

## PREFACE OF THE EDITORS

*Seleukid Perspectives* explores the kingdom that continues to fascinate students of Ancient History. Particularly appealing are its wide geographical span, multi-cultural population, and seemingly unending dynastic and political turmoil. Cooperation of mostly younger colleagues to confront the multifarious research challenges began at the *Sinking of the Anchor Conference* in Exeter in 2008. It developed into a series of (mostly numbered) *Seleukid Study Days* as of 2010, from which the (loosely defined) Seleukid Study Group evolved. Five volumes have so far been published by this group. The kingdom's many minor and major military operations had been addressed variously, especially at the Brussels conference *Rome and the Seleukid East* (SSD V, 2015, published in 2019). This was also the first conference at which the two of us met and joined forces. Our collaboration grew closer over the subsequent SSD VI on *Seleukid Ideology* in North Bay, ON in 2017, the proceedings of which were published as the first volume in the *Seleukid Perspective* series in 2023.<sup>1</sup>

It was the eminent scholar of Hellenistic warfare Nick Sekunda who, as our local host, chose the agenda of SSD VII in Sopot, Poland, in the summer of 2019. Besides the more traditional war accounts, we then began to turn to battle narratives and the analysis of what was arguably the largest military machinery of the Hellenistic world. Many unfortunate circumstances prevented us, however, from publishing the proceedings: individual health conditions, the Covid-19 pandemic, and the further escalation of the Russian war against Ukraine were some of the reasons why we had only received two submissions by 2022. But Scolnic and Coşkun had launched, in the meantime, the *Seleukid Lecture Series* in May 2021.<sup>2</sup> Several of the papers delivered online at this near-monthly virtual venue continued dwelling on a military focus, so that we gradually saw the potential of dedicating a full volume to *The Seleukids at War*.

- 1 These are the first five collaborative volumes: Erickson, K. and Ramsey, G. (eds.) 2011: *Seleucid Dissolution: The Sinking of the Anchor*, Wiesbaden. Coşkun, A. and McAuley, A. (eds.) 2016: *Seleukid Royal Women. Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship*, Stuttgart. Erickson, K. 2018: *The Seleukid Empire, 281–222 BC. War within the Family*, Swansea. Coşkun, A. and Engels, D. (eds.) 2019: *Rome and the Seleukid East. Selected Papers from Seleukid Study Day V, Brussels, 21–23 August 2015*, Brussels. Coşkun, A. and Wenghofer, R. (eds.) 2023: *Seleukid Ideology: Creation, Reception, and Response (Seleukid Perspectives, vol. 1)*, Stuttgart. Further information on the group's activities (<https://www.altaycoskun.com/events-news>) and exhaustive bibliographies (<https://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-bibliographies>) can be found online.
- 2 See the website <https://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-lectures> for programs, abstracts, and recordings of past lectures.

The present book includes four papers that have developed out of the Sopot conference (ch. 3 by Sekunda, ch. 6 by Pim Möhring and Rolf Strootman, ch. 7 by Hadrien Bru, and ch. 12 by Yuri Kuzmin) and another six that have been first presented and discussed at the *Seleukid Lecture Series* (ch. 2 by John Serrati, ch. 4 by Paul Johstono, ch. 9 by Graham Wrightson, ch. 10 by Silvannen Gerrard, ch. 11 by Michael Taylor, and ch. 13 by Pierre-Luc Brisson).<sup>3</sup> The two of us added one chapter each to complement the range of military subjects (ch. 5 by Coşkun and ch. 8 by Scolnic), besides the frame that introduces (ch. 1) and concludes (ch. 14) the book. We would like to thank our authors for working patiently with us through their – and not rarely also through their colleagues’ – manuscripts. This process allowed the discussion to continue after our in-person and virtual meetings. We hope that such interaction has improved each of the arguments here presented, while still forming a pluralistic snapshot of the current debates on Seleukid, Hellenistic, and partly also Roman warfare.

We would, moreover, like to extend our thanks to the editorial board of *Seleukid Perspectives* for providing advice and helping with peer review: Laetitia Graslin-Thomé (Nancy), David Engels (Poznań/Warsaw), and Kyle Erickson (Lampeter), who have now been joined by Eva Anagnostou-Laoutides (Macquarie, Sydney). We are grateful for the meticulous formatting of the typoscript by Stone Chen (Waterloo/Toronto), who also helped with the index. We further gladly acknowledge the great cooperation with Katharina Stüdemann at Franz Steiner Verlag. Last but not least, we gratefully mention the support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada: the funding of Coşkun’s research project on ancient imperialism and ethnic constructs covered the publication subsidies for the present volume.

While *Seleukid Perspectives 2* will soon be entrusted to the press, work on the next two volumes is already underway: *Jewish Responses to Seleukid Rule*, vol. 3; *Recent Studies on Seleukid Coinage*, vol. 4. We hope that many more will follow.

August 2024  
Altay Coşkun, Waterloo, ON  
Ben Scolnic, Hamden, CT

3 Note that Sekunda presented a more developed version of his Sopot paper also at this venue.

## CHAPTER 1

### AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SELEUKIDS AT WAR: RECRUITMENT, COMPOSITION, AND ORGANIZATION

*Benjamin E. Scolnic and Altay Coşkun*

#### SELEUKID RESEARCH IN ITS CONTEXT

The recent surge of Seleukid Studies follows some broader trends in Hellenistic research. Leaving aside a variety of detailed epigraphic, numismatic, or archaeological publications,<sup>1</sup> and further the increasing number of studies with a local or regional concentration,<sup>2</sup> the traditional interest in king-centred dynastic and political narratives continues.<sup>3</sup> Yet recent work has not just extended the perspective to include royal wives and the court,<sup>4</sup> but also aimed at a more systematic analysis of the construction of royalty, the communication of royal conceptions, and the negotiation of power along these ideological lines.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the past two decades

- 1 See *Seleukid Bibliographies* I–III, 2024, at <https://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-bibliographies>. See also the collection of papers without a narrow thematic focus: Dąbrowa 2011 and Oetjen 2020.
- 2 Most recent for Babylon(ia) are Debourse 2022 and Graslin-Thomé et al. 2023; cf. Coşkun 2023b, 347–356. Most recent for the Iranian territories is Daryaei, Rollinger, and Canepa 2023; cf. Panitschek 2016; Engels 2017; Strootman and Versluys 2017; Canepa 2020; Lerouge-Cohen 2022. Forthcoming regarding Judaea is *Seleukid Perspectives* 3 (Coşkun and Scolnic ca. 2025); cf. Grainger 2012; Coşkun 2019a; 2022c. For Parthia, see Olbrycht; Overtoom 2020. For more, see *Seleukid Bibliographies* II: *Babyloniaca* (2024) and IV: *Judaica* (in preparation) and V: *Persica* (in preparation) at <https://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-bibliographies>. More on regional studies below in the context of ‘mercenaries’.
- 3 Narratives: Grainger 2014; 2015a; 2015b; and n. 5 below. Diplomacy: Ma 2002; 2003; Grainger 2017a; Dreyer and Gerardin 2021; Coşkun 2023c; Wenghofer 2023. Nuptial diplomacy: Coşkun ca. 2024 and n. 4 below. Diplomacy and ideological communication: n. 5 below. For more, see *Seleukid Bibliographies* I: *Historica* (2024) at <https://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-bibliographies>. For useful recent narratives including the Seleukids, see also Chaniotis 2018; Capdetrey 2022. Of little value is Grainger 2020, as his bibliography is short and dated.
- 4 Royal wives: e.g., Coşkun and McAuley 2016; Hämmerling 2019; Carney and Müller 2021; Kunst 2021; Coşkun 2022a; 2022b; 2023a; 2024; Llewellyn-Jones and McAuley 2023. Court: Capdetrey; Strootman 2014/2020; Erskine, Llewellyn-Jones, and Wallace 2017.
- 5 E.g., Ma 2010; Iossif 2011; Gehrke 2013; Grainger 2017b; Ogden 2017; 2020; Pfeiffer and Klinkott 2021; Anagnostou-Laoutides and Pfeiffer 2022; Coşkun and Wenghofer 2023;

have paid greater attention to conflict and violent confrontation, both in terms of reconfiguring the highly fragmentary evidence into plausible histories of wars and revolts and of providing political analyses thereof.<sup>6</sup> The green book series of the Nancy *équipe* deserves particular mention, as it has been fostering research around the military campaigns and diplomatic interaction of the middle and later Seleukids, most of all Antiochos III and Antiochos IV.<sup>7</sup> Another noteworthy sub-trend seeks comparisons of the Seleukids with the Ptolemies.<sup>8</sup>

The present book, however, inserts itself into a trend that has been spurred by the fascination for the material and physical sides of the king's power, his military forces. In contrast to Roman Army Studies, which remained, if not popular, then at least steady after World War II, Greek and Hellenistic armies enjoyed little attention in the postwar era. Marcel Launey's *Recherches sur les armées hellénistiques* stand out in splendid isolation during the middle of the past century. It was only a generation later that Bezalel Bar-Kochva published his PhD dissertation on the Seleukid army, still a standard work to this day. Soon thereafter, however, the field began to develop and diversify at a growing pace.<sup>9</sup>

Let us begin by mentioning a few sub-branches that have only been touched on in passing in this volume. There is now a wide-ranging exploration of the culture of warriors and social history of warfare by scholars such as Hans van Wees and Angelos Chaniotis.<sup>10</sup> While we also observe a strong interest in ancient seafaring and naval warfare, this dimension of the Seleukid kingdom is only beginning to come under the scholarly gaze.<sup>11</sup> Next, it seems to be a commonplace to regard military expenses as the driving factor for issuing coins in antiquity, especially salaries and provisions for soldiers, and this seems to hold true for the Seleukids as well.<sup>12</sup> Yet the number of studies that investigate the costs and finan-

Coşkun 2023c. Dynastic ruler titles: de Callataÿ and Lorber 2011; Muccioli 2013; Caneva 2023. See also n. 20 below on victory ideology.

- 6 Especially Ehling 2003; 2008; Grainger 2010; Erickson and Ramsey 2011; Fischer-Bovet 2015; Chrubasik 2016; Bernhardt 2017; Coşkun 2018a; 2018b; 2019b; 2021a; 2021b; 2024; Erickson 2018; Coşkun and Engels 2019; Graslin-Thomé and Véisse 2021; Honigman and Véisse 2021; Mittag 2021; Kosmin and Moyer 2022.
- 7 Antiochos III: Feyel and Graslin-Thomé 2017. Antiochos IV: Feyel and Graslin-Thomé 2014. Also Feyel, Fournier, Graslin-Thomé, and Kirbihler 2012; Feyel and Graslin-Thomé 2021; Feyel, Graslin-Thomé, and Martinez-Sève ca. 2024.
- 8 Fischer-Bovet 2015; 2020; Fischer-Bovet and von Reden 2021.
- 9 Greece and Rome: e.g., Erdkamp 2007; Sabin, van Wees, and Whitby 2007; Campbell and Tritle 2013; Taylor 2020. And Launey 1950; Bar-Kochva 1976.
- 10 van Wees 1992; 2004; Chaniotis 2005; Sabin, van Wees, and Whitby 2007; Whately 2021.
- 11 General: e.g., Horden and Purcell 2000; de Souza 2001; de Souza and Arnaud 2017; Strootman et al. 2019. Seleukid: Schäfer 2023 and Möhring 2024; also Kosmin 2013 and Anagnostou-Laoutides 2023. The desideratum has been formulated most recently by Potts 2024. Note that Philip de Souza, who authored several studies on technical and cultural aspects of warfare mainly in the Classical period as well as of seafaring and piracy more largely, is currently working on an investigation of the Seleukid navy and naval campaigns.
- 12 For military expenses among other state expenditure, see Howgego 1995, 35–38 (antiquity); cf. de Callataÿ 1997 (Mithradatids). For the Seleukids, see Houghton and Lorber 2002, I p. XVIII; le Rider and de Callataÿ 2006, 174f.; Hoover 2007 and 2009, lii.

cial implications of Seleukid warfare are still relatively rare, though quickly rising in number.<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps the most important theme of this new volume, *The Seleukids at War*, is manpower: who were the people that fought for the king, where did they come from, and where did they retire (if they survived)? Building on the works of Launey and Bar-Kochva, Getzel Cohen presented his first and seminal work on Macedonian settlements in 1978, an investigation closely linked with the rewarding of veterans and the recruitment of fresh soldiers. Many related studies followed by the same scholar and others, such as by Richard Billows.<sup>14</sup> And the first two studies in this volume, written by John Serrati (ch. 2) and Nicholas Sekunda (ch. 3), will explore in complementary ways the relation between settlement, land lot, Macedonian status, and the duty of military service.

Sekunda also is the colleague who has most actively spearheaded the rise of specialized interest in the Seleukid army, as he has been conducting systematic research on the military organization of the major Hellenistic kingdoms for over three decades. He has authored the fundamental monographs for the three major Successor Kingdoms, covering the recruitment, organization, and equipment of soldiers, among other things.<sup>15</sup>

As Sekunda's own military service is no minor cause for his interest and expertise, many younger colleagues are now pursuing a hands-on approach, including Jean Charle du Plessis and Gabriele Esposito, who have been putting Hellenistic armour to practice tests.<sup>16</sup> Prolific are the contributions of Graham Wrightson to the field: besides co-organizing a high number of symposia on the history of Alexander the Great and the International Ancient Warfare conference series, his research focuses on combined arms combat and command structure, on the latter of which he is contributing to the present volume (ch. 9). Silvannen Gerrard has offered a scrutiny of infantry/cavalry ratios to our collaborative project, which is based on her PhD thesis.<sup>17</sup>

Add Paul Johstono, who directs the program 'Leadership and the Profession of Arms' at the Air Command and Staff College, Air University, Maxwell, AL. His work sheds light on the operational complexities of the military apparatus, as illustrated through the study of force generation (recruitment) in this volume.<sup>18</sup> Hand in hand with this renewed interest in technical detail and practicality goes

13 The most systematic for the Hellenistic period is now van Regenmortel 2024. See also Aperghis 2004; 2010; 2020; Mittag 2011; Taylor 2020; Lorber 2024. For related phenomena, see, e.g., de Callatay 2004 (taxation in kind); Duyrat 2016 (hoarding). Many thanks to Oliver Hoover for helping us update this bibliography.

14 Cohen 1978; 1995; 2006; 2013; Billows 1995; Schuler 1998; Mileta 2008; Daubner 2011; Muccioli 2019; Mairs and Fischer-Bovet 2021; Roux 2023. And for the Ptolemies, Fischer-Bovet 2014; cf. Serrati forthcoming; see also next note.

15 Seleukids: Sekunda and McBride 1994; Sekunda 1995; 2006. Others: Sekunda 1992; 2012; 2013; 2021; Sekunda and de Souza 2007. On the Ptolemaic army, see also Veisse and Wack-enier 2014; Johstono 2020.

16 du Plessis 2022; Esposito 2014; 2019.

17 Wrightson 2019; 2022; 2024a; 2024b; ca. 2025. And Gerrard 2020.

18 Cf. Johstono 2020 (Ptolemaic army).

the desire for fresh war or battle narratives, often presented in the Pen & Sword book series.<sup>19</sup> In this line stands Michael Taylor's painstaking analysis of the Battle of Magnesia (ch. 11 in this volume), after he has so far produced two monographs on related topics.<sup>20</sup>

As we shall develop below, the description of the same battle in Livy's account is also our main literary source (besides the Battle of Raphia and the military procession at Daphne) for the many ethnically defined units in the Seleukid army. These are often addressed somewhat sweepingly as 'light army', although they included heavy infantry such as Galatians or even mounted troops (riding on horses, camels, or elephants). Others call them 'mercenaries', although the dividing lines between 'Macedonian' core units, foreign soldiers serving for a salary, and foreign allied troops are not always easy to draw, since all of them could receive some kind of payment, be settled on Seleukid territory, or potentially even be drafted into other units. There is no consensus on a firm definition, and we have not imposed a unified terminology on the different papers in this volume.

The quickly growing body of scholarship is enhancing our understanding of the conditions and expectations for specialist fighters who fought in ethnically defined units, whether due to their recruitment, the origin of their ancestors, an institutional tradition of their corps, or the style of weapons predominantly deployed.<sup>21</sup> Most research has been on the Galatians, whether or not they are correctly addressed as mercenaries.<sup>22</sup> Similar questions may in fact be raised for other units, such as the Cretans, who have recently been the object of a thorough treatment by Lorenzo Paoletti,<sup>23</sup> or the Jews, arguably the subject people best attested in our literary tradition. While much scholarship on them focuses on the Maccabean Revolt or the political relation of the high priests of Jerusalem with the Seleukid kings, Ben Scolnic has undertaken to discuss, for this volume, some of the sources that not only document their persistent service under Hellenistic rulers but also the prestige as loyal and valiant fighters they thus earned.<sup>24</sup> Pim

19 Such as Bennett and Roberts 2011/19; Taylor 2013; du Plessis 2022; Wrightson 2022. Many more recent monographs (Elton 2023), whether on the Seleukids as such (Grainger 2014; 2015a; 2015b) or on other Successors as Antipatros (Grainger 2019) and Antigonos I (Champion 2014), could be listed here, nearly all also relevant for the early Seleukids. Among book chapters, see also Serrati 2013.

20 M.J. Taylor 2013 and 2020. On the pike phalanx, see also Matthew 2015 and R. Taylor 2020.

21 See esp. Sängler and Scheuble-Reiter 2022, also Sion-Jenkins 2001; Trundle 2013, and next notes.

22 We shall avoid the large ideological field of the 'Galatian Victory', on which see esp. Kistler 2009; Nelson 2022, with Coşkun 2022, 36 for additional bibliography. The most detailed coverage of Gaulish and Galatian fighters under foreign command is by Baray 2014, whereby Baray 2017 extends this to a systematic scrutiny into recruitment, service, and reward of ancient mercenaries. Coşkun (2022), Burghart (2022), and Payen (2022) emphasize that the Galatians of Asia Minor were more often allies or even military-political powers acting in their own name than just mercenaries.

23 Paoletti 2022. Another study by Timo Klär is in preparation.

24 Connect this with the study of Jewish *politeumata* under the Seleukids and the Ptolemies by Sängler 2021.

Möhring and Rolf Strootman have gathered the evidence for the Mysians, and Hadrien Bru analogously for the Pisidians, attested mainly under the long rule of Antiochos III but also beyond.

Many of the aforementioned studies repeatedly address, in their varying contexts, Macedonian or foreign soldiers or settlers, the weapons they bore, the status they may have enjoyed, the Greek or ‘barbarian’ names by which they were called, and last but not least their possible origins and their declared or perceived ethnic identities. Controversies nowhere reach as far as in the context of the Daphne Parade of 166 BCE, which has been vividly discussed by Rolf Strootman, Nicholas Sekunda, Stephen Harrison, and Altay Coşkun together with Ben Scolnic on 15 May 2024, as well as in other recent sessions of the *Seleukid Lecture Series*, to which also Paul Johstono, Philip de Souza, John Serrati, Michael Taylor, and Graham Wrightson have contributed.<sup>25</sup> While discussions are ongoing, Coşkun’s *Epilogue* (ch. 14) offers a synthesis for the question of the ‘Macedonians’ attested under the Seleukids.

In what follows, we shall use Livy’s description of the Battle at Magnesia as a frame to survey the contributions to this volume in some more detail.

## THE CHEQUERED LINE OF THE SELEUKID ARMY

*The Roman line was nearly uniform throughout with respect to both men and armour ... The king’s line was more chequered with troops of many nations, dissimilar both in their persons and armour.*

Livy 37.39.7, 40.1

The Battle of Magnesia, fought in the autumn or early winter of 190 BCE, was one of the decisive battles of the ancient world. A Roman army, commanded by the consul Lucius Cornelius Scipio, defeated Antiochos III near the town of Magnesia-ad-Sipyllum (modern Manisa). The victory accelerated the process that made Rome the unipolar power of the entire Mediterranean. The subsequent Treaty of Apameia ceded Seleukid territories west of the Taurus to Pergamon and Rhodes, forbade the maintenance of warships and elephants, and assessed a massive indemnity of 15,000 silver talents.

In Livy’s vivid description of the opposing forces at the Battle of Magnesia, we see the homogeneous Romans against the diverse elements of the Seleukid force under Antiochos III. The Roman army was closer to our modern concept of the military of a nation-state. In the details Livy provides of the array of Seleukid forces, we are introduced to many of the themes with which we shall engage in this volume. One theme is how to read our sources. Even though Magnesia was one of the most important battles in Seleukid history, we are still trying to under-

25 See <https://www.altaycoskun.com/seleukid-lectures>, also for 20 April 2022, 15 June 2022, 21 December 2022, 20 September 2023, and 19 June 2024. Cf. the sessions on 18 August 2021 (Silvannen Gerrard on infantry / cavalry ratio) and 15 December 2021 (Stephen Harrison on the Daphne Parade).

stand the dynamics of such conflicts and analyze the accuracy of the ancient descriptions that have survived. The main historical source for this battle is Livy, whose account no doubt distorts history to magnify Roman military glory and moral superiority. This may be why Livy gives us so many details.<sup>26</sup> Could his description of the chequered line be a detailed condemnation of ‘Others’ who were destined to fall to the ‘Us’ of Rome? Or shall we see the diversity of the Seleukid empire displayed at the Battle of Magnesia as a projection of an ‘ideal’ Seleukid world, which is even more directly symbolized at another touchstone in Seleukid military history for which we also have detailed information, Antiochos IV’s military procession at Daphne in 166?

The chequered line of the Seleukids was composed of soldiers coming from many different peoples and places, representing the huge expanse of that empire. Who were these soldiers? Some were ‘Macedonians’, but this term is itself quite complicated and interesting, as some of our scholars in this volume will show. What was the composition of the chequered line? How were all those soldiers from so many places in the kingdom and beyond recruited? How many were obligated to serve? How many were professional soldiers, and how many had been drafted from their farmland or business? The ‘events history’ of the Hellenistic Period is always front and center in scholarship, but the structural organizations of the armies often determined the outcomes of military events. And an important part of these structures was determined by how armies were mobilized.

## RECRUITMENT

The Seleukids obviously had great needs for manpower in their extensive warfare with usurpers and external powers. To continue Livy’s account of the Seleukid army at Magnesia:

*There was a body of sixteen thousand men armed ‘after the manner of the Macedonians’ which were called a phalanx. This formed the centre and was divided in front into ten parts. These parts were separated by two elephants placed between each two; the line of soldiers was thirty-two ranks deep from point to rear. This was the main strength of the king’s army, and it exhibited a formidable sight, both in the other particulars of its appearance, and in the elephants towering so high among the soldiers.*

Livy 37.40.2–4

How was such a heterogeneous army assembled? Paul Johstono, in ch. 4, ‘Generating Infantry for Seleukid Field Armies’, finds the Seleukid method of recruitment particularly worthy of study. The historical evidence, while scarce, is more robust than for other Hellenistic kingdoms and provides evidence for change over time. Seleukid recruitment had to be maintained across vast distances and many different peoples and languages. Johstono distinguishes between the generation of field armies, of garrisons, and of naval forces. The Macedonian-style phalanx was

26 For some aspects of Livy’s distortion, see Elton 2023, 96–98.



the largest component of the core royal army. An evaluation of the evidence demonstrates that the Seleukids were more adaptive in their approach to recruiting ‘Macedonians’ than most studies have recognized. The generation of these forces multiplied Seleukid power in some instances but also achieved multiple objectives beyond the battlefield. Their composition, origin, and role have some explanatory power for that battle and the outcome of the Roman-Syrian War.

We can better understand how an empire functioned and maintained power in far-flung areas by studying how the military was placed in various parts of the Seleukid kingdom, focusing on the establishment of military colonies. John Serrati, in ch. 2, ‘Soldiers, Settlers, and Citizens: *Katoikoi* in the Seleukid Empire’, emphasizes three Greek terms that are necessary for this discussion:

- *klērouchoi* – settlers who were given a plot of land (*klēros*) in return for military service;
- *katoikoi* – Greek and Macedonian military settlers;
- *katoikia* – military colonies settled with members of the same unit.

The Seleukids would have found it difficult to compete for good soldiers with other kingdoms without a scheme where at least some soldiers were given land in exchange for military service. The existence and maintenance of these military colonies should be seen as a primary reason for why the Seleukids were able to maintain such a powerful position in eastern Mediterranean throughout the third and into the second centuries BCE. The eventual decline of the system from the late second century BCE on was both a cause and an effect of the gradual breakup of the kingdom. Serrati combines actual evidence with common sense arguments to build his case while being careful not to infer conclusions about the Seleukid system from the Ptolemaic one.

Nicholas Sekunda, in ch. 3, ‘Macedonian Military Service in the Seleukid Kingdom’, questions the theory that the core of Seleukid armies was formed by ‘grants of land by the monarchy in return for military service by the allotment-holder and his male offspring’, the so-called ‘kleruchic system’, as found in Ptolemaic Egypt. Sekunda insists that the establishment of colonies and the distribution of *klēroi* did not create an obligation to perform military service. Since the Seleukid army was a ‘Macedonian’ army, it is possible that the Seleukid recruitment system was like the system of Antigonid Macedonia. Sekunda determines that the meaning of ‘Macedonian’ within the Seleukid kingdom was not just a matter of legal status, but also one of ethnicity and in fact origin. The Macedonian phalanx of the Seleukid kingdom was made up of persons of Macedonian patrilinear heritage, brought up in Macedonian institutions, and trained to fight in the Macedonian fashion. While ‘Macedonians’ were overwhelmingly descendants of ethnic Macedonians, who had been settled in the cities of the kingdom, certain legal rights, including that of citizen status in those new cities were conferred on others who became ‘Macedonians’ in return for liability to perform military service.

## COMPOSITION

Livy's account of the Battle of Magnesia also includes these ethnic elements in Antiochos III's army:

On the same side, a little farther on towards the wing, was the royal cohort; these were called **Argyraspides**, from the kind of armour which they wore. Next to these stood one thousand two hundred Dahan bowmen on horseback; then, three thousand light infantry, part Cretans and part Trallians, the number of each being equal; adjoining these, were two thousand five hundred **Mysian** archers. Four thousand Kyratian slingers and Elymaian archers mixed together covered the flank of the wing. Next to the left flank of the phalanx, stood one thousand five hundred Gallograecian horse, and two thousand Kappadokians (which were sent by king Ariarathes) wearing the same kind of armour; then, auxiliaries of all kinds mixed together ... they were mostly Syrians, with a mixture of Phrygians and Lydians.

Livy 37.40.9–12

We find this interesting attestation of the Silvershields (*argyraspides*) in Antiochos III's army at Magnesia. This rubric goes back to Alexander, who around 327 BCE, encouraged his longest-serving guard troops to decorate their shields with a layer of silver, hence the distinguished name of the Silvershields, who would be remembered as Alexander's heralded guard phalangites. In ch. 5, 'Macedonians, Silvershields, and the Seleukid Phalanx', Altay Coşkun focuses on the evidence in Seleukid history of infantry explicitly attested as *argyraspides*. In one of his army reforms, Antiochos III evoked the memory of Alexander's Silvershields when he designated a new division with selected men from his kingdom. They are attested at the Battle of Raphia, numbering near 10,000 men (217 BCE), and perhaps up to 15,000 at the Battle of Magnesia, as Coşkun now argues. Even after Antiochos III's defeat by the Romans, we see his son Antiochos IV, a generation later at the Daphne Procession in 166 BCE, parading 15,000 Silvershields, 5,000 Bronzeshields, besides many other specialists including 5,000 men trained and equipped in Roman style. The king proudly presented them as the core of his mighty military with which he was about to campaign to the east. This discussion resonates in our attempt to come to a more precise understanding of the 'Macedonian' phalangites in various Hellenistic armies.

Soldiers from places like Mysia, as in the study (ch. 6) by Pim Möhring and Rolf Strootman, 'Mysian Light Infantry in the Seleukid Army', served in ethnic units, and their first loyalty was to their group. The authors take a close look at one of the listed ethnic groups, whose presence at Daphne has been a puzzle for scholars. Möhring and Strootman take a constructivist approach to ethnicity: Ethnic identity is situational and comes into being in contact with others and is based on both self-ascriptions and ascriptions by others. The Mysians lived in an area that was prohibited to Seleukid recruitment by the Treaty of Apameia. The region of Mysia, in the mountainous interior of North-West Anatolia, was not under Seleukid control at this time. Strootman and Möhring eschew the usual explanations and insist that they were truly Mysians, asserting that these are an example of an ethnically defined unit in Hellenistic armies irrespective of big-power politics. On a higher plane, the authors tackle the complex issue of ethnic identity.

The Mysians were not just referred to by this designation by others but *self-identified* as a group to market themselves as warriors with a stereotyped reputation for ferocity. If scholars have been puzzled by their inclusion in the Seleukid army, it is partly because they did not appreciate the fluidity of relationships in the Hellenistic era.

Hadrien Bru, in ch. 7, ‘The Pisidians Between Seleukids and Ptolemies’, shows that Pisidians were not only enrolled in the Ptolemaic armies in the Syrian Wars, but also were part of the Seleukid army at the Battle of Magnesia, so that we may assume close relationships between the king and the Pisidians, mainly used as light infantrymen. Although Bru demonstrates that Pisidians had a much longer history as troops hired to fight for foreign kings, we should not exclude that they served the Seleukids only under Achaïos and Antiochos III, under which kings we have positive evidence for them.

Benjamin Scolnic’s essay in ch. 8, ‘From Mosallomos’s Arrow to Makkabaios’s Sword: Jewish Soldiers in the Seleukid Era’, revises the usual view that the Jewish people were not involved in Hellenistic armies or warfare. As a constituent entity in the kingdoms of Alexander, the Ptolemies and the Seleukids, the Jews played a role like all the other peoples. Monotheism and its unique rituals may have created some differences between these soldiers and the polytheists they fought alongside. Still, a tradition of military prowess provides a very different context for the famous revolt against Antiochos IV in the 160s BCE. The traditional view may have been based on a theological overlay of sources that want to emphasize the role of the Divine rather than the military skill of the Maccabees in the revolt. In particular, the well-known Judas Makkabaios may have been an experienced military commander.

## ORGANIZATION

*The king himself was in the right wing; the command of the left he gave to his son Seleukos and Antipatros, the son of his brother; the centre was intrusted to Minnion, Zeuxis, and Philippos, the master of the elephants.*

Livy 37.41.1

As we think about the variety in the Seleukid army, we ask: how did those diverse elements interact in a command structure? It is important to understand the organizational structure of an army on every level, starting at the top. While one should not make an arbitrary, modern distinction between political and military, one sees that the leaders of the three wings at Magnesia were often trusted notables such as a king’s son, a close relative or a ‘Friend of the King’ rather than war-toughened, experienced commanders.

Again, Magnesia is referenced in all three papers here, partly because we have an unusual amount of detailed information for this battle. In ch. 9, ‘Comparison of Army Command Structure under Alexander and the Seleukids’, Graham Wrightson explores the command construct of the different armies and, applying this to

Magnesia, he sees the Roman organization as a factor in that victory. Wrightson examines the hierarchy of the Hellenistic phalanx as described by Asklepiodotos, comparing the Seleukid phalanx derived from that of Alexander the Great with the Roman legion and the organization of other infantries. Alexander's phalanx was successful because of its efficient command structure and effective commanders. Hellenistic monarchs had armies in the Macedonian style but were unsuccessful against the Romans because the hierarchy of tactical command was too cumbersome and inefficient. The Roman legions of the early second century BCE, a citizen militia forged in the crucible of the Second Punic War, were extremely effective. The Seleukid army of Antiochos III was a multi-ethnic and multi-faceted army reliant on a *sarissa* phalanx, a strong heavy cavalry unit, and supporting light infantry and elephants, besides chariots and camels as at Magnesia. The resiliency inherent in the legions' tactical structure is apparent as the Roman left wing quickly reformed after being smashed by cataphract charge. Wrightson disagrees with Polybios' claim that the Seleukid command was inflexible, though he does see it as less flexible than the Roman manipular legions. Still, it was the Seleukids' less efficient command structure that was decisive in their defeat.

In ch. 11, 'A Commander Will Put an End to His Insolence: The Battle of Magnesia, 190 BCE', Michael Taylor describes the complexity of this conflict which saw Seleukid cataphract cavalry and pikemen engaging Roman legionary infantry. Taylor reconstructs the scene while dealing with confusing and even contradictory evidence, mostly from Livy and Appian. Ultimately, the legions proved the more resilient force, rebounding from the shock of Antiochos' successful cataphract charge, while the Seleukid phalanx was destroyed after the cavalry supporting its left flank panicked and fled. Taylor emphasizes that the confrontation between the heavily armored cataphracts posed a significant threat to the Roman manipular legion, far more than the traditional Macedonian pike phalanx did. Despite early successes, the Seleukid army was doomed by bad luck, the initiative of Scipio's delegated commanders (especially Eumenes II) and Antiochos' own tactical myopia, including underestimating his opponent and the flexibility of their command structure. Once the enveloped phalanx broke, the Roman legionaries' equipment and fighting styles allowed them to inflict unusually heavy losses upon the retreating Seleukid troops.

We keep in mind that pitched battles were the exception rather than the rule, as Wrightson and Taylor remind us. Even an experienced commander might only have one or two of these in his life. Both sides had to agree on the time and place, and often one side shied away from a major confrontation. On the other hand, political factors came into play, as when Lucius Scipio risked battle from 'a less than ideal tactical position', hoping to achieve a victory before his consulship ended.

In ch. 10, 'Seleukid Infantry-Cavalry Ratios: The Numerical Importance of Cavalry', Silvannen Gerrard shows that the Battle of Magnesia illustrates the continuing numerical importance of the cavalry. The strong emphasis on the cavalry in proportion to the infantry here parallels the typical proportion of Alexander's army. Antiochos mustered these cavalrymen in the attempt to overawe and out-

number the Romans with the impressive extent and variety of his army. Despite the battle's outcome, the intent was that the cavalry would play a decisive role in achieving victory. This overall strategy was the standard from the early Seleukids until at least the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, and the kingdom was able to resource it.

## RELATED STUDIES

As arms are the extension of diplomacy and ideological discourse, so the latter two continue the investigation of military concerns in reverse. In *Seleukid Perspectives 1*, Richard Wenghofer and Altay Coşkun debated the efficacy of Seleukid ideology versus the resistance of the subject people and dependent neighbours. That ongoing dialogue provides context here, for in the Hellenistic world, especially in areas such as Asia Minor, the minor communities were often in fluid relationships with, and caught between the major powers. In this volume, we see examples of the Mysians, the Pisidians, and the Jews negotiating their survival and loyalties. It may be axiomatic to say that there were as many kinds of relationships as there were political entities, but this also implies a context where individuals could choose their patrons.

If you are a soldier from Patara, as in the example by Yuri Kuzmin, in ch. 12, 'A Shield with the Depiction of a Seleukid Anchor at Patara', you are not so much a loyal supporter of either empire, as you are trying to survive and make your way in the world, and you are loyal to your group. Kuzmin studies re-used blocks from a theatre in Lykian Patara that were thought to have been erected soon after the occupation of Patara by Antiochos III in 197–189 BCE. He now suggests that the blocks were parts of the monument dedicated to the liberation of Patara in 167 when the Romans declared the freedom of Lykia from the Rhodians.

Pierre-Luc Brisson, in ch. 13, 'Of Ships and Elephants: The Aftermath of Gnaeus Octavius' Embassy and Rome's Eastern Policy in the 160s BCE', states that after Magnesia and the peace settlement at Apameia, Seleukid political influence paled before the intimidating spectre of Rome. Then, after its victory over the Antigonids at Pydna in 168, Rome stood as the unipolar power in the eastern Mediterranean. The debate over how invested Rome was in its policies toward the east should be answered by the actions of the Roman emissary Gnaeus Octavius in Antioch in 163. After its victory over the chequered line at Magnesia, Rome would set the terms for its relationship with the Seleukid dynasty for the rest of its existence.

In ch. 14, 'Epilogue: The Strength of the Seleukid Army and Open Questions', Altay Coşkun integrates the different essays in this volume and emphasizes certain themes and debates that emerge. In reviewing the abundant evidence of the widespread recruitment and heterogeneous composition of the Seleukid military until at least the mid-2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE, we see the ongoing strength of the kingdom. Coşkun is particularly interested here in the interpretation of the term 'Macedonian' and the relationship of those identified as such with the Seleukid dynasty. In more than one sense, the Seleukid kingdom was a Macedonian empire.