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Seleucid Study Day III: War within the Family: The First Century of Seleucid Rule. Bordeaux: Seleucid Study Group, Classical Press of Wales, Université de Bordeaux III, 05.09.2012-07.09.2012.

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Published on H-Soz-u-Kult (October, 2012)

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As hosts of the VIIth Celtic Conference of Classics Cf. the program of VIIth CCC:

http://www.ucd.ie/t4cm/Viieme%20Celtic%20Conference%20in%20Classics%20July%202012.pdf (11.10.2012). , Anton Powell (Classical Press of Wales, Swansea) and Jean Yvonneau (University of Bordeaux III) invited the Seleucid Study Group to organize a panel on the early Seleucid Kingdom (3rd century BC). After previous gatherings at Exeter and Waterloo in 2011, this meeting was the third in a (counted) series dedicated to a collaborative and interdisciplinary research agenda on one of the most under-explored world empires. In fact, the roots of this joint effort goes back to previous conferences in Exeter (2008) and Waterloo (2010), as STEPHEN MITCHELL (Exeter) explained in his welcome address. Cf. Tagungsbericht Seleucid Study Day I. 15.08.2011, Exeter, in: H-Soz-u-Kult, 27.10.2011, http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=3866 (11.10.2012), including a reference to the Seleucid Dissolution Conference at Exeter (2008), and: Tagungsbericht Seleucid Study Day II. 09.11.2011, Waterloo, Ontario, in: H-Soz-u-Kult, 09.01.2012, http://hsozkult.geschichte.hu-berlin.de/tagungsberichte/id=3979 (11.10.2012) on the previous Seleucid Study Days. For the report on the Hellenistic Workshop at Waterloo (2010), cf. WIHS Newsletter 1, 2011 http://wihs.uwaterloo.ca/sites/ca.wihs/files/Hellenistic%20Newsletter.pdf#page=3 (11.10.2012). In his introductory note, the panel convenor KYLE ERICKSON (Lampeter) identified various desiderata: first the necessity to more systematically integrate into the picture the satrapies east of the Euphrates as well as to analyse the continuity and ruptures in the transition from the Achaemenid to the Seleucid Empires; secondly, to focus more strongly on the periods intervening between the rules of Seleucus I (320/311-281) and Antiochus III (223-187); and thirdly to reconsider the roles of Seleucid royal women.

Mitchell's paper highlighted caution in using a simple model of subjugation by suggesting a new approach to Macedonian colonies in Asia Minor. Most of them had not been initiated and organized by Hellenistic kings but were owed to Greek or Macedonian private initiatives mainly during the years 325-275. A strong argument is that early colonies of central Anatolia were not named after kings but leaders of the settlers, as was the case with Dorylaeum or Themisonium. The kings very often did no more than, at a later stage, sanctioning and perhaps even privileging those settlements that were mainly beneficial to extending their control into the non-Hellenized areas.

LAURENT CAPEDETREY (Bordeaux) offered 3rd-century case studies on local autonomous rules in Asia Minor by dynasts without the royal title. Admittedly, the fierce competition among the Hellenistic kings for the control of that area was certainly an important condition for the growth of power that Olympichus of Caria and Philhetaerus of Pergamum acquired. But Capedetrey refused to equate such 'feudal' structures simply with weakness of the monarch or to explain the later dissolution of the empire with structures established in or even prior to the 3rd century. Those dynasts rather fulfilled a similar function as the vassal kings that were needed to rule an empire as vast and heterogeneous as that of the Seleucids.

ALTAY COSKUN (Waterloo) reconsidered the 'War of Brothers' whose traditional reconstruction is based on Justin (27): Antiochus Hierax revolted against Seleucus II (246-225) and defeated him at Ancyra only after Ptolemy

III Euergetes had withdrawn from the Third Syrian War (246-241). But Porphyry more convincingly dates the domestic frictions *prior* to Euergetes' invasion of Syria. As a result, Euergetes did not open the war in defence of his sister Berenice Phernophorus, but rather to seize a threefold opportunity for military gains: the usurpation of Andragoras in Parthia (247), the betrayal of Ephesus by the Seleucid strategos Sophron, and the dynastic strife in 246. New light was also shed on the shifting allegiances of the Tolistobogian and Tectosagen Galatians, the Mithridatids, the Attalids, and the Prusiads, all of whom pursued agendas of their own when opting either for Seleucus or Hierax.

Based on this new chronology, KYLE ERICKSON approached the problem of the coinage with the legend of Antiochus Soter, which constitutes a prime source for the discussion of the early dynastic cults of the Seleucids. Previous discussions had ascribed the minting authority to either Antiochus II, Berenice Phernophorus, Seleucus II or III, whereby numismatists have mainly opted for the 240s. Since no argument has so far been conclusive, the revised date of the 'War of Brothers' encouraged Erickson to place the coinage under the auspices of Antiochus Hierax (and perhaps his mother). This would also make sense in regards of the reverses, since Hierax maintained the traditional 'Apollo-on-the-Omphalus' type, whereas Seleucus altered the reverse iconography to that of 'Apollo-leaning-on-the-tripod'. Furthermore, the ideological interpretations of the coinage all can be explained by Hierax's cultivation of his ancestors' images, a practice not followed by his brother.

JOHN R. HOLTON (Edinburgh) analysed the Seleucid concept of the jointly ruling son. While joint-kingship had been a success for Seleucus I and his son Antiochus I, the latter's succession after his father's death in 281 was still troubled. But the most notable case of failure was the execution of Seleucus, son of Antiochus I, before he was replaced by the other son Antiochus II as joint-king. Holton pointed out that previous cases of joint kingship differed substantially in nature, whereas the Spartan constitution or the couple Antigonus I / Demetrius I came closest to the Seleucid model. It was argued that Seleucid joint-kingship was at least in its ideological design a relation of two equals, thus potentially giving rise to – equally harmful – ambition or suspicion. While not original, joint-kingship was rare before the Hellenistic world, and thus in some ways an aberration in the structuring of royal power.

ALEX MCAULEY (Montreal) and MONICA D'AGOSTINI (Milan/Bologna) attempted to shed more light on the House of Achaeus. The most renowned member was Achaeus 'the Younger': the lieutenant of Seleucus III who revolted under Antiochus III, to be defeated in 213. He was the last representative of a family that had spent the 3rd century cultivating connections with other potentates in Asia Minor. This notwithstanding, the family's progenitor Achaeus 'the Elder' appears to have been a Macedonian serving Seleucus I in high positions and also marrying into his family. Achaeus' daughter Laodice was the famous wife of Antiochus II who, together with her brother Alexander, played a major role in the usurpation of Antiochus Hierax. Another descendant, Antiochis, became the wife of Attalus I. It was finally argued that this inherited power base in Asia Minor was a decisive condition for the usurpation of Achaeus I which was aimed at founding a local kingship and not to supplant Antiochus III as ruler of the Seleucid Empire.

Although Seleucus II spent most of his reign campaigning against external and domestic enemies, ROLF STROOTMAN (Utrecht) questioned the view of Seleucus' rule as a failure. True enough, the challenges posed by the Ptolemaic invasion or the revolt of his own brother were serious, as were the upheaval in Khurāsān and Bactria, and last but not least the incursions of the Parnian Arsacids into Parthia. In the previous cases, Seleucus ultimately prevailed, whereas he had to accept an autonomous Parthian kingdom under Arsaces. This, however, should not be viewed as the beginning of the decline of the empire, since first Seleucus himself and later Antiochus III once more re-asserted overlordship over the eastern satrapies. Hence, not the alleged weakness, but rather the resilience of the Seleucids deserve to be accounted for.

BORIS CHRUBASIK (Oxford/Exeter) re-evaluated the continuities and ruptures in the transition to the Seleucid Empire from its Achaemenid predecessor. First, administrative practices displayed in royal letters were studied. Attention was paid to variations of the dating formula which occurred in the course of the 310s, but also to the roles of local power-holders as authors or recipients of letters. Moreover, Seleucid kingship was contrasted with that of the Persian 'Great Kings' mainly by focusing on royal opponents. The imagery of usurpers and counter-kings were used to contrast the royal self-presentation and hence the construction of both the Seleucid and Achaemenid kingship.

DAVID ENGELS (Brussels) enquired into the nature

of Frataraka rule over Persia and early Arsacid rule over Parthia, in order to better understand the interactions between the Seleucid house and the Iranian aristocracies. Most scholars assume that the Frataraka and the Parthians superseded regular Seleucid administration, aiming at complete independence from Hellenistic influence and the re-establishment of Iranian rule. Others, however, consider them as minor dynasts with rather reduced autonomy, whereby Achaemenid allusions in their iconography was complementary rather than an alternative to Seleucid allegiance. Engels added strongly to the credibility of the latter view by re-assessing the parallels between the Greek and Aramaic legends on some coins of Vahbarz and Arsaces I: both figured as *karani*, that is *strategoi*, which clearly reveals their subordinate positions. Literary sources were further adduced to demonstrate that it would be anachronistic to construct 3rd-century rebellions in terms of ethnic conflicts.

MARIE WIDMER (Lausanne) studied the *sympoliteia* dossier from Magnesia of ca. 243. I. Magnesia am Sipylos I = OGIS 229. The first of these texts is a letter of the Smyrnaei to Seleucus II: they stress their continued loyalty towards the ruling dynasty even in the face of a dangerous though unspecified enemy, whom Widmer identifies as Ptolemy III. They further boast themselves of having established cults for Seleucus' father (Antiochus II) and grandmother (Stratonice). Since Antiochus I is not mentioned and the queen died in 254, it was inferred that those cults had been inaugurated between 261 and 254. Surprisingly, Queen Laodice is ignored here. This was explained with the higher ideological potential of Stratonice: as wife of first Seleucus I and then of Antiochus I, she linked Seleucus II to the founders of the dynasty, not to forget her own father Demetrius. While this explanation was not questioned, it was pointed out in the discussion that the new chronology of the War of Brothers would not only allow the identification of Hierax as the enemy, but also the suggestion that Laodice might have befallen a *damnatio memoriae*.

With his reflexions on the Bactrian kings, RICHARD WENGHOFER (Nipissing) resumed the topic of the eastern satrapies. As a starting point, he drew on J. Jakobsson's (NC 2011) suggestion that a series of Bactrian coins depicting a king named Antiochus Nicator had not been minted by Diodotus I to honour Antiochus II Theos, but rather by a King Antiochus who might have been the brother of Diodotus II. Along these lines, Wenghofer was able to reconfigure the observations of Jakobsson to a more detailed outline of the dynasty's history and the events leading to the temporary secession of Bactria from the Seleucid Empire in the 230s and again by 213. Moreover, the fact that this new Diodotid king was named Antiochus provides some evidence in support of W.W. Tarn's long since discarded thesis that the main line of Greek kings of Bactria and India were in fact related to the Seleucids.

To conclude, most of the individual papers of this Seleucid panel very successfully addressed one or more of the desiderata mentioned initially. While there was little overlap, many individual results appeared to be converging. Most importantly, it has become apparent that Seleucid rule over the eastern satrapies was not continuously weakened before the anabasis of Antiochus III, as is the traditional view, but that the establishment of local dynasties with or without the royal title could be as effectively integrated in the east as in the west. A collaborative revision of Seleucid chronology has helped to reduce the periods in which some areas had seceded from the central power; genealogical studies enable us to see the marital web of the Seleucids not only spread out over Asia Minor, but also extended beyond the Euphrates; an analysis of the War of Brothers and the Third Syrian War lends further credence to the view that Seleucus II was able to prevail mainly due to his substantial support from the eastern territories, which implies that Arsaces and the Parni had managed to curb the uprising of Andragoras in Parthia. In addition, the importance of Seleucid royal women as political actors in their own right (especially Laodice I) and tokens of dynastic legitimacy (Stratonice, Berenice) were aptly illustrated. The latter strand of research will be pursued further at Seleucid Study Day IV, to be hosted at McGill University (Montreal, Feb. 20-23, 2013). The proceedings of Seleucid Study Day III will be published in ca. 2014.

Conference overview:

Stephen Mitchell (Exeter) / Kyle Erickson (Trinity St David, Lampeter): Introduction

Stephen Mitchell: Geography of Seleucid Anatolia in the 3rd Century BC

Laurent Capdetrey (Bordeaux): Les premiers rois séleucides et les dynastes d'Asie Mineure (d'Antiochos Ier à Séleucos III)

Altay Coskun (Waterloo): The War of the Brothers, the Third Syrian War, and the Battle of Ancyra: a Re-Appraisal

Kyle Erickson: Antiochus Soter and the War of the Brothers

John Russell Holton (Edinburgh): Key Considerations for Seleucid Joint-Kingship, 281-261

Alex McAuley (McGill, Montreal) / Monica D'Agostini (Milan / Bologna): The House of Achaeus: the Missing Piece of the Anatolian Puzzle

Rolf Strootman (Utrecht): Seleucus II Kallinikos and the Coming of the Parthians

Boris Chrubasik (Oxford): Heirs to the Great King? The Seleucid Empire and Its Achaemenid Inheritance

David Engels (ULBrussels): Iranian Identity and Seleucid Allegiance – Frataraka and Early Arsacid Coinage

Marie Widmer (Lausanne): De l'utilité des mères lors des changements de règne

Richard Wenghofer (Nipissing): New Interpretations of the Evidence for the Diodotid Revolt and the Secession of Bactria from the Seleucid Empire

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Citation: Altay Coskun. Review of , *Seleucid Study Day III: War within the Family: The First Century of Seleucid Rule.* H-Soz-u-Kult, H-Net Reviews. October, 2012.

URL: http://www.h-net.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=37405

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