


Hapax Legomenon διχοστασία in 1 Macc 3:29 and in Ancient Greek Literature

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ABSTRACT: The First Book of Maccabees contains many hapax legomena, including διχοστασία mentioned in the title of this article, recorded in 3:29. The author attempts to answer what role this term plays in the divinely inspired text and why it was used there. Is it a mere lexical enrichment of the author's writing, or does it have a deeper theological meaning? Does it contain something that privileges it over other related terms since it was used? An analysis of the role of the term in question in 3:29 will help address the questions above. When writing about discord or rebellion, does the hagiographer employ other Greek concepts that he could also use in 1 Macc 3:29? Finally, what does Greek extra-biblical literature contribute to the understanding of the noun διχοστασία potentially influencing its intentional use in the verse under examination.

KEYWORDS: Old Testament, Septuagint, First Book of Maccabees, *hapax legomenon*, exegesis

The First Book of Maccabees is packed with words that appear only once. Suffice it to say that chapters 1 to 6 alone have 116 such words. They occur either independently or in various syntactic combinations. One such *hapax legomena* is διχοστασία, appearing in the Septuagint only in 1 Macc 3:29. It is usually translated as 'discord, strife, rebellion,'¹ resulting in 'detachment, separation.'² The noun is worth analysing to determine its role in the divinely inspired text and why it was used there. Is it only as a lexical enrichment of the author's writing, or does it have a deeper theological meaning that privileges it over other related terms since it was used in 1 Macc 3:29? To address the above, it is necessary to

- 1 Cf. Z. Abramowiczówna, *Słownik grecko-polski* (Warsaw: PWN 1958) I, 589; 'dissension', T. Muraoka, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the Septuagint* (Louvain – Walpole, MA: Peeters 2009) 173; 'dissension, sedition', H.G. Liddell – R. Scott, *A Greek-English Lexicon. Revised and Augmented throughout by H.S. Jones with a Revised Supplement* (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1996) 439; 'dissent, discord, sedition', F. Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* (Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2013) 541. J.R. Bartlett translates it as 'disaffection', *The First and Second Books of the Maccabees* (CBC; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1973) 49. In Rom 16:17 and Gal 5:20, this noun takes the meaning 'the creation of discord, a split, a dispute, discord', R. Popowski (trans.), *Septuaginta* (PSBib; Warsaw: Vocatio 2017) 82.
- 2 'Dissension, discorde, séparation, sédition' (M.A. Bailly – H. Chávez [ed.], *Dictionnaire grec-français. Nouvelle édition dite Bailly 2020 – Hugo Chávez* [2023] 680, https://www.academia.edu/45681853/Anatole_Bailly_Dictionnaire_Grec_Fran%C3%A7ais_2020_1894_ [access: 27.11.2024]).

consider a few problems that will allow us to formulate a final answer about the meaning of this noun in the cited verse:

- a) How does this term function in verse 3:29 itself?
- b) When writing about discord or rebellion, does the hagiographer use other Greek terms that could also be used in 1 Macc 3:29?
- c) What does Greek extra-biblical literature add to the understanding of the noun *διχοστασία* that could influence its use in the main verse?

1. *διχοστασία* in 1 Macc 3:29

καὶ εἶδεν ὅτι ἐξέλιπεν τὸ ἀργύριον ἐκ τῶν θησαυρῶν
καὶ οἱ φόροι τῆς χώρας ὀλίγοι χάριν τῆς διχοστασίας καὶ πληγῆς,
ἣς κατεσκευάσεν ἐν τῇ γῆ τοῦ ἁραὶ τὰ νόμιμα,
ἃ ἦσαν ἀφ' ἡμερῶν τῶν πρώτων.³

He then found that this exhausted the money in his treasury;
moreover the income from the province was small, because of the dissension
(*διχοστασίας*) and distress
he had brought upon the land by abolishing the laws
which had been in effect from of old.⁴

A detailed exegesis of the text is not required here because it has already been done in the latest commentary by J. Nawrot, although quite cursorily and briefly. In fact, *διχοστασία* was the result of an ill-considered policy of uniform worship of the deities of the Seleucid Empire, forcibly imposed on the entire state by Antiochus IV Epiphanes. This is why local communities ultimately rejected it in the name of loyalty to the ancient religious traditions of their own countries.⁵ Following F. Gryglewicz, it should be emphasised that the author of 1 Macc has in mind only the tense relations between Judea and the empire in tax matters, as indicated by the context of the narrative. The ruler ordered that a large army be formed, choosing to pay all soldiers their wages in advance (vv. 27–28). However, he was entirely taken aback by the shortage of funds flowing from Judea into the state treasury exactly as a result of the *διχοστασία* and *πληγή* elicited by his attack on the Jewish religion (v. 29).

3 A. Rahlfs – R. Hanhart (eds.), *Septuaginta. Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*, 2 ed. (Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft 2006) 1048.

4 The official version of *The New American Bible* authorised by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, https://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0839/_P1.HTM [access: 15.11.2024].

5 J. Nawrot, *Pierwsza Księga Machabejska. Rozdziały 1,1–6,16* (NKB.ST 14.1; Częstochowa: Edycja Świętego Pawła 2016) 584–585. This thesis should probably be corrected slightly due to 1 Macc 1:41–42 describing the general approval of pagan communities towards the famous royal decree ordering the unification of worship in the empire. Even if this sentence is considered a literary exaggeration, the historical openness of pagan beliefs and their susceptibility to accepting occasional deities into the existing pantheon of their own deities is known (R. Doran, *The New Interpreter's Bible. A Commentary in Twelve Volumes* [Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press 1996] IV, 60).

Gryglewicz does not mention the possible weakness of the local official apparatus in fulfilling royal guidelines.⁶ It is also known – as noted by researchers – that a large part of the money collected for maintaining the army was spent, among others, on expensive games, plays and performances for the king, known for his extravagance, and for the common people.⁷ All this meant the need to forcefully collect taxes, and the overall maintenance of the army was forced onto the inhabitants of the province. It is known that the Seleucid kings eagerly and enviously looked at the temple treasuries as a possible source of new financial resources for the state treasury.⁸

At this point, the meaning of the two Greek words needs to be made more precise in the literary context in which they appear. The noun *πληγή* appears in 1 Macc only in the singular and a strictly military sense, as a defeat in specific battles (1:30; 5:3; 8:4),⁹ and in the general sense, as the sum of misfortunes brought upon the country and its inhabitants by wicked conduct which violated customs, Mosaic law and probably also material well-being and state independence (7:22; 13:32; 14:36; 15:29, 35).¹⁰ The context of 3:29 indicates the second meaning of *πληγή*, as a summing up of everything that the inhabitants of the country had to suffer from the invaders. It seems that the noun *διχοστασία* also takes on the same general meaning, according to the logical sense of the sentence. There is no particular circumstance or event that could be presented as *διχοστασία*. It is worth adding that in two cases of the New Testament use of this term in the Pauline writings, these are always generalising procedures. Thus, in Rom 16:17, *διχοστασίας*, preceded by the definite article *τάς*, indicates specific ways of destroying unity among believers known to readers.¹¹ Similarly, in Gal 5:20, *διχοστασίαι* are listed in the catalogue of vices of people living according to the flesh, not the spirit. The fact that they appear in the plural allows us to discover several specific but unnamed actions that undermine the spiritual way of Christian life. In the opinion of some exegetes, *διχοστασίαι* with political overtones suggests cultivating the spirit of party favouritism or elitism in the Church. In such cases, the unity and coherence

6 F. Gryglewicz, *Księgi Machabejskie* (PŚST 6.4; Poznań: Pallottinum 1961) 81.

7 E.g. W. Fairweather – J. Sutherland Black, *The First Book of Maccabees. With Introduction and Notes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1897) 94; J.A. Goldstein, *1 Maccabees. A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* AB; New York Doubleday 1976) 251.

8 1 Macc 1:21–24a; 6:1–3a, 12b; 2 Macc 1:14; 3:6–7, 13; Polybius, *The Histories*. IV. *Books 9–15* (trans. W.R. Paton) (LCL 159; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2011) 184–185; Polybius, *The Histories*. VI. *Books 28–39* (trans. W.R. Paton – S. Douglas Olson) (LCL 161; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2012) 194–195; Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*. IX. *Books 21–32* (trans. F.R. Walton) (LCL 409; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1957) 228–229; Strabo, *Geography*. VII. *Books 15–16* (trans. H.L. Jones) (LCL 241; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1930) 220–221; Justin, *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus*. II. *Books 21–44* (trans. L.C. Yardley) (LCL 558; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2024) 144–145..

9 In these cases, the location of the specific battle was mentioned, as well as the verb *πατάσσω*, 'hit, beat, stab, shock'.

10 In these texts, the verb *πιπέω*, 'do', in a general context, without any specific circumstances of the event, is predominant.

11 It is possible that apostates are setting traps for unwary neophytes in order to lure them into believing false doctrines and following schismatic practices inconsistent with the teachings of the Church (R.H. Mounce, *Romans: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* [NAC 27; Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman 1995] 278).

of the body of Christ is broken every time. Very quickly, backbiting, slander and mutual undoing destroy the spiritual life and threaten the authenticity of the witness of God's people.¹² In both cases, however, it does not refer to military actions but is limited to attacks on the individual spiritual life or the community life of believers. Another question is whether, in the times of Paul the Apostle, the religious meaning of *διχοστασία* evolved from the earlier context of the religious struggle waged, among others, by Judah Maccabee or was it transferred from another area where it initially operated. This problem will be solved based on texts of extra-biblical literature.

2. Synonyms of *διχοστασία* in 1 Macc

The search for synonyms of the discussed noun in 1 Macc aims to answer the question of whether *διχοστασία* only enriches the book's vocabulary or is used for a particular purpose by the hagiographer. There is a wide variety of terminology relating to disagreement in Greek literature.¹³ It shows the considerable breadth of the semantic field, generally expressed by 'disagreement', both in the specific sense, as a hand-to-hand clash of opponents in combat and as a general state of permanent disagreement, confrontation, misunderstanding or conflict.

Of the terms mentioned above, only two appear in 1 Macc: *ἔχθρα* as 'hostility, hatred' (11:12, 40; 13:6, 17) and *στάσις*, but it is used in the sense of 'permanence, state, position, agreement' (7:18; 10:72). In 11:12, it is the arbitrary taking away of Alexander Balas's wife, Cleopatra Thea, by the pharaoh Ptolemy VI Philometor and offering her hand to Demetrius II Nicator, in exchange for complete obedience to his father-in-law. In this way, *ἐφάνη ἡ ἔχθρα* ('hostility appeared') between Alexander Balas and Ptolemy, i.e. a permanent state of war, finally ending with the death of both in battle. In 11:40, the hagiographer presents a similar situation of deep discontent felt (*ἤχθρανεν*, v. 38) by Demetrius II's soldiers who had also served under his father's command. Once the situation in the kingdom had calmed down, Demetrius dismissed most of them from service, depriving them of their pay and sustenance. This was exploited by Tryphon, a general of the royal army and opponent of the monarch, in his plot against the ruler. He achieved this with the help of an Arab sheikh, Imalkue, to whom he presented the situation in the empire as *ἔχθρα* of royal troops against

12 T. George, *Galatians: An Exegetical and Theological Exposition of Holy Scripture* (NAC 30; Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman 1994) 396.

13 The following synonyms appear in the *English-Greek Dictionary. A Vocabulary Of The Attic Language*: *ἀγωνισμός*, 'rivalry, strife', *ἄθλος*, 'rivalry, contestation, struggle', *ἀμάχη*, 'enmity, hostility, quarrel', *ἀναρμοστία*, 'discord, dissonance', *ἀνομολογία*, 'disagreement', *ἄηρις*, 'fight, conflict', *διαμάχη*, 'conflict, dispute, controversy, quarrel', *διάστασις*, 'discord, opposition, rivalry', *διαφορά*, 'disagreement', *διχόνοια*, 'difference of belief, discord', *δυσαρμοστία*, 'disharmony, breakdown of unity', *ἔρις*, 'discord, quarrel, skirmish, tension', *ἔχθρα*, *ἐχθρότητα*, *ἐχθροπραξία*, 'hatred, hostility enmity, antagonism', *νεῖκος*, 'discord, quarrel, conflict', *στάσις*, 'discord, rebellion, revolt', *τρίψις*, 'clash, attack', cf. S.C. Woodhouse (ed.), *English-Greek Dictionary. A Vocabulary of the Attic Language* (Milton Park: Routledge 1910), *passim*.

the monarch. In 13:6, ἔχθρα was triggered by some specific event, although the text reports on the hostility of the Gentiles towards the Jews in general.¹⁴ Finally, 13:17 reports that, in order not to stir up the ἔχθραν of the people against himself, the high priest Simon sent Tryphon his sons as hostages. In this case, this specific act should be considered as a way to prevent a prolonged state of enmity.

The brief review of the texts above leads to the conclusion that ἔχθρα between the two parties occurs in particular situations and in 3:29 is not only the cause of διχοστασία but its decisive component. However, this does not support the idea that διχοστασία in 3:29 could be substituted with ἔχθρα since disagreement as a *status situationis* encompasses a broader meaning than hostility, which primarily pertains to human emotions. Consequently, in this verse, διχοστασία cannot be regarded merely an element that enriches the inspired text; rather, its use must be justified by the deliberate intent of the biblical author. The context and meaning of the noun will be explored further using texts from ancient Greek literature, which will aid in uncovering the hagiographer's true intention.

3. Extra-Biblical Literature

Among the nearly thirty texts containing διχοστασία in ancient Greek literature, several are noteworthy, as they may illuminate the intended meaning of this noun in 1 Macc 3:29.¹⁵

a) The first is Ode 11, 64–68 from the Epinicians series of Bacchylides, which contains the following verse:

Overmastering strife
had sprung up from a feeble beginning
between the brothers Proetus and Acrisius,
and they were wrecking their people with their unrighteous quarrels (διχοστασίαις)
and miserable battles.¹⁶

14 S.C. Berguig sees this hostility as a consequence of the anger of later Seleucid rulers triggered by Demetrius II's fiscal concessions to Judea in exchange for possible ad hoc assistance in difficult political and military situations, (*Commentaire littéraire et historique du Premier Livre des Maccabées* [Paris 2019] https://www.academia.edu/39813788/1_Maccabees_in_french_literary_and_historical_analysis_1_Maccab%C3%A9es_Analyse_litt%C3%A9raire_et_historique [access: 3.10.2023] 79). If in the protocanonical books ἔχθρα occurs most often in relationships between individuals, in the deuterocanonical books it is transferred to the social field, to relationships between entire communities, even nations (W. Foerster, "ἐχθρός, ἔχθρα," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* [trans. G.W. Bromiley] [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 1964] II, 815).

15 Those whose authors appeared later than the proposed date of the text 1 Macc, i.e. the second half of the 2nd century BC, such as Dionysius of Halicarnassus, Philostratus the Athenian, then Eusebius of Caesarea, John Damascus, and most poetic texts, more distant from the type of historical text, will not be discussed. On the other hand, two texts by authors later than 1 Macc will be added due to important parallels with the inspired text, enriching the semantic content. These will be excerpts from historical books by Plutarch and Ap-pian of Alexandria.

16 Bacchylides, *Corinna, Greek Lyric. IV. Bacchylides, Corinna, and Others* (trans. D.A. Campbell) (LCL 461; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1992) 180–181. All subsequent source texts are cited from the

This Greek author recalls the ancient myth about two twin brothers, Proetus and Acrisius, constantly arguing and fighting with each other already in their mother's womb until adulthood.¹⁷ By the will of their father, Abas, king of Argos, they would take turns ruling the city-state after his death. The fight between the brothers intensified when Acrisius did not want to give up the throne to his brother after the end of his reign. This resulted in the initiation of specific military actions because Proetus went to the court of King Jobates in search of help and, marrying his daughter, entered his country as the commander of a large army. The bloody battle between the brothers brought no definite outcome. Therefore, Proetus and Acrisius finally agreed to divide their father's kingdom into two parts: Acrisius received Argos, and Proetus received Tiryns and the coast of Argolis.¹⁸

In this text, *διχοστασία* has its specific cause, which is probably the failure to keep the terms of the agreement between the brothers.¹⁹ It introduces an extended conflict between the parties, none of which could secure a decisive victory. This situation is quite similar to the conflict between the Jews and the pagan Seleucid government described in 1 Macc 3:29. However, unlike the Greek heroes after their battle, this conflict only escalated to its culmination in the battles of Judah Maccabee during the reign of Antiochus IV.

- b) An important legal connotation is introduced by Demosthenes' speech about the wicked embassy directed against Aeschines:²⁰

Ye men of Athens, listen while I show
 How many ills from lawless licence flow.
 Respect for Law shall check your rising lust,
 Humble the haughty, fetter the unjust,
 Make the rough places plain, bid envy cease,
 Wither infatuation's fell increase,
 Make crooked judgement straight, the works prevent
 Of insolence and sullen discontent (*διχοστασίης*),
 And quench the fires of strife. In Law we find
 The wisdom and perfection of Mankind.²¹

Loeb Classical Library series, which does not always adopt the designations commonly found in earlier studies and analyses.

- 17 D. Nardo, *The Greenhaven Encyclopedia of the Greek and Roman Mythology* (Detroit, MI – New York – San Francisco – New Heaven, CT – Waterville, ME – London: Greenhaven 2009) 62.
- 18 D. Cairns, "Myth and the Polis in Bacchylides' Eleventh Ode," *JHS* 125 (2005) 38–39, https://www.pure.ed.ac.uk/ws/portalfiles/portal/11874310/Myth_and_the_Polis_in_Bacchylides_Eleventh_Od.pdf [access: 27.11.2024].
- 19 According to the record of the *Library* of Apollodorus (2,4.1), the reason for the feud was Proetus's seduction of Acrisius's daughter, Danae.
- 20 The judicial and political speech was delivered in 343 BC.
- 21 Demosthenes, *Orations*. II. *Orations 18–19: De Corona, De Falsa Legatione* (trans. C.A. Vince – J.H. Vince) (LCL 155; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1926) 412–413. General characteristics of the orator's speeches (E.M. Harris, "Speeches to the Assembly in Public Prosecution," *The Oxford Handbook of Demosthenes* [ed. G. Martin] [Oxford: Oxford University Press 2019] 365–388).

During the conflict between Athens and Macedonia, two meetings between legations took place, in which both Demosthenes and Aeschines participated, representing Athens (347–346 BC).²² After the second message had ended, there was a conflict between the two speakers. Demosthenes accused Aeschines of accepting a bribe from Philip II, which was supposed to result in significant concessions to the Macedonian king, which Aeschines agreed to.²³

Demosthenes, in his speech before the Athenian Ecclesia, quotes Solon's Elegy lamenting the state of lawlessness and its consequences within the city's community. Solon argued that many misfortunes afflicting the city stem from chaos and anarchy, particularly in legal matters. He maintained, that only legitimate, socially recognised governments can establish law and order, where criminals are punished, injustices disappear, arrogance is curbed, and pride is humiliated. Such authority removes intransigence, straightens distorted laws and arrogant actions, mitigates and eliminates discord, and finally assuages the anger arising in heated quarrels. The last verse of Demosthenes' speech praises the justice of righteous government, under which what is right and wise prevails among the community. *Διχοστασία* appears here in the legal context of law as one of the effects contributing to its further weakening. *Διχοστασία* likely describes the dispute between the two speakers regarding the obligations assigned to the deputies by the Athenian Ecclesia. However, this term formally refers in the text to a general statement of discord resulting from a lack of respect for the law.

A similar historical context is also included in 1 Macc 1:41, reporting on the arbitrary introduction by Antiochus IV of the notorious decree ordering the uniformity of religious worship in the empire, which particularly affected the Jews, who rejected any forms of idolatry. In 6:59, one can find a speech by the advisers of the young Antiochus V about all the evil caused by the proclamation of ordinances inconsistent with the eternal religious principles of the Jews, which is also consistent with verse 3:29. In this context, *διχοστασία* takes on a distinctly legal tone.

c) Strabo's *Geography* accurately presented the meaning of *διχοστασία* in 10.4.16:

As for their constitution, which is described by Ephorus, it might suffice to tell in a cursory way its most important provisions. The lawgiver, he says, seems to take it for granted that liberty is a state's greatest good, for this alone makes property belong specifically to those who have acquired it, whereas in a condition of slavery everything belongs to the rulers and not to the ruled; but those who have liberty must

22 For the political and social background and consequences of various alliances and enmities, see N. Sawada "Allies and Foes (I): Aeschines, Hyperides, Lycurgus," *The Oxford Handbook of Demosthenes* (ed. G. Martin) (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2019) 327–352. For a critical presentation of speech, see Demosthenes, *Selected Speeches* (trans. R. Waterfield) (Oxford World's Classics; Oxford: Oxford University Press 2014) 136–213.

23 The broader political background of the dispute between both characters is outlined, among others, by W. Lengauer, "Ajschines i jego czasy, wstępy," *Ajschines: Mowy* (Biblioteka Antyczna; Warsaw: Prószyński i S-ka 2004) 118–120, and R. Turasiewicz, "Wstęp," *Demostenes. Wybór mów* (Arcydzieła kultury antycznej; Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich 2005) XLV–XLVI. On the extent of corruption in ancient Greece, N.J. Nichols, "Corruption," *The Oxford Handbook of Demosthenes* (ed. G. Martin) (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2019) 167–178.

guard it; now harmony ensues when dissension (*διχοστasiaς*), which is the result of greed and luxury, is removed; for when all citizens live a self-restrained and simple life there arises neither envy nor arrogance nor hatred towards those who are like them.²⁴

Describing his observations about the landscape of Crete, Strabo cites the opinion about the governance of the island by Ephoros of Kyme, a historian famous in antiquity who lived around 400 to 330 BC.²⁵ The geographer apparently agrees with his predecessor's comments regarding the best form of government, which guarantees states freedom as the best way of living and social peace. This has a significant impact on the management of property acquired by citizens, which they are free to dispose of on their own. This right is not available to slaves. However, this freedom must be protected not only against external threats but – perhaps even more so – against those from within the community. Disputes and discord (*διχοστasiaς*), which destroy unanimity and disturb social peace, should be avoided at all costs. This discord must disappear if the social fabric is to be maintained. It comes from greed and luxury, probably understood as the desire for luxury and prosperity at all costs.²⁶ From Strabo's description, it is difficult to conclude whether these two fundamental causes of *διχοστasia* are also taken from Ephoros or whether it is his own idea.²⁷ Suffice it to say that Strabo perceives it this way, as probably in the next statement that agreement can last when a community lives in self-moderation and simplicity, i.e. no one forcibly seeks wealth in order to exalt above the other, thus introducing social divisions. Perhaps the most fundamental ones are based on material differentiation and the attitude of contempt and disregard for the poorer members of society. This is why *διχοστasia* is entirely incompatible with peace and social order, which Strabo strongly emphasises when he writes that it must disappear if governments want to perpetuate order in the communities over which they exercise their power.

This undoubtedly fully matches the situation outlined in 1 Macc 3:29. The author of 1 Macc states that internal social peace is impossible in the Seleucid Empire, issuing such absurd decrees as those imposed on the Jews by Antiochus IV Epiphanes according to 1:41. Worth mentioning is the allegedly lavish lifestyle of the king known for his extravagance. Regardless of the historical basis for this assessment, the biblical record is guided by its own evaluation of the ruler's reign, of which the record 3:29 is also a part.

24 Strabo, *Geography. V. Books 10–12* (trans. H.L. Jones) (LCL 211; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1928) 144–145.

25 L. Schmitz, "Ephoros," *A Dictionary of Greek and Roman Biography and Mythology. II. Earinus-Nyx* (ed. W. Smith) (Oxford: Murray 1880) 26–27.

26 R. Gorman – V.B. Gorman, *Corrupting Luxury in Ancient Greek Literature* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press 2014) 284–285.

27 Researchers tend to believe that Strabo continued to quote Ephoros (T. Hakan, *Plato's Counterfeit Sophists* [Hellenic Studies 44; Washington, D.C.: Center for Hellenic Studies 2011] 73).

d) Another critical insight for understanding the meaning of *διχοστασία* is given by Dio Cassius in his *Roman History* 5:22.3:

By tribuneship not disheartened, but they were actually the more emboldened. To this state was the populace brought by the patricians. They would not obey the summons to go on a campaign, though refusing to go on a campaign unless they obtained in each instance the objects for which they were striving, and by contending listlessly whenever they did take the field, they accomplished all that they desired. Meanwhile, as a matter of fact, not a few of the neighbouring tribes, relying on the dissension (*διχοστασία*) of their foes more than on their own power, kept revolting.²⁸

The story described in book five of *Roman History* is not easy to define historically. However, it probably takes place in the 5th century BC because the figures depicted are from this period of Roman history. First, we are dealing with Gnaeus Marcius Coriolanus, who besieged and conquered the Volscian city of Corioli in 493 BC but later joined the Volsci fighting against Rome.²⁹ Next, Dio writes about the patrician family of the Fabii, known especially for their tragic fate in the Battle of the Cremera in 477 BC.³⁰ Next, the historian mentions Titus Menenius, probably Titus Menenius Lanatus, a Roman consul in 477 BC who fought in the Battle of the Cremera, also mentioned by Livy.³¹ The Roman historian likely describes events from around 455 BC.³² In doing so, he highlights the constant quarrels and feuds between patrician families and the plebs, which significantly weakened Rome's defence capabilities.³³ The people took advantage of various political situations for their own purposes, posing a constant threat to the city, wanting to force multiple concessions from the rich patricians, especially through the activities of the people's

28 Dio Cassius, *Roman History*. I. *Books 1–11* (trans. E. Cary – H.B. Foster) (LCL 32; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1914) 164–165. The same motive of the other side taking advantage of the situation of quarrel between opponents is also shown, among others, by Plutarch: ‘Callisthenes began his palinode, and spoke long and boldly in denunciation of the Macedonians, and after showing that faction among the Greeks was the cause of the increase of Philip’s power, added: “But in a time of sedition (*διχοστασίη*), the base man too is in honour”’ (*Lives*. VII. *Demosthenes and Cicero. Alexander and Caesar* [trans. B. Perrin] [LCL 99; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1919] 378–379). See also Apollonius Rhodius: ‘like any people bereft of their king, they will be divided by bitter disagreements (*ἀργαλέησι διχοστασίησι*). And so with their forces divided in two, our route would be easier when we make our way back later on’ (*Argonautica* [trans. W.H. Race] [LCL 1; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 2009] 368–369).

29 *The Encyclopaedia Britannica. A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information*, 11 ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1910) VII, 154. Particularly famous here is the visit of the mother, wife and son of the leader before the attempt to take Rome by Coriolanus and the Volsci, described in Shakespeare’s tragedy, *Coriolanus*.

30 *The Encyclopaedia Britannica. A Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, Literature and General Information*, 11 ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1910) X, 113–114.

31 *Ab Urbe condita* II, 51.

32 Dio Cassius, *Roman History*, 165.

33 A very good analysis of this topic was published in 1901 by F.F. Abbott in the chapter “A Struggle between the Orders,” *A History and Description of Roman Political Institutions* (Boston, MA – New York – Chicago – London: Ginn & Company – The Athenaeum Press 1901) 41–62.

tribunes,³⁴ while reluctantly fighting to defend the city. For this reason, the battles with the Italian tribes surrounding Rome intensified, trusting more in the division (διχοστασία) of the inhabitants into different political factions than in their own bravery and battle.

What is important in Dio's description is that a society living in discord becomes easier prey for invaders. Effective defence is impossible if there is no sincere will to fight. Therefore, διχοστασία in 1 Macc 3:29 can also be understood as the weakening of the Seleucid Empire, torn by internal conflicts due to the irresponsible policy of autocratic rulers. The fact that the inspired author is not particularly concerned about this situation does not prevent a proper assessment of the situation from the point of view of the durability of the Seleucid monarchy.

- e) Ancient Greece also experienced problems with governance similar to those experienced by Rome in the 6th century BC, as Herodotus writes in his *Histories* 5:75:

When the armies were to join battle, the Corinthians first agreed among themselves that they were doing unjustly, and so changed about and departed; and presently Demaratus son of Ariston, the other king of Sparta, did likewise, albeit he had come with Cleomenes from Lacedaemon in joint command of the army and had not till now been at variance with him. From this disunion (διχοστασίης) a law was made at Sparta that when an army was despatched both kings should not be suffered to go with it (for till then they had both gone together); thus one of the kings being released from service, one of the sons of Tyndarus too could be left at home; for before that time, both of these also were entreated to aid and went with the army.³⁵

The account of the great Greek historian describes the turbulent period of introducing the reforms of Cleisthenes, an Athenian politician and reformer of the city's social system, who lived in the late 6th and early 5th century BC. His reforms to increase democracy³⁶ were met with hostility from the tyrant of Athens, Isagoras, supported by a small army of the king of Sparta, Cleomenes. As a result, Cleisthenes and his supporters were removed from the city, his reforms were stopped, and an oligarchy of 300 families was established. This, however, was met with a city-wide uprising, and the Spartans ultimately left the Acropolis. Despite another attempt to take over the city by the humiliated Cleomenes, Athens won in the 507/506 BC campaign. It happened as described by Herodotus: the Corinthians, as allies of Sparta, but supported by Demaratus, its second king, next to Cleomenes, refused to fight for the restitution of the tyrannical office in Athens. Other commanders who were

34 J.T. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome: Italy and Rome from the Bronze Age to the Punic Wars (c.1000–264 BC)* (The Routledge History of the Ancient World; London – New York: Routledge 1995) 242–271; D. Gwyn, *The Roman Republic: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2012) 18.

35 Herodotus, *The Persian Wars*. III. Books 5–7 (trans. A.D. Godley) (LCL 119; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1922) 82–83.

36 For more, see among others: E. Wipszycka – B. Bravo, *Historia starożytnych Greków*. I. *Do końca wojen perskich* (Warsaw: PWN 1988) 249–257; T. Buckley, *Aspects of Greek History 750–323BC. A Source-Based Approach* (London – New York: Rutledge 2010) 52–54.

part of the Spartan invading army, seeing the decision of the Corinthians and Demaratus, gave up further fighting against Athens and no longer supported Cleomenes.³⁷ Thanks to this coincidence, Athens saved its system and emerged from Sparta's tutelage, becoming the first power of ancient Greece over time.³⁸ Another consequence of the differences between the monarchs was the introduction of a new law in Sparta, ordering one to stay in the country while the other went to war. According to beliefs, one of the two sons of Tyndareus, the king's divine guardians, also stayed in the house.

It was this discord between the two rulers of Sparta that Herodotus called *διχοστασία*. The meaning of the term was determined by the context of the historian's statement. This is undoubtedly a specific, single decision of one of the kings, which caused a crisis in the management of the army and the conduct of a previously prepared campaign. Almost exactly the same consequences in the description of 1 Macc were caused by the arbitrarily introduced decree of Antiochus IV against the Jews, causing discord in the Seleucid state and a lack of funds to conduct campaigns on the eastern borders of the monarchy.³⁹

f) At the end of this analysis, it is worth quoting Plato's *Laws* 1.630α, which is difficult to interpret but important for the discussed problem:

In the day of grievous feud (*χαλεπή... διχοστασίη*), O Cynrus,
the loyal warrior is worth his weight in silver and gold.⁴⁰

In parts 1.624α–632δ, the philosopher promotes the most generally understood human good as the main goal of law-making, thus criticising the narrow, militaristic approach to law in Sparta and Crete. He supports an expanded interpretation of the law that provides opportunities for holistic human development.⁴¹ In the text above, he quotes a poem by an ancient poet, Theognis of Megara, Sicily, placing it in the context of his own general reflections on virtue, particularly courage. To properly understand Plato's sequence of arguments, for the purposes of the article, we must turn to passage 1.629δ, which contains the thesis about two types of war. The first, in the arguments of a fictional Athenian, Plato calls *στάσις* 'civil [war]',⁴² adding that it is *δη πάντων πολέμων χαλεπώτατος*, 'of all wars the

³⁷ Buckley, *Aspects of Greek History*, 79–81.

³⁸ A. Ziółkowski, *Historia powszechna. Starożytność* (Warsaw: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 2011) 424–425.

³⁹ According to the rules of historical writing in ancient Greece, describing the arbitrariness, despotism and authoritarianism of rulers, Antiochus IV was presented as a tyrant (J.A. Goldstein, *I Maccabees*, 251).

⁴⁰ Plato, *Laws*. I. *Books 1–6* (trans. R.G. Bury) (LCL 187; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1926) 20–21.

⁴¹ For an analysis of the problem, see, e.g. J. Annas, "Virtue and Law in Plato," *Plato's Law. A Critical Guide* (ed. C. Bobonich) (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2010) 71–91.

⁴² As rendered in the translation by R.G. Bury (Plato, *Laws*, 19). F. Montanari gives the general meaning of 'dispute, dissent, quarrel, point of contention' (*The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek* [Leiden – Boston, MA: Brill 2013] 1955).

most bitter'.⁴³ The second type is a war against external enemies, even when disputes occur within the attacked community. This one is considered milder than the first one. Earlier, in the conversation between the same fictional Athenian and two listeners, another poet was mentioned, Tyrtaeus, who praised above all bravery in the battles of ancient Greece. The interlocutors agreed that the poet commended the courage of soldiers fighting in the second type of war, i.e. against an external and foreign enemy (1.629ε). However, the Athenian argues that those who are more worthy of praise are those who prove bravest in the first type of war, that is, internal rebellion. To support his thesis, he quotes Theognis of Megara's poem in the form of advice addressed to Kyrnos, a young aristocrat. Well, a faithful soldier is worth as many kilograms of gold and silver as he weighs during a quarrel (*διχοστασίη*), provided he is on the side of the law that allowed him to practice the broadly understood virtue. Plato supports his argument by putting into the Athenian's mouth the words that a soldier who fights this way is braver than one who loses his strength in a war with an external enemy. This advantage is expressed in the statement that 'the union of justice, prudence and wisdom with courage is better than courage by itself'.⁴⁴ Faithfulness and steadfastness during a civil war are impossible on their own. However, they must be extended to include the entire scope of the virtue, i.e. other virtues supporting it. In the first type of war, praised by Tyrtaeus, mercenaries can also fight bravely, but they are also prone to brawls, often devoid of principles and reason. However, only a truly virtuous soldier will persevere when internal conflict lasts. This attitude is based on legislation designed to reveal all virtues of the soldier during the most trying times. Therefore, the law that strives to strengthen all the virtues, not only partially, occasionally and opportunistically, is more valuable (1.630ε).

In light of Plato's considerations, the actions of Antiochus IV are thoroughly reprehensible. He introduces a law that not only discourages virtues but also puts them to the severest test.⁴⁵ This leads to chaos, internal tensions and fights between various communities belonging to one Seleucid Empire, as shown in 1 Macc 3:29. However, if Plato mentions law in the most general way, pointing to its most important goal, which is to build a community that pursues recognised virtues, the author of 1 Macc proves that regulations that violate religious freedom are certainly not such laws.

The last cited text dates approximately two centuries later than the First Book of Maccabees. However, looking at it will significantly broaden the sense of the noun in question by adding an element absent in the earlier texts.

43 In the sense of conflicts between citizens of the same country due to violations of the rights of one group by another. Plato's negative opinion about such conflicts is probably based on the fact that what is being fought for then is not the common good but each group's own. And this undermines the strength of the community as a whole.

44 R.F. Stalley, *An Introduction to Plato's Laws* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett 1983) 36.

45 Even though the result of the ruler's actions in 1 Macc 3:29 (i.e. *διχοστασία*) gives the opportunity to act virtuously in the face of it. Such a possibility, however, was not recorded by the hagiographer.

- g) Plutarch draws attention to the important – but rarely emphasised – meaning of *διχοστασία* in his *Life of Pyrrhus* 22.1:

While he was involved in such perplexities, new hopes once more inspired him, and projects which divided his purposes (*πράγματα διχοστασίαν ἔχοντα τῆς γνώμης*).⁴⁶

The Battle of Ausculum in 279 BC, won by King Pyrrhus of Epirus in a war against the Romans, is an example of a victory achieved at too great a cost. The gains achieved do not offset the losses suffered. Hence the famous phrase ‘Pyrrhic victory.’⁴⁷ After winning it, he fell into an internal dilemma after receiving two almost equivalent offers of submission: one from the city of Syracuse, Sicily, and the other from his native Greece. The first proposed to give him the cities of Agrigentum, Syracuse and Leontini, asking him to help them expel the Carthaginians and free the island from tyrants. The other group informed him that the ruler of Macedonia, Ptolemy Keraunos,⁴⁸ and his army had perished at the hands of the Gauls and Dardans, so now it was time for him to go to Macedonia, which needed a new ruler. Pyrrhus understood that with the two excellent opportunities, he would have to choose one, which meant losing the other, so he hesitated for a long time. Ultimately, he chose the proposal of the people of Sicily, who seemed to offer better opportunities to implement his plans.⁴⁹ With this rather short mention, Plutarch points to the inner conflict of the man torn by contradictions resulting from opposing arguments and hesitant to make a choice quickly. The noun *γνώμη* used by Plutarch is significant. Dictionaries render it as ‘faculties of knowing and judging, intellect, intelligence, thought, reason, disposition, will, inclination, intention, considered judgment’, i.e. ‘opinion, proposal, motion, intention, purpose, decision.’⁵⁰ In the writings of ancient authors, it appears frequently and in many different contexts, and its semantic field includes both a rational judgment and a decision to act based on an identified situation.⁵¹ This very well reflects the meaning of *διχοστασία*, which introduces confusion and hesitation in the judgment, decisions made and will to act. This does not mean, of course, the weakness of Pyrrhus’s character, but emphasises, above all, the fact that frequently *διχοστασία* begins in the mind and will of a person, which later turns into one or another external action with lesser or greater consequences for the people around that person.

⁴⁶ Plutarch, *Lives*. IX. *Demetrius and Antony. Pyrrhus and Gaius Marius* (trans. B. Perrin) (LCL 101; Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press 1920) 416–417.

⁴⁷ An analysis of the events has been carried out by M. Engerbeaud, “La bataille d’Ausculum (279 av. J.-C.), une défaite romaine?,” *Revue de philologie, de littérature et d’histoire anciennes* LXXXVII/1 (2013) 61–80.

⁴⁸ He was the son of Ptolemy I Soter, ruler of Egypt. In 280 BC, he wickedly murdered Seleucus I Nicator and became king of Macedonia and Thrace.

⁴⁹ *Pyrrhus* 22, 2–3.

⁵⁰ Montanari, *The Brill Dictionary*, 436.

⁵¹ The problem of hesitation in decision-making among ancient heroes was taken up by T. Ziolkowski, *Hesitant Heroes Private Inhibition, Cultural Crisis* (Ithaca, NY – London: Cornell University Press 2018), especially in the introduction to his work, 1–8.

In their works, Polybius⁵² and Livy⁵³ draw attention to the unstable character of Antiochus IV, a man – it seems – strongly influenced by emotions, acting unpredictably. In situations similar to that of Pyrrhus and often faced with contradictory options, Antioch may have displayed all the more inner dilemmas and indecision. This was because he wanted to keep the treasury intact, which must have resulted in the imposition of continuous taxes. However, Antioch must have been aware that this could stir up social discontent and even revolts among his subjects. This was all the more likely since he had previously attacked their religious traditions. This assessment must be objectively verified, considering the smooth functioning of the entire Seleucid Empire under his rule.⁵⁴ However, we cannot rule out internal contradictions that tore at the king's heart. Having considered all the arguments for and against, he finally chose the path of confrontation with the Jews. He felt it would be more advantageous for him to stifle any attempts at resistance with the promise of pay for his army. On the other hand, the expected lack of money could have aroused a revolt of his own troops, without whom he could not reign at all.

However, some doubt may be expressed regarding the meaning of διχοστασία in 1 Macc 3:29 since, strictly speaking, the noun does not describe the conduct of the ruler, but what he *κατεσκεύασεν ἐν τῇ γῆ* 'had brought upon the land', i.e. upon the inhabitants of his empire. Thus, it is more about the effect of the king's actions on his subjects. One must remember, however, that there is no smoke without fire and no effect without cause. Διχοστασία, as a concrete situation of discord arising in the Seleucid Empire, could not have arisen without the intention of its creator, in this case the king. It was in his mind that the idea of collecting taxes was born, given that such a skilled monarch had to immediately perceive the consequences of his action and account for their impact on the attitude of his subjects towards him and the monarchy.

In this light, 1 Macc 3:29 may describe the ruler introducing not thoroughly thought out, overbearing, arbitrary decrees, revealing his internal struggle and causing discord and chaos in the monarchy.⁵⁵

Summary

The analysis of the representative examples of the the term διχοστασία in the Bible and ancient Greek literature yields several valuable insights, enabling us to address the core question of its meaning and intentional use in 1 Macc 3:29. In this verse, the noun pertains to the realm of politics and social dynamics, depicting conflicts arising from specific attitudes

⁵² *Hist. rom.* 26, 1.

⁵³ *Urb. con.* 41, 20.

⁵⁴ For more, see J. Nawrot, *Pierwsza Księga Machabejska*, 43–44.

⁵⁵ 1 Mac 1:21–23 mentions the plundering of the temple's treasury and its devastation, arguing that there were many more moments when the ruler stated the lack of funds for the broadly understood functioning of the monarchy (W. Fairweather – J. Sutherland Black, *The First Book of Maccabees*, 94).

or legal measures. This explains why the author opted not to use *ἔχθρα* – a term closely related in meaning but primarily focused on the emotional hostility between parties – when describing the objective state of discord between the Jewish community and the pagans under Seleucid monarchy. While *ἔχθρα* appears four times in the 1 Maccabees, it typically denotes enmity as either outcome of specific actions by monarchs (11:12, 40; 13:17) or, in one instance, the motive for fighting pagan enemies harbouring hatred toward the Jews (13:6). Similarly, in 3:29, *διχοστασία* underscores a profound antagonism stemming from both the hostile decisions of a monarch – namely Antiochus IV – against the Jewish community and the fundamental clash in religious practices. Thus, *διχοστασία* can be interpreted as both a consequence of Antiochus IV's *ἔχθρα* toward his Jewish subjects and a reflection of the Jews' resistance to the ruler's unjust and oppressive laws, which undermined their material, social and religious well-being.

A deeper examination of ancient Greek literature further illuminates the hagiographer's intent. In these texts, *διχοστασία* emerges primarily as a political concept, describing a protracted state of conflict between factions unable to secure a decisive resolution. Such discord often arises from legal anarchy, arbitrary legislation, or disregard for established laws. Incompatible with peace and social harmony, *διχοστασία* must be eradicated for rulers to maintain order within their communities. Moreover, it weakens nations by exacerbating internal divisions, often due to the reckless policies of autocratic leaders. In a military context, *διχοστασία* does not refer to a single battle but to a broader condition fuelled by conflicting political aims and personal ambitions, leading to unrest and the erosion of a nation's prior achievements. Notably, every instance of *διχοστασία* originates in an internal conflict – whether of the heart, mind or will – before manifesting outwardly, with varying degrees of impact on the surrounding community. This stands in opposition to the primary aim of law-making: fostering a virtuous community, which, for the author of 1 Maccabees, includes upholding religious freedom.

The observations lead to the conclusion that the use of *διχοστασία* in 1 Macc 3:29 is neither arbitrary nor a mere stylistic substitute for *ἔχθρα*. Rather, it reflects the inspired author's deliberate political, social and religious reflection. The hagiographer appears to expand the term's semantics beyond its typical usage in extra-biblical literature, where the religious dimension is absent, thereby enriching its significance in the context.

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