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THE IMPACT OF GREEK AND ROMAN MODELS
ON JEWS AND CHRISTIANS

JUDAISM AS “CITIZENSHIP” AND THE QUESTION OF THE IMPACT OF ROME

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When examining Judaism in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, many scholars tend to use the vocabulary of citizenship to describe membership in the people of Israel or in a given Jewish community.² This approach is supported by the fact that Jewish authors from antiquity use Greek political language when referring to the *Ioudaioi* and their institutions. However, the acknowledgement that Jewish or non-Jewish authors made metaphorical use of Greek political terms to describe Jewish communities or used such terminology in connection with the Hasmonean state, either directly or by way of analogy, is insufficient to support the claim that Greek or Roman political institutions were actually adopted by the Jews, whether in Judea or elsewhere. Therefore, a critical review of the ancient evidence pertaining to the use of citizenship vocabulary in connection with the Jews is very much needed in order to examine whether the Jews did indeed adopt Greek or Roman civic practices.³ It is an established fact that

¹ This research was funded by the European Research Council under the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP/2007-2013) / ERC Grant Agreement n. 614 424. It was part of the ERC Judaism and Rome project and was carried out under the auspices of the CNRS and Aix-Marseille University, UMR 7297 TDMAM (Aix-en-Provence).

² See in particular Shaye J. D. Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness: Boundaries, Varieties, Uncertainties* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999); Joseph Mélèze-Modrzejewski, *Un peuple de philosophes: Aux origines de la condition juive* (Paris: Fayard, 2011), 151–59.

³ For such an examination of Philo’s work, see Caroline Carlier, *La cité de Moïse: Le peuple juif chez Philon d’Alexandrie* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2008). On the Jewish communities in the diaspora and their experience of Greek political institutions, see in particular John M. G. Barclay, *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora: From Alexander to Trajan (323 BCE – 117 CE)* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996); Margaret H. Williams, *Jews in a Graeco-Roman Environment* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck,

Jews could be citizens of a given city.⁴ However, do Greek and Roman authors refer to the Jews as citizens of a Jewish or Judean *politeia*? And what do the Jewish authors who refer to Jews as fellow citizens mean by this term?

Such questions are of course too far-reaching to be treated extensively within the confines of this paper, but they will provide a framework for examining whether the Roman policy concerning the integration of new citizens had an impact on Jewish practices or discourses from the second century BCE to the end of the first century CE. I will first reexamine Morton Smith's theory that the "conversion" of the Idumeans and the Itureans under the Hasmoneans could be explained by the impact of the Roman policy of granting citizenship to Rome's former enemies upon the leaders of Judea.⁵ I will then examine how Jewish authors writing in Greek during the Roman period used Greek political vocabulary to define membership with the Jewish people, and also try to determine to what extent these discourses can be explained by their Roman context.

1. HASMONEAN JUDEA

1.1. Judean "Citizenship" under the Hasmoneans?

This paper will focus on the well-documented case of the Idumeans.⁶ The so-called conversion of the Idumeans, which I prefer to call a form of active "Judaization" of conquered populations, has received much attention in scholarly literature dealing with the Hasmonean

2013); Bradley Ritter, *Judeans in the Greek Cities of the Roman Empire: Rights, Citizenship and Civil Discord* (Leiden: Brill, 2015).

⁴ Josephus records attacks on the citizenship rights of Jews in Alexandria, Antioch, Caesarea, Scythopolis and other cities of Syria. See Ritter, *Judeans in the Greek Cities*, 38.

⁵ See Morton Smith, "Rome and Maccabean Conversions: Notes on 1 Macc. 8," in *Donum Gentilicium*, ed. David Daube (London: Oxford University Press, 1978), 1–7.

⁶ For a more detailed treatment of the issue of "forced conversions" under the Hasmoneans, see Katell Berthelot, *In Search of the Promised Land? The Hasmonean Dynasty Between Biblical Models and Hellenistic Diplomacy* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2018).

dynasty and has been understood as a grant of “Judean citizenship” to a non-Judean population.

The analysis by some scholars of the Idumeans’ “conversion” in terms of Judean citizenship reflects their understanding of the political evolution of Judea under the Hasmoneans. In 1937, the renowned American historian Salo Baron, identifying the Hasmonean dynasty from John Hyrcanus onwards with the Sadducees, explained:

With the expansion of the Macedonian power, the new vast empires, embracing so many disparate ethnic components, emphasized still more the supremacy of the state over the nationality, the *politeia* over the *ethnos*. The Sadducean leaders [*the Hasmoneans*] unconsciously adopted this principle. They fought the Syrian state on its own ground, erecting against it the power of the Judean state. Statehood thus became far more significant than it had ever been under the powerful monarchs of ancient Israel, and to its glory ethnic purity might readily be sacrificed. It was, therefore, only a logical consequence that Hyrcanus and Jannaeus, conquering one Palestinian province after another, should forcibly circumcise the natives and incorporate them into the national body.⁷

Based on Baron’s argument that the Hasmoneans’s choice to emphasize statehood rather than ethnicity or ethnic purity as he referred to it, resulted in what he called the supremacy of “the *politeia* over the *ethnos*,” it can be concluded that political affiliation became more important than shared ancestry, history or customs.⁸ This evolution in priorities made it possible for peoples who did not share Israelite ancestry to become members of Judean society.⁹ Baron was correct in noting that the Seleucid and Ptolemaic kingdoms were not ethnic in the sense that they did not encompass a single *ethnos*. His analysis,

⁷ Salo Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1937), 163–64.

⁸ For a review of different definitions and theories of ethnicity, see Christel Müller, “Introduction: La fin de l’ethnicité?,” *Dialogues d’histoire ancienne*, Supplément 10 (2014): 15–33.

⁹ For a similar yet different theory, see Benedikt Eckhardt, *Ethnos und Herrschaft: Politische Figurationen jüdischer Identität von Antiochos III. bis Herodes I.*, *Studia Judaica* 72 (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2013). According to Eckhardt, the Hasmonean dynasty, at least from Hyrcanus I onwards, was characterized by a relativization of the criterion of birth or lineage, which applied to both the leadership of the people and to the definition of the people itself.

however, needs some qualification, because there was no *politeia* in the Seleucid or Ptolemaic kingdoms as a whole, nor a *politeia* corresponding to a Seleucid state. As a result, an individual could not become a *citizen* of the Seleucid kingdom, but could only be a *subject* of the Seleucid king.

In contrast with Baron, Shaye J. D. Cohen focuses on the Hellenistic *poleis* and *koina* rather than on the Hellenistic kingdoms in order to identify a model for the political evolution in Judea. In the second century BCE, Hellenistic *poleis* granted citizenship to individuals not only on the basis of ancestry, but also on the basis of *paideia* and merit, such as evergetism. In other terms, they granted citizenship to people who were not ethnically Greek. As a result, Cohen contends that the Hellenistic model of citizenship provides the general cultural and political background for understanding how the Hasmoneans integrated foreigners who were not born within the people of Israel into the Judean state.

Cohen furthermore maintains that as ethnic groups such as the Idumeans were Judaized and incorporated into the Judean state, a new, political meaning of *Ioudaios* developed: that of “a citizen or ally of the Judean state,” alongside two other meanings of *Ioudaios*, that of “a Judean (a function of birth and/or geography)” and “a Jew (a function of religion or culture).”¹⁰ Cohen writes: “Insofar as they [*the Idumeans and Itureans*] became citizens in a state dominated by the Judaeans, they became Judaeans themselves in a political sense, and obligated themselves to observe the ways of the Judaeans.” He continues:

The idea that the Idumaeans and Ituraeans could somehow adopt membership in the Judean state, and somehow become Judaeans themselves through the observance of the Judaeans way of life, presumes the definition of Judaeanness as a way of life and as a citizenship. *Idumaeans and Ituraeans could be granted citizenship in the Judean polity* [emphasis added].¹¹

In essence, Cohen presupposes that Judean citizenship in the Hasmonean state was a real historical phenomenon.

This thesis is problematic in the context of the history of institutions, as there was no citizenship in Judea at that time because Jerusalem

¹⁰ Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 70.

¹¹ Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 118 and 127.

was not a *polis*. The city could have become a *polis* or have included a *polis* if Jason's reform had succeeded and prevailed over time.¹² However, the revolt of the Maccabees put an end to this reform attempt, and no further similar reform attempts were made, even during the reign of Herod.¹³

Moreover, ultimately, the Hasmoneans promoted a monarchical state, despite the dynasty's origins as a priestly family (according to the biblical traditions, kings were descendants of David, from the tribe of Judah, whereas priests came from the tribe of Levi). Josephus reported that Aristobulus I was the first to have called himself a king, but his ancestors had already displayed many features of royal power. Despite the dynasty's priestly origins, the military dimension of the Hasmonean dynasty, which derived much of its legitimacy from military success, was associated entirely with royal rather than priestly power. High priests were not supposed to actively participate in battle, because their priestly purity could have been jeopardized by contact with blood. More fundamentally, however, according to the traditions

¹² See 1 Maccabees 1:11–15; 2 Maccabees 4:7–15, 18–19. For a recent analysis of the Maccabean crisis that pays particular attention to political and fiscal issues, see John Ma, “Relire les *Institutions des Séleucides* de Bickerman,” in *Rome, a City and its Empire in Perspective: The Impact of the Roman World through Fergus Millar's Research*, ed. Stéphane Benoist (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 59–84; idem, “Re-Examining Hanukkah,” in *The Marginalia Review of Books*, July 9, 2013 (<http://themarginaliareview.com/archives/3083>); idem, “Notes on the Restoration of the Temple,” in *Seleukeia: Studies in Seleucid History, Archaeology and Numismatics in Honor of Getzel M. Cohen*, ed. Roland Oetjen and Francis Xavier Ryan (Berlin: de Gruyter, forthcoming); Sylvie Honigman, “The Religious Persecution as a Narrative Elaboration of a Military Suppression,” in *La mémoire des persécutions: Autour des livres des Maccabées*, ed. Marie-Françoise Baslez and Olivier Munnich (Leuven: Peeters, 2014), 31–48; idem, *Tales of High Priests and Taxes: The Books of the Maccabees and the Judean Rebellion against Antiochos IV* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2014), 387–404.

¹³ On the status of Jerusalem at the beginning of the Roman period, see the detailed and still decisive argument by Victor A. Tcherikover in “Was Jerusalem a ‘Polis’?”, *IEJ* 14, nos.1–2 (1964): 61–78. He aptly shows that the vocabulary used in the sources cannot be taken at face value: “It follows that under the procurators ‘archons’, a ‘boule’, and a ‘demos’ did exist in Jerusalem, but the archons were not *archons* in the Greek sense, nor was the boule a *boule*, nor the demos a *demos*. Throughout, the Greek names, borrowed from the Hellenistic world, reflected ancient Jewish institutions — the product of the evolution of the Jewish people through the ages” (74, emphasis in the original text).

of the Hebrew Bible, participation in the army and on the battlefield were royal prerogatives. The Hasmonean state nevertheless did become a monarchy sharing the features of other Hellenistic kingdoms and especially those of other ethnic kingdoms, such as that of the Nabateans, while otherwise maintaining unique, Jewish elements, including monotheism, the unicity of the Jerusalem temple, purity issues, and more.¹⁴ As stated above, in the Greco-Roman world, a monarchy implied that people were subjects, not citizens. Admittedly, the Hellenistic kingdoms included numerous *poleis* and Hellenistic kings granted certain groups the privilege to change their status and become a *polis*, with the right to a gymnasium, etc.¹⁵ It should be emphasized that only cities in the political sense bestowed citizenships, Rome being no exception. Thus, the only citizens in the Seleucid kingdom were citizens of specific *poleis*. Given this background, it is misleading to speak about the development of a Judean citizenship in the Hasmonean kingdom.

The Idumeans were Judaized at almost the same time that the Judean state was officially transformed into a monarchy. Consequently, the Idumeans never became citizens of the Judean state, because during this period there were no Judean citizens and no Judean citizenship. In fact, during the Hasmonean period, particularly from the period of Aristobulus I onwards, the Judean state was as remote from the model of the Hellenistic *poleis* as it was from the model of the Roman Republic.

Nonetheless, the question of whether ancient writers referred to the Idumeans as new citizens of the Judean state, either directly or by way of analogy with political institutions widely known in the Greco-Roman world, needs to be examined. Several ancient historians reported on the transformation of the Idumeans into *Ioudaioi*, including the historian Ptolemy, (probably dating from the first century BCE

¹⁴ See Maurice Sartre, “De Pétra à Jérusalem... et retour!,” in *East and West: Papers in Ancient History presented to Glen W. Bowersock*, ed. T. Corey Brennan and Harriet I. Flower (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 159–80; Christian-George Schwentzel, *Juifs et Nabatéens: Les monarchies ethniques du Proche-Orient hellénistique et romain* (Rennes: Presse Universitaire de Rennes, 2013).

¹⁵ See the case of Tyriaion, or Toriaion, in the Pergamene kingdom for example, known through inscriptions. On the relevance of this case for the situation in Jerusalem before the Maccabean uprising, see Honigman, *Tales of High Priests and Taxes*, 29–30, 212, 277–78, 363–64.

or CE, since a biography of Herod is attributed to him), Strabo and Josephus. Josephus reported that Hyrcanus:

After subduing all the Idumaeans, permitted them to remain in their country so long as they had themselves circumcised and were willing to observe the laws of the Judeans (εἰ περιτέμνονιντο τὰ αἰδοῖα καὶ τοῖς Ἰουδαίων νόμοις χρῆσασθαι θέλοινεν). And so, out of attachment to the ancestral land, they accepted [endured] practicing the same circumcision and the same manner of life, in other [respects as well], as those of the Judeans (οἱ δὲ πρόθω τῆς πατρῖου γῆς καὶ τὴν περιτομὴν καὶ τὴν ἄλλην τοῦ βίου διαίταν ὑπέμειναν τὴν αὐτὴν Ἰουδαίοις ποιήσασθαι). And from that time on they have been Judeans themselves (καταλείνοις αὐτοῖς χρόνος ὑπῆρχεν ὥστε εἶναι τὸ λοιπὸν Ἰουδαίους).¹⁶

Josephus wrote eloquently of the Jewish *politeia* in several passages of his works, often referring to Jews as “fellow-citizens,” but nowhere did he refer to the Idumeans as new citizens of the Judean state.¹⁷

¹⁶ Josephus, *Ant.* 13.257–58. Author’s translation. Another passage in the *Antiquities* evokes this episode very briefly, in connection with the story of the friendship between Herod and Costobar: “Hyrcanus had altered their way of life [or: constitution (*politeia*)], and [made them adopt] the customs and statutes of the Judeans (τὰ Ἰουδαίων ἔθη καὶ νόμιμα)” (*Ant.* 15.254, trans. Ralph Marcus, LCL, 119–21, slightly modified).

¹⁷ On Jews or Judeans as fellow citizens or *politai*, see for example, *Ant.* 1.21, Moses and the Israelites; 4.314, Moses speaking to the Israelites; 5.54, the Gabaonites’ request to become fellow citizens of the Israelites; 5.265, the Israelites are the fellow citizens of Jephthah’s daughter; 6.75; 7.291; 8.361; 8.370; 9.80; 10.269, at the time of Daniel; 11.176, at the time of Nehemiah; 12.46, in Ptolemy’s letter, following the *Letter of Aristeas*; 12.54, in Eleazar’s letter, following the *Letter of Aristeas*; 12.161–62, in connection with Onias; 12.252, to designate the inhabitants of Jerusalem, or of Judea in general, during Antiochus’s persecution; 12.269, Judeans as fellow citizens of Mattathias; 12.323, Judas and his fellow citizens; 12.433; 13.287, Chelkias and Ananias as fellow citizens of the Egyptian Jews; 14.226, diaspora Jews as fellow citizens of Hyrcanus II; 15.375, an Essene called Manaëmus recommends to Herod to behave with mildness towards his fellow citizens; 17.239, Archelaus is accused of having massacred the citizens in the Temple; and 20.205, the high priest Ananias is held in high esteem by his fellow citizens. In contrast, when referring to a particular place, Josephus often used the term *politai* vaguely, with the meaning of inhabitants (see *Ant.* 5.247, 9.99; *Life* 42–43, 135 or 346 for examples). The term *politai* thus has different meanings in Josephus’s work and does not necessarily imply the existence of civic institutions. Hence, in *Ant.* 8.370, the king Achab refers to the Israelites who are his subjects as *politai*, and in Book 15, which deals with the rule of Herod, the Judeans are repeatedly designated by the term *politai*. In such cases, *politēs* simply means a fellow Israelite or Judean.

Rather, as the above passage indicates, Josephus recorded that they submitted themselves to the laws of the Judeans, including that of circumcision, and became Judeans themselves. The question arises as to in what sense did they become Judeans. The answer remains ambiguous, but as Josephus implied in the above passage, and further demonstrated in the *Antiquities* and the *Jewish War*, the Idumeans adopted a Judean lifestyle and integrated into Judean society, becoming a part of it while maintaining their identity as a distinct group, probably as a consequence of their different lineage.

Ptolemy offers even stronger evidence of how Judeans and Idumeans differed:

Judeans are those who are so originally, by nature (Ἰουδαῖοι μὲν γὰρ εἰσιν οἱ ἐξ ἀρχῆς φυσικοί). The Idumeans, on the other hand, were not originally Judeans, but Phoenicians and Syrians (Ἰδουμαῖοι δὲ τὸ μὲν ἀρχῆθεν οὐκ Ἰουδαῖοι ἀλλὰ Φοίνικες καὶ Σύροι); having been subjugated by them [the Judeans] and having been forced to undergo circumcision, to contribute [taxes] to the nation,¹⁸ and to keep the same customs, they were called Judeans (κρατηθέντες δὲ ὑπ' αὐτῶν καὶ ἀναγκασθέντες περιτέμνεσθαι καὶ συντελεῖν εἰς τὸ ἔθνος¹⁹ καὶ τὰ αὐτὰ νόμιμα ἡγεῖσθαι ἐκλήθησαν Ἰουδαῖοι).²⁰

For an analysis of *politēs* in the Septuagint, see §2.1 below. However, there are no cases whatsoever in which Josephus referred to the Idumeans as *politai*.

¹⁸ Concerning this translation, see also Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 113. For the meaning of συντελεῖν εἰς as contribute financially to or pay a certain amount of money for, see Thucydides 2.15.2; 4.76.3; Demosthenes, *Against Leptines* 28; Aeschines, *Against Ctesiphon* 95. It is this meaning that underlies the translation to belong to, or to be counted among, as in Menahem Stern, *Greek and Latin Authors on Jews and Judaism* (Jerusalem: Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, 1974), 1:356 (henceforth *GLAJJ*), where one reads “to be counted among the Jewish nation.” See the explanation in the dictionary of Liddell and Scott: “συντελεῖν εἰς τοὺς ἵππεῖς, etc., strictly *to pay* to the knights or the class of knights and so, to *belong* to this class or body (because at Athens all citizens were classed acc. to their *τίμημα*, or rateable property); then, generally, to belong to it, be counted in a class or body...” (Henry G. Liddell and Robert Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon* [New York: Harper and Brothers, 1859], 1444).

¹⁹ Both Théodore Reinach and Menahem Stern replace the ἔθνος found in the θ group of mss with ἔθνος. See Reinach, *Textes d'Auteurs Grecs et Romains Relatifs au Judaïsme* (ed. Ernest Leroux; 1894; repr. Paris: Belles Lettres, 2007), 88; Stern, *GLAJJ*, 1:356.

²⁰ This brief passage is found in the article Ἰδουμαῖοι in the treatise *De adfinium vocabulorum differentia* of Ammonius, which dates from the beginning of the

Ptolemy's concept of origin (*ἀρχή*) seems to be equivalent to that of birth, genealogy or ethnicity, with ethnicity implying common ancestry. The Idumeans are called *Ioudaioi* but are not ethnically or genealogically Judeans or *beney Israel*. Unlike Josephus, who recounted that the Idumeans *became* Judeans, Ptolemy merely states that the Idumeans *were called Ioudaioi*.

Indeed, in keeping with Ptolemy's distinction, Josephus, in the *Jewish Antiquities*, repeatedly referred to the Idumeans as a distinct group within Judean society, and even as a distinct *ethnos* within the Judean *ethnos*. Particularly interesting is his depiction of their participation in the Judean War against the Romans, in which they demonstrated both a sincere devotion to the Jerusalem temple and what could be described today as a form of Judean nationalism.²¹ The Idumeans's participation in the Judean War indicates that the Idumeans were integrated into the Judean state or society and did not estrange themselves from it even after the Hasmonean dynasty ended. However, as Shaye Cohen emphasizes, "Josephus makes abundantly clear that the Idumeans always retained their own ethnic identity."²² Thus, the extent to which the Idumeans became *Ioudaioi* must remain ambiguous. What is clear is that they were not described as being Judean *politai* in any of the historical accounts that have come down to us.

The third historical testimony, that of Strabo, differs from the accounts of Ptolemy and Josephus. According to Strabo, the Idumeans joined the Judeans voluntarily. Strabo's account contrasts starkly with other historical descriptions of coercion of the Idumeans exercised by Hyrcanus. While not identifying the Idumeans as Judean citizens, Strabo related that the Idumeans did join the Judeans and shared their laws or statutes (*νόμιμα*).²³ Strabo described both groups as

second century CE at the latest. See Stern, *GLAJJ*, 1:355-356. I have used Menahem Stern's translation, but have modified it.

²¹ See in particular *War* 4.278-79; Alan Appelbaum, "'The Idumaeans' in Josephus' *The Jewish War*," *JSJ* 40, no.1 (2009): 1-22. Josephus describes the Idumeans as an unruly and undisciplined *ethnos* (*War* 4.231). In *War* 4.243, the chief priest addresses the Idumeans as a distinct *ethnos*, but in 4.263, the term *ethnos* seems to include both the Judeans and the Idumeans.

²² Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 114.

²³ See Strabo, *Geography* 16.2.2 and 34; Stern, *GLAJJ*, 1:287, 294-311. According to Israel Shatzman, Strabo's account refers to a period that preceded the conquest

ethnē, and as a Greek, he was well aware that *ethnē*, lacking civic institutions, could not enjoy citizenship.

All in all, there appears to be no historical evidence supporting the claim that the Idumeans were granted citizenship in Judea. However, it is notable that, according to Hyrcanus, the Hasmonean policy towards foreign enemies changed, at least with regard to the Idumeans. The Idumeans were not expelled, as were the inhabitants of Joppa by Simon, for example, or sold into slavery or massacred. While examples of selling vanquished peoples into slavery are difficult to find, massacres are clearly evident in the Books of the Maccabees, especially when Judeans were attacked.²⁴ The idea of integrating former enemies into the Judean state appears to represent a new approach, and warrants an examination of the possible influence of Roman policy upon the Hasmonean dynasty.

1.2. Roman and Hasmonean Policies

As mentioned above, in his 1978 article, “Rome and Maccabean Conversions,” Morton Smith initially explained the Judaization of the Idumeans as a result of the influence of Roman policy upon the Hasmonean dynasty. Smith asserted that the Hasmoneans had adopted an imperialistic policy towards their neighbors, much like that of Rome. He further contended that the fact that the Hasmoneans had offered their defeated enemies an alliance and participation in the Judean state had to be understood in light of the Roman policy of granting citizenship to Rome’s former enemies, who then became Roman allies.²⁵

of Idumea by Hyrcanus; see Shatzman, “On the Conversion of the Idumeans,” in *For Uriel. Studies in the History of Israel in Antiquity Presented to Professor Uriel Rappaport*, ed. Menahem Mor et al. (Jerusalem: The Zalman Shazar Center for Jewish History, 2005), 213–41 (in Hebrew).

²⁴ On these strategies, see Israel Shatzman, “Jews and Gentiles from Judas Maccabaeus to Hyrcanus According to Contemporary Jewish Sources,” in *Studies in Josephus and the Varieties of Ancient Judaism: Louis H. Feldman Jubilee Volume*, ed. Shaye J. D. Cohen and Joshua J. Schwartz (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 237–70; Karl Trampedach, “The War of the Hasmoneans,” in *Dying for the Faith, Killing for the Faith: Old Testament Faith Warriors (1 and 2 Maccabees) in Historical Perspective*, ed. Gabriella Signori (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 61–78; and my forthcoming book, *In Search of the Promised Land*.

²⁵ See Smith, “Rome and Maccabean Conversions.”

Smith subsequently distanced himself from this explanation.²⁶ In a later work published posthumously,²⁷ Smith no longer referred to the Roman model,²⁸ and instead suggested that the Judaization of the Samaritans, Idumeans, Itureans and Galileans was a result of political and military alliances based on common hostility toward the Seleucids, as well as a common rivalry with the Nabateans for some of these groups.²⁹ As a consequence, Smith argued, the term *Ioudaios* came to designate “a member of the Judaeo-Samaritan-Idumaeo-Ituraean-Galilean alliance.” Smith went so far as to suggest that the phrase *ḥever ha-Yehudim* that appears on some of the coins of Alexander Jannaeus actually referred to the members of this league.³⁰ The model Smith proposed was that of an “ethnic-religious-military league,” which, he claimed, “had been common in Hellenistic history. In particular the formation, growth and destruction by Rome of the Aetolian League furnish many parallels to the history of the *Ioudaioi*.”³¹

Although Smith himself departed from his initial hypothesis that the Roman model influenced the Hasmoneans, his ideas on this issue were elaborated upon by other scholars. Building upon Smith’s

²⁶ Shaye Cohen reports: “Smith himself came to recognize that the Roman policy is probably an analogy to, rather than a source for, the Hasmonean practice” (*The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 127, note 49).

²⁷ In Morton Smith, *Studies in Historical Method, Ancient Israel, Ancient Judaism*, in *Studies in the Cult of Yahweh: Vol. I*, ed. Shaye J.D. Cohen, Religions in the Graeco-Roman World 130/1 (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 263–319. See also “The Gentiles in Judaism, 125 BCE – CE 66,” in *The Cambridge History of Judaism. III. The Early Roman Period*, ed. W. Horbury, W. D. Davies and J. Sturdy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 192–249.

²⁸ There is one exception in “The Gentiles in Judaism, 125 BCE – CE 66,” 211, but it refers to a different issue.

²⁹ Smith, “The Gentiles in Judaism, 125 BCE–CE 66,” at 205 and 208. See also Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, 127.

³⁰ Smith, “The Gentiles in Judaism, 125 BCE–CE 66,” 210 and 215–216. The meaning of the reference to the *ḥever ha-Yehudim* found on Hasmonean coinage is subject to debate. For some, it refers to the Jewish people of Judea as a whole, whereas for others, it refers to a council, a kind of *boulē*. See in particular Christian-George Schwentzel, *Juifs et Nabatéens*, 88–91; Eyal Regev, *The Hasmoneans: Ideology, Archaeology, Identity* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2013), 186–99.

³¹ Smith, “The Gentiles in Judaism, 125 BCE–CE 66,” 210, note 75.

original work on Roman influences on the Hasmoneans, Martin Goodman wrote that:

The notion, at least in theory, of an indefinite expansion of citizenship in this way was found in the ancient world only among Jews and Romans and, since the latter had found it strikingly advantageous in the centuries immediately preceding the Hasmonean dynasty, it would not be at all surprising if the Jewish monarchs, who were eager to maintain contact with the Romans, followed suit.³²

Seth Schwartz also reflected Smith's original work in his proposition that:

When they imposed Judaism on their subjects, the Hasmoneans... may have been inspired by the example of their allies and friends the Romans, who had for centuries been successfully expanding their territory by combining exceptionally violent military activity with judicious grants of Roman citizenship to some of the people they conquered.³³

Schwartz even suggests that "Hasmonean imperialism was a small-scale version of Roman imperialism."³⁴

Avi Avidov also adopted Smith's theory of Roman influence, explaining Hasmonean expansionism as a mixture of aggression and integration, similar to Rome's policy towards its enemies and postulating that the Hasmoneans may have consciously followed the Roman model.³⁵

Even in the absence of Judean citizenship in the Hasmonean state, the integration of the Idumeans in the Hasmonean society and the careers of some Idumeans at the Hasmonean court, as illustrated by that of Antipater, Herod's father, can be considered comparable to the integration of the Italian allies by the Romans. However, the likelihood of Roman influence on Hasmonean "citizenship" rights is undermined by the chronology of Roman policies. Indeed, the Romans were unique in antiquity in bestowing citizenship upon former enemies, as they did during the first Roman expansion when they annexed entire territories

³² Martin Goodman, *Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire* (London: Oxford University Press; Clarendon Press, 1995), 76.

³³ Schwartz, *Imperialism and Jewish Society*, 40.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, n. 55.

³⁵ Avi Avidov, *Not Reckoned among Nations. The Origins of the So-called "Jewish Question" in Roman Antiquity* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 110–11.

and their populations to Rome.³⁶ However, this type of citizenship was in general *sine suffragio*, meaning that the new citizens did not enjoy the same political rights as the Romans, and remained in effect second-class citizens. Moreover, from the third century BCE onwards, Roman policy was characterized by a growing reluctance to grant Roman citizenship to the Latins, who remained *socii*, and by attempts to prevent them from holding political offices in Rome.³⁷ This attitude was particularly marked in the last quarter of the second century BCE, causing such great frustration among Rome's allies that it led to the Social War, the war of Rome's *socii*, in 91–88 BCE.

It is most likely not by chance that most of the historical primary sources extolling Roman grants of citizenship to former enemies are dated from *after* the Social War. These sources no doubt tried to minimize the record of the policy carried out during the second century BCE by presenting Roman magnanimity as a policy dating back to the founder of Rome. Cicero, for example, praised the Roman capacity to turn enemies into fellow citizens, and claimed that since Romulus, “our forefathers never ceased to grant and to bestow citizenship,” not only to towns, but to whole nations (*gentes universae*).³⁸ Tacitus attributes a similar type of discourse to Claudius, quoting him as declaring: “What

³⁶ See Michel Humbert, “*Municipium*” et “*civitas sine suffragio*”: *l'organisation de la conquête jusqu'à la guerre sociale*, Collection de l'École française de Rome (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1978); idem, “Le *status civitatis*. Identité et identification du *civis Romanus*,” in *Homo, caput, persona: La costruzione giuridica dell'identità nell'esperienza romana*, ed. Alessandro Corbino, Michel Humbert and Giovanni Negri (Pavia: IUSS Press, 2010), 139–73, esp. 140–41. See also Myles Lavan's article in this volume, “The foundation of empire? The spread of Roman citizenship from the fourth century BCE to the third century CE,” in which he writes: “In the earliest phases of Roman expansion, naturalisation was employed as a means of organising and controlling conquered populations. It was a status imposed on rebellious, not loyal, aliens — a striking inversion of later practice.”

³⁷ See Edmond Frézouls, “Rome et les Latins dans les premières décennies du II^e siècle av. J.-C.,” *Ktèma* 6 (1981): 115–32. He emphasizes that the Roman policy in the second century BCE completely contravened the conventional and subsequent image of Rome as granting citizenship “generously”.

³⁸ Cicero, *Pro Balbo* 31; trans. R. Gardner, LCL, 665. On Roman generosity in bestowing citizenship, see Philippe Gauthier, “‘Générosité’ romaine et ‘avarice’ grecque: sur l'octroi du droit de cité,” in *Mélanges d'histoire ancienne offerts à William Seston* (Paris: Éditions de Bocard, 1974), already referred to in the introduction to this volume. For a critical analysis of both the Roman discourse and its modern scholarly echoes, see also Myles Lavan, “The foundation of empire? The spread of

else was it that spelled destruction for the Spartans and the Athenians, militarily powerful though they were, if not their segregation of conquered peoples as foreigners? By contrast, our founder Romulus showed such wisdom that he regarded numerous peoples as his enemies and then as his fellow-citizens on the very same day!”³⁹

Despite these historical reports, such discourses were certainly not frequent in Rome at the end of the second century BCE. John Hyrcanus’s conquests and the ensuing Judaization of the Idumeans occurred between 111 and 107 BCE,⁴⁰ not only a period of great tension but one of the worst periods for the integration of foreigners into the *civitas Romana*. Admittedly, it is arguable that Hyrcanus or his counsellors, having only a vague knowledge of the situation in Italy, drew inspiration from the general understanding they had of the Romans’ political strategy. But it is unlikely that the Roman model alone prompted Hyrcanus to integrate the Idumeans, especially in light of the fact that there is no historical evidence for contacts between the Hasmoneans and the Romans from the point that Hyrcanus’s conquests began until the time of Pompey’s intervention in Judea in 63 BCE.⁴¹ Many other factors better explain Hasmonean policy toward the Idumeans, including the need for allies in order to control the newly conquered territories and to pursue more conquests in the future; the cultural proximity between Judeans and Idumeans; and the biblical genealogy of the Idumeans or Edomites as brothers of the Israelites. The hypothesis that the Judaization of the Idumeans was a result of the influence of Roman policy on the Hasmoneans remains very unlikely in light of all the historical evidence.

Roman citizenship from the fourth century BCE to the third century CE,” in this volume.

³⁹ Tacitus, *Annals* 11.24, trans. J. C. Yardley, *Tacitus. The Annals: The Reigns of Tiberius, Claudius, and Nero* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 227.

⁴⁰ On the chronology of Hyrcanus’s conquests, see the recent article by Israel Shatzman, “The Expansionist Policy of John Hyrcanus and his Relations with Rome,” in *Iudaea socia – Iudaea capta. Atti del convegno internazionale Cividale del Friuli, 22-24 settembre 2011*, ed. G. Urso (Pisa: Edizioni ETS, 2012), 29–77.

⁴¹ See Chris Seeman, *Rome and Judea in Transition: Hasmonean Relations with the Roman Republic and the Evolution of the High Priesthood*, American University Studies Series VII, Theology and Religion 325 (New York: Lang, 2013), 203–43. For a different perspective, see Shatzman, “The Expansionist Policy of John Hyrcanus”; Samuel Rocca, “The Hasmonean State and Rome: A New Appraisal,” *REJ* 173, nos. 3–4 (2014): 263–95.

2. THE ACCEPTANCE OF NEW “CITIZENS” IN THE JEWISH COMMUNITIES OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

2.1. Jewish Use of Civic Vocabulary in the Diaspora

An examination of the books of the Septuagint translated from Hebrew into Greek reveals very few occurrences of the terms *politēs*, *politeia*, *politeuma* or *politeuomai*. In Genesis 23:11, the expression *beney ami*, “sons of my people,” used by Ephron the Hittite, is translated as *politai*. In Proverbs 11:9.12; 24:28; Jer 36:23 (LXX; TM 29:23); and 38:34 (LXX; TM 31:34), the Hebrew *re’a*, or neighbor is also translated as *politēs*. Similarly, Zechariah 13:7’s reference to *amit* or fellow uses the term *politēs*. Given that ancient Israel was a monarchy and not a *polis*, it is not surprising that Jewish translators refrained from using civic vocabulary in their works.

Jewish literature written directly in Greek during the Hellenistic and Roman periods differs significantly from the translated literature, and its use of Greek political vocabulary to describe the Jewish people and its laws can be traced back at least to the second century BCE. In the *Letter of Aristeas* and in 2 Maccabees, for example, the members of the Jewish *ethnos* are described as fellow citizens, or *politai*.⁴² The term *politeia* is used as well and generally refers to the constitution or the body of laws and customs followed by the Jews, who are fellow *politai* to one another, regardless of where they dwell, as they all abide by the same laws,⁴³ with the laws of Moses serving as the ancestral constitution of the Jewish *ethnos*.⁴⁴ In at least one case, however, in 2 Maccabees 13:14, *politeia* may refer to the body of the citizens instead, a meaning that dates back to Aristotle and appears frequently in Philo’s work.⁴⁵

In the Hellenistic and Roman societies, Jews were sometimes citizens of the *poleis* in which they dwelt. From the first century BCE

⁴² See for example 2 Maccabees 5:6, 23; 9:19; 15:30; *Letter of Aristeas* 3, 126. In 2 Maccabees, the *politai* are not the citizens of Jerusalem, but members of the *ethnos* as a whole.

⁴³ See Carlier, *La cité de Moïse*, 77–126. In the *Letter of Aristeas*, for instance, the Egyptian Jews are the fellow citizens of the high priest in Jerusalem (see *Letter of Aristeas* 36, 44).

⁴⁴ See, for example, 2 Maccabees 4:11; 8:17; 4 Maccabees 17:9.

⁴⁵ See Carlier, *La cité de Moïse*, 97–98.

onwards, some Jews also received Roman citizenship.⁴⁶ As a result, Jews in the diaspora had quite an extensive knowledge of the way civic institutions worked. Their tendency to speak about membership in the Jewish *ethnos* in terms of citizenship, despite Jerusalem not being a *polis* and Judea not offering citizenship, attests to the powerful attraction the Greek model exercised upon the Jews.

Certainly, Jewish communities in the Diaspora were sometimes organized as *politeumata*.⁴⁷ However, these *politeumata* were not civic bodies, but rather a kind of association. Members of a *politeuma* were not necessarily citizens of the city in which the *politeuma* was found, but membership in a *politeuma* was not necessarily incompatible with local citizenship.⁴⁸ Regardless of the exact status of the Jewish communities as *politeumata* or otherwise, some sources describe a significant level of autonomy in the Jewish communities in the diaspora, sometimes reaching the point of a kind of self-administration. Thus, Josephus attributes to Strabo the following statement:

And it has come about that Cyrene, which had the same rulers as Egypt, has imitated it in many respects, particularly in notably encouraging and aiding the expansion of the organized groups of Jews (τὰ συντάγματα τῶν Ἰουδαίων), which observe the national Jewish laws (τοῖς πατρίοις τῶν Ἰουδαίων νόμοις). In Egypt, for example, territory has been set apart for a Jewish settlement, and in Alexandria a great part of the city has been allocated to this nation (τῷ ἔθνει τοῦτοῦ). And an ethnarch of their own has been installed, who governs the people (τὸ ἔθνος) and adjudicates suits and supervises contracts and ordinances, just as if he were the head of a sovereign state (ὡς ἂν πολιτείας ἄρχων ἀποτελοῖς).⁴⁹

⁴⁶ See *Ant.* 14.228, 232, 234, etc.

⁴⁷ See *Letter of Aristeas* 310 for a reference to a Jewish *politeuma* in Alexandria; P. Polit. Jud. for references to a Jewish *politeuma* in Herakleopolis (James M. S. Cowey and Klaus Maresch, eds., *Urkunden des Politeuma der Juden von Herakleopolis (144/3–133/2 v. Chr.) (P. Polit. Iud.)*, Papyrologica Coloniensia, Sonderreihe XXIX [Wiesbaden: Westdeutscher Verlag, 2001]). For the epigraphical evidence from Cyrene, see Gert Lüderitz and Joyce M. Reynolds, *Corpus jüdischer Zeugnisse aus der Cyrenaika* (Wiesbaden: Ludwig Reichert, 1983). See also the article of Peter Oakes in the present volume, “The Christians and their Politeuma in Heaven: Philippians 3:20 and the Herakleopolis Papyri”.

⁴⁸ See Ritter, *Judeans in the Greek Cities*.

⁴⁹ Josephus, *Ant.* 14.116, trans. Ralph Marcus, LCL, 509.

If Josephus's account is a reliable record of Strabo's words, Strabo is actually comparing the Jewish *ethnos* with a civic entity. The Jewish ethnarch behaves as if (ὡς) he was the leader of a sovereign *politeia*. However, this does not mean that the Jewish group was in fact a *politeia*; rather, it was still described as an *ethnos*. Nonetheless, this text may help explain why Jews in the diaspora sometimes called themselves *politai* of a Jewish polity.

2.2. Proselytes as New Citizens

Philo of Alexandria seems to have been the first to formulate the idea that proselytes who chose to embrace the creed and way of life of the Jews became citizens of the *politeia* of Moses.⁵⁰ In such cases, *politeia* refers to the community of citizens rather than to the constitution.⁵¹ Of course, in Philo's work, the discourse about the integration of new citizens into the *politeia* of Moses is a metaphor, not a political reality.

⁵⁰ See Katell Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia judaica: Le débat autour de la "misanthropie" des lois juives dans l'Antiquité* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2003), 272–79; Carlier, *La cité de Moïse*, 171–217. A similar idea, *mutatis mutandis*, is found in the Epistle to the Ephesians (2:12), when the author reminded the Gentile Christians that, before their conversions, they were “aliens from the citizenship of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise” (ἀπηλλοτριωμένοι τῆς πολιτείας τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ξένοι τῶν διαθηκῶν τῆς ἐπαγγελίας). In this case, the *politeia tou Israēl* is equivalent to membership with the people of Israel, the people who benefits from the covenant with God.

Prior to Philo, there may be one example of the idea that a proselyte becomes a fellow citizen of the Jews, found in 2 Maccabees, in the letter written by Antiochus IV when he became ill and declared that he wanted to become a Jew: “To the respected Jews, fellow citizens, many greetings, health and success (from) the King and Governor Antiochus” (2 Macc 9,19: Τοῖς χρηστοῖς Ἰουδαίοις τοῖς πολίταις πολλὰ χαίρειν καὶ ὑγιαίνειν καὶ εὖ πράττειν βασιλεὺς καὶ στρατηγὸς Ἀντίοχος; trans. Daniel R. Schwartz, *2 Maccabees* [Berlin: de Gruyter, 2008], 350). However, the text is full of irony, and the king is merely imitating the Jews' language. Daniel R. Schwartz aptly writes in his commentary: “The king speaks like a Jew (as promised in v. 17 and exemplified in v. 20), denoting the Jews as his ‘fellow citizens’... This too is part of the joke” (Schwartz, *2 Maccabees*, 361).

⁵¹ According to Joseph Méleze-Modrzejewski, the Jewish *politeia* in Philo is Jewishness itself: a status and a way of life: “Le sentiment qui s'impose est que la *politeia* que Philon revendique pour ses coreligionnaires n'est rien d'autre que la judéité elle-même, comme statut individuel et comme mode de vie conforme aux préceptes de la Tora” (*Un peuple de philosophes*, 157–58). However, see Carlier, *La cité de Moïse*, 126, 202–3, on *politeia* as the community of the *politai*.

Nonetheless, some of his remarks probably pertained to the phenomenon of non-Jews joining the Jewish community in Alexandria.

According to Philo, the proselytes, as new citizens in the Mosaic *politeia*, received rights equal to those of native citizens. In the treatise *On the Special Laws*, beginning with §51, Philo wrote:

These last he calls ‘proselytes,’ or newly-joined, because they have joined the new and God-loving commonwealth (*politeia*); they disregard mythical fictions and seize the pure truth. §52 Thus, while giving equal honour (*isotimia*) to all in-comers with all the privileges which he gives to the native-born, he exhorts the old nobility to honour them not only with marks of respect but with special friendship and with more than ordinary goodwill. And surely there is good reason for this; they have left, he says, their country (*patris*), their kinsfolk and their friends for the sake of virtue and holiness. Let them not be denied another city (*polis*) or other ties of family and friendship, and let them find places of shelter standing ready for refugees to the camp of piety... §53 Yet he counsels them that they must not, presuming on the equality before the laws (*isonomia*) and the tributes (*isoteleia*) which He grants them because they have denounced the vain imaginings of their fathers and ancestors, deal in idle talk or revile with an unbridled tongue the gods whom others acknowledge, lest they on their part be moved to utter profane words against Him Who truly is...”⁵²

In fact, the idea that the native-born or *ezrah* in Hebrew (אֲדֹרְגָּתִים) and the proselyte or *ger* in Hebrew (פרוֹסֵיטָה or עֲבֵרִיתִים) were equal before the law can be found in several passages of the Pentateuch, including Exodus 12:49 in connection with Passover and Leviticus 19:34. However, several of the concepts referred to by Philo in the passage above, such as *isotimia* (§52), and *isonomia* and *isoteleia* (§53) are completely Greek and are absent from the Septuagint. By emphasizing *isotimia*, *isonomia* and *isoteleia*, Philo tended to define the Mosaic *politeia* as a “structure of integration” rather than a “structure of participation,” to use Philippe Gauthier’s definitions.⁵³ Gauthier distinguishes between Greek citizenship, characterized by active participation in the political life of the *polis*, and Roman citizenship,

⁵² *Spec.* 1.51–53, trans. F. Colson, LCL, 127–9 (slightly modified).

⁵³ See Philippe Gauthier, “La citoyenneté en Grèce et à Rome: participation et intégration,” *Ktèma* 6 (1981): 167–79 (at 169 and 171); Claude Nicolet, *Le métier de citoyen dans la Rome républicaine* (Paris: Gallimard, 1976).

characterized by an emphasis on rights and duties, or on status and integration, rather than on actual participation in the institutions. It must be emphasized that until at least the beginning of the first century CE, Hellenistic *poleis* still functioned as “structures of participation.”⁵⁴ Conversely, Cicero’s definitions of citizenship “insist on the community of law (and thus on the common status of the citizens), and... leave aside every idea of participation in political life (hence the functions of the citizens).”⁵⁵ A comparison between Philo’s discourse about the Mosaic *politeia* and Cicero’s writings about the Roman *civitas* demonstrates that both emphasize the community of laws and the equality of the citizens before the law. Philo therefore tended to analyze the Jewish *politeia* in light of the Roman model of citizenship rather than that of the Greek *poleis*.⁵⁶ Philo’s approach had a logical foundation, as the Jewish communities in the diaspora shared biblical traditions and their adherence to the laws of Moses. Their common citizenship was therefore primarily based on common law, regardless of which aspects of their lives this law actually regulated or whether the law pertained mainly to the ritual and ethical spheres, rather than to participation in common institutions.⁵⁷ The insistence on the legal dimension of one’s membership with the Mosaic *politeia* was in fact a logical outcome of the centrality of the law, the Torah, for the self-definition of the Jews.

In the section *Peri Philanthrōpias* of the treatise *On Virtues (De Virtutibus)*, Philo again addressed the issue of proselytes, describing them as those who want to become members of the “*politeia* of the Jews,” an expression which makes the meaning of *politeia* as “community of

⁵⁴ Gauthier, “La citoyenneté en Grèce et à Rome,” 172–73. See also Anna Heller and Anne-Valérie Pont, eds., *Patrie d’origine et patries électives: les citoyennetés multiples dans le monde grec d’époque romaine: actes du colloque international de Tours, 6–7 novembre 2009* (Paris: de Boccard, 2012), esp. at 9–15.

⁵⁵ Gauthier, “La citoyenneté en Grèce et à Rome,” 172 (author’s translation from the French). See for example Cicero, *De Legibus* 1.23; *De Re Publica* 1.49.

⁵⁶ However, as Gauthier emphasizes, one finds significant shifts in Polybius’s political thought which indicate that a *polis* could now be conceived of in a very different way, such as in connection with a *koinon*. See Polybius, *Histories* 2.37.10–11, and Gauthier, “La citoyenneté en Grèce et à Rome,” 177.

⁵⁷ The synagogue was of course a community institution, but it was also local. According to Philo, the *politeia* of Israel extended much farther than the local community in a given place; it included all the observant members of the people, no matter where they were located.

citizens” even clearer. Writing about Deuteronomy 23:8–9, which allows the third generation of Edomites and Egyptians to enter the *qahal Israel* (*ekklēsia Kuriou*), Philo added that:

And if any of them should want to cross over to the polity of the Jews (καὶν εἴ τινες ἐθελήσειαν αὐτῶν μεταλλάξασθαι πρὸς τὴν Ἰουδαίων πολιτείαν), they are not to be scorned unyieldingly like the children of enemies, but are to be treated in such a manner that the third generation is invited into the congregation and granted that share of the divine oracles into which the native- and noble-born are also rightfully initiated.⁵⁸

Clearly, Philo’s commentary, referring to the integration of the enemies only in the third generation, closely follows the biblical verse. Why did Philo select this biblical verse in order to demonstrate the benevolence (*philanthrōpia*) of the Law of Moses towards outsiders? There were other, probably more convincing passages that Philo could have chosen in connection with proselytes. This particular passage from Deuteronomy, however, represents one of the very few texts referring to the integration of former enemies into the congregation of Israel. The reference to former enemies through their descendants may thus be seen as a deliberate echo of the Roman or pro-Roman discourse celebrating the grants of citizenship to former enemies, as in Cicero’s *Pro Balbo*, when Cicero praised “the Roman capacity to turn enemies into fellow citizens.”⁵⁹ Moreover, Philo recognized in the openness of the Mosaic *politeia* an expression of Moses’s *philanthrōpia*. Interestingly enough, Rome was praised for its *philanthrōpia* precisely because it granted Roman citizenship to foreigners, including former enemies.⁶⁰ Thus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus praised the Romans for having become the most illustrious nation:

Not only by their humane (*philanthrōpos*) reception of those who sought a home among them, but also by sharing the rights of citizenship with all who had been conquered by them in war after a brave resistance, by permitting all the slaves, too, who were manumitted among them to become citizens, and by disdaining no condition of men from whom the commonwealth might reap an advantage, but above everything else by their form of government, which they fashioned out

⁵⁸ *Virt.* 108, trans. Walter T. Wilson, *Philo of Alexandria. On Virtues: Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), 65 (very slightly modified).

⁵⁹ See §31.

⁶⁰ See Berthelot, *Philanthrōpia judaica*, 37–43.

of their many experiences, always extracting something useful from every occasion.⁶¹

Subsequently, Dionysius affirmed that Rome was “the most hospitable and friendly of all cities (κοινοτάτην τε πόλεων καὶ φιλανθρωποτάτην).”⁶² He also contended that this Roman *philanthrōpia* was connected to the integration of numerous foreigners into the population and civic body of the city. Therefore, it appears that in *De Virtutibus*, Philo repeated pro-Roman or Roman discourses, but in connection with the people and the laws of Israel.

Even if Philo’s two main sources of inspiration were clearly the Pentateuch and Greek philosophy, it is thus not unreasonable to suggest that the Roman notion of citizenship, or at least the ideological discourse surrounding it, influenced Philo’s representation of the *politeia* of the Jews. Philo was certainly aware of Greek pro-Roman discourses, such as those of Dionysius and Halicarnassus, having spent enough time in Rome to be exposed to such voices and to those of the Romans themselves.

Josephus later adopted Philo’s point of view, especially in *Against Apion*, where Josephus described the Jews as joyfully welcoming and granting citizenship to those who wanted to live under their laws. Using well-known stereotypes about the Spartans, Josephus contrasted the Jews with the Lacedaemonians, who in the ancient world were characterized by their *xenēlasia*, or the practice of expelling foreigners in order to avoid corrupting their ancestral laws:⁶³

§260 They (the Lacedaemonians) perhaps might reasonably be criticized for their churlishness (or: misanthropy): for they would not grant anyone the right of citizenship (*politeia*) or of residence among them.
 §261 We, on the other hand, are not inclined to emulate other people’s customs, but gladly welcome those who wish to share ours; and that would be evidence, I take it, of both benevolence (*philanthrōpia*) and generosity (*megalopsychia*).⁶⁴

⁶¹ *Ant.* 1.9.4, trans. Earnest Cary, LCL, 31.

⁶² *Ant.* 1.89.1.

⁶³ On these stereotypes, conveyed mainly by Athenian voices, see Plato, *Laws* XII, 949 e; Thucydides, 1.144.2 and 2.39.1-2; Dionysius of Halicarnassus, *Roman Antiquities* 2.17.1-2; François Ollier, vol. 2 of *Le mirage spartiate* (Paris: E. de Boccard, 1933-1943).

⁶⁴ *Against Apion* 2.260-261, trans. John M. G. Barclay, *Flavius Josephus. Against Apion* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), 317-18.

Josephus used the term *politeia* in the sense of constitution or right of citizenship rather than as a way to designate the Jewish people or the Jewish community, as did Philo. But Josephus was in agreement with Philo in several respects, such as their observation that Jewish citizenship implied mainly a life led in accordance with the Mosaic laws, an approach shared by the Hellenistic Jewish tradition as a whole;⁶⁵ and their shared belief that the openness of the Mosaic *politeia* to new citizens was proof of its benevolence. Josephus's underlying argument was that Jews and Romans shared certain common values regarding bestowing citizenship. In *Against Apion*, Josephus also praised the Romans for their readiness to integrate new citizens, in a manner comparable to that found in Cicero's *Pro Balbo* (31), Dionysius's *Roman Antiquities* (1.9.4; 1.41.1), and later in Dio Chrysostom's *Discourses* (41.9) and Aelius Aristides's *Encomium of Rome* (63–65, 98).⁶⁶ Moreover, the contrast between Jews and Spartans in Josephus's *Against Apion* is strongly reminiscent of the way Greek or Roman authors distinguished between Roman and Spartan or Athenian policies on the issue of granting citizenship.⁶⁷ Josephus actually clarified some issues that remained ambiguous in Philo's writings.

CONCLUSION

Although the hypothesis that Roman citizenship policies influenced the Hasmonean rulers is not corroborated by an analysis of the historical sources dealing with the integration of non-Judean groups within the Judean polity in the Hasmonean period, Roman definitions of citizenship and ideological discourses about Roman policies of citizenship certainly are reflected in the works of Philo and Josephus, the two main Jewish authors writing in Greek in the context of the Roman empire. Their descriptions of the integration of foreigners or

⁶⁵ See also *Ag. Ap.* 2.210.

⁶⁶ See *Ag. Ap.* 2.40. About this passage see Sylvie Honigman, "Philon, Flavius Josèphe, et la citoyenneté alexandrine: vers une utopie politique," *JJS* 48, no.1 (1997): 62–90; Katell Berthelot, *Philanthrôpia judaica*, 42–3, 340; Barclay, *Flavius Josephus. Against Apion*, 190–91. On Josephus's proximity to Dionysius in *Against Apion*, see David L. Balch, "Two Apologetic Encomia: Dionysius on Rome and Josephus on the Jews," *JSJ* 13, nos. 1–2 (1982): 102–22.

⁶⁷ See for example Tacitus, *Annals* 11.24 (see note 38 above).

proselytes into the Jewish people were certainly influenced by Roman or pro-Roman discourses about Roman generosity in granting citizenship, discussions about the connection between Rome's superiority and its willingness to welcome new citizens, and the Roman concept of citizenship as status, based first and foremost upon common laws. While not completely dismissing the importance of birth and ancestry, so fundamental in the biblical worldview, both Philo's and Josephus's definitions of what they termed Jewish citizenship came to relativize ethnicity or lineage and to celebrate the importance of virtue and piety, which were linked to the observance of the laws.⁶⁸

⁶⁸ For a similar position attributed to the Spartan king Agis by Plutarch, see *Life of Agis* 10.3. This point represents a major difference between the views concerning the proselytes held by Philo and Josephus and those subsequently held by the rabbis. On the importance of lineage in the rabbinic worldview and its implications for converts, see Gary G. Porton, *The Stranger Within Your Gates: Converts and Conversion in Rabbinic Literature* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1994); Shaye Cohen, *The Beginnings of Jewishness*, chapter 10; Christine E. Hayes, *Gentile Impurities and Jewish Identities: Intermarriage and Conversion from the Bible to the Talmud* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), chap. 8.

