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Hellenism in Transition from Empire to Kingdom: Changes in the Material Culture of Hellenistic Palestine*

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I have argued in the past that Hellenism (as an expression of the assimilation of Greek cultural patterns) in Hellenistic Palestine (that is, under Alexander the Great, the Diadochi, the Ptolemaic Empire, and the Seleucid Empire) was partially assimilated by the Phoenician, Samaritan, Jewish, and Idumean populations, primarily in governmental administration (in its broadest sense), language, script, coinage, institutions, officials, army, and the like. Moreover, the interaction of these groups—mainly the upper strata that settled in the major cities – with the new administration led to familiarity with and the adoption of Greek cultural patterns, including the realms of gymnasium and philosophical and rhetorical education, chiefly under the Seleucids in the second century BCE. This Hellenism, however, was still far from the total assimilation of these patterns, and their influence on daily life was limited.[1] In what follows I will argue that the archaeological evidence, specifically from the Hasmonean period, when Palestine was an independent political unit, showed Hellenism to have strengthened to a certain degree and to have found expression in other realms as well, such as in monumental architecture and monumental burial structures.

Hellenistic acculturation, resulting from a variety of circumstances, differed in the Hellenistic and Hasmonean periods. While in the former Hellenization was an integral part of the administrative reality, deriving from the origin of the ruling authorities, in the latter the assimilation of Greek

[1] O. Tal, *Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine: Between Tradition and Renewal* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 2006; 2nd rev. ed. 2009) (Hebrew). This book is concerned with the sources, distribution, and influence of the material culture of Alexander the Great and the Diadochi, as well as Ptolemaic and Seleucid rule in Hellenistic Palestine, and examines the term "Hellenization" in light of the archaeology of that period.

cultural patterns by the Hasmonean elite was a consequence of a policy intent upon "creating" a national and international past while imparting a cosmopolitan ambience to the kingdom.

We must first examine the definition of "Hellenism" as reflected in the historiographical research and from an archaeological perspective. Although many scholars ascribe the term to the German historian Johann Gustav Droysen,[2] it already appears in 2 Macc. 4:13, in a passage by Jason of Cyrene who complained that the inhabitants of Jerusalem were imitating the pagan culture that he called "Hellenic."[3] This understanding of the term differs from that of Droysen, who maintained that the Hellenistic world and *Hellēnismus* were culturally synonymous, a cultural *Verschmelzung* (fusion) in which the Greek, pagan, Eastern, and Jewish elements provided the foundation for the rise of Christianity.[4] For our purposes, however, "Hellenism" is the degree to which the local population groups adopted and assimilated Greek cultural and material elements. Culturally, the term expresses the copying of the Greek cultural mores on the one hand, and the adoption and use of material aspects such as architecture, artifacts, and the like on the other.

A number of historical sources discuss Alexander the Great's eastern conquests; most were composed hundreds of years after the events, but rely upon historical essays from the time of Alexander and his heirs. The downfall of the Persians (Medes) at the Battle of Issus (333 BCE) enabled Alexander's army to conquer Syria and Palestine, and thereby prevented a naval threat to his army. Most of the coastal settlements (with the exception of Tyre and Gaza, to which his army laid siege for several months) surrendered to him, apparently without opposition; the interior of the country was also conquered at this time.[5] Alexander's death was followed by strug-

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[2] J. G. Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (Gotha: Perthes, 1877–78).

[3] ἦν δ' οὕτως ἀκμή τις Ἑλληνισμοῦ καὶ πρόσβασις ἀλλοφυλισμοῦ διὰ τὴν τοῦ ἀσεβοῦς καὶ οὐκ ἀρχιερέως Ἰάσονος ὑπερβάλλουσαν ἀναγνείαν – ed. R. Hanhart ("And to such a pitch did the cultivation of Greek fashions and the coming-in of foreign customs rise, because of the excessive wickedness of this godless Jason, who was no high priest at all" – trans. E. J. Goodspeed, *The Apocrypha: An American Translation* [New York: Vintage, 1959], 454). This might not be a quotation by Jason, but rather the result of the epitomator's work; see also B. Bar-Kochva, "Judaism and Hellenism: Between Scholarship and Journalism," *Tarbiz* 63 (1994), 464–65 n. 111 (Hebrew; English summary, XXIII); N. Hyldahl, "The Maccabean Rebellion and the Question of 'Hellenization'," in *Religion and Religious Practice in the Seleucid Kingdom*, ed. P. Bilde et al., Studies in Hellenistic Civilization 1 (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 1990), 193 n. 5.

[4] A. Momigliano, "Hellenismus und Gnosis: Randbemerkungen zu Droysens Geschichte des Hellenismus," *Saeculum* 21 (1970), 185–88.

[5] A. Kasher, "Some Suggestions and Comments Concerning Alexander Macedon's Campaign in Palestine," *Beth Mikra* 20 (1975), 187–208 (Hebrew; English summary, 311–12); A. Momigliano, "Flavius Josephus and Alexander's Visit to Jerusalem," *Athenaeum* 57 (1979), 442–48. Fascinating archaeological testimony attributed to the period is provided

gles among his heirs over the territories of his empire. The testimony of the historical sources to the extremely stormy nature of the twenty-two years of the wars of the Diadochi (Alexander's successors) is not supported by the archaeological finds; the destruction of Akko, Jaffa, Gaza, and Samaria in 311 BCE by Ptolemy upon his retreat to Egypt was not identified in the archaeological remains. In contrast, the excavators of Ashkelon report a destruction layer dated to ca. 300 BCE that may have been linked to the battles waged at the time.[6] Coastal fortresses, such as Tel Shiqmona (Stratum B / Stratum 5) and Tel Michal (Stratum VI), which were abandoned in this period, might have taken part in these conflicts.[7] During the third century BCE, Ptolemaic rule prevailed in Palestine, and in 198, after the Battle of Banias (Panion), the Seleucids took control of the land until their final defeats in the late second century BCE, when the Hasmonean rulers John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannaeus conquered the coast of Palestine.

This time span, between 332 and 63 BCE, is called the Hellenistic period.[8] Some of the historical works on Alexander the Great's campaigns, in effect, gave ideological expression to his conquests in the East, namely,

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by a fortified structure uncovered at Naḥal Tut, which, according to its excavators, was connected to Alexander's siege of Tyre, which was destroyed in 332/331 BCE within the context of the Samaritan revolt; Y. Alexandre, "Naḥal Tut (Site VIII): A Fortified Storage Depot from the Late Fourth Century BCE," *'Atiqot* 52 (2006), 131–89, esp. 180–82.

[6] L. Stager, "Why Were Hundreds of Dogs Buried at Ashkelon?" *BAR* 17/3 (1991), 29, 31; L. E. Stager, J. D. Schloen, and D. M. Master (eds.), *Ashkelon*, I: *Introduction and Overview (1985–2006)* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 287 (Grid 38, Phase 10), 317 (Grid 50, Phase 3), 322 (Grid 57, Phase 3). This argument is corroborated by a coin hoard, the latest coin of which is dated to 305–290 BCE; see U. Wartenburg et al. (eds.), *Coin Hoards*, VIII: *Greek Hoards* (London: Royal Numismatic Society, 1994), 25 no. 220.

[7] Shiqmona, Stratum B / Stratum 5: J. Elgavish, *Archaeological Excavations at Shikmona, Field Report No. 1: The Levels of the Persian Period, Seasons 1963–1965* (Haifa: Haifa Museum of Ancient Art, 1968), 47–56 (Hebrew); idem, *Shiqmona: On the Seacoast of Mount Carmel* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1994), 87–92 (Hebrew). Tel Michal, Stratum VI: Z. Herzog et al. (eds.), *Excavations at Tel Michal, Israel* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press; Tel Aviv: Nadler Institute of Archaeology, Tel Aviv University, 1989), e.g., 14–15, 110, 130–33. Additional evidence of these battles comes from the numismatic field, namely, coin hoards (some from the antiquities market), the latest coins of which are dated to this period, for example, those discovered at Tel Michal and elsewhere, including Sidon, Beth Yeraḥ), Tel Ṣippor, and Jericho; see D. T. Ariel, "Coins from Tel Mikhal (Tel Michal)," *'Atiqot* 52 (2006), 79–80, 85.

[8] This article advocates dividing this era into the "Hellenistic" and "Hasmonean" periods. For the historical background, see, e.g., M. Hengel, *Jews, Greeks and Barbarians: Aspects of the Hellenization of Judaism in the Pre-Christian Period* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980); G. Fuks, *Scythopolis: A Greek City in Eretz-Israel* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1983), 13–43 (Hebrew); M. Stern, "Eretz Israel in the Hellenistic Period (332–160 B.C.E.)," in *The History of Eretz Israel*, III: *The Hellenistic Period and the Hasmonean State (332–37 B.C.E.)*, ed. M. Stern (Jerusalem: Keter and Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1990), 9–190 (Hebrew); D. Gera, *Judaea and Mediterranean Politics, 219 to 161 B.C.E.* (Leiden: Brill, 1998); M. Sartre, *D'Alexandre à Zénobie: Histoire du Levant antique: IVᵉ siècle avant J.-C.–IIIᵉ siècle après J.-C.* (Paris: Fayard, 2001).

the imposition of Greek (and even Athenian) culture that was common to all the peoples of the expanded Graeco-Macedonian Empire.[9] This shared culture, the *koinē*, was expressed in various historiographical writings, and especially in the establishment of the eastern *polis*, which was administered democratically by its citizens.[10] Two different scholarly approaches regarding the nature of "Hellenism's" impact on the East developed during the twentieth century. One, initially representing the German and British school that came into being under the influence of western European imperialism, derived, ultimately, from various Greek sources that regarded the peoples of the East as their inferiors and depicted the Greek monarchs as the cultural agents of Hellenism whose aim was to establish *poleis* in Asia; Hellenism was perceived as a political mechanism for the unification of the Graeco-Macedonian Empire in its realm.[11] The other approach, first presented primarily by Belgian and French scholars, emphasized the exploitative colonial nature of the Graeco-Macedonian expansion and was inclined to examine social and cultural relations in terms of separation and differentiation, along with mutual cultural diffusion and assimilation.[12] The historiographical research of Palestine in this period tends to prefer the first (imperialistic) approach, which regards Hellenistic culture as the victory of the rational Greek regime over the conservative and backward East.

The use of archaeological finds in the study of the Hellenization process in Palestine is facilitated by an examination of the "continuity" or "break" (or perhaps "renewal") in this period compared with the earlier ones. This is achieved by examining and analyzing the common elements and source of the material culture characteristic of the period – local-traditional or foreign-imported? Since the usual features of the material culture are expressed in three fields – architecture, burial, and artifacts (in their broadest sense) – our discussion will focus on these components. Moreover, the

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[9] On this ideological expression, see, e.g., P. Briant, *Alexandre le Grand*, 2nd ed. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 2005).

[10] On the difference between the Greek and Eastern city-state, see H. Kreissig, "Die Polis in Griechenland und im Orient in der hellenistischen Epoche," in *Hellenische Poleis: Krise, Wandlung, Wirkung*, ed. E.C. Welskopf (Berlin: Akademie, 1974), II, 1074–84; idem, "Landed Property in the 'Hellenistic' Orient," *Eirene* 15 (1977), 5–26.

[11] E.g., A.H.M. Jones, "The Hellenistic Age," *Past & Present* 27/1 (1964), 3–22; U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Hellenistische Dichtung in der Zeit des Kallimachos* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1924); W.W. Tarn, *Hellenistic Civilization* (London: Arnold, 1930); idem, *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1938).

[12] E.g., C. Préaux, *Le monde hellénistique: La Grèce et l'Orient de la mort d'Alexandre à la conquête romaine de la Grèce, 323–146 av. J.-C.*, 2 vols. (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1978–92); P. Briant, *Rois, tributs et paysans: Études sur les formations tributaires du Moyen-Orient ancien* (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1982); A.E. Samuel, *From Athens to Alexandria: Hellenism and Social Goals in Ptolemaic Egypt* (Leuven, 1983); idem, *The Shifting Sands of History: Interpretations of Ptolemaic Egypt* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1989).

distinct settlement model and settlement pattern of Hellenistic and Hasmonean Palestine are essential for assessing the political and social changes of this geographical realm.

The Hasmonean Period: The Archaeological Perspective

The study of the material culture of the Hasmonean period (mainly the second half of the second century BCE in Judaea and first half of the first century BCE in the rest of Palestine and parts of Transjordan) remains a mystery in many respects,[13] despite the fact that this material culture represents a distinct period (if only in the first half of the first century BCE), even disregarding the information drawn from the historical sources.[14] Few scholars have taken notice of the considerable changes this period shows in its archaeological remains and their components, including the urban, rural, and military construction; architectural decoration; burials; epigraphic data; and the settlement model and settlement pattern. Almost everywhere, the archaeological finds emerging from systematic archaeological excavations attest to changes from the previous period.

Settlement pattern – The archaeological finds indicate a surprising decline in the number of cities or settlements that contained urban frameworks, and in the scope and status of the settlements in which such frameworks continued to exist. The main coastal administrative centers under Ptolemaic and Seleucid rule, such as Akko (Ptolemais), Dor (Dora), and Ashkelon (Ascalon), lost their preferred standing; Jaffa (Ioppe), in contrast, maintained

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[13] No comprehensive archaeological study of the material culture of the Hasmonean period has been conducted. Works that include the Hasmonean period in their discussions – such as R. Arav, *Settlement Patterns and City Planning in Palestine during the Hellenistic Period 332–37 B.C.E.* (Ann Arbor, MI: University Microfilms International, 1986); M.-C. Halpern-Zylberstein, "The Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine," in *The Cambridge History of Judaism*, I: *The Hellenistic Age*, ed. W. D. Davies and L. Finkelstein (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 1–34, 660–62; H.-P. Kuhnen, *Palästina in griechisch-römischer Zeit* (Munich: Beck'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1990); A. M. Berlin, "The Hellenistic Period," in *Near Eastern Archaeology: A Reader*, ed. S. Richard (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 418–33 – did not succeed in adequately examining it as a separate era. In contrast, a series of final excavation reports concerned, inter alia, with Hasmonean Jerusalem (the City of David, the Ophel, the Jewish Quarter, and the Armenian Quarter) and Hasmonean Jericho provide much information, which, nevertheless, is limited to the material culture of the Hasmonean period as a whole.

[14] In contrast to archaeological study, the Hasmonean period has been thoroughly studied from the historical perspective; see U. Rappaport, "The Hasmonean State (160–37 B.C.E.)," in Stern, *History of Eretz Israel*, III, 191–273 (Hebrew); M. Hengel, *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Encounter in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, 2 vols. (London: SCM, 1974); idem, *Jews, Greeks, and Barbarians*.

its status owing to its role as the maritime gateway of Jerusalem.[15] Secondary Ptolemaic and Seleucid coastal administrative centers, such as Akhziv (Ekdippa), Nahariyah, Tell Keisan, Tell Abu Hawam, 'Atlith, Tel Tanninim (Crocodeilopolis), Mikhmoret, Apollonia-Arsuf, Tel Ya'oz, Yavneh (Iamnia), Yavneh-Yam, Tel Mor, and Ashdod, were destroyed or abandoned after the Hasmonean battles or led an impoverished existence during the Hasmonean period.[16] A similar trend was evident in administrative centers in other areas. Thus, in the Golan, the pagan city of Sussita (Hippos) lost its standing to the Jewish city of Gam(a)la.[17] In Galilee (in its broadest sense), administrative centers such as Tel Dan, Tel Kedesh (Kudissos), Bethsaida, Beth Yeraḥ (Philoteria), and Beth Shean (Scythopolis) were destroyed or abandoned while Jewish sites such as Yodefat (Iotapata) began to flourish.[18] Likewise in Samaria, we see the destruction or abandonment of administrative centers, including Samaria, Shechem, and Mount Gerizim (and possibly also Tel Dothan).[19] In the area of Judaea (in its widest sense), administrative centers such as Nebi Samwil and Maresha (Marisa) were destroyed or aban-

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[15] On this subject, see, e.g., A. Fantalkin and O. Tal, "Navigating Between the Powers: Joppa and Its Vicinity in the 1st Millennium B.C.E.," *Ugarit-Forschungen* 40 (2009).

[16] For general archaeological summations of these sites, see *NEAEHL*, passim; *NE-AEHL*, V: *Supplementary Volume* (Jerusalem and Washington, DC: Israel Exploration Society and Biblical Archaeological Society, 2008), passim and 2086–2115; E. M. Meyers (ed.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Archaeology in the Near East* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), passim.

[17] On Sussita (Hippos), see A. Segal et al., *Hippos-Sussita: Eighth Season of Excavations (July 2007)* (Haifa: Zinman Institute of Archaeology, University of Haifa, 2007), and bibliography there (Hebrew and English). On Gam(a)la, see D. Syon, "'City of Refuge': The Archaeological Evidence of the Revolt at Gamla," in *The Great Revolt in the Galilee*, ed. O. Guri-Rimon (Haifa: Hecht Museum, University of Haifa 2008), 53*–65*.

[18] See above, n. 16. On Tel Kedesh, see S. C. Herbert and A. M. Berlin, "A New Administrative Center for Persian and Hellenistic Galilee: Preliminary Report of the University of Michigan / University of Minnesota Excavations at Kedesh," *BASOR* 329 (2003), 13–59. On Bethsaida, see R. Arav, "Bethsaida Excavations: Preliminary Report 1987–1993," in *Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee*, I, ed. R. Arav and R. A. Freund (Kirksville, MO: Thomas Jefferson University Press, 1995), 3–63, passim; idem, "Bethsaida Excavations: Preliminary Report 1994–1996," in *Bethsaida: A City by the North Shore of the Sea of Galilee*, II, ed. R. Arav and R. A. Freund (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 1999), 3–113, passim. On Yodefat, see D. Adan-Bayewitz and M. Aviam, "Iotapata, Josephus, and the Siege of 67: Preliminary Report on the 1992–1994 Seasons," *JRA* 10 (1997), 135, 160–61 figs. 4–5.

[19] See above, n. 16. On Mount Gerizim, see Y. Magen et al., *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, I: *The Aramaic, Hebrew and Samaritan Inscriptions* (Jerusalem: Staff Officer of Archaeology, Civil Administration for Judea and Samaria; Israel Antiquities Authority, 2004), 12–13 ; Y. Magen, *Mount Gerizim Excavations*, II: *A Temple City* (Jerusalem: Staff Officer of Archaeology, Civil Administration for Judea and Samaria; Israel Antiquities Authority, 2008). On Tel Dothan, see D. M. Master et al. (eds.), *Dothan*, I: *Remains from the Tell (1953–1964)* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2003), 131–38.

doned while Jerusalem thrived.[20] In the urban sphere, it seems that, besides Jerusalem as the central city in Palestine in the first half of the first century BCE, there were hardly any *metropoleis*, as was fitting for an independent monarchical regime.

A predominantly archaeological examination of the rural pattern and its differences between the Hellenistic and Hasmonean periods is fraught with many difficulties in light of the fact that most of its sites were surveyed, and not excavated. The numerous archaeological surveys show, neverthe-less, a distinct rise in the number of rural sites in the Hasmonean period in comparison with the preceding Hellenistic period.[21] The Jewish population and the populaces that were annexed to it were mainly agrarian and were engaged primarily in agricultural production and processing.[22]

The military system – The Ptolemaic and Seleucid strongholds were aban-doned, only to be superseded by a security and defense conception different from what had preceded it.[23] Galilean military strongholds, such as Qeren

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[20] See above, n. 16. On Nebi Samwil, see Y. Magen and M. Dadon, "Nebi Samwil (Montjoie)," in *One Land – Many Cultures: Archaeological Studies in Honour of Stanis-lao Loffreda OFM*, ed. G. C. Bottini et al. (Jerusalem: Franciscan Printing, 2003), 123–38. On Maresha, see A. Kloner, *Maresha: Final Report*, I: *Subterranean Complexes 21, 44, 70* (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority, 2003), 5–6, 9–30, passim.

[21] This is not the place to discuss the limits of the archaeological survey and its data; on this change, see Tal, *Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine*, 201–16. For the Judaean region in particular, see O. Lipschits and O. Tal, "The Settlement Archaeology of the Province of Judah: A Case Study," in *Judah and the Judeans in the Fourth Century B.C.E.*, ed. O. Lipschits et al. (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2007), 33–52.

[22] The historical aspect of this topic was examined by U. Rappaport and B. Bar-Kochva; see U. Rappaport, "The Hellenistic Cities and the Judaization of Eretz Israel," in *The Seleucid Period in Eretz Israel*, ed. B. Bar-Kochva (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, 1980), 269–71 (Hebrew); B. Bar-Kochva, "Manpower, Economics, and Internal Strife in the Hasmonean State," in *Armées et fiscalité dans le monde antique*, Colloques nationaux du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique 936 (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1977), 176–77, 191.

[23] According to I. Shatzman, the system of Hasmonean fortifications relied heavily on the Seleucid system that preceded it and did not need a continuous defensive line; this is due to the expansion of the Hasmonean kingdom and because the Hasmoneans preferred to meet their enemies on the battlefield. Thus, fortifications served three purposes: domes-tic security; refuge for the inhabitants in times of attack; and palaces (such as Alexandrium and Hyrcania) used by the royal house when under siege; see I. Shatzman, *The Armies of the Hasmoneans and Herod: From Hellenistic to Roman Frameworks*, TSAJ 25 (Tübingen: Mohr-Siebeck, 1991), 94–97, 311–12. I have difficulty in accepting this opinion. His as-sumption that the Seleucid defensive conception was retained in the Hasmonean period is based mainly on the fact that, according to the historical sources, the Hasmoneans conquered and then settled Seleucid military centers in Judaea, Edom, Samaria, the coastal plain, Galilee, and Transjordan. This proposal, however, should be rejected, since the archaeological finds attest that many sites were destroyed; even if they were resettled, in most instances their previous character changed. Shatzman's list of fortified sites from the late Hasmonean kingdom (pp. 94–95) includes both urban administrative centers (main and secondary administrative centers) and military enclosures (castles, forts, fortresses).

Naphtali, Hazor, and Sha'ar Ha-'Amakim, ceased to exist.[24] A similar phenomenon was noticeable at Shiqmona on the Carmel coast[25] and regarding such Judean strongholds as Ḥorvat 'Aqed (Emmaus), Har Adar, Arad, Beersheva, and Ḥorvat 'Uza.[26]

Architectural decoration – Visible change is also evident in the realm of architectural decoration.[27] These elements were sparse in Hellenistic Palestine; the few that have come to light do not evidence a clear preference for any one style, with the possible exception of Dor where, although the finds are quantitatively very limited, the Doric order was favored. This decora-

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Even if many of the excavated urban centers (such as Beth Shean, Jaffa, Dor, Maresha, and Mount Gerizim) were resettled after the destruction wreaked by the Hasmonean conquest, they still underwent major settlement decline; this was expressed by sparse construction, fortifications falling into disuse, etc. Several of the excavated military enclosures (e. g., Arad) were abandoned and were not used by the Hasmoneans. In contrast, several of the excavated military enclosures (and possibly also urban centers) were established in the Hasmonean period (e. g., Alexandrium, Jericho[?], Ḥorvat Mezad, Giv'at Shaul, Hyrcania, Qaṣr al-Yahud, Machaerus, Masada[?], and more) and reflect a different defense strategy that was probably meant to compensate for the vulnerable points of the Seleucid strategy, since the archaeological finds reflect a decline in the standing of the Hellenistic cities in the Hasmonean period (see above).

[24] On Qeren Naphtali, see M. Aviam, "A Second–First Century B.C.E. Fortress and Siege Complex in Eastern Upper Galilee," in *Archaeology and the Galilee: Text and Contexts in the Greco-Roman and Byzantine Periods*, ed. D. R. Edwards and C. T. McCollough (Atlanta: Scholars, 1997), 97–105. The archaeologist believes that the site was used by the Hasmoneans, but I have difficulty in understanding the basis for this determination. On Hazor, see Y. Yadin, *Hazor: The Head of All Those Kingdoms (Joshua 11:10); with a Chapter on Israelite Megiddo*, Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1970 (London: Oxford University Press, 1972), 196–97 fig. 56. On Sha'ar Ha-'Amakim, see A. Segal and Y. Naor, "Four Seasons of Excavations at a Hellenistic Site in the Area of Kibbutz Sha'ar Ha-Amakim," in *The Eastern Frontier of the Roman Empire: Proceedings of a Colloquium Held in Ankara in September 1988*, ed. D. H. French and C. S. Lightfoot, British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara 11 (Oxford: British Institute of Archaeology, 1989), 421–35.

[25] J. Elgavish, *Archaeological Excavations at Shikmona, Report No. 2: The Level of the Hellenistic Period, Stratum H, Seasons 1963–1970* (Haifa: City Museum of Ancient Art, 1974) (Hebrew); Elgavish, *Shiqmona: On the Seacoast of Mount Carmel*, 97–103.

[26] On Ḥorvat 'Aqed, see M. Fischer, "Bacchides in Emmaus," in *Dor le-Dor: From the End of Biblical Times up to the Redaction of the Talmud: Studies in Honor of Joshua Efron*, ed. A. Oppenheimer and A. Kasher (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1995), 97–98 (Hebrew). On Har Adar, see M. Dadon, "Har Adar," *'Atiqot* 32 (1997), 63–72 (Hebrew; English summary, 39*–40*). On Arad, see Z. Herzog, *The Arad Fortresses* (Tel Aviv: Hakibbutz Hameuchad, Israel Exploration Society, and Israel Antiquities Authority, 1997), 249–50 (Hebrew). On Beersheva, see Tal, *Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine*, 70–71, 154; on Ḥorvat 'Uza, see M. Fischer and O. Tal, "Conclusions: The Hellenistic and Roman Periods," in *Ḥorvat 'Uza and Ḥorvat Radum: Two Fortresses in the Biblical Negev*, ed. I. Beit-Arieh (Tel Aviv: Yass Publications in Archaeology, 2007), 335.

[27] This includes bases, columns, piers, *antae*, capitals, and the entablature components (mainly architraves, friezes, and cornices). These belong to the three common orders of Classical architecture – the Doric, the Ionic, and the Corinthian – as described by the Roman architect Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, III–IV, passim, including the customary mixture of styles in Hellenistic architecture.

tion was carved in local stone that was usually quarried near the site, thus demonstrating the local nature of the art, while the meager finds reflect provincial regional artistic trends (Tel Anafa and Maresha). Architectural details were used in administrative buildings, public and private structures, military complexes, and burial complexes, although they were more common in private construction, mainly among the upper classes; this demonstrated a certain difference between the context of their use in the private sector in the East and the public sector in the West. Significantly, these features were incorporated in traditional structures and were not canonized in a classical Greek architectural complex, as is attested by the local artistic orientations visible in some of them.[28] Architectural decoration apparently first began to appear in the region in the late third or early second centuries BCE, while increased use was evident only in the late second century BCE. Thus, the quantity of architectural decorations used in the Hasmonean monumental burials in Jerusalem and the palaces of Jericho exceeds the frequency of their appearance in the Seleucid coastal sites.

Burials – Changes are evident in burials as well. A comparison of tomb types in the Persian and Hellenistic period indicates that pit, cist, and shaft tombs as well as burial caves were common in both, while (plain and complex) perpendicular *loculi* (i. e., *kokhim*) came into use only in Hellenistic Palestine. Other types were quite negligible in both periods and are not reflective of common practice. These include individual burials (that exalt the individual's standing), family burials, inhumation burials (usually for the one-time use of a tomb), and emplacement burials (that are generally reflective of the repeated use of a tomb). It was the accepted practice for tombs to be situated outside of a settlement. Most of the interred were laid on their backs in an east-west orientation. Funerary offerings were generally placed alongside the corpses and included the most common pottery vessels for serving and preparation, as well as storage vessels; metal objects, jewelry, and artifacts of other materials were rarer. Nevertheless, the use of *loculi* increased during the Hasmonean period in comparison with the Hellenistic period, as is evident primarily in remains from Jerusalem and its environs.[29]

Elsewhere I had questioned the theory that *loculi* are of Egyptian-Alexandrian origin and link the pre-Hellenistic and Hellenistic periods in the Levant.[30] An architectural and chronological reexamination of the *loculi* in

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[28] M. Fischer and O. Tal, "Architectural Decoration in Ancient Israel in Hellenistic Times: Some Aspects of Hellenization," *ZDPV* 119 (2003), 19–37.

[29] A. Kloner and B. Zissu, *The Necropolis of Jerusalem in the Second Temple Period*, Interdisciplinary Studies in Ancient Culture and Art 8 (Leuven and Dudley, MA: Peeters, 2007), 71–72 (as opposed to 139–141).

[30] For this argument, see J. P. Peters and H. Thiersch, *Painted Tombs in the Necropolis of Marissa (Mareshah)* (London: Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund, 1905),

Alexandria proved that they did not precede the appearance of this tomb type in Palestine, and that the earliest ones, despite the disagreement concerning their date, are from the mid-third century BCE, similar to the dates of the local examples. In light of a prevalent, fundamentally Phoenician, architectural concept, I accordingly surmised that it was not inconceivable that *loculi* appeared simultaneously in several locations in the Levant. The *loculi*, and perhaps also the burial structures, exhibit an architectural conception similar to that of the common private structure of the period, the courtyard house, thus, reflecting the belief that the tomb was an eternal dwelling and that death is everlasting sleep. The increased use of *loculi* in the Hasmonean period shows that the common family structure was family-communal and extended to the "clan." Moreover, individual tombs, many of which are known from the Hellenistic period and were meant to enhance the standing of the deceased individual, were less common in the Hasmonean period.

Script and language – The archaeological testimony shows that Palaeo-Hebrew was the official script of the Hasmonean kingdom; it was used on most of the Hasmonean coins,[31] on the administrative seals,[32] and in intellectual life, as is evidenced by the scrolls unearthed in the Judaean Desert.[33] This change – the abandonment of Greek as the official script, as was the practice in the Hellenistic period – naturally led to the adoption of Hebrew (and Aramaic, which was common at the time) as national language(s). Thus, Greek, the national language in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid Empires, became an international language that undoubtedly remained prevalent among the upper classes for political, economic, and social ends, but was relegated to secondary status in the Hasmonean period in favor of Hebrew and Aramaic.[34]

Governmental centers – The above descriptions of the urban, rural, and military patterns attest to fundamental changes in the settlement model and settlement pattern in the Hellenistic and Hasmonean periods. A pattern of main and secondary administrative centers in the different regions of Palestine (the coast, Galilee, Samaria, and Judaea) was replaced by another one, with a single royal capital, whose existence led, in fact, to the almost total decline of other administrative centers. Furthermore, from a settlement

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81–84; for the counter-arguments that I raised, see O. Tal, "On the Origin and Concept of the Loculi Tombs of Hellenistic Palestine," *Ancient West and East* 2 (2003), 288–307.

[31] On the coins, see Y. Meshorer, *A Treasury of Jewish Coins: From the Persian Period to Bar-Kochba* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi; New York: Amphora, 2001), 23–59.

[32] On the seal impressions, see Tal, *Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine*, 314–15.

[33] On the intellectual life, see H. Eshel, *The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008).

[34] The absence of Hasmonean monumental royal stone inscriptions on the model of the Greek inscriptions known mainly from the Seleucid period might attest to the intentional neglect of this practice.

model that can be explained by the "central place theory"[35] – a pattern of administrative cities and their rural periphery ("cities with their dependencies"), i.e., small- and medium-sized rural sites arranged around large urban settlements in defined geographical districts at set distances from one another – we see a shift to another model, a single metropolis in the region of Judaea surrounded by rural settlements, leaving the neighboring districts with hardly any sizable central cities.[36] This model shows a sea change in the nature of the governmental-administrative, economic, and social ties between the settlements on both the national and international levels; the relationship between Jerusalem and its settlement hinterland (in the broadest sense of the term) underwent fundamental changes between the two periods.[37] The change in the settlement pattern and settlement model must have had some effects on the country's road network, which was very dependent upon the nature of the ruling authority (along with other geographical, topographical, environmental, and economic factors). Given the fact that in Hasmonean times the country was a small but independent political entity, a local but centralized road network whose focus was the capital, Jerusalem, was likely to be established. Thus, the country's north-south coastal highway, which served before as a main land-bridge for imperial Eastern powers, was probably minimized.

From Province to Independent Kingdom

In the governmental sphere, intensive construction activity took place throughout Judaea, beginning with Simon (1 Macc. 13:41–42), and especially during the reigns of John Hyrcanus and Alexander Jannaeus, revealing

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[35] This scholarly model is based on the assumption that socioeconomic and political links between urban settlements and their satellites (both rural and military) can be graphically presented, so that the urban center is surrounded by the small sites attached to it. On the source of this model, see W. Christaller, *Die zentralen Orte in Süddeutschland: Eine ökonomisch-geographische Untersuchung über die Gesetzmäßigkeit der Verbreitung und Entwicklung der Siedlungen mit städtischen Funktionen* (Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1933; Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1968); and for the models that developed from it, see I. Hodder and C. Orton, *Spatial Analysis in Archaeology* (Cambridge, Eng.: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 53–97.

[36] On the historical aspect of this topic, see G. Fuks, "The Hellenistic Cities of Eretz Israel in the Hasmonean Period," in *The Time of the Hasmonean Dynasty: Sources, Summations, Selected Topics, and Supplementary Material*, eds. D. Amit and H. Eshel (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1996), 100–103 (Hebrew). Notwithstanding, the status of Ashkelon under the Hasmoneans is noteworthy; see G. Fuks, *City of Many Seas: Ashkelon during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 2001), 23–36 (Hebrew).

[37] It should be noted that also everyday utensils (mainly pottery vessels) underwent typological changes that attest to a period that differs in the material aspect, but this issue would exceed the scope of the present study.

a considerable rise in the use of architectural decoration of Greek and Hellenistic origin in Jerusalem, Jericho, and additional Hasmonean strongholds in the Judaean Desert. In the Hasmonean period, the provincialism characteristic of the Ptolemaic and Seleucid eras was replaced by an extroversion that was expressed in the archaeological realm by breathtaking construction projects and tombstones, the likes of which were unknown prior to the Hasmoneans.

Monumental Royal Construction in the Hasmonean Period[38]

A series of palaces (including fortified patrician houses and fortified official residences) was erected by the Hasmoneans at Beth Zur(?),[39] Gazara(?),[40]

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[38] For a general discussion, see E. Netzer, "The Hasmonean Building Projects," in Amit and Eshel, *Time of the Hasmonean Dynasty*, 185–96; see also idem, *The Palaces of the Hasmoneans and Herod the Great* (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi and Israel Exploration Society, 2001), 11–39, 68–78.

[39] 1 Macc. 4:61, 6:7, 9:52, 14:33; see Tal, *Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine*, 150–52, for a summary and interpretation of the archaeological remains.

[40] 1 Macc. 13:43–48: Ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις ἐκείναις παρενέβαλεν ἐπὶ Γαζάραν καὶ ἐκύκλωσεν αὐτὴν παρεμβολαῖς [...] καὶ προσωχύρωσεν αὐτὴν καὶ ᾠκοδόμησεν ἑαυτῷ ἐν αυτῇ οἴκησιν (ed. W. Kappler): "In those days he [Simon] pitched his camp against Gazara, and surrounded it with troops [...] and he fortified it more strongly and built himself a dwelling there" (trans. Goodspeed, 432). We may assume that the word οἴκησις is not limited to the settlement at the site, but additionally refers to the establishment of a royal palace there, that was also used by his son John Hyrcanus (1 Macc. 13:53). Graffiti discovered at Tel Gezer indirectly attests to the existence of a royal palace at the site: Πάμπρα[ς] Σίμωνος κατοπάζη π[ῦρ] βασίλειον ("Pampras [wishes] that fire should fall on Simon's palace"); this became known as the Pampras inscription; see L. Boffo, *Iscrizioni greche e latine per lo studio della Bibbia* (Brescia: Paideia, 1994), no. 13, with relevant bibliography. The graffiti is understood as an expression of rage against Simon the Hasmonean by a deceived Syrian, who might even have been forced to work on the construction of this palace. It should be emphasized, however, that the inscription does not directly attest to the presence of a Hasmonean palace in Gezer itself, since his "wish" is not indicative of a direct link between the site (Tel Gezer) and the palace.

It should be noted at this juncture that the city in 1 Macc. 13:43 is Gazara (Γάζαρα), and not Gezer (Γάζηρα), as it appears in two other narratives – one, in connection with the events that followed Judas Maccabeus' great victory at Emmaus in 165 BCE, when his Jewish warriors continued to pursue the remnants of the Seleucid army to Gezer and beyond, to "the plains of Idumea and Azotus and Jamnia" (1 Macc. 4:15; trans. Goodspeed, 388); and the other, in relation to Judas Maccabeus' even greater triumph over Nicanor in 161 BCE, at Adasa, when the Jewish warriors pursued the Seleucid army to Gezer (1 Macc. 7:45). We suggested elsewhere to identify Gazara with Tel Ya'oz, situated on the northern bank of Naḥal Śorek, based on its preservation in the Arab name (Tell Ghazza) and the archaeological remains that came to light in the excavations of the site; see M. Fischer, I. Roll and O. Tal, "Persian and Hellenistic Remains at Tel Ya'oz," *Tel Aviv* 35 (2008), 152–55.

Jerusalem,[41] and Jericho.[42] These were accompanied by the establishment of "desert fortresses" in Judaea and Moab, especially Hyrcania,[43] Alexandrium (Sartaba),[44] Cypros,[45] Duk (Dagon),[46] and Machaerus.[47] Additional royal patrician houses were probably built at other sites, but reports of such structures have not always been preserved in the extant sources and have yet to be uncovered in archaeological excavations; alternatively, if they had survived, they have not yet been correctly identified by their excavators.[48]

All this construction activity provides evidence for the creation of a new architectural landscape that, on the one hand, was meant to give tangible expression to the power of the ruling entity, and, on the other, to implement newly acquired technological knowledge. In the Judaean Desert, for instance, means were devised to utilize the region's natural resources and store runoff water to promote the development of agricultural lands and

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[41] See R. Reich, "The Archaeology of Jerusalem in the Time of the Hasmonean Dynasty," in Amit and Eshel, *Time of the Hasmonean Dynasty*, 219–30; G. Barkay, "Hasmonean-Period Jerusalem as a Reflection of the City from the Time of the City of David," in Amit and Eshel, *Time of the Hasmonean Dynasty*, 231–38.

[42] On Jericho, see E. Netzer, *Hasmonean and Herodian Palaces at Jericho: Final Report of the 1973–1987 Excavations*, I (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, 2001), 301–11.

[43] See above, n. 16; on Hyrcania, see also Z. Meshel, "The Late Hasmonean Siege System at Hyrcania," *EI* 17 (1984), 251–56 (Hebrew; English summary p. 11*).

[44] See above, n. 16; on Alexandrium (Sartaba), see also Z. Meshel, "A Siege System and an Ancient Road at Alexandrium," *EI* 20 (1989), 292–301 (Hebrew; English summary p. 205*).

[45] On Cypros, see E. Netzer and I. Damati, "Cypros," in *Hasmonean and Herodian Palaces at Jericho: Final Report of the 1973–1987 Excavations*, II: *Stratigraphy and Architecture*, ed. E. Netzer and R. Laureys-Chachy (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Institute of Archaeology, Hebrew University, 2004), 233–80, passim.

[46] On Duk, see Z. Meshel, "The Fortification System during the Hasmonean Period," in *Zev Vilnay's Jubilee Volume: Essays on the History, Archaeology and Lore of the Holy Land, Presented to Zev Vilnay*, ed. E. Schiller (Jerusalem: Ariel, 1986), 254–58 (Hebrew).

[47] See Z. Meshel, "The Hasmoneans and the Judean Desert Fortifications," in Amit and Eshel, *Time of the Hasmonean Dynasty*, 239–50; idem, "The Nabatean 'Rock' and the Judaean Desert Fortresses," *IEJ* 50 (2000), 109–15; idem, "The Main Function of Alexandrion and Judean Desert Fortresses," in *Judea and Samaria Research Studies* 12 (2003), 73–76 (Hebrew); K. D. Politis, "Ancient Arabs, Jews and Greeks on the Shores of the Dead Sea," *Studies in the History and Archaeology of Jordan* 8 (2004), 361–70.

[48] We should relate to several sites in which scholars sought to identify royal building activity, such as Nuseib 'Uweishira, between Duk and Cypros (see Netzer, *Palaces of the Hasmoneans*, 72) and Horvat Tura in the Jerusalem hills and its identification with Tur Shimon (see B. Zissu, "The Hellenistic Fortress at Horvat Tura in the Jerusalem Hills and Identification of Tur Shimon," *IEJ* 58 (2008), 171–94). We should add to these the sites reconstructed as Hasmonean anchorages at the Dead Sea, including Qaṣr al-Yahud and Rujm el-Baḥr (see P. Bar-Adon, *Excavations in the Judean Desert*, 'Atiqot 9 [Hebrew series] [Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority and Israel Exploration Society, 1990], 3–14, 18–29, respectively [English summary, 4*–5*]); on their reconstruction as anchorages, see Netzer, "Hasmonean Building Projects," 194–95; idem, *Palaces of the Hasmoneans*, 77–78.

related activities unique to the Dead Sea region.[49] Excavations and surveys conducted along the western and eastern shores of the Dead Sea did not reveal (early) Hellenistic remains, yet it seems that all the finds in the area are to be dated to the Hasmonean period.[50] It would appear that the Hasmonean rulers attempted to reconstruct the Kingdom of Judah of the late First Temple period in order to restore their people's ancestral glory.[51] However, just as there were noticeable Egyptian and Mesopotamian influences on material culture during the First Temple period, so too were architectural and technological developments in the Hellenistic period subject to influences from the Hellenistic East and West; this, in effect, demonstrates the acculturation of the Hasmonean kings in the Hellenistic world. On the one hand, the interior architectural design of the Hasmonean palaces – their use of architectural decoration, mosaics, Western paving methods, and colorful frescoes – was influenced by the Greek world (Greece and western Asia Minor).[52] On the other, the Hasmoneans most likely drew their knowledge of the utilization, storage, and efficient private and industrial use of water from their Nabatean neighbors, who had mastered these skills decades earlier.[53]

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[49] See, e.g., the industrial quarter uncovered in the excavations at Jericho; E. Netzer, "The Royal Estate," in Netzer and Laureys-Chachy, *Hasmonean and Herodian Palaces at Jericho*, 3–144, passim, esp. 35–36, 131–37.

[50] See Tal, *Archaeology of Hellenistic Palestine*, 125 n. 6.

[51] Intriguingly, most of the Hasmonean sites yield Iron Age potsherds. On this phenomenon in Jerusalem, see Barkay, "Hasmonean-Period Jerusalem," 236–37; it seems there is no room for chance in explaining this, and we have here intentional policy.

[52] See Netzer, *Hasmonean and Herodian Palaces at Jericho*, 11–174, esp. figs. 12–13, 127–28, 134; Netzer and Damati, "Cypros," fig. 327. On the architectural decoration at Jericho, see Fischer and Tal, "Architectural Decoration in Ancient Israel"; on the mosaics, see R. and A. Ovadiah, *Hellenistic, Roman and Early Byzantine Mosaic Pavements in Israel*, Bibliotheca Archaeologia 6 (Rome: Bretschneider, 1987), 77 (no. 111), 137 (no. 234), and bibliography; on the wall decorations, see S. Rozenberg, "The Wall Paintings of the Herodian Palace at Jericho," in *Judaea and the Greco-Roman World in the Time of Herod in the Light of Archaeological Evidence*, ed. K. Fittschen and G. Foerster (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996), 121–38 passim, although the discussion of the Hasmonean wall decorations is extremely meager.

[53] It should be noted that, according to Netzer ("Hasmonean Building Projects," 196), the Hasmoneans were influenced by Asia Minor in their development of waterworks. I find a great deal of logic in Meshel's proposal (see his three articles, above, n. 47) regarding the adoption of the Nabatean "Rock" in the desert fortresses, in their characteristics (steep escarpments with their truncated summits forming natural fortifications with difficult access), installations (large and sophisticated waterworks), and technological achievements (conduits [at times with siphons] that channeled runoff water, flood waters, and the water from streams and springs). However, the earliest known siphon comes from Pergamon (Asia Minor) of the first half of the second-century BCE; cf. R. J. Forbes, *Studies in Ancient Technologies*, I (Leiden: Brill, 1993), 163–65.

Hasmonean Monumental Memorials

Additional examples of the Hasmonean orientation to outside influences come from the realm of burial. The sources (1 Macc. 13:25–30; Jos. *Ant.* 13. 211) tell of seven pyramidal tombstones that Simon the Hasmonean erected in Modi'in (most probably in 142 BCE) for himself, his father, mother, and four brothers, which could be seen from the sea and were generally of a purely commemorative-propagandistic purpose.[54] Simon, as a high-handed political and religious leader, adopted the traits of a power-hungry Eastern monarch. Monumental and magnificent commemoration, which had its roots in the East, was not limited to the Near East in this era, but was also known in the contemporaneous Greek world (Greece and western Asia Minor). The selection of pyramids as memorials was not by chance; this type of structure was used for monumental burial in the First Temple period

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[54] 1 Macc. 13:25–30 (27–30): καὶ ᾠκοδόμησε Σίμων ἐπὶ τὸν τάφον τοῦ πατρὸς αὐτοῦ καὶ τῶν ἀδελφῶν αὐτοῦ καὶ ὕψωσεν αὐτὸν τῇ ὁράσει λίθῳ ξεστῷ ἐκ τῶν ὄπισθεν καὶ ἐκ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν. καὶ ἔστησεν ἑπτὰ πυραμίδας, μίαν κατέναντι τῆς μιᾶς, τῷ πατρὶ καὶ τῇ μητρί, καὶ τοῖς τέσσαρσιν ἀδελφοῖς. καὶ ταύταις ἐποίησε μηχανήματα περιθεὶς στύλους μεγάλους καὶ ἐποίησεν ἐπὶ τοῖς στύλοις πανοπλίας εἰς ὄνομα αἰώνιον καὶ παρὰ ταῖς πανοπλίαις πλοῖα ἐπι γεγλυμμένα εἰς τὸ θεωρῖσθαι ὑπὸ πάντων τῶν πλεόντων τὴν θάλασσαν. οὗτος ὁ τάφος, ὃν ἐποίησεν ἐν Μωδεῖν, ἕως τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης (W. Kappler); "And Simon built a monument over the grave of his father and his brothers, and made it high so that it could be seen, with polished stone on back and front. And he erected seven pyramids in a row, for his father and his mother and his four brothers. And he made devices for these, setting up great columns and putting on the columns trophies of armor for an everlasting memorial, and beside the armor carved prows of ships, so that they could be seen by all who sailed the sea. Such was the monument that he built at Modin, and that still stands today" (trans. Goodspeed, 430–31). On this episode, see also J. J. Schwartz, *Lod (Lydda), Israel: From its Origins through the Byzantine Period, 5600 B.C.E.–640 C.E.* (Oxford: Tempus Reparatum, 1991), 61–65. A. Berlin has recently argued that Simon's source of inspiration for the tombstones (pyramids) he erected were the two monuments in the Caria region in southwestern Asia Minor, one being the mausoleum in Halicarnassus (Bodrum), and the other an additional pyramidal structure called the Belevi Mausoleum, in the vicinity of Ephesus, in which Antiochus II is interred; see A. Berlin, "Power and Its Afterlife: Tombs in Hellenistic Palestine," *NEA* 65 (2002), 144–47. I have difficulty in accepting this claim. Although the time of these structures is the fourth and third centuries BCE, respectively, there is no reason to search for such geographically distant sources of inspiration. As indicated by what I wrote above, the Hasmonean rulers attempted, in many ways, to reconstruct the Judaean kingdom of the late First Temple period; since pyramids already symbolized monumental burial in Jerusalem in the First Temple period, then this would be a similar phenomenon, albeit intensified. It should be noted at this juncture that some of the royal burials of the First Temple period were marked by monumental columns, including tumuli that were erected in highly visible locations; see G. Barkay, "Burial Caves and Burial Practices in Judah in the Iron Age," in *Graves and Burial Practices in Israel in the Ancient Period*, ed. I. Singer (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi and Israel Exploration Society, 1994), 144–47 (Hebrew).

in Jerusalem[55] and was interpreted in the Hasmonean period as an eternal memorial (such as those of the Egyptian Pharaohs) meant to create a royal "past" for the Hasmonean dynasty, on the one hand, and a historical "past" (i. e., antiquity) for the Jewish people, on the other. The use of pyramids as Hasmonean tombstones also found expression in several more Hasmonean tombs dating to the late second–early first centuries BCE, for example, the Tomb of Benei Ḥezir (according to Avigad's reconstruction of the monument) and the Tomb of Zechariah.[56] These Jerusalem tombs, like those in Modi'in, were used by the priestly families and their prominence served as royal Jewish propaganda to those visiting the capital. Jason's Tomb, a monumental pyramidal tomb of a non-priestly family, might constitute another link in the development of this practice as it entered the private realm, in all probability in the first decades of the first century BCE.[57]

From Eastern Consciousness to a Western Conception?

The magnificent building projects, palaces, fortresses, and memorials defined a new Judaean architectural landscape in the Hasmonean period that had a clearly propagandistic function – to grant political, religious, and social legitimacy, and, of course, honor and grandeur, to the ruling Hasmonean dynasty. We should not, however, ignore an additional aspect of this landscape – by means of these stunning construction projects, the burgeoning Jewish state called upon Diaspora Jews to take part in its rebuilding and strengthening by their immigration.[58] The Hasmoneans viewed themselves as the founders of a ruling dynasty that had rid Judaea and Palestine of the foreign Seleucid rule and restored Jewish independence in their land, ac-

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[55] See N. Avigad, *Ancient Monuments in the Kidron Valley* (Jerusalem: Bialik Institute, 1954), 18–23 (Hebrew); D. Ussishkin, *The Village of Silwan: The Necropolis from the Period of the Judean Kingdom* (Jerusalem: Israel Exploration Society and Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi), 43–62; Barkay, "Burial Caves and Burial Practices."

[56] See Avigad, *Ancient Monuments*, 37–90; see also D. Barag, "The 2000–2001 Exploration of the Tombs of Benei Ḥezir and Zecharia," *IEJ* 53 (2003), 78–110. Barag rejects Avigad's reconstruction of the column over the tomb of Benei Ḥezir as a pyramid, and suggests that a square structure of parallel shape to the Nabatean tower tombs was erected over it; ibid., 87–92 and fig. 14.

[57] See L. Y. Rahmani, Jason's Tomb, *IEJ* 17 (1967), 61–113. D. Barag, "Jason's Tomb – A Re-appraisal," in *New Studies in the Archaeology of Jerusalem and Its Region: Collected Papers*, II, ed. D. Amit and G. D. Stiebel (Jerusalem: Israel Antiquities Authority and Hebrew University, 2008), 97–104 (Hebrew).

[58] An analogy to the independent State of Israel and the Zionist enterprise and contributions from abroad begs to be drawn, but this is not the place for such a comparison. On this topic, from a different perspective, see J. Shavit, *Athens in Jerusalem: Classical Antiquity and Hellenism in the Making of the Modern Secular Jew* (London: Littman Library, 1997).

cording to their understanding of its boundaries. Thus, the boundaries of the Hasmonean kingdom during its expansionary period were congruent with the borders of the Judaean and Israelite kingdoms in the First Temple period, and even exceeded them, extending into various parts of Transjordan (the Peraea).[59] The Jews of the First and Second Temple periods, however, vastly differed in their religious and social profiles; in terms of their self-definition in these two periods,[60] this revival of past tradition served the Hasmoneans well in creating a national mythos that would constitute one of the common denominators of the Jews of the time.

Notwithstanding, we are to understand the spectacular building projects and monumental burials on two levels: one, the national, vis-à-vis the Jews, their neighbors who were converted to Judaism, and those who had not; and the second, the international, vis-à-vis the Graeco-Roman world. At the time, the latter conducted imperial territorial expansions that constituted a threatening political power, compelling the Hasmoneans, as the rulers of a small state, to forge ties and alliances in order to gain recognition of their dynasty as the legitimate representatives of their people and of the territories of their kingdom. This recognition was not solely *de jure*, but also *de facto*, and was to find expression in the Hasmoneans' self-perception (in terms of national identity and self-definition) and in "selling" the Jewish past and its antiquity to the Graeco-Roman world.[61]

The continued use of the Greek language (alongside the resurrection of Hebrew for religious and administrative purposes) is indeed an outstanding testimony to the initiation of a dialogue with the peoples of the West, but

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[59] See N. Sagiv, "The Jewish Settlements in the Peraea (Transjordan) during the Hellenistic and Roman Periods," Ph. D. dissertation (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University, 2003) (Hebrew).

[60] This issue has been insufficiently researched; we encounter it in a number of studies that survey Jewish monotheism of First and Second Temple times, e. g., R. Albertz, "The Thwarted Restoration," in *Yahwism after the Exile: Perspectives on Israelite Religion in the Persian Era*, ed. R. Albertz and B. Becking, Studies in Theology and Religion 5 (Assen: Van Gorcum, 2003), 1–17; E. Ben-Zvi, "What Is New in Yehud? Some Considerations," in Albertz and Becking, ibid., 32–48; O. Keel, *Die Geschichte Jerusalems und die Entstehung des Monotheismus* (Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 2007).

[61] This phenomenon is well known from the ethnographic compositions of the Jewish-Greek literature of the period. These compositions open with the narrative of the ancient origin (*origo*), continue with a geographic description of the land and its customs (*nomina*), and end with the historical achievements of its rulers; see B. Bar-Kochva, *Pseudo-Hecataeus, On the Jews: Legitimizing the Jewish Diaspora* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 217–18, 233–53, passim; B. Isaac, *The Invention of Racism in Classical Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 109–68. The insertion of the letters from 2 Macc. 1:10–2:18 can be understood in the same vein, for the purpose of bolstering Judas Maccabeus' status, as can the association between Nehemiah as a political figure, builder of the Jerusalem Temple and its altar. Moreover, they both represent a non-Davidic, non-Zadokite leadership; see in this respect T. A. Bergren, "Nehemiah in 2 Maccabees 1:10–2:18," *JSJ* 28 (1997), 249–70, esp. 261–62.

language alone is not sufficient for conducting such a dialogue. The Hasmoneans also had to communicate with Hellenistic symbols that would be understood by the West as evidence of an ancient past constituting a "certificate" for acceptance and recognition. Each Hasmonean ruler perceived this relationship differently, but here we will limit ourselves to delineating only the general direction. Thus, from the time of Simon, the Hasmoneans defined themselves as members of a royal dynasty that, due to its standing, had to distinguish itself from the people in a number of spheres – whether political, economic, or social. As members of a royal dynasty, the Hasmoneans controlled a far-reaching state that was dynamic in its expansion and development, one that centered around a royal capital with a Temple that functioned as the religious focal point of its people (and possibly also of Diaspora Jewry). As members of a royal dynasty, the Hasmoneans issued coins that met with the Greek and Roman economic conventions of their day: having a limited usage, of national-political extent and circulation, so that the motifs stamped on their coins were a means of disseminating propaganda that expressed the political, dynastic, and religious might of the kingdom. The bilingual coins bearing a royal title in Greek (ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ) on their obverse and a royal title in Hebrew (יהונתן המלך) or in Aramaic (מלכא אלכסנדרוס) on their reverse were most probably meant to illustrate the international character of the kingdom at the peak of its expansion.[62] As a royal dynasty, the Hasmoneans had a regular army that was not only (financially) maintained by the kingdom, but also apparently acted with an awareness of Hellenistic fighting strategies and, in many instances, triumphed against its foes on the battlefield. We may assume that the Hasmoneans, as a royal dynasty, actively promoted, or at least supported, the redaction of some biblical, apocryphal, geographical, ethnic, and historical works, and the dissemination or translation of some Hebrew works into Greek or, alternatively, the writing of some oral traditions in Greek to teach of their antiquity as a people with a glorious past.

These Hellenistic symbols had numerous parallels in the Graeco-Roman world. Especially striking in this regard is Simon the Hasmonean's undertaking to commemorate the members of his family as a result of his recognition by the people as head of the priesthood and the political (and military) leadership on the one hand, and, his recognition by the Seleucid king Demetrius II on the other. Thus, beyond the creation of a royal "past" for the Hasmonean dynasty and the antiquity of the Jewish people, there was an additional reason for the erection of the pyramids in Modi'in as memorials. These monuments, with their carvings of *panopliai* (full armor) and ships,

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[62] As is expressed, for example, in Alexander Jannaeus's coins, Groups K, L, and M; see Meshorer, *Treasury of Jewish Coins*, 37–40, 47–48, 209–11.

could be seen from the sea and aroused many associations with the cult of the Greek founder. In the Greek tradition, the Greek colony (*apoikia*) observed a rite in honor of the founder(s) (*oikistēs*), who were designated, confirmed, and sanctified by a certain divinity; this ceremony was sometimes conducted alongside magnificent memorials[63] such as those known in the Roman world (*origo gentis Romanae* and the cult of the founders Romulus and Remus).[64] The selection of Modi'in (and not Jerusalem, which was the main focus of the Hasmoneans' rise to power) as the site of these memorials was not incidental, since this was done, in part, for the sake of those in the West. The conceptual parallelism between the Hasmonean dynasty and its founders (Mattathias and his sons), on the one hand, and the founder or founders of a Western dynasty, on the other, was intentional, helping to forge a common language between the West and the East.

In summary: Hellenistic acculturation in the earlier Hellenistic period differed from that in the Hasmonean period. I have attempted to indicate these differences from an archaeological perspective and to offer a possible explanation for the change in the perception of Hellenism during these two periods. While Hellenism in the Hellenistic period was an integral part of the administrative reality, in light of the origin of the ruling entities, the absorption of Greek cultural patterns among the Hasmonean elite in the Hasmonean period was the consequence of an intentional policy meant to impart a cosmopolitan character to the kingdom and to distinguish this elite from the local population while exalting the members of the Hasmonean dynasty – even if only in the first century BCE. This policy was not a conscious Hellenization process on the part of the Hasmoneans; rather, it was an attempt to survive in a reality compounded by duality and individuality – duality with the Graeco-Roman world owing to existential political motives, and individuality as the Jewish people, which ardently wished to preserve its faith and worldview.

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[63] On the Greek founder and the rite of the founder, see, e.g., I. Malkin, *Religion and Colonization in Ancient Greece* (Leiden: Brill, 1987), 17–91, 189–266, passim.

[64] See, e.g., I. Shatzman, *A History of the Roman Republic* (Jerusalem: Magnes, 1990), 26–43, 318–24 (Hebrew); T. J. Cornel, "The Foundation of Rome in the Ancient Literary Tradition," *Papers in Italian Archaeology* 1 (1978), 131–38.