CHAPTER FOUR

THE CULT AT ANTIOCH IN PISIDIA

Antioch in Pisidia ranks unquestionably as the greatest center of Men-cult in antiquity. The cult there reaches back before Roman times, although it is impossible to say just how far. Strabo can write of Antioch: 1

"Ἡν δὲ ἐνταῦθα καὶ ἱεροσύνη τις Μηνος Ἀσκάλου, πλῆθος ἔχουσα ἱεροδούλων καὶ χωρίων ἱερῶν. Κατελύθη δὲ μετὰ τὴν Ἁμύντου τελευτήν ὑπὸ τῶν πεμφθέντων ἐπὶ τὴν ἑκεῖνον χιληρομόλιαν.

The early importance of Men-cult in Antioch is also attested by the pre-Roman coinage. 2 These coins bear a bust of Men on the obverse, and on the reverse, either a humped bull and magistrate’s name, or a figure of Nike with a palm-branch, also with the magistrate’s name. It is impossible to venture any dating of these coins in the present state of our evidence, except that they can be placed between the freeing of Antioch from Seleucid rule, by the treaty of Apamea (188 B.C.), and the transformation of the Galatian kingdom into a Roman province by Augustus in 25 B.C. These coins do, however, indicate to us that even at this early period Men was associated not only with the bull, but with the idea of victory, with which he appears regularly in the typical Antiochene representation, apparently derived from his cult-image, from the time of Antoninus Pius onwards. It may well be an Antiochene from this Antioch who is mentioned in the probably Hellenistic inscription from Rhodes, no. 17.

The original Seleucid settlers were from Magnesia on the Maenander, 3 and Men is worshipped in that city also, 4 so it may be that the cults in the two cities are connected. But since the earliest Men-

1 XII, viii, 14 (= T. 2).
2 CMRDM, II, Antioch nos. 1-17.
3 Strabo, loc. cit. (= T. 2).
4 CMRDM, I, no. 29; nine coin-types in CMRDM, II.
coins of Magnesia are of the Severan period, and since both places have a very peculiar and pronounced iconography, the one quite different from the other, it is probably best to postulate independent development in the two places.

Strabo uses a very strong word (νικήτριαλόθη) to describe the fate of the cult of Men at the time of the Roman colonization by Augustus. The temple had come to possess extensive land-holdings and slaveholdings by the time Augustus made Galatia a province, and this all seems to have been broken up, the land, it can reasonably be supposed, going to provide farms for the Roman colonists.6

I have suggested elsewhere6 that perhaps the Romans chose their new colony, not only in order to hold their new province militarily, but also for the propaganda value which could be drawn from its principal cult. This is speculative. Certainly, the secular possessions of the temple were broken up, and the Romans may have been slow to realize the potential that Men-cult had for propaganda value. We cannot tell. The earliest definite sign of Roman exploitation of Men-cult for propaganda is the Galba-coin which we have listed as, “Uncertain, perhaps Ancyra.”7 The earliest full recrudescence of Men-cult in Antioch, its beginning to regain its former status, is signalled by the coinage of the reign of Antoninus Pius.8 There does exist a series of smaller coins, some portraying Men, which are undatable (CMRDM, II, Antioch 18-23) and which may bridge this period, as well as inscription no. 160, which is apparently of first-century date. Significantly, however, Krzyzanowska’s wishes to date the earliest of these small coins contemporaneously with Antoninus Pius also.

The type of Men shown on the coins with imperial obverses, with the attributes of Nike, bucranium, and rooster, continues in use through the reign of Volusian, and is clearly derived from the local cult-statue. This cult-statue also gave rise to a miniature copy of itself, found in the sanctuary on the top of Kara Kuyu (monument no. 175). One coin-type of Gordian III (Antioch no. 56) shows the

---

6 See Barbara Levick, Roman Colonies in Southern Asia Minor, p. 72 ff.
6 Numen, 22, 1975, p. 236.
7 CMRDM, II, p. 160.
8 CMRDM, II, Antioch 24.