Chapter Six
The Province of Judaea

The inauguration and character of the province of Judaea

Judaea passed through various phases before its final annexation to the Roman Empire. The rule of Herod's descendants was the last phase prior to the constitution of Judaea as a Roman province. The removal of Archelaus from his position as ethnarch of Judaea, Samaria and Idumaea (in 6 C.E.) opened a new chapter in the relations between the Jews and the Roman Empire, and administrative structures were then created which determined the political position of the majority of the Jewish people down to the Great Revolt. The population of Judaea was now included within the territory of a new Roman province headed by a Roman governor of equestrian rank. The continuity of this régime was broken only for the few years in which the entire country was united within the realm of Agrippa I.

The large Jewish population in Galilee and Transjordan was assigned to the tetrarchy of Herod Antipas until his deposition in 39 C.E., and from that year on came under the rule of Agrippa I. Under the first Roman governors therefore two of the chief components of the Jewish population (in Galilee and Peraea) were outside the sphere of direct Roman rule. At this time (till the year 34 C.E.), Philip, Herod's other son, continued to rule the north-eastern areas. After his death Philip's tetrarchy was annexed for several years to the province of Syria, until in 37 it was awarded to the new King Agrippa. It was the first part of Palestine to be assigned to him.

But the administrative unity of Jewish Palestine, restored by Agrippa, also persisted after his death in 44 C.E.; for on the reconstitution of the provincial régime the Jews of Peraea and Galilee, together with the inhabitants of Judaea, passed under the rule of the Roman procurator. In 55 C.E. Tiberias, Tarichaeae and parts of Peraea were attached to the kingdom of Agrippa II; nevertheless it may be stated that from 44 C.E. the greater part of the Jews of the country were under direct Roman rule; thus the administrative unity of Herod's kingdom in the year 4 B.C.E. was in a measure restored.

The deposition and exile of Archelaus occurred in a period in which
the system of allied client kings was still being maintained side by side with that of direct annexation and organisation under the régime of a province. The Roman princeps therefore had several choices. He could impose the task of ruling Judaea on one of the members of the Herodian family, which was what Augustus had actually done with Judaea so far; but it would seem to have been impossible to proceed further in this fashion, on account of the unpopularity of the House of Herod in Judaea itself, resulting from the Jews' experience under Herod and his son Archelaus. Augustus found no member of the family capable of maintaining order in Judaea without infuriating its inhabitants. He therefore decided to place Judaea under direct Roman rule for the first time in its history. This seemed to him good policy since as early as the time of Herod's death, Jewish representatives had implored him not to leave power in the hands of Herod's sons. But the inclusion of Judaea under a provincial régime could be implemented in several different ways. The simplest way, on the face of it, was to annex the ethnarchy of Archelaus to the neighbouring province of Syria.

Archelaus' ethnarchy was too small to demand the creation of an independent province, and the Syrian governors had supervised affairs in Judaea even in Herod's time. But weighty considerations prevented such a step throughout the period of Roman rule in Judaea, Roman policy being primarily influenced by the peculiar character of the Jewish population, its religion and its past, which were so different from those of the population of Syria as a whole. This situation demanded a special attitude and the Roman rulers never ignored the problem and never made Judaea an integral part of Syria, though they altered the form of government in Judaea more than once.

Augustus, therefore, saw no alternative to setting up Judaea as an independent province. The general arrangements made by Augustus for the Empire as a whole are known. The Senate sent governors to a portion of the provinces, particularly to those not exposed to serious danger from without. Others in which a considerable legionary force was stationed and whose position obliged a maximum military preparedness, were under the Emperor's direct surveillance. Provinces of this class received *legati pro praetore* representing the princeps,

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1 Jos. *Ant.* xvii, 314; *War* ii, 90-1; a similar wish of most of the inhabitants of Cilicia and Commagene is related by Tacitus, *Annals* ii, 42.