

Hasmonaeen Revolt and Dynasty, Herodian Era

October 4, 2006

■ Announcements

From last time:

- Hellenism, Hellenization
- Judaea in the Early Hellenistic Period

For today

- Hasmonaeen Revolt, 167–164 BCE
- Hasmonaeen Dynasty 152–63 BCE

Announcements

- **Preliminary** review sheet for midterms (10/30) is up on the website. Useful now, because it provides a brief chronology
- Handouts for next week's section and for the Documentary Hypothesis assignment will be up later this week.

Hellenism, Hellenization

- From the Greek word for Greece (Hellas), broadly the spread of "Greek" culture
- Culture of the conquerors
NB: the culture of Macedonian officers and soldiers, and Greek scribes and agents, looking back at "democratic" Athens as a model

Influence on conquered population

- **Sometimes** directly the result of conquest: new bureaucratic needs dictate language/literary training; "Greek" cities founded by outright settlement (e.g., Samaria, late 4th C)
- **But also** indirect: adaptation and appropriation of new ideas, practices, language, trade goods, tastes, etc.
- E.g., under leaderships with established connections to rulers, some ancient city-states (e.g., Gaza, Tyre) "became" Greek cities.

Compare "modernization" or "Westernization" in the present developing world

Judaea in the Early Hellenistic Period

- 334–170 BC difficult to trace in detail.
- Developments:
 - A small “Temple state”—a territory governed by a temple and its priesthood (product of late Persian, Hellenistic)
 - Political (and economic) reorientation to Mediterranean rather than to Mesopotamia
 - Particularly under Seleucids: Opportunities for local elites to advance through adopting Greek language, culture; through political reform or reorganization (foundation of *poleis*)

Hellenistic Era Palestine



Hasmonaean Revolt 167–164 BCE

- Terminology: Hasmonaean, Maccabees
- Chronology 175–160
- Interpretative problem: Why persecute?



Terminology (i)

- **Hasmonaeans:** A priestly family from Modi'in, lead the revolt against Seleucids.
 - Five brothers, Judah the most prominent
 - Acc. to 1 Macc. led initially by their father Mattathias
- **Maccabee:** An epithet especially associated with Judah



Terminology (ii)

- Some other terms/people:
- Second Temple Period
 - **Antiochus IV:** Seleucid king 175-163 BCE
 - **Oniads:** the name for the high priestly family (Onias = Yohanan). Onias is also the name of the HP deposed by Jason
 - **Tobiads:** Another significant family, possibly dating back to Nehemiah's time
 - **Jason, Menelaus:** In succession, "bought" the priesthood from Antiochus IV; set in motion "hellenizing" program



Chronology 175–160

- 175 "Hellenistic Reform"
 - Jason
 - Menelaus
- 169(?) Desecration of Temple, prohibition of Jewish religion
- 167(?) Revolt
 - Judah the Maccabee
- 164 Rededication of the Temple
- 160 Death of Judah the Maccabee

Interpretative problem: Why persecute?

- Why persecute?
Largely unheard of, and **not** to be explained based on the personality (“crazy”) or policies (“Hellenizing agenda”) of Antiochus IV
- Elias Bickerman
“Desecration” the work of **reformers**; prohibitions inspired by their knowledge of Judaism
- Victor Tcherikover
Revolt **preceded** the persecutions. “Desecration” and prohibitions were punitive.
- In both cases: requires rejection of explicit claims of our sources

Establishment of the Hasmonaean Dynasty, 152–63 BCE

- Eclipse of Hasmonaean after rededication of Temple (164)
 - Menelaus HP until 163 BCE (after reded.)
 - Alcimus HP 161-159 BCE (an enemy in 1Macc)
- Hasmonaean dominance:
 - (Re-)established **by Seleucids** (152, 142)
 - Peak of power, geographical expansion 103-76 BCE (Alexander Jannaeus)
- Geographical expansion (map)
- “Judaizing” policies? Combines:
 - Imposition of Jewish practice on subject peoples
 - **And** alliance building with anti-Hellenizing peoples
 - In Galilee (N) and Idumaea (S), seems to have stuck



Hasmonaean Expansion 152-74 BCE
