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An Empire on the Brink of Destruction: The Stability of the Seleucid Empire Under Antiochus IV (175 B.C. - 164 B.C.)

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AN EMPIRE ON THE BRINK OF DESTRUCTION: THE STABILITY OF THE
SELEUCID EMPIRE UNDER ANTIOCHUS IV (175 B.C. – 164 B.C.)

by

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Abstract

The Seleucid Empire expanded its territory to stretch from Thrace to India under the leadership of Antiochus III, making it one of the most expansive empires in the Hellenistic World. Antiochus III's subsequent loss at the Battle of Magnesia to Rome in 190 B.C. caused some of the satrapies of the empire to begin to rebel, and has led some historians to believe that the empire began an unrecoverable decline. In this investigation I will argue that the myth of decline in the post-Antiochus III era is invalid through analyzing the stability brought to the empire during the reign of his son, Antiochus IV. An investigation into Antiochus IV's stabilization of the Seleucid Empire has not been completed in English since 1966. Through analyzing his involvement in the southern and eastern regions of the Seleucid Empire as well as the internal reforms a clear picture of Antiochus IV's efforts towards stabilization becomes apparent.

Dedication

For Olivia, without whom this would not have been possible.

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Introduction

Upon the death of Alexander the Great the vast territories that he conquered fell into the control of several people close to him, ushering in a new era of the Hellenistic world. The Seleucid Empire, one of the largest post-Alexander Hellenistic empires, lasted for over two hundred years, at its height stretching from Greece to India. Most historical research conducted on the Seleucid Empire has focused on the first half of its existence, approximately 312 B.C. to 187 B.C., concluding with the death of Antiochus III and the Treaty of Apamea that triggered financial, territory, and military losses throughout the Empire. Some historians mark this series of events as the beginning of the decline of the Seleucid Empire; however, the reign of Antiochus IV shows a resurgence of the Seleucid Empire and the ability to recover from the losses endured at Magnesia.

Background

The Seleucid Empire was established in 312 B.C. as a result of the dissolution of the territory once conquered by Alexander the Great.¹ The territory was split, creating several empires including the Seleucid Empire in Syria and Mesopotamia and the Ptolemaic Empire in Egypt. Under the leadership of its first two kings, Seleucus I (312-281 B.C.) and Antiochus I (281-261 B.C.), the Seleucid Empire was able to expand its territory to control a large portion of what had been conquered by Alexander the Great. By the end of his reign, Seleucus I had expanded his influence from Thrace in Greece to the borders of India.² In the subsequent decades

¹ Susan Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, *From Samarkhand to Sardis: A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993), 10.

² *Ibid.*, 7.

the expansion of the empire stopped and the territory that the early kings conquered began to erode. The empire lacked the great leadership of the early kings that was desperately needed to maintain the Seleucid Empire's borders.

Antiochus III came into power in 223 B.C. at a very young age. He was the leader the Seleucid Empire needed.³ He reacquired the territory lost under earlier kings and expanded the territory even further. In the West, he brought the wealthy cities of Asia Minor under Seleucid control beginning in 213 B.C.⁴ In 209 B.C. He took back the territory of Ecbatana, pushed the Parthians back in the East, and forced both Parthia and Bactria to accept Seleucid dominance.⁵ He was also able to conquer Gaza in the South, bring Jerusalem and the surrounding area under Seleucid Control by 198 B.C.⁶ His military achievement brought prestige to the Seleucid Empire and expanded its influence. Also, in addition to his military achievements, he was able to make political gains as well. For Example, Antiochus III married one of his daughters to Ptolemy V, the king of the Ptolemaic Empire in Egypt, bringing an alliance between the rival Hellenistic empire.

Eventually, upon the request of the Aitolian League, Antiochus III moved further west, entering Greece with an army of 10,000 infantry, 500 cavalry, and six elephants in 192 B. C. to aid in their struggle against Rome.⁷ In 192 B.C., Rome and the Seleucid Empire began a war that would mark Rome's first conflict in Asia, ending with the defeat of the Seleucid Empire in the

³ Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 188.

⁴ John D. Grainger, *The Roman War of Antiochus The Great* (Boston: Brill, 2002), 18.

⁵ Malcolm A.R. Colledge, *The Parthians* (New York: Frederick A Praeger, 1967), 27;

⁶ Grainger, 30.

⁷ Titus Livius, *Livy: With an English Translation in fourteen volumes*, Evan T. Sage, trans. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985), XXXV: 14; Grainger, 191.

battle of Magnesia.⁸ The Romans defeated Antiochus III, and the subsequent treaty, the Treaty of Apamea, made the defeat official in 188 B.C.

The terms of the Treaty of Apamea are key to understanding the Seleucid Empire's post-war society, as the terms had economic, social, and military consequences to the empire. The treaty stated that the King must withdraw east of the Taurus Mountains. Livy claims that he was told to "keep [his] hands off Europe."⁹ In addition to the territorial losses in the West, many provinces in the East rebelled in an attempt to gain independence from the Seleucid Empire.¹⁰ Rome also demanded that Antiochus pay the full cost of the war, 15,000 talents, 500 to be paid immediately and the rest to be paid over twelve years.¹¹ Antiochus III's son, Antiochus IV, was taken as a prisoner to Rome as well. One of the final terms required the Seleucid Empire to destroy its remaining naval fleet and its war elephant forces. Out of all the terms listed in the Treaty of Apamea, only 500 talents had to be paid upfront leaving much of the terms to be decided later on.¹²

In addition to the demands of the Treaty of Apamea, the Seleucid Empire experienced another loss in 187 B.C. with the death of Antiochus III.¹³ He died while on campaign in the East, attempting to acquire the funds needed to pay the debt to Rome.¹⁴ The loss of the leader who had brought heightened power and prestige to the Seleucid Empire is a key turning point in

⁸ Grainger, 211.

⁹ Livy XXXVII: 45.

¹⁰ Polybius, *The Histories of Polybius*, Evelyn Shuckburgh S. trans. Vol. II (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1962), XXV: 2; Colledge, 28; Christian Habicht, *The Hellenistic Monarchies* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2009), 202.

¹¹ Livy XXXVII: 45.

¹² Grainger, 334

¹³ *Ibid.*, 353.

¹⁴ Appian, *Roman History: Volume II* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), Syr. 55.

understanding the Seleucid Empire as a whole, as his death led to the defection of many some of the territories he had conquered. Antiochus III was arguably the most successful Seleucid king, and his death marks a significant loss to the empire.

The goal of the Romans was to cripple the Seleucid Empire in order to prevent it from interfering in Roman affairs again. In the immediate aftermath of the Treaty of Apamea it appears as if the Romans succeeded in their goal. Territories in the East rebelled and the successful Seleucid King died.¹⁵ The terms, their repercussions, and the ability for the Seleucid kings to circumvent them will be important to understanding the power the Seleucid rulers held globally in the Ancient World.

The internal strife between the Seleucid Kings and the satraps of some of the satrapies has led some historians to believe that the decline of the Seleucid Empire occurred much earlier than it did. Despite the advancements of later kings, some authors have argued that the Seleucid Empire began its decline from its inception. F. W. Walbank's argument in *The Hellenistic World* exemplifies this position. Through his work on the Seleucid Empire, Walbank emphasizes internal conflict in claiming that the Empire was in decline from just after its inception.¹⁶ Other authors such as Cam Rea mirror Walbank's argument.¹⁷ This Roman-o-centric view of the East can be discredited though looking at the expansion of territory, military accomplishments, and economic status of the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus III and Antiochus IV.

¹⁵ Colledge, 28.

¹⁶ F. W. Walbank, *The Hellenistic World* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993), 123.

¹⁷ Cam Ray, *The Rise of Parthia in the East: From the Seleucid Empire to the Arrival of Rome* (Charleston: CreateSpace, 2013), 2.

There are also authors who argue that the losses from the Treaty of Apamea, including the loss of Antiochus III, marked the point of no return for the Seleucid Empire on its path to destruction. For example, Grainger writes, “The result [of the war with Rome] was... [a] fatal weakening of the Seleucid Empire.”¹⁸ His statement is reliant on the idea that the military, economic, and territorial losses to Rome after the Battle of Magnesia sent the Seleucid Empire down a path to decline that was not recoverable.

In a final category, there are scholars who argue that the Seleucid Empire went into decline well after the Battle of Magnesia due to other internal and external factors. One major aspect of this argument is shown through the work of Sherwin-White and Kuhrt. While discussing the aftermath of Apamea they argue that, “The Seleucids still controlled the territory from Cilicia to... Pakistan.”¹⁹ The power of the Seleucid Empire could still be seen over a vast territory and politically they held prestige in several parts of the Hellenistic World. What the Seleucid Empire needed most was a leader who could make the political, economic, and military decisions needed to recover from the loss at Magnesia. Those who address the advancement of the Seleucid Empire after the Treaty of Apamea agree that the empire did not go into a state of full decline until the rule of later kings; however, their discussion of the post-Antiochus III Seleucid Empire is mostly reserved to a conclusionary chapter. The events of the post-Antiochus III era of the Seleucid Empire have a large impact on the evolving relationships between the Roman, Greek, and Eastern worlds.

¹⁸ Grainger, 355.

¹⁹ Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 219.

Thesis

Very little research is devoted to the Seleucid Empire overall, having very few studies published about it in the last twenty years in English, and even less attention is given to the period just after the fall of Antiochus III at the battle of Magnesia. Although there have been works published in German and French, the last book written in English on Antiochus IV was published in 1966.²⁰ This work will attempt to analyze the period after the fall of Antiochus III in order to better understand the timeline of the decline of the Seleucid Empire and the stability brought to it during the reign of one of Antiochus III's son, Antiochus IV.

The question of the timing of the decline of the Seleucid Empire is one debated by Scholars today. The military defeat, monetary losses, and provincial losses due to the Treaty of Apamea proved to be detrimental to the Seleucid Empire; however, the reign of Antiochus IV will show that the empire was not in full decline during his reign and that his political, social, and military reforms and campaigns show that the Seleucid Empire was a strong and stable Eastern power during his reign (175 B.C. to 164 B.C.). Through addressing the military, economic, and territorial gains under the leadership of Antiochus IV the stability that he brought to the empire becomes apparent.

²⁰ Otto Mørkholm, *Antiochus IV of Syria* (Copenhagen: Gyldendalske Boghandel, 1966).

Chapter 1: The Southern Conflicts

After the death of Antiochus III in 187 B.C., his son, Seleucus IV, ascended to the throne. Very little is known about his reign. Mostly, it is believed that he reigned in a traditional fashion and did not achieve much in rebuilding and improving the Empire.²¹ Appian records him as being sickly and unable to command the obedience of the army.²² In 175 B.C., he was murdered by his minister Heliodorus, who replaced him with a young Antiochus in an attempt to take control of the throne for himself as the guardian. Very little is known about the young Antiochus except that he was a very young boy and would not ever survive to rule the Seleucid Empire on his own. There are historians that argue that Heliodorus was put into power as a pawn by Rome; however, this is not widely accepted.²³ Upon hearing of the coup, Antiochus IV began to make his way to the capital of the Seleucid Empire, Antioch. He had recently been released from Rome in a trade for Seleucus IV's son, Demetrius. With the Aid of the King of Pergamum, Eumenes II, he forcefully took control of the throne from Heliodorus.²⁴

The Early Years of Antiochus IV's Reign

The reign of Antiochus IV proves to be the best example of the sustained Seleucid power after the death of Antiochus III. According to Appian, Antiochus IV was given the name Epiphanes (The Illustrious) by the Syrians because when a usurper seized control of the government he showed himself to be a true king.²⁵ The literal translation of Epiphanes is God

²¹ Mørkholm, 37.

²² Appian, *Syr.* 66.

²³ Habicht, 191.

²⁴ Mørkholm, 10. Antiochus IV was a prisoner in Rome as a result of the Treaty of Apamea in 188.

²⁵ Appian, *Syr.*, 45.

Manifest, which can be accredited to the concept of the royal cult established by his father, Antiochus III²⁶. Early in his reign there was some contestation of the throne. There was an opposition that believed Demetrius was the rightful heir; however, Demetrius was a prisoner in Rome at the time. Antiochus IV had to manage the political sphere in Antioch to help solidify his position as king. In order to aid in his goal, Antiochus IV had coins minted bearing his image on the obverse.²⁷ Through the progression of Antiochus IV's ascension it can be seen that the change of power in the Seleucid Empire was contested, but was still successful without large-scale civil war or discontent. This is important in assessing the state of the Seleucid Empire, as in later years there will be greater discontent and internal strife that will help in the decline of the empire.

One situation that arose upon Antiochus's arrival in Antioch offers insight into the new king's efforts to stabilize the Seleucid Empire. When he arrived, with the army provided to him by Pergamum, he made an agreement with the young Antiochus where Antiochus IV would adopt him and make him his co-regent, attempting to prevent as much backlash to his ascension to the throne as possible. The story also suggests that Antiochus IV married the widow of Seleucus IV and father of young Antiochus, although this aspect is controversial as it might have just been a coincidence that both the widow of Seleucus IV and the wife of Antiochus IV had the same name. Either way these political moves helped to legitimize his reign and bring those who opposed him under his control.²⁸ This story of Antiochus IV political alignment within the ruling

²⁶ Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 202. An example of offering made by general can be found on this page as well.

²⁷ Mørkholm, 10.

²⁸ Mørkholm, 49.

family as to increase his legitimacy for the throne lends to the concept that Antiochus IV was very intelligent and politically minded enough to know how to transition into the position of power without causing mass chaos and civil unrest, a characteristic that would be needed to rebuild and expand the Seleucid Empire both internally and externally.

Antiochus IV relations with the Greek world also strengthened his power and control during his reign and demonstrated his goal of stabilizing the Seleucid Empire after the decline as a result of the Treaty of Apamea. He secured a good relationship with the Achaean League and throughout Greece as can be seen in Polybius, who was not a supporter of the Syrian power, by claiming that the “liberality of the present king [Antiochus IV] was well known in Greece.”²⁹ The liberality mentioned in Polybius is expressed in more detail through Livy’s account of the king. For example, Antiochus IV promised to enclose the city of Megalopolis with a wall and put forth most of the money to do so. In Tegea, he created a large theater made of marble.³⁰ In addition, in Athens he attempted to complete the temple of Zeus Olympius, which had sat unfinished for centuries.³¹ Livy also acknowledges that he gave many gifts to other Greek states, including Rhodes. The alliance between Antiochus IV and Rhodes would become instrumental due to the Rhodian navy and the depleted state of Antiochus IV’s navy after the Treaty of Apamea. Although Livy questions Antiochus IV ability and focus as a ruler, he does give the concession that “in two great and important respects his soul was truly royal, in his benefactions to cities and in the honours paid to the gods.”³² Antiochus IV strong connection with the Greek

²⁹ Polybius, XXIX: 24.

³⁰ Livy, XLI: 20.

³¹ Nathanael J. Andrade, *Syrian Identity in the Greco-Roman World* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 39; Polybius XXVI: 1.

³² Livy, XLI: 20.

world was a key political move to gain patronage, but also one to acquire more prestige for him and his empire.

Early Diplomacy with Rome

From the early years of his life, Antiochus IV was involved in Roman diplomacy. As a term of the Treaty of Apamea, he was taken to Rome as a prisoner. In 175 B.C. he was released in exchange for the son of Seleucus IV, Demetrius I. Later, in the period after his ascension to the throne, Antiochus IV had to navigate many early diplomatic issues with Rome in order to maintain and expand his influence, while not upsetting the growing power in the Mediterranean.

In 174 B.C. an embassy from Rome arrived in Antioch. It is unknown if the nature of this visit was just a formality, as Antiochus IV had recently become king, or if it was to get the Syrians stance on the Macedonian question before the beginning of the Third Macedonian War. Rome was trying to isolate Macedonia during this time as it waged a war against them.³³ Mørkholm argues that it could be possible that it was sent to ask the Syrians what their feelings were on the Macedonian question, as Antiochus IV had risen to the position of power in a vast and wealthy empire.³⁴ Antiochus IV had risen to the position with less legitimacy than the son of Seleucus IV, Demetrius I, and these interactions with Rome helped to legitimize his reign and show his political knowledge through siding with the Romans and staying out of the war in Macedonia, gaining their favor.

³³ Mørkholm, 64; Livy XLII: 6.

³⁴Ibid., 64.

In the next year, 173 B.C., Antiochus IV sent his first ambassadors to Rome.³⁵ It is suggested that this envoy also carried the final installment of the indemnity owed to Rome according to the Treaty of Apamea.³⁶ This would suggest that the economy in the Seleucid Empire was stable enough to come up with this large sum of money while maintaining its own economy and beginning to make preparations for a war in the south against the Ptolemaic Empire, even after the loss at Magnesia. The Seleucid envoy requested friendship with Rome and Rome accepted.³⁷ It should be noted again; however, that Rome was on the verge of war with Macedonia and needed the Seleucid's alliance in order to ensure they did not hold any allegiance to Macedonia and become an enemy. At the end of the conflict in Macedonia the relationship between the Romans and the Seleucids would change and the dominant power of the Romans in the Mediterranean world becomes more apparent³⁸.

What this early interaction between the new king of the Seleucid Empire and Rome shows is Antiochus IV's efforts to advance the Seleucid Empire and knowing that he must play the political game with Rome in order to be able to do the things he will later do. His political abilities to befriend the power of Rome shows his knowledge of politics and how to promote himself and the empire to aid in its recovery from the terms of the Treaty of Apamea.³⁹ These early contacts will aid in his relationship with Rome that will make Rome more lenient on some of the other terms of the treaty later in his reign, an aspect of the relationship between the Roman

³⁵ Livy, XLII: 6.

³⁶ Mørkholm, 65; Livy XLII: 6.

³⁷ Livy, XLII: 29.

³⁸ Green, 438.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 438.

Empire and the Seleucid Empire that will deteriorate under the immediate successors of Antiochus IV.

The Sixth Syrian War

As previously mentioned, the Seleucid and the Ptolemaic empires became allies after the marriage of Antiochus III's daughter to Ptolemy V.⁴⁰ This was not the first interaction between the two empires, as they had vacillated between confrontation and alliance since their inception. After Ptolemy V was murdered in 180 B.C., Antiochus IV's sister became regent to her son Ptolemy VI.⁴¹ When Antiochus IV's sister died in 176 B.C., Ptolemy VI was still a minor and two regents aided in his rule. According to Polybius, the regents expressed that the Coele-Syria lands were a part of the dowry when Cleopatra Syria was married to Ptolemy V, an agreement that Antiochus IV denied ever occurred.⁴² The two regents then promoted war to their people, declaring that it would be a short and victorious war that would include the surrender of not only Antiochus IV's territory on the borders of Egypt but the whole Seleucid Empire.⁴³ This was the rhetoric for the beginning of the Sixth Syrian War (170-168 B.C.), but it was also an important opportunity for Antiochus IV to secure and emphasize his control over the Greek communities west of the Euphrates to prevent rebellion.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ Livy XXXV: 13.

⁴¹ Mørkholm, 67.

⁴² Polybius, XXVIII: 20.

⁴³ *Diodorus Siculus: The Library of History*, Vol XI, trans. F. R. Walton, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978), XXX: 16.

⁴⁴ Andrade, 50. After the loss at Magnesia it was vital to maintain control over the territories that the Seleucids controlled and prevent other powers such as the Ptolemaic Empire from taking advantage of the Seleucid Empire's compromised state.

Egypt had already begun making war preparations. The celebration of the coming of age for Ptolemy VI marked an opportunity for Egypt to rekindle alliances, most notably with Rome, that would aid in their war effort against the Seleucid Empire.⁴⁵ At the same time a Syrian embassy, headed by Meleager, was sent to Rome as well to go before the Senate and address the aggressive Egyptian policy.⁴⁶ The Senate, however, would not hear the pleas of either embassy until after the war had begun across the Mediterranean.⁴⁷

The regents of the young Ptolemaic king, Eulaeus and Lenaeus, set out towards the Syrian lands without the king, but brought with them a large amount of the kingdom's treasury in an attempt to bribe Antiochus IV's officers to surrender their cities.⁴⁸ To their dismay, however, Antiochus IV was prepared for war as well and first met the Ptolemaic army on Egyptian soil at Pelusium, where he was victorious.⁴⁹ Therefore, Antiochus IV invaded Egypt to begin the Sixth Syrian War; however, it was in response to Egyptian aggressions and mobilization. Antiochus IV won the battle and showed mercy on the defeated by sparing the lives of Egyptian soldiers.⁵⁰ It is argued by some that this was a sign of a politically minded Antiochus IV and his "mildness" would contribute to his later victories in Egypt.⁵¹

After a short armistice and change of political leadership in Egypt, the regents were condemned and replaced. Antiochus IV took over a fortress at Pelusium.⁵² This began his march

⁴⁵ Mørkholm, 71.

⁴⁶ Polybius XXVII: 19; Mørkholm, 71.

⁴⁷ Polybius, XXVIII: 1.

⁴⁸ Diodorus Siculus, XXX: 18.

⁴⁹ Mørkholm, 73.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 74.

⁵² Polybius XXVIII: 18.

to Alexandria and the setting of another vitally important political move. Antiochus IV was in a dominant position as his army marched toward Alexandria. A Greek envoy, which had been in Alexandria, came to meet with the Seleucid king. Antiochus IV welcomed the men courteously and through a banquet that night where he heard the men give speeches in defense of Ptolemy VI, in which most of them placed the blame of the aggressions on the corrupt and now removed regents. Antiochus IV then began to speak. He acknowledged their points and brought up the acquisition of the Coele-Syria, denying the claim that it was promised as a dowry to Ptolemy V, but put off any decision on the subject.⁵³ In the meantime he advanced his army to the city of Naucratis.⁵⁴ It is at this point that there is a gap in the historical texts. There is debate over whether Antiochus IV was crowned king of parts of Egypt in 169 B.C. Regardless, Antiochus IV gained relative control over Egyptian policy. He was able to show his power and successes through his military and political actions while courting Greek emissaries and gaining allies at the same time.⁵⁵

Up until this point Antiochus IV seems to have had complete victory in Egypt. He was able to reassert the Seleucid military as a successful force and essentially take control of parts of Egypt without officially annexing it, which would have upset the powers in Greece and Rome. The political powers in Egypt, however, would soon change his position. Government leaders in Egypt established a new government to overthrow the government of Ptolemy VI. Cleopatra II and her brother, the younger Ptolemy, became joint rulers and appealed to Rome for aid against

⁵³ Polybius, XXVIII, 20.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, XXVIII, 20.

⁵⁵ Mørkholm, 84.

Antiochus IV.⁵⁶ He, in turn, portrayed himself as the defender of the legitimate government in Egypt and marched from Memphis to Alexandria. This was enough to catch the attention of Rome, but not their military intervention. Rome was still in the middle of a conflict in Macedon. Polybius suggests that the Romans feared that Antiochus IV's conquest of Alexandria would make him a threat to Rome, and sent an envoy from Rhodes to put an end to the conflict.⁵⁷ The Roman leadership did not see the need for direct military intervention in Egypt at the time.⁵⁸

The Romans entrust the Rhodians to conduct some kind of peace in the Syrian-Egyptian conflict.⁵⁹ Their intervention, though, would not matter. Antiochus IV was unsuccessful in his siege of Alexandria. When the Rhodian envoy arrived in his camp, he cut them off and denied the legitimacy of Cleopatra II and the younger Ptolemy. Antiochus failed in his goal of conquering Alexandria; however, he maintained his political prestige through sending gifts to both Greek cities and Rome amounting to one hundred and fifty talents combined.⁶⁰ In the Fall of 169 B.C. Antiochus returned to Syria with his army, leaving a garrison at Pelusium and Ptolemy VI in Memphis.⁶¹

Antiochus IV launched a new expedition into Egypt in the spring of 168 B.C.⁶² Through a naval attack, he successfully brought Cyprus under his control, thus asserting the resurgence of the Seleucid naval power for the first time since its decommission through the terms of

⁵⁶ Livy XLIV: 19, 6-8.

⁵⁷ Polybius, XXVIII: 17, 4-9.

⁵⁸ Günther Hölbl, *A History of the Ptolemaic Empire* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 147.

⁵⁹ Polybius, XXVIII: 17, 13-15.

⁶⁰ Polybius XXVIII: 22-23.

⁶¹ Mørkholm, 86-87.

⁶² Polybius XXIX: 26-27.

Apamea.⁶³ He then turned his attention to Egypt. How he took control in Egypt for the second time is debated, but regardless he was able to re-acquire much of the territory he occupied the year before. This shows his power and military might in the region and the sustainability of his military force as well as the weakness of Ptolemy VI. This set Antiochus IV on the second approach of Alexandria. His military force, however, would not be tested for a second time as Rome became aware of the resurgence of Seleucid power in Egypt.

The Romans, coming off a victory at Pydna over Perseus of Macedon, could now change their focus to Antiochus IV's advancements into Egypt. C. Popilius Laenas was stationed on the Island of Delos, and once hearing word of the success in Macedon, began Rome's intervention in the Egyptian conflict. In July of 168 B.C. the Roman embassy arrived to meet with Antiochus just outside of Alexandria. It was there in the city of Eleusis that 'the day of Eleusis' occurred that would change the course of Antiochus IV's expedition into Egypt.

Rome needed to reaffirm its strength in the area as Sherwin-White and Kuhrt claim, "It was obviously in Rome's current interests to shore up a tottering Egyptian regime against this most dangerous and powerful eastern empire."⁶⁴ The Egyptian regime was in disarray and the Seleucids looked strong and powerful to the Romans watching from afar. With Rome's conquest in Macedonia concluded, she turned to Laenas and his envoy into the Seleucid camp to help bring an end to the Seleucid expansion into Egypt.

Antiochus IV, preparing for the siege of Alexandria, was camped in Eleusis when the Roman envoy arrived. As Antiochus IV reached out to greet the envoy, Laenas presented him

⁶³ Livy XLV: 11; Cyprus was under Ptolemaic control at the time.

⁶⁴Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 219.

with a *senatus consultum* ordering him to conclude his campaign into Egypt and return to Syria giving all acquired lands back to the Ptolemaic king.⁶⁵ In doing so Laenas prevented himself from grasping Antiochus IV hand until he knew if he was a friend or a foe.⁶⁶ When the Seleucid King said that he needed time to consult with his advisors, Laenas drew a circle in the sand around him and said, “before you step out of this circle give me an answer which I may take back to the Senate.”⁶⁷ After moments of silence, knowing the strength of Rome through their recent success in Macedonia, Antiochus IV had no other viable option than to accept the Roman demands.⁶⁸ He removed his troops from Egypt a few days later. The Romans successfully defused the Seleucid Empire’s expansion into Egypt and restored Ptolemaic rule.⁶⁹ Even though Antiochus IV did not successfully take Alexandria or maintain control of Egypt, the Sixth Syrian War shows the strength of the Seleucid military after Apamea, being successful in battle on two expeditions into Egypt on land and sea.

The southern expedition of Antiochus IV in the Sixth Syrian War shows not only the military strength, but also the political abilities of Antiochus IV. He was able to fortify the southern border and establish stronger relationships and a stronger presence with the Greek communities there and portray strength to others throughout the empire to help deter other communities from rebelling. He was able, through political conversations with Rome, to maintain his military force after the Day of Elusis, even though parts of his military force went against the terms of the Treaty of Apamea. The acceptance of the Roman decree lost the

⁶⁵ Livy XLV: 11.

⁶⁶ Diodorus Siculus XXXI: 2.1.

⁶⁷ Livy XLV: 11.

⁶⁸ Diodorus Siculus XXXI: 2.2.

⁶⁹ Livy XLV: 11; Polybius XXIX: 27.

Seleucids Egyptian territory and some prestige, but they maintained their power in other areas through diplomatic means with Rome and the Greek communities that Antiochus IV came into contact with through his expedition south.

The Maccabean Rebellion

Although the expedition into Egypt took a large portion of Antiochus's attention, it was not the only issue requiring it in the south. The Seleucid Empire was vast, at this point stretching from the Mediterranean to the Far East, and although the royal family and many communities were Hellenistic, the empire contained many cultures that were not. In order to function properly as a society the Seleucid kings had to be able to balance the Hellenized culture of its leadership with the different cultures under their control, similarly to what the Romans were doing throughout Europe. One of the best examples of the conflicts that the Hellenistic kings had was the struggle between Hellenism and Judaism, which one historian claims to be the birth of religious persecution.⁷⁰

The Maccabean rebellion that would come in 167 B.C. was part the struggle between traditionalists and those in favor of a more Hellenized Jerusalem. Their homeland had switched hands between the Ptolemaic Empire and the Seleucid Empire several times, most recently becoming a part of the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus III in 200 B.C.⁷¹ A few decades later, in 170 B.C., Antiochus IV granted Jerusalem the title of Greek *polis* upon the request of some of

⁷⁰ Steven Weitzman, "Plotting Antiochus's Persecution," *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol 123, No. 2 (2004), 219.

⁷¹ Mørkholm, 135.

the city elites, led by the brother of the high priest Onais III, Jason.⁷² As with any change, this incurred backlash within certain Jewish groups who wished to hold on to the traditional aspects of the religion. This difference of opinion on the ability of traditionalist Jews to practice their faith the way they believed it should be practiced would bring them into conflict with the Hellenistic king and government in Jerusalem who now had Hellenistic leniencies.

The Hellenization of Jerusalem was part of Antiochus's efforts to further integrate the non-Greek communities into the Seleucid Empire in order to help prevent further rebellions. This process was highly successful in some areas of the Empire; however, that would not be the case in Jerusalem. There were several groups who did not agree with the Hellenization and wished to maintain a more traditional society.⁷³ This led to a divide within the community between those who supported Hellenism in the area and those who did not.⁷⁴ The act of Antiochus IV's predecessor, Seleucus IV, of raiding the temple in Jerusalem could also have hindered the relations between Antiochus IV and the people of Jerusalem.⁷⁵ With the understanding of this disconnect between the king and the people of Jerusalem it is important to understand that the conflict between the two groups was minimal in 170 B.C. and would not raise to the point of rebellion until several years later in response to the decrees of Antiochus IV in 167 B.C.

The conflict continued prior to Antiochus's 169 B.C. expedition in Egypt, when he sacked the temple in Judaea with the consent of the new High Priest Menelaus, whom Antiochus IV had assigned to the position because of his Hellenistic sympathies. Through the sacking of the

⁷² Andrade, 56; Thomas Horn, trans. *1 and 2 Maccabees* (Crane, MO: Defender Publishing), 2 Maccabees 4:4-15; Habicht, 199.

⁷³ Andrade, 59.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 56.

⁷⁵ 2 Maccabees 3:11; Mørkholm, 136.

temple he gained 1,800 talents and further upset many who lived in Jerusalem.⁷⁶ He also killed many of Menelaus' political opponents while in the city.⁷⁷ This interaction between Antiochus IV and the Jewish population of Jerusalem marks one of the first direct conflicts between the two powers and a prelude to what would happen in the years to come. Prior to this interaction the Seleucid intervention of the South was mostly concerned with the debate over whether the region belonged to the Ptolemaic Empire or the Seleucid Empire and little attention was given to Jerusalem and the discontent within; however, that would all change two years later.

Just two years later in 168/167 B.C., Antiochus increased his direct intervention in the area and set into motion a series of decrees that would bring him into direct conflict with some of his Jewish citizens.⁷⁸ Observing the Sabbath, performing circumcisions, and being in possession of the Torah and practicing its laws were punishable by crucifixion or hanging.⁷⁹ In addition, Seleucid forces, led by Apollonius, attacked the city of Jerusalem, killing many.⁸⁰ They desecrated the temple, stripping it of all valuable items, including the gold decorations, and leaving it bare.⁸¹ The Temple of Zion was then renamed for Jupiter Olympus and the Jews were forced to participate in a procession honoring the god Dionysus.⁸² Antiochus's treatment of the Jews through these decrees and actions has led him to be called "The historic prototype of the

⁷⁶ 2 Maccabees 5: 21; Mørholm, 142.

⁷⁷ Flavius Josephus, *The Antiquities of the Jews*, William Whiston trans. (Blacksburg Virginia: Wilder Publications, 2009), XII 5:1.

⁷⁸ Weitzman, 219; Hölbl, 190; Habicht, 200.

⁷⁹ Josephus XII 5:4; 1 Maccabees 1: 42, 1: 50; Weitzman, 219.

⁸⁰ 2 Maccabees 5:24.

⁸¹ Josephus XII 5:4; 1 Maccabees 1:22.

⁸² 2 Maccabees 6:2.

antichrist myth,” by one historian.⁸³ The exact reasoning for Antiochus’s decrees in Jerusalem is unknown, as he does not treat other ethnic groups throughout the empire with such scrutiny. The opinion of many is that these decrees were most likely created in an effort to Hellenize the Jewish population, as a part of Antiochus’s attempts to bring the people in his empire closer to the king.⁸⁴

In order to further Jewish Hellenization, Antiochus required that all Jews worship the Greek gods and had altars erected in every community.⁸⁵ The sacrifices were to occur once a month on the date of Antiochus IV’s birthday.⁸⁶ According to 1 Maccabees there were many in Judea who gladly adopted the king’s decrees.⁸⁷ These sacrifices, however, involved animals that Jews believed to be unclean and there was a growing population that was dissatisfied.

Many may have “gladly adopted” the decrees of Antiochus IV, however, there were those who resisted the demands of the king and that resistance evolved into the Maccabean rebellion. The Maccabean Rebellion began with Mattathias’s act in Modein in early 166 B.C. Mattathias was a priest in his community and was appalled by the changing conditions of Jerusalem saying, “Alas! Why was I born to see this, the ruin of my people, the ruin of the holy city, and to dwell there when it was given over to the enemy, the sanctuary given over to aliens?”⁸⁸ When the king’s officials, led by Apelles, came to Modein to enforce the sacrifices, Mattathias, being a

⁸³ Phillips Barry, “Antiochus IV, Epiphanes,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* Vol. 29 No. 2 (1910), 126.

⁸⁴ Green, 505.

⁸⁵ 1 Maccabees 1: 47; Josephus XII 5: 4; Mørkholm, 145-146; Elias Bickerman, *The Maccabees: An Account of Their History From the Beginnings to the Fall of the House of the Hasmoneans*, (New York: Schocken Books, 1947), 13.

⁸⁶ 2 Maccabees 6: 7.

⁸⁷ 1 Maccabees 1: 43.

⁸⁸ 1 Maccabees 2: 7.

prominent figure in the community, was called upon to be the first to do so.⁸⁹ Mattathias refused, claiming, “I [Mattathias] and my sons and my brothers will live by the covenant of our fathers.”⁹⁰ He then killed the Seleucid officials, a man who attempted to perform the sacrifice once Mattathias refused, and destroyed the altar, thus beginning the Maccabean Rebellion.⁹¹

Shortly after, groups of men, women and children who had fled the cities and were hiding in caves were discovered by Seleucid troops. The Seleucid forces first offered for the Jews to repent.⁹² They refused, and the Seleucid forces attacked. The Jews refused to fight back because it was the Sabbath and were slaughtered. Upon hearing of this horrific episode, Mattathias declared that they would not refuse to fight and that they would “fight against every man who comes to attack us on the Sabbath day.”⁹³ His movement grew as fugitives and warriors alike gathered to support him.⁹⁴ What began as one man’s refusal to follow the decrees and demands set forth by Antiochus IV evolved into an organized movement with a united goal that threatened the authority of the Seleucid king.

Why would Antiochus IV put forth such dramatic changes and bring on conflict and discontent within his empire? Prior to him, the Seleucid kings believed in religious tolerance and promoted the practices of other religions within their empire.⁹⁵ Even Antiochus followed this

⁸⁹ Josephus XII 6:2.

⁹⁰ 1 Maccabees 2:20.

⁹¹ Josephus XII 6:2.

⁹² Josephus XII 6:2.

⁹³ 1 Maccabees 2:41.

⁹⁴ 1 Maccabees 2:43.

⁹⁵ Erich Gruen, “Seleucid Royal Ideology,” in *Society of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers*, Vol. 38 (1999): 35-36.

pattern in other areas of the Empire. Bickerman calls the persecution of the Jews by Antiochus IV “the basic and sole enigma in the history of Seleucid Jerusalem.”⁹⁶

There are many theories from ancient and modern scholars ranging from mental illness to the manipulation of Antiochus IV by Jewish reformers.⁹⁷ Based on the information available, the most probable reason for his decision was an attempt of Antiochus to Hellenize his empire that encompassed so many different cultures and religions in order to connect them better with the Seleucid government. With the vast Seleucid Empire and the discontent between some cultural groups Antiochus needed a way to unite them and Hellenization served as his catalyst. The more important issue to discuss, however, is not the act, but the repercussions. The way in which Antiochus IV and his successors would address the conflict between Hellenism and Judaism, helps to demonstrate their ability, or inability, to maintain order and stability within their territory. The way Antiochus and the governing body of the Seleucid Empire handled the issue showed their ability to rule over the far reaches of their empire and would illuminate how their government handled complications from internal strife.

Mattathias died in late 166 B.C and left control of his movement to one of his five sons Judas, who was called Maccabeus, the origination of the term Maccabees.⁹⁸ For several years the

⁹⁶ Weitzman, 219.

⁹⁷ Peter Green, *Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 505; For the view that it was the brainchild of the High Priest Menelaus see Mørkholm, 145.

⁹⁸ Jpsephus XII 6:1; 1 Maccabees 3:1. The origination of the term Maccabeus comes from one of two possibilities. The first being *maqqaba* meaning “Hammer,” a military reference. Another possible origin of the term is as an acronym for *Mi kamokha ba'elim Adonai*, which translates to “Who among the gods is like you?,” a religious reference.

Maccabees, led by Judas, successfully waged guerrilla style warfare.⁹⁹ This was only a small rebellion in a small area of the vast Seleucid Empire; therefore, it did not warrant the attention of the king, as small rebellions would rise and fall on their own from time to time. The Maccabean cause gained popularity and their numbers grew as they raided the countryside, staying clear of the walled cities.¹⁰⁰ The small forces organized by the local officials and elite in Jerusalem attempted to bring an end to the rebellion; however, time after time the Maccabees were victorious.¹⁰¹

By fall 165 B.C., Judas and the Maccabean force had caused enough destruction within Judea to warrant the attention of the king. The Maccabees gained control of the road between Jerusalem and Jaffa, essentially cutting off the city from the King.¹⁰² The Maccabees were undermining the Seleucid authority in the area through their successful guerrilla warfare. Antiochus was forced to take the Maccabees seriously and mobilize forces into the area; however, at that time he was on campaign in the East with the main army solidifying Seleucid dominance in areas that had rebelled under earlier kings.

Antiochus named Lysias as the general in charge of a newly formed, large Seleucid force responsible for putting down the Maccabean rebellion.¹⁰³ According to 1 Maccabees the forces attacked and were repeatedly repelled by the Maccabees.¹⁰⁴ On the contrary, Bickerman claims that other sources show there was more political negotiation between Lysias and the Maccabees,

⁹⁹ Josephus XII 7:1.

¹⁰⁰ Bickerman, 37.

¹⁰¹ Bickerman, 38; 1 Maccabees 3:22.

¹⁰² Bickerman, 39.

¹⁰³ Josephus XII 7:2; 1 Maccabees 3:39.

¹⁰⁴ 1 Maccabees 4: 20-40.

where Lysias agreed to be the speak to the king about the demands of the Maccabees in return for their “good will towards the state.”¹⁰⁵ Either way, the Seleucid king knew that a decision needed to be made. The campaign in the East was costly and he needed the internal issues in the south to be resolved quickly. Through negotiations, aided by a Roman envoy and Menelaus, the officiating high priest of the reform party, the king and the Jews came to an agreement where the king would revoke the persecutions and grant amnesty to all who returned to their homes by March 29, 164 B.C., thus hypothetically ending the conflict between the Seleucid rulers and the Maccabees. The Maccabees, however, were still discontent that Menelaus and the reform party stood in a place of power and would take to action once again in later in 164 B.C.¹⁰⁶

In an attempt to eradicate the reform party from Jerusalem, Judas and his followers once again went on the offensive, this time attacking Jerusalem itself.¹⁰⁷ Once in control of the city, Judas had two initial goals: purify the temple and offer the appointed sacrifices.¹⁰⁸ It had been exactly three years since the first pagan sacrifice was made that the Maccabees put forth their “purification.”¹⁰⁹ In response to these aggressions, Lysias was once again sent with an army to subdue the Maccabees. After a victorious battle at Beth Zur, Lysias moved further into Maccabean territory and began a siege of Jerusalem.¹¹⁰

It was at this point that a series of unexpected events took place to change the relationship between the Seleucid government and the Maccabees. First, in 164 B.C. Antiochus died while on

¹⁰⁵ Bickerman, 39.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 40.

¹⁰⁷ Josephus XII 7:6.

¹⁰⁸ Josephus XII 7:6.

¹⁰⁹ Bickerman, 42.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 46.

campaign in the East, thus leaving control of the kingdom to his son Antiochus V. He was only nine years old; thus, prior to leaving on the eastern expedition, Antiochus IV named Lysias as the guardian of the young king.¹¹¹ Complicating the issue more, Antiochus IV, on his deathbed, named a different general, Philip, to be the guardian of Antiochus V.¹¹²

Once Antiochus V was named king, he and Lysias rode south with an army to handle the Maccabean issue, once again laying siege to Jerusalem. Upon receiving word that Philip was returning from the East with his army to take control in Antioch, Lysias and Antiochus V had to make a decision regarding the importance of the siege of Jerusalem versus losing control in Antioch. In 163 B.C. Antiochus V promised to end all persecutions of the Jews and give them the control over their laws that they had prior to Antiochus IV's reign.¹¹³ With this decision the rebellion of the Maccabees ended for the short term and order in the area was temporarily restored.

This conflict in the history of the Seleucid Empire is one that gets much attention for the religious persecution of the Jews, but is rarely addressed in the larger discussion of the evolution of the Seleucid Empire. The reason Antiochus IV deliberately antagonized his Jewish population is highly debated and truly unknown; however, the way in which he handled the issue as it escalated to the point of rebellion that challenged the king's authority in the area is more important to understanding the stability and functionality of the Seleucid Empire under his leadership. First, there was enough organization within the empire to coordinate and administrate the implementation of the decrees themselves. This situation does show the function and

¹¹¹ Josephus XII 7:2; Bickerman, 48; Green, 439. Appian, *syr.* XI.

¹¹² Josephus XII 9:2; 2 Maccabees 9:14-18.

¹¹³ Josephus XII 9:7; Bickerman, 49; Hölbl, 190; Habicht, 201.

effectiveness of Antiochus IV's government and the Seleucid Empire. Antiochus IV appointed inspectors to observe the changes taking place and ensure that sacrifices were being conducted according to the decrees showing that there were limitations to the autonomy given by the Seleucid king to local communities throughout the empire.¹¹⁴ Also, once the rebellion began the Seleucid powers were able to raise, organize, and coordinate a large army, while the main forces were on campaign in the East, and defeat the Maccabean rebels. This shows both the proficiency of the government and the financial stability to construct a second large military force.

Finally, the granting of amnesty by both Antiochus IV and Antiochus V shows the leaderships acknowledgment of the larger issues of the empire and the understanding that there were more important and costly ventures to handle and that the implementation of restrictions on the Jewish population was costly and not as important as the other external stresses on the empire. After the death of Antiochus IV, his successor, Antiochus V, needed stability in the empire, as he had to defend his claim to the throne at the same time, and the granting of Amnesty and revocation of the decrees of his father aided him in his effort. He solved the problem for the short term. However, as definitive as the giving of amnesty was to deciding the fate of the conflict, it was not the end of the struggle between Hellenism and Judaism. Later kings of the Seleucid Empire had to confront the conflict as well.

Southern Deterioration under Later Kings

The reign of Antiochus IV was the greatest example of the ability of the Seleucid Empire to recover and expand its power and influence after the loss of Antiochus III and the

¹¹⁴ 1 Maccabees 1 - 51.

implementation of the Treaty of Apamea. His successors attempted to continue the tradition. Due to internal and external conflict, however, the empire began to slowly degrade until its demise at the hands of Pompey in 64 B.C. The southern border as well as the conflicts with the Maccabees illustrates part of the decline that would consume the Seleucid Empire in the years between the death of Antiochus IV in 164 B.C. and the arrival of Pompey in 64 B.C. After the death of Antiochus IV, Antiochus V granted amnesty to the Maccabees and others and recanted the decrees of his father hoping that it would bring an end to the rebellion. The leadership of the Seleucid Empire hoped the Maccabean problem was solved. However, the conflict did not go away. In addition, the rivalry with the Ptolemaic Empire that had existed almost as long as both empires continued to require the attention of later Seleucid kings.

In 152 B.C. a Usurper named Alexander Balas, claiming to be the son of Antiochus IV, landed in Ptolemais and began to make his way to Antioch to gain control of the Seleucid Empire, continuing a period of severe internal conflict over the succession of the Seleucid Empire that had started with the death of Antiochus IV and that would last almost until Pompey arrived in Antioch.¹¹⁵ The Maccabees were still a powerful force during this period as both Alexander Balas and Demetrius I would fight for their allegiance in the civil war.¹¹⁶ Balas named Jonathan, the successor of Judas, to the position of High priest in an effort to gain his allegiance.¹¹⁷ Upon hearing of Balas' deal with Jonathan Demetrius I made his own appeal claiming "I will free you from the greatest part of the tributes and taxes which you formerly paid

¹¹⁵ Habicht, 214.

¹¹⁶ Josephus XIII 2:1.

¹¹⁷ Josephus XIII 2:2.

to the kings my predecessors, and to myself.”¹¹⁸ However the Jews did not trust Demetrius I, and aided Alexander Balas in his rise to the throne where they defeated and killed Demetrius I in 150 B.C. The throne of the Seleucid Empire was reinstated to the rightful heir, Demetrius II, from Balsa in 147 B.C. with the aid of King Ptolemy VI of Egypt.¹¹⁹ After the successful invasion, Ptolemy VI was in position to take control of all of Syria, but refused the throne of the Seleucid Empire, knowing Rome would not approve of a unified Hellenistic world and promoted Demetrius II as king, although it was clear that Ptolemy VI was in charge.¹²⁰ Ptolemy VI was mortally wounded in the Battle of Antioch in 145 B.C., leaving his troops to march back to Egypt leaderless leaving Syria back in the hands of the Seleucid king by default and not military or political action achieved by Demetrius II showing the dominance of the Ptolemaic Empire in the ongoing rivalry between the two empires.

The Seleucid Empire had to continually fight for the contested border between the Seleucid Empire and the Ptolemaic Empire. After the death of Antiochus VII in 129 B.C. Demetrius II regained control of the Seleucid Empire after being taken prisoner by the Parthians in 139 B.C.¹²¹ At the same time the Ptolemaic Empire was undergoing a civil war in which the king, Ptolemy VIII, was kicked out of the country and attempted to come back and regain control from his wife Cleopatra II.¹²² Cleopatra II offered Demetrius II the Egyptian throne in exchange for his aid in their civil war.¹²³ However, the strength of the Seleucid military at the time was

¹¹⁸ Josephus XIII 2:3.

¹¹⁹ Hölbl, 193.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 194.

¹²¹ Appian, *Syr.*, 68; Hölbl, 200.

¹²² Green, 537.

¹²³ Hölbl, 200.

minimal and the Seleucid forces were not able to make it past the border stronghold of Pelusion, where Demetrius II's troops revolted and joined Ptolemy VIII Showing the lack of strength and loyalty Demetrius had from his troops.¹²⁴

Ptolemy VIII decided then to use the weakness of the Seleucid Empire at this time against them. He arranged a revolt in the city of Antioch, and soon after other Syrian cities began to revolt as well. In 126 B.C., he sent a large army led by Alexander Zambians, whom Ptolemy VIII appointed as the rival to Demetrius II, to destroy Demetrius II's forces.¹²⁵ Demetrius II was defeated by the Egyptian army at Damascus, and soon after he was murdered, thus ending any support Cleopatra II hoped to gain from the Seleucid Empire in the Egyptian civil war and proved once again the weakness of the Seleucid Empire at this point in its history.¹²⁶ It also aids in the argument that the empire was in decline after the death of Antiochus IV because they could not protect their own capital from being overrun by the Egyptians and a usurper put into power.

These examples of military and political situations the Seleucid Empire found itself in after the death of Antiochus IV show the decline of the Empire as a whole. Its inability to build a successful army to fight in Egypt and maintain holdings in Judea shows that the central government of the Seleucid Empire held very little to no power over the southern region of the empire in the years after the death of Antiochus IV.

¹²⁴ Hölbl, 200. Antiochus IV's troops were also bribed to abandon him upon his first invasion into Egypt; however, they refused.

¹²⁵ Josephus XIII 2:1; Hölbl, 200. Josephus claims his to be the son of Antiochus VII, however, Hölbl states that it was most likely propaganda in order to attempt to legitimize Alexander's claim for the throne.

¹²⁶ Appian, *Syr.* 68-69; Green, 541.

Conclusion: The Southern Powers

Regardless of the losses from the Treaty of Apamea, the Seleucid Empire still had vast territory, gained under Antiochus III, which had to be effectively ruled in the. To the South, the land between the Seleucid Empire and the Ptolemaic Empire was one of the new lands now under Seleucid control and had to be brought into the political system. The issues in the south encompassed many years of Antiochus IV's reign. His domestic and foreign policy in this region showed how the Seleucid Empire was attempting to expand its influence and stabilize its position with the Greek communities in the South and Greece.

What can be seen from the Sixth Syrian War is the resurgence of the Seleucid Empire after the loss at Magnesia both militarily and economically. There is no doubt that the Seleucids were not strong enough to fight Rome, but they were prominent enough in the Hellenistic World to show their power and extend their presence throughout the Eastern Mediterranean, whether it be through warfare or diplomacy. It can also be seen that even after the massive loss of troops at the Battle of Magnesia the Seleucid Empire was able to rebuild its army and navy and be victorious with both. This shows an ability of Antiochus IV to govern his territory sufficiently that he was able to establish a new fighting force, organize them into a military force that was sufficient in size and ability, and then sustain this force over the course of several years as they would go on an expedition in the East after the conclusion of the Sixth Syrian War. This shows the continuation of the power of the Seleucid Empire and that it was not in a state of decline during the reign of Antiochus IV.

The Maccabean Rebellion shows a flaw in Antiochus IV's rule, but it also sheds light on the functionality of government under the Seleucid King. The ability for Antiochus IV to raise a second army under the generalship of Lysias also shows the stability and wealth of the empire to be able to function two armies simultaneously. In the end, the decline seen before and after Antiochus IV's reign overshadowed his advancements towards stability in the Seleucid Empire that is very important to its history.

Chapter 2: Taking Back the Rebellious East

Under Antiochus I and Antiochus III, the borders of the Seleucid Empire were expanded from Greece to India. This vast territory required the kings of the Seleucid Empire to be able to maintain order and to control many different ethnicities and cultures. Most Seleucid kings accomplished this by giving a level of autonomy to each individual community. Some of the conquered areas, mainly in the Far East, resisted incorporation into the Seleucid Empire, and were constantly waiting for opportunities to rebel and to break away from the Seleucid Empire. The Treaty of Apamea gave the disgruntled regions, such as Parthia, Bactria, Armenia, and Media the opportunity to break away from the weakened state of the Seleucid Empire.¹²⁷ The inactivity of Antiochus III's successor, Seleucus IV, left it to Antiochus IV to regain control of the lost territories.

The Seleucid East Prior to Antiochus IV

With the death of Alexander the Great, the vast lands that he had conquered fought for dominance and divided into four regions, the Ptolemaic Kingdom, the Seleucid Empire, Macedon, and later the Kingdom of Pergamum, the largest being the Seleucid Empire. The new empire would come to contain many of the territories conquered by Alexander the Great, including the satrapies in the East of Parthia and Bactria during the reigns of the first two kings.

Around the middle of the third century B.C. the Seleucid Empire were fighting in the Third Syrian War (246-241 B.C.) with Ptolemaic Egypt.¹²⁸ With the troops being consolidated in

¹²⁷ Colledge, 28.

¹²⁸ Edward C. D. Hopkins, "Overview of Parthian History: Early History," http://www.parthia.com/parthia_history.htm.

the West, the North Eastern border of the Seleucid Empire, the satrapies of Parthia and Bactria, became vulnerable to nomad invasions from Central Asia.¹²⁹ This led to tensions between the locals in the East and the Seleucid government as their troops and resources were being used to fight the war with Egypt, while nomads from Central Asia were raiding their lands.¹³⁰ It appears that the early focus of the Seleucid rule in the East was to ensure the protection of the trade and communications routes in the East and they had little interest in the outer edges of the eastern satrapies.¹³¹ The Seleucid neglect also led to the invasion and establishment of the Arsacid dynasty (247 B.C. – 224 A.D.) in Parthia.¹³² Both Parthia and Bactria broke away from the Seleucid Empire establishing independent rule by the late third Century.¹³³

The Parthians, under the rule of the Arsacids, are most well known for being a strong rival to the Roman Empire in the first and second centuries. As the nomadic tribes led by the Arsacids moved into Parthia they challenged the power of the Seleucids and took control of the area, creating an independent Parthia, taking control from Andragoras who was the Seleucid satrap Parthia at the time.¹³⁴ An agreement between Parthia and Bactria solidified independence for both powers.¹³⁵ The conflicts between the Seleucid and Parthian powers would eventually mark part of the deterioration of the Seleucid Empire and the rise of the Parthians, however,

¹²⁹ Colledge, 24.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 24.

¹³¹ Richard N. Frye, *The Heritage of Persia*, (New York: Mentor, 1963), 172.

¹³² N. C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1938), 10.

¹³³ Green, 148.

¹³⁴ Colledge, 25. Bactria also went into rebellion and gained independence from the Seleucid Empire during this time as well.

¹³⁵ Green, 148.

under several of the later Seleucid kings, Antiochus III, Antiochus IV, and Antiochus VII the Seleucid Empire experienced moderate success in the East.

The Arsacids, after establishing rule in Parthia, began to expand their territory. By 209 B.C. Parthia had expanded its territory as far as Ecbatana in Media.¹³⁶ In an effort to stop their expansion and the expansion of others, Antiochus III began a series of campaigns to take back all regions of the Seleucid Empire that rebelled. His goal was to expand the Seleucid Empire's borders to that of its founder, Seleucus Nicator. He retook Ecbatana after a long battle, pushing Arsaces II back.¹³⁷ Arsaces II eventually surrendered to Antiochus III, bringing the Parthians back into the Seleucid Empire. With Parthia being brought back under Seleucid control, Antiochus III forced Euthydemus of Bactria to sign a treaty as well, recognizing Seleucid control.¹³⁸ By the time Antiochus III went to war with Rome in 192 B.C. the Seleucid Empire stretched from India to Thrace.¹³⁹

Even with his expansive territorial additions to the empire, one decisive battle at the end of his reign would cost him much of what he gained. The Eastern satraps of Armenia, led by Artaxias, and Sophene, led by Zariadres, rebelled against the Seleucid's and named themselves kings, beginning an independent rules.¹⁴⁰ In addition, Bactria and Parthia shows no sign of Seleucid dependence after 190 B.C. as well.¹⁴¹ Parthia regained a large amount of its territory that had been lost to Antiochus III during the eastern campaign, and pushed its boundaries into

¹³⁶ Colledge, 27; Rea, 39.

¹³⁷ Colledge, 27.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 27.

¹³⁹ Green, 293.

¹⁴⁰ Polybius XXV: 2; Habicht, 202; Colledge, 28.

¹⁴¹ Habicht, 202.

Media.¹⁴² Bactria's separation from the Seleucid Empire was simple; Parthia acted as a buffer between Bactria and the Seleucid Empire allowing them to rebel and not be in fear of Seleucid invasion. Other areas throughout the East also abandoned the Seleucid Empire in an effort to create their own independent kingdoms.¹⁴³ The defection of many eastern satrapies shows the damage done to the eastern part of the Seleucid Empire as a result of the Treaty of Apamea and the Battle of Magnesia as they led to a weakened Seleucid Empire and little loyalty existed in the Far East. Antiochus IV would have to address the lack of influence the king had in the east in order to stabilize his empire and regain the territory and tax revenues lost through the process.

Parthian Expansion after Antiochus III

Although Antiochus IV never comes into direct conflict with Parthia during his reign he would have been aware of their growing influence in the East as they continued to expand their borders. Antiochus III brought the rebellious province back into Seleucid control. Once the Treaty of Apamea went into effect and the Parthians regained their independence, their presence continued to hinder the Seleucid Empire as the reign of Antiochus IV went on.

Parthia reasserted its independence from the Seleucid Empire under Phraates I (176-171 B.C.). During his reign, Parthia was able to expand its influence and military presence in the Far East, as Antiochus IV was occupied with the affairs of his ascension to the throne and the conflict with the Ptolemaic Empire. In Bactria a Usurper rose to power leading to instability in

¹⁴² Colledge, 28.

¹⁴³ Habicht, 203.

the leadership of Bactria and giving the Parthian ruler the chance to move into areas of Bactria, which he did claiming many areas of Bactria in 175 B.C.¹⁴⁴

After Phraates I's death in 171 B.C., he was succeeded by his brother, Mithridates I (171 – 138 B.C.), known as Mithridates the Great.¹⁴⁵ By 166 B.C. the Parthian Empire was on the rise once again. Mithridates did not waste any time expanding the Parthian Empire, conquering Hart by 167 B.C.¹⁴⁶ They occupied parts of Media and continued to expand deeper into Seleucid territory; however Mithridates would not make enough advancements West to gain as much attention from Antiochus IV as he would later kings when he conquered all of Media in 141 B.C.¹⁴⁷ With the leadership of Mithridates I, the power of the Parthians began to rival that of the Seleucids. What is most interesting about the relationship between Mithridates I and Antiochus IV is that Mithridates I never made moves deep into Seleucid territory until after Antiochus IV died. This could be attributed to the strength of the Seleucid Empire that was achieved by Antiochus IV.¹⁴⁸ Parthia's continued military actions in the East brought the two powers to the battlefield, however, it would not occur until the reign of Demetrius II in 139 B.C., many years after the death of Antiochus IV.

The Grand Procession at Daphne: A Prelude to the Eastern Expedition

Enduring the intervention of Romans at Eleusis, the internal rebellion of the Maccabees, and the loss of territory in the East, the Seleucid king was in desperate need of something

¹⁴⁴ Debevoise, 19.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 19.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 21

¹⁴⁷ Habicht, 225.

¹⁴⁸ W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (Chicago: Ares Publishers, INC., 1984), 184.

positive to project the strength of the Seleucid Empire internally and externally. Antiochus IV had to conduct damage control with both his citizens and the leaders of the Mediterranean world. Hearing about the grand Roman procession in Macedonia, constructed by Aemillius Paulus, Antiochus IV organized an event that would surpass that of Paulus and project the grandeur of the Seleucid Empire.¹⁴⁹ He sent envoys to several cities throughout the Hellenistic world to spread the word and help amplify the impact of the procession outside of the Seleucid Empire.¹⁵⁰

The thirty day event at Daphne to honor the god Apollo began in 166/5, historians have debates its exact date in relation to how it fits into the military campaign due to the lack of primary source material available at this time. It began with a large procession through the city. Processions honoring Apollo were not new and were conducted both by Antiochus IV's predecessors and his successors; however, the procession of 166 B.C. was larger, both in size and importance, than any other.¹⁵¹

The public procession began with large groups of armed troops totaling in the tens of thousands, showing the strength and wealth of the Seleucid Empire. Leading the procession was five thousand Seleucid troops marching "in the Roman fashion, with their coats made of chain armour, five thousand in the prime of life."¹⁵² This was Antiochus's way of exhibiting the newly reorganized military force of the Seleucid Empire. The Seleucid force was followed by five thousand Mysians, three thousand Cilicians, three thousand Thracians, five thousand Gauls, and Twenty thousand Macedonians. Two hundred and forty pairs of gladiators, showing the Roman

¹⁴⁹ Polybius XXXI: 3.

¹⁵⁰ Polybius XXXI: 3.

¹⁵¹ Rolf Strootman, *The Hellenistic Royal Courts: Court Culture, Ceremonial and Ideology in Greece, Egypt, and the Near East, 336-30 BCE* (PhD diss.; University of Utrecht 2007), 309.

¹⁵² Polybius XXXI: 3.

influence on the procession, as well as a few thousand troops from other lands continued the military segment of the procession.¹⁵³ At the end of the military procession there were three chariots, all drawn by several war elephants, and thirty-six war elephants in single file.¹⁵⁴ The presence of the war elephants is important as the Seleucid Empire was banned from having them through the terms of the Treaty of Apamea. The military force present at Daphne amounted to over forty thousand infantry and sixty-five hundred cavalry and was a show of power by the Seleucid king, most likely as a prelude to the eastern expedition Antiochus IV was planning; however, the military presence was not the end of the procession.¹⁵⁵

The first section of the procession displayed the military strength and power of the Seleucid Empire. The second section would show the wealth and splendor of Antiochus's domain. Even Polybius is taken back by the processions stating, "The rest of the procession was almost beyond description."¹⁵⁶ Polybius tries to express the vast amount of gold and silver presented at the procession saying, "A thousand boys carried silver vessels, none of which weighed less than a thousand drachmae (approximately five pounds each)."¹⁵⁷ Accompanying them were over six hundred slaves carrying gold vessels. In addition, there were roughly three hundred foreign delegates present in the procession. Not only was there a large showing of military power, but there was an expansive presentation of the wealth of the Seleucid Empire as well.

¹⁵³ Polybius XXXI: 3.

¹⁵⁴ Polybius XXXI: 3.

¹⁵⁵ G. G. Aperghis, *The Seleukid Royal Economy: The Finances and Financial Administration of the Seleukid Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 191.

¹⁵⁶ Polybius XXXI 3.

¹⁵⁷ Polybius XXXI 3.

As Sherwin-White and Kuhrt believe, this event was ‘counter-propaganda’ and a way for Antiochus to rally support from his client system, while showing off the wealth of the empire to the Hellenistic world and beyond.¹⁵⁸ The event lasted thirty days and continued to portray the wealth and prestige of the Seleucid Empire throughout.¹⁵⁹ The event was a political move of Antiochus to prove to the world that he was still powerful and emphasize the relationships he had with other leaders. The inclusion of the three hundred foreign delegates in the procession and the many envoys sent around the Hellenistic world inviting them to the procession exemplify that point.

The Grand Procession at Daphne was also a way for Antiochus to show his strength to Rome. First, the event itself was modeled after one hosted by the Romans, and Antiochus aimed, successfully, to surpass the procession of Paulus. He also challenged the terms of the Treaty of Apamea signed by his father. He accomplished this through the use of war elephants in the military procession. The war elephants were a symbol of Antiochus IV separation from the terms of the treaty set forth by the Romans and shows the independence and power he had and the power he had in his part of the world as the Romans would notice, but not take action against Antiochus. This is also a good measure to understanding the decline of the Seleucid Empire, as later kings would not have the power to break the terms with such ease.¹⁶⁰ The procession at Daphne is a great example of the propaganda skills of Antiochus as it served as both a

¹⁵⁸ Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 220.

¹⁵⁹ Polybius XXXI: 4.

¹⁶⁰ Dov Gera, *Judaea and the Mediterranean Politics 219 to 161 B.C.E.*, (New York: Brill, 1998), 206. The successors of Antiochus IV were under greater scrutiny by the Roman Senate to adhere to the terms as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

demonstration of the prestige and power of the Seleucid Empire and as a prelude to the Eastern expedition that he would embark on shortly after.¹⁶¹

Even with the great advances of the procession and games, there were aspects of the event that hurt Antiochus IV's image more than helped it. It is said through several sources that during the gatherings of the world leaders, Antiochus IV did not act according to what would be expected from the king-host.¹⁶² They were amazed by the greatness of the kingdom shown through the procession, but also the unacceptable behavior of the king as he rode on an inferior horse and danced around with the jesters at the feasts.¹⁶³ Even though this hindered Antiochus IV's image, the event as a whole still helped portray the Seleucid Empire as a grand power of the Hellenistic world, which was needed to portray the strength of the Seleucid Empire after Antiochus IV was removed from Egypt and as a prelude to the eastern expedition.

Although few historians have discussed the importance of the procession at Daphne, it is very important in analyzing the efforts of Antiochus IV to regain the prestige of his father and establish stability in the empire. The public disregard for the terms of the Treaty of Apamea and the presentation of the Seleucid Empire as a large, powerful and wealthy power in the Mediterranean world is a testament to the efforts of Antiochus in preserving and expanding the power of the Seleucid Empire after the loss at Magnesia. The procession exhibited the changes that Antiochus IV had made to the Seleucid military, advancements that would be put to the test on his later expedition in the East. This shows a reflection of what the Seleucid power could be

¹⁶¹ Green, 438. Polybius XXXI: 3; Diodorus Siculus: 16.1.

¹⁶² Diodorus Siculus XXXI 16.2; Polybius XXXI: 4.

¹⁶³ Polybius XXXI: 4.

and what they wanted the world to see them as. The potential for military and political strength are both demonstrated through the procession that would be tested in the eastern expedition.

The question remains, were the efforts of the king successful? This is a very difficult question to answer especially because Antiochus's death occurred just a short time later. In the short term, it did have a positive effect on the Seleucid Empire's power. Just after the event at Daphne concluded, an envoy sent from Rome arrived in Antioch. It is said that when Tiberius Gracchus arrived in late 166 B.C. he was treated with such hospitality by Antiochus that it removed any ideas in his mind that the Seleucid Empire had any ill feelings towards Rome after the Day of Eleusis that occurred a few years earlier.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, from this encounter it can be seen that Seleucid power still existed in the eyes of the Romans as they had broken several terms of the treaty of Apamea and yet the Romans were still maintaining friendly relations with the Seleucid king and not demanding the decommission of the naval and elephant forces. The procession at Daphne was a prelude to Antiochus IV's Eastern campaign, therefore it is possible that the Romans were satisfied with the Seleucids moving their military attentions East instead of West and did not want to harass them by enforcing the terms that Antiochus was breaking. Antiochus IV was also able to express Seleucid power to a large number of leaders in the Hellenistic world through the event.

The Eastern Expedition

Antiochus's eastern expedition began as an attempt to regain lost satrapies and attempt to restore part of the Eastern empire. There are many interpretations as to the exact reasoning for

¹⁶⁴ Polybius, XXXI: 5.

Antiochus's Eastern campaign. Some interpretations tend to acknowledge the necessity to increase the royal influence in some of the Eastern satrapies and reincorporate those lost under previous kings.¹⁶⁵ As previously mentioned, in 167 B.C. Parthia, under the command of Mithridates I, captured Hart, cutting off the Seleucid trade route to India and severing the Seleucid King's connection to the East.¹⁶⁶ This would have harmed the trade economy in the Seleucid Empire greatly. The awareness of the territory lost in the East, as well as the need to raise funds to fight the war in the South against the Maccabees and pay off war debt from the Sixth Syrian War, are all possible enticements for the eastern expedition. Once decided on the eastern expedition, Antiochus IV organized the Procession at Daphne in order to improve the image of himself and his empire, which, as previously mentioned, acted as his way of showing the Hellenistic world and Rome that the Seleucid Empire was wealthy and powerful. This expedition would be Antiochus's last, but he was still able to reestablish some form of authority in parts of the East.

There is very little source material on Antiochus IV's Eastern campaign, which causes a problem in the exact dating of the location of Antiochus IV at different points in his campaign. In order to aid in the dating of Antiochus IV's movements east the use of astronomical diaries as well as other records is needed to ensure accuracy. "Babylonian astronomical diaries recorded data drawn from astronomical and other observations concerning the moon, planets, solstices and equinoxes."¹⁶⁷ Occasionally those who wrote these diaries also noted political, social and

¹⁶⁵ Habicht, 202; Mørkholm, 166.

¹⁶⁶ Debevoise, 21.

¹⁶⁷ Dov Gera and Wayne Horowitz, "Antiochus IV in Life and Death: Evidence from the Babylonian Astronomical Diaries," in *Journal of American Oriental Society* Vol. 117 No. 2 (1997), 241-42.

economic occurrences. By combining the dating information from the diaries with the limited accounts of the Eastern expedition in ancient sources a close to accurate time line of events can be made. This is the case with some of Antiochus's eastern movements and allows for a clearer picture of the series of events that began with the Procession at Daphne and will end with his death.

Antiochus mobilized his troops and crossed the Euphrates and headed towards the northern satrapies in the spring of 165 B.C.¹⁶⁸ He first marched into Armenia, where King Artaxias I broke away from the Seleucid Empire to rule independently had amassed an army.¹⁶⁹ Very little is known about the war between Antiochus IV and Artaxias I. Diodorus provides only a fragment of the war discussing Antiochus IV's victory.¹⁷⁰ Antiochus IV's success is also mentioned in passing in Appian as well.¹⁷¹ What can be understood by combining the fragments available is that in roughly 165 B.C., Antiochus marched into Armenia and defeated Artaxias I. The location of the battle was in what is believed to be the capital of Armenia at the time, Habigalbat, also known as Armil, located in the vicinity of Lake Van.¹⁷² In order to remain in power Artaxias I was forced to recognize Seleucid authority.¹⁷³ Not very much is known about the size and makeup of Artaxias I's army, although it is possible that the army was very small after the battle because Antiochus IV would not have left Artaxias I in charge or a force that

¹⁶⁸ 1 Maccabees 3:37; Polybius XXI: 9; Gera and Horowitz, 241, 245; Mørkholm, 166-167.

¹⁶⁹ Mørkholm, 167; Diodorus Siculus, XXXI.17a.

¹⁷⁰ Diodorus Siculus, XXXI.17a

¹⁷¹ Appian, *Syr.* 66.

¹⁷² Gera and Horowitz, 244

¹⁷³ Diodorus Siculus, XXXI.17a; Gera and Horowitz, 244-45.

could cause significant damage to the Seleucid Empire after Antiochus's departure.¹⁷⁴ This is an example of military and political success in the early stages of Antiochus's eastern campaign to return the lost satrapies to the Seleucid Empire and raise necessary funds. The next phase of Antiochus's eastern campaign took him South to the Persian Gulf. Although there is not a full account of this move, Pliny the Elder provides some information referring the movements of Antiochus in Arabia.¹⁷⁵ The exact dates of this movement are uncertain. Knowing when Antiochus IV left for Armenia and where he would be later in 164 B.C. it is a fair guess that he was in the Persian Gulf region in the fall of 165 B.C. It is believed that Antiochus then established winter quarters, thus ending the first year of the eastern campaign.

The following and final year of Antiochus's campaign was 164 B.C., Where he campaigned in Elymais, in Media. He decided to attack a temple dedicated to the goddess Nanaia.¹⁷⁶ It was a common practice of many of his predecessors to plunder temple communities in order to raise funds, similarly to what he had done in Jerusalem a few years earlier. The locals in the area however, gathered together in defense of the temple and it is believed that Antiochus abandoned his plans to rob the temple prior to coming into actual combat with the locals, the same locals who had killed his father, Antiochus III, twenty-three years earlier, while on campaign in the same area.¹⁷⁷ In his retreat he moved towards the city of Tabae, in Paraetacene, between Persis and Media, where he fell ill and died.¹⁷⁸ It is mentioned in an Astronomical diary that a party escorted a king's corpse one month after the knowledge of his death had reached

¹⁷⁴ Gera and Horowitz, 247.

¹⁷⁵ Gera and Horowitz, 246; Mørkholm, 169-70.

¹⁷⁶ Polybius XXXI: 11.

¹⁷⁷ Mørkholm, 170.

¹⁷⁸ Polybius XXXI: 11; Josephus XII 9.1; Appian, *syr.* 67; 2 Maccabees 9:28; Green 439.

Babylon; therefore, it is believed that the body was that of Antiochus IV en route back to Antioch.¹⁷⁹

The exact cause of Antiochus's death is unknown. According to Appian, he died from the wasting disease.¹⁸⁰ Polybius claims that he was driven mad "by some manifestations of divine wrath in the course of his wicked attempt upon this temple."¹⁸¹ Second Maccabees claim it was divine retribution for the sins committed in Jerusalem.¹⁸² Whatever the cause may be, the death of Antiochus IV marks abrupt end to the Eastern campaign and the end of the last great attempt of a Seleucid king to regain control of the initial borders of the Seleucid Empire. The procession at Daphne and the eastern expedition after the undesired end of the Sixth Syrian War show that he was aware of the damage done to his empire by the Romans and needed to quickly recover in other areas of the empire before the loss resulted in more defections as the loss at Magnesia did to Antiochus III.¹⁸³ However his death in 164 B.C. would bring that endeavor to a halt and with it the end of his efforts toward stability.¹⁸⁴

Parthian Expansion after Antiochus IV: How the East was Lost

According to Andrade, "The death of Antiochus IV was a turning point in the rise of Parthia and the decline of the Seleucid Empire."¹⁸⁵ The increased expansion and strength of the Parthians after the death of Antiochus IV is possibly one of the largest external forces that aided

¹⁷⁹ Gera and Horowitz, 241.

¹⁸⁰ Appian, *syr.* 67.

¹⁸¹ Polybius XXXI: 11.

¹⁸² 2 Maccabees 9:12.

¹⁸³ Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 221.

¹⁸⁴ Strootman, 313.

¹⁸⁵ Andrade 63.

in the decline of the empire. After his death, the Parthians, under Mithridates I, continued to conquer and expand their territory into the Seleucid Empire with very little resistance, while the Seleucids were preoccupied with internal strife and continued conflicts in Egypt.

Mithridates I had successfully expanded the reach of the Parthian Empire, again conquering Media in 148 B.C.¹⁸⁶ The Parthians continued on their westward expansion, conquering Babylonia in 141 B.C., moving further and further west into Seleucid territory with minimal resistance.¹⁸⁷ The lack of resistance could possibly be credited to the internal deterioration of the line of succession of the Seleucid throne as usurpers as well as battling family members fought for dominance in Antioch.

With the rise of the usurper Alexander Balas to power in Antioch in 150 B.C., Demetrius II, son of Demetrius I, had to escape to Crete. Then, in 147 B.C. he returned to Syria and with the aid of the Ptolemaic Empire and regained the throne in 145 B.C. However, there were still legitimacy issues with regards to who was the king of the Seleucid Empire as the son of Alexander Balas, who was only two years old, was being promoted as King Antiochus VI by a group of unemployed troops, led by Diodotus, whose rise will be discussed more in chapter three.¹⁸⁸

In 139 B.C., Demetrius II was forced to march east to take on Mithridates I due to his vast expansion and left Antiochus VI to be dealt with later.¹⁸⁹ After experiencing a few successes in battle against small local armies, Demetrius II was defeated and captured by the main Parthian

¹⁸⁶ Green, 533; Debevoise, 21.

¹⁸⁷ Colledge, 17; Habicht, 225.

¹⁸⁸ Diodorus Siculus, XXXIII 4a; Habicht, 219; Green, 533-534.

¹⁸⁹ Green, 535.

force.¹⁹⁰ He was then paraded through the satrapies of Parthia.¹⁹¹ Antiochus VII, Demetrius II's brother, became aware of Demetrius II's capture while in Rhodes. He came back to Antioch and put Diodotus to death, thus taking full control of the empire and pushed forward the goal of continuing the eastern campaign.¹⁹²

Antiochus VII attempted to regain the territories in the South and East through a campaign similar to that of Antiochus III and Antiochus IV. His attempts mark the last partially successful expedition east against the Parthians. With the death of Diodotus, Antiochus VII's popularity grew throughout what remained of the Seleucid Empire to the point of being awarded the title *Megas* (The Great) on coinage in the year before his death.¹⁹³ His decisive battle in Jerusalem brought an end to the rebellion that began under Antiochus IV by laying siege to Jerusalem in 135 B.C. for one year and forcing them to terms.¹⁹⁴

Antiochus then turned his attention to the growing power of Parthia and the East. In Parthia, Mithridates I died in 138 B.C. leaving his son, Phraates II, in charge of the now substantial Parthian territory.¹⁹⁵ Antiochus left for his eastern expedition in 131 B.C. and made it as far as Ekbatana, the chief city in Media, where he would establish his base due to the support of Greeks in the area.¹⁹⁶ He was very successful, winning several battles against Parthian satraps

¹⁹⁰ Green, 535.

¹⁹¹ Josephus XIII 7:1.

¹⁹² Appian, *Syr.* 68.

¹⁹³ Habicht, 223.

¹⁹⁴ Josephus XIII 8:3; Habicht, 225. From this point on Jerusalem becomes an Ally of the Seleucid Empire especially noted under Demetrius II's as the Seleucid Empire was shrinking and the power in Jerusalem was stronger.

¹⁹⁵ Colledge, 30.

¹⁹⁶ Frye, 173.

and reclaiming Babylonia. According to Appian, Phraates II was afraid of Antiochus VII and returned Demetrius II back to his brother, in hopes that it would entice civil unrest in the Seleucid Empire over succession and move its attention away from Parthia.¹⁹⁷ It did not work, and Antiochus VII made winter quarters in parts of Parthia for the winter of 130/129 B.C. Unfortunately for Antiochus VII, on a selected day the Parthian people revolted against the military encampments and a large Parthian Army met Antiochus VII on his way to aide one of them. He was subsequently defeated and killed in 129 B.C.¹⁹⁸ As Aperghis writes discussing the decline of the Seleucid Empire, “The critical moment for the empire, with regards to population, was not Magnesia and the loss of Asia Minor, but the far more serious loss of Mesopotamia and the East to the Parthians by 129 B.C.”¹⁹⁹ This loss marked the end of the Seleucids eastern holdings and the end to any real authority held by the king of the rapidly deteriorating Seleucid Empire.

Conclusion: Antiochus IV and the East

Overall, the East proves to be an area of the Seleucid Empire where consolidation of power would never fully take effect and where the satrapies would always be waiting to rebel. The attempts of Antiochus III, Antiochus IV, Demetrius II, and Antiochus VII to regain territories that had repeatedly rebelled against their rule, some successfully and some not, shows how difficult it was to conquer and prevent the rebellion of the vastly different and far away societies of the East.

¹⁹⁷ Appian, *Syr.* 68.

¹⁹⁸ Habicht, 226.

¹⁹⁹ Aperghis, 57-58.

More specifically, Antiochus IV's eastern campaign including the Procession at Daphne shows his understanding of the political setting of the Hellenistic world and the Seleucid East as well. He showed once again his understanding of the necessity of positive propaganda, promoting the Seleucid Empire's prestige through grander and military force. Losses on the battlefield as well as inactivity of previous kings had caused massive deterioration of the Seleucid Empire; therefore, Antiochus had to rebound after the Day of Eleusis, knowing that this could be a catalyst for more rebellions, when the Romans had asserted their power once again over the Seleucid Empire.

Campaigns such as the one conducted by Antiochus III, also brought in large amounts of needed money as the conflicts between the Seleucids and the Ptolemaic Empire drained the treasury. Antiochus IV would have known that and it would have played into his decision to commence the eastern expedition. All in all, Antiochus IV's decision for an eastern campaign was a good one. Through the propaganda of the Procession at Daphne he was able to reestablish his position in the Hellenistic World to the Greek and Roman community, and then through the subsequent campaign, be able to reassert, at least in part, control in the East. With his untimely death, all of that effort would be for nothing. It is still a good example of Antiochus IV's political abilities and his constant attempts to stabilize and expand the prestige of the Seleucid Empire.

Chapter 3: The Strive for Stability

Antiochus IV helped to stabilize the Seleucid Empire and bring it out of the decline that resulted from the Treaty of Apamea. He then began to reestablish its position and prestige in the Hellenistic world. The military and political actions in the South and the East show that Antiochus knew the importance of maintaining his borders in order to aid in the stability of the empire. In addition, there were many decisions and changes that Antiochus IV made within Seleucid society that aided in the stability of the empire. When Antiochus ascended to the throne in 175 B.C., several areas of the Seleucid Empire had rebelled and established independent rule. The external wars previously mentioned are a great example of Antiochus IV's efforts to regain control of lost territory and reinstate prestige and power that would promote stability within the empire; however, his efforts were not restricted to just these two regions. The ways Antiochus IV changed internal policy in the Seleucid Empire supports the idea that he was attempting to encourage stability within the borders of his empire, while promoting it abroad militarily and politically, which in turn will show that the Seleucid Empire was not in a state of decline during his reign.

Ethnic Identity in the Seleucid Empire

By the reign of Antiochus IV, the Seleucid Empire encompassed a large amount of territory with many different ethnicities. Throughout this time the Seleucids had established a system of rule that maintained the integrity of local cultures in both Greek and non-Greek communities. There were many different languages and ethnicities throughout the Seleucid Empire and in an effort to please the communities and maintain order, the Seleucid kings would

allow them to maintain their own ethnic identity, but attempt to bring in Hellenistic elements as well.²⁰⁰ The Greek and Non-Greek communities had distinct characteristics from each other that led to a less unified people in the Seleucid Empire, which helps to understand the necessity of Antiochus IV in trying to bring more groups closer to the throne in order to prevent further rebellions and obtain stability.

From the time of Alexander the Great's conquest of the East, Greek communities were established throughout the Seleucid Empire. The influence of Eastern cultures evolved into Greek communities into communities that were unlike those in Greece or elsewhere in the Hellenistic world.²⁰¹ When Macedonian troops stayed behind in the East after their service had ended, they slowly integrate into the local societies creating an Eastern Greek culture unique to the Seleucid Empire. One example of Seleucid Hellenization in Greek communities of the Seleucid Empire can be seen at Marisa in Palestine. Here there are tombs that were created in the Greek fashion, with niches for the urns of the dead, but also included inscriptions with curses on it based on local practices.²⁰²

Unlike other areas in the Hellenistic world, the East developed into its own kind of Hellenism. Although the Seleucid Empire was the closest resemblance to Greek Hellenism, due to the fact that there were many established Greek along the Mediterranean coast of the empire and established hierarchy communities in the Eastern portion of the Empire, the society differed

²⁰⁰ Andrade, 40.

²⁰¹ Frye, 170.

²⁰² Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 185.

from that of the Greek communities in Greece.²⁰³ The establishment of Greek polis throughout the East occurred from the beginning of the Seleucid era where Greek art and architecture can be found in the Far East. The concept of bring Greek, however, changed in the Far East, as the communities were distant from Athens the idea of what Hellenism was became more of a blend between local and Greek cultures.²⁰⁴ Antiochus IV would use the concepts of Hellenism to attempt to expand his influence within his borders and establish connections between local elites and the king of both Hellenized and non-Hellenized communities. Hellenization, at least under Antiochus IV, was a broad concept that he attempted to use to bring many more communities closer to the King.²⁰⁵

This led the Seleucids to be disliked by some ancient Greek authors as not being an authentic Hellenistic society, claiming that they rode elephants, wore Indian unguents, and feasted immoderately, among other criticisms.²⁰⁶ Therefore, it is important to understand that Seleucid society was heavily influenced by Hellenism, brought by the Macedonians and practiced by the Seleucid Kings, but it was not the only aspect of Seleucid culture. There were many communities, such as temple communities and tribal communities, throughout the Seleucid Empire that did not show any signs of Hellenization. Therefore, what can be seen is a divide between the communities that were Hellenized and those that were not, this divide made ruling the Seleucid Empire difficult as those who were not Hellenized would be have less of a

²⁰³ S. M. Burstein, "New Ways of Being Greek in the Hellenistic Period," in *Crossroads in History: The Age of Alexander*, ed. Waldemar Heckel and Lawrence A. Tritle (Claremont, California: Regina Books, 2003), 229.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 233.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 233.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 49.

connection to the King and be more likely to rebel if given the chance. Antiochus IV understood this divide and the necessity of integrating more groups and made many strides to bring all cultural groups together during his reign with some degree of success.

The ethnic identity of the citizens of the Seleucid Empire was highly diverse from the very beginning, but the kings of the Seleucid Empire were able to maintain stability between the Greek communities and other communities throughout the empire through various methods, including patronage and the allowance of local communities to have more autonomy.²⁰⁷ The patronage seen between Antiochus IV and some of the communities within his empire was a continuation of what his predecessors had done, giving various gifts including, gold, dates, and dice.²⁰⁸ Antiochus IV did not patronize Greek communities alone, but also developed close relations with some eastern communities, giving some the title *polis*, and others the ability to mint their own coins.

The instability and loss of control of the late Seleucid Empire is attributed, at least in part, to the lack of connection between the Seleucid leadership and the Near and Far Eastern communities.²⁰⁹ Antiochus IV's realization of the necessity to integrate the native ethnicities into the Greek system in order to maintain their support for the crown is very important to understanding his contribution to the Seleucid Empire's stability during his reign. Through the granting of more autonomy to communities and the integration of more groups into newly formed cities, Antiochus IV attempted to stabilize his position in local communities in order to prevent dissatisfaction and rebellion from the Seleucid Empire and establish stability.

²⁰⁷ Andrade, 38.

²⁰⁸ Polybius XXVI: 1.

²⁰⁹ Andrade, 63.

The majority of the Greek communities in the Seleucid Empire recognized only ethnic Greeks as citizen making it desirable for some communities to want to be giving the title *polis* to be considered more Greek; however, many of the temple communities did not pursue recognition as a Greek *polis*. The lack of desire of some non-Greek communities to be Hellenized did not mean, however, that they did not show signs of Hellenization as the evolution of the East in general led to the Hellenization of some areas. The locations of municipal mints in the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus IV highlight this point. Not only did Antiochus IV select many Near East communities to mint bronze coins, but the coins that they minted show a combination of Near East and Greek idioms on them. The new system of integration shows Antiochus IV's attempts to bringing the people within his empire closer to the monarchy, not by fully Hellenizing them or creating "one people" like Andrade mentions, but by trying to establish loyalty between the king and the inhabitants of the cities in the Seleucid Empire to improve the relationship between different communities and the king in order to help maintain stability, even in times of decline or conflict.²¹⁰

Municipal Minting

One way of assessing how Antiochus IV achieved more integration of some of the different groups throughout the empire and therefore more stability, is to analyze the coinage struck during this time and the policy surrounding the minting of the coins. Coins depict many aspects of social, cultural, and political life in antiquity that has been lost in other mediums. During the reign of Antiochus IV, there were many changes made to the minting process that

²¹⁰ Andrade, 39.

gives insight into the relationship and challenges present between Hellenism and other culture that existed during his reign.

Antiochus allowed at least eighteen cities in the empire to mint municipal bronzes.²¹¹ This was a departure from the minting policy of his predecessors, who reserved minting to more established, royal mints. These cities show an expansion of a practice of municipal coin production on a scale that had not been seen in the Seleucid Empire before.²¹² There were two, Tyre and Sidon, that were old Phoenician cities, but the rest were all established during the Seleucid Era including, Alexandria by Issos in Phoenicia, Heirapolis Bambyke in Cyrrestice, Laodikeia by the Sea in Phoenicia, Seleukeia in Pieria in Northern Syria, Apameia on the Axios in Northern Syria, and Edessa in Commagene.²¹³

Most of the newly created mints struck coins bearing the image of Antiochus IV and/or Zeus, his patron deity.²¹⁴ One example can be seen at the mint in Ptolemais, also known as Antioch AKE in South Phoenicia. In Ptolemais, there were coins minted bearing Antiochus IV image on the obverse and an image of Zeus extending a wreath in his right hand on the reverse.²¹⁵ This demonstrates Antiochus IV's use of propaganda, through the medium of coinage,

²¹¹ Andrade, 50.

²¹² Andrew Meadows, "Money, Freedom, and Empire in the Hellenistic World," in *Money and its Uses in the Ancient Greek World*," ed. Andrew Meadows and Kristy Shipton, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 61.

²¹³ Getzel M. Cohen, *The Hellenistic Settlements in Syria, The Red Sea Basin, and North Africa*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 217.

²¹⁴ Andrade, 50.

²¹⁵ Cohen, 213-214.

to promote himself as the protector and benefactor of the Greek communities within his empire.²¹⁶

Antiochus IV's minting policy is just one example of his attempt to incorporate more people into the Seleucid system and bring the communities within his realm closer to the King through giving them more autonomy. Each community would mint coins bearing the image of the king, but also strike some coins bearing images revolving around local legends and divinities.²¹⁷ As Andrade says, "Greek culture, as expressed through Near East idioms (on coinage), could bind the Seleucid empire's diverse communities to their king and each other, while still facilitating the articulation of local customs."²¹⁸ It is believed that this was Antiochus IV's goal with his unprecedented policy of expanding the mints within the Seleucid Empire.

Some of the cities Antiochus IV's allowed to begin minting coins had never minted coins before and others were only created at the birth of the Seleucid Empire. None of the mints were in existence prior to the arrival of the Seleucids.²¹⁹ This is due to the fact that prior to the rise of the Seleucids the economy of the East was commodity based with the exception of Babylon.²²⁰ The establishment of mints and municipal coinage by Seleucus I was a way to stimulate the economy of the empire and create tax revenue. Although in the beginning of circulation it was mostly reserved for those living on or near the Mediterranean coast and some of the larger cities inland, the currency based economy expanded to more cities, but were mostly reserved to royal

²¹⁶ Green, 438.

²¹⁷ Andrade, 50.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 54.

²¹⁹ Meadows, 61.

²²⁰ Aperghis, 29.

mints.²²¹ The allowance of multiple local communities to mint their own bronze was not conducted a large scale until Antiochus IV, which gave those communities the ability to express their local traditions through the Hellenic medium.

The expanded circulation of bronze and silver coinage from official mints reached its peak under Antiochus III's extensive expansion of the Seleucid Empire, opening up trade from India to Asia Minor. The increase in trade can be seen in the larger circulation of coinage in certain areas of the Seleucid Empire such as the Persian Gulf. The Treaty of Apamea caused a decline in the circulation of coinage almost instantaneously and the circulation remained low during the reign of Seleucus IV, Antiochus IV's predecessor. This is based on research conducted by Salles, showing the variation and quantity of coinage found in certain areas during excavations. It is suggested that a correlation can be made between the quantities of coinage found to the amount circulating in the time period the coins were minted.²²² This being said, there are some problems with this approach including the fact that there is no way to prove definitively when the coins arrived and how they got there; however it does give an idea of the circulation of coins in the time of Antiochus IV. There was resurgence in the currency found from the time period of Antiochus IV's reign (175-164 B.C.) in the Persian Gulf region, which suggests that an increase in the circulation of coinage occurred under Antiochus IV that was not seen since the decline after the Treaty of Apamea.²²³ The findings of Salles also support the idea that there was a stimulation of the economy that occurred during the reign of Antiochus IV that

²²¹ Aperghis, 29.

²²² Jean-François Salles, "The Arab-Persian Gulf under the Seleucids," in *Hellenism in the East*, ed. Amélie Kuhrt and Susan Sherwin-White, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 91-92.

²²³ Salles, 92-93.

could be attributed to stability brought by both civil and military changes. The coinage minted under Antiochus IV show a change in Seleucid policy in an effort to unify the people of the Seleucid Empire through different means; however, this was not Antiochus IV's only way of promoting integration.

The Seleucid Greek *polis* and Land Grants

Through coins minted between 169 B.C. and 164 B.C. another aspect of Antiochus IV's attempt to connect the communities of the Seleucid Empire to the king becomes evident. Antiochus IV instilled the rank of Greek *polis* on some native Near East communities, a practice that had not occurred in the Seleucid Empire until after the Treaty of Apamea under Seleucus IV, and was not widely used until Antiochus IV.²²⁴ One of the best examples of Antiochus IV granting an existing city the rank of *polis* was in Jerusalem, which became a *polis* in the late 170's.²²⁵ It shows an example of how the process would take place; beginning with the renaming of the city, the construction of a gymnasium, and the rededication of the temple to Zeus.²²⁶ The transformation of Jerusalem failed; however, the failure can be better attributed to the oppressive decrees set forth by Antiochus IV in 167 B.C. and not the initial Hellenization of the city.²²⁷ There were other instances of existing communities being given the title of *polis* throughout the Seleucid Empire, mostly in Syria and Phoenicia, where the process was highly successful.²²⁸

²²⁴ Andrade, 54.

²²⁵ Ibid., 56.

²²⁶ Burstein, 240.

²²⁷ Andrade, 62.

²²⁸ Burstein, 240.

He also oversaw the establishment of new Hellenistic communities in Cilicia and Syria where there had not been previous Greek settlements, such as Epiphaneia in Northern Syria and Epiphaneia on the Euphrates.²²⁹ Due to the lack of prior settlement, it is assumed that the population was mostly native Cilicians or Syrians.²³⁰ This is yet another instance where Antiochus IV attempted to incorporate more people into the empire and increase stability by bringing more of his people into cities and into the Seleucid system. Also, the possibility of the new cities inhabitation being of Eastern background as well as Greek, as opposed to primarily Greek heritage, as was the policy under Antiochus IV's predecessors, demonstrates a change in thinking on the part of Antiochus IV with regards to the integration of larger populations of people within the empire. Although this effort did not incorporate the countryside and not all inhabitants were incorporated into the new cities, it shows Antiochus's understanding of what needed to be done and the strides he initiated to begin to incorporate more groups.

As previously mentioned, the status of Greek *polis* carried with it different meanings in the Seleucid Empire than it did in other Hellenized regions.²³¹ The Greek *polis*, under the early Seleucid system, was founded and inhabited by individuals who were ethnically Greek and could prove their Greek genealogy, similar to other areas of the Hellenistic world.²³² Under Antiochus IV, the Seleucid Empire made strides to integrate other groups in the Greek *polis* system as well; however, that is not to say that the eastern ethnic groups were considered on the same level as the Greeks. The groups and their cultures would intermingle, but there was still a distinction

²²⁹ Cohen, 106, 169.

²³⁰ Andrade, 54.

²³¹ R. J. van der Spec, "The Babylonian City," in *Hellenism in the East*, ed. Amélie Kuhrt and Susan Sherwin-White, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1987), 57.

²³² Andrade, 42 gives a more in depth look at the requirements of citizenship in the Seleucid Greek *polis*.

between the two groups, a distinction that caused much strife internally. The early kings of the Seleucid Empire did not recognize Near East communities as a Greek *polis* or give them patronage. This system of patronage, under Antiochus IV, to Near East communities can be seen in several cities, most notably Jerusalem. The system of Hellenizing Near East communities did not account for all communities within the Seleucid Empire and only shows the beginnings of what will later be used by the Roman imperial period to integrate the East.²³³

In addition to creating new Greek *poleis*, the giving of land grants was a method of incorporating more people in addition to collecting taxes and sustaining military forces that the Seleucids instilled in the empire. The king, owning the land, would give a grant of land and serfs in return to the settlers and their future generations paying taxes.²³⁴ It is suggested that the goal of the giving of land grants to individuals in new cities was done in an attempt to stimulate more economic activity and generate more revenue for the king.²³⁵ The land granting system in the Seleucid Empire was based more on economic considerations than political or military considerations, as in other societies.²³⁶ Temples were treated similarly to cities where the king would want to reinforce the economic centers located there, sometimes through the granting of land, which is one of the reasons for the evolution of some communities, such as in Jerusalem, become integrated into the Greek *polis* system, by Antiochus.²³⁷ He continued this tradition, but differed slightly from the policy of his predecessors. It had been primarily the custom to give land grants to groups of people in order to create a new city. Under Antiochus IV, the system

²³³ Andrade, 38.

²³⁴ Frye, 169.

²³⁵ Aperghis, 87.

²³⁶ Ibid., 113.

²³⁷ Ibid., 113.

shifted slightly from giving land grants to groups to giving land grants to individuals and groups that had already established cities.²³⁸

The establishment of new Greek *poleis* and the expansion of the land granting system give examples of Antiochus IV's policies that were put forward to promote stabilization within and aids in the argument that the Seleucid Empire was not in decline during his reign as cities were being built and communities were being incorporated and expanded showing at least a minor degree of prosperity.

Local Autonomy

The relationship between the king and the newly formed and already established communities is a unique one where Antiochus IV attempted to give a degree of local autonomy in local affairs in an effort to gain popularity and loyalty from the elite. As previously mentioned, from the beginning of the Seleucid Empire there had been moderated autonomy for local communities. This tradition goes back to one of the predecessors of the Seleucid Empire, the Achaemenid Empire.²³⁹ The Seleucids needed to evolve the existing system to fit their Hellenic system of rule, which, as previously stated, included creating tax revenue from a society that had mostly never used a currency before.

The concept of local autonomy within the Seleucid Empire was expanded under Antiochus IV; however, The autonomy given to local communities did not mean that the local communities held the power to overrule the king. The local governments of the Greek

²³⁸ Andrade, 55.

²³⁹ Aperghis, 29.

communities and other ethnic and temple communities would function semi-independently in civil matters; however, the king would hold the power to intervene with his armies and officials if needed.²⁴⁰ An example of this can be seen when the officials intervened in Judea to enforce Antiochus's decrees in 167 B.C.²⁴¹ The locals were given the decrees of the king, who sent officials to help enforce the laws.

The ability for local rulers to have some degree of autonomy was important to Antiochus IV and his predecessors to rule their diverse kingdom with a degree of success. Antiochus IV expanded that system, bringing even more communities closer to the king. He attempted to increase the prestige and prominence of the Seleucid power by “consolidating the network of Greek city-states” that incorporated Syria, Phoenicia, and Cilicia.²⁴² Examples of this are his allowance of certain communities to mint bronzes and incorporating communities into the Greek polis system.²⁴³ Local communities would have to handle their local affairs, which would cost more money, but the increased control of local elites pleased them and created a situation where both king and community were satisfied. Antiochus IV wanted to give more control to the local communities while at the same time establishing a more uniform rule over them and giving them more connection to the king to ensure their allegiance even in times of decline.

²⁴⁰ Andrade, 41.

²⁴¹ Josephus XII 6:2; 1 Maccabees 2:20.

²⁴² Andrade, 48.

²⁴³ Ibid., 48.

Religious Tolerance in the Seleucid Empire

In addition to local autonomy, another aspect of Seleucid rule adjusted under Antiochus IV was religious tolerance. Even though the Hellenistic Seleucids looked down upon ethnically different people, throughout the history of their empire, the Seleucid Kings were highly tolerant of local religions.²⁴⁴ The Seleucid royal family was of Hellenistic decent; however, there are signs that the ruling family, including Antiochus IV, participated in rituals with some of the Near Eastern temple communities. This was in his attempt to maintain legitimacy of the king's authority in the area through giving tribute and establishing relationships with the priestly class or leading citizens.²⁴⁵ An example of this is seen in the marriage of Diana of Hierapolis to Antiochus IV where he participated in their local religious rites.²⁴⁶ Antiochus's acknowledgement of other religions that existed within the communities of the Seleucid Empire shows once again that he was skilled in the use of propaganda, as he was attempting to gain good favor by the people of the area even though they might not be Hellenized in order to establish a better connection between the king and his people. Whereas the failures of Antiochus IV through the Maccabean Rebellion are extreme, the failures do not represent the overall policy towards all ethnic groups within the empire and appears to be more of an outlier than anything else.²⁴⁷

Antiochus IV's religious policies did not always help integrate more groups into the Seleucid System. The practice of raiding temples within the Seleucid Empire by the Kings had

²⁴⁴ Sherwin-White and Kuhrt, 185.

²⁴⁵ Andrade, 46.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 49; Michael J. Taylor, "Sacred Plunder and the Seleucid Near East," in *Greece and Rome* 61 (2014): 234. It is suggested that Antiochus IV could have also raided the local temple at Hierapolis, but the exact encounter is unknown.

²⁴⁷ Andrade, 38.

been occurring long before the rise of Antiochus IV; however, his raid of the temple in Jerusalem in 169 B.C. and 167 B.C. as well as his attempted raid in the East in 164 B.C., led to the inhabitants of the Seleucid Empire temple communities to become dissatisfied with the Seleucid rule and rebel when the opportunity presented itself upon the death of Antiochus IV.

Roman Influences

The evolution of the functions of the government under Antiochus IV to incorporate more groups through city-building, land grants and more freedoms to the local governments shows a change in the way the Seleucid leadership elected to rule over its people. In addition, Antiochus IV incorporated some Roman influences into the new system that shows his attempts to update the Seleucid Empire, suggesting that the empire was not in a state of decline during his reign.

Aspects of Antiochus IV reign were modeled based upon a Roman model.²⁴⁸ They are seen through Seleucid entertainment. Through the Procession and subsequent games at Daphne an increase in Roman influence on the Seleucid Empire can be seen. The Procession at Daphne was modeled after the Roman Triumph.²⁴⁹ The Syrian forces that led the Procession at Daphne were armored with Roman style armor.²⁵⁰ The month long event included Gladiatorial combat games.²⁵¹ In addition, Roman models can be seen in other aspects of Seleucid society under Antiochus IV. He built a temple dedicated to *Jupiter Capitolinus*, which was paneled with

²⁴⁸ Nick Sekunda, and Angus McBride, *Seleucid and Ptolemaic Reformed Armies 168 – 145 BC. Volume I: The Seleucid Army*, (Yorkshire: Montvert Publications, 1994), 4.

²⁴⁹ Tarn, 184.

²⁵⁰ Polybius XXXI: 3.

²⁵¹ Polybius XXXI: 4.

gold.²⁵² According to Livy these additions to the capitol city of Antioch brought great joy to the people of the city.²⁵³ The Implementation of New Roman models to Seleucid life shows the advancement of Seleucid society under Antiochus IV that was just another aspect of his updating of Seleucid society.

Population Fluctuation and Taxation

Population fluctuation occurred throughout the history of the Seleucid Empire as satrapies rebelled and were brought back under control of the king. Assessing the population of the Seleucid Empire is important in evaluating several aspects of Antiochus's rule. First it shows the stability in territory in the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus IV as population fluctuations would relate to the acquisition or loss of territories and suggest the success or failure of Antiochus IV's policies and the ability to portray the strength of the empire. Second it directly relate to the tax revenue earned, a portion of the income of the king was tied to the land; therefore, looking at the population a better understanding of Antiochus IV's finances can be seen. Likewise, looking at the fluctuation of the market through the prices of goods in the Seleucid Empire prior to, during, and after his reign demonstrates whether his political and social reforms and military campaigns had a positive or negative impact on these other aspects of the Empire.

The statistics related to the population and economy of the Seleucid Empire during the reign of Antiochus IV help to demonstrate the stability he brought to the empire in relation to the

²⁵² Livy, XLI: 20; Tarn, 186.

²⁵³ Livy, XLI: 20.

period of decline after the terms of the treaty of Apamea and the loss of Antiochus III and also to help reveal the point of decline that followed his death. This section relies heavily on the work of Aperghis, who was able to map out the population of the Seleucid Empire though analyzing many different aspects of the Seleucid society, from archeological evidence, to living patterns and economic conditions, to astrological diaries, taking into consideration the different conditions for inhabitation in different terrains throughout the Seleucid Empire.²⁵⁴ All combined, Aperghis creates a close estimation to the population of the Seleucid Empire at different points in its history. Although these population statistics are estimates they are put into the range that the actual population is highly unlikely to be outside of.²⁵⁵

Aperghis attempts to find the population range from the creation of the Seleucid Empire to the coming of Pompey, which allows for a comparison of the population between Antiochus IV's reign and other prominent Seleucid kings. The empire experiences two peaks in population between fourteen and eighteen million in 281 B.C. and 190 B.C., just prior to the Battle of Magnesia.²⁵⁶ The period just after the battle of Magnesia and the Treaty of Apamea shows the beginnings of the steep decline in population as portions of the empire were taken away from the Seleucids through the treaty and others rebelled against the weakened empire. In order to suggest that Antiochus IV's reforms and campaigns were successful overall, there must be a distinct difference in population during the years of his reign from those before and after. With the conclusion of the Battle of Magnesia and the Treaty of Apamea several parts of the Seleucid Empire went into rebellion and left the Empire, thus causing a steep decline in the population of

²⁵⁴ Aperghis, 35 – 58.

²⁵⁵ Aperghis, 35.

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 57: Figure 4.1.

the Empire until the reign of Antiochus IV. During the Reign of Antiochus IV the population of the Seleucid Empire stabilized roughly between nine and twelve million.²⁵⁷ The degree of stability experienced under Antiochus IV is only seen one other time in the history of the empire under the reign of Seleucus II (246-225). Then, following the death of Antiochus IV the empire went into another decline in population from which it never recovered.

The stability in the population of the Seleucid Empire after the steep decline suggests a degree of stabilization in the empire that could be attributed to several aspects of Antiochus IV's rule. The stability brought to the Seleucid Empire's population is a representation of the stability brought through the lack of rebellions throughout the empire during Antiochus IV's reign. It is suggested that this is due to his show of strength in military and political actions both internally and externally. Throughout the history of the Seleucid Empire the rebellions and defections usually occurred in times where the empire was in a weakened state. Antiochus IV fought both militarily and socially to ensure that even through defeat the empire would not continue to crumble. The successes of his work are evident in the post "Day of Eleusis" where the Seleucids lost, but Antiochus IV maintained stability in the Empire. This is all shown through the stability in population shown through Aperghis' work. Although it is not an exact calculation of population, the ranges given demonstrate Antiochus IV's advancement of the Seleucid Empire preceded and succeeded by decline.

Through assessing the population at the time of Antiochus IV's rule there can be made a rough estimate of the revenue from taxation that Antiochus IV received. It is believed that the

²⁵⁷ Aperghis, 57, Figure 4.1.

taxing rate under Antiochus IV was roughly one to two talents per thousand people per year.²⁵⁸ Comparing this with the population estimations under Antiochus IV, which would make the annual income between nine thousand and eighteen thousand talents from taxation making the maintenance of borders vital to the revenue of the king. The taxation being based on population makes Antiochus IV's decisions to attempt to bring back the satrapies in the East and ensure the provinces in the South do not rebel both a financial decision as well as one to improve the image of the Empire.

The population of the Seleucid Empire shows many interesting facts about the way the economy functioned and the amount of people who lived within its borders and suggests that there was a degree of stability in population brought to the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus IV, an unprecedented stability that is only seen during the reign of one other ruler in the history of the Empire.

Seleucid Military Reforms

The success or failure of many of Antiochus IV's reforms is hard to measure as limited sources survive; however, that is not the case with his military reforms. After experiencing the loss at Magnesia and the idleness of his predecessor, Antiochus IV implemented several military reforms and changes that aided in his successes in battle throughout his reign in several parts of the empire.

Upon his ascension to the throne, Antiochus IV saw the need to reorganize the Seleucid military force after the loss of military power. It has already been shown how Antiochus IV's

²⁵⁸ Aperghis, 249.

military changes and expeditions were successful in several parts of the Empire, but how he went about reforming the Empire has yet to be discussed. The phalanx system that the Seleucids had been using was the same that was used by Alexander the Great many years earlier. Antiochus IV, knowing the necessity of military victory to the success of his empire then set forth many reforms that evolved the Seleucid military.

Our knowledge of the military reforms is limited and comes from fragments of ancient tactical manuals that have survived. The three authors - Asclepiodotus, Aelian and Arrian – all give similar accounts, sometimes even copying whole passages from each other.²⁵⁹ These authors give a general understanding for the organization of the Seleucid military force and the changes that were made under the kingship of Antiochus IV.

The reformed military was made up of light infantry, heavy infantry, cavalry, and elephants similarly to the previous system; however, the military organization that was put in place by Antiochus IV closely resembled that of Rome. Antiochus reformed the way the Seleucid military was armed and fought, leaving the outdated Macedonian style and introducing a Roman style. This is most notably seen in the Procession at Daphne, where five thousand men “in the prime of their life” led the procession “armed in the Roman fashion.”²⁶⁰ Although not all of the Seleucid force was utilizing the new armor and weapons, it was being integrated into the existing system and was employed in several conflicts.²⁶¹ Conversely, there were ways the Seleucid military differed from that of Rome. For example, the size of the basic unit of the military force differed. Rome had six men in their *contubernium* the Seleucids had a half-file of

²⁵⁹ Sekunda and McBride, 5.

²⁶⁰ Polybius XXXI 3.

²⁶¹ Sekunda, 16.

eight men.²⁶² Antiochus attempted to update the Seleucid army during his reign through reorganization and the utilization of new era weapons and armor.

There was a form of conscription that allowed the Seleucid Empire to constantly have a steady flow of new recruits. In the Seleucid Empire the term “Macedonian” was used as a legal status, with which one was liable for conscription.²⁶³ It is possible that this term originated under the first kings of the Seleucid Empire, as the phalanx at the time would have been comprised of actual Macedonians who originated in the army of Alexander the Great. The Seleucid system of land granting would have come with the requirement of serving in the military, and also some financial privileges.²⁶⁴ The status would have been passed down from father to son. Although this system was not a new one, its implementation during the reign of Antiochus IV proved to be instrumental and showed a high level of organization as there was a high demand for large military forces on several fronts and he was able to maintain a large army throughout his reign.

In addition to the reforms of the army, Antiochus needed to address the absence of a navy in the Seleucid Empire. He could create more ships himself; however, he had to keep in mind the political repercussions with Rome and not break the terms of the treaty to the point where the Romans became upset. He was required not to have a naval fleet larger than ten ships and had to figure out how to maintain a navy while keeping in Rome’s good graces. The solution that Antiochus IV decided on was to create an alliance with a naval power already in existence: Rhodes.

²⁶² Ibid., 10.

²⁶³ Sekunda, 13.

²⁶⁴ Frye, 169; Sekunda, 13.

Rhodes was putting forth an effort to reinvigorate its naval fleet due to its lack of ability to build and sail more than six ships in the Third Macedonian War, possibly due to warring factions within Rhodes itself.²⁶⁵ In 172 or 171 B.C. Antiochus IV offered Rhodes an alliance and promised the delivery of either wood to build the ships or already built ships, the exact details are unknown. The agreement to help Rhodes rebuild its navy gave Antiochus IV the excuse he needed to begin to rebuild war ships in his own territory.²⁶⁶ This was Antiochus's strategy for building war ships without having a standing navy that exceeded the terms of the treaty, as he could claim that the ships were meant for the Rhodian fleet. This expanded fleet that Antiochus IV had at his disposal becomes apparent after his death when a Roman embassy arrived in Antioch demanding that the ships be burned.²⁶⁷ In late 170 B.C., with the rise of the Sixth Syrian War, Antiochus would use the war ships he now had against the Ptolemaic Empire where it would be successful in naval battles in Cyprus and aid the army's campaign into Egypt.²⁶⁸

Antiochus IV's military reforms proved to be successful in the campaigns against Egypt and Armenia. His updates to the Seleucid army based on Roman and other models and his tactical maneuver to restock his depleted naval fleet show Antiochus IV's awareness of the necessity of military reform. Prior to the rise of Antiochus IV, the Seleucid Empire's military force was still broken from the treaty of Apamea. After his revitalization of the military, the Seleucid Empire was a regional power once again during the later years of Antiochus IV's reign.

²⁶⁵ Gera, 209.

²⁶⁶ Gera, 210.

²⁶⁷ Sekunda, 27.

²⁶⁸ Gera, 211.

The Internal Deterioration post-Antiochus IV

Although Antiochus IV made many strides during his reign to maintain short term and long term stability in the Seleucid Empire, and was successful in keeping the Seleucid Empire out a state of decline, the series of internal conflicts that followed his death would lead to the decline of the empire. Very few Seleucid kings were able to find any degree of success after Antiochus IV's death. Not only did the death of Antiochus IV mean the end to the Eastern campaign to regain control of the lost territories, but also it left the door open for other provinces to rebel against the Seleucid Empire at a vulnerable point, with both internal and external problems, something Antiochus had been trying to avoid. For example, Armenia, which had just been brought back under Seleucid control, reverted back to its independence. In addition, Antiochus IV's raids of temples and their communities, as seen in Jerusalem and Elymais, to raise funds led to discontent in temple communities and once given the opportunity to rebel upon his death they did. This increased the local autonomy and gave rise to local dynasties that would also aid in the decline of the centralized power of the Seleucid Empire.²⁶⁹

Adding to and aiding in the decreased authority over the communities within the Seleucid Empire after the death of Antiochus IV was the period of extreme internal strife that hindered the success of the empire through almost continual competition for the throne. The strength of any government can be seen in the ability of its leadership succession to occur without huge political and military strife. Andrade cites "dynastic civil wars" as one of the main causes of the Post Antiochus IV decline, and the existing evidence supports that theory.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁹ Andrade, 63.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 63.

With Antiochus IV's rise a split occurred in the royal family of the Seleucid Empire. Antiochus IV named his son Antiochus V king, however the son of Seleucus IV, Demetrius I believed that he was the rightful heir leading to a split over who should rule. Upon the death of Antiochus IV, Demetrius I, who was given over to Rome during his father's reign as a "pledge of good faith," believed that he was the rightful heir to the throne of the Seleucid Empire and went before the Senate to plead his case for the throne in 163 B.C.²⁷¹ Currently, the son of Antiochus IV, Antiochus V, was king even though he was just a young boy with Lysias as his guardian. The Romans did not want to put a charismatic twenty three year old Demetrius I into the seat of power when they could much easier manipulate the young boy and his advisors. Just two years later in 161 B.C. Demetrius I escaped from Rome and arrived back in Antioch where he subsequently killed Antiochus V and took control of the throne himself.²⁷² Demetrius I, unlike Antiochus IV, did not involve his subjects into the royal spectacles and gained much discontent from his citizens. The discontent led to an uprising by Alexander Balas who falsely claimed to be the son of Antiochus IV. Balas gained the support of Pergamum, similarly to the way Antiochus IV came into power, and took control of the Seleucid throne, killing Demetrius I and forcing Demetrius II to flee in 150 B.C.²⁷³ This conflict is just the first of many that caused internal conflict and competition that aided in the disintegration of the central authority of the Seleucid Empire.

In addition to the civil conflict between Demetrius I and Antiochus V, another series of unrest occurs later under Demetrius II. As seen in chapter two Demetrius II returns from hiding

²⁷¹ Appian, *Syr.* 47; Polybius XXXI: 12; Green, 439.

²⁷² 1 Maccabees 7:1.

²⁷³ Habicht, 214.

in 147 B.C. and successfully retook the throne with the backing of Ptolemy VI at the Battle of Antioch in 145 B.C. Shortly after Demetrius's ascension to the throne, Diodorus, the military commander in Apamea who was dissatisfied with the way Demetrius II had treated the troops after his arrival in Antioch, promoted the son of Alexander Balas, a Usurper himself, as the rightful heir to the throne.²⁷⁴ Demetrius II was forced to flee the capital in 144 B.C. as a military force, led by Diodotus, invaded Antioch claiming Alexander Balas' son as their king and giving him the name Antiochus VI.²⁷⁵ However he was only two years old, therefore, Diodotus became the guardian and, essentially, ruler of the Seleucid Empire, bringing a military general and usurper once gain to the throne of the Seleucid Empire. Although, Demetrius was never officially removed from power so there is a period of roughly five years where both leaders were technically king.²⁷⁶ Antiochus VII would later kill Diodotus in 138 B.C. as he came into power after the Parthians captured Demetrius II. This episode highlights the lack of continuity in the royal line of succession and the constant civil unrest that embodied the post-Antiochus IV Seleucid Empire. The military loss of Demetrius II in rout to Egypt in his attempt to aid in the Ptolemaic civil war also shows the deteriorated state of the military as they barely got to Egypt before they were completely destroyed.

The repeated failures of later Kings in the external conflicts led to more loss of territory throughout the weakened Empire. The decline of the population in the empire shows an example of its weakened state that exists place after the period of stability under Antiochus IV ends. The conflicts over succession, in addition to the strengthening powers of Rome and Parthia,

²⁷⁴ Appian, syr. 68.

²⁷⁵ Green, 533-534; Diodorus Siculus, XXXIII 4a.

²⁷⁶ Habicht, 219.

preoccupied and crippled the empire, making it easy for more provinces to rebel, gaining independent rule, or be conquered by Parthia. The population fell to between nine and seven million in roughly fifteen years (150 B.C.) and by the mid first century B.C. the population of the Seleucid Empire fell well below one million.²⁷⁷ The loss of territory and population has a direct impact on the functionality of the Seleucid Empire, as the tax revenue would have been significantly diminished as territories slowly either left the empire or were conquered by other growing powers.

According to Livy, the relationship between Antiochus IV and Rome was a good one but with very firm boundaries.²⁷⁸ Rome was the dominant power and as long as Antiochus IV did not do anything to hurt Rome the friendship stood relatively strong. Upon his death the situation changed and the Romans needed to reaffirm their strength over the new Seleucid ruler which regressed some of the military advancements made under Antiochus IV's reign.

The increased scrutiny and power of the Roman Empire, in addition to the rise of the Parthian Empire mentioned in chapter 2, added to the internal conflicts that all combined to establish the full decline of the Seleucid Empire. Under the successor of Antiochus IV, Antiochus V, the Romans began to require a stricter adherence to the terms of the Treaty of Apamea. The Romans sent Gnaeus Octavius, Spurius Lucretius and Lucius Aurelius to burn the naval vessels and kill the elephants that were in disobedience of the terms of the Treaty of Apamea.²⁷⁹ This shows the Roman intervention in Seleucid affairs and the reinforcement of the terms of the Treaty of Apamea after the death of Antiochus IV. In the end it would be Rome,

²⁷⁷ Aperghis, 57: Figure 4.1

²⁷⁸ Livy XLV: 13.

²⁷⁹ Sekunda, 27.

under the command of Pompey that would bring the crippled and miniscule Seleucid Empire under Roman control in 63 B.C.

Conclusion: The Impact of the Loss of Antiochus IV

Antiochus IV made many reforms to the society of the Seleucid Empire in his attempt to strengthen it both militarily and socially. His political and economic efforts attempting to bring the inhabitation of the Seleucid Empire closer to one another and also be able to maintain their independent identity. The success or failure of his endeavors to rebuild the Seleucid Empire is unable to be fully addressed as his death on campaign in the East ushered in a new stage of internal and external conflict to the Seleucid Empire that would eventually see its demise.

The true impact of Antiochus IV on the Seleucid Empire can be seen in his attempt to rebuild what had been lost with the Treaty of Apamea. Militarily he was able to rebuild, update and sustain a standing military force including the navy. His successes in battle after the loss of troops, funds, and territory at the treaty of Apamea show his understanding of the necessity of a strong military force in stabilizing the empire. Antiochus IV's military reforms show his ability to adapt to the changing technology of the times. His implementation of Roman style armor and weapons as seen in the procession at Daphne as well as the changes he made to the formations of the Seleucid Empire's military force helps show how his rebuilding of the Seleucid force was successful.

In addition to his military reforms, Antiochus IV attempted to integrate the multitude of groups he ruled through attempting to bring them closer to the throne through city building, land-granting and integrating more autonomy for cities while also boosting their connection to the

throne through minting and the establishment of Greek *polis* in existing communities. This can all be accredited to his understanding that he needed to make sure all groups remained loyal to the king to ensure stability and prevent communities from rebelling against the king.

Antiochus IV died only twelve years into his reign and with his death came the end of the period of stabilization in the Seleucid Empire as they would fall into a decline riddled with internal and external conflicts all while the powers of Rome and Parthia gained power and slowly dismantling the Seleucid Empire until it was no more than the city of Antioch and its surrounding lands 63 B.C.

Conclusion

The reign of Antiochus IV brought stability to the Seleucid Empire that suggests the empire did not fall into a full decline after the Treaty of Apamea and that it was not until after the death of Antiochus IV that the Seleucid Empire fell into a decline from which they would not recover. He had the vision to see many of the problems within his Empire, from domestic issues of ethnic identity to external issues of defected provinces. This vision helped to maintain the stability of the large Empire during his reign, however, some of his policies also aided in the decline of the Empire that would follow his death. Therefore, it is true that the treaty of Apamea and the loss of Antiochus III did not cause the decline of the Seleucid Empire and that Antiochus IV was able to restore some of the prestige of the Seleucid Empire that had been lost due to the repercussions of the treaty; however, the political, social, and military moves of the king also caused discontent in several parts of the empire that would lead the less prominent kings that succeeded Antiochus IV to have to deal with more defections and more discontent that aided in the decline of the Empire. Although, Antiochus IV was not the sole cause of the decline of the Seleucid Empire he did have an impact on it.

When looking at the Seleucid Empire it is easy to see the rebellious nature of the exterior provinces as a sign of weakness of the Seleucid system. However, looking at the Seleucid Empire from this angle it is far less stated how loyal the provinces in the Mesopotamian region of the empire were. Hellenization took hold in the elites of these regions and the Seleucid kings are seen as patrons.²⁸⁰ This area shows the ability for the Seleucid system to work and that the Empire was not a failure from its inception.

²⁸⁰ Salles, 91.

Antiochus IV was able to field armies totaling around roughly 75,000 between his two campaigns, to the south and to the East, and upwards of 55,000 in 162 B.C. just after his death at the battle of Beith-Zacharia.²⁸¹ Even with a large portion of these troops being mercenaries it shows the ability for Antiochus IV to fund and raise a large army even after the defeat of his father and be at least mildly successful on the battlefield. Although there were attempts at campaigns after his death under Demetrius II and Antiochus VII none came close to the size or success of Antiochus IV.

Antiochus IV had great successes off the battlefield as well. He was able to use the tool of propaganda to his benefit in many situations throughout his reign to benefit himself and the Seleucid Empire as a whole. The procession at Daphne and the expansion of the municipal mints are examples of the successes of Antiochus IV's propaganda skills. In addition he was a good politician in the Hellenistic world and with Rome. He was constantly giving tribute and patronizing many Greek communities both within and outside of his domain. In regards to Rome, as mentioned in Green, political dealings were "shrewd, cautious, and diplomatic."²⁸² They were also successful as Antiochus IV was able to manipulate the relationship, allowing him to rebuild parts of his army that were against the terms of the Treaty of Apamea.

Although some historians argue that the reforms that Antiochus implemented in his reign aided in the decline of the Seleucid Empire it is hard to make that conclusion based on the events that occurred. Antiochus IV was attempting to integrate more cultural groups into the modified Hellenistic system that had evolved at that point. At the point of his death his campaign in the

²⁸¹ Aperghis, 192.

²⁸² Green, 438.

East ceased immediately. It is unknown how that campaign could have evolved the Seleucid empire and its relations with the growing Parthian power had Antiochus IV survived and continued the campaign. There are too many variables to attach the decline of the Seleucid Empire to the reforms and decisions made by Antiochus IV directly.

The decline of the Seleucid Empire occurred for numerous reasons. The internal civil wars of succession, the ethnic differences within the vast empire and their lack of assimilation leading to more autonomy as a weakened government could not enforce their laws and power throughout. The Growing power of Rome preventing the Seleucids from expanding west and crippling its military once again during the reign of Antiochus V. Parthia expanding its territory westward, slowly taking over Seleucid territories. All of these issues both external and internal combined to deteriorate the Seleucid Empire. By the death of Antiochus VII the Seleucid Empire has been reduced to Cilicia and Northern Syria and would never take battle to the great powers again.²⁸³ Finally, in 63 B.C. the Seleucid Empire that had deteriorated to just an empire in name was taken by Pompey and became a Roman province.

In addressing Antiochus IV's reign Tarn brings up several questions that give light to the political and social position of Antiochus IV and the Seleucid Empire during his rule:

“Why was he hailed Saviour of Asia? Why did Diodorus (reproducing Polybius) say that in 165 he was stronger than any other king? Why did Jason of Cyrene, who loathed his memory, say that his power seemed irresistible? And why, above all, did Mithridates I of Parthia... made no move till the broken nervy Seleucid was safely dead?”²⁸⁴

²⁸³ Habicht, 227.

²⁸⁴ Tarn, 184.

All of these questions express the thesis of this work and the simple answer is that he brought stability and staved off decline during his reign. Antiochus IV brought the Seleucid Empire out of the decline that was caused by the Treaty of Apamea and established the prestige to a degree that the Seleucid Empire was the major power in the East.

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