

## THE EVOLUTION OF ROMAN DIPLOMATIC INTERACTION WITH THE ACHAEAN LEAGUE, 200-146 B.C.E.

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Polybius wrote his *Histories* with the overriding belief that the Romans consciously moved towards domination of the Mediterranean world, which they achieved in the remarkably short-span of fifty-three years.<sup>1</sup> However, it seems the type of control the Romans intended to exercise over the Greek East was not always characterised by a continuous and violent drive for power.<sup>2</sup> Instead, Roman behaviour between 200 and 146 B.C.E. appears to indicate a desire for control that was not always bellicose or domineering.<sup>3</sup> Instead, Roman power politics with the Achaean League in particular seem to show the Romans attempting to increase their influence through means that were more diplomatic and subtle in nature. In the period 200-146 there were four distinct stages of development in the diplomatic discourses between the Romans and the Achaeans that reflect the changing nature of their relationship. These stages were affected by both Roman attempts to gain influence and Achaean responses to their efforts; although it is difficult to conclusively identify a consistent foreign policy in either case. The aim of this paper is to trace these developments in the relationship between the Romans and the Achaean League from their alliance with Rome in 198 to the Achaean War in 146 and see how these distinct stages of development influence the way we interpret diplomatic exchanges between the two; for example the two embassies sent by the Romans to the Achaeans in 147 that can be interpreted as contradictory.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps these embassies can be more readily explained within the context of these stages of development, rather than in reference to a politically homogenous period of fifty-four years.

The period between 200 and 146 can be divided into these four stages of development: 198 to 191; 191 to 167; 167 to 150; and 150 to 146. The impetus for these stages of development appears to be a change in the political climate in either Rome or Achaea; although lack of information, particularly on the decision-making process, hinders any decisive comments. There were also many things that influenced the political climate in both Rome and Greece at any given time, so there are various factors that could be seen as potential impetuses; for example, treaties or changes in political leadership.<sup>5</sup> These stages in the relationship between the Romans and the Achaeans do not necessarily reflect a steady foreign policy from either side; however they do indicate an evolution of general trends in attitude. These stages are characterised by certain types of behaviour, although do not preclude actions within these stages that are inconsistent or reactionary.

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<sup>1</sup> Polybius 1.1.5-6, 20.1-2; 3.2.6; 6.50.6; 9.10.11; see also Walbank (1972) 160-166.

<sup>2</sup> The most obvious proponent of this theory is Harris (1979) but his argument on the bellicosity of Roman society has been adapted since then: for example Eckstein's argument on the anarchic state structure of the ancient Mediterranean also claims that the Romans were continuously warmongering; although not exclusively: Ekstein (2006; 2008).

<sup>3</sup> All dates will be B.C.E. unless otherwise stated.

<sup>4</sup> First embassy: Dio. *Fr.* 21.72.1; Just. *Epit.* 34.1.5; Livy *Per.* 51; Paus. 7.14.1-3; see also Polyb. 38.9.1-3, 6-8; second embassy: Dio. *Fr.* 21.72.2; Paus. 7.14.3-5; Polyb. 38.9.3-10.11. Gruen refers to it as a *volte-face* perhaps due to senatorial disparity or a reversal of tactic, although he argues against any type of warlike aim from the Romans: Gruen (1976) 58-62.

<sup>5</sup> The Achaean-Roman treaty c.191 is one such impetus, as would be the death of Philopoemen in 183 which led to renewed vigour for the war against Messene and their subjugation: Plut. *Phil.* 21.1-2.

Achaean-Roman relations were controversial from the very beginning.<sup>6</sup> Polybius' influence on the history of this period and his failure to give a consistently objective account of events hinders our ability to completely understand the actions of both the Romans and the Achaeans.<sup>7</sup> Polybius, in dealing with his homeland, was torn by his dual allegiance. His admiration of Rome and wish to portray her positively did not always coincide with his view of Achaean politics or loyalty to the League.<sup>8</sup> Polybius' attitude towards the Achaeans, like the Romans' attitude, evolved in the period between the Second Macedonian War and the destruction of Corinth.<sup>9</sup> He praised and defended them, but also showed shock, dismay and in the end barely veiled disgust; demonstrating Polybius' emotional entanglement with the Achaeans in his *Histories*.<sup>10</sup>

In order to analyse the relationship between Achaea and Rome, it is important to take into account their treaty obligations; of which we have no surviving account. However, it is clear that a treaty was eventually concluded by reference to its renewal in 183.<sup>11</sup> There are many potential dates for the formation of the treaty; however E. Badian's argument is the most convincing. He suggested it was concluded between November 192 and late spring 191, perhaps as a reward after the Achaeans declared loyalty to Rome in the war with Antiochus and the Aetolians.<sup>12</sup> In 184, Lycortas, the Achaean *strategus* referred to the treaty as *aequum*, although due to the fragmentary nature of the sources, the exact meaning of this is unclear.<sup>13</sup>

E. Gruen has attempted to reconstruct the terms of the treaty using the behaviour of both the Romans and the Achaeans. He concluded that, like the treaty of Apamea, there was a clause restricting each party from aiding the enemies of the other, although any stipulations on mutual aid were less obvious.<sup>14</sup> The conduct of the Achaeans during this period implies that their own foreign policy was not restricted by the treaty, nor were they completely subservient to Rome.<sup>15</sup> Perhaps the only claim that can be made is that the treaty was made on equal terms, based not only on the claims of Lycortas included by Livy, but also on the behaviour of the Achaeans.

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<sup>6</sup> The Achaean decision to defect to the Romans in 198 from their alliance with Philip V was an extremely contentious decision; App. *Maced.* 7; Livy 32.19-23.3; Paus. 7.8.1-2; Plut. *Flam.* 5.3-4; Zonar. 9.16; see also Polyb. 18.13.8-11.

<sup>7</sup> Polybius' impartiality was noticeably affected in his *Histories* when he dealt with certain people or events; for example there is ample evidence of his negative opinion of the Aetolians. For a list of references see: Sacks (1975) 92; Champion (1996) 323, n. 45; for Polybius' characterisation of the Aetolians, see also Champion (2004) 129-137, 140-43, 152; and Antonetti (1990) 45-143, for his discussion of the development of this negative stereotype.

<sup>8</sup> The most obvious example is Rome's behaviour after the Third Macedonian War: Polyb. 30.13.8-11.

<sup>9</sup> After 168 Polybius regarded Roman power as complete, while any opposition to them was useless and the fault of irresponsible leaders: Polyb. 3.4.3; Schepens (1989) 326; Eckstein (2008) 358.

<sup>10</sup> For example: Polyb. 2.38-39 (praise); 30.13.9-11 (defence); 38.1 (shock and dismay). Polybius' account of the period between 152 and 146 is particularly significant for its violence and emotion, perhaps owing to Polybius' sense of unease, as Walbank suggests (1972) 178-79.

<sup>11</sup> Polyb. 23.4.12-13.

<sup>12</sup> For example Gruen (1984) 34 proposed a date shortly after the Aetolian and Antiochene treaties; see also Badian (1952) 79.

<sup>13</sup> Livy 39.37.13.

<sup>14</sup> Gruen (1984) 34-38.

<sup>15</sup> The Achaeans seem to have maintained their own foreign relations as can be seen by their embassies to Attalus and Ptolemy VI in 169: Polyb. 28.12.8-9. For their lack of subservience, see n. 17 and 18.

If the treaty was concluded between November 192 and late spring 191, this predated the treaties with both Antiochus and the Aetolians.<sup>16</sup> Achaean behaviour seems to indicate considerable political freedom since they acted on many occasions in the way they thought appropriate, irrespective of Roman demands.<sup>17</sup> The repeated rebukes by the Roman senate however, show that they were not always pleased by the lack of Achaean consultation.<sup>18</sup> As Polybius recognised with some criticism, the Romans seem to have wanted to be consulted on all matters.<sup>19</sup> For much of this period, Roman-Achaean interaction seems to demonstrate that the Romans did not actively seek to control the Achaeans, but, as A. M. Eckstein recognises, did expect to be deferred to and obeyed by lesser states in accordance with their *dignitas* and *auctoritas*.<sup>20</sup> Perhaps the Romans learnt from this difference in expectations and ensured that their position was clear in their treaty with the Aetolians in 189 by compelling the Aetolians by oath to uphold the *imperium* and *maiestas* of the Roman people without fraud.<sup>21</sup>

The first identifiable stage of development between Achaëa and Rome is between 198 and the establishment of the treaty in 191. The attitude evident in this stage is characterised by the uncertainty that this new alliance caused in Achaëa and the Achaeans' concern not to offend the Romans until their alliance was official. Roman diplomacy in this period was focused on stability after the Second Macedonian War and the pending threat of Antiochus, so they seem concerned to maintain good relations with the Achaeans.<sup>22</sup> The uncertainty around the Achaean alliance with Rome forced them to walk tentatively in their new associations, with the League acting only once in this period without direct Roman approval against the aggressions of King Nabis of Sparta in 192 when he tried to recapture Gytheum which was under the protection of the League.<sup>23</sup>

In contrast to the previous trend in attitude, the second stage of diplomatic relations between 191 and 167 is characterised by Achaean attempts to assert their independence and Roman attempts to quiet their opposition. As Badian recognised, Achaean behaviour changed between late spring and autumn 191 to become independent and belligerent.<sup>24</sup> It is not an over-exaggeration to say that during this period the Achaeans disregarded the Romans by conducting themselves as an independent polity who followed an aggressive policy of expansion in the

<sup>16</sup> Both concluded in 189: the Aetolians: Polyb. 21.30.1-5, 32.1-15; Livy 38.9.9-11, 11; Antiochus: Polyb. 21.17.3-9, 42; Livy 37.45.14-17; 38.38.

<sup>17</sup> For examples see: in 185: Diod. 29.17; Paus. 7.8.6, 9.1-2; Polyb. 22.10.1-14, 12.5-10; in 182 (in defiance of the Roman settlement in 184: Livy 39.48.2-4; Paus. 7.9.5; Polyb. 23.4): Polyb. 23.17.5-18.2; in 181: Livy 40.20.2; Polyb. 24.2.2, 8.1-8; in 150/1: Paus. 7. 12.4-5; in 149/8; Paus.7.12.9; in 148: Paus. 7.13.1-5.

<sup>18</sup> For examples see: in 191; Livy 36.31.8; Plut. *Flam.* 17.1; in 187: Polyb. 22.3.2-3; see also Polyb. 22.7.5-7; in 185: Diod. 29.17; Paus. 7.8.6, 9.1-2; Polyb. 22.10.1-14, 12.5-10; in 184: Livy 39.33.6-8, 36.3-5; Paus. 7.9.3; Polyb. 22.12.10.

<sup>19</sup> Polyb. 23.17.4; see also Eckstein (2008) 359.

<sup>20</sup> Eckstein (2008) 359-60.

<sup>21</sup> Livy 38.11.2; Polyb. 21.32.2-3.

<sup>22</sup> The Romans turned their attention to Antiochus immediately after the declaration of freedom at the Isthmian Games in 196, warning him not to cross into Europe or make war on autonomous Greeks in Asia: Livy 33.34.2-5; Polyb. 18.47.1-4. As Derow points out, the Romans were determined to make war on Antiochus, despite what seems to be a lack of justification: Livy 36.1.4-5; Derow (2003) 64.

<sup>23</sup> Livy 35.25.2-12.

<sup>24</sup> Badian (1952) 79.

Peloponnese.<sup>25</sup> There are eight instances during this period that seem to have irritated the Romans and led to them reprimanding the Achaeans or displaying disapproval.<sup>26</sup> The lack of retaliation by the Romans in this period is often used as proof that the Romans were unconcerned with the Achaean League; however, this was not the case.<sup>27</sup> The Romans repeatedly attempted to push Achaean actions in line with Roman policy, but did not seem to have any clear authority to enforce their position; perhaps due to the supposed equal nature of their alliance.<sup>28</sup> They were not yet in the position of dominance they held after the Third Macedonian War and seemed wary of retaliating with limited authority, particularly due to the negative publicity such an act would have generated. Until 167, and maybe even beyond, Roman actions do not appear to indicate they wanted to completely control the Achaean League; what they wanted was the deference due to them as the dominant power in the Mediterranean.<sup>29</sup>

Between 191 and 167 the Romans changed diplomatic tack many times in an attempt to counter the continued defiance of the League. Once the Romans realised that their obvious displeasure had no effect on the Achaeans, they attempted various diplomatic means to force the League into showing due deference. Initially they followed the advice of Marcius Philippus in 183 and ignored the League, waiting for them to get into a situation where they needed rescuing.<sup>30</sup> Once this failed, the Romans attempted to influence Achaean politics through the pro-Roman politician Callicrates; a man condemned by Polybius for acting contrary to the best interests of the Achaeans.<sup>31</sup> Finally in 172, Roman ambassadors approached a few of the League states separately on diplomatic matters, perhaps in an attempt to undermine Achaean solidarity and shake their confidence.<sup>32</sup> There is a possibility that this worked, since the conduct of the Achaeans after this was progressively deferential; however, by this point the Romans appear increasingly suspicious of those who did not explicitly support their policies.<sup>33</sup>

Despite this, a debate included by Polybius in 170 between eight Achaean politicians makes it clear that the Achaeans still saw their continued loyalty to Rome as a choice.<sup>34</sup> Polybius himself was active in the discussion where it was decided, partially through Polybius' influence, that the Achaeans would do nothing to anger the Romans out of fear that they would retaliate by demanding hostages as they

<sup>25</sup> Badian (1952) 80 claims the Achaeans began to act as an independent state after 191. Eckstein (2008) 323-25 argues that Greek states returned to their 'traditional expansionist policies' earlier than this, after the removal of Roman troops in 194.

<sup>26</sup> In 191: Livy 36.31.8; Plut. *Flam.* 17.1; in 187: Diod. 29.17; Polyb. 22.3.2-3; see also Polyb. 22.7.5-7; in 185: Diod. 29.17; Paus. 7.8.6, 9.1; Polyb. 22.10.1-4, 12.5-10; in 185/4: Livy 39.33.6-8; Paus. 7.9.1-2; Pol. 22.12.5-10; in 184: Livy 39.33.6-8, 36.3-5; Paus. 7.9.3; Polyb. 22.12.10; in 183: Livy 40.2.7; Polyb. 23.9.8-14; and twice in 181: Livy 40.20.2; Polyb. 24.2.2, 8.1-8 and Polyb. 24.10.6-8.

<sup>27</sup> Gruen concludes the Romans 'remained aloof, out of cordiality or indifference' citing examples after 164: Gruen (1976) 50-53.

<sup>28</sup> According to the speech of Lycortas in Livy: Livy 39.37.13. See n. 18 for examples of the Romans attempting to influence Achaean behaviour.

<sup>29</sup> Eckstein (2008) 359-60. For the purposes of this paper, deference is defined as the kind of respectful submission given by a client to a patron; particularly in regard to foreign policy and conduct towards the Romans. For a description of the responsibilities of both patron and client: Dion. Hal., *Ant. Rom.* 2.10.1-3.

<sup>30</sup> For Philippus' report to the senate: Polyb. 23.9.4-10; Livy 40.2.7-8; for the Roman response to his report: Polyb. 23.9.12-14.

<sup>31</sup> Polyb. 24.8.7-10.14; 29.24.5-6; 30.13.9-11, 29, 32.8-12.

<sup>32</sup> Elis and Messene: Livy 42.37.7-9.

<sup>33</sup> As can be seen by the taking of hostages after the Third Macedonian War: Livy 45.31.9-11; Paus. 7.10.7-11; Polyb. 30.13.6-11; Zonar. 9.31.

<sup>34</sup> Polyb. 28.6.

recently had with the Aetolians.<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, this is exactly what the Romans did after the Third Macedonian War for what they considered Achaean disloyalty; even though the Achaeans had voluntarily offered to commit their entire force to the Romans during the war.<sup>36</sup>

A third trend in attitude is evident in diplomatic relations between 167 and 150. This stage is characterised by the submissiveness of the Achaeans, potentially due to the taking of 1000 Achaean hostages after the Third Macedonian War.<sup>37</sup> Even when the envoy Gallus, according to Pausanias, attempted to disrupt the unity of the League in 164 on the orders of the senate, the Achaeans gave no indication of defiance.<sup>38</sup> Polybius claims the Romans retained the hostages for so long to quiet their enemies in Achaia and force them in line with the policies of Callicrates, while also indicating to the rest of the Greeks that they should do the same.<sup>39</sup> So the retention of the hostages in Rome was a mechanism of control for the Romans, or as Gruen puts it, their trump card.<sup>40</sup> The Romans finally received what they wanted from the Achaeans all along; due respect and deference in terms of behaviour and consultation on foreign policy.

Roman dominance after 167 appears to have influenced the attitude of the Achaeans and the way they interacted with Rome, demonstrated by the moderate tone of Roman-Achaean relations until 150. The hostages were a tangible indication of Roman power keeping the Achaeans compliant. It is tempting to say that the release of the hostages and perhaps the death of the pro-Roman Callicrates on the way to Rome in 149 contributed to the end of this stage of Achaean-Roman relations and the re-emergence of anti-Roman policy in Achaia, although there is little direct evidence to prove this.<sup>41</sup>

The final stage of diplomatic relations shows a distinct trend in attitude between 150 and 146 which is characterised by the re-emergence of Achaean resentment of Roman power and renewed attempts to claim independence; a drastic contrast to the previous amiable behaviour. After 150, the old territorial dispute with Sparta resurfaced and the Achaeans again began to disregard Roman directives.<sup>42</sup> These acts of defiance must have stunned the senate after such an extended period of compliance, but the Romans were not in the same position they had been prior to 171 and were no longer restricted to diplomatic tricks to reprimand the Achaeans. This change in power was something the Achaeans seem to have misunderstood, although Polybius recognised it and thought that any opposition to the Romans after this point was reckless and ill-fated.<sup>43</sup>

This is the diplomatic environment in which the embassies of 147 that led to the Achaean War should be seen. It is impossible to attempt to comprehend these embassies without first taking into account these distinct stages of attitude seen in diplomatic interaction between the Romans and the Achaeans. The Achaeans seem to have thought they could push the limits of Roman tolerance as they had prior to 167 with no political backlash, simply because they had before. However, they failed to

<sup>35</sup> Five Aetolian generals had been sent as hostages to Rome when they were accused of desertion after the defeat at Callicinus in 171: Livy 42.60.9-10; Polyb. 27.15.14, 28.4.6, 6.7.

<sup>36</sup> Polyb. 28.12.1-6, 13.1-6.

<sup>37</sup> See n. 33 for references.

<sup>38</sup> Paus. 7.11.1-3.

<sup>39</sup> Polyb. 30.32.8-12

<sup>40</sup> Gruen (1976) 49.

<sup>41</sup> The death of Callicrates: Paus. 7.12.8; release of the Achaean hostages: Plut. *Cat. Mai.* 9.2-3; Polyb. 35.6. Zonaras implies there is a connection between the return of the hostages and the beginning of the Achaean War: 9.31.

<sup>42</sup> Paus. 7. 12.4-9.

<sup>43</sup> Schepens (1989) 326; Eckstein (2008) 358.

comprehend the new dynamics of Mediterranean politics in this period, dominated by an unforgiving and aggressive Rome.

In 149 the senate promised to send an embassy in response to the renewed dispute between Achaia and Sparta.<sup>44</sup> This embassy did not arrive until 147 when the young envoy L. Aurelius Orestes informed the *strategus* Diaeus and the assembled magistrates of the League that the Roman senate had decided that Sparta, Corinth, Argos, Heracleia by Mount Oeta and Arcadian Orchomenus would no longer belong to the Achaean League. This decree was greeted by wide-spread violence, forcing the ambassadors to leave Corinth.<sup>45</sup>

Confusion is caused by the embassy sent soon after this one that seems to contradict the demands of the first. According to Polybius, the second embassy led by Sextus Julius Caesar, which had been sent directly after Orestes' return to Rome, scarcely alluded to the violence suffered by the Roman envoys and instead issued a mild reprimand begging the Achaeans not to give any further offence to the Romans or the Spartans.<sup>46</sup> On the surface this embassy seems to be the opposite of the one led by Orestes which ordered the League to release some of their key cities. It is mild and conciliatory, while issuing no repeat of the previous demands. However, the demands were not retracted either, making the entire episode and Roman intentions towards the Achaeans ambiguous.

Polybius represents the ultimatum of Orestes as a complete shock and ultimately claims it was an empty threat from the senate to scare the Achaeans into compliance.<sup>47</sup> J.A.O. Larsen argues that this demand was a result of the senate's long-held desire to fracture the League.<sup>48</sup> Gruen supports Polybius' argument that this was an empty threat, ultimately with the aim of settling the Peloponnese; and A.H. McDonald claims it was a demand like that given to Macedonia in 171 to 'surrender ... power and policy'.<sup>49</sup> Essentially the ultimatum issued by Orestes seems to be an indication that Roman power politics with the Achaeans had changed, seemingly without the Achaeans comprehending the difference. In this way it would have been a shock to the Achaeans as Polybius claims; but what is equally surprising is that they believed they could resurrect their defiant stance towards Rome without provoking a reaction.<sup>50</sup>

According to Polybius, the Achaeans took this risk because they believed that the Romans were so occupied in Spain and Africa that they were afraid of a war with the Achaeans.<sup>51</sup> This then led to their deceit at Tegea and what Larsen believed was the act that made war inevitable.<sup>52</sup> So, in what C. B. Champion calls a 'calculated gamble' the Achaean leadership believed the Romans would let them do whatever

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<sup>44</sup> Paus. 7.12.9.

<sup>45</sup> For the embassy: Dio. 21.72.1; Just. *Epit.* 34.1.5; Livy *Per.* 51; Paus. 7.14.1-3; see also Polyb. 38.9.1-3, 6-8; for reference to the violence in particular: Dio. 21.72.1; Flor. 1.32; Just. *Epit.* 34.1.9; Livy *Per.* 51; Polyb. 38.9.1-3; Strabo 8.381. Pausanias reports that the violence was directed towards the Spartans in Corinth, not the Romans: 7.14.2-3.

<sup>46</sup> Polyb. 38.9.3-10.10; Paus. 7.14.3-5; Gruen argues that the lack of any mention of this embassy in the Latin sources may signify their reluctance to include episodes that show Roman hesitation: Gruen (1976): 58, n. 103.

<sup>47</sup> Polyb. 38.9.6.

<sup>48</sup> Larsen (1968) 492 argues that this had been hinted at as early as 182 BCE.

<sup>49</sup> McDonald (1970) 127; Gruen (1976) 58-62.

<sup>50</sup> There is clear evidence of Achaean shock in their violent reaction to Orestes' ultimatum, even if the report to the senate was exaggerated as Polybius claimed: 38.9.1-3.

<sup>51</sup> Polyb. 38.10.10-11.

<sup>52</sup> Polyb. 38.10.11-11.7; Paus. 7.14.4-5; Larsen (1968) 493.

they wished.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps this belief was made on the evidence of their relationship with Rome between 191 and 167 that by this point was completely erroneous.

The question of Roman intentions remains. Did the Romans always intend to divide the Achaean league as Larsen claims? Up until the Third Macedonian war, Roman diplomatic activity appears to indicate that all they really required was the deference owed to them due to their *auctoritas* and position in the Mediterranean. So Roman actions do not imply that they sought to break the League as early as 183/2, despite their claim of indifference if the states of the League detached; instead this seems to be the senate simply following the advice of Philippus, ill-conceived though it was.<sup>54</sup> Again in 164, according to Pausanias, the senate supported a policy of detaching states from the League.<sup>55</sup> Although Pausanias' reliability is often doubted, at the very least this indicates a Roman awareness of the possibility of dividing the League and was perhaps intended as a warning to the Achaeans.<sup>56</sup> However, there can be little doubt that the Romans meant it in 147. Once the trends in Roman-Achaean diplomatic interaction are recognised, Orestes' ultimatum seems unsurprising, particularly with the resurgence of Achaean defiance after 150. The Romans had had enough of the Achaeans, and were no longer willing to be defied by those who did not understand their position in the Mediterranean.

Finally there must be an explanation behind the two seemingly contradictory embassies to the Achaeans. Gruen argues that there were many previous instances in Greek history that involved the Romans making demands that the Greeks failed to abide by, which were then followed by a milder tone or inaction by the senate.<sup>57</sup> Although there are valid examples of the senate taking this approach, the diplomatic relationship between the Achaeans and the Romans was unique; specifically due to their equal treaty. The Romans did not treat the Greeks as a homogeneous group but had various types of relationships with each state, so in each case the dynamics of interaction were different.<sup>58</sup> Gruen cites the Achaean defiance of Metellus in 185 as evidence for his claim, but as already established the Achaeans were continuously defiant between 191 and 167, to the annoyance of Rome. However, this defiance and the Achaean disobedience of Metellus was vastly different from their renewed boldness after 151 due to the establishment of Roman supremacy in Greece and the change in Mediterranean power politics; so diplomatic interaction in 185 is not effective evidence for behaviour in 146.

Instead, I find the argument that the Romans were simply biding their time a more convincing reason for the contradiction, despite Polybius' claim that this was not the case.<sup>59</sup> Such lengths had been taken by the Romans before. For example, just prior to the Third Macedonian War an armistice was given to Perseus to send envoys to the senate. While this was, according to Livy, primarily to give Perseus a chance to plead his case, Livy admits that the lack of Roman preparation was a partial motivation.<sup>60</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Champion (2004) 226.

<sup>54</sup> The senate had replied to the Achaeans in the autumn of 183 BCE that they were unconcerned with cities detaching from the League on the advice of Q. Marcius Philippus who had been sent to Achaia to arbitrate disputes between Messene, Sparta and Achaia; see n. 30 above for references.

<sup>55</sup> Paus. 7.11.1-3.

<sup>56</sup> Gruen (1976) 50-51 discusses Pausanias' reliability in his account of Gallus (Paus. 7.11.1-3).

<sup>57</sup> Gruen (1976) 60-61.

<sup>58</sup> For instance Roman-Aetolian diplomatic interaction was extremely different, perhaps due to their desertion of Rome in the First Macedonian War.

<sup>59</sup> Polyb. 38.9.7-8; Larsen refers to this as 'giving the Achaeans another chance'. He also rightly argues that it was too late in the year after the return of Orestes' embassy and the rejection of the ultimatum for the Romans to transport an army to Greece: Larsen (1968) 494.

<sup>60</sup> Livy 42.43.3

So perhaps there is little reason to believe the Romans would shy from playing diplomatic games to gain time for other conflicts to end or simply for more preparation time. It is also important to reiterate that the ultimatum issued to the Achaeans was not retracted by this second embassy, so perhaps the embassy led by Sextus had the sole purpose of easing the Achaean backlash shown by the eruption of violence after the announcement of Orestes. There was after all the possibility, although small, of the Achaeans obeying the Roman demands. Perhaps then, the function of the second embassy was simply to encourage the Achaeans not to give further offence to the Romans and agree to detach those cities elected by the senate.

In conclusion, it is important to look at diplomatic activity within the context of these distinct stages of behaviour in order to effectively analyse interaction between the Romans and the Achaeans between 200 and 146. This allows us to analyse diplomatic exchanges within the evolving environment they were made, rather than in regards to a continuous, politically homogeneous period of fifty-four years. By using this method, the embassies of 147 seem to reflect contemporaneous Roman attitudes towards the Achaeans, rather than an ultimatum without any prior indication as Polybius claimed. Achaean-Roman relations between 200 and 146 seems to show a Rome that was not quite as bellicose as usually assumed, but rather one that attempted to gain influence through diplomatic means. The Romans seemed to want deference from the Achaeans due to their power in the Mediterranean and only became aggressive after 150 when the Achaeans resurrected their defiant stance against Rome; presumably without realising that they were in no position politically to do so.

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