

SELEUKID SETTLEMENTS: BETWEEN ETHNIC IDENTITY AND MOBILITY*

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Go noiselessly by, stranger; the old man sleeps among the pious dead, wrapped in the slumber that is the lot of all. This is Meleager, the son of Eurates, who linked sweet tearful Love and the Muses with the merry Graces. Heavenborn Tyre and Gadara's holy soil reared him to manhood, and beloved Cos of the Meropes tended his old age. If you are a Syrian, Salam! If you are a Phoenician, Naidius! If you are a Greek, Chaire! And say the same yourself.

Meleager of Gadara, 1 cent. BC, *Greek Anth.* 7.419,
English trans. W.R. Paton

Abstract: The present paper deals with the population of the Seleukid settlements in order to address issues about the settlers' mobility and ethnic identity. By surveying the available evidence, this study aims in particular to understand the role played by non-Greek populations in the Seleukid Empire, trying to go beyond the thesis of an apartheid-like regime in which those ethnic groups would be socially as well as politically isolated from the Greco-Macedonian settlers.

Key words: Seleukid Empire, Ethnic Identity, Hellenism, Jews, Mobility, Macedonian.

In his celebrative portrait of the deeds accomplished by Seleukos I, Appian (*Syr.* 57) states that the king had founded many towns throughout his vast empire. From this particular point of view, the figure of Seleukos emerges not only as the continuator of Alexander the Great, the builder king *par excellence*, but also as a competitor of the Macedonian conqueror. Just as many of the so-called *poleis* founded or attributed to Alexander were often nothing but forts and guard posts, the first Seleukid settlements cannot all be classed under the label of city.¹ In many cases, moreover, a pre-existing site was simply

* I would like to express my gratitude to Alexander McAuley (McGill University) for a critical reading of the manuscript and for giving valuable comments which improved the quality of this contribution. Any mistakes are of course my responsibility alone.

¹ For a discussion on the idea of *polis* applied to the Hellenistic colonisation, see Grainger 1990, 63–66.

renamed in order to limit the high expenses that the foundation of a settlement on virgin soil entailed. However, it is unquestionable that Seleukos and his successors, especially his son Antiochos I, put special care into populating even the farthest corners of their empire and creating a network of settlements in strategic areas in order to enforce the royal presence on the territory, develop urbanisation, and strengthen communication between the Mediterranean and Central Asia. Laurent Capdetrey² has recently produced an in-depth study on the administration of the Seleukid Empire in which a great deal of attention is given to the role of colonisation policies as a means of territorial control and definition of the royal space. In the last two decades, the subject of Hellenistic foundations has received fresh and extensive attention especially thanks to the volumes by Getzel Cohen *The Hellenistic Settlements*,³ which offer an exhaustive survey of the Hellenistic colonies from Greece to Central Asia.

As for the Seleukids, we see that in the first phase the settling of colonists concerned Asia from the Middle East to Bactria, and then, after the defeat and death of Lysimachos at the battle of Kouroupedion in 281, large parts of Asia Minor were added to the Seleukid empire to populate. While under the two first Seleukid kings the colonisation process was remarkably intense, it tended to decrease subsequently for various reasons such as territorial losses and stabilisation of the control over a certain area until its end, possibly after the reign of Antiochos IV.⁴ Accordingly, the colonisation programme followed by the Seleukids involved despatching groups of settlers all over the Empire. This contribution aims to present a few reflections on the ethnic composition of the Seleukid colonies, their mobility and their role within the empire.

Kings and cities

In such a vast and heterogeneous empire the colonisation process followed different patterns depending on the area. A regional study is beyond the scope of this paper, so I will limit myself to the remark that the Seleukids adopted several methods in order to populate a colony. While on the one hand the kings would settle soldiers and veterans who served in their armies, on the other they sent colonists to these new settlements by taking them from other cities inside or outside the kingdom. Sometimes, as in Babylon and Uruk, an indigenous town received settlers to form a new community. In some cases the new settlement resulted from the synoikism of two or more local villages to which a certain number of colonists of different origin was added.

The well-known inscription from Magnesia on the Meander *I. Magnesia* 61 provides us with a basic idea of the procedures which lay behind the colonisation process when a city was involved in sending colonists for the new settlements. The inscription is a copy of an official letter sent from the assembly of Antioch in Persis (nowadays

² Capdetrey 2007.

³ Cohen 1995; Cohen 2006, and Cohen 2013. For the set of problems concerning the Hellenistic colonisation, Briant (1982a and 1982b) still offer important and stimulating reflections.

⁴ Cohen 1978, 32 clearly distinguishes two phases, the first one going from Seleukos I to Antiochos II, and the second from Antiochos III to Antiochos IV.

Bushir) to the city of Magnesia concerning the recognition of the festival of Artemis Leukophryene. The first part of the letter recalls the ties of kinship (*syngeneia*) between the two cities, as in the past Magnesia had sent a group of colonists to Antioch during the reign of Antiochos I. Despite its celebrative and summarising character, the section of the document from ll. 15 to 20 gives us the following information: in the first place, the king despatches an embassy to the city which was asked to send the colonists, then the matter is put to a vote and approved by the local assembly in the form of a decree, and afterwards the city proceeds to the selection of the individuals to be sent to the colony. Eventually, the departure of the colonists is accompanied by sacrifices and religious ceremonies. We do not know how the colonists actually reached the settlement: one can imagine a caravan led by royal agents or envoys from the recipient city accompanying the group to its new destination.

Likewise, the inscription does not tell us if the council could oppose the request of the king, or if the debate mentioned in the document was just a formality which the city had to follow without having any real freedom of decision. In fact, the style of the decree conveys the image of a council performing its activities in the framework of an independent and democratic process, but this turns out to be a misleading impression. It is likely that it emerged from the status of the cities in their relations with the Seleukid kingdom: according to the classification elaborated by Capdetrey,⁵ Magnesia actually belonged to the category of the subject cities, thus the request for colonists was in all probability an order concealed under the veil of the language register in use for official communication between the king and the cities.⁶

Our sources generally mention the colonists by region or ethnic group, while only in a few cases are we informed of their exact place of origin. Among the cities sending colonists is Miletos, which at the end of the 3rd century provided settlers for Seleukeia/Tralleis in Karia.⁷ More problematic is the case of a group of individuals from Ephesos sent to Seleukeia on the Eulaios/Susa,⁸ whose presence has been inferred by Le Rider on the basis of coin types struck in the local mint showing the identification of the Iranian goddess Nanaia with the Ephesian Artemis.⁹ Perinthos in Propontis could have provided settlers for the homonymous colony of Perinthos in Syria.¹⁰ Seleukos I moved part of the Greco-Macedonian community of Babylon to the new capital of Seleukeia on the Tigris.¹¹ Magnesia on the Maeander, on the other hand, was involved in the colonisation of Antioch near Pisidia, possibly Seleukeia on the Eulaios/Susa,¹² Antioch in Persis,¹³ as

⁵ Capdetrey 2007, 191–224. A different kind of classification is adopted by Ma 2002a, 150–174.

⁶ Ma 2002a, 179–242.

⁷ Cohen 1995, 265–268.

⁸ The Eulaios corresponds to the River Kerkha. On Susa under Seleukid rule, see Martinez-Sève 2010a, 41–66.

⁹ Le Rider 1965, 281.

¹⁰ Cohen 2006, 124.

¹¹ Contrary to what is affirmed by classical sources such as Diodoros of Sicily, Clancier 2012, 303–304 has shown that the population transfer to Seleukeia on the Tigris concerned only the Greco-Macedonian residents in Babylon, and not the Babylonians.

¹² Robert 1969, 330.

¹³ Cohen 1995, 279; Martinez-Sève 2009, 130–131.

we have seen, and settlements in Bactria.¹⁴ Although the evidence is quite limited, cities outside the control of the Seleukids seem to have taken part in their colonisation efforts. As far as one can infer from the explicit reference to kinship ties, it seems that Samos was involved in the foundation of Antioch on the Maeander by Antiochos I.¹⁵ The Athenian Soteles was the chief of the Seleukid garrison on the island of Ikaros (Failaka) in the Persian Gulf.¹⁶ Athens actually represents an exception in the Seleukid colonisation process, because the sources are generally silent or suspiciously celebrative about Athenian participation to the foundation of settlements, as in the case of the claim by John Malalas concerning the presence of Athenians among the founding population of Antioch on the Orontes.¹⁷ In fact, the highest praise a town could receive was being defined as *eugenis*, i.e. “of noble origins.” This nobility was acquired if the city could demonstrate that it was a colony of one of the Greek communities traditionally considered to be colonisers, such as the Achaeans, Arcadians, Ionians, Spartans, and of course the Athenians.¹⁸ Among the settlers of Antioch, Libanius (Or. 11.91) enumerates the Cretans, the Argives, the Cypriots, and the descendants of two demi-gods as Herakles and Triptolemos.¹⁹ Although it is more than plausible to assume that individuals from continental Greece – especially those serving in Seleukos’ armies – took part in the foundation of Antioch, caution should be employed with regard to the information by Libanius and Malalas. Invoking *eugeneia* was a common expedient in praise literature concerning towns, not to mention the great number of foundation legends which were embellished or outright fabricated by many other towns in order to enjoy the privileges following their status of high antiquity and nobility.

Settling within an Imperium Macedonicum

We are usually taught that the Macedonians formed the core of the colonisation policy led by the Seleukids. This is true, even though this statement, so often repeated, may in time flatten our perception of the issue. According to the plans of Seleukos I, the empire

¹⁴ Bernard 1987, 103–110; Martinez-Sève 2009, 134.

¹⁵ Cohen 1995, 250–253. On the decree of Samos see Habicht 1957, n. 65, l. 19. The founder of Antioch on the Maeander was, according to Steph. Byz. s.v. *Antiocheia in Caria*, “Antiochos son of Seleukos,” thus it could be either Antiochos I or III. I agree with Cohen in thinking that Antiochos I is the most probable, as at the times of Antiochos III Seleukid control over Karia was considerably weakened. For mythical kinship ties between Greek cities, in particular for Samos and Antioch on the Maeander, see Patterson 2010, 148–149.

¹⁶ Gatier 2007, 75–79. For a discussion of the Seleukid activity in the Persian Gulf, cf. Martinez-Sève 2010a, 58–63.

¹⁷ The Athenians and the Macedonians settled in Antioch were taken by Antigoneia: Malalas 8.201; cf. Grainger 1990, 37–39; Cohen 2006, 27, 81.

¹⁸ Robert 1973b, 202–203. On the contrary, Briant (1982b, 277–278) is more inclined to believe that despite the rhetorical use of the information made by Libanius, the participation of Aetolian, Cretan and Euboian colonists in the foundation of Antioch may be historically reliable. The presence of Cypriots at the earliest stages of the foundation of Antioch is quite probable, especially when considering the proximity of the island to the Syrian coasts. A new study about the foundation myths of Antioch is in preparation by Alexander McAuley (personal communication).

¹⁹ See also Strabo 16.2.5; Malalas 8.201. For a commentary on the sources, see Cohen 2006, 81, 86.

had to reflect the nature of his monarchy. Being a Macedonian was one of the basic conditions justifying his right to rule over an empire founded on Macedonian sovereignty. However, his son and successor Antiochos I was the product of the intermarriage of Seleukos I with the Bactrian princess Apama, and it is quite interesting that Babylonian documents referring to Antiochos I attribute the ethnic *Makaduna*²⁰ to the only Seleukos. Nevertheless, his father was conscious of the political potential of his son's mixed origins, and it is no mere coincidence that he appointed him viceroy in the Upper Satrapies, where his twin Macedonian and Iranian origin could be useful to catalyse loyalty from two representative components of the population of the eastern Seleukid provinces.²¹ Moreover, the Seleukids continued to practise intermarriage with the other Iranian royal houses of Pontos, Kappadokia, Kommagene, Armenia, and Media Atropatene, and one of the sons of Antiochos III – possibly the future Antiochos IV – had the Iranian name of Mithradates.²²

Several colonies or simple forts all over the empire were populated by Macedonians who served in the Seleukid armies in order to form a network of settlements loyal to the king.²³ From this point of view, Northern Syria became a New Macedonia where cities and territory were renamed after Macedonian places such as Beroia, Edessa, Europos etc. on the basis of similarities in the geographical features of the homeland.²⁴ The anecdote recorded by the historian Nymphis of Herakleia,²⁵ which shows Seleukos suffering from homesickness and wanting to spend his last years in Macedonia, is anything but a reflex of the political project of control of the imperial space elaborated by the king. We find witnesses of Macedonian settlers in regions spanning from Asia Minor to Bactria. The vestiges of Macedonian identity can be seen in the presence of Macedonian institutions such as the *peliganes*, the elder council,²⁶ attested at Seleukeia on the Tigris, Laodikeia by the Sea, Babylon,²⁷ and quite probably also Susa.²⁸ In this regard, the definition of the

²⁰ See Marten Stol and Van der Speck's philological commentary on the preliminary online edition (last update 2008) of the Antiochos' Cylinder from Borsippa, *col.* 1.5, http://www.livius.org/cg-cm/chronicles/antiochus_cylinder/antiochus_cylinder2.html. See also the transcription and translation in Kuhrt, Sherwin-White 1991, 71–86.

²¹ Coloru 2009, 146–155.

²² For Seleukid intermarriages with the Pontic house, see McGing 1986, 21–25, 32, 38; Kappadokian kings, see Diod. 31.19.6–7, *App. Syr.* 5; Armenia, *Pol.* 8.23.5; dynasty of Kommagene, see Facella 2006, 215–217; house of Media Atropatene, cf. Strabo 11.13.1–2. For Mithradates – Antiochos IV, see Mittag 2006, 34–36.

²³ Sartre 2001, 269–275.

²⁴ On the Seleukid foundations in Northern Syria, see Leriche 2003a, 117–146; on Europos, see Leriche 2003b, 171–191.

²⁵ Nymphis via Memnon of Herakleia, *FGrH* 434 F 1.

²⁶ For the *peliganes*, see Sarakinski 2010, 31–46, who offers a good review of the issue and shows that in the Hellenistic settlements of Asia this title was not a mere honorary one, but indicated a group of city officials in charge of the civic and political administration of the city on the king's behalf.

²⁷ *Pol.* 5.48.8–12 attests the *peliganes* in Seleukeia on the Tigris by the end of the 3rd century BC; as for the other cities, our sources date back to the 2nd century BC, which does not imply that this institution was not already active in the past. For the *peliganes* at Laodikeia by the Sea, see *IGLS IV* 1261, *l.* 22; a cuneiform tablet broken into several fragments known as the *Bagayasha chronicle* recording events occurred in Babylon in the 130s BC mentions the *peliganes*: Van der Spek 2006, 272, 284–288.

²⁸ Gatier 2013, 205–210.

lemma *peliganes* by the lexicographer Hesychios (s.v. *Peliganes*) is worth noting, as it says that among the Syrians – i.e. the Seleukid kingdom – the term refers to the *bouletai*, the councillors. These examples bring further confirmation of the Macedonian imprint given to the administration and civic life in a number of settlements of the Seleukid East. However, the overwhelming presence of Macedonian settlers in the Seleukid foundations as attested by the sources can be deceiving. One must not forget that they did not form the only community of the new colonies, nor did all the individuals labelled as “Macedonian” actually belong to that geographical area or ethnic group, but they could have been soldiers who served in regiments armed in the Macedonian style,²⁹ so that this term became a sort of supranational ethnic. Alexander already had young autochthonous men called the *Epigonoï* trained in the Macedonian style.³⁰ In Egypt a native soldier could become Macedonian after obtaining a promotion: this is the case of the Egyptian Dionysios, son of Kephala, whose ethnic shifted from “Persian” to “Macedonian.”³¹ Discussing the attitude of the Lagid dynasty towards its Egyptians subjects, J. Bingen says that “Ptolemy assumed the Macedonian royal diadem, but also the pharaonic crown of Upper and Lower Egypt; and this inaugurated the ambiguous relationship between the king and a new bicultural Egypt, which was no longer a satrapy in a foreign empire, even though the king had his capital in Alexandria, a non-Egyptian city.”³² In addition, it is doubtful that the population from Macedonia continued to emigrate *en masse* after the reign of Seleukos I (and maybe that of Antiochos I) when the empire had reached stability, not to mention that the Antigonid kingdom of Macedonia would not have easily let its subjects quit the country to reinforce the population of an opponent state. If we once again have to cite the parallel of the Ptolemaic kingdom, new demographic studies show that the flow of Macedonian immigration to Egypt was irregular, while the number of Greek immigrants stopped in the years following the battle of Raphia.³³

Other Hellenic groups equally managed to bring forth their contributions in order to create the perception not only of a New Macedonia but also of a New Greece. Once again, the sources concerning Magnesia on the Maeander allow us to contrast this view. In the first instance, we have to mention the wide range promotion the city made at the end of the 3rd century for having the Festival of Artemis Leukophryene recognised by all the Greek cities and communities from Greece to Persis.³⁴ The easternmost – at that time³⁵ – Seleukid settlements were invited to take part in this Pan-Hellenic festival by sending athletes: the section of the inscription (ll. 101–111) listing the cities which agreed to recognition of this festival is fragmentary, but we can still read the names of such well-known sites as Seleukeia on the Tigris (ll. 101–102) and Seleukeia on the Eulaios/Susa (ll. 108–109), together with other toponyms such as Apameia on the Sellas

²⁹ Cf. Kuhrt/Sherwin-White 1993, 53–57; Billows 1995, 208; Capdetrey 2012, 335–336.

³⁰ On the *Epigonoï* and the integration of Asian troops in the Macedonian army, see Curt. 8.5.1; Plut. *Alex.* 47.6 and 71.1; Diod. 17.108.1 and 17.110.1–2; Just. 12.4.2–10; Arr. *Anab.* 7.6.1, 7.23.1–4.

³¹ Boswinkel-Pestman 1982, 51–63.

³² Bingen 2007, 243.

³³ See Fischer-Bovet 2008, 56–78; Fischer-Bovet 2011, 135–154.

³⁴ *OGIS* 233; *I. Magnesia* 13; Rougemont 2012, no. 53.

³⁵ By the middle of the 3rd century and despite the campaign by Antiochos III in the Upper Satrapies (209–204), the Seleukid provinces in Central Asia were lost.

(ll. 103–104), Seleukeia on the Erythrean Sea (ll. 105–107) and Seleukeia on the Hedyphon (ll. 110–111).³⁶ The lacunae prevent us from knowing whether or not the invitation ever reached important centres like Laodikeia in Media (Nehavand), but we can say that all these settlements were certainly considered integral parts of the network connecting the cities of the Greek world.³⁷ More interesting is the influence exerted by the settlers of the Maeander valley in Bactria. Polybius³⁸ related that during the peace treaty (206) between Antiochos III and Euthydemos I, the latter showed that he and the Seleukid ambassador Teleas were originally from the same town, Magnesia. It is unlikely that Euthydemos himself was born in Magnesia, but his ancestors were, and handed down this memory to their descendants. Setting apart the diplomatic stratagem of invoking common origins in order to create an atmosphere of mutual comprehension, this episode is significant because it shows that the king was not only appealing to a generic feeling of ethnic identity but, more specifically, to a civic identity,³⁹ which was still strong even if the new generations of colonists were miles away from the homeland and had never directly experienced it. Moreover, the settlers from the Maeander valley also influenced the artistic representation of the local fluvial god Oxus, as attested by the votive offering made to this deity by an individual bearing the Iranian name of Atrosokes. Placed on a small pedestal, the little statue of the god Oxus is represented as the satyr Marsyas playing a double flute: now this iconography has its roots in the Maeander Valley, where Greek mythological tradition holds that the musical competition between Apollo and Marsyas took place.⁴⁰ Thus, the Bactrian landscape is reinvented in order to adapt to the cultural identity of the Magnesians and the representation they have of their native country. At a linguistic level, analysis of documents written in Greek coming from the Upper Satrapies has shown that the language underwent the same evolution which took place at the same time in Asia Minor, which means that this phenomenon would hardly be possible if the contacts between the two extremes of the Seleukid Empire had been scarce.⁴¹

Colonists from Ionian cities were sent both to neighbouring regions such as Karia (Milesians at Seleukeia-Tralles) and Phrygia (Laodikeia on the Lykos), but also to Susiana, where a group of Ephesians was possibly present in Susa, bringing with them the cult of the Ephesian Artemis. Greek families from Syria were possibly settled in Bactria, where a noticeable frequency of personal names containing the theonym *Helios*- is

³⁶ Apameia on the Sellas/Seleias was located in Mesene on the River Sihlu (nowadays Sihl) north of Wasit, see Potts 2002, 355. Seleukeia on the Hedyphon can be located at Ja Nishin c. 80 km SE of Ahwaz, while the River Hedyphon should correspond to the Jarrahi, cf. Potts 1999, 393–395. The town was taken by Hyspaosines and became one of the capitals and mints of the kingdom of Characene. Seleukeia on the Erythrean Sea was founded on the Persian Gulf, probably in the Seleukid satrapy known as Districts of the Red Sea, cf. Sherwin-White/Kuhrt 1993, 20. A few lines of the inscription (ll. 118–119) mention two more cities, Alexandria and Antioch, the location of which is lost. The former could be the Alexandria/Antioch in Characene, which later became Spasinou Charax.

³⁷ Cf. Ma 2003, 24–25; Honigman 2007, 125–140.

³⁸ Pol. 11.34.1.

³⁹ Mairs 2010, 180.

⁴⁰ Bernard 1987, 103–115; Coloru 2009, 152, 277–278.

⁴¹ Bernard/Bopearachchi 2002, 237–278; on the Seleukid colonisation in Central Asia, cf. Bernard 1994, 473–511; Capdetrey 2007, 76–81; for a survey on the ethnic composition of the settlers in Bactria, cf. Coloru 2009, 150–153.

attested:⁴² Syria was in fact the region where the solar cult was extremely popular, in both the Hellenistic and Roman periods.⁴³

In Bactria some official documents of the administration are dated to the month of *Loos*, which is a Northern Greek variant – possibly from the region of Thessalonica – of the month name *Oloos*.⁴⁴ On onomastic grounds, it seems that settlers from Northern Greece had been present at Ai Khanum/Eucratidia in Bactria: Kineas, the founder of the town, has a typical Thessalian name, as does the Lysanias buried in the necropolis outside the city walls, while the rich citizen Triballos who financed the restoration of the gymnasium keeps in his name the memory of the relations his ancestors had with the Thracian tribe of the Triballians.⁴⁵ According to Diodoros (33.4a), the Thessalians were also settled in the Syrian town of Sizara, which was renamed Larisa in their honour.⁴⁶ A parchment discovered in Afghanistan mentions the town of Amphipolis, which was probably located in the Balkh oasis.⁴⁷ This toponym was frequent in Northern Greece, and had already been employed by the Seleukids to rename the settlement of Tapsakos on the Euphrates.

An exclusive population?

Our sources show that the indigenous populations were not subject to long-distance mobility. Compared to the Greco-Macedonian colonists, autochthonous settlers tended to cover shorter trajectories which were generally limited to the borders of their place of origin. The inhabitants of Al-Mina were probably transferred to the close colony of Seleukeia in Pieria,⁴⁸ while Lydians formed part of the population of Thyateira.⁴⁹ The same Antioch on the Orontes had among its settlers Syrian communities from Antigoneia.⁵⁰ Sometimes they did not move at all, as in the case of the synoikism of pre-existent Karian settlements which was at the basis of the Seleukid foundations of Antioch on the Maeander, Nysa and Stratonikeia in Karia. The reason for this short-distance mobility is that the kings needed to use these individuals in the immediate vicinity to populate their new settlements with an experienced work force at a small cost.⁵¹ On the other hand, a Thracian settlement could have existed in Persis or in Central Asia, even if the sources about these military colonies are controversial to the point of precluding any

⁴² Robert 1973a, 443. Between Bactria and Northern India this class of personal names is represented by Heliokles, Heliodotos, Heliodoros, Heliophilos, cf. Coloru 2009, 152; on Heliophilos, see Fussman 1985, 37–38, 41; Falk/Bennett 2009, 200–202.

⁴³ Iossif/Lorber 2009, 19–42.

⁴⁴ Bernard/Rapin 1994, 275–278.

⁴⁵ Robert 1968, 418–420; Coloru 2009, 150.

⁴⁶ Cohen 2006, 117–119.

⁴⁷ Clarysse/Thompson 2007, 277.

⁴⁸ Cohen 2006, 128.

⁴⁹ Cohen 1995, 238.

⁵⁰ Downey 1961, 80; Cohen 2006, 81.

⁵¹ Briant 1982a, 90–91.

reliable conclusion.⁵² The only attested exception we have is the transfer of 2000 Jewish families from Babylon and Mesopotamia, which were resettled by Antiochos III in Lydia and Phrygia and received an allotment of royal land.⁵³ In this case, however, the transfer was an expedient measure for enforcing Seleukid authority by integrating a foreign community loyal to the king thanks to the bestowing of the land in an area which had had troubles with the recognition of Seleukid power. Heavier mobility expenses seem to have been invested mainly in the long-distance transfer of the Greco-Macedonians, because they were meant to reinforce the Hellenic element of the settlements (and their loyalty to the royal house) throughout the empire.

At this point, a question that naturally arises is the integration of the non-Greek population within the Seleukid settlements. Though our knowledge is still fragmentary, it is possible to make some hypotheses by examining a few examples taken from the available evidence of different regions of the empire. Babylon hosted a Greek community which under Antiochos IV received a reinforcement of settlers, along with the new dynastic name of Epiphaneia together with a constitution taken from the model of nearby Seleukeia on the Tigris. This new *politeuma* governed by an *epistates* had its own council of the *peliganes*. The cuneiform tablets defined this community by the Greek term *politai* and their assemblies were held in the theatre. The Babylonians, on the other hand, kept their own administrative system led by a governor (*shatammu*) and the council of the functionaries involved in the administration of the town temples (*kinishtu*), which met in the House of Deliberation in the Junipers Garden.⁵⁴ It is also possible that some of the Hellenised Babylonians took part in the activities of the Greek community or even became part of the body of citizens. As Clancier points out, “Rien n’indique que ses limites ethniques [of the polis] aient été absolument infranchissables.”⁵⁵

The Babylonian Ardi-Bēlit was also called by his second name Aristeas, and could write in Greek; another Babylonian bearing a double name, Marduk-eriba/Heliodoros, gave his son only the Greek name of Erotios.⁵⁶ This onomastic evolution may suggest a progressive assimilation to Hellenic culture, even if it is not possible to evaluate how deep this process was. Anyway, the juxtaposition of the Greco-Macedonian and Babylonian administration came to an end after Antiochos IV had promoted Babylon to the rank of polis: by then, Greeks and Babylonians met together in the theatre which had become Babylon’s centre of the political life, where communications from the royal power were relayed to the city.⁵⁷ In the provincial centre of Larsa in southern Mesopotamia, the Greco-Macedonian nobility was quite probably involved in the administration of the Ebabbar temple.⁵⁸ Although the astronomical diaries point to certain conflicts – some of which emerged in moments of political instability⁵⁹ – the documentary and archaeological evidence shows a substantial integration between Greeks and Babylonians. The

⁵² Dumitru 2011, 364–367.

⁵³ Jos., *AJ*, 12.148–153; bibliography and discussion of the issue in Capdetrey 2007, 164–166.

⁵⁴ On the role played by the Babylonian elites under Seleukid rule, see Clancier 2012, 297–326.

⁵⁵ Clancier 2012, 324.

⁵⁶ Boiy 2004, 290.

⁵⁷ Clancier 2012, 322–324.

⁵⁸ Monérie 2012a, 343–346.

⁵⁹ Cf. Van der Spek 2009, 111.

Greek district of Homera, which the akkadian sources simply call *ālu eššu*, i.e. the new town, was located in the north-eastern corner of Babylon, but it was not isolated from the rest of the city.⁶⁰ As is known, Seleukid kings and high officials performed rituals and made offerings in the Esagila. Private religious practices of Greek individuals within the context of local temples were also attested in other Mesopotamian towns such as Kutha (40 km south of Seleukeia on the Tigris), where Kebros son of Troilos offered a certain number of slaves to the god Nergal.⁶¹ Archaeological evidence for temples built according to the Hellenic architectural canons has not yet been found, and it is possible that the indigenous shrines sufficed in meeting the religious needs of the colonists. This fact has interesting parallels with the situation observable at Ai Khanum, where both the Greek and the local populations frequented the temple of Zeus/Mithra, built in a Near Eastern style and conception. The only element providing a link to the Greek presence was the colossal statue of the god sculpted following the model of the Zeus by Phidias at Olympia but also presenting elements of syncretism with Iranian religion.⁶² At Uruk the local governor Anu-uballit received the Greek name of Nikarchos from King Antiochos II. On the other hand, during the reign of Antiochos III the chief of the officers of Uruk (*rab ša rēš āli ša Uruk*), also called Anu-uballit, took the Greek name of Kephalon and married one Antiochis, daughter of Diophantos, a prominent member of the Greco-Macedonian community. While Anu-uballit/Nikarchos was the only one in his family bearing a Greek name, the brother of Anu-uballit/Kephalon, as well as nine members of the family – children, grandchildren and great-nephews – had Greek names.⁶³

In Susa, during the reign of Antiochos I an Iranian may have been an officer at the local mint because of the presence of Aramaic letters in the control monogram,⁶⁴ while another Iranian, Aribazos, had a military office (*strategos*) in Kilikia between the reigns of Antiochos II and Seleukos II.⁶⁵

Beginning from the reign of Antiochos IV, the representation of indigenous gods became more widespread – both under their local iconography and in a syncretistic form mixing Hellenic and indigenous characters – in the Seleukid coinage from the area stretching between Kilikia and Phoenikia.⁶⁶ Luwian deities such Sandan and Athena Margasia, the Semitic Atargatis and Ba'al Hadad, can therefore be observed, while the coinage from the Seleukis region privileges Hellenic representations because of the dense implantation of Greco-Macedonian colonists. However, one cannot state with conviction that the Hellenic imagery is to be interpreted univocally as a reference to a Greek deity or to an *interpretatio graeca* of a local god.⁶⁷ This phenomenon may find an explanation in the progressive shrinking of the Seleukid borders, especially after the treaty of Apamea, which as a consequence caused local identities to emerge and become more

⁶⁰ Van der Speck 2009; Clancier 2012, 322; Monérie 2012b, 359.

⁶¹ Monérie 2012b, 359–360.

⁶² Coloru 2009, 20, 269, 277; Martinez-Sève 2010b, 199–201; Mairs 2013, 93–111.

⁶³ Monérie 2012a, 330–343.

⁶⁴ Kriti 1997, 127–130; Houghton/Lorber 2002, 165.3d.

⁶⁵ *P. Petrie* 2.45 and 3.144 = *FGrH* 160. See also Capdetrey 2007, 244–245.

⁶⁶ Wright 2009/2010, 193–206.

⁶⁷ Wright 2009/2010, 200.

important for the preservation of the kingdom.⁶⁸ Actually, it was under the reign of Antiochos IV that the city of Tarsus in Kilikia was granted the right to strike an autonomous bronze coinage bearing on the reverse a representation of the god Sandan.⁶⁹ Likewise, it was Demetrios I who allowed Mallus to depict Athena Magarsia, the indigenous goddess worshipped at the close shrine of Magarsus, on the reverse of the silver coinage struck in the city.⁷⁰ Compared to the case of Tarsus, the coinage of Mallus is worth noting because the representation of the local deity appears on a silver royal series, and not in the local bronze coinage whose circulation was more limited.

As we have already seen, ancient historians tell us that the population of the capital of Antioch on the Orontes was composed of Macedonians, Greeks from Aeolis, Argolis, Crete, Cyprus, Euboea and, it goes without saying, autochthonous and non-Greek population.⁷¹ According to Strabo (16.2.4), this ancient metropolis comprised four quarters built in different times and divided by walls, so that Antioch could be considered a Tetrapolis.⁷² Seleukos I ordered the construction of the first quarter to settle the inhabitants of Antigoneia, who were not only Greco-Macedonians but quite probably Syrians, although we do not have any information about the way the different ethnic groups were organised inside this first settlement. The second quarter was created by the multitude of the *oiketores*. Regarding this term, Cohen is right in saying that the answer is bound to remain open, although he is inclined to identify them with the native Syrians.⁷³ The description by Strabo seems to describe a sort of suburb which was formed just outside the walls of the first settlement, to which it was added possibly between the reigns of Antiochos I and Antiochos II. If the term is to be translated as “local inhabitants,” this does not imply that the royal authority intended to isolate Syrians from the Greco-Macedonian population, especially because we do not know if those *oiketores* were all natives or included Greek colonists who could not be settled inside the older settlement. Moreover, if we bear in mind that for a Hellenistic historian such as Polybios⁷⁴ this term simply meant “colonist,” I think that we should take the information by Strabo for what it is, that is to say a generic group of settlers of different origins who established in that area. The third block was the work of Seleukos II, while the fourth, which was not originally walled, was created by Antiochos IV and named Epiphania after his royal epithet.

According to Flavius Josephus, the Jewish community of Antioch had received citizenship rights from Seleukos I.⁷⁵ This story has correctly been viewed with scepticism by modern historians, even if in another passage the same Josephus states that the Jewish community enjoyed citizenship rights under the successors of Antiochos IV,⁷⁶ which sounds more plausible as at that time the policy of the Seleukids towards the Jews became more favourable. Josephus also states that Seleukos granted the Jews of Antioch

⁶⁸ Wright 2009/2010, 199.

⁶⁹ Wright 2009/2010, 196.

⁷⁰ Houghton/Lorber/Hoover 2008, no. 1618–1619.

⁷¹ For the details and the bibliography see the considerable amount of data provided by Cohen 2006, 80–93. See also Capdetrey 2007, 60–69.

⁷² Downey 1961, 69, 71, 78–79; Cohen 2006, 81–82, 89, 93.

⁷³ Cohen 2006, 86.

⁷⁴ Pol. 3.100.4, but see also the precedent in Thuc. 2.27 and 3.92.

⁷⁵ Jos. *C. Ap.* 2.39; *AJ* 12.119.

⁷⁶ Jos. *BJ*, 7.43–44.

the right to receive a sum of money instead of the usual oil ration in order to buy purified oil according to the Jewish law.⁷⁷ The attribution of these privileges to the reign of Seleukos is without doubt a means by which to imbue them with an illustrious past. Involvement in typical civic activities, such as that of the gymnasium as well as the free distribution of supplies, clearly suggests that a certain number of Antiochene Jews may have enjoyed the rights of citizenship,⁷⁸ which were partly adjusted to meet the Jewish religious beliefs. Downey⁷⁹ assumed that a kernel of truth was detectable in the sense that Jews lived according to their traditions and institutions, but could have enjoyed a form of isopolity. However, I do not agree with his assertion that the Jews could not become citizens in their own right because this would equate to a transgression of the precepts of their religion. This is, in my opinion, taking the Jewish world as a monolith.⁸⁰ Individuals bearing Jewish names are present among the list of the epebes at Iasos in Karia as well as at Cyrene.⁸¹ A Jew from Alexandria boasted to having received an *appropriate paideia*, which may imply that he received an epebic education.⁸² Sources from the Diaspora, on the other hand, attest to Jews attending performances in the theatres and taking part in athletic activities.⁸³ If we have to take an example from a later context, the family of the apostle Paul was granted Roman citizenship despite being Jewish and monotheist. Antiochos IV decided to grant Jerusalem a *politeia* on the demand of the high priest Jason, who in addition established a *gymnasium* and an epebate. The new citizens were given the name of *Antiochenes in Jerusalem*.⁸⁴ The ethnic composition of this *politeuma* and its political status is still a matter of scholarly debate among those who are inclined to think that it was formed by inhabitants of Jerusalem who obtained the right to organise themselves as a Greek polis, while other scholars deny this.⁸⁵ Cohen has suggested that the Antiochenes were individuals from Antioch/Ptolemais/Akko who already resided in Jerusalem before the Hasmonean revolution.⁸⁶ This may be partly true, but having to resort exclusively to a foreign community in order to create the body of citizens of Antioch/Jerusalem would diminish the significance of the act of Jason. He aimed, on the one hand, to win the favour of Antiochos,⁸⁷ to whom he was indebted for obtaining the high-priesthood, and on the other to find a way of integrating Jewish traditions based on the laws of the Torah in the framework of Hellenic civilisation and institutions.⁸⁸ The same Jason and his brother Menelaus had changed – and they were

⁷⁷ Jos. *AJ* 119–120.

⁷⁸ Sartre 2001, 80.

⁷⁹ Downey 1961, 80.

⁸⁰ For the Jewish approach to Hellenism, see Gruen 1998, especially 1–33. Under the Hasmonean dynasty, Jonathan and Simon were granted the rank of *philo*, see 1 *Macc.* 10.16; 13.36.

⁸¹ Robert 1946, 90–108.

⁸² Gruen 2002, 123–124.

⁸³ Gruen 2002, 124–127.

⁸⁴ 2 *Macc.* 4.9; Jos. *AJ* 12.239.

⁸⁵ A detailed discussion of the issue may be found in Sartre 2001, 339–343; Cohen 2006, 231–233.

⁸⁶ Cohen 1994, 243–259; 2006, 231–232.

⁸⁷ It is in this light that we should interpret the episode of the envoy by Jason of *theoroi* bearing offerings for Melqart-Herakles to the penteteric games in Tyre, where the king himself was present, cf. 2 *Macc.* 4.18–20.

⁸⁸ Interesting views will be found in the PhD thesis by Andrade 2009, 60–70. The work will be soon published by Cambridge University Press.

not alone in doing so – their former Hebrew personal names⁸⁹ to adopt names recalling Greek mythology and the epic tradition. Moreover, in the same period, the legend began to circulate about the kinship ties of the Jews with the Spartans through Abraham.⁹⁰ This fact highlights the attempt of the Hellenised Jews to follow the practice of finding illustrious ancestors by taking them from the traditional Hellenic groups involved in the archaic colonisation process. Despite the accusations (2 Macc. 4.12) made against Jason of having forced the youths of the priestly families to attend the activities in the gymnasium, it is probable that some of those families spontaneously agreed. As Sartre pointed out,⁹¹ the reform led by Jason would not have had such wide support if it had aimed to suppress the Torah. In this regard, the absence of popular reaction during the priesthood of Jason is also remarkable. Without the participation of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, it would be difficult to understand why the author of 2 *Maccabees* considered the foundation of the gymnasium to be such an act of impiety against the temple and a danger to the unity of the Jewish community if it had only concerned a group of foreign residents. In several cities – especially Sardeis – the participation of the Jewish communities in funding and providing military service is a sign that they could enjoy an important role inside the civic body, even if the extent of the civic rights they enjoyed is difficult to appreciate.⁹² To summarise, different approaches to Hellenism existed inside the Jewish communities,⁹³ and it would not be surprising that some of them could enjoy citizenship, as the evidence we have cited seems to suggest. We do not have any source which can support the idea that some Jews “could probably become eligible for full citizenship by renouncing their faith and worshiping the city gods.”⁹⁴ This view seems a better fit for the accounts of Christian martyrdoms than the complex reality of the Seleukid Empire, which was all but a confessional state.

In the Seleukid Empire, other non-Greek groups could receive citizenship, as attested by the well-known decree of *sympoliteia* between Smyrna and Magnesia on the Sipylos⁹⁵ concluded in the framework of the Third Syrian War (246–241). Magnesia revolted against Seleukos II, waging a war against Smyrna, which on the other hand remained loyal to the king. Eventually, the two opponents came to an agreement favourable to Smyrna and Seleukos which consisted in the absorption of Magnesia into the Smyrnaian territory. The Persian garrison under the command of Omanes in the fort of Palaimagnesia was also included in the treaty and obtained the citizenship of Smyrna.⁹⁶ Acting on behalf of Seleukos, Smyrna obtained a considerable increment of its territory, but also strengthened the loyalty of the Magnesians and their soldiers towards the king thanks to the bestowing of citizenship.

⁸⁹ Jos. *AJ* 12.239. Jason’s Jewish name was Joshua, which could phonetically recall the Greek one, while Menelaus’ former name was Onias.

⁹⁰ 2 *Macc.* 5.9. For a letter allegedly sent by a Spartan king named Areus to the high priest Onias, in which kinship between Spartan and Jews through Abraham is stated, see 1 *Macc.* 12.19–23; the same claim is to be found in a letter from Jonathan to the Spartans, see 1 *Macc.* 12.1–18. See Andrade 2009, 63.

⁹¹ Sartre 2001, 343.

⁹² Gruen 2002, 129–130.

⁹³ Cf. the important remarks by Sartre 2001, 316–370.

⁹⁴ Downey 1961, 116.

⁹⁵ OGIS 229; *I. Magnesia am Sipylos* 1.

⁹⁶ *I. Magnesia am Sipylos* 1C, ll. 104–108.

Hyrkanis in Lydia⁹⁷ was an ancient Achaemenid settlement populated by an Iranian community from Hyrcania. In the opinion of Cohen, the town received Macedonian colonists under the reign of Antiochos I.⁹⁸ What is noteworthy here is that from then on the inhabitants adopted the double ethnic of Macedonian Hyrcanians. The first attestation of this practice during the Hellenistic Age dates from the beginning of the second century BC,⁹⁹ while more evidence is available from coins of the Imperial period when the double ethnic Macedonian Hyrcanian alternates with Hyrcanian alone. Does this double ethnic refer to integration between Macedonians and Iranians, or did it just have a geographical connotation? Epigraphic evidence seems to attest the only presence of Macedonians even in the iconographic representation of the town,¹⁰⁰ and we have to wait until the Roman period to see the emergence of two individuals bearing an Iranian name, Bagoas.¹⁰¹ However, as Briant has suggested, the presence of a double ethnic should demonstrate that the pre-existing Iranian population had been integrated into a new context marked by a “politique double.”¹⁰² In Lydia, possibly in the Mesogis range, there was also another community bearing a double ethnic, the Mysomakedones,¹⁰³ but whether it is the Seleukids, the Attalids or both who should be credited for the creation of this settlement has not been established.

Going beyond the paradigm of segregation?

This brief survey did not mean to be exhaustive, but rather intended to raise questions regarding ethnicity in the Seleukid settlements by taking a few examples which could provide some direction for discussion. It is important to point out that the heterogeneous nature of the Seleukid Empire as well as the patchy state of the documentation prevent us from arriving at univocal responses. The Macedonian identity was of course an important factor of unity, even if the Seleukid royal family was de facto a mixed one from the beginning and from subsequent intermarriages with members of Iranian royal houses that continued throughout the history of the dynasty: this fact did not pose particular problems of support to the settlers of Macedonian origin, as the ethnic identity and rights of the children born from mixed marriages were patrilineal. The Macedonian presence is particularly attested in key areas of the empire (Northern Syria, Central Asia and Asia

⁹⁷ Cohen 1995, 209–212. The site is now occupied by the modern Halitpaşaköy.

⁹⁸ Cohen 1995, 209–211. The attribution to Antiochos I is based on the finding of a dedication in honour of Zeus Seleukeios.

⁹⁹ Decree from Amphissa honouring the physician Menophantos son of Artemidoros, cf. Robert 1948, 16–18; Tataki 1998, 469. For other epigraphical attestations of this ethnic, see Robert 1948, 16–26; Tataki 1998, 470.

¹⁰⁰ Robert 1948, 19–20; local coinage bears the representation of a Macedonian shield and the town is possibly represented wearing a *kausia* in the base of the colossal statue for Tiberius at Pozzuoli, cf. Billows 1995, 179.

¹⁰¹ TAM V, 2, 1322: Markos Antonios Bagoas (*l.* 4) and Markos Antonios Bagoas son of Melissos (*ll.* 6–7).

¹⁰² Briant 1985, 173.

¹⁰³ Cohen 1995, 220–222. The site of the settlement is still unknown. Other examples of double ethnic are those of Dokimeion, Peltai and Blaundos in Phrygia, see Robert 1973b, 201–202.

Minor). But we have also seen that a certain number of individuals defining themselves as Macedonians were soldiers who assumed this ethnic for serving in Macedonian-styled units, they were actually Greeks or even indigenous. This seems to show that Macedonian identity became an ethnic and ideological construct more than a widespread reality and, even if in the first phase of the Seleukid period the high officers and aristocracy belonged to that ethnic group, Capdetrey¹⁰⁴ has rightly pointed out that at least from the 2nd century BC being Macedonian was no longer an essential prerequisite for pursuing a career in the upper echelons of the Seleukid hierarchy. Mobility tied to the foundation of settlements is attested in almost every corner of the Empire. The populations of the settlers included individuals coming from the Greek cities of Asia Minor, the Aegean and East Mediterranean Islands and continental Greece, but in this particular case our evidence is too scant or sometimes suspect because of the common practice among recent settlements of invoking illustrious founders from old Greece in order to ennoble their status and obtain privileges. Colonists from Greece took part in the founding of some settlements; however, our sources do not allow us to understand the extent of their contribution or whether or not it was limited to a specific period. Foreign soldiers from different parts of the Mediterranean world were certainly present in the empire, but we should also maintain a distinction among soldiers which stayed only temporarily and those who were implanted on a more permanent basis and later became part of the local communities.¹⁰⁵ Our sources show that the Greeks of Asia Minor gave a significant contribution to the population of several Seleukid settlements. This fact possibly results from the relatively more abundant evidence, which also conveys the overall impression of a mobility within, rather than without, the Empire.

The issue concerning the role played by indigenous populations inside the Seleukid settlements is even more difficult to detect, as the evidence is both patchy and still limited to certain areas. Thus, we should try to take an interpretative model and see how the available data fit in. To this end, we could start by quoting a comparison that Van der Spek has made considering the relations between Greeks and Babylonians: in the Roman Empire citizenship was used as an imperial strategy, while in the Seleukid kingdom

a universal 'Seleucid citizenship' did not exist: instead, there were many cities with as many constitutions and forms of citizenship. The kings communicated with subject communities in their respective languages and according their traditions. In diplomatic contacts with the Greek cities, the kings developed a discourse which suited the Greek traditions, in Babylon they acted as a traditional Babylonian king, in Jerusalem they dealt with the temple authorities. [...] Some kings may have furthered the Greek type of citizenship in some parts of the empire, but – in contrast to what we know from Rome – this citizenship was always tied to the city, not to the empire.¹⁰⁶

The multiple approaches that the Seleukids employed towards their subjects¹⁰⁷ alone could suffice to dispel the idea that non-Greek populations lived under the rules of an Apartheid-like state.¹⁰⁸ Just to compare a few examples of segregation in South Africa

¹⁰⁴ Capdetrey 2007, 389–392.

¹⁰⁵ On the role of the garrisons in the Hellenistic cities, see Chaniotis 2002, 99–114; Ma 2002b, 115–122.

¹⁰⁶ Van der Spek 2009, 114.

¹⁰⁷ Capdetrey 2012, 329.

¹⁰⁸ The term was employed by Van der Spek (2004, 393–408; 2009, 113) about the condition of Babylonians under Seleukid rule. Clancier (2012, 322–324) has criticised the idea of the existence of an

during Apartheid to what we can infer from the Seleukid state, there is no evidence for indigenous peoples being prevented from having access to quarters inhabited by the Greco-Macedonian population and vice-versa, and there were not spatial barriers which suggest the existence of a ghetto in the modern sense of the term; intermarriage was practised at different levels of society including the royal family; in several cases, non-Greek groups were granted citizenship by the cities or, as happened in Jerusalem during Jason's priesthood, the king patronised the creation of a civic body following the Greek model but mostly composed of Jews. Despite the lack of an entity similar to a national system of education, the access to Greek education and literacy was not impeded; rather, we can imagine that it was encouraged, especially when we bear in mind the fact that not only was a knowledge of Greek a way of obtaining social promotion, but bilingual individuals were also an important resource for the administration. If linguistic intermediaries between the Greco-Macedonian functionaries and non-Greek population were necessary in the Ptolemaic kingdom,¹⁰⁹ they were all the more vital in a multilingual empire like the Seleukid one.¹¹⁰

While one cannot talk about a segregation policy, it is nonetheless correct that the most important charges were entrusted to members belonging to the Greco-Macedonian aristocracy, while posts in the royal administration were assigned to non-Greeks in a few cases sometimes dictated by extraordinary contingencies. The local elites were in general left in charge of the administration of the native structures such as the temples in Babylonia and Jerusalem.¹¹¹ In this regard, religion seems to have represented a place of intercultural encounter between the indigenous and Greco-Macedonian peoples which turned out to be a means of integration. On the other hand, the degree of participation of non-Greek settlers in civic life cannot be determined because the evidence is too sparse, even if a few sources seem to indicate that this may sometimes have taken place. However, the lack of shared citizen rights is not to be interpreted necessarily as an intentional policy of segregation: inscriptions usually provide us with a description of matters concerning the civic life of the *polis* leaving aside the groups which were not involved, nevertheless the non-Greek settlers could have been free to administer their community according to their laws as long as they kept their loyalty to the king and paid taxes to the royal treasury through the intermediation of their representatives. Moreover, Cohen¹¹² has rightly drawn our attention to the fact that even for Greco-Macedonian settlers the most important element in the preservation of their ethnic identity was not the organisation of the colony according to the system of the *polis*, but rather the presence of structures relevant to the practice of Greek cultural values such as the gymnasium, the theatre or the market place.

apartheid, showing that the sumero-akkadian elite enjoyed a privileged position under the Seleukids. On the concept of dominant ethno-class, see Briant 1982a–b; Briant 1996, 362–366. See also the views of Capdetrey 2007, 389–392.

¹⁰⁹ Torallas Tovar 2010, 17–46.

¹¹⁰ On documents written in Greek in the archives of Mesopotamian temples, see Clancier 2005, 85–104; Monérie 2012a, 337–339.

¹¹¹ See the important conclusions by Capdetrey 2007, 390–392.

¹¹² Cohen 1994, 256–257. For a fresh view on the role of Hellenism in the East, cf. Traina 2002; Traina 2005.

The issue is inevitably bound to remain open, but I would abandon the model of ethnic segregation, which seems to be excessively shaped by episodes drawn from our recent contemporary history. It is paramount to remember that the term “isolation” applied to the autochthonous or non-Greek communities inside the Hellenistic foundations should not be taken immediately as a synonym of “ghettoisation.” The populations of the settlements, especially the major cities, resulted from the juxtaposition of different ethnic groups, the most visible of which was that represented by the Greco-Macedonians. This prominence could sometimes cause conflicts with non-Greek settlers, but the policy followed by the Seleukids was not marked by a systematic plan of submission or isolation of the other ethnic groups, as this would entail the constant danger of revolts and social instability. The cooperation with the local elites was vital in order to assure the loyalty of the subjects towards a dynasty ruling a Macedonian empire within a multiethnic context.

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