

Achaios

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Achaios, the son of Andromachos, was a kinsman and general of SELEUKOS III KERAUNOS and ANTIOCHOS III MEGAS. He is best known for his rebellion against Antiochos III, which allowed him to become king of a short-lived empire in Asia Minor in the late third century BCE. The history of Achaios is relatively well-known through the work of POLYBIUS (in Books 4, 5 and 8).

Achaios accompanied Seleukos III in his campaign in Asia Minor in 223. When the king was assassinated, Achaios executed the murderers and took command of part of the royal army to continue the war against ATTALOS I of Pergamon. Despite the army's encouragement to become king, he decided to accept Seleukos' succession by the king's younger son, Antiochos III, who made him viceroy of Asia Minor. Achaios defeated Attalos and recovered most of Seleucid Anatolia. Elated by his success, Achaios proclaimed himself king in 221/0; this move was legitimized by his victory over Attalos and his family's connection with the Seleucid house. His coins stress his prestige as a Seleucid, showing, for example, Apollo, Apollo's tripod, and a horse on the reverse. He made an alliance with the Ptolemies and began building up a small empire based on Lydia, creating "the most imposing and formidable of all the kingdoms and principalities of Asia Minor at that time" (Polyb. 4.48.12). When he advanced to Syria to claim the Seleucid throne, however, his Macedonian troops mutinied and refused to march against the legitimate king, Antiochos,

whose vassal Achaios still formally was. He retreated to southern Pisidia.

While Antiochos III and Ptolemy IV fought the Fourth Syrian War (219–217) (see SYRIAN WARS), Achaios continued his pursuit of an Anatolian empire by subjugating (parts of) Pisidia, Pamphylia, Lydia, Ionia, and the Troad – this time also at the expense of the Ptolemaic king. However, several Seleucid garrison cities along the Royal Road presumably remained loyal to Antiochos (Kosmetatou 1997: 23–4). A coalition of Pergamon and Bithynia against him (218) remained unsuccessful until Antiochos made peace with Ptolemy and in 216 crossed the Taurus Mountains with his army and joined forces with Attalos. Surrounded by enemies, and confronted with the full force of the Seleucid imperial army and the charisma of the rightful king, Achaios fled to the citadel of SARDIS, where he was kept under siege until he was betrayed and captured in 213. Convicted of treason by the royal council, Achaios was executed and underwent a *damnatio memoriae* marked by the ritual mutilation of his body.

SEE ALSO: Seleucids.

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