

Scipio's Embassy and Simon's Ambassadors (*I Maccabees 15*)*

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I. The East in 140/139 BCE

Scipio Aemilianus' grand tour of the East, which took him first and (and best-documented) to Egypt, but also to Cyprus, Syria, Pergamum, Rhodes and various places in Asia Minor and Greece, represents an important stage in Rome's rise to world domination.¹ The ancient references to it,² however, are not very detailed, and, moreover, only two, both from Cicero, seem to give chronological data sufficient to pin down its date directly — and they contradict one another. In *Academica* 2.2.5 Cicero refers to a conversation during Scipio's mission, *quam ante censuram obiit*; Scipio's censorship is definitely pegged to 142 BCE,³ so this allusion would put the embassy in ca. 144/143 BCE. In *De republica* 6.11.11, however, Cicero mentions the mission after Scipio's censorship and says he was elected to his second consulate while absent, thus implying, apparently, that the mission came just before the latter — which was in 134 BCE.⁴ It is difficult to know which version to prefer, for while the *De republica* notice comes in a chronological survey of Scipio's career and might therefore be assumed reliable, the *Academica* reference, which gives the earlier

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¹ See D. Knibbe, "Die Gesandtschaftsreise des jüngeren Scipio Africanus im Jahre 140 v. Chr.: ein Höhepunkt der Weltreichspolitik Roms im 2. Jahrhundert", *Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Instituts* 45 (1960), 35-38, and, in general, A.E. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford 1967), 127, 138-139, 177; E. S. Gruen, *The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome I-II* (Berkeley 1984), esp. 280, 714-715. For a focus on the embassy's implications for Syria, see Th. Liebmann-Frankfort, *La frontière orientale dans la politique extérieure de la République romaine ...* (Brussels 1969), 129-133. Egypt: below, n. 37.

² For a long list, see T. R. S. Broughton, *The Magistrates of the Roman Republic I* (Cleveland 1951), 481.

³ For the evidence, see Broughton, *ibid.*, p. 474.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 490.

terminus ad quem, comes in a composition written about six years later; perhaps Cicero is deliberately correcting an earlier error.

Given this inauspicious foundation, it is not surprising that nineteenth-century scholars were split between those — a small but prestigious minority — who opted for the earlier dating,⁵ and those — the majority — who opted for the later one, placing the mission ca. 136/135 BCE and discarding Cicero's *ante censuram* as a mistake, whether Cicero's or a copyist's.⁶ By the end of the century, however, a few scholars had discovered an indirect way of dating the mission, namely, by estimating its length and then seeking a period in which all the known participants were free; the result was a dating of the mission to 140-138 BCE.⁷ This dating became a virtual certainty with the 1903-4 discovery and publication of the Livy epitome from Oxyrhynchus (*P. Oxy.* IV, 668), which reinforced these *termini post* and *ad quem*.⁸ Given Astin's arguments based on the order of Diodoran fragments — which derive from Poseidonius — in the Constantinian *excerpta*, it seems the trip probably lasted from spring 140 until late summer 139.⁹

⁵ So E.W. Fischer, *Römische Zeittafeln* (Altona 1846), 131; H.F. Clinton, *Fasti Hellenici* III (1851, repr. New York 1965), 108; and Th. Mommsen, *Römische Geschichte* II⁸ (Berlin 1889), 64. Earlier exponents of this view are cited by Gerlach (see next note).

⁶ So, most prominently, and with detailed discussion: F.D. Gerlach, *Historische Studien* (Hamburg-Gotha 1841), 221-223, n. 1, and C. Müller, *Fragmenta historicorum graecorum* II (Paris 1848), xx. According to G. Unger ("Umfang und Anordnung der Geschichte des Poseidonios", *Philologus* 55 [1896], 97), this position was still the dominant one at the end of the century; it is taken for granted in C. Neumann, *Geschichte Roms während des Verfalles der Republik* I, ed. F. Gothein (Breslau 1881), 151, and defended in detail in A. Bouché-Leclercq, *Histoire des Lagides* II (Paris 1904), 68-69 n. 1, where further bibliography is also cited.

⁷ See esp. F. Marx, "Animadversiones criticae in Scipionis Aemiliani historiam ...", *RhM* 39 (1884), 68-71, and Unger (above, n. 6), 97-99. Marx and Unger were followed by F. Münzer, *RE* IV.1 (1900), col. 1452; all three were followed by B. Niese, *Geschichte der griechischen und makedonischen Staaten* III (Gotha 1903), 270 n. 1 and 292 n. 4.

⁸ See E. Kornemann, *Die neue Livius-Epitome aus Oxyrhynchus* (Leipzig 1904), 104-106 and F. Münzer, "Anmerkungen zur neuen Livius-Epitome", *Klio* 5 (1905), 135-136, also C. Cichorius, "Panaitios und die attische Stoikerinschrift", *RhM* 63 (1908), 203-204; E. Krug, *Die Senatsboten der römischen Republik* (Diss. Breslau 1916), 84-85; K. Bilz, *Die Politik des P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus* (Stuttgart 1935), 44-45; Knibbe (above, n. 1), 37-38; H. H. Scullard, "Scipio Aemilianus and Roman Politics", *JRS* 50 (1960), 69 n. 43; E. Badian, *Studies in Greek and Roman History* (Oxford 1964), 105-106; etc.

⁹ For this additional precision, see Astin (above, n. 1), 127, also *idem*, "Diodorus and the Date of the Embassy to the East of Scipio Aemilianus", *CP* 54 (1959), 221-227, followed, for example, by A. N. Sherwin-White, *Roman Foreign Policy in the East*,

Precisely the same period, spring 140 to summer 139, was also, as it happens, a fateful time for the Seleucid kingdom: Demetrius II's eastern campaign began around the same time as Scipio's grand tour and ended, with his capture by Mithridates I of Parthia, around the same time Scipio's tour did. The dating is quite certain: Demetrius' coins for 173 S.E. (autumn 140/139) are very numerous, which shows he reigned during most of that year, but there are none for 174 S.E., while Antiochus Sidetes has no coins for 173 S.E. but many for 174 S.E.¹⁰

Thus these impressive events of 140/139 BCE — just as the conjunction of Pydna and “the day of Eleusis” in 168 — foreshadowed, in the eastern Mediterranean, the end of one mistress and the coming of the next. The defeat and humiliating captivity of Alexander's heir in Antioch was paralleled by a grand tour of the East led by the Roman who had finally destroyed Rome's only competitor in the West. Small and aspiring eastern states would take notice.

168 B.C. to A.D. 1 (Norman, Okla. 1984), 57. Astin argued that since in the Constantinian *Excerpta de legationibus* the account of Scipio's mission (Diodorus 33.28b) comes after the account of Tryphon's murder of Antiochus (*ibid.* 28a), while the *Excerpta de insidiis* report the same murder (Diodorus 33.28) after the death of Viriathus (*ibid.* 33.21), which occurred in 139, it follows, given Diodorus' methods and those of the excerptors, that Diodorus dated Scipio's mission no earlier than 141/140 or 140/139. More recently, 144/143 has again been suggested; see H.B. Mattingly, “Scipio Aemilianus' Eastern Embassy”, *CQ* 36 (1986), 491-495. Mattingly suggests that the Diodoran passage in *de legationibus* is based on a part of Poseidonius' work earlier than that used by Diodorus in 33.28 (*de insidiis*). However, this suggestion apparently rests on nothing solidier than “I find it hard to believe that he [Poseidonius] said nothing about Tryphon in this interval” (i.e., between 146/5 and 139 — Diodorus 33.4a and 33.28) — Mattingly, 494. Moreover, as Astin argued (*loc. cit.*, 225), the way Diodorus 33.28 reads it is unlikely that there was any preceding reference to Tryphon's murder of Antiochus VI, and 33.28a reads like the direct continuation of 33.28. As for Mattingly's other two arguments, the first (494-495), a hesitant development of a hesitant suggestion by Sherwin-White (above, 50), results only in locating Scipio's mission sometime between 145 and 139 BCE, which changes nothing in the present context. The other argument is a general claim that the ambassadors would have had more to do in 144/143 than 140/139, a point which appears debatable (see Astin, *loc. cit.*, 226 n. 10) and possibly irrelevant; but we should await the study Mattingly hoped to write on the subject, according to the last line of his paper.

¹⁰ See H. Seyrig, *Notes on Syrian Coins* (New York 1950), 13 and 14 n. 29; G. Le Rider, *Suse sous les Séleucides et les Parthes* (Paris 1965), 361-372; K. Bringmann, *Hellenistische Reform und Religionsverfolgung in Judäa* (Göttingen 1983), 18. I do not know on what basis E. Bickermann wrote that “die Münzen zeigen, dass Demetrios II. noch im Herbstjahr 139-38 in Syrien als König galt” (*Gnomon* 6 [1930], 359).

II. *I Macc.* 15.15-24: Misplaced?

This brings us to a third event associated with 139 BCE. *I Macc.* 15, in the midst of its account of the beginning of Antiochus Sidetes' reign, set explicitly in 174 S.E. (139/138 BCE — v. 10), reports the return to Judaea of Jewish ambassadors to Rome. The delegation brought with it, as we read in vv. 15 and 24, copies of Roman letters "to the kings and the lands".¹¹ As an example, vv. 16-21 supply the text of a Roman letter to "King Ptolemy" (VIII Euergetes Physcon), informing him the Jews are Rome's friends and allies and enjoining him to act accordingly; vv. 22-23 report that similar letters were also sent to twenty-three named kings and cities around the Mediterranean. As opposed to the virtual certainty and unanimity which anchor Scipio's mission and Demetrius' fiasco in 140/139 BCE, however, scholars hold virtually unanimously, despite v. 10's explicit reference to 174 S.E., that *I Macc.* 15.15-24 in fact belongs to 142 BCE, a period dealt with earlier in the book.

The main arguments for the misplacement of *I Macc.* 15.15-24 are the following:

1. It constitutes the Roman response to the diplomatic mission of Numenius son of Antiochus, who had been sent by Simon. But the sending of Numenius is reported in *I Macc.* 14.24, where there is no continuation and the next verse, which refers to "when the people heard these things", is said to "dangle".¹²

2. On the other hand, the proclamation of the Great Assembly in *I Macc.* 14, dated to 172 S.E. (141/140 BCE — 14.1, 27), refers at v. 40 to the Romans' establishment of a treaty with the Jews and their reception with honor of Simon's envoys — a reference, we are told, to the correspondence in ch. 15.¹³

3. The document is presented in v. 16 as having been sent by "Lucius, *hypatos* of the Romans", usually identified with the consul of 142 BCE, Lucius Caecilius Metellus Calvus.¹⁴ Although nineteenth-century scholars, led by F.

¹¹ To be precise, v. 15 says they brought letters, in the plural, but v. 24 says they brought "the copy (sing.) of them"; the implication is that the same letter was sent to the different addressees.

¹² So J.A. Goldstein, *I Maccabees* [Anchor Bible 41] (Garden City, NY 1976), 493.

¹³ This is frequently assumed; so, for example, Goldstein, *ibid.*; Bickermann (above, n. 10), 358; J. C. Dancy, *A Commentary on I Maccabees* (Oxford 1954), 183; and M. Stern, *The Documents on the History of the Hasmonaean Revolt*² (Tel Aviv 1972), 137-138 (in Hebrew).

¹⁴ On him, see Broughton (above, n. 2), 474 and 476 n. 1 (where he is identified with our "Lucius") also J. van Ooteghem, *Les Caecilii Metelli de la République* (Brussels 1967), 79-86. *Ibid.*, 81, the identification with our "Lucius" is said to "paraît aujourd'hui certain"; cf. our n. 16. For *hypatos* = consul, see H.J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions* (Toronto 1974), 95-96, 165-171; M. Holleaux, *ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΟΣ ΥΠΑΤΟΣ: Étude sur la traduction en grec du titre consulaire* (Paris 1918).

Ritschl, thought that the praenomen of Calpurnius Piso, one of the consuls of 139 BCE, was Lucius,¹⁵ and hence maintained *I Maccabees'* 139 BCE date for our document, the above-mentioned Oxyrhynchus epitome of Livy, and the *Fasti Antiates* published two decades later, showed it was in fact Gnaeus.¹⁶ Thus Metellus is the only consul named Lucius during the years 143-137 BCE.¹⁷

4. The current location of the Roman material in ch. 15 may be explained away. Here there are a few options. Some say that it reflects the author's or editor's wish to display Antiochus Sidetes, the main antagonist in ch. 15, in a bad light — either as a flouter of Rome's warning¹⁸ or as ungrateful to Simon (vv. 26-27) in contrast to beneficent Rome.¹⁹ More recently, it has been suggested that the current disposition is no more than the result of a mechanical mistake: in the archetype of *I Maccabees*, the leaves of the manuscript were improperly pasted together.²⁰

Thus, it is usually held, repositioning the material after 14.24 would complete the story of Numenius' mission, give the Great Assembly's proclamation a complete antecedent and fit the name of the consul; the current situation may easily be explained away.

However, of these arguments for *I Macc.* 15.15-24 being out of place, none holds much water. For:

ad 1) There is no good reason to expect the report of the result of Numenius' mission to appear right after he was sent. Note, for example, that his first mis-

¹⁵ See F. Ritschl, *Opuscula Philologica* V (Leipzig 1879), 99-148, esp. 116-118 (= *RhM* 28 [1873], 601-603), followed, for example, by E. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi* I³⁻⁴ (Leipzig 1901), 251; for reviews of the literature, see *ibid.*, 251-253 n. 22, and W. Grimm, "Die neuesten Verhandlungen über den 'Consul Lucius', 1 Macc. 15,16", *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie* 19 (1876), 121-132.

¹⁶ For the Oxyrhynchus evidence, see Kornemann (above, n. 8), 73 n. 3; for the *Fasti Antiates* — G. Mancini, *Notizie degli scavi di antichità* 18 (1921), 128, 131. For the conclusions drawn with regard to "Lucius hypatos" of *I Macc.* 15, see, *inter alia*, Bickermann (above, n. 10); F. Münzer, "Das Konsulpaar von 139 v. Chr.", *Klio* 24 (1931), 334-5; Goldstein (above, n. 12), 493; A.M. Rabello, "The Legal Condition of the Jews in the Roman Empire", *ANRW* II.13 (1980), 681-2; Stern (above, n. 13), 128-9; *idem*, *Studies in Jewish History: The Second Temple Period*, edd. M. Amit, I. Gafni and M.D. Herr (Jerusalem 1991), 368, 482, 574 (in Hebrew); and above, n. 14.

¹⁷ See Broughton (above, n. 2), 471-484.

¹⁸ So N.G. Cohen, "Concerning I Maccabees 15:15-24", *Adam-Noah Memorial Volume: Essays in Jewish Studies* (Jerusalem 1969), 210-212 (in Hebrew).

¹⁹ So F.-M. Abel, *Les livres des Maccabées* (Paris 1949), 266. Note, however, that Abel continued to assume, contrary to (unaware of?) the post-Oxyrhynchus consensus, that "Lucius" refers to Calpurnius Piso (cos. 139 BCE).

²⁰ See Goldstein (above, n. 12), 493-494.

sion to Rome and Sparta, under Jonathan, is described in 12.1-23, while his return is reported only at 14.16-23. Indeed, by inserting other matters, the author lets the reader appreciate the passage of time between the sending and the return.

ad 2) There is nothing in the brief reference in *I Macc.* 14.40, to Rome's treaty and brotherhood with the Jews, which is not covered by the reports in *I Macc.* 8 and 12 about Simon's predecessors' treaties with Rome. Conversely, in this verse's allusions to friendship, alliance and honor between the Jews and Romans, there is nothing of the specific contents of 15.16-24, *viz.*, the Roman warning to foreign kings and cities not to trouble the Jews. And as for *I Macc.* 14.40's statement that the Romans had received Simon's envoys honorably, there are two possibilities simpler than the assumption that it indicates that 15.15-24 is out of place: either (a) the allusion is to 14.16-19, where we read that while Jonathan's ambassadors were in Rome it became known there that Jonathan had died and been replaced by Simon, whereupon the Romans wrote to Simon to renew the friendship and treaty — in this case, v. 40 would be loosely terming the ambassadors "Simon's" without going into details;²¹ or (b) taken literally, the reference to Simon's envoys could well refer to Numenius' delegation, the departure of which is recorded in v. 24 — for there is no reason that the news of its honorable reception in Rome, which is all v. 40 reports of it, could not have become known in Judaea well before it managed to elicit any documents from the Romans, such as those reported in ch. 15.²²

On the other hand, it must be noted that moving the Roman material back between 14.24 (Numenius' departure for Rome) and 14.25ff. (the Great Assembly's proclamation)²³ hardly solves the problem, if the correspondence is dated, as assumed by the consensus, to 142 BCE. For ch. 14 is clearly set in 172 S.E.

²¹ The fact that Goldstein (*ibid.* 494), who (as others) asserts the ch. 15 material is out of place, finds it necessary to delete the reference to Rome in 14.16, shows how weak that assertion is. In contrast, others would rather delete "and until Sparta" from v. 16, thus making the verbs in vv. 16-17 refer to Rome alone; so, for example, K.-D. Schunck, "I. Makkabäerbuch", *Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit* I.4 (Gütersloh 1980), 357 n. 16a; cf. *ibid.*, 359 n. 40a.

²² For correspondence between envoys and their homelands, cf. D. Kienast in *RE Suppl.* XIII (1973), col. 566.

²³ So, most baldly, in Goldstein (above, n. 12), 485-486, where the ch. 15 material is renumbered and inserted into ch. 14. Stern (above, n. 13: 129) is more circumspect: at the end of his discussion of *I Macc.* 15.16-24, which he argues were letters sent by L. Metellus in 142, he concludes that "from a chronological point of view this document belongs to an earlier chapter of *I Maccabees*, and its place is prior to the Great Assembly's decision in favor of Simon" — without specifying which earlier chapter. (That leaves the way open for him to infer (137-138) from *I Macc.* 14.40 that Demetrius recognized Simon after Rome did — Demetrius' recognition of Simon is already recorded in 13.35ff.).

(vv. 1, 27), which is autumn 141/140 BCE (according to the Macedonian reckoning) or spring 140/139 (according to the Babylonian/Jewish reckoning).²⁴

ad 3) The argument from “Lucius *hypatos*”, which has always been the main one, is based upon two assumptions: (a) that *hypatos* means “consul” and (b) that the letter in question was written by Lucius while he was consul. However, neither assumption is secure:

(a) Regarding *hypatos*: even if one disregards the oft-noted point that the translational vicissitudes of a Roman letter in *I Maccabees* (Latin [?]-Greek-Hebrew-Greek) should make us hesitate to build much on its terminology,²⁵ the plain fact is that, in the second century BCE, before *anthypatos* came into vogue, *hypatos* and *stratêgos hypatos* referred both to consuls and to proconsuls.²⁶ And given the fact that the Greek East frequently came into contact with prominent Romans only on their post-consulate missions, the latter is quite common. One notes, for example, several documents of 197-194 which refer to T. Quinctius Flaminus (cos. 198) as *stratêgos hypatos*,²⁷ a reference to a ca. 163 BCE dedication by Cn. Octavius (cos. 165) in which he is styled *hypatos*,²⁸ and a 146 BCE letter by Scipio Aemilianus himself (cos. 147) in which he does the same.²⁹ Most appositely, we may note that for generations scholars have assumed that a Delian inscription terms our Lucius Metellus *stratêgos hypatos* during his post-consulship participation in Scipio's tour of the East.³⁰ I do not know whether the

²⁴ For the two eras in use in *I Maccabees*, see Goldstein, *ibid.*, 21-25; for the dates in ch. 14 — *ibid.* 488. It is strange to find him noting, on 493, that “Lucius” was consul of 142 and that “no event of 142 belongs in chapter 15” — without explaining how an event of that year could belong in ch. 14. On the eras, see also Bringmann (above, n. 10), 15-28.

²⁵ For such doubts see, for example, L. Mendelssohn, “Nochmals der römische Senatsbeschluss bei Josephus Antiqu. XIV,8,5”, *RhM* 30 (1875), 426-427; A. Momigliano, *Ricerche sull'organizzazione della Giudea sotto il dominio romano* (1934, repr. Amsterdam 1967), 32-33. Elsewhere in the Septuagint, *hypatos* refers to Persian or other non-Roman officials (*Daniel* 3.2, 3, 94; *I Esdras* 3.14).

²⁶ See Th. Mommsen, *Römisches Staatsrecht II*/1³ (1887/1888, repr. Basel 1952), 240-241 n. 5; Holleaux (above, n. 14), 1-2 n. 2 and *passim*; Mason (above, n. 14), 104. Cf. Plutarch, *Marcellus* 30.5 (316).

²⁷ *SIG II*³, nos. 591-593. For annotated translations, see R.K. Sherk, *Rome and the Greek East to the Death of Augustus* (Cambridge 1984), 4-7.

²⁸ See Holleaux (above, n. 14), 157-158. For the date of Cn. Octavius' mission, see the recent discussion by B. Bar-Kochva, *Judas Maccabaeus* (Cambridge 1989), 547-548; cf. D.R. Schwartz, *Tarbiz* 60 (1990/91), 446 (in Hebrew).

²⁹ See *SIG II*³, no. 677; cf. G. Kaibel, “Inscription von Thermae”, *Hermes* 18 (1883), 156-157; Astin (above, n. 1), 76-77.

³⁰ See *SIG II*³, no. 681 (= *IG XII.5*, no. 270); F. Münzer in *RE III.1* (1897), col. 1208, no. 83; van Ooteghem (above, n. 14), 85. For the older discussion as to the identity of this honoree, see Holleaux (above, n. 14), 28 n. 5. For the presumption that this inscription originated in Delos, see *IG*, Holleaux and A. Wilhelm, “Die sogenannte

use of this title for our Lucius Metellus indicates that he had specifically been invested with proconsular imperium during this embassy, or whether it is simply evidence of a loose Greek usage for a consul of the recent past. Whichever the explanation, it could apply to the *I Macc.* 15 document too.

(b) As for the notion that the document in *I Macc.* 15 was written by Lucius during his consulate, apart from the belief that *hypatos* means consul, it seems to derive only from the additional assumption that the document is the result of, and written to accompany, the *senatus consultum* reported by Josephus in AJ 14.145-148, an assumption which may be linked with the further assumption that Josephus' "Lucius Valerius L.f. the *stratêgos*" (praetor?), who convened the Senate, is identical with our "Lucius *hypatos*"; it is supposed that if written in conjunction with a SC, it was probably written by an officeholder in Rome.³¹ Now these assumptions, especially the first one, are widespread and may be correct.³² We have no need to enter into the question, however. For if, as claimed by both *I Maccabees* and Josephus, numerous letters resulted from the deliberations in Rome, considerable time could go by before they were all delivered — and *I Macc.* 15.15-24 is explicitly set at the time of the return of the envoys to Judaea, not at that of their departure from Rome. We shall return to this below.

ad 4) As for the explanations as to why the Roman material in ch. 15 is out of place, as it were, it is, on the one hand, difficult to agree that the author or editor of *I Maccabees* would knowingly create chronological confusion only to

Hetäreninschrift aus Paros", *Mitteilungen des kaiserlich-deutschen archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abtheilung* 23 (1898), 434 n. 1. For L. Metellus' participation in Scipio's embassy, see Justin 38.8.8.

³¹ The two assumptions are not necessarily linked, for it could well be that the praetor convened the Senate and the consul wrote the letters; so, for example, Ritschl, *Opuscula* (above, n. 15), 147-148 (*RhM* 30 [1875], 434-435).

³² The controversy is caused by the fact that Josephus' document is very reminiscent of that in *I Macc.* 15, but Josephus dates his to the ninth year of Hyrcanus II, which his narrative context sets equal to 47 BCE. Some scholars prefer to emphasize the similarity to *I Macc.* 15 and conclude that the two texts go together (or that one, probably the *I Macc.* 15 text, was forged on the basis of the other); others prefer to depend on the reference to Hyrcanus and, if not accepting (with Mommsen *et al.*) the attribution to Hyrcanus II, redate the document to the period of Hyrcanus I — whether his ninth year, as indicated by Josephus' statement, or his first (134 BCE), which seems to be a probable year for the praetorship of Lucius Valerius L.f. (cos. 131 BCE); cf. Broughton (above, n. 2), 491-492 n. 2. For the earlier literature, see Grimm and Schürer (both above, n. 15), also L. Korach, *Über den Wert des Josephus als Quelle für die römische Geschichte* (Diss. Leipzig, Breslau 1895), 3-9; more recent discussions include Stern (above, n. 13), 146-148 and *idem*, *Studies* (above, n. 16), 79-82 (= *Zion* 26 [1960/61], 3-6); T. Fischer, *Untersuchungen zum Partherkrieg Antiochos' VII. im Rahmen der Seleukidengeschichte* (Diss. München, Tübingen 1970), 96-101; J.-D. Gauger, *Beiträge zur jüdischen Apologetik* (Köln-Bonn 1977), 285-302; and Gruen (above, n. 1) II, 748-750.

set Antiochus Sidetes, very indirectly, in bad light. If the author or editor in fact wanted to denounce Antiochus as anti-Roman or as ungrateful, as suggested, he could have made the polemical point more explicitly and, at the same time, made the chronological situation clearer. On the other hand, while it is true that the Roman material in ch. 15 interrupts the Antiochus-Tryphon narrative, it is also true that it is inserted precisely after the establishment of Antiochus' siege of Dora; just when both sides settle down for the duration, the author invites us to turn to another matter. This is a well-known and understandable ploy of writers, which gives the reader the sense of a passage of time.³³ Thus, it is hardly likely that the current disposition is the result of a random reordering of material. If that were the case, we would have to view the fact that the break comes at such a natural place as an amazing coincidence, and the *Wiederaufnahme* at 15.25, which picks up the narrative from 15.14, as a product of secondary (post-disruption) editing. Neither assumption has any basis other than wishful thinking.

But if the current location of the Roman material in ch. 15 results neither from deliberate departure from chronology nor from random error, then it is difficult to abandon what must be our starting-point, namely, that the author or editor thought the envoys arrived around the time of Antiochus' siege of Dora.³⁴ That is why he put the material in ch. 15. One way of dealing with this is by accepting De Sanctis' emendation of our *hypatos* from "Lucius" into "Laelius", i.e., C. Laelius, who was consul in 140.³⁵ It seems, however, that nothing so radical is needed in order to explain why Simon's envoys, dispatched in 172 S.E., returned only in 174 S.E..

III. Who Delivered the Mail?

The text of *I Macc.* 15 is strangely reminiscent of what we know of Scipio's grand tour of the East. First, in v. 15, we hear that the Jewish ambassadors brought back letters "to the kings and countries", a phrase which recalls those

³³ For a good comparison, note Josephus' insertion of an account of the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan River and their environs, which, as it were, allows the time needed for the building of Vespasian's rafts — BJ 3.506-521. See P. Villalba i Varneda, *The Historical Method of Flavius Josephus* (Leiden 1986), 171. — As for the question, *how much* time should be supposed to have passed between vv. 14 and 25 in *I Macc.* 15, see Gauger (above, n. 32), 306-309.

³⁴ So too, for example, Gauger (above, n. 32), 304; T. Fischer, "Zu den Beziehungen zwischen Rom und den Juden im 2. Jahrhundert", *ZATW* 86 (1974), 90. Our references to "author or editor" leave open the possibility, urged by many (such as Gauger), that the Roman material in ch. 15 was inserted into an earlier version of *I Maccabees*, perhaps by the same editor who inserted ch. 8; this need not concern us here.

³⁵ G. de Sanctis, *Storia dei Romani* IV.3 (Florence 1964), 195-196 n. 77.

used of Scipio's mandate.³⁶ Then we are given, in vv. 16-21, a copy of the letter directed to Ptolemy Physcon, just as Egypt was the first place visited by Scipio and the only one where our sources — notably Diodorus — give us any details of his doings.³⁷ Finally, vv. 22-23 give a long list of eastern regents and cities to which similar letters were sent, just as Scipio's stay in Egypt was followed by stops all around the same region. Specifically, we know that Scipio visited Cyprus, Syria, Pergamum, Rhodes and various places in Asia Minor and Greece, and he very likely visited Delos too (see n. 30); the list in *I Maccabees* includes Delos, Rhodes and Cyprus and the kings of Syria and Pergamum along with numerous other places in Greece and Asia Minor.³⁸ In the long list in *I Macc.* 15.21-23 there is only one addressee which there is specific reason to suspect that Scipio did not visit, namely, Cyrene, which lies to the west of Egypt: Scipio's travels after Egypt are specifically said (Diodorus 33.28b.3) to have taken him to Cyprus and then Syria, from which he apparently continued through Asia Minor and Greece on his leisurely way back to Italy. But Cyrene is also the least secure textually in the list in *I Maccabees*, for one of the uncials (Venetus) reads "Smyrna".³⁹

Thus, the widespread evidence for Roman involvement throughout the East in 140/139 BCE is complemented by Jewish evidence for the return in the very next year (174 S.E. [*I Macc.* 15.10] = autumn 139/138) of envoys who elicited Roman involvement throughout the East on behalf of the Hasmoneans. It does not take much imagination to put the two bodies of evidence together. That this has not been done seems to be due only to the fact that in the nineteenth century, when it was usual to think "Lucius *hypatos*" (*I Macc.* 15.16) was the consul of 139 BCE, it was usually thought — as we noted at the outset — that Scipio's mission came a few years later or earlier than 139 BCE, while in the twentieth century, when the Oxyrhynchus Livy epitome made it virtually certain that the mission came ca. 139 BCE, the same source, and the *Fasti Antiates*, also proved

³⁶ "Cities, peoples and kings" (Plut., *Mor.* 200-201); "the kings of the world" (Athenaeus 6.273a = Poseidonius, frag. 265 Edelstein-Kidd); "Egypt, Syria, Asia and Greece" (Cic., *De Rep.* 6.11.11).

³⁷ See esp. Diodorus 33.28b, also Plutarch (above, n. 36) and Justin 38.8.8-11; H. Winkler, *Rom und Aegypten im 2. Jahrhundert v. Chr.* (Diss. Leipzig, Engelsdorf-Leipzig 1933), 66-73.

³⁸ For an account of Scipio's probable itinerary, see Knibbe (above, n. 1), 36-37. According to Lucilius 14.464-468 (see W. Krenkel, *Lucilius: Satiren I* [Leiden 1970], 286-287), Scipio even visited Ecbatana and Babylonia; we need not enter the debates about the probability of Roman contacts with Parthia at such an early date (see Knibbe, 37 n. 11), or as to when exactly Ecbatana was in Parthian or Seleucid hands. For us it is enough to note that *I Macc.* 15.22 similarly lists King "Arsaces" (Mithridates I of Parthia) among the addressees. For a map locating the addressees listed in *I Macc.* 15, see Goldstein (above, n. 12), 539.

³⁹ See Bickermann (above, n. 10); *idem*, *TLZ* 58 (1933), col. 341.

that neither consul of 139 BCE was named Lucius. The usual response to the latter conclusion has been, as noted, to identify "Lucius *hypatos*" as the consul of 142 BCE, Lucius Caecilius Metellus Calvus, and to move our text up to 142 BCE and ch. 14. In fact, however, there is an alternative to this approach, one which accounts for the evidence currently available and allows us both to leave *I Macc.* 15.15-24 in its explicit chronological context and to take seriously the similarities between it and Scipio's mission.

The alternative approach simply posits that it took the Jewish ambassadors a year or two to return from Rome to Judaea. While any number of circumstances could explain this, we are now in the position to suggest one or two which go beyond the realm of speculation. Namely, if the Senate decided to send letters supporting Simon to various kings and cities around the Mediterranean, it is likely that Simon's envoys would be burdened with their delivery; why should the Romans bother when the Jews were the interested parties? Indeed, there is some evidence for petitioners being entrusted with Roman warnings to third parties.⁴⁰ But delivering all those letters would take time. Furthermore, it would

40 See, for example, *SIG* II³, nos. 646 and 664 = R.K. Sherk, *Roman Documents from the Greek East* (Baltimore 1969), no. 2, lines 56-60 (ca. 170 BCE) and no. 5, lines 4-5 (ca. 164 BCE); *SEG* III, no. 378, B, lines 12-13 (ca. 100 BCE), along with H.H. Schmitt, *Rom und Rhodos* (Munich 1957), 180-181, and R.M. Berthold, *Rhodes in the Hellenistic Age* (Ithaca-London 1984), 228 n. 38; and Jos., *AJ* 14.147 (on its date, see above, n. 32). Regarding the first-named text (See *SIG* II³ no. 646), it is true that the original editor thought the reference was merely to letters of recommendation, comparing it to Jos., *AJ* 13.263, and Mommsen agreed, adding an additional parallel at *AJ* 13.165; see P. Foucart, "Sénatus-consulte de Thisbé (170)", *Mémoires de l'institut national de France, Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* 37 (1906), 343; Mommsen (above, n. 26), III.2, 1156; *idem, Gesammelte Schriften* VIII (Berlin 1913), 296. However, on the one hand, both Josephan texts say the letters are to ensure safe travel home, but the inscription does not. On the other hand, this clause of the epigraphic SC is phrased just as the preceding ones, which seems to indicate that it, too, represents a Roman decision concerning a request which brought the Thisbians to Rome, not a formality after their business there was successfully completed. The letters promised are termed *grammata philanthrôpa*, which Foucart renders "lettres de recommandation" and Sherk (above, n. 27: 22) renders "courteous letters", describing them in his *RDGE* (30) as "travel visas". However, "le mot *philanthrôpa* désigne les privilèges accordés à un étranger par une ville, et à une ville par une autorité supérieure, tel un roi, et aussi les actes décernant ces privilèges" (L. Robert, "Inscriptions d'Aphrodisias", *AC* 35 [1966], 402 — my emphasis); C.B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence in the Hellenistic Period* (New Haven 1934), 373. Thus, the intention may well be that the envoys were to be given letters announcing Roman protection of their city's rights. Beginning with the very first issue discussed in this SC, Roman ratification of the Thisbians' claims to their previously owned territories, harbors and revenues, there

also be hazardous; in fact, dealing with piracy was, according to Strabo (14.5.2, 669), one of the main items on Scipio's agenda.⁴¹ And even without the pirates, diplomats from a two-bit state such as Hasmonean Judaea might not be able to expect diplomatic courtesy everywhere they went. If, however, they were able to travel under Roman protection, things would have been quite different.

This brings us to the interesting point, too often overlooked, that, according to Justin 38.8.8, L. Metellus Calvus, the consul of 142, was one of the two members of Scipio's team for the eastern tour (the other was Sp. Mummius). If Simon's ambassadors indeed traveled with that team or in its wake, distributing the Roman letters after the groundwork was laid, then a return to Judaea no earlier than autumn 139 is exactly what we would expect.

Thus, there are two apparent possibilities. The first, which takes *hypatos* to mean specifically "consul", is that the documents in question were written in 142 BCE, when L. Metellus was consul, and the delay in the Jewish envoys' return was due to the fact that they first delivered the letters, accompanying Scipio's mission or in its wake. This reconstruction, however, entails the assumptions that Numenius was sent earlier than 172 S.E. (so *I Macc.* 14.24 is misplaced) and that some of 142 and all of 141 went by before the Jewish diplomats left Rome; both are possible, neither attractive. A preferable possibility is based upon allowing *hypatos* to refer, as in the Delian inscription mentioned above (n. 30), to L. Metellus in his role as diplomat accompanying Scipio, and to assume the letters were written in the course of the embassy; in this case, *I Macc.* 14.24 would be placed properly and the delay in Numenius' return would be explained by the assumption that he either accompanied Scipio's embassy or waited in Rome for its return so as to receive copies of Lucius' letters.

Historically, there is not much difference between the two options. Both assume that the chronological proximity of Scipio's international tour and L. Metellus' international correspondence (*I Macc.* 15) is not merely coincidental. Rather, they are organically bound up one with another. On the plane of literature and propaganda, by way of comparison, *I Macc.* 8 justified the Hasmonean alliance with Rome by pointing to Rome's proven ability to subjugate its adversaries, exemplified by L. Mummius' destruction of Corinth in 146 (v. 10). Similarly, but in the arena of history,⁴² ch. 15 shows us the Hasmoneans hanging

are several points discussed in the SC about which the Thisbians would want Rome to inform other cities.

⁴¹ Strabo (*ibid.*) specifically links the plague of piracy to Tryphon, that is, to the years immediately preceding Scipio's mission; cf. E. Maróti, "Diodotus Tryphon et la piraterie", *Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 10 (1962), 187-194. For more literature on piracy, see E. Will, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique* II² (Nancy 1982), 466.

⁴² Whether all clauses in Lucius' letter are authentic, and whether all the addressees listed really received copies, is, of course, another matter.

onto Roman coattails when Mummius' brother and the destroyer of Carthage (also in 146) made a triumphant tour of the East: the third member of that Roman embassy, we are told, proclaimed everywhere a Roman guarantee for Judaean sovereignty.

The careful and disciplined scholar to whom this volume is offered will hopefully forgive us for concluding by inviting some idle speculation. Namely, one wonders how enthusiastic the Hasmoneans and their propagandist would have been, had they known that this Roman support, which they were so pleased to trumpet, was part of a historical process which was to end with the dynasty's nemesis being sent east by the same Senate precisely one hundred years later.

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