son made the position of the king's brother precarious. It should not be surprising that later Antiochos IV did not return to

⁸⁴ For Antiochos I under Seleukos I: *RC* 9. 1; *SEG* 27. 730. 7-8; *I.Priene* 18. 2-3; *App. Syr.* 59. Seleukos the son under Antiochos I: Robert/Robert (1954), 95 no.3; *SEG* 35. 1170. 4-5; *TAM* 5.2. 881. 2-3; *I.Laodikeia am Lykos* 1. 1-2. 'Antiochos the son' under Antiochos III: *RC* 32; *SEG* 38 973. 1-2; *SEG* 41 1004. 1; 14; *SEG* 49. 1505; cf. *OGIS* 245; Ma (2002), 93. See, however, Ogden (1999), 130-2.

⁸⁵ Bickerman (1944), 73-83, here 78.

the Seleukid kingdom after he was released from Rome.⁸⁶ We perhaps should read the usurpation as the culmination of these three elements, both in the long and short term: the appointment of Antiochos Hierax was intended to limit the power of Alexander. It was this position in Asia Minor along with his royal descent which gave Antiochos Hierax a certain degree of acceptance beyond the troops. This also can be seen in his coinage, which will be discussed below. One could further speculate that it was the dynamics at the end of the war (with a possible reduction in Antiochos Hierax' powers) and the birth of the first son of Seleukos II, which served as a possible context for secession.

Antiochos Hierax had to act like a king in the immediate aftermath of his usurpation. He had to defend his territories against his brother and to persuade his army that he was suited for the diadem with decisive victories. Moreover, in order to achieve acceptance similar to that of Attalos I, Ptolemaios III and Seleukos II, he had to be accepted by the other groups in Asia Minor as the better candidate for the diadem. Antiochos Hierax had been in Asia Minor for the duration of the Third Syrian War and it is possible that in his communication with cities and troops, he relied on his military achievements against Ptolemaic troops (if those were notable). Before Seleukos II's final defeat at Ankyra, it is likely that for a while cities, troops and dynasts, such as Olympichos or the Philomelids, were wondering to which king to turn; however, evidence from Asia Minor for this is lacking. Nevertheless, the curious case of Arados perhaps illustrates the dynamics of the period. While Arados was presumably beyond the reach of Antiochos Hierax, Strabo writes that it was precisely during the conflict between the two brothers that Seleukos II granted the island

⁸⁶ Antiochos III was the only brother of the king to succeed to the Seleukid diadem and Pol. 4. 2. 7 seems to suggest that Seleukos III had no children.

liberties in order to secure the island's allegiance (Strab. 16. 2. 14).⁸⁷ Seleukos II granted liberties to communities in order to prevent their allegiance with his brother and while we still cannot assess the motives why certain groups in Asia Minor would turn to any particular king, we can trace some of the policies of Seleukos II. We should presumably place the sale of the fortress at Hieron on the Bosporos in the context of competing kings before or after the battle at Ankyra. Kallimedes, an official of Seleukos II, sold the fortress to the city of Byzantion. This could have both served to maintain good relations between the Seleukid king in the east and the city, and to obstruct his usurping brother from gaining full control of the Bosporos.⁸⁸ We can see that Olympichos and the city of Smyrna used the political uncertainties to extend their own influence and although I am inclined to interpret their reference to Seleukos II as an act of independence (since the king was far away), it is nevertheless possible that their liberties were at least accepted by Seleukos II as a measure to limit his brother's authority. If we do not disregard the 'dowry of Phrygia' (Liv. 38. 5. 1-4) as a later construction of the Pontic kings as suggested by McGing, this former Seleukid land now occupied by Antiochos Hierax was given by Seleukos II to the Pontic kings in order to cause friction between the Pontic rulers and Antiochos Hierax. Since we cannot ascertain when in the reign of Seleukos II he would have given the land to Mithridates II, who was at times an ally of Antiochos Hierax (see above), the precise context remains unclear.⁸⁹ Moreover, it has been suggested above (and see below ch. 4) that the kingship of Attalos I also might not have entirely opposed Seleukos II's interests.

⁸⁷ It is of course possible that these policies were aimed against a Ptolemaic promotion of Antiochos Hierax on the borders of Seleukid and Ptolemaic domains: Duyrat (2005), 229-34.

⁸⁸ Pol. 4. 50. 2-3; Dion. Byz. *Anaplys Bospor.* 92-3; see above, n.48.

⁸⁹ McGing (1986b), 22; Bickerman (1938), 29; cf. Petković (2009), 378-83; Wörrle (2009), 409-44, here 426n.74.

It was in this political climate that Antiochos Hierax had to persuade the groups in Asia Minor that he was the better candidate for the diadem. But what royal image did Antiochos Hierax try to communicate to these groups? Despite the scarce evidence it is possible to ascertain that Antiochos Hierax created a distinct royal *persona* in his communication with the groups in his kingdom. The royal coinage, for example, enables us to ascertain both the royal image Antiochos Hierax wanted to convey to the recipients of his silver tetradrachms and how the kingship was to be perceived. If we can follow the hoard evidence, Antiochos Hierax' royal coinage seems to have started rather late: no issues of Hierax' coins can be dated earlier than 235 BCE. The only region in which Antiochos Hierax' coinage can be attributed to individual cities is the Hellespont and the Troad, where he minted coins in large numbers. The coinage produced in his largest mints, Alexandreia Troas and (the shared mint of) Abydos and Lampsakos, had four times more obverse dies than the obverse dies from the previous period under Antiochos II.⁹⁰ Antiochos had to pay his troops and the Galatians, and thus the coinage was an ideal medium to support his royal claims with a royal image; an image his army could see every day. Antiochos' army consisted largely of Galatian allies and Seleukid units, which were still in service. It is very likely that his initial Seleukid units were depleted soon after the campaigns against the Ptolemaic king. However, in Asia Minor, with control over parts of the Hellespont and Phrygia, he could enlist Seleukid *katoikiai*, Mysian and Thracian mercenaries as well as Galatian swordsmen. It was these troops with whom Antiochos had to successfully communicate in order to keep them under his standard.

Antiochos Hierax' imagery on his coinage is difficult to assess. Scholarship has been eager to differentiate within the coins of Antiochos Hierax, suggesting that some coins depict his grandfather Antiochos I, some his father Antiochos II, and some

⁹⁰ Boehringer (1993), 37-37, here 37; 42.

Hierax himself. However, this approach does not address the importance of the imagery and thus perhaps it is more appropriate to examine the coins from a different angle.⁹¹ A very dominant obverse picture of the coins of Antiochos Hierax shows a Seleukid king with deep eye sockets and a very straight nose (pl. 2.3-4).⁹² His hair has short curls, which grow larger on the top of the head and flow over the diadem. The hair also falls in small curls around the neck. Over the ear a wing is depicted, which is presumably a local attribute of Alexandria Troas.⁹³ A seated Apollo, either nude or slightly draped, with the legend βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος in the genitive, is depicted on the reverses of all coins.⁹⁴ The depictions of Antiochos I and Antiochos II serve a rather different purpose than to disguise the youth of the ruler, as Boehringer has suggested.⁹⁵ Justin stresses the young age of the king, fourteen, when he was made regent of Asia Minor, which was before the peace treaty with Ptolemaios III.⁹⁶ Hierax' coins appear initially in a coin hoard with a closure time between 235 and 230 BCE. If he started minting coins in the early 230s immediately following his usurpation, this would not make him too young to be depicted on a coin.⁹⁷ His brother Seleukos might not have been much older when he assumed the diadem in 246 BCE and Seleukos II is the only king to appear on his coins during the early years of his reign.⁹⁸

By depicting coins that might have his own features, as well as his father's and especially his grandfather's, Antiochos Hierax attempted to create a *persona* which

⁹¹ See the discussion in *SC* i.1, p. 293; Boehringer (1993), 37-47, here 38 and Fleischer (1991), 28-9.

⁹² *SC* 838; 840; 848; 857; 863; 866-7; 871-2; 874-6; 879-88. Individual features, such as the curls and especially the eyes and the nose, also can be identified on other coins.

⁹³ Boehringer (1993), 37-47, here 38.

⁹⁴ Apollo is depicted on all reverses of Hierax' coins, which also show the image of a Seleukid king: *SC* 835-38; 840-3; 846; 848-55; 857-72; 874-914; C836.14; Ad190-2.

⁹⁵ Boehringer (1993), 37-47, here 38.

⁹⁶ Cf. Bickerman (1944), 73-83, here 76n.22.

⁹⁷ For the hoards, see above, n.29.

⁹⁸ Since Seleukos II presumably did not mint coinage in Asia Minor after the death of Antiochos Hierax, the king's coinage of Asia Minor thus illustrates his early royal image: *SC* 643-56; 664; 667-9; 671-2; 674-9.

differed from that of his brother. While Seleukos II depicted a clearly individual portrait on his coins (coherent with Seleukid *formulae*), his brother Antiochos Hierax created his royal *persona* in a different rather than similar way to his father. By referencing both his father Antiochos II, who reigned before him, and facial features of Antiochos I, who was the first Seleukid ruler in the area where the coins were minted, Antiochos Hierax inserted himself visually into the line of his ancestors (cf. pl. 2.1-4). The amalgamation of three generations of successful Seleukid rulers in western Asia Minor who all bore the name ‘Antiochos’ culminated in his reign and in his coins. He relied on a connection with his predecessors, creating a royal *persona* which connected him to the House of Seleukos. This continuity is further corroborated by the depiction of the Apollo on Omphalos type on the reverse of Antiochos Hierax’ coinage. This seated Apollo starkly contrasts the new standing Apollo reverse created under Seleukos II (and discontinued under Seleukos III).⁹⁹ Antiochos Hierax proposed to his audiences that he was king because he was a member of the royal family, as transmitted through his royal name and on his coinage. It is possible to argue that this stress on tradition and continuity largely relied on the sustainance of the credibility of the coinage as well as sheer practicality.¹⁰⁰ Perhaps it should not be surprising that Antiochos Hierax inserted himself into the line of his ancestors in order to gain acceptance. However, the main argument here is another. It is important that Seleukos II chose not to follow his ancestors and instead created a very different imagery on his coinage. Antiochos Hierax, however, did not follow his brother’s initiatives. Moreover, Antiochos Hierax was the only usurper who inserted himself visually into a line of Seleukid kings (as will be seen in the following chapters).

⁹⁹ See e.g. for Seleukos II: pl. 2.5-6; *SC* 643-55 for Asia Minor and *SC* 701-5 for Antiocheia on the Orontes. See also *SC* 931-2 for coinage of Seleukos III from the Levant.

¹⁰⁰ For the stress on the continuity of coinage: Martin (1985); Meadows (2001), 53-63; Le Rider (2003), esp. 55-63

A second identifiable element of Antiochos Hierax' royal *persona* was his nickname: Hierax, which was surely a name used in the context of military campaigns and underlines the military elements of his royal image. Justin's portrayal of the name Hierax is a prime example of ancient authors' negative image of usurpers (as outlined in the introduction) and it is worth discussing it in detail. According to Justin, Antiochos was called Hierax because 'he resembled a bird of prey more than a human being, making his living by preying on the possessions of others.'¹⁰¹ For Justin 'Hierax' was a negative nickname attributed to Antiochos following his usurpation; however, this is not convincing. In a passage in Plutarch's *sollertia animalium* the imperial author suggests that Antiochos himself did not perceive the nickname in a negative manner. When discussing 'animal-like' epithets of people, Plutarch states that 'just as again among the kings, Pyrrhos liked to be called eagle, Antiochos a hawk.'¹⁰² Despite the fact that both authors wrote at a time far removed from the events, it is striking that Plutarch suggests that Antiochos had an affinity to the name and that Pyrrhos and Antiochos even liked (ἤδετο) to be associated with these birds (Plut. *Pyrr.* 10. 1). The ancient authors' narratives allow us to analyse Antiochos Hierax' nickname from two different angles. It is possible that the name 'Hierax' was a campaign name which underlined the swiftness of his expeditions. Indeed, nicknames or campaign names were not uncommon: Antiochos' nephew, Seleukos III, would later earn the nickname Keraunos from his army and likely was connected to military campaigns (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9). Although opportune in a military context, this name could have different connotations in other environments. It is doubtful that Antiochos would have depicted himself as Hierax in his communication with Greek cities or sanctuaries. The negative perception of the

¹⁰¹ Iust. 27. 2. 8: [...] *quia non hominis, sed accipitris ritu in alienis eripiendis vitam sectaretur.*

¹⁰² Plut. *mor.* 975b (12. 66 *de sollertia animalium*): ὥσπερ αὐτὸ καὶ τῶν βασιλέων Ἀετὸς μὲν ὁ Πύρρος ἤδετο καλούμενος Ἱέραξ δ' ὁ Ἀντίοχος.

nickname in Justin's account illustrates the transferal of the nickname from a repertoire of positive epithets to a different context.

The name also contained further semantics which might have influenced Antiochos' choice of nickname as his epithet. It is Aristophanes who indicates in *Birds* that the hawk is the bird of Apollo as the owl is the bird of Athena and the eagle the bird of Zeus (Aristoph. *av.* 515-6). In the *Odyssey*, the *kirkos* is Apollo's 'swift messenger',¹⁰³ which Aristotle describes as the third-most powerful sub-species of the hawks.¹⁰⁴ It should not be too concerning that the hawk in the *Odyssey* is described as a κίρκος, while Aristotle writes about the ἰέραξ, especially since the literary evidence can be corroborated with documentary evidence. The image of Apollo with a bird in his hand is not an uncommon theme in Greek plastic and two Hellenistic dedications from Delos clearly state that 'Apollo has a hawk in his right hand'.¹⁰⁵ The connection between Hierax and Apollo thus seems to be a reoccurring theme and it is possible that this was also part of the semantics Antiochos Hierax was trying to evoke.¹⁰⁶

The association of Seleukid kings with Apollo was created in the reign of Seleukos I and continued into Hierax' period. It was part of the Seleukid court historiography, which created an account that when Seleukos I consulted the oracle at Branchidai, the god had addressed Seleukos as king (Diod. Sic. 19. 90. 4).¹⁰⁷ Seleukos I also gave a vast number of dedications to the sanctuary listed in an inscription set up in the year 288/7 BCE in honour of Kings Seleukos and Antiochos.¹⁰⁸ Moreover, the Seleukids funded the building activities of the sanctuary (*I.Didyma* 479. 9-10) and

¹⁰³ Hom. Od. 15. 526: [...] κίρκος, Ἀπόλλωνος ταχὺς ἄγγελος.

¹⁰⁴ Ar. *hist.anim.* 620a 17-8; cf. Dunbar (1995), 354; Heubeck/Hoekstra (1989), 263.

¹⁰⁵ Palagia (1984), 318-21, here 319-20; Kokkorou-Alewaras (1984), 321-7, here 324-5. On Delos: both inscriptions come from the dedicatory registers of the Athenian officials to the sanctuary and date to 156/5 and 155/4 BCE. *I.Délos* 1416 A. 1. 24-5: ἀπολλωνίσ[κον ἐπὶ] | [β]άσεως ἔχον<τα> ἰέρακα ἐπὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς· θυμιατήριον ἐπὶ βάσεως κτλ.; *I.Délos* 1417 B. 1. 25: ἀπολλωνίσκον ἐπὶ βάσεως ἔχοντα ἰέρακα ἐπὶ τῆς δεξιᾶς.

¹⁰⁶ Cf. Dunbar (1995), 354.

¹⁰⁷ Primo (2009), 181-90.

¹⁰⁸ *I.Didyma* 424. Latest edition in: SEG 27. 730 with Günther (1977-8), 261-6; Petzl (1989), 127-33, here 131-3, no. 5. For Antiochos I as *stephanephoros*: *I.Milet* 123. 29.

inscribed themselves into the sacred landscape of the oracle (*I.Didyma* 480. 3-5; 19-20); Antiochos II used it along with other sanctuaries as a public notice board (*RC* 18. 32) and Seleukos II also expressed the importance of the Didymeian oracles for the Seleukid dynasty and the *syngeneia* with Apollo (*RC* 22. 4-7). Moreover, the Seleukids' special relationship with Apollo was apparent on the reverses of their coinage, as Apollo became the dominant deity on the precious coinage from Antiochos I onwards.¹⁰⁹ Apollo was the god who favoured the Seleukids and the house of Seleukos descended from this god. Therefore, it is possible to argue that the nickname Hierax also underlined this connection to Apollo. Furthermore, the strength of the bird might have been employed in a military context. While it cannot be ascertained if the nickname was initially attributed (as suggested by Boehringer)¹¹⁰ or if it was chosen, nevertheless it clearly seems to be an accepted nickname, perhaps referring to both military success and Apollo.

With both his name and his coinage Antiochos Hierax tried to insert himself into the line of Seleukid kings who had ruled over Asia Minor and it is possible that with the name Hierax he displayed his success as military commander of his troops. There is not much further evidence of Antiochos Hierax' communication with the other groups in Asia Minor, such as the Greek cities. As outlined in the introduction, no inscription can be connected to Antiochos Hierax' reign with certainty. It is possible that Antiochos Hierax was able to retain to a certain degree good relations with those cities in western Asia Minor which had been previously under Seleukid control. However, it appears that in the long run, the military defeats against the

¹⁰⁹ For the depiction of Antiochos I/Apollo: *SC* 310-11; 324-8; 331; 335-8; 347-53; 359A-60; 378-80; 409-24; 435-9; 443; 475-8; 480. Apollo also is depicted on both faces of the coinage: *SC* 381-93; 448-51; 455-60. The coins of Antiochos II nearly exclusively show the combination of the royal portrait with Apollo on the reverse: *SC* 481-639. Most mints which issued coins with other combinations also issued coinage with Apollo on the reverse. The coinage struck under the satraps of Baktria, Diodotos I and Diodotos II is excluded; see ch. 4.2.

¹¹⁰ Boehringer (1993), 37-47, here 39.

Attalid king destroyed his royal authority. The lack of evidence of royal communication in the Hellespont and the Troad, where most of the usurpers' coinage was minted, is surprising. The temple of Athena Ilias displayed quite a number of Seleukid letters and decrees, but interestingly no Seleukid documents survived after the period of c.240 BCE.¹¹¹ Would the economic centre and the estate of Laodike in the region not imply some degree of royal communication and interaction between these cities and King Antiochos?¹¹² If the activities of the Ilian Confederacy can be dated so high into the third century, it shows how eager these cities were to display their independence and that it was possible to do so. While it is tempting to argue that perhaps this is the impression we should obtain from Antiochos Hierax' kingship, two elements are of vital importance: the duration of his reign and the limits of the royal descent.

Despite the negative evidence with regard to Antiochos Hierax' rule, he reigned for a considerable period of time. His position as a real power in Asia Minor is depicted in his alliances with other rulers. It was his royal position which encouraged Mithridates II to break his alliance with Seleukos II. It was presumably in the period after the final defeat of Seleukos II that Antiochos Hierax secured an alliance with Ziaelas of Bithynia and married his daughter, thereby connecting himself to other dynasts in the region. He might have led successful campaigns through northern Phrygia and, with the exception of his refuge to Magnesia, he was able to drive out Ptolemaic units from the Hellespont and Thrace. Most of the surviving coinage from the Hellespont comes from this period and it is conceivable that this was the peak of Antiochos Hierax' kingship. If he did not acquire the

¹¹¹ *SEG* 41. 1048 (*I.Ilion* 35) and *SEG* 41. 1049 (*I.Ilion* 36) with Piejko (1991b), 111-38 which seem to be two decrees (maybe connected) concerning Seleukos, Laodike and her sons. It is the last document concerning the Seleukid family. *SEG* 41. 1050 (*I.Ilion* 38) is too damaged to make assumptions on the ruler mentioned on the stone: *contra* Piejko (1991b), 111-38, here 122-6 no. 3.

¹¹² For the estate: Wiegand (1904), 254-339, here 275-8; Sekunda (1988), 186-7.

campaign name Hierax in the context of the defeat of his brother, it was now perhaps that Antiochos took the name.

Antiochos Hierax was able to organise an army, engage the troops against the Seleukid king and fight numerous battles in Asia Minor. The ancient accounts regarding his communication with his Galatian allies, however, do not only underline their valour, but also question the loyalty of these troops. Bearing in mind the negative tone of Justin's narrative, we should note nevertheless that apparently Antiochos Hierax and his Galatian allies had different interests after the battle at Ankyra (Iust. 27. 2. 11). Porphyrios (perhaps describing the same event) writes that Antiochos Hierax was 'attacked' in Greater Phrygia (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8). The sources also seem to suggest that the Galatians left Hierax at some point (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 8; Trog. *proleg.* 27; Iust. 27. 3. 6), however, it is not entirely certain when. Descriptions of the Galatians' disobedience are also found in Polybios, who writes that at some point Attalos I could not motivate his Galatian troops (Pol. 5. 78. 1), and while the sources clearly seem to indicate that Antiochos Hierax had difficulty in gaining acceptance as king in his communication with the Galatians, Galatian disobedience was not only connected with Antiochos Hierax. Moreover, Porphyrios places an emphasis on the betrayal of the courtiers. No matter how we read these narratives, the accounts seem to suggest that Antiochos Hierax' rule was not uncontested yet he nevertheless remained king. Between the early 230s BCE and 228/7 BCE Antiochos was able to establish himself as an independent ruler in the area of northern Asia Minor, as the coins issued by the royal mints suggest. While the Attalid monuments indicate Antiochos Hierax' success in pushing Attalos I close to the city of Pergamon and to challenge him there in a battle; they also illustrate his defeats. It was the success of Attalos I of Pergamon which prevented Antiochos Hierax from extending his influence. Attalos I was not only able to claim the diadem,

but also was able to continuously challenge Antiochos Hierax in battle.¹¹³ Antiochos presumably had lost the city of Sardeis after the defeat at Koloe and Attalos I cut him off from his northern possessions. Thus, he was reduced to a commander without a sphere of influence. It was these continuous defeats, along with Antiochos' inability to securely hold the one region that had formed his centre, which marked the end to his kingship. The march beyond the Tauros might indicate problems for Seleukos II in the eastern parts of the empire, as described in Justin (Iust. 41. 5. 1); however, it also illustrates Antiochos Hierax' need to march in order to maintain his royal acceptance and to retain his kingship. He tried to succeed in a march into the east in order to secure his position as a successful military leader; the attempt, however, failed. Hierax was defeated and, as the evidence suggests, his last loyal mercenaries deserted him.

Another striking element of Antiochos Hierax' reign was the achievements of his opponents. His initial military successes were shattered after his defeats against Attalos I. While it could be argued that the negative tone in accounts of the usurper has influenced the evidence of his achievements, the themes of discord with his mercenaries, the lack of victories and the success of Attalid ventures might indicate the limits of Antiochos Hierax' success. Despite his reign of more than ten years and his reference to the house of Seleukos, the defeats against the Attalid king destroyed his kingship. Although Antiochos Hierax became king as a son of Antiochos II, he was not able to retain the control of Asia Minor. His royal descent might have allowed him to become king at a relatively young age and at the beginning it seems he was largely successful against both Ptolemaic and Seleukid troops; however, neither his royal pedigree nor these initial successes prevented the later defection of his troops or Attalid expansion.

¹¹³ On the technicalities of the Attalid 'war machine': Ma (forthcoming b).

2.2.2 Kingship by Success: Achaïos

Achaïos' position in Asia Minor before his usurpation was based on his close relationship with both Seleukos III and the new king, Antiochos III, his *syngenes* (Pol. 5. 48. 5). Under Seleukos II he had fought alongside his father against Antiochos Hierax (Polyain. *strat.* 4. 17). At the time of his accession Antiochos III presumably needed a successful commander in Asia Minor and Achaïos' experience, kinship with the kings and his loyalty when he rejected the diadem himself were presumably reasons for his appointment as chief administrator of Asia Minor. Achaïos was indeed militarily successful. He had fought in the name of the Seleukid king in Asia Minor and recovered lost territories. Achaïos was able to re-establish Sardeis as the Seleukid capital of Asia Minor and push back Attalos I from his former occupied land. In parts of Phrygia he re-established Seleukid control and he was perhaps even supported by local initiative. The local dynast Lysias should be seen as acting against the Attalids in the name of Seleukos III (*OGIS* 277 = *I.Pergamon* 25-6). After Achaïos' usurpation, the Maiander valley might have come back under Seleukid control and he continued to affirm his control in Pamphylia.

However, the motivation for Achaïos' usurpation presumably should not only be seen as a result of his military successes in Asia Minor but also arising from the dynamics among the friends of the young Antiochos III. The usurpation of Molon, only two years prior to that of Achaïos, is instructive here. Apart from Polybios' stress on the wealth of the satrapy of Media (Pol. 5. 43. 8) and the youth of the king, the Hellenistic author stresses Molon's hope for Achaïos' support and the cruelty and malice of Hermeias as one of the main reasons for Molon's secession (Pol. 5. 41. 1). Polybios' stress on three individuals (Achaïos, Antiochos III and Hermeias) as the

reason for revolt is striking. We already find Achaïos active under Seleukos II. Hermeias, Seleukos III's ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, was also presumably a high-ranking official under Seleukos II. Polybios' stress on Epigenes' prominent position among the troops also indicates that he was an experienced commander (Pol. 5. 41. 4; 5. 50. 8). Instead of reading Polybios' passage as an indicator of future relations between these individuals, it seems more fruitful to read it as a depiction of the current court situation at the accession of Antiochos III.¹¹⁴ If Molon, Achaïos, Hermeias and Epigenes simply sought to establish (and maintain) themselves as high-ranking courtiers under Seleukos III, the death of the king meant a new renegotiation of their political position. If any credibility must be given to Porphyrios' account that Seleukos III was murdered by his courtiers (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9), it illustrates the tensions among the same individuals and highlights the fact that this situation was not only dangerous for the king's friends, but for the king as well. Thus, both Molon and Achaïos' revolts must be placed in the context of Antiochos III's accession to the Seleukid diadem and the hierarchy of the king's group of friends.¹¹⁵

The importance of the king's *philoï* in governing the Hellenistic kingdoms has been illustrated by scholarship. While in the discourse of royal letters the Seleukid kings were interested in asserting that it was they who made the decisions in their kingdom,¹¹⁶ the importance of the king's *philoï* cannot be underestimated.¹¹⁷ The Seleukid king chose his agents personally and it was this act which ensured their loyalty. Although from the succession from Seleukos I to Antiochos I and Antiochos II a certain hereditary charisma was ascribed to the ruling king, the royal agents or

¹¹⁴ Will (1962), 72-129; cf. Strootman (2011), 63-89, here 72-4.

¹¹⁵ On the Seleukid court: e.g. Strootman (2011), 63-89. On the dynamics of the Antigonid court: Ma (2011), 521-43.

¹¹⁶ Cf. Herman (1980-1), 103-27.

¹¹⁷ On Friends: e.g. Capdetrey (2007), 277-9; Carsana (1996); Grainger (1997); Habicht (1958), 1-16; Mehl (2003), 147-60; Savalli-Lestrade (1998); idem (2003), 17-39; Weber (1997), 27-71.

friends did not become a hereditary group.¹¹⁸ The *philoi*'s social and economic status continued to be dependent on their relationship with the king. It was this group the king employed as his envoys, local governors and commanders, and they supported the king in his decision-making.¹¹⁹ The public perception of the king's friends is, for example, illustrated in the mention of the king's friends in Antiochos I's honours from Ilion (*OGIS* 219. 22).

Nevertheless, a family of royal friends could be closely linked to the Seleukid kings, as the family of Achaïos indicates. The genealogy of the house of Achaïos, and especially the connection with the Seleukid royal house, has been discussed extensively. Droysen and Beloch have argued that the usurper Achaïos was the uncle of Antiochos III, a view that has been since convincingly challenged.¹²⁰ If one rejects this conjecture, Polybios' account could still be valid. Polybios states that Laodike, the sister of Andromachos (and probably the daughter of Achaïos the Elder), was the wife of Seleukos II.¹²¹ This suggests the following picture. Achaïos the Elder, mentioned in the inscription from Denizli, was landlord of an estate in the area of Laodikeia on the Lykos. It is reasonable to suggest that he had a son named Andromachos and a daughter named Laodike. This Laodike was married to Seleukos II. Andromachos' son, Achaïos, assumed the diadem in 220 BCE. The wife of Antiochos II and her brother Alexander were the children of a certain Achaïos and most likely related the family of Achaïos (perhaps the uncle of the elder Achaïos bore the same name).¹²²

¹¹⁸ Weber (1980), 141-5.

¹¹⁹ Variety of duties: Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 355-9; see also Hatzopoulos (1996), 323-37; Council to the king: e.g. 18. 7. 3-4; Pol. 29. 27. 1-8; also *RC* 61; Habicht (1958), 1-16, here 2-4.

¹²⁰ Beloch (1912-27), IV.I 205; challenged by Corradi (1927), 218-32, here 221; cf. Wilcken (1891), 206-7.

¹²¹ Pol. 4. 51. 4: ἦν γὰρ Ἀνδρόμαχος Ἀχαιοῦ μὲν πατὴρ, ἀδελφὸς δὲ Λαοδίκης τῆς Σελεύκου γυναικός; see also: Pol. 8. 20. 11.

¹²² Schmitt (1964), 31; cf. Meloni (1949), 535-53; idem (1950), 161-83.

Family relations and an estate in a geopolitically important area in western Asia Minor indicate the importance of the family of Achaïos for the Seleukid royal family. The family had an estate in the fertile Lykos valley, large enough to have its own *oikonomos* and *eglogistes*.¹²³ Two daughters in the family married a reigning monarch and the Seleukid foundation Laodikeia was named after the queen of Antiochos II. This was important on a local level as it was named after a member of the Achæan family. Until Achaïos the Younger's death members of the family twice served as Seleukid administrators of Asia Minor: Alexander under Antiochos II and Achaïos under Antiochos III. Although at least one member of Achaïos' family turned against Seleukos II and supported (at least for some time) his brother Antiochos Hierax, Seleukos II continued to rely on members of the family in the battle against Antiochos Hierax: Achaïos and his father Andromachos. Achaïos' father Andromachos seems to have been important enough for Ptolemaic authorities to be taken hostage and only released a considerable time later.¹²⁴ Furthermore, it was Achaïos, the οἰκεῖος, who accompanied Seleukos III on his very important campaign to Asia Minor. Thus, although the royal friends always had to renegotiate their relationship with the new Seleukid ruler, they nevertheless could hold very prominent positions in the young king's kingdom.

This is only one example of one of the families of the powerful friends of the king. Their position is illustrated clearly in the context of the accession of a young king, as described in Polybios' continuous narrative in book five. Antiochos III 'inherited' a number of highly powerful friends who held various prominent offices. In contrast to the established friends of the former king, the king himself was young and presumably inexperienced. If the arrival of a certain Ly[sias?] at Seleukeia on the

¹²³ See Wörle (1975), 59-87, here 81-4; Billows (1995), 97-8.

¹²⁴ Pol. 4, 51. 1-5. It is not clear when Andromachos was taken hostage. The campaigns in Kilikia Pedias might be a possibility.

Tigris (*BCHP* 12.11-5) indicates that Antiochos III also had a different name before his accession, as did his brother Alexander (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 9), one could hypothesise that neither brother was immediately promoted as Seleukos II's successor.¹²⁵ While this is speculation, it is certain that Antiochos III's chances of gaining the Seleukid diadem were rather limited at the accession of his brother. It is in this context that we should see the conflict between Antiochos III and his inherited friends who were attempting to renegotiate their relationship with the king.

Therefore it is important to read the antagonism between Epigenes and Hermeias in particular as a conflict for influence over the young king at the time of the changeover between monarchs. Although Polybios' narrative presumably follows a Seleukid court historiography composed in the aftermath of the conflict at the accession of the young Antiochos III, the themes nevertheless reveal the dynamics of the period.¹²⁶ In Polybios' narrative Hermeias was 'jealous of all the holders of prominent positions at court' '...ἐφθόνει τοῖς ἐν ὑπεροχαῖς οὔσι τῶν περὶ τὴν ἀσλὴν' (Pol. 5. 41. 3); he 'forged' encouraging letters between Ptolemaios IV and Achaios which led to a war against Egypt (Pol. 5. 42. 7) and he 'forged' another letter between Molon and Epigenes which resulted in Epigenes' execution (Pol. 5. 50. 11-3). These passages underline Hermeias' attempt to outdo his opponents and to alienate other powerful friends from the king. Presumably the secession of Molon and Achaios also should be interpreted in this light. Bearing in mind the fate of Hermeias soon after the end of Molon's revolt (Pol. 5. 56. 1-15), it is possible that the dynamics further illustrate the Seleukid king's attempts to get rid of friends who were too powerful. Perhaps Molon saw his secession as a last chance to retain his position. It is impossible to ascertain whether Antiochos III was already involved in the 'early' conflict between Hermeias or Epigenes, or if this should be interpreted strictly as a

¹²⁵ Mehl (1999), 9-43, here 25-6 discusses similar questions regarding Mithridates/Antiochos IV.

¹²⁶ Cf. Primo (2009), 137-9.

power struggle between competitive courtiers and royal Friends. Nevertheless, the death of Hermeias should illustrate the active interest of the king to remain the most powerful individual in his kingdom. It is likely that it was the dynamics of competing courtiers and a king who had to assert his position which meant that Achaïos' future was not certain either. It is possible that Achaïos seized his opportunity given his experience and awareness that the Seleukid king would not cross the Taurus immediately (which he did not). It also is possible that the dynamics between the king and his friends did not leave Achaïos much room for political manoeuvre.

After Achaïos 'ventured to take the title of king' in Laodikeia on the Lykos (Pol. 5. 57. 5) he introduced a distinct royal portrait to the coinage he now began to mint. In doing so, he acted in stark contrast to Antiochos Hierax before him, but in a very similar way to his contemporary Molon. The number of surviving issues is quite sparse.¹²⁷ On the obverse of Achaïos' precious coinage a man is depicted, presumably the king. The portrait is shown in profile looking to the right (pl. 3.5). His hair lies in curls, but is rather short. No curls seem to leap over the diadem, which is visibly bound around the head and knotted in the back. The portrait includes a beard with a moustache with small curls and shows strong lines on the forehead and next to the nose. On the bottom of the bust a *chlamys* can be identified. The reverse of the stater and the tetradrachm contain the legend βασιλεὺς Ἀχαιός in the genitive form. Moreover, an Athena Alkis is depicted on the reverse, advancing to the left, brandishing her spear and shield. The shield is embossed with a kedge anchor, which is depicted upside down. On the crown of the anchor an eagle can be identified.¹²⁸ Moreover, a horse head is clearly visible on the left side of the reverse of the coin

¹²⁷ Gold coin: SC 952. Silver denomination: SC 953. Ad199-200. Bronze coinage: SC 954-9; SC 954 (Zeus/Athena); 955-7; Ad201-3 (Apollo/eagle); 958 (Apollo/Tripod); 959 (Apollo/horse head). For the portrait: Fleischer (1991), 40.

¹²⁸ Hirmer's photograph clearly shows the depiction of the eagle. The eagle was omitted by Houghton and Newell: Hirmer (1972), pl. 205, p.152; cf. SC 953; WSM 1440.

between the Athena and the legend, which could be a marker of a mint. The bronze issues show one obverse of Zeus paired with Athena Alkis on the reverse and three issues of a laureate Apollo (obverse), one with an eagle (pl. 3.6), one with a tripod and the smallest one with a horse head on the reverse.

According to A. Houghton, the coins were influenced stylistically and typologically by the image of Philip V of Macedon (pl. 3.7). Achaïos has a very strong neck and the *chlamys* – the military cloak – form a strong military connotation on the portrait; however, this is not visible on Philip's V coinage.¹²⁹ Achaïos' portrait instead seems to have been created deliberately as a contrast to Seleukid portraits. There are no other bearded portraits of a Seleukid king in Asia Minor and the *chlamys* was not a common element on Seleukid coinage thus far.¹³⁰ Since the death of Antiochos II in 246 BCE, the kings depicted themselves in young idealised styles; the late issues of Seleukos II are an exception. Both Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II were young when they became king, as was Antiochos III at the time of Achaïos' usurpation; however, the emphasis on 'softer features' of the kings seems not only to be determined by the age of the rulers. Rather it is a theme of the period.¹³¹ Following this trend, Antiochos III is depicted in Antiocheia, the cities of western Asia Minor, southern Kilikia and in the Levant in an idealised but youthful manner in the period before and during Achaïos' rule (pl. 3.1).¹³² Achaïos does not utilise this trend in

¹²⁹ For coinage featuring the portrait of Philip V: e.g. *SNG Cop.Mace* III 1230-3.

¹³⁰ In Mesopotamia in the context of the Parthian campaign, Seleukos II depicted himself with a beard and a *chlamys*: (Persian beard: *SC* 685-6. Greek beard: *SC* 749-50). Perhaps he also employed the Greek beard to underline his age in comparison to his younger brother.

¹³¹ See Fleischer (1996), 28-40, here 31

¹³² The youthful portrait types Ai and Aii are now dated between 223-211 BCE: *SC* i.1 pp.358-60; cf. Le Rider (1999), 110-31 and 163-4. The portrait from Antiocheia on the Orontes and northern Syria is particularly instructive: *SC* 1037; 1041-2. Evidence of Antiochos III's coins from Asia Minor is sparse and it is difficult to date them to the period before Achaïos' death. Nevertheless, they depict the youthful portrait. See e.g. perhaps Mysia: *SC* 961; 963. Perhaps Ionia: *SC* 965. Phrygian Mint: *SC* 989; 990. Perhaps Apameia: *SC* 1000-1. Tarsos and Tarsian mint: *SC* 1025-6; 1032; 1035. Antiocheia on the Orontes: 1037; 1041-2. The youthful portrait was no longer employed in Asia Minor after the sack of Sardes.

Seleukid iconography. Achaïos' portrait has a very strong neck and a receding hairline to display strong lines on his forehead.

There are secondary symbols on the coins which subtly refer to the Seleukid house (to which he was a relative), such as the Seleukid anchor. Apart from mint marks, these elements could stress the continuity of the minting authority in order to underline the validity of his coinage, although this is not entirely certain. What is certain, however, is that the three main symbols on his coins mark a break with the traditional Seleukid imagery: his portrait, Athena Alkis and the legend on the reverse. His royal portrait differs significantly from previous Seleukid images. He is displayed as a military man, signified by the cloak, at an older age. The break is more than obvious in his royal name, which is a reference not to the family (and relations) who placed him in charge of Asia Minor, but rather to a family with possessions in the region and involved in the administration of Seleukid Asia Minor. This distancing from the Seleukid kings is corroborated by the use of Athena Alkis on the reverse of Achaïos' precious coinage in contrast to the Seleukid use of Apollo. Mentioned by Livy as one of the goddesses of Pella to which the Antigonid kings performed their sacrifice (Liv. 42. 51), the goddess was used continuously by the Antigonid kings as well as by Ptolemaios I, Pyrrhos of Epirus and later the Baktrian kings (e.g. pl. 3.8).¹³³ Athena Alkis was a reference to Pella, the Argead kings and to Macedonia in general. Similarities with the coinage of Philip V do not therefore constitute a reference to the Antigonid ruler. Instead, the semantics of Achaïos' imagery were similar to the semantics of the imagery of Philip V: Macedonia and Pella. It is likely that Achaïos tried to insert his (probably Macedonian) family into the Macedonian descendants of Alexander's campaign and to refer to those semantics Ptolemaios I, Pyrrhos, the

¹³³ Antigonids: *SNG Cop.Mace* III 1198-1203; 1244-6. Ptolemaios I: Svoronos 32-5. Pyrrhos of Epiros: *SNG Cop.Epirus* 92-4. Baktrian kings: Bopearachchi (1991) 'Ménandre (I) Sôter' nos. 11-149. Most Antigonid coins show Athena Alkis preparing to throw a bundle of lightning. The coins of Achaïos, as well as the coins of Ptolemaios I and Pyrrhos, depict her with a spear: pl. 3.5.

Baktrian kings and the Antigonids referred to as well. The fact that nearly all Seleukid bronze issues with Athena Alkis were minted in Seleukid colonies, most of them in the east, further underlines this reference to Macedon.¹³⁴

The anchor on the shield of Athena Alkis is a reference to Seleukos I and the signet ring of the Seleukid royal family. Several myths regarding the anchor exist and it was used on Seleukid coinage.¹³⁵ Strikingly, it is depicted on the shield that Athena holds up to protect herself when brandishing the spear. Moreover, the anchor is topped with an eagle, which is also depicted on the reverse of some of the bronze coins of Achaïos and might be a local reference to the sanctuary of Zeus Genethlios (the Protector) in Sardeis.¹³⁶ Although reference to Seleukid elements is made, their arrangements on Achaïos' coinage clearly create a new and different image.

It is this image of differentiation which can also be seen in the coinage of Molon. Moreover, in contrast to the Seleukid issues of the young Antiochos III and previous Seleukid royal images, Molon issued a carefully executed portrait, although only one tetradrachm has survived.¹³⁷ The coin depicts the portrait of a mature but youthful man. The hair is much longer and therefore wavier than contemporary images of the Seleukid kings. The portrait has a very straight nose, strong gaze, small lips, a slight double chin and a slightly larger ear. On the reverse a *tropaion* is depicted, suggesting the commemoration of a battle (pl. 3.3), very similar to a *tropaion* on the reverses of the bronze coinage of Seleukos II from Seleukeia on the

¹³⁴ Two bronze coins from Tarsus in the reign of Antiochos II are an exception (SC 565-6). Otherwise: Seleukos I: SC 15-17 (Antiocheia on the Orontes). Antiochos I: SC 381-7 (Seleukeia on the Tigris). Antiochos II: SC 604 (Susa). Antiochos III: SC possibly 1183 and Ad37.

¹³⁵ The signet ring of Seleukos I: App. Syr. 56 (284-7). Anchor on coinage: Seleukos I: SC 134. Seleukos I: SC 34; 145-6; 188; 190; 223; 267-8; 271. Co-regency between Seleukos I and Antiochos I: SC 285-9. Antiochos I: SC 359; 359A; 376-7; 408A. Seleukos II: SC 663; 756-8. Antiochos III: SC 1294.

¹³⁶ SC 955-7; Ad201-3. For Zeus Genethlios: SEG 39. 1284 B. 13.

¹³⁷ Fischer (1988), 17 suggests that the coin is overstruck; I was not able to verify this from the photographs alone.

Tigris (*SC* 776-8; see pl. 2.7). This distinctive break with contemporary Seleukid imagery is also underlined in the royal names the usurpers took: Achaïos and Molon.

With these distinct symbols on their coinage, Achaïos and Molon ensured that their soldiers were presented with (and could not forget) their special claim to kingship. The choice of imagery on their coinage suggests that both Molon and Achaïos created a royal image which claimed that they were kings because of their military success. Despite the uncertainty about the issue number of the coinage, the coinage illustrates that the usurpers thought it was opportune to employ these elements on their coinage in their attempts to gain acceptance. Although one could argue that the political effect of the coinage might have been limited (see ch. 1.1.2), it seems certain that the usurpers either did not oppose this imagery or simply paid no attention to it at all, since otherwise this stress on difference would be difficult to explain. Thus, I would argue that the stress on difference, as it is depicted on the coinage, should be interpreted as a programme which was presumably also apparent in now lost evidence. For the troops of Achaïos, for example, this differentiation did not seem to matter. They already wanted to acclaim Achaïos king in 222 BCE after he avenged the death of Seleukos III and they continued to follow their commander after he made himself king in Laodikeia. The troops' affection for their commander should lead us to question the troops' hesitation at the sight of their 'king by nature' (κατὰ φύσιν), as described in Polybios (*Pol.* 5. 57. 6). Indeed it should be interpreted as a later re-writing of the usurper's history. We do not know what kind of troops Achaïos recruited in Asia Minor. Although he apparently arrived with a considerable force, he must have acquired further recruits. He received local contingents from the people of Etenna and Aspendos for his Pamphylian campaign. Mysian mercenaries and Galatian swordsmen might have been an obvious option; in the same period Attalos I also hired

Galatian mercenaries (Pol. 5. 77. 2; 78. 1-5).¹³⁸ The crucial point about Achaïos' troops, however, is that he seems to have been able to employ them in continuous engagements against the Attalid king. Even when the Seleukid king besieged Sardeis, desertion seems to have been minimal.

Moreover, Achaïos also was able to ally himself with other rulers in Asia Minor. In accordance with the practices of other Hellenistic rulers, particularly Antiochos III, he married Laodike, the daughter of Mithridates II, the king of Pontos, when Achaïos was presumably already king (Pol. 8. 20. 11). We do not know whether Mithridates III had already succeeded Mithridates II.¹³⁹ It was presumably in this period that the Pontic king failed to take the city of Sinope (Pol. 4. 56) and witnessed Achaïos' success in Asia Minor against Attalos I. An alliance with Achaïos as a new power in Asia Minor must have been welcome. A connection with the Pontic dynasty was presumably also an advantage for Achaïos: it allowed him to be part of the group of kings in Asia Minor.

The usurpation of Achaïos is instructive in three ways in particular: 1) Achaïos was the chief administrator of Asia Minor because of his relationship with the king and former kings. However, even after his usurpation it appears that he was not perceived as a plundering warlord, as he was approached by cities, such as Byzantion or Pednelissos, to come to their aid. The punishment of Sardeis also might suggest that the city supported the usurper initially. 2) Achaïos was an able military commander. He had a strong connection with his troops, as illustrated in Polybios' accounts of his military successes and his troops' attempts to acclaim him king from as early as 222 BCE. Moreover, his troops did not desert him. In Polybios' account,

¹³⁸ Cf. Mittag (2008), 47-56, here 49-50.

¹³⁹ Pontic kings: scholarship so far has assumed that Mithridates II died around 220 BCE. If he was still alive when his daughter married Achaïos, this might push the date of his death to the 210s. There is only sparse evidence for Mithridates III. However, this is not the place to discuss the Pontic kings. See Geyer (1932), 2160-1; McGing (1986a), 248-59, here 253-5; *HCP* ii, 96. For a new interpretation: Petković (2009), 378-83.

both the lower city of Sardeis and the usurper himself are taken by treason, not through defection. One of course could argue that Achaïos was a cousin of the king and that this helped him claim the diadem. However, as it has been argued above, Achaïos did not place an explicit stress on his Seleukid ancestry on his coinage. Instead he established his own imagery. His royal name and image was an individual reference to his kingship, based in Asia Minor. 3) The sources and their narratives place a strong emphasis on Achaïos' military successes, particularly against the Attalid king. However, Polybios' narrative does not fail to mention the recovery of the Aiolis by Attalos once Achaïos was on campaign in Pamphylia and the partial reversal after Achaïos' return. It is this fluctuation between the 'taking' and 'retaking' of territories in short periods of time which allows us to understand the levels of control in certain territories in the mid-third century BCE. The 'taking' of territories only demanded a strong army; the ruler's structures were exchangeable. For this reason, Ptolemaios III had been able to 'take most of Asia' (whether exaggerated or not) and Achaïos could push back Attalos I. It was for exactly the same reason that Molon had been able to 'take' Babylon swiftly. It had been one of Attalos I's strengths that he was able to expand in Asia Minor into former Seleukid territories which were now contested between the Attalid king and Achaïos. It is this context which we need to bear in mind when interpreting the campaign of Antiochos III in Sardeis; a campaign of Seleukid manpower in a *koinopragia* with Attalos I.

2.2.3 Excursus: Usurpers and the Ptolemaic Kings

The Ptolemaic kings played a large role in the power politics of Asia Minor during this period and it can be argued (perhaps unsurprisingly) that the Ptolemaic kings had a certain interest in the usurpers in Asia Minor. How Ptolemaic relations with Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos manifested themselves, however, is difficult to

assess. For the period of Antiochos Hierax in particular the evidence is confusing. Antiochos Hierax' initial power in Asia Minor resulted from antagonism with the Ptolemaic king during and after the Third Syrian War. After Antiochos had assumed the diadem and defeated his brother's troops at Ankyra, Porphyrios suggests that Ptolemaios III sent Antiochos troops (*auxiliaribus*) when he had to find refuge in Magnesia. This would suggest Ptolemaic support at this particular period in time. However, there are later instances which suggest that an alliance with Ptolemaios III was rather unlikely, particularly after Antiochos Hierax' campaigns in the Troad. If Ptolemaic Larissa did not continue to be a Ptolemaic enclave in the territory of Antiochos Hierax, Ptolemaic garrisons must have been forced to leave the city. If there was an initial alliance, the Ptolemaic king might have broken with Hierax after Seleukos II was no longer a threat in Asia Minor. However, after his final defeat he seems to have sought help from Ptolemaic troops (Iust. 27. 3. 9-11). If this scattered and contradicting evidence suggests anything, we should presumably assume Ptolemaic interest in Antiochos Hierax in order to oppose Seleukos II and weaken Seleukid control in Asia Minor. However, this Ptolemaic support does not seem to have gone beyond initial furnishing of troops, a scenario which similarly occurred between Ptolemaios IV and Achaïos.

There is more evidence of communication between Achaïos and the Ptolemaic kings.¹⁴⁰ According to Polybios, the target of the Seleukid campaigns in Asia Minor was Attalos I; he makes no mention of campaigns against the Ptolemaic king. It is possible that Ptolemaios III and Ptolemaios IV might have been interested in creating a buffer between Ptolemaic and Seleukid interests in Asia Minor, and perhaps there was a Ptolemaic incentive for Achaïos' secession, as suggested by the 'forged' letter

¹⁴⁰ See Schmitt (1964), 166-71.

of Hermeias.¹⁴¹ Ptolemaic interest in Achaïos is articulated for the first time when Ptolemaios IV's wished to include Achaïos in the Ptolemaic-Seleukid negotiations in the context of the Fourth Syrian War. Ptolemaios IV did not know how the war with Antiochos III would end and the inclusion of Achaïos in the negotiations could have made him a potential ally. However, when Ptolemaios IV won the battle at Raphia, Achaïos was not included in the final negotiations. Although Ptolemaios might not have been in an alliance with Achaïos, he must have been interested in the usurper, knowing that the Seleukid king would have to campaign against Achaïos in the future, which required time and resources. If Antiochos III was busied with internal strife, the Seleukid king would not have been able to threaten Ptolemaic possessions in Koile-Syria and thus during the siege of Sardeis Achaïos received Ptolemaic support. Therefore, Ptolemaios IV must have been interested in prolonging the quarrel between Antiochos III and Achaïos. Polybios possibly captures Ptolemaic support of Achaïos in his description of the Seleukid soldiers' fear of Ptolemaic troops at the siege of Sardeis. Polybios describes how in order to keep the plan of attack on the city of Sardeis a secret, Lagoras told his soldiers that they were to prepare against the Aitolians, who had to be prevented from entering the city (Pol. 7. 16. 7). Regardless of whether this is fictitious or real, the Aitolians presumably should be seen as Ptolemaic mercenaries.¹⁴² Moreover, it was also the Ptolemaic government which arranged the rescue of Achaïos out of the city of Sardeis.

While Ptolemaic interest in Achaïos' position in Asia Minor seems undeniable, presumably it should not be interpreted as an alliance or be seen as friendly relations. Achaïos was king because of his military performance and these successes could have come potentially close to the spheres of Ptolemaic interests.

¹⁴¹ This might have influenced Polybios' later narrative about the 'forged letter' by Hermeias, see above, p.65.

¹⁴² The Aitolians might not even be fictitious, as the use of the article indicates that they have been mentioned earlier in the narrative. See *HCP* ii, 65; Holleaux (1942), 125-39.

However, the Ptolemies were able to limit Achaïos' diplomatic attempts with the cities on the coast of Asia Minor by releasing his father from hostage. Achaïos acknowledged Ptolemaic power in the Byzantine affair and did not engage in it any further. Moreover, he must have largely refrained from marching into Karia and perhaps the western Maiander valley and Lykia; regions which were still under Ptolemaic control in this period.

The support both usurpers received from the Ptolemaic kings was influenced by their relationship with the Seleukid monarch and their position in the region, as they weakened Seleukid authority in Asia Minor. The evidence suggests that Achaïos (and possibly Antiochos Hierax as well) received Ptolemaic support at times when their own position in Asia Minor was threatened. Perhaps Seleukos II's grants to Arados mentioned in Strabo were intended to counter-balance the Ptolemaic promotion of Antiochos Hierax in the southern Levant (Strab. 16. 2. 14).¹⁴³ Nevertheless, the relationship between the usurpers and the Ptolemaic kings was strained by a potential conflict of interest in territories in western Asia Minor. Antiochos Hierax in particular must have enlarged his territories by taking Ptolemaic possessions. Achaïos also was able to extend his sphere close to Ptolemaic territories. As outlined above, it appears that communication between Antiochos Hierax and the Ptolemies was marginal. Achaïos' usurpation turned his Seleukid recovery into his own kingdom, which was more favourable to the Ptolemies than Seleukid stability. It is in this context that we should interpret Ptolemaic interest in the Seleukid usurpers: for the Ptolemaic king the usurpers in Asia Minor were more acceptable than strong Seleukid control. The new kings were only one of the dynasts of Asia Minor and thus there was not one super power in Asia Minor which could threaten Ptolemaic possessions; perhaps they even served Ptolemaic interests to counter the expansion of

¹⁴³ See above, n.87.

Attalos I of Pergamon. Moreover, the usurpations demanded reaction from the Seleukid king. The usurpers perhaps were encouraged to secede and apparently they received Ptolemaic support in times of danger. However, it is questionable whether Ptolemaic interest in usurpers went beyond their initial establishment in Asia Minor, since a strong king in Asia Minor could have been a threat to Ptolemaic possessions.

2.3 Royal Success in Asia Minor: The Limits of the Seleukid Family

The usurpations of Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos in Asia Minor are instructive for two reasons. First, they allow an assessment of both the geopolitical landscape of the Seleukid kingdom in the mid/late third century BCE and the extent and limits of Seleukid control. Second, they enable us to understand the concept of usurpation in itself: in other words, they illustrate who had the opportunity to become king in Asia Minor and who had the ability to remain king. The phenomenon of powerful political figures placed in charge as royal administrators of Asia Minor was not a new development of the third century BCE, nor was it to disappear after the usurpations of Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos. The diverse space of Asia Minor is clearly defined geographically with the Mediterranean on its western and southern coast, the Pontic Sea on the north coast and the massive Tauros ridge, which marks the border to the east, separating the space from Syria and Mesopotamia. The territory had already been conceived as a unit by the Achaemenid kings and Xenophon's description of Kyros the Younger as *karanos* 'of all those who muster at Kastolos' (Xen. *hell.* 1. 4. 3; *anab.* 1. 1. 2) captures this arrangement. Although two of the chief administrators in charge of Asia Minor had revolted against the Seleukid king, Antiochos III nevertheless acknowledged the importance of the office by placing

Zeuxis in charge of Asia Minor after the fall of Sardeis.¹⁴⁴ We presumably can see Zeuxis' title in an inscription from Euromos which describes him as 'Ζεῦξις τε ὁ ἀπολελειμμένος ὑπο τοῦ βασιλέως Ἀντιόχου ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπιτάδε τοῦ Ταύρου πραγμάτων', 'the one left behind by King Antiochos in charge of the affairs on this side of the Taurus.'¹⁴⁵ While Zeuxis' powers were reduced when the king was in Asia Minor (as the evidence for Alexander under Antiochos II also seems to indicate), they were as extensive as the powers of Achaïos before his usurpation during the long years of the absence of the king.¹⁴⁶

Of course both usurpations were connected to the office the usurpers had held and their prominence in the Seleukid hierarchy. The fact that the Seleukid kings favoured local power holders in order to retain Seleukid control, which at the same time allowed these administrators to obtain individual authority for themselves, should be understood presumably as what J. Ma has recently described as Hellenistic paradoxes.¹⁴⁷ It underlines the structural necessity of the Seleukid king to retain control over these administrators in order to maintain Seleukid control. However, it was not only the position of the chief administrator which made Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos revolt. Achaïos' usurpation also clearly illustrates the importance of individual success. Both Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos were appointed to the government of Asia Minor in order to stabilise the political situation and ensure Seleukid domination of former Seleukid territories. Their connection to the royal family (and in the case of Achaïos also his connection to Asia Minor) perhaps made them the ideal candidates. At least for Achaïos we know that he made himself king in the context of military campaigns. Antiochos Hierax also perhaps claimed the diadem

¹⁴⁴ Sardeis: Zeuxis is already mentioned in the first decree issued in Sardeis after the surrender of the citadel, dated to 5 March 213 BCE: *SEG* 39. 1283 with Gauthier (1989), no.1; Ma (2002), 126; see above, n.78. For Zeuxis: Olshausen (1972), 381-5. For later evidence of his power in the administration of Asia Minor: Ma (2002), 123-30. We already find him in the battle against Molon (Pol. 5. 45. 4; 46).

¹⁴⁵ *SEG* 36. 973. 3-5 with Errington (1986), 1-8 and *BE* 87. 294.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. Capdetrey (2007), 297; 299.

¹⁴⁷ Ma (2008), 371-85, here 374.

in the context of his successes against Ptolemaic troops at the end of the Third Syrian War, although evidence for this is lacking. Achaïos, on the other hand, was able to push Attalos I out of former Seleukid territories and he displayed his valour by revenging the death of the king.

The marriage of both usurpers to daughters of kings in Asia Minor illustrates the political dynamics of the period. With the withdrawal of Seleukos II from Asia Minor, Antiochos Hierax was for the moment a victorious king. It was presumably in this context that Antiochos Hierax secured an alliance with the king of Bithynia and married his daughter. The Pontic king supported Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos because both were in Asia Minor with their armies. Antiochos Hierax drove his brother out of Asia Minor and it was with Hierax that Mithridates II shared his borders. In the 220s BCE the Pontic king had witnessed Achaïos' success in his campaigns against the Attalids before Achaïos took the diadem. The alliance was presumably not one-sided and did not solely reflect Pontic interests. It perhaps can be assumed that the usurpers also thought these alliances to be advantageous; in a way, the Pontic marriage of Achaïos meant an acknowledgement the latter's power by the northern kings. The reaction of the Pontic kings towards the new kings is similarly reflected in the behaviour of the cities of Asia Minor. For Antiochos Hierax, the evidence does not allow any conclusions beyond the assumed support from Sardeis and presumably Magnesia under Sipylos. Although Antiochos Hierax' mints were dominant in the Troad and the Hellespont, evidence of communication with the cities in the region is lacking. As argued earlier, communication with Achaïos is attested in the appeals from both Byzantion and Pednelissos. The 'fear of the cities' of which Polybios writes (Pol. 5. 77. 1) presumably should not be interpreted as an endemic friction between usurpers and cities. Instead, it should be seen as the cities' reaction to military campaigns, as it is also attested for campaigns of Antiochos III later in the

period (Liv. 33. 38. 9). While the taking and retaking of cities, such as Kyme and Phokaia, by Attalos I, Achaïos, Attalos I and Achaïos in the years between 227 and 218 BCE illustrates the political and economical instability of the period, these conquest also must be placed in their appropriate contexts. For a large part of the third century the coast of Asia Minor was under constant competition between Seleukid, Ptolemaic and later Attalid monarchs. The usurpers were only one additional element in this chain of structural instability, which was only briefly broken at the turn of the third century when most of the coastline of Asia Minor was under control of Antiochos III until the latter's defeat against the Romans.

Beyond the geopolitical landscape, the usurpations of Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos illustrate the possibilities and limits of usurpation itself. Antiochos Hierax was a son of Antiochos II and this is illustrated by his royal *persona*, which resembled a conglomeration of Seleukid features on his own coin. However, while Antiochos Hierax had the same dynastic claim to the diadem as his brother, his kingship failed in the end because of his defeats against the Attalid king. One could of course argue that he failed because he had usurped the territories of his elder brother, 'the rightful king'; however, this necessitates a stress on the dynastic element of the Hellenistic kings which is perhaps not tenable. Antiochos Hierax had defeated his brother at Ankyra and he established a kingdom over which he ruled for a considerable period of time. Nevertheless, Attalos I of Pergamon managed to defeat him in numerous battles. Antiochos Hierax' royal descent did not allow him to remain king nor did it give him an advantage over the Attalid ruler. Antiochos Hierax' attempt to seize his opportunity in Mesopotamia, presumably in the context of Seleukos II's problems in the eastern provinces, was only a last straw. These dynamics are strikingly similar to those of the second century which will be discussed in the next chapter.

The limits of Seleukid descent are demonstrated in Achaïos' kingship. It was his position in Asia Minor and especially his military successes against Attalos I which allowed him to assume the diadem in 220 BCE with the support of his army in the city named after a member of his family. He created his own kingship. One could argue that compared to Antiochos III, he would not have been able to insert himself into the Seleukid family since he was only a cousin. However, comparisons with Seleukid family relations are not constructive. The choice of his own imagery, which amply stressed difference from the Seleukid house and the style of Seleukid iconography, and his political position (accepted by troops, cities and dynasts), illustrates the individual characteristics of Achaïos' kingship. For the troops, it was his success that mattered and thus they fought for Achaïos rather than deserting him.

The danger of Achaïos' usurpation for the Seleukid king is illustrated in his punishment by Antiochos III after his capture. It is not possible to draw conclusions regarding the death of Antiochos Hierax since the only account is the story of his murder by Galatians. While it is possible that he fell in a Galatian assault, it is more likely that the account was a rhetorical device to draw attention to Hierax' 'traitorous' character. Achaïos' death, on the other hand, is an interesting example of Seleukid policy towards usurpers in the third century BCE and should be interpreted alongside the mutilation of Molon. Molon's body only fell into the hands of Antiochos III after the usurper had committed suicide. Regardless, the king ordered his men to impale him in the most conspicuous (ἐπιφανέστατον) place in Media: Molon's corpse was displayed foot the Zagros range on the road between Media and the west (Pol. 5. 54. 3-9). Achaïos was not only mutilated, he was decapitated, his head sown into a skin and his body impaled (Pol. 8. 21. 3). The treatment of Achaïos' body is not described as an emotional act of anger or vengeance. It was in the king's *synedrion* that the necessary punishment (τίσι δεῖ... χρήσασθαι τιμωρίαι) was decided after many

proposals (πολλοὶ λόγοι) were heard (Pol. 8. 21. 2). The punishment was a public display. It echoed Dareios I's inscriptions from Bisitun, which state, for example, that the great king displayed the mutilated rebel Fravartis in his palace before impaling him at Ekbatana. His foremost followers were (presumably also publicly) hanged in Ekbatana (DB II 32; Bab. 25).¹⁴⁸ The display served to publicise the deconstruction of kingship and acceptance.¹⁴⁹ The re-insertion of Achaïos in charge of Seleukid Asia Minor, as Xerxes of Armenia, for example, was apparently not an option. He had to be executed. Achaïos was not a king to be kept in captivity as Demetrios Poliorketes was under Seleukos I, nor were his ashes to be returned to his family, as Poliorketes' ashes were by Seleukos I (Plut. *Dem.* 53. 2) as well as the ashes of Seleukos I by Philetaïros (App. *Syr.* 63 [335]). Achaïos was a usurper. The mutilation of his body seems to have been reserved for usurpers and was aimed to deconstruct his royal persona and thus his kingship. The harsh punishment was an acknowledgement of the power of the usurpers. Achaïos and, to a lesser degree, Molon had been able to use their armies against the troops of the Seleukid king and created their own kingdoms. Achaïos was king for roughly six years. Both usurpers demonstrated that although the Seleukid kings had established a dynasty, being a member of that dynasty was not a prerequisite for kingship. They struck coinage with their own name and their troops followed them. The display of both Achaïos and Molon's impaled bodies in (presumably) public places served not only as a symbol of the power of the Seleukid king, but also as a warning to his friends.

¹⁴⁸ The 'eastern' character of the punishment has also recently been summarised by Ehling (2007), 479-500, here 498. It is important to note that most translations translate ἀκρωτηριάσαι with 'to cut off the extremities', which is often interpreted as the hands. While it is plausible that the hands were cut off (maybe the one Achaïos was fighting with, cf. II Makk. 15. 30-5), it probably refers to the mutilation of ears and nose, which was an ancient middle eastern practice and can be found in the Hellenistic period.

¹⁴⁹ Jelito (1913); van Proosdij (1934), 347-50; Fleischer (1972-5), 103-22, here 115; cf. Ehling (2007), 497-500.

The death of Antiochos Hierax illustrated to the usurpers and also to the Seleukid king that the Seleukid dynasty was not a guarantor for success. Antiochos III understood this very well and thus strove to demonstrate his individual achievement. With his *anabasis* into the upper satrapies, which brought him the title ‘*megas*’, he reacted to all possible opposition from his successful military commanders and his friends by making himself an allegory of the greatest of all Macedonians, Alexander. This message of the *anabasis* was captured by Polybios, who stressed not only the eastern but also the western implications of the expedition and argued that it was these successes which made the king worthy of his diadem (Pol. 11. 34. 16). It should not be surprising that it was in this context that he underlined his long descent from kings in royal letters, that he referred to the affairs of Asia Minor under his grandfather ‘πάππου’ (SEG 37. 1010 with 54. 1237) and that he initiated a Seleukid ruler cult.¹⁵⁰ Antiochos III enforced the importance of the Seleukid dynasty and tried to equate it with Seleukid power. This emphasis should underline the limits of the Seleukid family which was apparent after the death of Seleukos II and at the accession of Antiochos III as a young man.

Usurpers in third-century Asia Minor largely relied on their army and, more importantly, on the victories they achieved. Asia Minor in the late third century was under constant competition, first by Ptolemaic units and later by Attalos I of Pergamon, who decided to move against Seleukid troops. The importance of the army is illustrated in the failure of Antiochos Hierax, who, despite being a son of Antiochos II, was not able to remain king after military defeats. Achaïos stressed his connection to Asia Minor by making himself king in Laodikeia, thus presumably trying to underline his royal authority. Moreover, Achaïos was able to communicate successfully with cities in his newly acquired territories and neither his troops nor the

¹⁵⁰ For the state cult: Robert /Robert (1983), 163-8; Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 209-10; Ma (2002), 356; van Nuffelen (2004), 278-391; cf. Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 269-70.

cities seem to suggest that his kingship was not accepted. If we can rely on our ancient sources in this respect (which we might not be able to do), it is striking that Antiochos Hierax did not have a city to return to after his defeats, while Achaïos was able to retreat to Sardeis. The importance of Achaïos' success (and that of Molon as well) is illustrated in the accounts of their deaths. Both Achaïos and Molon were executed in a cautionary fashion of what would happen to usurpers. These were the parameters of usurpation in the third century before Antiochos III's *anabasis* into the eastern satrapies and his war against Rome. The extent to which this picture is indicative for the Seleukid empire as a whole will be investigated in the following chapters.

3 Kings, the Makkabees, the Army and the Cities: Syria and the Levant in the Second Century

The Hellenistic world of the second century was very different from that of the third century BCE. The Seleukid kingdom had also changed. The treaty of Apameia, one of the indicators of change, was more than a territorial blow for the Seleukid empire. Although the loss of Asia Minor did not cause the kingdom to collapse and its financial repercussions seem to have been acceptable,¹ the provision of hostages disrupted dynastic succession. Throughout his long reign, Antiochos III placed a strong emphasis on the Seleukid family and underlined the connection between his individual success, the Seleukid past and the Seleukid dynasty. This dynastic policy was shattered when he was forced to send hostages to Rome and thus the political situation of the second century was no less precarious than it had been in the second half of the third century before Antiochos III's reconquest of Asia Minor. With Seleukid princes outside the kingdom, secondary candidates were able to claim the diadem. Although both Seleukos IV and Antiochos IV promoted their children as successors, they were not able to prevent their brother (Antiochos IV) or nephew (Demetrios I) from claiming the diadem after their death. The position of the king's brother was precarious, particularly as soon as the king had a son.² While there are no Seleukid records of royal brothers being murdered as soon as the king's son reached a certain age, the secession of Antiochos Hierax might be interpreted as a reaction to such, so too, can Antiochos IV's residence in Athens after his release. Examples from Ptolemaic Egypt illustrate the dangers of being the brother of the king.³ The survival

¹ Treaty: Pol. 21. 16-7; 40-2; Liv. 37. 44. 3-45.21; 38. 38-9. 1; Diod. Sic. 29. 10-11; Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F18. 9; App. *Syr.* 38-9 (197-202); cf. Gruen (1984), 639-43. For the financial implications: Le Rider/Callataÿ (2006), 199-207. For the physical payment of indemnities: Bauslaugh (1990), 39-65, esp. 58-9.

² Antiochos III was the only brother of the king to succeed to the Seleukid diadem: Pol. 4. 2. 7.

³ Mittag (2006), 41. For Ptolemaic Egypt: Ptolemaios II and Ptolemaios IV had their brothers murdered at their accessions: Paus. 1. 7. 1; Pol. 5. 34. 1-2; see also Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 271-2.

of both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I in Rome and their claims to the diadem could cause tensions between the new ruler and the former king's friends. The split in the dynasty eradicated Antiochos III's construction of a strong Seleukid dynasty and ultimately paved the way for usurpers.

Although Timarchos usurped the diadem in the Seleukid periphery (as had his predecessors), most Seleukid usurpers in this period were able to enlist their troops within the centre of Seleukid power and in proximity to the Seleukid king. Two groups of usurpers were active in this period. The first category consisted of former Seleukid generals who were motivated by royal succession, as well as perhaps external and internal pressures. The Seleukid generals Timarchos and Tryphon had held prominent positions under the previous ruler and seceded at the time of the new king's accession. The second group were descendants or pretended descendants of the family branch of Antiochos IV. The split in the royal line enabled them to claim to be members of the Seleukid dynasty and thus to attract supporters of the previous kings.

Some of the outside pressures were also similar to the preceding period. Only twenty years after Antiochos IV's campaign into Egypt, the Ptolemaic kings were powerful enough to reach within the Seleukid sphere and support different centres of power other than the Seleukid king. The former Seleukid east also became a political factor of its own: the growing strength of Eukratides of Baktria, and more importantly of Mithridates I of Parthia, gave a new twist to Seleukid politics during this period.⁴ The second-century Levant enables us to analyse a phenomenon which is difficult to trace in the earlier period (although it is likely to have existed). Local power holders emerged, the most obvious example being the Makkabees.⁵ The competition between the Seleukid king and usurper gave the Makkabees and the other power holders in the Levant the possibility of choice, thus transforming the audiences of royal

⁴ It is possible that this phenomenon was also a factor in the dynamics of the Seleukid east in the third century BCE. For this period, see below, ch. 4.2.

⁵ See: e.g. Bringmann (1983); Fischer (1980).

communication into active politicised agents. In practice, the Makkabees used the Seleukids' conflict with usurpers to establish themselves as a significant power in the region and their success is demonstrated by the numerous Seleukid concessions to this group. While the Makkabees offered the Seleukid king troops, it is possible that they offered support to the Seleukid usurpers as well. For the Seleukid kings and usurpers this meant that their royal communication had to be more persuasive than that of their opponent in order to be accepted as kings. Thus, the second-century Levant offers insight into the limits of Seleukid kingship and its defining characteristics. The previous chapter outlined the limitations of dynastic descent in the third century and it was the split in the royal dynasty which continued to weaken the dynastic element of the house of Seleukos. This chapter will illustrate that kingship in the Seleukid kingdom was neither legitimate nor illegitimate, but rather depended on acceptance from political agents, the interest groups within the Seleukid kingdom. The usurpers in the periphery could rely on their unique position to become the supreme power holder and it was often for this reason that their acceptance was not doubted. In the second-century Levant, with more than one power holder in the same space, this claim was contested; the kings had to be persuasive.

This chapter will begin with an outline of geopolitics in the second century followed by an examination of the royal offers of the Seleukid usurpers. It will then examine the responses to royal offers and analyse some of the politicised bodies within the Seleukid kingdom, thus demonstrating the power dynamics of the Levant and the East in the second century BCE.

3.1 The Geopolitical Landscape of the Seleukid Empire in the Mid-Second Century BCE, c. 162-123 BCE

As soon as Demetrios I was welcomed by the Syrians following his escape from Rome, he did what a king had to do in order to establish his position: he ordered his soldiers ‘not to show him the faces’ of Antiochos V and Lysias, who were consequently murdered by the troops.⁶ Demetrios I strove not only to avoid possible family members claiming his recently assumed diadem, but with the help of mercenaries and support from the Seleukid troops in Apameia, he rid the Seleukid court of the closest friends and allies of both Antiochos IV and Antiochos V.⁷ Yet Timarchos, a close friend of Antiochos IV in Babylonia at the time of Demetrios I’s accession, did not accept the new king in Antiocheia. He took the diadem for himself.

3.1.1 Timarchos

Timarchos and his brother Herakleides were natives of Miletos and both Diodoros (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a) and Appian (App. *Syr.* 45 [235]) underline their close relationship with Antiochos IV.⁸ In both accounts (which presumably derive from Polybios) Timarchos is mentioned as the most illustrious satrap of all, the satrap of Media. Appian indicates that Timarchos was appointed satrap by Antiochos IV and was in Babylon while his brother Herakleides was appointed treasurer (ὁ ἐπὶ δὲ ταῖς

⁶ I Makk. 7. 3: μή μοι δείξητε τὰ πρόσωπα αὐτῶν. For the welcome in Syria and death of the king: App. *Syr.* 47 (242); I Makk. 7. 4; Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 12. 390. A narrative for this period can be found in: Ehling (2008); Grainger (2010).

⁷ Apameia: Zon. 9. 25. Herakleides, the former ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν προσόδων of Antiochos IV and brother of the usurper Timarchos (App. *Syr.* 45 [235]) was removed from office, presumably before Timarchos’ usurpation (App. *Syr.* 47 [242]). The new king also appointed his ‘best and most trusted friend’ Nikanor as a commander against the Jews: Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 12. 402. For Bakchides as a friend of both Demetrios and Antiochos IV: *Ant. Iud.* 12. 393; cf. I Makk. 7. 8; Ehling (2008), 131, following Grainger (1997), 84-5 and Wilcken (1896), 2788.

⁸ For their connection with their hometown: *I. Milet* 1-2; cf. Herrmann (1987), 172.

προσόδοις).⁹ Diodoros' description of Timarchos as the most illustrious of the satraps could indicate that he was also the ὁ τῶν ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν, although this is not entirely certain. The wealth of the satrapy of Media is illustrated in Polybios (Pol. 5. 43.8- 44.3; 10. 27. 1-13) and Strabo (Strab. 11. 13. 6-7). It is this wealth, as well as its geographical location, which made the loyalty of the satrap of Media vital for the Seleukid king. Although the satrapy was distant from the central provinces of Syria and Babylonia, it was not a peripheral region like Armenia. It was presumably for this reason that Antiochos IV appointed Timarchos satrap, a position he maintained during the reign of Antiochos V.¹⁰ If, however, Timarchos' brother Herakleides was removed from office following the accession of Demetrios I (App. Syr. 47 [242]), it is questionable whether Timarchos would have had the opportunity to come to terms with the new king in Antiocheia.¹¹ Timarchos instead ventured on an embassy to Rome (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). According to Diodoros, Timarchos and Herakleides had been in Rome on embassies for Antiochos IV and it was their good relationship with Roman senators (which was later translated into a historical discourse on 'bribes') which presumably allowed Timarchos to speak in front of the senate.¹² 'He launched many accusations against Demetrios and persuaded the senate to enact the following decree concerning him: "to Timarchos, because of ... to be their king".¹³ Although this phrase is corrupt, the passage seems to indicate that

⁹ Diod. Sic. 31. 27a. App. Syr. 45 (235): [...] σατράπην μὲν ἔχων ἐν Βαβυλῶνι Τίμαρχον, ἐπὶ δὲ ταῖς προσόδοις Ἡρακλείδην, ἀδελφῶ μὲν ἀλλήλοιν, ἄμφω δὲ αὐτοῦ γενομένω παιδικά. Brodersen makes Herakleides a διοικητής: BAS, 64-5 (with older literature). This, however, does not seem necessary: Ma (2002), 135-6; Mittag (2006), 83. Capdetrey indicates that Βαβυλῶνι was not necessarily the satrapy of Babylonia, rather it denotes Babylon as the place where Timarchos was at that particular moment in time: Capdetrey (2007), 314-16. Similarly: Aperghis (2004), 276-7; Ehling (2008), 125.

¹⁰ Coloru (2009), 220; contra Knepp (1989), 42. The editors translate AD III 161 A₂ rev. 29: 'TA^{lū}ERÍN^{mes} man-da' as 'from the Medes' [...]. While this could refer to Timarchos and his troops, it also could be a reference to other people from the steppe.

¹¹ See also: Houghton (1979), 213-17, here: 215.

¹² We do not know who these senators were. Ti. Sempronius Gracchus is often described in Polybios as being interested in eastern affairs: e.g. Pol. 30. 27; 31. 33. 4; Knepp (1989), 37-49, here 40; 47. See below, 3.2.3.2. For the relationship between Eastern Experts and their clients: see below n.203.

¹³ Diod. Sic. 31. 27a: [...] καὶ πολλὰ τοῦ Δημητρίου κατηγορήσας ἔπεισε τὴν σύγκλητον δόγμα περὶ αὐτοῦ θέσθαι τοιοῦτον· Τιμάρχῳ ἕνεκεν ... αὐτῶν βασιλέα εἶναι. [...].

Rome acknowledged Timarchos as king. Indeed, the senate accepted his kingship as it had previously done with Ariarathes V of Kappadokia (Pol. 31. 3). Upon his return to his territories, Timarchos began his revolt by raising a στρατόπεδον ἀξιόλογον, a considerable army (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). Apparently, Timarchos also made an alliance with Artaxias of Armenia, who had seceded from the Seleukid fringes and made himself king after the defeat of Antiochos III at Magnesia (Strab. 11. 14. 5). Artaxias of Armenia was brought back under Seleukid authority by Antiochos IV (Diod. Sic. 31. 17a), but was able to act independently.

Timarchos styled himself as ‘Great King’ and could have taken Babylonia as early as autumn 162 BCE after the last mention of King Antiochos V in the astronomical documents. Demetrios is first attested in Babylon as king in mid-September 161 BCE; the sacrifices in September/October 161 BCE presumably mark the victory against the usurper.¹⁴ By marching into Babylonia, Timarchos perhaps sought to hinder Demetrios I from having a foothold in the Seleukid east and to cut him off from Babylonian supplies.¹⁵ A tetradrachm attributed to Seleukeia on the Tigris indicates that Timarchos held the Seleukid capital long enough to mint some coinage in the city and it is possible to attribute a number of clay seals to Timarchos’ reign in Babylon.¹⁶ While Diodoros describes how Timarchos advanced as far as Zeugma, it is difficult to ascertain how far west Timarchos’ arm could reach. Molon’s quick campaign and the little resistance from the Seleukid forces in 222 BCE make it

¹⁴ Antiochos V in Babylon: last attestation in September-October 162 BCE: *AD* III 161 Left edge 1. An unpublished tablet (*NCBT* 1975 to be published in *YOS* 20 no.47) which A. Goetze thought in 1945 (later revised by Goetze) to be an attestation of Antiochos V in January 161 BCE (Bellinger [1945], 43n.2) was a misreading. I am grateful to B. Foster and E. Payne (both Yale) who provided me with the text. Demetrios II: the first attestation is dated to the 22nd of the sixth month of the Seleukid year 151: *AD* VI 71 obv. 29; see Assar (2007), 45; *contra* Boiy (2004), 164. The chronology for Demetrios II in Parker/Dubberstein (1956), 23 (referring to Kugler [1922], 334) is superseded by the publication of *AD* VI. Offerings for King Demetrios I in September- October 161 BCE: *AD* III 160 A obv. 2. I am grateful to J. Taylor (British Museum) for help with this text; cf. del Monte (1997), 87-8; Ehling (2008), 129n.148.

¹⁵ Molon’s taking of Babylonia perhaps resulted in financial difficulties for Antiochos III: Pol. 5. 50. 1-2.

¹⁶ *SC* 1588. Houghton (1979), 213-7; Invernizzi (2004), p. 44, Se 44-6.

possible that in one campaign Timarchos was able to march through large parts of Mesopotamia and advance to the western borders of Mygdonia.¹⁷ While so far no Seleukid king is mentioned in the Babylonian chronicles for a period of nearly one year, there is also no evidence of Timarchos' activities in Babylonia.¹⁸

Appian's account of Demetrios I's campaign against Timarchos is strikingly short and straightforward: 'He killed Timarchos who had rebelled and administered the government of Babylonia badly in other respects. For this he was called *sotēr* and it was the Babylonians who began this.'¹⁹ The cuneiform material describes similar honours and 'sacrifices for the great gods and the life of King Demetrios' as late as September/October 161 BCE (*AD III 160 A obv. 2*). The death of Timarchos could explain the rapid collapse of his kingdom, but this remains hypothetical. After his defeat, his tetradrachms were collected and overstruck with issues of a double portrait of Demetrios I and his wife Laodike. The royal title also contained the epithet *sotēr*.²⁰ Demetrios I had been able to fight off a pretender and was accepted as king from Antiocheia to as far as Ekbatana. Moreover, he was able to establish his position in Judaea. While he had inherited problems with the Makkabees, the Seleukid king was not only able to build a number of towers in Judaea and in Jerusalem (*Ios. Ant. 13. 15-17*), but he also secured an alliance with the Jewish leader Jonathan. However, while Seleukid authority was re-established, a new usurper was soon to appear.

¹⁷ No coinage can be attributed with certainty to the area west of Seleukeia. Le Rider postulated a mint at Nisibis, however, this is uncertain: Le Rider (1965), 332; with idem. (1972) no. 23. The attribution was plausible for Houghton (1979), 213-17. The editors of *SC* propose a Median mint as an option: *SC* 1607.

¹⁸ For the absence of Seleukid names in the Babylonian documents: above, n.14.

¹⁹ *App. Syr.* 47 (242): [...] καὶ Τίμαρχον ἐπανιστάμενον ἀνελών, καὶ τᾶλλα πονηρῶς τῆς Βαβυλῶνος ἡγούμενον. ἐφ' ᾧ καὶ Σωτήρ ἀρξαμένων τῶν Βαβυλωνίων, ὠνομάσθη.

²⁰ *SC* 1683-1690. The coins 1686-7; 1689 can be identified as overstrikes of Timarchos. The epithet was, however, not limited to Seleukeia on the Tigris; see e.g. in Kilikia (*SC* 1609), northern Syria (*SC* 1623) and Antiocheia on the Orontes (*SC* 1627-32); see also Le Rider (1965), 332-4.

3.1.2 Alexander Balas

According to Diodoros, Attalos II proclaimed a young man as the son of Antiochos IV in order to send him into the Seleukid kingdom (Diod. Sic. 31. 32a).²¹ Alexander Balas was presumably born around 175/4 BCE, either just before or just after the accession of Antiochos IV, and very likely before the birth of Antiochos V.²² As suggested by Diodoros, the promotion of Alexander Balas was initiated by Attalos II's grievances (βαρυνόμενος) over the expulsion of Ariarathes V and for καὶ τῆς ἰδίας, reasons of his own (Diod. Sic. 31. 32a). Demetrios I had tried to interfere in the succession of the house of Kappadokia and it was very likely that he did not favour the Attalid kings, especially given their services rendered to Antiochos IV during the latter's accession to the diadem.²³

Alexander did not immediately march into Syria after being sent to Kilikia. In the summer of 153 BCE, Herakleides, the former friend of Antiochos IV, brought Alexander Balas and his sister Laodike to Rome. Other princes were also in the city. The future Attalos III was received by the senate on account of its friendship with his

²¹ Cf. Justin's account on the 'pact of the kings': Iust. 35. 1. 6; cf. *HCP* iii, 357. The note in App. *Syr.* 67 (354) indicates Ptolemaic support. Nevertheless, I would argue that it was the summary of Polybios in Pol. 3. 5. 3 which led later historians to attest Ptolemaic support from this early period onwards.

²² Birth of Alexander: the embassy to Rome in 154/3 BCE is instructive for determining the age of Alexander. Both Attalos III and Demetrios II were also present in Rome, but were treated differently by the senate and are described by Polybios as παῖς, while Alexander as νεανίσκος: Pol. 33. 18. 1-7. Demetrios I was twenty-three when he was allowed to address the senate, while before he was a παῖς; Pol. 31. 2. 6. 3-5. Schmitt (1964), 7-9 has argued that for Polybios, the change from παῖς to νεανίσκος was around twenty-one years of age and the example of Demetrios I might corroborate this. The accession of Antiochos IV: in the Seleukid king list, Antiochos IV and Antiochos his son (the son of Seleukos IV) are mentioned as kings in month Arashamna, which was from the 23 October to 20 November 175 BCE: *CM* 4 rev. 11. The birth of Antiochos V: App. *Syr.* 46 (238), which would indicate that he was born in 173 BCE; see: *BAS* 66n.6-7 for references.

²³ See the similarities in the promotion of Antiochos IV by Eumenes II: *I.Pergamon* 160, esp. 13-20. For a narrative: Mittag (2006), 42-4 (with references). It is likely that he stayed in Kilikia for a while. For Diodoros, Alexander was a μαιρακίσκος when he was taken to court and when he was sent to Kilikia. While it is not possible to ascertain if Diodoros' use of age descriptions is in accordance with those of Polybios, Diodoros names young men as νεανίσκοι: e.g. Diod. Sic. 14. 19. 2 (for Kyros the Younger's age in 401 BCE) as well as 37. 5a (for Andriskos). Only in one instance (apart from Alexander) does Diod. label young men as μαιρακίσκοι: Diod. Sic. 22. 5. 1. If Diodoros had a clear concept of different ages in his work, it can be argued that Diodoros chose to name certain young men who could lead an army as νεανίσκοι and others (younger ones) as μαιρακίσκοι. For this reason, one could argue that Alexander stayed in Kilikia until he was old enough to be brought in front of the senate. For Ehling (2008), 145 it was in 158 that Attalos II took charge of Alexandros, but it did not have to be so early.

father, despite only being a boy (παῖς). The future Demetrios II, who also was still a boy (παῖς), was received by a senatorial reception because of his young age.²⁴ The eldest of these princes, Alexander, was a young man (νεανίσκος) and therefore was allowed to give a speech before the senate:

the young man spoke first with a reasonable manner, begging the Romans to remember their friendship and alliance with his father Antiochos [IV] and entreating them, if they could, to help him to regain his kingship. But, if not, to allow his departure and not to prevent those who want to assist him to win back his father's kingdom.²⁵

Following Alexander's speech, Herakleides delivered a eulogy on Antiochos IV, accused Demetrios I of stealing the kingdom and emphasised Alexander's 'descent by nature' (ἐκγόνοις κατὰ φύσιν) from Antiochos IV (Pol. 33. 18. 9). Although Polybios indicates Roman discontent in his account, officially there was no Roman objection to Alexander Balas' claim to the diadem. It was decreed that he could return home and regain his father's rule (πατρῶαν ἀρχὴν καταπορεύεσθαι; Pol. 33. 18. 10-13). Despite the text's lacuna, it seems clear that Polybios continues to describe the accession of Alexander Balas as a personal enterprise of Herakleides, stating that he 'at once began to hire mercenaries and called upon a number of distinguished men to assist him' (Pol. 33. 18. 4), presumably to help raise money for the coup d'état.²⁶ The final account in the narrative describes how Herakleides (and also presumably Alexander and Laodike) set sail for Asia Minor and how it was in Ephesos that Herakleides occupied himself with preparations for his attack.

In the twelve months following his appearance before the Roman senate, Alexander Balas landed with mercenaries on the coast of the Levant and occupied

²⁴ Pol. 33. 18. 1-7; see above, n.22.

²⁵ Pol. 33.18. 7-8: πρῶτον μὲν οὖν ὁ νεανίσκος ἐποιήσατό τινας μετρίους λόγους, ἡξίου δὲ Ῥωμαίους μνησθῆναι τῆς πρὸς τὸν Ἀντίοχον τὸν αὐτοῦ πατέρα φιλίας καὶ συμμαχίας, μάλιστα δὲ συγκατασκευάζειν αὐτῷ τὴν βασιλείαν. εἰ δὲ μὴ, συγχωρῆσαι τὴν κάθοδον καὶ μὴ κωλύσαι τοὺς βουλομένους συμπράττειν αὐτῷ πρὸς τὸ καθικέσθαι τῆς πατρῶας ἀρχῆς.

²⁶ Pol. 33. 18. 14: [...] εὐθέως ἐξενολόγει καὶ προσεκαλεῖτο τῶν ἐπιφανῶν ἀνδρῶν [...]. On the lacuna: *HCP* iii, 560-1.

Ptolemais.²⁷ Demetrios I took his landing seriously: not only did he gather troops against the usurper, he also tried to propose an alliance and friendship with the Makkabees. Demetrios I instructed Jonathan to collect troops, to gather arms and he granted the release of hostages from the *akra* in Jerusalem (I Makk. 10. 3-6). Alexander similarly did not hesitate to influence the relationship between Demetrios I and Jonathan. Alexander's own military strength presumably relied either on a potential alliance with Jonathan or the neutrality of the people of Judaea. Thus, surpassing Demetrios I's offers to the people of Judaea, Alexander not only called Jonathan his φίλος, his friend, but he also granted Jonathan the high priesthood of Jerusalem (Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 13. 45; I Makk. 10. 20). Both I Makkabees and Josephus mention Demetrios I's reaction and his offer of further elaborate grants. However, the alliance does not seem to have been persuasive and the author of I Makkabees would later write that the Jews did not believe his promises. Josephus also states that it was now that Alexander gathered a large force and marched against Demetrios I (Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 13. 48-58; I Makk. 10. 25-47). While the precise events of the battles between Demetrios I and Alexander Balas are described differently in the sources, the choreography remains the same: after initial successes by Demetrios I, Alexander Balas' left wing gained the upper hand and Demetrios I died in battle.²⁸

Babylonian documents place the battles between Alexander Balas and Demetrios I in July 150 BCE. By September/October of the same year, Alexander Balas was the sole king in the Seleukid empire.²⁹ The first dated coin issues under Alexander Balas are from Seleukeia in Pieria, Byblos, Berytos, Tyre and Ptolemais

²⁷ The landing: Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 13. 35. Hoover/MacDonald (1999-2000), 109-17 and Psoma (forthcoming) would like to attribute tetradrachms from Myrina found on the coast of the Levant to this event. However, Meadows (forthcoming) has convincingly argued that the evidence is not decisive.

²⁸ Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 13. 59-61; I Makk. 10. 46-50; Iust. 35. 1. 9-10. The battle seems to be reflected in *AD* III 149 A rev. 1-13 which describes the events of the third month of the Seleukid year 162, ending on the 18/19 July 150 BCE.

²⁹ *AD* III 149 B obv. 1; rev. 10-13; Upper edge 1 (mentioning of the beginning of the eighth month).

and date to the Seleukid year 162 (=151/0 BCE),³⁰ while Antiocheia on the Orontes seems to have minted the initial silver coinage of Alexander without a date. Although the first dated coinage comes from the Seleukid year 163, the minting perhaps started earlier.³¹ It is likely that the account in Livy's *periochae* comes from the context of the taking of Antiocheia, illustrating the violent necessities of claimed kingship: Ammonios, Alexander Balas' chancellor, had '*amici omnes regis*', all the friends of the king, as well as the wife and son of Demetrios I, murdered (Liv. *per.* 50).³² After establishing himself as king, it seems that one of Alexander Balas' first political activities was to ask for the hand of the daughter of Ptolemaios VI Philometor. Antagonism between Demetrios I and Ptolemaios VI, as indicated in Demetrios I's attempt to take Cyprus (Pol. 33. 5), might have influenced the decision of Ptolemaios VI to form an alliance with the new king and to accept the marriage proposal. Ptolemaios VI and his daughter Kleopatra arrived in Ptolemais and celebrated the wedding (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 80). It was in the context of the wedding that honours were bestowed on Jonathan. The high priest was made one of the 'first friends' of Alexander Balas. He also appointed him *strategos* and *meridarch* (I Makk. 10. 62 and 65; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 83-5). Alexander seemed determined to ally himself with the Makkabees in particular, since other requests for an alliance from a (presumably Hellenised) group from Jerusalem were ignored (I Makk. 10. 61).

The scanty evidence for the administration of Alexander Balas follows Seleukid precursors. Ammonios is referred to by Diodoros as τὸν προεσθηκότα τῆς βασιλείας and it is very likely that this referred to the position of the chancellor. Moreover, there is evidence for two (presumably military) commanders in charge of

³⁰ SC 1799, 1822.1, 1828. 1830.1, 1831.1, 1835.1, 1842.1. Strikingly, in 162 SE Apameia minted posthumous issues for Antiochos IV, the alleged father of Alexander Balas; SC 1785. 3, 1883. While it is not certain if the coins were struck under the authority of Alexander Balas, the date and motive indicates that corresponds to Alexander's competition with Demetrios I: Mørkholm (1983), 57-63.

³¹ Houghton/Hoover (forthcoming) believe to have found die linkages which indicate earlier minting: see the lemma in SC 1780-97.

³² On the son, see below, n.35.

Antiocheia. Furthermore, both a *nauarchos* and a *strategos* of Babylonia ‘who is above the four generals’ are attested.³³ While Antiocheia on the Orontes seems to have been Alexander Balas’ principal mint until his expulsion from the city, the location of other mints indicates the extent of his administration. Alexander apparently minted royal silver coinage from Seleukeia on the Kalykadnos (with presumably a local reverse) in the west via Seleukeia on the Tigris (here with a reverse of Zeus Nikephoros), to as far east as Susa, the Persian Gulf and possibly Ekbatana (all with the reverse of Apollo on Omphalos).³⁴ In the south Alexander not only struck coinage in the former Seleukid mints, but he also established a number of royal mints in Koile-Syria and Phoinikia.

The stable period of Alexander Balas’ reign did not last long. Presumably in the spring of 147 BCE, Demetrios, the son of the late Demetrios I, sailed from Krete and landed in Kilikia.³⁵ In preparation for his defence, Alexander Balas marched from Phoinikia to Antiocheia before Demetrios II arrived (I Makk. 10. 67-8; Ios. *Ant.* 13.86-7). G. Le Rider has proposed that it also might have been in the period after June 148 BCE that Ekbatana fell to the Parthians.³⁶ At the same time, Demetrios II established a certain Apollonios as *strategos* of Koile Syria. The narrative of Josephus, in which Apollonios is named Alexander Balas’ commander, might indicate that Demetrios had been able to persuade Apollonios to change his allegiance from

³³ Ammonios: Diod. Sic. 33. 5. 1. Diodotos and Hierax: Diod. Sic. 33. 3. The *nauarchos* Antigonos, son of Menophilos: *I.Milet* 422. Babylonia: *AD* III 147 rev. 11.

³⁴ Seleukeia/Kalykadnos: *SC* 1776 with Houghton (1989), 77-98, esp. 84-5. Seleukeia/Tigris: *SC* 1858-64 (with lemma) with Le Rider (1965), 147-50. Persian Gulf: Mørkholm (1970), 31-44 attributed the issue to Antiocheia/Persian Gulf; *SC* 1866. Susa: *SC* 1867-8 (with lemma). Ekbatana: *SC* 1869-78 with Le Rider (1965), 338-40.

³⁵ Since Demetrios II was likely older than Antiochos VII, he must have been at least sixteen years old at this time. Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 19 mentions that Antiochos VII was 35 years old when he died, indicating that his birth was in 164 BCE. According to Bevan (1902), II App. P. 301-2, Demetrios II referred to the murdered brother Antigonos on his coinage. If Ehling’s interpretation of Philadelphos as an epithet for second brothers is correct, Antigonos would have been the older brother. Ehling’s suggestion that Antiochos VII was the older brother of Demetrios II seems historically implausible: Ehling (2001), 374-8, here 374-6.

³⁶ The loss of Media and the mints in the region could have been a reason to mint drachma issues at Seleukeia on the Tigris: Le Rider (1965), 339-40; *SC* 1859; cf. Iust. 41. 6. 6. For the date: the Bisutun inscription mentions a ὁ τῶν ἄνω σ[ατρ]απειῶν (II.6-7) in the Seleukid year 164; Robert *OMS VI* 615 = *I.Estrema Oriente* 274 (with references).

Alexander Balas to him (I Makk. 10. 69-89. Ios. *Ant.* 13. 88-102). It seems that Demetrios II was aware that the alliance between Alexander Balas and the Jews was one of the key factors which led to his father's defeat. By launching an attack on the Jewish allies, Demetrios II wanted to diminish their ability to support Alexander Balas. However, Jonathan and his troops were not only able to take Joppa as one of Apollonios' strongholds, but they also defeated the *strategos* near Ashdod and burned down the city. Alexander Balas bestowed honours on Jonathan and acknowledged Jewish power in the area by confirming Jewish control over the city of Ekron and its territory twenty kilometres east of Ashdod (I Makk. 10. 74-89. Ios. *Ant.* 13. 91-102.).³⁷

Strikingly, little is known for the remainder of the year 147 BCE, but the gathering of troops from the Herakleopolitean nome in Middle Egypt, mentioned in a papyrus dated to 29 May 146 BCE, could give an indication of the involvement of the Ptolemaic king in the affairs of the Levant.³⁸ For Josephus, Ptolemaios VI helped Alexander in his fight against Demetrios II and only a secret plot against the Ptolemaic king's life made him change his allegiance. Yet the author of I Makkabees claims that this was merely a trick by Ptolemaios VI to make himself master of the kingdom of Alexander (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 103-107. I Makk. 11. 1-8). The following scenario is possible: Ptolemaios VI, an ally of King Alexander Balas, hastened into Phoinikia to 'help' his son-in-law. The stationing of troops, the taking of the coast up to Seleukeia in Pieria and the tentative possibility of the striking of coins, however, indicated what this 'help' entailed: the Ptolemaic takeover of the coast of the Levant.³⁹ Ammonios' plot against Ptolemaios VI's life – regardless of whether it was real or a discursive insertion into Josephus' narrative – marks the breakdown in

³⁷ Ma (2000b), 71-112, here: 102-4.

³⁸ Schubert (1991), 233-6; further references in Huß (2001), 585n.378.

³⁹ Ptolemaic troops: I Makk. 11. 3. Seleukeia/Pieria: I Makk. 11. 8. Coins: Svoronos 1486, with the discussion below in n.179. Price: according to Diod. Sic. 32. 9c, Ptolemaios VI demanded Koile-Syria when forming an alliance with Demetrios II.

communication between Alexander Balas and Ptolemaios VI. The Ptolemaic king had come to the coast of the Levant (as his predecessor Ptolemaios III had come to ‘help’ his sister in the Third Syrian War) with a force ready for an invasion.⁴⁰ In order to gain the upper hand in the struggle, Ptolemaios VI proposed an alliance with Demetrios II (who up to this point does not seem to have been actively engaged against Alexander Balas). It is striking that in both narratives Ptolemaios VI promised to give his daughter to Demetrios. At this point, Kleopatra was presumably still with her husband Alexander Balas and most likely in Antiocheia on the Orontes.⁴¹ From Seleukeia in Pieria Ptolemaios VI pushed further inland and marched towards Antiocheia. Alexander Balas seems to have been fighting in Kilikia at this point.⁴²

Antiocheia does not seem to have been taken by force. The commanders of the city, Hierax and Diodotos, were presumably aware of the large Ptolemaic contingents marching towards the city and thus opened the gates. In addition to the recovery of his daughter, the commanders Diodotos and Hierax bound the diadem around Ptolemaios VI’s head and declared him king. The first book of Makkabees goes so far as to say that ‘Ptolemaios VI put two diadems on his head, the one of Egypt as well as the one of Asia.’⁴³ According to Josephus, Ptolemaios was aware that Rome might object to him taking two diadems and therefore announced that he would be ‘a counsellor of good’ (διδάσκαλός τε ἀγαθῶν) and a ‘guide’ (ἡγεμῶν) to Demetrios II if the people of Antiocheia accepted him as king (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 115). However, this relationship between Ptolemaios VI and Demetrios II was created in Josephus’ narrative in hindsight of the death of Ptolemaios VI and the subsequent kingship of

⁴⁰ Plot: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 106-7. Force: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 103. I Makk. 11. 1. Third Syrian War: see above, ch. 2.1.

⁴¹ I Makk. 11. 9. According to Josephus, Ptolemaios took his daughter from Alexander Balas before he promised her to Demetrios: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 110.

⁴² I Makk. 11. 14. In Josephus, Alexander Balas was expelled from Antiocheia, which could indicate that he either fled or was not able to return after his campaign in Kilikia; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 112. Diod. Sic. 32. 10. 2 mentions a visit to an oracle of Apollo Sarpedonios.

⁴³ I Makk. 11. 13: [...Πτολεμαῖος] περιέθετο δύο διαδήματα περὶ τὴν κεφαλὴν αὐτοῦ, τὸ τῆς Αἰγυπτου καὶ Ἀσίας; see also: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 113-15. For the city commanders: Diod. Sic. 32. 9c.

Demetrios II. The lack of early coinage for Demetrios II, his proclamation as king only after the death of Ptolemaios VI, and the fact that Ptolemaios VI is mentioned in the Seleukid royal cult, might give some indication of the extent of Ptolemaic occupation. The price for the alliance, as mentioned in the sources, was the southern coast of the Levant. It was presumably now that Demetrios II married Kleopatra and the allies Demetrios II and Ptolemaios VI arranged to meet Alexander Balas in battle.⁴⁴

In Kilikia, Alexander Balas had gathered a ‘large army and ‘great supplies’ and was quick in his approach (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 116; I Makk. 11. 15). He either reached the Seleukis via the coastal route at Alexandria ad Issum, or more likely because of the presence of the Ptolemaic fleet he came from the north via Gindaros. He had placed his son in the care of an Arabian dynast Diokles/Zabdiel and met the force of Ptolemaios VI and Demetrios II on the banks of the Oinoparas River.⁴⁵ The narratives of the battle are remarkably short. Alexander Balas’ army was defeated and he fled eastwards to the land of the Arabian tribes. Alexander tried to find refuge with Zabdiel and, according to the narratives, he was murdered by either the dynast or by two of Alexander Balas’ ἡγούμενες who betrayed their king in order to establish good relations with the new king, Demetrios II.⁴⁶ According to Josephus, the head of Alexander Balas was presented to Ptolemaios VI who himself passed away soon after (I Makk. 11. 17-8; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 118). Demetrios II, who had now taken the kingship in late 145 BCE,⁴⁷ eradicated the encroachments of his late father-in-law, pushed the

⁴⁴ Rejection of the Seleukid diadem: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 114. Strikingly, I Makk. does not mention this rejection and sees the Ptolemaic king as the driving force in the quarrel; cf. also Strab. 16. 2. 8. Royal cult: *OGIS* 246 (Teos) and *SEG* 13. 585 (Paphos). Marriage: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 116; I Makk. 11. 12.

⁴⁵ See also the presumably late issues SC 1776-9. Son: Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10. 1; cf. Iust. 35. 2. 1 for Demetrios I’s sons who were sent away. Place: Strab. 16. 2. 8.

⁴⁶ Murder by Zabdiel: I Makk. 11. 17. Ios. *Ant.* 13. 118. Murder by his officers: Diod. Sic. 32. 9d, 10. 1. The evidence is not decisive and conclusions cannot be made. However, it is striking that if Diokles/Zabdiel murdered Alexander Balas, he kept his son alive.

⁴⁷ Strikingly, the Babylonian documents do not name Demetrios II king on the 7/8 September 144 BCE: *AD III* 144 obv. 14. When he is mentioned again in mid October, he is king: *AD III* 144 obv. 35.

Ptolemaic troops out of his territories, and, according to the Babylonian chronicles, he ventured as far as the cities of Egypt (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 120; *AD* III 144 obv. 35).

3.1.3 Antiochos VI and Tryphon

Tryphon was born Diodotos near a fortress of Apameia and, as Strabo writes, he rose in ranks to become ‘closely associated with the king and those around him’ and thus a *philos* of Alexander Balas (Strab. 16. 2. 10). It is very likely (though not entirely certain) that he can be identified as the Diodotos who was one of Alexander Balas’ commanders in Antiocheia on the Orontes and who had handed the city over to Ptolemaios VI (Diod. Sic. 32. 9c) and bound a diadem around Ptolemaios VI’s head. After Demetrios II had driven the Ptolemaic forces back to Egypt, it seems unlikely that Tryphon was a likely candidate for a position under the new king of the Seleukid empire. It was perhaps under these circumstances that Tryphon fled to an Arabian dynast where ‘he spent many days’, ‘ἔμεινεν ἡμέρας πολλὰς’ (I Makk. 11. 40).

Despite Demetrios II’s initial military successes against Egypt, the sources indicate that he faced difficulties at the time of his accession. Josephus stresses that it was following his war against Egypt and his alliance with the people of Judaea (I Makk. 11. 22-37; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 123-8) that Demetrios ‘dismissed his army and reduced their pay, and continued to give money only to the mercenaries who had come up from Krete and from the other islands.’⁴⁸ This measure presumably was not unusual after the end of a war, but nevertheless it was precarious during a period when pretenders to the diadem could use these tensions between the kings and their troops.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Ios. *Ant.* 13. 129: [...] διέλυσε τὴν στρατιάν καὶ τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν ἐμείωσεν, καὶ μόνοις τοῦτον ἐχορήγει τοῖς ξενολογηθεῖσιν, οἱ συνανέβησαν ἐκ Κρήτης αὐτῷ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων νήσων.

⁴⁹ Different: Mittag (2008), 51-2; Ehling (2008), 168. The metallurgy does not indicate a debasement in the coinage which could indicate economic strains: *SC* ii.2 Appendix 2. Josephus presumably added this particular note, to make his passage more dramatic; cf. I Makk. 11. 38.

However, the dismissal of the troops was not the only problem Demetrios II had to face. ‘In the first instance, Demetrios chastened those who had been hostile to him in the war, not with mild censure, but visited them with outlandish punishments.’⁵⁰ The citizens of Antiocheia were not only punished for their support of Alexander Balas and their defection from Demetrios I, but also presumably for their acclamation of Ptolemaios VI as king. As a result of these measures, the people of Antiocheia broke into open revolt (Diod. Sic. 33. 4. 2). The first book of Makkabees describes how Demetrios II barricaded himself in the palace of Antiocheia, while the citizens of the city rioted and attempted to storm the palace. According to the Jewish sources, it was only with the help of Jewish troops, who set fire to the city, that Demetrios II was able to gain the control of the situation (I Makk. 11. 43-8; Ios. *Ant.* 135-9).

According to the historical narratives, it was during this conflict that Diodotos made ‘an ally of the Arabian dynast Iamblichos, who happened to have in his keeping Antiochos, who was called Epiphanes. For, he was a boy in his youth, but he was the son of Alexander.’⁵¹ It was Tryphon who ‘placed a diadem around his [Antiochos’] head, provided the retinue appropriate to a king and restored him to his father’s kingdom.’⁵² The sources describe how a number of troops defected from Demetrios and joined Tryphon and the new king, Antiochos VI. Josephus outlines that it was because of the lack of pay that the entire body of soldiers went over to Tryphon (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 144). Diodoros adds that from the beginning of the revolt, the men of Larissa near Apameia supported the usurper (Diod. Sic. 33. 4a). Tryphon seems to have gathered his troops at Chalkis ad Belum, southwest of Beroia, before he ‘declared war

⁵⁰ Diod. Sic. 33. 4. 2: τὸ μὲν οὖν πρῶτον τοὺς ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ γεγονότας ἀλλοτρίους οὐ μετρίαις ἐπιτιμήσεσιν ἐκόλαζεν, ἀλλὰ τιμωρίαις ἐξηλλαγμέναις περιέβαλλεν. [...]

⁵¹ Diod. Sic. 33. 4a: [...] ἐποίησατο δὲ σύμμαχον καὶ τὸν τῆς Ἀραβίας δυνάστην Ἰάμβλιχον, ὃς ἐτύγχανεν ἔχων παραθήκην Ἀντίοχον τὸν Ἐπιφανῆ χρηματίζοντα, παῖδα μὲν τὴν ἡλικίαν, υἱὸν δὲ ὄντα Ἀλεξάνδρου. κτλ; see also I Makk. 11. 39-40; 54-6; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 131; 144.

⁵² Diod. Sic. 33. 4a: [...] τούτῳ μὲν οὖν διάδημα περιθείς καὶ τὴν ἀρμόζουσαν βασιλεῖ θεραπείαν κατήγαγεν ἐπὶ τὴν πατρίαν ἀρχὴν [...]; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 144.

against Demetrios, and engaging him in battle overcame him and took possession of both the elephants and the city of Antiocheia.⁵³ The elephants, mentioned in both I Makkabees and Josephus, are clearly a reference to Apameia, where the Seleukid royal stud was kept, as well as the elephants. The city was securely situated, with a fortified hill and fertile marshes, and later served as Tryphon's base (Strab. 16. 2. 10). Since the first coinage of Antiochos VI seems to have been struck at Apameia, we can date Tryphon's control over the city from early 144 BCE onwards.⁵⁴ The coinage displayed a radiated young portrait on the obverse and the title of the king in the genitive on the reverse, βασιλεὺς Ἀντίοχος Ἐπιφάνης Διονύσιος. Two reverses depict the *Dioskuroi* and the typical Apollo on omphalos, a reference to the boy's grandfather Antiochos IV.⁵⁵

In the year 169 of the Seleukid era (SE) (late 144 or early 143 BCE), Tryphon and his troops managed to drive out Demetrios II from Antiocheia.⁵⁶ According to Livy's *periochae*, Demetrios II took refuge in Seleukeia (Liv. *per.* 52), presumably Seleukeia in Pieria.⁵⁷ Although Tryphon had taken Antiocheia on the Orontes, other mints still struck coinage in the name of Demetrios II. Newly established mints in Kilikia seem to have started minting coinage for Demetrios II in 143/2 BCE, which would indicate that Tarsos and Mallos were under Tryphon's control during this

⁵³ Chalkis: Diod. Sic. 33. 4a. The editors of *SC* argue in the lemma of *SC* 2016-17 that the following series could come from Chalkis because of its less polished style; this is, however, not conclusive. Battle: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 144. [...] πόλεμον ἐκφέρει πρὸς τὸν Δημήτριον, καὶ συμβαλὼν αὐτῷ κρατεῖ τῇ μάχῃ καὶ τοὺς τε ἐλέφαντας καὶ τὴν τῶν Ἀντιόχῳ πόλιν λαμβάνει; see I Makk. 11. 55-6.

⁵⁴ For the coinage: *SC* 2008-9. Houghton (1992b), 119-41, here esp. 123-4 argued that the mint should be in Apameia because of the use of the thyrsos as a mintmark. The mint ceased to operate in 144 BCE, indicating that it moved to Antiocheia.

⁵⁵ *SC* 2008-11. A third possible image (*SC* 2012) shows a panther, presumably a reference to Dionysos; Houghton (1992), 134-5 (followed by *SC*) argues that the mint officials from Antioch seceded from Demetrios II and joined Tryphon's cause. After the takeover of Antiocheia, they returned with Antiochos VI. For the *Dioskuroi*: see below, n.128. References to Antiochos IV: Mørholm (1983), 61; Svenson (1995), 70.

⁵⁶ For the date: Houghton (1992b), 119-41, here 134; Houghton/Hoover (forthcoming).

⁵⁷ Seleukeia/Pieria: Strab. 16. 2. 8: [...] ἔρμα δέ ἐστιν ἀξιόλογον καὶ κρεῖττον βίας ἢ πόλις [...]; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 221-2. The attribution of coins from Demetrios II to Seleukeia (dated to 142/1 BCE) is, however, not certain: *SC* 1929-30. Kilikia: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 147. The mention of a withdrawal to Kilikia by Josephus might suggest that it was Seleukeia on the Kalykadnos. However, Kilikia also might be a reference to later activities.

period.⁵⁸ Tryphon also tried to be successful in the eastern satrapies. In July/August 144 BCE, Tryphon (or one of his commanders) was on a campaign in Babylonia, but if he was trying to gain acceptance for Antiochos VI he failed.⁵⁹ It also was in this period that the Seleukids lost Susa and the Persian Gulf; however, Seleukeia on the Tigris seems to have continued to strike coinage for Demetrios II until Babylonia was taken by the Parthians.⁶⁰

The minting patterns in the cities on the coast of the Levant are indicative of the power dynamics of the period. Byblos and Askalon issued their first Seleukid coinage in 142/1 BCE, while Ptolemais, which had apparently never struck coinage for Demetrios II, started minting under Antiochos VI in 144/3 BCE. A number of mints on the Levantine coast continued to mint coinage for Demetrios II. While it cannot be determined if this was a display of actual power relations in the region (did Demetrios II hold this city?), it nevertheless shows that these cities were not (and/or did not want to be) allied with Antiochos VI. Sidon and Tyre minted for Demetrios II until 140/39 or 141/0 BCE and later under Antiochos VII.⁶¹ The literary evidence indicates that Gaza had defected from Demetrios II, but did not want to go over to Antiochos VI (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 150). It was perhaps in the aftermath of the death of Jonathan that the city issued coinage intended for the local market in the name of Demetrios II.⁶²

⁵⁸ The new mints of Demetrios II: Mopsos (SC 1898), as well as Uncertain Mints 92 and 93 (SC 1899-1903). Mints of Antiochos VI: Tarsos (SC 1996-7), Mallos (SC 1998).

⁵⁹ AD III 143 A flake 20-1. According to van der Spek (1997-8), 167-75, here 172, AD III 140 C rev. 36-7 indicates that Antiochos VI must still have been alive in January 140 BCE, however, this does not have to be the case; see also below, 79.

⁶⁰ On the Persian Gulf and Susa: SC 1993-5a. For Kammaškiri and Elam: Le Rider (1978), 33-7; Potts (2002), 349-62; see also van't Haaff (2007). Parthian takeover: AD III 140 obv. 1; van der Spek (1997-8), 167-75, here 171. For Seleukeia/Tigris: the Parthian seizure in June/July 141 BCE: *LBAT* 418; Oelsner (1975), 23-45, here 27-9; translation in Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 224.

⁶¹ Antiochos VI: Byblos: SC 2020. Askalon: SC 2026-7. Ptolemais: SC 2023-5 Demetrios II: Berytos: SC 1952 and 2100 (under Antiochos VII) Sidon: SC 1953-7 and 2101-6 (under Antiochos VII) Tyre: SC 1958-71 and 2107-15 (under Antiochos VII).

⁶² SC 1974-6. Hoover (2007), 63-90, here: 66-8. See below, 3.3.2.

Both the first book of Makkabees and Josephus give the Jewish high priest Jonathan a prominent role in the battle between Antiochos VI, Tryphon and Demetrios II. Soon after his accession, Antiochos VI and Tryphon sent letters to Jonathan, granting him honours and gifts; his brother Simon was appointed *strategos* of the army of the Ladder of Tyre (I Makk. 11.57-9). Josephus describes a reply by Jonathan to both Antiochos VI and Tryphon professing his gratitude (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 144-7). The sources detail how Jonathan took possession of the newly bestowed region, as well as Gaza, in addition to a significant military success against the generals of Demetrios II. The reach of Jewish power at this point is illustrated by their engagement in battles fought north of the Sea of Galilee, as well as the stress that both I Makkabees and Josephus place on Jonathan and the Jewish troops venturing north as far as Damascus (I Makk. 12. 24-32. Ios. *Ant.* 13. 154-63). According to the Jewish narrative, it was the Eleutheros River, south of Arados, that the Seleukid troops crossed in order to be on safe ground (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 174-9). The campaigns and sieges of Simon during this period suggest that the territory south of Galilee was under Jewish control.⁶³ The Makkabees also organised the fortification of Askalon, Joppa and Jerusalem (I Makk. 12. 35-8; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 181-3). On the one hand, this indicates the fragility of Jewish power; on the other hand, it also illustrates the resources and manpower of the Makkabees. Although Antiochos VI and Tryphon had been able to conclude an alliance with Jonathan, it was perhaps in this context of Jewish power that Jonathan was captured under Tryphon's orders (I Makk. 12. 42-52; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 188-93).⁶⁴ Tryphon might have hoped that by taking Jonathan hostage he would acquire control over Jewish affairs. However, the situation escalated: the Jews elected Simon, Jonathan's brother, as their new leader and Tryphon mustered a large army

⁶³ See also the preliminary report on an administrative building near Kedesh, which was destroyed during this period: Herbert/Berlin (2003), 13-59; Ariel/Naveh (2003), 61-80. On Arados as a frontier zone: Duyrat (2005), esp. 223-45. For Simon's campaigns: I Makk. 11. 65-66; Ios. *Ant.* 156-7 (against Beth-Sur); I Makk. 12. 33-4; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 180 (for the occupation of Joppa).

⁶⁴ Fischer (1972), 202-3, n.13; cf. Ehling (2008), 174-5.

and marched from Ptolemais towards Jerusalem. Although Simon gave hostages and paid money for the release of his brother, Jonathan was not set free. It was only after heavy snow that Tryphon had to retreat from his attack on Jerusalem. He executed Jonathan and marched back to Syria.⁶⁵

It was at this point that the young king Antiochos VI died. The last coin issues for Antiochos VI were minted in Byblos, Ptolemais and Askalon in the Seleukid year 171, which corresponds to the years 142/1 BCE.⁶⁶ Regardless of whether the boy was murdered or died during surgery,⁶⁷ the former guardian of the king had to act quickly if he wanted to maintain his position in the Levant: 'He made himself king, and put on the diadem of Asia and brought great evil over the land.'⁶⁸ His troops followed the new king (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 219-20). Although it is possible that Diodotos had held the name of Tryphon before, it now became his royal name.⁶⁹ His coinage marked a break from existing Seleukid formulae. He chose the epithet αὐτοκράτωρ, depicted a highly elaborated Boiotian helmet on the reverse of his coinage (which was initially introduced on an issue of Antiochos VI; SC 2003), broke with the Seleukid era and issued a portrait with slightly chubby cheeks and wild and wavy hair.⁷⁰ The royal name Tryphon was deliberately not part of the royal Seleukid names or formulae, but rather a reference to royal *luxuria*.⁷¹ While Josephus' narrative suggests that it was only a short period of time before Tryphon's troops defected and joined Antiochos VII when the latter landed on the coast of the Levant (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 222-4), both the

⁶⁵ Confrontation: I Makk. 13. 12-24; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 203-9. Return to Antiocheia: I Makk. 13. 24; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 209. Possibly: Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 16.

⁶⁶ SC 2020 (Byblos); 2022. 3 (Ptolemais); 2026 (Askalon).

⁶⁷ Murder of Antiochos VI: I Makk. 13. 31; Diod. Sic. 33. 28; App. *Syr.* 68 (357); Iust. 36. 1. 7; Oros. 5. 4. 18. Tryphon's indication of an operation: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 218; Liv. *per.* 55. See: Ehling (2008), 179.

⁶⁸ I Makk. 13. 32: καὶ ἐβασίλευσεν αὐτὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ περιέθετο τὸ διάδημα τῆς Ἀσίας καὶ ἐποίησεν πληγὴν μεγάλην ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 187.

⁶⁹ Scholarship assumes that the control mark TPY under Antiochos VI refers to Tryphon. To connect the mintmark with Tryphon and derive that he adopted the name earlier is a circular argument. The evidence in the literary sources might be a later insertion: Diod. Sic. 33. 4a; 33. 28a; Strab. 14. 5. 2; 16. 2. 10; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 131. Houghton (1992b), 119-41, here 121. For the initial discussion: *BMC Seleucids* xxxiii as well as Babelon (1890), cxxxvii.

⁷⁰ Epithet: see below n.139. Imagery: Smith (1988), 121; Fleischer (1991), 68-9.

⁷¹ For *luxuria*: see below, pp.125-6.

regnal years on the coinage and a sling bullet clearly suggest that Tryphon's reign must have extended into a fifth year (138/7 BCE).⁷²

Given Josephus' narrative of Tryphon's quick demise, it is difficult to assess Tryphon's activities during his later years. However, a few key features can be highlighted. The coinage of Antiocheia on the Orontes indicates a peaceful succession from Antiochos VI to Tryphon.⁷³ Like Timarchos and the Jewish embassies of the period (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 163), Tryphon tried to be acknowledged as king by the senate of Rome by sending a gift of a statue of a golden Nike to the Roman people (Diod. Sic. 33. 28a). According to Diodoros' narrative, the senate accepted the gift, but in the name of the murdered Antiochos VI, suggesting that the senate had limited interest in this king in the Levant. Tryphon's relationship with other powers is difficult to assess. Apart from the acclamation of Ptolemaios VI as king in Antiocheia when the Ptolemaic king entered the city in conquest (it should be noted that the king died soon afterwards), no evidence seems to suggest a continuing connection between Tryphon and the Ptolemaic court.⁷⁴

In the Levant itself, Simon tried to establish as much autonomy for his people as possible. In a letter from King Demetrios II to Simon, the Elders and the people of Judaea, a previous Jewish gift of a golden crown to the king is mentioned (I Makk. 13. 35-9). In order to avoid a possible alliance between Tryphon and the Jews, Demetrios II granted them their fortresses in Judaea, exempted them from taxes and implicitly gave up the garrison at the fortress of Jerusalem (I Makk. 13. 49). In the narrative of I Makkabees, it was in the year 170 of the Seleukid era, probably in the

⁷² For the last issues of Antiochos VI: see above n.66. For the last issues of Tryphon: SC 2043; 2046; 2048. 3. Sling bullet: Gera (1985), 153-63, here 163.

⁷³ See the corresponding mintmarks from Antiochos VI (SC 2000-3) to Tryphon (SC 2029-33); *contra* van der Spek (1997-8), 167-75, here 172.

⁷⁴ Diodotos/Tryphon and Egypt: Ehling (2003), 323; Ehling (2008), 180n.574. Also, the evocation of luxury and the name Tryphon does not have to be connected to Ptolemaic Egypt, as a search in the *LGPV* illustrates that the name is also prominent in other parts of the Hellenistic world during this period.

early days of June 142 BCE, that ‘the yoke of the infidels was taken from Israel.’⁷⁵

Demetrios II’s acknowledgement of Jewish power does not necessitate a proposed alliance between the Seleukid king and the Jews; instead it could simply be an attempt to neutralise the people of Judaea and complicate further alliances with Tryphon. The behaviour of Seleukos II seems to have been very similar during his attempts to limit his brother’s control of certain regions.⁷⁶ While Demetrios II granted further concessions to the people of Judaea, he also prepared for an eastern campaign. At some point after the Parthian conquest of Babylonia, the Seleukid king ventured east to re-take Babylonia (perhaps in 139/8 BCE).⁷⁷ The absence of Demetrios II in the Levant might have been advantageous to Tryphon’s attempts, even more so after Demetrios II had been captured by the Parthians in July/August 138 BCE (*AD III* 137 A rev. 8-11; *I Makk.* 14. 1-3; *Ios. Ant.* 13. 186). Although Tryphon’s relationship with the people of Judaea was fractured, for a short period after Demetrios II’s capture he was the only king in the Levant.

Regardless of Jewish resurgence, the landing of Antiochos VII indicates that Tryphon was in control of the Levantine coast and perhaps even the coast of Kilikia.⁷⁸ According to Josephus, ‘at Tryphon’s instance no city admitted him’, μηδεμιᾶς αὐτὸν πόλεως δεχομένης διὰ Τρύφωνα (*Ios. Ant.* 13. 222). But which cities along the coastline of the Levant could have been an option? Berytos was destroyed. Further south, Tryphon’s control of the coast is corroborated by the coinage of Byblos, Ptolemais and Askalon, which in 139/8 BCE were striking coinage dated to the fourth year of Tryphon’s kingship.⁷⁹ However, the cities of Sidon and Tyre never ceased to

⁷⁵ Date: *I Makk.* 13. 41: Ἐτους ἑβδομηκοστοῦ καὶ ἑκατοστοῦ ἦρθη ὁ ζυγὸς τῶν ἔθνων ἀπὸ τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ; see Schürer (1973), 192n.10; *contra* Ehling (2008), 177 who follows Schürer (1901), 247n.14; *Ios. Ant.* 13. 213. For the ‘limits’ of this independence: Fischer (1991), 33-40, here 37-8.

⁷⁶ See above, ch.2.2.1.

⁷⁷ Demetrios II’s eastern campaign is dated to 141/0 BCE in *I Makk.* 14. 1-3 and 139/8 BCE in Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 16; cf. van der Spek (1997-8), 167-75, here 172; Will (1982), 407.

⁷⁸ For Tryphon and the pirates (*Strab.* 14. 5. 2), see e.g. Maróti (1962), 187-94; Ehling (2008), 169.

⁷⁹ Berytos: *Strab.* 16. 2. 19. Byblos: *SC* 2043. Ptolemais: *SC* 2046. Askalon: *SC* 2048. 3. Berytos later mints bronze coinage again in the name of Antiochos VII.

mint coinage for Demetrios II and in the Seleukid year 174 (=139/8 BCE) Tyre started to mint coinage in the name of Antiochos VII.⁸⁰ Why then was the city of Tyre (and possibly Sidon as well) not a possible landing-point for the wandering Antiochos VII? It is certainly plausible that the account in Josephus is exaggerated and that Antiochos VII approached the northern cities in order to be close to Antiocheia on the Orontes and the other cities of northern Syria. Antiochos VII may also have chosen Seleukeia in Pieria for its defences. Ptolemaic troops were able to maintain the city within Seleukid territory between c.245 and 219 BCE (Pol. 5. 58. 10) and it had already served as a refuge for Demetrios II following his expulsion from Antiocheia.⁸¹ It also might be possible that the coinages in the name of Demetrios II from Sidon and Tyre do not necessarily indicate support for the Seleukid king. Tyre in particular had achieved a new status as ἱερά, sacred, and ἄσυλος, inviolable, which the city was eager to display on its coinage from 142/1 BCE onwards.⁸² If the coinage in the name of Demetrios II is not to be interpreted as an expression of loyalty, but rather as a display of opposition to Tryphon, this may have been the reason why these cities were not interested in admitting Antiochos VII.⁸³

Tryphon was not able to hinder Antiochos VII from negotiations with the people of Judaea. A letter preserved in I Makkabees uses the same performative language as the letters by his various predecessors. He confirmed '[...] all the remissions of tribute which the kings before me have granted you, and whatsoever gifts besides they granted.'⁸⁴ In the attempt to outdo his predecessors, Antiochos also granted the Jews the allowance to coin money with their own stamp, declared

⁸⁰ Tyre: SC 2108. 1; 2109. 1; 2110. 1-2; 2115. 1. Antiocheia and Seleukeia in Pieria also started minting for Antiochos VII in 139/8 BCE: SC 2063; 2064. 1-5; 2066; 2067. 1-2; 2068. 1-2.

⁸¹ Cf. Rey-Coquais (1978), 313-25.

⁸² SC 1960-1; see Seyrig (1950), 19-21; Iossif (forthcoming).

⁸³ According to Iust. 39. 1. 8 it was the *praefectus* of Tyre who murdered Demetrios II; see below, ch.3.3.2.

⁸⁴ I Makk. 15. 5: νῦν οὖν ἴστημί σοι πάντα τὰ ἀφέματα, ἃ ἀφῆκάν σοι οἱ πρὸ ἐμοῦ βασιλεῖς, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα δόματα ἀφῆκάν σοι. For the time of writing: Rhodos or abroad: I Makk. 15. 1. App. Syr. 68 (358); Seleukeia: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 223.

Jerusalem and the sanctuary free from taxation and granted Simon possession of all the fortresses he and his ancestors had built.⁸⁵ Antiochos also promised more honours after he was made sole ruler (I Makk. 15. 9).

Tryphon engaged Antiochos VII in battle. The evidence mentions large numbers of troops supporting the new king (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 223) as well as defections from Tryphon's ranks (I Makk. 14. 10), perhaps after Tryphon's defeat. Although Antiochos VII was in the end successful, the narratives might accelerate his achievements. In the year of his landing, Antiocheia on the Orontes started to mint coinage for Antiochos VII. By the beginning of the Seleukid year 175 (= 138/7 BCE) more and more mints started to issue coinage for Antiochos VII, including Damascus, Sidon and presumably Tarsos.⁸⁶ Tryphon's troops were either expelled from Antiocheia or changed sides. Tryphon retreated to the southern coast of the Levant and in 139/8 BCE the last dated coinage for Tryphon was struck at his major mints in Ptolemais and Askalon.⁸⁷ According to the first book of Makkabees, after being defeated, Tryphon fled from Syria to Phoenicia and eventually to Dor where Antiochos VII besieged him for a considerable period of time.⁸⁸ He perhaps fled from here to Orthosia (I Makk. 15. 37) and afterwards to Apameia, the initial base of his kingship (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 224). Tryphon's end is not clear: Josephus mentions a further siege at Apameia and describes Tryphon's capture and execution, while Strabo writes that the king committed suicide.⁸⁹ Strikingly, no account mentions the defection of troops in this last scene of Tryphon's reign.

⁸⁵ I Makk. 15. 6-8. For a possible re-aligning regarding I Makk. 15. 6-7, see Wirgin (1972), 104-10, here: 105-6. Simon never seems to have minted coinage: Schürer (1973), 190-1; Ehling (2008), 187.

⁸⁶ Probably Tarsos: SC 2035. Damascus: SC 2096. 1. Sidon: SC 2102. 1

⁸⁷ Ptolemais: SC 2046. Askalon: SC 2048. 3

⁸⁸ For the defeat: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 223. For a possible retreat to Ptolemais and the appearance of the mintmark of Antiocheia, see the lemma of SC 2045-6. Siege: I Makk. 15. 10-14; 25. Defensive character: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 223; cf. Gera (1985), 153-63, here 153.

⁸⁹ Apameia as a fortress: Strab. 16. 2. 10. Execution: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 224; App. *Syr.* 68 (358). Suicide: Strab. 14. 5. 2; Synk. 351. 18-19 (553).

3.1.4 Alexander Zabinas

Following Tryphon's death in c.137 BCE, no other rival is recorded to have tried to claim the diadem in the Seleukid territories during the reign of Antiochos VII. It was only after the king's death and the release of Demetrios II from Parthian captivity that the last Seleukid usurper emerged. His title, as indicated on the royal coinage, was βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος and he reigned from 129/8 to c.123 BCE.⁹⁰ The promotion of Alexander Zabinas was a consequence of Demetrios II's external politics. Since the late 130s BCE civil war had struck Ptolemaic Egypt.⁹¹ Kleopatra II and her brother Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II dissolved their union and it appears that Kleopatra II established herself in Alexandria. Although Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II initially retreated to Cyprus, he returned before 28 May 130 BCE.⁹² According to Justin, it was in this period that Demetrios II launched a campaign against Ptolemaic Egypt. Justin (and presumably the Seleukid court historiography) writes that Kleopatra II promised her son-in-law Demetrios II rule over Egypt as a reward (Iust. 39. 1. 2). However, Demetrios II was apparently pushed back by Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II. The sources are not entirely clear, but the following scenario could be plausible. After Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II pushed back Demetrios II, the king (like Antiochos IV before him) decided to march against Hyrkanos (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 267), but his troops revolted (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F 32. 21). It was the military defeat at Pelusium which resulted in the defection of his troops and is presumably the origin of Josephus' narrative that 'both the Syrians and his soldiers were hostile to him – for he was a scoundrel [...].'⁹³

⁹⁰ Coinage attributed to Antiocheia is dated to the year 184 SE (129/8 BCE), *SC* 2229. 1-2; 2230. 1, while the mints from Askalon as well as Uncertain Mint 114 still minted coins in his name in the Seleukid year 189 (124/3 BCE), *SC* 2254; 2256. 3; 2257. 2.

⁹¹ For a narrative: Hölbl (2001), 197-200; Huß (2001), 608-14; Nadig (2007).

⁹² *P.Eheverträge* no. 37. 2 (= *P.Leid.Dem.* 373A); Hölbl (2001), 199.

⁹³ Ios. *Ant.* 13. 267: [...] ἀφορμὴ τῶν τε Σύρων καὶ τῶν στρατιῶν τῶν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπεχθανομένων, πονηρὸς γὰρ ἦν [...]

It was after this defeat that Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II

[...] sent a young Egyptian, the son of the merchant Protarchos, to launch an attack on the kingdom of Syria. A story was fabricated to the effect that the young man had been taken into the royal family through adoption by King Antiochos, and since the Syrians, in order to escape Demetrios' tyrannical behaviour, would not reject any king whatsoever, he was given the name Alexander and considerable assistance was sent to him from Egypt.⁹⁴

While Justin makes Alexander an adopted son of (presumably) Antiochos VII, we should follow Porphyrios' account that he was a pretended son of Alexander (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F 32. 21); his royal name 'Alexander' corroborates this.⁹⁵ Justin's emphasis on the adoption is difficult to reconcile with Seleukid practices and it is very likely that Justin writes in a Roman rather than a Greek cultural context. The stress in the narrative is not entirely devoted to Alexander Zabinas' background (despite his descent from a merchant), but rather to the qualities of Demetrios II's kingship. The Syrians 'would not reject any king whatsoever' and this allows the author to translate the Syrians' despair into a discourse against the king: even a merchant's son would be a more welcome king. This shows what a bad king Demetrios II was – a tyrant in fact. According to Josephus, the Syrians and the soldiers asked Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II for 'someone from the family of Seleukos,' and the Jewish author makes no remarks about his heritage (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 268). Diodoros' fragmentary account also does not question Alexander Zabinas' position (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22; 28).⁹⁶ Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II was reacting against Demetrios II's activities in Egypt by sending a usurper into the Levant who claimed descent from the Seleukid kings.

⁹⁴ Iust. 39. 1. 4-5: [...] *inmittit iuvenem quondam Aegyptium, Protarchi negotiatoris filium, qui regnum Syriae armis peteret. Conposita fabula, quasi per adoptionem Antiochi Regis receptus in familiam regiam esset, nec Syris quemlibet regem aspernantibus, ne Demetrii superbiam paterentur, nomen iuveni Alexandri inponitur auxiliaque ab Aegypto ingentia mittuntur.*

⁹⁵ Proposed by: Mørkholm (1983), 62; cf. Ehling (2008), 209. Descent of Alexander Balas: historical circumstance makes it unlikely that Alexander Zabinas could have been a 'real' son of Alexander Balas. The Ptolemaic king must have got hold of the boy very early in the taking of Antiocheia and sent him off to Egypt before Ptolemaios VI died.

⁹⁶ For a narrative on the king: Ehling (2008), 208-14; Will (1982), 435-6.

The literary evidence does not provide detailed accounts of Alexander Zabinas' activities from his appearance in the Seleukid kingdom to the death of Demetrios II; nevertheless, a tentative image can be drawn. The situation in Antiocheia must have been anything but stable. It might be possible that the people of Antiocheia and Apameia revolted against Demetrios II,⁹⁷ and it was perhaps during this period that the young Antiochos Epiphanes (a supposed son of Antiochos VII) reigned for a short time in the city.⁹⁸ Regardless, Antiocheia must have changed sides again rather quickly: in 129/8 BCE the city of Antiocheia already minted dated bronze coinage under Alexander Zabinas' name.⁹⁹ On most issues the coinage bears the royal name βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος,¹⁰⁰ thus standing in contrast to his Seleukid contemporaries and predecessors, who ever since Antiochos IV carried either one or two epithets.¹⁰¹ The image of Alexander Zabinas on the obverse of his coinage depicts a youthful man with curls.¹⁰²

Alexander Zabinas was apparently accepted by the people of Antiocheia and his show of care for the corpse of Antiochos VII is described positively in the evidence. 'The scene won him great support amongst the people, everyone thinking that his tears were not forced but genuine.'¹⁰³ Moreover, Alexander Zabinas was able to move against Demetrios II. Both Josephus and Justin mention the military support

⁹⁷ Iust. 39. 1. 3. The reference to their leader (*primi duce*) Tryphon should rather be placed in the 140s BCE. Nevertheless, it is possible that it was only the 'leader' which was confused and not the revolt of 129 BCE: Hoffmann (1939b), 722-3.

⁹⁸ Houghton/Le Rider (1988), 401-11 attributed the coinage to a first reign of Antiochos VIII. However, the editors of *SC* have convincingly argued for another King Antiochos, *SC* 2208-9 (with lemma). Ehling's reconstruction of the king in 131 BCE is not convincing because of control linkage: Ehling (1996), 31-7.

⁹⁹ *SC* 2229; 2230. 1,

¹⁰⁰ *SC* 2210-14; 2016-39; 2242-57. Exceptions: gold staters from Antiocheia (*SC* 2215) as well as bronze issues perhaps from Seleukeia in Pieria (*SC* 2239-41). It is plausible that the issues with the epithets *theos* and *nikephoros* are connected to a victory against Demetrios II.

¹⁰¹ E.g. at Antiocheia: Antiochos IV as Theos Epiphanes (*SC* 1394; 1396-8), Antiochos V Eupator (*SC* 1574-6), Alexander Balas Theopator Euergetes (*SC* 1780-5), Demetrios II Theos Philadelphos Nikator (*SC* 1906-8), Antiochos VI Epiphanes Dionysios (*SC* 1999-2007), or Antiochos VII Euergetes (*SC* 2061-8). While all kings do not employ the epithets on every issue (often as a result of space), Demetrios I Soter is an exception, with frequent omissions of the epithet.

¹⁰² For the imagery, see also Fleischer (1991), 75.

¹⁰³ Iust. 39. 1. 6: [...] *Quae res illi mangnum favorem popularium conciliavit omnibus non fictas in eo, sed versa lacrimas existimantibus*. It is plausible that Justin's 'adoption' of Antiochos VII is connected to this scene.

Alexander Zabinas received from the Ptolemaic king and it was this support which, according to Porphyrios, gave him the nickname Zabinas, ‘the bought one.’¹⁰⁴ It is difficult to assess which parts of the Levant were still under Demetrios II’s control after Alexander Zabinas had taken Antiocheia on the Orontes. It is suggested that Kilikia continued to strike coinage for Demetrios II for the duration of his second reign; however, no other cities are securely attested for northern Syria.¹⁰⁵ It is plausible to suggest that Alexander Zabinas landed in northern Syria and from there made his campaign southwards against Demetrios II. Damascus remained a mint of Demetrios II, as did Ptolemais and Askalon. Moreover, the cities of Sidon and Tyre continued to strike coinage in the name of the Seleukid king. The Seleukid year 186 (127/6 BCE) is particularly revealing as it was in this year that Sidon, Ptolemais and Askalon minted the last coinage for Demetrios II. In the following year, Askalon started to mint for Alexander Zabinas, while Ptolemais issued one series for βασιλίσσα Κλεοπάτρα.¹⁰⁶ The break in coinage from Sidon, Ptolemais and Askalon could indicate that Alexander Zabinas led a military campaign into the south, which can be corroborated with the issue of Alexander’s coinage from Ptolemais. It is reasonable to suggest that the coinage of Kleopatra Thea Eueteria was an intermediary issue in opposition to Alexander Zabinas. It was in early 125 BCE, presumably near Damascus (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 21), that Demetrios II was defeated in battle.¹⁰⁷ According to Josephus, Demetrios II ‘fled to Ptolemais to his wife Kleopatra, but as his wife would not receive him, he went from there to Tyre, where he was put to death after suffering severely at the hands of those who hated him’ (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 268). Justin notes that it was in Tyre that Demetrios II was murdered on the

¹⁰⁴ Support: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 268; Iust. 39. 1. 5. Nickname: from Aramaic ܕܒܝ ‘buy, gain’; Ezra 10. 43; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 21; Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22.

¹⁰⁵ For a narrative see also Ehling (2008), 210-11.

¹⁰⁶ Demetrios II: Sidon (SC 2189. 8-9); Ptolemais (SC 2204. 2; 2205. 2; 2206); Askalon (SC 2206). Alexander Zabinas: Askalon (SC 2253; 2255-56. 1). Kleopatra Thea: Ptolemais (SC 2258).

¹⁰⁷ Date: Damaskos minted continuously in the name of Demetrios II until the Seleukid year 187 (=126/5 BCE); SC 2181.8-10. In the same year, the city started minting coinage for Alexander Zabinas using the same reverse but with changed controls: SC 2248. 1.

orders of the *praefectus* (Iust. 39. 1. 7-8). It also was in 126/5 BCE that Tyre stopped minting coinage for Demetrios II and – as it seems – its Seleukid coinage. Ptolemais began to mint coinage for Kleopatra Thea and her son Antiochos VIII.¹⁰⁸

Alexander Zabinas also was able to bring Kilikia under his control (either after his southern campaign or through a commander)¹⁰⁹ and it seems that for two years he was considered to be the sole monarch in the Seleukid empire. The gold *stater* from Antiocheia on the Orontes could date to the period after the defeat of Demetrios II, as this is the only occasion when Alexander Zabinas carried the epithets *Theos* and *Nikephoros* on his coinage.¹¹⁰ Seleukeia in Pieria now issued coinage in his name, as did Berytos. Alexander also apparently made friends with the Jewish high priest Hyrkanos (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 269). However, his rule was not without problems. It perhaps was in this context that three ‘noteworthy commanders’ (ἀξιολόγων ἡγεμόνων) defected and took the city of Laodikeia (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22). Moreover, Alexander was not able to occupy Ptolemais and it was after the death of Demetrios II that Kleopatra Thea promoted her son Antiochos as her co-regent. Most importantly, it perhaps was the success of Alexander which provoked the Ptolemaic king to break their alliance. The latter instead began to support Antiochos VIII (Iust. 39. 2. 1-3).

The period which followed is difficult to assess. Josephus, Porphyrios and Justin mention a military defeat of Alexander Zabinas by Antiochos VIII,¹¹¹ and Justin adds that Zabinas retreated to Antiocheia (Iust. 39. 2. 5). Justin also places particular emphasis on the sacrilegious behaviour of the king, an element which is likewise stressed in Diodoros (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 1). It is in the context of a second

¹⁰⁸ The murder of Demetrios II by Kleopatra in Appian should derive from an account which gives jealousy as an explanation for the historical events. It was jealousy which let Kleopatra Thea marry Antiochos VII and explained the death of Demetrios II: App. *Syr.* 68 (360); Liv. *per.* 60; cf. Primo (2009), 247-50.

¹⁰⁹ While it is possible that *IGCH* 1454 indicates a closure in 126/5 BCE, it is impossible to ascertain if Kilikia just fell to Alexander Zabinas or if it was taken in a conquest (as indicated in the lemma for Alexander Zabinas), *SC* ii.1 p. 441n.8; see also *SC* ii.2 ‘Appendix 3 – Hoards’ p.83.

¹¹⁰ *SC* 2215-6; see also n.100.

¹¹¹ Ios. *Ant.* 13. 269; Iust. 39. 2. 5; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23.

sacrilege that the authors place a revolt by the people of Antiocheia, which apparently forced Alexander to flee the city (Iust. 39. 2. 5-6). The loss of Antiocheia on the Orontes is corroborated by the coinage minted in the name of Antiochos VIII in 123/2 BCE.¹¹² Diodoros, writing about the same episode, adds that he was able to withdraw to Seleukeia, where he found no refuge. He fled, perhaps by boat, towards Poseideion, further south on the coast of the Levant (Diod. Sic. 33. 34/5. 28. 1). Although more than one version of Alexander Zabinas' death exists, following the accounts of Justin and Diodoros, it appears that soon after his flight, Alexander Zabinas was captured (perhaps by Justin's *latrones*) and brought before Antiochos VIII, who led him in chains through the camp 'ἀγομένου δεδεμένου διά τῆς παρεμβολῆς' and put him to death.¹¹³

3.1.5 The Levant in the Second Century: Conclusion

The history of the Seleukid kingdom from the 160s BCE onwards illustrates continuous competition for the royal diadem and control over the political groups within the empire. When reading the evidence, with the hindsight that the historical narratives were a later creation, it is strikingly obvious that the narratives of kings and usurpers were not very different from each other. Both kings and usurpers took cities, lost cities, won battles, forced the people of Antiocheia into revolt and granted honours to the Makkabees. The narrative of the second-century Seleukid kingdom also underlines the potency of the audiences themselves. The communication between the Seleukid kings, usurpers and the Makkabees, for instance, strikingly illustrates that it was the Makkabees who could decide whom they would acknowledge as king.

¹¹² SC 2263. Alexander Zabinas' last dated coinage is dated to 124/3 BCE and attributed to Askalon as well as to an uncertain mint: SC 2254; 2256.3.

¹¹³ Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 2-3; Iust. 39. 2. 6. Variations: Ios. *Ant.* 13. 269; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23 (suicide).

The Makkabees, however, were not the only audience which was transformed into an active agent. These agents could choose their king, and this is what we see in the historical narrative. At times the Seleukid king was accepted, while at other times the usurpers were. The narrative of the second-century Levant underlines the importance of royal offers and responses and will be discussed in the following sections.

3.2 Images of Kingship: The Royal Offers

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, royal offers were one of the core elements in the success of both usurpers and kings in this period. The competitors for power in the Seleukid sphere needed to persuade the different groups within the kingdom of their qualities. They had to instil in the agents within the kingdom an interest in being ruled by them and not by another king.¹¹⁴ It was only if they were able to persuade these groups that they were accepted as kings. It also was only then that royal letters worked – were felicitous (to borrow the terminology of J.L. Austin’s speech act theory) – when the letters were accepted *as* royal letters and not as a usurper’s pamphlet.¹¹⁵ As outlined in the introduction, it was only then that the king was king (as far as this particular group was concerned). Accordingly, this section will examine the process of persuasion. It was through this same process that, in a later period, the Roman emperor would persuade the Roman status groups to accept him. This section discusses the usurpers’ attempts to make themselves more palatable to the groups within the kingdom, leading to their acceptance as king.¹¹⁶ While vying for acceptance is clearly apparent in the historical narrative, the evidence for usurpers’ royal offers is limited, often to imagery on the coinage and the traces of royal

¹¹⁴ Weber (1980), 122-48, esp. 122.

¹¹⁵ Austin (1975), 12-45; Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 76-7.

¹¹⁶ Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 108; Bourdieu (1991), 37-42; Butler (1999), 113-28, here 120-4. For Rome: Flaig (1992), esp. 174-207; Veyne (1976), 236-8 (not included in Veyne [1990]).

communication transmitted and distorted in the literary sources. It is these offers which will be analysed below.

3.2.0 The Origins of Usurpers

The usurpers' political origins can be categorised into two distinct groups. The first group comes from the corpus of Seleukid commanders. Like their predecessors Achaïos and Molon in the third century BCE, these usurpers based their kingship on their previous career. This is indicated, for example, by Tryphon's relationship with the Seleukid troops from Apameia and his former position under Alexander Balas. Moreover, Timarchos' claim was based on the peripheral character of his usurpation, as were usurpations in the third century. The split in the dynasty was an important element for these usurpers' secessions, as the historical circumstances made it unlikely that these individuals would retain their positions in the new kings' courts. The second group of usurpers was not an entirely new phenomenon, but their precariousness was amplified by the emerging political developments of the second century BCE. The split in the dynasty allowed Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas to make themselves heirs of former Seleukid kings in direct opposition to their contemporaries. Although these usurpers came from outside the Seleukid sphere, the narrative for Alexander Balas strongly indicates that former courtiers or friends of their (supposed) fathers supported their claims. The support of former kings' friends is, for example, also attested for Demetrios I prior to his landing in the Levant (Pol. 31. 13. 3). It is this distinction in the usurpers' origins that shaped their individual claims to the diadem.

3.2.1 The Commanders

3.2.1.1 Timarchos: A Peripheral Great King

The usurpation of Timarchos falls half way between the usurpations of the third century and those of Alexander Balas, Tryphon and Alexander Zabinas in more than chronological terms. Timarchos' assumption of the diadem bears strong resemblance to Molon's usurpation, as both usurpers used their office in order to claim the diadem. Their geographic position in Media gave them the resources to recruit troops and equip an army large enough to engage the Seleukid troops in battle (Pol. 5. 43. 8). As with all previous usurpations in the Seleukid empire, the usurpation of Timarchos occurred in the absence of the king. While Timarchos had to persuade his audiences that he was a valid candidate for the diadem, his attempt to portray himself as a better king was aided by his presence in his own sphere of influence and the absence of the Seleukid king. Timarchos' usurpation, however, might have been triggered by the new dynamics resulting from the split in the dynasty. The murder of Antiochos V and his *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων*, as well as Herakleides' exile, illustrate kings' behaviour towards former high power holders within the kingdom. The re-occurrence of this scenario in the narrative of Alexander Balas' accession suggests a pattern; to a certain extent the options of Timarchos' political future after the accession of Demetrios I seem to have been limited and to counter his removal from office Timarchos made himself king. What were his royal offers?

The evidence for Timarchos' royal image and his claims to the diadem is limited, but a few elements nevertheless can be highlighted. Timarchos apparently thought it was necessary or opportune for his kingship to be acknowledged by the senate of Rome. While, like the kings of Kappadokia (e.g. Pol. 31. 3; 31. 7.1), he was presumably aware that he would not receive actual financial or military support,

Timarchos must have thought that acknowledgement from Rome could support his claim, likely because of Demetrios I's questionable accession. Demetrios I had not hesitated to seek acknowledgement of his own position (Pol. 31. 33. 1-5; 32. 2. 1-3). It perhaps was in the period before Demetrios I's acceptance as king by Ti. Sempronius Gracchus that Timarchos sought nominal Roman support in order to persuade his troops to follow him.

After the usurper's embassy to Rome, he made an alliance with Artaxias of Armenia, who had seceded from the Seleukid fringes and made himself king after the defeat of Antiochos III at Magnesia (Strab. 11. 14. 5; 11. 14. 15), only to be re-incorporated again by Antiochos IV (Diod. Sic. 31. 17a). The reintegration under Seleukid rule by Antiochos IV suggests that Artaxias might not have been able to resist the attack of a larger army (cf. Xerxes and Antiochos III; Pol. 8. 23. 1-5) and therefore we perhaps should not be surprised by Artaxias' cooperation with Timarchos. Nevertheless, Diodoros describes the rulers' alliance as a *συμμαχία* (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a). While it might be unreasonable to place too much stress on Diodoros' particular phrasing, the relationship between Timarchos and Artaxias seems to have been special when compared with Timarchos' relationship with the neighbouring peoples. If this indicated a qualitative difference between Artaxias and the 'other peoples' relationship with Timarchos, one could interpret the alliance between Artaxias and Timarchos as exactly that: an alliance with the Armenian king. This relationship, however, contrasted Seleukid behaviour with Armenia. Timarchos acknowledged Artaxias' independence and in return the Armenian ruler recognised Timarchos as king.

After being acknowledged by the Roman senate and forming an alliance with Artaxias of Armenia, Timarchos not only gathered a *στρατόπεδον ἀξιόλογον*, an 'impressive force' (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a), he also used the title of king and began to

mint his own royal coinage. However, Timarchos was not just king, as all his coinage identifies him as βασιλεὺς μέγας. No earlier Seleukid king had labelled himself as ‘Great King’ on his coinage. Only Antiochos I is styled ‘Great King’ (*šarru rabbu*) on the highly formulaic opening of the Borsippa cylinder, while in the other parts of the empire and on his coinage, he was styled as βασιλεὺς. Antiochos III had adopted the Greek title μέγας as his epithet after his eastern campaigns and took the title ‘Great King’ after his conquest of Koile Syria.¹¹⁷ The adoption of the Greek rendering of the Achaemenid title ‘Great King’ by Timarchos was a conscious decision to create difference from the usual empire-wide Seleukid formulae.

Timarchos’ use of the title, however, is not an isolated occurrence. It also is evident in other eastern regions during the same period. In central Asia, Eukratides I of Baktria, who presumably reigned in the period from c.170-145 BCE, was (perhaps on later issues) styled as βασιλεὺς μέγας on his coinage, as was Mithridates I on his later coinage (pl. 4.9-10).¹¹⁸ It is impossible to determine when Mithridates I started to use the title of ‘Great King’. The dated coins from Seleukeia on the Tigris from the years 173/4 SE (140/39-139/8 BCE) indicate that from at least the period after his conquest of Babylonia he displayed this title on his coins.¹¹⁹ The use of the title on the coinage (and in inscriptions outside Babylonia) suggests that during the same period, three rulers used the title of ‘Great King’. The disparity in dating the Parthian material does not allow conclusions regarding who was the first ruler to put the title on his coinage and who first employed it as a reference to the other neighbouring king.

¹¹⁷ Borsippa cylinder: Sherwin-White (1991), 71-86; for the text, 75-6. King List: *CM* 4 obv. 10; 13. Antiochos III: for Ma (2002), 276 the title of Great King under Antiochos III refers to a discourse between the Ptolemaic and Seleukid kings. For a late Seleukid ‘Great King’: *SEG* 19. 904 (cf. *SEG* 53. 1821) with Landau (1961), 118-26; Fischer (1970), 102-9; cf. Boffo (1994), 126-32.

¹¹⁸ Eukratides I: Coloru (2009), 209-30; Bopearachchi (1991), 70-1. Mithridates: *BMC Parthia* ‘Period of Mithridates I’ nos. 1-13; 16-28; 30-61. The legend on a relief from Khung-e Nouruzi in the south-western province of Khūzestān in modern-day Iran depicts a rider with a band in his hair and the legend: ‘Miθridāt the king of kings.’ While it cannot be ascertained when Mithridates I took the Elymais and the Susiane, the inscription nevertheless illustrates that the title was also used in other media: Harmatta (1981), 189-217, here 200-3.

¹¹⁹ Dated coinage: *BMC Parthia* ‘Mithridates I’ nos. 55-61. Seleukeia/Tigris: LeRider (1965), 154. On the documents in 141 BCE his title was nevertheless ‘king’: *AD* III 140 rev. 7; 10; Upper Edge 3.

Moreover, it is nearly impossible to determine the political dynamics of this period, although the expeditions of the Parthians under Mithridates I must have had some impact on Media since it was a border of the Seleukid empire. They fought numerous wars against the Baktrians (Iust. 41. 6. 3) and Strabo writes that the Parthians were able to take two Baktrian satrapies from Eukratides (Strab. 11. 11. 2). While Justin also states that ‘during the course of these proceedings among the Baktrians, a war broke out against the Medes’, ‘*Dum haec apud Bactros geruntur, interim inter Parthos et Medos bellum oritur*’ (Iust. 41. 6. 6), it is unclear when exactly this occurred during the long reign of Mithridates I. K. Schippmann and J. Wolski read the passage as if the wars of the Parthians against the Medes started soon after Mithridates I launched his campaigns against Eukratides I,¹²⁰ however, the passage could also refer to a later period, perhaps as late as the early 140s BCE. Therefore, while Timarchos might have been aware of the emergence of Parthian power, it is not possible to ascertain to what degree the Parthians were a threat to his kingdom. Nevertheless, the use of the title by Eukratides I, Mithridates I and Timarchos might suggest that Timarchos’ choice of title illustrates the power dynamics of these kings in their region, largely resulting from a discourse of power east of Babylon.¹²¹ If Timarchos chose the title with regard to the eastern kings, this does not necessarily exclude the possibility that Timarchos also tried to make a political statement against the Seleukid west.¹²²

The geopolitical environment of Timarchos’ kingship between the eastern kings and the Seleukid west also is illustrated in his coinage. His drachms and his bronze coinage depict a middle-aged man with relatively short hair and the diadem

¹²⁰ Wolski (1993), 80; Schippmann (1980), 24; see also Coloru (2009), 217-19.

¹²¹ See Coloru (2009), 215, for whom the title was adopted during the rivalry with Menander I; cf. Widemann (2009), 168 for whom the title was adopted during the rivalry with Demetrios I, but who sees potential for Parthian inspiration. For Bopearachchi the title was taken after the conquest of India: Bopearachchi (1991), 69.

¹²² Knepe (1989), 37-49, here 46; Ehling (2008), 128.

bound around the head, with the ends usually flying. It is this portrait which presumably can also be found on the clay seals of Seleukeia on the Tigris.¹²³ The portrait seems to be inserted among the ‘neutral’ royal portraits without too strong individual features (pl. 4.7).¹²⁴ The reverses are predominantly reverses of Nike on the bronze coinage, as well as issues of Artemis/Anahita and the Seleukid Apollo on Omphalos type on the drachms.¹²⁵ Timarchos issued a large number of bronze issues that perhaps were later countermarked, presumably under his own authorities.¹²⁶

While Timarchos’ drachms and bronze coinage largely used stylistic elements which were known in the Seleukid east, his tetradrachms were strikingly different. At some point during the reign of the Baktrian king Eukratides I, this eastern king minted a very innovative portrait which clearly inspired Timarchos’ coinage (SC 1588-9).¹²⁷ The tetradrachms show a royal portrait on the obverse with a crested Boiotian helmet, embellished more or less by ornaments. The diadem is visible at the neck and the depicted figure wears the *chlamys*, a military cloak. The military imagery on the bust is continued on the reverse, which depicts the *Dioskuroi* as twin riders, brandishing their lances and wearing helmets while their horses are rearing up (pl. 4.5-6). This depiction, along with the characterisation in Ailianos, who underlines the saviour and guardian aspects of the twins, indicates that this imagery has to be understood in a

¹²³ Invernizzi (2004), 44, Se 44-6.

¹²⁴ Cf. Smith (1988), 32-45; Jaeggi (2008), 68-74.

¹²⁵ Bronze coinage: it features a typical Nike holding up a wreath (and in one issue an elephant): SC 1594-1603; 1608. Drachms: Apollo/Omphalos: SC 1590; 1605. Nike on chariot: SC 1604. Artemis/Anahita: SC 1591-3; 1606. Artemis/Anahita occurs on the bronze coinage in the Seleukid east during the third century BCE: Antiochos II and Seleukos II in Susa (SC 598; 796); Antiochos III in the ‘Rose mint’, Seleukeia/Tigris and Susa (SC 1123-5; 1184; 1220-1; 1224-5); Antiochos IV in Mopsos and Susa (SC 1385-7; 1535. The Mopsos issues have the same style as Timarchos’ SC 1385).

¹²⁶ Le Rider (1965), 334n.2; cf. the lemma in SC ii.1 pp. 146-7.

¹²⁷ It cannot be ascertained with absolute certainty when Eukratides minted the ‘helmet coinage’ or whether he minted the coinage before Timarchos. However, the sheer number of issues, the innovative style of other Baktrian coinage, such as the elephant headdress of Demetrios I (Bopearachchi [1991] ‘Démétrios I’ pp. 164-6, nos. 1-9) and the *kausia* of Antimalkos (Bopearachchi [1991] ‘Antimaque (I) Théos’ pp. 183-6, nos. 1-12), strongly suggest that it was Eukratides’ coinage which inspired Timarchos’ tetradrachms and not vice versa; cf. Widemann (2009), 168; Coloru (2009), 209-15.

military context.¹²⁸ It is worth noting that Timarchos (just as Achaïos and Molon before him) employed certain coin types which were employed on Seleukid bronze coinage before his reign. The use of this (presumably) well-known imagery on the silver coinage can therefore be interpreted as a stress on continuity in order to sustain monetary credibility; however, it also marks a distinctive break with prominent Seleukid formulae.¹²⁹ The similarity between Timarchos' precious coinage and the coinage of Eukratides I does not of course necessitate an alliance between Timarchos and the Baktrian king, either against Demetrios I or against Mithridates I.¹³⁰ Since Antiochos III, no Seleukid king had been able to make his way into Baktria and it seems unlikely that Eukratides saw the Seleukid king as a primary threat. Nevertheless, it is at least possible that the stress on Greek military iconography, such as the helmet, the *chlamys* and the *Dioskuroi*, along with the title of 'Great King' refers to an awareness by both kings of growing Parthian power in this period, as indicated in Strabo (11. 11. 2).

Regardless of Timarchos' concerns regarding Parthian expansion, his military iconography was also used in his western campaign and thus, while it might be incidental that no drachms with Timarchos' other royal portrait survive from Babylonia, one could argue that it was a conscious decision that the distinctive tetradrachms were minted in Seleukeia on the Tigris.¹³¹ Timarchos also wanted to be known as 'Great King' by the people in Babylonia, the troops under his command and those troops whom he encountered on his campaigns. On his drachms and bronze issues he made reference to a local deity, while his military virtues were underlined by the numerous crowning Nike issues in Media; most importantly, they were

¹²⁸ While the *Dioskuroi* did not appear on Seleukid precious coinage, they featured on the bronze coinages, particularly in the eastern part of the empire, sometimes even in the same riding position: e.g. Antiochos II at Tarsos (SC 565-7); Seleukos II at Nisibis (SC 760); Antiochos IV at Tripolis and Susa (SC 1441; 1532); Antiochos V at Tripolis (SC 1577); cf. Ail. nat. 1. 30. For other attestations: Burkert (1985), 212-13.

¹²⁹ Ehling (2008), 128.

¹³⁰ Different: Coloru (2009), 219-23.

¹³¹ SC 1588 is the only issue of Timarchos that is associated with Babylonia: Houghton (1979), 213-17.

illustrated by his elaborate tetradrachms which featured military elements on the reverse and the military portrait of the king who issued these coins. The tetradrachms must have made a certain impact since it appears that Demetrios I was interested in a collection of Timarchos' coinage which was then overstruck with the jugate portrait of Demetrios I and his wife Laodike (pl. 4.4).¹³²

Beyond Timarchos' coinage, his acknowledgement by the Roman senate and his alliance with Artaxias of Armenia, there is no further evidence from which to draw conclusions regarding Timarchos' royal image and his kingship. Timarchos claimed the diadem and styled himself as 'Great King' Timarchos. While his imagery and his royal portrait were not significantly different from his Seleukid predecessors (despite a potential emphasis on the local character of the coinage), his title and tetradrachms differed from Seleukid formulae. Timarchos based his kingship on his position in Media, which he had held since the reign of Antiochos IV, and on his military experience, promising success on his coinage and perhaps even referring to previous achievements. Timarchos had been able to take and hold Babylonia long enough to mint his own coinage in the city. Nevertheless, Demetrios I overcame the usurper relatively quickly. After Timarchos, peripheral usurpations could no longer occur, since the Seleukid periphery had ceased to exist with the loss of Media after June 148 BCE and the loss of Babylonia at some point in 141 BCE.¹³³ From this point onwards, usurpers had to compete with the Seleukid king in the same space, which made their claims more difficult. However, it also complicated the royal offers of the Seleukid king himself.

¹³² See above, n.20.

¹³³ Media: See above, n.36; Babylonia and the Persian Gulf: see above, n.60.

3.2.1.2 Tryphon: Guardian and Usurper

Placed in the context of Demetrios II's struggles to establish his rule after the invasion of Ptolemaios VI and the death of both Alexander Balas and the Ptolemaic king, Tryphon seized the opportunity to gather former Seleukid troops under his command. It is striking that Tryphon did not actually claim the diadem at this point. Instead, the narratives place strong emphasis on Tryphon's promotion of Alexander Balas' son as the new king (Diod. Sic. 33. 4a). It was theoretically under the boy's command that Tryphon took the city of Apameia and soon afterwards Antiocheia on the Orontes, forcing Demetrios II to leave the city. The troops Tryphon had been able to gather were presumably largely those troops which Demetrios II had dismissed, meaning the former troops of Alexander Balas (I Makk. 11. 38; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 129). Although we cannot determine Tryphon's rank under Alexander Balas, the fact that he is described as *philos* of the king, commander of Antiocheia and had large support from the city of Apameia, would suggest that he was prominent in the political hierarchy. The perception of Tryphon's position during the reign of the young Antiochos VI is apparent in the description of the astronomical diarists who write of 'the general of ... and the troops of Antiochos, son of Alexander [...]' (*AD* III 143 A Flake 20). Both Tryphon's *de facto* authority and Antiochos IV's nominal position also might be illustrated in the account of an alliance between Antiochos VI, Tryphon and Jonathan (I Makk. 11. 57-9; Ios. *Ant.* 144-6). Josephus writes that Jonathan sent envoys to both Antiochos VI and Tryphon (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 147), which is particularly striking when it is compared to Josephus' narrative regarding Antiochos V and his guardian Lysias, in which the king, despite his young age, is the only actor (e.g. Ios. *Ant.* 12. 366-82).

Although the royal imagery of Antiochos VI makes reference to his Seleukid predecessors, the reverses depicting the *Dioskuroi*, the Boiotian helmet and the

panther, were individual to his reign (pl. 5.7-8).¹³⁴ Tryphon successfully promoted a son of Alexander Balas to the diadem and not only took two of the most important cities of the Seleukid empire, but also made an alliance with the people of Judaea while cities in the Levant and in Kilikia started to mint in the name of the young king. However, he was unable to gain support in Babylonia, and other cities in the Levant and Kilikia also continued to mint in the name of Demetrios II. Moreover, in the Seleukid year 171 (=142/1 BCE), the last coinage for Antiochos VI was minted; the king was dead.¹³⁵ Tryphon had to act and he made himself successor. He was eager to be accepted by the troops and displayed continuity in the coinage. One issue of drachms under Antiochos VI depicts a spiked Boiotian helmet on the reverse (SC 2003). A. Houghton has argued that the issue was introduced late in Antiochos VI's reign and served as a connector between the reigns of Antiochos VI and Tryphon.¹³⁶ However, the numismatic evidence does not deny the possibility that instead of being minted late in the reign of Antiochos VI, the coins could have been the earliest issued for Tryphon, appearing right after the death of his ward, especially since the letter style and controls are strikingly similar to Tryphon's issues from Antiocheia (SC 2029-30). While this hypothesis might be more plausible if one assumes the death of the king as an accident and not a long planned murder, the numismatic evidence does not provide any conclusions. Nevertheless, the Boiotian helmet could demonstrate a clear continuity with the coinage of the former king.

Generally, though, Tryphon broke with Seleukid conventions. It perhaps was only now that he adopted his new name, 'Tryphon', although it is possible it was a

¹³⁴ Seleukid elements are the radiated portrait on most issues on the obverse and the Apollo/Omphalos on the reverse: SC 2001-2; 2018; 2010A-11. Individual elements: *Dioskuroi*: SC 2000; 2008-10. Boiotian helmet: SC 2003. Panther: SC 2004; 2012. There are also 'local' issues, such as Sandan (SC 1996-7) and the eagle coinage on Phoinikian standard (SC 2020; 2022; 2026).

¹³⁵ SC 2020 (Byblos); 2022. 3 (Ptolemais); 2026 (Askalon).

¹³⁶ Houghton (1992b), 119-41, here 138.

nickname by which he was generally known.¹³⁷ Nevertheless, while Molon, Achaïos and Timarchos continued to use their name, Diodotos consciously chose the name Tryphon over any other possible royal name. With this name Tryphon evoked the concept of Hellenistic *tryphē*, luxury, a common feature in royal Seleukid representation.¹³⁸ For example, in his Attic comedies, Antiphanes refers to the excess (ὑπεροχή) of Seleukos I in the first quarter of the third century BCE (*PCG* II Antiphanes F185, pp. 414-5); Polybios mentions the sumptuous weddings of Antiochos III (Pol. 5. 43. 3-4; Pol. 20.8); and Heliodoros describes a fountain of wine under Antiochos IV in Antiocheia (*FGrHist* 373 F8). However, *tryphē* was never a part of royal Seleukid portraiture, iconography or titulature.

Difference and distinction also became apparent in Tryphon's royal epithet. Tryphon's royal title on his coins was given in the genitive βασιλέως Τρυφῶνος Αὐτοκράτορος. He did not assume the title of βασιλεὺς αὐτοκράτωρ, which has prevailed in scholarship.¹³⁹ The epithet is highly unusual and is presumably not connected with either Seleukid or Ptolemaic usage of the title of *strategos autokrator*. Nor should it be presumed that the title was a reference to the Greek form of the Roman *imperator*, for which evidence is lacking before 69 BCE.¹⁴⁰ However, Parthian usage could provide some evidence for the origins of the title. During the first century BCE, the title became prominent among the royal titles of the Parthian

¹³⁷ See above, n.69.

¹³⁸ Seleukid luxuries in context with meals: Vössing (2004), 145-50. The well-known Ptolemaic example is not an exception but rather illustrates different examples of how *tryphē* was employed by the Hellenistic monarchs: Heinen (1978), 177-99, here 188-92; idem. (1983), 116-30, here 120-4; cf. Lenfant (2007), 51-65, here 60n.5.

¹³⁹ Bevan misinterpreted the name and saw a connection to *strategos autokrator*: Bevan (1902), II 231 with App. Q. Hoffmann quotes Babelon on the title and writes '[Tryphon] nannte sich offiziell βασιλεὺς αὐτοκράτωρ,' but Babelon only states 'Tryphon prend sur ses monnaies le titre d'autocrator, qui n'a jamais été porté par aucun autre roi de la dynastie des Séleucides [...]': Babelon (1890), cxxxviii; Hoffmann (1939a), 715-22, here 721. Recent scholarship: Ehling (2008), 180; Baldus (1970), 236-7; see also Fischer (1972), 208n.38.

¹⁴⁰ *Strategos autokrator*: Seleukid usage: Pol. 5. 45. 6. Ptolemaic usage: at least one attestation under Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II: *I.Délos* 1528. 5-6; perhaps also *SEG* 31. 1521. 5-6. For Ehling (2008), 180 the epithet refers to Ptolemaic influence; cf. Philip II and Alexander III: Diod. Sic. 16. 89. Roman *Imperator*: Metellus Creticus (69 BCE): *IGRR* 1. 955. Pompeius (66-62 BCE): *IGRR* 3. 869; 4. 198; cf. Mason (1974), 119. For the use of *dictator*: Pol. 3. 86. 7.

dynasty.¹⁴¹ One coin hoard, either dated to the period of the late third or mid-second century, attests that the title was already employed by the Parthian kings before Tryphon's reign.¹⁴² Given the geographical distance of the Parthian sphere of influence from the Levant, it should not be assumed that it was the appearance of the epithet on the Parthian coinage that influenced Tryphon's choice. However, it is possible that both rulers referred to similar semantics in their differentiation from the Seleukid kings.¹⁴³ Of course a wide variety of military epithets were available, but many of them, such as Nikator, Kallinikos or Soter, would have referred to the Seleukid dynasty. Tryphon's epithet, however, emphasised his own achievements.

Differentiation between Tryphon and the Seleukid kings is also apparent in his decision to break with the Seleukid era and to use his own regnal years.¹⁴⁴ While it is uncertain if other usurpers also introduced their own regnal years, Tryphon was the only usurper to underline this initiative by putting his regnal years on his coinage. It is this differentiation which is also illustrated in the imagery on Tryphon's coinage. It largely depicts variations of one portrait on the obverse and two reverse types which both carry the name of the king. One reverse type depicts the eagle of the coinage on Phoenician standard,¹⁴⁵ while the more prominent reverse type depicts the aforementioned Boiotian helmet. The portrait depicts a man with a 'Greek nose',¹⁴⁶ an emphasised supraorbital ridge, a thick neck, with his face turned to the right side and

¹⁴¹ A tetradrachm attributed to either Orodes or Sinatrukes (both in the first half of the first century BCE) carries the epithet *autokrator* along with *philopatos*, *epiphanes* and *philelennos*: Sellwood (1980), 90; *BMC Parthia*, xxxi; 42; cf. Dobbins (1975), 19-45, here 41.

¹⁴² *IGCH* 1798. The royal name on the issues was Ἀρσάκης Αὐτοκράτωρ in the genitive. Due to the other coins in the hoard, the initial editors attribute the coins to Arsakes I or Arsakes II (c. 209), otherwise to Mithridates I (mid-C2 BCE). Regardless, the hoard is dated before Tryphon's reign: Abgarians/Sellwood (1971), 103-19.

¹⁴³ Coloru (2009), 158 suggests a similarity to the use of *karanos* in the Achaemenid empire.

¹⁴⁴ Not only 'following the Ptolemaic example', as suggested by Ehling (2008), 180. The Antigonids counted their regnal years (e.g. *I.Labraunda* 7. 15), as did the Attalid kings, at least in the second century (e.g. *TAM* 5. 1. 221; 486bis).

¹⁴⁵ The eagle mints were: Byblos (*SC* 2042-3), Ptolemais (*SC* 2045-6) and Askalon (*SC* 2047). Phoinikian Standard Coinage: see below, pp. 138-9.

¹⁴⁶ The term 'Greek nose' will be used to describe the characteristic nose of classical Greek sculpture which loses its prominence in the Hellenistic period. It is characterised only by a slight indentation of the nasal root at the suture where the nasal bone and the frontal bone meet: e.g. the Delphi charioteer; the god from Cape Artemisium: e.g. Boardman (1985), 52-3.

slightly raised. His round cheeks and the fold of his neck beneath the Adam's apple give him a slightly chubby appearance. There is no particular emphasis on muscles or other facial features thereby giving the face a more idealised demeanour. The most dominant element in this portrait is the hair: it falls in long waves, leaking over the diadem and is swept behind his ears, nearly reaching his shoulders (pl. 6.1-2).¹⁴⁷ Both the facial expression and the wild hair were later adopted by Seleukid and other monarchs, including Antiochos VII, Antiochos VIII and Mithridates VI of Pontos (pl. 6.3; 6.7-9).¹⁴⁸

The reverse depicts a Boiotian helmet, which has an elaborate spike on top, with attached cheek-pieces.¹⁴⁹ Helmets were not unknown in the Seleukid kingdom as Timarchos had recently issued a helmeted portrait and some bronze issues from Aï Khanoum show a very similar imagery (*SC* 448-51).¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, the depiction of helmets in Seleukid royal imagery ceased after Antiochos I and only re-emerged in the second century BCE under Eukratides I, Timarchos and Kammiškiri of Elam.¹⁵¹ The depiction of helmets on bronze issues in the 140s BCE under Alexander Balas and Demetrios II (presumably from Seleukeia on the Tigris) might be connected to the re-emergence of the helmet in iconographic usage in the middle of the second century.

The military overtones of a helmet are undeniable. Helmets feature as a depiction of weaponry on Hellenistic tombs and they also are employed in depictions

¹⁴⁷ Smith (1988), 121; Fischer (1991), 68-9.

¹⁴⁸ Smith (1988), 121-2; Fischer (1991), 68-9. For later Seleukids: Antiochos VII is depicted with longer, wavier hair falling at the neck (e.g. *SC* 2055-61); Antiochos VIII is often depicted with shorter, but very energetic curls, e.g. (*SC* 2281; 2286; 2293-4). This also is continued under most subsequent rulers; e.g. Mithridates VI: de Callataÿ (1997), pl. I-XIII.

¹⁴⁹ Dintsis (1986), 19. Pl. 5.5-6; 6.4.

¹⁵⁰ See: Bernard/Guillaume (1980), 9-32, here: 26-8. They also suggest it is a reference to Antiochos I's Galatian victory: Ibid. 23-6.

¹⁵¹ Eukratides and Timarchos: see above, pp.121-2. Kammiškiris: Le Rider (1965), no.89. Alexander Balas: *SC* 1790. Demetrios II: *SC* 1991.

of booty.¹⁵² If we follow Dintsis' account, the Boiotian and the konos helmet also had a strong Macedonian connection. Dintsis argues that these helmets (and particularly the Boiotian helmet) made their way into the East during the campaigns of Alexander III and it is these helmets which the Baktrian monarchs employed on their imagery.¹⁵³ Regardless of whether or not the helmet became the helmet of Alexander the Great's army, it is striking that it was this helmet, as well as the *kausia*, the Macedonian hat, which was adopted by some of his successors and employed on the coinage of the Graeko-Baktrians in order to underline their Greekness.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, while the pilos and konos helmets did not have a direct connection with Alexander III's anabasis, they were depicted on the coinage of Philip V and Perseus, which further underlines this Macedonian connection.¹⁵⁵ The semantics of the helmet therefore seem to be twofold: it combined military power and prowess and it established a link with Macedonian soldiery and Macedonianess or Greekness, as perceived in the Hellenistic East.

Tryphon's helmet, however, was more than simply a reference to the Macedonian military. Although Tryphon's reverses also depict a helmet, the style of the helmet and its fine execution are instructive. A very large horn protrudes from the front of the helmet and the ends of a diadem leap out from the rear. The ornaments on the helmet vary and might indicate different mints.¹⁵⁶ It also could underline the decorative character of the helmet, while the choice of an ibex horn emphasised its

¹⁵² Helmets as grave goods and decorations: Macedonia: Andronikos (1984), 140-6; Miller (1993), 53 and pl. 9 and 12; Tsimbidou-Avlonti (2005), pl. 25b; Pamphylia: Pekridou-Gorecki (1986), 50-4. Booty: e.g. the frieze at the temple of Athena Nikephoros at Pergamon: Bohn (1885), 93-138, esp. 102-4.

¹⁵³ Dintsis (1986), 17-20; 71-3.

¹⁵⁴ For the *kausia* as Alexander the Great's hat: Ehippos *FGrHist.* 126. F5; Fredericksmeier (1986), 215-27, here 224; see also Ritter (1965), 55-62. Successors: e.g. Demetrios Poliorketes: Plut. *Pyr.* 11. 6; Antigonos Gonatas: Val. Max. 5. 1 ext. 4; Krateros: Plut. *Eum.* 8. 5-6; for a wider reception: Tsimbidou-Avlonti (2005), 24-5; 35.

¹⁵⁵ Antigonid coinage: e.g. *SNG Cop.Mace* III 1241-3 and 1253 (Philip V); 1282-8 (Perseus).

¹⁵⁶ On different embellishments of the helmet: Seyrig (1950), 8-9; cf. *SC* ii.1 p. 337.

size.¹⁵⁷ Both the size and the adornment of the helmet are reminiscent of Plutarch's depiction of luxurious royal weaponry belonging to Alexander and Pyrrhos (Plut. *Alex.* 32. 5; *Pyrrh.* 16. 11). The helmet on the reverse of the coinage refers to the luxuriousness on the obverse. Since the helmet was the most dominant reverse type of Tryphon's coinage (with the exception of the eagle coinage), the coinage of Tryphon employed iconography which differed from pre-existing Seleukid imagery.

In his coinage, Tryphon created a royal image which had not been transmitted before on coinage in the Seleukid kingdom. He elaborated the energetic references to Alexander the Great, which also had been employed by Molon and had appeared in the Seleukid repertoire in the late second century.¹⁵⁸ Moreover, he depicted a piece of elaborated military weaponry as his main reverse type and placed a strong emphasis on *tryphē* on both the obverse and the reverse of his coinage. Thus, the image not only tried to underline military success and prowess, it also promised wealth and splendour.¹⁵⁹

However, Tryphon did not only rely on his royal image for his kingship to succeed. Diodoros describes how Tryphon sent a precious golden Nike to the Roman people in order to be acknowledged by the senate. Tryphon, he writes,

was eager to strengthen his position by means of a senatorial decree. Accordingly, after he prepared a statue of Nike, of the weight of ten thousand gold staters, he sent envoys to Rome to bring it to the people. For, he supposed that the Romans would both, because of the value and of the good mantic sign accept the Nike and to acclaim him king. But he found that the senate was more cunning than himself and that they cleverly outmanoeuvred him. For the senate accepted the gift and secured the good omen along with the profit, but changed the attribution of the gift and in Tryphon's stead, they inscribed it with the name of the king he had assassinated. By this act the senate went on record as condemning the murder of the boy and not accepting the gifts of impious men.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ The interpretations of Ehling (1997), 21-7 on the origins of the horn are rejected here.

¹⁵⁸ Bohm (1989), 120-7. See below pp.135-6.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. luxury at the Ptolemaic court: Heinen (1978), 177-99, here 188-92; idem. (1983), 116-30, here 120-4.

¹⁶⁰ Diod. Sic. 33. 28a: [... Τρύφων] ἔσπευδε τὴν δυναστείαν αὐτῷ διὰ δόγματος συγκλητικοῦ βεβαιῶσαι. διόπερ κατασκευάσας Νίκην χρυσῇν ἄγουσαν ὀλκὴν χρυσίνων μυρίων ἑξαπέστειλε πρεσβευτὰς εἰς τὴν Ῥώμην τοὺς ταύτην κομιοῦντας τῷ δήμῳ. ὑπελάμβανε γὰρ τοὺς Ῥωμαίους ἅμα μὲν διὰ τὸ λυσιτελεῖς, ἅμα δὲ διὰ τὸ εὐοίωνιστον εἶναι, προσδέξασθαι τὴν Νίκην, καὶ

Tryphon tried to gain acceptance from the senate by giving a precious gift. He apparently thought it was necessary to establish a good relationship with the Romans by sending a Nike, which presumably alluded to Roman success in the recent period (the destruction of Carthage or perhaps Corinth?).¹⁶¹ Even if we disregard Diodoros' value of ten thousand gold staters, the passage implies that Tryphon thought that acknowledgement by the Roman senate was an important aspect of his kingship and can be placed alongside Rome's acknowledgement of Timarchos, Demetrios I and Alexander Balas as well as Rome's alliance with the people of Judaea. The senate, however, refused Tryphon's offer. Diodoros' moral explanation of the senatorial rejection forms part of his narrative on Tryphon and cannot serve as a historical explanation. In fact, the acceptance of Seleukid kings who murdered their young predecessors was not unprecedented. Both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I were acknowledged, although their predecessors had died during the takeover of the diadem or shortly thereafter.¹⁶² Timarchos and Alexander Balas also were accepted. Thus, the senate's reason for rejecting Tryphon was presumably very different and will be discussed in further detail below.

It is difficult to assess what impact Rome's refusal had on Tryphon's kingship since it is questionable to what degree this would be known in the Levant. His relationship with the people of Judaea was strained following his capture of Jonathan and it is unlikely that Rome's rejection had any influence on this relationship. Moreover, it would be speculative to assume that his troops would question his authority on this basis, particularly because the evidence suggests that defection from

προσαγορευθῆναι βασιλέα. εὗρε δὲ τὴν σύγκλητον πάνυ πανουργοτέραν ἑαυτοῦ καὶ τοὺς ἀπάτη παρακρουομένους συνέσει καταστρατηγοῦσαν. Τὸ μὲν γὰρ δῶρον ἐδέξατο καὶ τὴν εὐφημίαν μετὰ τοῦ λυσιτελοῦς ἐτήρησεν, ἀντὶ δὲ Τρύφωνος μεταχρηματίσασα τὴν δόσιν εἰς τὸν ὑπ' αὐτοῦ δολοφονηθέντα βασιλέα τὴν ἐπιγραφὴν ἐποιήσατο. διὰ δὲ ταύτης τῆς πράξεως ἀνέδειξεν ἑαυτὴν μισοπονηροῦσαν ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ παιδὸς ἀναιρέσει καὶ δωρεὰς ἀσεβῶν ἀνδρῶν οὐ προσδεχομένην.

¹⁶¹ Cf. the parallel in Liv. 22. 32. 7-9.

¹⁶² Evidence of Antiochos IV's acceptance: Liv. 42. 6. 12; acceptance of Demetrios I: Pol. 31. 33.

Tryphon's ranks only occurred once Antiochos VII had gained a bridgehead in the Levant.

Tryphon's royal image incorporated iconographical elements which were known in the Seleukid kingdom. However, it was the combination and development of these elements which led to a new royal portrait which was unique and would influence the development of royal portraiture from this period onwards. His emphasis on elements from Alexander's imagery, the development of his hair in a highly energetic style, as well as the luxurious elements of his imagery and his royal name, promised his troops success and abundant wealth. Tryphon's royal image was intended to underline his claim to the diadem and his royal coinage was one element of its transmission. The stress on abundance also can be seen in the precious gift to Rome and could perhaps also be interpreted as another marker of Tryphon's royal image.

3.2.2 Sons of Kings

3.2.2.1 Alexander Balas and the Influence of Internal and External Powers

Alexander Balas was not the first claimant to the diadem who came to the Seleukid Levant from the outside; both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I had similarly done so before him. However, Alexander Balas was the first usurper to compete with a Seleukid king who was not a child. Therefore, those who were promoting the king must have been aware of the political competition in the Seleukid kingdom as soon as Alexander Balas reached the Levant. The choices made regarding Alexander's royal imagery must have been crucial in attracting as many followers as possible to overcome Demetrios I, who had already been able to defeat one usurper at the beginning of his reign.

Polybios and Diodoros (who presumably relied on Polybios' account) give a clear indication of the contemporary public image of the usurper before his landing in the Levant. In Rome, Herakleides presented Laodike and Alexander as the children of the former king Antiochos IV, his friend (Pol. 33. 18. 6-14). This corresponds to Diodoros' description of the origins of the usurper, which explains how Attalos II

[...] sent for a certain youth who in beauty of countenance and in age was exceedingly like Antiochos [V] the late king of the Syrians. This man resided in Smyrna and he stoutly affirmed that he was a son of King Antiochos [IV]; and because of this resemblance he found many to believe him. On his arrival at Pergamon the king adorned him with a diadem and the other insignia proper to a king, then sent him to a certain Kilikian named Zenophanes. [...] He received the youth in Kilikia and spread the word abroad in Syria that the youth would reclaim his father's kingdom in his own good time.¹⁶³

The account emphasises the resemblance (ὁμοῖα) between Antiochos V and the young Alexander Balas. If we follow the narrative, it was this resemblance which was the most striking element and gave credit to the young man's account. However, it is possible that this account should be read in light of Polybios' doubt about Alexander Balas' heritage, as it was proclaimed in Rome. It is impossible to ascertain whether or not Alexander Balas was a son of Antiochos IV and the negative narrative regarding his descent might have been ascribed to him during his strife with Demetrios I or Demetrios II.¹⁶⁴ Conclusions on his descent cannot be drawn, but this question is not entirely relevant for an analysis of Alexander Balas' royal image or his royal offers.

It was Attalos II who adorned the young man with a retinue appropriate for a king and he sent the usurper to the Kilikian dynast Zenophanes before Alexander ventured on the embassy to Rome. According to Diodoros (Polybios), the usurpation

¹⁶³ Diod. Sic. 31. 32a: μετεπέμψατο μεираκίσκον τινὰ τὴν ὠραιότητα τῆς ὄψεως καὶ τὴν ἡλικίαν ὁμοίαν ἔχοντα καθ' ὑπερβολὴν Ἀντιόχῳ τῷ πρότερον βεβασιλευκότῃ τῆς Συρίας. διέτριβε δ' οὗτος ἐν Σμύρνῃ διαβεβαιούμενος ἑαυτὸν Ἀντιόχου τοῦ βασιλέως υἱὸν εἶναι, καὶ παρὰ πολλοῖς πιστευόμενος διὰ τὴν ὁμοιότητα. ὥς δὲ παρεγένετο εἰς Πέργαμον, ἐκόσμησεν αὐτὸν διαδήματι καὶ τῇ λοιπῇ προσηκούσῃ βασιλέως περικοπῇ, καὶ πρὸς τινὰ τῶν Κιλικίων ἔπεμψεν ὄνομα Ζηνοφάνην. [...] εἰς δὲ χωρίον τῆς Κιλικίας δεξάμενος τὸν μεираκίσκον διεδίδου λόγους εἰς τὴν Συρίαν ὥς μέλλοντος ἐπὶ τὴν πατρῶαν ἀρχὴν κατιέναι τοῦ μεираκίσκου σὺν ἰδίῳ καιρῷ. [...]

¹⁶⁴ HCP iii, 557; Will (1982), 376; Ehling (2008), 146. Ogden (1999), 141-6 uses Alexander Balas to identify an attempt by Antiochos III to create legitimate heirs.

of Alexander Balas was a well-planned enterprise and therefore we also should assume that the royal image of the king was thoroughly constructed. It was this image which was proposed to the Roman senate: a son of Antiochos IV wanted to regain his ancestral rule ‘πατρῴας ἀρχῆς’ (Pol. 33. 18. 7). Alexander was not alone as Polybios mentions those who were willing to assist him ‘τοὺς βουλομένους συμπράττειν αὐτῷ’ (Pol. 33. 18. 8); however, the Attalid king was surely not included among them. Despite Attalos II’s interest in the investiture of Alexander Balas (Diod. Sic. 31. 32a), there are no further attestations of Attalid relations with Alexander Balas.¹⁶⁵ Alexander’s supporters were those around Herakleides, the former friend of Antiochos IV. The expulsion of Herakleides and the usurpation of Timarchos might be indicative of courtiers’ precarious position after the change in monarchs. Ammonios’ murder of ‘all the friends’ of King Demetrios in Antiocheia (Liv. *per.* 50) illustrates the potential danger facing kingless courtiers.¹⁶⁶ Although Herakleides disappears from the historical evidence after making preparations in Ephesos for Alexander Balas’ landing on the Levantine coast, his actions underline the potential of former courtiers’ influence over the affairs of the Seleukid kingdom.¹⁶⁷ It is at least possible that it was also this group of supporting friends who became the pledging plebs in Justin’s account (Iust. 35. 1. 6). If indeed we should interpret the early image of the usurper to be a well-constructed initiative, it is instructive that the name of the supposed son of Antiochos IV was not Antiochos or Seleukos, but rather Alexander, a fact which is echoed in Justin’s account (Iust. 35. 1. 7): Alexander Balas set out to usurp the Seleukid kingdom as a son of the Seleukid king, but his name was not Seleukid at all.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. Psoma (forthcoming). Seleukid-Attalid relations in the context of the accession of Antiochos IV: *I. Pergamon* 160, esp. 13-20. For a narrative: Mittag (2006), 42-4 (with references).

¹⁶⁶ Herakleides: App. *Syr.* 45 [=235]; see also above n.7. Timarchos: see above; cf. Pol. 31. 13. 3 on the courtiers of Seleukos IV who had left the kingdom.

¹⁶⁷ See: Münzer (1912), 468.

Once Alexander Balas landed on the coast of the Levant, we can see the king's royal *persona* in practice. Alexander made reference to his royal father on his coinage. He employed the Zeus Nikephoros type on the reverse, which had been introduced under Antiochos IV, presumably to underline the distinction between his coinage and that of his adversary.¹⁶⁸ Moreover, his epithet Θεοπάτωρ makes explicit allusions to his 'divine' father.¹⁶⁹ Although Alexander Balas had also issued coinage with the usual Apollo/Omphalos reverse and continued the Seleukid era, his royal coinage does not show an active attempt to follow Seleukid royal formulae and symbols. Instead he referred to one specific predecessor, developing it further in order to establish his very own image.

The choice of using the royal name Alexander is also apparent on the coinage. Apart from some issues of the royal image which contain softer features and occasionally the military cloak, the imagery is relatively homogenous on the silver coinage during Balas' reign, which would suggest a standardised portrait.¹⁷⁰ On the portraits of Alexander Balas from his primary mint, he is depicted with very expressed masculine facial features (pl. 5.1-3).¹⁷¹ Compared to former Seleukid rulers, his head is very large and particular emphasis is placed on the thick neck, chin and especially the supraorbital ridge. These features are further stressed by the relative small size of the eyes. His lips are full and he is usually depicted with a nose following the line of the forehead; most issues also contain a slight protrusion of the nasal bone. The hair is very curly, leaking up like flames, and forms an *anastolē* in the middle of the forehead. On some coins additional curls leak over the diadem and form curls at the back of the head, while some issues also depict him with sideburns. All

¹⁶⁸ Cf. e.g. Antiocheia on the Orontes: Antiochos IV: SC 1396-7; 1400. Alexander Balas: SC 1781-2. Antiochos V also employed the Zeus Nikephoros type in his mint at Antiocheia: SC 1574-6.

¹⁶⁹ I Makk. 10. 1. Antiochos IV appeared on the majority of his coins as θεὸς Ἐπιφάνης: e.g. Antiocheia on the Orontes: SC 1396-04; 1404-6; 1410-15.

¹⁷⁰ The issue from the Persian Gulf deviate deviates from the 'standard' image: SC 1866.

¹⁷¹ SC 1781-2. For the prominence of the mint: Hoover/Houghton (forthcoming), and also e.g. *IGCH* 1809 in Susa and 1813 near Teheran.

these elements – the heavy features, the Greek nose and the wild hair – are references to the imagery of Herakles and Alexander the Great, and were employed by his successors, particularly Lysimachos (pl. 5.5).¹⁷² While an *anastolē* was employed by both Antiochos IV and Demetrios I on some issues (pl. 4.1-2), Alexander Balas' royal image develops this motive further. It is this imagery that underlines the most important aspect of Alexander's royal *persona*, his royal name: Alexander.¹⁷³ While a clear reference to his 'divine' father was made, his imagery and his royal name Alexander Balas also referred explicitly to the memory of Alexander the Great. It was this image which Alexander Balas wished to convey to his troops who followed him in defeating the Seleukid king in battle and acknowledged him as king.

Some of Alexander Balas' royal offers can be assessed beyond the evidence of his royal image. Alexander fostered two close alliances after his accession which seem to have been crucial for his royal success. As mentioned above, as soon as Alexander Balas occupied Ptolemais, he tried to make an alliance with the people of Judaea. The political value of the Makkabees is illustrated by Demetrios I's contemporary attempts to foster an alliance with Jonathan at the outset of Alexander Balas' revolt.¹⁷⁴ Alexander Balas offered the Makkabees more concessions than any of their predecessors and he was the first pretender who confirmed the high priesthood to the Makkabaeen leader, thus making Jonathan the head of the Jewish theocracy (I Makk. 10. 20; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 45). Up to this point, the Seleukid kings had acknowledged Makkabaeen power, but still favoured the Hellenised faction for the high priesthood. Since Alkimos' death (I Makk. 9. 54-6), Demetrios I also had accepted Jonathan's power, but the high priesthood of Jerusalem had been left vacant (Jos. *Ant.* 20. 237). Although Alexander Balas' official granting of the high priesthood

¹⁷² For the portrait of Alexander: Smith (1988), 58-64; Fleischer (1991), 60. Lysimachos: Mørkholm (1991), 81-2; *contra* Queyrel (2003), 229. For a recent discussion on early Hellenistic coin portraiture: Kroll (2007), 113-22, here 114-17.

¹⁷³ See Bohm (1989), 105-16. See pl. 5.2-3.

¹⁷⁴ Ios. *Ant. Iud.* 13. 37; I Makk. 10. 2-4; cf. Ma (2000b), 71-112.

would have been void if he had not been able to establish himself in the Seleukid empire, Jonathan and the Makkabees were able to use this promotion to diminish opposition within Jerusalem. The lack of outside support for the Hellenised Jews in the *akra* limited their possibilities. Alexander decided to bring the Makkabaeen group as close to him as possible and he ignored the wishes of the other Jewish factions (I Makk. 10. 61), a policy he continued throughout his reign. Alexander elaborated these grants on the occasion of his wedding after he had been able to establish himself as sole king in the Seleukid kingdom (I Makk. 10. 59; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 83-5) and he offered further grants when Demetrios II began to challenge his rule (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 102.). Although the evidence might distort our picture, it appears that Alexander Balas' politics had its desired effects. He granted the Makkabaeen power official recognition, which catapulted the most powerful of the Jewish factions to the head of the Jewish state, while at the same time he ignored the other groups. This policy, combined with the lack of support for other groups (who were nevertheless still present), seems to have fostered the basis for a relationship between Jonathan and Alexander Balas. The people of Judaea seem to have only joined sides with Demetrios II after the death of Alexander Balas (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 123-5).

Finally, it was after Alexander Balas had defeated Demetrios I that he tried to strengthen a possible pre-existing alliance with Ptolemaic Egypt. This alliance was ratified by his marriage to an Egyptian princess. Scholarship has interpreted this alliance as very influential to Alexander Balas' reign, by stressing the influence of Ptolemaic elements on his coinage. The nature of this relationship (alliance vs. Ptolemaic dominance) is crucial to interpreting Alexander Balas' reign. Undoubtedly, Alexander Balas made reference to this alliance on his coinage; the political motivations, however, can only be assessed through a re-evaluation of the attestations of the relation between Alexander Balas and the Ptolemaic king. Particular emphasis

is placed not only on the wedding coinage of Alexander Balas and Kleopatra Thea, but also on the coinage with the eagle on the reverse. It has been suggested that the Ptolemaic eagle on the reverse of Alexander Balas' coinage indicates a close relationship between the Ptolemaic king and Alexander Balas either on political or economic grounds.¹⁷⁵ Scholarship has outlined that initial Seleukid minting activity in Koile Syria and Phoinikia was limited. Antiochos III apparently did not strike silver coinages in the region and his successors seem to have only minted coins in Ptolemais. An apparently small series from Seleukos IV, a larger series from Antiochos IV and another small series from Demetrios I survive.¹⁷⁶ In an analysis of the hoard evidence from the region, G. Le Rider has illustrated that Ptolemaic coinage on the Phoinikian standard was predominant in the hoards up to the 140s BCE and the hoarding of Phoinikian standard coinage presumably indicates local demand. Strikingly, the hoards outside the region rarely show coins of the Phoinikian standard.¹⁷⁷ Alexander Balas' Phoinikian standard issues should therefore be interpreted as a continuation of Antiochos V's initiative to strike these issues in the region. The coinage responded to local demand by using the Ptolemaic eagle on the reverse in a number of mints and would be continued by his successors until the Seleukids lost control over the region.¹⁷⁸ In light of the local prominence of the

¹⁷⁵ Various scholars have argued that Alexander Balas was dominated by Ptolemaios VI. Most recently Ehling has underlined this interpretation. He translates the eagle coins as an indicator of the economic relations between Ptolemaic Egypt and Alexander Balas' territory: Ehling (2008), 155-6 with references to older literature in n.382. See also Mittag (2002), 373-99, here 392-3; Mørkholm (1967), 75-87, here 78-9.

¹⁷⁶ On monetary policy in this period: Houghton (2004), 49-79. Seleukos IV: Le Rider (1992b), 37-45, here 39-40. Antiochos IV (tetradrachms only): Mørkholm (1963), 44-56. Demetrios I: Houghton (1992a), 153-69.

¹⁷⁷ Le Rider (1995), 391-404, here 395-6. *CH* 9, which was published after this study, contains no hoards which contradict Le Rider's analysis.

¹⁷⁸ Antiochos V: SC 1583. Le Rider (1995), 391-404, here 394; 396-7 (with reference to Le Rider [1985], 76). For Mørkholm (1967), 75-87, here 78-9 these issues were struck under Alexander Balas. However, Le Rider has shown that this interpretation is unlikely. Duration: the Seleukid eagle coinage continued until the reign of Antiochos IX: Le Rider (1995), 391-404, here 396. For the eagle coinage: SC 1583 (Antiochos V), 1824, 1830-2, 1835-7, 1842 (Alexander Balas), 1952, 1954-6, 1959-67, 2188, 2195-7, 2203-6 (Demetrios II [both reigns]), 2020, 2022, 2026 (Antiochos VI), 2042-3, 2045-7 (Tryphon), 2102-3, 2109-11, 2116-7, 2124 (Antiochos VII), 2253-6 (Alexander Zabinas), 2269, 2331-2, 2337-41 (Antiochos VIII [the first with Kleopatra Thea]), 2391-2, 2395-6 (Antiochos IX).

Phoinikian standard coinage, the use of the Ptolemaic eagle on the coins should therefore be detached from its 'Ptolemaic' significance and should presumably be read as a marker of weight standard in order to distinguish it from the tetradrachms on the Attic standard which also were struck at the mints. Evidence of the duration of the eagle on the reverse of the coinage throughout the period of Seleukid control of the area corroborates this argument.¹⁷⁹

Recent scholarship on Alexander Balas maintains that the location of the king's court in Ptolemais, the Egyptian name of Alexander Balas' chancellor Ammonios, the marriage of Alexander Balas to Kleopatra and the coin issues with Kleopatra depicted in front of Alexander Balas also can be interpreted as indicators for Ptolemaic dominance over Alexander Balas' reign. It has already been argued above that this assumption is doubtful for the Seleukid eagle coinage and the same is true for other remaining evidence. While for H. Volkmann, the court of Alexander Balas was located in Ptolemais, there seems to be no evidence to suggest that he limited his court to this particular city.¹⁸⁰ Similarly, the ethnic origins of Alexander Balas' chancellor in Egypt remain speculative. While the name Ammonios is certainly a reference to Ammon, the occurrence of the same name on mainland Greece, the islands, and in Asia Minor and Macedonia during the second century BCE, therefore does not demonstrate a direct connection between Alexander Balas' chancellor and Egypt. The frequency with which the name appears illustrates that it was not confined to a specific region.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ A potential Ptolemaic issue minted during the reign of Alexander Balas also cannot be attributed with certainty: Lorber (2007), 105-17 has outlined the limits of placing Ptolemaic coinage in the Levant. But even if the coinage was minted in the Levant, Hazzard (1995), 415-36, here 417n.7, idem (1999), 147-59, here 150 has argued that the tetradrachm attributed to Ptolemaios VI at Ptolemais (Svoronos 1486 pl. 48, 19-20) should be placed in the period of Ptolemaios VI's invasion; see also Le Rider (1995), 391-404, here 397.

¹⁸⁰ Ehling (2008), 155, following Volkmann (1925), 373-412, here 406. The marriage in Ptolemais and the handing over of the public affairs of Antiocheia to Hierax and Diodotos (Diod. Sic. 33. 3) have served as indicators of Alexander's court at Ptolemais; cf. Liv. 35. 13. 4.

¹⁸¹ While Ehling has argued that most attestations of the name are from Egypt, a search in the *LGPN* reveals that although the name is prominent in Egypt in this period, attestations in other regions, and

The wedding coinage, on the other hand, illustrates the importance of Ptolemaic Egypt for Alexander Balas during the early years of his reign. It was presumably for the occasion of their wedding that the royal mint at Ptolemais struck a tetradrachm (notably on Attic standard) which depicted on the obverse a double portrait of a man and a woman, presumably the royal couple (*SC* 1841). The reverse carries the legend βασιλέως Ἀλεξάνδρου Θεοπάτορος Εὐεργέτου. Alexander's emphasis on his queen is also demonstrated in an additional gold issue minted which depicted Kleopatra Thea on the obverse and a cornucopia and the title βασίλισσα Κλεοπάτρα on the reverse (*SC* 1840). The double portrait is the first Hellenistic royal portrait to show the queen in front of the king. Her features are smaller than her husband's, she is veiled and bears divine attributes, such as the cornucopia and the *kalathos*. The king's portrait is proportionally bigger: the male nose is twice the size of the female nose. However, in terms of style, the portrait follows the standard portrait of Alexander Balas. Little curls leak onto the face and the portrait has a dominant chin and a protruding Adam's apple. The supraorbital ridge is also emphasised and both wear a diadem (pl. 5.4).

Double portraits were not common on coinage in the Seleukid kingdom. The first Seleukid double portrait of a royal couple was introduced under Demetrios I (pl. 4.4), perhaps relying on its Seleukid counterparts in the Babylonian clay seals from the earlier period (Invernizzi [2004], 42, Se 28). To a certain degree it follows the rules of the far more common double portraits from Ptolemaic Egypt.¹⁸² Typically, the queen was depicted behind the monarch and the emphasis of the portraiture was on unity, illustrated through similar facial expression and bodily features, such as brow, eyes, nose and chin, which often gave the queen a masculine appearance. Although

Macedonia in particular, do not support his conclusions that Ammonios was Alexander Balas' Ptolemaic 'watchdog': Ehling (1998), 103; idem (2008), 155.

¹⁸² Ptolemaic portrait: e.g. pl. 5.6; Svoronos 603-6; 608-9; 613-25; 1247-8. Seleukid portrait: *SC* 1686-9. Also, the bronze issue under Alexander Balas depicted him in the front illustrates this: *SC* 1861.

the depiction of Laodike on the coinage of Demetrios I is slightly more feminised, the stress on unity is still apparent through similarity in lips, nose, eyes and the brow (SC 1686-9). Moreover, no more than the face of the queen is visible. This differs on the coinage of Alexander Balas as two individual portraits are combined. Furthermore, portraying the woman in front also allowed the introduction of another feature: variations in size. While the placement of Kleopatra gives the queen a prominent position on the coinage, her depiction also serves to amplify Alexander's larger features in the back, such as his chin, neck and nose.¹⁸³ It is possible that the queen was intended to underline royal continuity and stability, perhaps supported by the use of the *cornucopiae* and other divine attributes in her coinage.¹⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the coinage also illustrates Alexander's image of masculinity and physical strength as depicted on his individual coinage. Therefore, it is not credible to suggest that the double portrait demonstrated Ptolemaic dominance over Alexander Balas' reign.

Alexander Balas had a strong interest in establishing an alliance with Ptolemaios VI and he thought it was advantageous to display this alliance on his coinage. The coinage depicting Kleopatra Thea, however, was only a small fraction of Alexander Balas' main coinage, which only depicted his royal portrait. How successful these offers were will be the topic of the next section. However, one indication of Alexander Balas' attempts to be acknowledged as king can be underlined here. Although the Ptolemaic king had invaded the Seleukid kingdom and joined sides with Demetrios II, Alexander Balas' defeat in the final battle might not have been as quick as suggested in the sources. Not only was Alexander Balas able to flee the battlefield, but the fact that the Ptolemaic troops were not able to immediately remove their wounded king to a safe place suggests that the battle was not entirely an utter defeat for Alexander Balas.

¹⁸³ *Contra* Ehling, (2008), 155. For the imagery: Fleischer (1991), 60.

¹⁸⁴ Fleischer (1991), 76-7.

What then were the elements of Alexander Balas' royal offers? In addition to invoking reference to his father, in choosing his royal name and royal imagery Alexander Balas aligned himself more strongly than any Seleukid king or usurper before him with Alexander, emphasising that it was his personal achievements, his masculinity and his prowess which made it possible for him to be king. While it cannot be ascertained whether the name of Alexander was his own choice or that of his initial supporters, it nevertheless illustrates that he continued to employ the image of 'Alexander' throughout his reign. He attempted to strengthen his acceptance through a dynastic marriage; however, this alliance does not illustrate Ptolemaic dominance over the court of Alexander Balas. While no evidence remains for the continuing relationship between both houses, Ptolemaios VI's invasion of the Levant, perhaps in the context of the Parthian invasion of Media and the appearance of Demetrios II, might illustrate the state of this alliance in the early 140s BCE. Apart from his troops, the most important audience for Alexander Balas seems to have been the Makkabaeen group of Jerusalem. It was his acknowledgement of the Makkabees in the high priesthood which enabled him to maintain a continuous alliance with this powerful group and he tried to deepen this relationship by continuing to issue grants to Jonathan and Simon. While the fact that the Makkabees did not defect from Alexander Balas might give some indication of Alexander Balas' diplomatic success, his acknowledgement of the Makkabees also accelerated Makkabaeen power, which became increasingly prominent in the following period.

3.2.2.2 Alexander Zabinas

While the usurpation of Alexander Zabinas is closely connected with the military activities between Demetrios II and Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II, his royal

offers are poorly attested. When the city of Antiocheia started to mint coinage in Alexander's name in 129/8 BCE, his coinage carried the title βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος. His royal portrait depicts a youthful man with a relatively thick neck, protruding chin, sometimes chubby cheeks and on most issues a rather large nose. His hair consists of curls flowing over the diadem which are longer at the back of the head. The diadem either falls straight or is waving behind (pl. 6.4). Only in Askalon is he depicted with a chlamys.¹⁸⁵ Bronze issues depict him with an elephant scalp, the radiate crown or the crested Boiotian helmet. These elements are also attested in the coinage of Antiochos IV, his 'father' Alexander Balas and 'brother' Antiochos VI, as well as other (including later) Seleukid kings.¹⁸⁶ Accordingly, Alexander Zabinas' coinage largely follows the royal image of Alexander Balas, despite portraying a much more delicate and idealised image. The reference to Alexander Balas' coinage also seems to be apparent on the reverses. Like the coinage of his contemporary Demetrios II, the largest number of Alexander Zabinas' precious reverses depicts Zeus Nikephoros. However, the large number of other reverse types, particularly on the bronze coinage, does not suggest a specific preference for certain types.¹⁸⁷ Alexander Zabinas seems to have chosen a royal portrait which followed not only Alexander Balas' royal coinage, but also the other kings' style and iconography. Only two (albeit distinctive)

¹⁸⁵ Chlamys: SC 2253-6, which seems to be specific to Askalon; cf. Antiochos VI (SC 2026-7), Tryphon (SC 2047-8) and Antiochos VIII (SC 2339-41). The issue of Demetrios II, attributed to the mint, lacks the chlamys (SC 2206).

¹⁸⁶ It also is possible that the attributes on the bronze issues were incorporated by the mints. Elephant scalp: Antiochos IV (SC 1533), Demetrios I (SC 1696) Alexander Zabinas (SC 2234). Radiate crown: after it was introduced by Antiochos IV, it was employed by Antiochos V (SC 1579), Demetrios I (SC 1697-8; 1703), Alexander Balas (SC 1786; 1789; 1854) and on most issues (apart from three) of Antiochos VI (SC 2000-18; 2021-5); Alexander Zabinas (SC 2233; 2235; 2237). Crested Boiotian helmet: since its introduction under Timarchos, the helmet was employed on one issue of Alexander Balas (SC 1790), Demetrios II (SC 1991) and Alexander Zabinas (SC 2232). Both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas' issues were minted in Antiocheia on the Orontes, perhaps indicating regional preferences. Demetrios II's issue is attributed to Seleukeia on the Tigris. The helmet reappears under Antiochos VII (SC 2122).

¹⁸⁷ Zeus Nikephoros or attributes of Zeus: SC 2210; 2213-20; 2239; 2243-6; 2248. Other: a distinction between local types (such as Sandan, Ba'al-Berit or the Phoenician eagle type) and royal types is hardly possible and therefore it is not quite certain if the reverses are local or royal initiatives. The images include: Athena Nikephoros (e.g. SC 2222), Nike (e.g. 2224), Apollo (e.g. SC 2240-1) Dionysos (e.g. SC 2229), Tyche (SC 2232), *cornucopiae* (e.g. SC 2221; 2223), anchor (e.g. SC 2228), and others. For a stylistic analysis of the *cornucopiae*: Dahmen (2003), 171-83.

aspects seem consciously different. The depiction of a beardless idealised young man contrasted with the reigning Demetrios II, who on most precious coinage during his second reign was depicted with a long beard. Moreover, he ventured into the Seleukid kingdom with the royal name of Alexander, a reference to both Alexander the Great and his supposed father Alexander Balas. The stress on his royal name is underlined in his renunciation of royal epithets on most of his coinage: his image was that of a young king and his name was Alexander.

Justin describes another element of Alexander Zabinas' quest for acknowledgement by the people of Antiocheia. When the silver coffin of the dead Antiochos VII arrived in the city, Alexander Zabinas cared for the dead body (Iust. 39. 1. 6). If the event is historical, it is possible that it inspired Justin's genealogy of Alexander Zabinas' supposed adoption by Antiochos VII (Iust. 39. 1. 5). However, the following point is important. According to the narrative, Antiochos VII was loved by the people of Antiocheia. By displaying his care for the dead monarch's body, Alexander Zabinas tried to associate himself with that former king, attempting in this way to attract former followers of Antiochos VII. Alexander was not the first individual to whom a corpse proved useful. Philip, the *syntrophos* of Antiochos IV, had escorted the body and the royal insignia of the Seleukid king to Antiocheia and it seems that it was his specific role which allowed him to style himself as the executor of Antiochos IV's last wishes. In fact, it allowed Philip to establish himself in Antiocheia for a short period of time.¹⁸⁸ Alexander did not use Antiochos VII in order to establish himself in the city, but his treatment of the corpse demonstrated his care

¹⁸⁸ Philip as guardian of Antiochos V: I Makk. 6. 15: 'And he gave him the diadem, his cloak, and the ring, so that he should guide his son Antiochos and educate him to rule as king'. καὶ ἔδωκεν αὐτῷ τὸ διάδημα καὶ τὴν στολὴν αὐτοῦ καὶ τὸν δακτύλιον τοῦ ἀγαγεῖν Ἀντίοχον τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκθρέψαι αὐτὸν τοῦ βασιλεύειν; see also I Makk. 6. 55. The body of Antiochos IV: II Makk. 9. 29. Philip in Antiocheia: I Makk. 6. 63. For the body of Alexander for the Ptolemies: Paus. 1. 6. 3; 1.7.1; Diod. Sic. 18. 26-8; Strab. 17. 8; Fraser (1972), IIa 31-3 n.79.

for one of the dead kings (and Demetrios II's brother), which was thought to be helpful in his claims to the diadem.

It is impossible to ascertain whether it was Alexander Zabinas' success or Demetrios II's failure which led to the latter's end, but after Demetrios II had died the usurper was sole king in the Seleukid empire. He apparently had a good relationship with the people of Judaea (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 269) and the sources suggest that he was generally accepted in large parts of the Levant and in Kilikia. It is in this context that we should place the break with Ptolemaic Egypt. Justin writes:

After seizing the throne of Syria, Alexander was flushed with pride over his success, and began to show disdain even for Ptolemaios himself, the man who had engineered his accession to the throne. Ptolemaios [...] proceeded to devote his entire strength to the destruction of Alexander's kingdom, which the latter had acquired by Ptolemaios' resources solely because of his hatred for Demetrios. He therefore sent assistance to [Antiochos VIII] Grypos and also gave him the hand of his daughter Tryphaina [...].¹⁸⁹

The break between Alexander Zabinas and Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II did not have anything to do with Alexander Zabinas' relationship with the Ptolemaic king, if indeed they were still allied after Alexander went into the Levant; rather it was caused by Alexander Zabinas' success (and it is this success which Justin describes as *superbia*). The Ptolemaic king could not be interested in a strong Seleukid kingdom. Therefore, he began to send assistance to the younger son of Demetrios II, Antiochos VIII.

This is the limited evidence for Alexander Zabinas' royal offers. It is possible that the Ptolemaic support for Antiochos VIII overwhelmed Alexander Zabinas' royal offers, as indicated by the loss of Antiocheia, further reductions in his support base and finally in his capture. Although the fall of Alexander Zabinas seems to have been

¹⁸⁹ Iust. 39. 2. 1-3: *Sed Alexander occupato Syriae regno, tumens, successu rerum, spernere iam etiam ipsum Ptolomeum, a qui subornatus in regnum fuerat, superba insolentia coepit. Itaque Ptolomeus reconciliata sororis gratia destruere Alexandri regnum, quod odio Demetrii viribus suis adquisierat, summis opibus instituit. Mittit igitur ingentia Grypo auxilia et filiam Tryphaenam Grypo nupturam, [...].*

rather swift, his usurpation nevertheless underlines that even twenty years after the death of his ‘father’, a usurper thought it was advantageous to insert himself into the family of a man who had apparently been branded a usurper to the diadem in the period after his death. Moreover, similar to his pretended father who challenged a King Demetrios in 150 BCE, his name was also Alexander. He continued the Seleukid era and (if we credit the historical sources) he displayed care for the dead body of a former king. It was a combination of all these elements which led to his acceptance in the Levant. Beyond a reference to good relations there is no evidence of Alexander Zabinas’ relationship with the people of Judaea. Did he remind him that his father Alexander Balas had accepted Jonathan as high priest? Apparently, however, he was too successful for Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II to leave him to his own devices and the Ptolemaic king began to support Antiochos VIII.

Despite the sparse evidence concerning Alexander Zabinas’ relationship with his audiences in his kingdom, he is often depicted very positively, underlining his success in gaining acceptance. Why was a usurper whom his enemies called זַבִּינָא ‘the bought one’ more successful than Demetrios II who was well established in his kingdom? Should this be put down to the contempt held for Demetrios II or perhaps to Ptolemaic support? How influential were the outside supporters of the Seleukid usurpers and did they have a vested interest in the affairs of the Seleukid kingdom? It is these questions which will be discussed in the following section, before considering the groups within the kingdom.

3.2.3 External Support of Royal Offers: Neighbouring Kings and Rome

In a summary section about the political events between c.168 and 150 BCE, Polybios underlines the importance of the outside kings in Seleukid politics: ‘But then, Seleukos’ son Demetrios, after he was king in Syria for twelve years, lost both

his kingdom and his life, to the other kings combining against him', ὁ δὲ Σελεύου Δημήτριος κύριος γενόμενος ἔτη δώδεκα τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐστερήθη, συστραφέντων ἐπ' αὐτὸν τῶν ἄλλων βασιλέων (Pol. 3. 5. 3). For Polybios, Seleukid politics were not internal, but rather Mediterranean; the interwovenness of historical events was close to the Hellenistic author's heart. This chapter has illustrated so far that outside kings and the senate of Rome took an active interest in the affairs of the Seleukid kingdom. The degree or extent of external interest, however, was largely limited to the establishment of internal conflict and the creation of alliances between reigning kings and outside powers. Usurpers were used by the outside kings and Rome to influence the politics of the Seleukid kingdom and this will be the focus of this section.

3.2.3.1 Kings Outside the Seleukid Empire

Both the Attalids and the Ptolemies invested Seleukid pretenders and sent them into the Seleukid space. As mentioned above, Alexander Balas allied himself with Ptolemaios VI and married his daughter after he had established himself as sole king. The advantages for the foreign kings seem obvious: Attalos II tried to distract Demetrios I from his activities north of the Euphrates by sending a pretender into Kilikia;¹⁹⁰ Ptolemaios VI allied himself with Alexander Balas, presumably in order to avoid another Seleukid invasion of Egypt. He had only recently made peace with his brother, who was now reigning in Kyrene, and perhaps could not afford a war on the north-eastern frontier at this point.¹⁹¹ Ptolemaios VI might also have hoped to exert some influence over the young king Alexander. It was only a few years after his alliance with Alexander Balas that Ptolemaios VI successfully invaded the Levant as

¹⁹⁰ Demetrios I unsuccessfully offered his sister as a bride to Ariarathes V of Kappadokia: Diod. 31. 28; cf. Hopp (1977), 38-9.

¹⁹¹ For the competition between Ptolemaios VI and Ptolemaios VII: Huß (2001), 567-89; Hölbl (2001), 183-9. Scholarship argues that the formula in the demotic texts implies that the son and co-regent of Ptolemaios VI had died before August 152 BCE: see Huß (2001), 577n.317 and 578n.318; Hölbl (2001), 192.

his predecessor had and it was only his death which diminished Ptolemaic power over the Seleukid territories when Demetrios II quickly drove the Ptolemaic troops back into Egypt.¹⁹² During the later period there are no indications that Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II tried to intervene in the politics of the Seleukid kingdom after his accession to the diadem. The king exiled close friends of his late brother and he consolidated his position in Egypt.¹⁹³ Moreover, Antiochos VII also seems not to have been interested in a campaign against his southern neighbour. However, when Demetrios II returned from his Parthian captivity, the Seleukid king began a campaign against Egypt, which had fallen into civil war. Presumably to distract Demetrios II from the political troubles of his own kingdom, Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II invested a pretender to the Seleukid diadem.¹⁹⁴ While these initial objectives of royal support might seem obvious, the continued relationship between Seleukid usurpers and outside kings is difficult to establish.

Ptolemaic politics are instructive. The Ptolemaic king gave his daughter Kleopatra Thea in marriage to Alexander Balas after the latter's victory against Demetrios I. Nevertheless, five years later Ptolemaios VI invaded the Levant and joined sides with Demetrios II. This behaviour is remarkably similar to our account of Alexander Zabinas. Styled as a successor of a Seleukid king, he was sent into the Levant to weaken the authority of Demetrios II. After the death of Demetrios II, however, the Ptolemaic king began to support Antiochos VIII in order to weaken his former ally. The literary accounts display the breakdown in communication between the Ptolemaic king and both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas. Josephus (perhaps basing his account on Nikolaos of Damascus) describes a plot by Alexander Balas against Ptolemaios VI in his account of what motivated the Ptolemaic king's

¹⁹² See above, 3.1.2.

¹⁹³ See Huß (2001), 596-608 and Hölbl (2001), 194-7. For the exile of Galaistes, the *philos* of Ptolemaios VI: Diod. Sic. 33. 20. For the king's communication with the troops: SB VIII 10011 (=SEG 12. 548); Huß (2001), 601; Nadig (2007), 81-90.

¹⁹⁴ See above, 3.1.4.

change in attitude towards his former ally (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 106-10). Justin, on the other hand, gives Alexander's display of ingratitude towards Ptolemaios VI as the reason for the Ptolemaic king's change of allegiance (Iust. 39. 2. 1). However, as outlined above, the reason for the Ptolemaic kings' change in allegiance was their allies' successes. Thus, even if the Ptolemaic king was allied with the Seleukid usurpers, this relationship became highly unstable as soon as they were the sole kings in the Levant. Moreover, the Ptolemaic kings joined new kings to defeat their former allies, suggesting that the Ptolemaic kings were interested in a Seleukid kingdom which was divided by internal strife. Their alliances with Demetrios II and Antiochos VIII illustrate that the growing strength of Alexander Balas and the vitality of Alexander Zabinas were not in the Ptolemaic kings' interest.

Although the Attalids might have been interested in a stronger relationship with the king they sent into the Levant (as illustrated in the public friendship between Eumenes II and Antiochos IV),¹⁹⁵ there is little evidence on which to base conclusions regarding the relationship between Attalos II and Alexander Balas. Although the lack of evidence might be accidental, it seems plausible to assume that the initial distraction within the Seleukid kingdom was reason enough for the Attalids to invest in a Seleukid pretender and it was not certain how this relationship would develop. The Attalid kings might have been content with the victory of their pretender Alexander Balas, but it is questionable if his marriage to Kleopatra Thea was perceived positively at Pergamon. There is no evidence that Attalos II was involved in the appearance of Demetrios II in Kilikia; however, it is nevertheless possible that a new pretender to Seleukid Syria was welcomed by the kings of Pergamon.

Attalid interest in Seleukid Syria from Alexander Balas' period seems not to have outlasted the initial investiture of the king. Nevertheless, the sending of

¹⁹⁵ Mittag (2006), 103-14 argues that their friendship is evident in examples of benefactions, but does not reflect on the potential rivalry in this euergetic agon.

Alexander Balas indicates an interest in a kingdom which was preoccupied with its own affairs. The Ptolemaic support of Alexander Balas, Demetrios II (or in this instance perhaps only nominal support for a *de facto* conquest), Alexander Zabinas and Antiochos VIII illustrates that the Ptolemaic kings accepted a single ruler as long as he was not too successful. The acclamation of Antiochos VI and the usurpation of Tryphon perpetuated the duality of power within the Seleukid kingdom without outside influence. No communication between the Ptolemaic or Attalid kings and either Antiochos VI or Tryphon is attested. While this might be partially due to the lack of available sources for this period, it also is possible that both monarchs were content with the civil war in the Seleukid kingdom in this period. The Attalid kingdom seems not to have engaged in further politics with the Seleukid kingdom and the arrival of Antiochos VII on the coast of the Levant cannot be connected with outside monarchs.¹⁹⁶

3.2.3.2 The Roman Senate

The defeats of the Hellenistic monarchs by the Roman armies at Magnesia and Pydna fundamentally altered the political landscape of the Hellenistic east. From at least the day of Eleusis in July 168 BCE (Pol. 19. 27. 1-13), Roman power could no longer be doubted in the Seleukid empire. Acknowledgement of Roman supremacy in the geographic sphere of the eastern Mediterranean is illustrated by the numerous envoys of the *poleis* and kingdoms of the Greek east, as well as in the sending of royal hostages to Rome itself.¹⁹⁷ As has been outlined in this chapter, Rome was not only

¹⁹⁶ During the last years of Attalos II and the early years of Attalos III, evidence does not suggest activity on their south-eastern borders: Hopp (1977), 98-102; 107-12; Hansen (1971), 140-4. Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II was also strikingly passive in the Seleukid sphere. It is debatable if the revolt of Galaistes did not allow for any other political activities: Diod. Sic. 33. 22; see Huß (2001), 606-7; Hölbl (2001), 196.

¹⁹⁷ For an account highlighting the sheer number of embassies to Rome, e.g. Polybios' books 30-31; Canali de Rossi (1997); Gruen (1984), 111-19.

the initial cause of the split in the Seleukid dynasty, but also many of the Seleukid pretenders embarked on embassies to Rome in order to seek acceptance. Thus, this section will investigate usurpers' expectations in acquiring acknowledgement and will consider Roman politics towards the Seleukid empire.

The embassies of Timarchos and Alexander Balas to Rome are connected in two respects. First, they both tried to be acknowledged as kings in the Seleukid east during the reign of Demetrios I who, according to the Roman senate, never should have left Italy. Second, both embassies were headed by former friends of Antiochos IV. According to Polybios, the Romans did not want Demetrios I to leave Rome, since 'they were suspicious of a king in the prime of life like Demetrios and thought that the youth and incapacity of the boy [Antiochos V] who had succeeded to the kingship would serve their purpose better.'¹⁹⁸ Nevertheless, presumably in early 160 BCE, Demetrios I was acknowledged by the elder Ti. Sempronius Gracchus.¹⁹⁹ However, Ti. Gracchus only accepted Demetrios I in his position after the senate had acknowledged Timarchos in Rome as a king in Media, one of the Seleukid satrapies. Moreover, it was not only pretenders who were accepted by the Romans, as the people of Judaea allegedly made their first alliance with the Romans in this period.²⁰⁰ Thus, it is possible that it was part of Roman politics to acknowledge individual power holders within the Seleukid kingdom.

Seleukid pretenders, however, were not always accepted and thus senatorial politics, as suggested above, were not consistent. As previously mentioned, it was presumably not long after his accession that Tryphon had sent a golden Nike to Rome in order to be acknowledged as king. However, according to Diodoros' narrative, the

¹⁹⁸ Pol. 31. 2. 7: [...] ὑπιδομένη τὴν ἀκμὴν τοῦ Δημητρίου, μᾶλλον δὲ κρίνασα συμφέρειν τοῖς σφετέροις πράγμασι τὴν νεότητα καὶ τὴν ἀδυναμίαν τοῦ παιδὸς τοῦ διαδεδεγμένου τὴν βασιλείαν.

¹⁹⁹ Pol. 31. 33. 1-4. This has led scholars to believe that Demetrios I was not accepted as king in Rome: e.g. Ehling (2008), 140 (with further references). The acceptance of the golden crown, however, could be an indicator of his acceptance: Pol. 32. 2.

²⁰⁰ I Makk. 9. 17-32; 12. 1-4; Ios. *Ant.* 12. 415-19; 13. 164.

senate refused to acknowledge him because he had murdered his ward. It has been outlined above that Diodoros' moralistic explanation is not sufficient and the murder of boy kings in the process of accession to the diadem was not unique or necessarily unacceptable.²⁰¹ The reasons for Tryphon's non-acceptance presumably lie elsewhere and it is necessary to examine Tryphon's friends in Rome and to consider senatorial politics and competition in this period.²⁰²

The description of senatorial politics in this section so far has been largely artificial, following the language of interstate relations: the senate enacted decrees, such as 'to Timarchos, because of... to be their king' (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a); the senate 'decided' ἔδοξε (Pol. 33. 18. 13). However, the senate was not in unison in its political interests or decisions. For example, Polybios clearly illustrates in his account that the interests of M. Porcius Cato and the Scipiones were very different and the trial of the Scipiones after the war against Antiochos III is only one indicator of their senatorial competition (Pol. 23. 14; Liv. 38. 50-3; Gell. *NA* 4. 18; 6. 19). Different senators had not only different opinions with regard to the Hellenistic east, they also employed eastern politics in their senatorial *agon* in Rome. In the late third century BCE, Ti. Quinctius Flaminius was one of the most influential 'eastern experts' of senatorial Rome. He knew how to use his position as victor of Kynoskephalai and as 'liberator of Greece' to establish his position within the Roman eastern enterprise and also in Rome.²⁰³ U. Gotter has convincingly outlined how the prestige of eastern campaigns could be translated effectively for inner Roman politics. The successful expert would receive embassies from the east, which brought prestige, an influx in

²⁰¹ Diod. 32. 28a. See above, pp.130-2.

²⁰² The senatorial politics cannot be more than a sketch given the outline of the thesis. This could be an object of future research.

²⁰³ For Flaminius' Greek *persona* in Greece: Plut. *Flam.* 10-12. For its value in Rome: Flaminius had set up a statue with a Greek inscription on the forum, Plut. *Flam.* 1.1. He was again sent to the East (although only as a legate) with M'. Acilius Glabrio because of his popularity with the Greeks, Plut. *Flam.* 15. For Eastern Experts: Gruen (1984), 203-49. Gotter has illustrated that individual senators were indeed regarded as 'experts' both by the Greeks and their Roman colleagues. For this reason they were not granted consecutive commands in similar regions: Gotter [2001], ch. 6.1; cf. Bernhardt (1998), 79-89.

wealth (in the form of presents) as well as the awareness that the receiver of eastern embassies was an expert in this sphere. Following Gotter, the political value of Greek was translated into *auctoritas* in the inner senatorial discourse of the second and first century BCE and allowed Roman senators to obtain a more influential position among their peers.²⁰⁴ Good relations between the Hellenistic kings and Roman senators continued and it was presumably the good relationship between the elder Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus and the Hellenistic kings (e.g. Pol. 30. 27; 30. 30. 7; 31. 32.1-33. 5) which was the reason why the Attalid ambassador Eudemos visited his son Tiberius in 133 BCE during his embassy to Rome to open the will and testament of Attalos III (Plut. *Ti. Gracc.* 14. 1-3).²⁰⁵ Scipio Aemilianus, as the executor of Massinissa's will, illustrates that senators also could benefit from other rulers (Liv. *per.* 50; App. *Pun.* 105-6; Zon. 9.27.) and Cicero's first-century description of the arrival of the future Ariarathes X underlines the eastern wealth and the lucrativeness of friendships with eastern monarchs.²⁰⁶

It is perhaps in this context that we should place the acknowledgement of the Seleukid usurpers. Diodoros writes that Herakleides and Timarchos had been in Rome on a number of embassies for their king, Antiochos IV, and in his account of Timarchos in particular, Diodoros describes the usurper's relationship with Roman senators in the following terms: Timarchos 'provided himself with large sums of money and he offered the senators bribes; seeking especially to overwhelm and lure with gifts any senators who were in a weak financial position (Diod. Sic. 31. 27a).' The narrative stresses how Timarchos had been able to gain influence over Roman decision-making in the past by the means of bribery. It is certain that the envoys of Antiochos IV, on their mission to Rome, would have brought gifts for Roman

²⁰⁴ Scipio: L. Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus showed his guests precious silver work (Plin. *NH.* 37.12), brought Greek artists to Rome (Liv. 39. 22. 10) and a statue of him wore the Greek *chlamys* and sandals (Cic. *Rab. post.* 27; Val. Max. 3. 6. 2). For the analysis: Gotter [2001], ch. 6.

²⁰⁵ See Knepe (1989), 37-49, here 40; 47; Badian (1958), 160-2; Rawson (1975), 148-59, here 150-2.

²⁰⁶ Cic. *ad Att.* 13.2a; cf. *ad Att.* 5. 20. 6; and *ad fam.* 15. 2.

senators, who were regarded as their ‘Eastern experts’ and who would introduce them to the senate. The mention of the bribes, such as the corn contribution from Sicily for the younger C. Quinctius Flaminius, or the appearance of African beasts in Rome, only seems to be another means to describe the lavish gifts which external clients brought to their Roman patrons.²⁰⁷ It is impossible to say which families Timarchos and Herakleides communicated with on their embassy and it also is impossible to say which families had vested interests in the eastern affairs of Timarchos. Ti. Sempronius Gracchus was surely one of the most distinguished senators in eastern affairs. He had already headed the senatorial commission to investigate the state of affairs in the kingdom of Antiochos IV after Eleusis (Pol. 30. 27. 1-4) and was head of a commission in 161/0 BCE as mentioned above (Pol. 31. 32.1-33. 5).²⁰⁸ If there were Roman senators who had hoped that a King Timarchos could be to their political advantage, their hopes were in vain. Nevertheless, roughly seven years later Alexander Balas was accepted in Rome, while Tryphon was not. It is possible that it was the influence of Herakleides and his familiarity with Roman matters which led to Alexander Balas’ success, while Tryphon’s lack of friends in Rome resulted in the usurper’s non-acceptance. Moreover, in the period of Tryphon’s reign, which followed the death of Ti. Gracchus, some Roman senators were still interested in the eastern Mediterranean. This is illustrated by the embassy to the Hellenistic east, perhaps in the late 140s BCE, led by Scipio Aemilianus himself (Diod. Sic. 33. 28b).²⁰⁹

This model of senatorial competition is centred on an inner Roman discourse; a discourse of power, partially detached from the political considerations of the

²⁰⁷ Flaminius: Livy 33. 42. 8. Beasts: Livy. 44. 18. 8. Antiochos VII also sent magnificent gifts (*amplissima munera*) to Scipio Aemilianus who entered them into the official accounts, which Livy notes was not customary: Liv. *per.* 57.

²⁰⁸ See HCP iii, 516-7.

²⁰⁹ See Mattingly (1996), 67-76; idem (1986), 491-5; see also Astin (1959), 221-7, who prefers the later date c.140/39 BCE.

Hellenistic east. Nevertheless, even the few examples of leading senators heading on eastern embassies indicate some interest in the politics of the Hellenistic east. Thus, while it is perhaps not appropriate to formulate political themes on ‘the Roman senate’ or ‘the senate’s interests’ when considering the acceptance of usurpers, the non-acceptance of Tryphon is nevertheless revealing.

If it is possible to speculate on the interests of ‘the Roman senate’, one could argue that it was not interested in a strong Seleukid kingdom.²¹⁰ The senate (and now it is appropriate to slip back into diplomatic language) accepted two usurpers and although the acknowledgement did not include physical support,²¹¹ the senate nevertheless acknowledged local power holders as political entities, thus interfering in the politics of the Seleukid kingdom and encouraging a Seleukid empire which was occupied with its own affairs. A strong king in the Levant was not desirable and the acceptance of both Timarchos and Alexander Balas did not necessarily threaten Roman interests. Timarchos’ power base was in Media and it is likely that his sphere of action would initially have been the Seleukid east, far away from the eastern Mediterranean. Alexander Balas was accepted as pretender to the Seleukid diadem, and although he was presumably old enough to lead an army, he had not yet proven himself as a successful military commander. Both usurpers were accepted by Rome, but it was far from clear if they would succeed in their attempts. Tryphon, however, had been a successful military commander who was able to make Antiochos VI a counter-king to Demetrios II, engaging in warfare and maintaining his position until the boy king died. He also had been able to make an initial alliance with the people of Judaea and managed to capture Jonathan the Jewish high priest (regardless of his motives for the capture). An acknowledgement by Rome could have led to a potential shift in power, giving Tryphon’s reign more stability than the senate of Rome felt

²¹⁰ See also Ehling (2008), 281-2; *contra* Gruen (1976), 73-96, here 84-7.

²¹¹ Gruen (1976), 73-96, here 84-7; 94.

comfortable with. One could argue that Rome accepted usurpers in the Seleukid kingdom as long as it was not clear who would be victorious.

This would lead to the following conclusion. As far as a coherent policy in ‘the Roman senate’ can be detected, Rome was not interested in a strong Seleukid empire, but rather in a kingdom that was divided through internal strife. Internal wars prevented the kings from engaging with Ptolemaic Egypt, as under Antiochos IV and Demetrios I, or in other spheres of Roman interest, such as under Seleukos IV and Demetrios I. Pretenders in Seleukid Syria were accepted even if only to serve as a marker of distinction among the Roman aristocratic elite. If there was a continuous Roman interest in Seleukid Syria, it seems to have peaked in the period between Antiochos IV’s accession and the death of Tryphon. It was during this same period that Seleukid pretenders were interested in an acknowledgement by the senate of Rome, although they were presumably aware that they would not receive actual support. After the defeat of the Hellenistic kings by the new power from the west, it seems consequential that the Seleukid pretenders followed the embassies of Prusias of Bithynia, the Attalids and also their Seleukid counterparts to receive acceptance and perhaps even *amicitia*. While there is no evidence that Roman acceptance translated into communication between the Seleukid usurpers and their troops, the people in their sphere of interest or even other monarchs, it appears to have been desirable for Timarchos, Alexander Balas and Tryphon to obtain Roman acceptance.²¹² It was presumably the awareness of Roman power which made acknowledgement by the senate of Rome valuable in itself, particularly if the Seleukid king was also accepted or even a friend of Rome.

²¹² For the Attalid stress on their authority granted by Rome, see the inscription from Tyriaion: *SEG* 47: 1745; Jonnes/Ricl (1997), 1-30, here 3.

3.2.4 The Royal Offers: Conclusion

Both Timarchos and Tryphon revolted following the accession of a new king and it is likely that the careers of both usurpers would have been limited under these new rulers. While Timarchos had the advantage of usurping the diadem in the periphery, Tryphon began his revolt to restore the rule of the former king Alexander Balas: the promotion of the young Antiochos VI was the signifier, which presumably allowed Tryphon to gather troops who had served under the former king. Timarchos referred to local deities on his coinage and depicted a middle aged, neutral and idealised royal portrait. On his tetradrachms, however, he differed greatly from the common Seleukid formulae and placed a strong emphasis on military elements. Moreover, his royal *persona* is chiefly illustrated in his choice of the royal title of ‘Great King’. Tryphon is the only king for whom one can attest a break from the previous kings with the interruption of the Seleukid era. This break is also underlined in his choice of his epithet *autokrator*. In his imagery Tryphon stressed both military and luxurious elements, thus associating himself with Alexander the Great (as developed, for example, by Pyrrhos and Demetrios Poliorketes). On their coinage these kings promised their audiences that they would not only be militarily successful, but that they also represented a kingship which differed from that of their Seleukid contemporaries. Given Tryphon’s reign, it seems that at least initially this differentiation did not matter as the troops followed their commander nevertheless.

Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas, on the other hand, associated themselves with past Seleukid kings. They continued the Seleukid eras on their coinage and placed emphasis on iconographical continuity with regard to their supposed fathers. Nevertheless, the image of Alexander Balas in particular not only stressed a connection with Alexander the Great, it also continued and amplified Antiochos IV and Demetrios I’s references to the Macedonian king and thus created a

new individual royal iconography. While elements from Seleukid iconography are present, the royal portrait in particular is strikingly muscular and stresses the individuality of the king. This is amplified by the royal name of Alexander: it was the prowess of the king, transmitted on the coinage, which promised the troops military victories and stability.

So far, this chapter has illustrated that all usurpers made distinct offers of kingship to the groups in the Seleukid empire. This is no different from the period discussed in the previous chapter. Antiochos Hierax and Achaïos also received Ptolemaic support and both were able to make alliances with the kings in northern Asia Minor. Both Achaïos and Molon offered distinct royal images, constructed out of political action and royal iconography, which they thought would underline their claims to the diadem. They needed to persuade their troops that they were excellent military leaders and they needed to persuade the cities that they were not plundering warlords. However, their vying for the diadem took place in a very different social and political space. The usurpations of Molon, Achaïos, Timarchos, and to a large extent Antiochos Hierax as well, occurred in the periphery during the absence of the king. While their royal offers were still offers as such (and the citizens of Aspendos in Pamphylia or Seleukeia on the Tigris might have either happily accepted or resisted the usurper), they were not competing with another royal candidate in the vicinity. Therefore, the groups within the kingdom could choose to adhere or resist, but could not choose between different kings. For the second-century Levant, however, the evidence suggests a very different picture.

3.3 The Reception of Royal Offers: When Audiences become Agents

3.3.0 Choice: The Politicisation of Audiences

The political landscape of the Seleukid kingdom from the mid-second century BCE onwards was not only witness to an inner-Judaeian stasis in Jerusalem, but also to the usurpations of Alexander Balas, Tryphon and Alexander Zabinas in the direct vicinity of the Seleukid king. It was this political climate which created a 'market situation' in the communication between both contenders of monarchical authority and their audiences in the kingdom. The behaviour of the people of Judaea, the citizens of Antiocheia and others illustrate how the audiences became politicised agents, choosing freely (at least in part) which contenders' royal offers were acceptable, authoritative and kingly, and which were condemnable, void and tyrannical. Although this politicisation of audiences in the Seleukid kingdom gave usurpers the opportunity to establish and present themselves as the more attractive and persuasive alternative, the presence of more than one centre generally weakened the central authority of the king in his kingdom. The only real winners were the politicised entities, such as the people of Judaea, the Teukrid priests of Kilikia and the cities of Sidon and Tyre.²¹³ It is this political situation which clearly illustrates the limits of Hellenistic kingship: kings were only kings as long as they were accepted. By disregarding dynastic ties, acceptance was based entirely on approval from different politicised agents in the kingdom. Of course questions of power might indicate that kingship and authority were enforced and one could suggest that there was little a city could do but to accept a new ruler when under attack. Nevertheless, the appearance of two contenders for the diadem clearly illustrates the limits of authority through violence and dynastic links. The political climate of the second-

²¹³ For a practical assessment of cities' powers in this period: e.g. Ma (2000a), 337-76. On local elites and their interests: Dreyer/Mittag (2011).

century Levant perhaps allows us to draw much firmer conclusions about Hellenistic kingship and the Seleukid kingdom in general; however, for now, this analysis is about the reception of communicational offers and the reception of usurpers.

3.3.1 The Makkabees and Judaea

The interaction between the Makkabaeen faction of Judaea and the Seleukid kings and usurpers is the best-attested case of an audience transformed into political agents.²¹⁴ J. Ma has compellingly argued that the communicational efforts of both Seleukid kings and usurpers should not be interpreted as statements of power, but rather as pleas for acknowledgement couched in the usual imperial Seleukid language.²¹⁵ The reason for Seleukid appeals are obvious: since the beginning of the revolt of the Makkabees under Antiochos IV, the people of Judaea had become a powerful political factor in the southern Levant and not only controlled certain cities, but also maintained a large force which could support usurpers as well as kings. Strikingly, their success in becoming the primary faction in Jerusalem seems to have occurred in the period between the death of Alkimos and the arrival of Alexander Balas.²¹⁶ It was then that the group around Jonathan emerged as a potential political power, as the peace treaty with Bakchides in 158 BCE demonstrates (I Makk. 9. 57-72; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 22-3). Although the Makkabaeen narratives mention them only marginally, the Hellenised Jews still existed and were in control of the *akra* of Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the Seleukid kings and usurpers supported their Makkabaeen opponents and thus, without external support, the Hellenised faction could not strengthen its own claims of acceptance. Thus, the Makkabees had established themselves as one of the major powers in the competition between the Seleukid kings

²¹⁴ E.g. Schürer (1973), 177; 182-3.

²¹⁵ Ma (2000b), 71-112, esp. 85-109; cf. Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 228.

²¹⁶ Schürer (1973), 176-7; Wilker (2011), 216-53; see I Makk. 9. 73.

and usurpers. However, following the landing of Alexander Balas and his acknowledgement of Jonathan as the leader of the people of Judaea, they managed to establish themselves in the centre of Jerusalem and Judaea.²¹⁷ In return, the Makkabees accepted either usurpers or dynastic kings as kings and concluded alliances with them. This allowed both the Seleukid king and usurper either to engage their opponent with the support of the Makkabaeen troops or at the very least to avoid an alliance between their opponent and the people of Judaea.

While in theory the ‘market situation’ of royal acknowledgement places stress on the pure availability of an alternative ruler (in terms of ‘his enemy is my friend’), in practice it seems that, to a certain extent, the Makkabees preferred to support usurpers. While this is not entirely conclusive, a pattern appears to be visible. The fact that the Jews seem to have defected from Demetrios I should not be surprising: Alexander Balas needed to offer more concessions in order to establish himself in the area and so he was the more attractive candidate. In the following period, it seems that the Makkabees did not defect from Alexander Balas to Demetrios I or Demetrios II and they only rallied to the latter when he was the only ruler in the area (I Makk. 11. 24; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 124). Their continuing alliance with Alexander Balas might have been accidental, but if it was not, then the Makkabees practically halted competitive politics. Later in the period, after Jonathan had supported Demetrios II, the Makkabees turned to Antiochos VI, the son of Alexander Balas. The break between Tryphon and Jonathan falls in the period after the death of Antiochos VI. While one might argue that the Makkabees did not acknowledge Tryphon’s rule (and this is what I Makk. and Josephus seem to suggest), the rejection of Tryphon and the renewed

²¹⁷ For possible resistance of other Jewish groups: see e.g. the community of Qumran: Wilker (2011), 216-52, here 239-40.

alliance with Demetrios II which followed this event, should instead be connected to Tryphon's capture and the murder of Jonathan.²¹⁸

What can we make of all this? The immediate picture is as follows: if the Makkabees supported usurpers, this would keep Seleukid kings and usurpers preoccupied with each other, thus allowing the Makkabees to extend their own political influence. However, their continuing support of Alexander Balas illustrates that the picture is not quite so straightforward. The Makkabees did not necessarily support incoming claimants to the diadem, as in the case of Demetrios II. Moreover, further concessions were not their only interest since we have at least one occasion when grants from Demetrios I were refused (I Makk. 10. 26-45; *Ios. Ant.* 13. 47-57).²¹⁹

It is the Jewish acceptance of Alexander Balas and Antiochos VII in particular which is instructive for understanding the acknowledgement of political agents in this period. Even if Alexander Balas is a singular example, this case nevertheless allows certain conclusions to be drawn. Alexander styled himself a son of Antiochos IV and the Makkabees were aware of his genealogy (I Makk. 10. 1). Surely any reference to Antiochos IV would not have been favourable for a Jewish audience and it is questionable whether Alexander Balas would have insisted on this connection in his communication with the Makkabees. The absence of the patronymic epithet Θεοπάτωρ on the coinage of the southern Levant on Phoinikian standard should presumably be attributed to local practices rather than Alexander's policies.²²⁰ However, it may be possible that the absence of any former kings in Alexander's letters to Jonathan, as they are transmitted in I Makkabees and Josephus, is more than accidental. The difficulties concerning the royal letters in the books of Makkabees of

²¹⁸ See above, 3.2.1.2; see also Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 101-2.

²¹⁹ Whether the letter in I Makk. was authentic or not is in the end not decisive. For the discussion: Schürer (1973), 178n.14; see also Eilers (2008), 211-17; Ben Zeev (1998), 357-73.

²²⁰ The coinage on Phoinikian standard did not usually carry epithets. Tryphon's epithet was an exception: *SC* 2042-3; 2045-7.

course remain; however, it seems that at least Demetrios II (I Makk. 11. 34) and perhaps also Demetrios I (I Makk. 10. 29) made reference to their predecessors.²²¹ It is impossible to say if this was a deliberate insertion of the kings into a line of Seleukid kings, as suggested in Josephus' elaboration of the Makkabaeen version (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 49 and 128).²²² For the Makkabees, the relationship between Alexander Balas and his supposed father Antiochos IV was irrelevant for good relations with the king. What was so persuasive about Alexander Balas' offers?

According to Josephus' phrasing, the high priesthood had been 'vacant' for quite some time before Alexander Balas granted the office to Jonathan (Ios. *Ant.* 20. 237). It is not only instructive that the Makkabees accepted the offer, but also that they apparently did not attempt (or rather succeed) to take the priesthood themselves during its vacancy. If there had been an opportunity, the author of I Makkabees would certainly have preferred this version in his account rather than its bestowal by an outside king. Apparently, however, this was not a viable option. Moreover, Jonathan was first honoured as Alexander Balas' 'Friend' (I Makk. 10. 20; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 45) and later as his 'first Friend' (I Makk. 10. 65; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 85). The grants acknowledging Jonathan as στρατηγός and μεριδάρχης are of course not much more than an acknowledgement of Makkabaeen power. Nevertheless, the Makkabees were still acting within the frame of Seleukid power; Jonathan travelled to the wedding of Alexander Balas to receive honours for achievements which could not only be in the interest of the king. The acceptance of the high priesthood, the travels of Jonathan to Demetrios II and the alliance between Simon and Demetrios II illustrate that the Makkabees were still very much interested in receiving confirmation of their position by the kings in the Levant.

²²¹ On the use of the royal letters in 1 and 2 Makkabees: see references in Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 74n.3.

²²² It is questionable to which degree Josephus would have had more material than the first book of Makkabees to draw from for these documents. Scholarship also questions his interest in this material: Eilers (2008), 211-17; Ben Zeev (1998), 357-73.

The Makkabees accepted more and more concessions from the Seleukids and of course the Seleukids would not have been able to deny a large number of them.²²³ Nevertheless, as much as the Seleukid kings and usurpers were eager to incorporate the Makkabees within a Seleukid framework of communication, the Makkabees still thought it was necessary, or at least plausible, to act within this context. And this is where the friendship with Alexander Balas fits into Makkabaeon politics. The reason for this friendship should be placed within the internal politics of Jerusalem: the power of the Makkabees was not so strong as to resist totally the Seleukid discourse of power. Even in this period, the Makkabees needed nominal acknowledgement by the Seleukid king in order to surpass the opposing groups in Jerusalem.²²⁴ There is limited evidence regarding these other groups in Jerusalem, but references to the Hellenisers or the bestowal of the high priesthood (in contrast to a narrative of the Makkabaeon acquisition of the priesthood) are indicative of these dynamics. A last example will illustrate this.

Antiochos VII was the last king who reasserted some control over Judaea.²²⁵ According to Josephus' narrative, it was the king's piety towards the Jews which made the people of Judaea accept his peace (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 236-44).²²⁶ However, it seems obvious that it was not so much the strength of Antiochos VII, but rather the weakness of the Makkabees which placed the Seleukid king in the stronger position.²²⁷ Simon, the high priest of Jerusalem, was murdered by his son-in-law Ptolemaios, presumably in 135 BCE in the eighth year of his reign (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 228). Simon's son Hyrkanos, as well as his son-in-law Ptolemaios, fought against each other and while Hyrkanos was able to gain the upper hand in the struggle, Ptolemaios

²²³ Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 102-3.

²²⁴ Bickerman (1937), 136-8 underlines this competitive aspect. On the Tobiads: Pfeiffer (2011), 191-215. On other groups: Wilker (2011), 216-52.

²²⁵ Iust. 36. 1. 10; Fischer (1970), 88-9; idem (1991), 33-40, here 38; Habicht (1989b), 324-87, here 370.

²²⁶ For Antiochos III's care for Jewish customs: Ios. *Ant.* 12. 139-143; Bickerman (1980), 24-53; Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 86-9.

²²⁷ See also Ehling (2008), 196-7.

was still alive and resided roughly fifty kilometres east beyond the river Jordan with a local dynast (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 229-35). At this point Antiochos VII and Hyrkanos were dependent upon each other. Ptolemaios' capture of the fortress of Dogan above Jericho and the murder of Simon's wife and two sons illustrates that Ptolemaios was able to raise and engage troops, who opposed the house of Judas Makkabaios. Most importantly, it demonstrates that the Jews were not as united as the Makkabees presented themselves towards the Seleukids. The faction of the Hellenised Jews had long before lost its power; however, the leading position of the Makkabees was not always uncontested (e.g. Ios. *Ant.* 13. 288). While Hyrkanos could have joined sides with an upcoming pretender in order to free himself from tribute or gain more advantages that could have stabilised his position in Jerusalem, Antiochos VII could have tried to reassert Ptolemaios' position and endanger the position of the high priest in Jerusalem. Thus, for the first time since the Hellenised group in the *akra* of Jerusalem was abandoned by the Seleukid kings, Antiochos VII had found a means to establish a stable and continuing relationship with the Makkabaeen faction, firmly dependent on each other's acknowledgement of single rule. While there is no evidence to suggest a connection between the Seleukid king and the engagements within Judaea during this period, the dynastic strife was presumably very welcome.

The picture we obtain from Antiochos VII's relationship with Hyrkanos is a clear illustration that the Makkabees, even after the 'declaration of independence' under Simon, were not unchallenged. Makkabaeen power politics from c.150 BCE onwards is remarkably similar. While the author of I Makkabees and Josephus underplay the importance of other factions, these groups are nevertheless apparent in the narrative. No matter what degree of power we attribute to the strength of the Hellenised faction in Jerusalem, Tryphon's capture of Jonathan presumably should be interpreted with this in mind. It was perhaps the capture of Jonathan and Tryphon's

attempt to march on Jerusalem which were intended to break Makkabaeen superiority in the politics of Jerusalem. Tryphon perhaps wanted to strengthen one of the other Judean groups, which is possibly evident in Josephus' discussion of Tryphon and 'τῶν ἐν τῇ ἁκρᾷ', 'those in the akra' (Jos. *Ant.* 13. 208). These events underline the multi-factional politics in Jerusalem in this period. The Makkabees were not only interested in a usurper in the Seleukid kingdom in order to extend their own influence, they also needed to make sure that the Seleukid kings would not support other Judean groups, especially Ptolemaios, who had murdered Simon. The Makkabaeen position was not as strong as suggested in both I Makkabees and Josephus and thus the Makkabees continued to seek the support of other kings.

This behaviour illustrates that there was not a qualitative difference between the Seleukid kings and the Seleukid usurpers for the Makkabees. Usurpers might have been more willing to make concessions, but at the same time, these concessions were not always accepted. The alliances between the people of Judaea and the king in question were dependent on constant re-negotiations and affirmations. They offered each other mutual acknowledgement and acceptance. The Makkabees wanted to appear as the monolithic faction of the people of Judaea to the other Jewish factions and outside powers. The kings in the Levant wanted to be the only rulers in the region and for these reasons both groups were dependent on each other.

3.3.2 Antiocheia, Sidon and Tyre

In the second century BCE, Antiocheia on the Orontes had become *the* capital of the Seleukid empire. However, Antiocheia was not the only major city in the area, but constituted one part of the tetrapolis of Syria as was Apameia, the home of the

royal stud; Laodikeia, the harbour of the royal fleet; and Seleukeia in Pieria.²²⁸

Outside the tetrapolis, Ptolemais also became an important city in the latter part of this period. The presence of these other Seleukid cities must be considered when interpreting the literary source material. Jewish historiography constructs, to a certain degree, a ‘tale of two cities’, by contrasting Jerusalem with Antiocheia. In both I Makkabees and Josephus, Antiocheia features as the embodiment of Seleukid stateliness and a signifier for the Seleukid kingdom. In Jewish terms, Antiocheia was the home of the Seleukid kings, as Jerusalem was the home of the Makkabees. Nevertheless, the prominence of Antiocheia among these cities is also attested in additional evidence. If we can follow the Jewish sources in this respect, it was Antiocheia which Philip the ‘counter-ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων’ took when he brought the corpse and signet ring of Antiochos IV back to the Levant (II Makk. 13. 23; Ios. *Ant.* 12. 386). The importance of Antiocheia is also attested in the vast silver output of the mint located in the city. Clearly, Antiocheia was a very important city in the Seleukid Levant. It was the capital of the Seleukid empire, home of the palace of Demetrios II and the kings before him (as illustrated in the citizens’ revolt against Demetrios II) and was one of the homes of the Seleukid Friends and courtiers. Given this connection to the Seleukid kings, the taking of the city must have had a certain impact on the perception of usurpers’ success or failure.

Moreover, as outlined in the previous discussion of the Makkabees, the city was not just a passive audience in the political turmoil of the second century, as the city also became politicised. To be more precise, it is very likely that it was not ‘the city’ that was politicised and supported different kings. Rather, we should presumably imagine the city as a diverse political body, as different factions of the local elite hoped that supporting a different ruler would be beneficial to their claims of power

²²⁸ On the tetrapolis of Syria: Capdetrey (2007), 359-62.

(similar to Jerusalem). One prime example is the defection of the commanders Diodotos and Hierax, who handed the city of Antiocheia over to Ptolemaios VI. Even if we might not be able to follow the narrative, the scenario is clear: the city ‘defected’ from Alexander Balas, his chancellor was murdered and the commanders of the city offered the diadem to Ptolemaios VI. In this case, the commanders of Antiocheia judged that their chances of an alliance with Alexander Balas were slim, and thus chose to change allegiance. However, in this account we have no extensive evidence of who still sided with Alexander Balas (those around Ammonios) and who was not murdered. The remaining evidence concerning the city of Antiocheia does not easily allow us to portray these different factions, as is possible for other communities.²²⁹ Therefore, Antiocheia will be treated as a single political agent in its relationship with the Seleukid kings and usurpers.

Justin provides the most extensive account of a usurpers’ relationship with the city of Antiocheia on the Orontes in his account on the usurpation of Alexander Zabinas (Just. 39. 1. 6). In the episode with the silver casket of Antiochos VII (Just. 39. 1. 6), Alexander Zabinas illustrated that he knew how to display himself towards the people of Antiocheia, and his care and his kingly behaviour towards a royal predecessor apparently led to him being accepted by the people of the city. This account is corroborated by Diodoros’ portrayal of the ruler. At some point during Alexander Zabinas’ reign, three ‘noteworthy commanders’ (ἀξιολόγων ἡγεμόνων) defected and took the city of Laodikeia. Alexander besieged the city and after he was successful, he pardoned the commanders. Diodoros adds that ‘he was kindly and of a forgiving nature, and moreover he was gentle in speech and in manners, wherefore he was deeply loved by the people’ (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22). Alexander Zabinas responded to defection with forgiveness and kindness and was praised for it. This is reminiscent

²²⁹ For the dynamics of an inner city discourse: Gray [2011]; for the earlier period: Gehrke (1985).

of the portrayal of Antiochos III after the taking of Seleukeia on the Tigris, as Diodoros and Justin also portray Alexander Zabinas as a generous and good king, accepted by the people of Antiocheia on the Orontes. Rulers' attempts to court the people of Antiocheia on the Orontes is also apparent in the behaviour of other kings and it is in this context that we should place ancient authors' comments and criticisms on the luxuriousness of the Seleukid rulers. The *pompē* of Antiochos IV with its enormous banquets (Pol. 30. 25. 1-26. 4) and the banquets of Antiochos VII emphasised not only the Seleukid kings' wealth, but also their care for the people of Antiocheia.²³⁰ The depiction of the Seleukid kings' luxuries was a form of accepted communication with the audiences of the northern Levant and can be further illustrated in Poseidonios' account, which not only judges the Seleukid kings, but also the luxury of the people living in these cities (Poseidonios *FGrHist* 87 F 10 [EK F62a and b]).

However, Justin's account of Alexander Zabinas illustrates not only his acceptance, but also the limits of his relationship with Antiocheia. It was apparently after a military defeat by Antiochos VIII that Alexander Zabinas retreated to Antiocheia on the Orontes.²³¹ Justin places particular stress on the sacrilege committed by Alexander during his stay in the Seleukid capital. According to Justin, Alexander Zabinas removed a golden statue of Nike from the temple of Zeus in order to pay his troops. In a second attempt to obtain the statue of Zeus, however, the people of Antiocheia apparently forced him to flee the city (Iust. 39. 2. 5-6). Although Diodoros' account is confused, his overall judgement is the same and it is striking that it is the sacrilege and not Alexander's lineage which led to Alexander's fall. It is impossible to ascertain the historical validity of this account; however, the dynamics

²³⁰ See also Heliodoros *FGrHist* 373 F8. For Antiochos VII: Poseidonios *FGrHist* 87 F9a and b (EK F61a and b); see also F11 (EK F63) on the drunkenness of Antiochos VII. Antiochos VIII bestowed lavish gifts during the festivals at Daphne: Poseidonios *FGrHist* 87 F21a and b (EK F72a and b).

²³¹ Ios. *Ant.* 13. 269; Iust. 39. 2. 5; Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 23.

portrayed in the narrative are decisive and are underlined in the beginning of Alexander's end: Ἀλέξανδρος οὐ πιστεύων τοῖς ὄχλοις διὰ τε τὴν ἀπειρίαν τῶν ἐν τῷ πολέμῳ κινδύνων καὶ τὴν πρὸς τὰς μεταβολὰς ὀξύτητα παρατάξασθαι, 'Alexander did not trust the people because of their inexperience of the hazards of war and their readiness for any change' (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 1). Alexander Zabinas had been able to swiftly take Antiocheia as his early coinage indicates; he was accepted in the city as king and was loved by the people. Nevertheless, after Alexander had been defeated in battle, he no longer trusted the people as he knew they were ready for political change. This situation is strikingly similar to Molon's distrust of the people of Babylonia and the Susiane (Pol. 5. 52. 4). Given Alexander's acceptance in Antiocheia and Diodoros' general narrative, the changing opinion of the people was not connected to Alexander Zabinas' descent. Instead, it displayed Antiocheia's reaction to Alexander Zabinas' royal offers. After he had been defeated by Antiochos VIII (who perhaps was supported by Ptolemaic troops), Alexander thought it was necessary to seize the temple treasures in order to prepare his defence. The most striking element is not that Alexander Zabinas committed a sacrilege, but rather that he thought it was possible to remove the treasures from the temple (even if driven by political necessity). The people of Antiocheia no longer followed this king, thus defecting from Alexander Zabinas and driving him out of the city. Strikingly, Seleukeia in Pieria did not admit him (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 28. 1). However it cannot be ascertained if the plundering of the temple treasures was a reason, or rather a constructed reason, for defection (and whether this was constructed in the context of Alexander Zabinas' leaving of the city or by later authors). Nevertheless, it is very likely that it was the previous defeat of Alexander Zabinas and the approaching troops of Antiochos VIII that had decided Antiocheia's relationship with the usurper.

Antiocheia was able to choose its king. Both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas were no longer supported after a certain point and Antiocheia revolted after Demetrios II had taken over the city and punished collaborators of the previous regime. According to the (presumably exaggerated) Jewish narratives, Demetrios II had to call on Jonathan to send Jewish forces to quieten the people of Antiocheia. Although Tryphon took the city in the name of Antiochos VI soon afterwards, it is unclear how long the city stayed directly under Tryphon's control. The city defected from Demetrios II when he went on his Egyptian expedition in the 120s BCE and it accepted Alexander Zabinas relatively early in his campaign. Since the changeover of Antiocheia is largely attested by the coinage, it cannot be ascertained if it was the result of political pressures, or (as illustrated in the few examples above) voluntary changes in allegiance. The frequency of change is nonetheless striking and Antiocheia stands alongside other entities in the Levant, whose interest in independence became more and more visible in this period.

The behaviour of Antiocheia can also be corroborated with evidence from other cities in the Levant from the 140s BCE onwards. During the usurpations of Antiochos VI and Tryphon, the cities of Sidon and Tyre continued to mint coinage for Demetrios II until 140/39 BCE, while Ptolemais and Byblos began to mint coinage for Antiochos VI in 144/3 and 142/1 BCE.²³² For the cities which changed sides it is difficult to ascertain whether they did so because of the occupation of the city or if the city decided (similarly to the people of Judea) that it might be advantageous for them to join sides with the new king (cf. *Ios. Ant.* 13. 123-5). Nevertheless, the opening of a new mint (particularly if it is correctly attributed and was continuously striking coinage) illustrates a connection to Antiochos VI and Tryphon and the forced or voluntary defection from Demetrios II. However, the allegiance of cities which

²³² Antiochos VI: Byblos: *SC* 2020. Askalon: *SC* 2026-7. Ptolemais: *SC* 2023-5 Demetrios II: Berytos: *SC* 1952 and 2100. Sidon: *SC* 1953-7. Tyre: *SC* 1958-71.

continued to strike coinage for Demetrios II is less clear. The initial assumption that Demetrios II controlled the city with an established mint is complicated by irregularities in the evidence. Although Gaza had defected from Demetrios II in 142/1 BCE and was in a friendly alliance with Jonathan and the Makkabees (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 151-2), the city nevertheless struck quasi-municipal coins in the name of Demetrios II (SC 1974-6). It is doubtful that minting in the name of Demetrios II in the years 142/1 BCE should reflect the renewed alliance between Simon and Demetrios II.²³³ Rather, the portrait of Demetrios II was adopted for acceptability; it was a local coinage and thus does not allow secure conclusions regarding alliances with the Seleukid king.²³⁴ One could speculate that the portrait was also used as a marker against Antiochos VI and Tryphon; this, however, is hypothetical.

According to the literary evidence, the relationship between the Seleukid kings and the cities of Sidon and Tyre seems initially incompatible with the coinage. Although the cities continuously minted coinage in the name of Demetrios II and Antiochos VII, as mentioned above the cities of Sidon and Tyre were apparently not an alternative landing point for the wandering Antiochos VII.²³⁵ Moreover, Demetrios II himself was murdered by the commander of Tyre, the city which minted coinage in his name (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 268; Iust. 39. 1.7-8). In Tyre in particular, the coinage under Demetrios II had a largely municipal character, bearing the terms ἱερά, sacred, and ἄσυλος, inviolable, and some also displayed the name of the city, Tyre. This theme is continued under Antiochos VII when the coinages of Sidon and Tyre also displayed the names of the city in both Phoenician and Greek.²³⁶ While conclusive answers regarding the status and loyalties of the cities cannot be given, it is possible to suggest

²³³ Suggested by Hoover (2007), 63-90, here: 66-8; cf. idem (2004), 485-507.

²³⁴ See a similar example for Askalon: Meadows (2001), 53-63, here 57.

²³⁵ Sidon: the coinage for Demetrios II (SC 1954. 7; 1955. 5) ended in 173 SE (=140/39 BCE) and the coinage for Antiochos VII (SC 2101-6, here 2102.1; 2103.1) began in 175 SE (=138/7 BCE). Tyre: the coinage for Demetrios II (SC 1962; 1966; 1968. 6; 1970. 6) also ended in 173 SE, while the coinage for Antiochos VII (SC 2109. 1-2; 2110. 1-2; 2108. 1; 2115. 1) continued into the next year.

²³⁶ Sidon: Demetrios II (SC 1954-7); Antiochos VII (SC 2101-6). Tyre: Demetrios II (SC 1960; 1962; 1965; 1968-9); Antiochos VII (SC 2107-14).

that Sidon and Tyre were no longer Seleukid cities in this period. This is perhaps corroborated by the differences in the portraiture between the Seleukid coinage in the Phoenician cities and other Seleukid mints as outlined by P.F. Mittag.²³⁷ The image of the Seleukid king was retained for accessibility, perhaps even to make a political statement against a different king. If, however, the coinage does not allow conclusions with regard to the king who held the city, it is possible that the cities were independent actors. Thus, what can we make of this? While the coinage would initially suggest that it is at least possible that Sidon and Tyre were loyal cities of Demetrios II, the literary evidence suggests the contrary. Instead, the cities consciously defected from one king after they accepted statuses and grants in the same manner as the Makkabees did. Moreover, the coinage of these two cities illustrates that both cities consciously decided not to ally themselves with Antiochos VI or Tryphon. They insisted on their independence and preserved it as long as they could.

Indeed, the communities in the Levant actively tried to be independent and we also should presumably place Strabo's note on Arados, discussed above, in this context. While the passage informs us about Seleukos II's measures to gain support from the strategic island, the passage also illustrates that the Aradians used the political climate to their advantage and 'got possession of a considerable territory on the mainland [...] and otherwise prospered.'²³⁸ It was not the king who granted the territory; rather, the political situation favoured cities' own activities. The example of a dossier from the late Hellenistic period, dated to late Gorpaios 203 (early September 109 BCE) corroborates these observations for the period falling outside the scope of this thesis. A letter from Antiochos VIII or Antiochos IX to Ptolemaios X Alexander, and a copy of a decree (*RC* 71-2), are concerned with the city of Seleukeia

²³⁷ Mittag (2002), 373-99, here 391-3.

²³⁸ Strab. 16. 2. 14: [...] ὥστ' ἐκ τούτου χώραν τε ἐκτήσαντο τῆς περαίας πολλήν, [...], καὶ τᾶλλα εὐθνήνυν. [...]; cf. Duyrat (2005), 229-34; see above, ch.2.2.1.

in Pieria and the recognition of the city [...]*ἰς τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον ἐλευθέρους | [εἶναι...]*, ‘to be free, for all times’ (*RC* 71. 13).²³⁹ The freeing of the city fits the context of the civil war between Antiochos VIII and Antiochos IX. Berytos, for example, dropped its Seleukid name ‘Laodikeia’ on its coinage under Alexander Zabinas and referred to itself as Berytos (e.g. *SC* 2252). Antiochos VIII declared the city as *ἱερά καὶ ἄσυλος* (*I.Délös* 1551. 3-4) and it was during this period that the city again adopted the name Laodikeia (*SC* 2326-8).²⁴⁰ Similar to the events described earlier in this chapter, the late Seleukid rulers in the third century and in the late second century in particular were vying for support from communities in the Levant by granting them liberties. The ‘grant’ of freedom to Seleukeia in Pieria can be placed in this same context. However, the discourse of granting liberties does not necessarily have to be connected to historical reality. We do not know if Seleukeia in Pieria was more inclined towards the policies of the Seleukid king who had granted the city freedom, or if Berytos’ reversal to mint coinage as ‘Laodikeia’ meant continuous support for Antiochos VIII. The communities of the second-century Levant illustrate the political activity of the groups within the kingdom. Moreover, these examples suggest that although we do not have the same source material for the cities of the Levant as we have for the Makkabees, the cities’ interest in independence was just as pronounced as that of their Judaeian neighbours.

3.3.3 The Army

Gaining political power and independence was the ultimate interest of the people of Judaea and the political actors in the cities. These interests can also be

²³⁹ See the commentary in *RC* and Mitford (1961), no. 3; cf. Ehling (2008), 223-5, who identifies Antiochos IX as the author, although this is not certain.

²⁴⁰ Berytos: Moore (1992), 117-25, esp. 222-5; cf. Sawaya (2004), 109-46, here 123-9. For other cities: Ehling (2008), 222-6.

attributed to other actors in the eastern Mediterranean, such as the Kilikian and Arab dynasts who appear as independent actors in the historical sources from the mid-second century onwards. Yet what were the interests of the one group which not only constantly changed sides between Seleukid king and usurper, but also whose support was the one of the primary reasons for rulers' success: what were the interests of the army? Scholarship has stressed the importance of the armies for the Hellenistic rulers and an analysis of the usurpers' attempts to claim the diadem further underlines the armies' crucial role in the Hellenistic kingdoms.²⁴¹ This section will illustrate that the army of the second century was loyal to individual rulers and not to the House of Seleukos *per se*. Moreover, it will be argued that the ultimate interest of the army lay in the opportunity of choice. It was the change in allegiance to a new king which gave the army a political voice.

An analysis of 'the army' is of course artificial. Polybios' description of the Seleukid troops at Raphia (Pol. 5. 79. 3-12) and at the parade at Daphne (Pol. 30. 25. 3-11) illustrates the large diversity of Seleukid units. Seleukid troops varied in ethnic origin and military organisation, ranging from Cilician light infantry to Galatian swordsmen and from the Macedonian style phalanx to the cavalry.²⁴² 'The army' also varied in the different hierarchies within those units: ordinary soldiers might have had different interests from those of their commanding officers and indeed mass-defection also could give the light infantry a political voice. Our evidence does not allow an examination of all these different strata of 'the army'. Nevertheless, the following analysis will demonstrate that certain (albeit general and theoretical) conclusions with regard to the behaviour of 'commanders' and 'troops' and thus 'the army' can be drawn.

²⁴¹ E.g. Austin (1986), 450-66, here 456-65; Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 254-6; Capdetrey (2007) does not discuss the role of the army.

²⁴² See Mittag (2008), 47-56, here 48; Bickerman (1938), 74-83; Bar-Kochva (1976), esp. 20-75; Sekunda (2001), esp. 84-114.

The interests of ‘the army’ are inseparably linked to the question of the troops’ loyalty to one particular king, a topic recently discussed by P.F. Mittag.²⁴³ The key passage regarding this phenomenon is taken from the reign of Demetrios II following the deaths of Alexander Balas and Ptolemaios VI. According to Josephus, Demetrios II ‘dismissed his army and reduced their pay and continued to give money only to the mercenaries who had come up from Krete and from the other islands.’²⁴⁴ Regardless of whether we should consider Josephus’ note on the reduction of pay as historical or as a literary dramatisation, how can we explain the dismissal of the troops? Mittag has argued that it was the split in the dynasty which caused the Seleukid troops to change allegiance to the usurpers and that it was for this reason that Demetrios II had dismissed his soldiers, as he could no longer trust his Seleukid troops.²⁴⁵ However, his discussion of the loyalty of the ‘Seleukid troops’ requires refinement. Both the author of 1 Makkabees, and even more so Josephus, use the dismissal of troops to explain the accession of Antiochos VI and the success of the boy’s military commander, Tryphon. Although the accession of Antiochos VI was presumably connected to the dismissal of the troops, the actual act of dismissal needs to be placed in its appropriate context. Demetrios II had forced the Ptolemaic troops back to Egypt after the death of Ptolemaios VI. Therefore, the dismissal of troops should be understood as a ‘normal’ procedure after war since the upkeep of a standing army was very expensive. The standing army was demobilised.²⁴⁶ If interpreted this way, then the demobilisation of troops did not mean a change in the Seleukid king’s attitude towards his troops as proposed by Mittag. This leads us to the core of second-century relations between kings and troops.

²⁴³ Mittag (2008), 47-56.

²⁴⁴ Ios. *Ant.* 13. 129: [...] διέλυσε τὴν στρατιὰν καὶ τὸν μισθὸν αὐτῶν ἐμείωσεν, καὶ μόνοις τοῦτον ἐχορήγει τοῖς ξενολογηθεῖσιν, οἳ συνανέβησαν ἐκ Κρήτης αὐτῷ καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἄλλων νήσων.

²⁴⁵ Mittag (2008), 47-56, here 51-2. Mittag’s definition of the *katoikia* is not followed here.

²⁴⁶ Cf. Bickerman (1938), 51.

The loyalty of the Seleukid army towards the Seleukid king is very hard to assess for the second century BCE (and perhaps for the earlier period as well). Kings constantly tried to bind their troops closely to them; however, this does not mean that there was an affirmative relationship between the Seleukid royal family and the army. The relationship between usurpers and the army illustrates this. The troops followed their commanders. Indeed, it was a stress on continuity which allowed Timarchos and Tryphon to claim the diadem and which formed the base of their support. Although Tryphon initially evoked continuity with Alexander Balas by promoting the latter's son, Antiochos IV, the troops followed him and not the infant son of the previous king.²⁴⁷ This is clearly illustrated by the fact that after the death of the boy king, Tryphon continued to serve as the troops' commander, maintaining stability and paying the wages of his soldiers. The kings from outside the kingdom, Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas, styled themselves as sons of Antiochos IV and Alexander Balas respectively in order to appeal to the individual's former success (and to oppose the current ruler). Similarly to Timarchos and Tryphon, Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas could insert themselves in the line of past kings in order to attract former kings' friends who were not in power under the new king.

Yet despite their connection to the previous kings, the imagery on the coinage of both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas stressed their individual successes. They not only associated themselves with Alexander the Great (with their choice of name and youthful depiction), they also promised success, wealth and prosperity on their coinage. Alexander Balas' portrait displayed strong masculine features and the depiction of energy and power was maximised in Tryphon's coinage and even employed (although to a lesser degree) on the coinage of the Seleukid kings. It is striking that in addition to the military symbols employed on their coinage, the

²⁴⁷ Cf. Mittag (2008), 47-56, here 52.

coinage and the royal images of Alexander Balas and Tryphon promised luxury and wealth which were to come if they were successful in their claims. Moreover, the coinage promised military victories and success and it can hardly be a coincidence that the number of Nikes depicted on the coinage rises exponentially in the late second century.

The history of the second century and the coinage of the Seleukid kings and usurpers in this period suggest that troops were loyal to individual kings and not to any royal house. While this development has long been connected with the split in the dynasty, an example from the third century not only illustrates that troops could revolt but also that loyalty lay (at least in this case) with an individual. When Epigenes, the former advisor and friend of Antiochos III, fell from power in 222 BCE, the Kyrrhestai revolted and were put down perhaps two years later, after most of them had been killed (Pol. 5. 50. 7-8).²⁴⁸ Moreover, the troops of Molon and Achaïos were loyal to their commander and not to the Seleukid king. These dynamics remain very similar in the second century. Indeed, the troops followed their commanders, and this could explain why Timarchos and Tryphon were able to declare themselves king. They led their troops and armies in their own name against a king who came from the outside and offered continuity and stability to both troops and commanders. On the other hand, the young usurpers from the outside also inserted themselves in the line of former kings and thus tried to appeal to the troops of former kings. However, the emergence of young usurpers indicates that there must be more to the phenomenon than continuity. It is likely that commanders such as Tryphon would not have been able to continue their career under the new king and would therefore have chosen to side with another king. Yet was the reference to former Seleukid kings and the

²⁴⁸ Will (1962), 110-11 with Tarn (1928), 699-731, here 725. The Kyrrhestai were possibly still in revolt in 220 BCE when Achaïos hoped for their support: Pol. 5. 57. 4.

promise of success enough to make the armies join young and potentially inexperienced kings who came from the outside?

The stress on continuity and individual success was important and it is visible on the coinage of both kings and usurpers. If these promises on the coinage were fulfilled then it is very likely that a strong bond between troops and ruler was formed. However, in order to ascertain troops' interest in usurpers we should not follow too closely the rulers' discourse of success as employed on the coinage. Nor should we assume that these promises were enough to make troops change allegiance. In fact, it was the choice itself which was the value. Reminiscent of the period of the Successors,²⁴⁹ choice gave the army a political voice and it should not be surprising that troops favoured the promises of new usurpers over established kings. Although Demetrios I had reigned for a period of roughly ten years before Alexander Balas' landing, the promises of a new king were attractive to a large number of troops. Commanders would change sides if a new king took the diadem and both troops and commanders would be interested in the new king's royal offers and promises and ultimately his success. It was the act of following (or disregarding) royal promises which enabled the army to *make* politics. 'The army' could follow Alexander Balas and thus *make* Alexander Balas king. Commanders could become 'close friends' of the new king and perhaps (although this is speculative) Tryphon was indeed one of these friends. Even if conjectural, the picture remains the same: troops could follow a new king and thus *unmake* the former king.

The problem with Demetrios II's dismissal of troops, therefore, was not so much a question of loyalty to royal blood, of actual dismissal of troops or of Demetrios II's reliance on mercenaries (although these could all be points of friction). As illustrated above, the revolt of the Kyrrhestai under Antiochos III was long-lasting

²⁴⁹ E.g. Plut *Dem.* 49. 4: cf. Bosworth (2002), 246-78, esp. 247-54.

and caused instability in his satrapy, but it did not threaten the position of the Seleukid king. Even if Kyrrestai did not lead to long-term political frictions, this does not mean that Antiochos III's initial position was necessarily stronger than that of Demetrios II. The problem arising from Demetrios II's dismissal of troops was the presence of a second power holder in the vicinity, which allowed the army to 'choose' their king. It gave the army the opportunity to express their political opinion and the choice to serve a new king who would not dismiss them. If these hopes were not fulfilled, 'the army' (like the people of Antiocheia or the Makkabees) could join a new king.

'The army' of the second century followed its individual commanders. It is possible that troops or their commanders were loyal to certain kings and that it was these factions which the usurpers on the coast of the Levant appealed to when they declared themselves as sons of former kings. They joined usurpers not only for their promise of military success and wealth but also because having choice *per se* was ultimately one of the main interests of these troops. The presence of Tryphon and Antiochos VI after the establishment of Demetrios II gave 'the army' the opportunity to make kings who would act in the interest of 'the army'. It was for this reason that it acknowledged a new king. If we accept this hypothesis, it also becomes clear why Antiochos VII was immediately able to gather troops as soon as he landed on the coast of the Levant (as Alexander Zabinas did after him). The former troops of Demetrios II joined the king and contingents of Tryphon's troops changed rulers because they thought it was to their advantage. The promises of Antiochos VII were no more acceptable than those of Tryphon. These troops did not necessarily think Tryphon a worse ruler than Antiochos VII, it was the choice itself which was advantageous, as it gave a voice to individual soldiers and commanding officers; this choice would remain a crucial element of troops' behaviour in the vicinity of more

than one king.²⁵⁰ This analysis has focused on the behaviour of troops in the second century BCE, but this is not to suggest that it exclusively applied to the ‘new’ Seleukid kingdom after the accession of Antiochos IV. It is possible that this phenomenon was only an acceleration of a longer third-century process.

3.4 Usurpers in the Second Century: Conclusion

This chapter has illustrated the dynamics of political power in the Seleukid empire in the late second century BCE and it has analysed usurpers’ royal offers to the groups in the kingdom. Most importantly, the literary and documentary evidence of this period makes it possible to assess the different groups’ perception of and reaction to royal offers. A re-interpretation of the literary and documentary evidence considerably affects previous scholarship’s assumptions about the second century BCE and establishes the Seleukid Levant as a vital and understudied part of Seleukid history. Although the Seleukid kings of the second century held control over less territory than in the previous century, the dynamics of this period were not entirely different from those of the third century before the accession of Antiochos III. Moreover, a reassessment of the available evidence not only allowed me to construct a narrative of Seleukid usurpers, but more importantly, it also became apparent that most of the literary sources were influenced by post-usurpation reconstructions. With this in mind, the usurpers’ claims to the diadem in fact do not appear crucially different from those of the Seleukid kings.

Although usurpations occurred not only in the Levant but also in the eastern parts of the empire, such as Media and Babylonia, the Levant played a much more prominent role in this analysis. This is not only the result of the restricted source material. While the recent publications of cuneiform documents and numismatic

²⁵⁰ Cf. Flaig (1992), 134-73; indirectly: Szidat (2010), 195.

discoveries illustrate that Babylonia also played a much larger role in later Seleukid history than was previously assumed by scholarship, it is still very difficult to adequately assess the dynamics of Babylonian power plays beyond the level of political history.²⁵¹ For example, we do know that Kammiškiri of Elam reached Babylonia in the late 140s BCE; however, so far it is impossible to ascertain how the elites of Babylonia reacted to this, or if he did so with support of the Seleukid centre (as, for example, the Makkabees did at times).

The usurpers of the second century created royal images which contrasted with their direct royal opponents. Moreover, similar to Molon and Achaïos, Timarchos and Tryphon also created non-Seleukid images and stressed their distinction from the royal Seleukid house. Timarchos styled himself ‘Great King’ and Tryphon stressed Hellenistic *tryphē* both on his coins and in his name. Even if Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas inserted themselves into the line of previous kings, their imagery was clearly individual and referred to Alexander the Great, instead of the conventional Seleukid portrait of the late third century BCE. While Antiochos IV and Demetrios I incorporated, for example, the *anastolē* in some of their images and created individual reverses on their coinage, the *imitatio Alexandri* peaked under Alexander Balas and Tryphon (and to a lesser degree under Alexander Zabinas). The little surviving evidence suggests that in their administration, royal language and royal protocol, the usurpers’ kingdoms presumably did not differ from the practices of the Seleukid kingdom, although evidence might be too scarce and thus perhaps is misleading. While this chapter enabled a thorough discussion of the royal offers of usurpers in the competitive environment of the second century Levant, the major outcome of this chapter is that it was possible to analyse the perception of royal offers.

²⁵¹ See, however, Boiy/Mittag (2011), 105-31.

And this is the chapter's great advantage over the previous chapter. While the third-century audiences of royal offers were also not passive audiences of royal communication, the surviving evidence does not allow us to trace the engagement of the groups in Asia Minor with the royal contenders. The behaviour of the Philomelids in the contest between Seleukos II and Antiochos Hierax would have been revealing and it has been suggested that active individual behaviour can be traced, for example, in the actions of Olympichos of Karia and the city of Smyrna. Nevertheless, a close analysis of the perception and reception of royal offers of Asia Minor is not possible. This is different for the Levant in the second century. The ancient accounts of the author of the first book of Makkabees, Josephus and Diodoros, not only provide more information about the second century than we possess about Asia Minor in the third century, the presence of two contenders for the diadem in the Levant amplified political dynamics. Kings and usurpers transformed the audiences of royal offers into active agents who could pursue their own political agendas. The people of Antiocheia on the Orontes could refuse to obey their king and the Makkabees and other local power holders could begin diplomatic relations with the opponent of their current ally.

One of the key elements that this analysis has shown is that the acceptance of usurpers was not very different from the acceptance of Seleukid kings. For the groups within the Seleukid kingdom there was not a qualitative difference between the Seleukid king and another contender to the diadem who promised security. This chapter has illustrated that although the Makkabees used the wars between rival claimants to the diadem to establish themselves as the leading power in Judaea, their relationship with Alexander Balas and Antiochos VII also reveals that they were particularly interested in fostering a relationship with the stronger king. It has been argued that the literary evidence which derives from Jewish sources overestimates the power of the Makkabees and that while they were the biggest player in Jerusalem they

were not the only one. For the other cities in the Levant, these inner-civic dynamics cannot be attested, although it is very likely that they existed. Moreover, these cities frequently changed sides between the Seleukid kings and usurpers and this also seems to have been the case for Antiocheia on the Orontes, 'The city' did not favour Seleukid kings over usurpers without any claims to the Seleukid family. The fortress-city of Apameia in particular illustrates that the city's previous relationship with the Seleukid kings did not prevent the city from following Tryphon or even from becoming the site of his last stand. While in the case of Apameia personal loyalties might have bound the city to the usurper, other cities, such as Tyre and Sidon, were (similarly to the Makkabees) vying for their independence from the Seleukid kings. The fact that there was apparently no bond between the Seleukid king and the people from the Seleukid 'heartlands' is also suggested in a passage preserved in Justin's work. When the campaigns of Antiochos VII in Babylonia appeared too onerous, the people of Babylonia again changed sides and supported the Parthians. The changeover between power holders also seems to be one of the main interests of the army and a presupposed bond between the Seleukid king and his troops cannot be ascertained. The troops changed allegiance between kings and usurpers, and thus gained a political voice. It was only when the Seleukid kings could claim a monopoly of political power, as in the reign of Antiochos VII, that the seeking of individual interest could be slowed down and the political actions of the groups within the kingdom could be stopped.

The question remains as to which degree the actions of political agents in the kingdom are a marker of the Seleukid kingdom of the second century BCE after the accession of Antiochos IV. Scholarship has so far largely viewed the second century as different to the Seleukid kingdom of the third century; a Seleukid kingdom altered by the Roman defeats and the split in the dynasty. It is very likely that certain

developments, such as the individuality of kingship, stem from these events and are part of this new phase of the Seleukid kingdom. However, it is also possible that the Seleukid kingdom of the second century is only different from the empire of the third century in so far as it represented an acceleration of groups' interests which were already present. Did the split in the dynasty only hasten problems which were already apparent in the third century and in the period before the long reign of Antiochos III in particular? These problems could be curbed by the creation of a discourse proposing Seleukid identity as well as the 'loyalty' of Seleukid troops to their king. I am inclined to think along the lines of the latter option. In the third century the Seleukid kings also had to deal with revolts among their troops, and 'the army' consisted of many more units than those Seleukid settlers of Macedonian descent. Similarly, chapter two has argued that at times the Seleukid king had difficulties in obtaining his monopoly of power and that it was during the reign of Antiochos III that the Seleukid king placed a strong emphasis on Seleukid identity and Seleukid space.

The Seleukid king constantly attempted to be the largest power holder in the Seleukid kingdom and this chapter illustrates his struggles in the second century BCE. As in the third century, the Seleukid kings were not the only power holders. In fact they supported local power holders in certain regions which the kings judged peripheral. It is the relationship between central and local power which will be discussed in the following chapter before an assessment of the core of Seleukid kingship in chapter 5.

4 Central and Local Power: Kings, Dynasts and Other Power Holders in the Seleukid Kingdom

When the people of Byzantion on the south-western tip of the Bosphoros needed support in their conflict with the Rhodians in 220 BCE, they appealed to Attalos I of Pergamon and Achaios, the recently self-made king in Asia Minor, for help (Pol. 4. 48. 1-51. 9). These two rulers presumably were not only the closest to the Byzantines' sphere of interest, they also had the means to provide aid against the Rhodian ally, Prusias of Bithynia. According to Polybios, only Achaios could support the Byzantines, as he had forced Attalos I to withdraw back to his 'ancestral dominions' and Achaios was now κρατῶν μὲν τῆς ἐπὶ τάδε τοῦ Ταύρου 'master of all the country on this side of the Tauros' (Pol. 4. 48. 3). It was apparently crucial to the Byzantines that both power holders were local and had the resources at hand to help. The fact that Achaios had usurped Seleukid power was not an issue for the Byzantines.

For the Seleukid kings, however, there was a world of difference between Attalos I and Achaios. From at least the period of Antiochos I's reign, the Seleukid kings accepted, supported and favoured local power holders in certain regions.¹ The Byzantine account above is only one example of how the presence of local power holders resolved local conflicts and fulfilled local administrative needs. The most prominent rulers were the Attalids of Pergamon and the Diodotids of Baktria. However, other rulers, including the Philomelids of Phrygia, Artaxias of Armenia, the *fratarāka* in the Persis and the Makkabees of Jerusalem, were a part of the same phenomenon. In order to maintain political control, the Seleukid king had to constantly reaffirm his authority over these power holders, who were independent, but only as long as this was in the Seleukid kings' interest. One could therefore argue that

¹ Cf. Engels (forthcoming) for whom this phenomenon begins under Antiochos III.

their secessions in periods of weakened central authority were not much more than an exaggeration of their position (perhaps driven by both internal and external pressures). It could be argued that these dynasts were not different from other actors within the Hellenistic states who also defected under these same circumstances; cities, for example, reacted very similarly. However, as these dynasts were part of the administrative structure of the Seleukid kingdom, their position was different from seceding commanders, relatives and friends of the Seleukid king. The local power holders fulfilled local administration duties in peripheral Seleukid areas, fought local wars and at times— if not kept in line — they ‘forgot’ their Seleukid allegiance. Most importantly, they were located in regions which the Seleukid kings defined as peripheral and thus suitable to be administered by dynasts. Although dynasts might have been Friends of the Seleukid king, they were not members of the Seleukid ruling elite, the friends of the king. They did not have the long-standing loyalty of large contingents of the Seleukid army or connections with other high-powered friends of the Seleukid kings.

In two case studies this chapter will demonstrate that local power holders were part of a Seleukid administrative strategy and thus it will highlight the administrative practices of the Seleukid kingdom. It also will examine the Seleukid reaction to dynasts, which will be contrasted with Seleukid reaction to usurpers in the next chapter. Since the relationship between the Seleukid king, dynast and usurper is best attested in Polybios’ narrative, this chapter will take the long reign of Antiochos III as its starting point.

4.0 The Reaction of Antiochos III

As this thesis has illustrated, Antiochos III had to quickly learn how to react to internal secession. Early in his reign he fought successfully against Molon in the Fertile Crescent and although Molon committed suicide on the battlefield, the Seleukid king had the usurper's body impaled at the ascent of the Zagros mountains. Later the king overcame his cousin Achaïos, whose head he had sown into an ass' skin while his body was impaled. He reached an agreement with the Parthian ruler and although he was not able to take the city of Baktra, he made a treaty with the local king Euthydemos who then paid contributions. Antiochos III was also victorious in Asia Minor where he defeated the usurper Achaïos and on two further campaigns in the region he increased Seleukid territories.

Antiochos III reacted strongly against the usurpers Achaïos and Molon and while he initially attacked the Baktrian king, he eventually came to an agreement with him, as he had earlier with Attalos I of Pergamon. Our evidence does not give any account of frictions between the Attalids and the Seleukids within the context of the re-establishment of Seleukid power in Asia Minor. None of the ancient sources suggest that Antiochos III described Attalos I in similar terms as Achaïos, nor do they indicate that the Seleukid king wanted to destroy or take over Attalos I's kingdom. One of course might argue (and perhaps to a certain extent rightly so) that our sources only replicate a pro-Seleukid narrative. Achaïos and Molon were described as traitors because the Seleukid king was able to capture them. On the other hand, Euthydemos of Baktria was acknowledged as king because the Seleukid king was not able to put down the rebel after a two-year siege.² However, there is more to this phenomenon than we find in the narratives of Polybios' source. A close analysis of Attalid reaction to Seleukid resurgence in Asia Minor alters the picture.

² E.g. Lerner (1999), 52; Wolski (1999), 75-81.

4.1 The Attalids of Pergamon: Useful Dynasts for the Kings in Asia Minor

Attalos I and Antiochos III first came into contact when they entered an agreement against Achaïos in 216 BCE (Pol. 5. 107. 4). However, as indicated above, the campaign against Achaïos was not the only expedition of the Seleukid king in Asia Minor. His second appearance on the Ionian coast was foreshadowed by the propagated success of his *anabasis* in the upper satrapies, which is described in Polybios' narrative.³ Around 203 BCE Antiochos III arrived in the former Attalid city of Teos and 'released the city as holy, inviolate, and free from tribute.'⁴ In addition to continuous Seleukid activity in the region, Antiochos III again returned to Asia Minor during his naval campaign, wintering in the taken city of Ephesos in 197 BCE.⁵ During the following two years he led campaigns to Thrace and established firm control of the region and re-founded Lysimacheia as a capital for his son Seleukos.⁶

If the Attalids were concerned about Seleukid politics and the loss of territories after the death of Achaïos, they did not reveal it to their Roman allies. The first mention of antagonism between the Seleukids and Attalids is attested in our evidence dated to 193 BCE (Liv. 35. 13. 7).⁷ The earliest Attalid embassy to Rome in 201 BCE was most likely directed against Philip V (Liv. 31. 2. 1-2). While later it seems that the Roman senate was concerned about Antiochos III, neither in the context of the Seleukid envoys to T. Quinctius Flamininus in 197 BCE (Pol. 18. 47. 1; Liv. 33. 34. 2-3), nor in the context of the conference at Lysimacheia (Pol. 18. 48. 2-3; 18. 49-52; Liv. 33. 39-40), did the Roman envoys mention Attalid dominions.

Instead, the emphasis lay on the conflict between Antiochos III and the Ptolemies as

³ Cf. Primo (2009), 135.

⁴ SEG 41.1003. I 18-20; 47-8. For the date: Herrmann (1965), 93-100; Ma (2002), 260-5. Ma also discusses the lower dating to 197 BCE but rightly dismisses it.

⁵ Liv. 33. 19. 8-11. Ephesos is the last city on the list of Hieronymos: *FGrHist* 260 F46.

⁶ Thrace: App. *Syr.* 6; *I.Perinthos* 3 (SEG 48. 908); Grainger (1996), 329-42, here 336-7. Lysimacheia: Pol. 18. 51. 7-8; Liv. 33. 38. 10. For the re-conquest in general: Ma (2002), 82-102.

⁷ For the Annalist Invention of a Seleukid intrusion in 198 BCE: Liv. 32. 8-16, see below n.71. If the Seleukid intrusion did happen this would place the first complaint by the Attalids against Antiochos III to 198 BCE.

well as Antiochos III's taking of Ptolemaic and Antigonid possessions in Asia Minor and Thrace. Although the Seleukid king took over large parts of Asia Minor, the Attalid king did not visibly react. However, if we place this short narrative within the wider context of the relationship between the Attalid dynasts and Seleukid kings, a very different picture of Attalid-Seleukid relations emerges; a picture that forces us to re-think the black and white categories of dependent and independent dynasts and to re-examine the dynamics between the Seleukid kings and power holders in the Seleukid kingdom.

4.1.1 Seleukid and Attalid Past: 281-230s BCE

The relationship between the Attalid and Seleukid families was kick-started on the eve of the battle of Kouroupedion. According to Justin, following factional strife in Lysimacheia '[...] the survivors of the blood-bath and the army officers eagerly defected to Seleukos.'⁸ Pausanias' account allows us to place Philetairos in the context of these seceding courtiers. He writes that

Philetairos, to whom the property of Lysimachos had been entrusted, was aggrieved at the death of Agathokles and was suspicious at the treatment he would receive at the hands of Arsinoe, he took Pergamon on the Kaikos and sent a herald offering both the property and himself to Seleukos.⁹

Presumably to avoid the same situation as Sardeis, where Seleukos I had been besieging Lysimachos' commander Theodotos (who resolved to open the gates and to hand over the treasures stored in the city), Philetairos sent a herald to hand over his

⁸ Iust. 17. 1. 7: *itaque et ii, qui caedibus superfuerant, et ii, qui exercitibus praeerant, certatim ad Seleucum deficiunt*. For Lysimachos and the road to Kouroupedion: Lund (1992), 184-206. Initiation of Seleukid-Attalid relations: Allen (1983), 9-14. For the war: Iust. 17. 2. 1-5; Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 5. 7; Mehl (1986), 290-99.

⁹ Paus. 1. 10. 4: [...] καὶ Φιλέταιρος ἄμα, ᾧ τὰ χρήματα ἐπετέτραπτο Λυσιμάχου, τῇ τε Ἀγαθοκλέους τελευτῇ χαλεπῶς φέρων καὶ τὰ παρὰ τῆς Ἀρσινόης ὑποπτα ἡγούμενος καταλαμβάνει Πέργαμον τὴν ὑπὲρ Καΐκου, πέμψας δὲ κήρυκα τὰ τε χρήματα καὶ αὐτὸν ἐδίδου Σελεύκῳ; Allen (1983), 12-13.

fortress. Philetairos had bet on the right horse: Seleukos won the battle against Lysimachos and thus had outlived any other friend or commander of Alexander the Great.¹⁰ Although it is not clear what position Philetairos had precisely under Lysimachos, Seleukos I certainly seems to have made or acknowledged him as a power holder in Pergamon. Moreover, Strabo describes Philetairos, in his presumably semi-official administrative position under Seleukid rule, as ‘lord of the stronghold and the treasure.’¹¹

Philetairos’ position as a local power holder is illustrated in the epigraphic documents. He was active as a benefactor, not only in the direct vicinity of Pergamon, but also in other regions of Asia Minor and the Greek mainland. He made dedications to the sanctuaries of Delos and Delphi and he gave benefactions to a sanctuary of the Muses at Thespiiai.¹² It was presumably as early as the 280s BCE that Philetairos, his adopted son Attalos and the latter’s brother Eumenes were awarded *proxenia* by the Delphians. This honour was also later bestowed on the Phrygian dynast Lysias, son of Philomelos.¹³ His benefactions are similar to the activity of other local benefactors, albeit not on the same scale as Philetairos. The recently excavated documents from Kyme in particular illustrate the different levels of interaction between the local community, Philetairos and the Seleukid king. The inscriptions consist of three decrees and one letter, which presumably should all be placed within the same context.¹⁴ The first dossier contains a decree asking for the purchase of shields from Philetairos; a letter from Philetairos to the council and the people of the Kymaians bestowing benefactions; and honours granted to the benefactor. The city of Kyme sent two envoys asking Philetairos to sell them 600 shields for the defence of the city and

¹⁰ Sardeis: Polyain. 4. 9. 4. Death of Seleukos I: Iust. 17. 2. 1-6; Memnon *FGrHist* 434 F11. 8. 1-2; Mehl (1986), 290-321; cf. Heinen (1972).

¹¹ Strab. 13. 4. 1: κύριος ὢν τοῦ προυρίου καὶ τῶν χρημάτων; Allen (1983), 13-14.

¹² For a list: Orth (2008), 485-95, here 486; cf. the map in Schalles (1985), 150.

¹³ Philetairos in Delphi: *F.Delphes* III. 1. 432. Lysias: *F.Delphes* III. 4. 156; Wilhelm (1911), 48-63; Holleaux (1942), 357-63. For the date of the decree for Lysias: Ouhlen (1998), 215-30, here 220.

¹⁴ Decrees of Kyme and a letter of Philetairos: *SEG* 50. 1195; Manganaro (2000), 403-14; *BE* (2001), 54 and 373; Gauthier (2003c), 9-23; Hamon (2008), 63-106.

its hinterland. Philetairos in return wrote a letter to the community giving the shields as a gift (δωρεά) to the demos (*SEG* 50. 1195).¹⁵ The city then responded with honours for Philetairos' euergetical behaviour and it is this second decree in particular which is revealing for the relationship between the city of Kyme and Philetairos (ll. 20 onwards). The dynast of Pergamon is mentioned as a *euergetes* of the past (l. 20) and is honoured as a *euergetes* with a golden crown for his gift of 600 shields, which had shown his excellence and goodwill towards the city (ll. 25-6). Moreover, it was decreed that 'an akrolithic statue as fine as possible should be set up in the sacred room of the Philetaireion' (ll. 26-7). These proceedings were to be announced by the *agonothetes* at the next joint festival of the Dionysia and Antiocheia (ll. 27-8). The decree also mentions processions for the *Soteria* and Philetaireia (l. 42).¹⁶

The city of Kyme granted honours to their benefactor. While in this specific case Philetairos received a statue, his previous contributions led to the establishment of a festival and a sacred building in the name of the benefactor. Philetairos' position within the sacred landscape of Kyme appears to have been very dominant; nevertheless, he clearly was acting within in a Seleukid structure. Philetairos' recent honours were announced at the Dionysia and Antiocheia, presumably a major festival for the community to which Antiochos I's name had been added by the people of Kyme.¹⁷ This mention of the Seleukids was not only a reference to the past since Kyme continued to maintain relations with the Seleukid kings. Under Antiochos II, Kyme was the location of a royal mint (*SC* 498-501), as were the neighbouring cities of Myrina (*SC* 502-5) and Phokaia (*SC* 508-13). Additionally, a letter from a King Antiochos to Ephesos regarding the Kymaians indicates that there were relations

¹⁵ For the first decree: ll. 1-13. Letter of Philetairos: ll. 14-19.

¹⁶ While the festival of the Dionysia and Antiocheia were celebrated together, the text suggests that the *Soteria* and the Philetaireia were separate festivals: Buraselis (2003), 185-97; cf. Orth (2008), 485-95 here 489.

¹⁷ An inscription from Aigai illustrates how both Seleukos I and Antiochos II were granted *soteria* (l. 11) and *phylai* with the names Seleukis and probably Antiochis (ll. 24-5), thus inscribing the Seleukid kings into the civic landscape: Malay/Ricl (2009), 39-47; see Habicht (1970), 82-105; 147-56.

between the city of Kyme and either Antiochos I or Antiochos II (*RC* 17).¹⁸

Moreover, Philetairos was a benefactor of the sanctuary of Apollo Chrestérios in Aigai and dedicated land and a *propylon* to the sanctuary while the city was apparently under Seleukid control and had a Seleukid mint under Antiochos II (*SC* 494-6).¹⁹ Although Philetairos acted independently as a local benefactor – in this case to help in difficult times – his incorporation within a Seleukid space is clearly visible.

Why were the Seleukids interested in a strong dynast in north-western Asia Minor? The geographic position of Pergamon, as well as the supply of shields to the people of Kyme, provides an answer to this question. The treasure of Pergamon enabled Philetairos to act as a local benefactor and provide security. Both the arrival of the Galatians in Asia Minor (see ch. 2 above) and the dangers mentioned in the Greek inscriptions clearly illustrate that the Seleukid kings were not permanently able to control the Galatian tribes from raiding the cities in western Asia Minor. While Antiochos I's famous 'Elephant Battle' was celebrated not only by the Seleukids but apparently also by the Greek cities, the Seleukid kings could not focus their attention solely on the Galatian question. Instead, they needed local actors to fulfil these needs. The military colonies Attaleia and Philetaireia under Ida, mentioned in the well-known decree from Eumenes I (*I.Pergamon* 13 = *OGIS* 266) and most likely founded under Philetairos, are examples of the Seleukid delegation of power to local dynasts.²⁰ Philetairos and his successors gave local benefactions to the communities in the north-western Seleukid periphery. The position of the Attalid dynasts at Pergamon between the Aiolis and Mysia and not, for example, in Lydia (with Sardeis), also underlines

¹⁸ The editors of *SC* suggest that all three mints could have been operating under a single mint authority (see *SC* i.1 p. 179 for references). Royal letter: see Dittenberger's discussion in *OGIS* 242 and *I.Kyme* 3. For the internal dynamics of Kyme: Hamon (2008), 63-106, esp. 104-6; see *BE* (2005), 395.

¹⁹ Aigai: *OGIS* 312; Schalles (1985), 33-6; Allen (1983), 13-14; see also *SEG* 49. 1746 under Eumenes I (= Herrmann/Malay [1999] no. 3). A boundary stone from Aigai, likely dating to the reign of Antiochos II, indicates Seleukid authority: *SEG* 19. 720; see also *SEG* 33. 1034; with Herrmann (1959), 4-6; cf. Orth (1977), 124-38; 158-72.

²⁰ Kosmetatou (2001), 107-32, here 113-14. An eponymous city foundation should be placed in the context of the foundation of Dokimos under Lysimachos: Tcherikover (1927), 35; Lund (1992), 82; and the city of the Philomelids, see below.

the strategy of the Seleukid kings to place dynasts in key positions which were nevertheless peripheral.

Philetairos was not the only dynast who was a benefactor and guarantor of local security. As indicated above, the Philomelids of Phrygia also received *proxenia* from the Delphians and it is very likely that it is this family who is attested as independent benefactors to Rhodes after the earthquake of 227 BCE (Pol. 5. 90. 1). The Philomelids most likely founded the city of Philomelion mentioned in the Nikanor decree from central Phrygia, dated to 209 BCE (*SEG* 54. 1353), and were clearly local power holders who also acted as benefactors in the region. Their position on the royal road east of Apameia could enable them to act against intruders from the north-east, thus securing the area. Moreover, Lysias, the son of Philomelos, and his descendants were clearly acting within a Seleukid framework. They fought in the name of Seleukos III against Attalos I (*OGIS* 277) and the same Nikanor decree mentioned above shows that Philomelos was integrated in the hierarchy of Seleukid officials (*SEG* 54. 1353. 16; 20), perhaps as a *hyparchos*. In nearly the same wording as in the Pamukçu stele, Zeuxis writes to the local administrator Philomelos that ‘you would do well, therefore, by giving orders for your subordinates to obey the orders and carry out things as he [the king] thinks fit.’²¹

Yet the scale of Philetairos’ activities differed. Philetairos was apparently allowed to keep Lysimachos’ former treasure under Seleukid authority and thus he had greater resources to act as a local power holder.²² While presumably the city of Pergamon’s location, surrounded by Greek cities (which had a strong tradition of inscribing honours in stone), influenced the survival of Philetairos’ dedications on a much larger scale than any other dynast in Asia Minor, Philetairos’ position among

²¹ *SEG* 54. 1353. 22-4: καλῶς ἂν οὔν | [πο]ιήσαις σ[υ]ν[τάξας ἐπακολουθήσαντας τοῖς ἐ]πεσταλμένοις | [σ]υντελεῖ[ν] ὥσπ[ερ] οἴεται δεῖν. For the same phrase in the Pamukçu stele: *SEG* 37. 1010. 13-6.

²² For the size of Philetairos’ treasure of nine thousand talents: Strab. 13. 4. 1; Allen (1983), 13-19.

the dynasts of Asia Minor was prominent and this is also illustrated in his right to strike coinage. Although no attributions can be made with certainty, it is possible to establish some patterns. It seems that Philetairos initially issued a commemorative issue for Seleukos I as well as perhaps another issue for Seleukos I with the obverse of Herakles (SC 1; 308). According to E. Newell, it was in the direct aftermath of the death of Seleukos I that Philetairos reverted to minting in the name of Alexander.²³ Antiochos I was not in Asia Minor when his father was assassinated or at his accession.²⁴ It might have been in the context of the death of Ptolemaios Keraunos that Philetairos was granted coinage in his own name. The ruler of Pergamon employed a portrait of Seleukos I on the obverse and a seated Athena on the reverse (SC 309; see pl. 7.1). The coinage of Philetairos underlines the Attalids' relationship with the house of Seleukos, as outlined in the inscriptions. The obverse depicts a very finely executed portrait of Seleukos I with wavy hair, an upward gaze and a strong brow ridge, which mirrors the issues of Alexander under Lysimachos (pl. 5.5).²⁵ The reverse, however, was locally motivated: a seated Athena featured beside the legend of Philetairos. Philetairos was clearly seen as a local dynast with substantial means under the authority of the Seleukid king. He must have been interested in good relations with the Seleukid kings and it seems plausible to interpret the returning of the ashes of Seleukos I to Antiochos I as such an intention.²⁶ E. Hansen stresses the importance of a marriage between Philetairos' nephew Attalos and Antiochis, the daughter of Achaïos (Strab. 13. 4. 2).²⁷ While she uses the evidence to underline good relations between the Attalids and the Seleukid kings, it presumably should instead be

²³ Interim period: SC 306-7. SC 307 is die-linked with SC 308, which still carried the legend of Seleukos; see Newell (1936), 15-22; repeated in *WSM* 1528-35.

²⁴ As indicated in Memnon of Herakleia *FGrHist* 434 F11. 9. 1 and probably *OGIS* 219 (= *I.Ilion* 32); Jones (1993), 73-92, here 89-90; Ma (2002), 254-9; *contra* Piejko (1991a), 9-50.

²⁵ Fleischer (1991), 9.

²⁶ Philetairos obtained the body of Seleukos I for a large sum of money, had it cremated in Pergamon and sent the ashes to his son Antiochos I: App. *Syr.* 63 (335); Allen (1983), 14n.19 whose view is perhaps too narrow.

²⁷ Hansen (1971), 27-8.

interpreted as a marriage between the local elite. Achaïos, a relative of the king and a land holder in Phrygia, and Philetairos, ‘the lord of the stronghold and the treasure’, formed an alliance between their families, which was encouraged, or presumably at the very least acknowledged, by the Seleukid king.²⁸

It is possible that it was also during Philetairos’ rule that the Seleukid king granted him further liberties. G. Le Rider has suggested a re-interpretation for the so-called group II of Pergamene coinage, which displayed the obverse of Philetairos (wearing the *strophion* as on the obverse with Seleukos I) and the reverse of the seated Athena of Pergamon (pl. 7.2).²⁹ Based on his publication of the Meydancikkale hoard and supported with further hoard evidence, Le Rider convincingly concluded that group VIA of the Pergamene mint, currently dated to the period between 228/0-215 BCE, should be pushed back to c.241-235 BCE. This corresponds to a re-dating of Seleukid issues found in the Meydancikkale hoard, which were initially dated by Newell to the period between 230-223 BCE, but are now dated earlier. Le Rider also situated other Pergamene groups to an earlier period and places the emission of group II under Philetairos.³⁰ He underlines this hypothesis by illustrating the relative stability in die usage among the different groups in his suggested timeline.³¹ Scholarship has traditionally linked group II with Eumenes I and while Le Rider’s suggestions might not be correct, they should be taken into consideration.³² Two scenarios can be imagined. It is possible that Antiochos I, perhaps after his battle

²⁸ The family of Achaïos was not any dynastic family of Asia Minor: see above, ch. 2.2.2.

²⁹ Le Rider (1992), 233-45; Uncertain: Kosmetatou (2001), 107-32, here 117; accepted by Jakobsson (2010), 17-33, here 22. Smith has suggested the possibility that the *strophion* might not be connected to a posthumous portrait: Smith (1988), 74, cf. 35; cf. Krug (1968), 128-30. For the early image of Philetairos: Gans (2006), 12.

³⁰ Davesne/LeRider (1989), 238; Le Rider (1992), 237.

³¹ Le Rider (1992a), 241-2. If this attribution is correct, it would solve Imhof-Blumer discovery that the emissions of Attalos I would have otherwise been relatively little in contrast to the issues of his predecessor: Imhof-Blumer (1884), 27; Westermarck (1961), 12-13 on the unsuccessful attempts to solve this particular problem.

³² Imhof-Blumer (1884), 26; von Fritze (1910), 7-8; Newell (1936), 33-4; Hansen (1971), 22; Allen (1983), 24; Westermarck (1961), 6; Kosmetatou (2003), 53-60; cf. Kosmetatou (2001), 107-32, here 117; Capdetrey (2007), 118; Coloru (2009), 165.

against the Galatians, granted the dynast of Pergamon further liberties which included the foundation of his own military colonies and the minting of his own coinage with his portrait. It is possible that this measure was also undertaken for the minting of the *fratarāka* coinage in the Persis during the same period (pl. 7.4).³³ Another scenario could be that Philetairos took the liberty to mint his own coinage, perhaps in the years when the Seleukid king was absent, in order to underline his position in northern Asia Minor; a decision which apparently was not opposed. Although it is not certain, it appears that a break with the Seleukid kings did not occur. A treaty from 269/8 BCE under Eumenes I is dated to the forty-fourth year of the Seleukid era, thus presumably indicating that there was not a hostile break with the Seleukid kings.³⁴

The relationship between the dynasts of Pergamon and the Seleukids supposedly changed following the death of Philetairos and the accession of Eumenes I.³⁵ Strabo writes that Eumenes I was ‘dynast of the places round about [Pergamon], so that he even joined in battle with Antiochos the son of Seleukos and defeated him near Sardeis.’³⁶ The battle has traditionally been dated to 262 BCE, soon after the accession of Eumenes I and before the death of the Seleukid king in early June 261.³⁷ It is striking that apart from the battle mentioned in Strabo, no Seleukid-Attalid encounter survives until the clashes between Attalos I and Antiochos Hierax more than twenty years later.³⁸ For the period from 230 BCE onwards the battle against Antiochos I was presumably important for the Attalid kings. However, how this

³³ Klose/Müseler (2008), 16-20 have recently illustrated that the coinage of Baydād presumably began in the early third century. These observations are corroborated by the recent find of a Baydād coin struck over a tetradrachm of Demetrios Poliorketes: *Numismatica Ars Classica* Auction 59 Lot 653. For the Seleukids, the right to strike coinage apparently did not threaten their control; cf. Wiesehöfer (1994), 115-19; idem. (2011), 107-21.

³⁴ *I.Pergamon* 13. 10-11; *OGIS* 266, followed by Allen (1983), 24; Kosmetatou (2001), 107-32, here 113.

³⁵ Allen (1983), 20; Capdetrey (2007), 118; Hansen (1971), 21-2 and Cardinali (1906), 13-14 assume Ptolemaic influence: cf. Heinen (1984), 412-45, here 428.

³⁶ Strab. 13. 4. 2: καὶ ἦν ἤδη δυνάστης τῶν κύκλῳ χωρίων ὥστε καὶ περὶ Σάρδεις ἐνίκησε μάχῃ συμβαλὼν Ἀντίοχον τὸν Σελεύκου.

³⁷ For the regnal years of Eumenes I: Allen (1983), 9-11. Death of Antiochos I: *CM* 4 obv. 2.

³⁸ See Mehl (1998a), 151; Hamon (2008), 63-106, here 104-5.

‘defeat’ was perceived by the Seleukid kings and how it changed Attalid-Seleukid relations needs to be explored. The new documents from Kyme in particular allow us to ascertain the dynamics for the first twenty years of Attalid-Seleukid relations. The period following the accession of Attalos I is attested in the monumental accounts of the Attalid dynasty, as outlined above, and illustrates continuous engagements between the Attalids, Seleukids and Galatians. However, we are lacking evidence for the crucial period between the death of Antiochos I (261 BCE) and the death of Antiochos II (246 BCE). While it is possible that accounts of Seleukid-Attalid hostilities for this twenty-year period are lost, one could hypothesise that Attalid historiography would later narrate victories against their Seleukid neighbours (such as the battle against Antiochos I). Military activity in the area was ubiquitous, as was Seleukid presence. Antiochos II’s campaigns in western Asia Minor were extensive. In the context of the Second Syrian War in particular, it is striking that evidence of Attalid-Seleukid encounters have not survived given Seleukid military activity on the coast of western Asia Minor and the increase in Seleukid minting activity in the Aiolis. Thus, the relationship between Eumenes I and Antiochos II needs to be re-evaluated.

Eumenes I’s position as dynast of Pergamon was not entirely stable. The well-known decree from Pergamon regarding a mercenary revolt clearly reveals the difficulties of his position (*I.Pergamon* 13= *OGIS* 266). While both the wider political context and the date of the dossier remain uncertain, scholarship has concluded that the text should be dated to the early years of Eumenes I’s rule.³⁹ As argued above, the military colonies also mentioned in this decree were founded by Philetairos and thus do not give an account of Eumenes I’s actions.⁴⁰ Moreover, the text employed a

³⁹ Kosmetatou (2001), 107-32, here 112; Schalles (1985), 31-3.

⁴⁰ See above, n.20.

Seleukid dating formula.⁴¹ While previous scholarship has argued for expansion of Attalid territory under Eumenes I, I. Savalli-Lestrade has convincingly argued that the arbitration between Mytilene and Pitane illustrates that Eumenes I received Pitane from Seleukos II, perhaps at the Seleukid king's accession which thus illustrates that this territory was not Attalid before this date.⁴² Another factor for the break with the Seleukid kingdom has been attributed to the minting of coinage with the portrait of Philetairos under Eumenes I (the so-called group II).⁴³ If, however, Le Rider's re-attribution of group II of the Pergamene mint is correct, Eumenes I's first coinage was not revolutionary. His coinage presumably began with the minting of group III, in which the *strophion* (worn by the portrait of Philetairos on the coins of group II) was replaced with a wreath, while the reverse remained very similar (pl. 7.3).⁴⁴ Although this reconstruction is not entirely certain, it clearly illustrates that the emergence of Attalid coinage with the image of the founder of the dynasty under Eumenes I must at least be questioned.

Can we create a picture of Seleukid-Attalid relations for the reign of Eumenes I? The dynast of Pergamon engaged the Seleukid king in a battle near Sardeis. If Philetairos had already struck coinage with his own portrait, Eumenes I continued this policy of his predecessor. If the taking of Pitane occurred at the accession of Seleukos II, then the extension of Attalid territory under the earlier rule of Eumenes I cannot be determined. Moreover, the absence of Seleukid-Attalid antagonism during Seleukid military activities in the region brings into question the hostilities between the dynast and the Seleukid king. If one were to adopt a more traditional view and reject Le Rider's attribution of the Philetairos' coinage during Philetairos' reign, concerns regarding a break with the Seleukids remain. The colonies under Mount Ida were

⁴¹ See *OGIS* 266, followed by Allen (1983), 24.

⁴² *SEG* 42. 1106; Savalli-Lestrade (1992), 226; Capdetrey (2007), 118; Hamon (2008), 63-106, here 105; *contra* Allen (1983), 21; Virgilio (1993), 15-16.

⁴³ See e.g. Capdetrey (2007), 118.

⁴⁴ Westermarck (1961), group II: V.1-V.10; group III: V.11-29.

already founded under Philetairos, who acted within a Seleukid sphere as outlined above. Philetairos also had added his name to his coinage and recent analyses of the coinage of the *fratarāka* questions whether the minting of coinage with the portrait of the ruler should be understood as an indicator of independence or if it should instead be read as a Seleukid policy under the early Seleukid rulers to grant coinages to local dynasts,⁴⁵ which was similar to Achaemenid practices. In light of this evidence, I am inclined to interpret the coinage in this way. The fact that Antiochos II engaged in extensive campaigns against the Ptolemaic troops in the region makes me question Attalid-Seleukid antagonism. I hope to have shown that it is questionable that there was a break between the Seleukids and Attalids during the reign of Eumenes I. Moreover, the exchange of territories between Seleukos II and Eumenes I, as illustrated by Savalli-Lestrade, illustrates that their relationship continued until at least the accession of Seleukos II. Therefore, it is very likely that while the dynast of Pergamon acted semi-independently, he nevertheless remained under the umbrella of Seleukid control.

When did the Attalids break with the Seleukid kings? Although there is no evidence for the continued relationship between the Attalid dynasts and Seleukos II, perhaps it is not accidental that Attalid resistance to Seleukid control was in fact in opposition to Antiochos Hierax, who had just defeated his brother Seleukos II at Ankyra. Although Seleukos III later crossed the Tauros to re-establish Seleukid control (Pol. 4. 48. 6), this does not mean that Attalos I's opposition to Antiochos Hierax's new kingdom was not welcomed. It was in this context, along with the raids of the Galatians on the coast of Asia Minor, that Attalos I declared himself king.⁴⁶ Throughout the third century the rulers of Pergamon were semi-autonomous dynasts; they fulfilled local needs for administration, security and benefaction and acted within

⁴⁵ See above, n.33 and below n.126.

⁴⁶ For an Attalid narrative: Allen (1983), 28-35. See ch.2.1.1.

a Seleukid space. In the period of weakened (or no) Seleukid control from c.241-213 BCE, the Attalids created a kingdom for themselves. Nevertheless, it is the period from 216-193 BCE which is instructive for the relationship between Attalos I and Antiochos III.

4.1.2 Seleukid and Attalid Present: 216-193 BCE

Polybios notes that prior to Antiochos III's campaign against Achaïos in early summer 216 BCE, the Seleukid king 'came to an agreement with King Attalos and arranged for a joint campaign in the war against Achaïos.'⁴⁷ Scholarship has suggested that it was this agreement and a possible treaty between Antiochos III and Attalos I which recognised not only the independent status of the Attalid territories but also Attalos' kingship.⁴⁸ This scenario is possible and it is likely that after the defeat at the battle of Raphia Antiochos III wanted to ensure that his next campaign would be successful. However, if the Attalids could act relatively autonomous while at the same time be under Seleukid authority, it is at least possible that the *koinopragia* between Antiochos III and Attalos I in 216 BCE might not have the constituting character of independence as previously suggested. The twenty-year period between 216 to 193 BCE is central to understanding the core of Seleukid-Attalid relations.

The success of the Seleukid campaign against Achaïos has been outlined above,⁴⁹ and while Allen is probably not mistaken in assuming good relations between the Attalids and Seleukids at the beginning of the campaign to Antiochos

⁴⁷ Pol. 5. 107. 4: [...] καὶ συνθέμενος πρὸς Ἀτταλον τὸν βασιλέα κοινοπραγίαν ἐνίστατο τὸν πρὸς Ἀχαιοὺν πόλεμον.

⁴⁸ For Allen (1983), 61 the treaty between Antiochos III and Attalos, mentioned in the peace terms of Apameia (Pol. 21. 17. 6; App. Syr. 38 [199]), should be placed in this early period of Attalid interaction; this is possible, but not definite.

⁴⁹ See ch. 2.1.2.

III's departure, Attalos I must have viewed the destruction of Achaïos' *dynasteia* with mixed feelings.⁵⁰ Achaïos had twice been able to push back Attalid frontiers and take over Attalid territory which had only recently been acquired during Attalos I's wars against Antiochos Hierax.⁵¹ However, with Attalid support, Antiochos III had been able to quickly prepare a siege against the usurper in Sardeis and after Achaïos had been apprehended, he was executed and his kingdom was destroyed. Attalos I had been the ally of Antiochos III in the battle against a common enemy. However, the campaign had also taught the Attalid king the scale of Seleukid war and the inadequacy of refuge in one of the best-fortified strongholds of Asia Minor.⁵² The campaigns of Seleukos III had underlined the fact that the Attalids had extended their kingdom into territories which were of Seleukid interests and although Attalos I's position was presumably stronger than that of his predecessors after his arrangement with Antiochos III, he must have lost territories. In fact, the inscription from Pamukçu near modern Balıkesir illustrates that at least in the last decade of the third century BCE, Attalid territory was not as extensive as previously assumed.⁵³ Moreover, the Attalids were not the only local power holders in Asia Minor. Attalos I's relations with the northern Anatolian dynasts, and with Bithynia in particular, were important to the security of his position in Asia Minor.⁵⁴ In addition to frictions about border regions and territories, Prusias I of Bithynia at least partially challenged Attalos I's position in Asia Minor as the defender of Greece against the Galatians (Pol. 5. 111. 5-6).⁵⁵

⁵⁰ Allen (1983), 58-60; cf. Hansen (1971), 43.

⁵¹ See ch. 2.1.2.

⁵² For the siege narrative, see ch. 2.1.2. The topography of Sardeis was altered completely by the earthquake of 17 CE. However, some remains of the old fortification are still visible: Hanfmann (1983), 110, 115 with fig. 70; 72-3; 79. On the strength of Pergamon: Kohl (2004), 177-98.

⁵³ SEG 37. 1010 (with SEG 54. 1237); Ma (2002), 60; Dreyer (2007), 251. The territory cannot have been Attalid if one assumes that the Seleukid administrative documents were not enacted in Attalid territories.

⁵⁴ For the relations between the Seleukids, Attalids and Bithynians: Habicht (1957a), 1086-1107, here 1091-1102; Ma (2002), 60.

⁵⁵ See Habicht (1957a), 1086-1107, here 1091-2.

Both the recent demonstration of Seleukid power and the potential for rivalry with the other dynasts in Asia Minor made it essential that there were good relations between Attalos I and the Seleukid state, particularly with Zeuxis.⁵⁶ Attalid activities in the following years suggest no concern for Seleukid intrusions. In 211 BCE Attalos I joined the Aitolians and the Romans in their war against Philip V and set sail to Aigina in late 208 BCE only to return to Pergamon in the late summer of 207 BCE to repel Prusias I, who had apparently invaded Pergamene territories.⁵⁷ Attalos I freely left Asia Minor to support the Aitolians and spent long periods outside of Pergamon. The personal involvement of the Attalid ruler in this episode seems to suggest that Greek affairs were of higher priority than the affairs of Asia Minor. This does not suggest that the relationship between Attalos I and the Seleukid king was hostile, rather it suggests the opposite.

Seleukid-Attalid relations do not seem to have been disturbed by Antiochos III's return from his *anabasis* in 204/3 BCE. Activities in the city of Teos are indicative of the perception of Seleukid power during this period (*SEG* 41. 1003 I).⁵⁸ While the people of Teos paid taxes to the Attalids (presumably since Attalos I's campaign against Achaïos in 218 BCE), they nevertheless made contact with Antiochos III while he was still outside Asia Minor and he was 'responsible for many advantages' bestowed on them (ll. 8-10). Once he crossed to Asia Minor 'he restored the affairs to a profitable conclusion' (ll. 10-11) and he stayed in the city before he 'released the city as holy, inviolate, and free from tribute' (ll. 18-20). According to the Teian narrative (after the city had become Seleukid), it was advantageous to send embassies to the Seleukid king while he was still away and later to bestow lavish

⁵⁶ For Zeuxis' position after the taking of Sardeis: Ma (2002), 123-30; Capdetrey (2007), 297-300; Dreyer (2007), 255-7.

⁵⁷ Support of the Aitolians: Liv. 26. 24. 9; Iust. 19. 14. 7. Aigina: Pol. 9. 30. 7; Liv. 27. 30. 4. Return to Pergamon: Liv. 28. 7. 10. It has been suggested that Prusias was allied with Philip V: cf. Liv. 29. 12. 14. On the conflict between Attalos I and Prusias: Habicht (1957a) 1086-1107, here 1092-3.

⁵⁸ See above, n.4; see also Herrmann (1965), 29-160, here 108-10; Dreyer (2007), 274-8. For the language of changeover: cf. Chrubasik (in print).

honours on both Antiochos III and Laodike when they arrived in the city.⁵⁹ These honours inscribed the Seleukid royal couple into the public memory of the city and into the workings of civic life.⁶⁰ The Teian dossier is a good example of the second phase of the resurgence of Seleukid power in Asia Minor.⁶¹ Cities which had been in the Attalid sphere at least since the 220s now became Seleukid. The Seleukid king did not stay in Teos or Asia Minor for very long, since he fought another war against the Ptolemaic kingdom in c.202 BCE. However, Seleukid power was at least present in the region: Zeuxis and his troops were operating from Sardeis and two inscriptions from Karian Amyzon from October/November 202 BCE and November/December 201 BCE suggest that Seleukid troops were present in Asia Minor.⁶² Yet despite Seleukid resurgence and the loss of Pergamene territories, Attalos I did not openly oppose Seleukid claims.

After Attalos I had assisted the Roman senatorial commission in obtaining a sacred stone from the Magna Mater sanctuary in Pessinous in 205 BCE (Liv. 29. 11.1-8), he and Rhodes sent embassies to Rome in 201 BCE bringing ‘word that the cities of Asia also were being stirred up to discontent.’⁶³ While it is possible that the Attalid embassy had indicated concerns about Antiochos III’s campaigns in Asia Minor, neither Livy’s narrative nor the future activities of the Roman senate or Attalos I actually support this. ‘To these embassies the senate replied that they would look into the matter’. Livy links this phrase to Macedonia by writing ‘and the whole question of

⁵⁹ Ma (2002), 214-16, also 71, 201-3; Robert/Robert (1983), 137; Hermann (1965), 29-160, here 110.

⁶⁰ For the inscribing into the civic life, see Chanotis (2007), 153-71; Herrmann (1965), 29-160, here 143-7.

⁶¹ Cf. Giovannini (1983), 178-84, who interprets the dossier not as a Seleukid takeover, but rather as arbitration.

⁶² Seleukid troops: for Grainger (2002), 26 Zeuxis was without any resources at that time (based on the large army of Antiochos III at Panion), however, Zeuxis’ activities throw doubt on this; cf. Bar-Kochva (1976), 7-19. Amyzon: Robert/Robert (1983) nos. 14-15. For the takeover: RC 38; Ma/Derow/Meadows (1995), 71-80.

⁶³ For the embassy of 201 BCE: Liv. 31. 2. 1: [...] *legati venerunt, nuntiantes Asiae quoque civitates sollicitari*; see Dreyer (2007), 109 with references.

the Macedonian war was referred to the consuls.’⁶⁴ Appian states that the news of the secret pact between Philip V and Antiochos III was brought to Rome on this occasion (App. *Mac.* 4.2), but it is striking that this information was only provided by Rhodes.⁶⁵ The narrative thus makes it clear the extent of Attalid concerns about Philip V’s engagements in the eastern Mediterranean in the spring of 200 BCE.⁶⁶ At this time Attalos I set sail to meet the Roman commission in Athens (Pol. 16. 25-6; Liv. 31. 14. 11- 15. 5). He composed an address to the assembly which underlined the threat of Philip V and later in the same year Rome declared war against the Antigonid king.⁶⁷ Attalos I had left Pergamon again, only to return to his kingdom in late 199 BCE (Liv. 31. 47. 2). He insisted that Philip V was his enemy in his communications with Roman senators and during his stay in Athens. As Allen writes, ‘he was the main advocate – or so it seems – of the renewed war with Macedon.’⁶⁸

All of these activities seem to suggest that there were no tensions between Attalos I and the Seleukid king during this period and this is underlined by the fact that we have no evidence of official Attalid complaints about the Seleukid king. Thus, if there were no tensions between the Attalos I and Antiochos III despite the Seleukid activities in western Asia Minor, and if Attalos I did not consider it dangerous to leave Pergamon for long periods of time, we must reconsider Attalid-Seleukid relations.⁶⁹ In light of the geopolitical environment of the late third century, it seems very likely that in the context of the defeat of Achaïos, Antiochos III did not only acknowledge

⁶⁴ Liv. 31. 2. 2: *his legationibus responsum est curae eam rem senatui fore; consultatio de Macedonico bello integra ad consules*, [...].

⁶⁵ See Pol. 3. 2. 8. For the ‘three kings inscription’: Ma (2002), 379-82; Dreyer (2002), 119-38, here 122-7. For a compilation of the recent discussion on the treaty: Dreyer (2007), 259-72.

⁶⁶ Philip not only conquered Samos (*IG* 12. 6. 1. 12) after a defeat near Chios (Pol. 16. 2. 1-3) and a victory near Lade (Pol. 16. 15), he invaded Pergamene territory (Pol. 16. 1); Ma (2002), 76-7. For a different order of the battles: Wiemer (2001b), 85-97; Berthold (1975), 150-63; Walbank (1940), 108-37; *HCP* ii, 497-500; Allen (1983), 72. On Samos: Shipley (1987), 192.

⁶⁷ For a narrative of the events of 200 BCE: Dreyer (2007), 111-20; Gruen (1984), 382-98.

⁶⁸ Allen (1983), 73.

⁶⁹ Similar: Dreyer (2007), 290; cf. Grainger (2002), 32-3.

the kingship of Attalos I, Attalos I also accepted the authority of the Seleukid king.⁷⁰ The Attalids could of course pursue independent politics, bestow benefactions and make their own wars, as long as they did not impinge on the imperial politics of the Seleukid king. This situation does not seem to change until the death of the Attalid king in 197 BCE (Pol. 18. 41. Liv. 33. 21. 1-5).⁷¹ It perhaps is also in this context that we should place at least one of two dedications from Pergamon, found on the terrace of the Athena temple. Protas(?), son of Menippos, perhaps a *somatophylax*, dedicated a statue of the ‘Great King’ Antiochos III (*I.Pergamon* 182 = *OGIS* 240).⁷² If J. Ma is correct in his interpretation of the adoption of the title of Great King (and bearing in mind that this is a private dedication) then the *terminus post quem* should be Antiochos III’s victory against Ptolemaios V at Panion in 200 BCE.⁷³ This statue, set up in the city of Pergamon by a Seleukid courtier, also indicates good relations between the Seleukid king and Attalos I. The second dedication is even more puzzling and the context more obscure. The *demos* of Pergamon dedicated a statue to Zeuxis, son of Kynagos, who was Macedonian (*I.Pergamon* 189 = *OGIS* 236).⁷⁴ Since the context of these inscriptions was destroyed with the re-planning of the terrace of Athena under Eumenes II and the levelling of the terrace for the great altar, it is impossible to ascertain the character and frequency of dedications by the *demos* of Pergamon.⁷⁵ Although the interpretation of the inscriptions remains hypothetical, it is possible that they highlight the dynamics of the period.

This picture of Seleukid-Attalid relations changed in the period following 197 BCE and it was from 193 BCE that their relationship was re-defined. Since this occurred during the lead up to a conflict between Antiochos III and the Romans, the

⁷⁰ Similar: Engels (forthcoming).

⁷¹ Scholarship has convincingly outlined that Seleukid intrusion in Attalid territory (Liv. 33. 19. 8) should be regarded as an annalistic fabrication: Dreyer (2007), 283-5; Ma (2002), 279-81; *contra* e.g. Schmitt (1964), 269-70; see Dreyer for the latest bibliography.

⁷² For the suggestion of *somatophylax*: Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 38-9; Ma (2002), 390.

⁷³ Ma (2002), 272-6. The statue perhaps even derives from the context of Antiochos III’s victory.

⁷⁴ Cf. its similarity to *OGIS* 235.

⁷⁵ Ma (forthcoming a), ch. 3.4; Kähler (1948), 14; Schober (1940), 151-68; Radt (1999), 79-81.

events of 197 to 196 BCE need to be briefly sketched. The narrative is well known. According to Livy's account, Antiochos III set out with a large number of decked and lighter vessels to conquer the coast of Asia Minor in the spring of 197 BCE. This naval expedition was supported by a land army, which awaited him at Sardeis.⁷⁶ While Antiochos III was on the coast of Kilikia and Pamphylia in negotiations with the Rhodians, news reached him of Philip V's defeat by the Romans at Kynoskephalai.⁷⁷ Ignoring Rhodian requests, Antiochos III continued his naval conquest and by August 197 the Seleukid king arrived in Ephesos where he wintered.⁷⁸ During the winter Antiochos III took most of the cities on the northern Ionian coastline, only the two cities of Smyrna and Lampsakos apparently were 'contending for their liberty'.⁷⁹ Since the land troops had already taken Abydos at this point (Liv. 33. 38. 4; 33. 38. 8.), he was able to send them south towards Lampsakos, while the king himself set sail to the Hellespont to cross into the Chersonesos in spring 196 BCE (Liv. 33. 38. 8.). It was after the re-foundation of Lysimacheia and the king's expedition to Thrace that two Roman commissions arrived in Lysimacheia.⁸⁰

However, the politics of Asia Minor were no longer a purely Greek affair. Presumably to avoid Roman suspicions about the Seleukid king's activities in Asia Minor, Antiochos III sent an embassy to T. Quinctius Flamininus in 196, which was received after the proclamation of the freedom of the Greeks at the Isthmian games.⁸¹

⁷⁶ Liv. 33. 19. 9-11; Hieronymus *FGrHist* 260 F46. For the naval conquest until the taking of Ephesos: Ma (2002), 82-9; also Schmitt (1964), 278-88; Dreyer (2007), 285-9. For the Seleukid conquest of Lykia: Wörrle (2011), 377-415. For Rhodian rule in Lykia and Pamphylia in this period: Adak (2007), 251-79.

⁷⁷ Liv. 33. 20. 1-13; Wiemer (2002), 222-5. For the Rhodian narrative of the event: idem (2001b), 107-11; idem (2002), 44-5.

⁷⁸ Liv. 33. 38. 1. Ephesos also was the last station in Hieronymus' list: *FGrHist* 260 F46. The importance of Ephesos is illustrated in a passage by Polybios: Pol. 18. 41a; Ma (2002), 86-8;

⁷⁹ Liv. 33. 38. 3: *Smyrna et Lampsacus libertatem usurpabant*. This is not the first time Smyrna asserted its independence. Under Seleukos II and Achaios: see ch.2.1.1 and 2.2.2.

⁸⁰ Lysimacheia and Thrace: Pol. 18. 51. 3-4; Liv. 33. 38. 10-14; App. *Syr.* 1 (3-4); *Illion* 45. For Antiochos III's Thracian campaign: Grainger (1996), 329-43.

⁸¹ Pol. 18. 47; Liv. 33. 34; Gruen (1984), 621.

Prior to the Seleukid embassy, the commission had recently received the embassies from cities of the coast of western Asia Minor, including Smyrna and Lampsakos.⁸² The replies of both T. Quinctius Flamininus and the commission of ten were not as the Seleukid king desired. ‘They ordered him [Antiochos III], with regard to the Asiatic cities, to keep his hands off those which were autonomous and make war on none of them and to withdraw from those previous subject to Ptolemy and Philip which he had recently taken.’⁸³ When the Roman commissioners arrived at Lysimacheia in the early autumn of 196 BCE they re-iterated this same position. The senate’s concern about Antiochos III’s politics is further illustrated by the arrival L. Cornelius Lentulus at Lysimacheia to reconcile Antiochos III and Ptolemaios V (Pol. 18. 49. 3).⁸⁴

It is in this context that we must place the Attalid politics of the period. Attalos I died in Pergamon after suffering a stroke at Thebes perhaps in the summer of 197 BCE (Liv. 33. 21. 1. Pol. 18. 41).⁸⁵ The succession of Eumenes II presumably occurred peacefully, since he probably had already been in charge of affairs in Pergamon since his father’s departure in 200 BCE (with the brief interval of his return in the winter of 199 BCE). Nevertheless, dynastic successions in the Hellenistic period were hardly stable and the political landscape of Asia Minor was not favourable to political instability in the Attalid royal house. It perhaps was during the period after Attalos’ death that Prusias I had seized the territory of Phrygia Epiktetos, a territory which was later returned to Eumenes II after the peace of Apameia.⁸⁶

⁸² Lampsakos had sent an embassy to Rome, presumably before Antiochos III had threatened the city: *Syll.*³ 591; Bickermann (1932), 47-76; Mehl (1990), 147n.19. Polybios and Livy mention both cities sending embassies to Lysimacheia and Appian mentions others who appealed to Flamininus: *App. Syr.* 2 (5), based on Polybios’ account: *BAA* 81; Pol. 18. 52; Liv. 33. 38. 3-4.

⁸³ Pol. 18. 47. 1: [...] διακελευόμενοι τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς Ἀσίας πόλεων τῶν μὲν αὐτονόμων ἀπέχεσθαι καὶ μηδεμιᾶ πολεμεῖν, ὅσας δὲ νῦν παρείληφε τῶν ὑπὸ Πτολεμαῖον καὶ Φίλιππον ταττομένων; Liv. 33. 34. 2-4.

⁸⁴ *HCP* ii, 620-1; Pol. 18. 49. 3; Gruen (1984), 622.

⁸⁵ We do not know when Attalos I died, but Ma (2002), 265 has illustrated that *F.Delphes* III.1 336 cannot be taken as an indicator that Attalos I was still alive as suggested by Allen (1983), 10n.6.

⁸⁶ Habicht (1957a), 1086-1107, here 1096-8; Habicht (1956), 90-110, here 92-95.

Moreover, Eumenes II must also have been concerned about cities, such as Smyrna and Lampsakos, which turned to Rome for help rather than to him or his father before him.⁸⁷ It is indicative that the relationship between the new Attalid king and Antiochos III does not seem immediately different from that of his predecessor. Antiochos III did not make advances against the kingdom nor did Eumenes II straightaway urge Rome to act against the Seleukid king, and Eumenes II left Asia Minor in the summer of 195 BCE to join the Romans in a campaign against Nabis of Sparta (Liv. 34. 29. 4).⁸⁸

The political relations between Antiochos III and the Romans, however, had changed and Eumenes II must have been aware of the ambiguousness of the outcome at the conference at Lysimacheia and the announced marriage alliance between Antiochos III and Ptolemaios V.⁸⁹ According to Livy's account, it was after the winter of 194-193 BCE, when Antiochos III married his daughter to Ptolemaios V at Raphia, that the king returned to Ephesos via the Tauros ridge (Liv. 35. 13. 4. App. Syr. 5 [18]). Appian writes that the Seleukid king married another daughter Antiochis to Ariarathes IV of Kappadokia in the same period and he offered yet another daughter to Eumenes II in order to reaffirm Seleukid-Attalid relations; however, the Attalid king declined the offer.⁹⁰ The rejection of the Seleukid princess clearly illustrates a re-evaluation of the political position of the Attalid king which must have taken place in the early years of the second century. The Seleukid embassy to Rome in 193 BCE had

⁸⁷ See: Magie (1950), 947-8; see above n.82. Eumenes II was allied with Rome and as an ally he received the cities of Oreus and Eretria from the *decemviri* (Liv. 33. 34. 10). However, Roman involvement in the cities of Asia Minor which his father had previously held must have been concerning. Therefore, Holleaux's interpretation that Lampsakos and Smyrna were sent by Eumenes II seems unlikely: Holleaux (1930) 179; Hansen (1971), 75. Smyrna remained on the Roman side and allegedly founded a Roma temple in 195 BCE: Tac. *Ann.* 4.56. For the Ionian cities' position towards Rome in the wake of the war against Antiochos III: Mellor (1975), 51. For *Romaia* on Chios: Salvo (forthcoming); Derow/Forrest (1982), 79-92.

⁸⁸ Return: Liv. 34. 40. 7.

⁸⁹ Results of the first conference: Pol. 18. 49-52; Liv. 33. 39-41; App. Syr. 3-4 (10-17); Gruen (1984), 622-4. Seleukid-Ptolemaic friendship: Liv. 33. 33. 40; 35. 13. 4. App. Syr. 3 (13).

⁹⁰ App. Syr. 5 (18); Pol. 21. 20. 8; Liv. 37. 53. 13. Mehl (1998b), 251-3 dates the marriage proposal to 194 BCE, while Hansen (1971), 76-7 dates it to 193 BCE; however, uncertainties must remain: cf. Cohn (1909), 1091-1104, here 1092. In 212 BCE Antiochos III gave his sister Antiochis in marriage to Xerxes of Armenia: Pol. 8. 23.

failed utterly (Liv. 34. 57-9) and in Livy's account in book thirty-five we find the first public Attalid complaint against the Seleukid king trying to urge the Romans into war (Liv. 35. 13. 7-10). The Attalid king knew that his father's kingdom had only been able to emerge as a kingdom in the mid-third century because of the weakened central authority of the Seleukid empire. If it was not Seleukos II who had urged Attalos I to resist Antiochos Hierax and had granted further concessions to the Attalid rulers, it was only Antiochos III who had acknowledged Attalos I as king. At the same time, Attalos I also had accepted Seleukid superiority to a certain degree and the Seleukid resurgence clearly illustrated that the Pergamene state could not expand their interests without leading to a territorial loss for Antiochos III. Both Livy and Appian (ultimately relying on Polybios) narrate the discourse that led to Eumenes II decision to ally himself against his neighbour:

Even if some misfortune should befall, it was better, he thought, to endure whatever fate with the Romans as allies than by himself either to submit to the sovereignty of Antiochos or, if he refused, to be compelled to do so by force of arms.⁹¹

Eumenes II saw Rome as his chance to free himself from Seleukid superiority in Asia Minor. His predecessor had influenced the Roman decision (or at least the speed of it) in the war with Philip V and it was from this period onwards that Livy records very close relations between the Attalid king and the Roman senate. Eumenes II saw an opportunity for his dynasty to become independent from Seleukid power. In 192 BCE Eumenes II must have somehow taken part in the second war against Nabis of Sparta (*I.Pergamon* 62), although he appears to have been still in Pergamon when Antiochos III crossed into Greece. He immediately dispatched Attalos to Rome where Eumenes II was honoured together with his brother (Liv. 35. 33. 1-2). In the

⁹¹ Liv. 35. 13. 9: *etiam si quid aduersi casurum foret, satius esse Romanis sociis quamcumque fortunam subire quam solum aut imperium pati Antiochi aut abnuentem ui atque armis cogi*; similarly in App. Syr. 5 (20). Brodersen argues that Appian's phrasing (βασιλεύσιν βασιλεύόμενον) indicates the possibility of remaining a king under the 'Great King' Antiochos III: *BAA* 94.

immediate beginnings of the Roman war against Antiochos III Eumenes II was present with his fleet at Chalkis (Liv. 35. 33. 6).

The Attalid state profited immensely from the treaty of Apameia. In the second century Attalid historiography underlined the independence of the dynasty from their former Seleukid masters, tracing it from the battle at Sardeis in 262 BCE to the taking of the diadem under Attalos I. This re-creation of Attalid past has influenced our historical narratives and it is this re-writing of Attalid history that has reshaped Livy's (i.e. Poybios') narrative about Eumenes II's decision to go to war against Antiochos III. Nevertheless, a close analysis of the geopolitical developments of the third century BCE clearly illustrates why (for the Seleukid kings) the Attalids differed from Achaïos and Molon: they were semi-autonomous dynasts who acted with the acceptance of the Seleukid king. One could even hypothesise that the acclamation of Attalos I as king and his opposition against Seleukos II was more in favour of current Seleukid politics than against it. Although from 216 onwards the Attalid kings pursued relations with the Seleukid king, which was based on the inequality of their powers, the Attalids were kings and could pursue their own political agendas. The break with the Seleukid king only took place during the events of 197-c.193 BCE. The failed conferences between the Roman commissions and Antiochos III led to Rome becoming a new actor in the power politics of Asia Minor from which an independent Attalid kingdom emerged. The Attalid kingdom of the third century, however, was a peripheral semi-autonomous kingdom, which fulfilled local functions in the Seleukid periphery as the biggest and also as only one of a number of peripheral rulers.

4.2 Antiochos III and Euthydemos of Baktria

After Antiochos III's campaign against Achaïos, he launched a new expedition which took him into the east.⁹² Since Polybios' narrative survives in fragments, only a few episodes can be reconstructed.⁹³ In c.212 BCE Antiochos III brought Xerxes of Armenia back under Seleukid rule and thus secured Seleukid control for southern Armenia (Pol. 8. 23).⁹⁴ It is likely that it was in the autumn of 210 BCE that Antiochos III sailed down the Euphrates.⁹⁵ Soon afterwards, presumably in 209 BCE, Antiochos III was in Ekbatana preparing his expedition and in 210 or 209 BCE Antiochos III appointed his son as co-regent (*CM* 4 rev. 4-5). Polybios writes that the precious metals from the sanctuary of Anahita in Ekbatana were stripped 'to coin royal money' in order to finance the eastern campaign. Both Polybios and Justin add that afterwards the king marched against the Parthians with a large force.⁹⁶ After taking Hekatompylos he advanced to Hyrkania and after some skirmishes en route, battles and sieges he came to an agreement with the Parthian king, Arsakes II.⁹⁷ Antiochos III continued to push further east. Polybios describes a violent taking of a riverbank in Aria (modern Herat) by the Seleukid army and notes the personal courage of Antiochos III. Euthydemos, who was not present at the taking of the bank, was καταπλαγείς, 'terror-struck' at this Seleukid success and retreated to the city of Baktra (Pol. 10. 49. 1-15). Polybios describes the siege of Baktra as one of the big

⁹² For two very different narratives: Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 197-202; Lerner (1999), 45-61.

⁹³ On Polybios' narrative of the eastern campaigns: Coloru (2009), 66-9.

⁹⁴ Perhaps this also led to the renewed control over Kommagene: Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 190-7.

⁹⁵ Pol. 9. 43; *HCP* ii, 14; 186-7, for the season and the year; see also Niese (1899), 397n.6. If autumn is the correct season, Antiochos III would have spent a long time in Armenia. Thus, Holleaux's suggestion that the Seleukid king turned back to Antiocheia might be possible: Holleaux (1930), 140.

⁹⁶ Ekbatana and the wealth of Media: Pol. 10. 27. For the money: Pol. 10. 27. 13: τὸ χαρᾶχθὲν εἰς τὸ βασιλικὸν [...] νόμισμα. For the phrase: *HCP* ii, 235; see also the *stelai* from Pamukçu (*SEG* 37. 1010 with *SEG* 54. 1237) and Philomelion (*SEG* 54. 1353), see above n.21. Force: Pol. 10. 28. 1; Iust. 41. 5. 7. For royal revenue: Aperghis (2004), 171-5.

⁹⁷ Pol. 10. 27-31; *HCP* ii, 231-42; Iust. 41. 5.7; Coloru (2009), 179; Lerner (1999), 45-7; Will (1979), 57-8.

sieges of its time, on par with the sieges of Sardeis, Karthage and Corinth; however, the account is lost.⁹⁸ Polybios' next fragment discusses negotiations between Euthydemos and Antiochos III (Pol. 11. 34. 1-10)⁹⁹ and although it is impossible to ascertain the degree to which this explanation derives from any late third-century Seleukid Baktrian discourse, it is possible that the passage nevertheless reflects Seleukid opinions of seceding dynasts, given Polybios' use of a Seleukid court source for a large part of his narrative of Antiochos III.¹⁰⁰

Polybios' fragment is interesting for both Euthydemos' rationale and the Seleukid response:

For Euthydemos himself was a native of Magnesia, and he now, in defending himself to Teleas, said that Antiochos was not justified in attempting to drive him out of his kingdom, as he himself had never revolted from the king, but after others had revolted he had destroyed their descendants and had possessed himself of the kingdom of the Baktrians.¹⁰¹

He then added that the Seleukid king should not begrudge him of τῆς ὀνομασίας τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως <καὶ> προστασίας 'his royal name and status' (Pol. 11. 34. 3), since this allowed both rulers to be safe against the nomads (Pol. 11. 34. 5). In this account two elements are of particular importance: 1) Euthydemos did not revolt against the king since he had punished those who had seceded. 2) The position of a strong figure in Baktria helped both kings and thus implies Seleukid interest in the security of the province. As in the western campaigns, the *anabasis* of Antiochos III presumably was intended to recover his ancestral dominions.¹⁰² While Euthydemos might not have known the fate of Achaïos and the relationship between Antiochos III

⁹⁸ Pol. 19. 2. 7 and 29. 12. 8; *HCP* ii, 265.

⁹⁹ The fragment is presumably from 206 BCE: *HCP* ii, 312; Coloru (2009), 184-6; Lerner (1999), 51. For Antiochos III's interest in negotiations: Pol. 11. 34. 7: ὁ δὲ βασιλεὺς, πάλαι περιβλεπόμενος λύσιν τῶν πραγμάτων, [...], προθύμως ὑπήκουσε πρὸς τὰς διαλύσεις [...] 'And the king who had long been searching for a solution of the question [...] gladly consented to an accommodation [...]'.
¹⁰⁰ Primo (2009), 134-5.

¹⁰¹ Pol. 11. 34. 1-2: Καὶ γὰρ αὐτὸς ἦν ὁ Εὐθύδημος Μάγνης, πρὸς ὃν ἀπελογίζετο φάσκων ὡς οὐ δικαίως αὐτὸν Ἀντίοχος ἐκ τῆς βασιλείας ἐμβαλεῖν σπουδάζει· γεγονέναι γὰρ οὐκ αὐτὸς ἀποστάτης τοῦ βασιλέως, ἀλλ' ἐτέρων ἀποστάντων ἐπανελόμενος τοὺς ἐκείνων ἐκγόνους, οὕτως κρατῆσαι τῆς Βακτριανῶν ἀρχῆς.

¹⁰² For Antiochos III's claim to his ancestral dominions: Ma (2002), 27-33, esp. 29-30.

and Attalos I, he nevertheless was presumably aware of Molon's crushed revolt, the re-insertion of both Artabazanes of Atropatene (Pol. 5. 55) and Xerxes of Armenia (Pol. 8. 23) under Seleukid authority and the Seleukid king's the recent arrangement with the Parthian king. Euthydemos most likely had been in power in Baktria for a considerable period of time and his argument followed a logic which was fitting to his position.¹⁰³ He emphasised his peripheral position, arguing that Baktria needed a 'king' in these far regions in order to guarantee the security of the kingdom. Although it is uncertain to which degree the 'nomads' from the steppe were a later insertion in the Polybian narrative (giving the destruction of the Baktrian kingdom in the later part of the second century),¹⁰⁴ Euthydemos' explanation nevertheless strikingly echoes Seleukid policies in Asia Minor as outlined above. Moreover, the Baktrian ruler even underlined that he was helpful to the Seleukids, since he had destroyed (ἐπανελόμενος) those who had revolted against the king. It is difficult not to see a rhetorical embellishment behind this reasoning; however, a clear effort to distance himself from his predecessors is apparent.¹⁰⁵ In the Polybean speech Euthydemos argued that it was by his own authority that he was king in the region and that he could perform the duties required for the safety of Baktria and thus Antiochos III should acknowledge his position. Even if we cannot place a strong emphasis on the particulars of Euthydemos' reasoning, it is the Seleukid response which is striking.

As indicated above, Antiochos III gave his consent to Euthydemos' proposal. He received the son of Euthydemos, Demetrios, to ratify the treaty. The latter made a good and royal impression on him (Pol. 11. 34. 7-9). Additionally, the Seleukid king:

Promised to give him one of his daughters in marriage and conceded to his father the royal name. After making a written treaty concerning other points and entering into a sworn alliance, Antiochos took his departure,

¹⁰³ On the accession of Euthydemos: Coloru (2009), 175-6.

¹⁰⁴ Coloru (2009), 181-2 underlines the possibility of a nomad threat while not excluding the possibility of a Polybean insertion; see also Cataudella (2006), 383-92.

¹⁰⁵ It remains unclear whether this referred to an internal Baktrian discourse against the Diodotids, as suggested by Coloru (2009), 173.

serving out two generous rations of corn to his troops and adding to his own the elephants belonging to Euthydemos.¹⁰⁶

The language of the response is instructive. Antiochos III conceded the royal name to Euthydemos and promised to give one of his daughters to Demetrios in marriage. The limits of Seleukid success are underlined by the fact that Euthydemos did not leave his stronghold and that it was Demetrios who ratified the agreements. Although Antiochos III had no other option but to accept the monarch if he did not want to continue the siege, Antiochos III was undoubtedly the senior partner in this agreement. He profited from it directly, as indicated in the rations of corn he could distribute and the taking of Euthydemos' elephants. Moreover, apart from the siege of Baktra, Antiochos III's campaign seems to have been quite successful.¹⁰⁷ Thus, Euthydemos was acceptable as king in the political landscape of central Asia for Antiochos III. In the end it is impossible to ascertain whether the acceptance of Euthydemos as king derived from the long siege of Baktra, or if the siege served to illustrate the potential of Seleukid power and to force the Baktrian ruler to bow to Seleukid authority.¹⁰⁸ The surrender of elephants illustrates that Euthydemos himself was not in a superior position. Most importantly, however, the settlement was motivated geopolitically and this is emphasised in Polybios' narrative. Euthydemos had argued his case with reference to geopolitical concerns and Antiochos III was aware of his kingdom's political past. While Antiochos III was presumably the first Seleukid monarch to have accepted a Baktrian ruler with the title of king, the quasi-

¹⁰⁶ Pol. 11. 34. 9-10: [...] πρῶτον μὲν ἐπηγγείλατο δώσειν αὐτῷ μίαν τῶν ἑαυτοῦ θυγατέρων· δεύτερον δὲ συνεχώρησε τῷ πατρὶ τὸ τῆς βασιλείας ὄνομα. περὶ δὲ τῶν λοιπῶν ἐγγράπτους ποιησάμενος ὁμολογίας καὶ συμμαχίαν ἔνορκον, ἀνέζευξε σιτομετρήσας δαφιλῶς τὴν δύναμιν, προσλαβὼν καὶ τοὺς ὑπάρχοντας ἐλέφαντας τοῖς περὶ τὸν Εὐθύδημον.

¹⁰⁷ If Krit্ত's interpretations are correct, then Antiochos III was able to occupy Aī Khanoum during his campaign and mint coinage, thus underlining Antiochos III's impact in the region: *SC* 1283-4. P. Leriche has argued that the layer of rebuilding at Aī Khanoum between phases IV and V, dated roughly to c.225 BCE, was so extensive that it might have been initiated beyond the local level. Perhaps it could be dated to the taking of the city of Antiochos III as suggested by Krit্ত. However, since the chronology is not certain, it also could illustrate a violent changeover between Diodotos II and Euthydemos: Krit্ত (2001), 152-8; Krit্ত/Hoover/Houghton (2000), 93-112, here 93-102; Leriche (1986), 54-5; 67-70; Holt (1999), 54.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Coloru (2009), 183-5; Engels (forthcoming).

independent position of the Baktrian ruler was not new to the region. In order to interpret Euthydemos' position in Baktria it is first necessary to examine the dynamics of the local rulers of Baktria before Euthydemos' acknowledgement by the Seleukid king.

4.2.1 Peripheral Dynasts in the East: From Diodotos to Euthydemos

The surviving ancient literary accounts link the ascent of the Baktrian dynasty inseparably with the war between Antiochos Hierax and Seleukos II. According to Justin, the discord between the two brothers not only led the people of Parthia to secede, Theodotos [Diodotos], 'the governor of the thousand cities of Baktria, revolted (*defecit*), and assumed the title of king' (Iust. 41. 4. 3-5).¹⁰⁹ Arsakes invaded Parthia and overthrew Andragoras, the commander of Seleukos II, and took the government for himself (Iust. 41. 4. 6-7.). Given Justin's chronological order of events 'at the same time' (*eodem tempore*) or 'around this time' (*eo tempore*), and the two different accounts of the origins of Arsakes himself, the precise choreography of the Parthian and Baktrian secession is unclear. It has caused a considerable amount of scholarly attention, with a tendency towards a lower date for the secession of both Parthia and Baktria after the death of Antiochos II.¹¹⁰ While an assessment of early Parthian and Baktrian chronology is beyond the scope of this chapter, certain elements which are instructive for understanding the relationship between the Seleukid kings and the Baktrian dynasts will be identified. Justin's narrative on the

¹⁰⁹ For a recent assessment: Coloru (2009), esp. 157-73; Lerner (1999), 13-19; Holt (1999), 55-66. On the thousand cities: Leriche (2007), 121-53; see also Coloru (2009), 169n.58.

¹¹⁰ For a recent analysis following the low dating: Coloru (2009), 157-68; further references: Schmitt (1964), 64-75; and recently Assar (2004), 69-93. The following should not be seen as an extensive treatment of the debate, but rather different views: e.g. Bickerman (1944), 79-83; Narain (1957), 13-16. On the other hand, the 'lower' chronology' by Bevan was elaborated by Wolski and esp. Will: Bevan (1902), I 285-6: see esp. Wolski (1993) and Wolski (1999) for a synopsis of the author's extensive bibliography on the topic; cf. the bibliography in *Parthica* 7 (2005); cf. Altheim/Stiel (1970), 443-67; Bihar (1983), 29-97, here 28-30; Musti (1984), 17-220, here 213-220; Will (1979), 301-8.

subject seems clear. During Seleukos II's war with his brother, the Seleukid satraps of Parthylene and Baktria seceded. At some point after Andragoras' secession Arsakes invaded Parthia and the Seleukid satrap was murdered. Strabo's account seems to suggest similar dynamics, even though in this account it was Baktria which revolted first:

But when revolutions were attempted in those areas outside the Tauros, because of the fact that the kings of Syria and Media were busily engaged with other affairs, the ones entrusted (those around Euthydemos) first caused Baktriane to revolt and all the places near it. Then Arsakes, a Skythian, with some of the Däae [...] invaded Parthia and conquered it.¹¹¹

Although Strabo presumably confuses the name of Euthydemos with that of Diodotos,¹¹² both Justin and Strabo place the secession at a time when the Seleukid kings (τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Μηδίας βασιλέας) were engaged in other affairs.

This picture is enriched by coinage dating to the period. It presumably was during the reign of Antiochos II that there was a change to the Seleukid coinage in Baktria.¹¹³ The portrait of the Seleukid ruler, which until then had been on the obverse of Baktrian coinage, was replaced with a different portrait, generally interpreted as the portrait of Diodotos I.¹¹⁴ Moreover, the usual Apollo on Omphalos type on the reverse of the coinage was replaced with a Zeus holding an aegis and wielding a thunderbolt. The legend of the coin issues states βασιλέως Ἀντιόχου (pl. 7.7). Additional issues with a different portrait were presumably minted later with a similar reverse and the

¹¹¹ Strab. 11. 9. 2: Νεωτερισθέντων δὲ τῶν ἔξω τοῦ Ταύρου διὰ τὸ πρὸς ἄλλοις εἶναι τοὺς τῆς Συρίας καὶ τῆς Μηδίας βασιλέας τοὺς ἔχοντας καὶ ταῦτα, πρῶτον μὲν τὴν Βακτριανὴν ἀπέστησαν οἱ πεπιστευμένοι καὶ τὴν ἐγγὺς αὐτῆς πᾶσαν, οἱ περὶ Εὐθύδημον. ἔπειτ' Ἀρσάκης ἀνὴρ Σκύθης τῶν Δαῶν τινὰς ἔχων [...] ἐπῆλθεν ἐπὶ τὴν Παρθυαίαν καὶ ἐκράτησεν αὐτῆς; Coloru (2009), 161 follows this order of events; see also Brodersen (1986), 380; Drijvers (1998), 284; Will (1979), 305-6.

¹¹² Altheim's suggestion that these events refer to the revolt of Molon is unconvincing, as illustrated by Schmitt (1964), 70n.1; Coloru (2009), 163; *contra* Altheim (1947), 291; Will (1962), 106; Will (1979), 305; Lerner (1999), 40-1; cf. Wolski (1999), 45-50.

¹¹³ Holt dates them provisionally between 255 and 250 BCE, although no certainty can be reached: Holt (1999), 97; Kritt (2001), 7-34. For a similar sequence: Bopearachchi (1991), 41-5. Coloru (2009), 168 gives 'practical' reasons why the Diodotids could have continued to strike coinage with the dies of Antiochos II. Lerner (1999), 92-101 interprets one of Jenkin's forgeries as real: Jenkins (1965), 51-7.

¹¹⁴ Recently J. Jakobsson (2010), 17-33 has introduced a third Diodotid ruler, Antiochos Nikator. His reconstruction illustrates the many uncertainties which remain with regard to Baktrian coinage and although he makes plausible arguments to support his reconstruction, doubts remain. Therefore, the old chronology will be followed in this chapter.

royal Seleukid legend. This younger portrait has usually been identified as the son of Diodotos I, the future Diodotos II (pl. 7.8).¹¹⁵ The coinage was presumably created at two mints which were not connected with the Seleukid mints in the region and B. Krittr has tentatively identified one of the mints with the city of Baktra (mint B), which seems to have continued its mint activity during the siege of Antiochos III.¹¹⁶ The second portrait also continued to be struck on the obverse of the coins when the coinage reached yet another stage in the minting process. At some point the same obverse die was used in connection with a reverse die with a new legend bearing the title βασιλέως Διοδότου.¹¹⁷ It appears that mint A issued a commemorative issue later during Diodotos II's reign which also described Diodotos I with the title of king.¹¹⁸ In the following period both mints also minted coinage for Euthydemos after he usurped the kingship from Diodotos II.¹¹⁹

Scholarship has stressed that the coinage of the Diodotids reflects a gradual secession from the Seleukids with the introduction of new imagery and symbols.¹²⁰ However, if the reconstruction of the relationship between the Attalid dynasty, its own coinage and the Seleukid kings is accepted, it seems plausible to see very similar patterns emerging on the Diodotid coinage.¹²¹ Moreover, this re-interpretation might influence our understanding of the secession of Bactria. The transition of minting of coinage between Antiochos II and the Diodotid rulers does not necessarily have to be

¹¹⁵ The 'younger' portrait tries to be distinct from the 'older' portrait. However, it should be added that only one issue of Antiochos II from Ai Khanoum has been identified and thus it is not impossible to question if the 'younger' portrait is in fact not a portrait of 'a' Seleukid king. Although it is certain that the Seleukid kings created distinct royal images, the Baktrian coinage might be a local interpretation of the 'official' image: see Bopearachchi (1991), Series 11, p. 151; followed by Lerner (1999), 102-3, who saw in this series Antiochos II; cf. Jakobsson (2010), 17-33, here 31. The fact that the 'younger' image continues in the period of Diodotid 'independence', however, seems to make a 'Seleukid' version less palatable (see Holt's series E and F). Although the definitive decision about the 'young' and the 'old' portrait remain far from certain, Holt's reconstruction of the co-regency seems plausible: Holt (1999), 91-8.

¹¹⁶ Krittr (2001), 98-100.

¹¹⁷ Holt's groups D1-8 and F1-8; F3 is obverse die-linked with the issue E9: Krittr (2001), 8-12.

¹¹⁸ Holt (1999), 103; for Jakobsson (2010), 26-7 this would be the first series of Diodotos I.

¹¹⁹ Krittr (2001), 89-98. For his accession: Pol. 11. 34 and above, pp.213-4.

¹²⁰ See Tarn (1997), 72-3; Bengtson (1944), 54; Capdetrey (2007), 124; *contra*: Jakobsson (2010), 17-33, here 24.

¹²¹ Noted by Coloru (2009), 165; Holt (1999), 96.

interpreted as a break with the Seleukid kingdom or a slow preparation of secession. Rather, it perhaps suggests a change in local administration. It is impossible to determine whether the coinage was granted by Seleukid authorities, or if the satrap Diodotos took the liberty himself. It is possible that in both cases the local coinage was a response to external pressure (perhaps as a *topos* in Euthydemos' plea to Antiochos III, as mentioned above). O. Coloru's interpretation of a strong late reign of Antiochos II is plausible. If so, it could be argued that it was indeed the strength of Antiochos II which allowed him to grant coinages to local power holders in order to fulfil local administrative responsibilities.¹²² Even the fact that the satrapy passed to Diodotos II after his father's death might not be surprising.¹²³ If indeed local coinage should not be interpreted as a clear break with the Seleukid kingdom, it is also possible to interpret the case of the satrap Andragoras in a similar manner. If indeed the Parthian satrap minted coinage, he issued coins in Greek with a portrait either wearing a diadem or a *bashlik* on the obverse and a chariot on the reverse with the legend Ἀδραγόρου (pl.7.5). The *bashlik* type carries an Aramaic inscription נרגור on the obverse, which the editors interpret as an abbreviated rendering of Andragoras' name in Aramaic. The reverse seems to make reference to וחסוי, the name of the Iranian water deity Vaxšu/Vaxšuar (pl.7.6).¹²⁴ Both the presence of the *bashlik* and the absence of any royal title could indicate the local character of the coinage.¹²⁵ With the re-dating coinage of the *fratarāka* to the early period of the third century BCE, the minting of local coinage by local power holders should no longer be surprising and it

¹²² Coloru (2009), 165-6

¹²³ See also Briant (2002), 338-40.

¹²⁴ Diakonoff/Zejmal (1988), 4-19, pl; I am grateful to G. Kantor (Oxford) for helping me with this article; see also Wolski (1975), 159-69; Lerner (1999), 24. Recently, Coloru (2009), 158 has suggested that this coinage should represent the first Parthian issues rather than Andragoras' own coinage.

¹²⁵ *Bashlik*: Borchardt (1999), 53-84, esp. 59-69; Zahle (1982), 101-12; also Holt (1999), 63. Andragoras wears the diadem, which also for Jakobsson (2010), 17-33, here 24 was a prerogative for kingship, but this does not have to be the case. These are preliminary thoughts on a future project.

should not necessitate that a secession from Seleukid authorities occurred.¹²⁶ I would argue that it was in peripheral regions, such as the Persis, Parthia and Baktria, that the Seleukid authorities granted certain privileges to the local power holders in order to fulfil local administrative functions and these grants could have also included local coinages.

Does this re-interpretation of the coinage influence our understanding of the dynamics of the Diodotid secession? If the grant (or acceptance) of local coinage is independent from political rupture, it becomes even more difficult to ascertain when Diodotos I would have started to mint coinage with a different portrait and reverse style. The relatively small volume of coinage under Antiochos II in Baktria could indicate that it began in an earlier period of the Seleukid king's reign, however, this is far from certain. Diodotos I would have continued to mint in the name of Antiochos II even after the accession of Seleukos II.¹²⁷ F. Holt has convincingly argued that it was following the accession of Diodotos II that the Baktrian ruler adopted the royal title on his coinage.¹²⁸ If this interpretation is correct, we presumably should see Diodotos II's accession and his alliance with the Parthian ruler as a benchmark of events in the East (Iust. 41. 4. 9-10).

Thus, the following scenario can be reconstructed. At some point during the later period of Antiochos II's reign, the Seleukid satraps Andragoras and Diodotos minted coinage in their own name in their satrapies. They fulfilled local functions and acted relatively independent. Justin indicates that Andragoras seceded, possibly following the accession of Seleukos II and the Third Syrian War, and perhaps this was

¹²⁶ See above n.33; Müsseler/Klose (2008), 16-20; Wiesehöfer (1994), 119-27 and idem (2011), 107-21 also supports the view that a mint in the Persis was possible while the region was still under Seleukid control.

¹²⁷ See Holt (1999), 101n.34; Coloru (2009), 168. The parallel perhaps is indeed Pergamon and the coinage with the portrait of Seleukos I under Antiochos I (see above); *contra* Lerner (1999), 21-2.

¹²⁸ Holt (1999), 103.

a response to early Parthian intrusions.¹²⁹ Similarly, it might have been the Parthians' uprising, as well as the weakened central authority after the death of Antiochos II, that enabled Diodotos of Baktria to exert more independence. Moreover, he made his son co-regent in order to maintain stability in his satrapy and ensure a peaceful succession after his death.¹³⁰ Although the coinage is not necessarily an indicator of independence, it perhaps was this reaction to the events in Parthia which Justin describes as the revolt of Baktria (Iust. 41. 4. 5).¹³¹ While Seleukos II was engaged in other affairs after his defeat by the Gauls (possibly at Ankyra), the Parni under Arsakes invaded Parthia, overcame Andragoras and established themselves in the region (Iust. 41. 4. 6-7). If Diodotos I had not already broken from the Seleukid king, it was perhaps now that Seleukos II granted further concessions to Diodotos I and this could be what is reflected in Justin's account that Arsakes was in fear of both Diodotos I and Seleukos II (Iust. 41. 4. 8).¹³² Diodotos I perhaps still functioned as a Seleukid administrator in the region despite his semi-independent status.

After the accession of Diodotos II, however, the political situation changed. The Baktrian ruler took the diadem in a final attempt to uphold regional power.¹³³ It perhaps was the taking of the diadem which the Seleukid king was not willing to accept. Moreover, possibly in order to avoid continuous border conflict between the Parthians and his own territories, Diodotos II '*foedus ac pacem fecit*', 'made an alliance and a peace treaty' with Arsakes (Iust. 41. 4. 9). If we follow Justin in this account, Diodotos II apparently saw the need or opportunity ally himself with the neighbouring ruler, who presumably opposed Seleukid politics, and he broke with the

¹²⁹ See Coloru (2009), 159-63; Wolski (1975), 161; cf. Lerner (1999), 25-6. For the potential Parthian threat in the region: Lerner (1999), 29. For 'local pressures': Capdetrey (2007), 129.

¹³⁰ Although presumably a private dedication, the inscription mentioning King Euthydemos and his son (SEG 54. 1569) could suggest a strong connection between father and son under Euthydemos' rule. This perhaps is also reflected in the coinage of the Diodotid rulers: cf. Coloru (2009), 186.

¹³¹ For the interpretation that Diodotos did not make himself king: Holt (1999), 100; *contra*: Lerner (1999), 99-103; see above, n.113 and n.115.

¹³² See also Holt's suggestion of a victory issue of Diodotos I: Holt (1999), 97-9; Jakobsson (2010), 17-33, here 31-2.

¹³³ Capdetrey (2007), 130. For the 'essentially opportunistic' point of view: Billows (1995), 108-9.

Seleukid centre. However, it remains inconclusive whether we should place this change in allegiance in the context of growing Seleukid strength and Seleukid demands.¹³⁴ The treaty perhaps was indeed advantageous to the Parthians, as suggested in Justin's account. According to Strabo, Seleukos II initially had been able to make Arsakes flee the Seleukid king (Strab. 11. 8. 8). Yet later Arsakes was able to defeat Seleukos II in battle. The Seleukid king was not able to retaliate, but instead was recalled to the western parts of his empire (Iust. 41. 4. 9- 5. 1), presumably to oppose Antiochos Hierax.

The following period of Seleukid politics hindered the reaffirmation of Seleukid control in its peripheral regions and both Attalos I of Pergamon and the Baktrian rulers continued to act as independent kings. We do not have evidence for the politics of Baktria during this period. Coloru's proposal of an internal opposition towards the Diodotid rulers remains questionable.¹³⁵ Nevertheless, it appears that the Diodotids were not unopposed within Baktria and we can at least explore whether this had something to do with the interruption of the Seleukid kings' nominal support of the dynasts. At some point between c.230 and c.225 BCE, Euthydemos gained power in Baktria, 'destroyed his predecessors' (Pol. 11. 34. 1) and took over the diadem.¹³⁶

Diodotos I and Diodotos II's political spheres indeed slowly slipped from Seleukid control; however, this was not atypical in the Seleukid kingdom. This also happened in peripheral regions where there were strong local power holders and the Seleukid authorities were aware of this. The secession of the Baktrians was not the only case and I have suggested that the coinage of the Diodotid rulers should not be connected with their secession, but rather with Seleukid attempts to uphold regional

¹³⁴ Coloru (2009), 173; Lerner (1999), 33-43; Will (1979), 308-13; Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 89. Lerner's interpretation of Seleukos II's Parthian imprisonment, based on Poseidonius (EK F64), is rejected here since it conflicts with Iust. 41. 5. 1; Lerner (1999), 35-6.

¹³⁵ Coloru (2009), 172-3.

¹³⁶ For the date: Coloru (2009), 172-3; see also: Bopearachchi (1991), 47-9; Holt (1999), 25, 106; Lerner (1999), 11, 55-6. Overstrikes of Euthydemos over Diodotid coinage: Bopearachchi (2008), 245-68, here 255. Continuity of mint magistrates: Holt (1999), 104-5; Kritt (2001), 79.

power holders. Euthydemos had usurped the position of one of those peripheral regional power holders and the Seleukid king treated Euthydemos as such. Antiochos III acknowledged local power holders as long as they submitted to his conditions and the Seleukid campaigns in Atropatene are only one example of this (Pol. 5. 55. 1-10). We are not able to ascertain whether the Seleukid king wanted to exchange Euthydemos with a candidate of his own choice, nevertheless it seems very possible that all the Seleukid king wanted from Euthydemos was the latter's recognition of the superiority of the Seleukid king. Although Euthydemos initially decided to defend his territories as king of Baktria, after a two-year siege he accepted nominal Seleukid sovereignty. The Baktrian episode, along with the Seleukid king's reactions to other peripheral rulers, illustrates Seleukid acceptance of and interest in local power holders.

4.3 Seleukid Interest, Centre and Periphery: The Makkabees, Attalids and the Baktrians

The territory over which the Seleukid king claimed his authority was a heterogeneous entity. In addition to different ethnic bodies, the kingdom contained groups, such as Greek and non-Greek cities; smaller communities; as well as *dynasteia*. Some of these dynasts, including the rulers of Pergamon and the Phrygian Philomelids, were already present before the Seleukid take over under Seleukos I or were confirmed as local power holders in the wake of Seleukid control.¹³⁷ Moreover, the Seleukid kingdom was not static, it was dynamic. In response to geopolitical or

¹³⁷ The Teukrid priest-dynasts of Uzuncaburç in Rough Kilikia, with their fortifications and towers, were presumably also part of this group of local power holders. It cannot be ascertained without further investigation whether they were already placed in power by Seleukos I, as suggested by Trampedach (1999), 93-110, or later, as suggested by the results of the ceramic survey in Kramer (forthcoming). This examination will be conducted in the future. For a list of dynasts: Kobes (1996); see also Billows (1995), 90-107, however, the latter's definition of essentially every power holder as a dynast and his division between Macedonian and non-Macedonian origins is unhelpful.

local pressures, new local power holders, such as the dynasts of Baktria, emerged which necessitated a Seleukid response. This chapter has illustrated that the Seleukid kings favoured these developments in areas which they thought a strong local administrator to fulfil local responsibilities was needed. Most local power holders – the Attalids, the Philomelids, the Teukrids of Kilikia, the dynasts of the Persis and (if following Polybios’ narrative) also the Baktrian rulers – were placed in strategic positions which could enhance the stability of the Seleukid state.¹³⁸ Although this analysis relies on Polybios’ account of Seleukid affairs and thus also on the Seleukid empire of the late third century, I hope to have shown that these policies were not only introduced during the reign of Antiochos III. Rather, this chapter has illustrated that dynasts were a part of Seleukid rule from the early third century onwards.

This analysis, however, makes it apparent that scholarly attention to dynasts’ secession as a means of illustrating the strength of the Seleukid kingdom is not adequate. Neither does early secession illustrate the kingdom’s ‘weakness’, nor does late secession show its ‘strength’.¹³⁹ The dynasts were an administrative part of the Seleukid empire and their occasional secession was part of any territorial empire (this in fact also includes the defection of civic elites and local groups). In order to ensure the incorporation of these regions, the rulers had to constantly reaffirm their relationship with these groups, as illustrated in the previous chapters, and it is these reaffirmations which the sources describe as the actions of a strong Seleukid king (if he was successful) or a weak Seleukid king (if he failed).

The Seleukid politics towards dynasts were coherent. The kings favoured dynasties on the fringes of the empire, in areas which the Seleukid king had determined to be peripheral. Moreover, dynasts were useful political tools. They could play a vital role in maintaining control of these regions when central authority was

¹³⁸ Engels (forthcoming); Capdetrey (2007), 284-6.

¹³⁹ For the ‘Sick man of Asia’: e.g. Will (1979); Musti (1984), 175-220; Wolski (1999). For a revisionist strong Seleukid empire: Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993).

weakened as a result of an external or internal threat and in such cases their secession did not have to be more than a temporary measure. This also meant that the dynasts did not necessarily have to be punished once they were brought back under Seleukid control. However, a dynast could become too strong. If it was the display of Seleukid strength and power which reaffirmed Seleukid control over these dynasts, the continuing lack of Seleukid strength could make the dynasts dangerous for the Seleukid king, especially if their position became increasingly less peripheral. It is these elements which will be briefly outlined.

The case of Armenia offers an example of the peripheral character of the dynasty, as well as the attempts of Seleukid reaffirm control. On his way to the upper satrapies, Antiochos III reaffirmed Seleukid control over Armenia (Pol. 8. 23. 1-5). The father of the local dynast Xerxes had at some point stopped paying tribute to the Seleukids (Pol. 8. 23. 4) and it was the presence of the Seleukid king and the size of the Seleukid force which led Xerxes to renew his alliance with Antiochos III. The Seleukid king showed himself as a benefactor by remitting 'the greater part' (τὰ πλεῖστα) of the tribute (but strikingly not all of it), by restoring the dominions to Xerxes and by giving him his daughter in marriage (Pol. 8. 23. 1). Xerxes showed himself as a suppliant ruler, paying three hundred talents and supplying one thousand horses and one thousand mules. This short story is indicative of later relations with Armenia. The dynasts after Xerxes seceded from Seleukid control after the peace of Apamaia (Strab. 11. 14. 5; 11. 14. 15), only to be re-incorporated under Antiochos IV (Diod. Sic. 31. 17a). They were dynasts on the fringes and fulfilled local administration duties in the region. It was the physical presence of the Seleukid force which led to their re-incorporation within the Seleukid sphere. Whether Antiochos IV acknowledged their title as kings of the regions or whether this was only achieved with Timarchos is in the end not crucial for the Seleukid reaction. The Seleukid kings

simply reaffirmed their authority and did not believe it was necessary to hunt down the kings who had seceded.¹⁴⁰

The emergence of local dynasts and the Seleukid reaction to them is also visible in the period after Antiochos III and of course most explicitly in the relationship with the people of Judaea. The many grants of Seleukid kings and usurpers to the Makkabees have been described in chapter three, but it was Demetrios II's attempt to grant them local independence, which seems strikingly similar to Seleukid practices in the third century. Moreover, we also see that the celebrated Jewish independence, which the Jewish sources describe extensively, was not irreversible. Antiochos VII could re-exert royal influence over Judaea. It is instructive that Antiochos VII did not insist on the taking of Jerusalem, rather only the reaffirmation of Seleukid rule. John Hyrkanos apparently started to mint money in the name of the Seleukid king (*SC* 2123) and the Jewish high priest followed Antiochos VII in a campaign against the Parthians (*Ios. Ant.* 13. 249).¹⁴¹ As local power holders, the Makkabees proved to be more stable administrators of the city of Jerusalem and its territory than their hellenized predecessors. Evidence for local responsibilities is sparse for most of these dynasts, but the benefactions of Philetairos of Pergamon can serve as an example. Moreover, a recently published inscription from Baktria might at least give some indication of other local euergetical activities.¹⁴²

The secession of these rulers was hindered by the constant reaffirmation of Seleukid presence over these rulers and for this reason secession was partly an accepted temporary measure in reaction to regional or central instability. Seleukos II might have accepted the secession of Attalos I of Pergamon I (even if it might be too

¹⁴⁰ It is questionable whether we should credit the murder of Xerxes by the daughter of Antiochos III as a direct attempt to change the ruler of the area, particularly since later rulers were no longer exchanged: *Ioh. Antioch. Ap.* F75 (Mariev); cf. Schmitt (1964), 28.

¹⁴¹ Before the campaign John Hyrkanos also apparently issued coinage in the name of the Seleukid king: *SC* 2123. For the transfer from Seleukid to Jewish coinage: Hoover (2003), 29-39.

¹⁴² See the dedication of an altar to Hestia by a certain Heliodotos found in Tadjikistan in honour of King Euthydemus: *SEG* 54. 1568; see also the stele of Sophytes: *SEG* 54. 1569; Bernard/Pinault/Rougemont (2004), 227-356.

farfetched to imagine that he actively encouraged it) in order to oppose Antiochos Hierax; an alliance between Antiochos Hierax and Attalos I could have established stability in Asia Minor, which would have harmed Seleukid interests. Demetrios II's grant of independence to the Makkabees should perhaps be read similarly. The secession of peripheral rulers could be compensated through a strengthened Seleukid presence and this is what we see with Seleukos II's attempts in the eastern parts of the empire and with Seleukos III's expedition to Asia Minor. The reaction of the Seleukid kings to seceding dynasts is crucial. Antiochos III apparently accepted the kingship of both Attalos I (implicitly) and Euthydemos of Baktria (explicitly) and in return these rulers accepted at the very least a nominal Seleukid authority. Even in the case of forced submission, such as with Xerxes under Antiochos III and Artaxias under Antiochos IV, the rulers were left in their positions. All these rulers were initially peripheral. They were not members of the Seleukid court, they were not friends of the king and they were not placed in charge of regions the Seleukid king deemed politically and economically vital, such as Phrygia and Lydia, the tetrapolis of Syria, as well as Babylonia and Media. Their attempts to secede of course had to be stopped, but it did not generally question the position of dynasts in Seleukid administration.

There were, however, two possibilities in which this crucial element of Seleukid administration was very dangerous for the Seleukid kings and the stability of the empire as a whole. The periphery could become the centre and dynasts could emerge in regions which were not peripheral. The Seleukid concessions made to the Makkabees were dangerous since it was the Makkabees' position near the centre of conflict between Seleukid kings and usurpers which allowed the Makkabees not only to become a much larger factor of power in the southern Levant, but also to play off Seleukid usurpers against kings and vice versa. The reaffirmation of an alliance with the former peripheral rulers became synonymous with control over the kings' space as

a whole. In a different geopolitical setting, this same scenario led to structural instability during Antiochos Hierax' reign. The peripheral ruler Attalos I could become central to Antiochos Hierax' space of kingship and it was this constant competition which questioned Antiochos Hierax' control over his territories. As outlined in the introduction, it was in these circumstances that peripheral rulers also became dangerous for kings. The participation of John Hyrkanos in the *anabasis* of Antiochos VII illustrates that it was still possible for the Seleukid king to reaffirm Seleukid control over these dynasts; however, the Jewish resurgence after the death of Antiochos VII also illustrates the limits of the Seleukid kings.

Dynasts also could emerge in regions which were not peripheral. To a certain degree the usurpers Antiochos Hierax, Molon, Achaïos, and Timarchos were such dynasts. The commanders of Asia Minor in particular were invested with control of the area in periods of weakened central Seleukid authority and since they were in the periphery of the Seleukid kingdom, they fulfilled quasi-royal roles. These individuals, however, were the friends of former kings, some even relatives, and thus members of the elite in the Seleukid kingdom. This differentiated them from the peripheral dynasts in the kingdom. Moreover, their satrapies or administrative regions were more important to the Seleukid kings. These Seleukid commanders directed contingents of the Seleukid army, they had control over the treasures of Sardeis and the Hermos valley, the Galatian settlers in Phrygia and in the east they controlled the wealth of Media and the Zagros mountains. The fact that these commanders in Asia Minor and Media, like their Baktrian counterparts, would aim to turn their offices into dynastic principalities might not be unusual. However, the potential of their resources was far too large to be accepted by the Seleukid king.

4.4 Conclusion

It is not the aim of this chapter to give a complete picture of the dynasts in the Seleukid empire or to provide a detailed analysis of the individual dynasts which have been discussed. However, I hope this chapter has illustrated that the dynasts were a crucial part of the Seleukid administration. In regions without continuous Seleukid presence, local power holders could function as a link between the local communities and the Seleukid monarchs. Dynasts were peripheral, local and semi-independent. Some of them had existed since the early period of the Seleukid kingdom, while others emerged later. They could strike coinage and at times they would secede. However, this posed no structural challenges for the Seleukid state as a whole since dynasts could be reaffirmed. I have argued that Antiochos III's reign enables us not only to interpret the north-eastern dynasts of Asia in this way, but also the Attalids of Pergamon. Of course the Seleukid kings might have been aware that the conquest of Attalos I or Euthydemos of Baktria would have not only been costly but also time-consuming, if not impossible. However, the kings in Baktria and Pergamon were also aware of the potential of Seleukid power.

Dynasts became dangerous when their position enabled them to become central players in Seleukid politics. If this was the case, then they were able to influence the power politics of the Seleukid kingdom, as they had been able to influence the politics in their spheres. There were, however, also power holders which were not local. They were in the geographic periphery of the kingdom, yet their areas of control were not peripheral to the Seleukid state. While the occasional secession of local power holders did not challenge the structures of the Seleukid state, the secession of these 'high power holders' in crucial Seleukid areas did; they were usurpers.

5 Usurpers in the Seleukid Kingdom: Molon the King

Until Antiochos III gathered a large army and marched east, Molon seemed formidable. Polybios illustrates that on the one hand it was the wealth of his satrapy of Media that made him φοβερός as an opponent (Pol. 5. 43. 8), and this thesis has illustrated that on the other hand it was his position among local power holders which enabled him to usurp. While it is uncertain to what extent Molon was able to occupy Mesopotamia and Babylonia, in at least two engagements against Seleukid troops he was victorious. Moreover, it has been argued that the punishment of Seleukeia on the Tigris can serve as an indicator for the usurper's success in his short-lived kingdom since it was here that Molon was accepted as king.

This chapter will investigate the political implications of usurpers' revolts in the Seleukid kingdom. First, it will summarise the main themes and characteristics of Seleukid usurpers and their relationship to the Seleukid king. It will draw conclusions about their royal imagery after they took the diadem and it will investigate when and where it was possible for them to become king. Second, this chapter will examine Seleukid reaction to usurpers. It will analyse the punishment of usurpers, the reaction to usurpers' former territories and troops and it will assess whether it is possible to ascertain if the negative image of usurpers in the literary sources emerged in this context. Finally, this chapter will consider the implications of these political constellations for the Seleukid state. Local power holders were part of the Seleukid administrative strategy. However, if high power holders could only be stopped from usurping through the continuous reaffirmation of Seleukid control and the displayed strength of the Seleukid centre, this forces us to re-evaluate the stability of the Seleukid empire as a whole.

5.1 Usurpers in the Seleukid Kingdom

5.1.1 Competitors for the Diadem

Livy's short note (Liv. *per.* 50) on the murder of Demetrios I's wife, son and 'all friends' (*amici omnes*) by the chancellor of Alexander Balas dramatically illustrates the core of Seleukid power relations. While this episode presumably should be understood as the massacre of Demetrios I's court in Antiocheia, the event also depicts Alexander Balas' elimination of his rivals to his diadem. Those who were dangerous to his claims were the immediate family of the king and the former king's *philoï*. Since primogeniture did not exist in the Seleukid kingdom, other surviving family members were always a threat to the reigning king. The survival of a murdered king's son was not intrinsically different. The special attention Alexander Balas gave to the king's friends, however, is instructive and it is the role these friends played in the phenomenon of usurpation which will be discussed in this section.

The king's Friends were the high power holders in the Seleukid kingdom.¹ Since Alexander the Great's campaign, two groups of royal companions had emerged: those with the king and those who were entrusted with satrapal authorities.² These groupings can also be attested for the Seleukid empire. While some of the closest and most powerful friends of the king were continuously in his proximity,³ other close friends were sent to the most important peripheral positions in the empire. One of these positions was the satrapy of Media and the ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν. Seleukos I had entrusted his son with this latter position and while the responsibilities connected with it might have changed between the third and second centuries BCE, the rising power of the Parthians presumably did not lead to the curtailment of the

¹ On Friends: e.g. Capdetrey (2007), 277-9; see ch.2.2.2.

² Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 303, 358; Spawforth (2007), 1-16.

³ Pol. 5. 56. 10; 8. 21. 1. For denial of access: e.g. Apelles under Philip V: Pol. 5. 2. 7-10; 26. 1-16, analysed by Herman (1997), 199-244, here 217-19; Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 357.

importance of the office. The high military or administrative offices in the Seleukid empire show that power holders in these positions were not only Friends of the king, but also friends whom the king thought he could trust.⁴ Antiochos IV had betrothed his ‘childhood friend’ Timarchos with this office (App. *Syr.* 45 [235]) and Demetrios I also seems to have given the position of the ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν to a friend who had supported his claim to the diadem very early on.⁵ Therefore, if Antiochos III appointed Molon to the position of ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν, this should indicate that he was a very trusted friend.⁶ The position of the ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐπιτάδε τοῦ Ταύρου πραγμάτων, the chief administrator of Asia Minor, was of similar importance to that of the satrap of Media.⁷ Achaïos was appointed because of the loyalty he had displayed to the Seleukid dynasty (Pol. 4. 48. 10). Both Zeuxis (the chief administrator of Asia Minor) and Nikanor (the chief-priest on this side of the Taurus), who were also appointed by Antiochos III, would have not held their positions without having been chosen by the Seleukid king.⁸

So far this thesis has illustrated the limits of the royal friends’ loyalty. Conflict between kings and royal friends emerged most often during re-negotiations between king and Friends at the accession of new rulers. Conflict ensued when a) a young king inherited friends and b) friends had to choose sides after the split in the dynasty in the second century. A young king was at times confronted with powerful political figures from the former reign. Achaïos and Molon were already in socially and politically prominent positions at Antiochos III’s accession. Since Hermeias was appointed ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων by Seleukos III before his campaign (Pol. 5. 41. 2), it is at the very least conceivable that he was also already a friend of Seleukos II, as was presumably

⁴ For a depiction of ‘friends’ and ‘Friends’ in the Antigonid court: Ma (2011), 521-43, here 525-7.

⁵ Herrmann (1987), 171-92, here 175-8.

⁶ Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 358.

⁷ On the importance of both positions: Capdetrey (2007), 267-73.

⁸ Zeuxis: Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 36-8; Capdetrey (2007), 297-300. Nikanor: Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 34-5.

Epigenes who held a prominent position in the young Antiochos III's council. Retaining the friends of the former king is not surprising.⁹ The first years of Alexander the Great's reign, for example, were also characterised by his relationship with his father's companions.¹⁰ In the Seleukid kingdom, however, the accession of a new king created a slightly different scenario. Of course, the young king must have been interested in relying on former king's friends to maintain the peaceful administration of his empire. Yet the position of the former king's friends was nevertheless more precarious than in Argead Macedonia.¹¹ In a kingdom without an aristocratic hierarchy, the social elite's position was ultimately dependent on their relationship with the king and not on social standing.¹² While an individual's prior achievements had some merit, they did not necessarily guarantee a status of similar standing under a new ruler.

It was during the first years of a young king's reign that he would determine who among the inherited Friends would become a friend, thus shaping the political elite he wished. This process of reaffirming the relationship between the king and his friends caused political frictions, as suggested in Polybios' account of Antiochos III's accession (Pol. 5. 41-56).¹³ The political death of Apelles under Philip V and the murder of Hermeias and his family under Antiochos III clearly illustrates that it was the king who decided if these friends were acceptable to him or not. Nevertheless, it was presumably not in the Seleukid king's interest to display his power and his

⁹ It is not necessary to assume that all official posts were exchanged with the accession of a new king: Weber (1997), 27-71, here 49-50; Schmitt (1964), 120; Strootmann (2011), 63-89, esp. 72-4; cf. Bengtson (1944), 59-60.

¹⁰ Weber (2009), 83-98, esp. 86-7; also Badian (1960), 324-38; Bosworth (1988), 25-8; Heckel (1992), 1-56.

¹¹ For Philip II's Macedonia: Lane Fox (2011), 335-66, here 357-60.

¹² Bickerman (1938), 42; cf. Capdetrey (2007), 385-6 with Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 377; Dreyer (2011), 45-57, esp. 48 and 54-5.

¹³ Moreover, it has been suggested that the king could use these frictions to his advantage: See ch. 2.2.2; Herman (1997), 103-27, here 214; cf. Mehl (2003), 147-60, here 154.

friends' dependence.¹⁴ Moreover, it is probably not just a coincidence that the individuals who became the king's friends during the early years of the king's reign proved to be the most loyal.

Although the accession of Antiochos III illustrates the possibility of tension between the Friends of the king and the ruler, secession and revolt do not have to be characterised as ordinary occurrences. Despite the defeat of the Seleukid kingdom against the Romans and the death of Antiochos III in the Elymais soon thereafter, the accession of Seleukos IV, for example, was peaceful. After the death of his older brother in 193 BCE, Seleukos IV was the eldest son of Antiochos III and was named his heir. He had a residence in Lysimacheia and he fought in the war against Rome.¹⁵ Until his father's death in 187 BCE, Seleukos IV was already involved in Seleukid high politics for roughly eleven years. He was presumably well acquainted with his father's friends and there was continuity within his own circle of councillors. While the death of the king necessitated a re-negotiation of social dynamics at court and a re-evaluation of his closest friends, the accession of a king who had been co-ruler for a considerable period of time did not present the same potential for tension as the accession of a young king.

The split in the dynasty, however, accelerated the possibility of dissent. This can be described in two distinct but not mutually exclusive ways. First, while the split in the dynasty made it precarious to be a former royal friend, it also could offer opportunities to gain political influence. At Demetrios I's arrival in Antiocheia, the Seleukid king had not only Antiochos V but also Lysias, the young king's *ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων*, executed (I Makk. 7.3) and it has been suggested that the events at

¹⁴ For an 'absolute' king: Elias (1969), esp. 178-221; also Duindam (1995); idem (2003); Spawforth (2007), 1-16. If the literary accounts on murdering courtiers are reliable, the fact that kings could be murdered by *philoi* should presumably mean that *philoi* could kill kings since they were physically near the king. Therefore this assassination does not necessarily illustrate the power of the friends. This interpretation is underlined by the fact that the assassins do not survive long after their coup. For Seleukos III: App. *Syr.* 66 (348); Seleukos IV: App. *Syr.* 45 (233); Porph. *FGrH* 260 F32. 11.

¹⁵ On Seleukos IV: Stähelin (1923b), 1242-5; cf. Liv. 37. 44. 6.

Antiocheia on the Orontes also influenced Timarchos' decision to secede. Since the office of the ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἄνω σατραπειῶν was one of the most important offices, it was very likely that the post holder would be a close friend of Demetrios I. This scenario was very similar to Alexander Balas' actions. Livy's description of the murder of the *omnes amici* of Demetrios I does not indicate that all the Friends of the king had to die, only all of the former king's friends. The *amici* who had to be murdered were Demetrios' most trusted and highest commanders, either because they would not swear allegiance to a new king or the king did not want to trust them.¹⁶ In the third century, Neolaos, Alexander and all those who had actively taken part Molon's revolt of 222 BCE committed suicide after the defeat of their king (Pol. 5. 54. 3-4). They presumably did not see any chance of survival if they were captured.

The opportunity for both Herakleides and Tryphon to gain influential positions under the new king in Antiocheia was presumably rather slim. Herakleides had been removed from office (App. Syr. 45 [235]) and Tryphon had offered the diadem to Ptolemaios VI after he had opened the gates of Antiocheia (Diod. Sic. 32. 9c). The former king's friends took matters into their own hands. While Herakleides supported the claims of Alexander Balas, Tryphon gathered the former supporters of Alexander Balas under his own standard; he sought out the young Antiochos VI and made himself the guardian of a new king. The account of Galaistes, a high commander under Ptolemaios VI who revolted after losing all his properties under Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II, bears striking similarities.¹⁷

Most Seleukid usurpers were connected to the king and this should not be surprising. Only as a member of a small social group around the king was it possible to obtain an influential political position within the Seleukid kingdom. Holding an important rank enabled usurpers to accumulate resources and social capital that would

¹⁶ Cf. Savalli-Lestrade (1998), 357.

¹⁷ Huß (2001), 602-3, with references to a dossier of papyri.

enable them to secede. The fact that Molon, Achaïos, Timarchos and Tryphon seceded at the accession of a new king illustrates the precarious situation of the Seleukid king's Friends. Their social and political position was determined by their reciprocal relationship with the ruler. Therefore, while friends were generally loyal to their king, they were not necessarily loyal to the Seleukid dynasty; a young king could cause these tensions to surface. The secession of the royal Friends is indicative of structural difficulties in the Seleukid kingdom; however, the friends' powerful position was symptomatic of the problem and not its cause.

5.1.2 The Place of Usurpation: Centre, Periphery and the Crisis of the Dynasty

The size of the Seleukid kingdom necessitated the need for local power holders. While Ekbatana was 'only' 400 km as the crow flies from Seleukeia on the Tigris, both Ekbatana and Sardeis were roughly 1000 km from Antiocheia on the Orontes. The distance of roughly 2400 km between Seleukeia on the Tigris and Ai Khanoum illustrates the vastness of the empire. In the periphery semi-autonomous dynasts fulfilled local administrative functions and the previous chapter has outlined the dynamics between the Seleukid centre and these peripheral dynasts. Some of the non-central regions, however, were vital to the Seleukid king. Asia Minor, with its capital in Sardeis, and Media, with its capital in Ekbatana, had enormous resources and consequently high power holders were installed in these regions as representatives of the king. Indeed, these regions were rich. The wealth of Media is recurrent in Polybios' narrative and it has already been mentioned that it was this wealth which made Molon φοβερός (Pol. 5. 43. 8-44. 3) at the outset of his rebellion. The Hellenistic author re-iterates the wealth of the province in his tenth book (Pol. 10. 27. 1-13) and Strabo emphasises the riches in the Macedonian colonies of Media

founded under the Seleukids (Strab. 11. 13. 6-7). These accounts underline the region's abundance in men, horses, natural resources and precious metals and stress the defensive character of the capital of Ekbatana and satrapy itself. The Zagros range separated Media from Mesopotamia and made it very predictable from which directions enemy troops would march into the province. Moreover, from Seleukos II onwards, this region formed the easternmost satrapy which was under direct Seleukid administration and it bordered the Parthians.

Asia Minor was of similar importance. Although it was divided into separate satrapal regions, this westernmost part of the Asian continent with its geographic and political diversity – ranging from the alluvial plains of the Maiander to the mountainous ranges of Mysia; from the Greek cities in the coastal areas to local dynasts, villages and Galatian tribes in inner Anatolia – provided valuable resources as well as a supply of Mysian and Galatian mercenaries and access to Thracian auxiliaries. The region was already conceived as an important unit in the Achaemenid period and Cyrus the Younger was appointed *karanos* over the regional satraps (Xen. *hell.* 1. 4. 3). After the Achaemenid prince's death, Tissaphernes took on this position (Xen. *hell.* 3. 1. 3). The western coastline of Asia Minor was the location of Ptolemaic activities for a large part of the third century and thus it required a strong power holder if the king was not in the area.

It should not be surprising that the satrapy of Media was the backbone of two of the Seleukid usurpations in the late third and early second centuries BCE, and both Achaïos and Antiochos Hierax made themselves kings while in charge of political affairs in Seleukid Asia Minor. Regardless of Molon's involvement in the politics of the king's friends at the accession of Antiochos III, the Seleukid king was at this point in Antiocheia on the Orontes preparing for a war against Ptolemaic Egypt. It was the king's absence which allowed Molon to prepare his revolt. Polybios underlines that

this was very similar to Achaïos' usurpation. It was only when the king was on a campaign and absent from the western parts of the kingdom that Achaïos ventured to claim his kingship; all usurpations in this period occurred in the Seleukid periphery.

Usurpation in the absence of the king suggests that it was the travelling king who kept the peripheral regions under his control.¹⁸ The occasional secession of peripheral dynasts was neither problematic nor was it a sign of structural weakness; rather it was simply a side effect of the administrative system.¹⁹ However, the secession of chief administrators in Asia Minor and Media was dangerous for the Seleukid king. The high power holders were the friends of the king, they had often held positions under previous rulers and were not only in control of large resources but also contingents of the army, who would regularly fight under their standards. It is for this reason that these seceding royal friends were usurpers. Their resources could threaten the position of the Seleukid king as the most powerful individual within the Seleukid empire.

However, if the resources of the chief administrators and the absence of the Seleukid king were the reasons for their revolt, usurpations should have ceased in the middle of the second century BCE. With the peace of Apameia in 188 BCE, Asia Minor was lost to the Seleukids and Media fell to the Parthians after June 148 BCE. The rich peripheral regions were no longer Seleukid. Yet after the death of Antiochos VI, Tryphon was able to defend his claim to the diadem for roughly five years in the Levant in the presence of the Seleukid king. Since usurpers emerged in very close proximity to the Seleukid kings, this suggests that the reason behind usurpers' uprisings was not the vastness of the Seleukid empire. Revolt near the Seleukid kings was not unheard of and perhaps it is only incidental that the revolt of the Kyrrhestai in the early reign of Antiochos III did not result in a usurpation comparable to those in

¹⁸ Capdetrey (2007), 374-83; see also Briant (2002), 186-95.

¹⁹ Capdetrey (2007), 441-2.

the second century (Pol. 5. 50. 8; 57. 4). The frequency of usurpations in the second century, however, is connected to the split in the dynasty, which made the political situation of former king's friends far more precarious than beforehand, as outlined in the previous section. Again, this illustrates that the second-century usurpations clearly developed from those of the third century. The precarious relationship between kings, the king's friends and the monopoly of power was an acceleration of a third-century process.

Tryphon was closely associated (συσταθείς) with the king and those around the king (Strab. 16. 2.10). Strabo notes that it was Tryphon's birth in a hamlet near Apameia which allowed him to use the city as his stronghold. The city of Apameia, the southernmost city of the Syrian *tetrapolis* and the royal stud of the Seleukid kings, less than 100 km south of Antiocheia on the Orontes, became the base and (if following Ios. *Ant.* 13. 224) the last stand of a king unrelated to the house of Seleukos, thus denying Seleukid attempts to create a political and ideological centre.²⁰

Although both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas tried to be acknowledged as successors of a former Seleukid kings, hoping to find support amongst their fathers' friends or sympathisers, the dynamics were only partially different from the usurpation of Tryphon. It was the division of the royal house that enabled them to become kings within the direct vicinity of the Seleukid king. The fact that both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas were initially invested by outside powers might explain their opportunity to usurp, but this does not explain their success when they had landed in the Levant. These usurpers could not rely on their military performance in the Seleukid kingdom and thus they initially had no loyal troops at their command. It was for this reason that they claimed a connection to the Seleukid family. While their royal *personae* were still individual, they attempted to

²⁰ Capdetrey (2007), 359-62.

ally themselves with successful Seleukid kings, who descended from another dynastic line. The usurpers' position in the lineage of Seleukid kings gave former power holders an opportunity to regain royal prestige and power in the vicinity of a king. The success of Alexander Balas, and perhaps also Alexander Zabinas, must be explained in conjunction with the support of the friends of Antiochos IV and Balas who were ousted from the courts of Demetrios I and Demetrios II.

A topographical analysis of usurpers' claims to power with reference to the presence of the Seleukid king marks a change between the third and early second centuries and particularly from the middle of the second century BCE onwards. It was the wealth of the usurpers' provinces, the authority of their command and the absence of the Seleukid king which allowed Antiochos Hierax, Molon, Achaïos and Timarchos to claim their diadem. Outside pressures or support might have encouraged their decision. However, from the middle of the 150s BCE onwards, claimants of Seleukid ancestry appeared on the coast of the Levant and with support defeated the Seleukid king in battle or drove him out of Antiocheia. While one might argue that this would have necessitated membership in the Seleukid dynasty at the centre of the Seleukid empire, this was not necessarily the case. Reference to dynasty should be understood as a code that offered former friends of past kings a new political alternative. Moreover, in the case of Herakleides and Alexander Balas, their coup d'état was even initiated by the king's friends. Tryphon did not place himself in Seleukid lineage and reigned for more than four years. Thus, although political tensions were accelerated, the initial cause for usurpations in the second and third centuries remained the same: the Seleukid kings were not able to bind their friends to them or to make their own dynasty the only acceptable form of kingship in the Seleukid empire; and this is apparent in the imagery of the usurpers.

5.1.3 The Image of Kingship

It has been argued throughout this thesis that the royal coinage was an important element in the transmission of the usurpers' royal *persona* to their audiences. The coinage bore the royal name of the new king as well as a royal portrait, illustrating, and perhaps underlining, his claim to power. The absence of usurpers' royal letters from the epigraphic sources in particular makes the royal coinage (apart from possible clay seals in Mesopotamia) the only surviving medium of usurpers' self-representation. This section will illustrate that creating a distinction from dynastic kings was a decisive strategy of usurpers' self-representation and it will be argued that this emphasis on difference allows us to draw conclusions with regard to the competition between the Seleukid kings and usurpers.

The differences in the iconography between Antiochos Hierax and Alexander Balas could not be more striking. Antiochos Hierax made a clear reference to his father and his grandfather by using the Seleukid royal iconography employed by his predecessors. It has been argued that there was a conscious decision to incorporate elements of the physiognomy of his father and grandfather's royal portrait in order to underline his claim to the diadem.²¹ Alexander Balas made reference to his divine father by employing the epithet Θεοπάτωρ and the reverse type of Zeus Nikephoros, which was introduced under Antiochos IV. He maintained the Seleukid era on his coins, but this continuation is not displayed in the royal portrait, nor is it evoked in his royal name. He displayed a very masculine portrait, depicting strong physical features, such as an over-arching brow-ridge, the strong chin and wild hair, which had so far not been prominent in Seleukid iconography.

These usurpers' royal images are revealing when compared with their royal opponents. While Antiochos Hierax incorporated the physiognomy of his ancestors in

²¹ See ch. 2.2.1; pl. 2.1-4.

his portraiture, Seleukos II created a distinct, innovative royal portrait.²² Alexander Balas stressed his connection to Antiochos IV's coinage by displaying Zeus Nikephoros, a deity not employed on the coins of Demetrios I. Imagery differed by physiognomy. While the reigning Antiochos III was depicted as a young man with idealised features, Achaios portrayed himself as a mature man, which was emphasised with a full-grown beard and wrinkles on his forehead. Imagery also differed with regard to attributes on the coinage. Tryphon was depicted with wild hair and a luxurious military helmet, and Timarchos was shown wearing a Boiotian helmet and styled himself as 'Great King'. While the coinage of Timarchos and Antiochos VI depicted the *Dioskuroi*, both Alexander Balas and Tryphon placed an emphasis on *tryphē*, which was not a part of Seleukid iconography. The usurpers also stressed their distinction from the royal Seleukid family in their names. They either kept their names as Molon, Achaios and Timarchos, or they chose a royal name which was not connected to the house of Seleukos, such as Tryphon. Moreover, even the usurpers who pretended to be sons of Seleukid kings made reference to Alexander the Great in their choice of name age and/or to physical resemblance of the Temenid king and Dionysios. The most illustrative element of distinction is depicted on the coinage of Tryphon, who established his own regnal years. Difference and distinction were key elements of usurpers' royal offers. This stress on difference enables us to ascertain the following: if over a period of c.120 years all usurpers followed these patterns, then this should indicate that the usurpers thought it was possible and perhaps advantageous to become king in the Seleukid empire without being visually and stylistically a mirage of the Seleukid king.

One of course might argue that this is hardly surprising since not all usurpers were members of the house of Seleukos. Thus, how could they persuasively insert

²² Ch. 2.2.1; pl. 2.5-6.

themselves into the royal Seleukid line? One could argue that Achaios, the οἰκεῖος of Seleukos III, was only a cousin of the kings and his royal connection was too small when compared to his συγγενῆς Antiochos III.²³ I do not propose that we should disregard the pro-Seleukid narrative of Polybios when he writes about the king κατὰ φύσιν (Pol. 5. 57. 6). Even if we accept for the moment that the usurpers would not have been able to insert themselves into the royal line, the key element is that their attempts to claim the diadem were successful. Yet we can take this argument one step further. The imagery of the Seleukid usurpers illustrates that creating distinction was the usurpers' conscious choice. They promised (at least on their coinage) an iconography that differed from what the Seleukid kings presented. Most importantly, both the re-occurrence of usurpations and the duration of usurpers' reigns seem to indicate that these royal offers were accepted. Tryphon's royal image was as distinct to the Seleukid image as was the image of Achaios. Usurpers' continued to offer 'different' imagery until the last usurper in the Seleukid kingdom, which suggests that the usurpers thought this to be advantageous to their political aims. The presence of Seleukid usurpers and their distinction from royal Seleukid iconography illustrated that the Seleukid kingdom was not necessarily a Seleukid space. Every Achaemenid usurper also inserted himself visually into the line of Achaemenid kings. The individuality of the imagery of the Seleukid usurpers, however, bears witness to the individuality of royal claims. The usurpers promised a different royal image to the groups within their kingdom and they were accepted as kings.

²³ Cf. Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 268.

5.1.4 Conclusion

This section has suggested that the dynamics of the relationship between the king, his friends and the friends of former kings was the source for usurpation. It also has been argued that the phenomenon of usurpation was accelerated in the middle of the second century BCE because of competing royal lines, which made it difficult, if not impossible, for former king's friends to be accepted as the present king's friends. The usurpation of Tryphon illustrates that former king's friends were still able to usurp in the late second century as they had in the third century BCE. In the topography of usurpation, a clear distinction between the third and early-to-mid second centuries BCE can be established. While usurpers in the earlier phase exclusively usurped on the peripheries of the kingdom, from the middle of the second century BCE onwards it was possible to usurp within the physical vicinity of the king. It has been suggested that this phenomenon was connected to the failure of the Seleukid royal kings to create a coherent dynastic image in the Seleukid kingdom. The weakness of the dynastic image is also evident in the usurpers' royal *personae*. The usurpers employed iconographic elements that were known in the Seleukid kingdom, yet the usurpers' coinage marked a clear distinction from their Seleukid counterparts. This analysis leads to questions about the image of Seleukid kingship and power as well as to the political structure of the Seleukid kingdom. Following an examination of royal reactions to usurpation, it is these questions that the last section will assess.

5.2 Royal Reaction: Punishment, Pardon and Adaptation.

This section examines the royal reaction to usurpation. While it has been argued above that the Seleukid kings were content with dynasts outside the Seleukid

core regions, usurpers were not acceptable. Yet for the most part, there is very little evidence of Seleukid reaction in the aftermath of usurpation. Moreover, the evidence is often contradictory, which might reflect the uncertainties of war as well as the aftermath of usurpations. Alexander Balas was decapitated by his friends and his head was brought to Ptolemaios VI (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 118; I Makk. 11. 17-18); Antiochos Hierax was slain by a band of Galatians (Porphyrios *FGrHist* 260 F32. 8); Tryphon either was killed (διεφθάρη) by Antiochos VII after he was taken in Apameia (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 224), or he might have committed suicide (Strab. 14. 5. 2); if Alexander Zabinas did not commit suicide with poison (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 23), he was defeated and killed (ἀπέθανεν) or put to death (*interficitur*) by Antiochos VIII Grypus (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 269; Iust. 39. 2. 6). Strikingly, the themes of suicide and execution are prominent in these short accounts. However, the deaths of these usurpers feature as mere remarks in the literary sources. Only Polybios, in his pro-Seleukid narrative, describes in detail the deaths of two usurpers. First, he writes that the Seleukid king demanded that Molon's corpse be impaled and displayed in the most conspicuous (ἐπιφανέστατον) place (Pol. 5. 54. 3-9). Second, Polybios notes that Achaios' body was mutilated; his head was severed and sown into an ass skin and his body was impaled (Pol. 8. 21. 3). Similar to the parade of Alexander Zabinas, who was led in chains through the camp of Antiochos VIII, these displays of defeat were intended to both deconstruct the former kings' kingship and to give a warning to other power holders in the kingdom, particularly those who had sat with Antiochos III in the *synedrion* to decide what to do with the captured Achaios.

Opposition to the king was not only dangerous for the usurper. After Molon's defeat, his brother Neolaos hastened to the Persis in order to murder their mother and Molon's children. Afterwards Neolaos and Molon's brother Alexander committed suicide (Pol. 5. 54. 5). As Molon had apparently been aware of the consequences of

his defeat, his brother was aware of the punishments that would be inflicted on their family. This seems to also have been the case for the closest friends of Molon who committed suicide in their homes (Pol. 5. 54. 4). The account of the murder of Hermeias in the early reign of Antiochos III illustrates the potential fate of other family members. Polybios describes how the women and boys of Apameia stoned the wife and sons of the dead ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων (Pol. 5. 56. 1-14). While the murder of Hermeias' family might illustrate the public hate for the former chancellor, it nevertheless also displays the danger involved for Seleukid high officials who fell from grace. Although the acclamation of Achaïos in Laodikeia should indicate some prominence of the family estates until the 220s BCE, the future of the estate in the context of the campaign of Antiochos III is not known. The Seleukid king did not always hold the kin of rebels liable for their family members. Achaïos and his father Andromachos had been in the service of Seleukos II and had been his friend in a period when their relative Alexander had seceded with Antiochos Hierax. Achaïos continued to be honoured under Seleukos III and followed him on the campaign to Asia Minor. Nevertheless, after the death of Achaïos, it is doubtful that the family continued to be one of the closest friends whose daughters were married to the Seleukid kings.

The suicide of Molon and the murder of the usurper's family by his brother illustrates that they were aware of the punishments that would follow if they were captured by the king. Rebellion allowed for no compromises to be made and both the king and usurper were aware of this. The physical destruction of the usurpers and their followers displayed the negation of the usurper's right to power and illustrated the monopoly of violence at the hands of the king. While these forms of punishment left no alternative for the immediate followers of the usurpers, Seleukid reaction to other groups within the kingdom was different.

Polybios describes how after the death of Molon, Antiochos III went to Seleukeia on the Tigris and restored order to the neighbouring satrapies. Hermeias, however, brought accusations against the Seleukeians. He apparently fined the city one thousand talents, sent the chief magistrates into exile and destroyed many of the Seleukeians by mutilation, the sword or the rack (Pol. 5. 54. 10). According to the Polybean narrative, it was the king who took matters into his own hands to pacify and quieten the Seleukeians. Moreover, he reduced the punishment for the people of Seleukeia's 'mistake' (ἄγνοια) to only one hundred and fifty talents (Pol. 5. 54. 11-12). It is possible to compare Seleukeia with the capture of Sardeis a few of years later. The taking of the lower city of Sardeis after a long siege (Pol. 7. 18. 9), the massacring (φονευόντων) of the community, setting of fires to the houses (οἰκήσεις ἐμπιπρόντων) and the dispersing of men to pillage and loot (ἄρπαγὰς καὶ ὠφελείας) might be connected to the physical necessities of warfare. However, in the aftermath of Achaïos' death, troops were still billeted in the city and it is striking that Antiochos III did not immediately enter Sardeis as a liberator. Only later did the king order the restoration of the gymnasium and promised to organise the reconstruction of the city (*SEG* 39. 1283-4). In Seleukeia, one of the Seleukid capitals, the chancellor of Antiochos III accused and punished the collective of the city with incredibly heavy fines. A clear symbol of the punishment of the city (and not just its garrison) is illustrated by the actions of Hermeias, who sent the chief magistrates into exile and ordered the mutilation of citizens. These actions must be contrasted with the grants of the king. While it is not certain if the heavy burden on the Sardeians resulted from their allegiance with Achaïos or from the physical necessities of a siege, the benefactions of Antiochos III to Seleukeia should be read in light of the inscriptions from Sardeis, which mention the benefactions of the Seleukid king; the performance was the same, it was only the genre that was different. The punishment of Seleukeia

should be interpreted as an indicator of good (or at least not hostile) relations between Molon and the city of Seleukeia on the Tigris. Although Polybios only mentions Molon's quick successes and the little resistance from the city, it is nevertheless possible that the citizens of Seleukeia did not oppose Molon's claims of kingship; perhaps they even supported it. In the immediate aftermath of the revolt, it was the capital which was punished by a Seleukid commander for the city's allegiance to a usurper. Moreover, if we follow Polybios' account on Seleukeia in hindsight of the inscriptions from Sardeis, it was only in the aftermath of the revolt that the Seleukid performance changed. Antiochos III relieved the city of Seleukeia of its burdens and it was the Seleukid king who ordered the reconstruction of the city of Sardeis. Both punishments of the cities were short-lived. It was the king's eventual benefactions to his provincial capitals that initiated their renewed relationship with euergetic activities.

The Seleukid king was forgiving to his cities, but what about his troops? There is no evidence regarding how Antiochos III reacted to the troops of Achaios.

According to Polybios' account of Molon's usurpation, the king rebuked (ἐπιτιμήσας) Molon's troops at some length before giving them his right hand (δοῦς δεξιᾶν) and sending them back to Media to settle the affairs in his interest (Pol. 5. 54. 8). After the defection of two of Alexander Zabinas' commanders, Alexander pardoned them (Diod. Sic. 34/5. 22). The king might have had no interest in punishing his troops, who might become disaffected because of the disciplining behaviour of the king. Moreover, his military strength also relied on their acceptance of him as king. This is illustrated in Demetrios II's behaviour after he was established as king: shortly after his accession he penalised all those who had been hostile to him with outlandish punishments (τιμωρίαις ἐξηλλαγμέναις), including the people of Antiocheia (Diod. Sic. 33. 4. 2; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 135). Although the intensity of the punishment might be a

creation of later historiography, it is difficult not to see the revolt of Tryphon and the taking of the city of Apameia as the immediate results of these measures. Demetrios II could not necessarily rely on the support of the groups within his kingdom; the king had to be forgiving in order to be acknowledged.

The execution of the usurper, his associates and family ensured the end of the revolt. The harsher the treatment of former close friends of the Seleukid king, the more likely it demonstrated the ultimate authority of the king and the dangers of opposing the king. While the public display was directed to all the audiences in the kingdom, one of the primary audiences was king's Friends, since it was from their ranks that usurpers emerged. Cities were punished too, although in the aftermath of the death of a usurper, the Seleukid king was generally benevolent. The royal performance of pardoning usurpers' troops and reconstructing of usurpers' cities was necessary for the renewal of royal communication between kings and the groups within the kingdom. Only with the prospect of grants and benefaction did the cities and troops in the Seleukid kingdom remain in a continuous affirmative relationship with the king.

Seleukid reaction also resulted in the re-invention of the Seleukid royal image. Polybios' account of Antiochos III enables us to interpret some of the king's measures as direct reactions to usurpers. The establishment of the Seleukid family cult and the reaffirmation of Seleukid space by invoking a Seleukid past are presumably the most striking examples. Antiochos III placed himself within the lineage of Seleukid kings, hoping to create a strong Seleukid dynasty in his sphere of influence. Moreover, we also can interpret the creation of honorific court titles as an attempt to bind the courtiers to a fixed hierarchy and perhaps we also should place this development in

the reign of Antiochos III if not Seleukos IV.²⁴ Furthermore, the Seleukid kings, and Antiochos III in particular, strove to bind the Seleukid army closely to the Seleukid dynasty. Scholarship has placed a strong emphasis on the loyalty of the Seleukid colonists and their role in the Seleukid army. Following this model, it was the split in the dynasty in the second century in particular which led to a change in the army's loyalty.²⁵ It also has long been suggested, however, that the connection between the military settlers and their recruitment in the army is far from secure.²⁶ Additionally, Tryphon's success in Apameia and the revolt of the Kyrrhestai suggests that at times we should question the loyalty of these settlers to the Seleukid house. If, however, settlers did not form the core of the Seleukid army and were not loyal, one could begin to wonder whether the Seleukid army of the third century was indeed so different from that of the second century BCE. Perhaps we should rather see the events of the second century as an acceleration of a longer process. For the reign of Antiochos III, we know that the royal troops followed their leaders Molon and Achaïos against the troops of the Seleukid king and that the Kyrrhestai revolted presumably because their commander was dismissed from office. The 'loyalty' of the Seleukid troops to their king was dependent on the performance of their king and while troops were most likely be loyal to the previous king (and thus it could be opportune to recall his achievements), perhaps we also should see 'the loyalty' of troops to the Seleukid family as a discourse, constructed by the Seleukid kings to display the unity of the kingdom. By calling his troops loyal to the royal house, as in Polybios' narrative before the battle of Raphia, Antiochos III not only hoped to

²⁴ Bickerman (1938), 41-6; Capdetrey (2007), 384-6; Dreyer (2011), 45-57, here 48-50. For the period of its establishment: Capdetrey (2007), 383; Ehling (2002), 41-58, here 44-5; Strootman (2011), 63-89, here 85-7. For the development in Ptolemaic Egypt: Mooren (1975), esp. 17-73; cf. idem (1977).

²⁵ Most recently: Ehling (2008), 47-56; see also Bar-Kochva (1976), 20-47.

²⁶ Bickerman (1938), 88; Robert (1937), 191-3; Cohen (1991), 41-50; Sekunda (1994), 13-14; cf. Capdetrey (2007), 158-9.

encourage his army before battle, but he also advertised his model of loyal Seleukid troops who followed only the Seleukid kings.

The iconography of the Seleukid kings evolved in the context of the Seleukid usurpers. They were required to react to usurpations and they adopted elements from the iconography of the usurpers. For instance, the portrait of Antiochos III ‘aged’ during his reign. This, of course, can be attributed to the king’s natural aging, but it is striking that Seleukos II portrayed himself in a relative ageless portrait throughout his reign.²⁷ On a few occasions the later Seleukid kings are shown wearing helmets and the energetic hair, which had been re-introduced by Alexander Balas and Tryphon.²⁸ The stress on heavy physical features could have inspired Antiochos VIII’s distinctive Grypus nose. Regardless of whether the beard of Demetrios II alluded to the beard of Zeus, a Parthian beard or was simply a sign of age and maturity, the depiction of a Seleukid ruler with a fully-grown beard was not usual.²⁹ A weak interpretation of this material would presumably stress the local initiatives of the mints and the stylistic changes over the course of the second century. This is also reflected in the adaption of certain Ptolemaic symbols, such as the *cornucopiae*. The adoption of usurpers’ elements on a few occasions, such as occasional military features, energetic hair and strong physical features, would support this argument. A strong interpretation would argue that the change in the royal image was a reflection of the discourse of power in the Seleukid kingdom and the adaptation of reintroduced usurpers’ coin types in order to reinvent the authority of the Seleukid king. The occasional adoption of usurpers’ imagery would illustrate the Seleukid kings’ attempts to reincorporate energetic imagery in displays of Seleukid power. The most persuasive interpretation, however, presumably would be something in between. The adoption of energetic hair and heavy

²⁷ See ch. 2.2.2; pl. 2.5-6; pl. 3.1-2.

²⁸ E.g. Antiochos VII: SC 2061, 2081-95. Demetrios II: SC 2180, 2087a, 2193. Antiochos VIII: SC 2297c, 2298, 2302.

²⁹ See the discussion in 2.2.2. For Demetrios II: Mittag (2002), 373-99; Lorber/Iossif (2009), 87-115.

facial features could be a reference to usurpers' imagery. The curious beard of Demetrios II illustrates the king's interest in displaying himself differently from his predecessors (and, most importantly, from himself in his first reign). At the same time, however, the adoption of occasional attributive elements, such as the helmet, could be connected to local initiatives. On the macro level, by comparing the Seleukid standard portrait under Seleukos IV and Antiochos IV with the portraits of Antiochos VII and Antiochos VIII and beyond, it is difficult to argue against the development of energetic expression in the royal portrait and it is plausible that the political activities between two royal lines and usurpers had something to do with this.

The dynamics of the imagery and iconography on Seleukid coinage clearly illustrate that coinage mattered for both Seleukid kings and Seleukid usurpers. It serves as an indicator for the relations of power in the Seleukid kingdom. Instead of placing emphasis on the personal interests or religious convictions of the ruler,³⁰ the coinage was used to gain acceptance by the different groups in the Seleukid kingdom, most importantly the army. The variety in the iconography illustrates that 'Seleukid elements' were not necessarily perceived as the most persuasive. This is corroborated by Antiochos III's attempts to strengthen the royal line during his reign; the stability of the imagery of his coinage (apart from the age of the portrait) might further underline this. *Ex negativo* this is also illustrated by Demetrios I's choice of royal name, whereby he presumably strove to differentiate himself from Antiochos IV and Antiochos V. The Seleukid kings seem to have re-invented their royal *persona* as a reaction to usurpations and to prevent further usurpers; the historical narrative illustrates their success in achieving this.

³⁰ Cf. Iossif/Lorber (2009), 87-115, here 105-10.

5.2.1 Usurpers become Tyrants: Beyond Royal Reaction?

This section so far has examined Seleukid reaction to usurpers in the immediate aftermath of the usurpers' defeat. Polybios' two accounts on the restoration of Seleukid control illustrate that the death of the usurper was the most prominent element within a larger complex of events. It has been suggested that it is possible that the reinvention of the royal Seleukid *persona* also played a certain role. Another important element, however, has not been discussed so far and is presumably the most difficult to assess: the branding of usurpers as tyrants.

As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, it is argued that it was the final result of a struggle between two antagonists that allowed the construction of a story which involved a swift victory of a king over a usurper. The historiography that followed portrayed a reconstructed image of the usurper.³¹ The circumstances of Hellenistic historiography make it very difficult to assess the attributions of usurpers' qualities after their death because this image was adopted by Polybios, Poseidonios and subsequent writers. For example, the concept of Hellenistic *tryphē*, 'luxury', generally carries very negative connotations in Polybios and is often associated with decadence. The *tryphē* of Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II, the excessive drinking of Eumenes I that led to his death (Ktesikles *FGrHist* 245 F2 *apud* Athen. *deipn.* 10. 445. c-d) and the sumptuous wedding of Antiochos III in Euboia (Pol. 20. 8) are only a few examples. Polybios' depiction of Antiochos III as an οἰνοπότης (*ibid.*) follows along the same lines. Similarly, the irrationality of Hellenistic rulers is at times depicted as rage (λύσσα) and forms a second *topos* in Hellenistic literature, particularly in Polybios' depiction of Philip V (most explicitly in Pol. 5. 11. 1-12) and in his account of Antiochos IV's behaviour, where Polybios called the king Ἐπιμανής instead of Ἐπιφανής (Pol. 26. 1a-1). A similar *topos* is the fear of the cities which

³¹ See above, ch 1.1.1.

emerged with the presence of kings during periods of violence (e.g. Liv. 33. 38. 9).³²

This short excursus emphasises that the presence of literary *topoi* regarding the Hellenistic rulers are not a unique phenomenon in accounts on usurpers, but rather appear in accounts of many Hellenistic kings.

Nevertheless some aspects of particular *topoi* originated elsewhere.³³ At the outset of his usurpation, Molon was able to gather a large army (μεγάλης δυνάμεως) and leave his satrapy. According to Polybios' narrative, the Seleukid generals sent against the usurper were 'terror-struck' by Molon's approach (καταπλαγέντες τὴν ἔφοδον) and retreated to the towns (Pol. 5. 43. 6-8). The use of the participle of καταπλήσσω is presumably used to illustrate the power of Molon's approach. The Seleukid troops were overpowered and outnumbered. However, in the same dossier Polybios also writes that Molon:

[...] worked upon the troops in his own satrapy until they were ready for anything, by the hopes of booty he held out and the fear which he instilled into their officers by producing forged letters from the king couched in threatening terms.³⁴

According to this account, Molon had tricked his troops. His soldiers followed him out of fear of the Seleukid king, which was generated by trickery and the hope of booty. The account of Molon's first military contact with the Seleukid forces is clear: Molon was able to engage such a large army that the Seleukid troops sent against him fled terror-struck, presumably without engaging in battle. Polybios' account continues with another military victory against the *strategos autokratōr* Xenaitas, who was head of a considerable army, and Molon won additional victories until he established himself in the centre of the kingdom (Pol. 5. 46. 6-48. 16). Molon had been able to gather a force large enough to engage the king's troops. Moreover, his troops did not

³² On Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II: Heinen (1983), 116-30; Nadig (2007), esp. 138-99.

³³ The dynamics of the discourse on usurpers have been discussed in a similar manner in Chrubasik (in print).

³⁴ Pol. 5. 43. 5: [...] ἐτοίμους παρεσκευακῶς πρὸς πᾶν τοὺς ἐκ τῆς ἰδίας σατραπείας ὄχλους διὰ τε τὰς ἐλπίδας τὰς ἐκ τῶν ὠφελειῶν καὶ τοὺς φόβους, οὓς ἐνειργάσατο τοῖς ἡγεμόσιν ἀνατακτικὰ καὶ ψευδεῖς εἰσφέρων ἐπιστολὰς παρὰ τοῦ βασιλέως.

defect in either of the battles with the king's army. This contradiction in Molon's account can be corroborated in a further account.

After the death of the young Antiochos VI, Josephus describes Tryphon's communication with the army of the dead king:

He sent his friends and intimates to go among the soldiers, promising to give them large sums of money if they would elect him king. He pointed out that Demetrios had been made captive by the Parthians, and that if his brother Antiochos came to rule, he would make them suffer severely in taking revenge for their revolt.³⁵

According to Josephus' narrative, Tryphon first murdered the king in order to obtain the diadem. Second, he promised to bribe the troops, who would not have otherwise acclaimed him king. Finally, Tryphon threatened his troops with revenge by a relative of their former paymaster. The specific allusions to bribery and the threat of revenge are very similar to Polybios' description of Molon's revolt. Strikingly, it was only in Josephus' narrative that Tryphon was deserted by his troops and put to death soon after he had become king. It has been outlined above that his troops did not desert the king after the death of Antiochos VI for at least another four years and Josephus' own narrative underlines that Tryphon was able to initially prevent Antiochos VII from landing on the coast of the Levant (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 222). Josephus also writes that it was because of his soldiers' 'hate' (μῖσος) for Tryphon that they defected to Kleopatra Thea (Ios. *Ant.* 13. 221). The soldiers' opposition to Tryphon does not comply with either account of his military successes or with the relative duration of his reign. These *topoi* also can be found in the surviving accounts of other usurpers. For example, Appian writes that Demetrios I had murdered Timarchos who had badly (πονηρῶς) administered Babylonia. He also adds that it was for this reason that the Babylonians gave Demetrios I the name *sotēr* (App. *Syr.* 47 [242]).

³⁵ Ios. *Ant.* 13. 219: τοὺς δὲ φίλους καὶ τοὺς οἰκειοτάτους διέπεμπε πρὸς τοὺς στρατιώτας, ἐπαγγελλόμενος αὐτοῖς χρήματα πολλὰ δώσειν, εἰ βασιλέα χειροτονήσουσιν αὐτόν, Δημήτριον μὲν ὑπὸ Πάρθων αἰχμάλωτον γεγονέναι μηνύων, τὸν δ' ἀδελφὸν αὐτοῦ Ἀντίοχον παρελθόντα εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν πολλὰ ποιήσειν αὐτοῖς κακὰ τῆς ἀποστάσεως ἀμυνόμενον.

Achaios was also negatively portrayed. In 220 BCE, the Byzantines asked for his help his support ‘greatly raised their spirits’ (Pol. 4. 43-8). In the summer of 218 BCE the people of Pednelissos appealed to Achaaios for aid and the king campaigned south (5. 72. 1-3). However, in another episode from 218 BCE, Polybios characterises Achaaios differently. Following his return from a campaign to Pisidia and Pamphylia, Achaaios ‘continued to make war on Attalos, began to menace Prusias and made himself a serious object of dread to all the ones who live on this side of the Tauros.’³⁶ Polybios also describes how in a previous campaign Attalos I had visited the cities of the Aiolis and they willingly joined his cause. Previously, they had joined Achaaios ‘out of fear’ (διὰ τὸν φόβον) and this seems to have been the case particularly for Kyme and Smyrna (Pol. 5. 77. 2-4).

According to the literary tradition, Molon and Tryphon had to bribe their troops in order to gain their support. The successful general, giving booty to his troops, became a briber who could only force his men to stay loyal to him. Moreover, Achaaios was at the same time a *sotēr* and a menace, while Timarchos had administered the province badly. This overview of the literary evidence illustrates the discursive character of the authors’ narratives. Apart from individual successes, Molon, Tryphon, Timarchos and Achaaios are depicted as tyrants. Yet where do these *topoi* come from? Some descriptions might have the same source as the negative accounts on the Hellenistic kings. It is, for example, difficult to assess whether Alexander Balas’ weakness of character (ἀσθένειαν τῆς ψυχῆς) should be a negative discourse on kings or a negative discourse on usurpers (Diod. Sic. 33. 3). Nevertheless, it is plausible to assume that Seleukid court historiography was at least in part responsible for the accounts of Molon and Tryphon’s bribery and the account of the cruelty and malice of Hermeias can likewise be interpreted this way. These

³⁶ Pol. 5. 77. 1: Ἀχαιοὶ δὲ [...] ἐπολέμει μὲν Ἀττάλῳ συνεχῶς, ἀνετείνετο δὲ Προυσίᾳ, πᾶσι δ’ ἦν φοβερός καὶ βαρὺς τοῖς ἐπὶ τὰδε τοῦ Ταύρου κατοικοῦσι.

topoi had their origins in the Seleukid court historiography and were constructed after the death of individuals whose power was too excessive.

It is possible, however, that the discourse on ‘bad’ usurpers originated away from the Seleukid court? It has been suggested that the punishments of Sardeis and Seleukeia on the Tigris indicated the cities’ support for the usurper. But how did the local communities react in the immediate aftermath of the death of a usurper? A strong interpretation would suggest that the acclamation of Demetrios I as *sotēr* when he entered Babylon served to avoid the punishment of the city and its magistrates after Molon’s revolt. The attempt of the city of Antiocheia to acclaim Ptolemaios VI king can likewise be interpreted this way. The commanders Diodotos and Hierax opened the city gates, and perhaps in order to avoid punishment, bestowed honours on the Ptolemaic king by offering him the diadem (I Makk. 11. 13; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 113-15). Yet did the cities express their ‘fear’ towards the monarch in order to renew their relationship with their new (and perhaps former) ruler? The cities generally did not defame former rulers and the epigraphic documents do not extensively mention former monarchs. Strikingly, a letter from Ptolemaios II to Miletos, mentioning the ‘harsh and oppressive taxes and tolls (φόρων τε σκληρῶν καὶ χαλεπῶν [...] καὶ παραγωγίων) which certain kings (τινες τῶν βασιλέων) had imposed,’ does not name the former kings (*I.Milet* 139 = *RC* 14. 5-7).³⁷ Only the Teians appear to have acted differently. In their second decree for Antiochos III and Laodike they use more nuanced language. They mention ‘alleviation of the heavy and harsh taxes (τῶν βαρέων καὶ σκληρῶν ἐκκούφισιν [...] τῶν συντάξεων)’ and indeed no king who had imposed the taxes is mentioned in the immediate context of the inscription (*SEG*

³⁷ This sentence has caused wide scholarly debate, which is summarised in P. Herrmann’s addendum to *I.Milet* 139 in *I.Milet* n139. It is uncertain who the kings in question were: Wörrle (1977), 43-66, here 55n.70 (followed by Jones [1992], 91-102 here 97n.29). Seibert (1971), 159-66 discusses the possibilities of Antigonos Monophthalmos, Lysimachos and Demetrios Poliorketes. However, he ignores the fact that the taxes might potentially be ‘harsh and oppressive’ only in a Ptolemaic discourse. Cf. Mastrocinque (1987-8), 65-92, here 80-2 who favours Demetrios Poliorketes.

41. 1003 I). The origins of taxation are mentioned in an earlier decree. Although it neutrally describes the tribute that the Teians used to pay to King Attalos I, notably the decree names the Attalid monarch twice (*SEG* 41. 1003 I 19-20; 34). What was the Teians' intention? If the people of Teos wanted to emphasise the 'oppression' of Attalos I, they decided not to mention it explicitly. Similarly, if they decided to describe the former taxation system neutrally, there would not have been a need to mention Attalos twice in a distance of roughly fifteen lines. The mention of the Attalid king was intended to amplify Seleukid benefaction. At the same time, however, there appears to be no direct attempt to defame the Attalid king.

Locating the origins of a negative discourse on usurpers is difficult and perhaps even impossible. It is certain that elements such as the bribing of the troops were *topoi* that were ascribed to the usurpers after their death. However, it cannot be attested if this was the result of Seleukid historiography. The same must be said about cities' 'fear' of usurpers. While it might be attractive to connect the complaints of the cities to the defeat of the usurpers, this remains speculative, as cities could also be 'afraid' of kings in times of conquest.

Considerations on the relationship between usurpers, the Seleukid kings and the groups within the kingdom, however, transpose the discussion onto a different level: if the king's friends were able to declare themselves kings and fight against the Seleukid king – even if only for a limited number of years – and if they were accepted in the cities and even supported by them, what does this mean for the Seleukid kingdom?

5.3 Kings and the Seleukid Empire: A Story of Usurpation, Monarchy and Power

This thesis has discussed the implications of usurpation for the Seleukid diadem and, as such, has largely been a political history of the Seleukid kingdom. The picture it has created is one of high instability at the centre of Seleukid power with the Seleukid king constantly trying to hold the kingdom together. In his account on Seleukid administration, L. Capdetrey has placed particular emphasis on the interaction between the Seleukid centre and the periphery.³⁸ The Seleukid centre supported local power holders to fulfil local administrative needs. Although they acted independently, they were nevertheless included within the network of Seleukid administration. The recently discovered second version of the Nikanor dossier from Phrygian Philomelion, for instance, incorporated the Phrygian dynast Philomelos within the hierarchy of Seleukid officials (*SEG* 54. 1353. 16; 20). The family of Philomelos is an example of localised peripheral power. The Philomelids gave benefactions to Delphi and most likely founded a city in their own name, Philomelion. Their local activity can be further illustrated by the benefactions of the Attalid dynasts Philetairos and Eumenes I. Although they acted within a Seleukid framework, they were local benefactors and were able to provide local security and meet local demands, including the gift of shields to the people of Kyme (*SEG* 50. 1195). These dynasts could secede from time to time, but the presence of the Seleukid king and perhaps the Seleukid army reaffirmed control over these peripheral rulers. A well-known example is the anabasis of Antiochos III. The Seleukid king had to be the biggest player in the game, but at the same time he acknowledged local power structures.

In his analysis of the centre and periphery, Capdetrey's conclusions are convincing. He argues that the interaction between centre and periphery was inherited

³⁸ Capdetrey (2007), 359-82, 441; Sherwin-White (1987), 1-31, here 3.

from the empire's Achaemenid predecessor and that this form of administration was not a sign weakness in the Seleukid empire, but rather administrative practice.³⁹

Indeed, the use of local power holders should not be surprising since, to a certain degree, this is how many large territorial empires functioned: the Roman empire cooperated with the elites in Asia Minor; the Ottomans used local structures in its vast geopolitical space; even the early administration of the East India Company in Bengal and Hyderabad used local power holders to establish and maintain territorial control without creating an enormous administrative apparatus.⁴⁰

Nevertheless, the relationship between centre and periphery can serve as a litmus test for the success of a kingdom. If both local and high power holders seceded continuously, we should not try to locate the difficulties of the Seleukid state in the periphery or in the administrative system, but rather in the centre, that is, in Seleukid kingship.

5.3.1 Power and Kingship in the Seleukid Empire

The core weakness of Seleukid kingship was the potential of tension between the Seleukid king and his *philoï*, his most important power holders. More precisely, the Seleukid king's most pressing concern was how to communicate his position as the supreme power holder in his own kingdom.⁴¹ The precarious power of the Seleukid king was questioned since at least the middle of the third century BCE. Initially Antiochos Hierax claimed a part of the kingdom for himself, while in the following period Seleukid high commanders who had either no or only a limited

³⁹ Capdetrey (2007), 440-2.

⁴⁰ Briant (1982), 48n.3. Achaemenid Empire: e.g. Briant (2002), esp. 357-511; Briant (1984). Roman Asia Minor: e.g. Quaß (1993); Reitzenstein (2011) for a regional study. Ottoman Empire: e.g. Khouri (2006), 135-56; Winter (2009) for a regional study. British India: e.g. Marshall (1987); Ray (1998), 508-29.

⁴¹ Cf. Briant (2002), 875.

connection to the royal family were able to declare themselves king. Moreover, these later usurpers did not try to insert themselves into the line of the Seleukid kings and yet they were able to gather troops and engage the Seleukid army in battle. It is the usurpers who are indicative of the problem of kingship in the Seleukid empire: the Seleukid kings failed to create a 'Seleukid' identity for the Seleukid kingdom and therefore the Seleukid kings were not legitimate, only accepted as outlined in the introduction.

The Seleukid kings had to constantly succeed and persuade their audiences of their successes. Based on one of its entries on kingship in the *Suda* (B 147 A), H.-J. Gehrke has interpreted Hellenistic kingship using M. Weber's theory of charismatic rule, and has argued that it was the acquisition of charisma which fostered Hellenistic kingship.⁴² Charisma could indeed qualify an individual to make himself worthy of the diadem, however, charisma did not *make* kings. Following M. Weber's sociological presupposition that the groups within the kingdoms had to believe in the king's leading position, this thesis has illustrated that it was the constant verbal and non-verbal communication between ruler and ruled which assured the Seleukid king of 'social magic', the acceptance by the groups within the kingdom.⁴³ Thus, the Seleukid king had to constantly compete for his position. He had to be the most successful, the best in every aspect, and this can be seen in the different royal *personae* employed during the Hellenistic period. The display of vast palaces,⁴⁴ excessive drinking (e.g. Pol. 20. 8) and royal games and feasts (e.g. Pol. 30. 25-26. 3),⁴⁵ as well as the king's support of arts,⁴⁶ hunting,⁴⁷ and euergetical activities⁴⁸

⁴² Gehrke (1982), 247-77.

⁴³ Weber (1980), 122 with Habermas (1987), 371-97 and Bourdieu (1991), 41-2; see also Austin (2003), 121-33, here 123.

⁴⁴ There is little literary and archaeological evidence of the Seleukid palaces. E.g. for the size of the Ptolemaic palace of Alexandria: Strab. 17. 1. 8.

⁴⁵ This all falls under the category of *tryphē*: see above, ch. 3.2.1.2; cf. Heinen (1983b), 116-30.

⁴⁶ E.g. Erskine (1995), 38-48.

⁴⁷ E.g. Plut. *Alex.* 40; Arr. *anab.* 4. 13. 2; Plut. *Dem.* 50. 8.

⁴⁸ E.g. Pol. 5. 88-90. 4; Gauthier (1985); Ma (2002). For a collection: Bringmann/Steuben (1995).

provided him with a context to disseminate his royal communication to his troops, friends, cities, courtiers, embassies and thus be accepted as king by these agents within the kingdom. The king was king because he could communicate to his audiences that he performed these elements most successfully.

The fact that the Seleukid king had to prove himself capable of his position constantly and compete with other power holders for the monopoly of power suggests that his position was not *a priori* granted, but that it had to be attained. In the ideal case, the royal princes (militarily trained from youth) took over the kingdom after they had been active in the service of their father, often as co-rulers, such as Antiochos I or Seleukos IV. The pressure to succeed became particularly problematic, however, if the ruler was a child (as in the case of Antiochos, the son of Seleukos IV, and Antiochos V); if military success did not manifest itself (as in the case of Antiochos Hierax and perhaps Seleukos III); or in the aftermath of military defeats (Antiochos III did not ‘trust’ his troops after the defeat at Raphia and it might not be coincidental that it was now that he ‘remembered’ Achaïos in Asia Minor who had already been king for three years; Pol. 5. 87. 1-2). The shortage of resources which prohibited the king’s display of wealth could negate successful communication between troops and king (e.g. Antiochos III before his campaign against Molon; Pol. 5. 50. 1).

Nevertheless, as this thesis has illustrated, communication between ruler and ruled was not restricted to the Seleukid king. High commanders, local power holders and influential friends took part in this communicative process. It provided not only the smooth running of Seleukid administration, but also provided individuals a certain level of acceptance. In the Seleukid kingdom the Seleukid king was not the *only* actor, he was only the biggest player. This scenario was not necessarily problematic and can be similarly found in the highly aristocratic societies of the Achaemenid empire and

later in the Ottoman state.⁴⁹ However, the possibility of other high power commanders' success was too great. The Seleukid usurpers illustrate that kingship in the Seleukid kingdom could be acquired by individual achievements and the display of power. Military success in particular could give military commanders royal virtue, which inspired and/or persuaded their audiences to acclaim the individual king.⁵⁰ The new kings employed other elements in their individual *personae* which was displayed on their coinage or in their royal actions. They were accepted by the groups in their spheres of influence and were addressed by the local communities as kings. The groups had no particular loyalty to the Seleukid kings and accepted other power holders. Although the Seleukid kings were able to subdue Molon, Achaïos and Timarchos, I would argue that it was not dynastic descent that helped the Seleukid kings to become successful. The story of Achaïos' troops not wanting to march against their king κατὰ φύσιν (Pol. 5. 57. 6) is an often-quoted example of the importance of the relationship between the royal family and the troops.⁵¹ However, the fact that these same troops wanted to acclaim Achaïos king in 222 BCE after he avenged the death of Seleukos III (Pol. 4. 48. 9-10.) and celebrated his acclamation in 220 in Laodikeia on the Lykos (Pol. 5. 57. 5), might question the historical validity of this interpretation of the Polybean narrative. We also should perhaps interpret this as a construction of Seleukid court historiography to create a strong bond between the Seleukid troops and Seleukid king as suggested above. A similar example is the defection of Molon's troops as soon as they saw the Seleukid king (Pol. 5. 54. 1). The defection of troops was not only an issue between kings with different amounts of hereditary capital. This is already evident in the defection of Demetrios Poliorketes' troops, who defected to Seleukos I (Plut. *Dem.* 49. 4). Troops defected when they

⁴⁹ Achaemenid Empire: e.g. Briant (2002), 302-54. Ottoman empire: e.g. Karateke (2005), 14-52.

⁵⁰ Bickerman (1938), 12-13.

⁵¹ Gehrke (1982), 247-77; Austin (1986), 450-66; Mittag (2008), 47-56.

thought it was opportune. This is evident in Polybios' own account of the battle of Raphia (Pol. 5. 85. 10). The personal encouragement of Ptolemaios IV influenced his troops to win the victory. It did not only inspire the Ptolemaic troops to achieve greater successes, but also inspired Seleukid defection. Although the Seleukid troops resisted at first and did not join the Ptolemaic troops, they quickly fled (ταχέως ἐγκλίναντες). Another example is the defection of Demetrios II's troops, presumably after Ptolemaios VIII Euergetes II was about to win the battle (*FGrHist* 260 F32. 2; Iust. 39. 1. 4). It was not royal descent, but rather Seleukid manpower and the particular engagement of the Seleukid king (the sight of a king, instead of the king) which determined the destruction of the opponent's army. Polybios illustrates this in the speech of Epigenes, where he writes that Molon's revolt would shatter as soon as the 'king presented himself before the eyes of the people'; however, he also does not forget to add 'with an adequate force.'⁵²

More than one king could be accepted as king and while the groups within the kingdom followed other kings as well as those of the house of Seleukos, one could still argue that belonging to the Seleukid dynasty was an advantage and thus the Seleukid family had a lead over other claimants to the diadem. If the Seleukid dynasty did not add any value to the Seleukid king's claim to kingship, there was no reason for Herakleides and Tryphon to promote Alexander Balas and Antiochos VI as Seleukid kings. Instead, they could have claimed the kingship immediately for themselves. Indeed, the role of the Seleukid king seemed to be a special one, there is no doubt. Yet where did the specificity of this particular kingship and its limits lie? By following Weber, Gehrke has argued that it was the perpetuation of charisma through the dynastic secession that fostered hereditary charisma, as illustrated by the

⁵² Pol. 5. 41. 8: ... τοῦ βασιλέως παρόντος καὶ τοῖς πολλοῖς ἐν ὄψει γενομένου μετὰ συμμέτρου δυνάμεως, κτλ.

Seleukid succession.⁵³ The perpetuation of any kind of rule in a dynasty is a natural process and requires no sociological explanation. It not only offers stability to the ruling family but also to the closest circle around the ruler and the state as a whole.⁵⁴ It is not clear from which point onwards the Seleukids were eager to display the dynastic element of their kingship. However, references to the *progonoi* by Seleukos II (*OGIS* 227. 1-3) to the city of Miletos are one side of a discourse on ancestry which seems to have been apparent in the Seleukid empire under young kings in particular. This can be recalled in the later period in Polybios' account of the speeches of Antiochos III and Ptolemaios IV before the battle of Raphia (Pol. 5. 85. 1-13). The reference to royal fathers on the coinage of Antiochos I and Antiochos II, and the uniformity of Seleukid coinage until the reign of Seleukos IV, further illustrates this discourse. Moreover, the large responsibility of creating a Seleukid image presumably rested with Antiochos III and his creations of Seleukid past.⁵⁵ Thus, the Seleukid kings clearly sought to give their family a more royal status, a dynasty.

However, the Seleukid kings knew very early onwards that the communicational value of dynastic descent was limited. Seleukos I attempted to enhance his son's position, not only by making him co-regent, but also by offering him the opportunity to achieve successful communication with the empire's audiences on both military and euergetical levels.⁵⁶ The history of the Seleukid empire illustrates that it was particularly when the sons had already been acting as kings before their fathers' death that dynastic succession was peaceful; this can be seen most strikingly at the accession of Seleukos IV. While theoretically opportune, both measures were not always possible and it is these situations in particular which illustrate the potential and limits of royal descent. Even if the Seleukid prince did not have military

⁵³ Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 267.

⁵⁴ E.g. Karateke (2005), 16-52, here 17; Weber (1980), 16-17.

⁵⁵ For the state cult: Robert/Robert (1983), 163-8; Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993), 209-10; Ma (2002), 356; see also Gehrke (1982), 247-77, here 269-70; van Nuffelen (2004), 278-301.

⁵⁶ See Weber (1980), 143.

experience in order to communicate successfully with his troops, he could still become king. It is instructive that one of young Antiochos III's first measures was to prepare for a war against Egypt (Pol. 5. 42. 5-6) and to arrange a sumptuous royal wedding (Pol. 5. 43. 3-4). Seleukos III similarly began a campaign in Asia Minor soon after his accession (Pol. 4. 48. 7). Even if a prince was too young to actively rule in the Seleukid kingdom, he did become king and both the guardians of Antiochos V and Antiochos VI were eager to display the kings' communicational efforts with their audiences. Antiochos V rode on a military campaign (I Makk. 6. 28-31; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 367), while Antiochos VI made a treaty of friendship with Jonathan (I Makk. 11. 57-9; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 145-6). While it was possible for a Seleukid prince to become a powerful king, dynastic descent was not strong enough to guarantee that either cities or troops would be loyalty to them.

What was the political value of this initial acknowledgement of dynastic descent beyond making children kings? I believe the usurpations of Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas are the most instructive examples. Alexander Balas' reference to his father Antiochos IV was supported by Attalos II of Pergamon and Herakleides, the former friend of Antiochos IV. Herakleides had to leave the Seleukid court at the accession of Demetrios I. Given that Lysias was murdered, it is possible that he and his brother Timarchos were not the only friends of the king to leave the court and the Seleukid kingdom (App. *Syr.* 47 [242]). Similarly, Meleager and Menestheos, the sons of Apollonios, had supported Demetrios I since their father had been in the service of Seleukos IV but left the Seleukid kingdom during the reign of Antiochos IV (Pol. 31. 13. 3). The usurpers inserted themselves within the house of Seleukos, presumably to underline their relationship with their fathers and their fathers' friends. This was of particular importance since their fathers' friends were not members of the Seleukid court at this point. Tryphon's position made it unlikely for him to be of

service to Demetrios II and this was presumably one of the reasons why he promoted the acclamation of Antiochos VI. Both Alexander Balas and Alexander Zabinas were outsiders who did not have the same communicational successes that enabled Achaios, Molon and Timarchos' kingship. Their insertion into the line of the Seleukid kings, however, enabled them to re-negotiate their relationship with the friends of their supposed fathers. It is in these examples that we can understand the possibilities and limits of the Seleukid royal family. Since friends of former kings could support claimants to the diadem, their insertion within the royal family enabled these pretenders to become king. Nevertheless, immediately after their accession these usurpers had to prove that they could be successful, otherwise these initial supporters could leave them. Given the lack of an aristocracy in the Seleukid empire, it was not possible for Seleukid kings to be the head of an aristocratic pyramid in the Seleukid centre, unlike Achaemenid and Ottoman kingship.⁵⁷ Even if there had been a pyramid, this would not have guaranteed the success of the Seleukid candidate for the diadem; however, it would have excluded other high power holders in the Seleukid kingdom from being accepted as kings. With the lack of an aristocratic structure it was not φύσις, 'nature', or δίκαιον, 'justice', ἀλλὰ τοῖς δυναμένοις ἡγεῖσθαι στρατοπέδου καὶ χειρίζειν πράγματα νουνεχῶς, 'but the ability to lead an army and to manage the affairs with understanding', which persuaded the groups within the kingdom of the qualities of the individual and thus give τὰς βασιλείας (*Suda* B 147 A).

The Seleukid colony of Apameia supported the usurper Tryphon, Achaios was called on for help by cities in Asia Minor and Seleukeia on the Tigris does not seem to have opposed the usurpation of Molon. War and conflict ensued and thus the limits of the Seleukid kingship translate immediately into the limits of the Seleukid empire, its administration and its economy.

⁵⁷ Achaemenid empire: Briant (2002), 352-4; Tuplin (2009), 109-36, esp. 120-2. Ottoman empire: Karateke (2005), 13-52.

5.3.2 The Structure and Nature of the Seleukid Kingdom

The changeover of clay seals in Seleukeia on the Tigris from Antiochos IV to Timarchos and then to Demetrios I should presumably indicate that after Timarchos' usurpation and the expulsion of a garrison (as under Molon), the daily workings of the new kingdom were 'business as usual'.⁵⁸ The changeover from one monarch to another was nothing new on the coast of Asia Minor. However, if within one kingdom troops followed their power holders against Seleukid troops, and if cities and Seleukid colonies joined sides with military commanders (at times because they had been born in the area and at other times for no apparent reason), what does this tell us about the Seleukid state? What, in fact, *was* 'business as usual'?

The lack of a monopoly of power in the Seleukid kingdom for the Seleukid dynasty clearly illustrates the limits of Seleukid control. The empire had strong kings, but it was not a strong kingdom. If indeed the revenues largely remained in the periphery, these revenues could not be accessed by the central Seleukid authorities until the Seleukid kings returned to reaffirm their authority over the local dynasts or administrators who had seceded.⁵⁹ While in peripheral regions this was acceptable, in other regions, such as Media, it caused difficulties for the Seleukid state. The weakness of the centre, which allowed power holders such as Molon and Achaïos to secede in these important regions, could impede the imperial treasury. It is possible that we see this with Molon's taking control of the eastern revenues at the turn of the third century BCE. Polybios indicates that Antiochos III was not able to pay his soldiers and I would argue that it was Molon's usurpation which prevented the Seleukid centre from obtaining revenues from the eastern parts of the kingdom (Pol.

⁵⁸ See: Invernizzi (2004), 43-4 nos. Se 40-46.

⁵⁹ Capdetrey (2007), 417-18; cf. Aperghis (2004), 289-90.

5. 50. 1-5). It is precisely the political instability described in this thesis which further questions the functioning of the Seleukid economy. The loss of Asia Minor to the Seleukids for a considerable part of the third century is an indicator of the impact of the politics of the period.

It is likely that Lysias, the son of Philomelos, continued to exact tribute in his territories after the decline of Seleukid authority in mid-third century Asia Minor, but it is unlikely that these tributes made their way to Antiocheia on the Orontes. The literary evidence mentions *phoroi* and *syntaxeis*, and the epigraphic evidence in particular emphasises the freedom from taxes and tribute for civic communities.⁶⁰ Since the Ptolemaic resurgence and the usurpation of Antiochos Hierax, Asia Minor was outside Seleukid control and it is questionable which communities would have paid contributions to a Seleukid king between this period and the siege of Sardeis under Antiochos III in 213 BCE (perhaps with the exception of the ‘Seleukid’ campaign of Achaïos in 222-220). Moreover, western Asia Minor had only recently begun to make contributions to the Seleukid kings between 281 and the late 260s BCE when Antiochos I had finally reaffirmed Seleukid control in the area and when he or his son exempted Erythrai from paying the *phoros* (*OGIS* 223). As argued by Capdetrey, taxation was only one manifestation of Seleukid sovereignty, expressed in various different languages.⁶¹ However, the loss of Asia Minor between 246-213 BCE and the late re-conquest of western Asia Minor at the end of the third century illustrates how quickly these territories could be lost (and gained).⁶² Beyond Asia Minor the re-insertion of Xerxes of Armenia under Antiochos III and Artaxias of Armenia under Antiochos IV indicates the reaffirmation of Seleukid authority. It also shows that the local rulers had not paid taxes for a considerable time beforehand.

⁶⁰ E.g. Capdetrey (2007), 418-22; Aperghis (2004), 269-95.

⁶¹ Capdetrey (2007), 409, also 408-16.

⁶² Cf. Rostovtzeff (1941) I, 530-1; Ma (2002), 33-50.

This is also the case in Judaea and the Levant in the second century BCE. The Jews had already stopped paying taxes under Seleukos IV (II Makk. 3. 7-8). Although they made payments in the early years of Antiochos IV's reign (II Makk. 4. 7-9; 23), the Jewish conflict interrupted the payment of contributions. Demetrios I openly granted the people of Judaea a long list of exemptions and privileges, including tax exemption for Jews on festival days (I Makk. 10. 33-44; Ios. *Ant.* 13. 48-57). In order to strengthen his position, Demetrios II made consecutive grants and exemptions to the people of Judaea (I Makk. 11. 30-7; 13. 36-40). While Capdetrey is correct in his analysis that casual exemptions from taxes for particular festivals did not equal full exemptions '*aphorologesia*',⁶³ the political situation in Judaea and the southern Levant should presumably indicate to what degree the casual exemptions in the Seleukid letters impacted Jewish contributions to the Seleukid king.⁶⁴

The second-century Levant also illustrates the limits of royal Seleukid revenue. Even if the northern Syrian communities were not affected by high power politics as suggested at the site of Gindaros,⁶⁵ the politics of the period must have influenced their administration. For a large part of the second century, northern Syria and the Levant housed the rivalling armies of two contenders for the diadem. The power of the Makkabees was rising steadily. The cities and communities had to accept the levy of troops, plunder and also an invasion from Ptolemaic Egypt. This image places particular stress on disruption and perhaps neglects the continuity of Seleukid peace which is suggested by the archaeology of Gindaros. However, not all communities were free from danger: the city of Berytos was sacked and Antiocheia itself was the centre of revolt. Perhaps a microstudy of the administrative complex near Kedesh allows us to draw conclusions with regard to the state of Seleukid administration and economic practice in the middle of the second century BCE. The

⁶³ Capdetrey (2007), 417-22.

⁶⁴ See e.g. ch. 3.3.1; also Ma (2000b), 71-112, here 85-104; cf. Aperghis (2004), 166-71.

⁶⁵ Kramer (2004), esp. 263-76; Hannestad (2011), 251-79.

space had been occupied since the Persian period and presumably functioned as a part of an administrative centre.⁶⁶ It was abandoned and its archive burnt soon after the middle of the second century BCE and while it was later re-used, it apparently no longer served as an administrative centre.⁶⁷ The large number of possible parties who could have been responsible for the destruction of the building complex is instructive for understanding the instability of the period. The daily functioning of administration and economic ventures must be placed in the political context of the period.

This second-century image seems to confirm our limited knowledge of the Seleukid empire in the third century. The reigns of Seleukos II, Seleukos III and the early reign of Antiochos III illustrate that these problems were not a phenomenon of the second century, but rather were apparent in the Seleukid kingdom from at least the period after the death of Antiochos II in 246 BCE. Thus, the picture we obtain from the evidence is disenchanting. The reigns of some Seleukid rulers, such as the reign of Antiochos III between c.213 and 197 BCE, allow us to ascertain an image of Seleukid administration and the economy of the empire. It is not possible, however, to transfer this approach to the Seleukid empire as a whole. If we are looking for the Seleukid kingdom which was a stable, vibrant economic and administrative space, then we must search beyond the period discussed in this thesis. If it existed it was perhaps in the period before the death of Antiochos II and during the reign of Antiochos III and Seleukos IV, a period which witnessed two Syrian Wars, the affirmations and reaffirmations of Seleukid control and also the loss of Asia Minor.

The structural study of L. Capdetrey on the administration and economy of the Seleukid kingdom describe the state in its *longue durée* as an apolitical space, unchallenged by political affairs, and it is only with this approach that this book can

⁶⁶ Herbert/Berlin (2003), 13-59, esp. 18-55; see also Ariel/Naveh (2003), 61-80.

⁶⁷ Destruction: Herbert/Berlin (2003), 13-59, here 54. However, cf. Kramer (2004).

offer us insights into the system of the Seleukid empire itself.⁶⁸ The results of Capdetrey's important thesis persuade the reader to remember that it is impossible to think about the history of the Seleukid kingdom without thinking about its economy. While this is the strength of the book, it is also its greatest challenge. By analysing Seleukid usurpers and creating a picture of Seleukid history, this thesis has clearly illustrated that from the middle of the third century BCE onwards the core of Seleukid government, that is, its kingship, was constantly challenged and Seleukid authority was very fragile. It is perhaps unsurprising that 'exceptional' incomes of plunder and warfare form a far more regular source of wealth than supposed in Capdetrey's model. Perhaps the model of the war-waging king as suggested by Austin is more instructive.⁶⁹ This is not the place to suggest a model of Seleukid economy, nor is this criticism an attempt to deconstruct Capdetrey's important contribution. However, the material presented in this study questions whether the conclusions of the synchronistic approach in *Le pouvoir séleucide* enable us to determine the vitality of the Seleukid state, or if we also should take into account the consecutive warfare and structural weaknesses of the central authority when creating a history of the Seleukid empire.

The focus of this thesis has largely been on the political constellations of the Seleukid empire in the period between c.240 and 125 BCE and an extensive treatment of the kingdom's administration and its economy in this period could not have been its aim. Since this study focuses on moments of political crisis and lacks a discussion of continuity in Seleukid administration (which the Hellenistic historians did not find worth discussing), this approach has most certainly influenced the general *couleur* of my work. Nevertheless, this thesis has illustrated that the image of a 'strong' Seleukid kingdom is not sustainable in terms of Seleukid politics as suggested by Sherwin-

⁶⁸ Capdetrey (2007); cf. e.g. Briant (2002).

⁶⁹ Capdetrey (2007), 411-12; Aperghis (2004), 171-5; Austin (1986), 450-66, here 461-5; idem (2003), 121-33, here 124-6.

White and Kuhrt or in administrative and economic terms as argued by Capdetrey.⁷⁰ The Seleukid dynasty prevailed for a period of circa two hundred and fifty years until Pompeius Magnus rejected the claims of the last kings in 63 BCE. At the turn of the fourth century and at the turn of the third, the Seleukid kingdom was the largest empire of the Hellenistic world and only the assassination of Seleukos I and the defeat of Antiochos III by the Roman armies brought a halt to the empire's expansion. The resurgence of the empire under Antiochos III and the display of Seleukid power in Baktria, Armenia, Asia Minor and the Hellespont, demonstrate the sheer manpower of the Seleukid army and the resources that were at the disposal of kings. However, what this image does not depict is a strong empire. Instead, it illustrates the performance of individual control and constant affirmation by the Seleukid kings. The structures of the empire and the political system of Seleukid monarchy were not stable. The Seleukid kings favoured local power holders in certain regions who strengthened the kingdom. However, this was only possible as long as the king could retain his acceptance and thus his control. By the third generation of Seleukid rulers a Seleukid prince revolted against the king, which led local power holders, including the Attalids and the satraps of Baktria and Parthia, to slip from Seleukid control. The usurpations of Molon and Achaïos illustrate that a weakened central authority was not able to prevent the secession of Seleukid high power holders in their own territories. The reconquest of the Seleukid lands under Antiochos III was successful and violent, but also short-lived. The usurpations of Timarchos and Alexander Balas demonstrate that the same phenomenon occurred in the second century, which was amplified by the revolt of the people of Judaea and the invasion of the Parthians in the eastern satrapies of Media and Babylonia. The Seleukids had to surrender their new control of the southern Levant to the Jews only roughly fifty years after Antiochos III had taken

⁷⁰ Sherwin-White (1987), 1-31; Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1993); Capdetrey (2007), esp. 439-43.

control of the area. Babylon, the place of Seleukos I's kingship, was lost to the Seleukids in April 141 BCE (*AD III 140 A obv.1*). In 144 BCE, Kammaškiri, the king of Elam, marched around the rivers of Babylonia and the diaries speak of fear and panic in the land (*AD III 144 rev. 20-1*). The power of Elam was perhaps already apparent when Antiochos III arrived in the region before his death. The re-taking of Babylonia under Antiochos VII was short-lived and while Demetrios II apparently had been called on for help by the people of Babylonia and Media (*Ios. Ant. 13. 185*), these same people were 'burdened' (*gravari*) with the high number of troops by their liberator Antiochos VII and re-joined the Parthian king (*Iust. 38. 10. 8*). The Seleukid kings were not the 'rightful' kings for the groups in Babylonia; the troops and 'people' had previously joined Molon and now supported the Parthians. There was no special relationship between the groups within the kingdom and the Seleukid kings which could give the members of the house of Seleukos a prerogative for kingship and thus the Seleukid dynasty was not necessarily the most favourable within the Seleukid kingdom. It was neither the Seleukid defeat at Magnesia, nor the 'day of Eleusis' which defined the Seleukid kingdom in the second century. On the contrary, in accordance with Sherwin-White and Kuhrt's thesis of similarity between the third and the second centuries (in contrast to their result), the Seleukid empire of the third century was just as weak as in the later period. Of course the split in the Seleukid dynasty had an impact on the politics of the Seleukid kingdom, but it only accelerated a process that was rooted far deeper.

What does this mean? Is this just a revisionist approach to the work of Sherwin-White and Kuhrt and Capdetrey and does this lead us back to the Seleukid kingdom of Bevan, Will, Musti and Wolski?⁷¹ I would argue that it does not. Various elements of the Seleukid state which have been examined by scholarship of the

⁷¹ Bevan (1902); Will (1979); idem (1982); Musti (1984), 175-220; Wolski (1999).

twentieth century to describe the weakness of the empire – seceding dynasts, their coinages and the strength of local power – have convincingly been re-assessed as a part of Seleukid administration and do not illustrate the strength or the weakness of the kingdom. The weakness of the Seleukid kingdom lies in its central core of government as outlined in the previous section: its kingship. It is this type of kingship which was commemorated in the *Suda*, a kingship of Homeric type which focused on the achievements of the individual. The Seleukid kingdom did not develop an aristocracy which defined itself and the kingdom through its relationship with the king and which thus could have formed the structure of the empire. The Seleukid kings attempted to promote their family, but the individual potential of kings' friends did not allow the establishment of a hierarchical aristocracy which could have supported this dynastic kingdom. Indeed, one could argue that there was no kingship in the Seleukid empire; instead there were only kings.

This portrayal of the Seleukid kingdom, if accepted, also leads to further considerations. Since the early days of the Achaemenid history workshops under the auspices of P. Briant, A. Kuhrt and H. Sancisi Weerdenburg, Achaemenid studies have created an image of a striving, stable Achaemenid empire.⁷² Although this cannot be the place to write Achaemenid history, a few elements will elucidate my argument. The strength and duration of the Achaemenid empire seems to be defined by the relationship between the Great King and his aristocracy, the '*ethno-classe dominante*'. The Great King was a member of the clan of Achaemenes, the Persian royal clan (Hdt. 1. 125), and many, if not most, of the aristocracy were Persian.⁷³ The political interaction between the Great King and his Faithful, as well as the aristocratic structure of the elite, created a 'dynastic pact' which strengthened the

⁷² The *Achaemenid History* and the *Persika* series show the vibrancy of the field. For some of the major works: e.g. Briant (2002); idem (1982); see also now Briant (2009b), 141-70; Briant/Joannès (2006); Kuhrt (2007); eadem (1995), 647-701; Wieschöfer (2001). See also the following bibliography: Weber/Wieschöfer (1996).

⁷³ Briant (2002), 316-54; idem (1988), 137-73.

dynasty and thus also the empire. Despite Xenophon's *Cyropaideia* being a constructed narrative, it is nevertheless likely that Chrysantas' speech illustrates official policies or at the very least demonstrates the dynamics of the Persian court: he argues that 'Cyrus will never be able to employ us for his own advantage without it also being for our own, since our interests are the same and our enemies are the same.'⁷⁴ These interests were also economic. The estates of the fifth-century satrap Aršama, the '*bar beyta*', the 'prince of the house', were intertwined with the imperial landscape of the Achaemenid space (*TADAE* I A6.9). A series of letters during a revolt in Egypt illustrate the satrap's interest in the guarding and increasing of his properties in Egypt while he was at the king's court (*TADAE* I A6.10; see also A6.7). Like the Aršama dossier, the unpublished documents from Baktria, dated to the last decades of the Achaemenid empire, suggest the same high level of administration and constant contact between the local administrators, their superiors and the Persian court, and the clearest attestation of Achaemenid administration can presumably be drawn from the wealth of material from the Persepolis fortification archive.⁷⁵ If this is the current image of the Achaemenid empire, the difference between the Seleukid empire described in this thesis and its Achaemenid predecessor is striking.⁷⁶ The Achaemenid empire existed for c.220 years. None of the revolts threatened the social order of the empire and even if the ruler changed, as under Dareios I, the new king inscribed themselves into the heritage of Cyrus the Great.⁷⁷ The dynasty prevailed and so did the elite.

⁷⁴ Xen. *Cyr.* 8. 1. 5: [...] ὅτι οὐ μὴ δυνήσεται Κύρος εὐρεῖν ὃ τι αὐτῷ μὲν ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ χρήσεται, ἡμῖν δὲ οὐ, ἐπεὶ περ τὰ γὰρ αὐτὰ ἡμῖν συμφέρει καὶ οἱ αὐτοὶ εἰσιν ἡμῖν πολέμιοι; Briant (2002), 316-54, esp. 352-4.

⁷⁵ Baktrian letters: Shaked (2004). The letters will be published by Shaked in a forthcoming edition. Achaemenid control and exploitation: Briant (1982), 175-225. On the Persepolis archive: e.g. Briant/Henkelman/Stolper (2008); Henkelman (2008), esp. 65-179; On the archive at Daskyleion: Kaptan (2002).

⁷⁶ Cf. Sherwin-White (1987), 1-31, here 2-3.

⁷⁷ E.g. Briant (2002), 107-38.

C. Tuplin has recently noted profound differences between the Seleukid and Achaemenid state and the results of this thesis support this view.⁷⁸ A few remarks, however, will be added. The Seleukid kingdom borrowed elements from the previous territorial power in the region. In terms of infrastructure we see some continuity: Polybios mentions the continuing existence of the irrigation canals, the *qanāts* (Pol. 10. 28. 1-4), and perhaps the Seleukid kings had supported their upkeep. Moreover, the royal road also appears to have been maintained.⁷⁹ Furthermore, Seleukos I and Antiochos I inscribed themselves into the sacred landscape of Babylonia, as had the previous kings.⁸⁰ Administratively, local power holders were supported as semi-autonomous rulers. However, all these adoptions make sense and we should not forget the distinct differences between the Seleukid kingdom and its predecessor. Tuplin has not only deconstructed some of the supposed continuities between the Achaemenid state and the Seleukid empire, such as Aperghis' interpretation of the Achaemenid 'head tax', he also has convincingly argued that the Seleukid abandonment of the territories from Central Anatolia to the Caucasus, and most importantly Elam and the Persis, highlight the discrepancy between these two kingdoms. Moreover, specific practices of the Seleukid kings, such as the foundation of cities, the use of only Greek in official communication and the concept of joint kingship, further illustrate these differences. Tuplin also compares kingship in the Achaemenid and the Seleukid states and I would argue that it is in the context of kingship and royal rule that we can trace the major differences between these two empires.⁸¹ Although Achaïos the Elder had been a landowner near Laodikeia on the Lykos, he was not a power holder and does

⁷⁸ Tuplin (2009), 101-31; idem (forthcoming).

⁷⁹ Qanāt: Briant (2001), 15-40; Tuplin (2009), 109-36, here 111-12. Royal Road: *I. Estremo Oriente* 247-8 with bibliography (*SEG* 45. 1879-80); Callieri (1995), 65-73; Bernard (1995), 73-95, here 73-82; see also Joannès (2006), 101-35.

⁸⁰ Cf. Briant (1982), 48n.3; see also Briant (1990), 40-65. Sacred Landscape: Sherwin-White (1991), 71-86, for the text 75-6. Stress on continuity: Sherwin-White/Kuhrt (1987); van der Spek (2006), 261-79.

⁸¹ Tuplin (2009), 101-31; cf. Aperghis (2004), 51-8.

not seem to have had administrative functions beyond his estates. This was strikingly different from the position of Aršama in Egypt. Even if we disregard the political uncertainties after the assassination of Seleukos I, the period of Seleukid stability was very short indeed. The Seleukid king did not obtain the same position for himself and his family as the Persian Great King had. In terms of socio-political stability, the Seleukid dynasty was not comparable to the royal clan of Achaemenes and an aristocracy linked to the royal family at the centre was never established. Instead, the Seleukid kingdom inherited a very different idea of monarchy, based on individual success. This kingship was created under Alexander the Great and it manifested itself in the acclamation of the kings less than twenty years after his death in Babylon.⁸² In the Seleukid empire, individuals could become kings without needing to become the Seleukid king. With his martial conquest of the Persian Empire, the Macedonian conqueror destroyed this key component of Achaemenid success. Without the Achaemenid *ethno-classe dominante*, which was defined by its relationship with the king, and the introduction of individual success as a qualifying element of kingship, the possibility of individuals becoming king was too great. Alexander was the heir of an empire that had once been Persian, but it is doubtful that his rupture of the structural core of governance in the region made him ‘*le dernier des Achéménides*.’⁸³ The Seleukids attempted to curb these factors and the dynastic measures of Antiochos III are the most striking indicator; however, the dynasty was too weak. Even if the adaptation of local practices suggests continuity, this thesis has illustrated that the Seleukid kings were not the successors of the Achaemenid empire. The Seleukid kings were kings of the eastern parts of the Hellenistic world and for a long period of time they managed to maintain this central position of authority. However, other rulers could also be king and their authority could be accepted to the same degree as

⁸² See Lane Fox (2007), 267-311; Tuplin (2009), 101-31. Wiemer (2007), 281-309 focuses on the last year of Alexander in Babylon and comes to the same conclusions.

⁸³ Briant (1982), 291-330, here 330; Briant (2009a), 171-88; cf. Lane Fox (2007), 267-311.

the Seleukid ruler. Perhaps if we aim to identify the last Achaemenid in the Hellenistic period, we should turn to Armenia. The dynasty of Artaxias bore Persian names, wrote Aramaic and Artaxias styled himself in an Aramaic inscription as ‘the king who pulls fish’ near Lake Sevan: a fisher king.⁸⁴ Most importantly, however, in the first century BCE his descendants would create a strong empire and expel the Seleukid kings from Antiocheia on the Orontes. The conquest of the Armenian king – even if only short-lived – clearly illustrates that the Seleukid kings’ loss of their monopoly of power in their fragmented kingdom in the eastern Mediterranean. This was a process that had accelerated tremendously in the second century, but the usurpers of the third century illustrate that it had manifested itself as early as the middle of the third century BCE, only thirty-five years after the death of the first Seleukid king.

⁸⁴ Dupont-Sommer (1946), 53-66.

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² Although Victor Tcherikover published in German as Viktor Tscherikower, his name will be spelt as it appears in the English version.

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