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Historical and Chronological Observations on Josephus's Account of Seleucid History in *Antiquities* 13.365-371: Its Importance for Understanding the Historical Development of the Hasmonean State

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Abstract: This article explores Josephus's account of Seleucid history in *Antiquities* 13.365-371. In this passage, Josephus focuses on the Seleucid monarchs Seleucus VI, Demetrius III, and Antiochus X Eusebes and their fight for control of Syria. The difficulty in understanding this section is that it interrupts Josephus's narrative of the reign of Alexander Jannaeus and does not fully explain events in Syria that led to the endless civil wars there. Through the use of historical and numismatic data unavailable to Josephus, this study examines the background of the Seleucid rulers to explain why their struggle was important for understanding Hasmonean history. Josephus begins this section on Seleucid history with Seleucus VI because his death created the political instability that led to a prolonged civil war between the remaining sons of Grypus (Antiochus XI Philadelphus, Philip I Epiphanes, Demetrius III, and Antiochus XII Dionysus) and the son of Antiochus IX Cyzicenus (Antiochus X Eusebes). For Josephus, this conflict was important since the fraternal civil war between these rulers led to the dissolution of the Seleucid Empire and its takeover by the Romans: a fate shared by the Hasmonean state. By placing this account of Seleucid history in his narrative of Jannaeus's reign, Josephus uses events in Syria to foreshadow the fraternal strife in the Hasmonean state that likewise made it vulnerable to the Roman legions of Pompey.

In his account of the reign of the Hasmonean monarch Alexander Jannaeus (104-76 B.C.E.), Josephus inserts a nearly impenetrable passage in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 that contains a brief account of the fratricidal wars of the Seleucid kings for control of Syria.[1] This section of his book focuses on three Seleucid monarchs: Seleucus VI, Demetrius III, and Antiochus X Eusebes. The first two were sons of Antiochus VIII Grypus while the third was the son of Antiochus IX Cyzicenus. Because Demetrius III invaded the kingdom of Jannaeus, he clearly deserves to be included in any account of the Seleucid civil wars since he occupied a prominent place in Josephus's account of this Hasmonean mon-

[1] Papyrological evidence from Egypt shows that the first year of the reign of Jannaeus should be moved back from the traditional date of 103 B.C.E. to 104 B.C.E. For this evidence, see Cohen 1989, 119. For more detailed discussions of all the rulers examined in this article, see Atkinson 2016a. See also Dąbrowa 2010a; 2010b, 84-93; Regev 2013.

arch. However, the inclusion of Seleucus VI is less clear to the reader since he played no major role in Hasmonean history. But there is a reason Josephus groups these three rulers together in *Antiquities* 13.365-371, which interrupts his narrative of Jannaeus's reign.[2] Josephus begins this section on Seleucid history with Seleucus VI because his death created the political instability that led to a prolonged civil war between the remaining sons of Grypus (Antiochus XI Philadelphus, Philip I Epiphanes, Demetrius III, and Antiochus XII Dionysus) and the son of Antiochus IX Cyzicenus (Antiochus X Eusebes). This conflict led to the dissolution of the Seleucid Empire and its takeover by the Romans: a fate shared by the Hasmonean state.[3]

Josephus's account of the Seleucid civil wars in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 is difficult to understand and somewhat misleading in its portrayal of the political situation in Syria. He did the best he could with biased and incomplete data that apparently did not provide the complete names of all the Seleucid monarchs or full information about their reigns. On occasion, Josephus added titles in his books for the benefit of his readers to help them distinguish rulers with the same names from one another. This is especially true regarding the many kings named Antiochus. His identifications are sometimes incorrect, which complicates the work of the historian.[4] Nevertheless, Josephus was an excellent historian to realize the importance of Seleucid history as a backdrop for understanding what took place in the Hasmonean state. This study uses materials unavailable to Josephus, especially numismatic evidence, to show the importance that the Seleucid civil wars documented in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 played in the expansion of the Hasmonean state during the reign of Jannaeus. This section of the *Antiquities* is also significant since the civil war between the children of Grypus and Cyzicenus weakened the Seleucid Empire to such an extent that it became easy for the Roman general Pompey to plunder and conquer it.[5]

1. Seleucus VI Epiphanes Nicator

The first portion of Josephus's account (*AJ* 13.365-369) of the Seleucid civil wars briefly recounts selected events that occurred during the reign of Seleucus VI Epiphanes Nicator. Little is known about his relatively short time in power (94 B.C.E.). He was the son of Antiochus VIII Grypus and Cleopatra VI Tryphaenia. Seleucus VI was also the brother of Demetrius III, Antiochus XI Epiphanes Philadelphus, Philip I Philadel-

[2] The passage occurs following Josephus's account of Jannaeus's successful siege of Gaza (*AJ* 13.356-364) and before his narrative of Jewish revolts against his rule (*AJ* 13.372-376).

[3] For sources, and the complicated history of this infighting, see Bevan 1902, 253-263; Bellinger 1949, 73-86; Schürer 1973, 1, 134-135; Grainger 1997, 32, 34, 44, 52; Ehling 2008, 231-246.

[4] Josephus, for example, in the *BJ* 1.65 identifies Antiochus VIII Grypus as "Antiochus, surnamed Aspendius." Although Aspendius was his unofficial surname, Josephus is clearly referring to Antiochus IX Cyzicenus. He corrects the error in *AJ* 13.276.

[5] For the end of the Seleucid Empire, see Bellinger 1949, 51-102; Ehling 2008, 231-277. In *AJ* 13.327, Josephus writes that Grypus and Cyzicenus had reached a stalemate in their civil war. He describes them as two athletes whose strength is exhausted but who are too ashamed to yield, and prefer to continue their struggle between alternating bouts of inactivity and rest. The children of these monarchs continued this endless war for sole control of Syria.

phus, and Antiochus XII Dionysus.[6] Josephus begins his account of the fratricidal Seleucid civil wars with the 97/96 B.C.E. murder of Grypus by his minister Heracleon that brought Seleucus VI to power (*AJ* 13.365).[7] At that time, Grypus had waged a long war against his half-brother and cousin, Antiochus IX Cyzicenus, over such strategic cities as Antioch and Ptolemais. When Seleucus VI succeeded his father, he continued this war and fought Cyzicenus in Cilicia. In 96/95 B.C.E. Seleucus VI seized the city of Antioch and captured and executed his uncle, Cyzicenus.[8] Seleucus VI ruled there from 96/95-94/93 B.C.E. Josephus states that his cousin, Antiochus X Eusebes (Philopator), drove him from the city. Seleucus VI fled to Cilicia, where he was killed in Mopsuestia during a riot when he tried to extort money from its population. He appears to have perished in the royal palace when it was set on fire in approximately 94/93 B.C.E.[9]

Elsewhere in his books (*BJ* 1.64-65; *AJ* 13.275-279), Josephus describes in detail an earlier confrontation between Cyzicenus and the sons of the Hasmonean ruler John Hyrcanus, Judah Aristobulus and Antigonus, at Samaria. Cyzicenus came there after its residents pleaded with him to defeat the Hasmonean army besieging it. Aristobulus and Antigonus expelled Cyzicenus from the region and captured Samaria. Cyzicenus soon afterwards returned with Ptolemy IX Soter; Hyrcanus's sons defeated them and proceeded to capture and destroy Samaria.

Josephus believed it was important to begin his account of the Seleucid civil wars with the death of Grypus since this event brought great instability to the region. He correctly recognized that the murder of Grypus further acerbated the hostility between Seleucus VI and Cyzicenus for sole control of Syria. Their sons would continue this struggle, which would eventually destroy the Seleucid Empire. This fighting would quickly engulf Judea and nearly devastate the Hasmonean state during the reign of Jannaeus. By not integrating his account of the Seleucid fratricidal wars in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 into his narrative of the Hasmoneans, Josephus portrays the Seleucid rulers on a path to self-destruction. This section foreshadows the eventual fate of the Hasmonean state, which, like the Seleucid Empire, will eventually succumb to the Roman Republic because of its civil wars. Josephus believed this decline in Syria began with the death of Seleucus VI

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[6] See further Grainger 1997: 65-66; Ehling 2008, 231-232.

[7] Eusebius, *Chronicle* (in Schöene 1999, 1259) places his murder twenty-six years after the 167th Olympiad (= 112 B.C.E.). Josephus (*AJ* 13.365) gives him a reign of twenty-nine years. He is likely counting from 126/125 B.C.E., which was the first full year of his co-rule with his mother Cleopatra Thea. See further Hoover 2007, 285.

[8] Hoover (2007, 285) proposes this date because it leaves 95/94 and 94/93 B.C.E. for the conflict between Seleucus VI and Antiochus X. For the death of Cyzicenus, see Appian, *Syriaca* 69; Plutarch, *Moralia* 486E. For his reign, see Bevan 1902, 2, 253-259; Grainger 1997, 32-33; Ehling 2008, 233-235.

[9] There are conflicting accounts as to how he died. Appian (*Syriaca.* 69) claims that he perished when the gymnasium was set on fire. Eusebius (*Chronicle* in Schöene 1999, 260-261) states that he was informed of the plot to burn him alive and committed suicide. However, according to Porphyry's *Chronicle* (in Schöene 1999, 1: 260-261), he committed suicide to avoid capture. For these accounts, see Bellinger 1949, 74; Grainger 1997, 65-66. A lead weight from Antioch with an inscription of Seleucus Nicator VI and the date S.E. 218 (= 95/94 B.C.E.) shows that he was alive and in control of the city for at least a portion of that year. It is possible that he died early the following year, see Weiß – Ehling 2006, 369-378. Jerome (*Chronicle*, in Schöene 1999, 133) places his death in the 171st Olympiad (= 94/93 B.C.E.), cf. Hoover 2007, 288. The Seleucid Era (S.E.) is based on the numbering of the satrapal years of Seleucus I. He counted his reign from the beginning of the first calendar year after his conquest of Babylon in April, 311 B.C.E.: Bickerman 1944, 73-76.

during the reign of Jannaeus when the Seleucid civil wars brought turmoil to the Hasmonean state and guaranteed the eventual termination of both kingdoms.

2. Demetrius III Philopator Soter "Eukairos"

Demetrius III Philopator Soter "Eukairos" (97/96-88/87 B.C.E.), a son of Grypus, was the first Seleucid ruler to pose a threat to Jannaeus after the War of Scepters.[10] Coins minted in Damascus show that his reign there began in S.E. 216 (= 97/96 B.C.E.) and lasted until SE 225 (= 88/87 B.C.E.), with the exception of a short interruption in S.E. 220 (= 93/92 B.C.E.).[11] The first date conflicts with the claim of Josephus (*AJ* 13.370) that Ptolemy IX Soter "Lathyros" installed him there upon the death of Antiochus XI Epiphanes (ca. 93 B.C.E.). In this instance, the numismatic evidence is to be preferred over any literary accounts for reconstructing the reign of Demetrius III. This is because the coins Demetrius III minted in Damascus are sequentially dated, bear his name, and record the years he ruled this city. They show that the chronology of Josephus, or a source he used, is mistaken for this period.[12]

At this time, several Seleucid rulers fought one another over the other strategic city they all desired, namely Antioch. Eusebes, who took it from Seleucus VI, managed to control it for the year 94/93 B.C.E.[13] An occupation of Antioch by Antiochus XI not mentioned in any literary source is known through his coins that he minted there between 94 B.C.E. and the autumn of 93 B.C.E. The numismatic evidence shows that Eusebes retook Antioch in 93/92 B.C.E. and held it until 89/88 B.C.E. when he died fighting the Parthians to help the Arab queen Ladoice.[14]

The political situation of the Seleucid Empire is unclear for most of this period due to the absence of literary sources. Because of the paucity of data, Josephus failed to realize the importance of Antioch and Damascus at this time, and that several Seleucid rulers occupied both cities. Demetrius III continued to rule Damascus for much of this period. He issued coins in his name there from 97/96-88/87 B.C.E., with a one-year interruption in 93/92 B.C.E. when he briefly lost control of the city.[15] His brother, Philip I, held a portion of northern Syria at Beroea and Cilicia.[16] Eusebes's wife, Cleopatra Selene, acting in the name of their son, Antiochus XIII Asiaticus, emerged as a third claimant to the throne

[10] *AJ* 13.320-357; *BJ* 1.86. This conflict, which lasted between 103-101 B.C.E., was a war between Cleopatra III and her son Ptolemy IX (Lathyrus) Soter II for the Ptolemaic throne that largely took place in Hasmonean territory at the beginning of the reign of Alexander Jannaeu: Van'T Dack *et al.* 1989. For the reign of Demetrius III, see Grainger 1997, 44. For the conflict between Jannaeus and Demetrius III, see Dąbrowa 2010a, 175-181; Atkinson 2016b, 45-57.

[11] Wright 2010, 254-255.

[12] For this evidence, see Hoover – Houghton – Vesley 2008, 280-301.

[13] According to Porphyry (in Schöene 1999, 261) they were twins and the sons of Cleopatra Tryphaena and Antiochus VIII Grypus, cf. Ehling 2008, 237-240.

[14] *AJ* 13.371.

[15] Hoover – Houghton – Vesley 2008, 280-301. See also, Houghton – Lorber – Hoover 2008, 450-458.

[16] *AJ* 13.384. The toponym Beroea is similar to the Macedonian town of that name and may indicate colonists from northern Greece founded the town: Cohen 2006, 153-154.

of the Seleucia Empire.[17] All these rulers wanted to control the strategic city of Antioch after the death of Eusebes in order to consolidate their hold over Syria.

It has been assumed that Demetrius III ruled Antioch upon the death of Eusebes in late 92 B.C.E., and that he held it until his capture by the Parthians in 88/87 B.C.E.[18] The numismatic evidence, however, demonstrates that Eusebes ruled Antioch from 93/92 B.C.E. until 89/88 B.C.E. Demetrius III captured the city the following year. He minted only one coin in Antioch with the date S.E. 225 (= 88/87 B.C.E.). This date also provides us with the year of his capture by the Parthians. The first coin of Antiochus XII was minted in Damascus the following year, S.E. 226 (= 87/86 B.C.E.). This shows that Antiochus XII took advantage of the Parthian imprisonment of Demetrius III to take control of the city. He occupied Damascus until 84/83 B.C.E.[19] This evidence is important for determining when and why Demetrius III invaded the Hasmonean state. Its significance has until now been overlooked because the accepted chronology for this period is in error.

The number of dies used to produce coins at Antioch does not support the traditional dating of the reign of Demetrius III there from approximately 92-88/87 B.C.E.[20] Neither Josephus nor any extant account claims that Demetrius III occupied Antioch in 92 B.C.E. Rather, the earliest sources place him in the south in Damascus. It appears that only 1-3 dies were used for his coins during his short occupation of Antioch. This number is quite low since he would have incurred considerable military expenditures in his war against Jannaeus, and his conflict with Philip I.[21] By comparison, his smaller mint at his main base at Damascus averaged 2-5 dies per year.[22] Damascus, moreover, was his capital since 97/96 B.C.E. and was much closer to Judea than Antioch.[23] His reign at Damascus was quite lengthy, and extends from 97/96-88/87 B.C.E. The most recent assessment of the coin evidence from Antioch shows that Demetrius III reigned there for the single year of 88/87 B.C.E. Coins show that Philip I ruled the city immediately after the brief reign of Demetrius III, from 88/87 – ca. 75 B.C.E. There is no evidence that Philip I ruled it prior to the short tenure of Demetrius III there.[24] This numismatic evidence supplements Josephus's account by showing that Demetrius III was involved in considerable fighting

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[17] For Antiochus XIII Asiaticus, see Bevan 1902, 263-267; Grainger 1997: 34-35; Ehling 2008, 256-277.

[18] Bellinger 1949, 75-76; Schürer 1973, 135; Newell 1978, 117.

[19] Josephus narrates the occupation of Damascus by Antiochus XII in *AJ* 13.387-391 and *BJ* 1.99-102.

[20] This date is found in the widely used revised edition of Schürer (1973, 135), which still relies on the outdated numismatic study and reconstruction of Seleucid history in Newell 1978, 117-118. The numismatic evidence cited here and elsewhere in the present study uses research based on mathematical formulae that estimates the total number of obverse dies used to produce coins in a particular city for a given period. Because they last longer than reverse dies before they need to be replaced, they allow us to calculate a more reliable estimate of mint production for individual coins. Because recoining (the reuse and alteration of earlier coins) may affect the calculations, these numbers should be considered estimates. It is also possible that dies broke shortly after their manufacture due to poor workmanship or accidents. See Esty 1986, 185-215; 2006, 363.

[21] *BJ* 13.377-378, 384-385. For the numismatic evidence, see Hoover 2007, 294-295.

[22] Hoover – Houghton – Vesely 2008, 305-336.

[23] Bellinger 1949, 76. His successor at Damascus, his younger brother Antiochus XII Dionysus, likewise became involved in Judean affairs. See *AJ* 13.390. The placement of these two rulers at Damascus is important for understanding why each invaded the kingdom of Jannaeus.

[24] Philip I governed Antioch until Tigranes occupied the city in ca. 74/73 B.C.E. For this evidence, see Hoover 2007, 289-298. It appears that Philip I melted down the coins of his predecessors at Antioch, which suggests his currency may be artificially inflated in the numismatic record. This could explain why the Ro-

between other contenders for control of the Seleucid Empire, which greatly weakened him, before he invaded the Hasmonean state during the reign of Jannaeus.

It is important to consider events in Antioch in any study of this period because the struggle for control of this city affected those Seleucid monarchs who later invaded the Hasmonean state and attacked Jannaeus. The numismatic evidence from Antioch suggests that the political situation there was more complex than indicated by any of our extant sources. It is plausible that it may not have been under the jurisdiction of any Seleucid king in the immediate aftermath of the 89/88 B.C.E. death of Eusebes. Subsequent Seleucid rulers for a time had limited authority there. From S.E. 221 (= October 92 B.C.E. – September 91 B.C.E.) to S.E. 240 (= 73/72 B.C.E.) bronze coins were minted in Antioch with the inscription ΑΝΤΙΟΧΕΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΜΕΤΡΟΠΟΛΕΩΣ. This period includes the reigns there of Demetrius III, Philip I, and the Armenian king Tigranes II.[25] Because civic issues of Antioch were not minted in the name of any reigning Syrian monarch, this suggests that the city took advantage of the Seleucid Empire's civil wars to assert its autonomy. The rulers who minted coins there during this period had only limited authority over the city. This reconstruction offers a historically plausible explanation for the minting of civic issues in Antioch alongside coins bearing the names and portraits of several Seleucid rulers.[26]

Jannaeus was convinced that political instability caused by the warring Seleucid rulers, which allowed several prominent cities to gain their independence, had left Syria in a state of anarchy. For this reason, he thought that he would use this to his advantage and capture Syrian territory. But the situation was more complicated than he thought: even the Seleucid rulers realized that they needed to cooperate with one another to prevent the newly independent cities in their realm from becoming too strong. And the last thing they wanted was a Hasmonean ruler to try and take advantage of their current strife!

The two younger brothers of Seleucus VI, Antiochus XI and Philip I, after cooperating to confront Eusebes had to find some way to divide the Seleucid Empire between them without starting another civil war. They also needed to prevent Jannaeus from taking advantage of their fighting to seize Syrian territory. It is probable that both agreed to a truce, and declared the strategic city of Antioch neutral territory. It retained this status until shortly after the Armenian king Tigranes II captured it.[27] Philip I and his brother Demetrius III also needed to find a way to co-exist as rulers over portions of the Seleucid Empire. Hoover suggests that the citizens of Antioch took advantage of the Seleucid civil wars to declare their independence and subsequent Syrian rulers had only limited control over it.[28] The *status quo* held until Demetrius III and Philip I became enemies. Demetrius III marched against Philip I at Beroea in 88 B.C.E. and was captured by the Parthians in 88/87 B.C.E. This event, as we will see, had profound effects on the Hasmonean state.

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man governors, beginning with Gabinius (57-55 B.C.E.), used the coins of Philip I as the model for the currency they produced there. See Hoover 2011, 260-263.

[25] Antiochus XII Dionysus only ruled at Damascus from 87/86 to 84/83 B.C.E.: Hoover 2007, 298-299.

[26] For evidence in support of this suggestion, see Houghton 1998, 66-68; Hoover 2007, 289-296.

[27] Tigranes II "the Great" of Armenia appears to have taken the city in 74/73 B.C.E. and held it until 69/68 B.C.E.: Bellinger 1949, 81; Hoover 2007, 296-298.

[28] Hoover 2007, 290. He suggests Antioch, possibly by Eusebes, was given the metropolitan title, but not autonomy.

The historical and numismatic evidence shows that Damascus was the residence and capital of the territory Demetrius III controlled at the time he invaded the kingdom of Jannaeus.[29] The complicated political situation in the Seleucia Empire, which Josephus only abbreviates in a confusing manner, may shed some additional light as to why some Jews joined Demetrius III and his army during this monarch's invasion of the Hasmonean state to attack Jannaeus. This incursion is usually dated to 88 B.C.E.[30] As previously noted, the coins of Damascus show that the reign of Demetrius III there began in S.E. 216 (= 97/96 B.C.E.). He ruled the city until S.E. 225 (= 88/87 B.C.E.), with the exception of a brief interruption in S.E. 220 (= 93/92 B.C.E.).[31] The traditional date places his invasion of Judea just prior to his war with his brother Philip I and his capture by the Parthians. But a close look at his narratives reveals that Josephus has grouped together information from his sources without any regard to the proper sequence of events. The structure of his books, therefore, is literary and not chronological.[32] In addition, Josephus at times carelessly includes material from his sources that he does not adequately explain. He writes (*AJ* 13.371), for example, that he has already provided an account of the war between Demetrius III and Philip I when no such story is included. For this reason, numismatic data must be consulted to make sense of Josephus's confusing narratives.

The coins of Demetrius III from Damascus may help us to understand why he decided to intervene in Judean affairs, and why the opponents of Jannaeus invited him to do so, in 90/89 B.C.E. Dating his invasion to this time, most likely in 89 B.C.E. rather than 88 B.C.E., means that it took place approximately three to four years after Demetrius III temporarily lost and then regained Damascus. Currency minted in his name there stops in 93/92 B.C.E.[33] Mint production rapidly rises in S.E. 222 (= 91/90 B.C.E.), the year he regained control of Damascus. Coins were produced at a high rate there until S.E. 223 (= 90/89 B.C.E.). This increased output of currency represents his funding for his conflict with Jannaeus.[34] This rise in mint production for nearly two years preceding the invasion of Demetrius III suggests that he began to plan for an assault against Jannaeus

[29] For this campaign, see Dąbrowa 2010a, 175-181.

[30] For this invasion, see *AJ* 13.372-378; *BJ* 1.88-92. For a detailed discussion of the likely date of this invasion in light of Qumran texts (4Q169 3-4 I, 1-7; 4Q167 frg. 2; 4Q390; 4Q385a), see Atkinson 2016b, 46-48. See also Bevan 1902, 261; Marcus 1966, 415 note d; Klausner 1972, 212; Schürer 1973, 1, 221, 223-224; VanderKam 2004, 324.

[31] The numismatic evidence suggests that Demetrius III lost Damascus for a short time. Although this argument is one from absence, the continuous sequence of coins of his reign there, and the similarities between the obverse dies of the coins he issued in S.E. 219 and S.E. 221, makes it doubtful that coins were minted for S.E. 220 but are lost: Hoover – Houghton – Vesely 2008, 307.

[32] For this issue, see Hölscher 1904, 15-16; Kasher 1990: 154; Bar-Kochva 1996, 293-294; Atkinson 2016a.

[33] The abrupt gap in the dated coinage of Damascus for Demetrius III suggests that he was briefly ejected from the city. In S.E. 221 (= 92/91 B.C.E.), Seleucid royal bronze coins end at Antioch; they are replaced with a civic coinage with the inscription ΑΝΤΙΟΧΕΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΜΗΤΡΟΠΠΟΛΕΩΣ**.** It is probable that several ancient authors confused an expulsion of Demetrius III from Damascus with the eviction of Eusebes from Antioch in 93/92 B.C.E. The appearance of civic coinage at Antioch in 92/91 B.C.E. may indicate that Eusebes gave it the metropolitan title, but not autonomy, in gratitude for its loyalty to him during his conflict with Philip and Demetrius III. For the evidence in support of this reconstruction, see Hoover 2007, 290-296; Hoover – Houghton – Vesely 2008, 306-307, 310.

[34] For this data: Hoover – Houghton – Vesely 2008, 306-307.

once he recovered Damascus. Events in the region, especially in Antioch, affected his plan to conquer the Hasmonean state.

The death of Eusebes in 89/88 B.C.E. led to a power struggle in the region. Demetrius III now feared his brother Philip I; he presumably believed that his sibling would break their alliance and attack Damascus. Demetrius III was still in the Hasmonean state seeking to overthrow Jannaeus when Eusebes departed for Parthia. The absence of Eusebes from the region, and his subsequent death fighting in Parthia, left Antioch unoccupied. Demetrius III and his brother Philip I both wanted to control this vital city. If Demetrius III remained in Judea to fight Jannaeus, Philip I could have annexed Antioch and seized Damascus. Demetrius III had no choice but to abandon his campaign to conquer the Hasmonean state, return to Syria, and invade the territory of his brother, Philip I. It was the events associated with the Parthian campaign of Eusebes that forced Demetrius III to abruptly leave Judea, and not, as Josephus claims, the revolt of Jews against Jannaeus.

According to Josephus, Demetrius III, during his invasion of the Hasmonean state, defeated Jannaeus at Shechem and decimated his army. He also exterminated all of Jannaeus's mercenaries. The claim of Josephus that Demetrius III withdrew because of the defection of some Jews in his army is untenable since their presence in the Seleucid force was minimal. Demetrius III had sufficient troops to wage a war against his sibling, Philip I after his confrontation with Jannaeus. He only lost because Philip I received military support from a coalition of Parthians and Arabs. The figures Josephus provides for these battles are dubious. He claims that Demetrius III attacked Philip I with ten thousand foot soldiers and a thousand cavalry at Beroea.

In the *War* Josephus provides much smaller figures for the size of the army of Jannaeus that fought Demetrius III there.[35] Josephus, moreover, claims that Demetrius III fled Judea only after six thousand Jewish soldiers in his army defected.[36] Yet, the number of troops indicates that this mass desertion more than doubled the size of the army of Jannaeus. It is improbable that Demetrius III lost so many men through desertion. Josephus apparently inflated his numbers to imply that Philip I defeated Demetrius III because the Jews ultimately remained loyal to their high priest and effectively sabotaged the latter's campaign against Jannaeus. The numismatic evidence shows that it was actually events in the Seleucid Empire that forced Demetrius III to abandon his thus far successful invasion of Jannaeus's kingdom. If not for his hatred of his brother, Philip I, Demetrius III likely would have conquered the Hasmonean state.

Because Demetrius III appears to have begun his war with Philip I after he returned from Judea, his campaign against Jannaeus must have taken place shortly before the 89/88 B.C.E. death of Eusebes. Demetrius III abandoned his invasion of the Hasmonean state to fight his sibling, Philip I, for the former territory of Eusebes and to retain Damascus. The account of Josephus for this time is unfortunately full of errors: he confuses

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[35] According to *AJ* 13.377, Demetrius III had the following forces: 3,000 cavalry and 40,000 infantry. The army of Jannaeus included the following: 6,200 mercenaries and 20,000 Jewish soldiers. According to *AJ* 13.384, Demetrius III had 10,000 infantry and a 1,000 cavalry when he fought Philip I. In *BJ* 1.93, Josephus writes that Jannaeus had an army of 1,000 cavalry, 8,000 mercenaries, and 10,000 infantry. The army of Demetrius III included 10,000 infantry and 3,000 cavalry. Josephus does not include an account of the fighting between Demetrius III and Philip I in *BJ*.

[36] *AJ* 13.379.

several Parthian and Seleucid monarchs. Because many of these kings had the same name, Josephus, or perhaps a source he used, attributed some events to the wrong rulers. Josephus tried to clarify matters by providing the names of some of these kings; unfortunately, he made several mistakes. His errors caused him to misdate the Judean invasion of Demetrius III, and fail to recognize the role that events in Antioch played in forcing him to abandon his invasion of Judea. The reign of Demetrius III is closely connected with Antiochus X Eusebes, the third ruler Josephus focuses on in *Antiquities* 13.365-71. It was the death of Eusebes that ultimately led Demetrius III to invade the Hasmonean state; it was an attack upon his interests in Syria by his sibling, Philip I, which forced him abruptly to leave Judea and return home to fight for his kingdom.

3. Antiochus X Eusebes Philopator

Antiochus X Eusebes Philopator played a significant and largely unrecognized role in Hasmonean history through his participation in the Seleucid civil wars.[37] According to Josephus, immediately after Demetrius III left Judea he besieged his brother Philip I at Beroea. Philip's ally Straton called upon Azizus, the phylarch of the Arabs, and "Mithridates Sinakes, the governor of the Parthians," for help.[38] The two came to Philip's assistance; both defeated and captured Demetrius III at Beroea. According to Josephus, they sent Demetrius III to "Mithridates, who was then reigning over the Parthians."[39] This claim is slightly misleading since Mithridates was actually a governor and not a king.[40] This error is due to the confusion in the ancient sources concerning the circumstances that led to the death of Eusebes. A woman appears to have played a major, and thus far unappreciated, role in this event.

Josephus claims that Ladocie, queen of the unknown tribe of Samenian Arabs, asked Eusebes to help her repulse a Parthian invasion. Eusebes went to aide and died in battle.[41]

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[37] For his reign, see Grainger 1997, 33-34; Ehling 2008, 235-239.

[38] The first name is emended from the account of Diodorus Siculus (40.1a,b). One manuscript reads "Deizus" and the others "Zizus." Strabo (*Geography* 16.1.23) refers to a place in Northern Mesopotamia called Sinnaca, which may have been where this Mithridates was from.

[39] *AJ* 13.385.

[40] Marcus (1966: 421, note a) mistakenly identifies him as Mithridates II, whose reign he assigned to ca. 123-88/87 B.C.E.

[41] *AJ* 13.371. There is some confusion in the classical sources concerning the death of Eusebes. According to Josephus (*AJ* 13.371) Ladocie, queen of the unknown Arab tribe of the Sameinans, summoned him to help her fight the Parthians. The manuscripts vary widely as to the name of this Arab tribe: Niese 1892, 219. Stephanus of Byzantium describes them as an "Arabian nomadic people": Grainger 1997, 772. Eusebes fought the Parthians with Ladocie sometime after his struggle against Philip I and Demetrius III. Eusebius (*Chronicle*, in Schöene 1999, 1.40.25, 261) says that Philip I defeated Eusebes, who then fled to the Parthians. He later returned home to ask Pompey for his kingdom. Eusebius and Jerome (in Schöene 1999, [171.3] 1.923) place the expulsion of Eusebes from Antioch in the first year of the 172nd Olympiad (= 93/92 B.C.E.). According to Appian (*Syriaca* 48, 69/70), Tigranes twice expelled Eusebes from his kingdom. The source of these conflicting dates is simple: many ancient authors confused Eusebes with his son, Antiochus XIII Asiaticus: Bellinger 1949, 75 note 73. The account of Josephus is the most reliable. However, his placement of the death of Eusebes around 92 B.C.E. is incorrect. The year 89/88 B.C.E. is more probable since Demetrius III ruled at Antioch for a single year in 88/87 B.C.E. when he took the city during the absence of Eusebes there. Philip I did not rule Antioch since he was using Beroea as his base in that year (*AJ* 13.384). There is no

Josephus does not explain why Eusebes put his kingdom in jeopardy to help an Arab queen. It is probable that this Laodice is to be identified with Laodike Thea, the Commagenian queen of Seleucid ancestry. Her father was presumably Antiochus VIII Grypus and her mother was Cleopatra Tryphaena. She married Mithridates I Callinicus.[42] This Seleucid connection would explain why Eusebes risked a military confrontation with the Parthians to help an Arab queen: she came from a region whose rulers had a longstanding connection through marriage with the Seleucid royal family. Eusebes was likely helping his kin. Modern historians are apparently not the only readers of Josephus's account who have failed to understand her significance. The ancient chroniclers appear to have had little factual knowledge of what took place in the Seleucid Empire at this time as evident by their conflicting accounts of Eusebes's demise.

According to Eusebius, Eusebes fled to Parthia after Philip I defeated him in battle. He later surrendered to the Roman general Pompey to restore his former kingdom in Syria. After the residents of Antioch sent Pompey a gift, he decided to give the city autonomous status and not allow Eusebes to return there.[43] But Justin claims that the Roman consul Lucullus, after he had defeated Tigranes II, placed Eusebes on the throne of Syria. Pompey shortly afterwards removed Eusebes from power because he was suspicious of his whereabouts and his activities during the eighteen-year reign of Tigranes II. Pompey then reduced Syria into a Roman province.[44] Appian, however, conflicts with these accounts. He simply states that Tigranes II deposed Eusebes after the Armenian king annexed a portion of eastern Syria in 83 B.C.E.[45] Grainger does not attempt to resolve these discrepancies, but merely suggests that all of these ancient accounts are plausible.[46] However, it is clear that Eusebius and Justin have confused Eusebes with his son, Antiochus XIII Eusebes Asiaticus, who negotiated with Pompey in 65/64 B.C.E. for the return of his kingdom.[47]

Because of the gap in the historical sources relating to both Parthia and Arabia, it is difficult to determine the extent to which, if any, Parthian rulers penetrated into Seleucid or Arab territory at the time of Eusebes.[48] The claim of Josephus that Eusebes died helping the Arabs is clearly erroneous. It is more probable that Josephus has combined hos-

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evidence that Demetrius III drove Eusebes from Antioch. The reign of Eusebes is poorly documented in the extant sources. Numismatic evidence and a market weight from Antioch of Seleucus VI show that Eusebes ruled it beginning in 94 B.C.E. No literary source states that he lost the city to Antiochus XI. However, coins from Antioch show that Antiochus XI ruled the city between late 94 and the autumn of 93 B.C.E. Unless one wants to assume that Antioch was fully autonomous, it is more probable that Eusebes reigned there for a second time from 93/92-89/88 B.C.E. as indicated by the numismatic evidence. This latter date also marks the year when Eusebes died: Hoover 2007, 289-296. The death of Philip I is uncertain because the literary sources often confuse him with his son, Philip II Barypous: Dobias 1924, 218-227. The best estimate, based on the numismatics from Antioch and the beginning of the reign of Tigranes there, is that he died in 75 B.C.E.: Hoover 2007, 289-98.

[42] For this identification, see Grainger 1997, 31, 48; Assar 2006, 60; Ehling 2008, 230; Olbrycht 2009, 166-167.

[43] Eusebius *Chronicle* (in Schöene 1999, 261).

[44] Justin *History* 40.2.2-4.

[45] Appian *Syriaca* 48, 70.

[46] Grainger 1997, 33.

[47] Assar 2006, 60. For his reign, see Dobias 1924, 224-227; Grainger 1997, 34-35; Ehling 2008, 256-277.

[48] Justin (*History* Preface 3-4), our major source for Parthian history of this time, omitted approximately thirty-five years between Mithridates II (123-88 B.C.E.) and Orodes II (ca. 56-38 B.C.E.) in his epitome of

tilities between the Parthians and Arabs with the struggle over the Parthian succession that took place during the reign of Eusebes. He appears to have confused Mithridates II (= Arsaces XI; ca. April 121 – ca. September 91 B.C.E.) with Sinatruces (= Arsaces XII; ca. 93/92-69/68 B.C.E.).[49] The two fought a long series of wars for the throne that is poorly documented in the historical records. Sinatruces appears to have defeated Mithridates II in 93/92 B.C.E. and assumed power in Susa. Mithridates II died the following year. Sinatruces then lost Susa to Gotarzes I (= Arsaces XIII; August/September 91 B.C.E. – July/August 87 B.C.E.) in 88/87 B.C.E. Mithridates III (= Arsaces XIV; July/August 87 – August/September 80 B.C.E.) then began his reign.[50] The account of the death of Eusebes in *Antiquities* 13.371 actually refers to the victory of Sinatruces over Mithridates II.[51] The Parthian ruler Mithridates III took advantage of the Seleucid dynastic feuds to attack the Arabs and seize power for a time. Josephus has mistakenly associated this event with the death of Eusebes. The ascension of Mithridates III coincided with the capture of Demetrius III by the Parthians. Mithridates III took power in July/August 87 B.C.E.; Demetrius III was caught about the same time. Demetrius III died of illness in Parthian captivity.[52]

Numismatics may provide evidence for increased hostilities between Demetrius III and Eusebes that is not recorded in the extant records. In 94/93 B.C.E., Demetrius III is depicted for the first time with a full and bushy beard: a traditional sign mourning or a desire for revenge.[53] It is plausible that Demetrius III grew this facial hair to indicate his intent to seize the kingdom of his cousin, Eusebes. But trouble in Parthia changed everything. Eusebes left Antioch to fight the Parthians, which may have contributed to the loss of Damascus by Demetrius III in 93/92 B.C.E. In that year, Demetrius III marched north to support his brother, Antiochus XI, in his battle with Eusebes. It is probable that the forces of Eusebes, Jannaeus, or the Nabateans took advantage of the absence of Demetrius III to seize Damascus for a year.[54] During the departure of Demetrius III from Damascus to invade the kingdom of Jannaeus, Eusebes either died or lost control of Antioch. Demetrius III had to leave Judea to attempt to capture Antioch as well as annex the territory of his sibling, Philip I. However, it cannot be ruled out that Jannaeus or the Nabateans also took advantage of this situation to invade Seleucid territories.

If Jannaeus tried to capture Damascus or adjacent Syrian lands during this period, this could account for the decision of Demetrius III to invade the Hasmonean state. He wanted to pay back Jannaeus for his previous invasion into his territory. Whatever occurred at this time, it is clear that the conflict between Demetrius III and Philip I for control

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the history of Pompeius Trogus. An extant passage in Justin (*History* Prologue, 42) and Plutarch (*Lucullus* 21.4; 36.6) states that this period witnessed a rapid succession of Parthian rulers.

[49] For their reigns, see Assar 2006, 36-62. The coins of Sinatruces provide us with the dates of his reign and are to be given preference over the extant literary sources. For this numismatic evidence: Assar 2005, 21-29.

[50] For his reign: Assar 2006, 55-62.

[51] Records and coins from Parthia also reveal that Josephus in *AJ* 13.419-421 has confused Sinatruces with Mithridates III. For this evidence, see Assar 2006, 55-62.

[52] *AJ* 13.384-386.

[53] Seleucus II, Demetrius III, Philip I, Antiochus XI, and Antiochus XII, all appear to have grown beards to announce their forthcoming military campaigns, see Hoover – Houghton – Vesley 2008, 309; Atkinson 2016a. Demetrius III kept this portrait on his coins until 88/87 B.C.E.

[54] For this possibility, see Hoover – Houghton – Vesley 2008, 315-316.

of the territory of Eusebes led to a civil war between the two brothers and an invasion of the Hasmonean state. Although Josephus does not explicitly state this, he apparently realized it and for this reason placed his account of the Seleucid civil wars in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 just before his account of the invasion of Demetrius III and the subsequent Jewish revolts against Jannaeus.

4. Conclusion

Antiquities 13.365-371 does not accurately reflect the complicated political conditions in the Seleucia Empire, especially the continual fighting for control of Antioch and Damascus, or explain how events there affected the Hasmonean state. Josephus in this passage obscures the threat that Demetrius III posed to the Hasmonean state. He attributes his departure from Shechem, and Jerusalem's salvation, to the defection of Jews in the Seleucid army. His account of this battle is his literary creation. Affairs in Syria compelled Demetrius III to abandon his invasion of Judea. He then became a victim of Parthian expansion when Mithridates III captured him. The confinement and exile of Demetrius III left Philip I and his sibling, Antiochus XII, free to respectively take Antioch and Damascus.[55] Antiochus XII later took advantage of his close proximity to Hasmonean territory to follow the example of Demetrius III and attack Jannaeus from Damascus.[56] This evidence shows that Jannaeus failed to shape affairs in the Seleucid Empire, but merely reacted to them and barely survived.

Josephus ends his account of the Seleucid civil wars in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 with a statement that Demetrius III and Philip I held Syria, "as he has already told" (*AJ* 13.371). Josephus presumably copied the last statement from some unknown source since he has not recounted these events earlier in the *Antiquities*. Although scholars often assume that Josephus primarily used Nicolaus of Damascus for much of his historical materials, he also quotes from, or mentions, several other historians in his *Antiquities* including Nicolaus of Damascus (13.250-251, 347), Strabo (13.286-287, 319, 347), and Timagenes (13.344). He also refers to unspecified writers (13.337) he used to write his account of the reign of Jannaeus, which could plausibly be the source for *Antiquities* 13.365-371.[57] We must assume that Josephus used several sources for the Seleucid Empire when he wrote *Antiquities* 13.365-371, but the numismatic evidence shows he likely did not understand them.

By ending his narrative of the Seleucid civil wars with Demetrius III and Philip I, which comes before his discussion of Jewish opposition to Jannaeus, Josephus contrasts the anarchy in Syria with the Hasmonean state. Because the same infighting among the descendants of Jannaeus led to Pompey's dissolution of the Hasmonean state, Josephus's

[55] Philip I ruled Antioch from ca. 88-75 B.C.E. and Antiochus XII reigned in Damascus from 87/86-84/83 B.C.E.: Hoover 2007, 301. Philip I was killed by his younger brother, Antiochus XII: Houghton 1998, 67-68.

[56] For this invasion, see Atkinson 2013, 19-23.

[57] It is doubtful that Josephus knew the works of the Hellenistic Jewish historians, with the exception of Artapanus. It is probable that Josephus had access to a Seleucid chronicle. See further *AJ* 1.240; *Apion* 1.218; Atkinson 2016b.

description of the Seleucid civil wars in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 serves as a commentary on the Hasmonean dynasty. It shows the negative effects of civil war, which also mirrored the forthcoming civil war between the Middle East's conquer, Pompey, and his rival, Julius Caesar, that likewise ended the Roman Republic.[58]

Internal sedition destroyed the Seleucid Empire, the Hasmoneans State, the Roman Republic, and led to civil wars in the Roman Empire of Josephus's day. For these reasons, Josephus devoted much space to civil wars in his books. Many Romans of his day had also experienced the civil war with the rise of the Flavian dynasty. In *Antiquities* 13.365-371, Josephus emphasizes that *stasis* is a disease that afflicted the Seleucid Empire and Judea during the reigns of the Hasmonean monarchs and the first century C.E., and Rome as well.[59] The description of the Seleucid civil wars in *Antiquities* 13.365-371 is intended to foreshadow the end of the Hasmonean state. It precedes Josephus's account of the civil war between Jannaeus and his adversaries, which was immediately followed by the hatred between his two sons, Hyrcanus II and Aristobulus II, that led to the destruction of the Hasmonean state. For Josephus, the message he wanted to emphasize in these sections and throughout his *Antiquities*, as well as his *War,* was that civil war ultimately destroys even the most powerful of states. Because it had ended the Roman Republic and led to civil war in his day, Josephus also implies that it should be no surprise that civil war also had doomed the Hasmonean state. By contrasting the anarchy in the Seleucid Empire with the Hasmonean state, Josephus shows that he was an excellent historian to connect the two nations and to have realized that events in Syria greatly shaped the reigns of all the Hasmonean monarchs, especially Jannaeus.

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[58] For a detailed account of the Roman civil war between Pompey and Caesar and the battle of Pharsalus, see Greenhalgh 1981, 197-255; Goldsworthy 2006, 358-431.

[59] For *stasis*, see Mader 2000, 55-103; Mason 2009, 80-92; Schwartz 2013, 79-82.

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