

Hello. My name is Louis Polcin, and I will be presenting an expansion of my undergraduate history thesis entitled “Diplomacy and Security in the Ancient World: Hasmonean-Roman Relations.” This study was advised by Professor Robert Chenault at Willamette University in Salem, Oregon.

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Throughout the 2nd century BCE, there were four different rulers of the Hasmonean dynasty, a Jewish regime which controlled Judea, the area directly adjacent to the city of Jerusalem, and increasingly larger regions of Palestine, also known as the Southern Levant, who negotiated several treaties with the Roman republic. The first treaty was struck in the year 161 BCE, and the relations between these two states continued at least into the 120s BCE, if not further. These treaties are preserved in two sources: the Hasmonean dynastic history known as 1 Maccabees, as well as in *Antiquities*, a 20-volume summation of Jewish history written sometime in the 90s CE by the Roman-Jewish historian Josephus. These treaties were military alliances, in which each party agreed to defend the other should they be attacked, and to refrain from making war on one another’s allies. The agreements between the two states became larger in scope over time; John Hyrcanus, the last ruler to negotiate a treaty with Rome, established even more far-reaching terms, as will be discussed.

At first glance, these treaties look out of place, if not entirely ahistorical. Indeed, we have no evidence that the Romans or the Hasmoneans ever aided the other as they had agreed upon. The lack of Hasmonean aid to Rome is less surprising; during the mid 2nd century BCE, as we will see, Roman warfare was centered almost exclusively in the western Mediterranean,

Greece and Macedonia,¹ and the Hasmoneans simply lacked the resources, power and influence to aid Rome in any conflicts outside of the Near East. The fact that Rome never intervened to aid the Hasmoneans, however, presents a greater problem. Indeed, the Hasmoneans were consistently at war throughout the second century; and faced numerous internal and external rivals which posed serious challenges to the authority of the Hasmonean state, even in Judea itself. These military alliances as dictated by 1 Maccabees and Josephus, then, do not seem to fit the lack of action taken by the Romans, or indeed, to even match what the Hasmoneans were realistically capable of.²

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I will here attempt to place this relationship in a wider geopolitical context, which will help us recognize the importance of these treaties to both regimes. To understand the wider framework within which these negotiations took place, we must first examine the emergence of the Hellenistic kingdoms in the eastern Mediterranean.

In the late 4th century BCE, the Macedonian king Alexander III, otherwise known as Alexander the Great, conquered the Achaemenid Empire, which was based in Susa, located in modern southwest Iran, and which controlled territory between the western desert in Egypt up

¹ Examples include three engagements in Spain: The Second Celtiberian War (154-151 BCE), the Lusitanian War (155-139 BCE), and the Numantine War (143-133 BCE); the destruction of Carthage in the Third Punic War (149-146 BCE); and the First Servile War in Sicily (135-132 BCE). The only wars Rome fought in the east during the period in question are the Fourth Macedonian War (150-148 BCE), and the Achaean War (146 BCE), which still lay too far from Palestine for the Hasmoneans to be capable of intervention.

² The only scholar to raise the possibility of any military interactions between these two partners during the period in question is Tessa Rajak, who argues that Josephus's strange description of Antiochus VII's withdrawal from Judea, when the latter was at the brink of forcing Jerusalem to capitulate, demonstrates Roman intervention. This whole argument rests upon a dubious redating of the Fannius decree to the time of this conflict; see Rajak, Tessa. "Roman Intervention in a Seleucid Siege of Jerusalem?" in *The Jewish Dialogue with Greece and Rome: Studies in Cultural and Social Interaction*. Leiden: Brill, 2002. 65-81. Her argument is unconvincing, because the Seleucids frequently withdrew from wars to fight rival claimants to the throne; cf. Demetrius Akairos's withdrawal from Judea to fight a rival at Antioch in 89 BCE (BJ 1.95; Ant. 13.379), as noted by Marcus, Ralph, *Josephus With English Translation, Vol. VII*, The Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1933, 417.

to the Indus river, in modern day Pakistan. Upon Alexander's untimely death in 323 BCE, his generals divided the conquests amongst themselves. By the end of the 4th century, various wars between these competing generals led to emergence of four kingdoms which came to encompass the vast bulk of Alexander's conquests: the two which competed for control of Judea were the Ptolemies, here highlighted in dark blue and based in Egypt, and the Seleucids here in yellow, were who based in Antioch in modern-day Syria, and in this period held the entirety of Alexander's eastern conquests. Yet even as Alexander's conquests were divided amongst rivaling parties, none of the Hellenistic kingdoms never lost the ideology of reconquering, and thus reunifying, all of Alexander's conquests; as we will see, this was still true in the twilight of the Hellenistic period, when these states were in disarray. This map depicts the territories of these kingdoms in the year 301 BCE; as we can see here, Palestine was the geographic diver between the Ptolemies and Seleucids, and so was the subject of constant warfare throughout the 3rd century. While the Seleucids attempted multiple times to retake the region, Judea, as well as Palestine more broadly, was under Ptolemaic control. In this period, many Jewish communities were thoroughly Hellenized; many Jews migrated to Alexandria, a sprawling metropolis in Egypt, and some may have even joined the ranks of the Ptolemaic administration.³

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In 200 BCE Antiochus III, the ruler of the Seleucid empire who had already vastly expanding Seleucid holdings in Asia Minor (modern day Turkey) as well as Bactria (modern day Afghanistan and Pakistan), advanced south and captured Judea, ending nearly 100 years of

³ As suggested by the story of the Tobiads narrated in *Jos Ant.* 12, in which a man named Joseph builds a relationship with the Ptolemaic king in order to become the primary tax collector for the Ptolemaic holdings outside of Egypt; he subsequently uses his power to provide greater income to Judea.

Ptolemaic rule over Palestine. (Ant. 12.129-131). Unsurprisingly, Antiochus III followed the standard Hellenistic policies of religious toleration: as long as Judea maintained political loyalty, its internal political processes and cults would be respected.⁴ This changed however, after Antiochus III's son Antiochus' IV failed to invade Egypt. According to the Roman historian Polybius, Rome sent envoys to Eleusis in 168 BCE to meet the Seleucid king and confront him with a senatorial decree, which demanded his withdrawal from Egypt; this even is commonly known as the "Day of Eleusis."⁵ The Roman legionary then drew a circle in the sand around the king, and ordered him to state whether or not he would comply with the senate's ruling before exiting it (Polybius 29.27.1-5). Out of options and unable to confront Rome, Antiochus IV was forced to withdraw. It was on his return journey through Judea that the Seleucid king desecrated the temple in Jerusalem and enacted a series of blatantly anti-Jewish laws, such as banning the temple cult; moreover, he instituted pagan rituals within Jerusalem's borders, including his own ruler cult. Much ink has been spilled in speculation over Antiochus's motives behind these striking events. In my view, the most plausible explanation for this crackdown on local Jewish law is John's Ma's claim that the Hasmoneans, along with other Jewish groups which resisted the decrees, misinterpreted Antiochus's actions as religious persecution, when in fact the measure was a typical Hellenistic *synoikism*, or the refoundation of a city as a military colony; this was common response in the Hellenistic period to perceived unrest or rebellion. Yet in a Jewish context, the simple incorporation of the Temple into the Seleucid imperial cult was

⁴ See Antiochus's letter to Ptolemy, whom Marcus 1933 identified as "governor of Coele-Syria and Phoenicia under Antiochus the Great," (70-71), cf. Ant. 12.138-144. For Antiochus III's policies in western Asia Minor, see Ma, John. *Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. 110-121.

⁵ Polybius 15.25.13, 29.27; Livy 45.12.3-8; Diodorus Siculus 31.2. See also summaries by Gruen, Erich, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, 615, 652-659; Eckstein, Arthur, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War and the Rise of Rome*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 2006, 112.

unacceptable: it was this cultural misunderstanding that led to the Maccabean revolt.⁶

Mattathias, according to 1 Maccabees, murdered the Greek official who told him to sacrifice at a temple in Modi'in, which would violate Jewish law, and initiated a campaign of guerilla warfare against the Seleucids. Upon his death, his son Judas Maccabeus took over the rebel forces and won a series of military victories, likely because of his familiarity with the terrain. In the aftermath of Maccabeus's recapturing of Jerusalem and performing a "chanukah," or rededication, ritually reunifying the temple and advertising Maccabeus's claim to authority, the Hasmonean dynasty emerged as an independent (or at least semiautonomous) regime in Judea.

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While the Hasmoneans were still in their earliest stages of establishing themselves as an independent state in 161, when the first treaty between the two parties was negotiated, by this period the Roman Republic had grown to become the dominant military and political force of the Western Mediterranean. Indeed, just over one hundred years had passed since Rome's first military engagement outside the Italian peninsula: the first Punic War, from 264-241 BCE, in which Rome defeated the North African naval power Carthage and captured the islands of Sicily, Sardinian and Corsica. The republic had also defeated Carthage again in the Second Punic War, from 218-201, in which Rome seized the eastern seaboard of the Iberian Peninsula. Rome had also captured Illyria and Macedonia, and had set up numerous proxy regimes in Greek city-states, which were allowed to control their internal affairs but were answerable to the senate in terms of their foreign policy. Rome had even defeated the Seleucids in the early second century, and had fought battles as far east as Asia minor, or modern-day Turkey. Yet in

⁶ Ma, John. "Re-Examining Hanukkah: John Ma deconstructs the Maccabean History," <https://marginalia.lareviewofbooks.org/re-examining-hanukkah/>.

the eastern Mediterranean more broadly, the Republic had still not meaningfully intervened to manipulate the existing Hellenistic geopolitical structure. To be sure, Rome had a strong relationship with the Ptolemies, but the latter kingdom was still not directly under Rome's thumb as they would become later. Indeed, as the renowned scholar Erich Gruen notes in his 1984 book *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome*, Rome's interest in the east in the second century was "fragmentary, intermittent, and rarely intense."⁷ The republic had certainly not intervened militarily anywhere near Judea, much less did it control any territory near the Hasmonean state's holdings.

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In order to understand the interactions between the Romans and the Hasmoneans, I will incorporate the methodological framework of Arthur Eckstein, who argues in his 2006 analysis of Roman expansion that the Hellenistic Mediterranean functioned as an interstate anarchy, in which the only realistic measure of safety a state could rely on was victory in war. Within this highly competitive and hostile environment, each state needed to be what Eckstein calls a "self-help regime," relying solely on its own resources for its economic and political stability as well as its physical safety.⁸ States in this context cannot plan far ahead, and so tend to use preemptive military action to drive back other expansionist regimes;⁹ after all, even the most powerful regimes in the Hellenistic Mediterranean were almost brought down within a few years by successive military defeats, as can be seen in a slave revolt in the city of Carthage, which nearly brought the north African naval power to its knees, as well as the near defeat of

⁷ Gruen 1984, 723.

⁸ Eckstein 2006, 14-15, 94-99.

⁹ Eckstein 2006, 13-14, 17-19.

Rome at the hands of Hannibal.¹⁰ This climate could lead states to hold longstanding and even unrealistic fears of expansionist rivals, on the grounds that being outmatched militarily could easily lead to a regime's collapse.

Eckstein's analysis is invaluable as a framework for understanding Hasmonean-Roman relations. Nonetheless, there are serious issues with this model that need to be addressed: Eckstein largely ignores the use of diplomacy as a mechanism of pressuring rivals, and he does not adequately address the ways in which regimes may have used such diplomatic measures to prevent costly and draining wars. While it must be admitted that military force and violence nearly always formed the background to diplomatic negotiations in the Hellenistic world, the Hellenistic historian John Ma has demonstrated that diplomacy nevertheless had an extremely important function. In his case study of the relations between the city-states of western Asia Minor and Antiochus III during the late third and early second centuries BCE, Ma shows that, while the Hellenistic Mediterranean may not have had international "law," there were recognized customs of diplomacy that did have tangible power. When city-states honored Antiochus with public decrees, Antiochus would be expected to grant some concession to the city, such as grain provisions, exemptions from taxes, or some other benefit. The granting of such a concession, in turn, would compel the city to publicly honor Antiochus and the Seleucid regime, thus initiating a cycle of diplomatic concessions.¹¹ While there was an obvious imbalance of power in these interactions, both parties were able to successfully use these diplomatic measures to compel the other to bestow benefits upon them.¹² This does not mean

¹⁰ Eckstein 2006, 259.

¹¹ Ma 1999. 180-181; 196-201. By extension, Antiochus would become directly involved in the affairs of the state, helping to strengthen his power over the polis system (181-182). Antiochus referenced the past history of the city as another way to implicitly demand their loyalty (186-187).

¹² Ma 1999, 186, 189-192, 211-226.

that we must discard Eckstein's model of an interstate anarchy; rather, we must remember that, even in such an anarchy, diplomatic processes could be used to intimidate both allies and rivals and create an environment of greater security without needing to resort to warfare.

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I here argue that within this context, the treaties between the Hasmoneans and the Romans are entirely reasonable, and that both parties did indeed gain specific and significant benefits from this relationship. For the Romans, the Hasmonean dynasty, although small, sat at a critical crossroads over which the senate wanted to exert control in order to stabilize the eastern Mediterranean. Indeed, Palestine geographically represents a frontier zone between Egypt and Syria, which in this period were controlled by the Ptolemies and Seleucids, respectively. While the balance of power between these two regimes lay outside of direct Roman control,¹³ Rome saw any large and expansionist state in the Mediterranean region as dangerous, and felt obligated to take preemptive action to prevent such a state from gaining enough power to threaten Roman interests.¹⁴ We must also consider the long-standing fear of *Seleucid* expansion in particular by the Romans, stemming from the Seleucid incursion into Greece and the resulting Roman-Seleucid war at the beginning of the 2nd century; such memories surely played into recurring senatorial concerns regarding the threat that the Seleucids could pose to Roman safety. Moreover, Palestine had been exploited by the Seleucids for expansionist purposes before; both Antiochus III and IV invaded Egypt by marching through Palestine. As a small dynasty located at a strategically crucial position, the Hasmoneans would

¹³ Eckstein 2006, 1, 4, 14-22, 82-88, 94-97.

¹⁴ Eckstein 2006, 5-6.

have been seen by Rome as an extraordinarily valuable ally, which could prevent the need for Rome to intervene militarily in the Near East.

The Hasmoneans, a newly-formed regime facing constant internal attacks from rival claimants to the throne, would have sought to find a state that was powerful enough to back the dynasty, yet far enough away that the Hasmoneans would not risk becoming subsumed into the position of a client state; Eckstein demonstrates that this is especially critical for small states to consider within the context of an interstate anarchy, in which alliances are helpful but rarely secure or stable.¹⁵ In the mid-second century, Rome fit the bill for such an ally. Because of both Rome's distance from Judea and its internal stability,¹⁶ the Hasmoneans could feel confident that a Roman alliance would allow them to intimidate and outmaneuver their internal rivals, giving them greater legitimacy against their external enemies, such as the Seleucids. Such use of these treaties for intimidation of rivals, I suggest, presents a much greater benefit for the Hasmoneans than the hope of actual Roman military intention, which could have severely threatened Hasmonean aspirations for geopolitical independence. Especially in later treaties, once the Hasmonean regime had familiarized itself with senatorial objectives, policies and fears, I argue that the Hasmoneans demonstrate a remarkable ability to manipulate their presentation of the geopolitical situation in the eastern Mediterranean for their own benefit, overdramatizing the dangers that the Seleucid state could pose to Rome, which allowed the regime to gain clear concessions, albeit rhetorical ones, from the senate.

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¹⁵ Eckstein 2006, 113.

¹⁶ While idealized, Polybius's description of the Roman constitution (6.11-18) helps explain the political stability of Rome; Polybius could not find such an effective system of government in Greece or Carthage (6.43-52).

The importance of these relations for both states can perhaps best be seen in a treaty conducted by John Hyrcanus, the last of the four kings who negotiated with Rome. This treaty, known as the Fannius decree after the name of the Roman official who convened the senate to negotiate with the Hasmonean envoys, not only demonstrates the broad extent of the agreements made between these two parties, but when placed within the context of Hyrcanus' geopolitical priorities, as I will try to do here, it can also reveal the importance of this Roman alliance to the Hasmonean authorities.

Early in John Hyrcanus' reign, the Seleucid king Antiochus VII, known as Antiochus Sidetes, invaded Judea and besieged the city of Jerusalem in 134 BCE; Josephus claims that Sidetes was still upset over his defeat at the hands of Simon, Hyrcanus' predecessor. The siege became so severe that, in order to save resources, Hyrcanus expelled the women, children, and men of non-military age from the city, leaving them with nowhere to go. Yet it was at this moment, when Hyrcanus was on the brink of being forced to capitulate, that Sidetes suddenly withdrew. The noted Josephan scholar Tessa Rajak seeks to explain away this particularly bizarre episode by changing the date of Hyrcanus's relations with Rome to the time of this siege, arguing that Roman intervention -- of which there is no mention in the text -- forced Antiochus to withdraw. Such a dating requires Rajak to abandon the accepted chronology for the treaty, which falls in the 120's, and instead redate the text into the late 130's so that it may coincide with this campaign.¹⁷ Moreover, there is no precedent for the Hasmonean regime reaching out to Rome during a war, and indeed, such an embassy would not make sense.¹⁸ The Hasmoneans

¹⁷ For an overview of the dating of this treaty, see Seeman, Chris, *Rome and Judea in Transition: Hasmonean Relations with the Roman Republic and the Evolution of the High Priesthood*, New York: Peter Lang, 2013, 186-187.

¹⁸ Rather than following Seeman's fear that Hasmonean-Roman interactions would anger the Seleucids (187), I take a more pragmatic and internal approach: the Hasmonean state was too preoccupied with local events to contact Rome; moreover, doing so would not serve Hasmonean interests.

sent to Rome to gain the senate's backing because Rome was outside the geopolitical context of the eastern Mediterranean but still invested in bolstering the power of the Hasmonean state for its own interests. For the Hasmoneans to send to Rome during wartime would be to invite intervention – which the Hasmonean authorities certainly would not have wanted, as they knew it very well might have meant their end as an independent power.

A more reasonable solution is to engage the possibility that Antiochus Sidetes withdrew from Jerusalem because he faced threats to his authority at home. Usurpers may have sought to remove Antiochus VII from power, forcing him to return to Antioch to shore up his authority; the same would happen a few decades later, when the Seleucid king Demetrius Akairos defeated the Hasmoneans but then suddenly withdrew because a pretender had taken the throne.¹⁹

Antiochus VII died soon after this episode in 129 BCE, on campaign against the Parthians, a rapidly expanding regime based in modern-day Iran and a long-standing rival to the Seleucids;²⁰ this left Hyrcanus unhampered by any Seleucid threats, and provided him with an opportunity to enact expansionist policies, as can be seen here by his conquests highlighted in light green and nearly doubling the size of Hasmonean territory. He conquered a number of cities in the region of Samaria,²¹ even destroying the Samaritan temple in Mount Gerizim and then turned southeast to conquer Idumea (inhabited by the descendants of the biblical Edomites), where he issued a threat to the local populace to convert to Judaism or leave.²² This is noteworthy not only because of how Hyrcanus strategically presented himself to the Romans

¹⁹ Marcus 1933, 417.

²⁰ Either he was killed in battle (Ant. 13.253) or he committed suicide (Appian, *The Syrian Wars* 11.68)

²¹ BJ 1.62-63, Ant. 13.254-256

²² Ant. 13.257

as in a far weaker position than he actually was, as we will see, but also because it reveals certain key shared priorities between the Hasmoneans and the Romans. Like the Romans, the Hasmoneans themselves were also an expansionist state, benefitting from the internal rivalries that consumed Seleucid forces and enabled them to embark on military conquests. Indeed, as the historian of ancient Jewish history Seth Schwartz notes in his 2001 book *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, the ability of the Hasmoneans to bring conquered peoples into their political fold, thus expanding their geographic influence and their ability to establish imperial control, closely matches the methods of expansion employed by the Roman state in this same period. Yet even as they grew in size, power and military capability, both states continued to fear the possibility of being challenged or even subsumed by rivals.

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It is after these widely successful military campaigns that John Hyrcanus conducted his treaty with Rome, most likely in the year 127 BCE.²³ The text of the treaty itself is quite fascinating because of the remarkably specific concessions from the senate that Hyrcanus' men were able to elicit. The treaty stipulates that the Seleucids were required to return any cities that Antiochus VII had captured during his siege of Jerusalem "contrary to the decree of the senate," back to Hasmonean control; this language of a "decree" is likely referring to a treaty made between Rome and Antiochus's predecessor Demetrius I.²⁴ The Seleucids were also

²³ Schwartz, Seth, "John Hyrcanus I's Destruction of the Gerizim Temple and Judean-Samaritan Relations," in *Jewish History*, Vol. 7, No. 1, 1993, 11 argues that Hyrcanus's destruction of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim occurred in 128 BCE, and Cohen 1999, 110 dates the conquest of Judaea to the same year. If we accept Josephus's claim that Hyrcanus sent to Rome after his victories in Samaria and Idumea were complete, the treaty would have taken place no earlier than 127. As I argue here, Hyrcanus would likely have tried to couple his military conquests with Roman backing, and so would have had no motivation to delay negotiations with Rome; 127 is thus the most plausible year for the treaty. See Ant. 13.259-266.

²⁴ For an overview of Demetrius' tumultuous relations with Rome see Seeman, Chris. *Rome and Judea in Transition*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002. 36-50.

expressly prohibited from marching into Judea under arms; any laws which Antiochus VII had made again that were “contrary to the decree of the senate,” were annulled; and lastly the senate declared that Roman envoys would travel to Palestine to appraise the value of the land destroyed by Antiochus during the war (13.261-263). Rome here is represented as blatantly interfering in Judean internal politics and creating legal decrees that were expected to be followed by rulers at Antioch.

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While these concessions may seem striking, we must recognize that there is no evidence that Rome entered Judea during this period, either to enforce any of these provisions or to appraise the destroyed territories as they had promised. But instead of seeing this as a failure for the Hasmonean negotiators, I suggest that this decree represents the product of a masterful job of Hasmonean diplomacy and sleight-of-hand to serve their own interests. While we only have the decrees that the senate passed, as Josephus does not report the arguments that the Hasmonean envoys made to the Senate, these can be reconstructed based on the concessions that the envoys secured. It seems that the Hasmonean representatives used Antiochus Sidetes’ invasion and siege of Jerusalem to paint an extremely dark picture. We know that Hyrcanus was forced to send away the non-military population of Jerusalem for lack of supplies,²⁵ which suggests that Antiochus VII was close to forcing the Hasmonean regime to capitulate. Should Jerusalem have been lost, so the Hasmoneans may have warned, the Seleucids would have easily invaded Egypt, creating another Eleusis-like scenario which would necessitate Roman intervention. Rome’s concrete concessions also suggest that the Hasmoneans stressed a sense

²⁵ Ant. 13.240.

of urgency; the longer the Romans waited, the stronger the Seleucids would become, and the more detrimental any Seleucid military actions would be to Roman interests. This is clearly not an accurate reflection of the geopolitical situation at hand. Hyrcanus, coming to Rome after his successful military campaigns which nearly doubled the size of Hasmonean territory, was not in the same vulnerable position he had been earlier in his reign. Moreover, by the 120s the Seleucids controlled little more than Syria and were constantly ridden by civil wars, which hamstrung any king from embarking on military expeditions. [Map, comparison to Seleucid at their greatest extent] But there were brief moments where the Seleucids could still demonstrate their power, such as in their siege of Jerusalem, which suggests that the Seleucids still clearly possessed the ideology of reconquering Alexander's empire, even if they lacked the means to enact such a vision. This would have provided the Hasmoneans with the fodder they needed to tap into Roman fears of expansionist regimes that could threaten their growing hegemony, and elicit these concessions. These decrees also closely match the ultimatums issued by Rome to their Hellenistic rivals in earlier periods;²⁶ indeed, it seems that the Hasmoneans had caused the Roman senate to begin the diplomatic negotiations which were usually meant to prevent warfare (or to justify Roman military action if it became necessary). But after Antiochus VII's withdrawal from Jerusalem, and his death fighting against the Parthians, the Seleucids were not in a position to resist these Roman demands, as they were too consumed with internal factionalism.²⁷ Any military action was therefore avoided, just as the

²⁶ For Philip V: Eckstein 2006, 280; for Antiochus III: 303-304.

²⁷ Indeed, right after his description of the Fannius decree, Josephus tells us about two consecutive coups in Antioch, the latter of which led to a prolonged civil war (Ant. 13.267-272).

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Hasmonean envoys seem to have intended. From this scare-tactic, the Hasmoneans were able to boast seemingly clear and concrete relations with the Roman senate, which they could use to intimidate internal and external rivals.

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In sum, these interactions must be understood as having occurred in an interstate anarchy, in which states could not adequately trust one another or use any international laws to defend themselves. To survive, states needed to be self-sufficient, relying on their brute strength to appear as strong as possible and deter any potential rivals. Yet I have also suggested here that states do not simply desire warfare for its own sake— this is costly, drains resources, and presents significant risk (even for the largely dominant Roman state). Instead, it was often

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far more sensible to use diplomatic measures to intimidate potential rivals, and to reserve warfare as a last resort. We have seen that both the Romans and Hasmoneans conformed to this model of international relations: both states faced expansionist, militaristic rivals, and needed to be preemptively aggressive to survive. This did sometimes take the form of violence, as in Roman-Seleucid wars at the beginning of the second century, or from the Hasmonean perspective, when Hyrcanus used military force to conquer Samaria and Idumea, and incorporate these peoples into his regime. But the relations between the Hasmoneans and the Romans also serve to demonstrate that both parties preferred diplomacy to warfare. The Romans hoped that the Hasmoneans would prevent any Seleucid aggression that would necessitate Roman intervention; the Hasmoneans hoped that Roman backing would ward off any rivals and deter Seleucid attacks before the state needed to engage them militarily. In order to gain the concessions needed for these ends, the Hasmonean negotiators worked to manipulate their presentation of the geopolitical situation in the eastern Mediterranean, playing on Roman fears for their own interest. This new context allows us to explain why there is such explicitly militaristic language in these treaties, yet no evidence of actual military intervention. For the Hasmoneans and the Romans, this outcome was a success: the treaties served their purpose. [SLIDE] Thank you very much.