

HELLENISTIC WARFARE IN JONATHAN'S CAMPAIGN NEAR AZOTOS

Jonathan's 148–147 B.C.E. campaign against the Seleucid commander Apollonios near Azotos is distinguished by the employment by both sides of all the characteristic components of conventional Hellenistic warfare. Analysis and reconstruction of the battle clarifies the armament and tactics of the Jewish forces toward the end of the first generation of the Hasmonean revolt and consequently further illumines the historiographic features of 1 *Ma.*, the only primary source for this campaign. As far as Seleucid military history is concerned, the composition of the Seleucid army in this battle marks a significant departure from the traditional reluctance of the authorities to provide the local orientals, especially the Syrians, with heavy equipment, a change of policy resulting from the internal crises in the Empire.

The battle took place in 165 of the Seleucid era (1 *Ma.* 10.67) i.e. 148–147 B.C.E., and was connected with the contest between Alexander Balas and Demetrius II for the throne. The political and military developments in this dispute are not completely clear;¹ the scattered information which has survived, however, indicates that Demetrius invaded Cilicia with an army of Cretan mercenaries led by Lasthenes while Alexander Balas was staying in Ptolemais (Acre). Balas left

¹ See the reconstruction of the course of events and the list of sources in: E.R. BEVAN, *The House of Seleucus* (London, 1902) II 217–220; A. BOUCHÉ-LECLERC, *Histoire des Séleucides* (Paris, 1914) I 340–341; G. DOWNEY, *A History of Antioch in Syria* (Princeton, 1961) 121–124; Éd. WILL, *Histoire politique du monde hellénistique* (Nancy, 1967) II 317–319. The most detailed and complete description of the events was preserved by Josephus in *AJ* 13, 86–119. In these passages Josephus reports the background and aftermath of the confrontation between Jonathan and Apollonios. The information about the battle itself is based exclusively on 1 *Ma.* (see below), but, with regard to external events connected with the struggle for power in Syria, Josephus derived his information from a source (or sources) well acquainted with Syrian developments following the dethronement of Demetrius I (v. especially 106–108 and cf. 13. 58–61).

Ptolemais and hurried to defend Antioch. Apollonios Taos, the governor of Coele Syria and Phoenicia betrayed his master and supported Demetrius II.² Unrest in Antioch and other cities in northern Syria, whose inhabitants despised Balas' manners,³ forced the latter to seek friends wherever possible. Thus he urgently called for Ptolemy VI, his father-in-law, and it stands to reason that on the basis of the privileges formerly granted to Jonathan (*ibid.* 62–65) the Jews were also called upon to put their shoulder to the wheel, as they had been earlier by Demetrius I (*ibid.* 3–6, 22–45). Apollonios, who looked after Demetrius' interests in Coele Syria, presumably tried to deter Jonathan from intervening (*ibid.* 69–73). Jonathan defied the governor's warning and waged war on the cities of the coastal plain; although formally in the service of Balas, he actually did so for his own reasons, mainly territorial expansion.

The battle and the preliminary stages are described in 1 *Ma.* 10. 69–85 and in Josephus' *AJ* 13.88–102. The latter version is only a paraphrase of 1 *Ma.* and, although Josephus is well informed on the crises which beset the Seleucid Empire, there is no evidence that in his narrative on Jonathan's campaign he utilized additional sources (*v. n.* 2). Josephus' detailed description and the "professional" terminology are to

² On Apollonios *v.* 1 *Ma.* 10. 65 and 88–89. According to J. *AJ* 13. 88, 102, he went on to serve Alexander Balas. But there is no convincing evidence that Josephus used any source other than 1 *Ma.* in describing the relations within the Jonathan – Alexander Balas – Apollonios triangle (on the nickname applied to Apollonios, see below). Josephus seems to doubt that Demetrius II, who stayed in Cicilia, could have appointed Apollonios to rule Coele-Syria. To bring his interpretation in line with 1 *Ma.* 10. 88–89 he added that Alexander Balas pretended to be content with Jonathan's victory (*AJ* 13. 102). But there is no reason to doubt the version of 1 *Ma.* which records fairly acceptable relations between all the parties involved. Apollonios, who was previously the governor of the province, seems to have betrayed Alexander Balas as soon as Demetrius invaded Cilicia, being acquainted with the king's personal weaknesses and his tottering position in Antioch (*v. n.* 3 below). If Apollonios is to be identified with the friend of Demetrius I mentioned in *Plb.* 31.13.2, his sympathy for Demetrius Junior is even more comprehensible. This or another source could have been the origin for the nickname of Apollonios mentioned only by Josephus (13. 88): The reading in the best MSS (Rom and Lat.) is *Táος*, but the inferior group LAMWE reads *Δάος*. On the *Tάοι* see Stephanos *s.v.* *Tάοχοι* and X. *An.* 4.4.11, 6.3, 7.1. In any case, this nickname does not necessarily indicate national origin but may be connected with an expedition to Armenia or to Hyrcania.

³ This can be learned from *AJ* 13. 111–112; *Diod.* 32. 9 c-d; *Justin* 35. 2, although these sources refer to a later stage when Ptolemy VI invaded Syria.

be expected of a paraphrase, some parts are acceptable, since they fit in with the text of 1 *Ma.* and our knowledge of the period, while others must be rejected either because they misinterpret 1 *Ma.* or because, due to apparent difficulties in 1 *Ma.*, they deliberately depart from the basic source.

According to 1 *Ma.* Apollonios' army numbered three thousand cavalry, one thousand of whom were mounted archers (10.77—80), and an unspecified number of infantry men. The figure of eight thousand infantry attributed by Josephus to Apollonios' army (*AJ* 13.92) is undoubtedly based on the number of casualties cited in 1 *Ma.* 6.85 for Apollonios and is, therefore, worthless. In view of the internal situation in the Seleucid kingdom at the moment, the possibility that the standing army was split between the two contenders to the throne, and the confinement of Demetrius' troops to Cilicia to confront Balas' army, Apollonios' troops could not have been those of the royal army. They must rather have included the garrison of Jaffa (*v.* 10.75) Iamnia (*cf.* 1 *Ma.* 5.59) and Azotos, which cannot have numbered more than few hundreds at the most, and primarily the militias of the Hellenized coastal cities. The letter attributed to Apollonios in 1 *Ma.* 10.71, in which the governor introduces his troops as "the army of the cities" (δύναμις τῶν πόλεων) can not, therefore, refer to the cities of Seleucis as Josephus seems to indicate in his free paraphrase (*AJ* 13.90), but must refer to those much closer to the battlefield. The letter itself certainly cannot be regarded as authentic (*v.* below), but the description of the Seleucid force it contains may well be based on the author's knowledge of where the manpower for Apollonios' army came from. It is worth noting that the cavalry is said to have numbered three thousand troops: a cavalry contingent of identical strength figured in the celebrated parade of Antiochus IV at Daphne and is described as πολιτικοί (*Plb.* 30.25.3). The conventional identification of these cavalrymen as citizens of the Greco-Macedonian cities of northern Syria^{4a}) cannot be accepted because the latter were an integral part of the

⁴ See e.g. the addition to 1 *Ma.* 4. 3 in *AJ* 12. 306 (*cf.* 1 *Ma.* 12. 28—29; *App. Sam.* 16; Polyaeus 4. 15).

^{4a} *V.* e.g. H. DROYSEN, *Heerwesen und Kriegsführung der Griechen* (Freiburg, 1888) 165 n.3; G.T. GRIFFITH, *The Mercenaries of the Hellenistic World* (Cambridge, 1935) 146.

regular army listed separately among the cavalry contingents at Daphne.⁵ The πολιτικοί could therefore have been militia of the coastal cities in Coele Syria and Phoenicia. However, as Apollonios' cavalry would presumably have drawn exclusively upon the cities in southern Coele Syria, the similarity of the numbers can only be accidental, and the figure attributed to Apollonios' cavalymen is certainly rather exaggerated. The description of the battle refers to "phalanx" which forms the hard core of Apollonios' army (10.82).⁶ If my conclusion about the force being drawn from the local militia holds water, the battle near Azotos was the first appearance of the Syrian phalanx in the battlefield. The Greco-Macedonian element, which was a tiny minority in the Seleucid kingdom, preserved its military superiority by denying the natives phalanx armament and training, and the Syrians and Babylonians even light equipment. This policy did not apply to Diaspora Jews who were themselves a minority and were therefore bound to support the central authorities against the local population.⁷ The removal of this restriction is symptomatic of the internal weakness and general deterioration of the Seleucid kingdom after the death of Antiochus IV. At that stage some pretenders to the throne were forced to appeal for help to local troops against the Greco-Macedonian element just as Demetrius II later called on Jonathan for help against the citizens of Antioch (1 *Ma.* 11.44—50). However, these troops did not participate in the great campaigns before 150 B.C.E. and their military experience was limited to local skirmishes. The physical training and paramilitary manoeuvres practiced in the gymnasia of the *poleis* could hardly be regarded as a proper substitute for advanced military training.

The discussion of the numerical strength and tactical composition of Jonathan's army must be preceded by some methodological remarks on the treatment of this topic in 1 *Ma.* based on the analysis of Judas Maccabeus' campaigns.⁸ 1 *Ma.*, who habitually overestimates the

⁵ V. B. BAR-KOCHVA, *The Seleucid Army* (Cambridge, 1975) 28—31, 41—42, 44—45, 73—74.

⁶ The Hebrew original of 1 *Ma.* undoubtedly used Greek words in Hebrew transcription with regard to military, institutional and ritual terms, *v. e.g.* 1. 14, 54; 6. 35, 38; 13. 43.

⁷ V. B. BAR-KOCHVA, *op. cit.* (supra n. 5) 44—45, 52—53.

⁸ V. *ibid.* pp. 12—15, 185—187, 194—198.

number of enemy troops and underestimates that of the Jews, always attributes an overwhelming numerical superiority to the Seleucid army. However, examination of the course of the battles, external information and the available manpower of the Seleucid army and its commitments at the time of the battles in Judaea, "slips of the pen" in the Jewish sources on the strength of Jewish armies, estimates of the Jewish manpower in official documents and in accounts which have no ulterior motives, and the circumstances which surrounded each campaign, *all taken together* indicate that Judas Maccabeus had a numerically superior force in some of his battles. To be more specific, in the first stage, before the purification of the temple, the rebels numbered between six and ten thousand men, but after 164 B.C.E. well over twenty thousand troops could be mobilized. 1 *Ma.* departed from the truth like other official historians and chroniclers eager to glorify victories and "soften" the severity of defeats of the side they favored. To this well known tendency was added the religious-didactic purpose which is characteristic of the book; the author always indicates that an invisible divine hand directed the course of events and appeared to help the faithful believers. Had the author reported the real manpower figures, the reader would not have recognized the importance of divine intervention and influence. The various addresses attributed to the commanders are main vehicles for the didactic purpose. Like most "battle speeches" in Greek and Hellenistic literature they are unreliable and convey the author's conceptions and literary-historiographic tendencies. Moreover, their statements are frequently at variance with the known facts of the battles (e.g. 3. 17—23)⁹ and never conform to parallel speeches attributed to Judas Maccabaeus by 2 *Ma.*

1 *Ma.* is similarly unreliable with regard to the armament and tactical composition of the Jewish army. In contrast to the extremely detailed references he makes to the equipment of the Seleucid armies, he ignores that of the Jews and before the purification of the temple even complains about scarcity of armament. This may reflect the first stage of the revolt, but "a slip of the pen" in 2 *Ma.*, information from a Hellenistic source in Josephus and analysis of the battle of Elasa in 1

⁹ V. B. BAR-KOCHVA, Seron and Cestius Gallus at Beith Horon *Palestine Exploration Quarterly* 107 (1976) n. 6.

Ma. indicate that by the time of the purification of the temple, when the Jewish army was already numerically complete, it included also units of cavalry and heavy or semi heavy infantry and its tactics were accordingly modified. In view of the extensive information about Jewish military settlers in the Hellenistic armies and an indication in 2 *Ma.*, (12.35) I have suggested that the cavalry and phalanx units were based respectively on volunteers and instructors from the Diaspora. The silence about the tactical composition of the Jewish army and its sources of recruitment derives from the same didactic purpose which inspired the author to distort the relative strength of the two armies.

This negative evaluation of the reliability of the figures, addresses and information about Jewish armament in 1 *Ma.* does not apply by and large to the description of the battles themselves. Analysis of the geographical and topographic data are the information on the equipment and manoeuvres of the Seleucid army in the light of these, as well as our acquaintance with the terrain and the probability of the manoeuvres according to the changing situation, all-combine combine to verify the version in 1 *Ma.*, although the reservation must be made that like most military historians in antiquity it does not comprehend all sections of the battlefield and seems somewhat elliptical. Even the frequent use of biblical phrases does not weaken this reliability because the phrases usually have a satisfactory factual basis (v. e.g. 6.35 in comparison with Plb. 30.25.3). The reliability of 1 *Ma.* on battles falls short only in regard to two for which the author obviously did not possess any concrete information (3. 10—12, 4. 34—35).^{9a} The description of the battles supported by other reliable information can serve as a better guide for determining the size and composition of the Jewish army than the tendentious information provided by 1 *Ma.* when introducing the contending armies.

Jonathan's army, according to 1 *Ma.*, numbered ten thousand men (10. 74), but the Jewish manpower potential at that stage was certainly greater. In pursuing his didactic purpose the author ignores the size of Jonathan's armies in other confrontations. However, in an authentic document preserved in 1 *Ma.* Demetrius I promised Jonathan in 152

^{9a} On the reliability of the battle accounts in 1 *Ma.* v. further in detail B. BAR-KOCHVA. *Judas Maccabeus' Campaigns* (Jerusalem, 1976, Hebrew, forthcoming).

B.C.E. that he would recruit up to thirty thousand Jews for the Seleucid army (10. 36.)¹⁰ I would assume that the offer was made and could have appealed to Jonathan because economic conditions in Judaea had considerably deteriorated as a result of the frequent battles and the concentration of refugees there from remote districts (see e.g. 1 *Ma.* 5. 23, 25). The offer, which was made in order to induce the Jewish leader to support Demetrius against Alexander Balas, suggests that the available Jewish manpower was well over thirty thousand troops because Demetrius certainly could not have expected an unsuspecting Jonathan to respond to an offer which meant emptying Judaea of all its defending forces. And indeed a few years later Jonathan proceeded to Beith Shean (Scythopolis) against Tryphon with forty thousand men (1 *Ma.* 12.41). For that occasion the author reported the real size of the Jewish army in the sequence of the historical narrative because in fact no confrontation between the two armies took place and obviously the disclosure of the real figure could not directly spoil his didactic purpose, and he had to explain why Tryphon avoided battle.¹¹ It would be easy likewise to

¹⁰ On the authenticity of the document in general and the figure mentioned v. M. STERN, *The Documents on the History of the Hasmonean Revolt* (Tel Aviv, 1965) 97-106, especially 104—105 (Hebrew).

¹¹ Twenty thousand combatants are attributed to Simon the Hasmonean in the battle against the governor Kendebaios (1 *Ma.* 16. 4) which took place in 140 B.C.E. after the proclamation of independence. In that case the author does not apply a modest figure to the Jewish army because the character of the description changes from ch. 14 onwards. The emphasis is placed on Simon's royal (or, rather, presidential) pomp, his extension of borders, diplomatic relations, ports, affluence and security. Simon is said to have been appointed as *strategos* whose duty was to see to manpower, armament and fortifications (14.42), and the author is eager to show that Simon performed his duties satisfactorily. The well-known conjecture that 1 *Ma.* 14—16 is a later addition and is not the work of the author of the book should also be considered in this context. It is based on difference in style, the character of the description and its tendencies, and on the fact that Josephus in *AJ* 12.213—229 does not adhere to the narrative of 1 *Ma.* as he consistently does otherwise, but uses a much shorter source. Although it can be argued that these chapters were only missing by chance from the copy of 1 *Ma.* used by Josephus, the conjecture as a whole has not yet been decisively refuted. At any rate, the proclamation of independence evidently inspired the author to change the image of the Jewish army and stress its strength. Hence also the allusion to Jewish horsemen in the same battle (see further p. 91ff. below). On the question of 1 *Ma.* 14—16 see: J. von DESTINON, *Die Quellen des Flavius Josephus* (Kiel, 1882) 80—91, followed by many others; see the bibliography in: K.D. SCHUNK, *Die Quellen des I und II Makkabäerbuches* (Halle, 1954), 7; but v. H.W.

consider the figure of ten thousand combatants attributed to Jonathan in the campaign against Apollonios, a decided underestimate. However, it could well be that Jonathan did not exhaust all his available manpower because of his considerable superiority over the militia of the coastal cities, and 1 *Ma.* does indeed state, somewhat out of character, that Jonathan “chose” (ἐπέλεξε) the troops for this undertaking (10. 74). I suggest that Jonathan confined himself mainly to his standing army, although it is true that at this stage even the “regulars” could have totalled more than ten thousand.

As may be expected, nothing is said about the tactical composition and equipment of the Jewish army, and Jonathan’s troops are described merely as ἄνδρες (10. 74). In the letter attributed to Apollonios, the governor challenged Jonathan saying: “And now you will not be able to resist my cavalry and such a force on the plain, where there is no stone or a pebble nor a place to flee” (10. 73). But the letter cannot be authentic as is obvious from its formulas, language, and boasting, and its contradiction of the situation which later developed in which Jonathan besieged Apollonios’ garrison at Jaffa (10. 75). The letter like all the addresses in the book is an invention of the author reflecting the general purpose of the book to present the Jewish army as inferior in numbers and equipment.

The composition of the Jewish army should rather be deduced from the local topographic possibilities, the preliminary manoeuvres and the course of the battle which like similar data in 1 *Ma.* are quite reliable. The battle arena was certainly flat (10. 73, 77, 83). Its exact location cannot be determined: after occupying Jaffa, Jonathan turns southwards to Iamnia where Apollonios’ army was concentrated. Apollonios retreated toward Azotos, fifteen km. south of Iamnia, and deployed an ambush of mounted archers in Jonathan’s rear (10. 79). Near Azotos, Apollonios accepted the challenge and the concealed horseman attacked Jonathan in his rear. Père F.M. Abel reckons that the ambush was hidden somewhere in Wadi Qatra or Wadi Soukreir near Azotos,¹² but

ETTELSON, *The Integrity of 1 Maccabees* TAPA 27 (1925) 280—341; SCHUNK, *op. cit.*, 10—15; D. ARENHÖVEL, *Die Theokratie nach 1 und 2 Makkabäerbuch* (Mainz, 1967) 94—96.

¹² *Les Livres des Maccabées* (Paris, 1949) 199—200; *idem*, *Topographie des campagnes Maccabéennes* RB 35 (1926) 208.

the sea dunes west of the plain leading from Iamnia to Azotos could also offer suitable coverage for the cavalry. Be this as it may, the battle took place between Iamnia and Azotos on flat terrain.

Bearing in mind the character of the terrain, it appears from the description of the battle that the Jewish army was composed mainly of phalangites and cavalry. This conclusion is not in fact surprising for those who accept the view that Judas Maccabaeus already employed heavy troops seventeen or eighteen years earlier.

Let us examine the evidence for the presence of phalangites in the Jewish army which took part in this battle. The ambush of mounted archers is said to have caught Jonathan in the rear (10. 79—80), while on the front he faced the enemy's phalanx (10. 82) and certainly the rest of the cavalry (10. 77, 80) posted as usual in the wings of the phalanx. The mounted archers annoyed the Jews by ceaseless sniping and Jonathan ordered his troops to maintain their position (10. 81). The sniping went on for some hours (a feasible accomplishment by mounted archers with a large supply of arrows), but the enemy's phalanx did not exploit the opportunity to assault the Jewish force. Finally the mounted archers tired (ἐκοπίασαν, 10. 81), and as there is no indication of an advance toward them, it seems obvious that they had exhausted their ammunition. The fact that Jonathan ordered a passive "absorbing" battle order which successfully withstood the barrage of arrows and that the enemy's phalanx was deterred from breaking through the front of the Jewish force that had been "softened" by the missiles suggests that Jonathan's centre could not have been composed of light infantry. The passive tactics he employed would necessitate all the equipment of phalangites especially shields and long pikes to absorb the enemy's missiles and discourage its phalanx from attacking. The usual formation adopted by phalanx troops who faced similar situations (mainly against mounted archers) was the *synspismos*, i.e. combining shields. By narrowing the space between them the soldiers formed a consecutive dense "tortoise" of shields thus protecting the inside troops from missiles and simultaneously retaining their ability to engage in face to face combat.¹³ In case

¹³ On the *synspismos* v.: F. LAMMERT, *RE* s.v. coll. 1328—1330; J. KROMAYER-G. VEITH, *Heerwesen und Kriegführung der Griechen und Römer* (Munich, 1926) 135.

they were exposed in the wings, the phalangites formed a quadrate (πλινθίου), each side of which faced outwards. But if the infantry was protected by cavalry (as were Jonathan's infantrymen, *v. infra*), it must have faced outwards only in the front and the rear. Josephus in his paraphrase in *AJ* rightly interprets Jonathan's formation as *synaspismos* (13. 95—96). 1 *Ma.*, adhering to his didactic purpose, is content with a general description of the military manoeuvres and does not name the Jewish troops as phalangites, a term which he applies, as in the narrative of Beith Zacharia and Elasa (6. 35, 38; 9. 12), only to the enemy (10. 82).

As soon as the mounted archers had exhausted their ammunition they presumably withdrew from the battlefield. Archers who have been "neutralized" in this way having nothing more to contribute. The cavalry of Apollonios mentioned later (10. 82, 83) must certainly not be identified with the mounted archers but with the horsemen on the wings of the phalanx. The second stage of the battle commenced according to the description with the onslaught by Simon, Jonathan's brother, on the enemy's phalanx (10. 82). It should be noted that an advance in a flat battle arena by infantry troops, in this case composed of phalangites, against a battle array of phalanx and cavalry was bound to be suicidal and could hardly be imagined without cavalry protection on the wings to prevent the enemy cavalry from attacking the advancing phalanx on its flanks (cavalry protection would, of course, be even more essential for light infantry). In addition it must be borne in mind that a) Jonathan is not mentioned among the advancing infantry who were led by Simon although his earlier order regarding deployment in an "absorption formation" indicates that he was the supreme commander of the Jewish force; b) according to Hellenistic tradition the supreme commanders used to lead personally one wing of the cavalry,¹⁴ and c) the battle of Azotos was decided only when the enemy cavalry, i.e. the horsemen on the flanks, "got tired" (ἐξελύθη, 10. 82), at which point the author refers to the retreat of the phalangites.¹⁵ This means that other units,

¹⁴ *v. J. KROMAYER - G. VEITH. Antike Schlachtfelder in Griechenland* (Berlin, 1903) I. 166; B. BAR-KOCHVA, *op. cit.* (supra n. 5) 85.

¹⁵ Note the plural form of συνετριβησαν and ἔφυγαν which, in view of the singular form of ἡ ὑπὸς, refers both to the phalanx, which appears in the same verse also in the singular, and to the cavalry.

aside from those under Simon, defeated Apollonios' cavalry in the flanks. It is true that the dispersion of cavalry could be effected by phalangites in a frontal charge, but horsemen had no reason to lay themselves open to such a danger because they could easily evade the phalangites. A combination of all these considerations suggests that Apollonios' cavalry was defeated by Jewish horsemen commanded by Jonathan. The Jewish cavalry did not charge the enemy's mounted archers in the first phase of the battle, presumably because the latter were much lighter and because by doing so they would have exposed the flanks of the Jewish phalanx to an attack by the enemy's heavy cavalry.

The phrasing of 1 *Ma.* and the sequence of events perhaps suggest that Apollonios' phalanx was not actually defeated by Simon's phalangites: nothing is said about the "breaking" of the phalangites but only about that of the cavalry, which was naturally followed by the retreat of the phalanx. The collapse of the cavalry certainly exposed the phalanx to outflanking manoeuvres in addition to the necessity of confronting the Jewish phalanx in the front. It seems, however, that in order to conceal the participation of Jewish horsemen, the author was forced to distort the sequence of events somewhat. In a conventional battle the phalangite formations in the centre engaged only when the fate of the cavalry was known, or their confrontation remained undecided. A preliminary engagement of phalangites was regarded as dangerous, superfluous and a waste of manpower since success in the centre did not secure victory because the infantry was still open to cavalry attack in the wings.¹⁶ There is no reason to suggest that Simon's tactics were different from that employed by other commanders in the Hellenistic period. Simon's assault came therefore only after the cavalry confrontation was over, but the author could not describe the collapse of Apollonios' cavalry before referring to some move of the Jewish army, and that would explain the reordering of the infantry engagement to precede the "breaking" of Apollonios' cavalry.

To sum up, the course of the battle should be reconstructed as follows: both sides confronted each other in a typical Hellenistic battle

¹⁶ V. e.g. DROYSEN, *op. cit.* (supra n. 4a above), 175—181. W.W. TARN, *Hellenistic Military and Naval Developments* (Cambridge, 1930) 66—71.

array with phalangites in the centre and cavalry in the wings. Jonathan commanded the Jewish cavalry in the wings, and the centre was under Simon. Apollonios succeeded in surprising the Jews with his mounted archers hidden nearby, who attacked them from the rear with a barrage of arrows. Jonathan protected his troops by reforming his centre into the *synaspismos* formation. As soon as the archers exhausted their ammunition, presumably without causing much damage to the Jews, Jonathan engaged the enemy's cavalry wings. The collapse of Apollonios' horsemen gave Simon's phalangites the green light to attack the enemy centre. Threatened by Simon on the front and exposed to the danger of outflanking on the wings by the victorious Jewish cavalry, Apollonios' phalangites took to their heels without actually engaging Simon's phalanx.

In this battle Jonathan defeated the enemy using conventional Hellenistic equipment, formations and tactics. However, it must be stressed that in this case his enemy, "the army of the cities", had far less experience than his own troops who had already fought in this manner by the time of Judas Maccabaeus. As happened in the first stage of the battle at Azotos, the numerical and qualitative strength of Jonathan's army twice led his Seleucid enemies to resort to unconventional tactics like ambushes and night raids (1 *Ma.* 11. 69; 12. 27).

APPENDIX

This evaluation of the Jewish strength may at first sight be challenged by the description of the operation of *helepolis* by Simon in the siege of Gazara (1 *Ma.* 13. 43) and the surrender of the Akra in his time (*ibid.* 49—52), which are frequently quoted as an evidence for the accepted view that the Jewish army had converted to up-to-date formations and arms only in the time of Simon. But already by the time of Judas Maccabaeus the Jews were deploying siege *mechanai* against the Akra (1 *Ma.* 6. 20; cf. 52), while the surrender of the garrison and refugees in the Akra resulted not from the military development of the Jews but from the political change brought about by Seleucid recognition of the sovereignty and independence of Judaea (*ibid.* 36—42). The Akra was not occupied earlier because for political reasons the Jews allowed

supplies to be brought to the garrison. Otherwise the survival of the garrison through fifteen years of almost uninterrupted Hasmonean rule in Jerusalem (excluding the years of Alcimos' high priesthood which are not counted) is incomprehensible. It was more practical to keep the garrison, which could not do any harm, as potential hostages than to destroy this main symbol of Seleucid rule in Judaea and thus bring about a large scale military intervention (as happened twice, *v. 1 Ma.* 6.26; 13. 21; Triphon's attitude to Jonathan cooled after the later harassed the garrison in the Akra. In these two cases the Jews overestimated the difficulties caused by the internal crises in the kingdom). The Seleucid kingdom had a schedule of priorities and urgent undertakings in its large realm, and as long as its nominal reign in Judaea was not disturbed, relegated the suppression of the revolt to second place, diverting its main military forces to other regions. It was therefore better to defer operations against the Akra until Judaea was better prepared. This does not mean that from time to time the Jews did not try to get rid of the garrison but in each case, they eventually came to their senses. The great excitement following the surrender of the Akra reflected by some sources derived mainly from the symbolic meaning of the Akra as nominally representing Seleucid rule rather than from any practical difficulties resulting to daily life in Jerusalem and security in the country (anyhow not after 152 B.C.E.). The destruction of the fortress and the leveling of the hill (*AJ* 13. 215—217), if indeed this can be accepted as an historical fact, also point to the symbolic meaning of the Akra for the Jews as well as for the Macedonian authorities (cf. *AJ* 13. 147). This recalls a similar episode in Heraclea Pontica after the death of Lysimachus when the jubilant citizens razed the akropolis to its foundations (*Memnon* 6.2 [9]).

It must be added that the deployment of cavalry units among the infantry in Simon's battle in the Ayalon Valley in about 135 B.C.E. (*1 Ma.* 16. 7) does not indicate, as some scholars suggest, that employment of cavalry in the Jewish army was an innovation of the end of Simon's reign.¹⁷ On the contrary, it suggests that by the time of Simon, the Jews

¹⁷ V. ABEL, *op. cit.* (supra n. 12); J.C. DANCY, *A Commentary on I Maccabees* (Oxford, 1950) 192.

were well enough acquainted with cavalry warfare to allow themselves to deviate, because of local tactical reasons, from the stereotypical deployment, which could not be expected of beginners. The very reference to the participation of Jewish horsemen in that battle, in contrast to former campaigns, is to be explained by the different character and purposes of 1 *Ma.* 14—16 (*v. supra* n. 11).

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